

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 the way to God is open to all, but only if called by the Father now.

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

## Weekly Readings *For the Sabbath of November 29, 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.*

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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)

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In Greek, unlike in English, truth is the negation of what has been concealed: the concept of *truth* differs from English for in Greek, the base concept isn't discovery of what is *true*, but the revealing or unveiling of what has been concealed. Thus, the underlying assumption in Greek is that knowledge—especially what can be known about God—has been hidden from men. The Christian who walks in *truth* undertakes the humanly Herculean task of sifting through the rubble of history to find what has been hidden; for according to the Apostle Paul, all of humanity at one time had knowledge of God ...

So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome. For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith." For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For His invisible attributes, namely, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the

world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For *although they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks to Him*, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. (Rom 1:15–23 emphasis added)

The underlying assumption that supports Christian ministry is that since Calvary, God is trying to save humanity. But this assumption isn't today true; for if God were really trying to save humankind in this present age, in an era when humanity knew God but refused to honor Him as God or to give thanks to Him, God [Father and Son] has consigned humankind to disobedience and to being sons of disobedience.

Did not the God of Abraham divorce Israel because of this nation's lawlessness? Read Ezekiel chapter 23, followed by chapter 16 (reverse the order in which they appear in the prophecies of Ezekiel). These two chapters are too long to here incorporate into the text of this Sabbath Reading ... the totality of the chapters address how Israel—Samaria and Jerusalem after Israel divided itself into a northern and southern kingdom—never left the idolatry of Egypt; never collectively worshiped the Lord with a pure and undefiled heart. So the period when men knew God predates Israel journeying to Egypt; predates the patriarch Abraham who was told that the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet complete (Gen 15:16); predates Job, who believed that God had brought evil upon him, thereby disclosing his lack of knowledge about God despite being perfect in all of his ways.

It is this concept above most that is misunderstood by Christians, laity and priesthood. Can a Christian be like Job, perfect in the person's way but without knowledge of God? Yes, the Christian can. Likewise, so too can a Muslim or a Hindi or a Buddhist. For Paul wrote,

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 2:11–16 emphasis added)

The Christian who claims not to be under the Law will, if he or she breaks the Law and thus becomes a sinner, perish without the Law because of having broken the Law, thereby not being a doer of the Law who will be justified by having done what the Law requires. ... The great misunderstanding that exists within Evangelical Christendom is that "*Christians*" are saved whereas all others are lost. But this is not what Paul declared in his gospel [message of *good news*]. Paul would not have the Christian who claims not to be under the Law and thereby transgresses the Law saved; for according to Paul, sin is unbelief or disbelief of God, with *<pisteos>* translated into English as *<faith>* being *belief* [of God] *manifested in deeds*. Thus, when Paul wrote, "For whatever does not proceed from faith [*pisteos*] is sin" (Rom 14:23), Paul effectively moved "sin" from being the manifested transgression of the Law (as in murder or adultery) as expressed in 1 John 3:4 to being the unbelief of God that would permit a person to commit murder or

to commit adultery. Paul moved the Law from regulating hands and body to regulating heart and mind, and in this, what Paul wrote in his treatise to the holy ones at Rome agrees with what Matthew's *Jesus* said in His Sermon on the Mount (see Matt 5:21–22, 27–28).

When a Christian assumes that he or she understands what scripturally <*faith*> is, or what <*truth*> is, the Christian understands nothing until he or she goes to the Greek text and wrestles with it as Jacob wrestled all night with the Lord. And Christians will take from wrestling with Scripture a permanent limp that doesn't permit the Christian to walk in this world as the Christian previously had; for to "believe" God, the Christian will become a Sabbatarian ... the greatest manifestation of Christian unbelief is imbedded in the day on which the Christian comes before God to formally worship Him. And for a Christian as an adult to begin keeping the Sabbath, the Christian will find most doors in this world's economic system are now closed to the Christian.

If a Sabbatarian Christian financially prospers in this world in which the Adversary remains as its prince, the Sabbatarian should be concerned about the health of the Sabbatarian's soul; for *in walking in truth* as Gaius walked, the Christian's walk will be out of sync with the remainder of the world. The Christian will be as a cadet in a marching formation who cannot count time and is therefore out of step with other cadets.

The above is not to say that a Sabbatarian Christian cannot prosper in this world, but is to say that a Sabbatarian Christian who walks in truth and does prosper is as rare as a genuine prophet of God who proclaims good news ...

In that same year, at the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fifth month of the fourth year, Hananiah the son of Azzur, the prophet from Gibeon, spoke to me in the house of [YHWH], in the presence of the priests and all the people, saying, "Thus says [YHWH] of hosts, the God of Israel: I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon. Within two years I will bring back to this place all the vessels of [YHWH]'s house, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place and carried to Babylon. I will also bring back to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and all the exiles from Judah who went to Babylon, declares [YHWH], for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon." Then the prophet Jeremiah spoke to Hananiah the prophet in the presence of the priests and all the people who were standing in the house of [YHWH], and the prophet Jeremiah said, "Amen! May [YHWH] do so; may [YHWH] make the words that you have prophesied come true, and bring back to this place from Babylon the vessels of the house of [YHWH], and all the exiles. *Yet hear now this word that I speak in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people. The prophets who preceded you and me from ancient times prophesied war, famine, and pestilence against many countries and great kingdoms. As for the prophet who prophesies peace, when the word of that prophet comes to pass, then it will be known that [YHWH] has truly sent the prophet.*" (Jer 28:1–9 emphasis added)

As a test of what Jeremiah declared to Hananiah and to the priests and people present in the temple, that prophets of God only spoke of calamities as warnings to cause Israel to repent, that only when the words of a person proclaiming future good news came true was the person to be accepted as a prophet, what sort of message did Christ Jesus proclaim?

And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against

kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are but the beginning of the birth pains. Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. But *the one who endures to the end will be saved*. And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let the one who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house, and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath. 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. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. (Matt 24:6–22 emphasis added)

The only good news in a laundry list of calamity that extends to no human being surviving if not for the presence of the Elect within greater humanity is the endtime gospel that is to be declared to all nations as a witness to all men: *the one who endures to the end shall be saved*. Why? Because all flesh will have been baptized in the spirit of God (Joel 2:28) when dominion over the single kingdom of this world is taken from the Adversary and given to the Son of Man halfway through seven endtime years of tribulation (see Dan 7:9–14; Rev 11:15–18; 12:7–12), these seven years declared by John the Revelator when he wrote about his vision, saying he was brother and partner of endtime disciples in the Affliction and Kingdom and Endurance in Jesus (Rev 1:9).

In the Affliction, the Adversary will remain the prince of this world, which has been dealt a below-the-belt blow when all uncovered firstborns suddenly perish—including the great king of the demonic King of Greece, a federation of demonic kings that represents the belly and loins of the humanoid image Nebuchadnezzar saw in vision (Dan chap 2). On one day, approximately 2.4 billion human persons will perish in the Second Passover liberation of Israel, the nation to be circumcised of heart.

The great king of the King of Greece would appear as an erect penis on Nebuchadnezzar's humanoid image, and he would be broken because he was “first,” apparently the firstborn [first convert] of the Adversary.

What happened to beasts and men in Egypt in the days of Moses and Aaron (Ex 12:29) will happen to men and angels in the days of the two witnesses, who will not be publicly identifiable human persons until God cuts through the chaos of Christian chatter to disclose who speaks for Him by bringing about the Second Passover liberation of Israel from indwelling sin and death. Until then, declaration of the endtime gospel that all who endure to the end shall be saved will be about as well received within greater Christendom as Jeremiah declaring that seventy years would pass before any of Judah exiled to Babylon would return (cf. Jer 25:11; Dan 9:2; Ezra 1:1), these seventy years being from 609 BCE to 539 BCE, not 586 BCE to 516 BCE, a different seventy year period according to Daniel.

In uncovering what has been concealed, Daniel believed that the seventy years prophesied by Jeremiah ended with Cyrus, who commanded that a temple for the God

of heaven who is in Jerusalem (Ezra 1:2–3) be built [rebuilt] in Jerusalem. For Ezra and for Daniel, it wasn't the completion and dedication of the second temple that was the *seventy-year* milestone, but the beginning of construction. Yet for the vast majority of Christian prophecy pundits, it is the completion of the temple in 516 BCE that has significance in relationship to Daniel's seventy-weeks prophecy ... did the glory of God return to the second temple at any time during its construction or after its completion? No, the glory didn't return—until the man Jesus, having been born of spirit through the indwelling of the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*], cleansed the temple in the first year of His ministry as described in John's Gospel.

Scholars usually believe that Jesus only cleansed the temple one time, at Passover in the last year of His earthly ministry; that driving out livestock and overturning the tables of moneychangers was the act that necessitated temple officials condemning Him to death. They contend that the author of John's Gospel got it wrong about when Jesus cleansed the temple. But these same scholars have so little spiritual understanding that they believe the Synoptic Gospels have Jesus taking the Passover on a different night [the following night] than John's Gospel has Jesus eating the Passover, not realizing that Sadducees and Pharisees differed as to when the Wave Sheaf Offering should be presented but also differed about when the Passover lamb was to be killed, roasted, and eaten, with Pharisees being the historic winners in their dispute with Sadducees over how to read Moses.

Jesus ate the Passover on the dark portion of the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month [*Aviv*], which in endtime Christian reckoning would be the evening of the 13<sup>th</sup> day of the first month according to second temple officials: Tuesday night, April 24 [Julian], 31 CE.

On rabbinical Judaism's calculated calendar, this would have been the dark portion of the 14<sup>th</sup> day of *Iyyar* 3791 ... use of rabbinical Judaism's calendar blinds Christians, thereby concealing from them the reality that Jesus was truly in the heart of the earth three days and three nights, 72-hours, these three days being the high Sabbath of the 15<sup>th</sup> day of *Aviv*, a Thursday; the 16<sup>th</sup> day, a Friday; the 17<sup>th</sup> day, the weekly Sabbath; and He was gone from the grave during the dark portion of the 18<sup>th</sup> day of *Aviv*, the day after the Sabbath [τη μια των Σαββατων], said how the first day of the week is called in the Gospels, which for 1<sup>st</sup>-Century Christians had the days of the week referenced from the Sabbath (the number of days before or the number of days following the Sabbath).

There was a spiritual reason why John the Baptist preached in the wilderness. There was also a practical, physical reason: John was not a Pharisee ...

The Qumran community was where they were because they, also, were not Pharisees. While debate exists as to whether this community were Essenes, the rules of the community, its stress of the priesthood and the Zadokite tradition as well as drafts of a letter written to the high priest in Jerusalem suggest the community was Sadducean ... 1<sup>st</sup>-Century Nazarenes [Christians] should be considered a Sadducean-oriented sect of Judaism that placed emphasis on the inner self, the soul, and not on the outer self, the person's fleshly body.

In Jesus coming to John to be baptized, and in Jesus taking that Passover in the manner of the Sadducees before changing the symbol of the Passover from a sacrificed bleating lamb to Himself, His body and His blood, circumstantial evidence suggests that John the Baptist more closely adhered to how the Sadducees read Moses than how

Pharisees read Moses. And in John calling for Israel to repent and turn to the Lord, John didn't except Pharisees, who prided themselves for their *purity* of belief.

Was John a Sadducee? The author of Matthew's Gospel offers an answer:

Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him [John], and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. But *when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.* And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. (Matt 3:5–10 emphasis added)

John was the forerunner of all who will be saved through the indwelling of Christ Jesus, the reality of being spiritually born again or born from above. Again, John wasn't born of spirit. Nor was Noah, Job, Abraham, David, Daniel born of spirit. A person doesn't have to be born of spirit in this era to be saved. A person doesn't even have to be a Christian ... if a Muslim does what the Law requires without being under the Law—same for a Hindi or a Buddhist—the Muslim shall live through having shown that the works of the Law (love for God, neighbor, and brother) were written on his or her heart, or so Paul taught in his declaration of the gospel.

Consider now how far Paul is from Sacred Name Heretics, Christians who place importance on “correctly” enunciating a bastardized Hebrew pronunciation of Jesus' name. For Paul, salvation is dependent on faith [*pisteos*] only: does the person believe God and implement the person's belief in how the person lives his or her life? If yes, the person will be as Abraham was. If no, the person will be as King Saul was; as Korah and his friends were; as Pharaoh was.

Job did not have the Law; yet the deeds of Job that are recorded show that the works of the Law were written on Job's heart.

Abraham did not have the Law; yet the deeds of Abraham, especially in going after the four kings and recovering Lot and the possessions of Lot and of the five defeated kings, disclose that the works of the Law were written on Abraham's heart.

Noah did not have the Law; yet Noah is called a preacher of righteousness, blameless in his generation, evidence that the works of the Law were written on his heart ... in conjunction with the first section of this message [last Sabbath's Reading]: did Noah's neighbors come to him and ask to board the Ark? No, they did not. Would Noah have turned them away if they had come to him? That is a question that cannot be reliably answered, but probably not. So why didn't they come and ask? Because they didn't believe that a flood would occur. There were no rising creeks, no backup sewer systems or clouds in the sky. There would have been nothing to indicate what was about to happen, no nine previous plagues as occurred in Egypt before the sudden death of all uncovered firstborns. There were no warning signs other than Noah and his sons had been for some period of time diligently constructing a supersize vessel in their backyard.

No person comes to God without having the person's faith (belief of God) tested, then tested again [two journeys of faith, the first journey to Sabbath observance/the Promised Land, the second journey inside the Promised Land] ... Noah's belief of God was tested when he was told to construct the Ark. He passed this test as Abraham passed his first test when he left his father and journeyed from Haran down into the land of

Canaan, before continuing on to Egypt. Abraham was then told that his belief of God (concerning an heir) would be counted to him as righteousness. But despite having his belief of God counted as righteousness, he was again tested before his faith was made complete:

After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." (Gen 22:1–2)

Abraham passed this second testing, but not before the knife was poised to kill Isaac. Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. But the angel of [YHWH] called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for *now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.*" (Gen 22:10–12 emphasis added)

It was, therefore, necessary for Noah and his sons to board the animals and themselves on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the second month, and for Noah and his sons and their wives to wait a week [seven days] before the fountains of the deep erupted ... throughout these seven days, the faith and sanity of Noah was being tested. Was Noah being merely an old fool for having built the Ark? Had Noah been tricked by God? He had to wonder when four, five, six days passed with all of them in the Ark, but nothing happening outside. And certainly, if neighbors gathered outside the Ark, they gathered to mock Noah, not to clamor to get aboard. That would come the following day when the rain began.

Job's faith [belief of God] was tested; Noah's faith [belief of God] was tested. And what about Daniel's faith when he was about to be lowered into the lion's den? Yet Ezekiel writes,

And the word of [YHWH] came to me: "Son of man [Adam], when a land sins against me by acting faithlessly, and I stretch out my hand against it and break its supply of bread and send famine upon it, and cut off from it man and beast, even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver but their own lives by their righteousness, declares the Lord [YHWH]. (Ezek 14:12–14)

These three, plus Abraham, are named as being faithful, with Noah, Job, and Abraham not having the Law but nevertheless being counted as doers of the Law. And Daniel as a eunuch could not have entered the earthly temple if it had still stood—but the temple didn't stand, hence the way to God was open to all.

Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly place of holiness. For a tent was prepared, the first section, in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of the Presence. It is called the Holy Place. Behind the second curtain was a second section called the Most Holy Place, having the golden altar of incense and the Ark of the Covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron's staff that budded, and the tablets of the covenant. Above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the Mercy Seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. These preparations having thus been made, the priests go regularly into the first section, performing their ritual duties, but into the second only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the unintentional sins of the people. By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into

the holy places is not yet opened as long as the first section is still standing (which is symbolic for the present age). (Heb 9:1–9)

For as long as no earthly temple exists, the way to God is open to every person who through demonstrated love for God, neighbor, and brother shows God that the works of the Law are written on the person's heart and placed in the person's mind.

But even more can be said: Paul told the saints at Corinth that they were the temple of God (1 Cor 3:16–17; 2 Cor 6:16), as well as the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27). Therefore, as long as the Body of Christ as the temple of God lived spiritually, the way to God was routed only through Christ Jesus, the high priest of Israel who is the reality of Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God. For as long as the Body of Christ lived spiritually, access to God was only through Christ Jesus.

But if the Head of the Passover Lamb of God dies, the Body also has to die ... there was no Body of Christ until after the resurrected Jesus breathed on ten of His first disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld" (John 20:22–23).

The Body of Christ quit "growing" forty years after Calvary—

In John's Gospel, Jesus told the crowd that He had earlier fed,

Do not grumble among yourselves. No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the Prophets, "And they will all be taught by God." Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me—not that anyone has seen the Father except He who is from God; He has seen the Father. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh. (John 6:43–51)

How many can come to Christ Jesus and eat *bread that has come down from heaven*? Only those that the Father draws from this world. How many believe that the Father has to draw a person from this world before the person can come to Christ Jesus? Very few!

What does it mean to be drawn from this world by the Father? How can a person tell if he or she has been drawn from this world? ... This shall be the subject of next Sabbath's Reading.

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[ [Home](#) ] [ [Sabbath Readings](#) ]