

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 twice-born Christian's hope .

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

Weekly Readings *For the Sabbath of December 19, 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.

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit [that] has been given to us. (Rom 5:1-5)

1.

A decade or more before the author of Second Peter produced a cascading list of one thing added to another thing (2 Pet 1:5-7), Paul produced a cascade that begins with suffering, something most Christians have experienced—and will again experience. For the promise to Christians isn't a lifetime of smooth sailing, but a lifetime of turmoil; a lifetime of being out of sync with the world; a lifetime of laboring because that is what's expected of every Christian. However, Paul tells the holy ones at Rome and tells us today that we [should] rejoice in our suffering, for suffering produces endurance, which in turn produces character, good character, not the character of quitters or deceivers or of cowards. And good character produces inner hope of life after death in a reality quitters and cowards can never enter.

But it is here on "hope" where Paul's cascade piles up on real rocks ... hope does not put us to shame, why? Because God's love has been placed in our hearts through the

indwelling of the Holy Spirit [*pneuma 'agion*], given to every disciple truly born of spirit through the indwelling of the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] in the spirit of the person [*to pneuma tou 'anthropou*], with the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*], the Holy Spirit [*pneuma 'agion*], having entered into the spirit of Christ in the bodily form of a dove entering into the man Jesus of Nazareth (Mark 1:10) when John raised Jesus from a watery grave in the River Jordan.

A long clause: hope really isn't "hope" when a person has been twice-born through receiving the spirit of God (the Holy Spirit) in the spirit of Christ that has penetrated the spirit of the person. Hope has become a reality, but a reality without substance in this world; a reality that has no physical presence in space-time; a reality that spiritually exists for the person with the courage to believe the changed nature or changed character of the person doesn't simply come from physical maturation or from greater knowledge and experience.

There usually is no outward difference in appearance between the once-born Christian and the twice-born Christian ... there may be some difference in that the tattooed once-born Christian will, when twice-born, cover up tattoos with clothing, thus choosing not to display body art for which the Christian is now ashamed. The once-born Christian who previously ignored Paul's admonition to dress in a chaste manner will, when twice-born, begin to cover more of the person's flesh with clothing, perhaps even becoming a person who wears "plain clothing." The once-born Christian who looked with lust at members of the opposite sex will, when twice-born, find that lust no longer exists; so the "feel" that others experience when the Christian's gaze sweeps across these others is no longer offensive. The once-born Christian who found sin lurking wherever the Christian looked will, when twice-born, actually be less troubled by sin for a real separation will exist between unbelief and belief, between transgression and transgressor, between the Adversary's reign over living creatures and Christ's reign over the twice-born Christian. When the once-born Christian is twice-born, the Christian will not feel an urge to protest against the abominations that occur either inside abortion clinics and in gay-rights parades; for "real separation" will, with being twice-born, exist between the Adversary and his minions and the Christian, separation that doesn't cause the Christian to condone murdering the most helpless in society [unborn children]; that doesn't condone sexual abominations that cause the perpetrators of these abominations to be worthy of the second death, but that causes the twice-born Christian to understand that nothing really can be done about these abominations until dominion over the single kingdom of this world is taken the Adversary and his minions halfway through seven endtime years of tribulation. Until then, the evildoer will continue in his or her evil ways, unchecked by God, as humanity slouches towards Gomorrah, an expression borrowed from Robert Bork. When humanity can get no farther from God, the spiritual midnight hour will be upon humanity, and the Second Passover liberation of a second Israel [greater Christendom] will occur. Until then, twice-born Christians learn patience as they watch abomination after abomination become social norms for Western Culture; for American culture.

The twice-born Christian's hope isn't that of receiving the Holy Spirit and spiritual birth—for the twice-born Christian will realize soon enough that he or she has already

been born of spirit—but that the Second Passover liberation of greater Christendom will happen sooner rather than later; that 2017 is a better year than the more probable 2024.

Hope leads to realizing God’s love has been with the twice-born from the beginning.

God’s love isn’t like the love one person has for another person; isn’t attraction based on appearance, on genetic codes [DNA], or even on character for through suffering God is able to produce the character He desires in the person predestined to be glorified. The basis for God’s love is not easily discovered, but it is discoverable. However, easy answers, easy reasoning, shallow logic precludes discovering the basis for God’s love of His sons ... human sons of God are loved by God because *they are of the Beloved*, and the interplay of dynamics between the timeless heavenly realm and the physicality of space-time again enters into the relationship between God and humanity. Without passage of time in heaven, the end of any physical matter is known in heaven from its beginning; for both the end and the beginning of a matter are simultaneously seen.

The dynamics of timelessness prevents God from seeing the end of a matter without simultaneously seeing the beginning; so the foreknown and predestined person is glorified when the person first enters this world, a reality that takes some getting “used-to.” This, however, is the basis for Paul declaring,

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, *even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will, to the praise of His glorious grace, with which He has blessed us in the Beloved.*
(Eph 1:3–6 emphasis added)

Again, the reason why God loves us doesn’t have much to do with us, but has everything to do with the Beloved, whom He loved before angels were created ... because no person is born of spirit without the indwelling of the spirit of Christ, no person in this present era has the Holy Spirit unless born of spirit through the indwelling of Christ Jesus. And until the Second Passover liberation of a second Israel, no person not born of spirit will have the Holy Spirit. This means that Paul’s cascade flowing from suffering doesn’t pertain to the Christian not today born of spirit, or to the Christian who will not be born of spirit tomorrow or on any day prior to the Second Passover liberation of a second Israel. So Paul’s audience isn’t all of greater Christendom, but is the Elect, those persons foreknown by God the Father and predestined to be gloried as fruit borne out of season.

The pattern formed by human marriage between one male and one female discloses the relationship between Christ Jesus and the inner self [soul or *psyche*] of a son of God, as well as the relationship between the inner self of the person and the outer self [fleshly body] ... as a husband enters his wife for the purpose of procreation, the spirit of Christ enters the spirit of the person [disciple] for the purpose of procreation; i.e., to bring forth a new living creature that did not previously exist. For with entrance of the spirit of Christ into the spirit of the person, a new life is conceived: the now living inner self [soul] of the disciple is this new creature that is as Jonah was inside the whale, this new creature being trapped inside a fleshly body that initially is unresponsive to what the new creature wants.

Yes, when the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] enters into the spirit of the person [*to pneuma tou 'anthropou*], a new creature is conceived inside the “house” of flesh where the former spirit of the person animated the fleshly body. This new creature is of its parents, the spirit of God in the spirit of Christ and the spirit of the person, but this new creature is not the previously existing spirit of the person that was a son of disobedience, consigned to disobedience. Rather, this new creature is a human son of God, having of itself no physical attributes; hence it is neither male nor female, Jew nor Greek. This new creature is born “free” to believe God; free to keep the Commandments; free in the matter Paul expressed:

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to spirit. (Rom 8:1–4)

Again, once the inner self of a disciple is born of spirit [the spirit of Christ in the spirit of the person], this living inner self enters into a relationship with the fleshly body that houses this new creature analogous to Jonah in the whale, the fleshly body being analogous to the whale in which Jonah received life ... the new creature—the now living inner self—in the person’s fleshly body is as a husband in his wife, the two becoming one flesh for a short while before being destined to part company and go their separate ways: a human life span from the perspective of God lasts no longer than a husband’s erection lasts, with the climax giving birth to many sons of God.

False Christian sentimentalities prevent frank discussion of basic human activities: a husband is “one” with his wife in a literal sense when they are engaged in sexual union. It is easy to say that a husband and his wife are “one” in their offspring, a position held by some denominations, but what about the childless couple? Are they not also “one flesh” even if no offspring is conceived due to no fault of either? They certainly are. So being “one flesh” comes about when the “head” of the husband dwells within this wife as Jonah, alive in the flesh, dwelt inside the whale until spewed forth.

The new creature conceived as a son of God when the spirit of Christ penetrated the spirit of the person is brought to life as Jonah was brought to life inside the whale. This new creature is, again, analogous to the head of the husband in his wife, remaining in his wife for a while before seemingly being spewed forth, with the death of fleshly bodies necessarily spewing these new creatures forth to do a work for God as Jonah did a work for the Lord in Nineveh.

As a husband and his wife are “one flesh” for a limited period of time, the new creature born of spirit inside a house of flesh remains in this house of flesh for a limited period, the remaining lifetime of the fleshly house. And this reality has ramifications that Christians have never explored; for if the spirit of God the Father is in the spirit of Christ as a husband is in His Beloved, then there will be a separation of spirits as a husband withdraws from his wife. With this separation of spirits, there will be no more human sons of God conceived; for the glory of God [the bright fire] will consume the

spirit of the person if the glory of God isn't contained in a "vessel" that has also come from heaven but that is compatible with human life, this vessel being the spirit of Christ.

The new creature conceived through the spirit of Christ (in which is the spirit of God) penetrating and entering into the spirit of the person has heavenly life that has come from God the Father, with the spirit of Christ being the vessel in which the glory of God is contained in the heavenly realm as the spooled human DNA molecule is held inside every cell of the human person's fleshly body. This analogy isn't perfect, but good enough for the moment ...

Unfortunately, many Christian scholars are unable to think metaphorically, or in analogies, but think only carnally ... these are intelligent Christians (really agnostics) who sincerely believe that Paul was without understanding when he wrote,

Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ. Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you. *But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God.* Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head [Christ], but every wife who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head [her husband], since it is the same as if her head were shaven. For if a wife will not cover her head, then she should cut her hair short. But since it is disgraceful for a wife to cut off her hair or shave her head, let her cover her head. For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man. For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. That is why a wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. (1 Cor 11:1–10 emphasis added)

What is the clause, *because of the angels*, doing in this passage about imitating Christ Jesus? Are angels really watching human sons of God? Apparently, they are.

If the clause wasn't important, Paul would not have written it for angels have no conscious memory of receiving life as human persons have no memory of receiving physical life—and has human sons of God having little or no memory of their spiritual birth; of their moment of spiritual conception. And as the human infant can have memories of traumatic incidents (usually, not conscious memories) when the person is a few months old, the human son of God can know in retrospect the day of his spiritual conception if "conception" was traumatic enough to actually change behavior. In other words, if the moment of spiritual conception came upon the person suddenly and dramatically as the spirit of God in the bodily form of a dove entering into the person, memory of conception would exist. There is at least one reader of this Sabbath message who had a similar moment of conception, having gone to bed the previous night having no interest in God or in religion, but waking in the morning with an overwhelming feeling that he must get right with God, and must do so immediately.

Apparently angels desire to know how they came into being, as well as understand what is really expected of them since iniquity was discovered in an anointed cherub and rebellion occurred that tore heaven apart. And in seeing the conception of new creatures

inside of fleshly human persons, angels see in type their own conception, with heaven being analogous to the human body, especially the earthly body of Christ Jesus.

The concept that needs to be retained from the preceding paragraphs is that heaven is to God as the fleshly body of a person is to the spirit of the person. In stretching this concept a reasonable amount, it can be said that God is to heaven as a husband is to his wife: God is the Head of “heaven” as a husband is the head of his wife. And this permits the creation and existence of a new heaven to replace the “heaven” torn asunder by the rebellion of the Adversary. And this permits God and heaven to be one spirit in a form of primal energy outside of scientific inquiry.

If heaven is a living entity as a woman is a physically living entity, then every cell inside a human body becomes analogous to living creatures [entities] in heaven, with cancerous cells becoming analogous to unbelieving angels. And in the physical, if cancer is left to grow unchecked, cancer kills its host ... if unbelief had been allowed to remain in heaven, unbelief would have killed heaven itself in ways similar to how cancer kills.

Paul would have known about abnormal fleshly growths without having the word <cancer> and without knowing much about how these growths metastasize. He uses leavening (as in yeast) to convey the concept of lethal metastasization, with Paul writing that a little leavening leavens the entire lump (1 Cor 5:6): a little unbelief cause unbelief to spread throughout all of the Christian’s thoughts, all of the Church, all of heaven itself. Therefore, disciples are to root-out unbelief wherever it is found. But the Adversary made this more difficult than it should be by contaminating Scripture with things that simply cannot be believed, such as taking Jesus up on a very tall mountain where the glory of all kingdoms could be seen ... how high is the mountain from which a person can see the other side of the earth; see around the curve of the sphere to see what is necessarily hidden from sight by the earth being round?

The Adversary took Jesus nowhere, but the words the author of Matthew’s Gospel placed in his Jesus’ mouth are absolutely the right words for the situation; so when the disciple encounters analogous situations, the disciple knows in advance what the indwelling Christ has to say to the disciple. The disciple doesn’t have to wonder, *What would Jesus do?* The disciple knows what Jesus would do.

Examining what Paul wrote from the perspective of having indwelling heavenly life as angels have indwelling heavenly life even when cast into space-time, those disciples who are of the Elect should be able to visualize what Paul writes about imitating Christ—a disciple does what the indwelling Jesus found in Matthew’s Gospel did ...

Paul commended the holy ones at Corinth for maintaining the traditions even as he delivered them to this assembly, meaning that Paul would have rebuked these holy ones if they hadn’t maintained the traditions delivered by Paul. And one tradition was that of wives covering their heads as a sign of submission to their husbands, a tradition modern women understand and reject with vigor; for women intuitively understand that wearing a fabric head covering is a symbol of submission to their husbands. They do not seem to widely understand, however, that long hair on a woman is a symbol of submission to God whereas long hair on a man is a symbol of male unbelief.

Paul used one tradition he delivered to the holy ones at Corinth in a way that hasn’t been well understood within greater Christendom:

Again, God is the Head of Christ Jesus as a husband is the head of his wife, for God the Father gave life to Christ Jesus when His spirit [His glory] descended upon the man Jesus of Nazareth and entered into [*eis*, from Mark 1:10] Jesus, thereby penetrating the glory of Jesus, causing His spirit [*pneuma Theou*] to be in the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] as a husband enters his wife through penetration. And again, the duration of the spirit of God being in the spirit of Christ is, from the perspective of heaven, analogous to how long a husband remains in his wife from a human perspective.

The orgasmic explosion of ejaculation for a human male equates to resurrection of sons of God for God the Father.

Christ Jesus is the Head of every born-of-spirit disciple again as a husband is the head of his wife, with the spirit of Christ in the spirit of the person bringing forth a new creature, a son of God born of spirit ... this new creature has heavenly life through the indwelling of the glory of Christ in the glory of the person in a manner similar to the fleshly body of the human person having life through the glory [“breath” that sustains the dark fire of cellular oxidation] of the first Adam, passed to the first Eve and then on to her descendants, said in a way that can be humanly understood.

The husband is now the “head” of his wife for she is humanly born without the ability to sexually penetrate another person for the purpose of procreation: the husband can penetrate his wife but she doesn’t have the biological ability to do the same—and it is here where homosexual intercourse separates a person from God. It is also here where Paul uses a received tradition to illustrate and symbolize the transforming change of being truly born of spirit.

A human son of God cannot give birth to other sons of God: only Christ Jesus can do that for eternal life is the gift of God “in” Christ Jesus (Rom 6:23). Therefore one human son of God is to another human person as a woman is to another woman: there is no “head” that can penetrate the spirit of another person other than the spirit of Christ. So every human son of God has the same Head, Christ. No son of God has any other Head—disciples cannot make more born-of-spirit disciples. Hence, Christian evangelism is inherently an exercise of futility. For unless God the Father draws a person from this world and delivers the person to Christ Jesus for Him to call, justify, and glorify, the person remains a son of disobedience regardless of whether the person wants to serve God or to make war against God. Therefore, every human son of God is, from a heavenly perspective, as a pre-puberty child is from a human perspective.

But the physical bodies [again, analogous to the whale that swallowed Jonah] of human sons of God are adult males or females, often married, and thereby having human life as a man [husband] or as a woman [wife].

For the purposes of procreation, a man and his wife have one “head,” that of the husband’s penis. But among spiritual sons of God, procreation cannot occur: every human son of God is an heir of God and as such cannot be compared to “worker honey bees” (sexually undeveloped females), but scripturally is compared to a chaste Bride (a sexually inactive female person) ... in relationship to the spirit of Christ, the spirit of the person is female [without actually having gender] regardless of whether the fleshly body of the person is male or female. But the spirit of the person, conceived as a new creature, in relationship to the fleshly body is “male” [again, without actually having gender], and the fleshly body is female, regardless of biological gender.

Circumcision of the sexual “head” of a man and his wife [one flesh] symbolizes making the man and his wife “naked” before God as Adam and Eve were naked in the Garden; symbolizes returning the persons to the Garden before unbelief caused the Lord to drive Adam and Eve from the Garden. Thus every circumcised person has the same chance to eat from the Tree of Life as Adam and Eve had ... circumcision symbolically removes the “natural” skin covering [skin coat] of the head that was given to Adam and Eve when the Lord drove them from the Garden (Gen 3:21–24).

Circumcision in the flesh does nothing, however, for the new creature born of spirit that is analogous to Jonah in the whale. This new creature, without biological gender, is not born consigned to disobedience but is born free to believe God as Adam was created free to believe God ... circumcision in the flesh does not really return this new creature to the Garden; so the euphemistic expression, “circumcision of the heart,” has no real physical counterpart other than no longer being stubborn:

And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good? Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it. Yet the LORD set his heart in love on your fathers and chose their offspring after them, you above all peoples, as you are this day. *Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn.* (Deut 10:12–16 emphasis added)

The uncircumcised heart is stubborn, unbelieving, resisting the will of God, refusing to obey God. Circumcision of the heart isn’t about anything physical, but about spiritually submitting to the Lord; about being to the Lord as an obedient wife is to her husband. And this is an unpopular subject in modernity, a subject that harkens back to earlier eras when men oppressed women because they could, and because the Tenth Commandment seems to support male dominance in marriage: “And you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife. And you shall not desire your neighbor’s house, his field, or his male servant, or his female servant, his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s” (Deut 5:21) ... the Commandment equates your neighbor’s wife to your neighbor’s house or fields, things owned by your neighbor.

Now, returning to Paul’s cascade: if suffering cascades to hope that does not put the believer to shame, then this hope is akin to the hope Christ Jesus had when He suffered at Calvary, hope challenged by the man Jesus crying out, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” (Matt 27:46), the quote from Psalms 22:1,

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?

Indented line is the spiritual portion of the couplet.

On the cross, Jesus apparently uttered the physical portion of the couplet as doubt temporarily overwhelmed Him ... in reality, Matthew’s Jesus is the indwelling Jesus in every disciple born of spirit, and it is this Jesus both at Calvary (Mark 15:34) and in every disciple that has His hope challenged by physical death. But hope prevails because Jesus didn’t utter the spiritual portion of the couplet, *Why are you, God, so far from saving me?*

Hope exists in the spiritual realm, not in the physical where the human body serves the living inner self of all sons of God as the woman serves her husband in marriage ... this is not license for spousal abuse or for even rule in any way other than how Christ rules over disciples individually and collectively. Any heavy handed rule either in marriage or in the Church is of the Adversary, not of Christ Jesus; for Christ rules with an extremely light touch, so light that agnostics do not know whether God, Father and Son, even exist.

In addressing suffering, Peter, in feeding lambs [infants in Christ], wrote,
Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing. For,

"Whoever desires to love life
and see good days,
let him keep his tongue from evil
and his lips from speaking deceit;
let him turn away from evil and do good;
let him seek peace and pursue it.
For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
and His ears are open to their prayer.

But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

[from Ps 34:12–16 *indented lines are spiritual portions of couplets*]

Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil. For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, in which He went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him. (1 Pet 3:8–22)

Missing from Peter's quotation from Psalm 34 is the spiritual portion of verse 16: *to cut off the memory of them from the earth ...* as in the case when Jesus quoted from Psalm 22:1, leaving off the spiritual portion of the couplet, Peter leaves off the spiritual

portion of the couplet that has as its physical portion, *the face of the Lord is against those who do evil*.

There is a difference between the physical and the spiritual in thought couplet poetics even when the two lines seem to say the same thing ...

The cascade from suffering to hope does not leave the sufferer with hope in this world, but with hope in the resurrection—in the living inner self receiving a body with glory unlike the glory of the flesh where aches and pains accumulate with the passage of time until suffering doesn't come from outside causes but comes from the breaking down of the fleshly body.

And we can return to what will seem to have been a non-sequitur, Paul telling the holy ones at Corinth that in imitating him as he imitates Christ Jesus, the head of the wife is her husband ... the head of the holy ones at Corinth was Paul, who told this fellowship to put the man who with his father's out of the fellowship:

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you. For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing. When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. (1 Cor 5:1–5)

But Paul was serving as a type of Christ, the Head of every disciple truly born of spirit ... because the holy ones at Corinth tolerated sin worthy of the man's death under the Law (see Lev 20:11), these holy ones revealed that they were not collectively born of spirit; thus they needed a schoolmaster that wasn't the Law but was Paul, who had the maturity to know right from wrong.

Israel under Moses had Moses as their schoolmaster, but "Moses" in the form of the Law. The holy ones at Corinth didn't have Moses as their schoolmaster—these holy ones were not under the Law, but they were under Paul even when he wasn't present, which is why Paul could command them to deliver the one who was with his father's wife to Satan for the destruction of the fleshly body [a slow death sentence as opposed to stoning under Moses, an immediate death sentence].

All of humanity was under the sentence of death from Adam to Moses (Rom 5:14), who entered into the presence of the Lord, and who gave to the children of Israel the choice of life or death while they stood on the plains of Moab to hear Moses speak the words of the "second law," the covenant made in addition (Deut 29:1) to the covenant made on Sinai [the second Sinai Covenant, Exodus 34].

The Christian born of spirit isn't the fleshly body of the person born of the water of the womb, but is the inner new creature conceived when the spirit of Christ [as the Head of every disciple] penetrated and entered into the spirit of the person that animated the fleshly body of the person, thereby placing the spirit of every disciple in the role of wife, subject to her Head, Christ. For the inner new creature that is a son of God is without biological gender, without biological ethnicity, without social status. Therefore, when a new creature is conceived inside the fleshly body of a biological woman, the outer self

[the fleshly body] will show that she is under the authority of Christ by employing the symbol of having longish hair (representing her “natural” uncircumcised state), and under the authority of her husband—not every man—by covering her hair with a “covering” usually made by her own hands.

When a new creature is conceived inside the fleshly body of a human male, the outer male self will use the symbol of having shortish hair to “show” circumcision of the heart, and no other covering of the head to show he understands that he is naked before God as Adam was naked when Adam was placed in the Garden.

The Christian woman is covered spiritually by her Head/head, be that *head* Christ Jesus or her biological husband. A man is covered spiritually by his Head, Christ Jesus. In this world, a man has no other covering but Christ and obedience to God. So what’s seen in Paul’s cascade from suffering to hope is movement from the physical, where suffering occurs, to the spiritual where hope is for the promise of resurrection from death through a second-birth. And more about this in another Sabbath Reading.

* * *

"Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved."