

# The Sabbath Sentinel

September–October 2014



**Fishing with Grandpa**

**BSA — The Bible Sabbath Association**

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

# The Sabbath Sentinel

September–October 2014 Volume 65, No. 5 Issue 569

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Fishing with Grandpa on an Autumn afternoon

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

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# Spiritual Gifts



There are quite a few places in the New Testament that talk about spiritual gifts. Romans 12 speaks of exhortation, giving, leadership, mercy, prophecy, service, and teaching.

1 Corinthians 12 mentions administration, apostleship, discernment, faith, healings, helps, knowledge, miracles, prophecy, teaching, tongues, the interpretation of tongues, and wisdom.

Ephesians 4 enumerates: apostleship, evangelism, pastor, and teaching.

1 Peter 4:10 Says "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms"(NIV).

1 Corinthians 12:4-11 says, "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills" (NKJV).

## **Unity and Diversity in One Body**

The apostle Paul goes on to mention in verses 12-19: "For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many. If the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,' is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, 'Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,' is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where

would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be?"

These are some of the questions I have about spiritual gifts:

Who are the apostles of today? Who are today's prophets? Who are today's evangelists? Who are the pastors and teachers? Who are today's miracle workers?

I have my own theories on these questions, but I'll allow you to come to your own conclusions.

These are all questions that we need to confront as Sabbath-keeping Christians. Unfortunately, many believe, like the Church of Christ and several other denominations, that these gifts ended with the apostles. Is that true? Do we still see healings today, for instance? My wife and I know a lady in the Church of God, 7<sup>th</sup> Day in Wichita, Kansas, that has the gift of healing. I personally have been healed twice, once of asthma and another time of an eye infection. When I had my heart attack about two and a half years ago, there were many of our friends there praying for me and strengthening my wife. Some of our Pentecostal friends were praying quietly in tongues. As a result of the prayers of our believing friends, my heart suffered no damage even though my heart attack lasted over two days. I have been strengthened often by the Lord's hand and carried through some very difficult health situations, sometimes without healing. If this is true, what about the other gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians and Ephesians?

When I worked at Beech Aircraft in Wichita, I remember a Jew who would go to Pentecostal meetings and start speaking in Hebrew. Of course, there was always someone at those meetings who stood up to "interpret" the words coming out of this Jewish man's mouth, but it was never the same meaning as what the Jewish man was speaking. His purpose in doing this was to demonstrate that Christianity was a fraud,

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# How Evil Became Good



The battle between light and darkness, good and evil, truth and lies, righteousness and sin has been going on as long as men walked the earth. In our modern age of material and technological progress, that battle is now being redefined. The great rationalization of our time is not just blurring the distinctions between black and white, bad and good behavior, it is reversing the meaning of certain traditional sins to the status of “good” and so upsetting the moral order of society itself. The rationalization is clever, subtle, and often carries the force of law.

*by Kenneth Westby*

When we speak of changing the definition of evil I hear ringing the ancient words of Isaiah listing Yahweh’s woes of judgment upon his people. The fourth of the six woes (Isaiah 5:20):

Woe to those who call evil good  
and good evil,  
who put darkness for light  
and light for darkness,  
who put bitter for sweet  
and sweet for bitter.

Apparently periodic moral decline was afflicting the ancient house of Israel, Yahweh’s vineyard (vs 7). Any clear-eyed observer can plainly see its present iteration in Century Twenty-One, at the front lines of our ongoing culture war.

Are there objective standards for good and evil? Is there such a thing as “morality” and “immorality”? There was a time not too long ago when immoral behavior was not difficult to define. That has changed.

## **Enter Political Correctness**

To lie with language is a trick the social Darwinists perform with skill. Rename it. Establish accepted speech codes that are “approved” by the elites among us—all members of the International Left that runs academia, popular media, the press, Hollywood, etc.—in determining what “offends” someone and shouldn’t be used and what is the proper way to label human conduct previously thought to be sinful or evil. An informal Thought Police network operates to tamp down opposition to the latest politically correct (PC) rules. The PC crowd, as members of the secular left and “leftwing” popular media and the educational establishment, find the job of intimidating opposition to their rationalizing of evil a relatively easy thing to pull off. Average people just learn to shut up and go along with the cultural bullies especially since the government and courts are increasingly enforcing the PC agenda.

You may not like it, but the moral revolution seems to be sweeping through the culture so just bite your tongue and accept it.

Let’s get specific. A fundamental and traditional institution of human relations and organization has been marriage between a man and a woman and the formation of families. Families constitute the building blocks for society and nations which are simply unions of many like families. Healthy families, speaking morally, produce good children which continue to strengthen society contributing to its goodness, prosperity, and progress. Families that have internalized the moral principles of the Judeo-Christian religion are the most stable and productive contributors to the health of society. The American Experiment boldly writes this lesson in history.

Our Founders realized that government can only work well if the people largely govern themselves and have a set of moral principles they live by. American democracy would only work well, they acknowledged, among a people with religious convictions. Not that every citizen must be a Christian, but that the cultural norms of good behavior were generally shared, even if not a believer or church-goer.

Now the very foundations of society are being changed and laws rewritten to enshrine the “slouching toward Gomorrah,” as Judge Robert Bork titled his famous book. Homosexuality is no longer a deviant practice, a sin—no, no, it is now just a choice on par with heterosexuality. In fact to be a homosexual and proud of it is now elevated to a sort of hero status of bravery. To criticize homosexual practices or the new enthusiasm of homosexual marriage is to draw the ire of the PC powers and voicing it may cost you your job. You dare not speak evil against this evil behavior. Don’t you know, it is now okay to be gay—good, in fact.

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# Ephraim

## Their Treachery and Their Begetting of Strange Children

By Dr. Daniel Botkin



*“They shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek Yahweh; but they shall not find Him; He hath withdrawn Himself from them. They have dealt treacherously against Yahweh: for they have begotten strange children” (Hosea 5:5-7a).*

There are several places in the Bible that talk about seeking the Lord and finding Him: “But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find Him, if thou seek Him with all thy heart and with all thy soul” (Deuteronomy 4:29).

“Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near” (Isaiah 55:6).

“And ye shall seek Me and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13).

There are many other such passages which tell us that if we seek the Lord we will find Him. Yet in Hosea 5:6 we read about Ephraim coming with their flocks and herds to seek the Lord, but they do not find Him. They are not seeking some heathen god, different from Yahweh. They are seeking the one true God. But they do not find Him because He has withdrawn Himself from them.

How can Ephraim be seeking the Lord and yet not find Him? What about all those “Seek and ye shall find” type of promises?

Well, those promises about seeking and finding the Lord are conditional. In seeking, you cannot ignore the “with all thy heart and with all thy soul” part in Deuteronomy 4:29. You cannot ignore the “while He may be found” and the “while He is near” part in Isaiah 55:6. You cannot ignore the “with all your heart” part in Jeremiah 29:13.

Among conservative Bible-believing Christians in America, a very popular verse is 2 Chronicles 7:14. “If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”

This is a wonderful promise. We certainly need spiritual healing in our nation. But in claiming this promise of 2 Chronicles 7:14, we cannot ignore the conditions of the promise. The conditions include more than just seeking the Lord in prayer. The conditions also include humbling ourselves and turning from our wicked ways. And of course it is God’s covenant people, not the unbelievers, who need to do this, because the promise is addressed to “My people, which are called by My name.” As 1 Peter 4:17 says, “For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God.”

Why could Ephraim not find the Lord when they came seeking Him with their flocks and herds? Because He had withdrawn Himself from them. Why had He withdrawn Himself? Because Ephraim dealt treacherously against Him and had begotten strange children.

Why can God’s people today not find Him when they come seeking Him with their flocks and herds? Pastors urge their flocks to seek the Lord and His presence and His power, but what so often happens? Occasionally there might be some brief, short-lived excitement, but it soon fades and nothing significant has permanently changed. Our Bible says, “Seek and ye shall find,” but our experience says, “Seek but ye shall *not* find.” Just as the Lord withdrew Himself from Ephraim of old, it appears that the Lord hath withdrawn Himself from His people today.

The reason for the Lord’s withdrawal from Ephraim of old was their treachery and their begetting of strange children. If God’s people today deal treacherously against the Lord and beget strange children like Ephraim of old did, then we can expect the Lord’s presence to remain withdrawn from His people until the cause of the withdrawal is rectified.

The word *treachery* means betrayal. But you do not need to betray the Lord the way Judas Iscariot did before you are guilty of dealing treacherously against the Lord. The Hebrew phrase translated “dealt treacherously” in Hosea 5:7 is a single Hebrew word, *bagadu* (בגדו). The root of the word literally means “to cover,” and is the source of the common Hebrew word for garment, *begeg* (דגב), something which “covers” a person. Treachery against the Lord involves some form of a “cover-up,” a deception.

Of course you cannot deceive the Lord or hide anything from Him. Any attempt to hide something from the Lord will be no more successful than Adam and Eve’s attempt to cover up with fig leaves and hide among the trees of the garden. However, you can hide your sins from other people. You can appear to men to be living righteously, but in secret be living unrighteously. If you do this, you are dealing treacherously against the Lord, and this treachery will cause His presence to remain withdrawn from you.

If you are guilty of this kind of hypocrisy and cover-up, repent. Don’t just say, “Okay, I’ll admit to everyone that I

live unrighteously, and I'll continue to live unrighteously." That's probably better than being a pretender, but it won't cause the Lord's withdrawn presence to return to your life. You need to repent. You need to stop living unrighteously and start living righteously.

Now what about those "strange children" Ephraim had begotten? Why are they mentioned? Well, they were the evidence of Ephraim's treachery, the evidence that explained and vindicated the Lord's decision to withdraw His presence from Ephraim.

What sort of "strange children" has modern-day Ephraim begotten? If you do not know, you can find out by visiting churches and Christian rock concerts and other Christian events. That's not to suggest that everybody in these places are strange children. They are not. But you don't need to look very hard to find some strange children among God's children, some tares posing as wheat. You might even find some at Messianic congregations and conferences.

How are strange children different from God's children? For one thing, they bear a different mark than God's children. Moses mentioned this. Before Moses died, Yahweh told him to write a lengthy song and teach it to the children of Israel so that the song would be a witness for Yahweh against the children of Israel. Yahweh told Moses that after he died, the children of Israel would go a whoring after other gods. "Then My anger shall be kindled against them, and I will hide My face from them" (Deuteronomy 31:17). The song of Moses vindicates Yahweh's decision to withdraw His presence from the people, just as the strange children in Hosea 5:7 vindicate Yahweh's decision to withdraw His presence from Ephraim.

"They have corrupted themselves," Moses wrote in this song, "their spot is not the spot of His children" (Deuteronomy 32:5).

Strange children do not bear the mark of God's children. They bear a different mark, a spot that is not the spot of God's children. In biblical times, the "spot" which the strange children bore took the form of pagan marks inscribed on the skin of idol worshippers. The *Jamison Fausset Brown Commentary* says this about Deuteronomy 32:5: "This is an allusion to the marks which idolaters inscribe on their foreheads or their arms, with paint or other substances, in various colours and forms — straight, oval, or circular — according to their favourite idol."

That sounds very similar to what we see as a result of the current tattoo craze. I realize that most people who get tattoos do not consciously do it as an act of honoring strange gods, but tattooing is forbidden in the Torah (Leviticus 19:28). If you already have tattoos, God will forgive you. Just don't get any more. A tattoo is a spot which is not the spot of God's children.

Of course the spot which is not the spot of God's children goes far beyond tattoos. Simply put, bearing a

spot which is not the spot of God's children means living, speaking, and looking like strange children instead of like God's children.

How do God's children live and speak and look? They live righteously. They live a faith-based life of obedience to their heavenly Father's instructions. How do God's children speak? They speak the truth in love, they guard their tongue, they refrain from gossip, they speak words that minister grace to the hearers. How do God's children look? If they are men, they look and dress like men. If they are women, they look and dress like women. And both men and women dress modestly.

If you live unrighteously, or if you use your tongue to gossip and curse and slander, or if you are a man who looks and dresses like a woman, or a woman who looks and dresses like a man, or if you dress immodestly, then your spot is not the spot of God's children. You are bearing the spot of strange children, and this spot will keep the Lord's presence withdrawn from you.

If time travel were possible, I'd like to bring a typical Bible-believing Christian from one hundred years ago, let's say a Methodist, to a typical 21<sup>st</sup>-century American church. Let him observe the people in the pews and talk to them a while, then ask him what he thinks of Christians today. Knowing what I know about Methodists and other Bible-believing Christians of one hundred years ago, I believe he would say that many — perhaps most — of the people in the pews are strange children whose spot is not the spot of God's children.

If you could travel back one hundred years, visit a Bible-believing church, and tell them what sort of things Bible-believing Christians would be doing and saying and wearing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, they would probably laugh you out of the church, and they would explain to you that such people could not possibly be real Bible believers.

So, what sort of things will professing Bible believers in America be doing and saying and wearing (or not wearing) one hundred years from now, if the Lord has not yet returned before then? Unless God's children repent and seek the Lord with all their heart and soul, and draw back the Lord's withdrawn presence, I shudder to think of how much stranger the strange children will be one hundred years from now, or even ten years from now.

Check your spot and see if you are bearing the spot of God's children or the spot of strange children. If your spot is not the spot of His children, change your spot. Change the way you live and speak and look, so you will bear the spot of His children. Maybe then we will once again know the presence of the Lord which has departed from us.

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*Reprinted from "Gates of Eden," 7-8 2014, p. 10. "Gates of Eden" is a bimonthly newsletter produced by Gates of Eden, a messianic Jewish ministry. Write to Gates of Eden, P.O. Box 2257, East Peoria, IL 61611-0257. Gates of Eden is on the Internet at [www.gatesofeden.org](http://www.gatesofeden.org).*

# Was the Law of God Nailed to the Cross?

by Kelly McDonald



Some teachers today promote the idea that the Law of God was nailed to the cross. They say it is no longer applicable, especially to “Gentile converts” to Christianity. Typically, two passages of Scripture are used to prove their point: Colossians 2:13–15 and Ephesians 2:11–15. Did Paul teach against the Law? Is it binding just on Jewish converts to Christianity or all those who believe in Jesus Christ?

When we examine the Apostle Paul’s letters, we must keep in mind that he was extremely educated. The Apostle Peter noted this in his first letter. “Bear in mind that our Lord’s patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. **His letters contain some things that are hard to understand**, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction” (2 Peter 3:15–16, emphasis mine throughout). Peter noted that Paul’s letters are hard to understand. Paul sat under Gamaliel, who was a revered Rabbi of his time. By looking at the language and comparing other passages with his letters, we can gain a better understanding of his message to us today. We must dig deeper.

In Colossians 2:13–15, Paul wrote, “And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14 **Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances** that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it” (KJV, emphasis mine throughout). On the surface, it is clear that something was blotted out by Christ’s sacrifice – but what? In verse 14, the phrase “handwriting of ordinances” is the Greek phrase *choriegraphon dogma*.

*Choreigraphon* means a bill of indebtedness written in the debtor’s handwriting. *Dogma* means a man-made decree. This phrase refers to our sin debt. This is reinforced by the fact that the phrase “blotting out” means to erase something that is written. The Word of God mentions that a record of our deeds are kept in heaven (Revelation 20:12, Hosea 13:12, Nehemiah 13:14, Psalm 109:14). Christ erased our sin debt by nailing it to the cross. By doing so, He erased the record of sin written in the heavenly books! Revelation 12:10 explains that Satan is the accuser of the brethren. He accuses us because of sin! When we repent, our sins are blotted out of the books in Heaven. This puts the powers and principalities of this world to an open shame! They are disarmed! Their accusations are rendered null and void. This should be very humbling to all of us. Our sin debt was nailed to the cross, not the Law of God. Paul wrote in Galatians 5:24 that our sinful nature needs to

be crucified. The Law is not the problem. Our sinful desires are the problem!

The second passage some teachers use to negate the Law of God is Ephesians 2:11–15. In these verses, Paul wrote, “11 Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands— 12 that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, 15 **having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances**, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace...” (NKJV, emphasis mine throughout).

The key phrase for anti-law teachers is verse 15. From this they derive their belief that the Law was torn down or nailed to the cross. Paul starts by explaining that Gentiles were at one time excluded from citizenship in Israel. However, through the blood of Christ we have been made one with Israel and one with the covenants of promise. For Gentiles and Israelites to be unified, Christ had to die to abolish the “law of commandments contained in ordinances” that separated us from citizenship in Israel. The Greek word translated as “ordinances” in this phrase is *dogma*. We reviewed it above as referring to a man-made ordinance or decree. Thus, the phrase “law of commandments contained in ordinances” refers to the laws and commandments in man-made ordinances of the Pharisees and Sadducees, which separated Gentiles from becoming members of Israel.

The man-made rules of the Pharisees and Sadducees often treated Gentiles as second-class human beings. This is why Paul also mentions the “enmity” or conflict between the groups in verse 15. For instance, some Jewish people of Paul’s time had a rule which stipulated that any fellowship with Gentiles would make them unclean. God never said this in the Bible. It was a man-made rule. Rules such as this separated Gentiles from coming into covenant with God and becoming citizens in Israel.

As a physical representation of this, the outer court of the Temple in Paul’s time had a wall preventing Gentiles from associating and worshipping with Jews. This is the middle wall of partition that Paul says was torn down through Christ’s death. This wall was a physical representation of the wall of regulations (man-made ordinances and commandments) that the Pharisees and Sadducees had built to separate Israelites and Gentiles. Both Rahab and

Ruth were not native-born Israelites, but they are reckoned in Christ's genealogy (Matthew 1). They are examples of those who are included in Israel by God's favor. When the Israelites left Egypt, they left a mixed multitude of Gentiles and native Israelites (Exodus 12:38). All of the Gentiles that left Egypt with the Israelites became naturalized citizens. Through Christ's death, everyone is allowed to enter into citizenship in Israel without having to go through man's rules.

This leads us into answering another question: Do Gentile converts to Christianity have to obey the commandments? The excerpt from Paul's letter to the Ephesians is clear that we are brought into citizenship through Christ. First of all, God said that native born Israelites and foreigners who join into covenant with Him are to have the same requirements (Leviticus 24:22). We know God does not show favoritism (Rom. 2:11). That means all citizens of Israel have the same requirements for daily living! Secondly, the New Covenant is only made with the houses of Israel and Judah (Jeremiah 31:31-34, Hebrews 8:8-12). To be in the New Covenant requires that you be a part of Israel because it was only made with the two houses of Israel. Part of that New Covenant promise is that the Law of God is written on our hearts and minds! Lastly, the Greek word used for church in the New Testament, *ekklesia*, is a direct translation of the Hebrew word used to describe ancient Israel in the Old Testament. In the Septuagint or Greek translation of the Old Testament, the word *ekklesia* is used to describe ancient Israel. The word *ekklesia* basically means those who are called out or the called out ones. In Acts 7:38 (KJV), this word is used to describe Israel! It is even translated as church! Whenever you read the word church in the New Testament, it is a direct reference to Christians being citizens in Israel. Christians are an extension of Israel, not something completely separate. These examples in the New Testament prove that we as Christians are a part of Ancient Israel, God's means to bring salvation and covenant to the whole world. This makes the commandments, including the Sabbath, just as binding on Christians as on natural born Israelites.

By understanding other verses in the Bible and the language, we can see that Paul never spoke ill of God's Law. In Romans 7:12-14, Paul described the Law as righteous and spiritual (Romans 7:12-14). It is unfortunate that we hear such teaching in our world! The Ten Commandments are ten principles God gave for us to have wisdom, life, and prosperity (Deuteronomy 4:5-8, 30:11-16). They are for the good of all humanity.

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Editorial: "Spiritual Gifts" cont. from page 3.

and in this particular case, he was right, but that is not the case all the time.

There is a legitimate "speaking in tongues." Several years ago we had two (a husband and wife) couriers from Open Doors staying the night in our house. They related an instance on a recent trip to Cuba that demonstrated what speaking in tongues is all about. They were transporting quite a few Bibles in their suitcases. There were miracles performed in getting them through customs in Cuba, but that is another story. After finding a local pastor in a building behind another building, they proceeded to have a long conversation with the pastor. They had an interpreter there who translated from Spanish to English and English to Spanish. Sometime during the late hours of the evening, the interpreter went home, but they still continued talking to each other not realizing that God was doing the interpreting. Each understood in his own language. That is indeed a miracle which God supplied at the moment of need.

### **What about the other spiritual gifts?**

Indeed, there are other spiritual gifts. Should we ignore them?

How do you look at prophecy these days? In the past many have been bitten hard by tales of prophecy to come, but those days are long past. Is there a place for prophecy in the Churches of God? The apostle Paul has much to say about this in 1 Corinthians 14.

1 Corinthians 14:1-5, "Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries. But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification."

Notice that the apostle Paul exalts prophecy over speaking in tongues. However, the apostle does not doubt the people will speak in tongues. He only says that unless there is someone to interpret the language being spoken, it is of no value to the congregation.

One other thing that I notice in this passage is that Paul acknowledges that those who speak in tongues speak only to God if there is no one to interpret. He doesn't forbid speaking in tongues.

## Tongues Must Be Interpreted

1 Corinthians 14:6-11 "But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you unless I speak to you either by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by teaching? Even things without life, whether flute or harp, when they make a sound, unless they make a distinction in the sounds, how will it be known what is piped or played? For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle? So likewise you, unless you utter by the tongue words easy to understand, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air. There are, it may be, so many kinds of languages in the world, and none of them is without significance. Therefore, if I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a foreigner to him who speaks, and he who speaks will be a foreigner to me."

1 Corinthians 14:18-19 "I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all; yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue."

## Order in Church Meetings

1 Corinthians 14:39-40 "Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order."

For the apostle Paul it is critical that all things in the church be done for the edification of all in the church, not just certain individuals.

## What about the other gifts?

Who are today's apostles? I believe that the people who travel from country to country preaching the gospel are today's apostles. Consider what these people do daily. They put themselves in hostile situations for the sake of Christ. Many travel all over the world and receive only the reward of a job well done. They do these things for the love of Christ and for no other reason.

And, who are today's miracle workers? Those with the gift of healing are in a separate category, so they cannot be lumped in with miracle workers. I believe that these are people who can summon angels, cast out demons, and make many unexpected things happen for believers. Sometimes they have to protect believers through miracle-working power. They are essential to the body of Christ, and the apostle Paul lists them as a separate category.

The apostle emphasizes the value of prophesying. So, what is prophecy? Is it not the moment when God re-

veals something to you that he has not revealed to anyone else? It doesn't have to be a future event — only something that God has revealed to you or another member of the congregation that He has revealed to no one else. That brings up a tricky situation, however. How does one verify that the prophecy is true? This is something I have wrestled with quite a bit. I think it boils down to God's letting others in the congregation verify the accuracy of the prophecy. If others cannot verify the accuracy of the prophecy, then no one should believe the prophecy. It is not from God. In the mouth of two or more witnesses a matter is verified. That is how prophecies are certified as accurate.

I think we all know who the pastors and teachers are. These people have the gift of being able to teach others the Word of God. They are gifted with the power to guide others. I know that many have had bad experiences with pastors in the past, but they are essential to the growth of the Body of Christ. We must emphasize, however, that the pastor is not there to lord it over the congregation. He is there to bring the members of the Body of Christ to a greater knowledge of and closeness to our Lord. The pastor must always remember that he is not a dictator, but a member of the congregation that he serves. The pastor has to have the skills of a good administrator, be humble, and always look for the best in the church's members as well as doing the best for the members of the congregation.

So, what can we say about spiritual gifts? They are alive and well in the Churches of God. The problem that many Americans have in understanding how these spiritual gifts are still active is that they can go to the doctor for healing. Also, we have given medical names to demonic possessions. We treat mental illness with medication instead of looking to the Lord for guidance. As the apostle Paul says in Romans 12:3-8: "For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness."

—Kenneth Ryland

# THE GENTILE HEALINGS: FAITH AMONG THE NATIONS

By R. Herbert

We tend to think of events described in the Book of Acts as the beginning of faith among the Gentiles, but earlier biblical examples of faith in both the Old and New Testaments are instructive. There is also a striking parallel between these examples that deserves our attention.

Three of the gospels tell how Jesus spoke in the synagogue in his home town of Nazareth, but was rejected by the people there. It is clear that the message Jesus took to these people was not welcomed by the Nazarenes, but his response to their rejection particularly enraged them. Luke tells us that as a result of the rejection, Jesus said:

“Truly I tell you ... no prophet is accepted in his hometown. I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah’s time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed — only Naaman the Syrian” (Luke 4:24-27).

When they heard this, the Nazarenes’ rejection turned to outright rage, and they attempted to kill Jesus because he had said that God had chosen to send His servant Elijah to a widow in Sidon (a non-Jewish area) and had Elisha heal Naaman (another non-Jewish person) over people of Judah with the same problems.

It is easy to continue reading the Gospel accounts without noticing the striking parallels between the examples Jesus gave and two of his own miracles in clearly similar circumstances. First, Matthew 15 and Mark 7 tell how Jesus travelled to the Phoenician area of Tyre and Sidon and there healed the daughter of a Syrophenician woman (see inset box), just as Elijah had travelled to Phoenicia and raised up the son of a widow in the city of Sidon (1 Kings 17). In Luke 7 and Matthew 8, we find that Jesus also healed the servant of the Roman centurion at Capernaum. There it is the servant of the military leader who is healed rather than the military leader himself — as in the case of Elisha’s healing of Naaman the Syrian general (2 Kings 5); but the parallels between the stories are clear. Naaman was an officer of Israel’s enemy Syria just as the centurion was an officer of Judea’s enemy Rome — both were not only Gentiles, but also of the same hated profession. Both widows were Gentiles of Phoenicia — regarded by the Jews as religiously and socially inferior in terms of both gender and ethnicity. There are further

similarities: Naaman was a highly valued servant of the king of Syria who is told he need not go all the way to the prophet’s house. In the centurion’s case, the servant is said to be highly valued by his master, and the centurion sends word that Jesus need not go all the way to his house. Both the individuals involved in these two healings by Jesus — *the only Gentiles recorded as being healed by him* — are directly parallel to the Old Testament examples he had cited earlier in Nazareth.

But there is also a difference. In the Old Testament examples, both the widow of Sidon and Naaman the Syrian general showed an initial lack of faith — though they did make full expressions of belief after they were healed. In the case of the Syrophenician woman and the Roman centurion helped by Christ, Jesus commented specifically on the great faith these two individuals already had. While the Old Testament examples show God’s concern for even despised individuals who were not of His people, the New Testament examples show not only Christ’s concern for these same types of rejected individuals, but also their notable faith.

If the people of Nazareth were offended at Jesus’ stress on the importance of the Gentiles helped by Elijah and Elisha, they would doubtless have been yet more incensed at his extolling the parallel individuals that he helped as having greater faith than that of the Jews (Luke 7:9). And there is perhaps a lesson for all of us in these parallel miracles. We understand that it was difficult for the ancient Jews to accept the idea that the pagan Gentiles might actually have faith in God, but do we carry a similar bias in our own minds against those of other denominations or faith groups? Perhaps we should remember that Jesus chose to teach a lesson by replicating two great miracles of the Hebrew scriptures — by helping Gentiles whose faith was greater than many of those who were sure they were of the “true” faith. The truth is, God honors faith wherever He finds it.

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**The Syrophenician Woman’s Faith:** “... he arose and went away to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And he entered a house and did not want anyone to know, yet he could not be hidden. But immediately a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit heard of him and came and fell down at his feet. Now the woman was a Gentile, a Syrophenician by birth. And she begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. And he said to her, ‘Let the children be fed first, for it is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.’ But she answered him, ‘Yes, Lord; yet even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.’ And he said to her, ‘For

this statement you may go your way; the demon has left your daughter.' And she went home and found the child lying in bed and the demon gone" (Mark 7:24-30 ESV and see Mathew 15:21-28).

Mark makes it very clear that the woman was a Syro-Phoenician Gentile (the NIV calls her "Greek" because the Jews referred to all non-Jews as "Greeks"), which put her at a double disadvantage as a member of an ethnic group and gender looked down upon by many ancient Jews (who did not like to be approached in conversation by Gentiles and particularly by women). The woman's faith in approaching Jesus is thus all the more remarkable. Jesus rebuffed her request at first, saying: "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel" (Matthew 15:24), and, when she persisted, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." his led to the woman's amazing reply in pleading that even the dogs were able to pick up crumbs under the children's table, for which words Christ rewarded her with the healing of her daughter.

Reading this account superficially, Jesus' reaction to the woman, effectively referring to her as a "dog," seems harsh and out of character, but we should consider two things. Instead of the Greek word *kinos* "dogs," Mark actually uses the word *kinaria*, the diminutive form used of "little dogs" or "puppies." This considerably softens the tone of Jesus' words, though the implication is still there, kindly worded or not.

We can only presume that Jesus' words were meant not to disparage the woman but to see the extent of her humility and faith. This seems likely because Jesus' reaction was immediate and full as soon as the woman replied in a way indicating her humble acceptance of his words and her faith in him despite any insult she might have perceived.

If this was the case, the lesson for us is obvious. Whenever we are faced with difficulties and trials that we need to take before God, we should remember that it is possible to approach Him with both accepting reverence and persistence (see also Jesus's parable on the importunate widow, Luke 18:1-8). The example of the Syro-Phoenician woman shows us that faith must be willing to humbly accept the present answer, but it should also be unafraid to persist in asking God's favor.

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# The Rich Fool

By Lenny Cacchio



"Fool! This day your life will be required of you!" (Luke 12:20)

Once there was a rich fool, Jesus tells us. We don't know if he started off as a fool, but for certain something happened that made him that way. One year his farm was so productive that his barns were full, his storage bins were full, and his silo was full. His harvest was so great that he was dumping it on big heaps on the ground.

He decided to solve the problem by tearing down every building he had built and replacing them with ones newer, bigger, and better. In fact, the way he calculated it, his harvest was so successful he would never have to work again. It was now time to just kick up his feet and party for the rest of his life.

And that's when God calls him a fool.

It sure would be nice to win the lottery or find the estate of a long-lost uncle, but would it really be a blessing? In the neighborhood where Jesus lived it was assumed (as is sometimes assumed today) that if someone had riches, it was a sign that God held him in special regard. While we don't want to talk for God, common experience should inform us that this isn't always the case. The wicked often do prosper. The fact is, this man had something unusual but pleasant happen to him (sudden, great riches), yet he is held forth as a miserable failure.

If we're looking for a reason for this verdict, the text hints at the answer: "So is he who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God" (Verse 21).

This is not to suggest that prosperity and wealth are of themselves a special kind of evil. Nor is the intent to limit the discussion to riches alone. The intent here is to illustrate that whenever God or the vagaries of life hand us good things, whether monetary or otherwise, they are essentially worthless and definitely meaningless if we want to hoard everything for ourselves. Blessings only take on meaning if our vision is greater than ourselves.

This rich fool had great material wealth, but that was only part of the story. His wealth also freed up time. That time could have been used to serve others. He was clearly a man of talent, or else he would not have been such a successful farmer. But he used his time, talent, and treasure to serve himself. This is where he failed. This is where he was a fool. Taking your time, talent, and treasure and hoarding it all up for yourself does not advance the Kingdom of God not one whit. Great blessings can be curses if the center of attention is inward.

Whether it's your time, talent, or treasure, use those gifts to honor God. Enjoy them, exercise them, but do all to the glory of God.

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*You can catch all of Lenny's latest commentaries on <http://morningcompanion.blogspot.com> and on the BSA Web site at <http://www.biblesabbath.org/>. Lenny is a member of the BSA board of directors.*

## Defining Deviancy Downward...and Upward

I remember the great essay that the late Democratic Senator from New York, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, wrote on the moral decline taking place in America (are there any in his political party today saying such things?). Gertrude Himmelfarb discusses his essay in her excellent book, *The De-Moralization of Society—From Victorian Virtues to Modern Values* (She is probably America's leading intellectual historian on societal morality).

In his essay "Defining Deviancy Down," Senator Moynihan has taken the idea of deviancy a step further by describing the downward curve of the concept of deviancy. What was once regarded as deviant behavior is no longer so regarded; what was once deemed abnormal has been normalized. As deviancy is defined downward, so the threshold of deviancy rises; behavior once stigmatized as deviant is now tolerated and even sanctioned. Mental patients can rarely be institutionalized or even medicated against their will; free to live on the street, they are now treated, and appear in the statistics, not as mentally incapacitated but as "homeless."

Divorce and illegitimacy, once seen as betokening the breakdown of the family, are now viewed benignly as "alternative life styles"; illegitimacy has been officially rebaptized as "nonmarital childbearing;" and divorced and unmarried mothers are lumped together in the category of "single parent families." And violent crime has become endemic that we have practically become injured to it. The St. Valentine's Day Massacre in Chicago in 1929, when four gangsters killed seven other gangsters, shocked the nation and became legendary, immortalized in encyclopedias and history books; in Los Angeles today as many people are killed every weekend [and in Chicago seven killings would be a quiet weekend when many have dozens murdered].<sup>1</sup>

Moynihan worried that the overwhelming moral decay and residual violence was causing citizens to become desensitized to it. Once that happens it is easier to just accept it as part of "the changing world" that calls us to get in step. And if it makes the pill go down easier, consider it "progress" to a more "fair" and "tolerant" and "non-judgmental world" where sin is not sin and calling things a sin is a "sin."

Himmelfarb then notes how the redefining of deviancy has another effect upon society. She quotes one of my favorite thinkers.

Charles Krauthammer has proposed a complementary concept: "Defining Deviancy Up." As deviancy is normalized, so the normal becomes deviant. The kind of family that has been regarded for centuries as natural and moral—the "bourgeois" family, as it is invidiously called—is now seen as pathological, concealing behind

the façade of respectability the new "original sin," child abuse.

The combined effect of defining deviancy up and defining it down has been to normalize and legitimize what was once regarded as abnormal and illegitimate, and, conversely, to stigmatize and discredit what was once normal and respectable. This process, too, has occurred with startling rapidity.<sup>2</sup>

The rapidity has been startling and never has a culture changed its moral consciousness in just a matter of a few years. The explosion against and race to eliminate traditional morality began with the sexual revelation of the 1960s and has continued to gain speed since. In 1973 abortion was approved as the law of the land and the killing of innocents accelerated now totaling 55 million and counting. Free and legal abortion was sold—rationalized—as a way to reduce unwanted pregnancies and the resulting child abuse; an acknowledgement that a woman owned her body including the separate life growing within it and could kill that life without guilt. It's a woman's choice we were told and that this would somehow make society better. The "pill" was also supposed to cut down on "unwanted pregnancies." But alas, premarital sex increased and women still got pregnant and ended up killing a million little lives every year. This is just the low hanging fruit of the sexual revolution, its roots are slowly strangling society itself.

Soon, marriage itself would be in the crosshairs of the social/moral Darwinists of the Left. The handy wedge issue would be our enlightened new sense of fairness that should not tolerate excluding homosexuals from marriage. That would be discrimination and we know how evil that is. Look how rapidly this moral attitude has swept through our society including our courts and institutions both private and government!

In the space of just four years the US President and Vice-President "evolved" to their present positions of supporting homosexual marriage. At their first election in 2008 they were against homosexual marriage and stood with the majority of Americans believing marriage was between a man and a woman. But just in time for their second election and a flood of needed donations coming in from the powerful homosexual lobby, they both had an epiphany and their position "evolved" to being pro-homosexual marriage. How fast was that? The pro-homosexual position was likely already part of their moral consciousness, but when to reveal it was the question.

The rationalizations for homosexual "marriage" were boilerplate for the Left: equality, toleration, fairness,

not telling people who they can “love” and lots of dopey sentimentalism about the hardships homosexuals endure by not being “married” and officially recognized as equal to heterosexual marriage.

Robert R. Reilly recounts an incident to illustrate the political hypocrisy at work toward making homosexuality mainstream, even heroic.

On June 29, 2009, President Barack Obama met in the [White House] East Room with more than 250 “gay” leaders to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the birth of the modern “gay rights” movement, an event precipitated by a police raid on the Stonewall Inn, a Greenwich Village homosexual bar, owned at the time by the Mafia in New York City.

Mr. Obama singled out Franklin Kameny for special praise: “We are proud of you, Frank, and we are grateful to you for your leadership.” Mr Kameny had been close to the White House before. In 1957 he was arrested by the morals squad in Lafayette Park, a well-known trysting place for homosexuals, across from the White House. As a result, he was fired from his government job. At the time, “sexual perversion” was grounds for dismissal from the government. Kameny sued and fought all the way up to the Supreme Court, which refused to hear his case. “The government put its disqualifications of gays under the rubric of immoral conduct, which I objected to, Kameny said, “because under our system, morality is a matter of personal opinion and individual belief on which any American citizen may hold any view he wishes and upon which the government has no power or authority to have any view at all. Besides which, in my view, homosexuality is only not immoral, it is affirmatively moral.” In 1968 Kameny coined the phrase “gay is good.”<sup>3</sup>

In 2008, prior to his meeting at the White House with Mr. Obama, Franklin Kameny published a letter to Americans for Truth in which he said,

Let us have more and better enjoyment of more and better sexual perversions, by whatever definition, by more and more consenting adults....If bestiality with consenting animals provides happiness to some people, let them pursue their happiness.<sup>4</sup>

This is someone the White House would choose to honor publicly and celebrate his brave leadership in the homosexual cause! Such a scene would be inconceivable in a US presidency going all the way back to George Washington. Is this progress or moral decay?

Aristotle wrote in his *Ethics*, “Men start revolutionary changes for reasons connected with their private lives.” The sexual revolution of the 1960s was not part of a noble protest against the Viet Nam war—“make love, not war”—but an excuse to jettison Judeo-Christian traditional morality and flaunt sexual promiscuity. Smoke dope, get high, get drunk, and have all the sex

you can get away with. This was the brave new world of no transcendental moral rights or wrongs, just a perceived freedom to “do what feels good.” Many of those 60s hedonistic radicals survived their excesses, graduated, entered academia, entered politics, and are now the elder guiding forces for the continuation of the assault on morality and against the whole concept of objective laws of right and wrong, good and evil. To these radicals, morality is plastic made to change with the times and nothing is ultimate (for there is no God authority), everything is relative, subjective. The secular, humanistic Left is the nesting place for these elites who in effect become gods entitled to determine for all of us what is right or wrong, establish speech codes, and punish infractions of their current, ever-changing “standards” of thought and conduct.

Is this turning of the moral world upside down motivated by high principles or simple lust and rebellion against God? God’s prophet, Jeremiah, wasn’t wearing rose-colored glasses when he observed raw human nature in action and concluded with Yahweh that:

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?

I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doing.<sup>5</sup>

The concept of “Victorian values,” prevailed “when our country became great,” said Margaret Thatcher of her United Kingdom. The English idea of these values generally corresponds to the American concept of “family values” which held sway until recent times. These values, which are more properly virtues, are strong nuclear families, hard work, thrift, cleanliness, self-reliance, self-respect, neighborliness, patriotism, and moral character and conduct.

We use the term rationalization to describe how the human heart practices self-deception. We can rationalize just about any behavior to convince ourselves that what we do is right and our motives are good or compassionate or whatever spin we attach. The Nazis had a vile euthanasia program to eliminate “life unworthy of life.” They were doing people a favor by killing them since their lives had been determined to be a net negative. They were also “cleansing” a noble superior race of its undesirables (Jews, Gypsies, priests, the handicapped, etc.). This was a good thing, yes? Rationalization of evil is a dangerous path and those who tread it will be held to account by the Creator. If human rationalization of evil can justify and mandate the murder of millions, what can it not do?<sup>6</sup> What are we seeing among the Islamic radicals if not this same darkness of lies and self-deception to justify unspeakable bloodshed.

## The Deviant Population is Small but Loud

Judging by the cultural crows chattering loudly one would think that homosexuality was widespread, maybe a quarter of the population or more. But since surveys have been taken it has always registered as a small minority. The latest and largest government survey ever taken of gays, lesbians and bisexuals in the US population was just released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Less than 3 percent of the U.S. population identify themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual. "The overwhelming majority of adults, 96.6 percent, labeled themselves as straight in the 2013 survey." So how can this tiny minority bully politicians, the courts, and the general culture to accept their demands to change the moral landscape—including the most fundamental institution of all, marriage between a man and a woman with a family in view? The answer is money and power and shared values to dismantle the Judeo-Christian consensus that has existed since America's founding. Aristotle was right, "Men start revolutionary changes for reasons connected with their private lives." The homosexual agenda is useful to the atheistic Left to "fundamentally change America." We should not be intimidated by the clamor of the less than 3% who demand a change in our national codes of morality. The Left should listen to Aristotle instead of the Marquis de Sade.

The underlying dynamic is: If you'll rationalize my sexual misbehavior, I'll rationalize yours. Entrenched moral aberrations then impel people to rationalize vice not only to themselves but to others as well. Thus rationalizations become an engine for revolutionary change that will affect society as a whole. And so it must be. If you are going to center your public life on the private act of sodomy, you had better transform sodomy into a highly moral act.<sup>7</sup>

We must say that bad is good in order for the rationalization to be secure in itself. Homosexuals were made to appear victims, not perpetrators by one rationalization. As an act, sodomy has become sacramentalized in much of popular culture. Let's be perfectly clear what sodomy is. It is primarily performing sexual intercourse via the anus, the body's organ of elimination, and an inherently filthy practice and the genesis of a host of diseases. It is unnatural and disrespects the human body which carries the Image of God. God made body parts for a purpose and function and the sexual organs are not exceptions.

Homosexuals live shorter lives and consistently test as unhappier than the heterosexual population. Yet this

fact must be rationalized too. It is because "straight" society is homophobic and the reason for the misfortunes in homosexual's lives. Rather, is it not primarily their perverted, filthy practices and associations that discomfort them, not the perceived attitudes of intolerance from society that make them suffer? Yet we must believe it is not their behavior that is at fault, it is non-accepting society that is guilty. Rationalization at work.

But do the homosexuals really believe their own lies? Malcom Muggeridge, the great Christian philosopher, said: "People do not believe lies because they have to but because they want to." A former lesbian, Melinda Selmys, states this truth: "A man may lie to himself very prettily, but he can never really escape from the knowledge that it is a lie."

## The Darkening

Lies and clever rationalizations can blacken the windows of the limousine hiding the actions within, but those engaging in nefarious acts know what is going on. God certainly does. A black cloud of darkness has descended upon our culture blinding it to the dangerous direction it is heading. Jesus had a remedy.

When your eyes are good, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are bad, our body also is full of darkness. See to it, then, that the light within you is not darkness.<sup>8</sup>

The eye is the focus of the will and our connection with reality. To rationalize evil to make it good we must darken our souls, lie to ourselves, justify our actions with webs of lies to convince ourselves and others that we are good even though we do evil things. Jesus warned, "If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!"<sup>9</sup>

The new morality is not new just a recent revival of an old empty philosophy. It has been updated, dressing up in new garb the deep hostility toward God and his good way for man to live—his Torah. Paul also warned: "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than Christ."<sup>10</sup> The bumper-sticker philosophy of the amoral Left is banal, superficial, appealing to the baser instincts of humans and to the unthinking crowd-followers.

Once started the moral decline can pick up speed unless brakes are applied to it. For the sake of our nation, our kids and grandkids, I pray that this downward slide can be stopped and a sincere national repentance begin. Otherwise, it will get worse.

The moral gutter of the decline usually includes sexual sins as Paul vividly describes in the first chapter of the Book of Romans. The decay begins with “godlessness,” putting God out of the picture in determining what is right and wrong, good and evil; it then proceeds to “suppress the truth” by wicked rationalizations and lies. These elites of the culture, “although they [once] knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and the foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise they became fools....”<sup>11</sup>

Darkened hearts do all sorts of dark, evil, unspeakable things. But Paul gives us a clue to what happens when people “exchange the truth of God for a lie” and give themselves “over in the sexual desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of the bodies with one another.”

Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion. Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not be done.

And it has gotten worse as the homosexual political lobby has bullied its way into redefining marriage itself—in effect, degrading marriage to just a legal piece of paper. Marriage, the first institution made by God for a man and woman to come together and make families and build a stable society is now coming apart. The ugly fruit the devaluation of traditional marriage is already ripe and rotting.

### Light Always Defeats Darkness

Rationalizing evil is a fool’s game. The lies and the fruit of the actualized lies will mount up like piles of stinking garbage along the street. People will eventually cry out for solutions and help. A nation can turn around and let truth and goodness have its say in the public square. A revival is always possible. Our job as agents of the Father of Lights is to practice purity and goodness in our own lives and let that light be a guide to those around us. We can also pray for the salvation of our people and cry out like Jeremiah for his fellow citizens to come to their senses. When the light of truth begins to shine, the darkness must flee.

We should, I believe, in a participatory democracy, use our voices to choose people who stand for traditional morality and against the amoral spirit of the times. Stand for leaders brave enough to not be intimi-

dated by noisy parades and money from the less than 3% of the population who are busy building a highway to Sodom and Gomorrah.

When awaking begins Yahweh will be merciful and forgive all sins. That day is coming and we pray it come quickly.

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you....I will put my spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws....You will be my people, and I will be your God.<sup>12</sup>

All rationalizations of evil will be made manifest, and vanish, when God brings his kingdom to earth. No need for the righteous to panic. Let the doers of evil panic for their days are numbered.<sup>13</sup>

### End Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Himmelfarb, Gertrude, *The De-Moralization of Society—From Victorian Virtues to Modern Values*, Alfred A Knopf, New York, 1995, pp. 234–5.
- <sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 235–6
- <sup>3</sup> Reilly, Robert R., *Making Gay Okay—How Rationalizing Homosexual Behavior Is Changing Everything*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 2014, pp. 3–4
- <sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4
- <sup>5</sup> Jeremiah 17:9–10, KJV
- <sup>6</sup> Reilly, p. 8
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, p. 9
- <sup>8</sup> Luke 11:4–35, NIV
- <sup>9</sup> Matthew 6:23, NIV
- <sup>10</sup> Colossians 2:8, NIV
- <sup>11</sup> Romans 1:18–31, various quotes from this section, NIV
- <sup>12</sup> Ezekiel 36:23–28
- <sup>13</sup> See also these fine books on this topic: Robert P. George, *Conscience and Its Enemies—Confronting the Dogmas of Liberal Secularism*, ISI Books, 2013; and, William Tucker, *Marriage and Civilization—How Monogamy made Us Human*, Regnery Publishing, 2014.

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*Ken Westby is a board member emeritus of the BSA, and founder and director of the Association for Christian Development and the Virtual Church ([www.godward.org](http://www.godward.org)).*

# Adjusting to our World and its Behavior

By *Bill Ellis*



## Special to ASSIST News Service

SCOTT DEPOT, WEST VIRGINIA (ANS) — I have already lived most of my life in this world. It is Springtime on the calendar, but I am into the Wintertime of life. I have never had more fun in living than I do now. All I have ever enjoyed I still enjoy and understand it all a lot more than I ever did.

I am writing this column on the day Spring begins. Where I live in magnificent West Virginia, one of the most wonderful states, loaded with exquisite beauty, the flowers of the season are preparing for their annual Easter parade of new creations. The snows of Winter have made their appearance in grand style and I enjoyed each new snowfall.

On the day before Spring officially arrived, I listened to Larry Edmonds deliver a speech on that which governs most of life. You knew for sure that he was talking about "ATTITUDE" — capitalized all the way.

He did it with an "acrostic" which is simply defined as a word puzzle, wordplay — another word game. He gave a special meaning to every word, all of which started with a letter in the important word we call "attitude." Larry Edmonds vigorously attached his acknowledge of attitude with words that help us understand what attitude is all about.

A – Activity such as Bible study, prayer and action are important.

T – Time to concentrate on important things.

T – Trust placed in God, self, family and friends.

I – Impossible things tend to overwhelm us. The angel said, "For nothing is impossible with God" (Luke 1:37).

T – Testimony, our own is very important in our daily living and example.

U – Understand what God wants us to do.

D – Determination is often the important key to success.

E – Education is learning and having enthusiasm for life.

Not only are politicians of every rank from the lowest to the highest, failing us in unbelievable ways, but we are also being failed by economists, educators, athletes and in dozens of other ways. Movies and television are both more filthy and meaningless than we have ever known.

Crime of every kind seems to be on the rise. "You shall not murder." Our society murders millions of unborn babies and we call it abortion and say it is legal. International tensions mount every day.

Sexual immorality is becoming the normal for many. Living as dead civilizations did just before their collapse. You may read about it in 1 Corinthians 6:9-20 and Romans 1:14-32. The brilliant and scholarly Paul wrote both of these great books in the New Testament.

Our world is in big trouble. Think seriously about how long you think it will continue to exist.

Bill Ellis is a syndicated columnist, and convention and conference speaker on every continent. He is the writer of more than 2,000 newspaper and magazine columns, articles and contributions to books. He is also a widely known motivational speaker and pulpit guest who utilizes enjoyment of life and just plain fun and laughter while speaking to high school, university and professional sports teams as well as to business and professional groups of all kinds. His keen understanding of human problems makes him a favorite speaker for youth, parent, and senior adult meetings. He is accompanied by Kitty, his wife, favorite singer, editor and publisher.

For information on becoming a subscriber to the Ellis Column for your newspaper or magazine, you may contact him at: BILL ELLIS, P.O. Box 345, Scott Depot, WV 25560 or by calling: 304-757-6089.

# Doctrines Out of Thin Air

*By Chris DeWeese*



YouVersion aka Bible.com sent me an email about Ash Wednesday the other day. This is strange because Bible Christians historically haven't observed Lent or the other Catholic traditions. There is even a banner referencing this unscriptural period of time on biblegateway.com. For some reason, the Catholic Church's doctrines beyond Sunday, Christmas, and Easter, are creeping into traditionally Bible believing churches. Even the Methodist church near my house has a sign up showing they are observing Lent and they observed the more obscure Catholic period of Advent last year.

The roots of most of the false doctrines of Christianity come from syncretism, or the blending of other religions into the true faith. Sunday comes from Mithraism and the other Sun-worshiping religions from antiquity and isn't to be found in the Bible at all. It is interesting to note that a great many religious leaders from across the spectrum of Christianity acknowledge that observing Sunday as a special day is not found within the pages of the Bible.

James Cardinal Gibbons, *The Faith of our Fathers*, 88th ed., pp. 89. "But you may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never sanctify."

For many, many more quotes on this, please reference the Bible Sabbath Association's website here [http://biblesabbath.org/index.php?pr=Catholic\\_and\\_Protestant\\_Confessions](http://biblesabbath.org/index.php?pr=Catholic_and_Protestant_Confessions)

Easter is from Astarte and the other fertility goddesses from days gone by. Christmas is from the sun-worshippers, too. But some doctrines come out of thin air.

It is tradition that Peter was crucified upside down in Rome. While Yeshua does hint at Peter being executed in John 21:18, there is no hint of Peter going to Rome in the New Testament. The end of the book of Acts shows that Paul spent two years in Rome. In fact, the latter part of the book of Acts chronicles Paul's journey to Rome in detail. Peter, who didn't even want to eat with Gentiles, is not likely to have desired to go to the epicenter of the Gentile world. In 1 Peter 5:13 it is recorded that Peter went to Babylon, the opposite direc-

tion. Paul, however, was destined to go to Rome and he surely started and ministered to the congregation there.

Another doctrine that comes out of nowhere is for clergy to wear all black. Both the Jews and the Catholics do this, but the only people who had official clergy clothing in scripture would be the sons of Aaron. If we see a guy with a beard in all black today, we automatically assume he's a Jewish Rabbi. If we see a clean shaven man wearing all black and a white collar, he's a Catholic Priest. But there is no scriptural reason for this at all.

Catholics have ashes put on their foreheads on Ash Wednesday. The Bible shows repeatedly that when something horrible happens, people put ashes on their own heads but there is nothing about doing this annually at a church. And there is nothing about keeping a Wednesday holy in the Bible, either. This is yet another doctrine made up out of thin air. Other Lenten practices, such as giving up some bad habit and calling it fasting or abstaining from meat on Fridays also have no basis in scripture and are hard to define in history as well.

It is a strange place we find ourselves in 21<sup>ST</sup> century Christianity. Those of us who adhere strictly to the Bible's commandments are viewed as the odd ones while those who are steeped in mainstream Christianity's invented doctrines are considered "orthodox." As we near the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread, let's take solace in that we are actually doing what is found in the Bible and commanded by Yahweh and His Son!

"So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus" (Revelation 12:17).

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*Chris came to the Sabbath through his wife Diana, who is a third generation Sabbath keeper. His path lead him to the Holy Days and the other truths through meeting people on the internet. "Chris is an elder of a fellowship focusing on early Christianity that is based off of his website [www.firstcenturychristianity.net](http://www.firstcenturychristianity.net)." Chris supervises a team of Field Service Engineers in the Bio-Medical Industry for his secular career.*

# Beyond the Days

## *By Aubrey Duncan*



Perhaps the best known and most quoted passage of Scripture of the entire Bible is John 3:16-17. It reads: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life...For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” This passage is so simple, yet so profound, but grossly misunderstood. Most people, particularly Christians, misinterpret this passage to make it relate to people that came into the world after the birth of Jesus Christ. They somehow believe and teach that salvation since Jesus’ first advent is obtained differently than salvation before Jesus came to earth.

This is a grave misunderstanding of Holy Writ. It is from this perspective of salvation that most of the conflict and confusion in Christendom, including that of the true Sabbath, arises. The apostles and members of the early church (the Way) had no such conflict or confusion about the Sabbath or about Christ and His mission. They understood clearly who He was and what His mission was about, i.e. God in the flesh, stooping to save all mankind, before and after His earthly sojourn. Jesus repeatedly pointed to the Old Testament Scriptures to help His followers and His enemies understand who He was and what His mission entailed. Here are two classic examples: “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” (John 5:39). “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself” (Luke 24:27).

But how could Jesus save all humanity when He only appeared on earth some 2,000 years ago? Simply, because He is fully God and fully man. The learned apostle Paul calls it a great mystery. (1 Timothy 3:16) The prophet Micah prophesied that He is from everlasting to everlasting: “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting” (Micah 5:2). Jesus Himself declared: “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty” (Revelation 1:8). The apostle John teaches us: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same

was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:1-3, 14). Matthew declares that He is God with us and that He shall save His people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21-23).

All of Scripture must be viewed within this context or erroneous conclusions will be drawn. Hence, one’s understanding of who truly is Jesus is at the foundation of the Sabbath/Sunday controversy.

Essentially, this debate centers around whether the Seventh-day Sabbath is only for Jews and Sunday for Christians. The fact of the matter is that the Bible does not in any way support either of these views. Yes, the Bible is clear in that it states that the Sabbath, as part of the Ten Commandments, was given to the Jews. However, nowhere does Scripture say that the Sabbath or any other of the Ten Commandments were exclusively for the Jews. Quite the contrary, the Bible repeatedly states that God’s commandments, including the Sabbath of the Ten Commandments, are for all mankind.

Jesus declared: “The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath” (Mark 2:28).

Jesus was born of Jewish ancestry, but He is the Savior of all mankind. Likewise the Ten Commandment Law, which includes the Sabbath commandment, was deposited to the Jewish nation from God through the hands of Moses; but is for all humanity. The ancient Jewish sanctuary with its services and sacrifices is an object lesson in the God’s plan of redemption for all humanity. At the center of it was Jesus Christ. The priest, the sacrifices, the seven branch candlestick, the shewbread, the door, the mercy seat, and all the accompanying ceremonies were figures and types of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. They thus prefigured God’s plan of salvation by which all men are saved, before and after the cross. It is the only way of salvation for all humanity.

The Jewish nation had the high and holy privilege of not only being the recipients of God’s Plan of Redemption, though in type; but they had the sacred responsibility to share it with the rest of the world. The prophet Isaiah declares: “ And He (God) said, It is a

light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth" (Is 49:6).

With specific reference to the Sabbath, its blessings and obligation rests upon all men. Isaiah further declared: "Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve Him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be His servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant" (Isaiah 56:2,6). The apostle Paul confirmed: "What advantage then hath the Jew? Or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God" (Romans 3:1-2). Please take note of Paul's definition of the real Jew in Romans 2:28-29.

The Creator's Plan of Redemption, which provides for the keeping of His commandments, through His grace, was not for the Jews only. It is for all humanity. It was not exclusive to the Jews any more than the resurrection of Jesus Christ is exclusive to Christians. Likewise, God's law, His Ten Commandments, is no more exclusive to the Jews than Jesus' life, death and resurrection is exclusive to Christians. God's law, which includes His Sabbath commandment and His plan of Redemption is for all mankind. They were both given before there was ever a Jew or a Christian. The Sabbath was established at creation (Genesis 2:2-3). The Plan of Redemption was prepared before the foundations of the earth. (Revelation 13:8).

With regards to Sunday sacredness, one can search the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, but would not find such a concept. It is rooted in pagan practices of antiquity. It is all about worshiping the created, the sun, and has absolutely nothing to do with worshiping the Creator, the Lord of the Sabbath. God calls this practice an abomination. (Ezekiel 8:15-16). This abominable concept has been passed on to the Christendom by the Roman Catholic Papacy. This institution claims that their tradition of Sunday sacredness, derived from antiquity's pagan practices, is above the Bible. It asserts that it has the power to change the Biblical command of God's Seventh-day Sabbath to Sunday. Further, it boastfully proclaims that anyone who honors Sunday is not following the God of creation; but rather doing her bidding. She boasts: "Protestants accept Sunday rather than Saturday as the day of public worship after the Catholic Church made the change...But the Protestant mind does not seem to realize that in observing the Sunday, they are accepting the

authority of the spokesman of the church, the pope..." (Our Sunday Visitor, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 1950)

Jesus Christ, who is our example, (John 14:6) (1 Peter 2:21) kept all of His Father's commandments, including the Seventh-day Sabbath. (John 15:10) (Matthew 5:17-19) (Luke 4:16). All of His Sabbath experiences recorded in the Gospels showed that He kept the seventh-day Sabbath holy. He warned that after His death and resurrection that the Sabbath should be kept holy. (Matthew 25:20). Even in death, he rested in the tomb on the Sabbath. His disciples regarded the Sabbath with such high esteem that they would not as much as anoint His body for burial on the Sabbath. The Scriptures state that they kept the Sabbath according to the commandment and came to his empty tomb on the first day of the week. (Luke 23:56-24-1). No record of them keeping Sunday sacred is even vaguely alluded to.

Attempting to make Sunday holy in respect of Jesus' resurrection is based on man's tradition and not the word of God. Only a Holy God can make a day holy. The day He has made holy is the 7<sup>th</sup> day Sabbath, today called Saturday. Nowhere in God's word does He vaguely suggest or explicitly command that His people keep a day in honor of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is a cunning tradition of men used to usurp the commandment of God to honor Him by keeping holy His blessed Sabbath day.

All Sunday sacredness arguments put forth by Christians are quite like the fig leaf garments that Adam and Eve concocted and wore after they sinned. They are worthless. God has assured us through the prophet Isaiah that in the earth made new we will keep His seventh-day Sabbath. Anyone planning on being there would be well advised to begin practicing it now. (Isaiah 66:22-23). God declares that those who will be blessed and would have a right to eternal life will keep all of His commandments. (Revelation 22:14).

Finally, with regards to the Sabbath day, two calls are going out to the world. The first one is from the God of creation calling men to worship Him as Creator by honoring His holy and blessed Sabbath day. (Revelation 14:6-7). The other is being stealthy pushed upon men to honor Sunday, thus giving their loyalty and worship to the anti-Christ power of Bible prophecy. It is an issue beyond the days.

The question is: Whom will you choose? My prayer is that you resolve, like the apostle Peter: "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

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*Aubrey Duncan is the author of the book, God's Sabbath Truth. He is an Elder at the Wimbish Road Seventh-day Adventist church, Macon, Georgia. [www.adventtruthtruth.org](http://www.adventtruthtruth.org), [duncan@thesabbattruth.org](mailto:duncan@thesabbattruth.org)*

# A Recent Supreme Court Decision

*By Whaid G. Rose*



In case you haven't already heard, I'm happy to report that the US Supreme Court recently ruled in favor of religious freedom in *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby*. Burwell is secretary of Health and Human Services. Hobby Lobby is one of the nation's leading arts and crafts retailers, owned and operated by Christians (David and Barbara Green of Oklahoma) who said "no" to a Health and Human Services mandate that requires the provision of insurance coverage for life-terminating drugs and devices. The Greens took their case all the way to the nation's highest court in defense of their right to operate their family-owned business on the basis of their deeply held religious convictions. And on June 30, the Supreme Court ruled in their favor in a 5-4 vote.

Understandably, conservative Christians are rejoicing over this landmark ruling, which represents more than just a victory for Hobby Lobby. In reality, it is a reaffirmation of religious liberty for all Americans, not just Christians, a foundational principle of the United States Constitution, addressed in the First Amendment. In essence, it guarantees that Americans need not abandon their deeply held religious convictions in order to operate a business or charity.

But make no mistake—the battle for religious freedom isn't over, but is rather intensified by this ruling. Liberals and those zealous for abortion and transgender rights have already begun efforts to restore the contraceptive coverage requirement under the Affordable Care Acts. Senators Patty Murray and Mark Udall are being joined by leaders of both chambers of Congress in support of a new bill they've nicknamed "Not My Boss's Business Act."

What can Christians do to protect religious liberty? What are the broader implications of this recent Supreme Court ruling? How can Christians truly be the light of Christ in the ever increasing darkness of our world? These and other related questions are at the heart of *the July 11 broadcast of Focus on the Family radio broadcast on commented on this decision*. Focus on the Family President, Jim Daly, and a panel of guests, including former Senator Bill Armstrong and others, had a lot to say about the recent high court decision and how it will affect traditional values and religious freedom in America going forward. And whether or not you listened to the broadcast, be sure to take a moment to give thanks to God for the many blessings we enjoy as a nation, including America's cherished "first freedom."

For religious liberty,

Whaid G. Rose

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*Whaid Rose is the president of the Church of God, Seventh day*

## Compulsion to Conform

*by Jim O'Brien*

My wife has a book entitled, "Everyone is Normal Until You Get to Know Them." It's a bittersweet concept. Bitter because all of us have baggage, as we say—sweet because there is no need to feel inferior—at least to other humans.

It's also overwhelming because we are offered entrance into the very family of God—who is flawless. We are told to "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48).

Maybe that's why one of the most interesting ironies of human nature is the compulsion to conform to other humans. Most people have enough weaknesses to create a natural resistance to imitation.

When I was in college a psychology professor told us to imagine looking at a classroom of 25 students. He said that 2 of the 25 would spend time in a mental hospital, 4 would be profoundly neurotic, 4 deeply neurotic, 4 mildly neurotic and only 8 to 10 would be fairly normal.

It's gotten worse over the years. Today about one-quarter of the adult population suffer from a diagnosable mental illness. That's more than 57 million people!

Over 2 million adults were admitted to a drug or alcohol rehabilitation center last year. And the day before they were admitted to the institution, some of them were passing you on the highway driving a car or big truck.

Add to this the financial indebtedness and serious health issues most people face on a daily basis. For example, the average student leaves college today with a debt of \$32,000!

Okay, enough of statistical bad news! I've made my point—why would any of us want to be like everybody else?

The truth is, if you want to be like everybody else then you'll get what everybody else gets.

There was a psychological study once that demonstrated the benefit of having an unusual name. Having a name that is, well, peculiar, was a factor that actually favored success. The author cited the name Elvis as an example that helped the singer become great. If his parents had named him Bill or Bob he would probably have worked the checkout counter at Kroger and driven a used Ford.

There is deep truth in the idea of our unique identity in God. The King James Version of the Bible uses the term "peculiar" when it refers to God's people. Moses quotes God as saying, "Ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people" (Exodus 19:5 KJV). In other words, you are special to God above the crowd because of your *lack* of conformity. That's a peculiar characteristic you can enjoy.

The thought is expressed at least 5 times in the Bible. The contemporary versions render the phrase peculiar as "treasured people" as in Deuteronomy 14:2 where Moses says, "Out of all the peoples on the face of the earth, the Lord has chosen you to be his treasured possession!" (Deuteronomy 14:2 NIV)

Being thought of as "different" isn't so bad after all.

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Jim is a pastor in Cincinnati, Ohio, and Lexington, Kentucky.

# The Church in the World

## ISIS, Kurds Clash Near Assyrian Town, 2000 Assyrian Families Driven From Mosul

By Jeremy Reynolds

Senior Correspondent for ASSIST News Service

**MOSUL, IRAQ (ANS)** — ISIS and Kurdish forces clashed yesterday at about 10 PM on the outskirts of Tel Kepe, an Assyrian town 13 miles north of Mosul.

According to a report by the Assyrian International News Agency (AINA), ISIS tried to take over a medicine factory about 1.5 miles west of Tel Kepe, but was forced to go back after a short battle.

The latest count of the number of Assyrian families driven out of Mosul stands at 2,000.

The following report is from the Christian Aid Program Nohadra Iraq (CAPNI), an aid organization of the Assyrian Church of the East.

In Mosul, all 30 churches and monasteries are under ISIS control. Crosses have been removed from all of them. Many of them have been burned, destroyed and looted, and many are used as ISIS centers

Here are a few examples.

AINA said ISIS converted the St. Ephraim Syriac Orthodox Cathedral in Al Shurta district (east side of Mosul) to a mosque and installed loudspeakers for call to prayers.

The Syriac Catholic church in the old part of Mosul was looted and torched. The Mar Gewargis (St. George) monastery was looted.

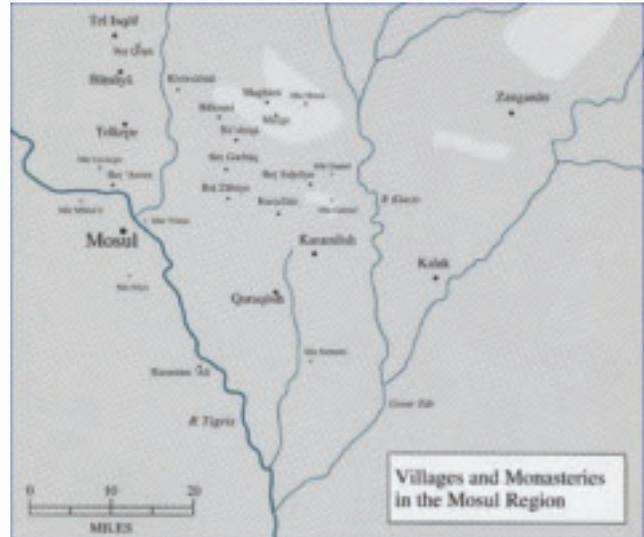
The Mar Thomas (St. Thomas) Syriac Catholic historical and old church was also looted after the doors were broken.

According to AINA, the Mar Behnam (St. Behnam) Syriac Catholic monastery in the ancient Assyrian town of Nimrod is controlled by ISIS.

Religious Sunni, Shiite and Christian tombs have been destroyed, according to Sharia. Shiite prayer mosques (Hussayniya) have been demolished.

AINA said all non-Sunni communities have been targeted by ISIS. Christian, Yazidi and Shiite religious sites have been destroyed. Turkish and Shabak Shiites have fled from their homes and villages.

Nearly 80 percent of the residents of Baghdede (Hamdaniya/Qaraqosh) have returned after fleeing from fighting between ISIS and Kurds.



Tel Kepe, upper left, where ISIS and Kurds are fighting

Baghdede, with a population of 50,000, is 97 percent Assyrian. There is still a severe shortage of electricity and water still cut off. Residents are using wells for water.

All municipal services have stopped.

The same conditions exist for the Assyrian towns of Bartilla, Bashiqa and Bahzany.

For more information visit [www.aina.org](http://www.aina.org)

See all ASSIST News articles at [www.assistnews.net](http://www.assistnews.net)

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Jeremy Reynolds is Senior Correspondent for the ASSIST News Service, a freelance writer and also the founder and CEO of Joy Junction, New Mexico's largest emergency homeless shelter, <http://www.joyjunction.org> He has a master's degree in communication from the University of New Mexico, and a Ph.D. in intercultural education from Biola University in Los Angeles. His newest book is *A Sheltered Life*.

Additional details on "A Sheltered Life" are available at <http://www.ashelteredlife.net>. Reynolds lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico. For more information contact: Jeremy Reynolds at [jeremyreynolds@comcast.net](mailto:jeremyreynolds@comcast.net).

# Notices and Advertisements



## A website for kids

We want our children to enjoy the Sabbath day, yet to learn appropriate activities acceptable to our Father, which can be challenging.

Yahweh's Assembly in Messiah, Rocheport, Missouri, has a children's website which has been designed for this exact purpose. We have tried to make it eye-appealing for children and periodically change the background to keep it that way.

There are lessons on all Yahweh's Feast Days which are available within a month or so of the special time under "Feast Days."

You will see, under "Bible Books," that we are putting actual books of the Bible online in a format easy for children to read with activities scattered throughout each segment. At the end of each chapter, there is an interactive quiz for them to take—no records kept.

[www.yahwehschildren.org](http://www.yahwehschildren.org)  
[www.yaim.org](http://www.yaim.org)

Be sure to check out the BSA Web site. We are making a lot of changes and additions to our site, which we think you will want to take advantage of. You can access the BSA site at

<http://www.biblesabbath.org>

Get your copy of her book,  
*The House of Yahweh My Side  
of the Story.*

Send \$12.95 to  
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P.O. Box 921,  
Abilene, TX 79604

## Why Do You Observe Sunday?

### THE BIBLE TEACHES THE OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH!

Which day of the week did Christ and the apostles observe? Which day did Paul teach gentile converts to observe? How was the day of rest and worship changed from the seventh to the first day of the week? 1 Thessalonians 5:21 commands us to "Prove all things." Please read this booklet with an open mind. If you are already right, honest investigation will confirm it. If you are wrong, you should want to know.  
T205 \$ .20 each or \$20 (100) (nonmembers add \$4 shipping) (Good for evangelizing).

## Advertise in The Sabbath Sentinel

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

**Display ads** are available at \$150 per quarter page for each issue the ad is published. Where possible your camera-ready copy will be utilized, or we will design your display ad for you. Send copy for all ads and payment to The Bible Sabbath Association, 802 N.W. 21<sup>st</sup> Ave., Battle Ground, WA, USA.

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

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# *The Sabbath Sentinel*

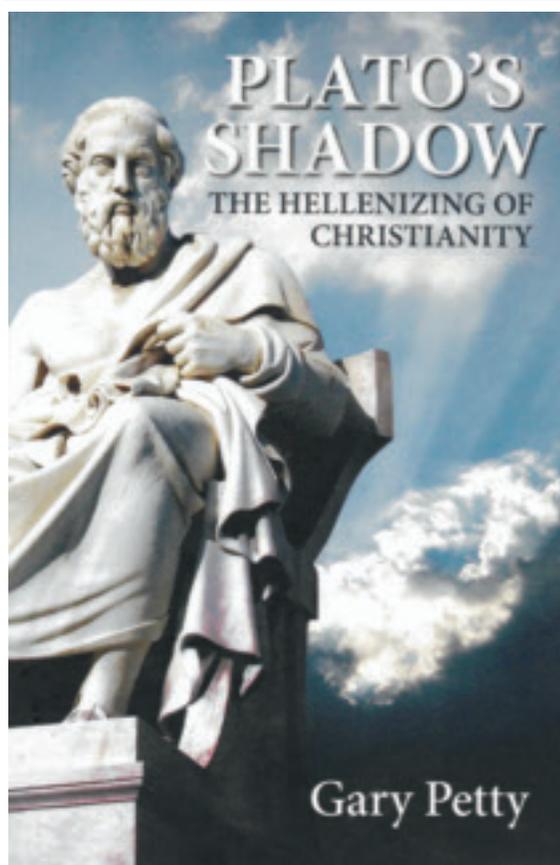
*A Bi-monthly Publication of*

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