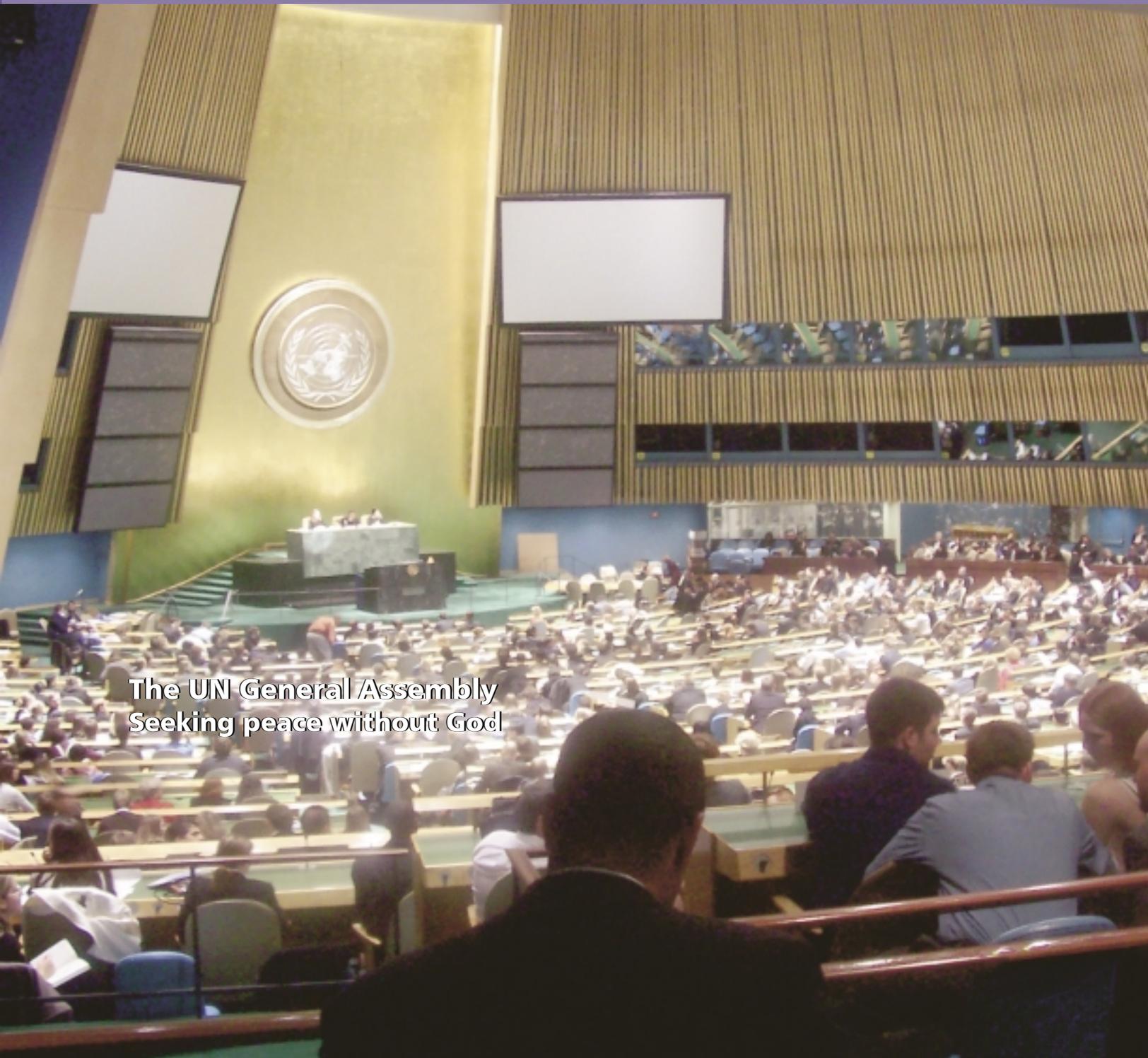


THE Sabbath Sentinel

September–October 2005



The UN General Assembly
Seeking peace without God

BSA — The Bible Sabbath Association

“...the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath.”

The Sabbath Sentinel

September–October 2005 Volume 57, No. 5 Issue 515

FEATURES

- 4 **Did Jesus Break the Sabbath?**
by Rod Reynolds
- 5 **Heart of the Matter: Savior vs. Spouse**
by Sandra Doran
- 6 **Evolution vs. Intelligent Design**
by Dr. Samuel Blumenfeld
- 9 **WARNING: Anger May Cause Cracks
in your Armor of God**
by Julia Benson
- 10 **All-out War in the Cornfield**
by Frank Sherwin
- 11 **Sinai Covenant: Law and Grace**
by Dr. Samuele Bacchiocchi
- 12 **Syncretism: A Blending of Paganism and Truth**
by Daniel Botkin
- 14 **Viewpoint: Saving Imperfect People**
by Marvin Moore

DEPARTMENTS

- 3 **Editorial—The Foundation of Political Freedom**
- 7 **Bible Study: The Wycliffe Bible Translation
and the Term “The Preparation” (Part 2)**
by Marsha Basner
- 11 **In Memory of Brother John Conrod**
- 17 **Sabbath Morning Companion:
Jesus Got Angry**
by Lenny Cacchio
- 21 **A Personal Tribute to Eugene Lincoln, 1923-2004**
by Terril D. Littrell, Ph. D.
- 22 **The Church in the World**
- 23 **Notices and Advertisements**

Our Cover: *The UN General Assembly (source: Valdosta State Univ.). In spite of lofty goals and its ambition to cause all nations to “beat their swords into plowshares” (Micah 4:3), this last-ditch hope for world peace has been plagued by corruption and partisanship.*

For a FREE subscription in the U.S. and Canada:

Call (888) 687-5191, email us at membership@biblesabbath.org or visit our website at <http://www.biblesabbath.org>. Because of additional postage costs, we request that international subscribers donate \$20 per year (only \$10 per year if they live in either Canada or Mexico) to defray the postage costs for international mailing, if they are able to do so.

The Sabbath Sentinel is published bimonthly by The Bible Sabbath Association, 3316 Alberta Drive, Gillette, WY 82718. Copyright © 2005, by The Bible Sabbath Association. Printed in the U.S.A. All rights reserved. Reproduction in any form without written permission is prohibited. Nonprofit bulk rate postage paid at Rapid City, South Dakota.

Editor: Kenneth Ryland, tss_editor@biblesabbath.org

Associate Editors: June Narber & Shirley Nickels

BSA’s Board of Directors for 2004-2007:

President: Richard Nickels, rich_nickels@biblesabbath.org

Vice President: Marsha Basner

Vice President: June Narber, june_narber@biblesabbath.org

Treasurer: Bryan Burrell, bryan_burrell@biblesabbath.org

Secretary: John Paul Howell, john_howell@biblesabbath.org

Webmaster: John Paul Howell, john_howell@biblesabbath.org

Directors At Large: Darrell Estep, Calvin Burrell, Bryan Burrell, Sidney Davis, Tom Justus, Earl Lewis, Barbara Parada

Office Manager—Gillette Office: Shirley Nickels

Subscriptions: Call (888) 687-5191 or (307) 686-5191, or write to: The Bible Sabbath Association, 3316 Alberta Drive, Gillette, WY 82718 or contact us at the office nearest you (see international addresses below). *The Sabbath Sentinel* is sent free of charge to all who request it. Your subscription is provided by the voluntary contributions of the membership of the The Bible Sabbath Association.

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.

Opinions expressed in *The Sabbath Sentinel* are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Editorial Staff or of *The Bible Sabbath Association*.

BSA Worldwide Web Site: <http://www.biblesabbath.org>

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

United Kingdom: Robert Taylor, BSA United Kingdom, PO Box 2086, Abbeydale, Gloucester, GL4 4WD, United Kingdom. Telephone: 01452 417116. Website: www.biblesabbath.org.uk. E-mail: robert@biblesabbath.org.uk.

Nigeria: Bassey Akpan, Nigeria BSA, P. O. Box 1277, Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. E-mail: ycog1@yahoo.com

Address Service Requested

The Foundation of Political Freedom



The foundation of political freedom is the Ten Commandments and the gospel of Jesus Christ. That is why democratic governance found root first in the fertile soil of the Protestant Reformation. As George Washington said, freedom cannot exist without morality, and morality cannot exist without religion. And, of course, he was referring to the Christian religion, as were all the American founders when they used the word “religion.”

It has been said that those who will not be governed by God will be ruled by men, and it is true. As we have witnessed the waning of our spiritual strength, men have risen to fill the gap with their own dreams and visions, along with a thirst for the political power necessary to force their own “heavenly” visions upon us all. Sadly, those most to blame for this state of affairs are Christians — the Church of the Living God. We have allowed the gap to grow rather than fill it ourselves.

Thomas Jefferson wrote and the American Republic’s founders signed the following: “We hold these truths to be self evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” (U.S. Declaration of Independence).

From the outset, as can be seen in the words of our founding document, the source of all political rights is acknowledged to be our Creator, not man and his government. The Founders did not trust human sources of government because of the sinfulness of the human heart. Rather, they looked to God and the Bible as the fountain of wisdom necessary to govern.

Their distrust of man and their declaration that all political rights proceed from God had a profound effect on the structure of government in the United States. For one, power was distributed among the branches of government. No single branch of government held power over the others. Also, states were looked upon as semi-autonomous regions that came under federal control only in those areas where they were unable to carry out the desires of the nation as a whole, such as war, interstate commerce, and foreign trade and tariffs. As the U.S. Constitution declares, those rights not specifically enumerated to the federal government in our Constitution are reserved to the states.

There is one area of governance that has been all but lost to the people. That is the right of the Church of Jesus Christ to exist without interference from the Government. A good understanding of the Founders’ intentions regarding the Church is terribly important, yet there is little recognition among Church pastors, theologians, or members of the rights that the Founders sought to guarantee in the U.S. Constitution that would ensure the perpetual independence of the people of God from governmental control. The Founders believed that the gospel of Christ should be unfettered in this great land. That is why even today, churches are exempt from taxes. Taxes belong to the work of Caesar and cannot be imposed on the Work of God. The power to tax is the power to coerce, and so long as government is restrained from imposing taxes on the Church, it is also restrained from coercing the message of Christ. When the Bill of Rights was added to the U.S. Constitution, the guarantee of religious freedom was deliberately placed in first position. *“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances” (First Amendment).*

The government of the United States was established so that Christians would be encouraged to participate in the offices and processes of government. It has been a source of sadness for me to see so many Christians who know our history label this nation and its various levels of government as Babylon, a nation ruled by Satan. It can only be that if Christians abandon the halls of government and hand the reigns of power over to the ungodly to do with as they wish. Yet that is exactly what we have done over the past 150 years. In spite of the fact that many Christians are frustrated with the direction our courts and legislatures have taken us, they continue to allow ungodly men and women to dictate the moral climate of our nation. If you wish to continue to live your Christian life in peace in this great land, which was a gift to us from our Creator, never forget George Washington’s words: Freedom cannot exist without morality, and morality cannot exist without religion. Then go do something to guarantee that same freedom for your children and grandchildren.

—Kenneth Ryland

Did Jesus Break the Sabbath?

by Rod Reynolds

Practically anyone who has been exposed to Christianity knows that Jesus Christ grew up in an environment steeped in Old Testament scriptures; He knew them, quoted them and lived by them.

Or did He? Some believe that Jesus kept the law so that others after Him would no longer need to. Others say that He revealed new meaning through old laws. Many, however, believe that Jesus made a “break” with the old Law, and in breaking the law established a new pattern of living for His followers.

Nowadays, even many who call themselves friends of Jesus say that He broke the law. Originally, however—during His lifetime on earth—it was His enemies who made that accusation.

Because Jesus performed miracles of healing on the Sabbath, some Pharisees accused Him of breaking the Sabbath (Matthew 12:10; Mark 3:2, John 9:14–16). John records that Jesus performed a healing during one of the festivals in Jerusalem. John’s gospel records what happened next, when Jesus confronted His accusers: “Jesus answered them, ‘My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.’ Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God” (John 5:17–18). From this, many assume that the Pharisees’ accusation—that Jesus broke the Sabbath—was correct, and that Christians as a result are free to do so.

Scripture also records that Jesus’ disciples were walking through a field on the Sabbath when they plucked and ate heads of grain. Seeing this, some Pharisees asked them: “Why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?” (Luke 6:2). Many accept that the Pharisees’ accusation is correct, and that by their actions Jesus and His disciples did not keep the Sabbath.

To understand what is at issue in these accounts, it is helpful to understand something of the rabbinical tradition that lay behind the Sabbath-breaking charges leveled against Jesus and His disciples. The Pharisaic tradition, by Jesus’ day, had developed into an array of petty rules having to do with the minutiae of the law. It focused on physical works that had little to do with the spirit and intent of the law—and which, in fact, often violated the law (Matthew 15:1–9; Mark 7:1–13; John 7:19; Galatians 6:13).

The scribes among the Pharisees created and transmitted the Pharisaic rabbinical traditions. The body of traditional law that they formulated, called the Halakah (preserved in the Mishnah), is extra-biblical. Although

authoritative for Jews who follow Pharisaic tradition, much of the Halakah is not directly supported by Scripture, but is intended as a “hedge” about the law, to prevent any possibility of its being broken.

Ironically, in an attempt to ensure their law-keeping by putting a “hedge” about the law, the Pharisees were breaking the law, for God had said: “You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take anything from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you” (Deuteronomy 4:2; also 12:32). By adding the weight of their tradition to the law of God, they bound “heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men’s shoulders” (Matthew 23:4).

The Pharisees placed the authority of their traditions above that of Scripture itself, thus going against the word of God. Scripture scholar Joachim Jeremias affirms that for the Pharisees, the oral tradition was “above the Torah,” and that the esoteric writings containing scribal teachings were regarded as inspired and surpassing the canonical books “in value and sanctity” (Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus, pp. 236, 238–239). Alfred Edersheim also points out that traditional law was of “even greater obligation than Scripture itself” (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Book I, 1.98).

What was the nature of these traditional ordinances? “The Halakah indicated with the most minute and painful punctiliousness [attention to detail] every legal ordinance as to outward observance.... But beyond this it left the inner man, the spring of actions, untouched.” Echoing what Jesus said (Mark 7:5–13), Edersheim continues: “Israel had made void the Law by its traditions. Under a load of outward ordinances and observances its spirit had been crushed” (Book I, 1.106, 1.108).

The sometimes-absurd contradictions within Pharisaic law are especially apparent in the rules of Sabbath observance. Edersheim writes: “On no other subject is Rabbinic teaching more painfully minute and more manifestly incongruous to its professed object.” Edersheim charges the scribes with “terribly exaggerated views on the Sabbath” and “endless burdensome rules with which they encumbered everything connected with its sanctity” (ibid., Book II, 2.52, 2.53). “In not less than twenty-four chapters [of the Mishna], matters are seriously discussed [regarding Sabbath observance] as of vital religious importance, which one would scarcely imagine a sane intellect would seriously

Continued on Page 15

Savior vs. Spouse

Sandra Doran



Q: My husband and I don't go to church because he feels that going to an imperfect church will do us more harm than good. He complains that most preachers don't believe their own message and that all one hears in church is arguing and complaining. Sometimes I wonder if I'll even go to heaven because I don't obey God by worshipping Him. I just can't seem to get up the courage to walk out the door and go on my own.

A: It sounds to me as if you are in a mental battle between your husband and your God. On the one hand, you want to please your husband. On the other, you long to please God. It seems that whatever decision you make, you are met with turmoil. By staying home, you face the turmoil of your own conscience. By breaking away from your husband's wishes, you face turmoil under your own roof. In the midst of such a dilemma, both options lead to a no-win situation.

The biggest question you must confront right now is whether you are able to function as an independent thinker within your own marriage. How much latitude do you have to make decisions on your own? What happens when you do not agree with your husband? Do you feel safe emotionally? Physically?

Your question has far more to do with healthy relationships than it does with religion. Even if someone were to counter your husband's negative biases with perfectly logical responses and convince him to take you to church each week, what would happen the next time you disagreed on another issue? For example, what would happen if you wanted a part-time job, and he felt you should stay at home? Or what if you wanted to make a trip across the country for a family reunion, and he didn't like the idea?

Do you see where I am going with this? Church-going is merely the lens through which a deeper problem is being made evident. The real issue is whether you are able to make a decision on your own and act on it.

I am wondering whose problem this is, really? Does your husband have such control issues that you

fear to counter his views, lest you pay some very unpleasant consequences? Or do you lack the fortitude to face the world on your own? Or perhaps it is a combination of both.

In order to resolve the church-going issue, begin by addressing the underlying problem that is causing an unequal balance of power in your marriage. I would suggest finding a Christian counselor who can help you examine what is happening under the surface. Once you feel stronger and things become clearer for you, invite your husband to join you for the sessions.

In the meantime, please be assured that God is not scowling at you from the heavens, blotting your name out of the book of life because you find it almost impossible to attend church right now. More likely, He is working on your heart, wooing you to meet with Him so that you can enjoy the assurance that you are truly and unconditionally loved.

While your relationship with your husband seems to be based on fear and control, your relationship with God need not be. Scripture is clear on this point. We do not earn our way to heaven by accumulating points for going to church or doing good deeds. The Bible tells us, "If anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins."^{*}

While establishing a healthy relationship with your husband will undoubtedly take a great deal of work, you can enter into a rich relationship with God right now. Ask Him for forgiveness for the things that you have done wrong. Accept His righteousness. Rejoice in His goodness.

With the assurance of His everlasting arms around you, I suspect you will find new ways to enter into His sanctuary to praise His name with the brothers and sisters who are waiting to hold you up.

^{*}1 John 2:1, 2.

*Reprinted with permission from **Signs of the Times**, January 2005, p. 21. Sandra Doran, Ed. D., is an associate superintendent of education for the Florida Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. (www.signstimes.com)*



Evolution vs. Intelligent Design

by Samuel Blumenfeld

Back in 1987, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a 1981 Louisiana law which mandated a balanced treatment in teaching evolution and creation in the public schools. The Court decided that the intent of the law “was clearly to advance the religious viewpoint that a supernatural being created humankind,” and therefore violated the First Amendment’s prohibition on a government establishment of religion. In other words, the Court adopted the atheist position that creation is a religious myth.

In speaking for the majority, Justice William J. Brennan wrote: “The legislative history documents that the act’s primary purpose was to change the science curriculum of public schools in order to provide an advantage to a particular religious doctrine that rejects the factual basis of evolution in its entirety.”

Of course, no one bothered to remind the learned justice that some of the world’s greatest scientists were and are devout Christians, and that it is atheism that is destroying true science, not religion. Also, Justice Brennan seemed to be totally unaware that an “establishment of religion” meant a state-sanctioned church, such as they have in England with the Anglican Church, which is the official Church of England. Belief in God is not an establishment of religion. Belief in a supernatural being who created mankind is not an establishment of religion.

Also, there is no factual basis to key tenets of evolutionary theory. The fossil record shows no intermediary forms of species development. No scientist has been able to mate a dog with a donkey and get something in between.

But homeschoolers, although not affected by what the court forces on government schools, should know how to refute the fairy tale called the Theory of Evolution. Justice Brennan called it fact, which simply indicates the depth of his ignorance.

First, what exactly is the Theory of Evolution? For the answer, we must go to the source: Charles Darwin’s *The Origin of Species*, published in 1859. Darwin claimed that the thousands of different species of animals, insects and plants that exist on Earth were not the works of a divine creator who made each species in its present immutable form, as described in Genesis, but are the products of a very long, natural process of development from simpler organic forms to more complex organisms.

Thus, according to Darwin, species continue to change or “evolve,” through a process of natural selection in which nature’s harsh conditions permit only the fittest to survive in more adaptable forms.

Darwin also believed that all life originated from a single source – a kind of primeval slime in which the first living organisms formed spontaneously out of non-living matter through a random process – by accident.

The first false idea in the theory is that non-organic matter can transform itself into organic matter. Pasteur proved that this was impossible. Second, the enormous complexity of organic matter precludes accidental creation. There had to be a designer. There is now a whole scientific school devoted to the Design Theory. William A. Dembski’s book, *Intelligent Design*, published in 1999, is the pioneering work that bridges science with theology. Dembski writes:

Intelligent design is three things: a scientific research program that investigates the effects of intelligent causes; an intellectual movement that challenges Darwinism and its naturalistic legacy; and a way of understanding divine action ...

It was Darwin’s expulsion of design from biology that made possible the triumph of naturalism in Western culture. So, too, it will be intelligent design’s restatement of design within biology that will be the undoing of naturalism in Western culture.

Dembski proves that design is “empirically detectable,” because we can observe it all around us. The birth of a child is a miracle of design. The habits of your household cat is a miracle of design. All cats do the same things. These are the inherited characteristics of the species. The idea that accident could create such complex behavior passed on to successive generations simply doesn’t make sense. The complexity of design proves the existence of God. Dembski also notes:

Indeed within theism divine action is the most basic mode of causation since any other mode of causation involves creatures which themselves were created in a divine act. Intelligent design thus becomes a unifying framework for understanding both divine and human agency and illuminates several longstanding philosophical problems about the nature of reality and our knowledge of it.

Intelligent design is certainly proven by the fact that every living organism lives through a programmed cycle of birth, growth and, finally, death. That very specific program is contained in the tiniest embryo at the time of conception. The embryo of a cow probably does not look any different from the embryo of a human being.

Continued on Page 9

The Wycliffe Bible Translation and the Term “The Preparation”

(Part 2)

by Marsha Basner



*Editor's Note: This is the continuation of a study that was published in our March-April 2005 edition of **The Sabbath Sentinel**. If you were not a subscriber when that issue was published and would like to receive Part 1, please contact our Wyoming office and we will send you a copy of the first part of our study.*

Preservation of the “Word of God” and the “Church of God”

Most of us agree that the Bible contains promises concerning the preservation of the “Word of God” and “Church of God.” Both reveal and contain the beliefs and practices of the primitive faith once delivered by the Almighty and His Son, to the saints. While it is obvious to all of us that the ecclesiastical authorities have miserably erred in the transmission of the doctrines of the primitive faith through the last 1900+ years, many of us, without question, believe and trust that these same ecclesiastical authorities have transmitted to us an inerrant Bible. Just as the apostolic doctrines cannot to be found in any one ecclesiastical organization, through diligent study and prayer, these doctrines could be recovered.

In like manner, could it also be that through these past almost 1900+ years, the content of the apostolic manuscripts has been preserved, but not exclusively through the canonized documents of the ecclesiastical churches?

Regarding “biblical infallibility,” most of us undoubtedly hold the view that the original Bible autographs were inspired of God. However, most of us also believe that all copies and translations that scribes and linguists transmitted to later generations were equally inerrant and infallible.

This writer believes that the Almighty exists in a personal, knowable way and has intentionally revealed attributes of His divine nature and purpose in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible (referred to hereafter as the Older and Newer Writings). Through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the Almighty has preserved the transmission of these revelations in an early oral form and later in a written form that is yielded through

various collections of manuscripts — in spite of invading armies⁽¹⁾, destruction of the Nazarenes’ scrolls by zealous rabbis⁽²⁾, ecclesiastical ineptitude, blatant scribal corruption, politically motivated early church bishops, overzealous Reformers, textual critics following a herd mentality, uniqueness of languages, and innovations in translation.

In contrast, the Older Writings did, but the Newer Writings did not, have the “checks and balances” which aided in the preservation of their texts. The Older Writings were committed to scribes, such as the Massorettes, who were concerned with the faithful preservation of the transmitted text. This they accomplished by maintaining accurate statistics on the entire state of the Sacred Books. Verses, words, letters were counted; lists were compiled of like words and of forms of words with full and effective spelling, and possibilities of easy mistakes were catalogued. The invention of the vowel signs and accents — about the seventh century — facilitated a more faithful preservation of the text.

Regarding the Newer Writings, the apostle Paul warns in 2 Cor. 2:17 that even in his day, there were those which would, “*corrupt the word of God...*” Messiah promised that His words would not pass away, but where did he indicate that ecclesiastical authorities would be its guardian? Many theologians testify to this unfortunate historical fact that ecclesiastical authorities have “corrected” the Newer Writings to support their doctrines and commandments:

“[the New Testament had] in many passages undergone such serious modification of meaning as to leave us in painful uncertainty as to what the Apostles had actually written” stated Dr. Lobegott Friedrich Konstantin von Tischendorf, a conservative Christian scholar.

Dr. Edgar Hennecke wrote: “*It is known that the wording of the Greek texts, which we use as a base, originate from the 5th century*” (*Neutestamentliche Apokryphen*, p. 8). At that time an assault was made upon all old manuscripts that the Church had not accepted and sanctioned by Canon Law. As a result, unrecoverable material was destroyed. Bruce Metzger a New Testament (NT) scholar states: “Of the approximately five thousand Greek manuscripts of all or parts

of the New Testament that are known today, no two agree exactly in all particulars." In his book, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, he notes that "a group of correctors working at Caesarea entered a large number of alterations into the text of both Old and New Testaments" (p. 46). He also points out that there have been doctrinal changes in the Bible due to preconceived notions of what the scriptures ought to say, in order to conform to previous held beliefs in an early age of Christianity (p. 201ff).

In the 3rd century, Origen wrote, "Now it is clear that there has come a great difference in copies, either through the laziness of scribes or from the audacity of those who introduced corruptions as amendments, or of others who took away from or added to their new text such things as seemed good to them" (<http://www.drgenescott.com/stn49.htm>).

An unknown author (thought by some to be Hippolytus, but by others, Gaius) writes somewhere around AD 230: "They [the heretics] laid hands fearlessly on the divine Scriptures, saying that they had corrected them." (We are familiar with the scribal insertion of commas in Messiah's words to the dying thief, to make it appear that he would go that day, to paradise. The spurious nature of 1 John 5:7 and suspicious nature of Mark 16:9-20, is also well known. With the passage of time, and discovery of additional ancient writings, such as the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hebrew Matthew, we may be given many more solutions to perplexing scriptural texts.)

It is commonly documented that errors crept into the Bible through the following ways:

1) Foreign text was inserted that better reflected the evolving beliefs of the Christian movement.

2) Marginal notes that someone had added to a copy of the Bible were incorporated into the text of subsequent copies.

3) Short passages were simply deleted because they were an embarrassment to the church. Based on research conducted by this author, by comparing older with newer Bible translations, it can be established that in many biblical texts which refer positively to the Sabbath or towards keeping of the commandments of YHWH, (which are evidenced in both the Older and Newer Writings) textual errors have crept in to the texts, through each of those three avenues.

Interpreting Punctuation Marks

In addition to understanding how we got the Bible we have today, we must also understand how to read the editor's punctuation marks. When employed by the editors of the 1611 KJV and most older Bible versions, it encloses words which represent a variant text or are spurious, as explained in the following reference:

"A note regarding the words/phrases enclosed in 'curved brackets.' We are all aware that generally, words in the biblical texts which are in italics generally mean that they are not in the 'original text.' There are other 'punctuation marks' in the text itself such as square brackets [], wavy brackets { }, round brackets () and double brackets [[]], all attempt to communicate to the reader that the words enclosed therein may be part of a 'variant' reading or even spurious" (<http://www.udallas.edu/classics/resources/EditorsSigla.htm>).

Another Bible scholar reports, regarding parentheses in the 1611 KJV Bible: **f) Parentheses:**

The Edition of 1611 abounded in parentheses. In the subsequent editions there has been an increasing tendency to discard them; and to supply their place by commas; or to ignore them altogether. But parentheses are a means of increasing the emphasis of ordinary punctuation; and, on that account, they require more careful consideration, rather than less; as the meaning can be either destroyed, changed, or made more clear by their use.⁽³⁾

Older Bibles abound with parenthetical marks and are often found in Bible texts traditionally used to question or denounce the validity of keeping the Sabbath or the biblical commandments. These verses have caused much confusion in Sabbatarian as well as in non-Sabbatarian circles regarding what the actual message of the NT, as to how the Sabbath and Commandments of YHWH are understood and practiced as part of the "faith once delivered to the Saints."

With this insight regarding the meaning of punctuation marks such as () parentheses, we can proceed to discuss their appearance enclosing the term or phrases containing the term "preparation," in reference to the time of Messiah's crucifixion.

There are a few translations other than the Wycliffe's Bible that do not employ the term "preparation" in the selected texts of, Mark, 15:42, Luke 23:54, John 19:13, 31 & 42, and/or they enclose the phrase by parentheses. This provides evidence that these whole phrases are interpolations or insertions into the text, therefore not part of the inspired Word of YHWH. These examples may be difficult to read, since "Old English" spelling has been retained:

Mark 15:42

KJV: And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath.

Witnesses omitting or including the term "preparation," but noting the phrase in which it appears or eventually appears in by () in Mark 15:42:

Continued on Page 17

Blumenfeld: "Intelligent Design" continued from Page 6.

But each has been programmed differently: one creates a cow, the other a human being.

In the case of the latter, that tiny embryo contains an incredibly complex biological program that causes the individual to be born, pass through infancy and childhood, develop into maturity, middle age, old age and, finally, death – a process that takes sometimes as much as a hundred years. How can an accident know what is going to happen 100 years after it has happened?

But since intelligent design infers the existence of a designer – God – it is likely that evolutionists will resist any change in their views, since the acknowledgment of the existence of God is too nightmarish for them to contemplate.

© 2005 WorldNetDaily.com. Reprinted with permission. Dr. Samuel L. Blumenfeld is the author of eight books on education, including: *Is Public Education Necessary? NEA: Trojan Horse in American Education,* "The Whole Language/OBE Fraud" and *Homeschooling: A Parent's Guide to Teaching Children*. His books are available on Amazon.com. Back issues of his incisive newsletter, *The Blumenfeld Education Letter*, are available online.

Come Celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles!

Come Celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. It is the Feast of the Bible that celebrates and focuses on the Millennial reign of Jesus Christ. Just like the Seventh Day Sabbath celebrates the Millennial rule of God over the earth, this eight day festival does the same. For 2005 we will focus on The Presence of the Lord in the life of a believer. We will have services on the opening night, (Oct 17, 2005), and each morning at 11:00 a.m. for the entire eight days of the Feast. Come for all or part.

The Lord Jesus Christ really is coming back to this earth. Our entire Sabbath culture is based on that return. This is a Feast to celebrate all of the good things that we hold dear. It is a time to honor the prophecies of Universal Sabbath Observance. It is a time to celebrate the fullness of the redemption that we have in Jesus Christ. Hungry Hearts Ministries will host the Feast of Tabernacles in Jackson TN.

This Feast Site will focus on Jesus in the personal life of a believer. We will use Praise and Worship style of music during the service. And we will have Prayer Meetings at night to bring every feast goer into that place of personal intimacy with the Lord Jesus Christ. If you are interested in this type of experience you can obtain a free Feast Planner by calling, (731) 668-8477; writing, PO Box 10334, Jackson, TN 38308; by email, Hungryheartsmin@aol.com; or by website, hungryhearts.tripod.com. Come and celebrate before the Lord with great joy. His coming Kingdom!

WARNING: Anger May Cause Cracks in Your Armor of God

By Julia Benson

I have a secret that a lot of people wouldn't think could be possible about me. Sometimes I become quite angry (I'm fairly sure I'm not alone in this phenomenon.) But, usually, I find a way to get over it. However, sometimes I don't let go of the anger and it is still there under the surface. BEWARE!

What starts out as irritation quickly works its way into frustration and soon becomes full-blown anger that rages into a spirit of disobedience to God. I can think of a time when I was angry at my husband for three days, and for three days I was so consumed by my anger I barely prayed or thought about Christ, let alone read the Bible. If I did pray, it was really chintzy, and I prayed out of obligation, not because I wanted to.

At the time when this happened, I thought I was out of that mode of not praying or praying without heart. Here I thought I was in this great "spiritual renewal." Then boom. It was gone.

It's like Satan found a little crack in my armor through my anger. Then he pried and pried it open until it was a gaping hole and all of the love and devotion for Christ that I had so carefully stored up just spilled out onto the dirty ground.

I did know one thing, though. I didn't want to go back to the way I was before my "spiritual renewal," saying Lord, Lord, but not really meaning it. So, I did what I had to do. I patched the hole in my heart and picked up every last grain of love and devotion for Christ and put it back. There is no way I'm going to live without Him!

Do I still struggle with anger? Unfortunately, yes. But it is becoming easier for me to patch the holes in my armor, and maybe someday, if I keep my focus on Christ, there won't be any cracks for Satan to enter. Ephesians 6:13 says, "Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand."

Julia Benson is a freelance writer who lives near the town of Farmersburg, Iowa. She attends a Seventh-day Adventist Church in Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin.

ALL OUT WAR IN THE CORNFIELD

by Frank Sherwin

A lazy summer day in an Illinois cornfield is the setting of an unbelievable altercation involving chemical warfare, field-wide alarm calls, and some of the most graphic violence seen on any battlefield. The battle rages. And yet, there are no sounds in this cornfield, save for the rustling of leaves and the occasional bird call.

One of the many “warriors” is a caterpillar that has a voracious appetite for corn leaves. As it munches on the leaves the corn plant responds by releasing a range of organic compounds called volatiles. Such compounds have a number of functions including warning other plants that in turn activate their own defense genes. Volatiles also attract parasitoid wasps. These predatory insects follow the biochemical signal right down the individual plant under attack. Once there, she finds the caterpillar and injects eggs under its skin. In due time the larvae develop and consume the host from the inside out.

But what if the corn leaf is just physically damaged due to wind or hailstones? Will the plant still release volatiles? No. The Creator designed the plant to recognize compounds in the caterpillar’s saliva as it is eating the leaf, in this way false alarms are avoided. It is this chemical plus the wounding of the plant that starts what scientists call a signal transduction pathway in the corn. The complex process results in the production and release of volatiles. One must ask, is this the result of nothing more than time, natural processes, and chance, or a Creator’s blueprint?

The fact that this battle hardly describes the “very good” creation that God completed at the end of the Creation Week has not been lost to ICR scientists. But it wasn’t always like this. Like so many other predator/prey relationships, the above description reveals the tragic corruption of the creation due to sin. Let’s

remember that according to Scripture, plants are not alive as people and animals are. In the beginning plants were created as food for truly living plants and animals. In the very short time prior to the Fall, we speculate that parasitoid wasps did not engage in hunting for caterpillars (a clear predator/prey relationship). Instead, the wasps may have injected their eggs into protein-rich plants. Caterpillars probably fed from plants as they do today, as doing so would not contravene the “no death before the Fall” teaching. A

variety of plant secretions probably directed the insects what to eat and what not to eat on the individual plant before the Fall and in so doing probably assisted the plant in a symbiotic relationship. Plant scientists are only now beginning to understand the complexity of these plant chemical defenses.

The complex process of signal transduction may have changed slightly after the Fall. In the Garden, caterpillars and wasps were herbivores and fed from plants, the wasp being “called” to the plant by volatiles secreted due to the caterpillar’s feeding. After the Fall when God cursed the earth, the wasp had to seek a more protein-rich

source: the caterpillar. How? Like evolutionists, creation scientists can only speculate. Plants with their signal transduction pathway could generate a hypersensitive response against the wasp by way of R (resistance) proteins produced by a number of activated R genes after the Fall. The wasp, deterred by the production of protective molecules throughout the plant, turns to the caterpillar for its repository of eggs. The Creator equipped each with the necessary ability to adapt.

Reprinted with permission from “Acts & Facts,” p. 5. ©2005 by ICR (Institute for Creation Research). P.O. Box 2667, El Cajon, CA 92021.



Caterpillars like this one do millions of dollars in crop damage each year. Source: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture

Brother John Conrod

John A. Conrod, former BSA board member and long-time BSA supporter, has died. In recent years, in spite of a debilitating disease, John designed Web sites for various Seventh Day Baptist (SDB) churches. He was always kind and cheerful, in spite of his physical difficulties. He inspired us all with his Christ-like spirit.

John served as a Seventh Day Baptist pastor in Denver, Colorado, and Marlboro, New Jersey. He was also Field Pastor for the Pacific Coast Association, and he and his wife Joyce were SDB missionaries to Malawi, Africa.

John was awarded a Bachelor's degree from Seattle Pacific University in Washington in 1961 and a Master of Divinity from Eastern Baptist Seminary in Philadelphia in 1969. In addition to pastoral work, John worked as a corporation accountant. He was ordained by the Marlboro Seventh Day Baptist Church in New Jersey. John authored the very popular "Correspondence Bible Study," "Guide to Bible Understanding," and served the Seventh Day Baptist ministry



in a very special way through as editor of Fisherman's Net Publications.

John received a Bachelor's degree in business administration from Seattle Pacific University and a Master's degree in Pastoral Counselling from Eastern Baptist Seminary. In addition to his work as a pastor and missionary, John worked for many years in the accounting and business administration fields. At times he did both.

When computers took over the accounting work, John learned computer programming and converted his employer's records to digital form. This put John in a position to help his church with its financial records and to help a non-profit ministry called New Covenant Ministries with their finances at no cost.

One of John's great loves was being editor of a monthly internet newsletter for the Mid-Continent Association of Seventh Day Baptists entitled "Fisherman's Net." This newsletter can be accessed on the Web at <http://www.seventhdaybaptist.net/fishnet/>.

Sinai Covenant: Law and Grace

"Part of the problem of the "New Covenant" theology is the failure to realize that the Sinai Covenant reveals God's gracious provision of salvation just as much as the New Covenant does. God revealed to Moses His plan to deliver Israel from Egypt and to set her up in the Land of Canaan (Ex. 3:7-10, 16) because Israel is "His people" (Ex. 3:10). God's deliverance of the Israelites from the bondage of Egypt reveals His gracious provision of salvation just as much as does His deliverance of New Testament believers from the bondage of sin. In fact, in Scripture, the former is a type of the latter.

"... the Israelites responded with faith to the manifestation of salvation: 'Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians...and the people feared the Lord; and they believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses' (Ex. 14:30-31). When the Israelites believed, God revealed to them His covenant plan: 'Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation' (Ex. 19:5).

"These words show the gratuity of the divine election of Israel. God chose Israel without merit on her part (Deut. 9:4ff), simply because He loved her (Deut. 7:6ff). Having separated her from pagan nations, He reserved

her for Himself exclusively. 'I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself' (Ex. 19:4). Through the Sinai covenant, God wished to bring people to Himself by making them a worshipping community dedicated to His service, living by the principles of His Law. This divine plan revealed at Sinai was ultimately realized at the Cross when types met antitypes.

"The prophets appeal to the Sinai Covenant with emotional overtones drawn from human experiences to explain the relationship between God and His people. Israel is the flock, and the Lord is the shepherd. Israel is the vine, and the Lord the vinedresser. Israel is the son, and the Lord is the Father. Israel is the spouse, and the Lord is the bridegroom. These images, as Pierre Grelot and Jean Giblett bring out, 'make the Sinaitic covenant appear as an encounter of love (cf. Ez. 16:6-14): the attentive and gratuitous love of God, calling in return for a love which will translate itself in obedience.' All of this hardly supports [the] contention that "something was seriously wrong with the Israelite covenant.'"

*(The above passage is excerpted from **The Sabbath under Crossfire** by Dr. Samuele Bacchiocchi. Dr. Sam's book is available from the Bible Sabbath Association for a cost of \$15 post paid for BSA members. Non-members at \$2 for shipping and handling.)*

Syncretism

A Blending of Paganism and Truth

by Dr. Daniel Botkin



Syncretism is defined as “the combination of different forms of belief or practice” (Webster’s). The word *syncretism* does not appear in the KJV, but the subject of syncretism is certainly addressed (and condemned) in the Scriptures. From a Biblical perspective, syncretism is the blending together of Yahweh worship with pagan worship.

A perfect example of syncretism is the worship of the Samaritans. When the Samaritan woman asked Yeshua a question about the difference between the worship of the Jews and Samaritans, He responded with this: “Ye worship ye know not what. We know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews” (Jn. 4:22).

This forthright statement probably sounds arrogant and ethnocentric in today’s politically correct world, especially given the fact that the Samaritans believed in the same God the Jews worshipped. What was wrong with the worship of the Samaritans? To answer this question, we have to go to 2 Kings 17 and read about the origin of the Samaritans.

King David and King Solomon both ruled over a united, twelve-tribe monarchy. After the death of Solomon, the ten northern tribes seceded from the southern tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and made Samaria their capital. The ten northern tribes sinned greatly against the Lord. Their punishment was exile: Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years. In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel [the ten tribes] away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes... So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day” (2Ki. 17:5f, 23).

After the Israelites were carried away, the king of Assyria populated Israel’s land with pagans from other territories: “And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof (2 Ki. 17:24).

These were the people who later became known as the Samaritans. The rest of the chapter describes the development of the Samaritans’ syncretistic worship. Soon after these people first settled in Israel’s land,

Yahweh sent lions among them “because they feared not Yahweh” (vs. 25). The Samaritans told the king of Assyria that they did not know how the God of this land wanted to be worshipped. So the king sent an Israelite priest to “teach them the manner of the God of the land,” and this priest “taught them how they should fear Yahweh” (vs. 27f). The Samaritans then began to worship Yahweh. However, they mixed their worship of Yahweh with the worship of their old pagan gods: “They feared Yahweh, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence... So these nations feared Yahweh, and served their graven images, both their children, and their children’s children: as did their fathers, so do they unto this day” (vs. 33 & 41).

Yahweh had made it clear in Deuteronomy chapter 12 that He does not want worship which is patterned after the worship of pagan gods. Rather, He said, “What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it” (Deut. 12:32). The unnamed priest who instructed the Samaritans apparently neglected to tell the Samaritans that Yahweh rejects syncretistic worship. Or, if the priest did tell them, they chose to ignore those instructions. In either case, the Samaritans ended up with a flawed system of syncretistic worship. They erroneously believed that their system of worship was every bit as legitimate as that of the Jews. When the Jews returned from Babylon to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple, the Samaritans came to them and said, “Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto Him since the days of Esar-haddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither” (Ezra 4:2).

The Jewish leaders rightly refused this ecumenical proposal, because they knew that the Samaritans’ syncretistic worship would end up polluting their own worship. The Samaritans resented being shunned this way, and so opposed and harassed the Jews in their efforts to rebuild Jerusalem. About 500 years later, at the time of the Messiah, the Jews and the Samaritans were still not getting along with each other, which explains why the Samaritan woman was surprised when Yeshua asked her for a drink. “How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans” (Jn. 4:9).

It was to this Samaritan woman that Yeshua spoke about the need for true worshippers to worship “in spirit

and in truth." "The Father seeketh such to worship Him," Yeshua said, "and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (Jn. 4:23f). True worship is a blend of spirit and truth. Syncretistic worship is a blend of paganism and truth.

The subtle danger of syncretistic worship lies in its claim to be worshipping the true God, Yahweh. When the Israelites brought idols and idolatrous practices into the Temple, they did not think of their actions as an abandonment of Yahweh. They thought of it as just supplementing their worship with customs borrowed from heathen idol worship. Even the golden calf at Mount Sinai was not regarded as a substitute god to replace Yahweh; rather, it was regarded as a symbolic representation of Yahweh. This can be seen in Aaron's reference to the golden calf as the God "which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" and his proclamation that the worship of the golden calf would be "a feast unto Yahweh" - not a feast to some Egyptian god (Ex. 32:4f).

Syncretism made its way into the Messianic faith quite early. Certain statements in the Epistles show that it was starting even before the Apostles died. Paul scolded the Galatians for turning back to the weak and beggarly elements which put them in bondage to the observance of times. (And it is clear from the context that Paul was *not* referring to Yahweh's appointed times, which Paul himself observed. Rather, this observing of times concerned the Galatians' reverting back to their former pagan superstitions about times, much like some Christians today who put stock in their horoscopes.) Syncretism was also occurring among the saints at Colosse. This is obvious from Colossians chapter 2. (Here too it is clear from the context that Paul was *not* referring to the commandments of God written in the Torah; rather, he was talking about unhealthy bondage to man-made traditions, commandments, and philosophies.)

We know from history that the Apostles' warnings against syncretism went unheeded by the majority of Church leaders. Pagan customs were adapted and modified for use in Christian worship. Much that exists in Christianity today is nothing more than white-washed, baptized paganism. This is especially obvious in the Roman Catholic Church, which freely admits that many of its extra-Biblical traditions were borrowed from pagan idol worship. Anyone who doubts this can read *Catholic Customs and Traditions: A Popular Guide* by Greg Dues (Twenty-Third Publications, 2000). This book, written by a Catholic and primarily for Catholics, is a brief but comprehensive overview of the customs of Roman Catholicism. Throughout the book, the author freely admits that many Catholic customs were borrowed from paganism. Some examples:

- Sunday worship "is an example of how culture and pagan traditions influenced Christian religious traditions. This title [Sun-day] comes from pre-Christian worship of the sun" (pg. 22).
- The choice of December 25 as the date to celebrate Jesus' birth was an adaptation of the pagans'

December 25 celebration of the birthday of their sun god. After Constantine "became the benefactor and protector of Christianity," the writer states, "pagan cultural features of sun-symbolism were no longer threatening. They could be freely absorbed by the church. The church, with its Nativity date of December 25 already in place, did precisely this" (pg. 51 f).

- "Most Christmas traditions associated with evergreens and trees are related somehow to pre-Christian practices... Teutonic and Scandinavian peoples worshipped trees and decorated houses and barns with evergreens at the new year to scare away demons" (pg. 56).

- Concerning Santa Claus: "The origin of this tradition is a fascinating and deliberate mixture of a bishop-saint, Father Christmas, Christmas Man, and the Norse mythological god Thor." Thor is described as "elderly, jolly (though a god of war), with white hair and beard, friend of the common people, living in the north land, traveling in the sky in a chariot pulled by goats, and as god of fire, partial to chimneys and fireplaces" (pg. 60-62).

- Mardi Gras, the Catholic pre-Lenten party-time, came from "pre-Christian revelry and masquerading associated with ancient pagan observance of spring and New Year festivals celebrated at the spring or vernal equinox" (pg. 73).

- Concerning the Catholic custom of giving milk and honey to those newly baptized: This practice, marking an important moment in life, was borrowed from pagan mystery cults" (pg. 90).

- Concerning the origin of Easter eggs and Easter bunnies: "In ancient Egypt and Persia friends exchanged decorated eggs at the spring equinox... These eggs were a symbol of fertility... Rabbits are part of pre-Christian fertility symbolism because of their reputation to reproduce rapidly" (pg. 98f).

- Valentine's Day is connected to "a pagan Roman festival, Lupercalia... This festival came under the patronage of Juno, the goddess of marriage... St. Valentine replaced the pagan goddess Juno as a patron of love" (pg. 139f).

Samaritanism and Roman Catholicism are not the only systems of worship guilty of syncretism. Syncretism exists in Protestantism, too. It can even be found in Judaism. "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (Jn. 4:23f). Let's worship in spirit and in truth, not in a blend of paganism and truth.

Reprinted from "Gates of Eden," July-August 2005, page 8. "Gates of Eden" is a bimonthly newsletter produced by Gates of Eden, a messianic Jewish ministry. Write to Gates of Eden, P.O. Box 2257, East Peoria, IL, 61611-0257.

Saving Imperfect People

by Marvin Moore

A *Signs* reader recently wrote asking me how he could be assured of salvation when he still had sins in his life that he had not overcome. I'm sure this question is on the minds of other readers, so let's talk about it.

To begin with, *salvation doesn't depend upon our success in overcoming sin*. This is not to say that God is indifferent to our sins. Jesus said to the woman caught in adultery, "Go now and leave your life of sin." God is anxious for us to do good works, for Jesus also said, "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."²

However, while God is not indifferent to our sins, He knows that we are incapable of overcoming them on our own. Our minds are sinful, and it's impossible for a person who's sinful on the inside to produce good deeds on the outside. That's why Paul said that "no one will be declared righteous [KJV: "justified"] in his sight by observing the law."³

God's solution is to save us first. He accomplished this by doing two things. He sent Jesus to die for our sins so that He could forgive us, and He attributes Christ's righteousness to us, actually making Christ's righteousness our righteousness. Now we are holy-sinless in God's sight, if you please—in spite of the fact that we are still very flawed on the inside. The theological term for this transaction is *justification*.

At the same instant that God justifies us, He also changes us on the inside through the power of the Holy Spirit. Christians call this transformation "conversion" or "the new birth."⁴ Through conversion God plants within our minds a principle that begins to mold the way we think and feel. As we maintain our trust in Christ's righteousness that covers our sinfulness, and as we cultivate the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives, our inner life conforms more and more to God's pattern of holiness. And as this change progresses within us, we grow in our ability to live God's way of life.

However, we do not overcome all of our sins at once. If ever there was a saintly Christian, it was the apostle Paul, yet he acknowledged that he was imperfect. At the same time, though, he said that he was "[pressing] on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."⁵

While God is glad to see His people grow toward perfection and at some point even to reach perfection,⁶ He isn't looking for perfect people to save. He saves imperfect people and moves them toward perfection. *And He assures these imperfect people that they are in a saving relationship with Him throughout the entire process of their growth toward perfection.*

That's the answer to the question of the reader who asked how he could be assured of salvation when he still had sins in his life that he had not overcome. Salvation comes first, and victory over temptation is increasingly the result of that salvation, not the cause or basis of it.

Now let's talk about another aspect of this question. It would be easy for someone reading this editorial to say, "I know that I'm saved because I'm overcoming my sins." The problem is that when we don't overcome we'll feel like we *aren't* saved. Either way—whether we win or lose, we're basing our assurance of acceptance by God on our accomplishments. We have a perfect right, of course, to rejoice every time we gain the victory over a particular temptation. But *it is justification—Christ's forgiveness and His righteousness attributed to us—that forms the basis of our salvation.*

Here's a prayer that puts our victory over sin in a proper perspective relative to salvation: "Thank You, Jesus, for saving me by Your death that made possible my forgiveness and by Your righteousness that covers my sinfulness. And thank You for the power of Your Spirit *that has been transforming me*, making it possible for me to gain another victory over my temptations."

So here's my response to my correspondent: Praise God for every victory over temptation. However, you must always base your assurance of salvation on Jesus' death that forgives you and His righteousness that covers you, never on your victory over sin.

End Notes: ¹John 8:11, ²Matthew 5:16, ³Romans 3:20, ⁴See John 3:3-8, ⁵Philippians 3:12, ⁶I believe that perfection is possible, but we will never know when we've achieved it, and we can never claim it (see 1 John 1:8) this side of Christ's second coming.

©*Signs of the Times*. Sept. 2004, p. 5. Reprinted with permission. www.signstimes.com. Marvin Moore is editor of *Signs of the Times*.

entertain." Yet "in all these wearisome details there is not a single trace of anything spiritual—not a word even to suggest higher thoughts on God's holy day and its observance" (ibid., 2.778–779).

For example, the law included detailed regulations regarding what constituted a "burden" that could not be carried on the Sabbath; for example, pieces of paper, horses hairs, wax, a piece of broken earthenware or animal food. Generally a burden was anything as heavy as a dried fig, or a quantity sufficient to be of any practical use (e.g. a scrap of paper large enough to be converted into a note or a wrapper). It prescribed what might or might not be saved if one's house caught on fire. Only those clothes that were absolutely necessary could be saved. But one could put on a dress, save it, then go back and put on another. One could not ask a Gentile to extinguish the flames. But if he did so voluntarily, he should not be hindered. One could eat food on the Sabbath lawfully only if it had been specifically prepared for the Sabbath on a weekday. If a laying hen laid an egg on the Sabbath, it could not be eaten. But if the hen had been kept for fattening and not laying, the egg could be eaten, since it would be considered a part of the hen that had fallen off! These regulations considered studying the Mishna on the Sabbath more important than studying the Bible. The Hagiographa (the Old Testament "Writings") were not to be read on the Sabbath except in the evening. And there are many other similar examples.

Of special interest to us are the laws regarding harvesting and healing on the Sabbath. Even the slightest activity involving picking grain—removing the husks, rubbing the heads, cleaning or bruising the ears or throwing them up in the hand—was forbidden. Yet if a man wanted to move a sheaf on his field, he had only to lay a spoon on it; then, in order to remove the spoon, he might also remove the sheaf on which it lay!

It should be noted that, unlike the Pharisees (whose numbers were relatively few), most Jews of Jesus' day paid little attention to these petty rules.

When the Pharisees complained about Jesus' disciples plucking and eating heads of grain on the Sabbath, Jesus (as He often did) was able to point out the contradictions in Pharisaic law. Jesus noted how David and his followers, famished and fleeing for their lives, ate the shewbread when no other food was available, though it was normally only for the priests to eat (Matthew 12:3–4; Mark 2:25–26; Luke 6:3–4; 1 Samuel 21:1–6). Even the Pharisaic law agreed with the original written law on this point, vindicating what David chose to do when his life was in danger (Edersheim, Book II, 2.58). Jesus simply said: "Yet I say to you that in this place there is One greater than the temple. But if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. For

the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath" (Matthew 12:6–8).

Of course, the Sabbath commandment is in a separate category from the sacrificial ordinances. Yet since Jewish law permitted the feeding and watering of animals on the Sabbath to relieve unnecessary suffering, this principle would logically and naturally extend to human beings—in this case, Jesus' disciples—who were partaking of the only food readily available at that time.

This controversy would never have been possible were it not for the Pharisees' exaggerated views about actions forbidden or allowed on the Sabbath. The priests in the Temple worked on the Sabbath, yet were guiltless (Matthew 12:5). The scribes knew this, but apparently did not clearly understand why it was so. Somehow, they missed the point that God instituted the Sabbath not only to give human beings rest from physical labors, but also to give them a time to devote to God by doing His works and serving Him. The disciples' actions were "clearly not a breach of the Biblical, but of the Rabbinic Law" (Edersheim, Book II, 2.56). Jesus said that the Pharisees, not understanding the law, had "condemned the guiltless" (Matthew 12:7). Clearly, the disciples were falsely accused, and were not guilty of breaking the Sabbath as charged.

Since healing might entail work, Pharisaic law permitted it on the Sabbath only if necessary to save life or prevent death. Thus a plaster might be applied to a wound if the object was to prevent it from getting worse, but not to heal it. Yet, contrarily, a splinter might be removed from the eye, or a thorn from the body, though no immediate danger to life was perceived. Furthermore, an animal might be removed from a pit, or taken to water, on the Sabbath.

When the Pharisees accused Jesus of violating the law by healing on the Sabbath, He again was able to reveal their hypocrisy by using their own contradictory rules. First, we will examine Jesus' acknowledgement that He had been working. The Sabbath law is, in part: "Six days shall you labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work" (Exodus 20:9–10). Notice that the work forbidden by the Sabbath law is "your work." The law does not forbid works of service towards God. Indeed, the very reason we are commanded to cease from our own works on the Sabbath is so we may devote the time to the work of honoring and serving God; that we may "turn your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy day of the Lord honorable, and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words" (Isaiah 58:13). Here it is clear that it is our own works—the course of our everyday business—that we are to avoid on the Sabbath. On the other hand, we are to honor God on the Sabbath. Giving honor to God often entails work—"good works."

A careful reading of Scripture reveals that we are to cease and rest from common or profane work on the Sabbath, so that the time may be devoted to God's holy purpose. But implicit in the Sabbath command is that we do the work necessary to fulfill the spiritual aim and meaning of the Sabbath. On the first Sabbath, God rested from His work of physical creation, but He did the work of creating the Sabbath, blessing and sanctifying it (Genesis 2:2-3; Mark 2:27). The weekly Sabbaths and the annual Sabbaths were proclaimed to be "holy convocations"—commanded assemblies for the purpose of gathering to hear God's word taught, and for congregational worship (Leviticus 23:2, 4). This includes the "work" required to travel to the place of assembly, and to listen, learn and participate in the worship service. Those commissioned to teach did the work of reading and explaining God's word. On such occasions, people customarily did the work of eating and drinking, sharing and rejoicing in the holy day and in the truth of God's word (Nehemiah 8:1-12). Other work implicit in the command was done, too: even on the most solemn day of the year—the Day of Atonement—the priests did the work of slaying animals and offering sacrifices before God, according to the requirements of the law (Leviticus 16).

The work of honoring and worshiping God is not forbidden on the Sabbath. Indeed, it is the object of the Sabbath. That is why the priests could work on the Sabbath and not be guilty. Their work was a necessary part of the congregational Sabbath duty of honoring and serving God. It was, in that sense, not their work but God's work that was being done. On a Sabbath day early in His ministry, Jesus announced in summary form the work He had been sent to perform. His work was preaching the gospel, healing [both physically and spiritually] and liberating from oppression (Luke 4:18-19). The works Jesus did were not His works, but God's works, which He had been sent to perform (John 4:34; 9:4; 17:4). Healing was an integral part of Christ's ministry. In perfect harmony with what the Sabbath rest pictures—and with the gospel message—Jesus' healings typified the physical and spiritual healings that Christ will perform during the Millennium, when the Kingdom of God is established on the earth (see Isaiah 35:5-6, 57:16-20; Jeremiah 30:10, 17; Ezekiel 47:8-10).

When Jesus healed on the Sabbath, He was not breaking the Sabbath, but fulfilling it, because one is not at rest when afflicted, oppressed and bound by disease or infirmity. As many scriptures show, God delights in redeeming and restoring the afflicted, and giving them the rest exemplified by His Sabbath. God "hears the cry of the afflicted. When he gives quietness [rest], who then can make trouble?" (Job 34:28-29). Bound by their false traditions, the Pharisees did try to make trouble for the Messiah, condemning Him for giving those whom He healed rest from their afflictions.

Instead, they should have offered praise. Speaking of ones afflicted and at death's door, the psalmist wrote: "Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble,

and He saved them out of their distresses. He sent His word and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions. Oh, that men would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men! Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare His works with rejoicing" (Psalm 107:19-22).

Jesus answered those who accused him of breaking the Sabbath: "If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath, so that the law of Moses should not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath? Do not judge according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (John 7:23-24).

As we have seen, when John wrote that Jesus "broke the Sabbath" (John 5:18), he was describing Jesus' actions from the Pharisees' perspective (compare 9:14-16). Those who say Jesus did actually break the Sabbath are agreeing with Christ's enemies—His accusers—that Jesus' miraculous works of healing were a breach of the Sabbath law. They are agreeing with Jesus' accusers that He was a Sabbath-breaker. To be consistent, they must also agree with the Pharisees when they said of Christ: "We know that this man is a sinner" (v. 24). The blind man who had been healed knew better than that, saying that "we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him" (v. 31).

When Jesus healed on the Sabbath, He was not violating the law of God. By His actions, He demonstrated the true application of God's laws—rather than Pharisaic traditions—that "it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath" (Matthew 12:12). The "law" that Jesus violated was a man-made rule that was itself against the principles of God's law.

Remember: Had Jesus Christ actually broken the Sabbath, He would have been sinning. But the Scripture says that He "committed no sin" (1 Peter 2:22). Had He sinned, He could not be our Savior. But He, being undefiled and separate from sinners, offered Himself without spot and without blemish to God for our redemption (Hebrews 7:26; 9:14; 1 Peter 1:18-19). No, Jesus did not break the Sabbath. He spent the Sabbath preaching, teaching, healing, honoring God and doing the good work of His ministry—the work of God.

The record of Scripture is that Jesus kept the Sabbath faithfully, as God intended it to be kept. In doing so, He set us an example. "He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked" (1 John 2:6).

©2005 Living Church of God. Reprinted with permission from the May-June 2005 edition of *Tomorrow's World* magazine. *Tomorrow's World* is available at *Tomorrow's World*, P.O. Box 3810, Charlotte, NC 28227-8010 or www.tomorrowsworld.org.

Jesus Got Angry

Lately I find myself yelling at the television set. I get angry when I see the stunts pulled by our duly elected officials, and I get angry with the garbage foisted upon us as entertainment, and I get angry at the lack of civility in public discourse.

I know that God gets angry about some things too, but I also know that God doesn't get angry in the same way that I get angry. I get righteously indignant and want to throw my shoe at the tube. I compare myself to the other side and, like that little guy in the nursery rhyme, I boast, "What a good boy am I!"

Somehow, I don't think God expresses his anger in the same way I do, and certainly his motives are different. A few examples of Jesus' anger illustrate the point:

1. Mark 10:13-14 – Some followers of Jesus tried to bring their children to him, and Jesus was indignant when the twelve disciples tried to hinder them. "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God." (NKJV)

2. John 2:13-17 – Jesus entered the temple around the time of the Passover. The people were bringing livestock for sacrifices as part of their religious service, but the rules required that the animals needed to be without blemish. For reasons known only to the inspectors, the animals the people brought always seemed to be blemished, and it so happened that the Temple had unblemished animals to sell at premium prices. But the people could only buy these animals with temple money, not Roman coin, because the Roman coin was unclean. Of course the exchange rate offered for temple money was, shall we say, inflated. Jesus saw this abuse of people coming to worship and honor God, made a scourge of small cords, and drove out both the moneychangers, the livestock, and disrupted their little scam.

3. Mark 3:1-5 — Jesus entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day and approached a man with a withered hand, determined to heal him. No one would commit to admitting that healing on the Sabbath was an honor to God rather than an affront to him, and Jesus "looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their heart," and then proceeded to heal the man.

4. Matthew 23:13-33 – "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" They put stumbling blocks in the way to God and wouldn't so much as lift a finger to lighten the burden.

Consistently, Jesus directed his anger at those who used religion as a means of control or personal advantage rather than as a stepping stone to a relationship with God. He refused to countenance anything that restricted access to him or his Father.

That's a good thing to be angry about, but there is also more to the story, and this is where I come up lacking. When Jesus healed the man in the synagogue, it says he was both angered and grieved. Feel not just the passion of his anger, but also the intensity of his love. We can almost hear him saying, "Don't you folks get it? God's rules aren't willy-nilly restrictions designed to control. They are the supreme expression of his love. They are to draw you closer to God, but you use them to build a wall of separation." Then he healed the man.

Solomon wrote: "Do not hasten in your spirit to be angry, for anger rests in the bosom of fools" (Ecclesiastes 7:9 NKJV). It is also wise to be angry at the right things and for the right reasons.

—Lenny Cacchio

Basner: Study, Part 2 continued from Page 8.

Tyndale 1526

42 And now when night was come (because it was the even that goeth before the saboth)

Tyndale 1534

42 And now when nyght was come (because it was ye even that goeth before ye saboth)

Coverdale 42 And at euen (for so moch as it was the daye of preparinge, which is the fore Sabbath)

Geneva 42 And nowe when the night was come (because it was the day of the preparation that is before the Sabbath)

Bishops 42 And nowe when the euen was come, (because it was the day of preparyng, that goeth before the Sabbath)

Luke 23:54

KJV 54 And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on.

Witnesses omitting the term "preparation in Luke 23:54:

Tyndale 1526

54 And that day was the saboth even, And the saboth drew on.

Tyndale 1534

54 And that daye was ye Saboth even and the Saboth drue on.

John 19:14

KJV 14 And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

Witnesses omitting the term "preparation" in John 19:14:

Tyndale 1526

14 (It was the saboth even which falleth in the ester feast, and about the sixth hour) And he said unto the jewes: Behold your king.

Tyndale 1534

14 It was the Saboth even which falleth in the ester fest and aboute the sixte houre. And he sayde vnto the lewes: beholde youre kyng.

John 19:31

KJV 31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

Witnesses omitting the term "preparation" in John 19:31:

Tyndale 1526

31 The jewes then because it was the saboth even that the bodies should not remain upon the cross

on the saboth day (For that saboth day was an high day) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken down.

Tyndale 1534

31 The lewes then because it was the saboth eve that ye bodyes shuld not remayne apon ye crosse on ye saboth daye (for that saboth daye was an hie daye) besought Pylate that their legges myght be broken and that they myght be taken doune.

Geneva 31 The lewes then (because it was the Preparation, that the bodies should not remaine vpon the crosse on the Sabbath day: for that Sabbath was an hie day) besought Pilate that their legges might be broken, and that they might be taken doune.

KJV 42 There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

Witnesses omitting the term "preparation in John 19:42:

Tyndale 1526

42 There laid they Iesus because of the jewes' saboth even, for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

Tyndale 1534

42 There layde they Iesus because of the lewes saboth evenfor the sepulchre was nye at honde.

(One phenomenon we find occurring in these older Bible versions, as they are "modernized" they are translated to comply with the accepted Greek text. That process is called "assimilation to the Greek," which can immediately be seen by contrasting Tyndale's first to the modern Tyndale Bible translation.)

Textual Criticism

The process of reviewing Bible manuscripts and variants as we are doing here is known as Textual Criticism. Textual criticism consists of the following steps:

a) All the variant readings of the text are collected and arranged. (Of course, this is the very reason textual criticism is necessary at all. If we had only a single copy, there would be no questions, but since we have several, which all say different things, we have a problem. Which text accurately records the original statements?)

b) The variants must then be examined.

c) The most likely word or phrase is then determined.

Most of us are aware that the original manuscripts of the New Testament no longer exist. They have been destroyed by the processes of time. But most of us believe that the New Testament has been preserved in God's providence by copies being made, first of the originals and then of later copies of the copies and copies of those copies, and so on through the centuries. The earliest complete copy of the New Testament that we have was made about 300 years after the New Testament

was written, although manuscripts of some parts have been found that were copied less than 100 years after the originals were written. For the first fifteen hundred years of copying, copies had to be made by hand. This means that all the types of errors that can creep into handwritten copies can be found in the manuscripts of the New Testament (<http://bible.ovc.edu/terry/tc/layintro.htm>).

Christians, whose desire is to listen to, live by, teach or to support those who teach the truths from the Bible, must be able to discern which Bible, which texts are the closest to the originals. Our Messiah in John 17 desires us to "all speak the same thing." Sabbatarians may be able to come to agreement of many doctrines, if the interpolated words or phrases are identified and eliminated from the Bible texts. By identifying these interpolated texts, and removing them, we will be able to "give an answer" to Jewish, Muslim, and atheistic critics who have attacked our faith through the conflicting texts in the "Newer Writings." Our inability to answer these antagonists has caused many to leave faith in Messiah. Yahshua warned us in Matt. 24 that false teachers and false prophets "will come" and will attempt "to deceive even God's elect" (Matthew 25:24-25). To best guard oneself against falsehood, one must know the truth. To spot a counterfeit, one must study the real thing. By studying these conflicting texts, and eliminating spurious readings, we are better able to "rightly divide the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). Only by corrupting and confusing the biblical text can the "false teacher" possibly be able to "deceive the very elect."

Satan obviously knew that he could not destroy (annihilate) the "Word of God;" therefore, he caused a myriad of translations and variations in the biblical texts to be produced over the centuries since they were originally penned. Variations in some of the key texts have produced confusion regarding whether the Sabbath and the biblical laws are to be kept. Most of the texts produced to overthrow the validity of keeping the Sabbath and/or to support the observance of Sunday, arise from this type of textual variants. The faith and pure doctrines of the early church suffered the same fate. The true doctrines continue to exist, but obscured amidst a myriad of other doctrines of man.

Analyzing Texts of Early Bible Versions

Early versions are translations of the Greek NT into other languages. The most important of these are the early Latin versions. The NT was probably first translated into Latin around 200 AD. The earliest manuscript of such a version is from the fourth century. Fifty manuscripts have been categorized. They are designated by "it" (for Itala) with a letter superscript. Next in importance is the Vulgate. This Latin translation was the work, at least in part, of Jerome (c. 345-420). It became the official version of the Roman Catholic Church. This ac-

counts for the over 8,000 copies which exist. The earliest is from the fourth century. These are designated by "Vg" and a letter superscript (http://www.vanderbilt.edu/AnS/religious_studies/NTBib/textual.html).

Why focus on Wycliffe? Wycliffe's translation of the Bible is so significant because he reportedly translated from an "early version" —"from a pile of 'old Latin' manuscripts and commentaries." Wycliffe was determined to write a word-for-word translation of the Latin text he possessed, which in key places is obviously different from the Latin texts extant today, and possibly different from Jerome's approved Latin Vulgate.

The "Old Latin" documents are invaluable for textual criticism because they date back in their earliest forms nearly to the middle of the 2nd century, and are very early witnesses to the Greek text from which they were made. They are exceptionally valuable inasmuch as they are manifestly *very literal translations*. The great uncial manuscripts reach no farther back than the 4th century, whereas in the Old Latin we have evidence—indirect indeed and requiring to be cautiously used—reaching back to the 2nd century. (In general, the Old Latins are traditionally broken up into three classes, the African [the oldest of the types], European, and the Italian. Even these terms can be misleading, however, as there is no clear dividing line between the European and the Italian) Ref. <http://www.skypoint.com/~waltzmn/Versions.html>.

Regarding the most famous Latin translation, the Vulgate, attributed to Jerome, it has been used by the Roman Catholic Church for more than 1000 years. In 382 Pope Damasus commissioned him, the leading biblical scholar of his day, to produce an acceptable (acceptable to whom?) Latin translation of the Bible from the several divergent translations then in use. (At the end of the 4th Century, Jerome stated that there "were as many Latin Texts as there were manuscripts.") Jerome obviously had access to manuscripts that we do not have today. His *revised* Latin translation of the Gospels was delivered to the Pope in 384 (Ref. <http://www.ntcanon.org/Vulgate.shtml>).

One could anticipate that since Jerome's Bible translation into Latin, coming 50 years after the famous Council of Nicea of 325, which declared:

"Christians must not judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day, rather honouring the Lord's Day; and, if they can, resting then as Christians. But if any shall be found to be judaizers, let them be anathema from Christ."

Most NT texts which might support Sabbath or keeping of YHWH's commandments, would likely be deleted or modified in the "ecclesiastically certified" New Testament, "because they were an embarrassment to the church." In order to discourage unauthorized

translations of the Bible the Roman Catholic Church authorities decreed the following:

Council of Toulouse — 1229 A.D.

The Council of Toulouse, which met in November of 1229, about the time of the crusade against the Albigensians, set up a special ecclesiastical tribunal, or court, known as the Inquisition (Lat. *inquisitio*, an inquiry), to search out and try heretics. Twenty of the forty-five articles decreed by the Council dealt with heretics and heresy. It ruled in part:

Canon 1. We appoint, therefore, that the archbishops and bishops shall swear in one priest, and two or three laymen of good report, or more if they think fit, in every parish, both in and out of cities, who shall diligently, faithfully, and frequently seek out the heretics in those parishes, by searching all houses and subterranean chambers which lie under suspicion. And looking out for appendages or outbuildings, in the roofs themselves, or any other kind of hiding places, all which we direct to be destroyed.

Canon 6. Directs that the house in which any heretic shall be found shall be destroyed.

Canon 14. We prohibit also that the laity should be permitted to have the books of the Old or New Testament; unless anyone from motive of devotion should wish to have the Psalter or the Breviary for divine offices or the hours of the blessed Virgin; but we most strictly forbid their having any translation of these books.

The Council of Tarragona of 1234, in its second canon, ruled that:

No one may possess the books of the Old and New Testaments in the Romance language, and if anyone possesses them he must turn them over to the local bishop within eight days after promulgation of this decree, so that they may be burned lest, be he a cleric or a layman, he be suspected until he is cleared of all suspicion.

In 1408 the third synod of Oxford, England, banned unauthorized English translations of the Bible and decreed that possession of English translations had to be approved by diocesan authorities. The Oxford council declared:

It is dangerous, as St. Jerome declares, to translate the text of Holy Scriptures out of one idiom into another, since it is not easy in translations to preserve exactly the same meaning in all things. We therefore command and ordain that henceforth no one translate the text of Holy Scripture into English or any other language as a book, booklet, or tract, of this kind lately made in the time of the said John Wyclif or since, or that hereafter may be made, either in part or wholly, either publicly or privately, under pain of excommunication, until such translation shall have been approved and allowed by the

Provincial Council. He who shall act otherwise let him be punished as an abettor of heresy and error.”

We declare, condemn and disallow all and each of these Propositions as false, captious, ill-sounding, offensive to pious ears, scandalous, pernicious, rash, *injurious to the Church and its practices*, not only outrageous against the Church but even against the secular powers, seditious, impious, blasphemous, suspected of heresy and savouring of heresy itself, as also encouraging heretics and heresies and even schism, erroneous, often condemned, and lastly also heretical, *containing divers heresies* manifestly tending to innovation (p. 232 of *Vicars of Christ*, by Peter De Rosa).

What Bible manuscripts were available at that time which could have been used to make an “unauthorized” translation of the Bible, or certain texts to cause such wrath from these ecclesiastical authorities? What did the Catholic Church fear? What texts would be properly translated in these unauthorized Bibles which would be injurious to the “*church and its practices*?” What “*heresies*” did they contain? This author believes that these “unauthorized translations” can provide us with the original rendering of many problematic texts.

Several modern scholars, in an effort to reconcile the gospel accounts of Messiah’s last week, have insisted that the term “Preparation,” to the first century Jew, exclusively identified the 6th day of the week, “Friday.” Two problems exist with their conclusion. The first is that the Jews of the first century did not use the term, “Preparation” for Friday, but used “sabbath eve” or “evev Shabbat,” (evidence provided often includes redacted translations from the Greek, in which the term “Preparation” is used; however, alternate translations without the term Preparation are also available). Secondly, the bracketing of the word and phrase containing the term “Preparation,” gives reason to doubt its originality and its validity, and thirdly, if “Preparation” was actually in the “original texts” from which the translators worked, they would have universally employed the term “Preparation” instead, but that is not the case. The Church authorities warned all persons against reading Wycliffe’s Bible translation under penalty of excommunication. The Council of Constance in 1415 condemned Wycliffe, ordering his body to be exhumed and burned. Tyndale’s Bibles were repeatedly confiscated and burned, and he himself died a martyr’s death, being burned at the stake in 1536. Had Wycliffe and Tyndale translated texts in their Bibles contrary to what the Church authorities had approved in their Correctories? (The Roman Catholic Correctories reviewed the variants in the Bible translations and chose those which were acceptable according to their faith and practice.)

Based upon the information presented above which identifies how to determine textual variants, this author has concluded that the term “Preparation,” and

the phrases in which it appears, as used in the Gospels in reference to the day Messiah died, are textual interpolations or additions. Unfortunately, in our modern Bible translations, the parenthetical marks which attest to their spurious origin have mostly disappeared. Therefore, one must refer back to the older English translations to find where they appear.

The term “preparation” was undoubtedly placed into the biblical texts because it “better reflected the evolving beliefs of the Christian movement” based on its desire to promote the resurrection of the Messiah on Sunday, and to thereby promote Sunday sanctity. Whether by hard copy, or online, we would all benefit from referring to older versions of the Bible which contain the original punctuation marks, comparing scriptures in our modern Bibles which appear difficult to understand. Undoubtedly we will realize that the ecclesiastical authorities were not the sole guardians of the Scriptures, and the doctrines proclaimed therein, any more than they were guardians of the practice of and the “faith once delivered to the Saints.” In spite of these religious authorities, the words of the Almighty and His Son, as promised, have been preserved.

End Notes

- 1) There were several campaigns by the civil Roman authorities to persecute Christians that involved their questioning and destruction of biblical manuscripts. These reached their height in the reign of Emperor Diocletian (AD 284-305) whose first edict ordered that “the churches should be levelled with the ground and the scriptures destroyed with fire.” Between AD 296 and 311 Diocletian and Galerius issued four edicts against Christians with escalating penalties of loss of property, slavery, imprisonment, torture, and death. It was hoped that, if there were no churches and no copies of the Scriptures, Christianity would die out (*A History of the Early Church to AD 500*; J W C Wand; Methuen & Co; 1937; ISBN0-416-18110-4; p 125).
- 2) One Orthodox rabbi in the Talmud wrote that the scrolls should be burned. Another rabbi dissented, saying that scrolls with the Divine Name written on them should never be burned. Another rabbi argues that the Minim (Nazarene) scrolls should have the Divine Name cut out of them on a day that is not a Sabbath day, and then whatever is left of the scrolls (with the holes cut out of them) should be burned. Another entry claims that the Minim scrolls are such an abomination that they should be burned without even bothering to cut the Divine Name out of them, but just to burn the things, because they are so odious to him.
- 3) *Philologos* | How to Enjoy the Bible - Part 1 - III | The One Great Requirement of the Word: “Rightly Dividing” It.
- 4) *Vicars of Christ*, by Peter De Rosa

Marsha Basner is a vice president of the BSA and lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

A Personal Tribute to Eugene Lincoln, 1923 to 2004

by Terril D. Littrell, Ph. D.

Eugene Lincoln was reared by a poor widowed mother in Marion, Indiana, during the Great Depression. He has told me his story many times of how difficult it was for them some days just to have their daily bread. His mother was a devout Seventh-day Adventist, and he joined the denomination when he was 13. He showed an interest in writing at an early age. When Eugene was 20, he wrote and published a small booklet of poems titled *Bits o' Verse*.

He considered it a privilege to study at Marion College, and was thankful to graduate with honors. He met Darlene Boatwright from Ellijay, Georgia, who was also a student at Marion College, and a convert to Seventh-day Adventism at an early age. They attended church together and were married on July 4, 1945. The following year Eugene graduated with a B.S. degree in Education.

He worked at a newspaper office during his college years, and for many years afterward he worked as a Linotype operator and headline writer for the farm news. He continued to write articles for the newspaper as well as denominational publication.

In 1953 Eugene learned about the Bible Sabbath Association (BSA) and became a member at age 30. Seven years later he was elected as a member of the board of directors. When the editor of *The Sabbath Sentinel*, Harlan Little, passed away that same year, he was invited by the board to become the editor in 1960.

I became a member of the BSA in 1961 and began corresponding with Eugene. He wrote me about a tornado that hit their home in Marion and how window glass was in the bed of their baby Johathan. This was an experience that he and Darlene talked to my wife Chloe and me about a lot through the years to come.

I showed a keen interest in the development of *The Sabbath Sentinel*, and while I was a student at Midwest Bible College, Stanberry, Missouri, Eugene asked me to become the assistant editor. I took this position on January 1, 1967. In 1969 the Burrells asked me to consider serving as president of the BSA. I was elected president by the BSA membership and took office on January 1, 1970, about the same time I graduated with honors from Evangel College in Springfield, Missouri.



During the eight years I served as BSA president, Eugene and I became close friends. We worked closely together, and I came to know him well. I have never met a more humble and unassuming man than Eugene Lincoln. He was gracious, kind, and loving—always caring for

others. Eugene never judged others, but was always very exacting and demanding of himself. He never held any prejudice against other denominations. He considered himself a Christian first, a BSA member second, and a Seventh-day Adventist third, yet he was very loyal and faithful to his church.

In spite of several moves and job changes, Eugene remained as editor of *The Sabbath Sentinel* until 1985. One of the hardest things he ever did was to give up the editorship of his beloved *Sentinel*, where he had served for 25 years.

Eugene retired from his job with the SDA Publishing Association in Hagarstown, Maryland, in 1980, and remained with *The Sabbath Sentinel* for five more years.

In 1995 I led Eugene and Darlene in the renewal of their marriage vows. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in our home in Tennessee. We visited them once more in their home in Hagarstown, at which time Eugene asked me to conduct his funeral service if he passed from this life before I did. From that time on until his death in 2004, I faithfully called him by phone every Sabbath to wish him and Darlene Sabbath Shalom!

Later Eugene and Darlene made the difficult and final move to Greensboro, North Carolina, to be with their son David and his family. It was there that Eugene passed away on July 17, 2004. His daughter-in-law, Jan, called me and asked me to conduct the graveside funeral service. Sadly, I had to decline due to my own poor health due to my diabetic condition. I miss my dear brother Eugene Lincoln, and look forward to being with him for eternity in heaven. □

Brother Andrew Reflects on 50 Years of Ministry

SANTA ANA, Calif. (July 14, 2005) – As Open Doors celebrates 50 years of service to persecuted Christians on Friday, July 15, Brother Andrew, Open Doors' founder and author of the best-seller *God's Smuggler*, reflects on the international Christian ministry – past, present and future.

Q: Can you remember how you felt during your first trip behind the Iron Curtain on July 15, 1955, as you traveled by train into Poland with your suitcase bulging with Christian booklets?

BA: I remember almost every hour of that trip, because I was the only Christian surrounded by communists, about to visit a world that I knew nothing about. It was an eye opener in every aspect. I found churches and a Bible society that we knew nothing about. I also found there was a great lack of Bibles but lots of enthusiasm. It was there that a pastor said, 'Andrew, you being here means more than 10 of the best sermons.' I knew I couldn't preach very well but I can be there!

I heard from the Bible Society Director, Mr. Enholm, who told me stories about professional smugglers who would come to his shop, buy 10 Russian Bibles, smuggle them across the border into Russia and make a fortune. Something began to wake up in me. I thought, if people do that for the love of money, unbelievers taking such a risk, how much more we should go over there and take the Bibles to the Russians. That's where the first seed was sown.

Q: Open Doors is celebrating 50 years of ministry to the Persecuted Church in 2005. Does it seem possible?

BA: It has grown to where people ask me, 'If you could do it all over again, would you?' I say no, it's too big and too much responsibility. Fortunately, God only shows us one step at a time. One step we can take. If we do that then the Lord sees how we land on one foot, then the other. If you accept responsibility and grow spiritually, then God will show you the next step. But it's the vision that God gave.

Q: What do you tell young people who ask for advice in how to organize a ministry?

BA: Always have the guts to surround yourself with people who are better than you. For me, that's the formula for success. That's how you grow strong as a mission. That's why I feel Open Doors is strong.

Q: You seem satisfied with the way things are going now.

BA: I feel very good about it. I still think we have a modern function. We can only do it according to the life and measure of faith that we have received. So I feel very happy about what we are doing with our limited resources. We are never possessive of knowledge, resources and people. We always want to share for the good of the Body of Christ.

Q: How do you see the future of Open Doors?

BA: Unfortunately, I think we have a terrific future, because the conflict in the world is increasing.

Q: So Christian persecution will increase?

BA: Absolutely, the whole end-time theology of the Scriptures and specifically the Book of Revelation teaches about that. But we still feel happier in a state of denial rather than facing reality. That's why we've created this "pie in the sky" concept – that we will somehow escape suffering. But God is a God of unity, and there are no different standards for Christians in North Korea, or Siberia, or Mongolia, or China, or Afghanistan, than for us in the West and everywhere else. We must be ready. We must be connected to the Persecuted Church and learn from it.

Q: Do you think the Church in persecuted countries will grow?

BA: It will certainly grow in depth, not necessarily in numbers, but the strength of the Church is not determined by statistics or numbers – it's in influence. If we have no influence in our society, then why talk about the growing church? Numbers don't mean anything.

Q: Do you think persecution is going to come to Europe and America?

BA: Yes, and we need it. Sometimes I think 'God hasten the day.'

Q: And where do you think persecution is going to come from?

BA: From Islam - not that Islam is a threat, it's a challenge; but we are not accepting the challenge. If we do not accept a challenge, it turns into a threat. Sometimes people come to my office and they are very upset, 'Oh the Muslims have bought another empty church, and they have converted it into a Mosque, isn't that terrible!' No, that's not terrible, what's terrible is that the church was empty.

Q: What is your message?

BA: The Church needs to accept the fact that there is a suffering church and repent of our lack of understanding and compassion. We have not taken good care of one another and unless we do that, there will be no change in our culture which is getting worse and worse all the time, declining in moral spirituality and church influence.

Q: What is the most important thing we can do for the Persecuted Church?

BA: Our work thrives on prayer. Pray as we face this terrible dilemma of growing persecution, diminishing church influence worldwide and exodus of Christians from the Middle East where Christians are running away. God is building his Church but you and I have to help. We have to witness, we have to be obedient to the Great Commission, we must supply the needs, we must go and say what can we do for you. And they always say, 'please pray for us.' And if we press the point further they probably say, 'bring me a Bible, but come, come; come and encourage us so we can stay here.' Until that point is reached they will leave by the tens of thousands. That's the mission of Open Doors: like a cry of distress, an SOS from God, 'strengthen what remains and is at the point of death.'

Source: *Open Doors with Brother Andrew*. www.opendoorsusa.org.

Notices & Advertisements

CALENDAR OF THE LORD, 2005

FREE: with the picture of Christ Jesus as biblically described.

Precept upon precept during these 22 years in striving to fulfill His will. Learn of your Creator, Saviour and High Priest of the New Testament; also as the God whose name is "I AM" in the Old Testament as His Calendar teaches. For you and others interested. Limited to 10 outside the USA due to high airmail postage.

Write to:

Church of God (New Testament), AL
74-4963A Mamalahoa Highway
Holualoa, HI 96725 USA
(Feb 05)

Notice to Pastors

*If you are a pastor, ask us for a free copy of our **Directory of Sabbath-Observing Organizations** for your church library. It is a handy tool for staying in touch with other Sabbath-keeping groups in your area and around the world.*

Beyond the Impasse

Finding Harmony in Faith & Law

by Samuel R. Licorish

Finally! A work that finds its niche in a uniquely bold confrontation of the difficult statements regarding faith, law and justification in Romans, Galatians, and in particular Ephesians 2, is now available.

This refreshingly objective examination is available for only **\$17.00** (plus shipping).

www.BeyondtheImpasse.com

1-888-858-5151

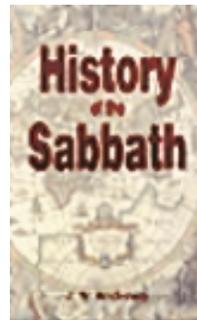
Write Author:

PO BOX 23117

Ottawa, ON

K2A 4E2

Canada



History of the Sabbath, by J. N. Andrews, 548 pp., \$15.00 regular price, special sale price, \$13.00. The history of the Sabbath stretches for almost 6,000 years. The Creator rested on the Sabbath, He placed His blessing upon the day; and He sanctified a divine appointment of the day to a holy use. The Sabbath dates from the

beginning of our world's history. This book shows the record of the Sabbath in secular history and the steps by which Sunday has usurped the place of this the Bible Sabbath. Non-members: add \$2 for shipping and handling. B206

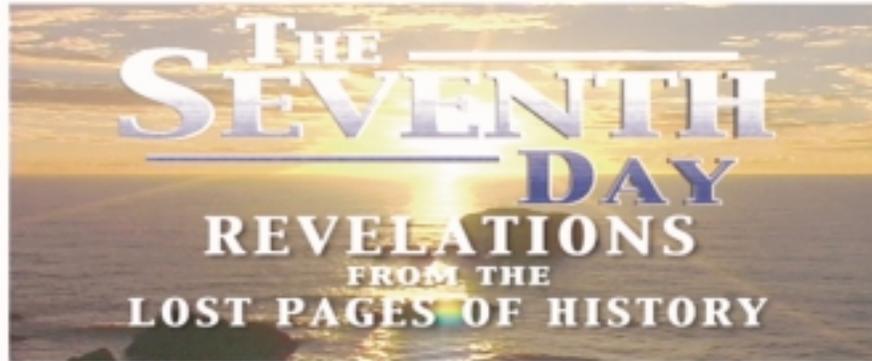
Advertise in The Sabbath Sentinel

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*.



**A Multicultural Tool For Worldwide Evangelism and Sabbath Enrichment
Tracing the History of the Sabbath From Eden to Eternity**



Scenes from The Seventh Day: Revelations from the Lost Pages of History

Seventeen years in the making, this Sabbath promotional series was the dream of the late James Arrabito. You will learn much about the exciting history of the Sabbath. Narrated by: Hal Holbrook. Five-part video series on the Sabbath. VHS (NTSC) or DVD. \$20 for single copy, \$18 for multiple copies, \$90 for the entire five-part series. The Bible Sabbath Association, 3316 Alberta Drive, Gillette, WY 82718. Postage: \$5 for entire set or add \$2 per video for North America. International shipping \$30 VHS, \$10 DVD for set, OR \$5 per video. Indicate the appropriate order code:

- | <u>VHS</u> | <u>DVD</u> | |
|------------|------------|---|
| V215-1 | D215-1 | Origins of the Sabbath, 52 min. |
| V215-2 | D215-2 | Jesus and the "Change" of the Sabbath, 47 min. |
| V215-3 | D214-3 | Sabbath Persists Through the Dark Ages, 48 min. |
| V215-4 | D215-4 | The Reformation and the Revival of the Sabbath, 60 min. |
| V215-5 | D215-5 | Explosion of Sabbath-keeping in Modern Era, 83 min. |

The Sabbath Sentinel

A Bi-monthly Publication of

The Bible Sabbath Association

HC 60 Box 8, Fairview, OK 73737 USA

Address Service Requested

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 618
RAPID CITY, SD