

THE

# Sabbath Sentinel

November–December 2002

I was in prison,  
and you visited me

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

# The Sabbath Sentinel

November-December 2002 Volume 54, No. 6 Issue 498

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# Back to Basics

## Prison Ministry

When the board of directors of the Bible Sabbath Association recommended that we put together a special issue of *The Sabbath Sentinel* featuring prison ministries, I was not at all sure that this topic would generate much interest. Since that time, I have been surprised at the outpouring of response surrounding the topic of prison ministry. Little did I suspect that ministering to prisoners was on the hearts of so many people.

For some time we have been running a column titled “The Church in the World,” (see page 21) containing stories of persecuted Christian in third-world countries. Many of these people were thrown into prison because of their belief in Christ. One thing that is often overlooked, however, is that many people become Christians after they are in prison. The experience of being in prison, deprived of friends, family, and worldly comforts, often leads prisoners to examine their own lives and gives them a stark view of their personal conduct and attitudes. Coming to understand the inadequacy of life in this present world, many begin to realize that the only true escape from slavery to their personal sins is through the blood of Jesus Christ. In short, many prisoners come to see what people outside prison walls often do not see: that life in this world, no matter how comfortable, leads to death.

Prisoners, whether they are incarcerated because of crimes or persecution, need the ministering hand of the body of Christ. In presenting several articles on various facets of prison ministry, we hope that some will be inspired to respond to the needs of those in prison, and that all will pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ who are serving time in prison.

## Brother Joseph

Recently my wife and I were privileged to welcome into our home brother Joseph Kimani, a pastor from Kenya. I say “privileged” because of what we learned from this man of God. True, we provided his meals and lodging, but the value of what he brought was much greater than what we were able to offer him in return.

Joseph’s goal is to evangelize the entire country of Kenya, and he and his church are actively going about doing just that. Frankly, his zeal, tempered with a heavy dose of common sense practicality, was very refreshing. He knows that God wants all to hear the message of salvation, and he has willingly thrown himself into the task. But, already it appears that Joseph’s vision is too

small, for the Lord is opening up inroads into the neighboring countries of Tanzania and Uganda.

There are two spiritual principals that Joseph exemplified that are in marked contrast to the approach of most churches in the United States. First, the mission of the Church is evangelism. We all know the verses, “Go ye therefore into all the world and make disciples of all nations,” and “the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few.” Yet, for most American and Western churches, the days for this are past. We concentrate on church programs, erecting buildings, and holding onto those members that we have. If there is “evangelism,” often it takes the form of trying to induce members of a group with similar doctrinal ideas to switch over to our group, in spite of the fact that there are plenty of unconverted people out there (“the harvest is plentiful”) who could fill our pews if they were given a good reason to do so.

At the very heart of the type of evangelism that Joseph and his church practice is the belief that people must be won to Christ—to a personal relationship with the Savior of the world—before they are taught all the dos and don’ts of how to walk the Christian life. In other words, they are taught to put their complete faith and trust in the personal, living Savior and Head of the Church, before they are taught why they should keep the Sabbath as opposed to Sunday. Often in the West, a doctrinal foundation is laid down as the basis for our relationship with Christ and the Father, instead of personal faith in Christ and the transforming power of that faith.

The second principle I saw manifested in Brother Joseph’s approach was that of complete trust in Christ to take care of His Church. I asked him whether he was concerned about the condition of his church during his lengthy absence from Kenya. “No, not at all,” he replied. “The men who are taking care of the church are men of God. Besides, it is not my church. It belongs to the Lord, and He will take care of His church.”

How refreshing was that reply! I have seen too often that pastors are so unwilling to release control of their church that Christ can do little to prepare the people for greater things. Then, when the pastor leaves or there is some crisis in the church, the whole congregation falls apart into a dozen splinters.

Would that we could all recapture the simplicity of Christianity! Preach Christ. Trust Christ. It’s no more complicated than that. □



# Simple Truth from a Complex Book

by Calvin Burrell

“As a new Christian, I’ve found more diverse opinions than I thought,” someone wrote. “If we study together in Jesus’ name, won’t God reveal the truth so we can agree on everything in the Bible?”

We asked a respected elder to help answer this good question. “God is not the author of confusion,” he quoted from I Corinthians 14:33, a chapter on spiritual gifts. This was helpful, but in the same chapter we find other verses that are used on opposite sides of the “tongues” question. “Forbid not to speak with tongues,” Paul writes (v. 39), although he had earlier stressed that five words clearly understood in the church are better than 10,000 spoken in tongues (v. 19).

This sort of inclusive teaching prompted the question I received. Part of what we mean by the complexity of Scripture is that it applies in many more areas than just one.

In a dozen or a hundred topics, the truth of the Bible runs on two rails: God’s sovereignty and man’s freedom; the deity and humanity of Christ; worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:24); make a joyful noise; be still and know (Psalm 100:1; 46:10); walk in the old paths, and sing a new song (Jeremiah 6:16; Psalm 96:1); bear each other’s burdens; everyone must bear his own (Galatians 6:2, 5); rejoice always, and turn your joy to gloom (Philippians 4:4; James 4:9).

Perhaps the classic paradox in Scripture is Paul’s emphasis on salvation by grace through faith, compared with James’ stress on the necessity of good works for a living faith. The skeptics will refer to each of these as contradictions, but they are not. They are paradoxes, two truths that appear problematic on the surface, but which combine to form a richly-textured fabric of divine truth—Bible truth on two rails. If one wheel comes off the track, the whole train derails.

The Bible is a complex book, in part, because of the need to balance truths. But that’s not all. The very length and volume of Scripture make it more than a simple task to master. Not just one book, it is a library of 66 volumes, 1189 chapters, and over 31,000 verses. Its 770,000-plus words were first written in three different languages, none of which is spoken much today.

The translation from ancient Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, and the evolution of modern languages, is a major challenge to biblical scholars. Thankfully, the task is done well by many of them.

Sooner or later, we will arrive at the difficult passages of Scripture: its genealogies, and lists of laws; its poetry (Job, for example), and its prophecies (including Daniel and the Apocalypse). An honest reader, even a scholar, must admit that the Bible is not an easy book!

Who’s behind such complexity? Who is it that whispers such sweet mysteries? The One who spoke the universe into existence, of course. Who can understand that act, with its myriad of diverse life forms and scientific marvels? He also invented the DNA molecule and the human genetic system, recently “mapped” with the aid of computers working for years. He produced the human body, fearfully and wonderfully made, and the greatest of all computers—the mind. God’s ways are unsearchable, to be sure, but most of us will use only 10 to 15% of our brain potential learning anything.

It should be no surprise that the God whose creation and character are past finding out, should give us more than a monotone blob in His Book. He did not promise all His treasures to the casual reader, but to those who receive, apply, seek, search and dig (Proverbs 2:1-5).

If God and the Bible are both complex, what hope is there for simple-minded folks like us? Much hope, in every way!

When babies take milk, they grow. They understand neither the formula of the milk, nor the nutrients in it, but they change for the better when they drink it.

So it is with Christians. We make good progress when we take the Word. The Bible invites us, not to come and be a scholar, but to come and drink, to taste and see, and to be made whole! (Isaiah 55:1ff; I Peter 2:2). Where do we start?

We can start at the beginning—of either major section of Scripture. Start in Genesis, and read history—

*Continued on Page 20*

# Behind Prison Walls—Do's and Don'ts

by Denis Burrell

I have been a prison chaplain for the State of Oklahoma for over 15 years. During those 15 years, I have seen and heard just about everything regarding the sins of man and the power of the Holy Spirit to change peoples' lives.

Ministering in prison has its specific challenges, especially if you are going to be effective in winning souls and, at the same time, keep out of trouble with prison officials and with the prisoners themselves.

The number one rule to follow while ministering in a prison setting is, "Confidentiality." There is nothing worse than going to prison for "stories" about evil becoming good—Jesus saving someone from the depths of sin—and sharing those stories with people on the outside.

Many of those spending time in prison do not want other people sharing their stories with the outside world. Plus there is a more serious side to sharing what one learns of the lives of those inside. Legal questions can arise if their stories fall on the ears of the wrong person or possibly the ears of one involved in the crime itself. It is just wrong to betray confidentiality.

Many times we have people getting attached to those in prison in a personal way. Volunteers are never to get involved with inmates outside their ministry as a volunteer.

Inmates are experts in spotting lonely people or people having problems at home and many times take advantage of volunteers. There are cons in prison and they earned the right to be called such. So when ministering in prison keep focused on your ministry and not your love life.

Don't enter into contracts of any kind with an inmate. Don't mail letters for inmates. Don't give money to inmates. Money turns into drugs in prison—letters can have messages about drugs, sex, and other illegal activity—and contracts can get you in trouble.

Making promises that you don't intend on keeping or for whatever reason cannot keep is wrong. There is nothing more disappointing to someone on the inside than to have someone promise you something and they do not follow through. The Bible says let your yea be yea and your nay be nay, and to make vows or promises and not keep them is wrong so don't make them at all (Jesus' Sermon on the Mount).

While preaching in prison, do not castigate other religions or religious groups. It is important to respect

the rights and beliefs of others. Besides respect with the institutions, you will also have respect from the inmates who attend your services.

As a chaplain, I have to help all religious groups to be able to conduct their services, and I cannot discriminate because of my beliefs. They all have constitutional rights and freedoms just like you and me. Though we might not believe in some of the extreme religious practices, it is still their right to practice those religious services.

Defend your beliefs by preaching those beliefs and not preaching against others. You would not want others to speak against your ministry and beliefs, so treat others the way you would like to be treated: respectfully.

Personal conduct, as well as dress, is important in ministering to prisoners. Be on time and always show up. Do not miss your appointments. To one locked up, missing a service is an insult and can cause an inmate to mistrust you. They battle with insecurity and depression every day. Missing a service adds to that insecurity in their lives, especially if they have confidence in your ministry.

A good question to ask yourself is, "Why do I want to start a prison ministry?" Do I just want to be able to brag about doing something for Jesus? It looks good on my monthly report? It sounds good while I'm talking to my peers? Or, do you have a burden to win the lost—to reach out in compassion to those who are behind bars? Do you feel the heart of Jesus and His love for those that are bound by chains? Do you realize that His blood shed at Calvary covered all sins? Can you minister to the homosexual, child molester, rapist, or murderer as one who can be changed?

How you answer why determine your effectiveness as a prison volunteer. Stay focused on your purpose and the reason why.

Deciding what your message is will also help to determine your purpose. Inmates are told that they can never change who they are. It is the teaching of modern-day psychologists and counselors. Is your message one that sets people free from their past, and is it a message that frees people from their sinful lives? Do you preach a born-again experience that totally changes every part of your life, or is it a partial gospel? Your message must be life-changing.

*Continued on Page 19*

# ***Jail and Prison Ministry — a Job For You?***

***By Earl Lewis***

The last section of Matthew 25 speaks of the last judgment. A comparison is given between those who are given life eternal, and those receiving everlasting punishment. While we are definitely saved by God's grace and through the sacrifice Jesus made on the cross, God does call us to obedience and work (Ephesians 2:10).

Some of the jobs Christians are called to do are listed in Matthew 25. We are to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, take in the stranger, clothe the naked, visit the sick, and go to those in prison. Some of these things are easy and natural for us to do. Others cause us to drag our feet; some we just aren't interested in doing. Yet, God has called us to be about His work as diligent workers in the field planting seed, plowing, and preparing for the harvest. Maybe some of you reading this article are interested in finding a new field to work. Pray and trust God to guide you to where He wants you to invest yourself on behalf of bringing others into His kingdom.

I didn't plan it, but somehow, a few years ago, I was called into a new phase of ministry. For the past six years, I have been involved in jail visitation on a local level. This has been done mostly at the Jasper County Detention Center (JCDC) in Carthage, Missouri, in the county where I live. Some has been done in the adjoining county at the Newton County Detention Center (NCDC) in Neosho, Missouri. It started when someone I knew was picked up and jailed. They called; I went.

Most of the people I visit are not hardened criminals. Many made a bad decision that was costly; some were with the wrong companions, at the wrong time, in the wrong place. Some have costly habits from which they can't break free. Some have financial difficulties and write bad checks in an attempt to feed their families. Of course, there are many incarcerated, who are accused of much more serious crimes. I visit those who request a visit with me. These are usually referrals from another inmate or a relative. These are the ones who appear to be more open to changing their lifestyle. They realize their way hasn't worked, and are looking for a better way.

Although I am the one who does the weekly visits, I have a support group that helps make it possible. Among the support group is the Women's Ministry of the church I pastor in Joplin, Missouri. They purchase clothing for the women inmates that are in

need. Sometimes there is quite a need. Only white undergarments can be worn by inmates. If they are incarcerated with colored undergarments, they lose them. If they don't have family members to supply them, they have none. In the winter time, the cells are cold and extra clothing or an extra blanket is furnished. Personal products may be furnished by family members, or if they have funds, they can be purchased at the facility. If not, they do without, or wait on the generosity of the guards. We have placed a box in our church to gather sample sizes of soap, shampoo, and toothpaste.

During these times, a helping hand is appreciated and remembered. Sometimes the thing needed most is to know that someone cares about them. A notable favorite saying of mine is well-worth remembering. It says: "They don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." This is true of people everywhere. Being in jail is no different. The tragic fact is that many don't have anyone who really cares about them.

My prison ministry is now done almost exclusively through correspondence. A lot of it has involved graduates of the local JCDC and NCDC. Contacts seem to come from a number of other ministries.

The *Giving & Sharing Newsletter* reaches a lot of prisons and brings some response. Many inmates request study material and Bibles from this ministry. It is our goal when we receive these requests to assist the prison chaplains and furnish Bibles and study aids for their libraries.

SEED Missionary Aid Association is another ministry that was started primarily to furnish Bibles and study materials for foreign ministers. It has been expanded the past few years to include those in, or who have recently been released from prison. The major focus is helping them to adapt to life on the outside.

Searchlight Bible Course (SBC) also brings some referral contacts from other prisoners. Some of the jail inmates take the SBC with them when they are transferred to state prisons. Other inmates see them doing it and ask about it. Occasionally, other family members of the inmates inquire and enroll in the study course. Many times we have from twenty to forty students actively enrolled in the course. This is not a course of deep theological study. While scriptural issues and doctrines are taught, the emphasis is on introducing the student

to Christianity, and helping him in his growth and walk as a Christian.

Also among my support team are several former inmates who have paid their debt to society, and are attending church. Because they benefited from the SBC, they have volunteered their time, and assist the director with copying lesson material, grading lessons, and corresponding with some of the inmates.

For the last two or three years, I have been a member of Coalition of Prison Evangelists (COPE), PO Box 7404, Charlotte, NC 28241. There are several good reasons for this membership. It provides a support group and information for those involved in this type of ministry. It also provides educational material for the worker and the inmate. Membership in COPE is not limited to ordained ministers, so Christian lay workers may also apply for membership. You may wish to write COPE for a free copy of their booklet, "Effective Jail and Prison Ministry for the 21st Century."

As a licensed minister of the Church of God (7th Day), I am provided with proper identification from the General Conference located in Denver, Colorado. While this is sufficient in most cases, many of the guards and authorities at the local jails and detention centers are not well informed. They may be acquainted with the mainstream denominational churches, but some are suspicious of churches they do not recognize, or have not heard about. They are concerned about people being involved with a cult. Being a member of a national organization such as COPE provides easier access to do the work of the ministry. It also provides pocket-sized picture identification, which definitely helps the situation.

There are some real blessings in local jail visitation. There are also some pitfalls to be aware of and to avoid.

Sometimes by being there at a time when a person is facing a possibly serious situation, that person is at the lowest point in his life. Some of them are open to looking to Christ for the first time in their life. The pitfall is that many are very good actors or actresses. They are good at saying what you want them to say. You have to learn to read between the lines a lot. You must always rely on the Spirit of God to give you discernment, and know when a person is sincere. Sometimes you are able to lead people to Christ, and then watch and help them make changes in their attitude and life despite the situation. Those who are really sincere realize that their situation is working for their good (Psalms 119:67, 71; Romans 8:28). They not only clear themselves

with the justice system, but they clear their conscience before God.

Another pitfall to be careful about is when an inmate asks you to bond them out or if someone else is going to put up the bond money, but they want you to sign a surety bond to be responsible that they appear in court. This is a dangerous position in which to put yourself, no matter how well you think you know the person. I personally do not recommend this kind of guarantee. If you are actively involved in this type of ministry, you may find yourself personally knowing an individual who is incarcerated. They may be related to someone you know, or live in your neighborhood. I live in a small town of 150 people. Yet, I have found a close neighbor lodged in the local jail when I went to visit.

From my experience you will need to set guidelines and limits, and stick to them.

Wherever He leads you, God will bless you in your ministry and service to our heavenly Father and for His Kingdom.

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# A Letter from a Texas Prison

Dear brethren at B.S.A.,

We here, the prisoners at the F.C.I. Bastrop, want to thank you for supporting us with your prayers and for freely providing the B.S.A. and other materials. I personally want all of you out there in the world of grand illusions to know that your support of ministries such as B.S.A. does bear fruit. Such support has turned my life around from a Torahless path onto the only path that leads towards our Father in heaven.

The illusions in prison aren't as mesmerizing as they are out of prison. Evil isn't as subtle and deceptive as it can be out there. Whoever thinks that becoming a "Christian" in prison is just one way to escape the reality of being in prison either has never been in prison or has never committed to the Messiah when they were in here. It is not an easy thing! Inmates can be exceedingly quick to point out any character flaws which would seem to contradict one's profession of faith.

Pent up anger, lust, confusion, hatred, foolishness, violence, and other dangerous-to-the-soul behaviors and emotions are openly displayed in a setting such as prison, and it is not just the inmates that one must contend with, but the guards and staff. You can't just run away from it. You can't tell those in authority about many situations because you can't expect their confidentiality to protect you. "Rat-finks" are not prone to long and healthy lives in here. So, you just have to deal with impossible situations the best you can. For a real Torah-observant man, prison becomes a true testing ground for loving your enemies.

So, prison ministries make a huge difference in my life. Each newsletter, journal, magazine, book, or letter becomes a spiritual meal—an affirmation that once we get back out, we will be able to find spiritual brothers and sisters who care enough to show it and give us hope. We all need someone to lean on. If you aren't out there most certainly the enemy—our old running buddy—will be. Now that I know you are out there helping to provide food to keep us on the Torah path, it moves me to do the same in here—to be a light that points towards Torah and Messiah. Also, when I get out, Yahweh permitting, I'll also join with you and put out my hands to offer another one who is drowning help to get out of the troubled waters.

Now, touching on the Shabbat, oh my! Shabbat has been the stepping stone on my path leading to rest—not just eternal rest but rest in many ways: rest from confusion, doubt, and rigidity in my spiritual life. Once I was able to comprehend that Yeshua kept the Sabbath and so did all His first century followers, I was able to commit myself to doing the same. Once I committed to keeping the Sabbath like they all did, I found myself being released

to keep the rest of Yahweh's instructions, and found them not to be the burden I had been led (brainwashed) to think of them as! Just the opposite! Keeping Torah becomes a joy. Then I began to feel connection with the Spirit that authored Psalm 119. How I love Yah's laws! They are what leads us on the path, the same path, that Messiah walked. And, how I want to honor the Father as Yeshua did. Step by step my eyes and heart have been opened up, and now it is only when I contemplate and try to keep His laws that I glimpse love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control. Only then am I able to smile, to wipe away the pain this world's way now causes me.

So, brothers, when people (antinomians) try to tell you about going into bondage by keeping Yahweh's laws (man's laws bind; man's ways bind), let no one judge you in (keeping) respect of the Sabbath!

From beginning to end, Shalom!!

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P.S. I want to have a pen-pal in Israel—Spanish or English. Please print my address so perhaps someone can help me find one.



## ***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!***



## Book Review:

# Effective Jail & Prison Ministry

I have no immediate urge to enter a prison for any reason, so why should I read a book on how to do a prison ministry?

My plans did not include receiving mail from prisoners, but things sometimes happen to us; things are thrown in our way and suddenly there are new challenges, circumstances, and problems; yes, experiences, opportunities, and growth.

Coincidental with finding myself corresponding with several inmates and becoming engrossed with their stories, I picked up a book I had recently received and began to read.

Before we review the book let's answer the question: "Why? — why do I need to read this book?"

#1. If you think you know anything about prisons or prisoners, the first few paragraphs will knock the wind out of your sails.

#2. Consider the following scriptures: II Timothy 3:16-17, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Ephesians 4:11-12, "And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting [furnishing] of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

We first learn scripture. This gives us knowledge to apply; but to what and how? It is necessary and helpful to know what a person's problem is before we can help. Most of our knowledge and ideas come from many sources, most of which are socially and politically correct, but fundamentally flawed. Someone once said "beware of the professional," wise words, those.

My experience says, if you want to know, go not to the theoretician, professor, or pundit; go to the one doing the work and producing results. That's what makes this book valuable. It's written by many authors "in the trenches." It dispels many of the misconceptions we hold, giving us fresh workable information on which to apply our knowledge and good works.

Now much of the "work" and effort we expend in this life will be fraught with failure, frustration, and error. But we learn from our mistakes. If, when we are "thoroughly furnished" and "edified," we apply our great wisdom and works to a situation we don't understand, it's like applying a coat of paint to a sick dog. Stupid, yes, but either is at best useless and probably harmful.

The beauty of this book is that its principles and ideas are not limited to prison ministries, but tough addictions, family, fatherhood, power/control; it will humble you, enlighten you, and educate you. When you finish this book you are not done. You will have just begun. There are other books and materials you will want. They will be found throughout the book and in appendixes "A" and "B."

Please don't misunderstand; scripture is paramount, but misapplied scripture is a disaster waiting to happen. I hope this will lead us to consider history, circumstances, and experience before we go "where angels fear to tread."

Happy reading! For a copy of **Effective Jail and Prison Ministry for the 21st Century**, by Dr. W. Thomas Beckner and Jeff Park, 198 pages, contact: Coalition of Prison Evangelists (COPE), PO Box 7404, Charlotte, NC 28241.

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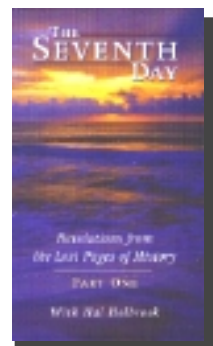
*Reprinted from from the September 2000 issue of the **Giving & Sharing Newsletter** (<http://www.giveshare.org>)*

## The Seventh Day

Parts One and Two of a five-part series: **Revelations from the Lost Pages of History** – 52 min. VHS video starring Hal Holbrook, \$23.00 each video, or \$5.00 for 14-day LOAN. (V215)

*Notice: Part Three coming in December 2002*

*Both videos sell for \$44.00. Add \$2.00 for shipping and handling.*



# A Sobering Look at Life in Prison

by June Narber



In this modern age, prisons have evolved into the classic place where the law in any given country places individuals who have been convicted in a court of law of “breaking the law.” Certain individuals are there for serious crimes such as murder, rape, molesting a child, or armed robbery. Others are there for lesser crimes, but crimes nevertheless, such as drug use, prostitution, theft, check forgery, and so on. Prisoners are often mistreated, subjected to physical violence, and denied the most basic of human rights, the right to worship as he or she believes.

Regardless of the crime committed and the sentence assigned, these prisoners are still human beings. Many individuals have forgotten that. Let me explain what I mean. I hear the phrase, “well, he deserves whatever he gets in prison.” Is this true; does a man (or a woman) deserve whatever “he or she gets” in prison? What possible scenarios might an individual in prison face?

I will walk you through the lives of three individuals I have had the opportunity to interview and/or visit in their prison environments.

What acts of violence can happen to someone in prison? Violence against one’s person is always a threat. This includes the possibility of being hit, beaten repeatedly, kicked, thrown up against a wall, or violent sexual acts. Maybe most of us cannot imagine having sexual advances forced upon our person, but all too often male prisoners are forcibly sodomized. The physical implications of this act are bad enough, but the psychological implications are even more severe, especially if the individual has always been “straight.” It can traumatize an individual. Such scenarios are not a rarity in prison; they are often the “common daily” threat against men in correctional institutions. Imagine being a young man who was put in prison for repeated drug use. Does he “deserve” to be raped and put at risk for a fatal illness like AIDS? Of course not. Violence breeds more violence. Criminals can never be rehabilitated in an environment that forces them to become even more self-defensive and violence prone.

Such satanic acts of physical violence and homosexuality are despicable. No human being should ever have to subjected to a situation where these kinds of acts have a risk of occurring. In some cases, the threat comes from the very prison guards who are stationed there to protect and guard inmates. It is a horrid situation that would take the strongest of character to endure.

The following stories are true. The names of the individuals have been changed to protect their privacy.

Johnny is a prisoner in the country of Thailand. He became convicted of the Sabbath approximately six years ago. However, only recently has he ventured to observe Sabbath regardless of the consequences. The prison system in Thailand is different from the prison system here in the United States. The majority of prisons are not heated or air conditioned. Prisoners receive minimal food and water. To survive, they must buy any additional food they need at astronomical, prison-inflated prices. They must also buy personal toiletries such as soap, shampoo, razors, and even toilet paper. If they do not have someone on the “outside” to bring them supplies in person, the guards sometimes take anything mailed to them, and they never receive it. Johnny spent many a hot summer in his Thai prison cell. On some days, he felt like he was going to suffocate because there were no windows or even ventilation in his cell-block. Sometimes, he did not even have adequate water to drink. In Thailand, an individual CANNOT drink the public water because it is untreated and polluted. Only bottled water and beverages can be consumed. In prison, such bottled liquids are expensive and hard to come by.

Human rights do not always extend to prisoners, especially in the prison Johnny was being held in. He went long periods of time without access to bathing facilities, suffered dehydration and malnutrition on an ongoing basis. His “lifeline” was the mail he received. In the beginning, Johnny wrote every religious group he could to try to get someone to send him money and supplies so he could “survive” in this

prison environment. He admitted to me later during a personal interview that he had not always been sincere. He often lied in letters, professing “Jesus” as his Lord, only to trick Christians into sending him things he needed. Later though, as God really began to work with him, he became convicted of the Sabbath. Upon my first contact with him, I did not believe he was sincere in his faith because of the several comments he made during my visit with him—including one sexually charged comment. After returning to the United States, I continued to receive letters from Johnny, and over the course of the next two years, I started to see some changes in the way he wrote. He stopped asking for money and supplies and started to talk more about the Bible and the laws of God, including the Sabbath. I have come to believe that he is really committed to the truths of the Bible.

Today, Johnny is still in a Thai prison in the district of Bangkok. He observes Sabbath alone; however, he stated in a recent letter to me that others in his prison were beginning to understand this truth of God.

Larry is a Sabbath-keeper who has been in and out of prison in the State of Texas.

His crimes include drug use, sales, and possession. He is currently finishing out a six-year term. While Larry was not in prison, he was a practicing Sabbath keeper. Upon his first prison sentence, Larry stopped observing the Sabbath because it was just too miserable of an experience to endure. In his prison facility, prison guards repeatedly beat anyone professing to be a Christian, and he got a “double portion” of the beatings and other forms of abuse because he was a Sabbath keeper. Larry supposed that the hostility was centered at the Sabbath because of the anti-Jewish atmosphere at this particular prison. Had Larry risked Sabbath observance in prison, it is likely he would not be alive right now. On the other hand, Larry feels empty because he is not doing what his heart has convicted him of. He lacks the emotional support and network of support that is needed to be able to practice religious freedom in prison. What can be done to help Larry and others like him? Pray for them, and write them if possible. ***We also need to try to change prison laws and make freedom of religion mandatory under all circumstances.***

Marcus is a prisoner in the western part of the United States. He was put in prison for first-degree murder. He murdered a man for the pleasure of seeing him bleed to death from the knife-inflicted wound to his chest cavity. Today, Marcus is struggling with homosexuality he developed while in prison after several sexual encounters with men. In addition, he became a practicing wiccan (“witch”) while in prison. Marcus is serving a thirty-year prison sentence. However, in the letters I have

received from him, I believe there is a chance he will come to know the Messiah. How can I say this? He is HUNGERING after something missing in his life. He has tried just about everything except a relationship with Yahshua (Christ). I have hopes that he will continue to ask questions about the truths of God.

As you can see through these three examples, life in prison is hard and (for two of these examples) being a Sabbath observer can be difficult. There are dozens of cases in the states of Oklahoma and Texas of individuals who are standing up “together” to claim their right to religious expression and freedom from working on God’s Holy Sabbath day, Saturday.

While criminals deserve to be punished for the crimes they commit, we cannot accept that basic human rights are taken away from any living soul. I think more laws need to be created to protect the bodies of inmates from sexual and physical violence and laws created and ENFORCED to protect the religious freedom of every woman and man in prison systems.

What can we do to help inmates who have become convicted of the Sabbath?

First of all, we can write letters to them. Second, we can pray for them. Third, we can try to network with lawyers and lawmakers to try to ensure the religious freedom of every inmate in the United States. However, I caution about sending money to any prisoner.

There are parasitic individuals who continue their life of crime even while in prison by taking advantage of caring Christian individuals that want to help them. Sending someone clothes or books is one thing, but sending money is down right foolish. My motto is, give people what they need, not money that they can spend any way they want.

As followers of the Messiah and as Sabbath keepers, we must witness the truth to every living thing; and this includes loving individuals and serving them. However, we must be wise stewards of what God has given us and not waste our resources.

I look forward to the day when every prison in the world will be destroyed. God’s just laws will spread across the land and all will obey the will of YHWH. Those who break the law will be punished according to their crimes. Some may be put to a quick death. Our Creator will NOT tolerate the kind of prison environments that exist today, because His ways are just and as the Healer of mankind, He will heal all men and women’s hearts, souls, bodies, and minds. The crimes and punishments of this age will become a faded memory. Let’s pray for that day to come soon. In the meantime, let us reach out to those in prison who are seeking to do HIS will. □

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*June Narber is board member of the BSA.*

## Announcing

# The 2003 BSA Essay Scholarship Contest

The Bible Sabbath Association is pleased to announce November 1st as being the official start date of the 2003 Essay Scholarship Contest. All entries must be postmarked by May 1st, 2003. Four winners will be chosen. First Place: \$750; Second Place: \$500; Third and Fourth Places: \$250 each. Winners will be notified by late May or early June depending on when the judges complete the decision-making process.

The applications will be available November 1st. Please contact June Narber at [jnarber@hercurian.com](mailto:jnarber@hercurian.com) to have one emailed to you. For a copy sent through the mail, please contact the BSA Office. Applications will also be available for download from the BSA website at <http://www.biblesabbath.org>.

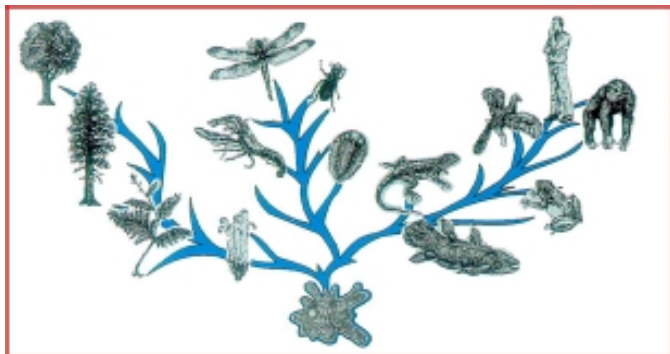
The rules for this year's contests are as follows:

- 1) Age restrictions: Age 16-25. Applicants may not be older than 25 years of age at the opening date of the contest, November 1st. Applicants that are older than this will be disqualified.
- 2) Applicants from outside the United States are welcome. Entries MUST be written in English and must be post-marked by the deadline.
- 3) Applications must be handwritten. Essays need to be handwritten with a typed copy attached so the judges can easily read the essays.
- 4) Each of the three contest questions must be answered in essay format.
- 5) Recommendation letters must be received by the deadline. Two recommendation letters are necessary: a) one from a high school teacher or counselor b) one from an adult Sabbath keeper affiliated with the youth, (applicants' parents MAY NOT write a recommendation letter). Note: Recommendation letters are required because such letters are important for entry into higher education as well as for job applications. It is crucial to have excellent recommendations for all of life's endeavors.
- 6) Applications must be filled out completely and signed. Incomplete applications will be disqualified.
- 7) Write all applications in blue or black ink. NO PENCIL.
- 8) Applicants need to include an email address. If they don't have one, they can get one free by going to [www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com) or any of a number of free email services. If they don't have access to a computer they can use one at just about any public library or local college. Winners will be notified by email. Email is crucial for continual updates about the contest.
- 9) Winners agree to have their essays published in *The Sabbath Sentinel* along with a short biography and photograph of themselves.
- 10) Each applicant agrees to be sent a year's free subscription to *The Sabbath Sentinel* upon their entry into the contest.

The judging will be done by three or four Sabbath-keeping judges from different Sabbath group affiliations. New judges are selected every year. Scoring is based on a point system that focuses on how well the essay matches the essay questions, original thought, composition, grammar, dedication to the Sabbath, and related factors. The judges do not contact each other until each has sent his or her scores back to scholarship Chair, June Narber. June averages out the scores for each applicant (each essay is scored separately) and emails them back to the judges. The judges confirm their scores for each applicant and the four winners are declared based on the highest point totals. In the case of a tie, the judges then talk to teach other and discuss each essay's strengths and weaknesses, and a new score is entered for the tied individuals. The higher score becomes the winner.

For more information about this year's contest, please contact June Narber, Scholarship Chair and BSA Board Director at [jnarber@hercurian.com](mailto:jnarber@hercurian.com).

# Evidence from Biology



## What is Evolution?

Evolution is the theory that claims living organisms have changed through time from ancestral single cells into many different life forms in the world today, including human beings. It has occurred by a process of mutations that generated new genetic information acted on by natural selection, which enabled organisms to become better adapted to their environment and resulted in new species. Evolutionary processes would produce changes in the frequency of genes within a population as it responds to changes in the environment, as less fit creatures are eliminated and older species become extinct.

## Do Animals Adapt or Evolve?

The classic example of adaptation is the variation between finches on the different rocky volcanic islands of the Galapagos group, which lie across the equator about 1000 km (600 miles) west of South America. These birds are commonly known as Darwin's finches and differ from each other in beak length, diet, colour, size and habits among other things. The birds have been used as prime evidence that new species can evolve. This was based on Darwin's suggestion that finch ancestors from South America somehow arrived on the islands where, due to differing pressures, e.g. sexual and environmental, they have produced the many species known today. The variations seen in the finches are regarded as adaptations which fit them for survival, and have been used to classify them into as many as 13 (14?) different species<sup>1, 2</sup>

## What is Adaptation?

Most people are familiar with changes that occur in the body with sports training. You will develop larger

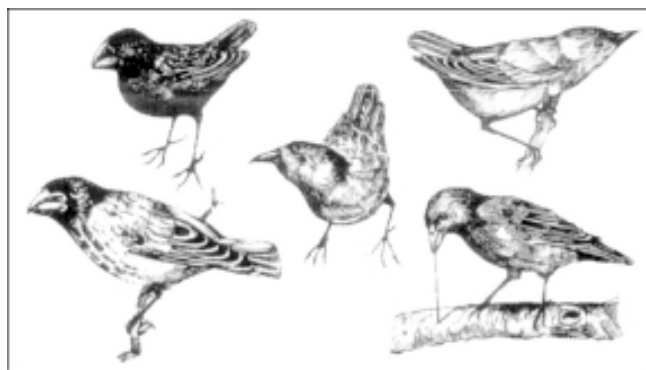
muscles as you train hard at some physical activity. When athletes train at high altitude, the body adapts to the lower air pressure by producing more red blood cells. This type of adaptation is an inherent ability to adjust to changes in the environment.

## Can Adaptation Change Body Structure?

Animals can inherently adapt to changes in their environment in the same way, especially if environmental stimulus starts early in life. If rats find a new edible seed larger and harder than what they already eat they will make the effort to eat it. Young rats whose teeth and jaws are still growing will grow larger teeth and jaws than their parents if brought up on this new diet. Eating larger tougher seeds stimulates growth of teeth, muscles and jaws. On the other hand, if the chewing muscles of developing rats do not work, the jawbones are not stimulated by muscle action and will not grow.<sup>3</sup> **No mutation or evolution is involved.** It is another example of the potential built into living creatures which enables them to cope with change in the environment without needing to evolve new genetic information.

## Finch Adaptation

If a living population is studied through several generations, it can be demonstrated that their genes are activated by environmental changes. For example: In 1967 finches were introduced to Southeast Island, about 160 km (100 miles) southeast of Midway Island in the Pacific Ocean. Over the next twenty years the birds spread to three small neighbouring islands and continued to breed. When studied in the mid 1980's the finches on different islands were found to have different beak shapes. This could not have been produced by random mutations in only 20 years. However it could have happened if changes in the diet merely activated or deactivated genes that controlled the size of beak



and jaws.<sup>4</sup> Such non-evolutionary adaptation is the most likely explanation of Darwin's Galapagos finches.

### How Many Species?

Darwin collected what he regarded as nine finch species during his voyage on the Beagle (1831-1836). These finches were classified as separate species based on their beak shape, size, colour, feeding, etc. Darwin's argument sounded so good, no one bothered to test it by seeing if they were really separate and could not interbreed and produce fertile offspring.

Now it has been discovered<sup>5</sup> that Darwin's finches can interbreed and produce fertile offspring if given the opportunity, so they are really one species and provide no evidence for the evolution of new species, and never have. This historic first and foundational evidence for Darwin's theory of evolution turns out to be false.

### Do Animals Adapt and Evolve?

They certainly adapt, but they don't evolve. Adaptation is the built-in ability of living creatures to cope with changes in their environment. As such, it can only produce a limited change that is already built into a creature's genes. Should the change in the environment exceed the animal's inherent ability to cope, the creature will become extinct. Neither can such inherent ability produce new types of living creatures. Darwin's finches have produced only finches, which differ from each another only as much as the African Zulus differ from the Nordic races of man. Finches have in essence "produced their own kind," which is the basic evidence a creationist would look for as proof that the Genesis account of creation is factual, since it states repeatedly that all living organisms were created to "produce their own kind."<sup>6</sup>

## Does Natural Selection Produce Evolution?

In 1955 Dr. Kettlewell, Oxford, UK, introduced "industrial melanism" of the English Peppered Moth



Biston betularia as evidence for evolution by Natural Selection. His story was simple. Prior to 1850 while England was fairly clean and pollution free, the light form of the peppered moth dominated the English countryside. Following industrialisation, smoke caused trees to become dirty, and the lichens on them to die. The number of light moths began to decrease, and dark versions of the peppered moth began to increase. Change in government attitudes in the 1950's resulted in a clean up of the environment. As trees got cleaner, the number of light moths increased and dark moths decreased.

Kettlewell's explanation was that birds feeding on moths could see light moths on dark trees more easily and dark moths were better camouflaged as trees got dirtier. Hence birds began to eat the light moths in increasing numbers, leaving dark ones to increase in numbers and percentage of moth population. Since 1955, Dr Kettlewell's story has appeared in almost every biology textbook as evidence for evolution. It is a story so logical few people bothered to check it. However, since 1998, Kettlewell's story has come in for some severe professional criticism. The book *Melanism: Evolution in Action*, by Majerus, reviewed by Jerry A. Coyne in *Nature* (Vol. 396, p. 35), lists the following problems with Kettlewell's story:

- The moth does not rest on tree trunks! Exactly two moths have been seen on tree trunks in more than 40 years. Kettlewell actually placed two dead moths on the tree trunk to take his famous photograph.
- The shift in percentage of light and dark moths in the population did occur but took place well before new lichens grew on polluted trees. A parallel shift in moth population occurred in US industrial areas but there was no change in lichens.
- Kettlewell's results have not been replicated in later studies.

If we critically analyse this and ask "what has evolved?" the data tells us there were dark and light forms of the moth before 1850, and dark and light forms of the moth after 1950. Obviously the moth has not evolved even though the frequency of light and dark genes have changed. Secondly, the change in numbers of dark versus light may represent some form of natural selection but not how Dr. Kettlewell suggested.

## Do Mutations Improve Living Things?

Sickle cell anaemia is a genetic disease that causes red blood cells to lose their normal donut shape and become distorted into a crescent shape. Those with a severe case of the disease die young, but it was noticed in Africa that people with a mild form of this disease not only lived into adulthood but seemed to have increased resistance to the malaria parasite. Because

of this, the mutant gene that causes the sickle cells has been claimed to be a good mutation.

## Sickle Cells and Malaria

The reason for the increased resistance is that malaria is caused by parasites invading and living in red blood cells. The parasites have two problems with sickle cells. They find it harder to invade and live in deformed cells, plus sickle cells are removed by the body's normal disposal processes more quickly than normal cells. Therefore some parasites are eliminated from the body before they can do more damage.

## Molecular Cause

Sickle cell anaemia is a good example of a single mutation causing multiple problems. The root cause is the substitution of one base pair in DNA's code for haemoglobin, which leads to the substitution of one amino acid in the protein part of the haemoglobin molecule. This results in the molecules having a slightly different shape so that they tend to line up and form stiff rods that distort the shape of the red cells. The distorted red cells damage capillaries, which leads to the death of the surrounding tissue. People who have two mutant genes suffer from severe anaemia and damage to their vital organs because they can only make sickle cells. Those who have one normal and one mutant gene produce a mixture of normal cells and sickle cells. This decreases the severity of the disease significantly but such people still suffer with problems caused by the sickle cells.

## A Good Mutation?

The Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta (Georgia, USA) spends millions of dollars each year treating people with sickle cell disease. The gene was brought to America during slave days, when black people were removed from Africa to the USA. There is no way anyone with the disease would call it a good mutation. They would rather have a different way of combatting malaria. Normal people who live in malaria prone areas do develop some resistance to the parasites, without sickle cells, so the "positive" effect of the sickle cell mutation is actually very small.

## Do Embryos Show Evolutionary Stages?

Many biology textbooks still reproduce a set of diagrams, originally published by Prof. Ernst Haeckel in 1874, showing human and animal embryos passing through stages where they have gill slits like a fish and a tail like a monkey. The drawings are meant to convince students that human embryos relive their evolutionary past as they develop. This idea has been summarised in the catchy phrase "ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny." (Ontogeny means development, phy-

logeny means evolutionary history.) In 1997 Haeckel's work received scathing criticism from Dr. Michael Richardson, a lecturer at St. George's Hospital Medical School, London, UK.<sup>7</sup>

"**Embryonic Liar**" was the headline used by *The Times* (London, UK) in a report of Dr. Richardson's study.<sup>8</sup> *The Times* goes on to say: "One of the most famous biologists of the 19th Century has been accused of being a scientific fraud, a faker, who has muddied the waters of embryology for generations. As famous in his day as Darwin, Ernst Haeckel was a giant among German biologists... Dr. Michael Richardson, has shown that Haeckel's last bequest to science is deeply flawed. *"This is one of the worst cases of scientific fraud,"* says Dr. Richardson. *"It's shocking to, find that someone I thought was a great scientist was deliberately misleading. It makes me angry."* Richardson assembled an international team of collaborators, collecting marsupial embryos from Australia, Puerto Rican tree frogs, snakes from France and an alligator embryo from Manchester, amongst others. He found that, contrary to what Haeckel had asserted, the embryos of different species are not all the same. In fact, they are so different that the drawing Haeckel made could not possibly have been done from life. *"What he did was to take a human embryo and copy it, pretending that the salamander and the pig and all the others looked the same at the same stage of development. They don't."* There is only one word for this, and Dr. Richardson doesn't flinch from using it. *"These are fakes."*

The worst aspect of Haeckel's fraud is that his drawings had already been exposed as frauds by Prof. Wilhelm His of Leipzig University in 1874 shortly after Haeckel published them and more than 120 years prior to Dr. Richardson's study.<sup>9</sup> Haeckel's peers in Germany got him to admit that he relied on memory and used artistic license in preparing his drawings, according to Dr. Scott Gilbert, a developmental biologist at Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania.<sup>10</sup> Yet the fraud lives on, and Haeckel's embryo drawings, along with the phrase "ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny" are still in many high school texts at the date of our printing (2001).

## Why Have these Fraudulent Diagrams Been Reproduced for so Long?

Haeckel originally used the diagrams to promote his passionate belief in the theory of evolution. Haeckel was a popular and persuasive speaker and became the leading spokesman for Darwinian evolution in Europe. The embryo diagrams and the ontogeny catchphrase became inextricably linked with evolution. To cast doubt on embryonic "evidence" was to cast doubt on evolution.

## What about the Gill Slits and Tail?

The “gill slits” are a series of ridges and grooves in the region between the head and trunk of the embryo. They develop into bones, muscles and other structures of the face and neck. They are never gills and never slits. Also, since an embryo needs a spinal column before the pelvis and legs can grow, in the early stages of development the lower end of the spinal column is very prominent for a short time. Thus, the “tail” is simply the end of the spine and is incorporated into the growing pelvis.

### Summary

Darwin’s finches, the peppered moth and sickle cell anaemia are all examples of natural selection. But in no situation has any evolution been involved. In the case of Darwin’s finches no new species have evolved and no mutation seems to be involved. Any adaptation seems to be the result of an inherent ability built into the genes. This also seems to be true for the peppered moth. With sickle cell anaemia the apparent slight benefit of some resistance to malaria is far outweighed by negative effects of the sickle cell disease.

Scientific scrutiny of the three historic foundational **proofs** of evolution—Darwin’s finches, the peppered moth, and Haeckel’s embryo diagrams has caused them to collapse. In addition, sickle cell anaemia has been shown to not be a good mutation by those who work with the disease and no-one has yet presented evidence that mutations improve living things.

This means you are free to ask some or all of the following questions.

What about other claims of evidence for evolution, eg. fossils, the ape men, millions of years, extinction, etc?

If evolution is not true, what is?

If creation is true, what would the evidence be?

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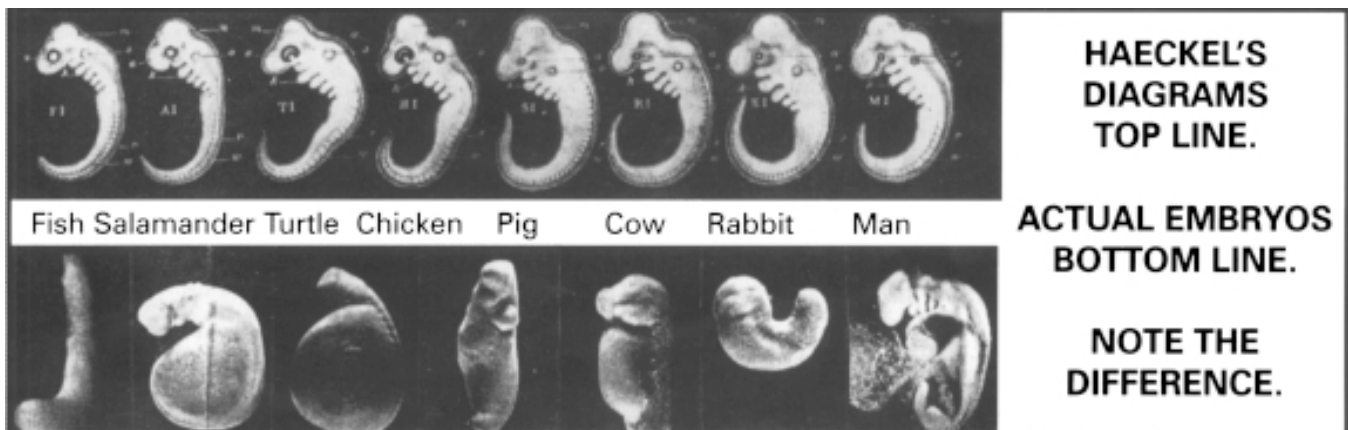
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# About the BSA Scholarship Fund

## An Open Letter from the Chair of the BSA Scholarship Essay Contest

Dear Sabbath-observing friend,

We now have entered the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In this exciting time, we must be looking toward the future of the Sabbath-keeping community. Our future lies in reaching the younger generation with the torch of truth of God's word, and especially the truth about which day is the Christian Sabbath. Such truth can be taken for granted by those of us who know it. However, considering the hundreds of millions of professing Christians in society who worship on Sunday, it is a precious truth that needs to reach these people, as well as the rest of the world who do not even know Jesus Christ as of yet.

The Bible Sabbath Association has created a scholarship fund whose funds are awarded through an annual essay contest. The next essay scholarship contest is scheduled to begin the fall of 2002 and conclude in the Spring of 2003, being the official "2003 BSA Essay Scholarship Contest." This is the beginning of the fourth anniversary year of the scholarship contest. We need your financial support in order to have the funds to award the promised prizes. We also hope to raise enough money to guarantee that the scholarship can continue for upcoming years. We ask that you consider donating any sum of money designated for the BSA Scholarship Fund.

### *What is the Bible Sabbath Association (BSA)?*

The Bible Sabbath Association is a fifty-plus year-old non-profit organization that promotes the truth of the Seventh-day Sabbath. It has no church affiliation and is comprised of believers from many different Sabbath-keeping churches, backgrounds, and beliefs. We stand in unity in the belief that the seventh day of the week is the Sabbath—the biblical day of rest for Christians; that the Bible is the inspired Word of God; that the Ten Commandments should be observed; and that Jesus Christ (also known as Yahshua in the Hebrew language) is the Son of God and the promised Messiah/Savior of the world. BSA has a variety of booklets for sale that promote the Sabbath-day truth, as well as those that tell the history of Sabbath keepers throughout the ages. The BSA also publishes the ***The Sabbath Sentinel***, a free bi-monthly magazine that is of interest to the "at-large" Sabbath-keeping community. The BSA is governed by a constitution and bylaws, with a 12-member board of directors that is elected by the BSA membership every four years. They each give of their time for BSA service with no financial compensation.

They receive no salary for serving on the Board of Directors or for any of their time dedicated to promoting the service activities of BSA.

### *What does the BSA Essay Scholarship Contest consist of?*

The contest is open to all students who are in their junior year in high school (or home-schooled students that are one year away from being college bound at the approximate age of 16-17) and to all college-age students up to the age of 25. To apply for this scholarship, the applicants need to request an application from the BSA office. Along with the application, they will need to submit a recommendation letter from their high school or college counselor (or teacher) AND a recommendation letter from their church minister (or spiritual elder in the case of a home-based fellowship). The contest will be comprised of an essay entry per applicant. The essay must answer a question from the theme of this year's contest, which is announced every fall (the competition concludes around May 1 of each year). Applicants will be asked to answer three questions within an essay body format. Questions that have been used in previous essay contests include: 1) "Why is the Sabbath important to you, and how do you keep it holy?" 2) "What do you believe is the best way of promoting the truth of the seventh-day Sabbath to local communities and to the world at large?" and 3) "How do you think cooperation can be promoted among Sabbath keepers of different denominations or doctrinal positions?" Each year a new set of questions is created for the essay contest. Each question pertains directly to the seventh-day Sabbath.

In the process of this contest, we hope to generate ideas from our youth which are important to the Sabbath community at-large.

### *Can home-schooled individuals apply?*

Yes. Home-schooled young adults can apply. They will need a recommendation letter from a leader in their community that is aware of their academic/service history and a recommendation letter from a minister/elder or leader in the Sabbath community that is aware of the youth's dedication to the seventh-day Sabbath. The recommendation letters serve as an introduction to the young person. They also are "practice runs" as most academic programs require recommendation letters for applicants. Only home-schooled children enrolled in a verifiable home school learning program are eligible.

### *Where can the scholarship be used?*

The awarded scholarships will be mailed directly to the trade school or university that the winners are scheduled to be enrolled in for the Fall Semester of 2003. The prize money can be used at any institute of higher learning. Trade schools, beauty schools and other career-preparing institutes are approved for this scholarship disbursement. The student must remain in the school for the duration of the semester the prize is awarded. It is not transferable to another college unless request is made prior to the fall semester of 2003. The scholarships awarded are a one-time award. They are not renewable for the following year. Former winners cannot reapply for the contest because we would like new young people to have a chance to win the scholarship money.

The judges for the contest are new each year, and it is impossible for any favoritism to come into play due to the special judging system we have devised.

Schools outside the United States are also approved for the purposes of this scholarship award.

### *When does the scholarship contest start?*

#### *What are the prizes? Who can apply?*

The contest will start in November 1, 2002, with applications being accepted through May 1, 2003. Each applicant will be requested to subscribe to **The Sabbath Sentinel** for one year along with his or her application entry (free of charge). The winners of the essay contest will be awarded a first prize of \$750; second place \$500, third and fourth place with a prize of \$250 each. Scholarship money will be paid directly to the trade school, college or university the student has been accepted at for the fall 2003 school year. The contest is open to students from countries outside the United States. It is also open to any Sabbath-keeping Christian regardless of church or organizational affiliation.

### *How Will the Contest Be Judged? What are the Other Rules of the Contest?*

The entries must be written in legible handwriting of the applicant ALONG WITH a typed copy of their essay question answers. This is a requirement. Three or four Sabbath-observing judges with strong academic backgrounds will judge the contest. The Board of Directors will choose the judges based on their academic merit, experience, and dedication to and observance of the seventh-day Sabbath. We strive for the ideal situation: Two judges will be members of The Bible Sabbath Association at-large and two will be from the Sabbath community at-large. Each will be from a different Sabbath-keeping organizational background (i.e., Church of God, Seventh-day Baptist, Seventh-day Adventist, independent, etc.). We feel this mixture of judges will make the judging of the contest very fair and balanced.

The entries will be judged on how well the applicant answers each essay question, in addition to their grammar, expression of their viewpoints, their dedication to the seventh-day Sabbath, and completed applications with the recommendation letters. All of these areas are equally important.

Contest winners' essays will be published in a future issue of the BSA's magazine, **The Sabbath Sentinel**.

### *How can I donate to the BSA Scholarship Fund?*

Please consider donating to the BSA scholarship fund. Send donations to our main BSA office in Gillette, Wyoming. Donations can also be given over the telephone with a credit card; they are tax deductible. The goal this year is to raise \$7000 to give the scholarship program a firm foundation to build from. This amount of money will ensure that the contest can continue for at least five years into the future.

All donations given to the BSA scholarship fund will be used 100% for the prizes awarded. No money received will be used for any other purpose. The BSA budget has no money allotted for the scholarship fund, so we ask money be donated specifically for this cause. Without donations, we do not have prize money to award to our worthy youth. The applicants to this contest will have to answer in-depth questions pertaining to the Sabbath, and hard work will be required on their part to construct creative answers to this year's questions. Through this scholarship program, we support the educational objectives of our Sabbath-keeping youth. Our youth are very important to us, as they are the future of Sabbath-keeping congregations.

ALL DONATIONS SHOULD BE SENT TO THE BSA OFFICE AND MADE OUT TO THE BIBLE SABBATH ASSOCIATION AT 3316 Alberta Drive, Gillette, WY 82718.

Please indicate that the money donated is for the scholarship fund.

Questions regarding to the BSA scholarship fund can be sent to June Narber at 6325-9 Falls of Neuse Road, Ste. 193, Raleigh, NC 27615; by email at jnarber@hercurian.com.

We at BSA, appreciate your time, prayers, and support. Thank you very much for your interest in our scholarship program. We pray that you will consider being part of this exciting service project.

Sincerely,



June Narber  
Scholarship Chairperson & BSA Board Member

## Return Good for Evil

*Never pay back a bad turn with a bad turn or an insult with another insult, but on the contrary pay back with good. For this is your calling—to do good and to inherit the goodness of God. 1 Peter 3:9, Phillips.*

During the second world war, Reuben Manalaysay, a student at Philippine Union College, was falsely accused by the Japanese of being an American spy. The Japanese Military Police arrested him and so tortured him that he was never again able to play the violin. After the Philippines were liberated and his inquisitors were imprisoned, Reuben sought them out and shared his faith with them. Through his efforts several of his former inquisitors accepted our faith and were baptized. This is the true Christian spirit. A Christian returns good for evil, not because he hopes thereby to get something in return, but because it is right.

*Excerpted from New Every Morning, p. 250 Author: Donald Ernest Mansell. Publisher: Review and Herald Publishing, 1981.*

The Word of God promises that the Lord will set the captives free and free those that are in the darkness of prison. He does and will do that, but there are those who, for whatever reason, will have to pay the full price, and that also is in the Word of God in the Sermon on the Mount. You need to know the difference, because you must give hope as the Word also says—but not false hope. That wisdom can only come from above.

You might have many questions, and there are many answers, but some of those questions can only be answered from experience. So, be prepared to learn from your experiences so that the Word of God will not be misused and the faith of others be destroyed.

May God give you all wisdom as you seek to fulfill His will in your life and especially while visiting Him in Prison. Read Matthew 25:31-46, and ponder our Lord's words, for He is there. □

## Advertise in The Sabbath Sentinel

**Classified ads** (20% discount for second time, 30% thereafter) are available at the rate of \$1.00 per word (including each word and each group of numbers in the address; telephone numbers count as one word) for each issue in which the ad is published.

**Display ads** are available at \$150 per quarter page for each issue the ad is published. Where possible your camera-ready copy will be utilized, or we will design your display ad for you. Send copy for all ads and payment to *The Bible Sabbath Association*, 3316 Alberta Drive, Gillette, WY 82718.

**Discounts:** Advertise in the TSS Classified Ads section for more than one issue and receive discounts: \$1.00 per word 1st issue, 20% off for 2nd issue, and 30% off for subsequent times.

Ad copy without payment will not be accepted for publication. Deadline is two months prior to publication (i.e. if you want your ad to appear in the September/October issue we must receive it before July). BSA reserves the right to reject or edit any ad copy. Publication does not necessarily imply endorsement by *The Bible Sabbath Association* or *The Sabbath Sentinel*.

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

Now available for \$10 each, you may purchase Real Audio or MP3 format CD's. Or if you prefer the set, the three CD set in Real Audio is \$25; the four CD set in MP3 format is \$35.

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*Continued from Page 4*

His Story. The creation and the flood. The fall of Adam, and the call of Abram. Soon we'll come to Exodus and the law, which is more difficult reading. Let's not give up easily: the commandments of the Lord "make wise the simple" (Psalm 19:7).

We may fast forward to Psalms and start again in the Bible's sweet middle. In this way, we work our way through the Scripture—Proverbs, Isaiah, and the other prophets. Certainly we will find some things hard to understand, but don't worry. Someone said, "It isn't the parts of the Bible I don't understand that worry me; it's the parts I do understand." There is enough here that can be understood to keep us busy loving, trusting, and obeying our God.

Or, start in Matthew. Read the four gospels—the story of Jesus and His love. Read Acts, the report of the early church. Read Romans and the other epistles of Paul. Don't jump to Revelation yet. God put that one last for a reason. It's not for kindergarten or grade-schoolers.

Every word of God has value, but not every portion of the inspired text is of equal value. Some teachings of the Scripture are clearly of greater importance than others, and these are often the more simple in their presentation.

The Bible assists us through its complexity by telling us which of its many words are more important. It does this, in part, by the use of repetition. The 150 Psalms are filled with prayer and praise. The ten commandments are written twice, and four gospels tell the life of our Lord. Of 89 chapters in the gospels, 30 of them deal with one special week of Jesus' years here—that of his death and resurrection.

Throughout the Bible, but especially in the New Testament, two of the fruits of the Spirit are given priority again and again: faith and love.

These are the things that God wrote large. We should read them big also, for they are the topics of His Word that make the biggest difference in our lives.

Many other subjects are introduced in Scripture that make much less difference. In Romans 14, for example, Paul writes about "doubtful matters," things about which Christians may well disagree without breaking fellowship. Eating certain foods and celebrating certain days are among the illustrations he offers. "Don't despise or judge each other over these things," he says (vv. 3-13).

In other words, don't major on the minors!

In addition to repetition, the Bible helps us focus on its majors by specific words that suggest larger letters in boldface type. Note these examples:

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." (Eccl. 12:13).

"He has shown you, O man, what is good and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8)

"Seek first the kingdom," said Jesus. He also spoke about the "weightier matters of the law—justice, mercy, and faith." We have the essentials of His teaching if we simply remember, from Matthew, His great invitation (11:28-30), the great confession (16:13-19), His great commandments (22:36-40), and great commission (28:19-20). These were the priorities of Jesus Christ, and they should be ours as well. There's nothing so difficult about them. Their clear call is for more obedience, not more study.

And what is it that the greatest of the apostles considered most valuable? He writes them to a church in Corinth that was conflicted and confused over some complex issues of faith. "I declare to you the gospel...I delivered to you first of all...Christ died for our sins...He rose again...." (I Corinthians 15:1-4). This is the heart of the gospel for Paul; nothing is more precious to Him.

Two chapters earlier, he summarizes the response every Christian owes to the grace of God: "Now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love" (13:13). Here are Paul's priorities, and we can make them ours as well. There is no need to be confused about them.

Although we need the entire Bible—with its complexity—and we dare not subtract from God's word, there is a need to cut to the core of its teaching to find its plain and simple truth. Here it is:

In 25 words or less: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

in 7 words: Seek ye first the kingdom of God

in 6 words: Fear God and keep His commandments

in 5 words: Christ died for our sins

in 4 words: Jesus Christ is Lord

in 3 words: Faith, hope, charity

in 2 words: Trust & obey

in 1 word: God

Or is the one word "love"?

The Bible has a simple answer to this question: God is love.

But let's not make it too simple. For God, like love, is a many splendored thing.

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*Calvin Burrell is a vice president of the BSA.*

## *The Church in the World*

**North Korea.** While news of North Korea's nuclear threat sweeps through our nation, their continued persecution of Christians goes nearly untold. With only two registered churches in the entire country of North Korea, tens of thousands of Christians are forced to meet secretly lifting quiet voices and hymn up to their Heavenly Father. If a Christian is caught with a Bible or even verbally reciting a prayer, they along with their entire family, face arrest, torture, and a probable 15-year prison term. Those caught distributing Bibles or preaching the Gospel are often executed.

Enduring some of the harshest persecution in the world, continued famine, and a possible threat of war, Christians caught in this "axis of evil" have become living martyrs as they cry out to God and the world-wide church to hear their cause. (Source: Voice of the Martyrs)

**Pakistan: Christians Told to Protect Themselves.** In the wake of two more deadly terrorist attacks against Christian institutions in Pakistan in early August, government security officials have advised local church leaders to arm themselves for possible assaults by Muslim extremists.

In a carefully planned set of assaults, armed Islamic militants shot six people dead on August 5<sup>TH</sup> at Murree Christian School for missionary children. Just four days later, another handful of extremists hurled grenades at the chapel of Taxila Christian Hospital, killing five more and wounding another 26. All the victims were Pakistani citizens.

The deadly raids were the most recent of four deliberate attacks on Christian targets in Pakistan since President Pervez Musharraf swung his support behind the U.S.-led war on terrorism after September 11, 2001.

Security officials called in administrators of the hundreds of Christian schools, hospitals and other institutions run by the Christian community across the nation, explaining that it was "impossible" for the government to protect them all. (Source: Compass Direct)

**Ayub Masih Flees Pakistan.** (Sept. 5, 2002) Christian prisoner Ayub Masih fled his native Pakistan and arrived in an undisclosed country in the West on Wednesday after being imprisoned for six years on blasphemy charges. Despite being acquitted and released on August 15 by Pakistan's Supreme Court, Masih's life remains under constant threat from Muslim extremists.

"It is the result of prayers of the body of Christ and the grace and mercy of God the Father," Masih said of his release. "I am grateful to Open Doors' Brother Andrew, that he worked hard for my release and raised a lot of prayer support for me."

Masih, 31, was arrested and jailed on October 14, 1996, in his village of Chak 353/IB near Arifwala, located about 200 kilometers southwest of Lahore. He was convicted and sentenced on April 27, 1998, on the verbal testimony of a Muslim neighbor who claimed Masih had blasphemed Mohammed by praising Salman Rushdie's book, "The Satanic Verses." Local Christians, however, said the accusation was made because of a property dispute.

A mason by profession, the Pakistani Christian has a basic high school diploma and was hoping to enroll in a Bible school in Karachi at the time of his arrest. But his conviction and death sentence given by a Sahiwal lower court changed his life and the lives of many others forever.

He seldom received treatment in prison for sickness or injury. Nevertheless, Masih said the greatest les-

son he learned was to accept difficult circumstances and continue to be grateful to God. (Source: Compass Direct)

**Nigeria. Bomb Blast Damages Nigerian Church.** A bomb exploded on September 11 in a church in the Laranto area of Jos, the capital of Plateau state in northern Nigeria. The blast, which security agents attribute to Muslim extremists, shattered the roof of the cathedral and destroyed interior parts of the building. No injuries were reported.

The explosion occurred around 10 o'clock in the morning, causing panic in the city and driving a wedge in the fragile peace process in the state.

Haruna Dauda, senior minister of the Church of Christ in Nigeria, said he believes Muslim militants were responsible for the attack because about two months ago two Muslim extremists broke into the church. The two men were arrested and delivered to police custody.

He attributed the rising wave of terrorist attacks on the Christian community to the September 7, 2001, clashes that pitched Muslims against Christians in the state. The violent confrontation resulted in the death of over 1,000 people and the destruction of property estimated at millions of dollars.

On September 18, Rev. John Audu, general secretary of the Church of Christ in Nigeria, told Compass that during the past year his denomination has lost 25 church buildings in Jos alone.

Pastor Dauda stated: "We also lost five ministers — three ordained pastors and two evangelists. In addition, 35 of our members were killed, including one of our secretarial staff here." In all, he said, the Church of Christ in Nigeria has lost church properties worth over \$10 million in the last year. (Source: Compass Direct)

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Dear Brethren,

I received my first copy of “The Sabbath Sentinel,” and I must say, I was very moved to see a magazine dedicated to many basic truths so often overlooked. This is my first letter to you all, and I hope I can relate to you my true feelings concerning the truth that has been revealed to me, without worrying about offending you or anyone of the many brethren who seek the truth of Yahweh’s words with the love of Yahshua Messiah. We have many beliefs that are very much the same and some that are different, and I would not think of letting that come between myself and the brethren of the true work that must be done by the few of us who are really serious and searching to find truths hidden for many years.

I am an inmate in the Texas Prison System, at the Coffield unit in Tennessee Colony, Texas. We have gathered a few believers in our group for Sabbath and Holy Day services. At least we are trying to be able to meet, but the prison system has refused to have convocation meetings on any of the true days of worship except for the first Sabbath of each month. It is continually a battle, but they have fought us hard for over three years now. We had no choice but the file a federal law suit against the Texas Department of Corrections and the Chaplain’s office for violations of the law of Yahweh and the U.S. Constitution. We need more volunteers and search to and fro for those who might be willing to come into this prison to lead us. We have a volunteer that we consider to be our el-

der. His name is Jerry Healan, but he can only come on the one Sabbath a month. Please pray for us.

I have a request. Would it be possible for you to send me a “Directory of Sabbath-observing Groups?” I do not receive funds nor do I earn money in the prison system. It might be a very huge help to me to seek help for our 25 to 30 brethren who truly seek Yahweh’s truth. Thank you, my dear brethren, and I pray Yahweh’s Spirit will guide you always.

Shalom Aleichem!

Brother J. M.  
Texas

*J.M.: I’m sorry to say that we have a policy of not sending the “Directory” into prisons. The “Directory” contains a lot of information that could be misused if it wound up in the wrong hands. We continue to send a lot of material into prisons, but we have had to make an exception when it comes to the “Directory.”—Editor*

Dear Editor,

In your July-August issue I read with interest the “American Cream-puff vs. Muslim Extremism” article by Lewis Goldberg. I couldn’t agree more with much of what he had to say. The majority of American believers don’t want to be reminded about the hard sayings of the Bible. Ones that pertain to the “fear of God” readily come to mind. I can’t imagine how most of today’s Christians deal with Luke 19:27 where Jesus says: “But those enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.”

I did find it perplexing that the author criticized those who take a particular verse and end up with

something they base their personal doctrine on. Not that I don’t agree that such a thing is wrong. However, I found this statement strange coming from a man who writes for a magazine whose fellow contributors are from a variety of “religions”—religions that originated from a founder’s particular slant on the Bible or his or her interpretation of certain scriptures. This is supposedly okay because they all have a common cause, keeping the Sabbath. Sounds like a case of the pot calling the kettle black.

David Cavall  
North Carolina

*David: Our unity in the person of Christ and our common fellowship on the Sabbath are more important than our doctrinal differences.—Editor*

Dear Friends in Christ,

Please send a subscription to The Sabbath Sentinel to our friends indicated below... They received The Sentinel while living here in Michigan...and have moved to Florida.

*(Done.—Editor)*

I found the article, “Until the Seed Should Come” by Dr. Daniel Botkin, to be a good description in understanding what part of the law is established and what is abolished. It would have been a big help to me years ago when approached by Sunday-keeping people.

I was raised in a Sabbath-keeping home, and it took me a long time trying to understand the “law,” especially Romans. I’m thankful God gave me the grace to study it until it became clear to me. Perhaps Dr. Botkin’s article will help someone who really needs it.

Myrtle Foor  
Michigan

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Because of the need of home-schoolers and Sabbath churches for good material, we have found some very interesting children's and Sabbath materials to add to our list.

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(Please add \$2.00 for shipping unless you are a member.)

### Send orders to

The Bible Sabbath Association  
3316 Alberta Drive  
Gillette, WY 82718

*"No purpose of action against religion can be imputed to any legislation, state or national, because this is a religious people... This is a Christian nation."*

—U.S. Supreme Court (1892)

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**This 182-page book is available for a suggested donation of \$9.00 postpaid. Ask about quantity discounts.**

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## **The Sabbath Sentinel**

**A Bi-monthly Publication of**

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