

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 "Paul's Gospel."

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Weekly Readings *For the Sabbath of November 28, 2015*

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.

Paul, an apostle—not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead—and all the brothers who are with me, To the churches of Galatia: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. (Gal 1:1–7)

1.

Paul revealed (stated by the hand of Tertius) what his gospel was in his treatise to the holy ones at Rome:

We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? Or do you presume on the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. *He will render to each one according to his works: to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, He will give eternal life; but for those who are self-*

seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. *For God shows no partiality. For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified.* For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus. (Rom 2:2–16 emphasis added)

Paul's gospel was a simple message that aligns exactly with what Matthew's Jesus declared to His disciples:

When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. Before Him will be gathered all the nations, and He will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And He will place the sheep on His right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me." Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?" And the King will answer them, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me."

Then He will say to those on His left, "Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me." Then they also will answer, saying, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?" Then He will answer them, saying, "Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. (Matt 25:31–46)

Matthew's "Jesus" isn't the biological man that lived in the 1st-Century CE, but is the indwelling "Christ" that, *while we were still sinners, died for us* (Rom 5:8), with disciples having no transmigration of souls, meaning that endtime disciples were not conceived and as such were not and could not be sinners in the 1st-Century CE; meaning

that Jesus “died” for endtime disciples outside of space-time, died for endtime disciples when He entered His creation as His unique Son (from John 3:16), thereby leaving timelessness (the supra-dimensional heavenly realm) and entering into space-time where no escape is possible without receipt of a second life, a second breath of life—without receipt of “life” that lives outside of space-time, this life being of God the Father, thus causing the person to be twice-born, with the person’s physical life (the breath of life that animates the person’s fleshly body) not able to ever exit space-time because of the physicality of the flesh.

Paul addressed the above when he wrote, “I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable” (1 Cor 15:50).

Paul didn’t know anything about the Higgs boson or the *Standard Model* of particle physics, but he knew that flesh and blood couldn’t inherit heaven, his word for what’s behind the Big Bang (what’s on the other side of the four known forces and matter), and as we endtime human persons have had to rewrite astrophysics texts in the past twenty years and still do not know all we should about the conservation of knowledge on the event horizons of black holes, Paul didn’t know all he should have known about spiritual birth and receiving a second breath of life. But Paul knew enough to lay the foundation of spiritual knowledge upon which *Philadelphia* builds a narrative about twice-born disciples.

Paul’s Gospel—the good news that he delivered to the assemblies in Galatia—held that all persons will be judged by what the person has done in this world and during the person’s physical life. And Paul’s Gospel radically changed Israel’s position in this world, and should have changed how Israel thought of itself in relationship to other peoples and nations. For under Paul’s Gospel, Israel as a people were special for Israel served as the model-for (the shadow and type of) how endtime disciples, when liberated from sin and death, will behave both toward God and toward the Adversary, with these endtime disciples being themselves the shadow and type of angelic servants ...

Human persons have been sculpted in the image of servants, with Paul writing about Christ Jesus:

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
(Phil 2:5–8)

Disciples as sons of God outwardly appear as servants; appear as Jesus appeared. Inwardly, the living soul [*psuche*] appears as God appears, but cannot be seen by human eyes nor detected by instruments intended to measure what physically exists. Thus, there can be no physical evidence informing humanity about the presence or absence of a living soul inside a person. Humanity has to accept or reject the existence of living souls on faith, which isn’t true for those persons truly born of spirit ... the twice born person fights the same battle that Paul fought between the Law of God in his mind causing him to desire to keep the Commandments and the law of sin and death in his fleshly members that wouldn’t/couldn’t keep the Commandments—

Until the Second Passover liberation of a second Israel, the war between mind and flesh being fought inside twice-born disciples will continue inside the disciple, but following the Second Passover, the war will be won inside the disciple and will move outside the disciple where the Adversary erects new breastworks and redoubles his efforts to defeat potential sons of God ... he has already lost his war against the Elect, the figurative oil and wine [processed fruits of the Promised Land] that Sin, the third horseman, cannot harm (Rev 6:6). So, really, all the Adversary can do with the Elect is cause them to be martyred as Jesus was martyred, thereby permitting them to escape the severity of life on earth during the Affliction, the first 1260 days following the Second Passover.

But the Father has work for the Elect to do; hence, Matthew's Jesus declares,
For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved [alive]. But for the sake of the Elect those days will be cut short. (Matt 24:21–22)

If the Father didn't have work for the Elect to do, He would not need to intervene on their behalf to cut time short; to shorten the Adversary's dominion over the single kingdom of this world. He would permit all life to be destroyed, likely in a nuclear exchange thereby making the planet uninhabitable for millennia when the Father only intends the planet to receive its Land Sabbath before the coming of new heavens and a new earth. He doesn't intend for the planet to be blown into another asteroid belt, or to have its atmosphere stripped away as Mars has had. He intends to continue the ongoing demonstration, with life in the Millennium serving as the control, the baseline for life as lived in heaven before iniquity was discovered in an anointed cherub, with the Adversary being loosed from his chains after the Thousand Years serving as the example for iniquity being found in this cherub, with fire coming from the belly of this cherub being a one-time event that has already happened in the heavenly realm but not inside of space-time.

Endtime disciples need to be able to separate the physical from the spiritual, and Sabbatarian disciples with Worldwide Church of God backgrounds have an extremely difficult time grasping what is physical and what is truly spiritual, arguably because by their own admission, they are not born of spirit.

The 1st-Century Jesus Movement examined and mostly rejected Paul's Gospel: when a proselyte was baptized as a rite for inclusion within "Israel," the proselyte was raised from the watery grave still the same gender as when dunked. A male was still a male, a woman was still a woman. A free man was still free. A slave was still a slave ... this is the evidence that everyone could see. Submersion in water didn't cause changed genders; didn't make the proselyte like angels, with Matthew's Jesus saying, "In the resurrection they [the dead] neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven" (Matt 22:30). So "death" seemingly stood [stands] between the proselyte and spiritual birth, the argument Herbert Armstrong made in the 20th-Century and the argument made in the 1st-Century by the Circumcision Faction.

Paul's Gospel ran counter to the above reasoning when it came to spiritual birth; for in Paul's Gospel as expressed in his treatise to the holy ones at Rome, disciples were born of spirit when they received the Holy Spirit, not when resurrected after death; for

receipt of the Holy Spirit was actual resurrection of the inner self from death [the state of being without life]. Hence Paul said,

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His. (Rom 6:1–5)

Baptism for the Christian represents real death, but “death” without the fleshly body dying—and without the lifeless inner self [*psuche*] twice dying. Thus, while submerged when baptized, the physical body imitates the lifeless inner self and achieves parity with it (a state of oneness); so that when the physical body is raised from its watery grave, the physical body (having achieved oneness with the inner self) again breathes the breath of life that was breathed into the nostrils of the first Adam as the inner self “breathes” the breath of God [*pneuma Theou*] that entered into the last Adam (see Mark 1:10).

Where Christendom has failed is in understanding that it, like Israel, are not all of Christ Jesus. And again returning to Paul treatise to the Romans, we find Paul saying,

I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit—that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh. They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen. But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named." This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring. (Rom 9:1–8)

Not all who have descended from Israel belong to Israel—not all who profess that Jesus is Lord belong to Christ, a reality with which Paul would have struggled just as Israel in Judea struggled with Paul’s Gospel in the 1st-Century.

In his treatise to the Romans, Paul goes on to say,

For this is what the promise said: "About this time next year I will return, and Sarah shall have a son." And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God’s purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls—she was told, "The older will serve the younger." As it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God’s part? By no means! For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have

compassion." So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. (Rom 9:9–16)

What did Esau do while still in the womb that would have caused the God of Abraham to disrespect [hate] him? He would have been innocent of any wrongdoing. But he would have been hairy, and he would have reminded the Lord of the hide and hair coats given to Adam and Eve before these two were driven from the Garden of Eden. He would have appeared as a "wild man," a Sasquatch, a man of the fields. And he would have represented in his person the reality of human unbelief of God.

What about Christians and greater Christendom? Are there Christians analogous to Esau, wild "Christians" of the sort Mark Twain caged with more tranquil Christians? Perhaps not. But there are far more Christian unbelievers than believers, with these unbelieving Christians being analogous to Esau who was rejected before birth [these Christians being rejected before being born of spirit]. And why are they, will they be rejected before being born of spirit? Because when they had no one looking over their shoulder, they were as Galatians were: they rejected Paul's Gospel, and accepted as valid a gospel based on Scripture, not upon revelation.

The preceding declaration needs clarified: the Circumcision Faction had Scripture on its side when disputing with Paul and his followers. Consider what Moses wrote:

And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the statute of the Passover: no foreigner shall eat of it, but every slave that is bought for money may eat of it after you have circumcised him. No foreigner or hired worker may eat of it. It shall be eaten in one house; you shall not take any of the flesh outside the house, and you shall not break any of its bones. All the congregation of Israel shall keep it. If a stranger shall sojourn with you and would keep the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised. Then he may come near and keep it; he shall be as a native of the land. But *no uncircumcised person shall eat of it*. There shall be one law for the native and for the stranger who sojourns among you." All the people of Israel did just as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron. And on that very day the LORD brought the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts. (Ex 12:43–51 emphasis added)

Consider also what the prophet Ezekiel writes pertaining to Israel in the Millennium:

And say to the rebellious house, to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: O house of Israel, enough of all your abominations, in admitting foreigners, *uncircumcised in heart and flesh*, to be in my sanctuary, profaning my temple, when you offer to me my food, the fat and the blood. You have broken my covenant, in addition to all your abominations. And you have not kept charge of my holy things, but you have set others to keep my charge for you in my sanctuary. Thus says the Lord GOD: *No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, of all the foreigners who are among the people of Israel, shall enter my sanctuary*. (Ezek 44:6–9 emphasis added)

If from Moses to Calvary no outwardly uncircumcised [in the flesh] person could eat the Passover, and if from the coming of the Messiah onward, no uncircumcised person in the heart and in the flesh can enter the sanctuary, it is reasonable for 1st-Century

Christians to assume that they needed to be outwardly circumcised to come before God. But what these early Christians failed to understand is the relationship between circumcision and the temple ... when only the physical temple stood, the person needed to be circumcised in the flesh to enter the temple. When the temple stands after the coming of the Messiah, a person needs to be circumcised inwardly and outwardly (of heart and in the flesh). Thus, there is a gap between Moses and the coming of the Messiah, and in this gap disciples form the temple of God (1 Cor 3:16–17; 2 Cor 6:16) and form a spiritual temple in heavenly Jerusalem. And to enter this spiritual temple, the disciple needs to be circumcised of heart. Outward circumcision is no help, no entrance *key*. Thus, if an endtime disciple rejects Paul's Gospel, the disciple necessarily rejects spiritual birth and is spiritually as Esau was physically.

The above is correct: the Christian who for whatever reason rejects Paul's Gospel is accursed, doubly accursed (condemned to death and the second death). And this subject will be revisited in a further Reading.

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