

The Sabbath Sentinel

March/
April
2001

*“As the deer pants for the water brooks, ...
So my soul thirsts for You, O God.”—Psalm 42:1*

BSA — The Bible Sabbath Association
“The Sabbath was made for man....” — Jesus, the Christ

The Sabbath Sentinel

March—April 2001 Volume 53, No. 2 Issue 488

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EDITORIAL

THE END IS HERE!



Those who have been receiving *The Sabbath Sentinel* for several years know that I accepted the job as editor with the proviso that a more talented and suitable editor be sought. It was not because I could not do the job that I made that statement. My reason for such a statement was that I could only devote a small part of my time to this venture. An undertaking of the magnitude and value of *The Sabbath Sentinel* deserves a leader who can focus the time needed through the acquired literary skills attained during the formal educational process.

I believe that *The Sabbath Sentinel* can be a valuable tool for reaching across the organizational lines which have traditionally kept us from getting to know each other. When I study scripture, I actually find very few commandments that God wants us to understand and keep. The rest of scripture seems dedicated to telling us hard-headed sons and daughters how to properly apply those few rules.

It has been the application of the rest of the Bible that has created multiple God-obeying groups who differ only slightly in the application of the Word of God. Because of that (in my humble opinion) misapplication of the Word of God, we have brethren scattered around the world (and next door to us)—most of whom we do not know. We have brethren separated from each other by the most trivial of differences in doctrinal understanding.

The mission of seeking cooperation between these various groups is a high calling. It deserves somebody dedicated to that calling who can lead it full time. I have come to see that the somebody needed is not me.

At last, the search has resumed for an editor of *The Sabbath Sentinel*. My resignation as the editor is effective with this edition of the magazine. Besides the reason listed, there are personal issues that also force me to resign. As important as this work is, it is not as important as our God, His Son and my family.

I am not disappearing, however. The calling of God has taken me to a different ministry where I feel I can more effectively use the gifts God has given me. This is an encouraging new beginning for me. It is my fondest desire that all will pray that this beginning will allow me to effectively reach out to the abused children of God; that it will allow me to help ease the pain that exists amongst His Children.

It is not a sad time for me. However, it is a bitter-

sweet one. With God's blessing on this work, it will be a happy one for all of the readers and contributors.

I wish to extend my thanks and acknowledgment to those who have helped make my job more enjoyable and educational. First, to my good friend Doby. It was he, along with my darling wife, Susie, who insisted that I step up and take on the role several years ago. I resisted the idea at first but I have come to see that they were right and I was wrong. Doby has been responsible for the magnificent covers which have been created for *The Sabbath Sentinel*. Moreover, his editing skills have greatly enhanced the quality of the articles, about which so many have written praise.

June Narber Harrison, who is a board member of the Bible Sabbath Association, and the wife of the former editor of TSS, Lars Harrison, has also been extremely helpful in the editing process. Indeed, had it not been for the prompting of June, I would not have embarked on the road that led me to this ministry at TSS. June is a good friend and a valuable asset to the BSA.

Shirley Nickels, the wife of board member Rich Nickels, has put in long hours keeping the advertising straight when I couldn't. It has been Shirley who has made certain that I got the ads right, often in spite of myself! The many requests generated by the magazine have been provided for through the efforts of Shirley. To Shirley, I also give thanks for the assistance.

Also, I have received many letters of thanks and praise for the direction of TSS. It has been that encouragement that has inspired me. I have learned much from the brethren who cared enough to write—even when they did not agree with me. Those letters were often the source of inspiration for an article or direction taken with TSS.

Finally, many have sent articles for publication. Thanks are in order to those of you who cared enough to take the time to create and send them to me. Most of them have yet to be published. Everyone can be assured, however, that I have read them all. I will forward them to the new editor.

Thanks again for allowing me to serve you. Until the day we meet in His glorious Kingdom, I pray for a safe journey on the path to righteousness. Thy Kingdom Come!

Royce E. Mitchell Jr.

President's Message

"Cars Don't Grow From The Ground"

Ken Westby



It would have been more convenient for us had God arranged for timber to grow out of the ground in standard building dimensions. One could plant a field of 2x4 stud seed, another of 2x12 rafter timber, another to grow cedar shingles. Think of the middle men we could avoid and how simple building a house could be.

I suppose the Creator could have set things up that way since he is able to do anything, but the idea strikes me as strange and even stupid. We accept that God made trees, marvelous and beautiful living things that they are even in the raw, and that we can use them to fashion into lumber for houses, boats, furniture, carvings, paper, whatever use we can invent. It seems logical and normal for us in the order of things that we have been given an earth full of wonderful raw materials from which to fashion into useful things. We accept the fact that Cadillacs don't grow—despite the fact that a guy in west Texas planted a long row of them along a highway.

Great Yahweh didn't have the creation grow squared, already milled lumber, but he gave us trees. He also buried billions upon billions of tons of iron ore, coal, oil, and every mineral for which we could ever hope to devise a use. Cadillacs and Fords come out of the ground from God's buried treasure and after some intelligent fashioning, we drive to McDonald's to eat a cow and some wheat that have been fashioned into a burger.

The point is this: Raw creation needs fashioning to be made suitable for higher purposes—be they a computer, a Boeing 777, medicine, surgical instruments, a furnace, a water pump, a refrigerator—you name it. Bringing things from raw to finished is the enterprise of man.

God anticipated man would be virtually full-time engaged in fashioning his environment when he gave forth his blessing to **"be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it"** (Genesis 1:28).

But isn't mankind itself also part of the raw creation that needs to be fashioned for a higher purpose? Man- and womankind were not made just to rule the earthly elements. We have a surpassingly higher calling—one given in God's own voice as he was about to create us: To the

heavenly host he declared, **"Let us make man in our image, in our likeness...."**

Here is how it all works: Man rules and fashions the earth; God rules and fashions man. God, who is able to create the physical cosmos, is also able to create a spiritual man made in the Divine image. In fact, he has successfully been doing it for thousands of years, and I'm sure you are profoundly happy that he is now working on you.

God has devised the best possible method to fashion and mold man into his Divine character image. He has powerful means and effective tools to do this work. His holy Spirit can work mightily upon the human heart to convict, change, cleanse, lead and inspire. His sharp tools include his revealed law, Godly traditions that remind and bind the faithful to truth, and a calendar of Sabbaths to keep us ever mindful of our Maker.

The Sabbath is a tool to fashion man/woman into God's image? Consider this: In order to become like God one must know what God is like. This simple logic is supported throughout the Word of God. Knowing God is the key to becoming like God. Speaking of backslidden Israel, Yahweh declares, **"My people are fools; they do not know me"** (Jeremiah 4:22). How did a people which at its beginning had known God, witnessed his power, and received his blessings, later decay to such ignorance of God that they must be called "fools"?

For one thing, they rejected the very things that could keep them mindful of their Maker—the very tools that God could use to fashion them into a holy nation making of them a light to all nations of how great their God is. Once again, the Bible is clear on how a chosen people lost knowledge of God.

"They did not follow my decrees but rejected my laws—although the man who obeys them will live by them—and they utterly desecrated my Sabbaths. So I said I would pour out my wrath on them..." (Ezekiel 20:13).

God want to fashion us after himself. He invites us to come learn of him, to walk and to fellowship with him. One of his helpful tools is time. He said to his people,

“Keep my Sabbaths holy, that they may be a sign between us. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God” (Ezekiel 20:20).

The Sabbath isn't something we “keep” as a legalistic ritual having some innate, magic-like essence that rubs off on the “keepers.” As the nationally famous Rabbi Daniel Lapin puts it, “We don't keep the Sabbath, the Sabbath keeps us in relationship with God.”

Rather than an exercise in an ancient religious ritual, the Sabbath is a vibrant day that celebrates a current and living relationship between Maker and “makee.” As the Lord God himself explained it, “a sign between us.” It is a day that cycles every seven to remind us of who we are and why we are—created to be fashioned into the divine image.

If this relationship between God and man is sincerely established and maintained there is a natural outcome: ***“Then you will know I am the Lord your God.”*** If God can establish a corollary between (a) worshipping him on his Sabbaths and, (b) coming to know him, I think we can too. A goal of the BSA is to hold high the Sabbath as God's gift to assist all in drawing near to him.

Certainly, the Sabbath is not the sole portal to the knowledge of God, but it is God's preferred day to pause and worship him as Creator and Savior. It is one of the precision tools God uses to form and fashion us from raw carnal flesh into a spiritual son or daughter. It facilitates building a relationship—a weekly meeting specifically to learn of and worship our Maker.

God has enshrined in time a memorial of his creation and invites us to pause to consider the meaning of our being. When we forget or refuse to do that, it won't be long before we lose that special relationship and forget the God that made us.

We humans have been quite creative at using (and often abusing) the earth's living things and elements. We have also been given raw time to use or abuse. It just comes with the rising sun and it is ours to waste, or use for good purposes. God invites us to fashion our week with him as time's object and his day at week's pinnacle. Just as the six days of creation build to the climax of the seventh and crowning day when God makes it holy and begins a relationship with his first son and daughter, we can *make our week in his image*. We can make it the crown of the week and use it to draw near him.

Just as a raw diamond must be cleaned, polished,

and fashioned with facets to bring out its full, coruscating glory, we need similar work. Cars don't grow out of the ground, they're made by man from suitable raw material. Spiritual sons and daughters of God don't grow from church pews or anywhere else, they're hand made by God. Invite him now to use his best and eternal methods and tools to fashion you into his glorious image. He knows what he doing.

—Kenneth Westby

Kenneth Westby is a Vice President of the Bible Sabbath Association, the founder of the Association for Christian Development, PO Box 4748, Federal Way, WA 98063 and is editor of its publication, The New Millennium. He is also the weekly host to the Virtual Church, a one-hour live phone broadcast 11 AM (Pacific) every Sabbath at 918-222-7158.

Why the Seventh-day Sabbath?



This 12 page brochure provides clear insight into the reasons for keeping God's Seventh Day Sabbath! It also contains an area where your local congregation can stamp its address and phone number making it easy for potential brothers and sisters to contact you for more information. They are priced at only \$.20 each, but you can get them in packages of 100 for only \$17.00. You will also be helping BSA spread the Gospel with your purchases, since all monies are used to continue the publication of TSS and to do the other fine work of BSA!

Our True Roots

by
Pastor Brian D. Jones, Ph.D.

Have you ever looked up into the night sky and thought, Who am I? How did I get here? What are my roots and the purpose of my existence?

Noted American writer Alex Haley undertook the quest of tracking his ancestral roots, and traced them back as far as the mid-eighteenth century to the Ivory Coast of Africa. He brilliantly narrated this fascinating historical adventure in his classic work, *Roots*. But Haley could only find the outer branches of his ancestral tree. Who was his primal ancestor? Who is yours and mine?

Evolutionists since the days of Charles Darwin would have us believe that we are lucky descendants from the ape, which in turn evolved from more primitive forms of life that unexplainably modulated over generations from the first organic cell to creatures of increasing complexity and intelligence. However, science has never been able to rationally defend this theory. The chain of evolution consists of a series of missing links; the chain simply isn't there.

Centuries of scientific observation demonstrate that each species and its generations of offspring remain the same type throughout the ages. Cats give birth to cats, dogs to dogs, and humans to humans. Paleontological findings (ancient skeletal and leaf imprints in rocks) offer nothing to suggest a gradual transition from one species to another over the course of time. From every scientific standpoint, the evidence of nature indicates creation by the direct, authoritative act of an infinite supernatural intelligence.

For example, the eye could not have developed by a gradual series of steps. Every part of the eye, including its connection to the visual cortex of the brain, is so delicately interrelated that it could not function correctly without all parts having come into place at the same time.

Darwin became depressed when he thought about the eye, because its existence could never be accounted for by evolution. Its intricacy of design and function pointed overwhelming to the genius of a divine Creator. After his famous book *Origin of Species* was published, Darwin wrote, ***“To suppose the eye, with all its inimitable contrivances for adjusting the focus to different distances, for admitting different amounts of light, and for the correction of spherical and chromatic aberration, could have been formed by natural selection, seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest degree.”***

We can only agree with Darwin's statement and conclude that evolution is an unsubstantiated hypothesis, a myth espoused by scientists who cannot bring themselves to acknowledge the God who declares, ***“I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even My hand, have***

stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded.” **Isaiah 45:12.**

Assuredly we are not outriders of some impersonal, unguided evolutionary process, but sons and daughters of God. Our roots are traceable not to mud or a monkey, but to the Maker of the universe.

Seventy years ago, in the days of Model T Fords, a motorist's vehicle broke down on a country road. Despairingly he waited for someone to come along in a wagon to tow his car into town. But then along came chugging another Model T, a rare sight in that region.

The driver and his party stepped out and asked the man if they could help. ***“You sure can,”*** he said. ***“My car needs repair. Would you send help from the next town?”***

“Well, let's take a look,” replied the other motorist. He took out a tool box, looked the disabled engine over, tinkered with it for a few moments, gave the crank a few turns and had the car in operation.

“How did you do it?” asked the astonished driver. The man answered, ***“Oh, I'm Henry Ford, I invented this thing.”***

If we want an explanation of life's origin, wouldn't it make sense to turn to the divine Inventor of it—the One who was there to make it all happen? So let's allow our minds to take a scriptural journey back to our origins.

According to Genesis chapters one and two, it took God only seven literal days to create this solar system, including our world and the life it contains. Read this account carefully and slowly, starting with the words, ***“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”*** **Gen. 1:1.** Allow yourself to visualize the beautiful epic of creation that angels and other worlds witnessed in its unfolding order (see **Job 38:4-7**). Consider the wonderfully logical sequence of events as they progressed, and notice how each step prepared the way for the next.

Day 1: God formed the earth in empty space. It stands without form and void, steeped in darkness, a sphere of waters. Then across its quiet surface the spirit of God ruffles the waters. A strong, musical voice rings out, Let there be light! And light appears. Earth now stands like a giant embryo full of mysterious promise and stark beauty.

Day 2: Once again God's voice rolls forth, now declaring, ***“Let there be a firmament [sky] in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.”*** In silent, steady procession great curtains of mist ascend to form a clear canopy of water covering earth's atmosphere. This prepares the way for the support of life.

Day 3: God now produces dramatic changes. He speaks the command, ***“Let the waters under the heav-***

ens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear”; and it was so.

And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of waters He called Seas. At first the land looks barren, but now the master Artist speaks, and every form of vegetation springs forth instantly. Grass, flowers, majestic trees clothe the world in multicolored profusion, making it a richly variegated garden of delight. God surveys His handwork and sees that it is good.

Day 4: God chooses this day to create the sun and moon to provide the earth with light, warmth, and the regulation of tides. These heavenly bodies and the ones beyond stand as eternal markers of seasons, days, months and years.

Day 5: Now the symphony of creation rises to new heights of intensity and richness. By His word God populates the waters with creatures that swim, splash and play in seas lavishly decorated with coral, gems, and marine vegetation of every sort.

Suddenly the air comes alive with an enchanting variety of winged musicians, extravagantly colored and iridescent birds, gracefully chorusing their praise and joy as they dart about, and perch in trees.

Day 6: God makes every land-dwelling creature, from the elephant to the ant, empowering each species to reproduce after their own kind by procreation. No laborious evolutionary process is involved. Every creature comes forth perfect, unique in appearance, mature in form and function.

God creates all these wonders with delight and effortless ease. But thus far all that He has made is a prelude to His crowning act of creation. He creates man, whom he makes in his own image to share His own nature and characteristics: intelligence, love, benevolence, freedom of will, creative ability, never-ending life.

Because of God’s special relationship with Adam, He creates him differently. God spoke all the lower creatures into existence. But with His own hands God sculpts man from the elements of the earth, and breathes the breath of His own life into him. He names the man Adam.

Not content to make a solitary human, God creates from Adam’s side a suitable companion, Eve, his equal in moral stature and intelligence. He places them in the Garden of Eden where they are to have the privilege of conversing daily with their Maker.

From Him they would learn about His character and laws, about the mysteries of the universe, and about the wonderful nature and potential of their own lives. They are to populate the earth with children who will share the delights of companionship with the Creator and His handiwork. God appoints Adam and Eve the recreational work of tending their beautiful paradise garden.

Day 7: To enhance the value of their lives, God makes the Sabbath for His new race of beings, mankind, so they could enjoy a weekly day rest from work and of special intimacy and fellowship with Him, in whose presence they

would perpetually find fulness of joy (**Psalms 16:11**).

Knowing our amazing origin as Adam and Eve’s descendants, ends all confusion about our roots, or the value, purpose and dignity of life. We can walk tall as children of God, knowing that He is not only our Creator, but also our Friend, Redeemer and Lord who cares for us with deep personal interest and infinite love.

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Preserving (cont. from page 15)

gent than many of us. In fact, children in the Church today are probably among the best educated group of people God has ever called. Make sure you neither verbally knock education nor any choice they might make toward future employment. It is amazing the damage thoughtless verbal comments can make.

So, as an individual, we must each be responsible for reading and keeping up with the news and the current trends. In that way, we can stay in communication with the younger generation. It is wrong to expect them to do things the way you or I did them. This is just a fact of life: things CHANGE.

My challenge is that the mindset of many of our leaders is the very thing holding our church’s growth back. Could it be our own reluctance to change and grow is delaying the coming of the Messiah? While I hope not, deep down I am afraid that such might be true.

Because new areas of thought can be frightening, it is difficult to get people who have always been in control to allow changes to take place. Israel had to wander in the wilderness for forty years—until the older generation that had led them out of Egypt died off. We may also have to wander for a while until some current leaders wake up and realize that they are wrong; until they realize how they have treated the brethren; and, until they realize that their mindsets concerning issues such as power, control and government have damaged the Body of Christ.

These latter three are enemies of faith. Therefore, some of our leaders must change or be removed, and then the work of God in many of us can finally be done. Then, the wonderful Kingdom of God can be set up on earth.

Love is the government of God. Love is why we keep his laws and commandments. Love is why we worship and praise him.

Preserving the Sabbath truth for the next hundred years must start with our changing our own mindsets and erroneous indoctrinations. We must outgrow the limits of our imaginations and prejudices. We must reach out to others of all ages, social classes, gender, and cultures. When we do this, the love and power of God the Father and Christ the Messiah can flow into others’ lives—healing, blessing, and bestowing life.

WHAT PART OF THE OLD COVENANT IS PART OF THE NEW COVENANT?

by
JOHN SASH

There has been a lot of debate and confusion in recent years over what was the Old Covenant. Paul said it was done away. Which laws were specifically done away? Which laws were in the Old Covenant?

Of the 613 laws of the Old Testament how many are still binding on Christians? Is it necessary for salvation to keep the annual festivals? What about the New Moons? They are often listed with the Sabbath and the festivals.

What about tithing? What about sacrifices and offerings which were an integral part with tithing under the Levitical system? What about clean and unclean meats? What about the ritualistic cleansing?

What justification do we have to pick and choose which laws to keep? If we claim we are now under the New Covenant and that the Old Covenant has been done away, why are we observing some of the laws of the Old Testament and not others? If we claim we are only to keep the moral laws but not the ritual laws, then why are we keeping the unclean food laws and the festivals?

The bigger question is the Sabbath because this is the crux issue that has been under attack by New Covenant Theology (NCT) in recent years. Basically NCT is a concerted effort by evangelistic Christianity to fight the Sabbath keeping community by using certain proof texts in the New Testament to say the Law is done away with—replaced by the New Covenant law of love and grace. Therefore we no longer need to keep the Sabbath. The WCG collapsed under NCT's onslaught. The COG 7th Day and the SDA churches are currently losing battles to it.

The purpose of this paper is to show a primary reason why NCT has been so successful, and the Sabbath keeping community so ineffective in the theological war. Simply stated, we don't know what the Old Covenant was. We, the Sabbath keeping community, have made two monumental errors: We have allowed NCT to define the Old Covenant as the Law, and we have allowed NCT to define the New Covenant as love and grace. Both of these definitions are very wrong.

Therefore we have put ourselves into a position where we can never win the theological battles. The result is confusion within our ranks and endless debate with NCT without. We may choose to ignore the NCT arguments, but we will never defeat NCT until we understand what the Old Covenant was, and thus what the New Covenant is.

II CORINTHIANS 3

Paul in **II Corinthians 3** says the Old Covenant was

done away with and replaced by the New Covenant. NCT says the law Paul referred to was the Ten Commandments. We respond by saying the law Paul was talking about couldn't possibly have been the Ten Commandments. According to our logic if the law Paul was talking about was the Ten Commandments it would mean Paul was saying the Ten Commandments were done away with. Since we believe the Ten Commandments are still in effect we have argued that Paul was referring to some other law. This is a huge error on our part. Not only was Paul referring to the Ten Commandments, he specifically and only was referring to the Ten Commandments. Look at what he says:

“And it is plain that you are a letter from Christ, entrusted to our care, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God; not on stone tablets but on the tablets of human hearts,” verse 3. (New Jerusalem Bible used throughout)

“He (Christ) has given us the competence to be ministers of a new covenant, a covenant which is not of written letters, but of the Spirit; for the written letters kill, but the Spirit gives life. Now if the administering of death, engraved in letters on stone, occurred in such glory that the Israelites could not look Moses steadily in the face, because of its glory, transitory though this glory was, how much more will the ministry of the Spirit occur in glory! For if it is glorious to administer condemnation, to administer saving justice is far richer in glory. Indeed, what was once considered glorious has lost all claim to glory, by contrast with the glory which transcends it. For if what was transitory had any glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts for ever,” verses 6-11.

“With a hope like this, we can speak with complete fearlessness; not like Moses who put a veil over his face so that the Israelites should not watch the end of what was transitory. But their minds were closed; indeed, until this very day the same veil remains over the reading of the Old Testament (the same Greek word for ‘covenant’ used above): it is not lifted, for only in Christ is it done away with. As it is, to this day, whenever Moses is read, their hearts are covered with a veil, and this veil will not be taken away till they turn to the Lord,” verses 12-16.

Paul has to be referring to the Ten Commandments. No other law was written in stone, only the Ten Commandments. There was no other law given at the time Moses face shone and he covered his face with a veil, only the Ten Com-

mandments. We will see the Old Testament scriptures that prove this later.

Paul associated only the Ten Commandments with the Old Covenant which Paul says has been replaced by the New Covenant. But does he say the Ten Commandments are done away? No, he says that they are now written on the tablets of our hearts. That hardly means they are done away. That includes the fourth commandment.

How can Paul on one hand associate the Ten Commandments with the Old Covenant that was done away and then say those same Ten Commandments are written in our hearts? Because technically the Ten Commandments were not the Old Covenant. They were only half of the Covenant, the half Israel was to keep. The other half of the Covenant was what God was to do.

Once we see that the Old Covenant was a legal agreement between God and Israel—with stipulations for both parties rather than just the “Law”—it becomes very clear what Paul was talking about. Let’s take a look at what the Old Covenant was.

“So now, if you are really prepared to obey me and keep my covenant, you, out of all peoples, shall be my personal possession, for the whole world is mine. For me you shall be a kingdom of priests, a holy nation,” Exodus 19:5.

This is the proposed covenant. If Israel would obey God, God would make Israel his personal nation. Israel agreed and God said he would come down and speak to them in a dense cloud on Mt. Sinai in three days. He gave the Ten Commandments and only the Ten Commandments, **Exodus 20**.

Afterwards Moses approached the cloud where God was. God gave additional laws regarding the altar, slaves, homicide, theft, seduction of a virgin, firstfruits, and the festivals, **Exodus 21-23**. God said that if Israel obeyed Him He would drive out the inhabitants of the Promised Land so that Israel could occupy it, **Exodus 23:23-33**. These additional laws were not part of the Covenant. They were just that, additional.

“Moses went and told the people all Yahweh’s words and all the laws, and all the people answered with one voice, ‘All the words Yahweh has spoken we will carry out!’ Moses put all Yahweh’s words into writing ... Then taking the Book of the Covenant, he read it to the listening people, who then said, ‘We shall do everything that Yahweh has said; we shall obey. Moses then took the blood and sprinkled it over the people, saying, ‘This is the blood of the covenant which Yahweh has made with you entailing all these stipulations,’” Exodus 24:3,4,7,8.

The term “Book of the Covenant” has erroneously come to mean the additional laws of **Exodus 21-23**. Note what the footnote of the New Jerusalem Bible says:

“The ‘Book of the Covenant’, 20:22-23:33, has been so named in modern times on account of 24:7 (although the text in question refers to the Decalogue).”— In other words

what we refer to as the “Book of the Covenant” mentioned in 24:7 is specifically referring only to the Ten Commandments. Note above that Moses differentiated between God’s spoken words (the Ten Commandments) and the additional laws. It was Yahweh’s words, the Ten Commandments, what He spoke, that Moses put down in writing in the Book of the Covenant, not the additional laws. Again, note what the New Jerusalem Bible says:

“The ‘words’, alone mentioned in what follows, refer to the Decalogue, see 20:1 seq., called the ‘Book of the Covenant’ in 24:7. The ‘laws’ are an addition after the Book of the Covenant had been inserted, see 21:1.”

Israel was offered a covenant in **Exodus 19**. She accepted. God spoke the terms of the covenant in **Exodus 20**. Israel asked that Moses speak to them. Moses approached God and God gave Moses additional laws. Moses wrote only the Decalogue in the Book of the Covenant and read it to Israel. Again Israel agreed. Moses then went up Mt. Sinai for forty days and came down with the two tablets containing the Decalogue.

“Inside the ark you will put the Testimony which I am about to give you. ... You will put the mercy-seat on the top of the ark, and inside the ark you will put the Testimony which I am about to give you,” Exodus 25:16,21.

Note the footnote in the New Jerusalem Bible:
“‘Testimony’: accepted translation of the word ‘edut’ which, properly speaking, following other Middle Eastern parallels, means the stipulations in a treaty, imposed by an overlord on his vassal. Here, the ‘Testimony’ is the Decalogue, written on stone tablets sometimes called ‘tablets of the Testimony’, 31:18; 32:15, 34:29. Consequently, the ark is called the ‘ark of the Testimony’, 25:22; 26:33; 40:21.”

In other words, the term “testimony” is synonymous with covenant, and the ark of the testimony was the same as the ark of the covenant.

“When he had finished speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai, he gave him the two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone inscribed by the finger of God,” Exodus 31:18.

The Testimony or Covenant consisted of only what was written on the stone tablets of the Testimony. Only the Ten Commandments were written, nothing else.

“This v. follows on from 24:12-15 and continues the ancient narratives interrupted by the lengthy Priestly interpolation. The tablets were inscribed with the Decalogue, called the Testimony, see 25:16g, which contained the stipulations of the covenant. Ancient Eastern treaties were similarly inscribed on tablets or on steles and preserved in a shrine.”

“Moses turned and came down the mountain with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hands, tablets inscribed on both sides, inscribed on the front and on the back. The tablets were the work of God, and the writing on them was God’s writing, engraved on the tablets,” Exodus 32:15,16.

Again, the Testimony or Covenant, contained only

the Decalogue for Israel's part of the agreement.

Moses found Israel in rebellion. He broke the stone tablets and made Israel drink of the water with the ground up golden calf, a type of an adulterous drinking the bitter waters containing her sin, see **Numbers 5:11-31**. Moses went back up Mt. Sinai where God renewed the covenant.

"Yahweh said to Moses, 'Cut two tablets of stone like the first ones and come up to me on the mountain, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke,' Exodus 34:1,2.

"He then said, 'Look, I am now making a covenant: I shall work such wonders at the head of your whole people as have never been worked in any other country or nation, and all the people round you will see what Yahweh can do, for what I shall do through you will be awe-inspiring. Mark, then, what I command you today, I am going to drive out the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites before you," Exodus 34:10-12.

Here we have God's part in the Covenant. It is the physical promised land of Palestine, the same land that was promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

"Yahweh then said to Moses, 'Put these words in writing, for they are the terms of the covenant which I have made with you and with Israel.' He stayed there with Yahweh for forty days and forty nights, eating and drinking nothing, and on the tablets he wrote the words of the covenant — the Ten Words," Exodus 34:27,28.

This scripture is just after God had instructed Moses to give Israel several other laws. Yet none of those laws were part of the Covenant as the above scripture says. There were additional administrative laws for Israel. The Covenant contained the Ten Commandments, and only the Ten Commandments. This was true when the ark of the covenant was later brought into the temple Solomon built. (However, there is some debate whether the ark also contained the jar of manna and Aaron's staff.)

"There was nothing in the ark except the two stone tablets which Moses had placed in it at Horeb, the tablets of the covenant which Yahweh made with the Israelites when they came out of Egypt," I Kings 8:9.

"When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hands, as he was coming down the mountain, Moses did not know that the skin of his face was radiant because he had been talking to him. And when Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, the skin on his face was so radiant that they were afraid to go near him. ...Once Moses had finished speaking to them, he put a veil over his face," Exodus 34:29,30,33.

This is what Paul was referring to in **II Corinthians 3**. This is the only time Moses' face shone. Thus the law Paul is referring to has to be the Ten Commandments. But, it was the Covenant, not the Ten Commandments that

Paul said was done away. Now let's focus on the other half of the Covenant and we will see how and why the Old Covenant has been done away with.

"Look, that is the country I have given you; go and take possession of the country that Yahweh promised on oath to give to your ancestors, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and to their descendants after them," Deuteronomy 1:8.

"Look, Yahweh your God has given you this country. March in, take possession of it as Yahweh, the God of your ancestors, has said," Deuteronomy 1:21.

"Yahweh your God has given you this country to be yours," Deuteronomy 3:18.

"And now, Israel, listen to the laws and customs which I am teaching you today, so that, by observing them, you may survive to enter and take possession of the country which Yahweh, God of your ancestors, is giving you," Deuteronomy 4:1,2.

Again and again we see that God's part of the agreement, the Covenant, was to give Israel the land He promised to the Fathers.

"He revealed his covenant to you and commanded you to observe it, the Ten Words which he inscribed on two tablets of stone. Yahweh then ordered me to teach you the laws and customs that you were to observe in the country into which you are about to cross, to take possession of it," Deuteronomy 4:13,14.

Here we see the relationship of the laws and customs that followed the Covenant. The additional laws and customs were commandments for Israel to keep when they entered the Promised land, but they were not part of the Covenant. Only the Decalogue was part of the Covenant.

Notice what God says is the penalty for Israel's breaking the Covenant, the Ten Commandments: ***"Be careful not to forget the covenant which Yahweh your God has made with you, by sculpting an image or making a statue of anything, since Yahweh your God has forbidden this; for Yahweh your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God. ...Today I call heaven and earth to witness against you — you will quickly vanish from the country which you are crossing the Jordan to possess. Your days will not be prolonged there, for you will be utterly destroyed. Yahweh will scatter you among the peoples, and only a small number of you will remain among the nations where Yahweh will have driven you," Deuteronomy 4:23,24,26,27.***

If Israel kept her part of the Covenant God would keep His part and give Israel the Promised Land. If Israel broke the Covenant God would drive Israel from the Promised Land.

"Yahweh our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. Yahweh made this covenant not with our ancestors, but with us, with all of us alive here today. On the mountain, from the heart of the fire, Yahweh spoke to you face to face," Deuteronomy 5:2,3.

The Ten Commandments are then given in **Deuteronomy 5**. The ancestors Moses refers to above are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and not the previous generation as the

context shows. In other words, the Covenant at Horeb was a new covenant given to Israel and not to the Fathers. This understanding helps us better understand what Paul later says about the Law in relation to the promises made to Abraham.

“These were the words Yahweh spoke to you when you were all assembled on the mountain. Thunderously, he spoke to you from the heart of the fire, in cloud and thick darkness. He added nothing, but wrote them on two tablets of stone which he gave to me,” Deuteronomy 5:22.

Again, there was nothing added to the Covenant in addition to the Decalogue. The additional laws were for Israel’s benefit and prosperity in the land God was giving her. To break these additional laws would bring Israel misery, but she would still possess the Promised Land: ***“I shall tell you all the commandments, the laws and the customs which you are to teach them and which they are to observe in the country which I am giving them as their possession. Keep them and put them into practice: such is Yahweh’s command to you. Stray neither to right nor to left. Follow the whole way that Yahweh has marked for you, and you will survive to prosper and live long in the country which you are going to possess. Such, then, are the commandments, the laws and the customs which Yahweh your God has instructed me to teach you, for you to observe in the country which you are on your way to possess,” Deuteronomy 5:31-6:1.***

The following scriptures from Deut. show that the covenant God made with Israel on Horeb contained only the Ten Commandments: ***“At Horeb, you provoked Yahweh, and Yahweh was so angry with you that he was ready to destroy you. I had gone up the mountain to receive the stone tablets, the tablets of the covenant that Yahweh was making with you. I stayed forty days and forty nights on the mountain, and nothing to eat or drink. Yahweh gave me the two stone tablets inscribed by the finger of God, exactly corresponding to what Yahweh had said to you on the mountain, from the heart of fire, on the day of the Assembly. After forty days and forty nights, having given me the two stone tablets, the tablets of the covenant,” Deuteronomy 9:9-11.***

“I went back down the mountain, which was blazing with fire, and in my hands were the two tablets of the covenant,” Deuteronomy 9:15.

“And he inscribed the tablets, as he had inscribed them before, with the Ten Words which Yahweh had said to you on the mountain, from the heart of the fire, on the day of the Assembly. Yahweh then gave them to me. I turned and came down from the mountain and put the tablets in the ark I had made, and there they stayed, as Yahweh had commanded me,” Deuteronomy 10:4,5.

The ark held the covenant. It is called the ark of the covenant. It held only the Decalogue, Israel’s half of the covenant agreement. In **II Corinthians 3** Paul was referring to the covenant given at Mt. Sinai whereby if Israel kept the

Ten Commandments, God would give them the Promised Land. Israel broke that covenant and eventually God drove Israel into exile. The final end of the Old Covenant occurred in 70 C.E. when the Temple was destroyed and the Jewish people dispersed.

However there was another covenant made between God and Israel on the plains of Moab just before entering the Promised Land. The knowledge of this covenant may help us understand some of Paul’s other comments on the “law”. Note the following verses: ***“Yahweh your God commands you today to observe these laws and customs,” Deuteronomy 26:16.***

Moses has just concluded several chapters dealing with sacrificial regulations, tithes, idolatry, clean and unclean foods, the sabbatical year, slaves, firstborn, the yearly festivals, cities of refuge, warfare, marriage and sexual matters, vows, firstfruits, and various other rulings. These laws were apparently written on pillars coated with lime. They constituted a covenant separate from the one at Horeb. They were given just prior to Israel’s entering the Promised Land.

“Keep all the commandments which I am laying down for you today. After you have crossed the Jordan into the country which Yahweh your God is giving you, you must set up tall stones, coat them with lime and on them write all the words of this Law, when you have crossed and entered the country which Yahweh your God is giving you, a country flowing with mild and honey,” Deuteronomy 27:1-3.

Then follow the blessing and cursings of Deuteronomy 27 and 28. The ultimate curse is exile from the Promised Land.

“You will be torn from the country which you are about to enter and make your own. Yahweh will scatter you throughout every people, from one end of the earth to the other; there you will serve other gods made of wood and stone, ...Yahweh will send you back to Egypt, ...And there you will want to offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as serving men and women, but no one will buy you,” Deuteronomy 28:63,64,68.

“These are the words of the covenant which Yahweh ordered Moses to make with the Israelites in Moab, in addition to the covenant which he had made with them at Horeb. ...Keep the words of this covenant, put them into practice, and you will thrive in everything you do,” Deut.28:69; 29:8.

The New Covenant

Now I would like to briefly discuss the New Covenant and why Paul said what he did in **II Corinthians 3**. Eternal life is conspicuously absent from the Old Covenant. The only promise was the land and prosperity and long life in it. There are only hints of something beyond. It is only later at the time of the prophets that eternal life is discussed and only then under the concept of a New Covenant. In these prophecies the Law, the Ten Commandments is firmly written, only this time in the hearts of men. God had lamented

that Israel did not have the heart to keep his Law, the Decalogue. If God then gives man the heart to keep the Ten Commandments, and writes those commandments in his heart, does it make any sense that man would not keep them, i.e. not keep the Sabbath? Not hardly.

“If only their heart were always so, set on fearing me and on keeping my commandments,” Deuteronomy 5:29. (written just after the Ten Commandments were given).

“Circumcise your heart then and be obstinate no longer,” Deuteronomy 10:16.

“Circumcise yourselves for Yahweh, and apply circumcision to your hearts,” Jeremiah 4:4.

“Look, the days are coming, Yahweh declares, when I shall make a new covenant with the House of Israel (and the House of Judah), but not like the covenant I made with their ancestors the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of Egypt, a covenant which they broke, even though I was their Master, Yahweh declares. No, this is the covenant I shall make with the House of Israel when those days have come, Yahweh declares. Within them I shall plant my Law, writing it on their hearts. Then I shall be their God and they will be my people. There will be no further need for everyone to teach neighbour or brother, saying, ‘Learn to know Yahweh!’ No, they will all know me, from the least to the greatest, Yahweh declares, since I shall forgive their guilt and never more call their sin to mind,” Jeremiah 31:31-34.

“I shall give them a single heart and I shall put a new spirit in them; I shall remove the heart of stone from their bodies and give them a heart of flesh, so that they can keep my laws and respect my judgments and put them into practice. Then they will be my people and I shall be their God,” Ezekiel 11:19-21.

“I shall ...gather you back from all the countries, and bring you home to your own country. ...I shall give you a new heart, and put a new spirit in you; I shall remove the heart of stone from your bodies and give you a heart of flesh instead. I shall put my spirit in you, and make you keep my laws, and respect and practice my judgments,” Ezekiel 36:24-28.

In **II Corinthians 3** Paul plainly infers that the Ten Commandments are now written with God’s Spirit on the tablets of the hearts of men. Peter describes Christians as living stones with Jesus being the chief cornerstone, **I Peter 3:4,5**. Thus we are living tablets upon which God’s Spirit writes the same Law that God’s finger wrote on stone tablets. Jesus was the living Word of God. He kept every word of God, especially the Ten Commandments. We see that under the New Covenant, the stipulation for us to keep the Ten Commandments remains the same. It is even magnified. Yes, we are to have faith as well, but so was Israel to have faith.

Under the New Covenant God promises us two things: forgiveness and eternal life. That is why Paul said, in **II Corinthians 3**, that the New Covenant was so much more

glorious than the Old.

“Indeed, what was once considered glorious has lost all claim to glory, by contrast with the glory which transcends it. For if what was transitory had any glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts for ever. ...Since what we aim for is not visible but invisible. Visible things are transitory, but invisible things eternal,” II Corinthians 3:10,11; 4:18.

“It is he who has rescued us from the ruling force of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of the Son that he loves, and in him we enjoy our freedom the forgiveness of sin,” Colossians 1:13,14.

NCT is an insidious assault against the Law of God. It wrongly defines the Old Covenant to only mean the Law and not the agreement for the physical land of Palestine. It wrongly defines the New Covenant to only mean God’s gift of forgiveness and grace without our living by God’s Law. NCT leaves out God’s part of the Old Covenant and man’s part of the New Covenant. The arguments of NCT can be defeated, but only if we correctly define the Old and New Covenants. We are under the New Covenant and that is precisely why we are to keep the Ten Commandments, all ten—because under the New Covenant God writes His Law, the Ten Commandments in our hearts.

This paper does not purport to have all the answers. The prophecies of the Old Testament seem to show the New Covenant to be a time of utopia. We hardly have that now. Will many if not all of the additional laws God commanded Israel to observe in the Promised Land be kept at this future time? If so then what about now? In a sense, we are in the wilderness on our way to the Promised Land. Are we required to keep these additional laws now or will they be kept later? Israel was to begin observing them when they entered the Promised Land. Yet they kept many, such as the festivals, while en route to the Promised Land. In the prophecies of the New Covenant God says he will bring many back from their exile and put within them a heart of flesh. Could this not also include those who don’t currently keep the Sabbath, yet have a humble repentant attitude? There is much to learn.

What about the various other matters of the law — tithing, firstfruits, festivals, new moons, dating of the festivals, and various “Jewish” practices? Even though they are not part of the New Covenant, yet they are still laws and commandments God gave to Israel for her benefit. We are to live by every word of God. Surely, with God’s Spirit we can discern which laws from the Old Testament are still valid and good for us. Paul and the early Church kept the festivals as well as the dietary laws. No doubt they kept many other laws that we might today consider too “Jewish”. Paul advised Jews to remain as Jews and Gentiles to observe only those recommendations of the Jerusalem council. Surely we can agree to disagree on these other additional laws separate from the Ten Commandments. But we can be in complete unanimity on the need to keep the Ten Commandments under the New Covenant. That includes the Sabbath.

The Bible Sabbath Association

BSA 2001 Essay Scholarship Press Release

The Bible Sabbath Association is sponsoring a 2001 Essay Scholarship Contest. The contest is open to all 7th Day Sabbath observing youth/students who are in their Junior year in high school (or home schooled students that are one year away from being college-bound approximately age 16-17) and to all college age students up to the age of 25. Along with the application, they will need to submit **a recommendation letter from their high school or college counselor AND a recommendation letter from their church minister.**

The contest will be comprised of an essay entry per applicant. The essay must answer a question from the theme of this year's contest, "The Sabbath Community: Observance and Growth Issues". Applicants will be asked to answer two questions within an essay body format. Potential questions that might be asked include:

- 1) Why is the Sabbath Important to you and How do you keep it Holy?
- 2) How do you believe is the best way of promoting the truth of the Seventh Sabbath to local communities or the world at large? or,
- 3) How do you think cooperation can be promoted among Sabbath keepers of different denominations or doctrinal positions?

The Bible Sabbath Association is a fifty-plus year old, non-profit, non/church affiliated organization that works to promote the truth of the Seventh Day Sabbath and cooperation among Sabbath keepers of all church/assembly affiliations.

Applications will be accepted through March 30, 2001. Each applicant will be requested to subscribe to The Sabbath Sentinel for one year along with his or her application entry.

The four winners of the essay contest will be awarded a first prize of \$750; second place \$500, and third and fourth place with an award of \$250 each. Scholarship money will be paid directly to the trade school/college or university the student has been accepted at for the fall 2001 school year.

The contest is open to international students from other countries. It is also open to any Sabbath keeping Christian regardless of church or organizational affiliation.

Applications can be obtained by contacting The Bible Sabbath Association, 3316 Alberta Drive, Gillette, Wyoming 82718 or BSA Director/Scholarship Chair Ms. June Narber Harrison at ejnarber@mindspring.com or at address: 6325-9 Falls of Neuse Road #193, Raleigh NC 27615. Forms can be returned to either address.

Preserving the Sabbath for the Next 100 years

By
Eva June Narber

Through out the ages, there have been small pockets of Sabbath keeping and Bible fearing people around the world. At this point in history, we have more people exposed to the truth of scripture than at any other time. This is partly due to the explosion in world population; and partly due to the popularity of mainstream “missions” that have been adopted by many Sabbath keeping churches and assemblies. In retrospect, do we need to be concerned that the Sabbath truth in particular will still be as widely known 100 years from now? Consider these facts: a) In the splinter groups of the former Worldwide Church of God, the majority of people who attend are over the age of 45; b) all churches report losing their youth to popular cultures and; c) not much innovative thinking is going into solving the current problem, except for using conventional methods which have always been used.

In just thirty years, a good number of the current readers of this magazine will be awaiting the resurrection of the dead. In fifty years, most living ministers will be deceased. Action needs to be taken now to attract more young people to the Sabbath-keeping community and to keep the ones we already have. If we don't, it is likely there will come a time when the number of Sabbath keepers decreases to a level that “requires” another “great leader” to come on the scene to bring the Sabbath truth to light once more. While this may very well happen, I believe that we are wasting our talents and our current resources to ever allow such a lapse in the Sabbath keeping truth to occur. We need to empower our youth and each other.

In my own Sabbath keeping family-branch of the “church tree”, the current events are embarrassing to talk about. The leaders still have not learned that they are here to serve the brethren. Many honestly see themselves as some kind of dictator or “lord over the people”. The brethren are so indoctrinated that they believe God has put such a man in power.

Did the ancient Israelites believe God had put Saul in kingship over them? Did they forget that they begged and pleaded for God allow a physical leader to “rule over them”? Do we in turn, look to a physical leader to tell us what to do—*more* than we look to God— or do we live in faith, making our own decisions for our well being? Do we make decisions through the aid of the Holy Spirit, the Bible, and just plain common sense? Why do we tolerate men telling us we are sinful because we think for ourselves instead of bowing down to men?

To make matters worse, brethren have left former organizations and joined what are called “splinter groups” and are repeating the very same mistakes—and are totally oblivious to this fact. The leaders (ministers, preach-

ers, elders) are refusing to empower the brethren to do local evangelism, to think and study the scriptures on their own, apart from having one of themselves present for “scrutiny”. This problem appears to be based on the various organizational leaders’ refusing to give up power for fear of losing tithing money. The lust for power and money are the vehicles by which the church is being eaten alive from within. Some people have seen these problems and started what we call “independent fellowships.” These brethren seem to be doing more of the commission as seen in the pages of scriptures: a) love each other; b) feed the sheep; c) make disciples of all people. Many of these groups are active in local evangelism.

How can we help correct the problems that exist in our current Sabbath keeping churches? First, look at our current church. Is the leader more feared than loved? Is He more concerned with keeping people in line and in accordance with that church’s select doctrines than looking into the Bible to learn more of what God has to say?

Second, how do the brethren treat each other? Is the atmosphere in the congregation especially controlling or expectant of certain people to stay within certain behavior ranges? Do they limit the talent growth and talent expression of its members? Are there more sermons about women submitting and women’s roles than those focused on Jesus Christ and the plan of salvation?

Are more sermons focused on such topics as church government and tithing rather than on the important topics, such as preaching the truth to all people, keeping all of God’s laws, loving each other, and forgiving each other? In these examples, my focus becomes clear: is the church more focused on issues centered around control and power or on issues such as development of character and putting on the whole person of Jesus Christ in your lives? This is a touchy subject. So many of us have been, or still are, so indoctrinated by our churches that we cannot see the simple truth from God’s own word.

We cannot hope to preserve the truth we have been given for another three generations or to attract and keep youth in our churches until we fix the very problems that drive them away in droves!

I conclude by offering some innovative ideas for consideration to strengthen our assemblies and churches.

Methodology For Change

1) ALLOW an open forum once a month outside of the Sabbath for members, both men AND women, old and young, to come forth and publicly address any topic than concerns them. Have a moderator and give each of them

ten minutes to express themselves. A few churches do this on the night of the new moon—following the Old Testament example.

2) LISTEN to what people are saying. Don't reprimand them for daring to voice their opinions. Be especially considerate of things women are trying to vocalize. Women are far more perceptive in some areas than men are through the nature given to them by God—and they are the most likely to be ignored or criticized for saying anything.

3) ENCOURAGE people to think of ways to make worship services more innovative; to take part in local evangelism; to think of what exactly their talents are and how they can be used. In my own church experience, people have been criticized and kept under control by the element of fear. People feared suggesting anything, and if they tried to do anything on their own, in terms of adding something to church (without permission) or local evangelism, they were disciplined and, all too often, in the most humiliating of ways, including being disfellowshipped publicly. That has been their reward for trying to be more involved.

4) GET RID of the corporate mentality and hierarchical control. Control should be of ourselves, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. If a minister in a hierarchical congregation is particularly corrupt, how can he be corrected since he presumes to be lord over the congregation? Unity comes from mutual cooperation, not from "keeping the people in line by fear and government-style intimidation".

5) INVESTIGATE the concept of home fellowships in addition to what your current church attendance is. In our fellowships, free expression should be encouraged. Consider inviting outsiders new to the faith to these kind of intimate atmospheres.

6) WHEN PROBLEMS ARISE, form a committee of twelve or so to listen to the issues. If a doctrinal situation (which it will be nine times out of ten), let the presenter have fifteen minutes to expound on his or her views, and then take an hour and discuss the doctrine, going around the committee for insight. If agreement cannot be reached, tell the individual they can believe what they want, but there are limits to how far he will be allowed to go to indoctrinate the rest of the brethren. He can form his own group if he wants to. Big rifts are caused when churches try to "hold" unto their tithing paying members. It is better to have an open door and allow people to come and go as they please. If God is working through your group, the size of it does not matter.

7) BUILD YOUTH GROUPS. If your church only has a small number of youth, network with other Sabbath observing churches in your area or state to have weekend gatherings, events, and seminar weekends to build relationships as well as share mutual beliefs. Churches can sponsor youths to go to one of the many Sabbath keeping youth summer camps.

8) DO ORIGINAL THINGS in your church. Have wide

selections of music. Encourage people to get involved in planning, organizing and implementing church events. DO NOT put the same people in charge each time. SHARE the leadership, and work opportunities, alike. No man should be above cleaning the toilet, and no woman so unprepared or shy she cannot organize a small committee to accomplish a goal. If this is the case in your assembly, your congregation is losing growth opportunities for its members. Would the leaders forfeit leadership in lieu of a general cleanup duty once in a while? If so, time to examine their attitude and perspective!

9) DEVELOP A SPEAKING CLUB for both the men and women in your church to learn how to publicly present organized topics in the form of speeches on all kinds of topics from social to spiritual issues. These can be together or two separate clubs. This prepares both sexes for evangelism OUTSIDE of the church. Don't fear that is teaching or encouraging the women to speak in church. What do we expect women to do when confronted with the opportunity speak God's truth to someone outside of the faith: call her minister or husband to come witness for her?

10) GET INVOLVED in the community. Have drives for the local homeless shelter. Encourage your members to get involved in helping others. Jesus Christ did! Are we demonstrating that we are better than Him with our self-righteous appraisal that we should be separate from the world? Let your light shine by helping the less fortunate in your community. Would Jesus Christ do any less?

11) KEEP A WRITTEN RECORD of the history of your local fellowship church. Donate a duplicate of these records to the local library. You might be amazed at who will come into contact with information about the Sabbath as future generations peruse library history papers in search of genealogical records.

12) FELLOWSHIP with local brethren is as important as worship. Come up with new ideas for fellowship after Sabbath time; it isn't healthy when local groups fall into ruts and do the exact same thing week after week.

13) KEEP IN MIND the mind set of younger people. They have high levels of energy. Their minds are quite active and thirsting for new things and new adventures. Build upon these traits when you organize group activities for them, as well as for the whole fellowship. Among my fondest memories of times past in the Sabbath community where: a) talent shows; b) chili suppers c) hay wagon rides d) camp-outs e) canoe trips f) museum and field trips.

14) WE MUST all start focusing as much on relationship building as we do on doctrine. God commands us to love each other. We cannot effectively do this when we are judging others and expecting them to behave in a generic way unrelated to their personality.

15) UNDERSTAND that we are now in the 21st century. The younger people are more educated and intelli-

*See "Preserving"
continued on page 7*

Cooperation or Compromise— What Would God Say?

by
Royce Mitchell, Jr.

The disheveled young woman shivered in fear. She had just been dragged by an angry mob from a clandestine rendezvous, having been “set up” in an effort to compromise someone else. Collapsed on the floor, she gazed up into the hate-filled eyes of the crowd. She knew that her life was measured in minutes—perhaps even seconds—now. The woman knew that among her final acts would be numbered a sin against the God of Israel.

Suddenly a voice of authority rang out! “Let him who is without sin among you cast the first stone!” The young woman prepared herself for the pain and death that would surely follow. Yet, as she waited, she saw the looks of hate turn to looks of shame. Slowly, one by one the men, who sought to use her to entrap this man of authority, turned and departed.

Looking into the eyes of her protector, a feeling of profound gratitude and sincere love came over her. Christ then asked her, “Where are those who accused you?”

“They have gone, my Lord,” she responded. “Then, go, and don’t sin anymore,” Christ said.

Did Jesus compromise the Law of God by His response to the mob? Did saving the young woman taken in adultery, whose story we read about in John 8, constitute a compromise of the Law of God? Or, was there a deeper spiritual issue at stake that Christ wanted us to learn today?

The lesson that the hard-hearted mob did not understand was voiced by Christ in Matthew 9:12-13, where He said, **“But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, ‘They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, ‘I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.’”** (KJV throughout, unless noted).

Another way of saying this was that Christ loved, and loves, sinners. He hates, however, their sin. Christ was willing to cooperate with the sinner in order to secure the life of one of God’s children. But, He was not willing to compromise on the sinful actions of the sinner.

Our Mission Statement

If Christ can be said to have issued us individually a mission statement, it can probably be found in Matthew 5:48: **“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”** Some might say this is an impossibly high goal—and without the help of the Holy Spirit, they would be right!

But, we as His Children do have His Holy Spirit, and with it comes discernment. There is a time to cooperate; there is a time to compromise. Becoming perfect means, in part, that we rightly discern which is the appropriate response.

Compromise or Cooperate—Which?

In order to know what we should do, we need to understand what God wants of us. Neither “compromise” nor “cooperate” are found specifically in the King James version of the Holy Scriptures. Yet, the principles are found throughout the Bible.

Compromise means “a settlement in which each side gives up some demands or makes concessions” Webster’s New World Dictionary, 1959. Cooperate means “to act or work together with another or others for a common purpose.”

Can we find examples where God or Christ has compromised or cooperated so that we may follow Their example? I believe we can!

God compromises

Previously we found the example of the woman taken in the very act of adultery. She was clearly guilty of a sin, the punishment of which was stoning. Jesus would have been right to have had the woman stoned. But, cooperation with the mob would not have served the purpose of God. In this case, compromise for the purpose of rescuing a lost sheep was in order.

Notice, however, a similar incident found Leviticus 24, beginning in verse 11: **“And the Israelitish woman’s son blasphemed the name of the LORD, and cursed. And they brought him unto Moses: ... And they put him in ward, that the mind of the LORD might be shewed them. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; and let all that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him....”** (Vs 23) **“And Moses spake to the children of Israel, that they should bring forth him that had cursed out of the camp, and stone him with stones. And the children of Israel did as the LORD commanded Moses.”**

Here, God did not compromise. Punishment was swift and sure for the blasphemer. Yet, compromise of His Way by men is not something that God desires. There are many examples of compromise of the Way of God by men in scripture.

In Numbers 22, we find the example of Balaam. Balaam obviously knew and worshipped the True God, the One Who went with Israel. In verse 6, we find that Zippor had sent messengers to Balaam with a bribe to get him to pronounce a curse on Israel.

God told Balaam not to pronounce any curse on Israel and to send the men home. Yet, more representatives of Zippor returned to plead with Balaam to get him to pronounce a curse. Balaam again went to God seeking His permission to do so.

Balaam's willingness to compromise with the expressed will of God angered God greatly—so much so that He intended the next day to slay Balaam as a witness of His will. It was only by the miraculous speech of an ass that Balaam was saved from the sword of the angel. Faced with death, Balaam realized his sin and repented.

Balaam was willing to compromise with God's Law, spoken directly to him. It nearly cost him his life. God hates the compromise of His Law.

Christ Cooperated

In Luke 9:49-50, we find Christ instructing His disciples: ***“And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbid him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us.”*** Notice that those who cast out devils in Christ's name did not walk with Christ and His disciples.

What was Christ's response to their having been told to discontinue the practice? ***“Forbid him not....”*** Why was that? Remember, cooperation is working together for a common purpose. Was not the message of Christ further advanced by those who cast out devils in His name? Certainly! Was casting out devils a sinful action? No! So, Christ was able to cooperate without compromising the desires of His Father.

The Thin Black Line

At first glance, the ideas of compromise and cooperation appear to be similar. Both have as a common thread the desire to accomplish a goal. But, they do not necessarily come from the same motivation. We must be very careful that we don't step over that thin, black line that puts us into a position where we act in a way that is displeasing to God.

Notice the interaction between Peter and Paul found in Galatians 2:11-15: ***“But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they were not straightfor-***

ward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of all, ‘If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?’” (NAS).

Peter compromised the clear path that Christ had laid before the Church. Paul, on the other hand, recognized that cooperation had turned into compromise—and hypocrisy. Paul then went on, in context, to then ask the Galatians, ***“Who has bewitched you?”***

This was a serious charge! The sin of witchcraft is worthy of death in the eyes of God! Yet, here, the actions of Peter were tied, for all of history to see to this day, to the sin of witchcraft.

A Time to Compromise

In Ecclesiastes 3:1 we find the following: ***“To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:”*** There is a time for cooperation; there is a time for compromise.

When then should we compromise? Let us get the answer from God!

Notice the situation that developed between Abram and Lot when their herds became large: ***“And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land. And Abram said unto Lot, ‘Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.’”*** (Genesis 13:7-9).

Abram, not desiring that anything should come between him and Lot, compromised what he might have desired and allowed Lot to take the prime grazing land. It was more important to save the relationship with Lot than to be the elder. Could Abram have taken the best land? Certainly, and been right in doing it. He was the elder among the people. However, he chose to compromise what he wanted and to allow Lot to choose instead.

Notice, however, that Abram did not compromise God's Law.

God Compromises too!

God has even been known to compromise. We see that in the situation where the angels of the Lord were sent to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham bargained with the Lord to get Him to relent on the destruction of all if but 50, then 45, then 30 and finally 10 righteous men could be found. Initially, the Lord intended to destroy the city. In the end, if but ten righteous could be found, He would not destroy the city.

Notice, however, that the key was righteousness. In order to save the city, ten righteous men would have to be there. We know from scripture that there were not ten such

men living in Sodom and Gomorrah. The Lord destroyed the cities and they remain destroyed to this very day. But, the point is that the Lord was willing to compromise His purpose for the sake of a few righteous men.

What Does This Mean For Us?

In life, we are faced daily with decisions that involve compromise and cooperation. Sometimes we must cooperate with others to reach a common goal. A good example of that is the cooperation we have seen within the Bible Sabbath Association.

In the BSA, we have members of a number of markedly different groups who are cooperating for the purpose of promoting the Sabbath commanded by the Lord. Moreover, there is cooperation for the purpose of promoting the Lord Jesus Christ, and His (and the Father's) Way. Within the cooperative venture, there is room for discussion of our similarities. As we have seen, there is even room for discussion of our differences.

We have run articles which discuss various ideas and beliefs that are not common to all of our groups. Yet, we have learned from our brethren, and why they believe what they believe—all without compromising our own beliefs. Examination of our own beliefs through the study of others' makes our own grasp on our beliefs stronger, or moves us into a position of growth that is right and proper in the eyes of God. It is only when we quit growing that we die.

At the BSA, we compromise regularly our desire to see our own particular brand of Christianity promoted. Such is done in an effort to promote that which is far more important—Christ's atoning sacrifice and the Father's Sabbath and Laws. Some things are just more important than our own individual or group understandings which differ from others whom God has also given His Spirit.

Cooperation is a constant fact for the brethren whose purpose is the mission of the Bible Sabbath Association. Articles are written with the main purpose and focus of the BSA in mind. Many subjects are covered, but they are covered in such a way as to prevent offense to brethren who do not believe the same.

It takes cooperation to move the Association toward its stated goal, which itself is cooperation. Brethren who accept the Law of God with its accompanying Sabbaths, and the atoning sacrifice of Christ, ought to be able to cooperate with one another toward that goal. Sometimes, even the compromise of our own goals is necessary to achieve that cooperation. These things are right and good in the eyes of our Lord and King.

What is not good and right, as we have seen from the biblical examples, is the compromise of the Way of God. We have such choices before us daily. A choice must be made between taking that extra five minutes for lunch or being prompt in giving the time we are exchanging for money. To take the extra five minutes is to compromise the Law of God. It is theft, a violation of the Word of

God. It is this type of compromise that we must avoid.

People find themselves daily in situations that make them uncomfortable. Sometimes, they believe that prevarication will deflect that discomfort away from themselves. Unfortunately, the discomfort is often then focused on another. The liar may feel relief, but the compromise of the Law of God comes with a penalty.

Compromise is a tool that, if improperly used, can lead to sin. Why is that? It is because we are capable of compromising another in place of ourselves. In the case of the Law of God, the One who is compromised by our actions is our Savior, Jesus Christ.

We are given a number of directives by Christ. He pointed us to the Law of God. Christ told the rich man that if he wanted life to keep the commandments. Christ was not teaching salvation through works. He merely was stating the obvious, that ***"a good understanding have all they who keep His commandments."*** Christ knew that compromise with the basics of the Way of God, summed up in His Law, would prevent one's understanding of the importance of His death.

Christ expanded upon the Law of God by telling us that we should love God above all, and our neighbor as ourselves. There was nothing new in His statement; He was quoting scripture from the Old Testament.

He went on to say that if we keep all the commandments of God, and broke just one, that we would be guilty of them all. Therefore, the one who compromises to lust after the things of his neighbor is as blood-guilty as the one who deliberately kills his neighbor. Christ knew that such compromise was not proper for men.

Christ went on to say that His disciples would be known by their love for one another. This was no suggestion. Compromise in this aspect of the Way of God is not an option. Even Jesus Christ, and the Father Himself, will never compromise on their love for us.

In all things we do then, we must consider if doing it conforms to the Will of God—that we do all things out of love for our brother. There are times when we believe something needs doing and that a good can come of it. However, if it in any way violates Christ's command that we love one another, then we must find another way.

Likewise, we must never do anything which promotes hatred—the opposite of love. Hatred is an attribute of Satan, and a compromise of love. In this case, compromise is not approved of God, but of Satan. It is to be avoided.

In summary, we may compromise our own desires, but we may never compromise the desires of another, including the desires of Christ and the Father. Compromise of their expressed will is sin, and brings with it the death penalty.

We may cooperate to accomplish Godly goals, as we do here at the BSA. But, we must never compromise the Law of love for one another given by Christ. That form of compromise is wrong and must be avoided.

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Grafted-In Ministries maintains a substantial reference website at "<http://www.GraftedIn2Torah.org/>" that documents the move away from the teachings of the Apostles and the original followers of THE WAY and their keeping of the Biblical Sabbaths to the present apostasy of Sunday-keeping. Berean study e-mail forums are maintained on the internet and can be joined by sending an email to "Feasts-subscribe@egroups.com" AND/OR FOR WOMEN ONLY "MessianicSisterhood-subscribe@egroups.com".

Grafted-In Ministries also holds a Beit Midrash on the third weekend of the month in Port Angeles, WA. which starts just before Sunset Friday and lasts til approximately 3PM Sunday. Family-style accommodations are provided during this weekend retreat while we earnestly contend for the "faith given the saints". All participants are required to lay down their denominational baggage and rely on Scripture for answers without a denominational interpretation. Gifts and tax-exempt donations are gratefully accepted but there is no cost for the weekend. Info: (360) 452-5699 or "www.GraftedIn2Torah.org/Wrshp/BMIntro.htm" Withdraw from the world for one full weekend feasting on HIS Word in the fellowship of other believers and see if your life isn't changed forever! email: "GraftedIn@saintmail.net".



"Sabbath Roots: The African Connection,"
by
Charles Bradford

Mr. Bradford traces the history of African Sabbath-keepers. A must-read for all of those interested in the documentation of Sabbath keeping in Africa. This book is now available from the Bible Sabbath Association for \$15.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



My family and I are Seventh Day Adventists. I have been receiving The Sabbath Sentinel for several months. I would like to tell you that it has been very informative and a real blessing.

At this time I would like to send you a small donation and ask that you please continue sending us The Sabbath Sentinel.

Les Mareussen

Sure do enjoy The Sabbath Sentinel. The new Editor is doing a fine job.

Eugene & Violet Rodgers

I just read a little in the recent edition of The Sabbath Sentinel and wanted to write. Since I am a new subscriber, I did not receive the Sept/Oct. 2000 edition If at all possible, could you kindly send me a copy? I am enjoying the publication so very much and the letters to the editor provide a wonderful source for inspiration in studying and possibly writing articles! I do find it a little sad that some people will automatically reject something - with anger- instead of just doing a little studying or letting it go. There is no single person on earth that knows everything and we are commanded to rightly divide the word of truth. I see no reason to discontinue reading a publication which is working so hard to promote the Biblical Sabbath, a much neglected and unknown command, simply because of a viewpoint which was not in line with one's beliefs. In the front cover of your publication, it very clearly tells the reader that the views in each article do not necessarily reflect the beliefs of the Editorial Staff. If you only printed things which one group agreed with or one group understands, then where is the opportunity for learning and growth? Please, continue with your work and may Yahweh bless you greatly!

Mrs. Sharon White

Editor—**Stepping out of the Darkness**

Thank you for your kind words. I certainly agree that one ought to think about what is being written or said by a brother or sister and, like the noble Bereans, ought to set about trying to prove—or disprove—whether the things written or said are so. While TSS does work to promote God's Sabbath, it promotes Jesus Christ, the Lord of the Sabbath, moreso. That means that we must discuss what our brethren believe to see if we are in error, or to re-prove that our belief is correct. What should never happen is that we should react without thought, as some have done. I will send you the issue in "pdf" and you can read it on your computer.

Ed.

I was shocked and disheartened when I read your editorial in the October Sabbath Sentinel.

Please tell me when the Board approved the vile statements of Emperor Constantine as Association Policy. I would like the names of the Board members that passed the resolution and their current addresses. Also, please send me a complete list of all current board members.

In the same statement you quote the sabbath is also called detestable and it states that all who observe it are a anathema.

Scripture clearly states "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." If you use a red letter bible, it is in red. Are you better in judgment than the one you call master?

Louis Kirschenbaum

I was as shocked and amazed at your letter, Louis, as you apparently were at what you perceived to be support of the statements of Constantine. Please allow me to suggest that you go back and read again the editorial for October 2000. In the event that you need some help, please allow me to explain.

The text you quote is a quote from Constantine, and he was being quoted by Mr. Ernest Davis of Indiana. Mr. Davis was upset because he perceived a bias against people of the jewish religion by the BSA. Mr. Davis believed that we were akin in attitude to Constantine and he quoted such to apprise us of how he felt.

Somehow, Mr. Davis got the impression from an earlier article entitled "Sunday Roots" that the Bible Sabbath Association dislikes or does not wish to fellowship with people who keep the jewish religion. However, as I go on to explain, nothing could be more distant from the truth.

As I stated in the editorial, I welcome fellowship with the worshippers in the jewish faith. As the title stated, half a loaf is better than none. Also, as I stated, the death of Christ was for all men, and that includes practitioners of religions that neither preach nor worship Him. The fact is: one day every knee will bow at the name of Jesus, whether they believe it now or not. Nothing that was written by me should have been construed as supportive of any statement of Constantine.

As to the Board membership, you will find their names on the inside front cover of this magazine. They may be reached by mailing the BSA at the address listed. No resolution was passed supporting any statement of Constantine by the Board. No, my judgment is not even the equivalent, much less better than the one I call Lord and Master. I hope this puts your mind at ease.

Ed.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(CONT.)

A few days ago I saw several of your most recent issues of the Sabbath Sentinel. I used to subscribe and write for this magazine in the days when Richard Wiedenheft was editor.

Judging from what I saw of the most, recent issues, I think I can say that the SS has never been a better magazine than it is now. I appreciate the breadth of scope in its coverage of topics pertinent to the Sabbath. You are wise not to confine yourself to a narrow range of doctrinal persuasions, since there is a great deal of diversity of views among committed Sabbath-keeping Christians. To publish articles exclusively on what sabbatarians hold in common would make the periodical rather bland and repetitious. No reader is obligated to adopt views he cannot agree with, but such reading may stimulate fresh thought if only on an opposing side of the question.

Brian D. Jones

Thanks for your kind words of support. Many feel as you do and have sent us letters of appreciation. Additionally, I appreciate the article you submitted for publication and we included it in this issue. It is my prayer that others will also find it edifying.

Ed.

I was quite pleasantly surprised to see my message published in the back of the November-December issue of The Sabbath Sentinel. I have written an article that I would like to send to you for consideration for publication. The article is entitled, "The Sabbath in Light of the Gospel" What is the procedure for this? Can I send an attachment? Please let me know. I am sharing the Sabbath Sentinel with many.... Thank you again for your excellent ministry. I am honored that you included my little note in your last publication.

Michael Delaney

The procedure for submitting articles for publication is to send them to the editor of The Sabbath Sentinel at the address on the inside cover. Or, you can email them to giveshare@vcn.com. It is important that you take the time to run a spell checker on your article and to read it several times to be sure that all syntax and subject-verb agreement issues are covered. We edit all articles, but being human, we miss things.

Thanks also for your support. TSS has grown rapidly over the past year thanks to the efforts of all involved. I have certainly appreciated God's having allowed me to serve the Sabbath keeping brethren in this way.

Ed.

I have received the latest issue of "The Sabbath Sentinel" and found most of the articles fascinating. I do think that there is a need for articles focused on the basics for the new or tentative Sabbatarian - however I do not find this a major shortcoming of the excellent magazine.

I have a question. I can understand most of the arguments regarding the Sabbath...however I can not help coming back to Exodus 31:16-17 KJ (although the reading almost the same for all translations). Exodus 31:17 ***"It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed."***

This was to be a sign between God and Israel, period. Are we to understand that somehow we are part of the lost tribes and that it is binding on us or are we to follow Acts 15:10-20.

I ask this out of desire to know the truth which I pray for daily, and not out of any desire to provoke or be argumentative.

Keith Leonard

Thanks for your letter and your support. Like you, the brethren at the Bible Sabbath Association are, or should be, in a state of learning at all times.

In answer to your question, in the space allotted I can only touch on the issues and must rely on you to look up the concepts mentioned. The first principle to remember is the definition of sin: sin is the transgression of the law.

Secondly, the Sabbath is the fourth commandment of the law. Breaking the Sabbath is sin. It was sin for ancient Israel: sufficiently so that committing such a sin cost the Israelites both kingdoms. It is a sin for us today. Sin is always sin.

Whether or not we are a part of the Tribes of Israel, lost or not, is not really relevant to your question. Salvation has come to all mankind through Jesus Christ. The physical blessings for obedience which were promised to Israel are not a part of the New Covenant. That New Covenant is based upon "better promises."

As to Acts 15, it is important to remember what was being discussed and not to make the issue any more than it was. The issue was circumcision, not the Sabbath. The council was not saying to avoid meats sacrificed to idols but that it's fine to worship them. In short, they were not addressing keeping the commandments. It would go without saying that the commandments should be kept—so why would they mention it?

If you have more questions along this line, please read the article by John Sash in this issue. He does a fine job with a similar concept. Or contact me at: rmitchel@flash.net.

Ed.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(CONT.)

I thank you for the Sentinel issue 485, and read with special interest the article on Woman's role in the church by Royce Mitchell. As a woman, may I say that he has not given the whole answer as regards God's instruction. I have therefore enclosed a leaflet we send out from Scotland you may wish to use.

(Name unrecognizable)
The Stewarton Bible School

Thank you for your interest in TSS. Also thank you for sending your short tract. I read it with interest since I wrote the article which you mention. Let me say that your tract does not address the points I made in my article. Instead it is a rehash of the very points that I refuted by showing the totality of scripture disagrees with the standard interpretation. Your tract further did not delve into the mistranslations found in the several scriptures you quoted. However we do thank you for submitting the tract and should a space be found in the future it could be included.

Ed.

After reading your booklets, I began to realize the truth. I'm glad that (the) Lord has shown me the light.

I was born a Hindu and converted to Muslim before knowing the truth. I studied the Catholic way of teaching and found there is no truth in them.

It all began when I was responding to a local advertisement regarding Christ's teaching. I responded to the advert and received a booklet and your address. I immediately wrote to you requesting a booklet about the true teaching.

Unfortunately, there is no Church in Malaysia which practice the Sabbath. Currently I am doing it myself alone, by reading the Holy Bible, books, listening to cassette and spiritual songs.

I'm also searching for a job which can offer a 5 days a week and off on Saturday. This will enable me to keep the weekly Sabbath.

I'm praying to Lord to guide me in this. Can your church groups pray for me in getting a 5 days a week job, guidance, protection and spiritual strengths?

M. Jonathan

I believe there will be hundreds of brethren praying for you after reading this. Also, perhaps someone can respond with a local congregation there for you. If so, I will respond to you by mail. Also, the BSA has other booklets available should you want to order them.

Ed.

I've just finished reading the Sept.-Oct. issue of The Sabbath Sentinel and since I've never written before I wanted to let you know I appreciate your magazine and the considerate way you try to be open and fair minded to all.

I especially enjoyed and was blessed by "The Issue" by a man named Sidney Davis. We in our congregation have started some studies on the Jewish roots of Christianity and have found others have the same understanding as Mr. Davis.

It is sad to see so many churches including some Sabbath churches have gotten so far away from our Jewish roots by taking the Messiah Yahshua and dressing Him up in our westernized, paganized, gentitized garb until He scarcely looks like himself.

Tony Clawson

Thanks for the support. You are like many new brethren who have come into fellowship with the BSA over the past few years. We welcome all who desire to fellowship in peace.

Several things you wrote caught my attention. I do believe in the inerrant Word of God and in seeking out the mistranslations for the true intent of the Word. One thing that attracted me was "Jewish roots." Since the word "Jew" in scripture is a mistranslation of several words, and since the word "Jew" did not come into existence until the time of William Shakespeare, I wonder if you really meant to say "Hebrew Roots?"

Expanded, the word "Jew" is actually "ioudaios" which literally means "Judean or belonging to Jehudah." It means of the Tribe of Judah. The reason for my mentioning this is two-fold. First, Christ strongly criticized the practitioners of the supposed Hebrew religion of His day. From that one would suspect that such practices were not in the form or intent given the Hebrews in the wilderness.

Secondly, those practitioners of that form of religion are today confused with a race of people. There are prophecies pertaining to Judah which have yet to be fulfilled. If we are to understand when the prophecies come to pass, we need to know who the remnants of Judah are. They are a people, not a religion.

Next, the word "gentitized" is from the root word "gentile" which is another mistranslation. The actual word in the Greek is "Hellen" which means "Greek." It is also translated from the Greek "ethnos," "ethnon," "ethnee" and "ethnesin" which is the root of our word "ethnics" and means a race or tribe. In effect, it meant a non Israelite, as Christ meant the term.

None of this is said to discourage or disparage your practices. What we do must be of faith. It is my sincere prayer that everything we do is for the glory of God and that we don't fall into the same trap as the 1st century Judeans.

Ed.

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additional 250 words, or \$100 for a full page. Photos,
[black & white are better than color], can be inserted in
your extra page for \$30 each.

We are a Messianic congregation, located in the
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sula): seeking part-time pastor (quickly to move to full-
time). We are committed to the restoring of our Hebrew
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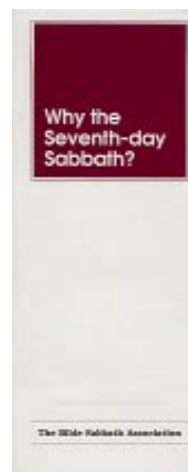
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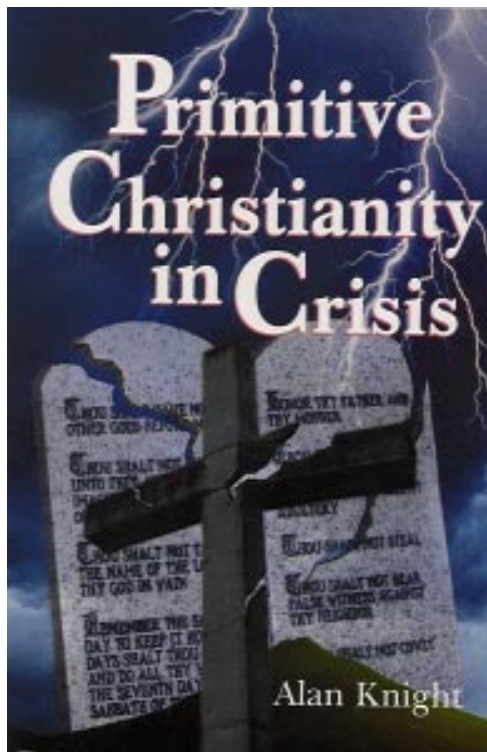
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Gnosticism, Past and Present

Seventh-day Adventist James Arrabito says that Gnostic cult theology is dominant in today's Protestant and Catholic theology. In his VHS NTSC video, "Gnosticism, Past & Present," Arrabito lists several Gnostic traits that we should watch out for today: (1) Allegorization or mythologization of Scripture to fit one's pre-conceived views, (2) Belief that only the spirit part of man is redeemable (disavowal of the bodily resurrection), (3) De-emphasis of eschatology in favor of the existential movement, (4) Minimizing of sin, miracles, denial that demons are in high places, (5) Spiritualize away the Word of God, (6) Belief that Christ did not come in the flesh, but He was an emanation of light, and salvation is ascending to a higher plane of belief, (7) Hatred of "Jewish" law.

These and other Gnostic traits have great appeal in our day. Arrabito shows how we can resist today's pull of Gnosticism. The VHS NTSC video, "Gnosticism, Past & Present," is available from The Bible Sabbath Association, 3316 Alberta Drive, Gillette, WY 82718 for \$15.00, or \$5.00 for 14-day Loan.

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