

The following Scripture passages are offered to aid beginning fellowships. The readings and commentary for this week are more in line with what has become usual; for the following will most likely be familiar observations. The concept behind this Sabbath's selection is sharing what you have.

[Printable/viewable PDF format to display Greek or Hebrew characters](#)

Weekly Readings *For the Sabbath of November 22, 2014*

The person conducting the Sabbath service should open services with two or three hymns, or psalms, followed by an opening prayer acknowledging that two or three (or more) are gathered together in Christ Jesus' name, and inviting the Lord to be with them.

The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth. Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul [*psuche*]. For I rejoiced greatly when the brothers came and testified to your truth, as indeed you are walking in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth. Beloved, it is a faithful thing you do in all your efforts for these brothers, strangers as they are, who testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. For *they have gone out for the sake of the name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles*. Therefore we ought to support people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the truth. (3 John 1–8 emphasis added)

1.

John the Elder writes to Gaius, but who is John the Elder? Some critics as early as Eusebius have doubted that John the Elder was the Apostle John even though the Sabbatarian Churches of God have assumed he was. This assumption, however, rests on John the Elder also being John the Revelator; rests on there being only one “John” that for endtime Christians spiritually duplicates the physical ministry of John the Baptist, who made straight the way to Christ Jesus. This one “John” makes straight the spiritual *way* to Christ; for he is the brother and partner of end-of-the-era disciples in the Affliction and Kingdom and Endurance in Jesus (Rev 1:9 in Greek). He is not the brother and partner of spiritual Gentiles, just as John the Baptist didn't making straight the Way to the physical temple, or to Moses.

In all things spiritual, the physical reveals and precedes the spiritual: John the Baptist, despite what Luke's Gospel declares about John and his parents being filled with spirit, was not born of spirit but was a righteousness human person possessing one

breath of life. He was not born again, or born anew, or born from above, again despite Luke's Gospel claim that he was filled with spirit ... if what the hearsay author of Luke claims is true, John the Baptist was filled with spirit as greater Christendom will be filled with spirit [*pneuma*] when baptized in the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] following the Second Passover liberation of Israel, the nation to be circumcised of heart. Being filled with spirit [*pneuma Theou*] without the indwelling of the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] does not cause the person to be *born of spirit*. It is only through the indwelling of the spirit of Christ in which the spirit of God resides that a person is born of spirit as a son of God, a younger sibling of Christ Jesus. Therefore, **for the Elect**—those Christians who are truly born of spirit as fruit borne out of season; those Christians who are foreknown and predestined by God the Father, called, justified, and glorified by Christ Jesus—**the Apostle John, having had the spirit of Christ [the breath of Christ, *pneuma Christou*] directly transferred to him when the glorified Jesus breathed on ten of His disciples (John 20:22), forms the type and reality of John the Baptist, his historical shadow.**

Endtime disciples are in no way deprived in comparison to 1st-Century disciples; for endtime disciples have to determine if they will follow a man as Jesus' first disciples had to decide if they, as John's disciples, would follow Jesus ... again, the Apostle John is for endtime disciples that constitute the Elect what John the Baptist was for Israel in the 1st-Century, with the <*wilderness*> in which John the Baptist preached representing the same wilderness in which a fit man was to release the *Azazel* on *Yom Kipporim*, this wilderness spiritually representing heaven where Jesus as the reality of the *Azazel* bears the sins of born-of-spirit Israel. Thus, John the Revelator reaches across space and time to teach endtime disciples as John the Baptist reached across the immediacy of space and time to teach his disciples in the 1st-Century.

John, like *James*, was a fairly common name in 1st-Century Judea; so there is no way to know for certain that John the Elder was John the Apostle, especially when the polished Greek syntax of John's Gospel greatly differs from the rough Greek used to write the Book of Revelation, the Greek of a first-language Aramaic speaker. But John's Gospel seems to end with the conclusion of chapter 20: chapter 21 seems to be an addendum. And in chapter 21, the author of John's Gospel lays out the chronological structure of Peter's two epistles: *feed my lambs* (disciples who are spiritual infants, 1 Peter chapters 1–4), *tend my sheep* (1 Peter chapter 5), *feed my sheep* (2 Peter chapters 1–3). It would logically follow for the author of John chapter 21 to lay out the chronological structure of Revelation, if both have the same author—and indeed, the chronological structure of Revelation is presented in John the Revelator declaring that he is the brother and partner of disciples in *the Affliction* [definite article present] and *Kingdom* [no definite article] and *Endurance in/of Jesus* [again, no definite article, but along with “Kingdom” sharing the definite article for “the Affliction,” and when three nouns share the same definite article, the three nouns are linked to form one definite unit] (Rev 1:9).

Because John chapter 21 reads as an addendum to John's Gospel, substantially differing in its narration of post-Resurrection events from the Synoptic Gospels—and because the chronological “structure” of canonical texts is not consciously outlined except in John's Gospel and in Revelation, it doesn't excessively stretch faith to believe

that both John's Gospel and Revelation were inspired by the same author even if that author's hand did not write both texts, a point recognized early in the 2nd-Century CE, and a point that nearly prevented the canonization of Revelation. The dissimilarity of syntax usage between the texts is what keeps endtime scholars from accepting that John the Apostle, an illiterate Aramaic speaker early in the 1st-Century, wrote Revelation late in his life ...

I know that times have changed and that for native English speakers, learning to write in English is not all that difficult; however, I recently read my brother Ben's memoir, *Gift of the Journey*, a private printing. And from reading his memoir, I know that Ben—a college graduate with triple majors in Forestry, Land Management, and Fish and Wildfire from University of Nevada, Reno—cannot write received English. He is not illiterate: he is well spoken, articulate, a now retired district ranger for the U.S. Forest Service. But the written language isn't the spoken language, an assumption too many English speakers make, one I made when I first began a novel while waiting out the weather, tied to the old Sub Dock at Dutch Harbor in December 1979. Of course, I wasn't tied to the dock: my boat was. No one reading this would think that I was "tied" to the dock. Most everyone not simply reading over what I just wrote would assume that I was in a vessel of some sort. But that assumption would be based on American idioms in current use, not on what was actually written, because what was written was that *I was tied to the old Sub Dock*, when *<I>* in this case is used metonymically to represent not only the person but the vessel the person fishes, with the vessel not the person being actually tethered to the dock.

To be able to read and comprehend English isn't the same as being able to write received English ... being able to drive a vehicle isn't the same as being able to repair the vehicle.

English was, for me, my poorest subject in grade school and high school; yet midlife, I entered the graduate English program at University of Alaska Fairbanks without any undergraduate English coursework beyond Freshmen Composition. I had been writing professionally for nine years when I returned to college after laying out a term to marry when 18 years old: I was then in Oregon Tech's Small Arms Technology [gunsmithing] program, needing no English beyond Freshman Comp to graduate. And the one term became a second term, then a third term, then twenty-three years. So I know better than most that a person can become a self-taught writer, but I also know that every self-taught writer will benefit from the professional criticism of others. I benefited from taking my M.F.A. degree in Creative Writing from UAF; for without having "studied" the poetry and prose of earlier generations, I wouldn't have recognized the Book of Acts as a Greek Second Sophist novel that has had its last scene removed post completion because of what would have been in this last scene in which hero and heroine are reunited (in which Paul would have joined the glorified Jesus, thereby ending the Christian era). It was through graduate studies that I was exposed to the carnivalesque, the noun used in English translations of Mikhail Bakhtin's criticism for a literary mode that subverts the dominant style of a culture, that I read Bakhtin's literary criticism, which in turn introduced me to novelesque texts that predate the quasi-official 17th-Century birth of the novel as a genre. And Acts is a predictable Second Sophist novel that used Paul's epistles as its source material.

A Christian seminary course of study may or may not introduce the student to textual criticism of the Gospels, but self-study can provide through close readings of the Gospels more reliable criticism. However, effective self-study requires a “student” who doesn’t assume he or she already knows what the Bible says; for the nature of God sealing and keeping secret prophecy until the time of the end will have every previous reading of prophecy prior to the time of the end reinforcing the sealed and secret nature of the prophecy. And Matthew’s Gospel, appearing as a traditional Greco-Roman biography of the man Jesus that uses Mark’s Gospel and the “Q” text and a mysterious “M” text as its source texts, is better identified as prophecy concerning the indwelling Christ Jesus in the spirit of the man [or woman] foreknown and predestined by God the Father; for chapters one and two of Matthew’s Gospel will not withstand historical scrutiny. Nor will chapter twenty-eight for when will the glorified Jesus receive all authority in heaven and on earth? Not until dominion over the single kingdom of this world is taken from the Adversary and his angels halfway through seven endtime years of tribulation (*cf.* Dan 7:9–14; Rev 11:15–18; 12:7–12). So Matthew 28:18 cannot actually occur until the middle of the tribulation, when eleven tribes will be represented in the 144,000 that follow the glorified Lamb wherever He goes [Joseph is twice represented].

Given the probability that sixty decades passed between Calvary and the composition of John’s Gospel, it is reasonable to assume that John the Apostle was no longer illiterate when John chapter 21 was written ... when Jesus didn’t return as expected, John the Apostle would have set about educating himself. In a carnal way, I set about writing when I realized that Ken Follett had never been to sea for long enough to write his sea chase scene in *Triple*, a novel I threw across the cabin while tied to the old Sub Dock at Dutch.

But more important than if John the Elder was the Apostle John is the controversy that exists among endtime Sabbatarian Christians as to whether these disciples should take the Passover as Jesus ate the Passover—the Lord’s Supper—on the night He was betrayed, with Seventh Day Adventists presently following the teachings of Ellen G. White, who argued that since disciples spiritually dwell in the reality of *Yom Kippur* which has the glorified Jesus “covering” the sins of disciples in the heavenly realm, disciples shouldn’t look backwards to the Passover but should rather look forward to the Feast of Tabernacles, the Millennium, when (according to her teachings) disciples will be with the Lord in heaven for a Thousand Years. The *spirit of prophecy* that many Sabbatarian Christians have assumed that Ellen G. White had utterly fails her when it comes to disciples being with the Lord in heaven, then returning to the earth that will not even be here physically.

- Those disciples foreknown and predestined to be glorified—spiritually foreknown as Noah, Daniel, and Job are physically foreknown [those disciples whose lives are epistles in the heavenly Book of Life, rather than stories in the Bible]—will receive glorified outer bodies in which their already glorified souls [*psuchas*] will dwell.
- Those disciples who when filled with the spirit of God at the Second Passover liberation of Israel and who commit no blasphemy against the spirit of God will, upon Christ Jesus’ return [the Second Advent], received glorified outer bodies in which their still-to-be-glorified souls will dwell.

- When the kingdom is taken from the Adversary and given to the Son of Man halfway through the seven endtime years (on doubled day 1260), those individuals who today and through the Affliction have no inheritance from God or with God the Father will then be filled with spirit as greater Christendom was filled with spirit at the Second Passover ...

This third part of humanity will then be to greater Christendom as the children of Israel were to the nation of Israel that left Egypt following the first Passover. And this third part of humanity will constitute the great number who will be saved through enduring to the end, the endtime gospel delivered by the two witnesses. Of this third part of humanity, few will, after being filled with spirit, commit blasphemy against the spirit through unbelief; i.e., not believing God.

Inwardly, the Elect differs from greater Christianity in that the Elect have already been inwardly raised from death through being foreknown, predestined, called, justified, and glorified while they continue to dwell in mortal fleshly bodies, meaning that the Elect are not a physical people but are an assembly of souls [*psychas*] that form the Church Jesus would build. And the Elect are to John the Elder as Andrew (Simon Peter's brother) was to John the Baptist, meaning that at some point in the Affliction [the first 1260 days of the seven endtime years], the Elect will have to leave John the Elder and follow the glorified Jesus as He works through the two witnesses. At this point, the importance of the inscribed Bible will recede and the importance of day by day words that the two witnesses speak will ascend. For the two witnesses will speak the words of Christ Jesus while doing the spiritual work for which Moses and Aaron serve as models: they will bring death and destruction upon those Christians who would be as Korah and his friends were.

For *Philadelphia's* purposes, John the Elder is the Apostle John as Bishop Papias (taught by John the Elder) seems to imply in those passages of his writings preserved by Eusebius. And John the Elder makes a distinction between the fleshly body of a disciple [e.g., Gaius, for whose health John prayed] and the soul [*psuche*] of the disciple, whose health is determined by whether the disciple walks in the truth. About Gaius, John wrote, *indeed you are walking in the truth*, suggesting that Gaius' soul was in good health.

In making a distinction between the inner self, the soul [*psuche*], and the visible, physical outer self of Gaius, for which John prayed, John the Elder introduced the concept that the soul [the living inner self] could be weak or sick, as represented in not walking in truth ...

The health of Gaius' soul was connected to "walking in truth"—with *works*, that word that petrifies greater Christendom, necessarily occurring in *walking*, for *<walk>* forms a euphemistic expression for how Gaius lived his life day by day, regardless of what his physical health was. And in living life day by day, a person *walks* through time and space.

Not any walk disclosed that Gaius' soul was in good health: only one walk disclosed good health, *walking in truth*.

The question should here develop in a person's mind: how would a Sabbatarian Christian walk in this world if weak or sick?

Would a Christian “walking in truth” succumb to the Sacred Names Heresy, a teaching in which salvation rests upon how Jesus’ name is physically pronounced? Is it not a spiritually weak Christian that would place importance on the modulation of air, which is the nature of utterance?

A person is near death when the person labors to inhale and to exhale. Is not a person fixated on his or her “breath” [*pneuma*] sensing that he or she is ill and near death? Does the healthy person not take breathing for granted? Will the healthy soul [*psuche*] spend energy thinking about the physical modulation of breath as shaped by the person’s tongue, or is it the weak and near death soul that becomes fixated by the breath of the person, that is on how words are uttered, pronounced? Will not the healthy soul take speaking for granted, knowing that when it comes to spiritual things, it isn’t uttered words that matter but the thoughts of the soul, thoughts too primal to be expressed even in silent words in the person’s mind?

The thoughts of the soul were euphemistically identified by the Apostle Paul as the *groaning of the spirit*, not a physical groaning or even a silent mental groaning, but the unuttered and unconscious thoughts that form <feelings> that cannot be well expressed in words. Hence, the Sabbatarian Christian who insists upon placing importance on so-called sacred utterance [same applies to the Christian who speaks in *tongues*] has a sick or dead soul. This Christian does not *walk in truth*.

The health of Gaius’ physical body was unrelated to the health of Gaius’s soul although a causal relationship can and often does exist; for there is no better way for God, Father or Son, to get a person’s attention than to afflict the physical body, as evidenced in God permitting the Adversary to attack Job, first in possessions outside of Job’s body, then in his most dear possession, his body. And make no mistake, a person’s physical body is the principle possession of the living inner self; for this body is the house in which the non-physical inner person dwells.

Job was, according to God, perfect in all of his ways ... Job was not perfect in all of his thoughts for he believed that there was a causal link between physical prosperity and righteousness, that only good things happened to good people and that evil things happened to evil people. Therefore, when the Adversary brought evil onto Job, this *perfect* man believed that God had brought these things upon him. Yet he did not sin with his mouth, but suffered greatly while believing that if he were to come before God, he would come as a prince.

The Adversary couldn’t break Job, nor teach Job what he needed to learn. Nor could Job’s friends teach him what he needed to learn. God had to speak directly to Job before Job understood the distance between man and God, a distance that cannot be crossed by astronauts or cosmonauts; a distance that can only be crossed by the resurrected non-physical soul that has the faith, belief of God great enough to walk through the fire separating the dimensions.

John prayed for Gaius’ physical health, not for the physical health of those persons in the region who were not walking in the truth. John did not pray for the health of spiritual Gentiles, either slaves of the Adversary or sons of the Adversary.

But how did John pray? We don’t know. The promise of Christ is the healing of the inner self of the person (the soul) from death, not the healing of the fleshly body, which

He can do and on occasion does do as He finds necessary for the predestined disciple to grow in grace and knowledge.

What we know is that Gaius was walking in truth as his outer manifestation of what he believed, thereby linking body and mind, his body manifesting in how he lived what he mentally believed. Hence, the health of his soul could be known by how he walked in this world, even if his physical body was on the verge of dying.

Apparently Gaius was in good spiritual health, but John was less sure of Gaius' physical health and was therefore praying for his fleshly body, which here introduces a concept that has been addressed in previous Sabbath Readings: are disciples born of God ever justified in manifesting hard hearts—uncaring, unloving acts—towards neighbors and brothers, family members, even when brothers or neighbors are knowingly taking advantage of the disciple? Can a disciple (and there was a case in Alaska that caused problems) put food away so as to not feed a mooching brother, or spiritual brother? Is a disciple ever justified in the thought, *this is my food and I'm not sharing it with you?* Inherent to “prepping” and “preppers” is the selfishness that says, *This is mine and I'm not sharing. I saw what was coming, and I prepared for doomsday, and you can't have what I set aside for me and my family to survive. There isn't enough for both of us.*

Over the decades of American prosperity that foodwise actually goes back to colonial America, citizens of this nation have not really had to worry about from where their next meal was coming. Certainly some have gone to bed hungry, with much of the nation hungry during the Great Depression, but there have really been no food shortages. There has always been a surplus of food even when the economic politics of the moment caused uneven distribution of the food that was available ... today, a person receiving Federal or State food assistance can purchase a hundred pound sack of potatoes for about twenty dollars, enough “food” to ensure the person of a full belly for the month. Of course a person will want more to eat than boiled potatoes, but the person will not starve if the person has nothing more than potatoes to eat day by day. The person will truly be uncomfortable in his or her poverty, but the person will survive, and most likely will be extremely motivated to take whatever job is offered to the person.

There are still some alive who lived through the Depression: ask them what it was like to have all the corn or cornmeal a person wanted to eat and nothing else but weeds. People survived; the nation survived. And that generation made sure their children would not have to live as they had-to, with the children of that generation walking on the moon. Today, well-fed Americans have to hitchhike rides to the space station on Russian rockets, while American lunar vehicles await being salvaged as museum pieces by a future generation.

Those who lived through the Depression did their children no favors by establishing social safety net programs that discourage work, even that of cooking.

In a doomsday scenario, perhaps there truly won't be enough food for everyone to eat and live another day. Perhaps the person who has foodstuffs, whether a delicacy or a staple, will truly believe that he or she has no obligation to share what little the person has with a derelict brother ... but what does that say about the health of the person's soul? It certainly says that the soul of the person is *dead*, without life, or is so sick that it

is as good as dead. For how much did the widow of Zarephath have when Elijah asked for a morsel of bread (1 Kings 17:11)?

Reality is how things actually are, exist, rather than how they appear or perhaps are imagined. And the reality for Americans of all ideologies is that enough food is thrown away every day to feed the nation ... there are a few of us who have actually eaten from dumpsters, with what was in the dumpsters being offered for sale three or four hours earlier. And on that note, *Philadelphians* should set aside whatever they reasonably can for the promise of Scripture is that real hunger will exist in the Affliction, the first 1260 days of the seven endtime years. Every *Philadelphian* will have the opportunity to feed hungry neighbors, even to where doing so taxes the limited resources of the *Philadelphian* as the widow's resources were tested day after long day.

A disciple might imagine that he or she is a pillar of spirituality, knowledgeable in the ways of God, walking in this world as Christ Jesus walked, but is such a perception the reality of the disciple's spiritual health, especially when the disciple hides food from others, not sharing a last morsel of a delicacy; especially when food is any kind of an issue. Or for that matter, money, shelter, clothing—anything a stranger might need for a journey.

To walk in the truth, the disciple must not merely intellectually know what the truth is, but must live it, thereby giving to <truth> a face and a personality. The disciple must become the manifestation of *truth*, doing things the disciple doesn't want to do out of love for the stranger, thereby causing the conflict in the person's soul—the conflict between the remaining carnality of the crucified self and the love of the indwelling Christ who died for the inner self while the person remained a sinner—to consume itself and become ashes under feet of the *new man*.

This piece has become long enough that the second section discussing *what is truth* will have to wait until next Sabbath's Reading.

For Americans, Thanksgiving will occur this upcoming week: of all peoples, Americans have the means to actually eat to excess and have leftovers for later. This is a blessing that no Sabbatarian should take for granted.

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