


# THE **Sabbath Sentinel**

July–August 2002



The flamingo,  
the bird with  
the miracle beak

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

**The Sabbath Sentinel**  
**July-August 2002 Volume 54, No. 4 Issue 496**

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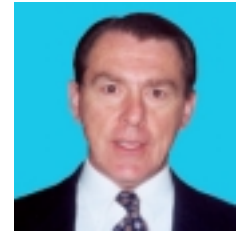
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# Whoever Loses His Life for My Sake



This is a message of grief. As I turned on my radio this morning about 6:30, I heard the newscaster say, "...and Martin Burnham was shot to death in the raid." This is a fatal chapter in the story of two unassuming missionaries and their three children. Martin Burnham and his wife Gracia were missionaries in the Philippines and had given themselves to their calling—to bring the lifesaving message of Christ to the country's southern islands.

A little over a year ago Gracia made special plans for their 18th wedding anniversary. She arranged for the two to spend some time at a popular beach resort. While enjoying their sunny retreat, the Muslim guerrilla group, Abu Sayyaf, raided the area, and the Burnhams and others, about 20 in all, were taken hostage. Although most were eventually let go, the Burnhams remained hostages until early this morning. Today the ordeal ended. The terror is over, but the grieving begins.

Maybe this all seems important to me because the Burnham family lives less than 15 miles from our home. We have been in their church from time to time for homeschooling activities. And, over the past several months, we often heard of their plight and how their three school-aged children were holding up under the strain of their parents' kidnapping. All around this area people were praying for their health, their children's welfare, and their safe rescue.

Four days later: One often looks for solace and encouragement at times like these, and in the days that have passed since writing the preceding three paragraphs (I found it difficult to pick up the pen and continue), that encouragement has come. Gracia Burnham is now home with her three children, and in spite of a bullet wound in her right leg, she is in remarkably good spirits and recovering well. News reports and interviews since the rescue last Friday are painting a portrait full of the bright colors of Christian faith, love, kindness, and courage. Since we Christians do not sorrow as the world sorrows, maybe it would be good to focus on the things of Christ that turn sorrow to joy. This following excerpt

from a Wichita Eagle article on Saturday, June 8, is a good illustration of what I mean:

"In taped interviews, Martin and Gracia at times appeared frail and frightened, but reports from other hostages who escaped described the couple as rock-solid in their faith.

"Francis Ganzon, a Filipino who was released by the guerrillas two weeks after she was captured with the Burnhams, said that when other hostages were praying to be released, Martin was praying, "Thank you, Lord."

"Martin also led the group in singing inspirational songs."

This kind of peaceful strength was a characteristic that many said marked the life of Martin Burnham.

As for Gracia Burnham, Scott Ross, a spokesman for New Tribes Mission, the Burnhams' sponsor during their 15 years as missionaries, described her in this manner: "She is upbeat; she really believes that God is in control..."

Both Martin and Gracia were children of missionaries. Martin spent his high school years in the Philippines and worked for New Tribes Mission flying passengers

and supplies around the Philippines. The two met and fell in love at Bible college and were married soon after graduation. And, with their lives firmly planted in the missionary field from their youth, it seemed only natural to return to the Philippines and give their lives in God's service to the people of that land.

In the final gun battle that took Martin Burnham's life, it is said that when Martin was wounded, he fell on top of Gracia, and by shielding her body in this manner, probably saved her life. This man, who, others said, would sing to his wife to give her encouragement during their captivity, received from Gracia the highest praise any person can receive from another when faced by such a horrible death: "He died well."

Such incidences of God's people facing the worst kind of cruelty are continual reminders of the Lord's words: "He who loses his life for my sake shall find it," and "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." □



Source: New Tribes Mission (ntm.org)

# Stay Close to God and One Another

by Tom Justus



It was about 9:30 a.m. on a Wednesday morning. I walked across the hall to see my son, Bob, about a printing job in our plant. He wasn't there. I went up to the switchboard and asked where he was. I was informed that he had received a call from his doctor to come to his office. Then I remembered a few days before that he had a black mole removed from his hairline on his neck and a biopsy was being performed. I thought he must have gone to get the results, never thinking any more about it.

About an hour later he came into my office. I took one look at him and knew something was terribly wrong. He said, "Dad, I have cancer and the doctor wants you to call him." I called the doctor and learned of the grim results. It was melanoma cancer and had already spread to other parts of his body. At this time he was forty two years old.

This next eighteen months that followed until his death, June 22, 1992, was very trying on him and the family. He had three major operations, chemotherapy and radiation treatments. The reason I am writing about this is that I want to share with others the great example that he set and some lessons that I learned.

I first learned that many things that I thought were so important really were not important at all. I kept thinking, why Bob? He had been the perfect son, never smoking, never over-drinking, always obedient and I never heard him say a curse word. Why him instead of me? I would read Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose." I found the answer in watching the trust that Bob had in God.

In all the suffering that he went through he never complained. He never asked why? God. He accepted his trial. He had two daughters, the oldest being a senior the year that he died. He wanted so much to see her graduate. He did live that long and was able to attend and I watched him, stooped over, make his way down to greet her. He had seen her graduate. He died less than three weeks later.

Bob came down to the printing plant ten days before his death. He went around to all the employees and shook their hands and told them goodbye. It was very difficult for him to get around. He was intent on saying farewell to them.

He asked me if it would be all right to get four burial plots together; one for himself and his wife and one for his mother and myself so we would come up in the resurrection together. He wanted to design his tombstone. I said fine. He was a flying instructor and loved to fly, teaching his wife to fly. One side of the monument was an airplane and it said, "I fly." The other side was another airplane and it said, "I fly 2." Across the bottom was the inscription, "STAY CLOSE TO GOD AND ONE ANOTHER UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN."

There are so many troubles and heartaches in the world today, I use this inscription in closing my sermons when I am visiting other churches. I learned the need of this from my son. He asked me to speak at his funeral and tell the people of Springdale how thankful he was for being able to spend the last 12 years of his life with the people here. As our salesman, he had met and influenced many people in the surrounding area. At the funeral there were over 500 people, only about 50 being from our small church. How had he influenced so many people? By the way, he loved people and his closeness to God.

I have learned very much from his life. I have learned to be patient. I have learned to be more compassionate with other people in their trials. I do not say to people anymore, "I understand what you are suffering," unless I have been through the same trial. I do know how it feels to lose a child. My heart goes out to people who have lost loved ones. We need to draw closer to God daily. We need to comfort one another, we need to forget the trivial things that divide us.

How does Romans 8:28 apply, "All things work together for good to those who love God?" Part of the good is that I know that if I ever want to see my son again, I MUST STAY CLOSE TO GOD. Even though our family members were very close to each other, it has bonded us even more. Seeing the trust that our son had in the resurrection has given us all more strength to face whatever is in the future. God has said I will never leave you nor forsake you. Remember as we are faced with problems, "STAY CLOSE TO GOD AND ONE ANOTHER UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN."

—Tom Justus is a vice president of the BSA

# Learning Not to Become Offended

by Tommy Willis

As a student of human nature I always try to examine why we do the things we do and why we react the way we do. It's important to know ourselves and the danger of the human nature we were born with, and why we become offended.

Scripture tells us that many Christians will become offended and hate one another as the end of the age draws near (Matt 24:10-13). This relates to the problem of not knowing ourselves and the danger of our human nature. Think about it: if the many Christians that become offended (that this Scripture talks about) would have seen the danger of their human nature, they would have seen more of the need to pray and draw close to God so that His Spirit would be there to help them react with mercy and forgiveness towards those who have done them wrong.

If we will study the above verses, we will see that after Jesus says that many will hate one another and become offended, He then states "but he that endures till the end will be saved." This shows the connection between not becoming offended and enduring till the end! Many of the things that happen will be testing points to see how much we are going to seek out God so that we can stay with His love and forgiveness—to stay focused on the narrow road.

The problem is, we take things in the personal hurt the way the world does when others react badly towards us. We get our feelings hurt and often become offended. This is why Jesus said in the same Olivet prophecy that if we would "watch and pray always," we would have His strength to endure through all these things.

"Great peace have they which love thy law and nothing shall offend them" (Ps 119:165). This does not mean just to know the doctrines and laws of the Bible intellectually. One must build up a close personal relationship with Christ, the Living Word, and have enough of His Spirit inside to react with His mercy and compassion—that is, have His law "written on our hearts"—and then we will not become offended.

Many become offended at life itself. They didn't ask to be born, and feel they don't deserve the tri-

als they have to endure (people relate to this subconsciously). But this is a dangerous attitude and could cause us to turn from God.

Everything that happens to you in life will be a blessing if you will not become offended and let God teach you from it, because God says He is working it all to the good (Rom 8:28).

This is one of the keys to healthy spiritual growth. But, we really get out of focus when we become offended, and we don't see the danger we are in. I share this with you as one who became offended for many years, which led to an unforgiving heart towards other Christians. I was in much danger during this time. It was many years before God taught me not to become offended. Had not God been able to clear up my unforgiving heart, I would have been destroyed in the lake of fire with that attitude, because God says that if you don't forgive your brother, then neither will He forgive you (Matt 6:14-15).

Many are offended at their lot in life. They may feel they are from dysfunctional families, or that they don't have much of the world's material goods, or that fate has dealt them many bad blows. But, as believers we need to realize that no matter how many problems we have, God says He will be there to guide and direct us and give us His grace to endure and overcome.

The inevitable trials of this mortal life will come. It's important to learn not to become offended at what God allows to come our way. God is the Master Arranger and knows just what trials each of His children needs. He knows that what will work with one child, might not work with another. We need to learn to trust His wisdom, and see that, if He allows it to come upon us, then He knows we need it. This is one of the keys to healthy spiritual growth. Keeping this in mind will help keep us from becoming offended at the suffering which is for our benefit.

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# Scholarship Essay Contest

## Comments on the 2002 BSA Essay Contest by June Narber, Committee Chair

This year's essay contest came to a close April 1<sup>st</sup>. It took about three weeks to process the essays (copy them and mail them to the judges). Two of our judges were international this year (one in Canada and the other one in Spain). I'd like to make some comments about this year's contest as well as the contest in general.

This year we had applicants representative of all the major Sabbath-keeping organizational divisions. However, we had fewer than twenty applicants. I would like to see more youth participate in the contest.

All of the essays were very good. Two areas need to be briefly addressed. I disqualified three applications because the applicants were well over the 25-year-old age cut off. We will not accept applications of individuals who are past the cut off age. The reason for this is that the contest is designed to be a youth scholarship contest. Secondly, the issue of **what** to write on the essay comes up. In the judging process, each essay question is judged based on **how well** the applicant answers the question. In some essays, the question that was asked is barely addressed at all. In a couple of cases last year, the applicants digressed and quoted more than a dozen scriptures in random sequence and hardly had any of their own words in the essay at all. It is essential for applicants **to answer the given question**. It is good to use scriptural reference, but not to the extent that the essay is no longer their own words but large quotes from Scripture alone. Part of the reason we decide to use a given question for the essay contest is to help generate some new ideas to share with the Sabbath-keeping community at large. It is my personal hope that ideas generated from the Sabbath-keeping youth might help to solve some of the issues facing Sabbath keepers at large.

In final thoughts about the applicants in general, it is important that applicants **follow directions** to apply for the contest: 1) fill out the application completely, 2) attach reference letters from a high school counselor and a Sabbath-keeping elder/

minister/leader, 3) have the materials postmarked by the deadline, 4) answer the given essay question thoroughly, 5) handwrite the application and attach typed copies for easy viewing by the judges. For applications that do NOT follow these rules, points will be deducted by the judges based upon the point scoring system I have devised (which in itself guarantees the fairness and accuracy in the judging process).

Next year's contest will officially be open by late fall. At this time, I would like to invite our readers to offer new questions that might serve as essay questions. Any questions submitted should be related to the Sabbath: history of the Sabbath; Sabbath observance; keeping Sabbath in the modern world; Sabbath in community; Sabbath fellowship; cooperation/peace/relations among Sabbath keepers in general; promotion of the Sabbath; Sabbath issue in international areas and so on. Secondly, any interested parties who might like to donate their time to serve as judges next year are invited to submit a brief letter and resume to me for consideration. Potential judges need to have 1) minimum academic credentials of a bachelor's degree 2) be dedicated Sabbath keepers in any Sabbath-keeping organization or independent fellowships 3) have email access for easy and fast correspondence during the judging period next April.

The judges for this year's contest are as follows along with their biographies.

### **Gordon Moynham from Alberta, Canada**

Gordon's academic credentials include an Honours B.A. from Waterloo Lutheran University (now Wilfrid Laurier University) in Waterloo, Ontario and an M.A. and PhD candidacy (dissertation not yet complete) from the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta (all in Economics). He is an instructor in Economics at Mount Royal College in Calgary, Alberta, where he teaches first and second year courses in Microeconomics, Macroeconomics and Money & Banking. He has been a Sabbath keeper since 1969 and is currently a member of the Church of God (Seventh Day) and he has many friends in various other Sabbath keeping churches. He is married (35 years) and has 2 children—a daughter, age 24, who is

currently working in Scotland and a son, age 20, who is studying to become a paramedic. He can be reached at [GMoynham@mtroyal.ab.ca](mailto:GMoynham@mtroyal.ab.ca).

#### **Lars Harrison from Raleigh, North Carolina**

Lars Harrison's academic credentials include a Mechanical Engineering education from Sweden, a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Accounting from Georgia State University, Atlanta, Georgia, and a Bachelor of Theology degree from Ambassador College, Big Sandy, Texas. He is an independent Sabbath keeper and a former editor of *The Sabbath Sentinel*. He came into the Sabbath truth in 1986.

Lars is a native of Sweden and has been married to June Narber for eight years. Professionally, he is the President & CEO of Altika Corporation, an international financial services & strategy consulting company. Lars can be reached at [lharrison@altika.com](mailto:lharrison@altika.com).

#### **Juan Antonio López de la Torre of Faura (Valencia) Spain**

Juan Antonio López is an EFL and Bible teacher coordinator at a college in Spain: Colegio Adventista de Sagunto. Juan holds the following degrees: Licenciatura en Filología Francesa (French Philology), Facultad de Letras de la Universidad de Murcia (Spain); Certificado de Aptitud en Francés (French), Escuela Oficial de Idiomas de Murcia (Official Languages School); Certificado de Aptitud en Inglés (English), Escuela Oficial de Idiomas de Valencia (Official Languages School of Valencia); Curso de Aptitud Pedagógica, ciclos I y II (Teaching Certificate), Universidad de Valencia; Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction, Universidad Adventista del Plata (Sagunto's program).

He is a member of the Seventh Day Adventist Church. He is married to María José Fenor and has two children. He can be reached at [j\\_a\\_ldelatorre@hotmail.com](mailto:j_a_ldelatorre@hotmail.com)

## **Our First Place Scholarship Winner Matthew Gladden**

Matthew Gladden, 20, is from McMinnville, Oregon, where he attends Linfield College. He is a senior and will be graduating with a degree in piano performance with a minor in psychology. Matthew grew up with four brothers in Central Oregon and was home schooled by his parents, Jim and Lisa Gladden. He enjoys traveling, cars, and playing the piano. He spent several summers in Central America doing mission volunteer work with Maranatha Ministries. Upon one such trip Matthew had the opportunity of meeting Rachel Butler, of Grand Ronde, Oregon, to whom he was recently married. Matthew and his beautiful bride both attend the Grand Ronde Seventh-day Adventist Church. Matthew is considering graduate school in either piano performance or pastoral ministries.



### **(1) What lessons have you learned from keeping the Sabbath in your life?**

I was raised as a Sabbath keeper. Saturday was the day I couldn't play with my friends and the day that my parents slept all afternoon. Since then my outlook on the Sabbath has drastically changed. My parents are far away, and I now keep the Sabbath not because I have to, but because I choose to. Oh, what joy it has been! The Sabbath now means something different to me than it did when I was a child. In the last few years I have learned many lessons from keeping the Sabbath. Here are just a few:

Keeping the Sabbath is a pleasure. Keeping the Sabbath over the last few years has shown me that keeping the Sabbath is a privilege and a joy. I remember when my outlook on the Sabbath was starting to change. Instead of thinking about the "coulds" and "could nots," I instead focused on how I could bring

honor to God in an act of worship. The experience was incredible! When sunset came, I remember thinking how I wished the day was longer.

The Sabbath is something I need. It sets the mood for the rest of my week. God was smart when he gave us the Sabbath; he had our best interest in mind. Besides rest from our physical labor, communion with God is something that we humans need in order to survive. God asked us to set aside one day for him for our own benefit. The Sabbath is a day to step back from life and meditate on what really is important in life. It then gives us strength to tackle the week ahead.

The Sabbath is an important part of my relationship with God. This is the most important lesson I have learned from keeping the Sabbath. Every evening, from 9:00-9:30 pm, I make a call to my fiancée, who is working in a different state. That phone call is the best part of my day. We talk about our wedding and how it won't

be long until we will see each other again. Our daily phone call keeps us communicating, and therefore keeps our relationship strong. If this check in time is needed for a human relationship, don't we need one for our relationship with God? This is what the Sabbath is for. God has set up a check in time with us because he wants our relationship with him to be strong. All week I look forward to my time with God. We "talk" about all sorts of things. Best of all, we talk about how it won't be long until we will see each other.

The Sabbath is a delight, a much needed gift from God, and an integral part of my relationship with God. Those are just three of the many things I have learned from keeping the Sabbath. With a lifetime ahead of me, I know there will be many more Sabbaths to keep, many more lessons to learn.

## **(2) How do you explain the Sabbath to others (teachers, employers, friends, etc.)?**

Keeping the Sabbath is a very normal part of my week. It is also quite normal among close friends and family. It is an accepted way of life for the small "culture" that I live in. However, for most of the world, taking a day aside to worship God seems a little weird and different, especially if the day is Saturday, not Sunday. Even more strange is the fact that I don't work or participate in activities that will take my focus from God. How do I explain what I do to my friends and the people I come in contact with? This is a question I have had to face and is also one that I love to answer. It gives me an opportunity to tell them about my favorite part of the week.

I was recently contacted and asked if I would be interested in judging a talent show and competition over a weekend. The experience would have helped my musical background as well as given me contact with other musicians in the area. However, the main day of the competition was Saturday. I did not have to think long about my decision, but I did spend time thinking about how I would tell the director of the show my decision. I knew I was not interested in spending my Sabbath at a talent show. I called up the director and told her that I would not be able to judge the show because I was a Sabbath keeper. She was very understanding, and was even glad to hear that I kept the Sabbath. I have never once regretted that decision.

Explaining the Sabbath to my friends and acquaintances is something I have had many opportunities to do. I have recently learned that the best way to do it is to simply be open and honest with them. Instead of saying, "I do this because of my religion," I say "I choose to worship God on this day." I let them know that I take a full day of my week to spend time with God. When they ask me why, I tell them because God asked us to. When they ask me why I do it on Saturday instead of Sunday, I tell them because God asked us to rest on the seventh day, and that Jesus himself kept the SEVENTH day Sabbath. For both responses I quote the fourth commandment.

I am surrounded by both non-Adventists and non-Christians at the school I am presently attending. Because of that I have many opportunities to explain my Sabbath observing habits. The main point(s) I try to get across to them is that I keep the Sabbath because (a) I choose to (not because my religion says I have to), and that (b) keeping the Sabbath is a wonderful, joyful experience. Through these main points I hope to give them an accurate picture of what Sabbath keeping is all about.

## **3) What challenges face Sabbath keepers and/or Sabbath-keeping churches in the years to come.**

In America today, we have the wonderful opportunity of enjoying religious liberty, the principle on which this country was founded. For seventh-day Sabbath keepers, who worship on a different day than most religions, this freedom is especially appreciated. However, it is likely that such religious freedom will not be so abundant in the future. Besides the rejection that some Sabbath keepers already experience, the future may hold for us other, more trying challenges. I hope and pray that both Sabbath-keeping churches and individuals will be ready for such trying times.

Religious freedom is something that America boasts about. However, it is not always practiced, and is sometimes misinterpreted and abused. There are many stories of Sabbath keepers who are fired or "laid off" because of their refusal to work on Saturday. For years my father has been denied a promotion simply because he will not "be a team player" (be available at anytime to work). I do not see this circumstance getting any better in the future. In fact, with the direction our country is heading, and its emphasis on weekend events, I can only see it getting worse. I recently saw a calendar with its first day being Monday, leaving the seventh day as Sunday. As harmless as this may seem, this is a subtle hint to de-emphasize the true order of the week, drawing attention to Sunday as the seventh and last day of the week.

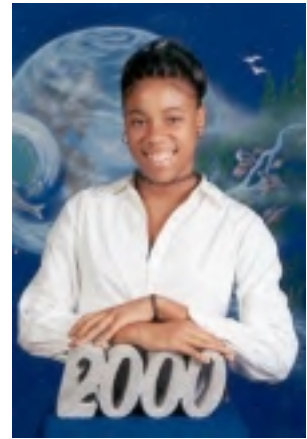
Along with the general respect for Sabbath keepers going down, I can see the future holding times that could be downright dangerous for Sabbath keepers. Atrocious things have been done to God's people in the past, and as history moves on, there is none to say that those things couldn't happen again. Satan has done, and is doing, all he can to cause people to forget the only commandment that starts out with the word "remember." Satan will stop at nothing to discourage God's people from worshipping their God. This may come in the form of laws against Sabbath observance, or privileges taken away from those who do.

There is no telling what kind of challenges are in store for Sabbath-observing churches and people. It will be vitally important in the last days for Sabbath keepers to be well-grounded in their belief. They must know exactly why they choose to observe the Sabbath, and be willing to give up their lives for such a principle. I hope and pray that I and my church community will have the faith to stand for what we believe, and that the Sabbath will continue to be observed until the very end.



## Our Second Place Scholarship Winner Ashley Drakes

I am Ashley Trenneice Drakes, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Donly Drakes of Greenville, Mississippi. I am the eldest of three other siblings and a 2002 high school graduate of the Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science. I attend the Worldwide Church of God. As of now, I am anticipating enrollment at Tougaloo College the fall semester of 2002 and I plan to major in Political Science and minor in Economics. I enjoy reading, working with children, and writing poetry and fiction in my spare time.



### **(1) What lessons have you learned from keeping the Sabbath in your life?**

The Sabbath has provided me with a better understanding on how to live a life that God favors. It has taught me that I am different with regard to what I believe and who I am. The Sabbath has strengthened my character and helped me develop and enhance my relationship with my Creator. Because of the Sabbath, I have been instilled with a strengthened faith and I've been enabled to come to the realization that my worldly desires are of no comparison to my Father's holy day. They are insignificant on God's Sabbath and I give God His proper time on His set day. I have learned self-discipline and how to make better choices and decisions in deciding what in life is truly important. It has not been easy giving up worldly entertainment and desires on the Sabbath, but honoring and serving my Holy Creator is the supreme purpose of the Sabbath and everything else is secondary. God gave me six other days in the week to worry about my own problems and handle my personal interests and concerns. The seventh day, however, to me, is a blessing that God specifically created so He and His children could develop a healthier relationship. Because of His holy day, I have learned to better appreciate the more simple things in life and reflect and be thankful for even my blessings of meager value. God's Sabbath has empowered me with the fundamentals in becoming a better Christian and server of God.

### **(2) How do you explain the Sabbath to others (teachers, employers, friends, etc.)?**

The Sabbath to those that do not keep it can be very confusing and is often misunderstood. Most people think Sabbath-keepers go to church on Saturday instead of Sunday and that's the end of it. However, keeping the Sabbath has been quite different for me because I do more than go to church. In my family, we not only do no work on the Sabbath, but there is also no going out shopping, to the movies, or hanging out with friends until sundown Saturday. So, as could be expected, my friends often question why I can't go with them to the big football game on Friday nights or go to the mall

with them to catch the clearance sale Saturday mornings. Whenever questions about the Sabbath come up, whether it be friends, family, or employers, I explain to them I that I keep the biblical seventh-day Sabbath spoken of in the Bible. Just as Jesus rested on the seventh day as God commands in the Ten Commandments, I keep the Sabbath reverently, also. I also explain to them that God commands us to rest and keep the seventh day of the week holy and, technically speaking, it is obvious that the seventh day of the week is Saturday, not Sunday. As in Genesis 2, God refrained from all work on the seventh day and made the day holy. Because the Sabbath is a holy day, I too refrain from all work and worldly entertainment to acknowledge and give praise to my Creator. I do not try to force my keeping of the seventh-day Sabbath on others; however, I expect them to respect my belief in it just the same.

### **3) What challenges face Sabbath keepers and/or Sabbath-keeping churches in the years to come?**

There are several challenges facing Sabbath keepers and churches that keep the seventh-day Sabbath. One particular challenge is in the case of the world being ruled under one religion and worship on another day. Another prospective problem may be the promotion of a new calendar system that would obstruct the present seven-day week. In the world's current situation, anything is possible and Sabbath keepers will ultimately be compelled with the decision of abiding by the law or following their faith. It will be a trial in which the inner conviction of those that keep the Sabbath will be tested. However, even Jesus was tested because of his beliefs and as Sabbath keepers we are to definitely follow his example. Even for his life, Jesus did not forfeit what he believed and had faith in. He did not yield to the corruption of society. We, like Jesus, may one day be forced into making similar decisions; and just as in Jesus' time, being unyielding in our faith could lead to persecution. The question is, will we make the right choice even if it costs us our life, or will we bow down to the barricades of society and prove that we, in actuality, have no faith at all?

# **“Marvelous Are Thy Works” The Marvel of Birds**

**by C. Frazier Spencer**

The Bible is a unique book. It says it was written by a Being who is above all other gods because He created the wood, stone, and metals; the very material which are used to fashion other gods. Strong words indeed! Psalm 95: 3-5; 115:3-8; 135:5, 15-18; Isaiah 44ff; Jeremiah 10:2-15. This Being adds that He is the giver of life. Job 33:4; Proverbs 4:4; 7:2; Romans 6:23; John 1:3-4. This Being farther writes to us in Romans 1:20 that the invisible things of Him are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.

Therefore looking at the things that have been made to prove this Creator God seems to be a logical starting place for people interested in Christianity. Notice Paul used the Creator God as a starting place (Acts 17:24-25) when first revealing God to the pagan philosophers at Athens.

As the direct opposite to a Creator God, stands Evolution which says every living thing is the result of mindless, purposeless, accidental chance. The Evolution opposite is now taught in our schools and in the various media as established fact. Even worse, the alternative is not only denied equal time; the alternative is not even allowed to be presented! Thus, it seems to this writer that Evolution has taken on many aspects of being a dominant Religion in itself.

If humans are in fact the result of a Creator God, then it seems in our best interests to follow His instructions of how to live.

If on the other hand, humans are the result of a mindless and accidental process, if there is no Creator and Life giver, if, as Evolution claims, humans are just highly developed animals; then we should eat and drink because tomorrow we die (1 Corinthians 15:32).

Some say there is a direct relationship between the rise of the evolutionist's "Humans are Just Animals" dogma with today's rise in immorality and violence.

So which one is true? A Creator/Life giver or accidental Evolution? We need to know, and to know that we know!

The purpose of this column, therefore, is to help counter today's widely taught Evolution doctrine. It also hopes to present various small parts of the evidence that can be seen of a Creator God.

## **Woodpecker Safety Gear**

Sir David Attenborough, a fellow of the Royal Society, is a widely acclaimed Natural Science television producer and author of many books explaining Natural Science. He is also an Evolution believer and supporter. Thus, his observations and conclusions are even more striking. His book, *The Life of Birds*, was published in 1998 by the Princeton University Press. Some of the information from his book follows. Italics added for emphasis.

Woodpeckers hunt for insects that are beyond the reach of the tree creeper, beneath the bark and even in the wood below. The implements they use are not tweezers but chisels. A blow from a woodpecker's bill strikes the tree at about 25 miles per hour.

Let's pause and consider this information for a moment. First, Attenborough sees woodpeckers actually using implements. Then he reports about speed. Have you ever seen pictures of test cars that were crashed into a barrier at speeds of 25 miles per hour? Quite devastating. Yet, picture this tiny bird doing this many times a minute, minute after minute. He goes on to explain:

...And does so with such force that the two mandibles of its beak would fly apart were they not, at that moment, held together by a special locking device. The shock of the blow is so great that if it traveled directly to the brain, the bird would be knocked unconscious. That does not happen because its brain lies above the level of its beak and is cushioned by muscles at the base of its beak which act as shock absorbers.

Having hammered its way into a gallery excavated by an insect larva of some kind, the woodpecker then has to extract its prey. This it does with an extraordinarily long tongue. In some species, it is four times as long as the bird's beak. To accommodate it, a long sheath extends from the back of the beak over the rear of the bird's skull, along its crest and down over the front of the bird's face. Salivary glands around the sheath at the base of the beak coat it with a glue-like mucus and this, together with the barbed hairs with which it is coated, makes it stick to the soft skin of a beetle grub so that the woodpecker can drag out its vic-

tim. This equipment is invisible within the woodpeckers head so we tend to forget it is there, but it must surely rate as one of the most extraordinary devices for collecting food possessed by any bird.

An additional woodpecker special characteristic is added by Barry MacKay in his book *Bird Sounds*: “Stiff bristles, which are specially modified feathers, cover the nostrils to protect the bird from inhaling wood chips and dust.”

Let’s review for a moment what was revealed to us. Here is a list of the implements or special characteristics that we have learned are built into the common woodpecker:

- chisels
- special locking device shock absorbers
- glue like extraordinary tongue
- barbed hairs
- stiff bristles

At this point, we need to ask ourselves a question. Can these be the result of mindless and accidental Evolution, or do they seem to have purpose, to have been intelligently designed?

Consider further. The woodpecker is a bird that feeds on insects inside a tree.

How, then, could mindless and purposeless Evolution make the connection between a bird outside the tree with its food source hidden inside the tree? It seems Evolution would have immediately settled for food found outside the tree and would have gone no further.

Doesn’t it seem logical to conclude only an intelligent mind could have made the connection between the woodpecker and its food and then designed the implements, at least six distinct ones as identified by Attenborough and MacKay needed to accomplish the highly specialized job?

## Tools for Eating Crows

Some birds even make their own tools, as the author goes on to point out.

A Crow species found on the island of New Caledonia has been observed with an even greater proficiency as a toolmaker.

The first tool is a poker, a sharp leaf stem several inches long. With this, the bird probes around in the crowns of palms. Here, buried in the accumulation of leaf litter lurk big fleshy grubs. Sometimes the crow manages to impale one... but it has also learned that if it does so repeatedly, the grub will become so irritated that it will bite the spike with its powerful jaws and then hang on with such determination that the crow can pull it out.

The second tool, used for much the same purpose,

is rather more elaborate. It is a kind of hook. The bird carefully selects a twig with a curved end, breaks it from its branch and takes it back to its perch. There it removes the bark and any leaves it may have and spends several minutes using its beak to exaggerate the curve of the hook on the end.

Its third implement is a harpoon, made from the long stiff strap-like leaves of the pandanus. These carry lines of backward-pointing spines down each margin like the blades of a saw. The crow tears a strip from the edge of one of these leaves, and holding it in its beak with the saw teeth pointing upwards, jabs at the grubs so that the teeth snag in the grub’s soft skin.

Again, a question: If we observe knowledge and behavior such as in these crows, that appears to have been programmed into them, is it not reasonable to conclude that a Master Programmer was involved? Reflect also on built in knowledge of nest building by birds, of web spinning by spiders, and on and on.

Living in the Computer Age, I think we have a big advantage over previous humans in seeing and proving the Creator God. Our generation can easily identify and understand the work of a Creator/programmer that previous generations were unable to do.

## The Life of Birds

The author provides more information on bird implements and special characteristics.

**Vultures** have naked heads, for they feed by thrusting their heads inside corpses and feathers would quickly become soiled by blood and guts and would become the source of infections.

**Boobies** as they begin their dives for fish they pull back their wings and take the shape of an arrowhead, thus reducing wind resistance, but retaining their ability to steer as they take aim. At the last moment, within a foot or so of the water, they fully extend their wings backwards and hit the surface at 60 miles per hour. At such a speed, the impact with the water must be very violent, the boobies have a network of airsacs just below the skin in front of the body which absorbs much of the shock.

Nor is water driven into their nostrils for these are permanently blocked and the birds breathe instead through the corner of the mouth.

The huge precipices of the Outer Hebrides and the Orkneys, some over a thousand feet high, are colonized by millions of **sea birds** which settle on the narrow ledges, in itself no mean feat of aerobatics, and there deposit their eggs. Those of guillemots



The Downy Woodpecker  
(Source: CEVL, Michigan State University)

*Continued on Page 13*

## BSA Membership to Vote for New Constitution

Dear BSA member:

The Constitution and Bylaws subcommittee of the Bible Sabbath Association recently drafted a proposal for a new constitution and bylaws that streamlines our current document for the purpose of enabling our Board of Directors to carry out the association's business more effectively. The Board of Directors voted to send the proposed revision to the entire BSA membership for their approval or disapproval. In order for the new constitution and bylaws to be legally effective, 85% of the membership must vote on the change, and a majority of those voting must approve the document. The mass mailing of this notification to the membership omitted the voting ballot which is presented below. We ask all members who received the proposed revision to use the ballot below and send it by mail in the enclosed envelope or to send their vote electronically via e-mail. The deadline for the return of ballots is September 30, 2002. We apologize for this oversight.

Cordially,

Sidney L. Davis, Jr.  
President

**Please mark your vote in the appropriate square below.**

I agree with the changes.

I disagree with the changes.

(Cut here)

and razorbills are even more pear-shaped than those of plovers, with one end blunt and the other pointed. The reason for this cannot be to allow the eggs to nestle close to one another, as it is for those of plovers, because guillemots and razorbills only produce a single egg. It could therefore be a safety feature. If objects with such a shape are pushed or knocked, they will not travel far, but merely roll in a circle, a valuable characteristic for eggs that may be laid on bare rock ledges!

Grebe chicks climb up to the back of one of their parents. Once they are on board, the adult raises its wings slightly to prevent them falling off. The first objects Grebe chicks are given are not food. They are small feathers picked up by the adult from the surface of the water. Each little chick will swallow a great number.

**Questions:** Why would a parent bird gather for its newborn baby's first meal, small feathers which are not food? Why would the baby chicks eat the feathers, which are not food?

Attenborough goes on to explain that the first meal of feathers serves a vital need. "The feathers may be indigestible, but they are very valuable nevertheless. They accumulate in the chick's stomach. Some form a felted plug in the opening that leads to the intestine. This prevents any sharp fish bones or indigestible parts of insects that the chick will soon be eating from passing through the stomach and damaging the delicate walls of the gut. Others collect into balls with which the fish bones become entangled and held until they are largely dissolved. This practice of feather-eating will continue throughout their lives, but it must be a specially valuable precaution at this early stage."

What if feathers floating on the water are not available, you might wonder? Ah, that has been taken care of too. The author explains, "small feathers (...) picked up by the adult from the surface of the water or plucked from its own breast." Strange behavior indeed, yet there it is.

As Attenborough points out, the baby Grebe chicks need this first meal of feathers. We are thus confronted with a problem in logic. How could Grebes survive for millions of years while they were evolving various techniques until finally, and purely by accident, they stumbled on the first meal of feathers solution? Yet that is the scenario evolutionists would have us picture and believe.

Furthermore, once stumbled upon, how was the knowledge to eat the first meal of feathers passed on to each subsequent parent and to each baby bird? The logical answer seems to be that there was a Master Programmer at work and the needed feather meal was programmed into the brains of the first Grebe parent and the first offspring baby. It was programmed so thor-

oughly that the parent will even illogically pluck out its own feathers if necessary.

**Flamingos** live predominantly on blue-green algae. These microscopic plants float in the upper surface of the water and the lesser flamingo collects them with one of the most complex beaks possessed by any bird. When feeding, it lowers its long neck and holds this beak upside down and pointing backwards, just beneath the surface of the water where the algae it seeks congregates. The lower mandible is bulbous and has a honeycomb of air-filled spaces which cause it to float, so minimizing the muscular effort needed to hold the beak in the right place in the water. The bend in the middle of the beak is of particular importance. Were the beak straight, then when it opens, the gap between the mandibles would steadily increase from the corner of the gape to its tip. With a bend in the middle, the flamingo is able to separate its mandibles just slightly so that the distance between them is almost the same along nearly all its length. There is therefore no danger of a feeding bird taking in larger objects than it wants."

Internally, the edges of the mandibles are lined by hinged horny plates. The bird's tongue acts as a pump, moving extremely rapidly backwards and forwards. As the tongue retracts, the hair-covered plates are swept down flat and water is drawn in. As the tongue pushes forward again, the plates lift, water is expelled and the algae and shrimp are strained off by the hairs. Backward pointing spines on the palate and the tongue guide the food particles into the throat. The bird is thus able to swallow its food with a minimum of salt water. Pumping in mouthfuls twenty times a second, a lesser flamingo can filter twenty liters of water a day and extract from it sixty grams of food.

## You Be the Judge

We have considered only a few of the many complex bird designs and special characteristics reported in great detail in this 311-page book. As we consider bird characteristics like chisels, special locking devices, shock absorbers, glue like extraordinary tongue, barbed hairs, stiff bristles, a tool maker of a poker, a hook, small feathers needed to be eaten by newborn grebe birds, a most complex beak, honeycomb of air-filled spaces, needed bend in the middle of a beak, hinged horny plates, and a tongue that acts as a pump, we have to ask ourselves, are all of these implements and special characteristics the result of Evolution, which admittedly is mindless, purposeless, accidental chance? Or, are they more logically the result of planning, design, master programming, an intelligent, purposeful Creator?

Which one makes more sense to you?

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# Dealing With Pharisees, Yesterday and Today

by Monte Judah

Yeshua's ministry was filled with inspired teaching, new sight for the blind, healing for the lame, cleansing for lepers, and hope for the poor. It also had something else – great conflict. In the midst of doing so much good, there were those who were opposed to all the good being done. Was it Satan incarnate who was so adamantly opposed? Was it evil forces filled with hatred that opposed Yeshua as He went about doing good? No. For the most part, it was the religious people, specifically it was the religious leaders who were pledged and committed to the good of the community and the people. Within this group were Sadducees, scribes, priests, and the elders of the land, but it was the Pharisees that gave Yeshua the most grief. Unlike the other leaders, the Pharisees had built local synagogues and ministered directly to where the people were. They were the spiritual leaders of the people. Why then would they be so opposed to the ministry of Yeshua? Why would any religious leaders be opposed to Yeshua's ministry? Why did they disregard the good things done for the people? What in particular bothered them so much to cause such opposition? The reasons are going to surprise you. But what will surprise you even more is that these same reasons are used today by religious leaders that are opposed to one another.

Why would any religious leader today be opposed to the good works of any ministry? Whether it be the local pastor or a regional/national leader, why would any religious man be opposed to another man ministering. Let's examine Yeshua's example as He dealt with opposition in His day.

## ***The charges against Yeshua:***

If you were to stop and ask a Pharisee why he was opposed to Yeshua, he wouldn't answer that he was opposed to good works, but for other reasons. Here is a summary list of the six charges against Yeshua as recorded in the Gospels and how Yeshua addressed them.

### **1. He breaks God's word.**

The first complaint against Yeshua was nothing less than absurd. The Pharisees charged Him with breaking their rules for Sabbath.

Therefore some of the Pharisees were saying, "This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath..." (John 9:16).

Actually, they charged Yeshua with breaking Sabbath because He was healing on the Sabbath. First, it was the lame man at the Pool of Bethesda when He told him to take his pallet home.

Therefore the Jews were saying to him who was cured, "It is the Sabbath, and it is not permissible for you to carry your pallet." And for this reason the Jews were persecuting Yeshua, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath (John 5:10, 16).

Yeshua answered these charges with the words of Moses. Yeshua pointed out that Moses instructed Israel to circumcise their sons on the eighth day, even if it was a Sabbath. Yeshua questioned them with the Torah. If Moses says that you should circumcise on a Sabbath, then what is the fault with healing the whole man on Sabbath?

On this account Moses has given you circumcision (not because it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and on the Sabbath you circumcise a man. If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath that the Law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made an entire man well on the Sabbath? (John 7:22-23).

This is a well known teaching in the Torah for Torah teachers today. Rabbi Elazar was one of the great sages of Judaism and very profound in many of his teachings. He said it this way, "If circumcision, which involves only one of the 248 limbs of a man, overrides Sabbath, then the whole body certainly overrides the Sabbath." According to the teachings of Judaism, Yeshua spoke and did correctly. Please take note that Yeshua (the Greatest Torah Teacher) said it first.

Yeshua did not keep the commandments of the Pharisees; He kept the commandments of His Father handed down by Moses. This event served notice to the Pharisees that debating Scripture with Yeshua would not work to bring Him down. They would need to find something more to defeat Him.

### **2. He is not sent from God.**

Yeshua said that He was sent by His Father, our Heavenly Father. A lot of people are sent by God for a variety of reasons. Prophets are sent by God. Moses was sent to the children of Israel by God. Pastors are called of God. In fact, all spiritual teachers lay claim to the call or authority of God to teach. Israel was familiar with hearing people say that they were sent by God. They even had a proce-

sure to determine if the person was from God. They examined the words and deeds. They looked for signs. Moses instructed them that truth was confirmed by the evidence of two or three. Yeshua, Himself, said that we were to examine the fruit from the tree to determine the type of tree. So why was this a charge against Yeshua? Why didn't they see Him as sent from God? It can't be because people are not sent by God. The answer is somewhat shocking. They simply refused to consider His words or deeds and signs. They said He was not from God and offered only their opinion against Him. This was a great source of conflict even among themselves.

But others were saying, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And there was a division among them (John 9:16b).

Some of the specific signs that assuredly proved that Yeshua was sent from God included giving sight to the man born blind. Even the blind man gave this testimony when questioned by the Pharisees.

Since the beginning of time it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, He could do nothing (John 9:32-33).

If He wasn't sent from God, then the Pharisees had to contend that He was doing things of His own will for the purpose of falsehoods.

The Pharisees therefore said to Him, "You are bearing witness of Yourself; Your witness is not true" (John 8:13).

Yeshua answered this point directly on several occasions. First, He stated His position clearly and showed the signs of God's hand, His Father. Then, He reminded them of John the Baptist and his personal endorsement of Yeshua. He reminded them of His specific deeds and works. Finally, He offered the Scriptures (Moses and the Prophets) as a witness of Himself.

Even in your law it has been written, that the testimony of two men is true. I am He who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me (John 8:17-18).

If I alone bear witness of Myself, My testimony is not true. There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the testimony which He bears of Me is true (John 5:31-32).

But the witness which I have is greater than that of John [the Baptist]; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish, the very works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me (John 5:36).

You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me (John 5:39).

### **3. He misleads many people.**

When the Pharisees could not contend with Him by Scripture or deny His signs, they accused Him of

doing harm to the people of Israel. They accused Him of misleading the people. "Sure, He is doing this right now, but later He will harm the people." The fact that the people are listening and paying close attention to a speaker does not mean that they are being misled. Truth is truth. Only when error is mixed with truth is there opportunity for deception. The reason the Pharisees said Yeshua was misleading the people was because the people were no longer listening to and paying close attention to them. Thus, they concluded that He was going to mislead the people.

And there was much grumbling among the multitudes concerning Him; some were saying, "He is a good man"; others were saying, "No, on the contrary, He leads the multitude astray" (John 7:12).

Religious leaders do not like it when their people go to hear another. When the Pharisees saw that even more people were going to Yeshua than went to John the Baptist, this became a real complaint on their part. Yeshua was forced to leave the region.

When therefore the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although Yeshua Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were), He departed Judea and went again into Galilee (John 4:1-3).

Later, the Pharisees wanted to have Him arrested when they saw the people responding favorably to Him.

But many of the multitude believed in Him; and they were saying, "When the Messiah shall come, He will not perform more signs than those which this man has, will He?" The Pharisees heard the multitude muttering these things about Him; and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers to seize Him (John 7:31-32).

Since the Pharisees couldn't contend directly with Yeshua, they began to attack the people who were willing to hear Him. They even attacked the guards who didn't bring Him back under arrest.

The officers therefore came to the chief priests and Pharisees, and they said to them, "Why did you not bring Him?" The officers answered, "Never did a man speak the way this man speaks." The Pharisees therefore answered them, "You have not also been led astray, have you?" (John 7:45-47).

It is one thing for the officers that work for the chief priests not to understand properly, but Nicodemus was one of the elders of the priests. He was one of the rulers of the people. When he gave argument for why Yeshua should at least be heard, he was argued against by the Pharisees.

Our Law does not judge a man, unless it first hears from him and knows what he is doing, does it? They answered and said to him, "You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee" (John 7:51-52).

The truth is that the Scripture does say that the Messiah is to come out of Galilee; however, there was no sense in arguing Scripture with them. They had already departed from the Scripture on the commandments. Why should they hold to Scripture on the prophecies? They were going to just argue something else if you pointed it out; and that is exactly what they did do. They began to argue about where Yeshua came from.

#### 4. It is not known where He is from.

One of the most common complaints of people who are determined to complain is to question the source of a person or teaching. Where are you from? What school did you go to? Where did you get this from? These are only a few of the questions that people wishing to take issue ask. The whole question of where the Messiah is to come from and where Yeshua was from, was a major topic of contention for Him raised by the Pharisees. First, they argued that no one knows where the Messiah comes from but they knew where Yeshua was from.

However, we know where this man is from; but whenever the Messiah may come, no one knows where He is from. Yeshua therefore cried out in the temple, teaching and saying, "You both know Me and know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know. I know Him; because I am from Him, and He sent Me" (John 7:27-29).

Then the argument shifted to "Okay, we know the Messiah is the son of David and is to come from Bethlehem, but Yeshua is from Galilee."

Others were saying, "This is the Messiah." Still others were saying, "Surely the Messiah is not going to come from Galilee, is He? Has not the Scripture said that the Messiah comes from the offspring of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?" So there arose a division in the multitude because of Him (John 7:41-43).

When both of those arguments couldn't hold up, they denied that they even knew where Yeshua was from. When the man born blind heard that, he offered his own wisdom in the matter.

We know that God has spoken to Moses; but as for this man [Yeshua], we do not know where He is from. The man [born blind, now seeing] answered and said to them, "Well, here is an amazing thing, that you do not know where He is from, and yet He opened my eyes" (John 9:29-30).

#### 5. None of the leaders believe in Him.

The Pharisees had a pretty high opinion of themselves. They held themselves up as a standard of proper behavior and decorum. If they didn't believe that Yeshua

was the Messiah, then He simply wasn't the Messiah. It's as simple as that. They reasoned that the people were in error in the Scripture because they didn't have their interpretation. Obviously, the interpretation of the Pharisees and their consensus agreement proved that they were right, and any differing opinion was wrong.

No one of the rulers or Pharisees has believed in Him, has he? But this multitude which does not know the Torah is accursed (John 7:48-49).

The real problem here with Yeshua was that He did not confirm the Pharisees in their leadership positions. Had He simply checked in with the Pharisees there in Jerusalem, let them announce who He was and in so doing, bolster and endorse their leadership, everything would have been fine. But Yeshua didn't do that. Yeshua didn't authenticate the Pharisaic authority and grant them their first share in His kingdom. Therefore, the Pharisees decided to be opposed to him and hang onto whatever ego and power they had.

#### 6. He has a demon and is crazy.

When all else failed, when they couldn't contend with Him by Scripture or directly, when they couldn't convince the crowd not to listen, and the argument fell through that He was from the wrong side of the tracks, they went for the bottom of the barrel. They reached in and got out some really slimy, ugly stuff to find fault with Him. "Let's just slander Him and say He has a demon and is crazy!"

The Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?" Yeshua answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me" (John 8:48-49).

And many of them were saying, "He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to Him?" (John 10:20).

I guess this shows how desperate the Pharisees were getting. When you have to stoop to accusing someone of having a demon (doing Satan's work) and say they are crazy, then who needs facts, truth, signs from God, or anything else. There is only one more step you can do to stop Him then – kill Him. So, that is what the Pharisees decided to do.

#### *The Real Reason Why the Pharisees Were against Yeshua*

So, why did the Pharisees really take issue with Yeshua? It wasn't about Scripture. It wasn't about doing good deeds or Godly signs. It wasn't about misleading the poor people or disputes about whether He was born in the right place. It wasn't about the majority opinion of the rulers or having a demon and being crazy. It was about something much more insidious. It was about **POWER**.



Yeshua had a different kind of POWER than the Pharisees had, and they knew Yeshua had it. What kind of power are we talking about? Before we answer, let's cover some basics about power and what it really is.

In its simplest form, power is about your hand and what it can do. Power comes from a variety of sources. Your ability to tap into those sources (gaining authority) and how you use your hand determines how much power you have.

Let me give you some examples:

When you go to college and get a degree, you get a certain amount of knowledge with some authority. "He is an authority on that subject." Knowledge is a form of power. A bachelor's degree does not have as much power as a doctorate degree has. This is why people put their degrees after their name; it gives notice that they have a certain level of knowledge (power).

Another example is titles. In the work place, a President of a company or organization is more powerful than a Department Manager. It doesn't mean that the President has more knowledge than the Department Manager. This is what is called positional authority. Pharisees were way up there in position and knowledge.

Power also comes with wealth. Are you familiar with the world's version of the Golden Rule: Whoever has the gold has the rule.

Today, religious men use titles and exert positional authority over the brethren. Regardless of their motives this is their authority base. Reverend, Pastor, Deacon, Messianic Rabbi are but a few examples that send the signal to us that the titled person has authority and power. Failure to recognize this power or submit to it can spell real conflict for you.

What did Yeshua think about the power of position, the use of titles and ruling by positional authority?

But do not be called Rabbi; for One is your Teacher, and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called leaders; for One is your Leader, that is, Messiah. But the greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted (Matthew 23:8-12).

Is Yeshua saying that all titles are inappropriate? If He is, then every religious leader past, present and future is in big trouble. No, He isn't. What He is saying is the power to minister comes from God not from a title or position. Pastor is not a title; it's a work. Rabbi is not supposed to be a title; it is a work and a ministry. Minister means servant. Power (the greatest) comes from God's ministry and service. God has all the power. Therefore, Yeshua is saying that the servant of God, one who humbles himself, will have the real source of power (God). How do you get this power? It comes by God's anointing. That is why the Messiah is the Anointed One.

Yeshua was questioned by the leaders about this.

And it came about on one of the days while He was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel, that the chief priests and the scribes with the elders confronted Him, and they spoke, saying to Him, "Tell us by what authority You are doing these things, or who is the one who gave You this authority?" (Luke 20:1-2).

Yeshua turned the tables on them and asked about the authority of John the Baptist. He asked if John's baptism was of men or of Heaven. He was asking them by what authority John had ministered. They refused to answer so Yeshua did the same with them.

Yeshua did not assert His title as Messiah or positional authority. He did not ask anyone to believe Him or follow Him because he was the Messiah by title. Instead, He did the work of the Messiah. He fulfilled the prophecies. He paid the price as the Lamb of God.

Religious men, like the Pharisees hand out titles to one another, then expect everyone else to do the work. They assert their position and their learned degrees (power of knowledge). Yeshua said it this way.

And they tie up heavy loads, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as a finger. But they do all their deeds to be noticed by men; for they broaden their phylacteries, and lengthen the tassels of their garments. And they love the place of honor at banquets, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and respectful greetings in the market places, and being called by men, Rabbi. (Matthew 23:4-7).

Here is a spiritual law that you can take to your heavenly bank and deposit like gold. All power belongs to God; He is the only source of real power. Trying to acquire power on your own, by others giving you power, by knowledge, title, wealth, or position is temporary at best and will not remain.

At Yeshua's trial, Pilate asserted his authority as a Roman Governor saying that he had the power of life and death. What was Yeshua's response to Pilate's assertion?

Pilate therefore said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?" Yeshua answered, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me up to you has the greater sin" (John 19:10-11).

Yeshua said that Pilate's authority was temporary and was granted by His Father. Even the power of Pharaoh with Moses was temporary and for God's purpose.

For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I raised you up, to demonstrate My power in you, and that My name might be proclaimed throughout the whole earth" (Romans 9:17).

Pharaoh didn't have the power, and Pilate didn't have the power. Neither do other men, no matter what their title. Any authority they have has been given by God.

Have you ever heard this expression? Power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely. Even the heathen world knows that men cannot handle power very well. History is filled with examples of this truth. Just because a man is religious does not negate this truth. This is why Yeshua insists that HUMILITY is essential for effective leadership. Yeshua showed us this kind of humility while using the power of God to heal, calm the storm, speak with wisdom, and teach.

However, there is one very important part of the lesson we must learn about God's power. When you minister with the power and authority of God, anyone using any other power will be opposed and in conflict with you. Take the example of the Pharisees. Better yet, take the example of our own modern day brethren in leadership. Why is there so much conflict? It is all about power and who has it.

The power and authority of God do not come from title or knowledge. It comes from the anointing of God. God's power works best when it is not mixed with the power of men. This is why Paul says to us:

And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Messiah may dwell in me (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Many years ago, I was challenged by my own brethren just as the leaders of Israel challenged Yeshua. "Who are you submitted to? And by what authority do you do the things you do?" This is a question that every minister and servant of God should answer. An organization can't give you the right authority or power. A title, a certificate, a wall full of degrees will never carry the day for what God wants done. The authority of men will never accomplish the work of God.

My answer stunned the questioner. "I am submitted to any man who is submitted to the Lord. Can you show such a man? If you can, then he will be submitted unto me just as I am to him in the Lord. We will be submitted one to another in the Lord."

Until all men realize that we are under God's power and authority, we are going to have conflict. It is a power conflict, but they won't call it that. First, they will argue with you about what the Scripture says. They will try to take the power, the sword of the Scripture away from you. Then they try to confront you directly concerning your relationship with God. They don't want you to using God's authority that He has given you. They will accuse you of misleading and being misled.

They will say that you are using the God's power incorrectly. They will question where your learning is from and where you are from. They will try to confuse and be-

fuddle you, anything to get you to question who you are. Then they will try to show you that there are more of them than there are of you (they have more power).

They will try to diminish your power with numbers, knowledge or with pedigree. Finally, they will just say you are a heretic, demon possessed, and crazy. They will even threaten you. All of it is to get you to use your own power, instead of God's power, or to not believe that God's power will work.

And Jesus said to them, "Watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." Then they understood that He did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees (Matthew 16:6, 12).

Yeshua's warning to His disciples and us is about power. Power puffs and leavens leaders with ego and pride of position. Knowledge is said to do the same thing. Knowledge puffs up. When you come into contact with puffed up leaders, you will experience these things, the same things that Yeshua encountered.

But consider this brethren, if they accuse you with the same accusations Yeshua faced, you are in pretty good company. Didn't Yeshua say they would hate us because they hated Him first. Didn't He say we would be hated without a cause. Think about this for a moment. Didn't we say we wanted God's power to work in us. Didn't we say we wanted to drink from the same cup that the Master drinks from? We should now be surprised, then, when these things happen.

There is a day coming when there won't be anymore Pharisees or power struggles. That will be when all power will be in the hands of God and no longer misappropriated by men. This is what the Scripture means when it says:

Then comes the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power (1 Corinthians 15:24).

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# **American Cream-puff Christianity vs Muslim "Extremism"**

**by Lewis J. Goldberg**



In these post 9/11 days, expressions of faith have been more in number and louder in volume. For many, this is a comfort—a sign that our nation’s religious heritage is not lost in a culture consumed with public sexuality, materialism, and out-doing each other. In truth, America’s overt testimony of its so-called Christian heritage has revealed that The Body suffers greatly from “cream-puff Christianity” with W.W.J.D.? as the ultimate depth of introspection and The Prayer of Jabez as a coupon for free goodies from the Almighty.

## **A Mile Wide and an Inch Deep**

Most Americans who walk around calling themselves Christians suffer from an ill-informed faith. Whether they are born into a Christian household or converted later in life, as they get older, rather than feast on God’s Word they stand idly by, waiting to be pumped full of the latest trends in “pop Christianity.” John 3:16 is enough to convert an unbeliever, but at some point he has to delve into Scripture to figure out how to apply divine teachings.

Mentioned earlier was the W.W.J.D.? phenomenon and The Prayer of Jabez series of books, tapes, calendars, bottle openers...whatever. Junk doctrine like these offer no more to the thirsting soul than what the world does: more stuff...less guilt. The question “what would Jesus do?” is often asked without truly breaking open the Word to find out what He actually did, and ends up being no more than a brief consideration of several ways to justify a contemplated action.

The Prayer of Jabez is the latest pseudo-religious fad—built on 1 Chronicles 4:10—the point of which is to tell people if they pray with great faith to the Lord, He’ll give them “stuff!” Now, it seems that Jabez indeed had great faith in the Lord, as Jabez (we may glean from this verse and the one before it) was a very sinful man, yet his faith that the Lord would rescue him from sin made him whole again. However, he didn’t just ask for deliverance from sin...he also asked for stuff (e.g. “...bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast....”) Pop Christianity focuses on “stuff” over Spirit, and it’s going to take something more than the prayer of Jabez to get us out of that mode.

The Holy Bible is an intensely complex document. All its component books fit together like an immense jigsaw puzzle...not one piece out of line or missing. It would be as if said jigsaw puzzle were constructed over thousands of years, with no one craftsman actually knowing what the final picture would look like. The final product is such a picture, beautiful in its heavenly design and functional as the very universe itself. It may be said that most so-called Christians are just charlatans running around with one piece of the puzzle, thinking they’ve got the whole picture.

When we grab a catchy phrase or a particular verse and shape our views of the world with it, we end up with a pathetic shell of the true doctrine - one which sees practitioners of all other religions as “people of faith,” and which allows the world to shape and interpret the meaning of the Holy Bible. Many of us in this nation have let humanistic compassion get the best of us... it may be to our ultimate detriment. The Bible speaks plainly of the unrepentant heathen and how he is to be treated. A doctrine of “everyone-in-a-big-happy-pile” has replaced the “shook off the dust of their feet” attitude of the Apostles (e.g. Matthew 10:14).

## **Jihad**

Contrast the sad state of American faith with the Muslim “extremists” fighting a war beyond traditional frontiers. Say what we will about their so-called “monotheism” and their “peaceful faith,” their holy book—The Koran—commands good Muslims to kill infidels, and that’s just what they’ve done in America (and continue doing on their daily trips to market in the Israeli streets).

We are daily urged by the media and our president not to stereotype people from Islamic nations. We are told that the terrorists are merely the “fringes” of the Muslim community, and do not represent the whole. But while they say these things, it becomes increasingly obvious that the terrorists are the ones “doing Islam right.” Rather than call the terrorist Muslims “extremists,” we should instead refer to the ones who sit out the intifada as “backslidden,” and worthy of the same death those true to the faith deliver to the “unwashed.”

Our borders are teeming with Muslims—both fundamentalist and apostate, and every state in between. Has anyone thought to ask “what happens when a Mosque has a revival?”

### Duh-mestic Policy

I have editorialized that non-citizen Muslims should be deported from this country, a position for which I have been given some grief. It should come as no surprise that people who don't understand their own faith should be ill-equipped to understand someone else's. To entertain the idea that “Allah” is the God of the Holy Bible is utter stupidity, yet so many parrot that line when asked to have an opinion on Muslims. The Words of God and the words of Allah are totally incompatible. We cannot make Allah into God, just as we cannot make Alec Baldwin into Adolph Hitler just because they have never been seen in the same room together (though the possibility is fascinating).

Yes, the Lord did promise Hagar that he would make Ishmael into a “great nation,” (Gen 17:20) but “great” in this case means “large,” not “wonderful” or “good.” The Ishmaelites (from whom Middle Eastern Muslims are descended) are a nation “of the world,” not “of God.” Muslims will proudly point out that they are mentioned in the Old Testament, but they'll leave out the part where He says “but my Covenant will I establish with Isaac” (v. 21).

It's time to get back to Bible basics: use our common sense, horse sense... any old sense but this non-sense in which we wallow. Here is a bit of information that will make you a hated individual if you utter it: Those who profess Allah are enemies of God. That does not mean we hate them in any way. We pray for them, we proselytise them, and we fellowship with them to show them there is another way than the idolatry to which they cling. By the same token, we “have to do what we have to do” when it comes to protecting our nation's people against enemies, both foreign and domestic.

When there is a 20 mph zone in front of a school, does that mean the municipality hates people who drive 30 mph? No, it means that limits are set for public protection. When there are a certain number of fatalities at an intersection, the municipality will erect a traffic signal to prevent further death. Well, around 3,000 deaths recently occurred at an intersection called “New York City.” Where's the traffic light? Hung up in committee by cream-puff Christians, no doubt.

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<http://www.sierratimes.com/02/06/14/goldberg.htm>

### Loss that Is Gain

*“I try to please all men in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved” (1 Corinthians 10:33, RSV).*

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, endeavored to live by this rule. One night as he was returning from a church service a robber stepped out of the shadows and demanded his money.

“My friend,” said Wesley handing over his cash to the man, “some day you may want to give up this kind of life, and when you do, remember that ‘Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,’ and that ‘the blood of Jesus Christ... cleanseth us from all sin.’”

Without a word the robber took Wesley's money and disappeared into the night. Years later, Wesley was approached by a man who asked him whether he remembered the incident. Wesley remembered it only too vividly.

“I was that robber,” the man confessed. “The words you spoke that night never left me. As a result I found Christ, and my life has been completely changed.”

Have you ever considered what you would do if you found yourself in a similar situation and in a position to shoot the robber? Some people I have talked to have indicated that, given these circumstances, they would kill the robber without any qualms of conscience.

Doubtless a man who threatens another person's life ought to expect to lose his own, and perhaps this is what he deserves. But I wonder how many Christians have thought of such a predicament as an opportunity to save a soul? After all, material things are nothing compared with eternal life and a soul saved in God's kingdom.

Some years ago a former vice-president of the United States wrote about the way he and his wife reacted when their lives were threatened by a murderous mob in the capital of a foreign country they were visiting. Reflecting on the incident, he stated that a person usually acts in an emergency the way he plans to act before the emergency arises. In other words, if we decide that under certain circumstances we will take another person's life then we are more likely to do just that when those circumstances arise than if we decide otherwise.

No one, of course, can be conscience for someone else. But is not the cause of Christ better served if a Christian suffers “the loss of all things” and thereby wins a soul to Christ than if he keeps all things and cuts short a sinner's probation? Would not such a sinner, if saved, be eternally grateful that you had a higher sense of values than he did, and would not his salvation bring you eternal joy?

*Reprinted from **New Every Morning**, p. 308. Author: Donald Ernest Mansell. Publisher: Review and Herald Publishing, 1981.*

## **Colombia**

### **“The Brothers are in Danger, All of Us”**

In his 14 years as pastor of the Church of God in Puerto Asis, Putumayo, Angel Pinto has had to walk a dangerous line between outlaw armies at war with one another. At least four evangelical pastors have died violently during Pinto's tenure. He himself has survived several death threats and a brief kidnapping ordeal. Nevertheless, Pinto and his family continue their ministry by broadcasting gospel messages to a besieged evangelical community through the church's tiny FM radio station and sheltering war refugees. The Pintos are willing to share the love of Christ with anyone who comes to their door.

Pastor Angel Pinto, like many other pastors and church workers in Colombia live under the constant threat of torture and assassination. According to estimates, since 1998 at least 27 Roman Catholic priests and 60 evangelical ministers have died at the hands of assassins. (Source: [compassdirect.org](http://compassdirect.org))

“As it is written: ‘For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.’” (Romans 8:36).

## **Indonesia**

### **Returning Christians Face Threats and Violence**

After violent Muslim groups had destroyed many Christian homes and driven Christians out of the area, these groups are now trying to prevent Christians from rebuilding their homes in Sulawesi, Indonesia. The government, which is trying to reestablish a peaceful atmosphere between Christians and Muslims, is pressuring people to return to their homes. On March 17 more than 500

members of Laskar Jihad, a Muslim extremist group, went to Togalu and threatened the Christians. Christians from nearby villages confirmed that there were threats and stone throwing by the Muslims.

(Source: [Open Doors](http://Open Doors))

## **India**

### **Police Threaten to Burn Christians in Front of Temple**

Around 40 Christians of the New Life Fellowship (NLF) had gathered for worship on February 8 at the home of a new believer in Nagpur, in India's Maharashtra state, when a mob of over 500 people surrounded them and started pelting them with stones. The mob then threatened to burn them alive. The police inspector refused to register the church's complaint and threatened the leaders. The NLF has been the target of militant Hindu groups for its bold evangelistic outreach.

(Source: [compassdirect.org](http://compassdirect.org))

## **Nigeria**

### **State Government Closes 24 Christian Schools**

Nigeria's Kano state government closed 24 Christian schools because of their refusal to provide Islamic religious studies as part of their curricula. Dr. Mohammed Tahir, Chairman of the Education Task Force, told *Compass* in Kano on March 19 that more Christian schools would be closed unless they adhere to the Islamic education policy, pay the required education taxes and employ Islamic clerics to teach Islam. (Source: [compassdirect.org](http://compassdirect.org))

## **Vietnam/Cambodia**

### **Christian Refugees Granted Asylum**

On March 31 of this year the Cambodian government approved an offer by the U.S. on March 26 to

grant asylum to about 1,000 of Vietnam's mostly Christian tribal people who had illegally crossed the border to Cambodia to escape from religious persecution and other abuses in the Vietnamese highlands last year.

(Source: [Open Doors](http://Open Doors))

## **Saudi Arabia**

### **Prisoners Deported**

An Ethiopian and Filipino Christian jailed since last summer in the Saudi Arabian port city of Jeddah were released and deported to their home countries over Easter weekend. Filipino Dennis Moreno flew home to Manila on March 30. Ethiopian Worku Aweke left the previous night on a flight back to Addis Ababa. The two were the last of 14 expatriate Christians imprisoned for months by the Saudi muttawa (religious police) without formal charges for allegedly illegal Christian activities. (Source: [compassdirect.org](http://compassdirect.org))

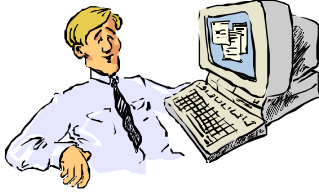
## **Peru**

### **Prison Sentence Cut in Half for Christian Army Colonel**

Peruvian army colonel David de Vinatea's 16-year prison sentence officially has been reduced to eight. De Vinatea's wife, Chely, heard the news from a Lima radio station on the morning of March 28 that Peru's official newspaper *El Peruano* had published the action. De Vinatea, an evangelical Christian, has been imprisoned more than six years for narco-trafficking crimes he says he did not commit. De Vinatea, 50, is set to be released in September 2003. (Source: [compassdirect.org](http://compassdirect.org))



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Dear BSA,

Thank you so very very much for selecting me as last year's scholarship winner. It is wonderful to know that there are other Sabbath keepers who are willing to support the goals of students like myself. I appreciate the generosity which you have shown me.

Sincerely,  
Kimberly Springer

Dear Editor:

This is in response to JB's fourth irony, it is not meant to imply he advocated abortion, but to illustrate what really is the true irony:

Yahweh sent Israel into Babylonian captivity for Sabbath breaking, witchcraft and child sacrifice. Back then abortion was a rather dangerous method, so instead the unwanted babies were burned alive in sacrifices to Moloch, accompanied by loud drumbeats to drown out their crying.

Considering the 40+ million babies that have already been sacrificed to this country's modern gods of convenience and prosperity, is not our nation due for the same kind of treatment? And that does not include the so called birth control pills and certain other birth control methods that have probably killed even more babies than that, by preventing already conceived week old babies from attaching to the womb.

Now women's rights are enshrined as the right not to have any or few children. Instead of having children, we have mass legal and illegal immigration to replace the children that we did not want, in order to support future social security and company stock dividends. It has been estimated that by mid-century there will be few people of European descent in the world, including the US. And many of the elderly that are then remaining will be euthanized, as

now is done in Holland, because their children will not want them. Now is the time to call this modern madness what it really is. Having more than a few children is not a sin! It may even save your life! Yes, Jesus does want more than just a few little children, especially in His church!

Robert Peterson,  
Barrett, Minnesota, US

[Editor's Note: In the March-April 2002 issue of TSS, J.B. from Vancouver, WA, stated the following:

"And finally, the fourth irony is that those who think the Adamic covenant 'to be fruitful and multiply' is still applicable today are hypocritical! How can one choose one "old" covenant command over another?? Besides, it is all too obvious the world needs less people, not more!

"I have never seen the foolishness of one denomination show more in TSS than last month."]

### *Teaching the Law CD's are now available from the BSA*

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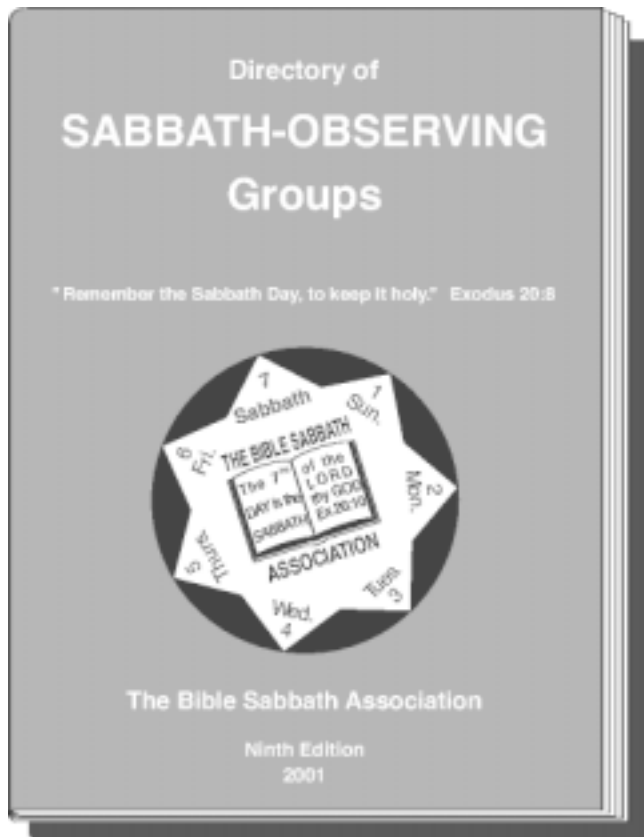
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## ***Place your Order Now!***

The 246-page ninth edition of The Bible Sabbath Association's comprehensive catalog of Seventh-day Sabbath-Observing Groups has gone to press! The *Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups* will ship in late September or early October.

The 2001 *Directory* lists over 400 Sabbatarian groups, and over 1600 congregations. This is the ninth update of the *Directory*, originally published in 1957, and the largest compilation of Sabbatarian Groups in the BSA's history. There are many international congregations listed.

The *Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups* is available for \$15, postpaid, or 10 copies for \$95 postpaid, from:

The Bible Sabbath Association  
3316 Alberta Drive  
Gillette, WY 82718.

You may also order by credit card by calling 307-686-5191, or  
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