

# The Sabbath Sentinel

January–February 2009



**Ruins of the Abbey of Glastonbury**  
Is this the site of the first Christian Church?

**BSA — The Bible Sabbath Association**

*Jesus said, "the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath"*

# The Sabbath Sentinel

January–February 2009 Volume 61, No. 1 Issue 535

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**Our Cover:** *Glastonbury, Somerset, UK*  
*Thought by many to be the site of the first Christian church*  
*ca. 40 to 50 A.D., a Sabbath-keeping church.*  
(source: *Pittsburgh Univ.*)

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# It's Hard to Keep up



This past month seems like two years. I've heard that the older you become, the quicker life passes, but this is ridiculous. Let me tell you what has been going on.

During the first weekend of December the BSA board met in Kansas City, Missouri. The meetings were very productive, and as we get into 2009 you will be hearing more about the results of our meetings. There are several items that we discussed that are worth mentioning to you now.

First, the financial state of the BSA is not where we would like it to be. The faltering economy has hurt us as it has many other nonprofit organizations. We do not want to cut back our services to our readers and BSA members; however, this is something that we will have to take a hard look at in the coming months. One area that we specifically would like to upgrade is our Web site. We have put a new face on the Web site, but much of the old site and its inadequacies still remain. This is one area in which you can help us. We need funds to do the upgrades that will make it easier for you and others to navigate our Web site. We would also like to offer new material and services on our Web site, such as updates of our Directory, announcements, and some interactivity with our readers and members. If you would like to help us with that, please consider making a donation to help us make this a reality.

Second, we had thought previously that it would be impossible to conduct our essay scholarship contest for students this year. However, we have the funds to offer one prize of \$1000 to the student who writes the most persuasive essay on a subject relating to the Sabbath. If you know a student who could use an extra \$1000 for college tuition, let that student know about our contest. Details are on page 5 of this issue of the *Sentinel*.

Third, we are very close to putting the final touches on our next edition of our *Directory of Sabbath Observing Groups*. Once the editing has been finalized, we will go to press with it. This is always one of our most sought-after publications.

As you can see, we have been busy, and we hope that 2009 will bring many more opportunities for the BSA to be of service to you and your church or fellowship group.

Another thing that happened during December was the death of my mother. Since this is personal, I won't say a lot about it. My mother died on December 18. Because of her constant need for care, she was in a nursing home in the town where we live. We saw her nearly every day and were aware of her deteriorating condition, so her passing did not take us by surprise.

Mary Lou Ryland was a week and a half from her 89<sup>th</sup> birthday. With the passing of a parent, one thinks of the things that the parent valued as important during their life. My mother was a simple, uncomplicated farm girl who grew up in very difficult circumstances. She graduated from high

school at the age of 16 and was married just before her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. To my mother hard work and providing for her family were the most important things in life. My father was a brilliant man, and I think it was my mother's black-and-white values that kept him and us children focused on the practical and important things in life.

My mother owned a beauty shop in our small farm town where she continued to work until she was 60. In spite of her work, I can never remember her missing one of my ball games, or a recital or play that my sister was in, or one of my brother's track meets or Scouting events. She put her husband and children ahead of everything else on her list.

My mother was in considerable pain during her final months, so much so that my wife and I often wondered why God was letting her hold on. On her final day my wife and I came from work directly to the nursing home. She was still fighting to hang on to life. The head nurse called me into the hall and explained to me that sometimes people continue to fight and struggle until they are given permission to let go by loved ones. I had already talked to my mom about letting go and being able to see Jesus face to face, yet she was still struggling. I got on the phone and called my sister in Idaho and explained to her what the nurse had told me. Then I put her on the phone with my mom. I heard my older sister (my mother's firstborn) tell my mother how much she loved her and that we would be all right if she went ahead of us. After the conversation I sat with my mother holding her hand. She had stopped struggling and within five minutes her heart stopped beating. I kissed her on the forehead and said, "Goodbye, Mom."

She knew little about doctrines and theology. That was all too complicated. She just knew that God loved her and that the next face she saw would be Jesus. She knew that God had given her a good husband and three sometimes ornery children, and she had done her best to treasure this gift from God, and as her children we were blessed by her care.

Just two days after my mother died, we got the news of the passing of Dr. Sam, Samuele Bacchiocchi. Dr. Sam was perhaps the greatest Sabbatarian scholar of all times, and his scholarship was appreciated by Sabbath keepers and Sunday keepers alike. Dr. Bacchiocchi was the first non-Catholic ever to receive a doctorate from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. His *From Sabbath to Sunday*, based on his doctoral dissertation in Rome, was the most thorough examination ever written on how the sacred Sabbath came to be changed to Sunday worship.

Though an Adventist, Dr. Sam was a great friend to all Sabbath-keeping groups, and was always willing to travel to remote parts of the globe to tell the Sabbath story to whoever would listen. We will miss him greatly.

—Kenneth Ryland

# Our Kansas City BSA Board Meeting



**By John Paul Howell**

During the weekend of December 5 through 7, the directors of the Bible Sabbath Association met in Kansas City, Missouri. In addition to reviewing the progress of the Association's various ministry efforts, the board members attended Sabbath services with the Kansas City Church of God, which meets in Independence, Missouri. Lenny Cacchio and the entire membership of the Kansas City Church of God were very friendly and gracious hosts.

At the conclusion of the director's meeting, a renewed spirit of urgency regarding the work of the BSA had been kindled among the directors present. This renewed urgency was aptly expressed in their commitment to the following basic BSA programs and services that have been popular over the years.

**THE SABBATH SENTINEL** — The work of the editor, and fellow board member, Ken Ryland was validated and the attendees endorsed his commitment to publish at least one Sabbath-supporting article in each issue. Ken was also encouraged to increase the amount of news/interviews with Sabbath-observing churches/leaders in the magazine. It was agreed that, as the late Richard Nickels wrote in 1999, "*The Sabbath Sentinel* should be a positive publication promoting Sabbatarian cooperation."

**NEW AND RENEWED LITERATURE** — Since the loss of Richard Nickels, the stream of new BSA materials has slowed to a trickle, and nearly stopped. The attending directors agreed to begin surveying available materials and recommending those most appropriate for our purposes. This would include the best of our previous titles (tracts, leaflets, booklets, books, tapes, CDs, DVDs, etc.), and newer titles, including materials advising interested persons in how to organize and serve small groups of individuals as they come to faith in Christ and/or observance of the weekly Sabbath. "Without good, new literature, we die" —Richard Nickels.

**DIRECTORY OF SABBATH-OBSERVING GROUPS** — The attending directors agreed that the completion, publication, and distribution of the Directory be the Association's project of highest priority until it is completed. It was agreed that the directors will work together in assisting Shirley Nickels' efforts in the BSA

business office in completing this project by March 31, 2009.

**SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST** — It was recommended that the Scholarship Contest be continued in 2009. After the Kansas City meeting, a motion was circulated via e-mail to all the directors outlining how the contest will be conducted in 2009. The motion passed. (Please see Page 5 of this issue of *The Sabbath Sentinel* for more information about this year's Scholarship Contest.)

In addition to the historic programs and services offered by the Bible Sabbath Association, the attending directors also recognized the necessity of using new and innovative approaches in delivering the historic programs and services as well as in creating new ministries to share the truth of the Seventh-day Sabbath.

**USE OF THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA** — It was recommended that the BSA increase, improve, and accelerate its use of electronic media and the Internet. The initial focus will be on the BSA website and its related links. This will require the identification of a professional Web-team for the Association. It is hoped that qualified members of the Association will volunteer to help with this project under the direction and leadership of two or more of the current directors.

**IMPROVED NETWORKING AMONG SABBATARIANS** — It was recommended that efforts be undertaken to increase, improve and accelerate the practice of personal networking among Sabbatarians in general and BSA members in particular, beginning with the Association's Directors. Many options exist for implementing this recommendation, which recognizes that our work, in its simplest form, is a people to people ministry and requires us, no less than any others to remember the most oft-repeated words of our Lord, "Love One Another."

**TEAMWORK WITHIN THE ASSOCIATION** — It was recommended that the Board of Directors move toward a team approach in fulfilling the various ministries offered through our Association. Since not all board members have the same gifts and interests, we feel it is unproductive to insist that each member of the

board perform the same task. It was acknowledged that members of the Association also have gifts in specific areas and that they should be encouraged and given the opportunity to invest their gifts in service to the Association. The members of the board and interested members of the Association must cooperate and work together in order to propel the BSA forward. Following are some of the various duties which each of us should consider.

- i. Electronic, Website, and Web-related services
- ii. Review of potential books and other materials for distribution
- iii. Writing (assistance for TSS Editor, etc.)
- iv. Directory (assistance with the BSA office)
- v. Networking among the Sabbatarian churches
- vi. Financial (advice regarding fund raising and budgets)

But what good is it for just the directors to have this renewed spirit of urgency. We are but just twelve people who have been elected to lead this organization. Although we have gifts and talents in certain areas, we do not have the time nor the resources to do all the necessary work ourselves. That is why I am asking you, the members of the Bible Sabbath Association, to examine yourselves and determine what gifts and talents you might have that you can offer in support of *your* Association.

What about the other people you attend Sabbath services with? Are they members of the Bible Sabbath Association? If not, then please encourage them to join. Do they have gifts and talents that can be used to help spread the truth of the Sabbath? Then in addition to encouraging them to join, encourage them to offer their gifts and talents as a ministry of sharing the truth of the Sabbath.

And finally, for those of you who are not members of the BSA yet receive this publication, have you considered joining and working together with us? I realize that some of you are unable to do so for one reason or another. However, if you are unable, would you please just drop us a line and let us know that you are keeping the BSA in your prayers?

The Bible Sabbath Association was founded to promote the truth of the Seventh-day Sabbath and to encourage cooperation among Sabbath keepers. As an organization, it depends upon its members for support, both financially and physically. Today, not only does the BSA need financial support, but it also needs the physical support of its membership. The directors of the BSA can only do so much. It is up to the membership to step up and do the rest. So if you want to join with the directors and help propel the BSA forward in the coming year, please contact us and tell us how you want to help.

—John Paul Howell, BSA president

## The 2009 BSA Scholarship Essay Contest

The Bible Sabbath Association 2009 Scholarship Essay contest begins January 1, 2009, and concludes April 1, 2009. Applicants are invited to contact June Narber for instructions and an application at her email address: [junenarber@yahoo.com](mailto:junenarber@yahoo.com).

The scholarship is open to all Sabbath keeping individuals between the ages of 16 and 25 as of April 1, 2009. This year the contest is only open to citizens and legal residents of the United States and its territories and Canada. There will be one prize of \$1,000 for the best written essay. Applicants will write a five paragraph essay answering the question "How can the Sabbath best be safeguarded, protected, and preserved for future generations in consideration of the great lie that pervades the Christian world that the Sabbath is on Sunday, not Saturday?"

As in previous years, the essays will be judged by a panel of Sabbath observing judges and scored by a point system that guarantees fairness and focuses on how well the essay question was both answered and written.

Applications must be received no later than the deadline of April 1, 2009, not just postmarked by that date. The winning essay will be published in *The Sabbath Sentinel*, a publication of the Bible Sabbath Association. Previous winners include those from all the major Sabbath-keeping church organizations. Please contact the scholarship chair, June Narber, for further information at [junenarber@yahoo.com](mailto:junenarber@yahoo.com) or (919) 349-6425 late evenings or on Sabbath. Applications should be mailed to

June Narber, BSA Scholarship  
6325-9 Falls of Neuse Road, #193,  
Raleigh, NC 27615



# Jesus on Prayer

“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?” – Luke 6:46

By Brian Knowles

Jesus’ first instructions to his disciples (*talmidim*) on prayer are found only in Matthew’s account (Matthew 6:5-8). In context, he had just finished talking to them about ostentatious almsgiving (Matthew 6:1-4). God does not reward good deeds done for the sake of appearances. Acts of almsgiving and philanthropy done for the praise of men will receive no reward from God. When doing good deeds, it’s best to keep a low profile.

## Spiritual Exhibitionism

This context is important to Jesus’ discussion of prayer because the theme of ostentation is carried through, “And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the street corners to be seen of men,” (Matthew 6:5a).

Several things about this verse jump out at us. First, Jesus doesn’t say “if” you pray, but “when.” He takes it as a given that his followers would be a praying people.

Second, some people, whom Jesus called “hypocrites,” deliberately position themselves to be seen by others as praying. Ostentatiously giving alms (charity) and praying are both forms of spiritual exhibitionism which Jesus condemns. Prayerful public posing and posturing are ways of getting others to say, “Oh my, look how spiritual she is — she’s always praying.” Those who gain recognition and praise from men for their gifts of charity and exhibitionistic praying have, in that human praise, the full reward for their “spirituality” (verse 5b).

Jesus then teaches the correct way to pray: “But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you,” (Matthew 6: 6 RSV).

**Note:** Jesus is not here forbidding collective prayer. The early followers of Rabbi Jesus often gathered for prayer (Matthew 18:19-20; Acts 16:13, etc.). Praying in a group as Christians is not the same as ill-motivated exhibitionistic praying in the public square to gain recognition from men.

## Prayerful Long Windedness

Once Jesus had addressed spiritual exhibitionism in both deeds of charity and in prayer, he turned his attention to another dimension of prayer: long wind-

edness: “When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him,” (Matthew 6: 7-8).

“Gentiles” were non-Jews—pagans or heathen. They employed in their prayers to the gods some peculiar practices. In this section, the Greek word used to describe pagan prayers is *battalogo*. It appears nowhere else in the New Testament or in contemporary secular literature. Robert Mounce, in his commentary on Matthew, suggests that it is a word made up from another Greek word: *battarizo*, meaning to “stammer or stutter.” Mounce explains that “Behind the word is the practice of the heathen who developed long lists of divine names, hoping that by endless repetition they would somehow invoke the name of the true god and receive what they wished. To know and pronounce correctly the name of a god was thought to provide the power to manipulate that god,” (*New International Biblical Commentary—Matthew* by Robert H. Mounce, p. 56).

Of course I believe that when Jesus was originally giving this teaching, he was speaking in Hebrew, not Greek. The key thought here is “many words.” God is not impressed by the sheer volume or loudness of our words. In fact, in Judaism, one of the highest forms of prayer is silence: “Be silent, all flesh, for He is aroused from His holy habitation,” (Zechariah 2:13). Worshipful silence before God often enables us to hear the “still small voice” (1 Kings 19:12). Silence can be “listening prayer.”

God heard the silent prayer of Hannah, Samuel’s devoted mother though “...Hannah spoke only in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard,” (1 Samuel 1:13). When we appear worshipfully before the throne of God, he “hears” the desires of our hearts and often grants them,” Delight yourself also in the Lord, and he shall give you the desires of your heart,” (Psalm 37:4). After a time of barrenness (1 Samuel 1:5), the Lord granted Hanna a son who became a great prophet.

## God Anticipates

Any of you who have been parents have experienced the phenomenon of knowing what your children are

going to say before they say it. You know when they are “on approach” what is coming next: “Dad, I need some money to buy that video game,” or, “Mom, I want to stay up later tonight to watch (whatever).” God, our loving Father, is the same, “...your Father knows the things you need before you ask him,” (Matthew 6:8b). God anticipates his children.

In this article we have learned that God is not impressed with ostentatious giving or praying. Those of us who perform acts of piety to “be seen of men” have, in that human approbation, all the reward we’re going to get. It’s best not to be a spiritual exhibitionist or an ostentatious giver and prayer. That’s what it means by “don’t let your right hand know what your left hand is doing.”

We also learned that God is unimpressed with overlong and overloud prayers. A silent prayer can be

as effective as a noisy one – if not more so. The rule of thumb is this: The subject of the prayer dictates the appropriate length of the prayer. On occasion, Jesus prayed all night, but many of his prayers were relatively short. You can bet there were no wasted words in those prayers; everything he said had substance. Surprisingly, Jesus didn’t always pray for healing or exorcism – he simply took authority and cast out the disease or the demon. Jesus could do this because the prayer that gave him this authority had already been done.

In the next installment, we examine the so-called “Lord’s Prayer” from a Hebraic perspective.

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*Brian Knowles is a professional artist and writer and is a former magazine editor. Brian is an avid student of the Bible and a frequent contributor to the Association for Christian Development website ([www.godward.org](http://www.godward.org)).*

## **Dr. Samuele Bacchiocchi Remembered (1938-2008)**

**by Kenneth Westby**

I remember well our first meeting in Baltimore, Maryland. I think it was the spring or summer of 1975, and I had invited him to speak to a group I had assembled in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. I had read of his ground breaking book, *From Sabbath to Sunday*, gave him a call and invited him to give a presentation. He graciously accepted. I put an ad in the paper and invited all the people I knew. We had a good crowd and he was full of his subject having just completed his work at the prestigious Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. His newly published book was his dissertation for which Pope Paul VI awarded him a gold medal.

The medal was big, heavy and he was quite proud of it. It was the first and last gold medal I ever handled. We sold many of his books that day and had a most enjoyable time of fellowship during his visit. Sam was a gracious man with that old-country politeness and humility you don’t often encounter.

Over dinner I suggested he turn his considerable scholarly intellect into investigating the question of the biblical festivals of Israel being replaced by pagan festivals in traditional Christianity. I postulated that he would find a similar change for similar reasons as what he discovered in the Sabbath-Sunday question. He listened politely but didn’t agree. His scholarly

plate was full of other projects and he was a busy professor at Andrews University in Michigan. I was pleasantly surprised when years later he did investigate the festivals of Israel question and produced two very fine books promoting their value and meanings. Of course I tweaked him on that turnaround and we’ve shared some good laughs.

On another occasion on the phone he mentioned that on the table behind his desk he had a big stack of my article *The Mysterious 7-Day Cycle*. He kept reproducing it, regularly giving out a copy to each student in each of his classes. I was flattered. Over the years I had many occasions to invite Sam to speak to various church groups. On each occasion he would invite me and JoAn to visit him in Michigan and enjoy a real Italian dinner prepared by his dear wife. I regret we never took him up on his generous invitation. We love Italian food.

Sam was a rare blend of scholar, preacher, promoter, salesman, and untiring entrepreneur. But he is best remembered by me for his Christian passion and wholehearted defense of the Sabbath. His work remains and continues to proclaim the gift of God’s Sabbath day. “Well done, Sam!” was likely God’s response as Sam’s life came to an end. I say Amen!



# Three New Commandments

## Part 1 — Rejoice Always



By Bryant Buck

Sabbath keepers love to emphasize the Ten Commandments. There is no dispute that the Ten Commandments are the basis of Yahweh's law and that they are an eternal standard for righteous behavior. But the Word of Yahweh has more commandments than just the Ten Commandments. In the New Testament alone there are numerous commandments given to help us towards a more victorious life in our Lord and Savior Yeshua Messiah.

Three new commandments of particular benefit to believers in Christ are found in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. "Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." (NAS) In this series we will consider these three new commandments and how they can assist us in our walk with Yeshua. We will begin with the commandment, "Rejoice always."

Think about this: If you are always rejoicing, there are other things that you can't do at the same time. When I truly rejoice, I don't complain, backbite, slander, vent my anger or commit other sins with my mouth. When I truly rejoice, I am verbally proclaiming how great my God is, what a marvelous creation He has made, what a complete salvation Christ has given me, and what a wonderful life I have in Yeshua. Rejoicing is not an abstract concept of some subjective state of mind; it is a behavior and it starts with what comes out of my mouth. When I am rejoicing, I simply cannot commit numerous verbal sins condemned in the Scriptures because only what is good and just is then coming out of my mouth.

I am amazed at how often Christians give the same reasons that sinners give for not rejoicing. "I don't feel like it." "I'm too depressed." "I don't have anything to rejoice about." Yahweh's Word does not limit the command to rejoice to when things are going well for us. In fact, the command to "rejoice" is qualified by just one word — "always." If we wait till we feel like it, we may rarely rejoice. If we wait till we get over our depression, we may never rejoice. And if we think that we don't have anything to rejoice about, what is the matter with us? You're alive, aren't you? Rejoice that you're not dead! Christ saved you from your sins, didn't He? Rejoice that you're not still lost!

The command is, "Rejoice always." So your circumstances have nothing to do with it.

Furthermore, your excuses have nothing to do with it. If you don't make up your mind to rejoice and start doing it, you're breaking this commandment — pure and simple. Since the command is to "rejoice always," the time to start doing it is now. If you don't do it now, you are still disobeying the commandment.

Let's take this idea of the excuses we make for not rejoicing a step further. If we start rejoicing, we won't rejoice for long before we do feel like it. If we start rejoicing, we simply won't be able to stay depressed. And because we have made up our mind to rejoice, we actually have found something to rejoice about. Whether we obey any commandment or not is always a matter of choice. If we make the choice to "rejoice always," we can actually change our whole state of mind. You cannot rejoice for long and stay negative at the same time.

Do you want to be a witness to a negative, complaining world? Rejoice—today, tomorrow, and always. When everybody else at work is moaning and groaning, you make the choice to be different — Rejoice! When everybody else in your house is down in the dumps, you make the choice to be different—Rejoice! No matter what difficult circumstances you face. Rejoice and change your world!

In Acts 16:19-34 Paul and Silas were arrested, beaten, and thrown into jail for preaching the gospel of our Lord and Savior. So what did they do? Moan and groan? Complain and murmur? Lament their circumstances? This is what the Bible tells us they were doing:

"But, about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them" (Acts 16:25, NAS). They were beaten and bruised and locked up in some filthy jail, but they were neither moaning, nor complaining, nor lamenting their circumstances. Rather, they were praying and praising in other words, rejoicing. You're not beaten and bruised and in jail today, are you? Then REJOICE! In fact, even if you have similar or worse circumstances, REJOICE! REJOICE ALWAYS and change your world.

---

*Bryant Buck is assistant minister of New Beginnings Church near Rock City, Illinois, and is the author of the currently selling book **The Prayer Warrior**.*



# Samuele Bacchiocchi 70, Noted Sabbath Scholar, Dies

## Retired Andrews Theology Professor Had Global Influence

by Mark A. Kellner, News Editor

Samuele Bacchiocchi, a retired theology professor at Andrews University and one of the world's leading proponents of the seventh-day Sabbath, died December 20, 2008 — the Sabbath — following a two-year battle with cancer. He was 70 years of age and resided in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

Sam was best-known for his scholarship on the seventh-day Sabbath. He was a prolific writer, a tireless preacher, and appreciated as an energetic and passionate teacher. I'm going to miss my long-time friend and colleague," said Keith Mattingly, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, who worked alongside Bacchiocchi in the Andrews University Department of Religion and Biblical Languages.

Bacchiocchi, who spent 26 years teaching at the Seventh-day Adventist-owned university and more than 20 years lecturing worldwide about the Sabbath and its significance, was the first Protestant to attend and graduate from the doctoral program at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, Italy. It was at the *Gregoriana*, as it is known in Italian, that his studies in church history led to the publication of *From Sabbath to Sunday: A Historical Investigation of the Rise of Sunday Observance in Early Christianity*, the English version of his doctoral thesis. The doctoral dissertation received a grade that merited his graduation "summa cum laude," and Bacchiocchi received a gold medal for academic achievement donated by Pope Paul VI. Both were high honors, particularly for a non-Roman Catholic student at the Jesuit-run university.

The book has been in print for more than 30 years and is widely recognized as a seminal text on the subject, even by those who disagree with his conclusions. For example, Cambridge University scholar R.J. Bauckham, in *From Sabbath to Lord's Day: A Biblical, Historical and Theological Investigation* (D.A. Carson,

ed.; Wipf & Stock, 2000), said that while "a number of scholars have in the past argued that Christian Sunday observance originated in the second century[,] the most recent and fullest version of this thesis is that of S[amuele] Bacchiocchi."

In the 1970s, Bacchiocchi was featured on *It Is Written*, a weekly television program sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in which his thesis was noted. This led to numerous invitations to speak, and for the following three decades, Bacchiocchi spent many weekends on the road traveling to Adventist churches and other settings to present messages about the Sabbath, its biblical roots and continuing significance. His influence spread in the age of the Internet, reaching out to members of the Worldwide Church of God, a distant offshoot of the nineteenth century Millerite movement, which had abandoned its own Sabbatarian tradition in the 1990s.

Even those who disagreed with Bacchiocchi's view of the Sabbath respected his viewpoint. The Adventist scholar "was a friend of the Lord's Day Alliance of the U.S. even as he disagreed with positions that this organization holds regarding Sabbath," said Timothy A. Norton, coexecutive director of The Lord's Day Alliance of the U.S., in Atlanta, Georgia. "Dr. Bacchiocchi's respectful dialogue, particularly as a prolific writer on Sabbath, was a welcome source of consideration and debate that we have valued very much."

Samuele Bacchiocchi was born on January 29, 1938, in Rome. "I was born in a godly Catholic family that lived close to the Vatican wall," he wrote in an issue of his monthly newsletter, "End-time Issues."

He added, "My parents attended Sunday Mass regularly and recited the rosary faithfully every



**Dr. Samuele Bacchiocchi**

night. This continued until my father was introduced for the first time to the study of the Bible by a fellow carpenter who belonged to the Waldensian Church."

Eventually, the Bacchiocchis were convinced that the Sabbath was a creation ordinance and at first worshipped privately on the seventh day at home, until connecting with the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Samuele Bacchiocchi earned a bachelor's degree at Adventist-owned Newbold College near London, and then earned a master's in theology at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University.

From there, he and his wife Anna went to Ethiopia. For five years, Bacchiocchi served as a Bible and history teacher at an Adventist school there. He then went on to graduate studies at the *Gregoriana*, after which he was invited to join the Andrews faculty.

Bacchiocchi wrote or edited 17 different books, many of which expanded on his Sabbath theme. His seminar scheduled was somewhat curtailed during his illness, although, his family said in a statement, his life was that of "a man who sacrificed practically all of his time and energy to help others understand the Bible more fully, even up to end as he gave his last seminar in England the Sabbath before being taken to the emergency room."

The family statement noted, "We believe that it is fitting that God chose the Sabbath day, the day that he loved most and spent his life preaching and writing about, to be the day that he entered into his final earthly rest."

Heather Knight, Andrews University provost, also recalled his accomplishments: "Dr. Bacchiocchi's reputation as a theological and biblical scholar is widely respected within Adventist circles and beyond. His family continues to have a significant impact on our campus and in our community. He will be very much missed by his colleagues and friends in the Andrews University community," she said.

A funeral took place on December 27, 2008, at Pioneer Memorial Seventh-day Adventist Church on the campus of Andrews University in Berrien Springs. The family is receiving condolences via e-mail at the addresses of his children Loretta Bacchiocchi, at [loretta\\_bacchiocchi@fhchs.edu](mailto:loretta_bacchiocchi@fhchs.edu), Gianluca Bacchiocchi at [bacchiocchi@gmail.com](mailto:bacchiocchi@gmail.com), or Daniel Bacchiocchi at [dbacch@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dbacch@sbcglobal.net).

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## Love that is unto Death

by Donald Mansell

*One will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone will dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Rom. 5:7, 8, NASB.*

The annals of human history record a few instances of people who have been willing to forfeit their lives for their friends. In our text Paul alludes to such instances. Perhaps he had in mind the story, familiar in the Greco-Roman world, of Damon and Pythias, or more correctly, Phintias. These two men lived on the island of Sicily in the fourth century B.C. Dionysius the Elder, tyrant of Syracuse, had decreed that Phintias must die on a certain day. The doomed man pleaded that, while awaiting execution, he might be permitted to visit his family and put his house in order. Dionysius granted his request on condition he find someone willing to die in his place should he not show up for his execution.

Damon heard about the tyrant's terms and volunteered to die should his friend not return on the stated day. When the fateful day arrived, Phintias did not show up. Unknown to Damon, Phintias' ship had been held back by contrary winds. After Damon had been placed on the scaffold, he was allowed to address the spectators. He affirmed his undying friendship for Phintias and declared that he had no regrets. He was sure that Phintias had done his best to be back at the appointed time.

As the executioner prepared to do his work, a horseman was seen galloping at full speed toward the place of execution. As he approached, Phintias was heard shouting, "Stop the execution!" When he reached the gibbet, he leaped from his horse and without ceremony climbed the scaffold to where Damon stood. Throwing his arms around him, Phintias said, "I am glad I arrived in time. You have been faithful unto death."

Said Damon, "Phintias, since I cannot die to save you, I will not survive you, and I ask to be executed with you."

It is said that Dionysius was so moved by this demonstration of love in the face of death that he pardoned Phintias and begged the two friends to admit him to their noble friendship.

Admirable as this demonstration of love may be, Christ's love for us is infinitely greater. While we were yet sinners-enemies of God, if you please-Christ died for us. Such love staggers the imagination. Only a God who loves His creatures would do such a thing.

If we love God, it is not because we love Him naturally, but "because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). Those who have His love are willing "to lay down ... [their] lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:16).

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Donald Mansell, *New Every Morning*, page 80. Review & Herald Publishing Ass'n. 1981.

## Invest According to the Scriptures

I used to believe that following the Bible would lead to investment success. In spite of the fact that I failed miserably, I still believe the Bible holds the key to financial success. The problem is not the Bible, but in the particular prophetic scenario that I used to inform my investment decisions.

I was absolutely sure that Western Europe would be the economic powerhouse of the future. The United States would degenerate into insignificance, beset with economic cirrhosis and social unrest. In line with conventional ecological theories of the day, China and India would suffer atrocious food shortages leading to mass starvation of millions. This would be caused partially by a new ice age that we would bring on ourselves through increased use of fossil fuels, which were going to run dry by 1985.

My investment strategy for dealing with such scenarios was an obvious one: Don't bother saving for retirement because surely "The End" would come before I could enjoy the fruits of my self-denial. But if I were to grit my teeth and invest, it would have been in European stocks (the economic powerhouse of the future), foreign currencies (the dollar isn't worth the paper it's printed on), gold (the universal store of value), and money market funds (then paying 18%).

The role of the investment markets, as it turns out, is to make fools out of the greatest number of people, and that's the case here. Over the last 25 years, it was bone-headed to bet against the US economy. Europe, in spite of attempts at unification, has been a stagnate backwater in terms of economic growth. China and India are quickly entering the world as economic giants. Interest rates in the United States have declined steadily as inflation was finally cracked, and long term investors in the US stock market have averaged 10% – 12% annually. Gold, which reached \$800 an ounce in the late 1970's has never recovered to anywhere near that level.

Worse than making bad investments, millions of Baby Boomers haven't invested at all, and frankly, they either will have to work the rest of their lives or endure a pauper's existence on whatever the Social Security Administration feels like paying them.

The fact is, the Bible does not endorse the "eat and drink for tomorrow we die" philosophy. The Apostle Paul specifically says that such is the philosophy of despair and is reserved for those who have no hope (I Corinthians 15:32). That certainly should not describe us. What should apply to us are solid biblical principles of personal finance. We find them sprinkled like salt throughout the Bible. Here are a few, all quoted from the New International Version:

1. Ecclesiastes 11:1 — Cast your bread upon the waters, for after many days you will find it again. (Invest in the future with the hope of a return).
2. Ecclesiastes 11:2 — Give portions to seven, yes to eight, for you do not know what disaster may come upon the land. (Diversify over seven or eight different asset classes because you can't predict the bad things that might happen during the next year).
3. Proverbs 13:11 — Dishonest money dwindles away, but he who gathers money little by little makes it grow. (There are no get rich quick schemes. There are only get poor quick schemes. Save a little from each paycheck, and let compounding work its magic).
4. Proverbs 27:23 — Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds. (It's not just grabbing all the dollars you can. It is also being diligent in your life's work.)
5. Proverbs 26:13 — The sluggard says, "There is a lion in the road, a fierce lion roaming the streets!" (Don't let fear paralyze you from taking calculated and prudent risks).
6. Proverbs 17:18 — A man lacking in judgment strikes hands in pledge and puts up security for his neighbor. (Don't co-sign somebody's note unless you are prepared to pay the entire balance).
7. Proverbs 13:18 — He who ignores discipline comes to poverty and shame, but whoever heeds correction is honored. (You are not as smart as you think you are. Learn from the instruction of others, and also learn from your mistakes)
8. Proverbs 13:22 — A good man leaves an inheritance for his children's children, but a sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous. (Be certain to do adequate estate planning, including wills and trusts).
9. 2 Corinthians 12:14 — After all, children should not have to save up for their parents, but parents for their children. (Do plan for your retirement, and do plan for your children's needs. Yes, you should own life insurance).

I could go on with my list, but I believe I have made my point. Solid financial planning begins with universal principles that have worked for all time. Basing your financial future on prophecies seen only through a glass darkly smacks of Proverbs 26:13: I can't do anything now! There is a lion in the street! Fear is the motivation of fools, and sadly, it is the motivation of too many Christians.

—Lenny Cacchio



# Jewish Influence upon Christianity in Early America

*By Terril D. Littrell, Ph.D.*

Jewish life in America began, at least for the vast majority of Jewish families, in the decision of European Jews to leave their parents, their synagogues, and their homes to go to America.

The earliest Jewish settlers in America were Sephardim, descendants of Jews who had been expelled from Spain in 1492 and had fled to places such as the Ottoman Empire, Holland, and Brazil.

They arrived in Dutch and British colonial America, driven to emigrate there by the same forces that propelled other early settlers. In America they soon lived not as poor immigrants in separate neighborhoods, but as respected and often prosperous, influential citizens. And they not only mixed with, but very often assimilated into the Christian gentry, who accepted them as fellow members of the upper reaches of society.

What was to be the place of Jews in America as independence approached? These early communities eagerly supported the Revolutionary ideals of individual rights and freedom of conscience, which American statesmen learned from the Enlightenment. Viewing themselves not as a community apart but as Americans of Jewish faith, they fought for full citizenship rights and the disestablishment of Christianity as a state religion. At the national level they shared the victory when the First Amendment to the Constitution was adopted, prohibiting an establishment of religion and guaranteeing them, and all others, the free exercise of their faith. The Jews did not seek to separate religion and society, nor did they argue that the government could not support religion in general. Rather, they demanded that it be absolutely neutral among religions. And the Constitution was a great advance toward this goal.

It is somehow fitting that Touro in Newport, Rhode Island, is the only extant colonial synagogue in the United States. The Jews who immigrated to the colonies were Sephardic, descendants of those who had fled to Spain and Portugal after the capture of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 A.D. Most of the Jews who came to the American colony, were prosperous merchants from Holland. They established their community in Newport, which was then the center of colonial trade.

By 1658, a few Jews arrived in Newport, and in 1677 they purchased land for a burial ground, which subsequently became the subject of Longfellow's poem, "The Jewish Cemetery at Newport." Worship services were held in private homes until 1759 when construction began on the present building. Interestingly enough, its architect, Peter Harrison, also designed King's Chapel in Boston and Christ Church in Cambridge.

Touro was completed four years later and dedicated on the first day of Hanukkah, December 5, 5523 (1763), by Rabbi Dr. Isaac de Abraham Touro. The Books of the Law were deposited in the Georgian styled Ark. One of these is now a 400-year-old Touro Synagogue treasure, brought from Spain during the Inquisition.

When President George Washington visited Newport, he was addressed on behalf of the Jewish congregation by Moses Seixas, who said, "Deprived as we heretofore have been of the invaluable rights of free citizens, we now (with a deep sense of gratitude to the Almighty Dispenser of all Events) behold a Government erected by the amnesty of the people, a Government which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance; but generously affording to all liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship, deeming everyone, of whatever nation, tongue, or language, equal parts of the great Governmental machine."

Because of the Revolution, the Jewish community in Newport was subsequently dispersed, and the synagogue was not reopened until 1883. In 1947 Touro Synagogue was rededicated as a National Historic site by the National Park Service.

When my wife Chloe and I visited the synagogue in 1999, we found a vital congregation of 100 people with a number of visitors. We wondered what connection, if any, this Jewish congregation had with Baptists.

In 1636 Roger Williams was tried by the Puritan officials at Boston, found guilty, and banished from the colony of Massachusetts. Williams had opposed church authorities on several points. These included, among others, that civil authorities had no jurisdiction over men's consciences.

To avoid deportation, Williams and his small band of dissenters fled to the south. There, Pilgrims, who differed from the Puritans to the north, controlled the land. When Williams was offered sanctuary among the Pilgrims, he named the place Providence out of gratitude to God's mercy.

Two years after the settlement at Providence, Williams and eleven other men formed the first Baptist church in America, with Williams as the church's first pastor. Roger Williams was the first man to proclaim true religious liberty in America, and Rhode Island, founded on the principle of liberty of conscience, was the first colony to identify with the principle of religious freedom. The Code of Laws of 1647 concluded: "All men may walk as their consciences persuade them, everyone in the name of his God."

First Baptist Church of Newport was organized around 1639. Stephen Mumford, an observer of the Sabbath, came to Newport from London in 1664 to be a part of First Baptist Church. In 1611 he and other Sabbath observers organized the First Seventh Day Baptist church in America.

The historical Touro Synagogue is located one block from the old First Baptist Church and next door to the Seventh-Day Baptist meeting house today, within the Newport Historical Society building.

As guardians of the faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Jewish people have handed down a legacy of truth to all people of all generations. A part of this legacy, according to the Hebrew Scriptures, was to be the inclusion of Gentiles in the Sabbath tradition: "Also the sons of the stranger [Gentiles], that join themselves to the Lord ... everyone that keepeth the sabbath ... and taketh hold of my covenant ... I will make them joyful in my house of prayer ... for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people" (Isaiah 56:6-7).

Seventh Day Baptists recognize Saturday as the Sabbath of Creation and honor God in worship on that day. Seventh Day Baptists believe in the saving love of Jesus, the inspiration and authority of the Bible, freedom of thought under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and congregational government.

Jewish people have always recognized their calling to be that of witnesses to God's truth as revealed through Torah; however, the collective Jewish people have never seen themselves as a superior race or class as a result of their election. They see their calling as more responsibility than privilege.

When the covenant of God with Israel was renewed and perfected through the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, it was also extended with greater flexibility to the nations of the world. The Jewish believers in Messiah Jesus became God's

witnesses through the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8) and took the message of God's salvation through Jesus throughout the Gentile world. Those who believed upon Jesus were themselves also chosen and made fellow citizens with Israel and members of the household of God (Ephesians 2:11-19). The Gentiles who believed in the Jewish Messiah were converted to the new covenant Judaism which came to be called Christianity. Just as many Gentiles had become Jews before the time of Jesus by being circumcised, being taught the Torah, and being immersed in the mikveh, so Gentiles who believed in Jesus became Jews by being circumcised in heart, taught the Word of God, and being baptized in water.

This grafting of the Gentiles into Israel's olive tree was not, however, the achievement of an elite status. It was adoption into the servant nation. The status of the believer was that of a slave to Jesus Christ and a servant to the world. Though many sects within Christianity have considered themselves in some way superior, the truth is that believers are elected, not elite, and they are totally equal in their salvation. It has been said that Christians are forgiven, not perfect. They are still one in their humanity with the unredeemed balance mankind.

As believers in Christ we must recognize our oneness. Faith in Jesus adopts us into sonship of God so that "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for [we] are all one in Christ" (Galatians 3:28).

*Reprinted from Faith To Faith magazine promoting Jewish-Christian Relations, January, 2000. Dr. Terril D. Littrell is a retired pastor with over forty years of experience in teaching and ministry. He and his wife Chloe live in Cleveland, Tennessee.*

## Getting God into Films

At a private reception for select Christian filmmakers at the Menger Hotel's Minuet Room on Friday, Doug Phillips laid it on the line. His San Antonio Independent Christian Film Festival — which ends its well-attended run today at Lila Cockrell Theatre and Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center — is, at its core, about promoting God's word and fighting back against media-driven pop culture gone awry.

"Everything we do has to have a Kingdom message," said Phillips, founder of the film fest.

"Too many Christians watch a lot of crap," said Adam McManus, a well-known personality. "They allow their values to be compromised and let too much of the pop culture and media in instead of spending time in front of a Bible."

—Hector Saldaña, *San Antonio Express News*



# An Involuntary Sabbatical

by Lenny Cacchio

As job losses mount and incomes drop, I along with many of you have begun to contemplate what might happen if I find myself as a statistic next week. I have chosen to define any such event in my own terms and call it a “Self-funded Involuntary Sabbatical” (SIS). This phrase has a gentler ring than the traditional appellation.

A little time to stand back and reflect is a good thing, and an SIS can provide the opportunity to try. What if everyone were to have a chance for a sabbatical every few years, a time to reconnect with the important things in life? If the scriptures offer any guide, a sabbatical is supposed to be a blessing, unlike the SISs that so many experience today. The problem lies in the ability to afford it.

In the Torah (the first five books of the Bible) the idea of a sabbatical is addressed several times, most notably in Leviticus 25. “When you enter the land I am going to give you, the land itself must observe a Sabbath to the LORD. For six years sow your fields, and for six years prune your vineyards and gather their crops. But in the seventh year the land is to have a Sabbath of rest, a Sabbath to the LORD. Do not sow your fields or prune your vineyards. Do not reap what grows of itself or harvest the grapes of your untended vines. The land is to have a year of rest” (Leviticus 25:2-5 NIV).

The people of those days had the same concerns that we have about such involuntary sabbaticals. Verse 20: “You may ask, ‘What will we eat in the seventh year [when I’m unemployed] if we do not plant or harvest our crops [and I don’t have a paycheck coming in]?’” The passage contains a two-fold answer, both parts of which provide good advice even for those of us who might be suffering from an unplanned sabbatical.

First, verse 6 reminds us that God will provide our needs even if we can’t always see how he will. “Whatever the land yields during the Sabbath year will be food for you—for yourself, your manservant

and maidservant, and the hired worker and temporary resident who live among you, as well as for your livestock and the wild animals in your land. Whatever the land produces may be eaten.” If you’re unemployed, it’s good to remember that if our Father feeds the birds of the air, who neither reap nor sow, then why not us? (Matthew 6:25-34).

The second part of the answer is for those of us who are not on an involuntary sabbatical just yet. In the modern world we are at a disadvantage when compared to our ancient counterparts. They knew when their Sabbaticals would be and could prepare for them several years in advance. In today’s world, where SISs are unplanned and unwanted, planning has even more urgency. The admonition to plan ahead is just as important now as it was anciently.

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**The injunction is to put back some of your production from the good years in anticipation of your SIS. If you are blessed with employment, stuff some of your earnings into a low-risk place where you can get to it should you suffer the loss of your ability to meet the normal exigencies of life.**

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Leviticus 25: “I will send you such a blessing in the sixth year that the land will yield enough for three years. While you plant during the eighth year, you will eat from the old crop and will continue to eat from it until the harvest of the ninth year comes in” (Verses 21-22 NIV).

The injunction is to put back some of your production from the good years in anticipation of your SIS. If you are blessed with employment, stuff some of your earnings into a low-risk place where you can get to it should your suffer the loss of your ability to meet the normal exigencies of life. Losing your job will still be unpleasant, but it will buy you some time to refocus. It might just be that God can turn your “Self-funded Involuntary Sabbatical” into a blessed time. If nothing else planning ahead for your SIS will allow you to be a bit more choosy than you might otherwise be when testing the employment market.

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*Lenny Cacchio lives in Lees Summit, Missouri, and is very active in his local church. The “Sabbath Morning Companion” is now available as a devotional and journal through the Website of the Church of God, Kansas City ([www.kccog.org/literature.htm](http://www.kccog.org/literature.htm)).*



# Can a Sabbath Keeper Believe in Evolution?

by Herbert W. Armstrong

There is a striking, fundamental connection between the Sabbath and evolution. Many of us, perhaps, have felt that we need not be concerned about evolution. We have heard it stated that there is no real conflict between science and the Bible, or between science and religion. But that is only because we have not fully realized just what evolution is.

"Say, you don't swallow that one about Jonah and the whale, do you?" sneeringly asked a relative, a young lady fresh from college, some little time ago. I was shocked, for she had been reared in a Christian home, and, before her college days had been converted.

"You ought to study biology," she continued, "and you'd get your eyes opened. You still cling to a lot of those dusty old myths and legends and fairy tales of the Bible. That's just ignorance, and superstition. Science has proven that the Bible is not an accurate historian, nor a textbook on science. We know now that Moses' narrative of Creation was only a legend. Most of Genesis is nothing but folklore. There wasn't any Adam. And think how silly is that story about Eve being made from one of Adam's ribs."

Something had happened to this young lady. She had gone to college a sincere, happy, jolly, Christian girl full of ideals. She came out a typical modern girl, a scoffer. Idealism shattered. Serious, sarcastic, cynical. Yet she stoutly maintained that she still believed in God. Only her conception had changed, and most of Christianity had been revealed to her as silly superstition. She had had her eyes "opened!"

Yes, and Satan opened them! "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." 2 Corinthians 11:14.

I quote this instance because it is typical. Our colleges and universities are turning out thousands and thousands of young men and young women like her, every year.

Now let us get our eyes opened. Let's awake to the significance of this situation! Professors in denominational colleges, supported by professing Christians, teach us that we can believe both in God and in evolution. And most of us have heard this and assumed it to be the truth. Listen!

Satan knows how to keep abreast with the times. He employs modern weapons for a modern world. And evolution is the devil's most powerful modern weapon. With it Satan is snatching people away from God faster than God's people are able to win others to Him. And Satan is picking the very flower of our young manhood and womanhood -- the high school and college students.

Can you accept both God and evolution? Can you be a Sabbath-keeper and believe in evolution? What proof have you that God is your God? What proof that He is the One True God? That He is greater than other gods? When God desired to have a sign between Him and the children of Israel, that they might know that He was their God, as well as that He might know they were His people, what sign did He choose? He made the Sabbath that sign. Exodus 31:12-18. Why? How does the Sabbath point to Him as the One True God? Simply by pointing, as a memorial, to Creation! The God who created this earth, and everything that we see and know -- surely that God is the True God, greater than all other gods. Surely Creation is the one supreme proof that He is God! Rob God of that proof, and what proof have you left that He is greater than the gods of the heathen? When you keep the Sabbath, you affirm, every seventh day, your belief that God is the Creator!

Is Satan dumb? Oh no! Satan knows exactly where to strike to destroy the faith of those he wants to take from God. When Satan destroys belief in Creation — when the Devil succeeds in convincing men that this earth was not created by an all-powerful creating God, but that it came, — listen to this, for it is the accepted scientific definition of evolution — "by continuous progressive change, by natural causes, according to fixed laws, brought about only through resident forces" — then has Satan destroyed the proof of God.

Do you know just what evolution is? It is the Atheist's explanation of creation — of creation without God. The infidel had to originate some kind of an explanation. Ask him, "Well, if you don't believe in a personal God, then how did this earth get here? How did you get here?" — and, until he invented the theory of evolution, he could not answer. Without evo-

lution he could not account for his own very existence. So evolution became inevitable.

It is true that evolution originated in pagan, infidel, unbelieving minds. It is the product of the mind of the "natural man," as the Apostle Paul describes him. The mind to which the things spoken of in the Holy Scriptures are, as those Scriptures say, "but foolishness." Those world-renowned scientists who developed, cradled, and propagated into scientific acceptance the modernly recognized theory of evolution were — every one — atheists. Darwin, originally a professing Christian, utterly lost his faith through his conversion to evolution. Huxley, Spencer, Haeckel, Lyell — atheists or agnostics, every one! The evolution-believing scientist today is no more a believer in your God and mine than were those of Darwin's day. Thomas A. Edison said the word "God" had no meaning to him! Luther Burbank died proclaiming his unbelief in any personal, creating God.

But do our college professors teach that evolution denies Creation — denies God — denies the Bible? They do not dare! They are teaching in schools supported wholly or in part by professing Christians. They are teaching too many students reared in Christian faith. It would be too great a shock. It would create and intensify prejudice. So our college professors know they must be subtle — just as Satan would have them. They approach the subject with the stealth and fox-like cunning of that old "serpent." They tell our young students they may believe both in God and in evolution. They tell the students and the public that there is no real conflict between science and religion. They lull suspicion and quiet prejudice. They hand out evolution sugar-coated, craftily assuring us it is entirely harmless. They appeal to the pride and the vanity of the "rational" mind. To understand and believe evolution becomes a mark of distinction, of learning, of "higher" education. To reject it is a mark of gross ignorance, rank prejudice, threadbare superstition. They present a mass of highly complicated arguments, "positive" evidence, and supposed facts — all based upon an imaginary and supposititious hypothesis. They fill the student's mind so full of complex and intricate minor arguments and details that he loses sight of the main fundamentals which must be proved or disproved, before any of the arguments hanging upon them become established. These underlying fundamentals they ignore, or rush hurriedly over. The student is induced to take them for granted. After a single year's course in Biology or Geology, the average college student is thoroughly convinced that evolution is conclusively proved and established. Since evolution is proved, anything contrary must be false.

Gradually, as he proceeds in life, our former college student begins to realize that he cannot reconcile the

teachings of the Bible with evolution. So, of course, evolution has disproved the Bible. It never occurs to him that the Bible might disprove evolution. When there is dispute between the Bible and science, science is always right and the Bible always wrong.

Our student who has accepted evolution still thinks he believes in God. His professor told him he could believe in both God and evolution. Oh, but that professor neglected to define his God. For evolution, god is not a creating God; he is only a pantheistic god, everywhere present in nature — just another name for blind, dumb, purposeless nature. But, now, he gradually realizes he cannot reconcile evolution and the Creation account in Genesis. He does not realize, at first, that this has destroyed his sole proof of God. But it does destroy any conception in his mind about infallibility of the Bible, or divine inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

The *Century Dictionary and Encyclopedia* defines evolution as "opposed to Creation." Huxley said it was "directly antagonistic to Creation," adding "evolution makes it impossible to believe the Bible." Sir Oliver Lodge says, "Taught by science, we learn that there has been no fall of man; there has been only rise." Another frank evolutionist, Carl Vogt, says, "Evolution turns the Creator out-of-doors."

### **What Evolution Teaches**

Do you realize what evolution teaches? It is much more than a theory that man "came from monkey." Briefly, it is this: The earth "came" by purely natural causes, by the Planetesimal Hypothesis, of Prof. Thos. Crowder Chamberlain. Until a few years ago, the earth "came" by the "Spiral Nebular Hypothesis" of La Place. Now, however, that theory is discarded and out-of-date. Man "came," in Lamark's day, by the theory of "Use and Disuse." But since the day of Darwin, man has come by a natural fixed law of variation of species, a law of the "survival of the fittest," called "Natural Selection." That means that nature — blind nature — selects the fittest for survival, the weaker being exterminated in the struggle for existence, and therefore progress is ever upward.

The first life upon this earth, according to the Gospel of evolution, "came" by spontaneous generation, or some unknown process, many millions of years ago, in the warm ocean slime. The first active life was a single-celled protoplasmic "amoeba," so small you could see it only through a high-powered microscope. It generated into additional cells. It developed, grew, multiplied, until the oceans became peopled with vast swarms of worms. And mark you, these worms, according to evolution, are our ancestors. It goes back much farther than the monkey. A life grew and multiplied and developed, some of these sup-

posed early sea forms gradually took to land, developing lungs in place of gills.

Then developed, out of these, through the fixed natural law of "variation of species" (meaning one species of life changes into, and becomes, another and different and higher species) caused only by resident forces, reptile forms, and then mammals. Life upon earth developed, advanced — always advancing — upward — ever upward — through the ages, one species changing gradually into another, different, more advanced species of life, finally reaching the monkey, then the anthropoid ape, and then, finally, the dawn of man. Man was a gradual transition from anthropoid ape, so gradual that no one could possibly tell at just what stage of development it ceased to be ape and became man.

That, briefly, is evolution! Can you reconcile that theory with any creation that points to God as Creator? Can you accept it without denying the proof of God? Can you accept it and say you are keeping a Sabbath that points to Creation?

Now let's proceed just a little farther. According to evolution, there could have been no Adam, no clearly defined first man. Therefore there could have been no fall of man!

The Devil is not content with destroying the proof of God, the Father. He must go farther. The only fall of man has been upward, ever upward! The first human beings were mere ape-men, almost as much ape as man with virtually no intelligence — no language, nor intelligent speech. According to science, the process of development continued for millions of years, from this ape-man beginning through various familiar ages: the "Old Stone Age," the "Iron Age," the "Bronze Age," and the others, through which science imagines man has traveled. Man has continued to progress according to science, clear down to the present day, when man is supposed to be progressing faster than ever before. Isn't progress the gospel of the day? Isn't it the religion of the world? Progress! Yes, but where? Toward God, or toward Satan? Material progress, perhaps. But spiritual and moral progress, no!

Now note where this leads us. Since man is not fallen, but has ever continued to progress upward, man never had any need of a Saviour! Thus does evolution dispose of the great purpose — the great proof — of Jesus Christ, the Son of God....

But evolution does not stop here. Evolution teaches that the miraculous and the supernatural are impossible. Why, all on earth evolution is, is an attempted explanation of how things came by natural causes, through resident forces. Just blind, dumb, purposeless nature. Just happen-so. No miracles. Nothing sudden or supernatural. The scientist says that the miraculous and the supernatural are scientifically impossible. Evolution absolutely and completely denies

the possibility of the supernatural. Now, let us ask, is the Holy Ghost anything but the supernatural? So thus, too, does evolution dispose of the Holy Ghost!

But still that is not all! The young college student, who has learned about evolution, sneers about Jonah and the whale. Evolution has taught him that the miraculous is impossible. The story of Jonah is a miracle. So it becomes a silly joke. Do you see Satan's purpose in striking at this? Because Jonah was a type of Christ, the only sign given by Jesus Christ that He was the Messiah — the only proof that the resurrection was upon the Sabbath and not upon the first day of the week — the only proof which does away with the justification of the world for keeping a different day than the one which points to God as the Creator was that He was three full days and three full nights in the grave starting Wednesday just before sunset!

And Satan, through evolution, and the teachings against the supernatural, has destroyed one thing more! Why has the Devil caused our modern scientists, and our young college students, to sneer at the account of the creation of Eve from Adam's rib? Picture this! Adam in the garden, his side opened, and from the wound came Eve, Adam's bride. Now picture another event of which that was the type, four thousand years later. The second Adam, Jesus Christ, on the Cross — a wound in His side — and from this wound poured the blood which was the purchase price of the bride for Him! Eve was a type of the Church of God! So Satan had to attack that too, and cause our modern intellectuals to regard that with scorn and ridicule.

You will find that it is such key points — the signs and proofs which point to and prove God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the inspiration and veracity of the Bible and the Bride of Christ, the Church of God on earth — the very things that Satan would destroy at which the Devil shrewdly levels his weapons.

Can a man believe both in God and in evolution? Are these modern scientific teachings in accord with the Bible? We answer with a question. Can a man believe in both Satan and God? Are Satan's teachings in accord with those of the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures? Can we reconcile them?

"Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." Our college students are getting their eyes "opened." Man is ever advancing. Instead of being taught to worship the God of Creation, they are being taught to worship man and his wonderful, ever advancing handiwork — tens of thousands every year: the high school and college students of our land, the flower of our youth, the future leaders of our modern civilization. Satan truly, knows where and how to strike. And evolution is the most powerful modern weapon.

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*Bible Advocate*. Stanberry, Missouri. May 1, 1928



# Me and My Sin

A serious subject calls for some digging for adequate answers.

by Calvin Burrell



The main problem with all of us is our sin. We were born in it. We live with it, to one degree or another. It stains and twists all our worlds.

Most of the sad facts about history and human failure are nicely explained by what the Bible says about sin. The Scriptures on this topic correspond with the reality of what is; thus, their teaching is true.

God's Word defines sin in different ways. Sin is the absence of faith. Sin is any foolish thought. Sin is missing the right mark — unrighteousness. Sin is the failure to reach God's standard, and the transgression of His law. Sin is not doing what we know we ought.

Blending these Bible definitions, we may say that sin is any thought, word, deed, or omission that disobeys the word and will of God for our lives. That covers a lot of territory! And it describes every human on earth at some time or another, including you and me.

In this introduction, I have described the nature and extent of sin. So far, not so good. My purpose, however, is to consider better things: the divine solution to this human predicament. If sin is the disease, what is the cure? Four words in Scripture summarize the Spirit's solution to our sin problem. They will be easier to learn and embrace if we see them in pairs, as they are written.

## Confess

The Bible word confess literally means to "speak the same thing with" another. In this case, "another" is God, and confession means to agree with Him about our sins.

God says we are all sinners and fall short of His glory. Do we agree? If not, we lose our chance to receive the salvation offered in Christ, for the Bible says, "He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy" (Proverbs 28:13).

Try this riddle: What is it that when you say it's yours, you lose it, but when you deny it, you've got it for sure?

The answer, of course, is your sin.

To confess sins, then, means to say they're yours. We're talking more than one sin here, and confession means to admit them, lay them bare, name them and own them as your own.

David did this with these words: "I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me" (Psalm 51:3). Peter simply said, "I am a sinful man, O Lord!" (Luke 5:8).

What happens when you do the same by confessing your sins, trusting in the provision God has made through Christ? You lose them. They're gone, in the bottom of the deepest sea, removed as far from you as the East is from the West and remembered against you no more. Go ahead — shout "Hallelujah!" for the Word says that when you confess, you will ....

## Be forgiven

The glory of God is to forgive a matter, and this He did for all that matters through Christ. Pardon becomes ours when we confess. As it relates to sin, the gospel says this: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

This truth is well illustrated in an exchange between David and Nathan. "I have sinned against the LORD," admitted the humbled king to the prophet.

Nathan replied, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die" (2 Samuel 12:13).

David confessed; God forgave (Psalm 32:5). And so can it be for us!

How can God complete this transaction as He does? First, it is His prerogative and His alone to forgive sins because all sins are, in the final analysis, against Him. Second, He has the divine right to forgive sins because Jesus Christ paid the penalty for them by His death on the cross. Human objections are often raised against both these propositions, but they remain as revealed truth. Believe them or not.

Another case of forgiveness is in Jesus' parable of two men praying (Luke 18:9-14). "God, be merciful to me a sinner!" confessed the publican as he fell on his face in the temple. He, not the proud Pharisee,

went home that day “justified” — that is, knowing he stood right with God, sins forgiven.

Confession of sins, says the Bible again and again, leads to forgiveness of sins. So what are you waiting for? Why not confess your sins to the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior today?

## Repent

Repentance is closely related to confession, yet not quite identical with it. Confession refers primarily to words — what we say about our sins.

Repentance, on the other hand, refers primarily to thoughts and feelings about sin — and what we do about it. It is the response of the whole person, starting with the heart and mind. In repentance, the way we think and feel about our sins transforms from the previous posture of approval and embrace to that of hatred and refusal.

Nothing describes the change of repentance more vividly than Jesus’ picture story of the prodigal son. Stuck in his sins and the slop of a pigsty, this young man finally came to his senses and returned to his father’s farm, willing to do a servant’s work. In a word, he repented!

In this parable, the phrase “he came to himself” may also be read as “he came to his senses.” Hence, repentance is sometimes described as a mostly mental affair that involves no great emotional element. Perhaps the simplest and best biblical definition of repent, after all, is simply to “change your mind.”

There is much truth here, but we should not miss the fact that other passages prescribe repentance in ways that contain substantial and sentimental expressions of contrition, passion, and zeal. For these, sample Psalm 51:17; Isaiah 22:12; Hosea 14:2; Joel 2:12; 2 Corinthians 7:10; and James 4:9.

It cannot be disputed that repentance is a core component of the message of Jesus Christ and His apostles, beginning with John the Baptist. To confirm this, trace twelve texts: Matthew 3:2, 8; 4:17; Mark 1:15; 6:12; Luke 13:3-5; 15:7; 24:47; Acts 2:38; 11:18; 17:30; 26:20. The true gospel, then, calls sinners to repentance.

To repent of sins in Jesus’ name is to find our way out of the sin problem. To truly repent is to ...

## Be converted

One overlooked text pairs repentance with conversion in no uncertain terms: “Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19).

Complete conversion, rightly understood, should be the hope of every earnest heart. The Old Testament Saul found conversion for a time: He was changed into “another man” when the Spirit came. The New Testament Saul found conversion for time and eternity: He counted all his achievements as losses for the greater gain of becoming a new man in Jesus Christ.

Conversion, let it be understood, is not a change we make but a change the Spirit of the Lord makes to us and in us. It happens as the promised response to repentance: You change your mind (repentance) and let the Lord change you (conversion). The solution to all our sin problems, even the toughest, comes through this transaction of grace.

Conversion, triggered by real repentance, deals effectively with the sin problem. Our sins are gone — forgiven and blotted out in the sense of their guilt and penalty. And in the sense of their grip and practice, our sins are going, going, gone — rejected and dwindling away. This is the time of our victory over, and freedom from, sin — the time of the Lord’s refreshment.

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*Reprinted from the Bible Advocate, October-November 2008, page 4. Calvin Burrell is the secretary of the board of directors of the BSA and is the editor of the Bible Advocate.*

## “Jesus” Ejected from School

Charlie Butts — OneNewsNow

A New Jersey eighth-grader was rebuffed at school over his Halloween costume — sandals, a robe, a fake beard, and a crown of thorns.

Alex Woinski of Paramus came to school dressed as Jesus while other students wore witch, ghoul, and devil costumes. Mat Staver of Liberty Counsel points out the youngster was sent home.

“Seems to me there’s a direct discrimination here simply because of the Christian viewpoint. Satan is in, apparently; Jesus is not,” he contends. “This is obviously a blatant attempt to discriminate against religion, and particularly Christianity.”

Staver says something needs to be done to educate the educators on the Constitution. “Sometimes if education doesn’t work, litigation does,” he adds. “Sometimes school officials only listen when it affects their pocketbook. This is such a case that needs to catch the school’s attention.”

The youngster said school officials told him to go home because his costume might offend other students, and it also disrupted the education process.

# Preparing the Way of the Lord

## Landscaping and Road Reconstruction



by Daniel Botkin

The gospel of Jesus Christ (the good news of Yeshua the Messiah) does not begin with a manifestation of the Messiah Himself. The gospel begins with a messenger and a message to prepare the way for the Messiah. "The beginning of the gospel of Yeshua the Messiah, the Son of God; As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send My messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight" (Mark 1:1-3).

Before Yeshua was manifested to Israel as the Messiah and Son of God at His First Advent, the spirit and power of Elijah had to prepare the way for His appearance. Before Yeshua is manifested to the world a second time as the Messiah and Son of God, the spirit and power of Elijah must again prepare the way for His appearance. "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of Yahweh" (Mal. 4:5).

In New Testament times, the spirit and power of Elijah was embodied in John the Baptist, and operated through the Baptist's ministry. In our time, the spirit and power of Elijah is still at work, whenever and wherever God's people heed the message that John preached. John's message can be summed up in one word: Repent. "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:1f).

The word repent means different things to different people. Some people think of repentance as nothing more than a mental acknowledgement of one's sins, followed by a verbal confession, either to a priest or to God. Some define repentance as feeling sorry and remorseful about one's sins. Other people might include things like the shedding of tears, the wringing of hands, and the beating of the breast in their definition of repentance. True repentance should include confession of sins and feelings of remorse. And it doesn't hurt to have some old-fashioned tear-shedding, handwringing, and breast-beating thrown in for good measure. But there is one more vital and necessary ingredient that must be present for repentance to be genuine repentance. That ingredient is a change of behavior.

John the Baptist's audience clearly understood that John's call to repentance required not just feeling, but doing something. "And the people asked him, saying, 'What shall we do then?' ... Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, 'Master, what shall we do?' ... And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, 'What shall we do?'" (Lk. 3:10-14). Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost brought the

same response ("Men and brethren, what shall we do?"), as did Paul's encounter with Yeshua on the road to Damascus ("Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?") (Acts 2:37 and 9:6).

A true change of heart produces a change of behavior. "A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, 'Son, go work today in my vineyard.' He answered and said, 'I will not.' But afterward he repented and went (Matt. 21:28f). The sincerity of this son's repentance was proven by his actions. It would not have been true repentance if he had merely said to his father 'I'm sorry I didn't obey you' and then continued to abide in his disobedient state.

If we tell God we are sorry, but still continue to knowingly disobey His commandments, we have not really repented. It is not enough to just call Jesus lord. "Not every one that saith unto me, 'Lord, lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21).

This does not mean that we earn forgiveness and eternal life by obeying God's commandments. Forgiveness and eternal life are gifts that are given to us because we trust in the atoning work of Yeshua. Nor does it mean that we must change our behavior before we come to the Savior. We come to the Savior as we are, laden with our sins, and let Him take away our sins and give us eternal life. But we must come with the sincere intention of changing our behavior. With the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit, we start changing our behavior. We stop living a life of disobedience and start obeying our heavenly Father's commandments. If there is no change of behavior, then our faith is insincere and bogus. As James put it, faith without works is dead.

John the Baptist's message of repentance paved the way for the Messiah's First Advent, and the same message must pave the way for the Messiah's Second Advent. This message of repentance that we ourselves must heed and then share with others is a message that involves some "landscaping" and "road reconstruction" to prepare the way of the Lord. Notice the references to landscaping and road reconstruction in John's ministry:

"Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God" (Lk. 3:4-6).

What do these references to landscaping and road reconstruction mean? What do filling valleys, leveling hills,

straightening out crooked paths, and smoothing out rough roads have to do with preparing the way of the Lord?

Roads and paths exist for the purpose of leading travelers to a destination. The destination of a seeking sinner is the Savior, the One who can save him from his sins. The heart of the seeking sinner catches a glimpse of Jesus afar off, and sees hope of forgiveness and eternal life. The sinner begins his pilgrimage by walking toward Jesus. But a pilgrim hiking through mountains and valleys on rough, crooked paths will have a difficult time reaching his destination. He will often find his view of the goal obscured by the landscape. As a result, he may lose heart or even lose his way. It is God's will that every seeking sinner reach the goal and find eternal life in His Son. Therefore God wants the road to the Savior to be as straight and as level and as smooth as possible, with no obstacles blocking the sinner's view of the Savior, so that people looking for the goal can see the goal. According to the Bible, this was to be the result of the preparatory landscaping and road reconstruction: "And all flesh shall see the salvation of God." "Salvation" in Hebrew is *yeshuah*. The Father wants all flesh to see the *yeshuah* that is in His Son Yeshua.

If we want people to see God's salvation, we have to make the road plain to them. We have to bring them to a place where their view of Yeshua is not blocked by the mountains of misunderstanding and hills of confusion that are around them. We have to explain things as simply, as clearly, and as thoroughly as we can - basic things like repentance, trust, forgiveness.

We have to do some divine landscaping and road reconstruction. We have to fill in some valleys, level some hills, straighten out some crooked paths, and smooth out some rough places. If a person is in a valley of depression, so deep that it obscures his view of the Savior, then we need to fill that valley up with words of love and

hope, and lift the depressed sinner up high enough to see some hope in God's salvation. If a sinner is high and lifted up and blinded by his own pride and arrogance and self-righteousness, then we need to level that mountain of pride by lovingly but firmly speaking the truth of God's Word, and let the Lord humble him so that he will look up to the Lord instead of looking down on other people. If a sinner has warped, crooked ideas about God's ways (as most sinners do), then we need to lovingly straighten out his crooked paths so his view of God's salvation is not blocked. If the road of life has been rough for a sinner, then we need to do what we can to smooth it out for him so he can more easily find his way to the Savior.

The purpose of preparing the way of the Lord, the purpose of doing divine landscaping and road reconstruction, is so that all flesh will see the salvation of God. After a sinner comes to the Savior and finds forgiveness, the Master sets him on another path, the path of discipleship. This path of discipleship will be difficult and rough at times; it will have its ups and downs through mountains of ecstasy and valleys of sorrow. But this path of discipleship for the redeemed is not the path I am talking about. The path that needs to undergo landscaping and road reconstruction is the path that leads seeking sinners to the Savior. This is the path which must be made straight and clear and level and smooth, so that those sinners who are seeking salvation can see the salvation of God when we point them to the Savior.

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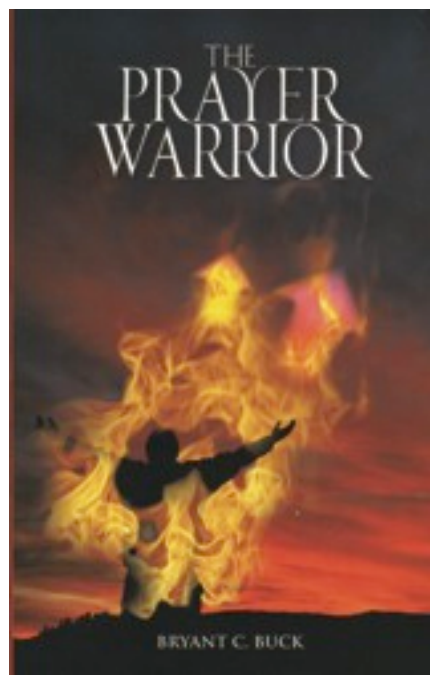
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# The Church in the World

## INDIA: NEWS BRIEFS

### Recent Incidents of Persecution

**Karnataka**, December 19 (*Compass Direct News*) Hindu extremists from the Bajrang Dal on Dec. 14 attacked a Christmas program of Christian social organization Helping Hands and accused the director of forcible conversion in Bangarapet, Kolar. The intolerant Hindus disrupted the program of the organization, which helps rural women and children, and accused Samuel Moses of trying to forcibly convert women and children, reported the Evangelical Fellowship of India. The extremists burned gospel literature and took Moses and his accountant to the Bangarapet police station. The Christians were detained in the police station for about nine hours, with the incident publicized on local broadcast and print media. The Christians were later released without charges. Police Inspector Chinnana Swami told Compass that the Christians were detained for questioning but police found no forcible conversion and the case has been closed.

**Karnataka** – Hindu extremists allegedly belonging to the Hindu extremist Rakshane Vedike on Dec. 8 attacked a pastor, accusing him of forceful conversion in Ibrahim Pura, Bellary. The Global Council of Indian Christians reported that at 5 p.m. Assembly of God pastor N. Satyam and another Christian were on their way home from a prayer meeting organized by convert Krishna Veni when a mob of about 25 extremists led by Sidesh Malleesh and Mahendra Bhatt dragged the Christians from an auto-rickshaw, cursed them in foul language, beat them and falsely accused the pastor of forceful conversion. The Evangelical Fellowship of India (EFI) reported that police arrived and took the Christians to the police station, where about 100 Christians later protested against the violence. The Christians were released without charges at 11:30 p.m., and the matter was settled peacefully between the two parties, EFI reported.

**Andhra Pradesh** – Hindutva (Hindu nationalist) extremists from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh on Dec. 7 beat a pastor in Bhainsa Mandal, Adilabad district. The Global Council of Indian Christians reported that at about 7 p.m. Bethel Church pastor Prabhu Das and church members identified only as Mark and Raju were on their way back from a prayer meeting when nearly 25 Hindu extremists armed with wooden batons surrounded them and angrily questioned them about their reason for coming to the village. The extremists repeatedly slapped Das and

Mark and snatched Raju's bag, which contained a Bible, and the latter fled. A local pastor told Compass that on identifying Das as pastor, the extremists falsely accused him of forcible conversion and beat him up with their batons on his hands and legs. Raju phoned a Christian who came with a vehicle and took Das to a private nursing home for treatment for a fracture in his left hand. Later he was admitted to the Adilabad Government Hospital. Das has declined to file a First Information Report, saying he has forgiven his attackers. A local pastor told Compass that on Dec. 12, the Pastors' Fellowship of Adilabad presented a memorandum to the superintendent of police requesting security for pastors of the district.

**Madhya Pradesh** – Nearly 20 Hindu extremists from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh on Dec. 5 beat pastors Pangala Bhai and Limba Bhai in Palasapara village in Meghasah Tehsil. The Evangelical Fellowship of India (EFI) reported that at about 3 p.m. extremists surrounded Pangala and Lima of Indian Evangelical Team as they were returning home from a prayer meeting. Using foul, abusive language, the extremists falsely accused them of forceful conversion, beat them and robbed a mobile phone and cash. The village council chief took the injured pastors to a private hospital. The pastors have not filed a case against the attackers, saying they have decided to forgive them, EFI reported.

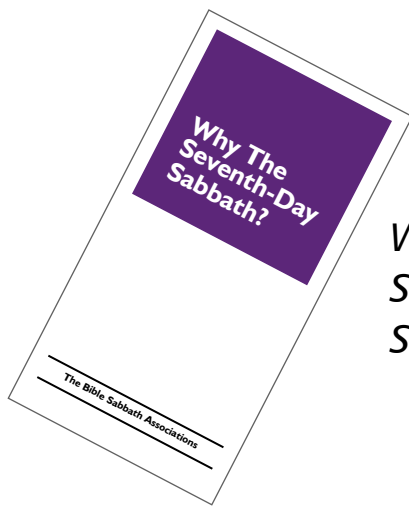
**Punjab** – Hindu extremists from the Bajrang Dal on Dec. 2 attacked two Operation Mobilization (OM) workers in Sangur. The Evangelical Fellowship of India reported that the extremists attacked Pani Garhi and Kiran Bhai as they were distributing gospel tracts in the area. OM men's team leader Imocha Naorem told Compass that the extremists took the Christians to the police station after verbally abusing and slapping them. Police refused to file a complaint but gave a stern warning to the extremists not to disturb the Christians again.

**Karnataka** – Hindu extremists on Nov. 26 accused pastor Vantakesh Nayak of forceful conversion and beat him along with four other Christians in Davanagere. The All India Christian Council reported that the Christians had gone to a nearby village to open up a new shop with prayer when the extremists stormed in and assaulted them, tearing their shirts. The intolerant Hindus filed a police complaint of forceful conversion against the pastor in Honnali police station. Investigating Officer Jai Laxman told Compass that the Christians were detained only as a preventive measure, that they have been released and that the case is closed.



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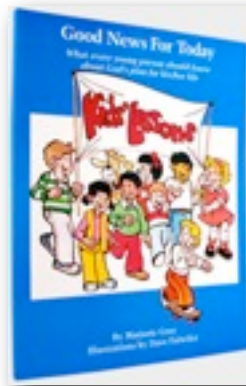
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# *The Sabbath Sentinel*

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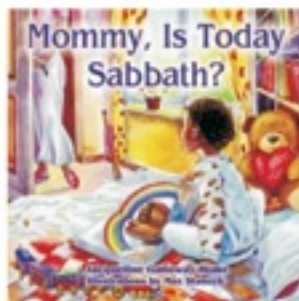
Phyllis Washington, Director of Children's Ministries, North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists

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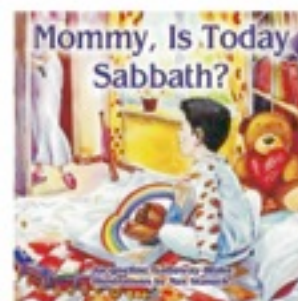
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