

The Sabbath Sentinel

January–February 2007



BSA — The Bible Sabbath Association

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

The Sabbath Sentinel

January-February 2007 Volume 58, No. 1 Issue 523

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Our Cover: A father teaches his daughter to pray. This is the next generation of the Church. Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" (Matthew 19:14 NIV).
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Editor: Kenneth Ryland, tss_editor@mac.com
Associate Editors: Julia Benson & Shirley Nickels

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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@mac.com

International addresses:

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

Sierra Leone: The Bible Sabbath Association Sierra Leone, 326 Bai Bureh Road, Calabar, Town, P.O.BOX 289, Freetown, Sierra Leone

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

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

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Returning to Righteousness

Our Theme for 2007

*Why would **The Sabbath Sentinel** and the Bible Sabbath Association (BSA) adopt the theme, "Returning to Righteousness," for the entire year of 2007? Because the people of God are allowing their commitment to holy, righteous living slip away through apathy. For sure, not all of God's people are waning in their desire to live godly lives, but the truth is, too many of them are. We at the BSA are sending out this call for the children of our Creator to disengage their affections from this Babylon of materialism, moral relativism, and covetousness, and once again seek after the true treasures of God.*

I do want to emphasize, however, that returning to righteousness does not mean the adopting of a list of do's and don'ts regarding the Sabbath or the Laws of God. Rather, it means that each Christian and the Church collectively must shine with faith and good works like a city on a hill. Our civilization is quickly descending into the darkness of the pit of hell where destruction awaits. It is up to Christians to light a path that leads our countrymen (regardless of the country we live in) out of that darkness, away from the wrath of God that will surely come upon all who persist defying His law and refusing His grace.

My concern is that many Christians have lost the will to live godly lives. Too many have made peace with the unrighteousness of this world and make little or no effort to distance themselves from the festering corruption that has diseased our once-noble culture. I am not the final judge of these matters, but I see what I see, and have lived long enough to recognize and understand that the coarseness of our culture, which was unheard of 30 years ago, is a stench in the nostrils of our Holy God.

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Announcing

The BSA Scholarship Essay Contest for 2007

We are very pleased to open competition for the largest scholarships we have ever offered. Thanks to the very generous contributions of donors to our scholarship fund, we will be offering \$2,000 for first prize, \$1,000 for second prize, and \$500 for third prize.

If you are seventh-day Sabbath keeper and a current or soon-to-be college student between the ages of 17 and 25 and would like to enter our contest, please go to the BSA Web site at <http://www.biblesabbath.org> and download our scholarship contest rules and contest application. You may also write directly to our scholarship contest coordinator, June Narber, at 6325-9 Falls of Neuse Road #193, Raleigh, NC 27615. You may also contact June by e-mail at junenarber@yahoo.com.

Our contest begins immediately. All entries must be in the hands of our contest coordinator by April 1, 2007. We will begin evaluating the essays at that time. We will announce our winners no later than June 1, 2007.

Pass the word. Tell your college-aged friends. Competition for our BSA scholarships is now open.

Islam's Sabbath

by Kenneth Westby



Allah, Islam's God, didn't rest after the six days of creation, and Muslims see no need to rest on their "Sabbath" which is Friday, the sixth day of the week.

Jews and Christians find authority for their concept of "Sabbath" primarily from the example of the Creator who "rested" or ceased from his labors on the seventh-day, blessed it and made it holy. Observant Jews and most Christian Sabbatarians continue the practice of "ceasing" or "stopping" normal business activities on the seventh-day to celebrate God's good gifts and to worship the Creator of heaven and earth. Christianity in general, however, centuries ago swapped the biblical Sabbath for the first day of the week, a Sunday Sabbath. How the Sunday Sabbath is commonly observed by Protestants and Catholics has much more in common with typical Islamic Friday Sabbath observance than how devout Jews and Christians celebrate the seventh-day Sabbath.

Observing the Muslim Sabbath

Using the word "Sabbath" to describe the Islamic Friday is misleading. No rest or ceasing is commanded, expected or practiced. "Observing" or "celebrating" a Sabbath are terms that can be used of religious Jews and Sabbatarians, and in times past of Sunday-keepers (for most Protestants and Catholics today all normal business activity is allowed and some devout ones will pause to attend church). The only special feature of the Muslim Friday "Sabbath" is the noon prayer which Muslims are encouraged-mandated-to do communally. It is a midday call on Friday to congregate at a Mosque after which Muslims are free to go back to work. This noon prayer time is a daily feature but on Friday assembly is emphasized so prayer can be done congregationally, usually preceded by a sermon.

Concerning prayers, all the faithful are commanded to pray at five set times during the day: 1) between dawn and sunrise; 2) at midday, when the sun has reached its zenith; 3) in mid-afternoon; 4) after sunset; and 5) in the evening, before going to bed. These are ritual prayers fixed in all details. The daily prayer (*salah*) ritual is the second most important duty of the five pillars of Islam. There are also three voluntary times for prayer: after dawn, "when the sun is already high," before midday, at about 11 a.m., and after midnight. Only the sick, the aged, the men-

tally retarded, and under some circumstances, travelers are exempt from this duty (and I expect that might include those soldiers of Islam fighting infidels such as the nineteen suicide terrorists who attacked America on September 11, 2001). "In order for prayers to be valid, cleanliness of both clothing and location is necessary; the latter is effected by decking the ground on which one prays with a rug, cloth, or similar cover. In addition, the person praying must also undergo a ritual purification."

The different sects of Islam can vary on the details of accomplishing purification whether physically through washings or symbolically. "In ritual washing, the hands, forearms, head, and feet are cleansed with a threefold movement of the hand. In addition, rinsing out the mouth, blowing out of the nose, and scrubbing out the ears is advisable. When no water is available, the Koran (*Qur'an*) allows the believer a "dry wash" with earth, sand, or, symbolically, a pebble." The Friday (*Jumu'ah*) assembly entails two sessions. The first session, the head of the Muslim state (or his representative) delivers an address, in which he may discuss any issues pertinent to Islam.

Nowadays, rarely do rulers of Muslim states attend the Friday congregations with common Muslims, let alone lead in the Friday prayers. That duty has been given to the Muslim clergy, the imams. The sermon (*Khutbah*) usually starts at 12:30 p.m. in winter and at 1:30 p.m. in the summer. An ancient sage taught that when Friday sermon and prayer comes the angels take their place at the door of the Mosque to write down the names of those who come early and the order of their arrival. The person who comes early is like one who had sacrificed a camel for the pleasure of Allah. The one who comes after him is like one who had sacrificed a cow, and it slides downward to rams, chickens, and for the late comer, only an egg in the path of Allah.

It is also believed that when the Imam proceeds to the podium (*Mimbar*) to launch his sermon, those same angels roll up their scrolls and join the congregation to listen. The second session is the leading of Friday midday prayers. With men separated from women, these prayers are orientated toward Mecca. They are not praying to Mecca, but to Allah, Mecca being the spiritual center of Islam. The precise loca-

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Romancing Your Child's Heart

by Julia Benson

After attending a women's church retreat that featured a breakout session entitled Romancing Your Child's Heart a couple of years ago, I came home from the retreat all revved up and ready to win my toddler child's heart for Christ. I was ready! I knew I'd have this romancing thing licked in a week. I was even so bold as to decide to win my husband's heart for Christ too (he's a non-believer). Life was going to be great. A few weeks after the retreat, I, along with the other ladies that attended, briefed the rest of our church group about what we had learned. I was even so bold as to publicly commit to making my life a testament to Christ so that I could be a witness to my husband and daughter.

But over the next couple of weeks the romancing didn't take place. What did take place was the depression that reared its ugly head every so often over the previous few years. For the next one and a half to two weeks I cried, I felt overwhelmed by even the simplest of tasks, I couldn't make decisions, and I pushed those I love away from me. There was one whom I didn't push away from me this time. Usually when life had become hard for me I had a hard time turning to God. I certainly didn't push him away, but I didn't particularly lean on him either. But this time was different.

I couldn't take it anymore. Being depressed was a waste of time and had the physiological effect of making me sick. It was ruining my relationships with the people I love. It was ruining my relationship with my Creator. I couldn't have it anymore. As I cried uncontrollably while my chest felt like it was being squeezed tightly, I knelt down to pray. I didn't ask him to take my depression away. I didn't ask him to make me happy. I didn't ask him for material things because my depression was way beyond that. I sobbed and begged my Father in Heaven to change my heart.

And He did.

These past several years have seen the most growth for me as a Christian than ever before in my life. I had known that it was time for me to live for Christ, and I mean really live for Him. But – I don't know why – I was holding back. I had asked God to help me completely surrender to him, but even after praying for that, I still felt that I was holding back. For a long time I had wanted to surrender my whole heart to him, and I held back.

Then, when I had that last bout with depression, it completely consumed me. I realized there was no way I would make it through without Christ at my side. So, in the midst hopelessness and desperation, I asked him to change my heart.

And He did. It took about a week, and He completely changed my life.

I simply didn't have anything else to hold back. My life, my trust, my love were (and still are) all His! There is nothing – nothing – I can't overcome if I have Christ. It's true; He will never abandon me. My heart has been totally won by Christ, and I completely and totally and continually surrender it to Him.

Over the course of the next couple of weeks I worked on romancing my child's heart for Christ. I tried very hard to have patience with Kiersten, to be more expressive about my relationship with Christ (I'm not an extrovert), to be more consistent with teaching her Bible lessons, and to pray with her more often. When considering discipline, I was careful to determine whether she was acting out in defiance or childishness. She was completely responsive to my efforts. She was more even tempered (except, of course, when she missed her nap), she was more loving and affectionate, and I think she was a little more conscious of her relationship with Christ.

I also tried to romance my husband's heart for Christ as well. I've tried very hard to have more patience with Tom. I focused on seeing how beautiful he was in his interactions with our daughter and his support of me. I tried to be more affectionate toward him. He too was responsive to my efforts. Although he still does not call on Christ as his Savior, I have seen great changes in him over the years, and I still have hope that as God reveals more and more of his glory to Tom, he will accept the wonderful gift of Christ's love for him.

Shortly after all this "romancing" started, a realization hit me one day when I was recording the process in my journal. My heart had been romanced by Christ. Somehow I had changed. I had been transformed by the love of my Savior!

Since then my heart still belongs to Christ. Of course, like I suspect it is with many Christians, the roller coaster ride of life pulls me away from my Crea-

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The Will to Do Good

By Brian Knowles

A number of years ago I noticed my small grandson sitting in a stairwell in his parents' A-frame home, apparently in deep thought. I think he was about five at the time. I sat down beside him and asked, "Whatcha thinkin' about?" His reply was instant and candid, "I'm thinking about how to do bad things."

Well at least he was honest about it! We've all done that haven't we? When we were children, we contemplated how to get revenge on our enemies, how to get even with a sibling, how to steal something and get away with it, how to whip the school bully, how to run away from home, or how to do something mean to someone....

As adults, we still think about how to do bad things, but we tend to be less than candid about admitting it. And, depending on our level of moral maturity, chances are we seldom actualize our nefarious plots.

When I was a young, ignorant, inexperienced parent, I thought the most important thing I could teach my three sons was obedience. I learned that I could control their behavior -- so long as they were within reach of my heavy hands and loud voice. But once they were out from under my thumb, and out with their friends, they did bad things. Authoritarian parents need to learn that controlling their children's behavior is not the main objective of childrearing.

So what is the goal of godly childrearing? The answer is found in a proverb: "*Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it*" (Proverbs 22:6).

The Meaning of "Train"

If you take this proverb at face value, you may miss some of its meaning. For example, what does the word "train" mean? The Hebrew word translated "train" is *chanak*. It can be translated "train up" or "dedicate" — but the meaning goes deeper.

In the ancient Hebrew world, when a newborn baby would not take to its mother's breasts, she, or the midwife, would rub the palate of her child with sweet, chewed dates. She might also rub some on

her nipple. This often stimulated the sucking action necessary for the child to begin feeding. This action was the first "teaching" the child ever received. Consequently, the word *chanak* became the word for training or teaching.

The word was also used for rendering a horse submissive as, for example, does "the horse whisperer." It also meant to "make experienced." Yet another meaning is "to dedicate" or "consecrate" (*cf.* Deuteronomy 20:5; I Kings 8:63).

"The way he should go"

The whole meaning of this phrase is not apparent in the translation. A more literal translation would be "according to his way." As A. Cohen writes, "The intention is 'the way of uprightness and good living,' but even this training must be according to the way suitable for the individual child..." (*Soncino Commentary on Proverbs*, p. 146). Another way of looking at that is that a child that is always given his own way will continue to seek his own way when he gets older. He or she must learn the right way while still young enough to learn it.

The point is, each child is an individual, and he or she must be treated as such. I have five grandchildren by two of my sons. No two are alike. "One size" of childrearing does not "fit all." This is the problem with formulaic, legalistic childrearing approaches. They simply don't work well. Some children are more sensitive than others. All have individual body chemistries, mentalities, skill sets, tolerances, strengths and weaknesses, sins, and idiosyncrasies. These must be recognized. The child must be reared taking all of these individual characteristics into consideration.

Furthermore, each child accumulates a unique set of experiences upon which to draw. What happens to one child doesn't always happen to a sibling. Children contract illnesses, experience accidents, face different threats and develop different relationships. All of these affect "who they are" and more importantly, who they will become when they are older.

Each of our children, and grandchildren, needs to be approached with a personalized psychology. Yet,

the goal is similar: to teach and train him how to live successfully, and righteously. The apostle Paul worded it this way: *“Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord”* (Ephesians 6:4). Our children need to grow up learning, experiencing and, above all, seeing God’s way modeled.

Effective childrearing prepares a child to live autonomously and successfully in the real world, with both God and man. It doesn’t make him eternally dependent upon his parents. Nor does it alienate him from them. The well-reared child is always ready to honor and support his parents, and the godly parent is always “there for” his child through all the unfolding stages of his or her life.

“When he is old”

This phrase is not speaking of the child’s old age, but rather of when he reaches the age of accountability at thirteen for boys, and twelve for girls. This is the time of *bar mitzvah* and *bat mitzvah*. The Hebrew word *bar* means “son” and *bat* means “daughter.” A *mitzvah* is a commandment. At age thirteen the Jewish boy becomes a “son of the commandment” and at twelve, a Jewish girl becomes a “daughter of the commandment.” This means he or she is now accountable directly to God for the commandments that apply to him or her.

From birth to *Bar Mitzvah* is the time of training and preparation for this momentous event. Prior to this time, the child is considered “all that his parents are.” Now he must deal directly with God. If he has been properly prepared throughout his early life, he will follow God’s way and *“will not turn from it”* (Proverbs 22:6b).

“Will not turn from it”

The word “turn” or “depart from” (KJV) is from the Hebrew *suwr* – pronounced “soor.” It is often used for “turning aside” from the right path – from the path of God’s commandments (cf. Exodus 32:8; Judges 2:17 & Deuteronomy 9:12).

This idea of walking in the right path, and of not turning aside from it, is ubiquitous in the Bible. Think of the image of a path in the woods. Either we can walk straight ahead on the path toward the light we see at the end of it, or we can leave the path and take side trails that lead into darkness. Furthermore, we could stop dead in our tracks, do an about face, and start walking back the opposite way, away from the light.

In life, we are either moving Godward, or we are moving away from him. Repentance means halting our journey down the wrong path, and turning back

toward God – toward the light. This is the journey of *teshuvah* – turning or repentance.

The evil influence (*yetzer hara*) in the world seeks to turn the righteous from his godly direction, and move him back into the treacherous paths of darkness. It says to the man of God: *“Leave this way, get off this path, and stop confronting us with the God of Israel!”* (Isaiah 30:11).

A child that has been reared in God’s way will recognize that there are times when he has departed from it – that is, taken a wrong turn in life. The boy or girl may find him- or herself on a path leading away from God, instead of toward him. God advises, *“Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the Lord”* (Lamentations 3:40). The journey of *teshuvah* begins with a change of direction. We return to the well-lit path that leads toward God. We walk in the light, rather than in the darkness of error and sin.

A child that has been “trained in the way that he should go” knows the difference between right and wrong, light and darkness, the path toward God and the many paths that lead away from him. Jesus said, *“Enter in through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life, and only a few find it”* (Matthew 7:13-14).

The world in general is headed in the wrong direction. It is moving incrementally farther away from God and deeper into the darkness. Only a relative handful of people out of the vast sea of humanity are moving Godward. Those who are moving deeper into the darkness are producing the fruit of darkness. The apostle Paul was blunt in the language he used to express it:

“Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed, and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, and malice. They are gossips, slanderous, God-haters, insolent, arrogant, and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them” (Romans 1:28-32 NIV).

The natural, carnal, mind “thinks about how to do bad things” – and does them. It departs from the path of light and heads in dark directions. It celebrates sin. It renders godliness politically incorrect.

The more one drifts from the path of righteousness, the more one learns to hate God and all he stands for (Romans 8:7). At the end of this path lies eternal destruction.

We should be able to see, by now, the enormous importance of "...*training a child in the way he should go...*" Bringing children into such a world as this is an enormous responsibility. Failure to prepare him or her for the godly life and all of its distractions can lead to all kinds of heartache and misery. Generally speaking, the world is swaddled in satanic darkness. As Jesus told his disciples, his followers are sheep among wolves. We need to be solidly planted on the path of righteousness in order to keep moving Godward. Sometimes the paths of righteousness lead through a valley darkened by the shadow of death (Psalm 23:3, 4). The children of God must learn not to fear the evil that casts that shadow. Jesus taught: "*Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell*" (Matthew 10:28).

I realize that's easier said than done. It takes enormous faith and confidence in God to stand one's ground in the face of a deadly threat. Today's world is full of such threats. I doubt that things are going to get any better. I see no basis for optimism except perhaps for the psychological need for it. Most people, it seems, are in denial about the state of the real world. They do not grasp the magnitude of the threat. Believe me, it is real.

We have no greater responsibility than to protect our children from all that threatens them, and to prepare them to stand on their own, and on principle, when we are off the scene. Evil is on the march all over the world. If no one fights it and stops it, it will continue to advance. Nehru once said, "Evil unchecked grows. Evil tolerated poisons the whole system." Today's politically correct world is not only tolerating evil, it is celebrating it. It is encouraging it. A few voices of alarm are being raised, but the public's response to them is largely apathetic or contemptuous. Edmund Burke famously said, "All that is required for evil to triumph is for a few good men to do nothing."

Very few are actively fighting evil these days. Those who do so are viewed by the world as more evil than the evil they are fighting. They are demonized at every turn. This plays into the hands of the advancing forces of darkness.

I don't mean to be paranoid, but there is reason for alarm. We can only deny reality for so long before it swamps us. There are many threats to peace, well-being, political and religious freedom, and even

life itself abroad in the world: Islamic Jihadists, resurgent communists; secular progressives and right wing Christian Dominionists. You can add to that mix any number of war lords, tin pot dictators, drug lords, neighborhood gangs and organized crime, crooked power-mad politicians, and other corrupting influences. To live in today's world is to run a gauntlet of evil.

Preparing the children we brought into the world to live successfully in this world is a major responsibility of every parent. It's not a job we can take casually. We must put energy into it. If we don't do it prayerfully and conscientiously we probably won't do it right.

As we teach, train, love and discipline our children, and seek to influence our grandchildren, we are helping shape the next generation of mankind.

As I get older, I find myself thinking about how to do good things. One of the best things we grandparents can do is impart godly values to the next generations. We can draw on the deep well of our own experience and accumulated knowledge to provide way marks on the paths toward light. We can help our progeny develop the will to do good in the world. We can teach them what Paul meant when he wrote: "*Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good*" (Romans 12:21).

This article is reprinted from the Web site of the Association for Christian Development where Brian Knowles is a regular contributor (www.godward.org).

"If we as Christians do not speak out as authoritarian governments grow from within or come from outside, eventually we or our children will be the enemy of society and the state. No truly authoritarian government tolerates those who have a real absolute by which to judge its arbitrary absolutes and who speak out and act upon that absolute. This was the issue with the early church in regard to the Roman Empire, and though the specific issue will in all probability take a different form than Caesar-worship, the basic issue of having an absolute by which to judge the state and society will be the same.

"Here is a sentence to memorize: *To make no decision in regard to the growth of authoritarian government is already a decision for it.*"

Francis A. Schaeffer, *How Should We Then Live?*

Dinosaurs vs. Birds: The Fossils Don't Lie

by Timothy L. Clarey, Ph.D.

Abstract

One of the biggest stumbling blocks to the idea that dinosaurs evolved into birds continues to be the lack of fossil support.

The term "Dinosauria" was first used in 1841 by Sir Richard Owen in an address to the British Association for the Advancement of Science, subsequently publishing the term in 1842. He was the first to recognize that dinosaurs ("fearfully great reptiles") were a distinct group of reptiles, much different from today's lizards. Owen defined dinosaurs as reptiles that walked erect, having a posture similar to elephants and rhinos. Dinosaurs did not have wings, flippers, or fins. Owen was the best known and most authoritative comparative anatomist in the nineteenth century. He argued extensively against Darwin's theory of evolution later in his life.

Thomas Huxley, the famous supporter of Darwin's theory, was the first person to suggest the dinosaurian origin for birds in publications between 1868 and 1870. Huxley found that some dinosaurs had a bird-like ankle joint, a short torso, massively braced hips, a long and mobile neck, and long hind limbs so typical of bird anatomy. He also found that some dinosaurs had holes in the bones for air sacs as in modern birds, and that some dinosaurs possessed the backward pubic bone typical of birds.¹ Later, the presence of what is interpreted as a "wishbone" in some dinosaurs was added to this list.²

Archaeopteryx to Archaeoraptor: Bird to Hoax

In the middle of the controversy is the so-called transitional fossil often cited as the link between birds and dinosaurs entitled *Archaeopteryx*. All ten specimens have been found in Germany in the Solnhofen Limestone of Late Jurassic age (150 million years old by evolutionary standards). Pat Shipman stated that, "These few, special fossils have served as the basis for brilliant deductions, wild speculations, penetrating analyses, and amazing insights."³ It is the well-preserved impressions of feathers on several of the specimens that have elevated *Archaeopteryx* to icon status as the first bird.

Among the first critics of *Archaeopteryx* as the first bird was Sankar Chatterjee when he announced the discovery of a Triassic "bird" he called *Protoavis*. As sponsors of Chatterjee's research, the National Geographic Society (NGS) chose to release the discovery before formal peer-review and scientific scrutiny of his work, drawing sharp criticism from his colleagues.⁴ He did however, allow the NGS to publicize his finding, theoretically pushing back the first bird 75 million years before *Archaeopteryx*. However, many paleontologists did not agree, and today some even doubt *Protoavis* is a bird at all.⁵ The NGS continued to create controversy with the 1999 publication of the "feathered" dinosaur *Archaeoraptor*, again announcing the discovery prior to peer-review. It was later learned that this specimen was a glued together composite of a bird and a dinosaur. In other words, it

was a fake. Jonathan Wells went so far as to label the specimen the "Piltdown bird" in memory of the Piltdown man hoax.⁶ The NGS should have learned in 1991 not to make "scientific" claims or announce discoveries until the findings are first peer-reviewed for scientific integrity.⁷

One of the biggest stumbling blocks to the idea that dinosaurs evolved into birds continues to be the lack of fossil support. Shipman commented, "The bipedal ancestor hypothesis, while favored strongly by logic, has little direct evidence from the fossil record to support or refute it."⁸ The best fossil evidence for a link is the historical confusion between *Archaeopteryx* and *Compsognathus*. At least three of the *Archaeopteryx* specimens were initially misidentified as either a *Compsognathus* or a pterosaur. Unfortunately, these two animals are found in the same strata, making it difficult to argue that *Compsognathus* was the ancestor of *Archaeopteryx*. Advocates for the dinosaur/bird hypothesis are left claiming that something yet unknown was the ancestor to *Archaeopteryx*. "This may be true, but balancing on a hypothetical ancestor is an even shakier proposition than balancing on one leg while the other moves forward," stated Shipman.⁹

It gets even more confusing when you consider that most of the dinosaurs claimed to be ancestors to birds are found in rocks much younger than *Archaeopteryx*. Dinosaurs like *Velociraptor* and *Deinonychus* are found in rocks of the Cretaceous Period. These

rocks are, by evolutionary standards, 75 million years younger than the Late Jurassic Period rocks containing *Archaeopteryx*. This information tends to be downplayed by the advocates for the dinosaur/bird relationship who insist that some, as yet, undiscovered ancestor must be the common link to both groups, regardless of the lack of fossil support.

Cladistics: An Attempt to Circumvent the Facts

Paleontologists have tried to get around the fossil "problems" by employing a new system of classifying organisms called cladistics. This system describes organisms on the basis of sister-group relationships between organisms.¹⁰ Cladists classify extinct and extant organisms on equal footing without regard to time, and in the process, unknown or missing transitional fossils become conveniently dismissed or eliminated.

The problem with cladistics is the arbitrary choice of what constitutes an evolutionary novelty. An evolutionary novelty is an inherited change from a previous pattern or structure that makes an organism unique.¹¹ Choosing evolutionary novelties creates particular problems for extinct organisms because only morphological features are available for comparison. The choices are made based on expert opinion, or in the words of Henry Gee, "persons qualified to judge the evidence."¹² Gee further explained, "The danger for scientists is that they will come to believe the hype, that they are indeed secular priests in possession of the truth with a capital *T*, the 'truth that can be known'. But such truth is expressly unscientific [falls short]."¹³ The reason many fell for the *Archaeoraptor* hoax was their belief in their own hype, regardless of the poor science involved.¹⁴ They believed so strongly that birds evolved from dinosaurs that all evidence to the contrary was ignored or brushed aside as unimportant. They became "priests," preaching their own version of "science."

Additional Evidence

Many dinosaur skin imprints have been identified in the last 150 years. These discoveries, like the spectacular discovery of embryonic skin imprints from Argentina in 1998, show only scales, very similar to modern reptiles. There are no known dinosaurs possessing feathers like we see in *Archaeopteryx*.¹⁵

Recently, a new dinosaur was discovered, named *Juravenator*, from rocks near those containing *Archaeopteryx*.¹⁶ This new specimen exhibited clear reptilian scales along its tail without a trace of feathers. The authors attempted to explain the lack of feathers in such a "bird-like" specimen by suggesting that feathers were merely seasonal or that feathers must have evolved more than once. The simplest solution is that they had no feathers in the first place.

Alan Feduccia, an ornithologist, and his team of scientists found no evidence of true feathers in any of the recently published "feathered" dinosaurs from China.¹⁷ They concluded that the presumed "proto-feathers" were merely the remains of collagenous fiber meshworks that formed feather-looking patterns during decomposition. Feduccia's team further added that it is too early to declare that "birds are living dinosaurs," and that "the problem of avian origins is far from being resolved."¹⁸ These authors warned that the strict overemphasis on cladistics, and the ignoring of data from stratigraphy, embryology, ecology, and biogeography, has resulted in misleading interpretations of the evidence.¹⁹

Another team of scientists found both soft-tissue and skeletal support that indicates birds and dinosaurs are not related.²⁰ They concluded that the theropod dinosaurs, including the recently discovered, *Sinosauropteryx*, did not have a bird-type lung-diaphragm, but a crocodilian-type of system, further widening the gap between birds and dinosaurs.

Conclusions

What does the Bible say about dinosaurs? The term "dinosaur" wasn't used in Biblical times, but we do have a passage in Job 40:15-18 that describes a huge, sauropod-type animal that ate grass (the behemoth). Until recently, no grasses were found as fossils in rocks containing dinosaurs. However, in 2005, a group of scientists discovered titanosaurid sauropods did eat grass.²¹ They found evidence for grass in fossilized dinosaur dung (coprolites) from Late Cretaceous rocks of India. Even the "tubes of bronze" (literal rendering of "strong pieces of brass") has been backed and supported by discoveries of dinosaur bones, as sauropod vertebrae are hollowed out with structures called pleurocoels along the sides of the centra,²² and possessing strong leg bones like "iron." Again and again, scientists find that dinosaurs were in fact, a unique group of reptiles, not truly like modern lizards and not bird-like either, but indeed one of God's marvels of creation.

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"The True Truth"

The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. 2 Chronicles 16:9.

Tomé Souza lived on one of the tributaries of the Amazon, some 100 kilometers west of the city of Manaus. As a young man he began an earnest search for what he called "the true truth." He had never heard of the Bible, but in his own way he began to pray that God would lead him to this truth. One night he dreamed he saw a placard with the word manancial. This is the word for "fountain" in Jeremiah 2:13 in the Portuguese Bible. He awoke as soon as the dream ended and wrote down the unusual word. Next day he showed it to his brothers, who asked him what it meant. He had to admit he did not know. They laughed at him. A few months later Tomé fell seriously ill and had to be taken to a hospital in Manaus. One evening, as he was praying, he suddenly noticed that the scenery outside his hospital window had changed. Instead of buildings, he saw a river with a grassy plain beyond with herds of cattle grazing on it. The scene vanished and an inner voice assured him: "This is where you will find what you are looking for."

Diligent inquiry led him to conclude that the only place in the Amazon Basin that matched what he had viewed was to be found in the territory of Rio Branco. He went there. What he saw agreed with the vision he had seen. There he married, and joined a company of diamond miners. One night, after fervent prayer, he dreamed he saw Christ descending from heaven surrounded by clouds of angels. The next day, when he told his dream, his companions interpreted it to be a good omen. Instead, the company went bankrupt. Tomé lost everything and finally moved to Boa Vista, capital of the territory. He continued to search for "the true truth." A Baptist neighbor heard about his quest and gave him an old Bible. One evening, as he was reading it, an inner voice commanded: "Tome, go downtown and you will find what you are looking for." He obeyed.

As he walked down the main street of the town someone invited him to attend an evangelistic meeting that was in progress. He accepted the invitation. One of the first things he saw was a color slide of a picture of the Second Coming by Harry Anderson. It matched exactly what he had seen in his dream. "This is what I have been looking for," he said to himself. After Bible studies he and his wife accepted "the true truth," and a few weeks later I had the privilege of baptizing them.

If our hearts are perfect toward God, then He will guide us in the way we would choose to go if we could see the end from the beginning.

Donald Mansell, *New Every Morning*, page 95. Review & Herald Publishing Association. 1981.

The Preeminence of Yeshua

by *Daniel Botkin*



Over the past several years, more and more Christians have been learning about the Hebrew roots of their faith. As the Hebrew roots and Jewish background of the New Testament faith are explored, the New Testament Savior is seen in a new light. The Savior is viewed less and less as a White Anglo-Saxon Protestant named Rev. Jesus Christ, and more and more as a Jewish rabbi named Yeshua. And indeed, that is what He was, a rabbi. However, He was far more than a mere rabbi. I get concerned when I hear some people in the Messianic movement say things which give people the impression that Yeshua was a typical first-century Jewish rabbi. He was a rabbi, but He was not ordinary. He was extraordinary.

Yeshua was certainly a typical first-century Jew in some ways. He dressed and looked like an ordinary Jew. There was no halo floating above His head. He ate, worked, and went to the synagogue every Sabbath like other Jews. Ethnically and culturally He was like other Jewish men. Yet He was set apart from all other men, even from all other first-century Jewish men. Outwardly He looked like a typical Jewish rabbi, but inwardly He was not a typical rabbi. He was the sinless Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, the Word incarnate. As a result, He had a unique connection to the Father. He was in a category all His own.

The content of Yeshua's teachings included some elements of typical first-century Jewish thought. Yet His teaching was unlike that of anyone before Him. "And it came to pass, when Yeshua had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at His doctrine; for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matt. 7:28f). "And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth" (Lk. 4:22). "And the Jews marveled, saying, 'How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?'" (Jn. 7:15). "Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, 'Why have ye not brought him?' The officers answered, 'Never man spake like this man'" (Jn. 7:45f).

Even noble Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, had difficulty understanding the depth of Yeshua's teachings. "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" Yeshua asked him (Jn. 3:10).

Yeshua was not only a rabbi, He was also a prophet. In some ways He was similar to the previous

Hebrew prophets, yet He was in a category that was unshared with any other prophet. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds" (Heb. 1:1-1f).

Like Moses, Yeshua was Israel's Redeemer, yet He was far greater than Moses. "For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house" (Heb. 3:3).

Yeshua was greater than all human messengers, and was greater even than the angelic messengers. "Being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said He at any time, 'Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee'? And again, 'I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son'? And again, when He bringeth in the first begotten into the world, He saith, 'And let all the angels of God worship Him.' And of the angels He saith, 'Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire.' But unto the Son He saith, 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom'" (Heb. 1:4-8).

Yeshua was not a typical first-century rabbi. He was raised in the first-century Jewish world, but He did not fit in the first-century Jewish world. His teachings and the way He practiced His faith made Him a misfit and often put Him at odds with the Jewish world in which He lived.

Yeshua did not fit in the first-century Jewish world. If He were to come back today, He would not fit in the twenty-first-century Jewish world, either. In the entire collective body of all living Jewish people, He would find a very small percentage of Jews who take their faith seriously. And even among those who do take their faith seriously, He would find much of the same hypocrisy that existed among first-century religious Jews.

If He came back to the Church today, He would not fit in there, either. For one thing, He would show up for worship on the wrong day. He would arrive at

Continued on page 19

If I Were President

If I were president, the first thing I would do is resign because I would probably be impeached anyway. I am sure I would be accused of combining church and state even though technically I wouldn't be.

For if I were president, one of my first acts would be to call a National Day of Prayer and Fasting. It wouldn't be just a National Day of Prayer. We have one of those, and for those few who participate, it has become an hour of prayer and music.

I would make my day a real day of prayer by doing it the old fashioned way: I would add back the fasting part. And I would make it during the week and request all non-essential services be closed so that people could devote themselves to prayer, soul-searching, repentance, and humility. I am sure this would elicit howls of derision from most corners of the nation, which is probably why I would be impeached.

The idea of a national day of fasting has a long national tradition. The Pilgrims were more inclined to call a thanksgiving fast rather than a thanksgiving feast, 1621 being one notable exception to the rule.

In 1746 the French fleet threatened the British settlements in North America. On October 16 of that year, the people of New England called for a day of fasting and prayer. That night the French fleet was destroyed by a dreadful storm at sea. Maybe that was coincidence, and maybe not.

The Continental Congress passed the First Prayer Declaration in 1775, setting aside a day for the colonies to pray and fast together.

Abraham Lincoln and the U.S. Senate called for a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer in the proclamation of March 30, 1863. The document proclaimed, "We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power, as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us!"

It has been a while since the nation has been called to fasting. The proclamation of 1863 seems to describe 2006 America, but I don't expect anyone in government today to mandate what the Senate and the President mandated back then.

That doesn't mean you and your church can't call such a day on your own, and in fact, that might be the only way this type of thing can get done. It must come from the heart of the grassroots and spread upward if it is to be effective.

It is well to remember the words of Benjamin Franklin in a speech he gave before the Constitutional Convention on June 28, 1787. During the bleakest days of the Convention, when it appeared that the delegates would fail, he stood and said the following words:

In this Situation of this Assembly, groping, as it were, in the dark to find Political Truth, and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, how has it happened, Sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of Lights to illuminate our Understandings? In the Beginning of the Contest with Britain, when we were sensible of Danger, we had daily Prayers in this Room for the Divine Protection. Our Prayers, Sir, were heard; — and they were graciously answered. All of us, who were engag'd in the Struggle, must have observed frequent Instances of a superintending Providence in our Favour. To that kind Providence we owe this happy Opportunity of Consulting in Peace on the Means of establishing our future national Felicity. And have we now forgotten that powerful Friend? or do we imagine we no longer need its assistance? I have lived, Sir, a long time; and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this Truth, that GOD governs in the Affairs of Men. And if a Sparrow cannot fall to the Ground without his Notice, is it probable that an Empire can rise without his Aid? We have been assured, Sir, in the Sacred Writings, that 'except the Lord build the House, they labour in vain that build it.' I firmly believe this; and I also believe, that, without his concurring Aid, we shall succeed in this political Building no better than the Builders of Babel; we shall be divided by our little, partial, local Interests, our Projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a Reproach and a Bye-word down to future Ages. And, what is worse, Mankind may hereafter, from this unfortunate Instance, despair of establishing Government by human Wisdom, and leave it to Chance, War, and Conquest.

I therefore beg leave to move, that henceforth Prayers, imploring the Assistance of Heaven and its Blessing on our Deliberations, be held in this Assembly every morning before we proceed to Business; and that one or more of the Clergy of this city be requested to officiate in that Service.

Those are good words for all time.

—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).

In Loving Memory of Dr. Allen R. Babcock

(January 12, 1922 to February 13, 2006)

by *Terril D. Littrell, Ph.D.*

The Babcock family name is familiar to Sabbatarian historians. The name reaches back to Anglo-Saxon times in England, first found in Worcestershire, long before the Norman Conquest in 1066 A.D.

Some of the first settlers of this name to New England in America in the 1600's were Seventh Day Baptists, who settled in Portsmouth, Newport, and Westerly, Rhode Island. There is a long line of Sabbatarian scholars, educators, and clergy who were relatives of the late Dr. Allen Babcock.

Allen Rodney Babcock was born on a cold winter day in Mackinaw, Michigan, on January 12, 1922 to Earl and Edna (Davis) Babcock. He passed from this life on February 13, 2006.

Allen grew up in a traditional Seventh Day Baptist home. His dad worked for Ford Motor Company in Detroit, Michigan. The family moved from Detroit to Battlecreek, Michigan, and on to North Loup, Nebraska, where Allen graduated from high school in 1940.

He entered the Navy and spent most of his time in the South Pacific repairing Navy bombers during World War II.

After the war he came back to North Loup and married Merna C. Van Horn on June 1, 1948, at the North Loup Seventh Day Baptist Church. The couple moved to Davenport, Iowa, where Allen attended Palmer Chiropractic College. He graduated in 1950 and they moved to Kansas City, Missouri.

Dr. Babcock learned of a need for a chiropractic clinic in El Dorado Springs, Missouri, so he, his wife, and baby son Roger moved there in December of 1950. He made El Dorado Springs home for his family and remained in practice there for over 50 years. His wife Merna operated a health-food store in the community for over 25 years.

He and his family were strong, loyal, and faithful members of the Church of God (7th Day) in El Dorado Springs. I became their pastor in 1966. I introduced him to the Bible Sabbath Association, and he immediately joined and became a strong financial supporter. He served as a board member for 30 years, as vice president for several terms and as a contributing editor of *The Sabbath Sentinel*.

He and I became close friends. Our families spent a lot of time together on Sabbath as well as on other occasions. We celebrated with them on their 25th wedding anniversary. We traveled with them to North Loup, Nebraska, where we met their parents. I was a guest preacher at the North Loup Seventh Day Baptist Church.

The Babcock family today seems like part of the Littrell family. We continue to visit each other's homes and exchange correspondence on a regular basis. We make telephone calls back and forth and e-mail each other. I performed the marriage ceremony for their son, Jay Babcock.

I shall always remember Allen Babcock as a Christian gentleman who had respect for all of God's children. He was a kind and compassionate man who looked for ways to be helpful to others.

He was a generous person whose ears were always open to those who were hurting in body, soul, and spirit. He gave all he could to make this world a better place for all people to live.

He was not ashamed to publicly witness of the love of his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He had the BSA calendar hanging in clear public view in his clinic waiting room. He placed *The Sabbath Sentinel*, *Bible Advocate*, and other good Christian literature on his reading table at all times. The BSA bumper sticker with the words, "The seventh day is the Sabbath," was always on his automobile. He stood for God, family, and country, opposed all forces that are destructive to these three.

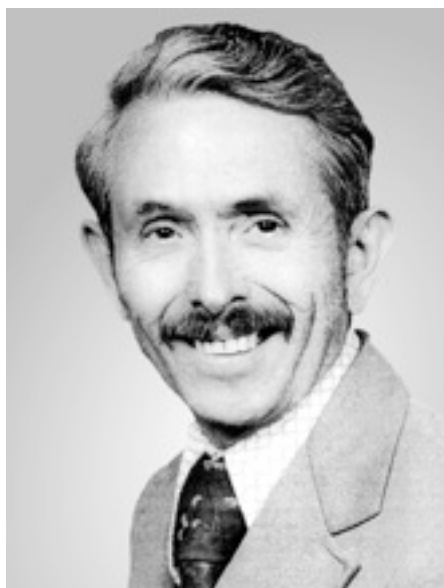
He was preceded in death by his father and mother and his brother the Reverend Wayne Babcock, a Seventh-day Baptist pastor.

He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Merna C. Babcock; three sisters, Audrey Fuller of Daytona, Florida, Gloria Sharp of Beemer, Nebraska, and Donna Brown of Altamonte Springs, Florida; four children, Roger Babcock, Auburndale, Florida, Shirley (Babcock) Coulter of Springfield, Missouri, Jay Babcock of Jasper, Alabama, and Teresa (Babcock) Rush of El Dorado Springs, Missouri; twelve grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted on February 16, 2006, at the Sheldon Funeral Home in El Dorado Springs, with pastors Terry Manley and Gene Rawls officiating. Internment was at the Clintonville Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, contributions were received by Casa Shalom Ministries, Inc., to support orphans.

My desire was to attend the funeral and speak on behalf of the long life and service to God and neighbor of my dear friend and brother in Christ, but due to my own poor health with diabetes I was not able.

I shall not see him anymore on earth, but have already made arrangements to meet him again in heaven.



Nutrition Is Not Diet

by Dr. Allen R. Babcock

(Reprinted from the May 1975 Sabbath Sentinel)

The American College Dictionary defines nutrition as follows: "the act or process of nourishing or being nourished" and "the process by which the food material taken into an organism is converted into living tissue."

By the above definition we understand that nutrition is not merely the process of putting an assortment of elements into the digestive tract — it may not even be the perfect balance of high quality foods into the system — but a process by which nutritional material is taken into and converted by body processes into living tissues, that is, into cells, secretion, hormones, etc.

Assimilation — The physiology book calls it anabolism, "the process of building up." Zoethout and Tuttle's physiology book says, "the first and preliminary step in anabolism is supplying the cell with the necessary material for recouping its losses."

Catabolism — The releasing of potential energy and all it involves is known as catabolism. The catabolism in your body is expressed in part by the destruction of three million cells each second; you burn three million nervous impulses each second. The bones in your body give up particles of calcium by the thousands each second.

The used-up and destroyed elements and cells must be replaced by elements designed to do just that. Carbohydrates will not build cells, and calcium used must be replaced by good organic calcium. Impulse eating is as dangerous to your physical body as impulse buying may be to your finance structure.

Let us remember, an overbalance of vitamin A compared to vitamin B will lie distinguished as a deficiency of vitamin B, with the same effect as would be produced by a lack of vitamin B in the diet. This is the reason we stress in this column taking natural, fresh, raw, organically grown fruits, vegetables, nuts, and seeds as they come from the hand of God in such "togetherness" and wholeness that there is little fear of imbalance if judgment is used.

Important early scientific researchers Sir Robert McCarrison and Weston Price found that certain races of people were virtually free of degenerative diseases and cancer. Other investigators since have reported similar experiences. The diets of all such races or tribes, while varying widely, were found to

have these attributes in common: they were simple, natural, and adequate. They embraced, in other words, the principles of wholeness.

Conversely, other tribes or races living in neighboring areas, subject in all other respects to the same influences but eating the refined and degenerated foods that are part of the "trade goods" of civilization, were found to be afflicted with the typical diseases of civilization, including cancer.

Excerpts from Dr. D. T. Quigley's study, *The Natural Malnutrition*, are extremely illuminating:

"In the life of the ordinary person [not us?] the most common disease-producing factors are from food deficiencies.... In the past it has been known that contaminated air and water have a good deal to do with the production of disease, and while this does occur, it is not to be compared with the importance of the amount of disease produced by errors in diet."

C. Edward Burtis made a study of 2707 patients suffering from tumors, cancers, stomach ulcers, colitis, constipation, neuritis, arthritis, heart disease, chronic headaches, and high blood pressure, and disclosed that as a group, they were consuming 55 per cent white flour products, bread, cookies, cake, pastries, pancakes, biscuits, muffins, etc. The sugar consumed by this group (represented by candy, marmalade, preserves, jellies, jams, and canned goods containing heavy sugar syrups) added another 20 per cent to the deficient, devitalized, devitalized, demineralized foods. Thus 75 per cent of their diets were devitalized. And as time progresses, the accumulation of problems produced by these diets creates havoc not only in increased amount of the usual diseases but also in new and unusual symptoms which are often seemingly impossible to manage.

We see a consistent increase in percentages of people who are beginning to realize the folly of our modern diet. The sad part of the situation is that predominantly those who seem to be awakening are the ones who have seen these health-destroying factors destroying their own bodies or those close to them.

All too often it seems, the young cannot be instructed, and for the old it may be too late. □

tion of Mecca relative to the local mosque is published in degrees of longitude and latitude and prayers are carefully oriented. A key architectural design feature of mosques is their assembly room's straight line orientation to Mecca. Early on in Islam's history Muslims prayed toward Jerusalem! The prayers are set and the physical postures or positions of prayer are likewise governed by rules. Prayer services begin with all standing. Then the believers raise both hands next to their head and speak the so-called declaration of intention formula, *Allahu akbar*, (God is great) to move them into a state of consecration. They then fold their hands in front of their stomach and quietly recite sections of the Koran. Then they bow forward, the palms of their hands touching the legs above their knees and thrice repeating *Allahu akbar* along with words of praise "Glory and praise be to my God, the Almighty." There are many cycles of such movements that compose the prayer session.

What's so great about Friday?

The likely genesis of the Friday "Sabbath" goes back to the earliest days of Islam. Islam, as most historians acknowledge, was heavily influenced by Muhammad's borrowing from Judaism and Christianity. Muhammad formulated his new religion mixing both traditions as well as establishing his particular distinctions. He was well acquainted with the several Jewish tribal communities in Arabia and saw that a key element to their unity was "The Book." He was inspired to create one of his own to galvanize unity among his followers.

Muslim doctrine holds that the Koran was uncreated, its words conveyed to Muhammad from a sacred tablet preserved in heaven. Many non-Islamic researchers, however, believe that Muhammad commissioned a Jew for wages to create a rough draft of his book. It evidences many revisions and edits in spite of claims to the contrary. Muhammad was also acquainted with the traditions of the several Christian settlements in Arabia and their Sunday (resurrection day) Sabbath tradition. He freely incorporated certain Christian elements into his book. In the city of Medina Muhammad often participated in the Friday market day. Friday was a busy business and market-gathering day for seventh-day Sabbath observant Jews. He determined Friday would make a practical choice for communal assembly and prayer for his followers. By establishing a "Sabbath" different from Jews and Christians he avoided their Sabbaths and took practical advantage of Friday's commercial market day assemblies. He declared Friday as the day for congregational noon prayer for his followers. It was no more "spiritual" than that.

The Koran mentions the seventh-day Sabbath in relation to the Jews on several occasions—usually in a critical or negative context. It chastens Jews for breaking their Sabbath and has some novel stories to illustrate. One involves God testing Jews by bringing them a bounty of fish on the Sabbath, but not on other days. The greedy Jews yielded to temptation and rigged nets to trap their Sabbath catch of fish.

"And certainly you have known those among you who exceeded the limits of the Sabbath, so we said to them: Be as apes, despised and hated. So we made them an example to those who witnessed it and those who came after it, and an admonition to those who guard against evil."

The transgression referred to is likely the fishing story mentioned in Surah 7:163. One of the common derogations of Jews by Muslims to this day is to call them "apes" or "monkeys." The Jews were condemned for breaking the Sabbath, but Muhammad made no attempt to keep it. He taught it had been abrogated and used arguments similar to those used by Sunday-keeping Christians.

The Koran also creates space from the Jews by teaching that Allah does not get tired and didn't need to rest after his six days of creating. "We created the heavens and the earth and all that lies between them in six spans, and no weariness came upon us." Islam erroneously accepts that the biblical account pictures God as tired from creating and needing a rest.

Islam and its Koran hold that the seventh-day Sabbath has been abrogated by the new revelation of Muhammad. Further, Islam teaches that Jesus did not need resurrecting since he did not die on the cross (a substitute took his place) and he was raised to heaven unharmed. The Christian Sunday has likewise been abrogated by the last of God prophets, Muhammad.

Allah and Muhammad

The matter of which day is the correct Sabbath does not appear to be a matter of great concern in Muslim theology. Allah's prophet trumps all previous religious commands and traditions, and his example has become the new law. Abraham is claimed to be "the first Muslim," and Moses is quoted more than one hundred times in the Koran (often inaccurately), but Muhammad trumps them all. Those who resist the teachings of God's final prophet are in for trouble.

"O Prophet! Strive against the disbelievers and the hypocrites! Be harsh with them. Their ultimate abode is hell, a hapless journey's end" (Surah 9:73).
"O ye who believe! Fight those of the disbelievers

who are near to you, and let them find harshness in you" (Surah 9:123).

While Allah is considered by Muslims to be Creator and God, he is not the same God the Bible describes. In fact, Allah has nothing in common with Yahweh, the God of Israel and Creator of all. Well, what about the oft heard claim of the pure monotheism of Islam? Muhammad attacked the Arab polytheists of Arabia, and Mecca in particular, for their having and worshipping 360 idols of celestial gods surrounding the sacred Kabah in Mecca. Muhammad preached against this polytheism and declared one of their gods to be the supreme and only God, Allah (who was previously the moon god). The moon (and sometimes a sword) is a common feature on the flag of Islamic nations. Islam is monotheistic in the sense it worships but one god. However, the God it worships is simply one of the idol gods of the pagan polytheists of Arabia.

The True Genesis of the Sabbath

The origin of the Sabbath is found in God himself and nowhere else. The Sabbath is not a revelation received by a charismatic (though a likely illiterate) Arabian in the 6th century AD, but by an act of God at the beginning—the very beginning. Hebrew Scripture doesn't picture a creating Yahweh being tired and needing a rest. Genesis does not speak of God "resting" (*nuah*) on the seventh-day, which might suggest being tired and needing refreshment. The object of the Sabbath was not for God to find energy for another week's work. God worked in order to relax and enjoy his creation with the first couple—made in his image—not the other way around. The Sabbath is not for the weekdays, but the weekdays for the Sabbath. In the Old Testament the Sabbath is a day God especially claims. It is holy because it has special associations for and with God.

By blessing the day Yahweh implies it has the same capacity to be fruitful that the living world possesses—the power to stimulate, animate, enrich, and give fullness to life. On the seventh-day God "stopped" or "ceased" because the work was done. The verb is *sabat*, from which the word "Sabbath" comes. The fact that God stopped work at the end of the week assures us that the world we live in is not a half-finished project. God ceased creating because the job was properly and completely done. It can now be enjoyed by both God and man. The Sabbath signifies the completion of creation. It therefore has no evening. Have you noticed that in the creation account the Sabbath has no night? Yahweh didn't close the seventh-day as he did the previous six by saying, "and there was evening, and there was morning—the first day," etc. I must assume that it was a 24-hour day

like the previous ones with evenings and mornings. But the seventh day is handled differently. Why? His work was complete. The earth would endure forever. It is stable, secure, and constantly upheld and "tended" to by its Creator. It also awaits the great eschatological Sabbath of the Kingdom of God when the earth will burst forth in full flower, free from despoiling evil. Then there will be no night. None of these profound truths attach to the Islamic Friday "Sabbath."

It Is about the Image of the Creator

Daniel J. Boorstin writes in his engrossing book, *The Creators*, "The contrast between the Hebrew and Christian views of the Creator and the Muslim view appears wherever we look—in the creeds, the traditions, and the visions of Islam. This, as much as anything else, makes it hard for us in the West to feel at home with Islam. For Islam found the very notion of Creation unappealing. The first, decisive, yet unfamiliar evidence is the Muslim view of Holy Scripture." Boorstin notes that the Muslim counterpart to Jesus is not Mohammed but a book. Where the Bible records that man was made in God's image and that Jesus as Son of God had so incarnated that divine image, he could say, if you have seen him, you had seen the Father. But Muslims believe in *Inlibration*, the embodiment of god in a book—the Koran. A pillar of the Muslim faith is that the Koran is uncreated. Why did God create man? The God of the Bible will judge man by his fulfillment of the God-like image. Not so in Islam. "I have only created *Jinns* [angels] and men, that they may serve me. I created the *Jinn* and humankind only that they might worship me" (Surah 51:56). The Koran repeatedly reminds us that Allah's creatures are only his "servants" or "slaves." The people of the Koran prefer to call themselves Muslims, from "Islam," the Arabic word for submission or obedience.

The notion of sharing God's creative image and nature as his sons and daughters is foreign to Islam. There is a reason that the nations of Islam are among the world's poorest and most backward and not known for beneficial creations or contributions to civilization. For a believing Muslim, to create is a rash and dangerous act. He is not an image bearer of a divine creator, but a slave.

The Biblical Seventh-day Sabbath

Similarities between the Islamic "Sabbath" and the seventh-day Sabbath are virtually none. Contrasts, however, abound. The biblical Sabbath is not a mere Jewish peculiarity. It points toward a completely different world view than that of Islam. It embodies the ideology of creation. God is creating men and women in his image, and He has entrusted them with

God-like abilities to create, abilities to be used in serving our fellow man and thereby glorifying the Creator who shared them with his image bearers. The Creation story of seven days is a gospel declaring a rhythm of God's movement in fulfilling His Grand Plan for mankind. It is a weekly celebration of the creation of the world. The Sabbath celebrates the uncontested enthronement of its Creator. It points

to a future golden age—the Kingdom of God—when there will be no night. □

Ken Westby is a director emeritus of the BSA and founder and director of the Association for Christian Development and the Virtual Church. You may visit the ADC Web site at www.godward.org.

BSA Announces a Final Closeout Sale of Mordakhai Joseph's "Teaching the Law" Tapes and CD's.

For several years the BSA has offered an audio tape presentation of the Old and New Testament by Mordakhai Joseph, called "Teaching the Law." Mordakhai Joseph was born to a strict biblically oriented Orthodox Jewish family in Aden, Yemen. Mordakhai was raised in Israel and served for several years in the Worldwide Church of God. This teaching series is available on tape or on CD.

By "the Law" we mean to explain what the Law is and why there is a need to study it in a systematic way. For example, it is not possible to understand the New Testament if you do not understand the Old Testament. Many of the controversies surrounding the books of Galatians and Romans, for example, could be avoided if people had the proper background. The New Testament magnifies the Old Testament, so the Old Testament needs to be understood.

Further, the Law of God is really expressed throughout the entire Bible and includes God's value system, God's character and personality, and how God thinks. The Law of God is not limited to the Ten Commandments and the Old Covenant. That would be a narrow, superficial, and incorrect view. Also, we will attempt to point out the differences and the errors made by legalists trusting in obedience for salvation and those who have a false idea of what grace is, believing that there is no Law today. And, we believe that the Jewish traditions, while perhaps containing some wisdom, are not scripture and that scriptural teaching has precedence over any man or group of men's teachings.

Individual audio tapes are available for \$2.00 each, or \$1.75 each for 30 or more. There are 434 lessons on the Old Testament, and two special series, one with 3 tapes on Divine Service for \$5, and 6 tapes on Heaven & Hell for \$10. You may purchase an entire series of either or both the Old and New Testaments for \$1 per tape plus shipping costs.

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tor, causing a painful chasm between us. But, somehow, I always find my way back to him to hand over my heart again.

The change of my heart wasn't a ticket to a happy and wonderful life on earth. Rather, it was a pathway to discover the love and strength of my Creator when my life became difficult so that I could taste that happiness and joy again. □

Julia Benson is a freelance writer who lives in a small town in northeast Iowa. A former school teacher, Julia now works part-time at a local newspaper. Julia has a husband and a three-year-old daughter. She attends an Adventist church in Wisconsin.

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 (1/3) to one half (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.

church on Saturday instead of Sunday, and would wonder why there was no Sabbath service that day.

Those of us who theologically dwell somewhere between the church and the synagogue ("too Jewish for the church, and too Christian for the synagogue") should perhaps ask ourselves whether or not He would fit in our world. If He came to worship with us on Shabbat, we would be assembled on the right day. But would He find among us the same hypocrisy and lukewarmness that He found among Jews and Christians of the first century? Merely keeping the Sabbath on the right day does not guarantee the absence of hypocrisy and lukewarmness.

"Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head" (Lk. 9:58). These words were spoken to a man who approached Yeshua and eagerly volunteered to follow Him whithersoever He would go. The simple, literal meaning of Yeshua's statement was that He had no certain dwelling place, that He stayed in different houses as He traveled from place to place. But the statement also has a deeper meaning which relates to the Body of Messiah, the *ekklesia*, the collective Body made up of His disciples. In a spiritual sense, the Son of man still has nowhere to lay His head. He still waits for a collective body of people who will not only verbally acknowledge Him as Head of the Body, but really let Him be the Head. He waits for a body of people who will totally yield to His headship, and let Him be Lord and Master of their lives.

Viewing Yeshua as a typical first-century Jewish rabbi will not bring about this kind of submission. The study of first-century Jewish history is important because it provides a historical context for the study of the New Testament. But in our zeal for studying the Hebrew roots of our New Testament faith, we must never forget the uniqueness of our Rabbi, Yeshua, "who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature. For by Him were all things created, that are in the heaven, and that are in the earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the *ekklesia*: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence" (Col. 1:15-18).

Reprinted from "Gates of Eden," November-December 2006, p. 8. "Gates of Eden" is a bimonthly newsletter produced by Gates of Eden, a messianic Jewish ministry. Write to Gates of Eden, P.O. Box 2257, East Peoria, IL, 61611-0257. Gates of Eden is on the Internet at www.gatesofeden.org.

Thursday, December 14, 2006

IRAN: AUTHORITIES ARREST EIGHT LEADERS OF HOUSE CHURCH MOVEMENT

December 14 (Compass Direct News) — Iranian secret police began to raid and arrest leaders of one of the Islamic republic's indigenous house-church movements last Sunday (December 10), arriving unannounced in the early morning hours to search their homes in Tehran, Karaj, Rasht and Bandar-i Anzali.



According to one source, those arrested have been told they face 10 accusations, including evangelization activities and actions against the national security of Iran.

Police authorities reportedly confiscated computers, CDs, tapes, Bibles and printed evangelistic literature found in the homes they searched, according to a report on the Farsi Christian News Network website.

Over the past five days several members of the house church movement have been called in for a day or more of interrogations and then released. But eight remain under arrest, including one woman.

The pastors and active members still held in custody were identified as Behnam Irani

and Peyman Salarvand, from Karaj; Behrouz Sadegh-Khandjani, Shirin Sadegh-Khandjani and Hamid Reza Toluinia, from Tehran; and Yousef Nadarkhani, Parviz Khalaj and Muhammad Reza-Taghizadeh, from Rasht.

Today two of the prisoners, Seyed Abdolreza Ali Haghnejad from Bandar-i Anzali and Bahman Irani from Karaj, were set free.

Members of the religious community of 600 or more reportedly have been warned by police authorities not to send any news about the arrests outside of Iran.

An indigenous house church movement, the group describes itself as a nondenominational Christian community of "free evangelicals," although Iran's evangelical community questions some of the group's unorthodox doctrines, including rejection of the Trinity.

Over the past year, Iran's harsh Islamic regime has targeted various Christian groups known to use literature and other means to spread their faith among the majority Shiite Muslim population.

In at least eight known incidents this year, former Muslims who had converted to Christianity were arrested and held in custody for several weeks before being released. In most cases, they were forced to pay large bail amounts and told their cases remained open for possible criminal prosecution.

Under Iran's strict apostasy laws, any Muslim who leaves Islam to embrace another religion faces the death penalty.

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Editorial—Continued from page 3

We as the Church of the Living God need to pay heed to His warnings—both past and present. After redeeming the Israelites from slavery and oppression and giving them a fertile land of their own, He threw them out of their land because of their vileness. "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment" (Isaiah 1:3-6). Take out the word "Israel" from Isaiah's text and substitute the word "America." The words are old, but the message is for us in 2007. The Israel of Isaiah's day is gone, the cities destroyed and the people taken away captive because of their sins. God could no longer stomach their behavior. Let me add verse 7 of Isaiah chapter 1: "Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers." Have we stopped believing that God can do the same to us for the same reasons that He allowed Israel's destruction to come upon her?

As for the Church, our Lord has something to say directly to us. "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator" (1 Peter 4:15-19). I think one of the things that many Christians have forgotten is that the righteous are "scarcely" saved. They have the idea of they are basically "good" and try to just "get along" in this world without making a lot of waves, that's good enough for God.

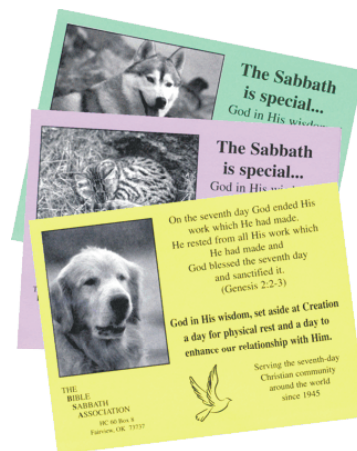
However, is "sliding by" good enough for God? "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and

increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see" (Revelation 3:15-18). One of the messages that is often overlooked in Jesus' letters to the Churches in Revelation 2 and 3 is the emphasis on "overcoming." For example, Jesus says in Revelation 3:21: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne...." The implication is, of course, that to him that does not overcome, the Lord will not grant that person to sit with Him in His throne.

I would like to leave you with one place to start—2 Corinthians 10: "For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, pulling down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ; and having readiness to avenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled" (vv. 4-6). When was the last time you thought seriously about "bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ?" Judgment does indeed begin with us, the House of God. But, the apostle Paul also tells us, "...examine yourselves, whether you are in the faith, prove your own selves. Do you not know your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you, unless you are reprobates?" (2 Corinthians 13:5, MKJV), and "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" (1 Corinthians 11:31).

--Kenneth Ryland

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Letters from our Readers

Dear Editor,

I read with great interest the article on "Profaning the Sabbath Day" by J. Sjoldal in the Sept/Oct '06 Sabbath Sentinel. On page 11 it gives a list of examples of necessary workers. I would like to know if you believe a security guard would fall into this group, especially at night when there is no other staff on site and fire alarms need monitoring and in residential settings with elderly or disabled people.

I would greatly appreciate your insight on this matter.

Walter A. Landl III
Northbrook, IL

Dear Mr. Landl,

In his wisdom, our Creator gave us commandments and instructions that are often non-specific, thus causing us to have to make judgments about the details. No man has authority to make detailed judgments for you. We can, however, sit down and reason together, and try to work together as brothers to come up with a course of action that would honor our Father in heaven.

In the case that you mentioned, it is interesting to consider what would happen if security guards who are responsible for protecting elderly or disabled people decided that they would not work on the Sabbath day. The result would be potential harm to the residents whom they are charged to protect. This function appears to be very much like the necessary police and medical workers who are on call in case of emergencies. No amount of planning or preparation can substitute for a person on the scene to protect life and property and deal with unexpected problems.

We should remember once again that recognizing certain necessary Sabbath day work is not a license to abandon the Sabbath day. We honor our Father best by obeying his commands and helping our fellow man. We can do this on the Sabbath day in rotation, so that no one person consistently bears the load. The Sabbath day is a blessing that we get to do, not a burden that we have to do.

Jonathan Sjoldal

Dear fellow heirs in Yashua,

Shalom! It is my steadfast hope and prayer that this correspondence finds you well and being blessed. As for me, I'm saved, I'm healed, and I'm delivered in the wonderful and powerful Name above all names, Yeshua HaMashiach!

I'm writing to inform you of my new address, see above. Also, I would like to comment on an article in the Sept.-Oct. 2006 issue of The Sabbath Sentinel titled: "Smiting Amalek" by Daniel Botkin on page 6.

Brother Daniel says: "If you have not yet crucified your flesh with its illicit affections and lust, then you do not really belong to the Messiah. You only think you do,..." Now that is a pretty black and white statement. Either you do or you do not. Either you have or you have not. But then in the very next sentence he says: "The degree to which you have crucified your flesh reveals the degree to which you belong to Messiah." Is it just me, or are those two statements totally contradictory to each other?

Also, I would like to ask, if we have no more "Amalek" within us, that is, no more works of the flesh, don't we then become perfect as the Messiah is? And if we become perfect as the Messiah is, then we no longer are in need of His atoning Blood that cleanses us from sin since we no longer have sin in us?

I would appreciate your comments on this question if you are able to do so. Thank you for your time and assistance. Shalom!

Gerald B. Wilson #377028
Goree Unit
P.O. Box 38
Huntsville; TX 77344

Dear Gerald,

I think you are trying to over-analyze Dr. Botkin's article. Dr. Botkin is well aware of the scripture that says, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8). There will never be a time this side of the Resurrection that we will not need to battle the flesh and its yearnings. Crucifying the flesh is a moment-to-moment activity. If we are not in the continual process of bringing our mind and body into the obedience of Christ, we do not belong to Him because the presence of the Lord's Spirit in us continually confronts us with the need to put to death the deeds of the flesh. Dr. Botkin is saying nothing more or less than this. So, even though our ultimate objective is to crucify totally the flesh, in terms of the practicality of the matter, we crucify the flesh by degrees. As we advance in our spiritual growth, we come closer and closer to our Messiah; that is, the Lord has a greater claim on our lives.

Editor

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