



THE Sabbath Sentinel

September–October 2002

**Christ or Money:
Who is in charge?**

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

The Sabbath Sentinel
September-October 2002 Volume 54, No. 5 Issue 497

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Cover Photo: Corel Royalty-free Photos

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Editor: Kenneth Ryland, tss_editor@biblesabbath.org

Associate Editors: June Narber & Shirley Nickels

BSA's Board of Directors for 1999-2003:

President: Dr. Sidney L. Davis, president@biblesabbath.org

Personal mailing address of the president:

P. O. Box 1213

North Chicago, IL 60064 U.S.A.

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Recording Secretary: June Narber, june_narber@biblesabbath.org

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Donations are gratefully accepted and are tax deductible in the United States. Those who choose to voluntarily support this international work to promote the Sabbath and proclaim gospel of the kingdom of God are welcomed as contributors.

Annual membership contributions: regular membership \$25; Family Membership \$30; Life Membership \$500. All memberships include an annual subscription to *The Sabbath Sentinel*. Make all checks, drafts and money orders payable to *The Bible Sabbath Association*. (VISA and MasterCard accepted).

The Bible Sabbath Association is dedicated to promote the seventh day Sabbath. As a nonsectarian association for Sabbath-observing Christians, BSA accepts members who acknowledge Jesus Christ (Yahshua the Messiah) as their Savior, believe the Bible to be the Word of the Eternal, and uphold the seventh day Sabbath. BSA takes no official position on other theological issues, and publishes *The Sabbath Sentinel* as a forum to promote understanding and to share items of interest to Sabbath observing groups and individuals.

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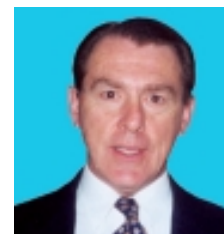
Correspondence and manuscript submissions: Address all inquiries to: Kenneth Ryland, c/o *The Sabbath Sentinel*, 3316 Alberta Drive, Gillette, WY 82718. Phone: (307) 686-5191, E-mail: tss_editor@biblesabbath.org

International addresses:

Australia: Bible Sabbath Associates, Jim & Lyn Carnochan, 7 Sunny Ridge Rd., Arcadia NSW 2159, E-mail: lyn_carnochan@hotmail.com

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Why this Universal Lack of Peace?



At the risk of stepping on people's toes (what's new?), I am going to bring up a subject that most Christians in the "civilized" world do not want to deal with. That's the lack of peace in their lives. We talk a lot about personal peace or "inner peace," but I am often astounded at the level of anxiety and outright fear that exists in the lives of most Christians. Jesus, when he was about to be taken away to a horrible beating and death, reassured his disciples with these words: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27). Are these the words of your heart also in the midst of terror or uncertainty?

In my last editorial I mentioned the rescue of missionary Gracia Burnham and the machine gun battle during the rescue attempt that ended her husband Martin's life. Reports of their unwavering faith and peace during their year-long captivity were impressive, but I have also been impressed by Gracia's demeanor during the weeks since the loss of her husband. There is a strength in her peace. It is this kind of peace, I believe, Jesus was talking about, yet it is this kind of energizing peace that is most lacking in Western Christians these days. Such peace is not merely being resigned to loss or tragedy, but an assurance that, in spite of circumstances, our lives, moment by moment, are in God's hands.

There are more reasons than I can possibly enumerate for the fears that so easily take our minds captive, but all of them probably boil down to not trusting God to work out everything for our good. Is that conclusion too harsh, or have we gotten our eyes so far off Him that we are having trouble finding our way back home?

I remember the great line in the oratorio "Elijah," taken from Psalm 121:4. "He watching over Israel slumbers not nor sleeps." Psalm 121 also states: "The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore" (vs. 5-8).

Throughout the Bible God constantly reassures His children. The apostle Paul encourages us to call Him

"Abba" (Romans 8:15 and Galatians 4:6), just as Jesus did when he prayed in Gethsemane (Mark 14:36). Abba is the Aramaic word for Dad or Daddy. Are you close enough to God to call him Daddy? If you are not, then maybe that is the pathway to the peace that is lacking in your life.

If your eyes are always pointed down at your circumstances, then you are not looking up for His gentle assurance. In John 16:33 Jesus said, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Sometimes we forget that we "in him" and that our peace comes through that closeness to the Father, "Abba," through Christ.

I think that too often, when we are in a financial bind or have health problems or personal problems, we don't back out of the way far enough for God to get into our problem to do His work. He has to work around us rather than with us and through us. With great anxiety we pray constantly about the problem, but fear that His solution might not be what we want, so we stay in His way and attached to the problem, dreading that He might take us in an unfamiliar and uncomfortable direction. In a sense, we trust our own familiarity with the problem more than we trust the solution He might give us. However, this is really no different than the way we often treat other human beings. We fear giving those close to us enough independence to deal with matters on their own, so we stay overly involved in their problems in order to insure that things "turn out right."

Faith is trust, and our peace comes down to trusting God to treat us with the tender care He promises in His Word. We have all experienced His loving care many times, but with each fresh challenge there are fresh doubts. If there is anything that the Sabbath teaches, it is that God not only gives peace; He is peace. He not only gives rest; He is rest. Our peace and our rest are in Him. Each of us must let Him in.

"For I know the plans that I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you" (Jeremiah 29:11-13, NIV). □

Overcoming Obstacles to Unity

by **Dr. Sidney L. Davis**



Dear Friends and Brethren,

Reflecting on some of my experiences in traveling to and enjoying the worship of different Sabbatarian churches and fellowships, I have found that many of the brethren still have difficulty embracing each other across denominational barriers. Inter-Sabbatarian recognition and fellowship, though not commonly practiced, is a worthy goal to seek. I have noted some positive attempts to overcoming the historical and traditional factious denominationalism that estranges Sabbath-keepers from each other, and marginalizes us from our fellow Christians in general. I am encouraged that many are beginning to see the Sabbath as a means of invitation to our fellow Christians to celebrate and experience in a tangible way the rest we enjoy in Christ as well as an invitation to unity among Sabbath keepers. Such openness comes as a result of the secure assurance we have of our salvation experience in Christ. This kind of development will help dispel the perception of sectarianism that characterizes some groups.

There is a Baptist church in Oklahoma whose membership voted to honor the Bible Sabbath. As a consequence of becoming a "seventh-day" Baptist church, they were "excommunicated" from their Baptist denominational affiliation. However, recently that Baptist denomination recanted the dismissal of that church and invited this "seventh-day" Baptist church back to their previous denominational affiliation as a Baptist church that observes the Bible Sabbath. There are also groups of sabbath-keeping churches and individuals in western Tennessee who are promoting interdenominational dialog and cooperation among Sabbath keepers. These various fellowships meet four times a year on the fifth Sabbath of every quarter. They call their inter-Sabbatarian fellowship "Fifth Sabbath." In Central Missouri there is a yearly Sabbath rally held on the last Sabbath of the year. The rally also features a few Sabbath churches of various denominations and fellowships worshipping and celebrating together. Recently in Boston the pastor of a Seventh-day Adventist church was invited to give a health talk to a Church of God youth convention. There may be other places and occasions where these types of gatherings of various Sabbath-

keeping groups that promote cooperation and dialog among Sabbath keepers. If you know of any, write to the BSA and let us know of them or any events of this nature. Such examples are just the kind of thing we need to promote and publicize.

The BSA is dedicated to expanding the Sabbath-keeping consciousness, not only of each other as Sabbatarians, but of Christians and society as a whole. Pursuant to this we have published the **Directory of Sabbath-observing Organizations** so that we can know more about ourselves: who we are and where we are. Whenever and wherever possible we should take more opportunities to experience the rich and varied Sabbath traditions that exist among us. The publication of our Directory has given us the opportunity of letting people know more about Sabbath keepers and Sabbath-keeping groups in general. In one of the most popular magazines in the Christian world, **Christianity Today**, we are advertising our **Directory**.

This president's message is part of a campaign to enlist your support in the cause of increasing Sabbath consciousness and unity in this uneasy atmosphere of a Christian majority that has long assumed the first day of the week to be the traditional "Lord's Day" or "Christian Sabbath." To the traditional Christian, Sunday has assumed the place of and identity as the Christian's day, and has positioned itself against the Sabbath which "Christian culture" has assumed to be distinctly "Jewish" and non-Christian. This has certain consequences in a majority Christian culture, especially where economic and employment issues are concerned. This is especially true for Christian Sabbath keepers.

Unlike the Jewish community, the majority of Christian Sabbath keepers have no real infrastructures or provisions designed to serve as an economic and political buffer in the face of difficulties presented by a majority Christian culture. In an attempt to address this, the BSA has joined in a coalition with two other Sabbatarian groups, the Seventh-day Adventist church and various representatives among the Jewish faith in supporting the Workplace Religious Freedom Act of 2002. Some have questioned the BSA's solicitation of support for our participation in this coalition and our

work in general to promote cooperation among Sabbath-keeping groups. It is my belief that we have a duty to work toward the goal of preserving and protecting each worker's right to time away from work to worship and honor the Lord, regardless of which day he chooses to worship on. Protecting the rights of Sabbath keepers protects the religious rights of all.

I know of no other organization like the BSA whose sole reason for existing is to bring Sabbath keepers together based on our commonality of observing the fourth commandment of the Decalogue. The Lord's Day Alliance of the United States (LDA) enjoys the broad and unquestioned support of various Christian churches and denominations based solely on their common observance of the first day of the week as "The Lord's Day" or "the Christian Sabbath." I have tried to analyze why some Sabbath keepers who have every reason to support the BSA find ways instead to criticize, ques-

tion, or second guess our efforts. Maybe some Sabbath keepers see the BSA as a rival organization to their own, even though the BSA is not a church or denomination. I have seen the overriding sectarian interests of various Sabbath groups that seem to serve as a barrier to such broad support. But, such sectarian interests, where they exist among supporters of the LDA, do not prevent them from fulfilling their mission. I believe this is because the base of the support for Sunday as the national "Christian Sabbath" is rooted in a very strong Christology for Sunday. However, I believe the Bible shows a greater Christology in the Sabbath that needs to be emphasized more clearly.

Over the centuries Sabbath keepers have had to stand in a defensive posture against the majority Christian culture. Every possible argument in defense of Bible

Continued on Page 20

THE WORKPLACE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM ACT (BACKGROUND)

Critical Legislation for the American Community

Today in the United States, where the First Amendment of the Constitution protects each citizen's right to the free exercise of his or her religion, many citizens are confronted with a difficult choice - between their faith and their livelihood. The Workplace Religious Freedom Act ("WRFA") is designed to ensure that no American is forced to make such a choice.

Prior to 1977, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 required employers to reasonably accommodate the religious observances of their employees unless doing so would impose an "undue hardship" upon the employer. In 1977, the U.S. Supreme Court eviscerated this protection for religious workers by holding that if an accommodation imposed even a de minimis expense upon the employer, an accommodation was not required under the law. (*TWA v. Hardison*, 432 U.S. 63) WRFA seeks to amend Title VII of the Civil Rights Act to reinstate the protection religious workers require so that they may be faithful to their religion and support their families as well.

WRFA would return the law to what Congress intended by applying similar standards for determining what would constitute an "undue hardship" to an employer as already found in other important protections for workers such as the Americans with Disabilities Act. Thus, WRFA would define an "undue hardship" as a situation which imposes "significant difficulty or expense" upon the employer as determined by factors such as the cost of the accommodation in relation to the size and operating costs of the employer as well as the number of individual employees seeking such an accommodation. The definition of "undue hardship" has been carefully crafted to balance both the respect that religion must be afforded with the needs of employers to have reliable and productive workplaces. Thus, for example, a reasonable accommodation that would preclude the employee from fulfilling the "essential functions" of his or her job need not be provided.

A typical scenario which the passage of WRFA would address is with regard to permitting the more flexible work schedules religious employees often need. If, for example, an employee needed to leave early on Friday afternoon in order to observe the Jewish sabbath or a Christian wished to take off from work on Good Friday, and was willing to work late nights earlier in the week to ensure that all of the tasks for which he/she was responsible were completed (ensuring that there would be no impact upon the employer's "bottom line"), WRFA would require the employer to grant such an accommodation and not insist that worker be present on Friday.

The Workplace Religious Freedom Act enjoys the support of a broad coalition of religious groups including, but not limited to: American Jewish Committee, Baptist Joint Committee, Christian Legal Society, Family Research Council, General Conference of Seventh Day Adventists, National Association of Evangelicals, National Council of Churches, Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America.

Source: Institute for Public Affairs of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America

Holy Scripture Supported by Modern Science

by Jim Schicatano

Each book of the Holy Bible is capable of standing alone in terms of spiritual theme and historical information. The lessons unveiled with each progressing passage remain as pertinent and inspiring in today's modern society as they did at the time of their writing. They are truly a timeless collection of God's inspired messengers.

While each of us may have a favorite book of the Bible, no book is capable of telling God's entire story or revealing His entire message.

In various passages throughout the Bible, God reveals many answers to the riddles of science. Each verse is yet another piece of the enigmatic Bible-science puzzle. Together they support each other, strengthen our argument for the existence of a divine Creator, and reveal that the Holy Bible can still withstand the scrutiny of today's scientific challenges. The

ens) is expanding (or stretching). During the twentieth century it was discovered that our universe is indeed expanding — and has been expanding since the beginning of time.

“He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in” (Isaiah 40:22).

“He wraps himself in light as with a garment; he stretches out the heavens like a tent and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters. He makes the clouds his chariot and rides on the wings of the wind” (Psalms 104:2–3).

“This is what God the Lord says—he who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and all that comes out of it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it” (Isaiah 42:5).

The Lord speaking: “It is I who made the earth and created mankind upon it. My own hands stretched out the heavens; I marshaled their starry hosts” (Isaiah 45:12).

The Existence of Space

In the Book of Job it is claimed that the Earth is suspended in emptiness, or space, which Job describes as “nothing.”

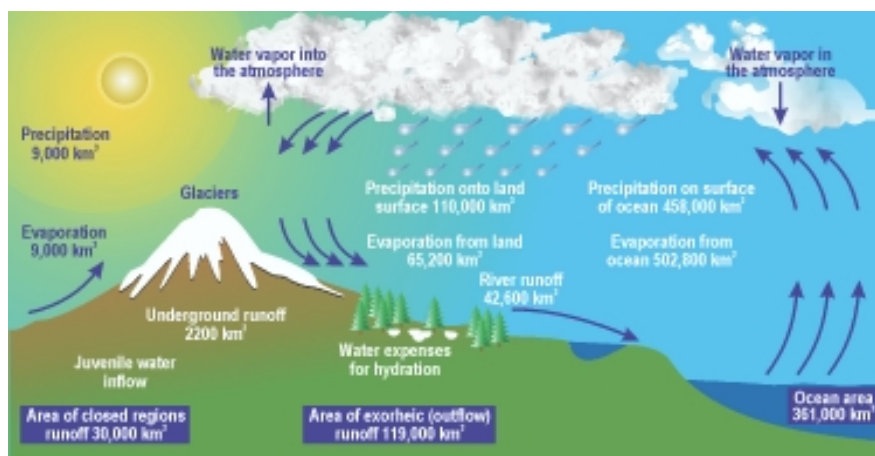
“He spreads out the northern [skies] over empty space; he suspends the earth over nothing” (Job 26:7).

The Hydrologic Cycle

The basic stages of the water cycle are described in the following three verses. The third verse, from Ecclesiastes, may also indicate the sphericity of the Earth.

“He draws up the drops of water, which distill as rain to the streams; the clouds pour down their moisture and abundant showers fall on mankind” (Job 36:27–28).

“He wraps up the waters in his clouds, yet the clouds do not burst under their weight” (Job 26:8).



The Hydrologic Cycle (Source: UNESCO)

passages included below not only support a Biblical Creation, but they present the Bible as being scientifically accurate at a time when its authors had no knowledge of the scientific facts that we take for granted today. Here are some verses of Scripture that are supported by modern science.

The Expanding Universe and the Spherical Earth

The following verses display two scientific facts that could not have been known at the time of their writing. The first verse, from Isaiah, declares that the Earth is round. All four verses reveal that the universe (the heav-

The wind blows to the south and turns to the north; round and round it goes, ever returning on its course. All streams flow into the sea, yet the sea is never full. To the place the streams come from, there they return again (Ecclesiastes 1:6-7).

Plants Preceded Animals

The Bible places the creation of plants (on the Third Day) before the creation of animals (on the Fifth and Sixth Days). Science is in agreement here. Fossil records demonstrate that plants appeared before animals, both in the sea and on the land.

Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so (Genesis 1:11).

And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky" (Genesis 1:20).

And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so (Genesis 1:24).

Animal Life Began in the Sea

Most scholars will acknowledge that the Biblical Creation story is certainly incomplete from a scientific perspective. Yet, what the Bible does reveal in no way contradicts the scientific evidence. For example, science has learned that the first animal life appeared in the oceans. This correlates nicely with the Biblical record where the first mention of animals in the Bible places them in the Earth's waters.

And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures..." (Genesis 1:20 NIV).

The Countless Stars

Gaze up into the sky on any starry night and you will witness only a minute fraction of God's creations. In our galaxy alone there are estimated to be over one hundred billion stars. And in our universe, there are hundreds of millions of galaxies. The stars in the universe then, would seem to be countless. But as you are gazing up into that starry night you might decide to count the stars anyway — and that might be possible. The average person is only capable of seeing a few thousand stars on any given night. Why then does the Bible speak of countless numbers of stars? How can a few thousand visible stars, which can surely be counted, be compared with the number of grains of sand on the seashore? — a number so vast that no one during Biblical times could even begin to estimate it.

Once again, the Bible seems to be revealing a scientific fact (the countless number of stars) that its authors could not have known nor ever have imagined. For the Bible to compare the number of stars and the number of grains of sand on the seashore, would indi-

cate that the stars that exist in the heavens must far exceed that which is visible from the Earth. But how could the Bible's authors have known this without the inspirational knowledge from God?

This is what the Lord says:

"I will make the descendants of David my servant and the Levites who minister before me as countless as the stars of the sky and as measureless as the sand on the seashore" (Jeremiah 33:22).

The angel of the Lord called to Abraham:

"I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies" (Genesis 22:17).

Jacob in a prayer to God:

"But you have said, 'I will surely make you prosper and will make your descendants like the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted'" (Genesis 32:12).

The word of the Lord came to Abram:

He took him outside and said, "Look up at the heavens and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be" (Genesis 15:5).

The Ocean Floor

Beneath the ocean's vast surface was a mysterious, unknown world that possessed wonders beyond the scope of ancient man's technology. The sailors of that age were no doubt skilled in the art of sea travel. Yet the murky depths of the seas they sailed were as mysterious to them as the distant galaxies of space are to us. It is little wonder then that the writers and storytellers of old conjured up horrifying tales of sea monsters and terrifying creatures of the deep. Man's imagination is most productive when he possesses the least amount of knowledge.

Even today, there is much about the ocean that remains mysterious and undiscovered. But the contour of the ocean floor is no longer a mystery. We now know that the bottom of the ocean is comprised of great mountain ranges, deep trenches, volcanoes, valleys, and plateaus. We take this knowledge for granted today, yet such information has only been verified in the past century, with the advent of sonar and satellites. How is it possible, then, that the Bible speaks of "valleys" existing beneath the sea?

"The valleys of the sea were exposed and the foundations of the earth laid bare at the rebuke of the Lord, at the blast of breath from his nostrils" (2 Samuel 22:16).

God's Final Creation – Man

Science and the Bible are in agreement on one fundamental aspect of man's creation - modern man made a very late appearance on planet Earth. The Bible claims that humanity was God's final creation.

Science agrees, maintaining that hundreds of millions of years, and countless millions of creatures of the air, land, and sea would come and go, before man — Homo Sapiens — finally arrived. This harmonization between the Bible and science should not be minimized. This is the one claim that the Bible made about man's creation that can be scientifically verified — and it has been confirmed.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them (Genesis 1:27).

The Beginning of Time and the Universe

Lastly, let us examine the very first verse of the Holy Bible. The revelations of this verse are often disregarded or greatly unappreciated, especially when we consider the level of scientific knowledge that existed at the time of its writing. It was not always known that time had a beginning. Many cultures believed that the universe existed in cycles or was eternal. Yet, the very first verse of the Bible states, in simple terms, that both the universe and time did have a beginning. This is a fact that science has since verified with the concept of the Big Bang. Whether this belief originated or was unique to the Hebrews is not as important as the fact that it was the correct belief. For once again, the Bible and science are in perfect harmony.

“In the Beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). □

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Note:

All biblical references are taken from the NIV: International Bible Society, The Holy Bible, New International Version (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984)

About the author: Jim Schicatano

Mr. Schicatano graduated from Penn State University in 1984 where he earned a Bachelor's degree in Science. He is a full member of the American Scientific Affiliation, an association of Christian scientists.

Jim is a prolific writer and avid student of the Bible, his true passion. He has written a variety of scientific articles and fictional short stories. His most recent publication is a book on scientific creationism titled *The Theory of Creationism*. The book has been very well received and was featured in the January 2002 edition of the “God and Science” newsletter.

Recent articles by Mr. Schicatano have been published in *The Y Files* (Article #Y137), *Evidence for God from Science*, and *Sword and Spirit*. If you would like to read more of Jim's writings, visit his Web site at <http://home.att.net/~jamspsu84/ttocmain.html>

God's Name Written on our Faces

They shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. Rev. 22:4.

In biblical times in heathen lands it was customary for priests to write the name of the deity they served on the foreheads of those who came to worship their god. This practice is still carried on in India today. Everywhere one travels in that great country, one sees temples and gods in whose honor the temples were built. The male adherents of the Hindu religion visit these temples frequently, and it is not unusual to see these devotees emerge from these places of worship with the name of their god written in ashes on their foreheads.

It is said that this custom gave rise to the saying “The gods we worship write their names on our faces.” Whether we realize it or not, the gods we worship do write their names on our faces in a very real sense. All we need to do is look around and observe this fact. Who has not seen the puffy countenance and bleary eyes of a beer devotee, the sallow, blighted physiognomy of a drug addict, or, to be a bit facetious, the wrinkled visage of an old “sun worshiper”? Or again, who has not seen the love of God radiating from the face of one of His true worshipers?

We read in Exodus 33 that Moses became so well acquainted with Jehovah that he asked Him to show him His glory. Because sinfulness cannot exist in the presence of infinite holiness, God told Moses that he could not see His face and live. Yet, He allowed Moses to behold as much of His glory as it was possible for him to endure. He caused all of His goodness to pass before him (verse 19). After seeing God's goodness and hearing His name proclaimed (chap. 34:6), Moses descended from Mount Sinai, and the inspired record says that “the skin of Moses' face shone,” so that he had to cover his face with a veil (verse 35).

It is said that the face you have at age 20 is the one you were created with but that the one you have at 40 is the one you create. There are exceptions, of course, but generally speaking, this is true. We do to a great extent determine what we look like.

The faces of God's professed people should reveal in them His character of love. This does not mean that their faces will always be frozen in a perpetual smile. On the other hand, neither does it mean that they will be everlastingly solemn. There is, after all, “a time to weep, and a time to laugh” (Ecc. 3:4). Of all the people in the world, Christians have good reason to be joyous.

When you looked in the mirror this morning did your face reflect the love of the God you worship?

Reprinted from New Every Morning, p. 76. Author: Donald Ernest Mansell. Publisher: Review and Herald Publishing, 1981.

Until the Seed Should Come

by Dr. Daniel Botkin



Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the seed should come to whom the promise was made (Gal.3:19).

Christians sometimes quote this verse in an attempt to justify their casting away of the Torah as a moral guide for believers.

“The law was intended to last only until a certain time,” they say, “until the Messiah, the Seed, had come. Now that Jesus has come, the Old Testament law no longer applies. It was only meant to last until Jesus came.”

The anti-nomian view (the idea that the Torah can be ignored by Christians) presents some major problems. First, if the Torah was meant to end when the Seed came, then why did the Seed warn His disciples to not even think that He had come to abolish the Torah? (Mt. 5:17ff.) And if the Torah is no longer valid, how are Christians supposed to know how God wants them to live and worship? The New Testament gives some instruction, of course. It is worth noting, though, that many of the New Testament instructions are direct quotes from the Torah. Even anti-nomians like Scofield admit this: “The [OT] commandments are used in the distinctively Christian Scriptures [the NT] as an instruction in righteousness,” Scofield wrote. (Scofield Reference Bible, Gal. 3:24 footnote.)

Scofield’s observation is true, and it raises an important question: If the Old Testament Law was meant to last only until the Seed came, then what business did Peter, Paul, James, and John have telling Christians to obey Old Testament commandments? They sometimes even used the phrase “for it is written” to give added weight to their authority when they quoted Old Testament commands. If it is now no longer necessary to obey Old Testament commands because the Seed has come, then what difference does it make that “it is written”?

Obviously some commandments of the Torah are still binding on Christians. Most Bible-believing Christians agree that the Ten Commandments should be obeyed. (Well, nine of them, anyway. For some reason the Sabbath commandment is viewed as abolished.) Bible-believing Christians generally agree on other various Torah commands (prohibitions against sodomy, witchcraft, talebearing, etc.). So obviously some of the Torah’s commands are still binding for Christians. And,

according to Galatians 3:19, part of the Torah was meant to last only “until the Seed should come.” The Big Question is: Which part of the Torah was meant to last only until the coming of the Seed? Who gets to decide which Torah commands Christians can ignore and which ones they should still obey? And what is the basis for determining whether a commandment is abolished or still binding? The anti-nomian view cannot answer these questions.

The anti-nomians focus on the phrase “until the Seed should come,” with special emphasis on the word until. If we first look at the introductory phrase “it was added because of transgressions” (with a special emphasis on the words added and transgressions), we can come up with a view that explains which part of the Torah was meant to last only until the Seed should come. First let’s consider the word added.

If something is “added,” then there has to be something else to which it is added. The use of the verb add necessitates the existence of a prior addend to which the second addend is attached. If the law was “added,” then to what prior addend was it added? More importantly, did Paul mean that the entire Law was added (to something)? Or, did he mean that part of the Law was added to a prior, already-existing Torah? If this is the case (and I believe it is), then this would help to clarify which part of the Torah was meant to be temporary, “until the Seed should come,” and which part of the Torah was meant to be observed even after the Seed came. Obviously the part of the Law that was added as an addendum to the prior, already-existing Torah would be that part which was meant to last only until the Seed should come, and the prior, already-existing Torah would be that part which was to continue even after the Seed came.

Now let’s consider the phrase “because of transgressions.” This will help clarify what law was added. We need only ask ourselves this question: Which part of the Torah makes a provision to cover transgressions? The answer: That part of the Law which gives instructions concerning burnt-offerings and sacrifices. See, for example, Leviticus 16:3, 16, & 21, where the sin-offering and burnt-offering are offered “because of their

Continued on Page 18



The Sabbath Reality: A Different Perspective

by Robin Todd

Some of us within the Sabbatarian community are fond of admonishing others to examine and sometimes set aside preconceived notions gleaned from religious tradition. Now I am asking you who debate over the Sabbath issue to step out of your preconceived notions of orthodoxy and hear yet another voice on this important topic. Dare to think outside the box and still be true to the Scriptures.

When we approach the subject of the Sabbath as if it were a piece of the puzzle of life, we miss its profound significance. Indeed, when presented as something “instituted” at creation, or “commanded” at Sinai, what the Sabbath symbolizes becomes merely a part of the whole and is thereby unintentionally minimized. So, let’s start from a different position—that is, that the Sabbath symbolizes the foundational reality of God. When seen as the whole itself—as the reality—God illuminates in us his purposes.

Although God created the physical universe as we know it in six days, that creation turns out to be only the stage on which his spiritual reality is played out. When he sanctified that seventh day (with no recorded “evening and morning”), he was weaving his spiritual reality of REST into the very fabric of the created order. Put another way, that which was sanctified and blessed (the greater) was superimposed over the creative result of his labor (the lesser). The rest in which God dwells focuses our attention on God as Creator only secondarily. Primarily, it brings a God who rests into view. Rest is the main thing; it is his reality for you and me—the basis for our relationship with him. Physical creation, as wondrous as it is in declaring the majesty of God, is external. Rest is internal—indicated by its sanctification and its spiritually metaphorical link to our belief system (Hebrews, chapter 4). With that established, let’s continue.

In this reality of rest, God saw, and we saw, our nakedness. Yet neither he nor we were ashamed of it. We were created imperfect—that is, incapable of perfectly sound moral or ethical behavior—and that was all right. We did not fall from a perfect condition to an imperfect condition upon eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, as has been generally taught within classical Christianity for over 1,000 years (even longer in most other world religions). Rather, we fell from God’s reality of rest (the dwelling place of unperfected children who are secure in God’s

unmeritable love and acceptance) to what became our own false reality of works or performance-based acceptance. We were deceived into a relationship when we were promised that we could become like God through the knowledge and proper implementation of our perceived notions of right and wrong—good and evil—rather than by knowing him who IS the Good.

It was when we saw ourselves from that vantage point that we became internally and toxically ashamed (and shamed). When attempting to value ourselves on the basis of God’s perfect spiritual law of love, we fell far short. Far more than feeling guilty for what we had done, we were shamed because of what we were. But understand: God was never ashamed of our nakedness! “Who told you that you were naked?” he asked. Our divine Parent knew that no child, especially a fragile infant just brought into the world, could possibly start out from such a place. Perception, however, created reality (as it often does), and in this case self-condemnation was the fruit. A relationship with God based on works instead of rest is counter-productive and produces weeds. It frustrates the grace of God, which is inherent in the rest relationship that exists between him and his children.

Still, God is so powerful and wise that he has been able to work within our self-inflicted false reality throughout revealed history. As he has always known would be the case, mankind has failed to achieve what he sought, that is, to become like God through the knowledge of good and evil and implementation of rules to attain it. What Satan promised as life became death to us. Though this seemed reasonable and logical, we were not created with the ability to grow in that manner. Instead, we became locked into sin and its penalty of death. But thankfully, at the predetermined time, God sent his Son to satisfy the penalty for sins committed under this self-inflicted reality of performance. At the same time, in this single moment when Christ was on the cross, our loving Father began calling us back to his own Edenic reality of rest and grace, which has never really ceased except in our own collective perception.

All of this is not really that difficult to understand if we bring it down to a practical, human level. Understanding how our Heavenly Father lives in Sabbath rest teaches us much about how we must be with our own children. He is our model of how to be a good parent. Let me explain what I mean.

When a child is born, it is the parents' intention to love and accept their infant son or daughter without regard to merit. As parents, it is our eyes, face, voice, and gestures that all work together to mirror to the child his or her value and loveability. No parent of a newborn would ever think to condition love and acceptance on behavior. No parent in his right mind would intentionally make knowledge of his rules of right and wrong, and performance based on those rules, the foundation of his relationship with a son or daughter. Although the rules of good behavior certainly play into our relationship with our children, those rules are not the architects of that relationship; our unconditional acceptance of our children form the foundation of our relationship with our newborn children. In other words, our children are acceptable to us by grace, not by their works. At least, that's how it all starts between us and our children. Unfortunately, and to the profound detriment of humanity, good intentions quickly give way to other forces handed down through the generations. Children quickly learn from their parents first, then society, and finally even the religious establishment of their culture, that to be accepted and loved, they must become "human doings" instead of human beings. Nevertheless, the more secure a child feels about who he is, despite his imperfections, the more capable he will be to love and be loved throughout his adult life. God, who is love, created us in his image. Thus, we possess the central need and desire to love and be loved (I would also argue that even God has a "need" to be loved).

Parents (especially fathers) have been guilty through the ages of perpetuating the destructive nature of this present world by our insistence that to be accepted, our children must perform perfectly and adhere to our rigid behavioral expectations. This has caused shame in our children. No healthy relationship can be based on this approach. It will continue to produce children who grow up into adults demanding a love from others that they cannot give to themselves. This behavior is called sin and manifests itself in many ways such as anger, jealousy, envy, covetousness, and more. It can also lead to addictions of various kinds, and even war. Beware!! This approach must be changed because it is leading humanity to destruction. If we will change this approach in ourselves, through the power of the Holy Spirit, we might be able to lead our families and those around us from the edge of the abyss of utter destruction that the world is falling into. Each of us can save some that are being drawn away to death.

Don't get me wrong. I am not saying that parents should not teach ethics or morals, or that they should not discipline their children. After all, God sometimes disciplines us harshly for our own good (Hebrews 12:5-11). What I'm saying is that it cannot be the basis for healthy parent-child relationships or, ultimately, for the

formation of morally sound individuals. As parents we must absolutely and unmistakably create an atmosphere of "rest" in this relationship.

Unfortunately, our religions (including Christianity) have been part of the problem—blinding us to this truth and blocking our way of escape from sin through doctrinal fortresses, full of both good and false doctrine. The generally held teaching that God created man perfect (morally and ethically) and that he then fell into imperfection, is quite frankly satanic in origin. God has been given a bum rap here! Instead, and to his eternal credit, God entered our false reality and showed us how utterly we have failed to attain to his ideal for us using this knowledge-performance method. By sending Jesus into our false reality, he proclaimed his reality of rest and continues to call us back to it. But, can we go where we have never been? Only by faith in Jesus and what he has proclaimed and done.

My brothers and sisters in the faith, I know this is not going to be a popular idea to many, but we cannot afford to limit the meaning of the seventh-day Sabbath by continuing to support ourselves solely on the Ten Commandments as justification for our weekly observance, or on the "instituted at creation" argument. We must lead this performance-driven world back to the relationship of REST as originally intended. Everything else is subordinate to this principle of rest. To say it one more time: a relationship with our Creator Father based on works (performance or law-system) leads directly to sin. A relationship based on rest leads to his righteousness and peace. The seventh day is the most powerful tool to proclaim the rest in which God dwells. Presented in the post-creation account, the Sabbath proclaims that rest is the foundation upon which God is working out of his plan for us. It reminds mankind that the primary tension between God and man is "rest vs. works." A condition of spiritual rest leads to obedience, and a striving for spiritual works leads to disobedience.

Our Father, through the example of his Son and the power of the Holy Spirit, gives us the ability to know the truth and the strength to be set free from the chains of sin that bind us. It begins with our families, and most directly lies at the feet of our fathers. I also believe that this kind of personal transformation can and should begin within the Sabbatarian community. God help us to learn to live in the eternal and life-giving rest where He dwells!

Robin Todd and his wife Elizabeth are known as "Two of a Kind," a music ministry proclaiming the message of God's unmeritable love. Robin is also co-founder of the Bible Sabbath Musicians Association, on the Web at www.sabbathmusic.org. If you wish to contact Robin about his music CD, ministry, or the BSMA, you may email him at robinsings1@attbi.com, or mail to 6413 Stephan Ct. S.E., Lacey, WA 98503.

George Washington: Believer Liberator

by Steve Farrell

Who freed America from King George—God or George Washington?

An irate atheist, disturbed that an American writer in a major U.S. publication dared testify that thousands of years ago God freed Israel from Egyptian bondage, and that the fundamental laws which followed the event—namely, the Ten Commandments—were intended to be a universal freedom blueprint, wrote the following retort:

“You’ve got to be a joke. How can anyone take you seriously, if you believe, as a matter of history, this: “The Lord stepped in and freed them”?”

“Did the Lord step in and free America from King George? No. George Washington stepped in.”

My response to the reader and his ilk is this: There is no joke here. Revisionist history aside, George Washington and his fellows never embraced the faithless, arrogant belief that the American Revolution was won by man’s brute and brawn and genius, alone.

From the beginning of the war, there was no doubt as to where Washington drew his strength and resolve and his hope for victory.

When the First Continental Congress convened in 1774 and Thomas Jefferson called for a prayer to be offered, the Founders, each of them, in faith and humility bowed before their Maker. One delegate knelt. Bishop White, who was present, said that the kneeling man was George Washington.⁽¹⁾

Congress, from that day forward, became a praying and a believing body of men. Recalled Benjamin Franklin, a dozen years later:

“In the Beginning of the Contest with Britain, when we were sensible of Danger, we had daily Prayers in this Room for the Divine Protection. Our Prayers, Sir, were heard; —and they were graciously answered. All of us, who were engag’d in the Struggle, must have observed frequent Instances of a superintending Providence in our Favour.”⁽²⁾

This thing must disturb the militant atheist, or the deceitful libertine libertarian, that the collective feeling of those men who produced the greatest and freest government in the history of the world was that they relied upon God, and held out the invincible conviction that He had intervened in their favor; or as Patrick Henry, in his stirring “Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death,” had predicted:

“[W]e shall not fight our battles alone.”⁽³⁾

No one defended this conviction more stoutly than General George Washington. To Joseph Reed, he wrote on Jan. 4, 1776:

“How it will end, God in his great goodness will direct. I am thankful for his protection to this time.”⁽⁴⁾

To the Massachusetts Legislature several months later, he wrote again:

“The interposition of ... Providence ... has manifestly appeared in our behalf through the whole of this important struggle. ...

“May that being, who is powerful to save, and in whose hands is the fate of nations, look down with an eye of tender pity and compassion upon the whole of the United Colonies; may He continue to smile upon their counsels and arms, and crown them with success, whilst employed in the cause of virtue and mankind.”⁽⁵⁾

Washington knew if God was to be on America’s side, their cause must be just, her soldiers must pray, and what’s more, they must act like Christians. He believed, for instance, that using the Lord’s name in vain undermined an army’s strength. Therefore, in 1776, he issued this order, which he repeated when necessary:

“The General is sorry to be informed that the foolish and wicked practice of profane cursing and swearing, a vice heretofore little known in an American army, is growing into fashion. He hopes the officers will, by example as well as influence, endeavor to check it, and that both they and the men will reflect that we can have little hope of the blessings of heaven on our arms if we insult it by our impiety and folly.”⁽⁶⁾

The point is, Washington was a levelheaded believer who saw that faith must be matched with manly works:

“[We need to engage in a] brave resistance... [to] conquer or die... [to engage in a] vigorous and manly exertion... [and to] rely upon the goodness of the Cause, and the aid of the supreme Being, in whose hands Victory is, to animate and encourage us to great and noble Actions.”⁽⁷⁾

Along the same line, the aid of the supreme Being had worked so many “miracles for our deliverance,” the general worried that the troops might become over-dependent upon the miraculous and stop “troubling [themselves] about the matter,” that is, fail to do their part.⁽⁸⁾

"I was riding with Mr. Potts near to the Valley Forge where the army lay during the war of ye Revolution, when Mr. Potts said, 'Do you see that woods & that plain? There laid the army of Washington. It was a most distressing time of ye war, and all were for giving up the Ship but that great and good man. In that woods [pointing to a close-in view] I heard a plaintive sound as of a man at prayer. I tied my horse to a sapling & went quietly into the woods. To my astonishment I saw the great George Washington on his knees alone, with his sword on one side and his cocked hat on the other. He was at Prayer to the God of the Armies, beseeching to interpose with his Divine aid, as it was ye Crisis & the cause of the country, of humanity & of the world. Such a prayer I never heard from the lips of man. I left him alone praying. I went home & told my wife. We never thought a man could be a soldier & a Christian, but if there is one in the world, it is Washington. We thought it was the cause of God & America could prevail."

Source: *Eyewitness testimony of Isaac Potts, a Valley Forge resident who shared the following story with the Rev. Nathaniel Randolph Snowden (1770-1851), who then recorded it in his "Diary and Remembrances."*



Credit: McRae, John C., engraver. "The Prayer at Valley Forge." Engraving after a painting by H. Brueckner. Copyright 1866.

Column space doesn't permit an enumeration of the numberless miracles wherein Washington's troops were delivered by changes in the elements, impressions in Washington's heart, "the miraculous" discovery of a traitor, the sparing of the general's life, and the "rais[ing] up friends to fight our battles for us" by a "just God who presides over the destinies of nations"⁽⁹⁾—even the French and rich Jewish merchants.

Washington's notes and letters are filled with this common theme:

"The hand of Providence has been so conspicuous in all this, that he must be worse than an infidel that lacks faith, and more than wicked, that has not gratitude enough to acknowledge his obligations."⁽¹⁰⁾

And so let this author reveal his own witness: God raised up Gen. George Washington to fight a divine battle, as a necessary prologue to the establishment of a divine Constitution, which stands today as the standard of liberty to all the world.

To the day of Washington's death, to his credit, this believer liberator never took credit for the victory. Even when others gave him opportunity, he always put them in their place—and shame on anyone who would claim otherwise, and call it history. □

End notes

1. Schroeder-Lossing, **Life and Times of Washington**, 2:658.
2. Smyth, ed., **Writings of Benjamin Franklin**, 9:600-601, this being part of an appeal by Franklin that a chaplain be appointed from that day forward to pray over their sessions, and to pray over Congress later on, a religious tradition which lives to this day.
3. Henry, Patrick. "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death."
4. Fitzpatrick, ed., **Writings of George Washington**, 4:211-12.

5. Fitzpatrick, ed., **Writings of George Washington**, 4:441-42; and see 5:93.
6. Cousins, Norman. **In God We Trust**, 1958.
7. Fitzpatrick, ed., **Writings of George Washington**, 5:211.
8. Fitzpatrick, ed., **Writings of George Washington**, 7:456.
9. Henry, Patrick. "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death."
10. Fitzpatrick, ed., **Writings of George Washington**, 12:343

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Why the Seventh-day Sabbath?

This attractive booklet lists six reasons why keeping the Sabbath is important for today. The back cover is formatted so as to be suitable for stamping the address of your local congregation!

Order code number P205 to purchase this booklet. They can be purchased for only \$17 per 100 copies. This is an inexpensive but effective way to teach others about God's precious gift of His Sabbaths!

Close to You, El Salvador

A New Charity Organization Begins Working in El Salvador

Goals 2002: Raise money to open a non-profit school in El Salvador and to raise money to start helping people with special needs.

Close to You, Inc. is incorporated as a nonprofit charitable corporation in Wyoming, U.S.A. It will be registered as a nonprofit foundation in El Salvador later this year. It is run by a small board of directors in the United States, and by the founders (Roberto and Barbara Parada) in El Salvador, Central America. The charity functions to raise money for various aid projects and to organize and administer these projects. It is a non-denominational Christian aid organization, not a Church. The members of the current Board of Directors are all Sabbath-observing Christians that attend various Church organizations.

The mission of Close to You, is simply to help the materially poor by providing for their physical, educational, and employment needs. With this help, the poor can then begin to help themselves. Our focus is on El Salvador and Central America in general, but if the need arises, we are willing to help people worldwide. Our financial goal is to keep administrative costs at a minimum so that the maximum amount of each donation reaches those who need it. We have vowed never to use credit to purchase goods or services.

Our primary reason for starting Close to You, is to help the members of our Church (James 2:15-16; I John 3:17). We have determined that the best way to help them is to: (1) provide education for their children; (2) provide jobs for the unemployed; (3) provide financial assistance for special needs; and (4) to provide religious freedom in school and in the work place.

Our secondary reason for starting Close to You, is to help the abandoned, orphaned, and abused children of El Salvador (Psalms 82:3; James 1:27). God, as the Father of the fatherless (Psalms 68:5) expects us, as the brothers and sisters of the fatherless, to care for them and provide for their needs. All they need is a safe place to live, food and clothing, medical and dental attention, an education, and emotional and spiritual nurturing. And, of course, they need to know the love of a family and the love of God. A home for children that is run by truly dedicated and loving Christians can provide countless opportunities to share God's truth. The children will not only receive the hope of a good future in this life, but the hope of eternal life in the next.

Close to You School

The unemployment rate in the Church in El Salvador is often almost 50%. The average monthly sal-

ary for the employed is \$200. Uniforms are required in almost all schools and the parents must purchase books and schools supplies, as well as provide transportation. It is a well-known fact that if a child receives a good education, then it has a greater chance of breaking out of the poverty cycle. We have many children that are several grades behind because their parents have had to keep them out of school, or can't provide the necessary supplies for them to succeed. We also have several adults who are struggling to find a way to go back to school to finish their high school education.

Most schools are in session Monday through Saturday, with most exams given on Saturdays. Most jobs require work Monday through Saturday as well. Most of the unemployment in the Church is caused by this problem. Many members have been fired for refusing to work on Saturdays. The school will offer many employment opportunities to Church members, without the worry of working on the Sabbath.

Close to You hopes to open a non-profit kindergarten through grade twelve school that will be free to the children in the Church. All other students will pay tuition and fees. In this way, we hope that the school will be self-supporting and that there will be profits that can be used to finance a Home for Children, and other projects. The school will be closed on the Sabbath. We hope to make it bilingual and have a good library and computer rooms. We will initially rent a large house. Eventually we hope to move out of the city and have our own property and build our own buildings, providing transportation to the school for the children in the city.

Home and Family for Children

When the school is operating, we will be able to open a Home for Children. Our goal is to function as a

home and family, and not to become a typical orphan asylum. The Home will initially be operated in a rented house, but the eventual goal is to own property outside the city and to build a series of buildings in conjunction with the School. The dream is to have lots of green spaces with trees and plenty of room for the children to play, with a swimming pool and playgrounds. Supervision will be provided by adults, volunteer and/or hired. Eventually we hope to have our own medical and dental clinics on the property. Also, we hope to have enough acreage to grow our own produce, and have room for greenhouses.

Special Needs

There will always be special needs that Close to You would like to help people with. Our website will have a current list of projects that fall under this category. For example, we can provide basic services like a water tank for a family without running water, a concrete floor for a family living in a house with a dirt floor, or medicine for people that can't afford it. We can also be prepared to respond with relief aid after natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes. Read the stories we post on our website to find out how you can help individuals and families with special needs.

How You Can Help

Our most immediate need is for financial donations. Tax-deductible donations are welcome. Other ways to help are to purchase the Salvadoran coffee that we are selling (see below) or to donate specific items that we currently need for our school. There is a list of needed items posted on our website. Of course, we are always in need of your prayers.

Close to You is selling coffee from El Salvador this fall to provide funds for our projects. Organic coffee is being offered in 1-pound bags, fresh from the coffee fields. Small-scale farmers receive a higher price for each pound and the farmers we are buying from this year are Sabbath-keepers. To place an order for coffee, you may use our on-line order blank, contact us at one of the addresses below, or call us at (307) 686-5191. Coffee is priced at \$7 per pound, plus shipping.

For more information about our organization and our projects, and to find out how you can further help the needs of the people in El Salvador, please request a brochure from: 3316 Alberta Drive, Gillette, WY 82718, or by E-mail at: closetoyouinc@hotmail.com.

See our website, www.closetoyouinc.org. We hope that you will be willing to help us open the school in February of 2003 and help us to begin assisting people with special needs this year with the purchase of our coffee or by donating to Close to You.

— written by Roberto & Barbara Parada

The Paradas are members of the United Church of God. Roberto is an Administrative Assistant to the Presi-

dent of El Salvador. Barbara is a graduate of Texas A&M University in Marine Biology, and daughter of Richard and Shirley Nickels of Gillette, Wyoming. They are both bi-lingual.

The Paradas may be reached at: Apartado Postal #7, Nueva San Salvador, La Libertad, EL SALVADOR, C. A. Telephone: 011-503-228-1099. The Spanish name for their charitable organization is "Cerca de Ti, Inc."

El Salvador is a small country on the Pacific coast of Central America. It is located south of Guatemala and Honduras and has two seasons, rainy and dry. The population is close to seven million in a country the size of Massachusetts. The average monthly salary is less than \$200. The principal products are coffee, cotton, sugar cane, cereal grains, vegetables, fruits, and spices. El Salvador is the world's only producer of Balsam.



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Lincoln's Message for Today's America

by Brian Knowles



President Abraham Lincoln once said, "...it is the duty of nations as well as of men, to owe their dependence upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions, in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord."

Of course he had in mind Psalm 33:12: "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." In context, the Psalmist may be speaking of Israel. Yet only a few verses earlier, he had written, "Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him" (verse 8). Clearly that is a verse of universal application. Verses 13 and 14 further describe the universal purview of God: "The Lord looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation he looketh down upon all the inhabitants of the earth." Then he says, "There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength...Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine" (Psalm 33:18-19).

Not by might

The United States, over which Abraham Lincoln once presided as President, has become the most prosperous and powerful nation in the history of mankind. At the touch of a button, our President literally has the power to obliterate all life on this planet. This nation is blessed, not because of who it is, but because of how it has been—a predominantly God-fearing, Christian nation that has provided a safe haven for Jewish people. As the forces of evil gather strength in the modern world, it is only the good graces of a good God, not our military might, that will save us from destruction.

There is only one God—the Creator, YHVH, the God of the Bible. There is only one Messiah (Anointed One)—one Mediator between God and man, and that is Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:5). God does not show favoritism. He chastens every son he loves (Hebrews 12:5ff.).

Abraham Lincoln was also aware of that. He said, "...insomuch as we know that, by His divine law, nations like individuals are subjected to punishments and

chastisements in this world, may we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war, which now desolates the land, may be but a punishment, inflicted upon us, for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole People?"

Lincoln had a degree of God-consciousness not shared by any modern President except possibly Ronald Reagan. I wonder what he would have said were he alive today? How would Lincoln have viewed the barbarities of Pearl Harbor and September 11? Would he have viewed these outrages as divine chastening?

Too proud to pray?

Lincoln's God-consciousness was of an inspired sort. One of his most famous statements is as fresh and applicable today as when it was first made: "We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power, as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which has preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroke success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us!"

Lincoln then declared a national fast.

Can you imagine any modern president, including the incumbent, echoing closely Lincoln's thoughts and declarations? There was a time when US Presidents were not ashamed to kneel humbly before God and acknowledge him as the source of national blessings—as well as national chastisements. Nor were they shy about calling for national repentances.

Complacency in the face of evil?

Today, the United States and indeed the whole Western world, is facing the greatest evil it has ever faced. Regrettably, since September 11, many Americans have sunk back into complacency. As a people, we are still busily "making provision for" the flesh (cf. Romans 14:13 KJV). With one ear, we are waiting for the other terrorist shoe to drop (and it will), and with the other we are listening for "smooth things."

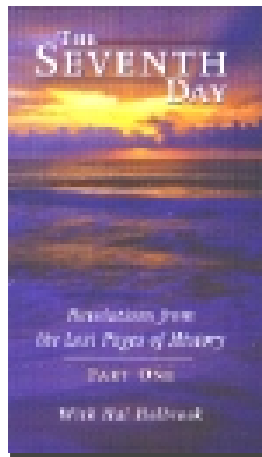
Scripture tells us that “When a man’s ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him” (Proverbs 16:7). The same is true for nations. If our national ways pleased God, the terrorists would be put to flight. If we as a nation would first submit to God, the devil that is behind terrorism would flee from us (cf. James 4:7).

Those who murder innocents think they do God a service. They believe that for committing these heinous acts, they shall receive a reward in Paradise. The apostle John wrote, “...no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him” (1 John 3:15). The way of the true God is love, not hate. John was also inspired to pen the words, “God is love.”

John made it plain that, “In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother” (1 John 3:10). Terrorism is wanton murder. It is the lowest form of unrighteousness. Death is its only reward (Romans 6:23).

Death will continue to breed death until the world turns to God. Let it begin with the Church. Let it begin with you and me. After all, judgment begins at the house of God (1 Peter 4:17), and if we would judge ourselves, we would not have to be judged (1 Corinthians 11:31). □

Brian Knowles is a writer and artist. Many of his articles are posted at <http://www.godward.org/>.



The Seventh Day

Revelations from the Lost Pages of History – Part One, with Hal Holbrook, 52 min. VHS NTSC video, \$23.00, or \$5.00 for 14-day LOAN. First in a five-part series of the history of the Sabbath. (V215)

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Q & A Dialog on the Sabbath

Q: How did the Jews misinterpret God’s spiritual intent concerning the Sabbath?

Notice the case of the man who picked up sticks on the Sabbath. It’s recorded in Numbers 15:32-36. Many assume today that God was so upset with the man for the act of picking up a few little sticks that he had the hapless offender stoned to death. But read the text. Note that it nowhere says how many sticks were picked up—two or two thousand. It doesn’t say how long or difficult the task was, nor if the “sticks” were small or large. And, most importantly, we don’t know why the man did what he did. What was his motive behind the deed? The context can help clarify the situation. God had just given instruction regarding sins committed in ignorance and those that were presumptuous, knowledgeable, willful, rebellious sins. Compare verses 27-29 with verses 30-31. Note the difference in the way God dealt with the two types of sin. Then this story is inserted, probably to illustrate the distinction. Note that the stick-gatherer was not immediately killed for his deed. He was put in custody. The correct punishment was not evident and clear to Moses and the leaders. They appealed to God for his judgment. God, who knows men’s hearts, sentenced the man to death. Obviously, the stick-gatherer was guilty and worthy of death. Why? Because of his simple deed? Or because of his attitude of willful rebellion (v 30-31)?

Many of the Jewish leaders, lacking God’s Holy Spirit, missed the spiritual understanding of these scriptural examples. They were always concerned with what was “lawful” on the Sabbath day. Their approach to God’s Sabbath was very legalistic. For instance, half a fig was all right since it could fit in the mouth and be classified as “eating” (which was “lawful”), but carrying a whole fig was considered a “burden” and prohibited as “labor,” and therefore “unlawful.”

The rabbis made the Sabbath an end in itself, rather than the intended means to an end. The multiplication of human imposed regulations, rather than preserving the Sabbath, destroyed it. And, such hair-splitting distinctions and rabbinical restrictions obviously led to a spirit of hypocritical fault-finding.

The Jews did not rightly interpret God’s spiritual laws. They missed the point—the spiritual purpose of God’s Sabbath and the intent behind the law. The way the Jews had interpreted these scriptures was contrary to God’s original intent and purpose for the Sabbath, as Jesus plainly showed. Jesus came as the Son of his father Yahweh as our example to show us the way, to reveal the original intent of God’s Sabbath command.

Source: Association for Christian Development Website—<http://www.godward.org>

transgressions”—the exact phrase Paul uses in Galatians 3:19.

The next question: Were the laws concerning burnt-offerings and sacrifices for transgressions added to a prior, already-existing Torah? Yes, they were. The Torah was first given to God’s people when they heard the voice of Yahweh utter the Ten Commandments. (See Deuteronomy 4:13, 36; 5:4, 22.) Then Moses went up into the mountain. When the people got tired of waiting for Moses to return, they transgressed the Torah by making a golden calf to worship. This transgression of the Torah made it necessary for God to add something more to the Torah, namely, laws concerning burnt-offerings and sacrifices.

“The law was added because of transgressions.” This statement alone strongly implies (if not proves) that there was, indeed, an already-existing Torah, because “where no law is, there is no transgression” (Rom. 4:15). In order for transgression to exist, there must be a law to transgress. It was the transgression of the already-existing Torah that made it necessary to add the law of burnt-offerings and sacrifices. Therefore we could understand Galatians 3:19 to mean “the law [of burnt-offerings and sacrifices] was added [to the Torah] because of transgressions [against the Torah].”

These laws of burnt-offerings and sacrifices were added to cover transgressions, but burnt-offering and sacrifice was not the thing God was originally after: “For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices. But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imaginations of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward” (Jer. 7:22–24). Obedience was what God wanted, but transgression created a need for burnt-offerings and sacrifices to be added to the Torah.

It is remarkable that even Scofield, in spite of his anti-Torah bias, makes this comment about these verses from Jeremiah: “The command concerning burnt-offerings and sacrifices was not given to the people till they had broken the decalogue, the law of obedience” (Jer. 7:22, fn.1, emphasis mine). It is even more remarkable that in this same footnote, Scofield refers the reader back to his notes at Exodus 20, where he separates the giving of the Law into stages. Scofield sees the first stage as consisting of the following: the giving of the Ten Commandments (Ex. ch. 20), the “judgments” (Ex. 21:1–23:13), the feasts (Ex. 23:14–19), and the instructions for the conquest of Canaan (Ex. 23:20–33). Scofield calls this first stage “pure law, with no provision of priest-

hood and sacrifice for failure” (emphasis mine). He views the giving of the laws of burnt-offerings and sacrifices as a separate stage, distinct from this first stage. According to Scofield, the laws of burnt-offerings and sacrifices were given as something separate from and subsequent to the people’s transgression of the Torah, and because of the people’s transgression of the Torah. In these notes, the anti-nomian Scofield has unwittingly shown that “the law [of burnt-offerings and sacrifices] was added [to the Torah] because of transgressions [against the Torah]”!

All of this can be summed up in the words of Samuel: “Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams” (1 Sam. 15:22). What God wants is obedience. It is transgression that creates the need for burnt-offerings and sacrifices; therefore, the Lord has no pleasure in burnt-offerings and sacrifices. Hebrews 10:6–9 elaborates on this: “In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do Thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt-offerings and offering for sin Thou wouldest not, neither had pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second.”

In the above verse, God did not “take away” the Old Testament Law that He might “establish” New Testament Grace. In the context of this passage, the “law” that is being discussed is the system of burnt-offerings and sacrifices that were offered at the Temple by the Levitical priesthood for the transgressions of the people. Because the Messiah had been sacrificed and the Temple was soon to be destroyed, God was in the process of “taking away the first [system of animal sacrifices for transgressions]” in order to “establish the second [system of sacrifice, viz., the sacrifice of Messiah, who was ‘wounded for our transgressions’ and was stricken ‘for the transgression of my people’ (Isa. 53:5, 8)].”

A close study of Hebrews, especially chapters 9 & 10, will show that the writer’s goal was to show his Messianic Jewish readers that the sacrifice of the Messiah was the fulfillment of all the previous sacrifices and burnt-offerings that were offered in the Temple. As long as the Temple was still standing and as long as the Levitical priesthood was still operating, Messianic Jews were free to participate in Temple worship during this period of transition. (This is obvious in the Book of Acts.) However, they needed to understand that Yeshua was the fulfillment of the sacrifices. The only value of burnt-offerings and sacrifices was in the fact that they pointed back to the sacrifice of the Messiah, the “more excel-

lent sacrifice.” These sacrifices could not, however, be a substitute for the sacrifice of the Messiah.

This idea harmonizes quite well with the idea that “the law [of burnt-offerings and sacrifices] was added [to the Torah] because of transgressions [against the Torah].” The writer of Hebrews was telling his Jewish readers that the laws of burnt offerings and sacrifices were only necessary until the Messiah should come, and Paul was telling his Gentile readers in Galatia the same thing.

If this understanding of Galatians 3:19 is correct (which I believe it is), then it will make a great difference in how we understand some of the other references to “the law” in Galatians. This view takes into account the fact that “the law” which the so-called Judaizers were trying to push onto the Gentiles in Galatia included the laws of burnt-offerings and sacrifices that were offered at the Temple. And before Gentiles were allowed to participate in these offerings at the Temple, they had to undergo circumcision, which meant a full-fledged, formal conversion to Judaism. And this, of course, was what Paul was opposing - the idea that justification comes by a formal conversion to Judaism.

The next time you read Galatians, keep these four things in mind when you see the words “the law”: 1. Paul could not have been preaching against the Law per se, because Christians were still expected to obey some parts of the Torah. 2. Christians were not required to obey the laws of burnt-offerings and sacrifices. 3. The law that the Judaizers were trying to push on the Gentile believers included the laws of burnt-offerings and sacrifices. 4. For Gentiles, Temple worship involving sacrifices required a full-fledged, formal conversion to Judaism in order to be justified.

*Reprinted from **Gates of Eden**, Vol. 7, No. 6, November-December 2001.*

*Daniel Botkin is a member of the board of directors of the Bible Sabbath Association and publisher of **Gates of Eden** (<http://www.gatesofeden.org/>).*

“Private virtue, rooted in biblical faith, is essential for the American experiment to work as the Founders intended. And, it's vital that Christians understand this often-ignored 'wing' on which our way of life depends. The wing that teaches us that, without virtue, there can be no greatness.” —*Charles Colson*

ACLJ News Release

ACLJ Gets Victory in Ten Commandments Case

Federal Judge Turns Back Legal Attack by ACLU in Kentucky

August 22, 2002

(Lexington, KY) — The American Center for Law and Justice, an international public interest law firm, announced today that a federal court in Lexington, Kentucky, has turned back an attack by the ACLU on a Mercer County, KY, courthouse display which includes the Ten Commandments among a series of historical and legal texts. At a hearing today, U.S. District Court Judge Karl Forrester denied the ACLU's motion for a preliminary injunction, which would have included the removal of the display.

“This is a major victory for the people of Mercer County and for all Americans who don't buy into the ACLU's extreme misrepresentation of our constitution,” said Francis J. Manion, Senior Counsel of the ACLJ who argued the case on behalf of Mercer County. “The First Amendment was never intended to remove all mention of God or religion from the public square. The Supreme Court and many other courts have long recognized the foundational role of the Ten Commandments in the development of our legal system. There is no reason why government at all levels cannot acknowledge this fact.”

The ACLU filed suit against Mercer County over the display. In court today, U.S. District Court Judge Karl Forrester rejected the ACLU motion for a preliminary injunction saying the ACLU had not shown a “likelihood of success on the merits.” The court held that government officials who display the Ten Commandments for their historical value have a permissible secular purpose for doing so.

The court also found that the display of the Ten Commandments with other historical documents makes it clear that government is displaying the Commandments because of their undoubted secular importance and influence. The court noted that the historical influence of the Ten Commandments is beyond rational dispute. In the words of Judge Forrester, “the plaintiffs [ACLU] might wish it were so. But plaintiffs' wishes cannot change history.”

“With today's decision, we see an important development and a critical recognition of the constitutionality of such a display,” said Manion. “The Supreme Court has said: ‘There is an unbroken history of official acknowledgment by all three branches of government of the role of religion in American life.’ Appropriate displays of the Ten Commandments, such as the one at issue here, are part of that unbroken history and are well within the mainstream of American culture. It's clear the people of Mercer County, Kentucky understand the difference between ‘acknowledgment’ of religion and ‘establishment’ of religion. It's encouraging that the court understands the distinction as well.”

The American Center for Law and Justice is involved in more than 15 cases around the country defending public displays of the Ten Commandments.

The ACLJ is an international public interest law firm specializing in constitutional law. The ACLJ web site address is www.aclj.org and it is headquartered in Virginia Beach, VA.

Continued from Page 5

Sabbath observance has been put forth, and such arguments continue to advance as they should.

But, perhaps, we should refocus and reevaluate our theology around the Lord of the Sabbath instead of just the Sabbath itself. The Sabbath has just as much, if not more, christological significance than what the Christian majority has made for Sunday through the centuries. And perhaps, just perhaps, our peculiar differences that keep us apart will lose their focus as we focus on Christ, and through Him we will find the cooperation and dialogue among Sabbath keepers that the BSA is dedicated to promoting.

Because the majority of Christians have, since the Edict of Constantine, revered Sunday as a Christian holiday, the religious majority have stolen the march on Christian Sabbath keepers in fostering and promoting unity on the basis of the sacredness of Sunday. They have at the same time preempted the reasons and rationale for such unity, by calling Sunday “the Sabbath,” “the day of rest,” “the Lord’s day,” terms original to the Sabbath of Creation, the seventh day. The Roman church asserts the authority to have “transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.” On such grounds the Roman Pontiff claims to have the moral and religious authority over all Christians who by practice assent to the Roman church’s edicts whether such authority is recognized or admitted.

Sabbath keepers must bring about a united consensus that reaffirms the moral and religious authority that Jesus Christ has over all creation as Lord of the Sabbath. The redemptive and spiritual meaning of the Sabbath is defined by Christ himself as the one who brings us rest, releases us from the debt of sin, and recreates us into His image. This is “Sabbath language.” These ideas of rest, release, and creation all point to the Sabbath. As Sabbath keepers we must maintain the moral high ground that recognizes the entire Ten Commandments as the preeminent moral standard of Christian culture. It is impossible to promote the Sabbath without promoting the Ten Commandments. In a society whose culture is becoming morally decadent, we stand in the responsible position of calling attention to God’s great moral standard and the teachings of Christ that emphasize and affirm it.

Most Christians assume as fact the Sabbath is no longer relevant in the Christian age because there is no distinct or explicit command for keeping the Sabbath in the New Testament. This is presupposing that the “New Testament” faith represents a discontinuity of “Old Testament” faith. Such a supposition is implicit in the very terms “Old Testament” and “New Testament as applied to the Christian Bible. But such terms and divisions as applied to the Bible owe their origin to the Gnostic Marcion’s (ca. 150 CE) radical separation of the

Scriptures based on his anti-Semitic theology, not found in the Bible itself. The relevance of the Decalogue for Christians is perhaps based on greater grounds that find their expression in the teachings of Christ Himself, the greatest expounder of the Law. Jesus explains the deeper meaning and relevance of God’s precepts even though He does not distinctly or specifically repeat or command every precept of the law. In this context, of all the precepts that became the focus of Christ’s teachings, he gives attention to the fourth precept of the Decalogue more than any other.

We exalt and give attention to the deeper meaning of the Sabbath in following Christ’s teachings and example. Our Sabbath consciousness should emphasize our commonality in Christ. We needn’t fear our association together on the basis of our common belief of the Bible Sabbath if it is founded on Christ. We needn’t fear our embracing all fellow Christians as a part of the body of Christ for the same reason. We can celebrate our diversity as Sabbath keepers when we can come together and share in what ways we find our Sabbath-keeping in Him and invite fellow Christians to experience such with us. I am privileged to promote such ideals as a member of the BSA and to call for a broader support for our efforts.

The Sunday question is perhaps one of the greatest divides among Christians today and probably will remain so until the end of the age. Our Sabbath keeping should be full of the same compassion that Jesus exhibited in teaching the true meaning of Sabbath observance that leads us to embrace all Christians as brothers regardless of where we stand on the question. It is not enough just to be right. One must be right for the right reasons. It is in that same spirit that we encourage you to continue to support our efforts to be right for the right reasons. □

Bible Trivia Quiz

- 1) Who was Adam and Eve’s firstborn son?
- 2) Which body of water did the Israelites cross to enter the promised land?
a) Red Sea; b) Euphrates River; c) Jordan River; d) Brook of Kidron
- 3) Who will see Jesus when He returns?
- 4) How many days was Lazareth dead before Jesus raised him?
a) 4 days; b) 2 months; c) 1 week; d) 2 days
- 5) When Jesus returns, on which mountain will His feet stand?
a) Sinai; b) Horeb; c) Olives; d) Gerizim

Answers: 1) Cain (Gen. 4:1); 2) c (Josh. 3:1); 3) Every eye (Rev. 1:7); 4) a (John 11:39); 5) c (Zech. 14:4)

They Sang in their Cells in Bangladesh Despite Persecution

Three Gospel for Asia Bible school students in Bangladesh were sharing Christ in the village of Vasu during a six-month ministry assignment. Muslim extremists, angry to see a Gospel witness in their village, went to the police with false claims that the young men were terrorists.

At 5:30 a.m. on March 18, army police arrested the men and took them in for questioning. Though the missionary trainees carefully explained their identity, the authorities put them behind bars. It was a nightmarish day the three will never forget.

The students were severely beaten with bamboo rods and endured unthinkable torture. One of the police officers pierced a pin into the fingernail of one brother, causing him excruciating pain. For the whole day all three were writhing in pain, unable even to move because they had been so brutally beaten. From the next day on, the police were lenient and allowed them to sing and pray in their cell-witnessing for Jesus even to their persecutors. Meanwhile, local GFA leaders diligently sought to secure their freedom.

Finally, 23 days after the arrest, the students were released upon signing a bond. While the investigation of their case continues, they are required to report to the police station on a regular basis. Thankfully, they are in good spirits. Even on that terrible day of beating, they had joy to share in the sufferings of Christ and are ready, if necessary, to give their lives for Jesus' sake. Please pray that they will stand strong in faith and that God will use them to bring thousands to faith in Christ.

(Source: <http://www.worthynews.com>)

Christians Under Attack in Poso, Indonesia

Radical Islamic warriors are continuing their rain of terror on the Christians of Sulawesi Island, Indonesia. A Voice of the Martyrs (VOM) source has confirmed that 21 Christian villages in the Poso coastal area have been burned and destroyed and at least seven people have been killed in recent months.

"It seems that Muslim leaders have a double standard," said VOM spokesman Gary Lane. "They demanded the U.S. halt bombing in Afghanistan during Ramadan, but it is apparently okay for radical jihad warriors to terrorize Indonesian Christians during the Islamic holy month."

VOM confirms at least 600 homes and six churches were burned during the attacks that occurred November 26–29. The largest church in Poso was bombed and burned during the attacks and 15,000 Christians reportedly fled the area seeking refuge in the villages of Huasa and Sulewana.

"Christians resided in the Mulukus long before Islam arrived there, but it appears that these radical Muslims want to make the islands—especially Sulawesi—a Christian-free zone," said Lane.

According to several reports, well armed, uniformed, militant Laskar Jihad troops now have the Christian village of Tentena surrounded. 50,000 Christians apparently are at risk of slaughter in Tentena. In Jakarta, Bishop Mgr. Josef Suwatan told the Jakarta Post the Muslim rebels are mostly from East Java, not Sulawesi Island and they are equipped with AK-47 automatic weapons, rocket launchers and even circular saws and bulldozers. He urged the police and Indonesian military to protect the Chris-

tians of Poso by taking "tight measures to control the militiamen and disarm the local people."

But it appears the Indonesian government is doing little to send in additional troops to protect its own citizens from a possible massacre. According to the Jakarta Post, Poso Precinct Police Chief Unggung Cahyono said, "The number of attackers is too large for us, so security forces are unable to stop them."

"President Megawati has called for tolerance, peace and justice for people of different religions in Indonesia," said Lane. "More than words



Christian villages like this one on Saparua have been wiped out by Muslim warriors. (Source: Voice of the Martyrs)

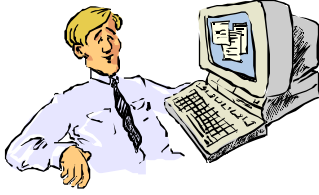
are needed now to protect Christians in Poso and throughout the Mulukus."

"Our concern at VOM is that while attention is focused on the atrocities of the Taliban in Afghanistan, the destruction of entire villages and the slaughter of innocent men, women and children in Indonesia is being ignored by the world community."

VOM is urging Americans to pray for Indonesian Christians.

(Source: <http://www.worthynews.com>)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Dear Mr. Ryland:

One of your readers, sister Ana Harrom, gave very solid advice when he said "... We should not force at any rate to get into countries which are so dangerous to stay around...." You erred greatly when you disagreed with this statement.

There are two sides to every coin. The opposing side to grace is the need to repent by obeying God's law, for example. But antinomians ignore the other side of the grace coin.

The command to go preach the gospel also has an opposite side of the coin. Jesus said "Don't throw your pearls before swine or they will trample them, then turn and tear you." In John 7:1 Jesus went about in Galilee. He would not go about in Judea, because the Jews were seeking to kill him.

It is not wise to take the message before those who you have good reason to believe will treat your pearls as something to be trampled in the mud—people who have their bayonet

prepared, and a desire to run you through.

Jesus spoke in parables so that many with eyes and ears would understand what they saw and heard. He did not speak without using a parable (thus, his whole word, the Bible, is a parable). This is in agreement with Revelation 22:11, "Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy...."

The gospel is hidden to many at this time, in accordance with God's will.

You erred again when you said, "We should save all people." The phrase "We should save all people" is too strong of a statement. You lay a heavy responsibility upon your readers. It appears you are advising them to go into dangerous areas and forfeit their lives while "saving" people.

Dangerous situations do arise for which we will lose our lives preaching Christ. But to preplan your own death by going into Sudan where execution is required for those preach-

ing Christianity is not a burden that Christ laid on his disciples' shoulders.

As for the timing of the spiritual harvest, you should know that the Feasts are a prophecy and pattern of the spiritual.

Jesus was the first of the firstfruits of the harvest. He was the wave sheaf offering made on Sunday morning after the Passover (our Passover sacrifice was crucified on Passover day). He was accepted by God for us.

The firstfruits of harvest, also called Pentecost, became the firstfruits of the receipt of God's Holy Spirit. These are the saints who will be kings & priests in the millennial reign (the Sabbath rest when man must rest from his 6000 years of building the kingdoms of man).

The great fall harvest is yet future. I believe it is pictured in "that last great day of the Feast of Tabernacles, when rivers of living water will issue from Jesus."

Greg A. Jandrt
Schofield, WI

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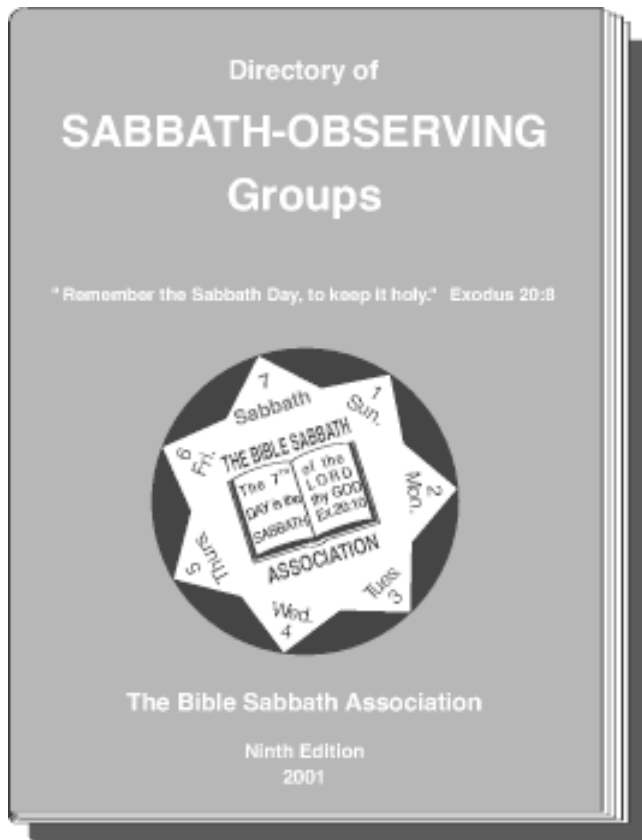
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The 246-page ninth edition of The Bible Sabbath Association's comprehensive catalog of Seventh-day Sabbath-Observing Groups has gone to press! The *Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups* will ship in late September or early October.

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:

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The Sabbath Sentinel

A Bi-monthly Publication of

The Bible Sabbath Association
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