

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 Hebrew style narration.

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

## Weekly Readings *For the Sabbath of December 14, 2013*

*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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Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle. And they were gathered at Socoh, which belongs to Judah, and encamped between Socoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim. And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered, and encamped in the Valley of Elah, and drew up in line of battle against the Philistines. And the Philistines stood on the mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on the mountain on the other side, with a valley between them. And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. He had a helmet of bronze on his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail, and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of bronze. And he had bronze armor on his legs, and a javelin of bronze slung between his shoulders. The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron. And his shield-bearer went before him. He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why have you come out to draw up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants. But if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us." And the Philistine said, "I defy the ranks of Israel this day. Give me a man, that we may fight together." When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid. ... And David rose early in the morning and left the sheep with a keeper and took the provisions and went, as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the encampment as the host was going out to the battle line, shouting the war cry. And Israel and the Philistines drew up for battle, army

against army. And David left the things in charge of the keeper of the baggage and ran to the ranks and went and greeted his brothers. As he talked with them, behold, the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, came up out of the ranks of the Philistines and spoke the same words as before. And David heard him. All the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were much afraid. And the men of Israel said, "Have you seen this man who has come up? Surely he has come up to defy Israel. And *the king will enrich the man who kills him with great riches and will give him his daughter and **make his father's house free in Israel.***" And David said to the men who stood by him, "What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" And the people answered him in the same way, "So shall it be done to the man who kills him." (1 Sam 17:1–11, 20–27 emphasis and double emphasis added)

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Before beginning to discuss David and Goliath, note the construction of the sentences as received in translation. Note how many begin with <and> ... in Hebrew style narration, thoughts expressed as independent clauses of approximate equal value are added together with coordinating (as opposed to subordinating) conjunctions to form long, paragraph-length sentences. These independent clauses function as soldiers in locked shield formations. They represent *parataxis* (as opposed to *syntaxis* or *hypotaxis*), a literary style that adds together equals as opposed to establishing a hierarchy among clauses, and they represent an approach to language usage that discloses the mental landscape of Hebraic language users, a mental topography that runs counter to lord/serf relationships, which is what causes the clause, *make his father's house free in Israel*, stand out as David, himself, stood out. Jesse, David's father, should have been a free man although one that had apparently been made poor by conflict with Philistines.

In New Testament texts composed in Greek, *parataxis* is seldom seen. It is not seen in Paul's epistles that scholars recognize as unquestionably being of Paul, but *parataxis* is seen in *deutero-Pauline* texts about which scholars have questions of whether Paul authored the epistles (*e.g.*, Ephesians and Colossians) —

But Paul didn't write his treatise to the holy ones at Rome: "I Tertius, who wrote this letter, greet you in the Lord" (Rom 16:22). Rather, Paul dictated this epistle, with Tertius, whose first language was apparently Greek, actually crafting Paul's treatise; so an endtime disciple would not expect to find *parataxis* in this epistle. And while 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians has Paul answering questions asked in a letter and addressing charges made in Corinth against him, 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians is a compilation of two or more epistles that Paul wrote to the holy ones at Corinth, with the latest of a series of letters having been placed at the first of 2<sup>nd</sup>-Corinthians, and with a portion from an earlier epistle (perhaps the second of a series of three) concluding 2<sup>nd</sup>-Corinthians ... the epistle has been tampered-with although not necessarily rewritten. But the act of editing a text, that is the act post-composition selecting what to include and what to exclude, inevitably produces a text

differing from the original composition—and the act of combining two texts, omitting portions of each and consciously subordinating portions of one to portions of the other produces a text that did not before exist even if all of the words retained had previously been written; for meaning is assigned to icons [linguistic or otherwise] by the context in which the icon is received, with the truly classic example being the Book of Acts, a Sophist novel placed in a context where readers would not expect to find a novel: Holy Writ. And because readers expect everything to be true [factual] in Holy Writ, readers unwittingly believe that three thousand were added to the Church on Pentecost [Feast of Weeks] (Acts 2:41) and five thousand after the beggar was healed (Acts 4:4), numbers that would have attracted attention in Jerusalem and as such, would have been acknowledged historically. Thus, *faithful believers*, accepting without questioning the veracity of Acts, would have the Jesus Movement in the backwaters of Judea posing a political threat to Rome itself within a couple of month of when Jesus was crucified. Surely such as large conversion of Jews to the sect of the Nazarenes so soon after Calvary would not have produced the context seen in Acts chapter 10, unless of course Saul of Tarsus was much more effective in dissuading converts to continue with the Nazarenes that would seem to be the case. Simply put, three thousand or five thousand or eight thousand converts to the Jesus Movement showing up at the temple to pray and worship daily in the weeks and months after Calvary would have frightened official Judaism and the fear of temple officials would have been conveyed to Roman administrators who would have written to Rome concerning the situation. No such correspondence occurred. Instead, nearly a century after Calvary, there are a couple of mentions in official Roman correspondence about a small Jesus movement in Judea—and these mentions occur after the Great Revolt and about the time of the second revolt that precedes by nearly two decades Bar Kokhba's revolt.

Returning to the merging of two or more Pauline epistles into 2<sup>nd</sup>-Corinthians: because the context differs, the same words that Paul wrote to the holy ones in Corinth after they received his first epistle have differing meanings from those that mid 1<sup>st</sup>-Century Corinthians would have assigned to these words, especially when Paul writes of going to the third heaven which as in the Aristotelian argument he made in chapters one and two of his epistle to the Galatians, is irrefutable “proof” for whatever point he seeks to establish through direct revelation. By *recomposing* Paul's epistle that followed 1<sup>st</sup>-Corinthians and placing his vision of going to the third heaven late in 2<sup>nd</sup>-Corinthians, Paul or whomever edited two or more of his epistles to the saints at Corinth mutes the argumentative premise that supported Paul not being inferior-to but actually superior to his so-called super apostles. And while Paul, himself, could have put the two or more letters together as a document that could be circulated beyond the saints at Corinth—not an unreasonable speculation if his rebuke of these saints in a second epistle was more personal but as strong as seen in 2<sup>nd</sup>-Corinthians 11:1–15—it is more likely that someone who collected and archived Paul's epistles actually put what this person deemed the most important portions of two or more letters into a single letter that would have treatise-like impact on saints everywhere.

Can I be certain that 2<sup>nd</sup>-Corinthians is created from two or more epistles? Yes, I can be; for what does Paul write and what is his tone in the opening chapters of 2<sup>nd</sup>-Corinthians? Paul wrote,

If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer. Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort. For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again. You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many. For our boast is this, the testimony of our conscience, that we behaved in the world with simplicity and godly sincerity, not by earthly wisdom but by the grace of God, and supremely so toward you. For we are not writing to you anything other than what you read and acknowledge and I hope you will fully acknowledge—just as you did partially acknowledge us—that on the day of our Lord Jesus you will boast of us as we will boast of you. Because I was sure of this, I wanted to come to you first, so that you might have a second experience of grace. (2 Cor 1:6–15)

When did the holy ones at Corinth partially acknowledge Paul and those with him? They had not partially acknowledge Paul when he wrote 1<sup>st</sup>-Corinthians. They questioned whether he was even of God (1 Cor chap 4), having judged him not trustworthy. So there must necessarily have been correspondence between Paul and the saints at Corinth in which the saints responded to 1<sup>st</sup>-Corinthians, correspondence which caused Paul to write what he did about super apostles (2 Cor chap 11). Paul's strong rebuke then produced a softening of the saints that caused correspondence to come to Paul in which these saints partially acknowledged Paul. Now, the beginning of 2<sup>nd</sup>-Corinthians is an appeal for full acknowledgement of Paul's ministry as the defining New Testament ministry of Christ Jesus ... the tone of 2<sup>nd</sup>-Corinthians chapters 10 through 12 differs from the tone of chapters 1 through 7 and even through chapter 9, chapters in which Paul is on friendly terms with the saints. That cannot be said about, especially, chapter 11.

If I tell a Roman Catholic that he or she worships a different Jesus from the Jesus of John's Gospel, from the Jesus I teach, from the Jesus that actually died at Calvary, I'm not telling the Roman Catholic that he or she worships falsely to make friends with the Catholic, but to try to awaken the Catholic and get this "Christian" to repent before the Second Passover liberation of Israel occurs and the person either perishes from being out of covenant with God or on day 220, rebels against God in the great Apostasy. I'm trying to save the person, not make friends with the person. So in friendly communication, I would say nothing about the Roman Catholic accepting another Jesus and having another spirit other than that which saints have who keep the Commandments and have the testimony of Jesus (Rev 12:17). If I spoke to the Roman Catholic about the good work Catholic charities do—and they do good works—I would not pick a fight with the Catholic by bringing up the fact that the *Jesus* Catholics worship

is of the Adversary; is a demon. Yet this is what Paul does in a not-very-gentle manner in 2<sup>nd</sup>-Corinthians chapter 11 ... again, if I tell you that you worship a false Jesus and have a false spirit, could I expect you to take up an offering for Christians who believe God as I do? Answer the question for yourself, but if 2<sup>nd</sup>-Corinthians began life as a unified text—an epistle written at one sitting—then Paul expected of the saints at Corinth what I would not expect from a Roman Catholic I just blasted for heresy.

Now, in a Sabbath reading that isn't going where I set out to go, let us return to the parataxis found in Paul's so-called *deutero-canonical* epistles: Paul, being educated as a Hebrew, most likely would have thought and spoke in sentences that were a long string of short independent clauses held together with coordinating conjunctions, clauses that could have been written as short-line verse if these independent clauses were ideologically subordinated into pairings of thought. The piling on or piling up of independent clauses is, again, characteristic of Hebraic prose; so the author of Ephesians and Colossians is most likely a Hebrew—and who as a Hebrew would be writing to Greek converts. Who might such a Hebrew be other than the Apostle Paul? It is extremely unlikely that a Greek would have thought to craft an epistle in Paul's name by composing a text in the style in which Paul would have spoken to Greek converts; for what can be deduced about Paul's speaking style from 2<sup>nd</sup>-Corinthians: "Indeed, I consider that I am not in the least inferior to these super-apostles. Even ***if I am unskilled in speaking***, I am not so in knowledge; indeed, in every way we have made this plain to you in all things" (2 Cor 11:5–6 double emphasis added).

Why would Paul acknowledge himself as being unskilled in speaking? Because he was not formally trained in Greek rhetoric, but would have spoken as a Hebrew rabbi spoke, a rabbi who had learned to use language by reading about the exploits of a young king David ... I learned to use the English language not in school, or even in graduate school, but as my mother used the language, with her correcting my grammar when I misspoke or misused the language as she understood what "proper English" was, with her mother having been a school teacher who had attended the University of Chicago. I actually learned why I spoke as I do from my German professor—Herr Mandl—when a freshman at Willamette University fall 1963; for the professor in explaining German grammar compared German to English, giving the basis for why English grammar is constructed as Mom taught me to speak. And by extension, I write as I speak, almost.

When teaching English Comp to university freshman, I usually tell students using inappropriate situational grammar that if they want to avoid having an instructor do to their children what I was doing to them in marking up their papers, they needed to speak situational-appropriate grammar to their children at all times. Concerning language usage, the mind has the tongue mimic what the ears hear which is also spiritually true ... if the minds of children hear the words of Jesus, these minds cause tongues to speak the words of Jesus. However, if the minds of children hear the words of Karl Marx, tongues speak the words of former Vice-President Gore, especially concerning global warming and the evils of Capitalism.

The young person who reads or has read to him or her the exploits of David inevitably wants a sling, which takes practice mastering but which when mastered is about as effective as a modern handgun in both range and killing force. David was not the underdog in his contest with an uncircumcised *dog*; for David had superior

weaponry. But it wasn't David's sling that secured him Goliath's head: it was his faith. And it is here where David's four unused stones represents the work that remains to be done:

Now Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spoke to the men. And Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, "Why have you come down? And *with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness?* I know your presumption and the evil of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle." And David said, "*What have I done now? Was it not but a word?*" And he turned away from him toward another, and spoke in the same way, and the people answered him again as before. When the words that David spoke were heard, they repeated them before Saul, and he sent for him. And David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him. Your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." And ***Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for you are but a youth, and he has been a man of war from his youth."*** But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep sheep for his father. And when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb from the flock, I went after him and struck him and delivered it out of his mouth. And if he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and struck him and killed him. Your servant has struck down both lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, for he has defied the armies of the living God." And David said, "[YHWH] who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and [YHWH] be with you!" Then Saul clothed David with his armor. He put a helmet of bronze on his head and clothed him with a coat of mail, and David strapped his sword over his armor. And he tried in vain to go, for he had not tested them. Then David said to Saul, "I cannot go with these, for I have not tested them." So David put them off. Then *he took his staff in his hand and chose five smooth stones from the brook and put them in his shepherd's pouch. His sling was in his hand, and he approached the Philistine.* (1 Sam 17:28-40 emphasis and double emphasis added)

A couple of things to note: the promise King Saul made to the soldier who battled Goliath included "making his father's house free in Israel" (1 Sam 17:25), implying that Israel was not a free nation since making for themselves a king, but an indentured nation, owing to the king obligations of enough significance that *freeing* the house of the father from these obligation was of great value.

The second thing is that Saul equates David's youth with Goliath having been a warrior since his youth; thus, David was as a second generation Goliath, setting about to be a warrior when still a youth. Thus, if Goliath had been a warrior when still a youth, David would also be a warrior from his youth, an awareness that removes David from early adolescence and moves David into being old enough to begin training as a warrior. But it is as David being a second generation Goliath where spiritual understanding begins; for natural Israel is to spiritual Israel as Philistines were to natural Israel. David,

now, forms the shadow and copy of a youthful champion of spiritual Israel as Goliath served as a shadow [the image of David existing in one less dimension] of David. And because this Sabbath reading has a mind of its own and needs to be restarted, I will again take up the subject of David and Goliath in the new year and quit this reading by saying that the glorified Christ Jesus is the youthful champion of spiritual Israel, and is to the Adversary as David was to Goliath. It will be Christ Jesus who fulfills David's role as king of Israel in the Millennium, not that David will not serve under Christ Jesus. And when Christ Jesus overcame the Adversary during His earthly ministry, He was as spiritually young as David was physically young when David slew Goliath—and that is something to consider until I can return to this subject.

Oh, the four stones David picked up but did not need to hurl to kill Goliath have the names of four demonic kings inscribed on them. These stone will be figuratively hurled at the four horsemen of the Apocalypse by spiritual youths in the Affliction, these youths being the two witnesses.

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*The person conducting the Sabbath service should close services with two hymns, or psalms, followed by a prayer asking God's dismissal.*

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