



# *The Sabbath Sentinel*

**Nov-Dec  
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**BSA — The Bible Sabbath Association**

**Jesus said, "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."**



# The Sabbath Sentinel November-December, 2021

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# **LUST, the underlying issue**

In his book *I Surrender*, Patrick Morley writes that the church's integrity problem is in the misconception "that we can add Christ to our lives, but not subtract sin. It is a change in belief without a change in behavior." He goes on to say, "It is revival without reformation, without repentance."

All too often we deceive ourselves into thinking that we are doing right by God while what we are doing is remaking God in our image. There is no repentance in that. In fact, we are just creating a false god in place of the One True God. Sometimes we think we are obeying God when, in fact, we are merely deciding what we think God wants as filtered through our will. This attitude is every bit as wrong as deliberate sin is wrong.

Paul takes us on a tour of repentance in Rom. 7:7-25. Some think that Paul was a perfect Christian. After all, he was trained at the feet of Gamaliel and personally trained for 3 years by the resurrected Christ. Surely, here was a man who was perfect before God, right? But, that's not what Paul tells us.

In Rom. 7, Paul proclaims to us that he would not have known what sin was except for the law. He then opens our eyes to what law he was talking about. He tells us that he would not have known what lust was except for the law. The law he is writing about is the collection known as the Ten Commandments, which is where we find the law about lusting for what is not ours.

Our sins are wrapped up in lust. We lust for that which is not ours. Whether we lust for something physical or for a nature contrary to God, we are still lusting. But, lust is defined in the scripture, and it brings death with it. Lust is the most insidious of sins because it hides behind things that are not themselves sin.

When we don't honor our parents as we should, we are lusting after the honor that rightly belongs to them. Indeed, we are lusting after the honor that God has bestowed on them as our parents.

It is no different when it comes to murdering another. When we reach the point where we can hate another human being enough to kill them, we are lusting after the power of God Himself, who alone has the authority to grant and take life.

When we steal, we must first lust after that which does not belong to us.

King David recognized that lusting after the wife of another man was an evil thing worthy of death, proclaiming his own sin in the process. As Paul rightly wrote, lust for

something wrong is at the source of all of our sins and our need for repentance. We are all guilty of harboring lust for something that is not ours to possess.

Paul goes on to proclaim that the law is "*holy, just and good*." Regular readers of this magazine know that we proclaim that very message as part of our mission. He goes on to say that the same law that was so wonderful is the law that brought to him death, just as it has done to all of us. It is this death penalty that we need to take seriously if we are to find true repentance.

Like Paul, we know that God's laws are spiritual in nature, and that we are likewise very carnal. We look into God's Word, into His glorious Commandments, and are convicted. Then we walk away and forget what manner of man or woman we are. Instead of trembling at the awesome word of God, we go down the road and remake God's Way into what we desire it to be. Paul recognized that he did that very thing through the lusts that beset him. If Paul did that, surely we can do the same thing, can't we?

"But, I want to do the right things!" we might add. Paul felt the same way. He wrote in Vs 18 that, "*For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwells no good thing. For to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I do not find.*" We already know that Paul was well trained by Jesus and Gamaliel so knowledge was not the problem. Probably no man who ever lived understood the Way better than he did. Yet, he found that lust interfered with his desire to do the right things. He lamented that problem publicly in his letter to the brethren in Rome, laying bare his heart, acknowledging the problem for the benefit of the brethren, and us.

Like Paul, we want to do the right things. Like Paul, we let lust interfere with our actually doing what is right in God's eyes. "How so?" one might ask. "I fast twice a week. I tithe on everything even though the bible only commands a tithe of the flocks and fields." If those words sound familiar, those are the words that the Pharisee who prayed with himself prayed. Yes, he thought he was praying to God but he lusted after the honor that rightly belonged to God, elevating himself before God. He did not recognize that he was a miserable, rotten, filthy sinner. Do we pray in that manner? Do we lust after the honor that belongs to God?

Do we recognize that the will of God that we think we want to do, is really being clouded by our lust for what we want? Do we recognize it when we attempt to reshape God in our image? Do we recognize it when we lust after

the things that belong to God by proclaiming to ourselves that something is God's will—when God never said such? We should look for the problem because if Paul can have that problem then any of us can!

Does anyone think that they do not do this? If so, please reexamine everything. Do we spend enough time in bible study, getting to know and understand this wonderful Daddy who was willing to allow His only other companion to divest Himself of eternal life and live as one of us—to die without having sinned so that we can access eternal life also? Are we growing in our knowledge of God and His Way by staying at His feet in His Word? If not, we have lusted after that which belongs to God because we cannot know what is that pure, perfect will of God without studying—and doing so regularly.

Do we meditate on the things we read in the scriptures? That is, do we set down the book and really stop to think about what God said to us? Or, do we just read past the scripture in our haste to get the verses read so that we can get back to the “real world?” Do we understand that it is in the meditation that we can really come to understand what we are being told? If we are neglecting meditating on the Word of God, then we are lusting after the time that God wants us to use to come to know Him better.

How about prayer? Are we praying regularly, or have we let prayer slip, our time with God reduced to convenient moments for us? If so, lust for the time God wants to spend with us has robbed God of time with His unborn child. We are told to be instant in prayer. That means to be constantly in communication with God. Has our lust for what we want interfered with telling Daddy what's on our mind? If so, we are guilty of the very thing Paul writes about in Romans 7.

We've come to the final tool God lays out for us to show us HOW to get close to Him—fasting. The Church of God fasts annually on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. Do we as His Children fast at other times to get close to God? When we find that we have sinned—and we all, like Paul, do still manage to live imperfectly—do we fast, asking God not only for forgiveness but for strength against the sin in the future? Do we fast as we see a trial approaching, for us or for others? Or, is filling our belly more important to us? If the latter is true, perhaps we are lusting after our righteousness rather than the righteousness of God.

Paul recognized this problem in himself. He said, *“But if I do what I do not desire, it is no more I working it out, but sin dwelling in me.”* Like us, he did not want to sin and yet, through lust, he did sin. He saw the problem in himself. Without a doubt, Paul probably went through some deep soul-searching to arrive at his conclusion that he had a problem with lust.

Paul also found the solution for the problem he had. In recognizing his sin, he found that he was a wretched man. But, he also found that the same Savior we worship would not only show him forgiveness but the path back to the

righteousness of God. He wrote, *“Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord!”* Paul recognized his sin and repented, calling on the redeeming blood once again to be healed of his guiltiness. If we have fallen short, we have the same path back to the Father that Paul enjoyed! We can repent.

In fact, something very special happens when we repent. Yes, we get forgiven and our relationship with God is restored. But notice something else Paul wrote in Rom. 7: *“If then I do that which I do not desire, I consent to the law that it is good.”* When Paul recognized that he was not doing what he desired, which was to be right with God, he was saying that the law was good, by that admission that God was right!

Do we recognize and admit to God that He is right when placing our sins before Jesus? Yes, we get forgiven upon repentance and requesting mercy. How often, though, do we stop to realize and tell the Father “Daddy, you are right and I was wrong. Please be merciful to this sinner.”

How often do we stop and consider the extreme torture—and that's what it was—followed by the humiliating death that Jesus willingly took on for us, for you and I individually, when we are asking for that mercy? Have we ever stopped to consider how that even if every other man and woman on earth never sinned and did not need Christ's sacrifice, but we did sin, that Jesus would still have had to come down here and go through what He did for us specifically?

Do we consider how it is that Jesus was set and determined to undertake that great effort so that the Father would have us to be His Children, so that we could be cleansed by His blood to open the door to the Holy of Holies where the Father resides? Do we consider when we lust after that which is not ours that Jesus in the form of the YHVH, or the Word, had determined before the world was formed to come down here for you and me?

How seriously do we take that gift of mercy? If we are not taking it as seriously as we should, then we are lusting after something that belongs to God.

If you are as convicted in the heart as I am after considering all of this, then please take heart. We can still repent! We can still change and get back on the path toward the Father and His righteousness. We just have to recognize that we have allowed ourselves to fall victim to the lusts of life, which lust, as Paul lamented, so very easily victimizes us.

Like Paul, we don't want to be led astray by our lusts. We should pray the Father for the wisdom, first, to recognize the lusts and, secondly, the strength to cast them out as unwanted distractions from the bond of love between us and Daddy. But, we have to recognize our problem first. Do we see it? We will if we look for it.







## The President's Corner

### *Sabbatarian Anabaptists in 16th Century Germany*

*(Part 1 of 2)*

*Kelly McDonald*

When late October/early November arrives, many people think about the Reformation. While Luther started a revolution that would influence the course of history, another revolution began which involved the seventh-day Sabbath. This movement caught Luther's attention and that of many other people (we reviewed Luther's view of the Sabbath in the Nov-Dec 2020 and Jan-Feb 2021 editions of *The Sabbath Sentinel*). It is a fascinating page out of Sabbatarian history as these Sabbath keepers had no known connections to any pre-existing Sabbath group. Through a series of events, including a failed prophecy about Jesus' return, a small group of reformers would obey and teach the seventh-day Sabbath.

Sixteenth century Germany was a country ripe for change. The invention of the printing press in the prior century had enabled ideas of all kinds to be spread faster than ever before. Religious and political revolts contributed to a very unstable situation.

In 1517, Martin Luther initiated a reformation of church practices that he deemed as non-Scriptural with his 95 Theses. It started a religious revolution that questioned and threatened the traditional establishment, which was the Roman Catholic Church. Several years later, wary commoners of Germany rallied together to protest their treatment by feudal lords; they desired more freedom. In 1524, these protests devolved into violence and a formal revolt began which is historically called "The Peasant's War" (this was the name it was given by German princes; people who were non-peasants participated).

One ardent defender of this revolt was Thomas Muntzer. He proclaimed that Jesus was coming soon and that the people needed to overthrow the existing rulers to hasten His return. Among the men who heard him was Hans Hut; he was an Evangelical Lutheran who sold books by trade. He was inspired by Muntzer's message and ensured that one of his books was published. Hut fought in the peasant's army.

People in this rebellion hoped that Martin Luther would side with them in their quest for political freedom. They saw their movement and Luther's reforms as complimentary and contributing to the same overall goal of overthrowing a corrupt establishment power structure. Things did not turn out the way that they desired. Luther encouraged the princes of Germany to crush the rebellion with maximum force, even calling for the revolutionaries to be killed like mad dogs. Within a year of fighting, at least 100,000 people died in this revolt.

Just before or perhaps during the events of the 1524-1525 Peasant's War, a separate movement emerged in Germany called Anabaptism. Among their core beliefs was the rejection of infant baptism in favor of adult baptism upon a personal

conversion experience. After Luther's rejection of the commoner's rebellion, people looked for a Christian religious ethic that promoted individual religious freedom. For many, the Anabaptist movement was the answer. They promoted local leadership in congregations and a personal relationship with God.

Among the first Anabaptist ministers in Germany and Austria were Balthasar Hubmaier, Hans Denck, and Hans Hut. The instability of the period seemed to create opportunities and obstacles that did not exist years beforehand. These Anabaptist leaders often did not have long ministry careers because they were usually martyred. Despite the brevity of their service times, they made a tremendous impact. The printing press allowed their influence to spread far and wide.

Hubmaier started preaching Reformation doctrine in the early 1520s, but he also participated to some degree in the Peasant's War. In 1525, he was baptized and composed a very influential tract on the importance of Christian baptism. The next year, he moved to Nikolsburg, Moravia where religious toleration was allowed. He found success and turned the local Lutheran congregation into an Anabaptist group. This included prominent persons such as the feudal ruler of that area – Count Leonhard von Liechtenstein.

For a time, Hubmaier led a congregation of as many as 12,000 people. One of his assistants was Oswald Glaidt, who had previously been a Franciscan monk and Lutheran. He composed works to help Hubmaier's cause, including a fourteen-point tract explaining Anabaptist beliefs and a song written in 1526 or 1527 entitled "The Ten Commandments." In the song, we can see the importance that German Anabaptists placed on the Decalogue. At that time, Glaidt still only thought of the Sabbath as something to be spiritually observed. But his view on the Sabbath would soon change.

Hans Denck was also baptized by Hubmaier and led an Anabaptist congregation of 1,100 people in Augsburg (1526). He taught that Luther's view of justification was too flaccid and that it allowed one to live as they wished. He wanted people to focus on living like Jesus. Hans Hut was among those he baptized.

After Hut's baptism, he diverged from some earlier views, such as those of Muntzer, about the Peasant's War. Instead, he began to teach that God would have to bring about revolution and change by His own power and authority. As a result, his teachings had an eschatological tone which echoed Muntzer minus the militancy. Scholars debate whether the failure or the Peasant's War or his baptism caused him to have a different perspective on the subject.



Hut traveled to Nikolsburg and clashed with Hubmaier. The two had several points of difference, including the use of the sword by secular authorities and Hut's prophetic views. Hubmaier tried to have Hut arrested, but Hut fled the area and traveled to Austria. Glaidt followed Hut and the two worked together to spread the message. Hut preached the gospel and Glaidt followed his efforts by baptizing and instructing the new converts. Among their new followers was a man named Andreas Fischer.

Hut taught that God was gathering an elect Body of believers. When Christ publicly returned, this elect group would fight in the spiritual army of God to defeat their enemies (based on Rev. 17:14 and Rev. 19:11-18). Moreover, he taught his followers that they were to suffer for the cause without picking up arms to fight back. He thought that these events would happen very soon and predicted that Christ would return on the day of Pentecost in 1528.

During this time, Oswald wrote a song called "Awake You People In These Final Days." Fortunately, this writing has survived the centuries. The heavy eschatological focus provides precious insight into the eschatological teachings of Hut and Glaidt.

The song promoted the idea that the return of Jesus was imminent. They viewed themselves as living in the last days prophesied in the book of Daniel; they put together a medley of prophecies from this book (mainly from chapters 8, 9, and 11). They viewed full-immersion water baptism and the taking of communion as the restoration of True Temple sacrifices described in Daniel. The martyrdom of their people resulted in the cessation of these Temple sacrifices. They viewed the Pope as the man of lawlessness from 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 and the originator of worldliness and false doctrine in the Christian world.

From 1527 onward, Ferdinand I, the King of Austria, issued edicts against Anabaptists which hindered their evangelistic efforts. Bounty hunters and others were commissioned by the king to hunt down Anabaptists and arrest or kill them on sight. Beheading was their favored form of execution against these Christians (Liechty, Andreas Fischer and the Sabbatarian Anabaptists, pp 36-38).

Hut was arrested and died in prison in 1527. He only preached for about a year but had a tremendous impact for Anabaptists, especially in Austria. Jesus did not appear in 1528 as he had predicted. Despite this failure, many of his followers continued with the Anabaptist movement in one way or another. Oswald Glaidt was one of their leaders.

### What About the Sabbath?

Oswald Glaidt was the first of these Anabaptist ministers to teach the literal observance of the seventh-day Sabbath. How and when he came to understand the Sabbath is still debated. The theory espoused by contemporary authors such as Luther and Erasmus was that the Jewish people convinced them to keep the Sabbath. Modern scholarship has definitively proven this to be false. In modern times, two very credible ideas on this subject have been developed. The first comes from Daniel Liechty in his work *Andreas Fischer and the Sabbatarian Anabaptists*. In it, he borrowed material from Werner Packull's work.



Apparently, Hans Hut had a concordance of the seven judgments found in Revelation. In it, he employed the Sabbath in an allegorical sense. One of his early disciples was questioned about the seven judgments and testified that "[As] Christ had labored six days, and [then] celebrated the seventh, so God's Word had been persecuted six times and now for the seventh time, [but] it would be brought into rest through the Anabaptists after they experience the same [persecution]" (idem, page 62). Liechty argued that from this allegorical focus on the Sabbath, Oswald derived a need to literally observe the seventh day.

The second view comes from Martin Rothkegel, whose approach and material greatly impacted this subject. He discussed one of the issues which divided Anabaptists, which was the issue called "The Sword." Should a Christian hold positions in government, and, if so, to what degree should they use violence as part of their judgments against law breakers?

In 1527, Hubmaier wrote a work called *On the Sword*. He advocated the idea that Christians could hold secular government positions and use violence to punish evildoers. He also believed that God mandated the use of the sword in these situations. Hans Hut took the opposite view on this subject. He claimed Christians should never serve in government and advocated for non-resistance against violence.

Rothkegel introduces a piece of evidence not previously explored on this subject. In 1530, Glaidt composed a book where he advocated the sword. He explained that the Ten Commandments were required for all Christians to follow in the literal sense. This included the Sabbath. This was a departure from his previous view in 1527. Glaidt went on to say that it was the

duty of Christian rulers to put to death people who violated one of the commandments requiring that penalty. As discussed earlier, Glaidt spent time under Hubmaier's leadership. While Glaidt joined Hans Hut's group, he seems to have held onto Hubmaier's view of The Sword.

I consider both authors to have a valid point and it is likely that both Hans Hut's eschatological focus on sevens in the Bible, including the Sabbath, and Hubmaier's view on the sword contributed to Glaidt's conclusion. As Liechty pointed out, Hubmaier was anti-Jewish and thought that Sunday was the Sabbath (ibid, p 61). Hubmaier focused on the literal observance of the Ten Commandments, except the Sabbath. Hans Hut was using the Sabbath in an allegorical sense. In a way, Glaidt merged these two ideals into a new way of thinking about the subject. As we will see in the next article on this subject, Glaidt used eschatological arguments in other works (which shows continued influence from Hans Hut).

While conducting the evangelism campaigns with Hans Hut, Oswald met a man named Andreas Fischer. In the next edition of the Sabbath Sentinel, we will examine the lives of these Sabbatarians and their work for the Lord.

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# THE POWER

# OF THE WORD

*Aubrey Duncan*

The Book of Genesis introduces us to the power of the word of God.

With no theological exegesis, no intellectual philosophy, the Bible simply declared, *“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. 2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. 3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light”* (Genesis 1:1-3).

## **Rest of creation story, all by the Word of God.**

And it did not take Him millions of years as some believe and teach. David informs us, *“By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. 7 He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. 8 Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. 9 For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast”* (Psalms 33:6-9).

The most important lesson in the book of Genesis is the revelation and demonstration of the unlimited power of God’s word.

The Word of God cannot be separated from God. The apostle John informs us, *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men”* (John 1:1-3).

*“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth”* (John 1:14).

When therefore we reject the word of God, we are rejecting God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent.

There is power in the word of God. The word that created the world is the Word that God the Father sent, in the person of Jesus Christ, to restore us back to His image from which we have fallen because of sin.

## **The word of God is the law of God.**

Jesus declares, *“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth”* (John 17:17).

The Psalmist David tells us, *“Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth”* (Psalms 119:142).

*“Thou art near, O Lord; and all thy commandments are truth”* (Psalms 119:151).

*“My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness”* (John 119:172).

And what does that word do? David answers, *“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. 8 The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is*

*pure, enlightening the eyes”* (Psalms 19:7-8).

## **The word of God transforms the life.**

David again shares his commitment to God’s word, *“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee”* (Psalms 119:11).

The Word of God heals and restores. The Scripture testifies to that fact.

Jesus had just preached what I consider the greatest sermon ever preached, we call it the Sermon on the Mount. He encountered a man who was afflicted with the despicable disease of leprosy. Such was separated from family, friends and society. He was untouchable. But the Word touches the untouchable and loves the unlovable. The Scripture records:

*1 When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.*

*2 And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. 3 And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.*

*5 And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, 6 And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.*

*7 And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. 8 The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.*

*9 For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.*

*13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour* (Matthew 8:1-9, 13).

## **Whether it be in person or proclamation, the Word has power to heal.**

God does everything by His Word. The apostle Paul confirms, *“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,*

*2 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;*

*3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high”* (Hebrews 1:1-3).

There is no such thing as worshipping God the Creator outside of His word. There is no devotion to Christ without devotion to His word. It is suicidal to reject the Word of God.

Paul writes to his protégé, Timothy, *“And that from a child*



*thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

*16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:*

*17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Timothy 3:15-17).*

Listen to this gem from my favorite Bible commentator, E.G. White, “The creative energy that called the worlds into existence is in the word of God. This word imparts power; it begets life. Every command is a promise; accepted by the will, received into the soul, it brings with it the life of the Infinite One. It transforms the nature and re-creates the soul in the image of God. {Ed 126.4}

We have all the evidence around us that testifies to the power of God’s Word. David would exclaim, “*The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy-work*” (Psalms 19:1).

That’s why He bids us and we obey to come together on Sabbath to worship Him in honor of His creative and redemptive power.

Jesus, the Word made flesh that His Word is food for the body and soul.

He had just fed the five thousand with five barley loaves and two fish and He departed to the other side of the river. The people followed, no doubt wanting more miracles.

The next day they came again after Him, and Jesus would declare, “*I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world*” (John 6:51).

He then declared something that puzzled and astonished them. “*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. 54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.*

*55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. 56 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him” (John 6:53-56).*

To the people this was a rather, not only strange, but bizarre thing to say. For one thing, to the Jewish mind to drink blood was an abomination. To eat human flesh was just unthinkable. It’s called cannibalism. Never mind some teach in this very day that that’s we need to do.

The Bible records that many now departed from Him for speaking those words. But then Jesus explained to those that remained, “*It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life*” (John 6:63).

As the multitudes left, Jesus then asked His twelve apostles, “*Will ye also go away?*

*Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. 69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God” (John 6:67-69).*

Jesus would later emphasize to the twelve, and to you and I today, “*I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2*

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**Please join us in our efforts to spread the message of God’s Sabbath rest and mutual cooperation of the brethren to the rest of the world.**

*Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. 3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you....If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you” (John 15:1-3, 8).*

#### **The Word of God raises the dead. Story of Lazarus.**

*Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. 42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.*

*43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.*

*44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go (John 11:41-44)*

We can trust the Word. We can depend on the Word. Job knew that well. You all know his story. Stripped of everything he had, he declared, *“Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food (Job 23:12).*

The Word cuts away sin from our lives. Paul declares, *“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12).*

We were created by the Word.

We must live by the Word.

Jesus rebuffed the enemy of our souls by the Word.

When tempted by the great deceiver to perform a miracle by turning stones into bread to sustain His emaciated body, after not eating for 40 days, the Savior declared, *“But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4).*

God sets His Word above His name. David reminds us *“I will worship toward thy holy temple and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name” (Psalms 138:2).*

#### **The power of the word.**

We will be delivered by His Word. As He raised Lazarus from the dusty grave, He promises to do the same for you and I if we fall asleep before He comes again. He assures us through His servant Paul, *“For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:*

*17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1Thess4:15-17).*

The question is today, “Do you believe His Word? Do you trust His Word?”

Whatever you may be going through, your only hope is in the

Word of God. His Word will comfort you and sustain you.

In the midst of the deception, chaos and uncertainty of this life, we have a sure foundation in the Word of God.

But you must, like David, claim it as your own. Because he hid it in his heart, he depended on it to lead him in his daily walk. So, he exclaimed, *“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psalms 119:105).*

God wants you to do and say likewise.

If you have never given your life to Him, now is a great time to do so. Today, you have heard about the power of His Word; now you can experience it.

He is pleading with you even now, *“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, (My Word) and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me” (Revelation 3:20).*

Will you? I pray that you will.



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# THE *TRUE* FACE OF GRACE

*Darl Arbogast*

It has always been true in my observance—especially of religion and specifically Christianity—that contradictory things are always being written by very reputable people. It is also true that in accordance with God's word, the Bible, there is only one truth, John 17:17 NKJ - *Jesus said, 17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.*

And Jude verse 3 - *3 Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.* (That being the case even among the most educated teachers and preachers how can all these people possibly be right, or wrong?)

How right do we have to be to be judged worthy of immortality at our resurrection when Christ returns to gather His saints; or when many are raised after the Millennium; whichever affects us personally? Daniel 12:2 NKJ - *2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt.*

I once asked an elderly college professor of a Sabbatarian school, how many PHD's he had attached to his name, 'three' he replied. I asked him what the letters PHD stood for. His answer shocked me, "Piled, higher and deeper". A man of few words no doubt.

When it comes to the subject of grace and trying to understand it thoroughly the pile of opinions is truly very high and very deep, but somewhere in there is the simple truth.

Some of us have studied about grace for many years and have gotten part of it, but not the seeming elusive whole picture.

Some schools of thought are that since none of us could keep the law (commandments) "just forget it, don't try they say, that is trying to earn salvation by keeping the law; that is not what the Bible teaches." Jesus said in John 14:15 NKJ - *15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments."*

Certain motivational speakers in their mega-churches calling themselves evangelists on television suggest that once saved always saved forever 'after theory' espousing that as being the grace of God.

The Apostle Peter wrote in Acts 2:38 -40 NKJ - *38 "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." 40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."*

By the way Jesus kept the Sabbath, the Passover, the feasts and it is written in Revelation 14:12 NKJ - *12 Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.*

It has been reported that 92% of American people believe there is a God, but how many of those will be worshipping God each Sabbath day as instructed by God Himself?

When you think of how many people there are whose eyes are not open to the Lord's Sabbath that brings it home as to just how blessed and yes special we are to our Father in heaven and to His Son, Jesus the Christ.

Exodus 31:12-14,18 NKJ - *12 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 13 "Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: 'Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you. 14 You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. ... 18 And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God (the Ten Commandments).*

God's fourth commandment is written down in Exodus 20:8-11 NKJ - *8 "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh*



*day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. 11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.*

Many are well intended and zealous but their zeal is misdirected when they erroneously believe you can do away with the laws of God.

The truth is that God's laws are written in the heart and mind of a truly converted person so you can't do away with them; they live in your head. If they are in your head they will aid God's Holy Spirit through your thoughts and actions.

Matthew 5:17-20 NKJ – Jesus said, 17 *"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. 18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. 19 Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.*

Reading in the book of Matthew, chapter 5, Jesus the Christ never came to abolish God's laws which are His laws. When Jesus said He is the end of "Works of law" He was speaking to His Jewish Disciples; meaning Judaism could not save one single soul regardless of how devoted one may have been to Judaism." Heaven and the earth have not passed away so God's law is still here and still in effect. Jesus declared in Matthew 5:17 He had not come to abolish God's law but to fulfill (magnify) the law showing the higher level of spiritual content and how we can attain to that level in our hearts and minds.

Such a person as this will be keeping the 4th Commandment and all the other nine as well.

### **MORE REGARDING GRACE**

God's grace comes down to us like a warm spring shower of rain affecting all aspects of a Christian's life. God is not calling everyone right now; mostly those who have a yearning for Him. Those seeking sincerely will find Him; while grace and/or favor status are given to them.

God showers His grace out on such a person and draws them to Him.—when the timing is right. When we are first called it is only the beginning, we are in the first grade level in our learning and the ladder keeps going up, up, up until we graduate by being awarded immortality eventually.

Several people have related the experience of having a beam of light shine down on them and around them such as a sun beam peeking through the clouds. Some of them associate this as God showering them with grace from on high and by that they repented and began to live for God. Most of us will probably never experience that even though we may be in right standing with God.

Jesus came to present a New Covenant, a graduation, an elevation to a new level of spirituality. For example in ancient Israel, the people of God, all males were circumcised to identify them as God's people however Christians in our advanced culture are experiencing what the Apostle Paul called circumcision of the heart affecting our conscience, mind and our attitude toward God; identifying us as the New Covenant people of God.

The Spirit of God with His laws and Commandments comes into us and thereby Christ is living in us; His laws and commandments identify us as Christians. Hebrews 4:16 NKJ - 16 *Let us therefore come boldly (confidently) to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.* (Those that are keeping His Commandments are under His grace.)

### **TRIBULATION AND THE DAY OF THE LORD**

How well are we able to see what is ahead and not get overwhelmed with grief, sorrow and sadness?

'The tribulation' and the 'Day of the Lord' do not seem real to most Americans today it is just a story like a fantasy as in the days of Noah. Unfortunately it will not be real to them until the water arrives.

Luke 17:26 thru 29 NKJ - Jesus said, 26 *And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: 27 They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28 Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; 29 but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.*

It is a sad tragedy that so many in God's church today have not learned how to love God properly or our neighbor properly or have proper respect for ourselves, nor do we worship God according to way that He desires. We are divided as Jesus said in Matthew 12:25, 30 NKJ - 25 ... *"Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand."* ... 30 *"He who is not with Me is against Me..."*

For years preachers have been preaching a fear tactic religion; that is an American tradition! As a child I learned to fear hell fire and as an adult to fear the lake of fire but seldom was true love ever mentioned or expounded, probably because they didn't know how or understand it themselves.

If we are to receive salvation we are saved by grace through faith and that not of ourselves. Ephesians 2:8-9 NKJ - 8 *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

We do not necessarily need to pick the word grace apart letter by letter in Hebrew, Greek or Aramaic. We need to realize its presence, be thankful for it, walk and to work with it and, if you do have it, to bask in its pleasant warmth.





# TWO TREES AND THE SABBATH SINGULARITY VERSUS DUALITY

(Part 2 of 2)

*Bill and Karen Bishop*

The serpent promised man that if he ate of the Tree of Knowledge, he could be AS gods (knowing good from evil). This portended a “form of godliness” that was to be rejected, as it involved acquaintance with a mixed brew of impurity. If man had not eaten the forbidden fruit, it seems very probable that he would never have become familiar with evil at all, and the holiness he knew was far superior to the good he would soon be shown.

The good from this defiled tree could never be pleasing to Yah. Such “righteousness” was viewed by Him as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:4). Unfortunately, the mainline church has developed a taste for reassessing what good means - buying into the Tree of Knowledge version of it. The resulting fallacy has plagued many Believers over the centuries. The spirit of this world associated with this tree of death has fabricated a dangerous ideology which most people have come to believe in our age:

1 - The Old Testament = the Old Covenant = wrath and vengeance of the Father figure = association with judgment, overly restrictive rules, and endless regulations.

2 - The New Testament = the New Covenant = forgiveness and love through the Messianic figure = association with grace, total freedom and complete liberty.

This was an attempt to subconsciously paint the Old as being “evil”, and the New as being “good”, and this attempt has been amazingly successful. This is the subjective twisted truth of the god of this world. It paints the delusion that evil is of Satan, and good is of “God”; that Yah is a rigorous task master, and Y’shua came to override Him. Along these lines, the duality of the fallen realm has subtly created the underlying message to today’s church that the harsh Old Testament was ousted and replaced by the liberation of the New Testament.

The separation of the Old and New Testaments into opposing factions totally annihilates the harmony of the united objective Divine Truth that runs from Genesis through Revelation. By separating one part from the other, the coherence between the two is severed. A love for

the Son replaces the reverential awe of the Father from years gone by, and the commandments and statutes of the Torah are left out in the cold. This being accomplished, it is now possible to denigrate the Old Testament with impunity. Some congregations are actually New Testament only churches, and many Bibles are available with only the New Testament. Make no mistake about it – this is largely due to the duality of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and a failure to see it for what it is.

Likewise, while the good in our world today is an obvious improvement over the evil, much of it is not based on Tree of Life standards. Doing good by the world’s standards may not always match up to Yah’s ways. The standards of Heaven may be far different from the those of secular humanism.

The good side of the Tree of Knowledge often undermines and desecrates the sacred. For instance, those who observe Sunday often say they ARE observing Sabbath. They have no idea that this is the enemy’s plan to desecrate the sanctity of the True Sabbath. They think they are doing good and right, and do not see the error in their choice of day. Even though the Sabbath was instituted at creation, the Old Testament has largely been forgotten. As we enter into Yah’s presence on His designated True day of rest - the 7th day Sabbath, it is a picture of our entering into restoration during the Millennial Kingdom on the 7th millennial day. Hebrews 4:4-11 seems to speak of this reality, yet it is lost on the average Believer today.

Under the Tree of Knowledge parameters, keeping the 7th day Sabbath is viewed as antiquated and obsolete. It is sidelined as being a part of the restrictive rules of the Old Testament that were abolished after the New Testament era began. Such division is totally alien to Tree of Life standards. We are given a glimpse of the Tree of Life through Torah. It is never anything but holy. Even the judgmental aspects associated with it are for the purpose of cleansing and purifying fallen humanity. Among its instructions is to remember the Sabbath (clearly shown to be the 7th day) and keep it HOLY. Likewise,

we are to be HOLY as Yah is HOLY (1 Peter 1:16 & Leviticus 11:45). This command to maintain holy standards in our walk (particularly relative to the Sabbath) admonishes us to attain to the standards of holiness that the Tree of Life exudes. We must live in this fallen realm, but we do not have to partake of its knowledge. Our knowledge and wisdom are to come from the Tree of Life. We are to be separated from the world and live in Tree of Life holiness as much as is humanly possible.

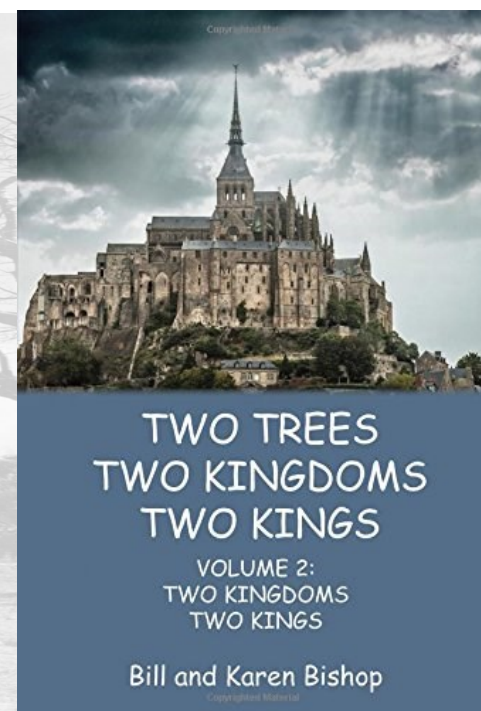
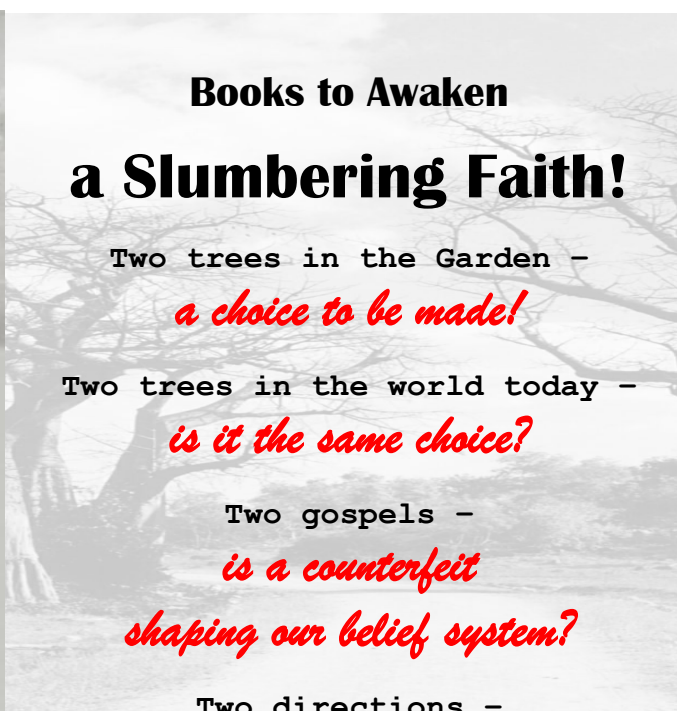
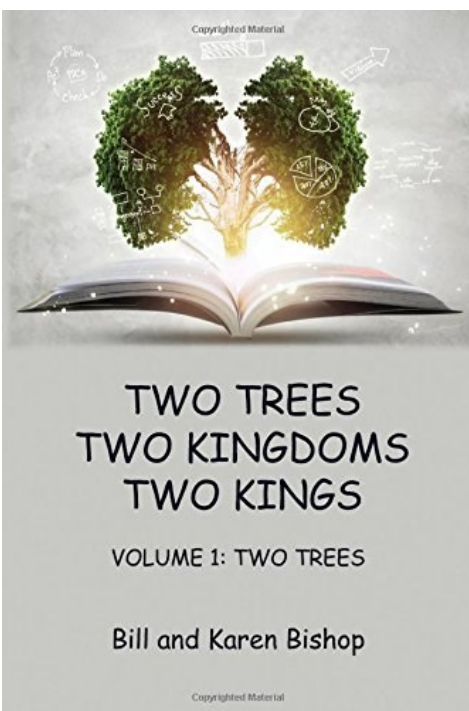
Y'shua was said to be adorned in glistening white during the Mount of Transfiguration event. When we begin to see the contrast between the Tree of Life version of holiness and the world's version of good, the Tree of Life holiness appears as this glistening white glory, versus the

muddy white representation of the fallen world's good.

We have a choice to make today. Which fruit will we eat? By believing that the Tree of Knowledge "good" is Yah's good, humanity (even Believers) may lapse into deception during life's journey, and fall VERY short of pleasing our Father above. May we choose to feast on the Tree of Life and observe our Father's statutes, conform to the image of His Son Who did likewise, and walk in Tree of Life holiness rather than the world's version of good.

There is much more, and we are hoping to be able to expand on this idea in future articles.

In the meantime, be blessed and be a blessing!



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# MESSIAH ...

## AS WAVE OFFERING?

*D.J. Wellington*

Many folks believe and teach that the Messiah was not only the “last lamb” who was killed for us, rising at the end of the Sabbath, but He was also the “wave offering” which was offered up that year on the first day of the week/the day after the Shabbat.

This “combination” is one of the bases for their starting the count to Shavuot (more specifically, the Feast of Sevens or Weeks) on a Sunday. (Another reason being Leviticus 23:15 which they teach can “only” be the weekly Shabbat—this is not the purpose of this study but it can be shown to mean the weekly Shabbat OR a “high day”). [NOTE: Christianity refers to this day as “Pentecost”; however, that merely means “fifty” and has an origin all of its own and worthy of more investigation by the reader.)

There are several different types of offerings but we’re just going to look at two—sin offerings and wave offerings. So, let’s look at the requirements for sin offerings first.

According to Leviticus 4 the “sin offering” is meat with different animals being used (although if someone could not afford even the turtledoves, fine flour could be substituted per Leviticus 5:11). There was never a “wave offering” as part of the “sin offering,” that I found anyway.

Messiah was offered up for OUR sin, as a sin offering—the lamb, meat offering. There are many verses which discuss the sin offering and I would encourage anyone finding something different from this, to bring it to my attention.

### **The wave offering**

As part of the consecration service for the priests, Aaron and his sons, were to have certain items in their hands and waved as a wave offering before Yahweh (Exodus 29:24). This was part of the consecration service which took seven days (Leviticus 8:33-35), every day having sacrifices of their own. According to Acts 1:3, Messiah was seen alive 40 days, telling his disciples to wait for Him. Quite possibly after He was seen alive, He was to be consecrated for



seven days required for consecration of priests (Leviticus 8:33-35). His returning on the Feast of Sevens may well have been His first “job” as our “High Priest,” AFTER His consecration.

The point, though, is the wave offering is not the same as the sin offering and the items are two different ones.

There were also breasts which were offered up as a wave offering and then to be eaten as the priests’ portion of offerings (Leviticus 11:14). There were occasions when multiple items constituted the “wave offering” (Leviticus 14:12, 24), but in those cases, they were offered at the same time, but were still different items.

Now, in Leviticus 23:10-12, along with the wave sheaf (waving the sheaf of the firstfruits), a lamb was to be offered as a BURNT offering—most understand Messiah was an offering for OUR sin, a “sin” offering. Note it was two different items—the grain and the meat. Various offerings were also “waved” as a wave offering such as Numbers 5:25.

### **Now for a possible conclusion**

It appears that it simply is unlikely that Messiah, upon His resurrection, would have been the wave offering to commence the count to the Feast of Sevens. But, if one still contends He was, then here is another point....

“IF” Yahushua was the wave offering upon His resurrection at the end of Shabbat THAT YEAR, it would

have been on the first day “Sunday,” Abib 18. Why would the anniversary NOT be on Abib 18 every year? In fact, there are years using this criteria where the anniversary of His rising would be on a Tuesday (following 3 days/3 nights), and the “wave sheaf” taught to be the previous “sunday.” So, the memorial of His being the wave sheaf is on a day while He would still have been in the grave. Or the anniversary of His rising would be on a Thursday (following 3 days/3 nights), and the “wave sheaf” three days later—what happened during those 3 days?

Where do they come in to the count, just ignored? This does not make sense. Our Father is very precise in most cases.

Also it has been said that because He was the wave sheaf, He could not be touched as He had not yet been offered. Yet, Miriam clearly touched Him. John 20:17 says, Yahushua said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My El and your El.' " Notice He says “cling” indicating she was holding onto Him. Matthew 28:9 seems to be the same timeframe here and also indicates He was touched.

So if Messiah was not the wave offering which started the count to the Feast of Sevens, what could Leviticus 23:10 be foretelling? Could THAT wave sheaf be simply just what it says—an offering of firstfruits? Look at Isaiah 66:20...could it possibly be that the grain as a wave offering (not the one starting the count) were His disciples as they were commissioned to go forward (Matthew 28:19)? Could it possibly be that the grain offering at a future time will be His people—possibly even the one which WOULD start the count in that year? The Levites were also offered as a wave offering in Numbers 8:11-15, that they may “qualify to perform the service” of/for Yahuweh. This sounds very similar.

The other point that should be made is the instructions for the start of the count to Feast of “Sevens” was to wave a sheaf of the firstfruits after “entering the land,” so you should go to Joshua to determine when they entered the land to assist in figuring out the timeframe—may not be connected with the other wave offerings in scripture.

This should be food for thought and further study for sure.



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# 613 COMMANDMENTS?!

*Daniel Botkin*

“Six hundred and thirteen commandments?! Forget it! I couldn’t even remember that many rules, let alone obey all of them!”

That is often a typical response when a Christian learns that the Law God gave to Moses contains 613 commandments. Does God (or did God) really expect His people to obey that many rules? It seems unrealistic and unreasonable to some people. But let’s consider a few things.

## **GOD’S RIGHT TO COMMAND HIS CHILDREN**

First, consider the fact that God is sovereign. He is the LORD, the Boss, the Owner of everything. As the Creator of all things, He has the right to command His creatures. He can give as many commandments as He wants. He does not need our approval.

## **MAN-MADE CIVIL LAWS**

Second, consider how many federal, state, and local laws there are. In the July 23, 2011, Wall Street Journal, Gary Fields and John R. Emshwiller wrote an article about how many federal criminal laws there are in America. The title of the article was “Many Failed Efforts to Count Nation’s Federal Criminal Laws.” In effect, they concluded that there are far too many to count. It is estimated that there may be as many as 300,000 laws.

And those are just federal criminal laws. Add to that estimated number of 300,000 all of the thousands of state, county, and local laws that exist, and you will realize that you live with hundreds of thousands of man-made civil laws, with new ones being added every year. Yet you are expected to somehow be a law-abiding citizen. Why then should it seem unrealistic and unreasonable to live with 613 God-given commandments?

**77 + 194 = 271**

**77 + 194 + 26 = 297**

Third, Consider the fact that God does not expect you to obey all 613 commandments. He only expects you to not disobey any of the 613 commandments. Let me explain.

According to The Concise Book of Mitzvot, by the Chofetz Chayim, the Torah contains 77 positive commandments (things we are commanded to do) and 194 negative commandments (things we are commanded not to do). In addition to these, there are 26 commandments that can be obeyed only in the land of Israel. That makes a total of 271 commandments if you live outside Israel, and 297 commandments if you live in Israel. That is a lot fewer laws than all the federal, state, and local laws you live with!

**613 - 297 = 316**

But the Torah has 613 commandments. What happened to the

other 316 commandments?

There are 316 Torah commandments that cannot be kept today - which explains why the subtitle of the Chofetz Chayim’s book is The Commandments Which Can Be Observed Today.

## **TEMPLE & SACRIFICIAL COMMANDMENTS**

Most of the 316 commandments that cannot be observed today pertain to the Tabernacle and Temple services and the sacrifices that were offered by the Levitical priests.

Even if we wanted to bring animals or produce to Levitical priests to offer as sacrifices to the LORD, we could not do it, because God said that those sacrifices were to be offered only in one specific place, the Temple in Jerusalem. With no Temple and with no functioning Levitical priesthood, the commandments pertaining to sacrifices cannot be kept. As Hebrews 8:13 explains, that system of sacrifices and burnt offerings decayed, waxed old, and vanished away.

## **COMMANDMENTS THAT REQUIRE A THEOCRACY**

If a commandment prescribes stoning or some other punishment, this is not observable for two reasons: 1) because we are not currently living under a theocracy and therefore we must let the civil courts punish lawbreakers, and 2) because “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law” (Gal. 3:13), i.e., from the punishment we deserve for breaking the law.

## **OTHER COMMANDMENTS THAT CANNOT (OR NEED NOT) BE KEPT TODAY**

Some of the commandments in the Torah were obviously intended only for the Israelites during their forty years in the wilderness. For example, Deuteronomy 23:12-14 says to carry a spade to bury your dung in the desert outside the camp. If you currently live in the desert and have no toilet or outhouse, this might still be a useful commandment for you to follow, but otherwise you do not need to carry a paddle to bury your dung.

Some of the commandments were obviously intended only for the Israelites during the conquest of Canaan. For example, Deuteronomy 20:17 says to utterly destroy the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. Most of us do not even know any of those folks, and even if we met some of them, I do not believe the LORD wants us to take up weapons and utterly destroy them. That was a job for Joshua’s generation.

Some people might disagree with me, but I also believe that the instructions in Deuteronomy 21:10-14, which tell a soldier how to take a beautiful woman from among a conquered enemy to be his wife, was a commandment intended only for the generation that conquered Canaan. I could be wrong; maybe God still approves of a soldier forcing a beautiful woman to be his wife if she is a captive among a defeated foe, but I have my doubts. I think that was just for Joshua’s generation.

## **“271.... THAT’S STILL A LOT OF RULES TO REMEMBER”**

Yes, 271 rules is a lot to remember. However, we are not required to memorize and recite a long list of 271 commandments. No individual person is required to do all 271 commandments. Let me explain.

How do you manage to be a law-abiding American citizen in a country that has hundreds of thousands of man-made civil laws? By memorizing and reciting all the laws? Of course not. You realize that many of our government’s laws pertain only to specific people who do specific things.

You are able to live with thousands of civil laws because most of these laws are situation-specific. The laws apply only to people in a particular situation, and only while they are in that situation.

For example, building codes apply only to people who are constructing buildings. If you are not constructing a building, you do not even need to be aware of the many laws that regulate building codes.

Laws that regulate the collection and payment of retail sales tax apply only to retailers who sell retail merchandise. If you are not a retailer, you do not need to familiarize yourself with those laws. Driving laws apply only to people who drive, gun laws apply only to people who own guns, and so on.

Many of the commandments of the Torah are likewise situation-specific, so nobody is expected to do them all. Even Yeshua/Jesus did not do all 613 commandments, because some of the commandments are specifically for women, some for lepers, some for Levites, some for married people, some for bastards, Moabites, and Ammonites. Yeshua was not a woman, nor a leper, nor a Levite, nor any of those other things, so He did not do all 613 commandments. Yet He never once disobeyed any of the 613 commandments.

### **CHRISTIANS DO BELIEVE IN KEEPING THE LAW**

If they are honest, Christians will admit that they do believe in obeying the commandments of the Torah - at least those commandments which they believe are still valid. Christians believe that God still expects them to obey the commandments that forbid murder, adultery, theft, and lying.

In the Appendix of the Aramaic English New Testament, Andrew Gabriel Roth does the math, and concludes that Christians already obey up to 87% of the Torah commandments which can still be kept (page 846).

Whether they realize it or not, Bible-believing Christians believe in keeping most of the Torah commandments which can still be observed. For most Christians, the commandments they have a problem with are commandments that deal with the Sabbath, the Feast Days, the dietary laws, and a few other miscellaneous things that are dismissed as “Jewish rituals, just for the Jews to do until Christ came.”

However, the Bible nowhere singles out these commandments from the rest of the Torah and says that they are just for the Jews. Nor does the Bible say that these commandments would be abolished by the coming of the Messiah. People think of these things as Jewish practices only because Christians abandoned them centuries ago, and Jews have continued to practice them. But the Bible does not give one set of rules for Jews and

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**Please donate today so that we can expand and expose more brethren, and future brethren, to the teachings of the Bible and the idea that brotherhood is better than dogma!**

a different set of rules for non-Jewish believers. “Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country: for I am the LORD your God” (Lev. 24:22).

### **TORAH PRINCIPLES**

Christians also believe in principles that can be derived from Torah commandments. For example, Deuteronomy 22:8 says to build a battlement (i.e., a parapet or fence) on the roof of your house. In Bible times people used their flat roofs for living space or work space. This commandment was given to prevent people from falling off the roof. All other codes and safety regulations in the building industry come from the principle that is embedded in this commandment. Most Christians believe in the basic principle of safety regulations in the building industry. Even if they do not have a flat roof that requires a parapet, they believe in safety measures like the parapet.

In Exodus 21:28-36 God declared what sort of penalties a man should pay if his ox gores someone. A Christian today might say, “I don’t own an ox, so this commandment is irrelevant to me.”

You might not own an ox, but maybe you own a dog. If your dog bites someone, the principle of the goring ox would require you, as the owner of the dog, to compensate the victim for any medical treatment and for any loss of income due to time off work during his recovery.

Maybe you do not own a dog, but you probably own a car. If you accidentally hurt a person or their property with your car, the same principle applies. You pay for the damages. That’s why we have car insurance.

So even if a Christian does not own an ox, he believes in the



## *Do You Want to Learn More About the Sabbath?*

### *Are You or is Someone You Know New To the Sabbath?*

The BSA now offers some free resources to help you learn about the Sabbath.

We have short, 1 or 2 minute audio clips on topics such as:

“What is the Sabbath?” and  
“When is the Sabbath and How Can We Know?”

Free booklet download “A Beginner’s Guide to the Sabbath.”

1. Go to our website:  
[www.biblesabbath.org](http://www.biblesabbath.org)
2. Click on the Products Menu
3. Click on the “Free Resources” Link

principle of the goring ox.

Leviticus 19:9f and Deuteronomy 24:19-21 give instructions for leaving part of your harvest in the field so the poor can come and gather the gleanings, i.e., the leftovers and the forgotten sheaves of grain. Today most poor people do not know that they are entitled to come and glean from the farmers’ fields after the harvest. Many farmers also do not know about this. Some farmers might shoot gleaners, mistaking them for trespassers and thieves.

A Christian farmer today might not make the gleanings of his harvest available to the poor in the exact same manner as it was done in ancient Israel, but a Christian farmer can help provide for the poor by sharing some of the profits he makes from his harvest.

These are just a few examples of principles that can be derived from various Torah commandments. There are many more. You might not use the ephah and the hin (Lev. 19:36) as units of measure anymore, but if you sell something, the Lord expects you to give a true measure of merchandise, regardless of what units of measure you use. In other words, truth in advertising.

You might not have an uncovered pit on your property (Ex. 21:33), but if someone is injured on your property because of some other careless neglect on your part, the Lord expects you to make compensation.

You might not carry a spade with you to bury your dung (Deut. 23:13), but the Lord expects you to flush the toilet, or use an outhouse, or have some other means to dispose of your sewage.

#### **PEOPLE WHO ARE JUSTIFIED BY FAITH SHOULD HONOR GOD’S LAW**

Our justification does not come by obeying God’s Law. (See Acts 13:39; Rom. 3:20 & 28; Gal. 2:16 & 3:11.) We are justified by our faith in Yeshua/Jesus. We believe that He paid the penalty for our sins.

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,” Paul said in Romans 5:1. Yet in the very same Epistle, Paul says “For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified” (Rom. 2:13).

If a person is truly justified by faith, he will do the law. He will begin to walk in the instructions of the Torah. If he doesn’t, then his non-doing of the Torah is evidence that he is not really justified by faith. He only thinks he is, or he is just pretending that he is, because it is “the doers of the law” who “shall be justified.”

Even though no man is justified by the law in the eyes of God (Rom. 3:20; Gal. 3:11), James says that “by works a man is justified, and not by faith only” (James 2:24). You are not justified in the eyes of God by keeping the law, but your keeping of the law is proof that you are justified. Or, if you are not a doer of the law, that is proof that you are not really justified by faith.

So if you are justified by faith, prove it by being a doer of the law, because “the doers of the law shall be justified.”



# The Love of God and Enduring Until the End

**Tommy Willis**

The trials of life have increased with the Coronavirus, with a rise in suicides, domestic violence, drug abuse; we could make a long list. Some are having frightening, pandemic-induced dreams. That's the reality of the times we are living in—increased tribulation. The Plague has made us think more about our mortality. I heard some social psychologist say recently that we in this society were not ready to face our mortality. The plague is forcing us to—and many are terrified. Too often we live in denial of death and suffering and the plagues could get worse.

Even more serious trials could come, as some talk about the rumblings of war in an unstable world.

Things seem to be changing for us. For a long time, we were spared a lot of things that happened in the past. I remember my grandfather telling me about the plague in 1918 called the Spanish Flu, and how many people were dying. It caught your attention when he told what he saw. Our forefathers understood more than we appear to do that life is also a veil of tears, and not just "fun," as the commercials often try to convince us. And many often looked to God more because of the difficult life they had to live. We will need to do that as the trials and tribulations of life increase—to look to God more, and get our foundation down in Jesus Christ.

We don't know what tomorrow will bring. The Bible reminds us of the brevity of life:

*"Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes."* (James 4:14) NIV.

*"Teach us to realize the brevity of life, so that we may grow in wisdom."* (Ps 90:12) NLT.

What's important to understand is that we don't have to have the terror of death as the social psychologist mentions above, if we have faith in God. He has made a way for us to face death unafraid. We are not to fear death. A good example of this is what Paul said:

*"For to me, living means opportunities for Christ, and*

*dying—well, that's better yet! But if living will give me more opportunities to win people to Christ, then I really don't know which is better, to live or die! Sometimes I want to live, and at other times I don't, for I long to go and be with Christ. How much happier for me than being here!"* (Phil 1:21-23) TLB. This doesn't mean we should seek death, because life is a blessing. God has a work for us to finish, but we need to realize even death is a promotion to something better. Paul loved life, but he realized to depart this life would be far better, because he says we go to be with Christ!

Part of the problem is that the above scripture is often not real to us because we don't spend enough time with God. We grasp these doctrines intellectually, but often fail to see the reality.

This is why serious trials can bring us closer to God. An encounter with death can increase our faith: *"We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead."* (2 Cor 1:8-9) NIV.

Paul says the trials were so great that they despaired of life. This increased their trust in God. I've heard some brethren talk about how, with the increased trials because of the coronavirus, it made them realize more their mortality, and it helped them draw closer to God. Some talked about "gold refined in the fire," as trials increased. Trials will come. And, therefore, we must seek God to teach us how to suffer and endure through them.

Keep this in mind; the pressure of life can run us down, and we may need to get a rest. A good example of this is Elijah (1 Kings 19). Even after being used powerfully as God prophet, he let fear come in, depressing him and causing him to want to die! If you will notice in verse 5, he lay down and slept, and then got even more rest after that. If we continue reading we see he needed a fresh awareness of God's presence. He had lost sight of the



reality that God was with him. All of us have a breaking point; and it will also help to back off from matters at times, pray, rest, and get a fresh awareness of God's presence. God promises to never leave or forsake us. Sometimes we will need to slow down and get some rest, pray and reevaluate matters.

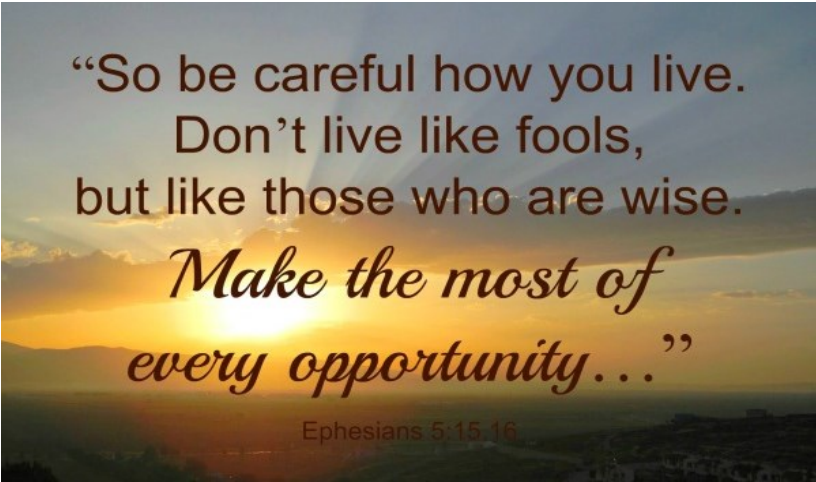
Another thing to keep in mind in the affairs of everyday life, is that we often take ourselves too seriously. The pressures of life can sometimes steamroll over us if we don't learn to lighten up a bit and laugh at ourselves. I learned more of this principle while taking care of my invalid dad. We were both under pressure, for I have health problems and am up in age, too. He would call us "Two old men." He and I would often joke around. I would tell him about the saying: "Old age is not for sissies." And we would have a good laugh. Laughing would really lighten things up and help us with the struggle of it all. Try to find the humor in life's trials; it will help you deal with it all. We all take ourselves too seriously at times; we need to lighten up a bit.

Yes, it is getting difficult. Jesus said a nation divided cannot stand. Any keen student of history should be seeing that this nation is headed for more and more chaos. Many Christians are angry at the way the world is going, and some have said they want to throw things at the TV. They are becoming hurt and offended in record numbers; some are so angry they can't think soundly. Keep in mind that the world will do what the world does; but we have to stay in focus in spite of it all.

When I see such chaos in the minds of Christians, I think of Paul's admonishment to the Galatians: "*For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.*" (Gal 5:14-15) NIV.

Keep in mind that Paul is warning Christians of the danger of their human nature which will destroy them if they are not careful. Having seen division in the churches for almost half a century now, it's no mystery to me why we would need to be warned as Christians.

Therefore, keep in mind that the world will do what the world does; but I see many Christians already becoming offended and hurt, taking things personally, hurting in the way the world does, and becoming offended. Brethren, we get out of focus when we become offended, and it is dangerous. To have the kind of love that Jesus said we



"So be careful how you live.  
Don't live like fools,  
but like those who are wise.

*Make the most of  
every opportunity..."*

Ephesians 5:15, 16

should have, we can't become offended. "*Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.*" (Ps 119:165) KJV. Let us keep in mind that law without love is pharisaical.

Think of the scripture in Matthew 24:10-13 "*And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*" KJV. This is talking about Christians, you have to have the love to begin with for it to wax cold.

Since the love of many Christians will wax cold, we need to keep in mind the connection here between love and enduring till the end!

I've seen many Christians talk about the above scripture as if it's for the world and not warning Christians, but one has to have the faith and love to learn from it. This is talking about us brethren! If we will be praying and meditating as we should and staying close to God, then He will give us His ability to stay with His mercy and love. He will strengthen us to not become offended, to not take things in the personal hurt way the world does. Instead we will react with His mercy and love. And this will enable us to endure until the end.

I share this with you as one who became offended for many years. I had an unforgiving heart towards those in and out of the Church. It was many years before God got my mind straight. Once God showed me how, without the work He did on the cross, I would be lost, then He brought me to repentance. Thanks to God's mercy, I have not held anything against anyone for over 25 years now. I know that only by Christ in me can that be done, and I thank God. But I went through many years of failure before God taught me differently. Once God gave me

the ability to forgive, the big war I had going on inside ended! And I was at peace. O' the price I paid for an unforgiving heart.

As we study the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus talks about the Golden Rule and the love we should have; the same love that Paul mentions to the churches in the above Scripture. And He talks about forgiveness. Jesus says: *"For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."* (Matt 6:14-15). I see many Christians angry at those "in the world," when they fail to see the danger of our own nature, the same problem and danger I was in many years ago until God brought me to repentance, by showing me the danger of my human nature. We will be safe brethren if we stay with the love and forgiveness of God, and He will give us His peace so that we will not become offended.

Let us keep in mind what Jesus said:

*"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. "Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven."* (Luke 6:32-37) NIV.

Jesus instructed us: *"So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets."* (Matthew 7:12 NIV). We can quibble about picky points of doctrine for the remainder of our lives, but we had better make sure we are seeking God for His love. No, the law was not done away with. Yes, we should obey the Law. But, let us remember, that law without love is Pharisical.

Seek God's ability to apply Jesus words on the Sermon on the Mount. If we do then we won't become offended and hurt as the world does when things don't go our way. But we will learn to react with the love and mercy of Jesus Christ. And we will stay in focus.

Are we not to follow the example of Jesus Christ? When they crucified Him, He prayed for them, and asked God to forgive them. Spend time with God. Don't let the busy rushing schedule of the world take you away from Him. Spend time with the best Friend you will ever have. I used to look at prayer as a "duty." Now I look at it as a time of intimacy with the best Friend I will ever have, and I have learned the joy and intimacy in prayer. He has shown me how much He cares for us. Now I want to spend time with Him. I sit in a chair talking with God, and often feel the peace of God all around me.

The cares of this life can destroy us if we let them. Don't let the chaos of the world pull you down. Things could continue to deteriorate. Slow down; and make sure you are not neglecting your personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Sit and talk with Him. Spend time getting to know Him personally. As we seek Him diligently, He will have us see what we need to see about prophecy, or anything else we need to stay in focus as we learn to stay with Him in prayer. Let us not pass up this wonderful opportunity to go to Him with all our cares and worries, for He cares for us: *"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."* (1 Pet 5:7).

As we learn to do this, He will give us His peace amidst a world of chaos.

*"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."* (John 14:27) NIV.

Get Your Foundation Down in Jesus Christ.

*"Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock."* (Mt 7:24-27) NIV.

Too often many make the mistake I made with giving lip service to Jesus words on the Sermon on the Mount about forgiveness. Study the Sermon on the Mount and seek God for his ability to apply what Jesus told us to do.

Get your foundation and trust down in Jesus Christ. As this old world gets shaken as Scripture says it will, it is the love and peace of God that will enable us to endure till the end.







## ***SCRIPTURE NEWS 2 USE***

There is a new website out there dedicated to two purposes. First, to have the books of the

Bible in form that even younger people can understand. It is beneficial for home-schoolers as well as useful for Sabbath lessons.

<https://scripturenews2use.org/bible-books>

The other purpose is to encourage all people to read their Bibles to “prove” what is true and what is not, challenging for themselves what is commonly taught.

<https://scripturenews2use.org>

The time is shorter than we may think!  
May our Heavenly Father guide and direct all to draw them closer to Him!

## **Letters to the Editor**

I was especially appreciative of the article by Tommy Willis on the end time prophecy in the Sept – Oct issue of the Sabbath Sentinel. I share those views and have been preaching and teaching them myself for decades.’

I was born the first week of May 1941 and the atomic bomb was used on Japan the first week of December 1941. Later when in high school I read of the experimental test of the nuclear bomb. The bomb was a small device placed in a small water tank filled with 200 gallons of water and when the bomb was detonated the only thing left were the twisted metal legs the tank was setting upon.

Boys have always been fascinated with firecrackers, the bigger and more powerful they were the boys seemed to like them all the more; they grew up becoming good soldiers.

Over the years our nation has escalated from gunpowder bombs to atomic bombs to the nuclear bombs to the neu-

tron bombs and who knows what else may be coming. The words of Albert Einstein has come true in my lifetime “The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything save our modes of thinking and we thus drift toward unparalleled catastrophe.”

Our nation would be in better shape today if our Clergy had been preaching the truth from the Bible instead of erroneous traditions of men, then God would be our protector and no other nation under Satan’s influence could touch us.

Also remember that God is not overlooking the 50,000,000 plus aborted babies our women have murdered since 1973. How many of our young men and women have died in uniform trying to protect an ungrateful populace?

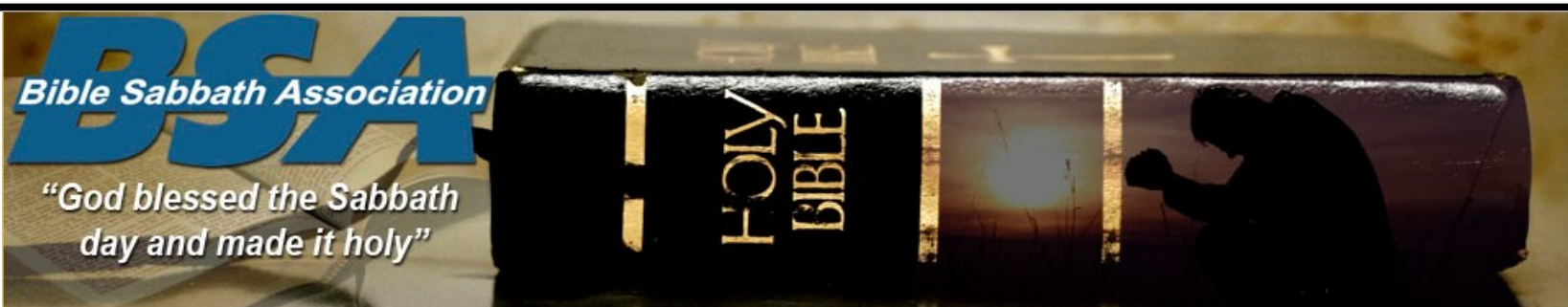
Question: When Christ returns will He find ten righteous people on the earth?

Darl Arbogast

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