

The following Scripture passages are offered to aid beginning fellowships. The readings and commentary are offered as openings into dialogue about the subject or concept. And the concept behind this Sabbath's selection *remains "knowing God" that He won't accept a rebel.*

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Weekly Readings

For the Sabbath of November 5, 2005

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

The person conducting the services should read or assign to be read Ezekiel chapter 7.

Commentary: The message is to the land of Israel, and it is the announcement of an end, the announcement that the end has come upon the four corners of the earth because of God's anger. God will judge the land of Israel according to its ways, and will punish accordingly so that the land of Israel will know that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is Lord, indeed. And herein lies the difficulties ahead of the Christian Church, for God is the same today as He was yesterday and as He will be tomorrow. God exists in the timeless heavenly realm. He doesn't change, for the moment itself doesn't change. And He can no more allow rebellious sons into the heavenly realm than He can allow rebellious angels to remain.

The Lord commands Ezekiel to announce disasters, doom, a day of tumult, a day when He will pour His wrath over the land, sparing not, pitying not, but striking each person according to his or her ways. And few human beings will survive.

The reader should now read Isaiah chapter 24.

Commentary: Those intellectuals who worry about whether the earth will support its ever increasing global population really need fear for their salvation, physical and spiritual. And those Christians who, at this end of the age, sing for joy, who give glory to the Lord, who praise the Righteous One, but who transgress the commandments and teach others to do so—woe to them, for they are traitors, treacherous false disciples upon whom wrath and punishment will come.

Knowing the Lord is knowing that He will not allow into the heavenly realm any rebel. And a disciple who will not keep the commandments of God to the best of the disciple's ability actively rebels against the Lord, regardless of how much this disciple's mouth professes love for Father and Son.

The reader should now read Judges chapters 1, 2, & 3.

Commentary: The history of the Christian Church is foreshadowed by the history of circumcised Israel upon entering God's rest—the Church did not drive out alien theologies and philosophies. Rather, the Church, like the tribes of Israel, allowed foreign modes of worship to remain in the peoples converted to Christianity. In [typology](#) and typological exegesis, physical peoples represent spiritual inner-selves. Geography represents mental topography. The land Beyond the River represents God's rest (Ps 95:10-11). So to allow Canaanites or Amorites or any of the other peoples Israel was commanded to drive out and kill to remain in the Promised Land becomes analogous to the Christian Church adopting and figuratively christianizing pagan holidays, beliefs, practices.

The angel or spokesman of *YHWH* said to Israel that He had brought Israel up from Egypt and had brought the nation into the land he swore to give to their fathers. He said that he would not break covenant with the nation—and they Israel was to make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land (Judges 2:1-2). He had not brought Israel into Canaan earlier, for the fullness of the iniquity of the Canaanites and Amorites had not been then reached (Gen 15:16). But because the fullness of iniquity had come, Israel was to slay the native peoples, not accommodate them, nor enslave them. Israel was to tear down their altars—and Israel disobeyed God. Thus, these native peoples would be thorns in the side of Israel, and their gods would snare the holy nation (Judges 2:3). And so it has been with the Christian Church: accommodated and adopted theologies of the pagan peoples converted to the Cross has ensnared the Church, causing it to fall backwards and be taken by the prince of disobedience.

Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and of the elders that crossed the Jordan and outlived Joshua. But when another generation rose to prominence over the tribes, the people of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord: they went after the alien gods of the native peoples they had not slain. Likewise, when the Church was swollen with Greek converts, the Church swallowed whole Greek constructs of hell and heaven, and produced a hybrid dogma of human beings possessing immortal souls that must be regenerated by the Cross. And as the anger of the Lord was kindled against the natural nation of Israel for its abandonment of the Lord, the anger of the Lord caused the martyrdom of a generation of disciples.

The Church's adoption of pagan constructs has led to the formation of denominations—of schisms—in the Body of Christ to test who is genuine. Whereas the Body was to be one with the Father and the Son, the Body has been dismembered as if it were a lamb butchered by hirelings. Now, at the end of the age, the Church is as Israel was at the end of the book of Judges: "In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25). Every Christian does what is right in this son of God's eyes. One eats no meat; one eats clean meat; one eats swine. Another keeps no Sabbath day, but gives an hour to the Lord. Another keeps the weekly Sabbath, but not the

annual Sabbaths. Another keeps all seventy Sabbaths. Another keeps the eighth day as a day of rest. A third disciple keeps the commandments of God; his fellow disciple bundles himself in the mantle of Grace, and breaks every commandment. Yet all proclaim to the world that they are "Christians." It is little wonder why those human beings who have not yet been born from above want no part of such confusion and hypocrisy.

The reader should now read Ezekiel chapters 5 & 6.

Commentary: When Ezekiel lay bound on first his left side, then his right side in the fourth chapter, Ezekiel was bearing the iniquity of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, just as the Lord today bears the iniquity of the spiritually circumcised nation of Israel. But when the fullness of iniquity, or when the transgressors have reached their limits (Dan 8:23), the Lord will act against Israel as He acted against the Amorites when He sent Israel into the Promised Land. The natural nation of Israel was as hairs on the Lord's head; the spiritual nation is also as hairs on His head. And as the natural nation was figuratively shaved off, weighed in the balances, divided, with one part burned, one part struck with the sword, one part scattered, so too will the spiritual nation, once the fullness of iniquity is reached, be weighed and measured (Rev 11:1-2), then killed by fire, by war, and by being scattered and hunted down.

When the fullness of the nations comes to the Lord (Rom 11:25), bringing to the Lord the iniquities to which they are married as if their wrong-doings were foreign wives, judgment will again be entered into between God and Israel.

The Apostle Paul wrote the things that happened to the natural nation of Israel happened as examples for the Church (1 Cor 10:6, 11), so that disciples would not be idolaters as some of the natural nation were (v. 7). Disciples are not to test Christ, not to tempt Him; for His wrath is to be feared.

We should, indeed, note the kindness and severity of God (Rom 11:22). We are to continue in His kindness, or we, too, will be cut off—and continuing in His kindness is hearing the words of Jesus and believing the One who sent Him (John 5:24). Believing, though, isn't merely professing belief with our mouth, but actually putting into practice the commandments of God.

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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