


THE Sabbath Sentinel

September–October 2006



**Jerusalem:
City of Peace,
Prize of War**

BSA — The Bible Sabbath Association

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

The Sabbath Sentinel

September–October 2006 Volume 58, No. 5 Issue 521

FEATURES

- 4 **How to Deal with the Fear of Terrorism**
by Loren Seibold
- 6 **Smiting Amalek**
by Daniel Botkin
- 7 **The Acceptable Offense**
by Israel Steinmetz
- 8 **How to Become a Winner**
by Donald Mansell.
- 9 **Profaning the Sabbath Day (Part 1)**
by Jonathan Sjørdal
- 12 **Angels and the Thirteen Sabbath Songs**
by Kenneth Westby

DEPARTMENTS

- 3 **Editorial—Jerusalem, “A Cup of Trembling”**
- 18 **Hebrew Roots Featurette — Parallelism: A Key to Interpretation**
- 19 **Sabbath Morning Companion: Putting People First**
by Lenny Cacchio
- 22 **The Church in the World**
- 23 **Notices and Advertisements**

Our Cover: Jerusalem, the Old City
Photo by Dreamstime.

The Sabbath Sentinel is published bimonthly by The Bible Sabbath Association, 3316 Alberta Drive, Gillette, WY 82718. Copyright © 2006, by The Bible Sabbath Association. Printed in the U.S.A. All rights reserved. Reproduction in any form without written permission is prohibited. Nonprofit bulk rate postage paid at Rapid City, South Dakota.

Editor: Kenneth Ryland, tss_editor@biblesabbath.org

Associate Editors: Julia Benson & Shirley Nickels

BSA’s Board of Directors for 2004-2007:

President: Kenneth Ryland, ken_ryland@biblesabbath.org

Vice President: Marsha Basner, marsha_basner@biblesabbath.org

Vice President: June Narber, june_narber@biblesabbath.org

Treasurer: Bryan Burrell, bryan_burrell@biblesabbath.org

Secretary: John Paul Howell, john_howell@biblesabbath.org

Webmaster: John Paul Howell, john_howell@biblesabbath.org

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

Office Manager—Gillette Office: Shirley Nickels

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

International addresses:

Australia: Bible Sabbath Associates, Walter & Cindy Steensby, P.O. Box 4305, Hawker ACT 2614, Australia. E-mail: steensby@netspeed.com.au

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

Philippines: Enrique M. Gabuyo, 398 Kinville Subdivision, Calamba Laguna 4027, Philippines, cogemg007@yahoo.com

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

Address Service Requested

For a FREE subscription to *The Sabbath Sentinel*

Call (888) 687-5191, email us at membership@biblesabbath.org or visit our website at www.biblesabbath.org.



Jerusalem, “A Cup of Trembling”

Zechariah 12:2-4: “Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it. In that day, saith the LORD, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness: and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the people with blindness.”

Right now “the people round about” Judah and Jerusalem are not trembling. Judah (the modern nation of Israel) is the one trembling. Even though the Hezbollah terrorists suffered significant losses in their recent 34-day conflict with Israel, they and many terror-sponsoring states in the Muslim world consider the war’s outcome to be a great victory for Hezbollah. Why is this so?

Simply put, Israel cut and ran. Israel’s war in southern Lebanon was a politicians’ war, not a soldier’s war. When it appeared to the politicians that Israel had made progress in driving the terrorists away from the border and that they had a “deal” with the UN to police southern Lebanon, the current crop of Israeli politicians said, “Great! We’ll withdraw.”

In the meantime the terrorists have taken heart because of the Israelis’ attitude. Because they were not completely vanquished, as they have been in every other war with the Israelis, the terrorists and their sponsoring states are looking at the recent war as a victory. All across the Middle East the confidence of those who desire to destroy all Jews and Christians has been buoyed. Their self-assurance is sky-high.

What happens in Jerusalem and Israel is central to many Christians’ and religious Jews’ thinking about the coming of the Messiah. Israel is the nucleus of prophecy. The expectation is that, when the world is at its worst and Jerusalem is on the verge of being overwhelmed by the forces of darkness, Messiah will intervene from heaven and plant his feet on the Mount of Olives. In that day He will crush the forces that his enemy the devil has amassed against Him.

Who but God Himself can say when that final event will be? One thing for certain is that the stakes are much higher than ever. The terrorists are more confident and better armed. Iran is on the verge of obtaining nuclear weapons. Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad would like to use his nuclear weapons to bring the trials of Armageddon on the world. He believes that the

purpose of his Islamic Revolution is to pave the way for the appearance of the Twelfth Imam, a messiah-like figure that disappeared from the world in about 939 A.D., and will reappear as the prophesied redeemer of Islam. This final Imam will change the world into a perfect Islamic society before the “Day of the Resurrection.”

With each new conflict between the Jews and their Muslim neighbors the weapons are more potent and the potential for loss of life on both sides is much greater. By the time you read this, it is possible that the region will be enveloped in another military conflict. This time the Israelis will strike back much harder to reestablish the aura of dominance that prevailed in the past. The Israelis are determined to convince their foes that Jerusalem and Judah are indeed a cup of trembling for any who dare to think they can threaten the Jewish nation’s existence.

I wish I could present you with an immediate favorable conclusion to this perpetual firefight that has continued since the modern nation of Israel’s birth in 1948. This article is as unfinished as the wars in the Middle East. The immediate problem for all of us is that there are no safe havens as we learned on September 11, 2001. There are just places that are a little safer than others.

As we see the escalating nature of this fight, we cannot allow ourselves to become fixated on the conflict and our own fear that it might somehow engulf the world and us personally. The fact that Jesus at his coming will have to fight to establish his dominance over the nations tells us that wars and hostility toward the people of Christ will continue and worsen until the day he arrives as King of kings and Lord of lords. We must never forget that we, like Abraham, seek another “city,” whose builder and maker is God. Jesus said that in this world we will have tribulation, but he also said in Luke 21:28, “Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.” —Kenneth Ryland

How to Deal with the Fear of Terrorism

by Loren Seibold

It may well be the lead story on tonight's newscast: A car bomb on a busy street. A suicide bomber in a Middle Eastern restaurant. An exploding package in a thronged marketplace. Machine guns fired into a crowd. Though we may be far from where it happens, each time we hear it, something within us tightens, like a wrench applied to a bolt.

The perpetrators are inscrutable, unknown; their attacks, unexpected. The psalmist might have been describing them when he spoke of "terror by night,"¹ for it is the strategy of these people that we can't anticipate their violence or see where it comes from. For that reason, it frightens us long after it is over, even when an attack is unlikely.

That is, of course, why it's called terrorism.

An ancient problem

Terrorism is nothing new. In biblical times, tribal warriors would raid peaceful herders' encampments, killing men and taking women and children captive. The first organized terrorist cells were documented at the time of Jesus, when a sect of devout Jews, called Zealots, rebelled against the Roman occupation of Palestine. They rejected open confrontation in favor of covert tactics: garroting a Roman official on a dark street or slipping a blade between his ribs in the press of a crowd. Like terrorists today, these few made an impression on the Roman Empire far greater than their numbers.

Interestingly, Jesus had a Zealot numbered among His disciples.² Though we know little about Simon the Zealot (not to be confused with Simon Peter), some of Jesus' teachings sound as if they were for Simon's benefit. A terrorist would likely have approved the maxim "'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.'" "³ Jesus countered with, "'If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.'" "⁴ Roman law allowed a soldier to conscript a passerby to shoulder his armor and pack for one mile. Imagine how that would anger a Zealot! Jesus might have been addressing Simon when He said, "'If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.'" "⁵

Under Jesus' guidance, Simon conquered his anger. Not all Zealots did. In A.D. 73, a remnant of nine

hundred secured themselves at Masada, a nearly impregnable mountaintop fortress near the Dead Sea; so angry were the Romans with these terrorists that soldiers spent months constructing a massive earthen ramp to the fortress. But when they finally reached the top of Masada, they found that all nine hundred Zealots, men, women, and children, had committed mass suicide—making them, in a sense, the first suicide terrorists.

Pervasive fear

Though nothing of the magnitude of the World Trade Center attack has happened again, our fear of terrorism hasn't gone away. In truth, the actual statistical threat to people like us (even if more terrorist attacks were successful) is small beside the danger of, say, death from an auto accident or heart disease. Yet there need be no actual danger for us to feel afraid; imagining ourselves in danger is enough to rob us of peace of mind.

Some try to address their fear by taking matters into their own hands. One troubling response to the attacks on America in 2001 was a surge in gun purchases—though there was nothing in the entire 9/11 episode that could have been addressed by an average person having a gun in his house. But people didn't buy guns because they really thought a terrorist would knock on their door one evening during dinner. They bought them to feel more secure. Having a means of defense (whether or not they would ever use it) gave people a false sense of security. Some experts opined that gun buyers may actually have become less secure: Given the prevalence of gun-related accidents, it's likely that the arming of the American public against terrorism, though it nabbed not a single terrorist, led to more ordinary people being shot.

How to attack fear

The Bible suggests three ways to conquer fear.

First, trust God to care for you. The faithful of Scripture repeatedly testify to God's protection. King David, often in danger from enemies, declared, "The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; the God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence."⁶

I wonder how often God has saved me from threats to my life, health, and happiness that I didn't even know about? It is no exaggeration to say that if you are reading this right now, you can be sure God has constantly protected you and kept you in His care! Why not take comfort in His protection 99.999% of our lives, rather than worry about the minuscule chance of being a terrorists' victim? God doesn't want us to live fearful lives! Paul insists, "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."⁷

Second, Jesus encouraged us to seek inner peace—no matter what is happening around us. Not peace we must purchase and then manage by our own judgment, strength, and reflexes (as with a firearm), but peace that comes from knowing God is with us. Jesus Himself lived with the knowledge that He was going to die a violent death; yet He trusted His life to His Father's care. " 'Let not your heart be troubled,' " He said. " 'You believe in God, believe also in Me.' " " 'For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.' "⁸ Terrorism weighs heavy on our minds; but Jesus offers a light burden! Clearly, Jesus is not as worried about terrorism (or, for that matter, war or cancer or the stock market) as we are! He knows that by the mercy of His Father, all things will ultimately redound to the good of those who love Him.⁹

Surprisingly, the best antidote to terror may not be self-defense, but a kind, open, and sympathetic heart. The apostle John, who himself suffered much at the hands of cruel men, wrote, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment."¹⁰ How much less torment might we suffer if we'd try, as Jesus said, to love our enemy?¹¹ There is no natural end to a cycle of revenge; but might not our enemy, met with love and understanding rather than hate, be less likely to continue his destruction?

Finally, fix your mind on the life beyond this life. Jesus never ruled out the possibility of our facing genuine danger down here. " 'In this world you will have trouble,' "¹² He said. His own shortened life demonstrated that on this earth, even the very best people are not safe. But eternal salvation is more important than present safety: "Fear not them which kill the body,

but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."¹³

Jesus is, at this very moment, preparing a safe place for us.¹⁴ "Fear not, little flock," comforted Jesus, "for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."¹⁵ Earthly kingdoms will always be troubled. The kingdom God is preparing for us will never be troubled! The most compelling reason to set aside our fear is that beyond this life is a world utterly without terrorism—or any reason for it.

End Notes

(1) Psalm 91:5, KJV. (2) Luke 6:15. (3) Matthew 5:38. (4) Verse 39. (5) Verse 41. (6) 2 Samuel 22:2, 3, KJV. (7) 2 Timothy 1:7, KJV. (8) John 14:1, NKJV; Matthew 11:30, NKJV. (9) Romans 8:28. (10) 1 John 4:18, KJV. (11) Matthew 5:44. (12) John 16:33. (13) Matthew 10:28, KJV. (14) John 14:2. (15) Luke 12:32, KJV.

Reprinted with permission from *Signs of the Times*, August 2006.

Loren Seibold writes from Worthington, Ohio. Loren is the Senior Pastor of the Worthington Seventh-day Adventist Church. Loren has served congregations in the Dakotas (SDA) and as Pastor in Palo Alto, California. He was the Vice-president and founding member of the Samaritan Community Counseling Center in Palo Alto, a member of the Central California Conference Executive Board (SDA), member of the dissertation review committee of the San Francisco Theological Seminary, volunteer with Amistad Foundation, member of the Human Rights Committee of the US Veterans Administration. He currently serves as associate editor for *Ministry* magazine.

Correction

In the last issue of the Sentinel, page 19, col. 1, bottom of page, reads as follows:

Conclusion

It was not possible to cover all the baseless claims that evolutionists adduce to try to convince the public that God is not the Creator of all things, and that man is really not the final answer to all moral and spiritual questions.

The paragraph should read:

Conclusion

It was not possible to cover all the baseless claims that evolutionists adduce to try to convince the public that God is not the Creator of all things, and that *man* really *is* the final answer to all moral and spiritual questions.

Smiting Amalek

by Daniel Botkin



Through the Prophet Samuel, Yahweh told King Saul to “smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass” (1 Sam. 15:3).

In a spiritual sense, the commandment to smite Amalek is a commandment for all disciples. Saul was a king and ruled a kingdom. You are a little king (or queen) and rule over your own “kingdom,” i.e., your personal life. God gives you free will and you decide what choices to make for your life. You can choose to obey God’s commandments and do things His way, or you can choose to disobey His commandments and do things your own way. Concerning Amalek, God’s commandment is to smite him, to utterly destroy him, and to show him no mercy. “We wrestle not against flesh and blood,” Paul wrote, but there is a spiritual Amalek that we must smite and utterly destroy.

What does Amalek represent in the spiritual realm? Amalek was a descendant of Esau, the carnal man who sold his birthright for a bowl of lentil soup. Esau is a picture of the man who values his fleshly appetites more than he values the things of the spirit. Amalek was the fruit of Esau; therefore our Amalek is the “old man,” the sinful, fleshly nature that places more importance on the things of the flesh than on the things of the spirit. Amalek represents the flesh in the ongoing internal struggle between the flesh and the spirit.

This conflict goes all the way back to the womb of Rebecca, where Esau, the forefather of Amalek, and Jacob, the forefather of Israel, “struggled together within her” (Gen. 25:22). What Rebecca experienced in a physical sense, we experience in a spiritual sense. Our desire to sin and our desire to do good play tug-of-war inside us. Galatians 5:17 describes it this way: “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to

the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.”

Our carnal desire to sin is very strong and very persistent. Amalek tugs at our heart constantly, using whatever means he can to tempt us. What should we do about the Amalek who lives inside us? Reform him? Educate him? Try to improve his self esteem? No, none of these things, because Amalek cannot be changed; he is incorrigible. The only way to deal with Amalek is to smite him and utterly destroy him. God’s solution for the problem of the old sinful nature is to kill it, not reform it. In New Testament terminology, “they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts” (Gal. 5:24).

To provide some context for the above verse, Paul first contrasts the works of the flesh to the fruit of the Spirit: “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murder, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts” (Gal. 5:19-24).

This contrast between the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit describes the difference between “Amalek,” the old sinful desires of the flesh, and “Israel,” the new holy desires of the spirit. The only way to end the struggle between Amalek and Israel is to smite Amalek. Those who truly belong to the Messiah do this very thing, for “they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” If you



Samuel rebukes Saul.

Continued on Page 20

The Acceptable Offense

Followers of a narrow gospel must watch their actions toward those in the broad way.

by Israel Steinmetz

Increasingly surrounded by pluralistic, relativistic, and postmodern notions and worldviews, Christians in America and in other Western societies face a daunting challenge.

Freedom of expression, full rights for all lifestyles, and tolerance have become bywords of this generation, many of whom reject the Bible, absolute truth, and transcendent morality. More and more people believe that all religions teach essentially the same, that no single view of truth is more accurate than another, and that all spiritual paths eventually lead to heaven.

In the midst of this broad way are Christians proclaiming a narrower gospel. It declares all people sinners by nature and choice, and that without God's mercy and grace through Christ, we are all headed to death and damnation. Religions that deny this mislead people and are devoted to false gods.

It is no surprise, then, that Christians are often perceived as exclusive and offensive to those in the broad way. If our eyes and ears are open, we will bear the brunt of their satire, criticism, and political activism. It must be, said Jesus, that offenses will come.

Christians must be careful, however, that the offenses we cause are acceptable in the Lord's sight. Sadly, we may offend others for all the wrong reasons.

Irrelevant faith

One common offense is when we portray a boring, irrelevant, and detached faith. Although Mark Batterson, pastor of National Community Church, may be overstating when he claims, "Irrelevance is Irreverence," and although Char Meredith's book *It's a Sin to Bore a Kid* adds to biblical definitions of sin, they believe that the church's failure to meaningfully transmit the gospel to the world amounts to a grievous offense against God. Point well taken.

Consider Jesus' example. Through imaginative stories and simple lessons, He taught profound truths to common people and attracted those who would seldom enter most of our churches. Or consider Paul, who found a hearing in the Areopagus, a center for philosophical discourse in heady Athens (Acts 17:16-34). The point is that the world's failure to respond to the gospel may be more because of the offense of a dull,

out-of-touch church than it is the true offense of the cross of Christ. The gospel is the most compelling, life-changing message in the world and should arouse either a humbled confession or a jeering laugh—but not a disinterested yawn!

Pride

Another unacceptable offense is Christians' pride toward unbelievers. Many believers—particularly those raised in churches—look down on unbelievers. We forget that we, too, were rescued from sin and rebellion. Were it not for the grace of God and others' help, we would go the same way as the sinners around us.

May the church never forget that we are spiritual beggars who have been given the Bread of Life.

Lack of compassion

Christians also forget Christ's compassion toward them when they tell the bad news about "those sinners" without ever sharing the good news. Make no mistake: The gospel is not the gospel if it doesn't promise condemnation for those who reject it. But neither is it the gospel unless it promises restoration, wholeness, and life to those who accept.

Many have seen signs reading "God hates fags!" at anti-gay rallies. Does this communicate good news to slaves of sin and of sexual immorality? Jesus welcomed prostitutes and sinners, ate with them, and shared with them words of eternal life. The church must do the same if it is to become like Christ and teach His gospel. Failure to practice the love of Christ toward sinners is to earn the world's offense and invite its curse.

Hypocrisy

Being one type of person around saints, then changing for non-believers, offends both God and men. Jesus commands believers to live so that even the average man or woman would glorify God (Matthew 5:16).

Part of Christians' hypocrisy is their failure to admit wrong and to ask forgiveness from unbelievers. Such acts of honest humility can be powerful in winning the world for Christ.

Isolation

Finally, the church is often offensive in its isolation from the world. Someone has said that rather than being in the world but not of it, the church is oftentimes of the world but not *in* it. God's people have too often retreated from their primary mission and become little more than a religious ghetto.

When this happens, unbelievers have a right to be offended. Christians must not retreat into a cloister, under the guise of escaping the sinfulness of the world. Rather, we should participate in business, education, government, medicine, and many other fields that need the light of Christ. We must establish friendships with those who need to hear the gospel. Christ left the church in the world as His witness. True to its calling, the church will shine there until He returns.

Offense of Jesus

What, then, is the acceptable offense that Christians should commit?

It is Jesus himself—the living stone, accepted by God but rejected by men. To those who believe, Jesus is precious; to those who do not believe, He is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense (1 Peter 2:7, 8). True followers of Christ should commit the offense of sharing Jesus with others.

Paul explains further that when Jesus the crucified Christ is proclaimed, He becomes a stumbling block to the sign-seeking Jews and foolishness to the wisdom-seeking Greeks (1 Corinthians 1:21-25). This is, as Paul says in Galatians 5:11, the “offense of the cross,” and it is inescapable for all who love the Lord who died thereon.

When Christians follow Jesus faithfully and proclaim the gospel without compromise, they are destined to offend those who reject the gospel. Such offenses stem from unbelievers' rejection of Christ, not from believers' sinfulness.

Christians must not use the gospel as an excuse for offending unbelievers if, in fact, our irrelevance, pride, lack of love, hypocrisy, or isolation is causing the offense. However, if we proclaim the pure and exclusive gospel of Jesus Christ in a pluralistic, hedonistic, relativistic culture, we can rest assured that the offense is acceptable to God.

Reprinted with permission from Bible Advocate, April-May 2006. Israel Steinmetz is a graduate seminary student living in Chesapeake, VA.

A man may have to die for our country: but no man must, in any exclusive sense, live for his country. He who surrenders himself without reservation to the temporal claims of a nation, or a party, or a class is rendering to Caesar that which, of all things, most emphatically belongs to God: himself.” —C. S. Lewis

How to Become a Winner

Unto man belong the resolves of the heart; but from the Lord cometh the expression of the tongue. Prov. 16:1, Leeser.

One of the catchiest billboard advertisements I have ever seen pictured a young teen-ager leaning forward with his fists on a car battery, a cocky, chip-on-the-shoulder expression on his face, accompanied by a caption that read: “Want to start something?”

People who start arguments sometimes win them, because people who don't start them often allow them to. Generally those who lose do so because they show their hand from the beginning, giving their adversary, who perhaps did not show his hand, an advantage. So, if you want a better chance to win an argument, don't start it.

The second rule, when someone tries to provoke an argument, is: Don't say a word—*not one word*. This accomplishes two things: 1) it throws the challenger off balance, and, 2) it gives you time to think—and pray. Most people find this the hardest step to follow, but it can be done. The secret is to resolve *before* the argument that you are not going to allow yourself to be drawn into it, no matter what, and ask God to help you. He will, if you ask in faith and really mean it.

The third rule is: Let the other person run out of steam. When the other person realizes that you are not responding to his challenges, he will probably repeat them. Next time he pauses, just say, “I'm listening”—and you are listening, not with an air of superiority, but humbly and respectfully. He may have something worth listening to.

After a while the challenger will begin to repeat himself, and eventually he will run out of things to say. At this point a few choice words could deliver a *coup de grace*. But as a Christian this is not your purpose. Your purpose is to win a friend, not an argument. So you say something like: “Well, that is certainly one way to look at it,” then you go on calmly to present your point of view. Occasionally, at this juncture, the other person will concede that you have better reasons for believing as you do than he has for believing as he does. By saving his face you make it possible for him to accept gracefully another point of view.

This method of meeting arguments can be used effectively in soul winning. In some instances that I have heard of, whole congregations have been won to our message by this method—including the pastors.

During the course of this day you may meet individuals who will challenge you to an argument. Why not turn such challenges into opportunities for winning souls? Remember: “Unto man belong the resolves of the heart; but from the Lord cometh the expression of the tongue.”

Donald Mansell, New Every Morning, page 94. Review & Herald Publishing Ass'n. 1981.

Profaning the Sabbath Day (Part 1)

by Jonathan Sjørdal

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do All thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of YHWH thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days YHWH made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore YHWH blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.”

Exodus 20:8-11

Part I: The Work

The fourth commandment is clear: we are to abstain from doing our labor on the seventh day of the week—the Sabbath day. For those who wish to heed the words of our Father in heaven who gave us his Laws, the following discussion pertains to how to obey the seventh day Sabbath command of our Creator, not how to *replace* or *ignore* it.

The Sabbath day command is for the master as well as the servant. The master is commanded to cease from his labors, and not to compel his servants nor even his beasts to labor on the Sabbath day. It is a day to devote to our Creator, the one day in seven that we give to our Father, as he commanded us.

Abstaining from work on the Sabbath day can cause employment difficulties. You may lose your job, or not even get hired in the first place. But persistence will pay off, and in our modern society, you can find a way to make a living that allows you not to work on the seventh day. Yet this was not always so.

What about feeding the animals?

Most of the population of ancient Israel were farmers. They raised animals for meat and wool, for sacrifices, and also used animals to plow their fields. They had to feed and water the animals (which is real work!) on the Sabbath day. Even the ultra-righteous-appearing Scribes and Pharisees were aware of this fact of life. When the ruler of the synagogue chastised Yahoshua (Hebrew name translated *Jesus* in English) for healing on the Sabbath day, our Messiah put him in is proper place:

The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? Luke 13:15

Don't fall into the ignorance of "city people" in thinking that the animals were all out in the fields grazing and finding their own water, so that there was no need to care for them on the Sabbath day. That is true only for some animals, and not at all true in the winter. Animals must be fed, and cows and goats must be milked (twice daily), even on the Sabbath day. And even those animals that are out in the far pastures grazing had a shepherd to protect them from the lions and bears. Did the shepherd simply take the day off on the sabbath day so that the lions and bears could dine in peace? As with the other elements of this issue, we *must account for reality* in order to make sense of the whole thing.

In our modern society, with most of us not having animals to care for, it is relatively easy to forget that there is some work that *must* be done on the Sabbath day. We have become sheltered from *reality* in these days when we have so many specialized jobs. We might well live our whole lives without having a job that requires necessary work on the sabbath day.

What is the test for which work is necessary? The famous "ox in a ditch" passage sheds some light:

And Yahoshua answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day? And they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go; And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day? Luke 14:3-5

Q: Why could the ox be pulled out of the pit (a HUGE amount of work) on the Sabbath day?

A: Because it was necessary. It was something that could NOT be done yesterday or tomorrow (the ox might be dead by then).

The Scribes and Pharisees were constantly trying to find ways to trip up Yahoshua, to trap him in his words, or accuse him of some unlawful action:

At that time Yahoshua went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day. But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests? Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless? But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple. But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day. Matthew 12:1-8

The Pharisees' accusation of breaking the fourth commandment was a false accusation. The disciples were NOT breaking the Law (Hebrew: *Torah*) of the Sabbath day by feeding themselves. They were not doing harvesting labor, nor causing someone else to do it on their behalf. The Pharisees had created their own law (the traditions of men that our Messiah so roundly condemned) that prohibited far more than the Torah did. It *appeared* that the disciples were breaking the fourth commandment, but a closer look revealed that this was not so.

In a similar manner, our Messiah quoted two other examples from the Old Testament where it *appeared* that men of God had broken the Sabbath day command. David appeared to have broken the law of the showbread that was to be before YHWH continually. Indeed, had David taken the showbread from before the altar, he would have transgressed the Torah. But the account in 1 Samuel 21 states that the bread had just been replaced that day (which was a Sabbath day) by the fresh bread that replaced the old bread every Sabbath day. So David's action did not break the Torah of the showbread, for the new showbread had been placed before the altar that very day.

In the other example Yahoshua used, he reminded the Pharisees that on the Sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, which is to say that they do the temple work that was commanded of them. Again, though what the priests did *was work*, it was work that was commanded by YHWH himself, and therefore did not break the Sabbath day commandment. Yahoshua continually reminded the Pharisees that he and his disciples kept the Torah, not the vain traditions of men.

Do you obey the fourth commandment? How do you feel about work on the Sabbath day? You may surprise yourself. Take the Sabbath day work test:

It's Sabbath day morning, and...

...your house is on fire. You get everyone out of the house, and you're standing on the lawn with your cell phone in your hand. Do you call the fire department?

Yes No

...your daughter has eaten some little red berries she found on a bush in the yard. She's complaining about terrible pain in her stomach. Do you call the poison control hotline?

Yes No

...an armed burglar breaks into your house. You manage to disarm him, and tie him to a chair. Do you call the police?

Yes No

...your husband has chest pains. His left arm is feeling numb. Do you take him to the Emergency Room?

Yes No

...you hear on the radio that there is an ongoing violent uprising near the Mexican border where American citizens are being killed hour by hour. Do you approve of our border patrol agents fighting to save the lives of the American citizens that are in the path of the killers?

Yes No

...you are on your way to church and you lose control of your car. Your husband is ejected, and badly injured. The paramedics show up. Do you allow them to save your husband's life?

Yes No

...your wife is seriously ill and has been in the hospital for five days. Do you keep the IV's in and allow the nurses to care for her throughout the day?

Yes No

...the winter weather caused you to keep all your farm animals in the barn. Do you feed them and milk the cows?

Yes No

The command to cease from your labor on the sabbath day is not separated from the reality of the human condition. There are necessary functions that must be performed in order for people to live. As our Messiah said, "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath." Disobeying the Sabbath day command is sin. But it is also sin to make an idol out of the Sabbath day, putting the Sabbath day before all else, including helping people by doing *necessary* work.

What defines "necessary"? Is a waitress performing necessary work when she serves food to patrons on the Sabbath day? What would happen if waitresses didn't work and restaurants were to shut down on the Sabbath day? Would anyone be hurt? Even if the restaurant is one's only source of food (an unlikely proposition), fasting won't hurt you, and might even give

you incentive to use the preparation day (the day before the Sabbath day) for its intended purpose.

If it can be done yesterday or tomorrow without any serious consequences, it is work that is not necessary on the Sabbath day.

Examples of Necessary Workers

Farmers	Paramedics
Firefighters	911 operators
Policemen	Poison Control operators
Doctors	Midwives
Nurses	Military & Border Patrol agents

One measure of how *necessary* these functions are is to consider the behavior of devout Sabbath-day keepers. Such people would never shop, mow the lawn, go to the office to work, or even go out to eat on the Sabbath day. But they would (and do!) depend upon and call upon the people who do these *necessary* functions when there is a need for them. How many Yes boxes did you check in the test above? How do you feel about your approval of other people working *for you* on the Sabbath day?

We expect (and even demand!) that people who work in these professions to be on duty, even during the sabbath day. If we had a NEED for any of these people to help us on the sabbath day, would we not call upon them for help? Of course we would! If our house is on fire on the Sabbath day, any of us would call the firefighters to help. We expect, and *insist* upon their help, because the fire can't wait until tomorrow.

If you have a serious injury, you go to the Emergency Room at the hospital. You fully expect that there will be trained people there to help you. It would be folly to shut down the Emergency Room with a sign saying that injured people and mothers in labor should come back tomorrow for help. In some cases, waiting until tomorrow would mean greater injury or even death. And what about the gravely ill who are already lying in the hospital? Should the doctors and nurses self-righteously go home for the Sabbath day, and not care for these people? As always, *elitist thinking falls apart when confronted with reality*.

While insisting that these functions be staffed on the Sabbath day, do we then condemn the people who are there to help us by classifying their service to us as Sabbath breaking? "My sincere thanks for coming to put out my house fire, *you infidel!*" In saying to these people that we insist that their kind of work be done on the Sabbath day, but that they are wrong to do that work on the Sabbath day, we demonstrate elitist behavior, and outright *hypocrisy*.

The Bible has a few things to say about hypocrites & hypocrisy: Job 8:13; 13:16; 15:34; 17:8; 20:5; 27:8; 34:30; 36:13; Psalms 35:16; Proverbs 11:9; Isaiah 9:17; 10:6; 32:6; 33:14; Matthew 6:2; 6:5; 6:16; 7:5; 15:7; 16:3; 22:18; 23:13; 23:14; 23:15; 23:23; 23:25; 23:27; 23:28;

23:29; 24:51; Mark 7:6; 12:15; Luke 6:42; 11:44; 12:1; 12:56; 13:15; 1 Timothy 4:2; James 3:17; 1 Peter 2:1.

What kind of progress will we make witnessing to people and telling them about the blessing of the command from our Father in heaven to keep the fourth commandment if we are demonstrating this kind of hypocrisy? *Our behavior nullifies our witness*. If, however, we share the truth of the Sabbath day command while recognizing the reality that necessary functions won't wait and have to be done by someone, our witness is strengthened.

Does the need to perform necessary work on the Sabbath day mean that we have license to ignore the seventh-day Sabbath and treat it like any other normal work day? Certainly not! We have the example of the priests in ancient Israel, who were not known as being disobedient to the Sabbath day command. The priests worked hard, even on the Sabbath day. They worked in seven-day shifts (courses), with 24 groups sharing the burden in rotation. In practice, this meant that each priest only had to work on the sabbath day twice a year, and on annual holy days (which were also Sabbath days). This example, given by the Creator himself, demonstrates how *necessary* Sabbath day work can be done properly, within the bounds of the commandment.

Just as the priests rotated their Sabbath day work, so it is right and proper for us to rotate the Sabbath day labor among those who do it so that no one person has an undue share of the burden. The Sabbath day should be, as much as possible, a day to cease from your labor. But the reality is that it is not always possible to avoid all labor. Minimizing the work by rotating the absolutely necessary work among many people is a realistic solution that remains within the spirit of obeying the fourth commandment.

A frequently heard argument regarding performing necessary work on the Sabbath day goes like this: "Sabbath keepers should simply choose not to work in any of those professions where working on the Sabbath would be necessary. Let unbelievers fill those functions."

Because of the *necessary* nature of the work in such professions, the work involved is *helping people* in their time of need. As a Sabbath keeper, do you really want to take the stand that the Sabbath day command is absolute from helping people? *Is that really the hill you want to die on?* Such elitism demonstrates that commands of our Father are a burden, whereas we know that they are a blessing for our good. Worse yet, it demonstrates the hypocrisy of the one making such a claim. You would call a 911 operator on the sabbath day, but you would not carry your share of the burden by *being* a 911 operator on the Sabbath day? *The world that we are to carry a*

Continued on Page 21

Angels and the Thirteen Sabbath Songs



by Kenneth Westby

Among the most intriguing discoveries from the Dead Sea Scrolls are the thirteen songs of Sabbath sacrifice. These songs address an angelic priesthood, God on his chariot, and an elaborate heavenly temple thronged with spiritual beings. What can we learn from these ancient songs?

In the spring of 1947 the Bedouin Muhammad ed Dib who, while looking for a lost sheep, discovered a cave containing a whole quantity of ancient Hebrew scrolls. His find was made while climbing the cliffs above the west shore of the Dead Sea near

the ruins of Qumran. During the next ten years many more caves would be searched and scrolls that had not seen the light of day for two thousand years would be discovered and presented to an amazed world.



The main assembly hall where it is believed many of the scrolls of Qumran were written.

In the years since, the mystery of who hid these precious writings and what prevented them from ever returning to claim them has largely been solved. Scholars have combed the evidence and there is general agreement that the Dead Sea Scrolls belonged to the Essenes, one of three major religious sects of Judaism during the time of Christ, the Sadducees and Pharisees being the other two. The Essenes had several communities in Judea, but the one at Qumran was its spiritual center.

Today, one can visit the unearthed ruins of what remains of ancient Qumran, see the synagogue, the baptism pools, and the many water channels required by the lively community devoted to holiness and the study of Scripture. I've visited Qumran twice, once in the 80's and then in 2003, each time a moving experience.



Steps down to one of Qumran's ceremonial baptismal or washing pools.

The scholars and writers of Qumran never retrieved their hidden scrolls because they were surely killed by the invading Romans around the time of the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D. Some may have joined the resistance at Masada further south, from which there were no survivors. The Qumran community's scrolls were its most precious possession and the fact that no one ever returned for them can only be explained by the Roman's complete annihilation of the Essenes at Qumran.

Their treasures of Scripture (fragments from all books of the Hebrew Bible save Esther have been found in addition to hundreds of other manuscripts, books, and commentaries—and the 13 Sabbath songs) remained lost for two millennia. Among the scrolls are the oldest manuscripts of Scripture we have, some of them dating 300 years before Christ. Their discovery is of immense importance to biblical studies and they open a window to better understand one of the major sects during the time of Christ. The community of Qumran was thriving during the ministry of Jesus and must have been well known to him. It was to a cave in that same wilderness area he retreated for his time of testing and temptation.

The scrolls show that the Qumran community called itself the "Covenant" (berit), or "New Covenant." They saw themselves as the "little Remnant" foretold by the Prophets, i.e. the true Israel. They also called themselves the "Holy Council of God."

John the Baptist

There is good reason to believe that John the Baptist spent his early years in the Essene community of Qumran. Recall that his father Zechariah was an elderly but still active temple priest in Jerusalem when approached by Gabriel, the angel of "the presence," to announce that his wife Elizabeth, long past menopause, would have a son. Many devout priests had become fed up with the politicized priesthood and had withdrawn to the community at Qumran. Elizabeth and Zechariah, already in their 70s or 80s, with a baby to care for considered what would be best for the child. They likely had relatives already residing in Qumran and may have felt led to bring their son to grow up among them.

The Gospel of Luke records that John came forth from the desert wilderness and began preaching along the Jordan River, saying, "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Qumran is in the desert wilderness south of where the Jordan dumps into the Dead Sea. Clearly, The Baptist did not hold to all Essene teachings for he left the community which taught its members to withdraw from society and politics. Instead, The Baptist plunged headlong into direct engagement by actively critiquing and condemning the current religious/political establishment. His comments on Herod's adulterous behavior finally got him killed, a fate common to God's prophets.

John was a scholarly prophet, an ascetic, and a dynamic preacher of repentance and the pursuit of holiness—qualities reflecting training and teachings he received from scripture and possibly from the discipline of Qumran. He also established his own school of disciples, many of whom later became disciples of Jesus.

Cave 4

Since the Essenes had rejected the corrupt temple establishment in Jerusalem, they had no access to it. Instead, they focused their attention toward the heavenly temple described in the book of Ezekiel (chapters 40-48). They understood that true sacrifice was not limited to offerings of grains and animals offered up in a gilded building, rather in praise and holy devotion to the God to whom the physical temple was dedicated. They believed, as did early Christians, that one could have access directly to the heavenly temple and to Yahweh whose glory filled it; the earthly temple was merely an inferior symbol of that above.



The cave in the center is where most of the Dead Sea Scrolls were found.

Much emphasis was placed upon understanding this celestial temple and the heavenly host of angels and spiritual creatures that attended it. An elaborate angelology was developed—based partly on Scripture, partly upon mystic imagination. This sect of Judaism had its strong, mystical elements. Prime among them were notions derived from Ezekiel's vision of the divine chariot-throne ("merkavah"). Later Jewish mystics would develop a labyrinth of esoteric mystery systems the most well known today being the kabbalah (cabala), formulated in 11th century France.

The history of religions groups is often the story of excesses—truth carried too far and over-laden with too many manmade inventions. Such was the story of Qumran's angelology—much truth and insight, but lost in a context of fanciful inventions. The discovery of Dead Sea Scroll Cave 4 revealed an amazing song book which prominently featured angels in Essene worship.

Cave 4 contained fragmentary forms of eight manuscripts, the oldest of which has been dated to 75-50 B.C. These manuscripts are a liturgical text composed of thirteen separate sections, one for each of

the first thirteen Sabbaths of the year. Why just the first thirteen Sabbaths is not known and there is no evidence this series of songs was repeated during the remaining three quarters of the year.

Carol Newsom who's *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice: A Critical Edition* is the definitive work on this topic writes in her introduction: "These thirteen compositions invoke angelic praise, describe the angelic priesthood and the heavenly temple, and give an account of the worship performed on the Sabbath in the heavenly sanctuary."

These songs aren't just congregational hymns sung in praise to God; they were apparently regarded as real-time liturgical participation in the heavenly temple's Sabbath service. Great care was taken to acknowledge and describe the various details of this other worldly divine scene from the vestments of the angelic priesthood, to the temple itself, to the great Merkavah or chariot throne of Yahweh.

A Celestial Sabbath Service

The notion that earthly temples and their service are in some sense dependent upon heavenly prototypes was widespread in the ancient world. Among the Israelites it had biblical precedent as Moses and David were given a divine "pattern."

The writer of Hebrews, who obviously had priestly experience, wrote: They [human high priests] serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: 'See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain'" (Heb 8:5). The writer said that Jesus now "serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man" (vs 2).

The worshippers at Qumran operated on the principle that the entire earthly apparatus of temple, priesthood, and sacrifices were but types of the great archetype in heaven—the seventh heaven to be precise; true Zion, true Eden, and locus of the true Temple. The leaders of the community were priests and they considered their movement to be a priestly enterprise. The dominant personality of the movement, the Righteous Teacher, was a priest. They saw themselves as a pure priesthood replacing the present pollution of the Jerusalem temple and priesthood.

Newsom writes: "Since the Qumran community could not conduct an actual sacrificial cult [worship, ritual], atonement was effected through the community's prayer, praise and obedience to the law." They regarded the community as temple-like by exclusions of the impure, requirements of purity and through distinctions between priesthood and laity. "The devel-

opment of the idea of the community as a temple was not, to be sure, a matter of spiritualization...the Qumran community anticipated restoration of the Jerusalem cult to a condition of purity in the eschatological age and planned for its reconstitution." They were a Messianic movement looking forward to the Kingdom of God and toward restoring a purified priesthood.

The function of reciting the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice was to bring the congregation into the heavenly courts and participate in a Sabbath service administered by angelic priests.

"Both the highly descriptive content and the carefully crafted rhetoric direct the worshipper who hears the songs recited toward a particular kind of religious experience, a sense of being in the heavenly sanctuary and in the presence of the angelic priests and worshippers. That this experience is intended as a communal experience of the human worshipping community is made clear by the first person plural forms which appear... 'our priesthood,' 'the offering of our mortal tongue,' 'how shall we be considered among them'.... Even though the Sabbath Shirot [songs] do not appear to have been designed as vehicles for the incubation of visions or of mystical ascent by individuals, the sophisticated manipulation of religious emotion in the songs would seem to have increased the possibility of ecstatic experience among some worshippers.... It [is] possible for one to assume with confidence that the recitation of these Sabbath songs was a major vehicle for the experience of communion with angels...."

Smoke, Fire, Music, Song

The close coordination between liturgical song and sacrifice was an ancient feature of temple worship. The Chronicler's account of the purification of the temple by Hezekiah, for example, keyed the Levites' songs precisely to the firing of the offerings.

"As the offering began, singing to the LORD began also, accompanied by trumpets and the instruments of David king of Israel. The whole assembly bowed in worship, while the singers sang and the trumpeters played. All this continued until the sacrifice of the burnt offering was completed" (2 Ch 29:27-28).

Qumran's Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice were choreographed to fit within the perceived Sabbath service taking place in heaven. Early Jewish thought associated a special connection between earth and heaven with Sabbath observance. The Sabbath and certain holydays provided a special opportunity for communion with angels in the worship of Yahweh who sat upon his chariot throne. These Essene Sabbath songs exploited this belief in a particularly close relationship between heavenly and earthly worshippers on the Sabbath.

David is also credited with writing many Sabbath worship songs. Hebrew tradition holds that David

wrote 3600 psalms to be used for singing before the altar over the whole-burnt perpetual offering every day of the year. He also wrote 52 special Sabbath songs and songs for offerings of the New Moons and Solemn Assemblies and 30 songs for the Day of Atonement. In all David wrote a total of 4,050 songs!

The Thirteen Sabbath Songs describe a heavenly scene not unlike some of those described in the Book of Revelation. They draw heavily from Isaiah's vision when he "saw the Lord, seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple" (Isa 6:1-7). Isaiah tells of flying seraphs with six wings, voices so loud they shook the temple, and of fire and much smoke. He thought he would die for his "eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty."

Ezekiel's visions provide further material to enrich the canvas the Essenes paint of the heavenly host and their courts. Ezekiel tells of the vision he received in Babylon along the Kebar River. He is startled by a windstorm, clouds, flashing lightning, brilliant light, and at the center fire like glowing metal. Then he sees living creatures with four faces and four wings with hands under their wings. He sees a maze of breathtaking colors and creatures that looked like they were torches of fire. He sees huge intersecting gyroscopic wheel-like



creatures that sparkle, move like lightening, and are full of piercing eyes. And above all this he sees an expanse of sparkling crystal and winged creatures whose moving wings create immense noise. Above that he sees a throne of sapphire and above that he sees "a figure like that of a man," like glowing metal as if full of fire. A brilliant light surrounded him and it had the colors and radiance of a rainbow. Ezekiel exclaimed, "This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord" (Ezk 1:1-28).

In the tenth chapter he continues with his description of the throne chariot of Yahweh with its attending angelic creatures. Later in his book (chapters 40-48) he recounts his detailed vision of an idealized prophetic temple, one often associated with the Messianic age or Millennial Kingdom.

The Beauty of the Qumran Songs

If one could place herself/himself in that desert setting during one of the first thirteen Sabbath day services of the year and try to capture what was taking place, what might be experienced? In the first place you would be considered one of the fortunate elect to participate in this ceremonial assent to the throne of God. This was special knowledge unique to the Righteous Community.

Your assent via the songs of sacrifice would pass you through levels of spiritual powers: seven princes of the seven heavens associated with the then known seven planets, each commanding 496,000 myriads of angels; you would acknowledge the seven orders of the angelic priesthood and their deputies and vast companies of angelic attendants; you would come to the seven chief princes; then you would acknowledge the two highest angelic classes, the angels of the Presence and the angels of sanctification.

You would hear dozens of these angelic powers called by name. Your song would describe and praise the fine details of textures and colors woven into the garments of the angelic priests, the bejeweled furnishings, god-like beings of every description moving about, and music, glorious music. The heavenly temple would be described in such detail you could feel like you were actually in the presence of angels joining them in joyful praise and adoration of Yahweh. You would be shaken by the intense sights and sounds, by chariots of light, shining eagles, Seraphim, Cherubim, Michael, Gabriel—almost too much for your soul.

As you sang the songs the words would meld with your mind's vision of the angelic host and the heavenly courts. You would marvel at the splendorous color, light, and energy emanating from the celestial scene—a scene you couldn't have otherwise imagined. Your spirits would soar as you anticipated a glimpse of the Merkavah—his Majesty's throne chariot and above it, God himself!

The apostle Paul received actual visions and revelations of the heavenly scene, of Paradise, which sights he called "inexpressible things" and sights he was not permitted to publicly describe (see 2 Cor 12:1-4).

Nowadays, with available cinemagrapic high-tech special effects spectacular other worldly scenes can be created. In the deserts of Qumran one only the Scriptures and one's imagination—and the Essenes put both into creative overdrive. Admittedly, the angelological doctrine of Qumran got a little out of hand.

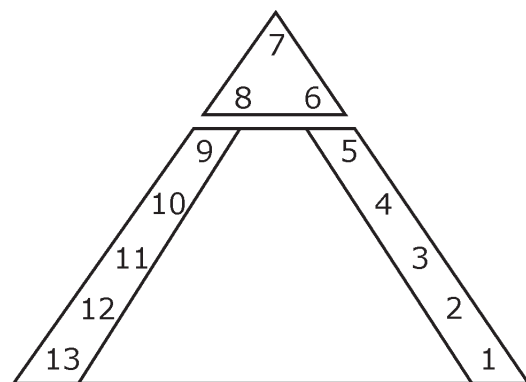
Some scholars see in it an early form of Jewish Gnosticism. In some of these hymns angels are called "spirits of Knowledge." Essenes regarded their ascent through the angelic realm to the chariot throne a matter of having the right knowledge in addition to living a pure life of obedience to Torah. Proper Gnosis/Knowledge impregnates the whole of Qumran thought and mysticism.

"They had rules peculiar to themselves which they were forbidden to divulge to postulants without the permission of the overseer; they possessed secret doctrines, revelations reserved to initiates, a higher Knowledge—a Gnosis of salvation—which was the privilege of the elect. From these elect, the brethren admitted to the sect, nothing was to be concealed."

As I mentioned earlier, the story of religion is often the story of excesses. But we should not miss appreciating some of their spiritual insights and virtues even if we criticize their preoccupation with angels and Gnostic theology.

Heptads

The thirteen Sabbath songs were artfully arranged in a Heptad, or series of sevens. The content and intensity of the songs peaked at the seventh Sabbath. The two legs of six weeks met at the crowning seventh forming a triangle (see illustration). As we saw, sevens were used throughout the Sabbath songs and are an important part of Jewish apocalyptic tradition, very much like John uses them in the Book of Revelation. The Sabbath or Seventh day has cosmic significance in the biblical world view. Seven is the rhythm of life and emanates from the Creator of Life.



Essene Doctrine and the Early Church

There is no doubt that Paul and the other apostles had to deal with elements of mystical theology and with the beginning stages of Gnostic heresy. In his letter to the Colossians Paul acknowledged the existence of unseen heavenly powers, rulers, and authorities, but noted that Christ was superior to them all. Our focus should be on Jesus, not the lesser unnamed powers he rules (1:16-18). He also takes a cut at asceticism and "the worship of angels" (2:18) which puff people up with idle notions of what they think they have seen and know (Gnosticism?).

To the Ephesians Paul is bold to introduce "God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us in the heavenly realms" (1:3). Paul means for us to realize that we have a place next to Christ in the heavenly realms. Our name is written in heaven meaning our place or citizenship is there. We need not genuflect through legions of angelic powers to have an audience with God and his Son. A humble prayer brings us directly to the Merkavah and the face of God.

Again Paul lifts us up to visions like those 13 Sabbath Songs might evoke by saying, "God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms" (2:6). Now how spectacular is that? Do we need to navigate through a hierarchy of angelic hosts to catch a glimpse of the throne? If we are "in Christ" we share his throne!—and Jesus is the head over everything except God himself. Rather than being subordinate to angels, we are called to join Jesus in managing angels in the Messianic Kingdom.

Angels are servants of Yahweh; they follow his orders and are ministers for good. Paul indicated that they may disapprovingly report breaches of decorum and disrespect in how the church conducts its worship of God. They deserve our respect and admiration, but they rarely intrude into our consciousness. The Bible readily discloses their existence and function, but all worship and attention is to be directed toward their God and ours. We should not be preoccupied with discovering details of the angelic world for that is God's undisclosed domain.

Neither should we be ignorant of angels. They surround us and fill the skies doing God's bidding. Knowing they exist to protect and serve should impart comfort to us as it did to the terrified servant of Elisha. Remember the story of the poor fellow who looked about to find himself and Elisha surrounded by an army with horses and chariots set to destroy them (2 Kings 6:15-17). Elisha prayed to God on behalf of his servant saying "open his eyes so he may see." His poor servant saw what he thought was reality and was struck with fear. As Elisha's servant was to learn, there is a greater reality than that we see with physical eyes.

Elisha said to his servant, "Don't be afraid for those who are with us are more than those who are

with them." How true. As soon as God opened up his servant's eyes to see the spiritual world he "saw the hills full of horses and chariots and of fire all around Elisha." I recall one of the 13 Sabbath songs described a scene of hundreds of thousands of fiery chariots in the armies of God standing at the ready waiting for His Majesty's order. I believe such angelic armies exist.

Lessons from the Dead Sea

I fear many of us think too little, not too much, about the heavenly Kingdom of God. I fear our eyes are too low to the ground to see beyond the exigencies of our mundane lives and are too burdened with day to day troubles that seem to box us in.

We could take a lesson from our ancient friends in Qumran. We can stop short of their excesses for we now know Christ who triumphs all principalities and powers giving us direct access to the great chariot throne of God's grace.

Yet it might do us well to lift up our eyes, let our imagination soar after God's Kingdom and in our mind's eye see the majestic and mighty kingdom of which we are a part. Wouldn't we be both humbled and inspired to sense the spine-tingling reality that we are in actual, direct and daily contact with the Master of the Universe, with his kingdom of amazing spiritual beings of varied powers and descriptions? Perhaps on the Sabbath our singing could be more passionate and worshipful were this reality to intrude into our minds.

This is "real reality." The real world we need to be aware of isn't the freeway traffic, the stack of bills on your desk, the people and politics of life, but rather the real world is God and his Son. Jesus said "learn of me"; God said the most important knowledge in all the cosmos is to "know Me and what I am like."

The writer of Hebrews gives Christians this picture to keep before them as they pray:

"But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly [singing?], to the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant...so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire!"

I think the Essenes of Qumran could even join us in saying "Amen" to that.

Kenneth Westby is a directory emeritus of the BSA and founder and director of the Association for Christian Development (www.godward.org).



Parallelism: A Key to Interpretation

by *Brian Knowles*

The translation and interpretation of the Bible has long been a politicized process. The interests of political powers – especially kings and religious leaders – have been read into, or out of, the texts and translations of Scripture. Psalm 105:15 is a case in point.

In the King James Version of this verse we read: “Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.” Early Anglicans used this verse to justify the doctrine of the divine right of kings. After all, aren’t kings anointed at the time of their coronation? So, they concluded, this verse must be talking about kings. An ancient treatise dating from 1642 fully develops this notion. It was written anonymously and entitled “The Sovereignty of Kings.”

In opposition to this idea, the Puritans said that the term “anointed” refers to God’s people as a whole.

Both ideas are incorrect. Had the 17th century Puritans and Anglicans known more about the Hebrew language, they would have realized that this verse is a parallelism. A parallelism is a characteristic of Hebrew poetry, found especially in the book of Psalms. In parallel constructions, two sequential lines may exhibit synonymous (Psalm 61:1), antithetic (Proverbs 17:22), or synthetic parallels of thought (Psalm 2:2). In the case of Psalm 105:15, we have a synonymous parallelism: “Touch not mine anointed” is the equivalent of “do my prophets no harm.”

“Do no harm” means the same as “touch not.” “Mine anointed” means “my prophets.” The verse has nothing to do with any divine right of kings. Nor does it refer to the people in general. It is talking about those whom God has anointed to speak on his behalf to the nations – his *nevi'im* or prophets. Those who hinder or harm them will be accountable to God.

A New Testament Example

The recognition of Hebrew poetic parallelisms is often the key to understanding a given passage of Scripture. The Psalms are full of such constructions. We even find them in the New Testament. For example, in the so-called Lord’s Prayer (it would be better titled “The Disciple’s Prayer”) we read, “...your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10 NIV).

This too is a synonymous parallelism. When God’s will is done on the earth, his kingdom is being manifested. Synoptic scholar, the late Robert Lindsey, interpreted the thrust of this verse as follows: “May your princehood become real, and more and more people come under the dominion of your power in the kingdom of heaven and do God’s will.” God’s kingdom, or dominion, expands as more and more people voluntarily bring themselves into alignment with his will.

Psalm 131:1

In this psalm, we see another example of parallelism. David writes, “My heart is not proud, O Lord, my eyes are not haughty; I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me. But I have stilled and quieted my soul; like a weaned child with its mother, like a weaned child is my soul within me” (Psalm 131:1-2 NIV).

In this poem, the clauses echo each other. The first one makes a statement that is then expanded on in the following clauses. Both the meaning of the words and the grammar link the three clauses of verse one together. David rejects pride at three different levels of his being: his inner man (heart), his external demeanor (eyes) and in his actions.

Commenting on the second verse, Tremper Longman III, writes: “The English translation of the Hebrew verbs (“have stilled” and “have quieted”) indicates that David’s confidence is rooted in the past and continues in the present. He then illustrates his present disposition by using the word “like.” Note that David does not use a generic term for child, but the word for a weaned child, one that does not need its mother’s milk, is especially calm in its mother’s lap. It does not grasp for the source of sustenance, but rests quietly in its mother’s arms” (*Making Sense of the Old Testament*, p. 49).

More on Pride

Parallelism is frequently found in the Proverbs as well: “Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall” (Proverbs 16:18). The second clause is another way of saying the first.

Often, when the first part of a parallelism is difficult, the second part may open up the meaning. An

example might be: "He who despises his neighbor sins..." (Proverbs 14:21a). What does it mean to "despise" one's neighbor? The second part of the proverb tells us: "...but blessed is he who is kind to the needy" (Proverbs 14:21b). To despise one's neighbor is to ignore his needs — to turn ones back on him when one could help. This thought is reinforced in another verse: "He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the

needy honors God" (Proverbs 14:31). This verse uses an antithetic parallelism to make its point. Oppressing the poor and being kind to the needy are opposites. Showing contempt for one's Maker and honoring God are opposites.

All three types of parallelism are found throughout Scripture. Once we understand how they work; the meaning of many otherwise obscure verses opens up. □

Sabbath Morning Companion

Putting People First

Having recently moved from an employer of a dozen people to one of 55,000, I had the normal reservations associated with changes in the corporate culture. One never knows certain things about a new job until experiencing it, so I was most interested in attending my first major company event, where one of the Heavy Hitters was brought to town to address the area employees.

Somewhat expecting a rah-rah stir 'em up and inspire the salesman presentation, I was surprised to hear such things as:

1. The people who live under the same roof as you are more important than your job.
2. Forty nine per cent of Americans do not use all their vacation time. Don't be one of them. Take all the time off that the company gives you.
3. Take time for yourself.
4. When you get your high schooler's soccer schedule, put the game times in your calendar and don't let anybody schedule over them.

Those were just a few of the gems of wisdom in her presentation, and those are words I never expected to hear from an employer, especially a large one. But there it was, with handouts and in public, for everyone to see and hear.

It will be fun testing the company's commitment to a balanced life, and I sense, based upon a later conversation with a fellow worker, that this is the real deal. Having known the speaker for some time, I was told, "She really believes what she says." And then, "I like her and will do about anything for her."

This company — and this executive in particular — whether by design, by accident, or by instinct has discovered a distinctly Biblical principle, that it is more blessed to give than to receive. To see people as something more than a name on a timesheet or an organization chart, to understand that they have their own hopes and dreams, their own loved ones, their own joys and trials, and that employees are more than a cog in the corporate wheel, to be used up and discarded, is to respect the inherent dignity that we each carry as God's unique creation.

By doing this, by infusing the company with an element of humanity, they foster a loyalty and a sense of teamwork that connects on a personal level. With this leadership, people will go the extra mile because they want to and not because they are compelled to.

Solomon tells us to "cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days." (Ecclesiastes 11:1). Jesus says, "Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be poured into your lap." (Luke 6:38 NIV).

Christianity works when it is tried. It just isn't tried enough, and sadly it isn't tried enough even in churches. Some churches seem to exist as social clubs. Some are extensions of the leader's ego. Some are family businesses. Some are used as a means of control. Every church to some extent or other falls short of the ideal. But, imagine, if you will, how churches would change if the giving principle infused every church in every town, from the youngest child to the eldest elder. Religion would transfigure itself from a consumer item into an agent of transformation. Instead of pews filled with the disgruntled searching for problems, the church would be filled with brothers and sisters striving for solutions. Instead of preachers looking to build empires, we would have servants looking to build the temple of God.

Here is a good place to start. Remember the executive who came to Kansas City to speak? She recalled the advice her father gave her every day before she left for school. It catches the essence of the servant attitude that can transform the world. "Remember to do something nice for somebody today." If everyone did that, the world would be turned upside down. And the world could use that right now.

—Lenny Cacchio

Lenny Cacchio lives in Lees Summit, Missouri, and is very active in the Truckers' Bible Study in the Kansas City, Missouri, area. The Sabbath Morning Companion is now available as a devotional and journal through the Website of the Church of God, Kansas City (www.kccog.org/literature.htm).

have not yet crucified your flesh with its illicit affections and lusts, then you do not really belong to the Messiah. You only think you do, because "they that belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." *The degree to which you have crucified your flesh reveals the degree to which you belong to the Messiah.*

The Lord's commandment to King Saul was to utterly destroy Amalek and spare nothing. The Lord's commandment to us is to utterly destroy the Amalek who lives inside us, for he is the one who produces the sinful works of the flesh. Notice that the Lord does not just deal with only the external manifestations of the flesh. He doesn't just list the sinful works of the flesh and then say, "Try really hard to stop doing those things." Instead, He tells us that true disciples will crucify the flesh with its illicit affections and lusts. Then those sinful actions will cease, because the desire to do them is gone. Amalek is dead.

Some people neglect the root of the problem, and try to get rid of the works of the flesh by their own will power. Instead of crucifying Amalek, they just subdue him and keep him on a leash. This is what King Saul did. He captured Agag, king of the Amalekites, and spared him. He also spared "the best" of the sheep and oxen, "but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly." This is what some believers do. They just kill off the "big sins," the sins that they consider "vile and refuse," but they spare the "little sins," the things that look cute and seem harmless. Worst of all, they spare Agag, the king of Amalek. They keep him subdued and on a leash, but still alive. As a result, their fleshly, sinful nature survives.

Agag may be subdued and on a leash, but he can still cause big problems later on. Haman, the man who almost succeeded in annihilating all the Jews of Persia about 500 years after King Saul's reign, was an Agagite. According to Jewish tradition, Agag was allowed to be with his wife during his brief captivity, and during that time he begat a child who became the ancestor of Haman. If you refuse to smite Amalek today, he may spawn something that will bring a major tragedy later on in your life.

It was bad enough that King Saul spared Agag and the best of the sheep and oxen. To make matters worse, he tried to justify his actions. When Samuel asked him why he had not obeyed the commandment of the Lord, Saul insisted that he *had* obeyed the commandment of the Lord.

"What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Samuel asked.

There are some people who claim to be Spirit-filled and Spirit-led, yet they consistently produce an abun-

dance of the works of the flesh. When such people insist that they are filled with the Spirit, led by the Spirit, and walking in the Spirit, I can't help but wonder: What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear? What meaneth these fleshly manifestations of gossip and backbiting; of hatred and rage and heated arguments over things of minor importance; of envy, strife, and division; of anger, resentment, bitterness, and unforgiveness? "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16). If you are walking in the Spirit, why are you fulfilling the lust of the flesh? "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal. 5:24). If you belong to Messiah, why is your fleshly, carnal nature so alive?

The manifestations of the works of the flesh in your life are like the sheep and oxen that Samuel heard. The works of the flesh are living, breathing, walking testimonies that loudly proclaim the fact that you, like King Saul, have not obeyed the commandment of the Lord to utterly destroy the little Amalek who lives inside you. Each sin you commit is a walking advertisement, a bleating sheep that bellows, "Gossip! Anger! Envy!" Each sin is like a lowing ox that moos, "Immorality! Immodesty!"

If the works of the flesh are manifest in your life, admit it. Don't be like King Saul, who denied his disobedience, then tried to shift the blame to others. "The people spared the best of the sheep and oxen," he said. Don't try to justify your sins with statements like "He provoked me!" or "I've had a hard life; I deserve a little illicit pleasure." And don't try to excuse your sinful actions by cloaking them in religious garb, like Saul did when he told Samuel that they spared the best of the sheep and oxen "to sacrifice unto Yahweh thy God."

Some people rationalize their sins and convince themselves that they are actually committing the sin for a noble cause, as a "sacrifice to the Lord." A woman desperate to get married says, "I know the Bible says not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers, but I'm going to marry him in order to win him to the Lord." A businessman says, "I know this is a shady deal and illegal, but I'm going to give half of the profits to the work of the Lord." A woman who doesn't want to dress modestly says, "I know the Bible says women are to dress modestly, but I can't dress that way if I want to evangelize harlots and the immoral. An old-fashioned modest dress like that is going to alienate them." A worker who doesn't want to take the Sabbath off says, "I'm going to keep working every Saturday, even though I could get Saturdays off. That way I'll have more money to give to the Lord. This will be my sacrifice to the Lord."

When Saul tried to justify his disobedience by saying its purpose was "to sacrifice unto the Lord,"

Samuel's reply was a reply that is appropriate for any similar attempt to justify disobedience: "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken that the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king" (1 Sam. 15:22f).

Witchcraft and iniquity and idolatry are sins of action; rebellion and stubbornness are sins of attitude. Saul's rebellious, stubborn attitude caused him to lose his position as king, because rebellion and stubbornness are like witchcraft, iniquity, and idolatry in the eyes of God. If we are rebellious and stubborn, we can lose our position in the Body of Messiah. We can miss out on fulfilling God's plan for us.

What was the evidence of Saul's rebellion and stubbornness? It was his refusal to utterly destroy Amalek. He spared Agag and kept him on a leash instead of smiting him. What is the evidence of a professing believer's rebellion and stubbornness? It is the same thing. It is his refusal to crucify the flesh and its illicit affections and lusts. It is just subduing the fleshly nature and keeping it under control, on a leash, instead of crucifying it.

When Agag was brought to Samuel, Samuel took a sword and "hewed Agag in pieces" (1 Sam. 15:33). If your sinful nature is merely subdued and on a leash instead of slain, know that there is a Prophet greater than Samuel, and He has a sword that is sharper than Samuel's. That Prophet can hew Agag in pieces with the sword of the Spirit. Bring the Agag who lives inside you to Yeshua, and let Him smite Agag, so that Amalek will never again rise up in you.

One of the commandments of the Torah is in Deuteronomy 25:17f: "Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt; how he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God."

This is a commandment to remember what Amalek did. When you remember what Amalek did to Israel, also remember what Samuel did to Amalek's king, Agag. He hewed Agag in pieces. And also remember that this is what Yeshua can do to the Agag who lives inside you. Then you will have fulfilled the commandment to "blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven" (Deut. 25:19). □

Reprinted from "Gates of Eden," Jan-Feb 2006, p. 8. "Gates of Eden" newsletter is produced by Gates of Eden, a Messianic Jewish ministry. Write to Gates of Eden, P.O. Box 2257, East Peoria, IL, 61611-0257.

Sjördal: "Profaning Sabbath" continued from Page 11.

witness to will instantly see the duplicity, the arrogance, and the outright hypocrisy of such a stand.

We are told in Leviticus 19:18 that "...thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself..." Look at it from the other side for a moment: How would you like it if others exhibited elite behavior that demonstrated disdain for you, even as you were serving them in their time of need? Where is the love in using people, and looking down on them as "unbelievers"? It is these "unbelievers" who are doing all the serving, and you are the one being served. People are highly sensitive to *arrogance* and *hypocrisy*. Demonstrating these behaviors is the fastest way to turn people off and completely nullify your witness.

Historical note: The Maccabees took a hard line on their Sabbath day observance. In 168 b.c., they were being besieged by Antiochus IV Epiphanes and his army. The Maccabees read the fourth commandment to say absolutely no work whatsoever, with no flexibility for *necessary* work—not even the work of defending their own lives from the enemy who was upon them. They refused to take up arms on the Sabbath day, and as a result, over 1,000 men, women, and children were needlessly slaughtered.

The Sabbath day is very important to our Creator. How we behave in the face of the fourth commandment demonstrates a great deal regarding our attitude toward our Father, and our willingness to obey him and acknowledge his authority. But *obedience is not the antidote to reality*. We can learn from the Maccabees. The fourth commandment is not a death pact. As with many things in life, it is not an either/or, all-or-nothing proposition. Our willingness to obey our Father's commands can and should co-exist with a desire to help others, and a willingness to make that desire a reality by facing reality and doing our part. Achieving this balance is to keep—not to profane—the Sabbath day.

Jonathan Sjördal
Charlottesville, VA 2006

Part II will deal with the money that one receives for working on the Sabbath.

Jonathan Sjördal (sjordal@peoplepc.com) is a life-long sabbath keeper who lives in Charlottesville, Virginia with his wife Kristie and four children. He and his wife run a family business, homeschool the children, and host a sabbath day meeting in their home each week. Jonathan is a student of the Bible who has written extensively on biblical issues. He considers everything he writes to be an invitation to discussion with the goal of mutual truth seeking from our Father in heaven. Selections of his writing can be found at www.creatorgod.org.

Colombia - July 7, 2006

Mother of Four Murdered for Evangelizing

(Opendoorsusa.com) On July 7 in Colombia's Meta Province, leftist rebels hired a gunman to kill a Christian mother of four after she refused to stop proclaiming Christ. The rebels were angered that many insurgents were defecting from their illegal armed group as a result of her leading them to faith in Christ.

Jennifer (pseudonym), a resident of a village in Meta Province, had previously cooperated with insurgents against her will, preparing them meals and transporting illicit drugs. Likewise, some of her brothers and nephews became subversives or collaborators.

Eventually, Jennifer had found help to escape involvement with the insurgents, and in time she adopted the faith in Christ that her mother had taught her. When the insurgents learned that Jennifer was winning rebel souls to Christ, they approached her and asked her to rejoin their ranks in exchange for money and power. Upon hearing her refusal and her intention to continue spreading the gospel, they added her to a list of Christian leaders to be executed in the region.

The insurgents arrived in Jennifer's village on July 7 with the list of names. They asked her why she was preaching the gospel when they did not give her permission to do so.

A hired gunman then shot Jennifer in her chest and shoulder. Still in the throes of death, she was dragged to the feet of the assassin, and he shot her 15 more times.

Jennifer was very aware of the dangers that she faced. Despite her fears, she had continued to share her faith in Christ with great conviction, even winning a nephew to Christ who became an active underground preacher to the insurgents. Jennifer was also growing in her knowledge of Scripture and was raising her children in the ways of God.

Jennifer's violent murder leaves four children, ages 14, 9, 3 and 5 months, without the care of their mother. Her husband had already left the country.

As the violence against God's Church continues in Colombia, so must the prayers of His people persist that many more would come to a saving faith in Jesus Christ.

Iran - August 08, 2006

Government 'Officially' Charges Ex-Muslim with Drug Trafficking

Officers tell convert to Christianity his real crime was abandoning Islam.



(Compass Direct News) — Seven years after Issa Motamedi Mojdehi converted from Islam to Christianity, Iranian secret police have jailed him for abandoning Islam but officially charged him with illegal drug trafficking.

Authorities formally charged the 31-year-old Christian with drug trafficking when he was arrested two weeks ago. But secret police officials have told Motamedi Mojdehi that his real offense, said to be recorded in his confidential legal file, is abandoning Islam, officials told him. He will remain in jail and possibly face execution. An officer identified only as Mr. Baghani warned the arrested Christian that it might take "several executions" before Iranians understand the consequences of apostasy under Islamic law.



Issa's wife, Parvah, with daughter, Martha, and son Micah.

Notices & Advertisements

“LORD’S BIBLICAL CALENDAR, 2007 — “LEARN OF ME.”

FREELY TO ALL NATIONS. Contains a picture in the “likeness” of JESUS, the only begotten Son of the Father (Almighty God) of all Nations. Whom, Father sent to earth by the Holy Spirit, of Mary in the Jews’ Generation. Know Him also as printed, and in the New and Old Testaments of the King James Holy Bible, and do the marked days. For you and others, write to:

Church of God (New Testament), AL
74-4963A Mamalahoa Hwy
Holualoa, HI 96725 USA.
(April 07)

Seminar

Celebrating 2000 Years of Christianity in Africa

with

Charles E. Bradford, Author

(Sabbath Roots: The African Connection)

Columbus, Ohio

September 23-24, 2006

Ephesus Seventh-day Adventist Church
3600 Sunbury Road, Columbus, OH 43219

See Web site for registration form
(www.africanchristianity.org)

2007 Directory of Sabbath-observing Groups

We are now working on the new directory. If you are a Sabbath-keeping group or organization, send information to BSA at 3316 Alberta Drive, Gillette, WY 82718. We need a good phone number where interested people can contact you easily. If you would like an input form, you may call 1-888-687-5191. One third ($\frac{1}{3}$) to one half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of a page is free. You may pay for additional space if you wish to add more information or place an ad for your group.

The *Directory* is used by hundreds of people to visit churches while traveling, or to find a home church. If you have already sent information but do not hear from us by early spring of 2007, please call the toll free number to make sure you are included.

The BSA office will be moving to the state of Washington in May or June of 2007. Our future address will be announced in an upcoming edition of *The Sabbath Sentinel* magazine.

Our tentative print date for the upcoming *Directory* is the fall of 2007.

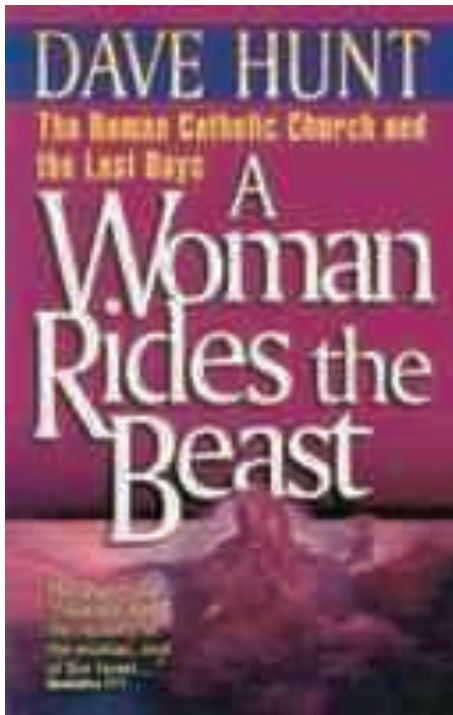
Advertise in The Sabbath Sentinel

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

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

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

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



Book

An eye-opening book about prophecy, Catholicism, and the last days. Has the view of the Church of Rome as the woman who rides the beast in Revelation 17 become outdated? Hunt carefully sifts through history and prophecy to provide an answer.

(552 pages, \$11.00. Non-members add \$2.00 for S&H.)

Video

(Now Available on DVD)

Based upon Dave Hunt's best-selling book, "A Woman Rides the Beast."

Most discussions of the end times focus on the coming Antichrist, but he is only half the story.

Many are amazed to discover in Revelation 17 that there is also another mysterious character at the heart of prophecy—a *woman* who rides the beast.

Who is this woman? Tradition says she is connected with the church of Rome. But isn't such a view outdated? After all, today's Vatican is eager to join hands with evangelicals and all religions worldwide. "The Catholic church has changed," is what we hear.

Or has it? In "A Woman Rides the Beast," biblical truth and global events present a well-defined portrait of the woman and her powerful place in the Antichrist's future empire. At least ten remarkable clues in Revelation 17 and 18 prove the woman's identity beyond any reasonable doubt.

(58 minutes, \$20.00. Please specify DVD or VHS tape. Non-members add \$2.00 for S&H. Video may be rented for \$5.00 for 14 days.)

The Sabbath Sentinel

A Bi-monthly Publication of

The Bible Sabbath Association

3316 Alberta Drive, Gillette, WY 82718 USA

Address Service Requested

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