



The Sabbath Sentinel

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CHOICE

BSA—The Bible Sabbath Association

Jesus said, "man shall live by ... every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."

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Are We Choosing Life?

Jesus, or Yeshua if you prefer, once said something that often gets overlooked due to the context of when He made the comment. He said this when dealing with Satan's taunt that Jesus could command stones to turn to bread IF He was the Son of God. His response is found in Mat. 4:3: "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*"

Jesus was not making up something new to respond to Satan. Just as Jesus stated, the same thing was written in Deut. 8:3. There is an important point for us to grasp in what He said and that is the point that if God said it then we need to adopt it if we want life.

The question becomes whether we accept what Jesus said and then look into what God has said, or whether we will rationalize those words away so that we can do what we want to do. Some will say, "God will understand." Yes, God will! He will understand that we don't want to do what He said to do. That is the exact same mistake that our parents made in the Garden which led to our being cursed with a death penalty—not that we would have done anything differently as can be easily shown in our own lives before our conversion.

The author of Hebrews advised us in Chapter 6, vs 1-6, that we are to lay aside the foundational doctrines he lists and instead to go on to perfection—not that we need to neglect the things that we have learned. The writer also cautions us that if we neglect His Word and fall away after we have tasted the delicious Way of God then it becomes impossible to be restored—the unpardonable sin.

Have we found ourselves in a place where we no longer find anything new in the Word of God? Are we no longer growing in that knowledge? We are in a precarious place if we have reached that point! Jesus gave us the parable of the Sower and the Seed in Matt 13 to consider. We need to honestly evaluate ourselves to see if we have become unfruitful and like one of those who Jesus describes in that parable. Are we more concerned about the things of this world? Has Satan distracted and discouraged us in spite of the wonder of God's Way of life? Do

we think that God's arm is too short to reach out and deliver His promises to us when troubles come? Do we think that we need to take matters into our own hands rather than rely on God to deliver us? None of us can answer these questions for anyone else; it is up to each of us to perform this evaluation on ourselves. That said, if we are not finding anything in the Word of God that surprises or challenges us, we may be in trouble!

Peter warns us in 2 Pet. 2:20-21 that, "*if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.*"

This is a not-so-thinly veiled warning to all of us that we need to stay on the path outlined by "every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." Peter wrote in 1Pe 2:2 "*As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:*" which should lead us to consider how emphatically a newborn baby takes to its mother's milk—and then examine whether or not WE are as zealous for incorporating every Word of God through which to filter our actions.

Serious students of God's Word know that from the very beginning God has demonstrated that He allows us to choose whether or not we will follow what God says. In the Garden, God could easily have surrounded the Tree of Death with angels who had flaming swords to protect against Adam and Eve taking that fruit. But, God did NOT do that. He stood back and allowed them to choose whether they would love Him enough to do as He asked, or not. We all know that they did not; we would not have done differently. Because of that, death entered into the world. We, through our parents, CHOSE death. But, now we can choose life!

At Mount Sinai, Israel was counseled to choose life and blessings or death and curses. Joshua reiterated that command in Jos 24:15: "*And if it seem evil unto you to serve*

the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” Do WE choose to serve the Lord by adopting every Word that He speaks? Or, do we serve something else?

We know that in Exo 20 we find these words proceeding from the mouth of God, “*And God spake all these words, saying, ... Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.*”

Moreover, in Lev 23:1-4 we find these words proceeding from the mouth of God: “*And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts. Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings. These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons.*” God then proceeds to outline His Sabbaths to include annual days beginning with Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, counting 50 days to the Feast of Weeks, and then on to the fall Festivals of Trumpets, Atonement and Tabernacles.

Indeed, every time we read where God speaks our antenna should go up due to Christ’s words that we will LIVE by every word of God!

When a man of influence came to Christ, he wanted to know how he could inherit life, and was pointed back to words spoken by God. In Luk 18:18 –20 we find that exchange: “*And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.*”

To LIVE, the commandments are to be kept! That is what is gleaned from that exchange.

God spoke the following to us as well in Exo 31:12-13 “*And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you.*” The sign that we know the God of creation is not the Sabbaths; it is the KEEP-ING of the Sabbaths! If we are not keeping HIS Sabbaths then we don’t know who God is!

Some have said, “Those days were intended for the Jews/ Hebrews.” But we should notice, if we care at all about the Truth, what is written in Heb 8:6-8: “*But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah...*”

The “better covenant” was not founded upon different laws! Even Jesus said when on earth as a flesh and blood human that not one jot or tittle would be done away with until ALL has been fulfilled. No, the new covenant is founded on better PROMISES, not different laws. God is not fickle! He would not tell us that we can neglect to obey the Laws which caused Israel and Judah to go into captivity! His Laws, the words spoken by HIS mouth, are to be lived so that we can have life!

The conclusion of the matter is that there are many places where God has spoken directly to us through one individual or another. Jesus tells us that if we want to live, it must be by every one of those words. God does not require anything too difficult. In fact, Jesus said that His Way is easy and His burden light. All we need to do is exactly what Joshua said he would do: “*As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.*” THEN we need to figure out what it is that God has said!

Do we care enough about what God says to live by every word that God has spoken? The choice is, as it has been from the beginning, ours. The choice is an individual decision but a vitally important one. It is the choice between life and death.





The Rise of Heresy in the Second Century

(Part 2)

Kelly McDonald, Jr.

In the last edition of The Sabbath Sentinel magazine (May 2023), we summarized the false teachings that infiltrated Christianity in the mid-second century. In this edition, we will discuss specific teachers and their doctrines. Some of their teachings have lasted down to our present time in some form.

Among the first false teachers to arise in the second century were Saturninus and Basilides, who began to spread heresy during the time of the Roman Emperor Hadrian (117-138 AD) and continued to do so into the reign of Antonius (138-161 AD). A Christian witness of this time, Irenaeus, wrote about their errors:

“Arising among these men, Saturninus (who was of that Antioch which is near Daphne) and Basilides laid hold of some favourable opportunities, and promulgated different systems of doctrine — the one in Syria, the other at Alexandria...He has also laid it down as a truth, that the Saviour was without birth, without body, and without figure, but was, by supposition, a visible man; and he maintained that the God of the Jews was one of the angels; and, on this account, because all the powers wished to annihilate his father, Christ came to destroy the God of the Jews, but to save such as believe in him...This heretic was the first to affirm that two kinds of men were formed by the angels — the one wicked, and the other good. And since the demons assist the most wicked, the Saviour came for the destruction of evil men and of the demons, but for the salvation of the good” (Against Heresies, 1.24.1-2; emphasis mine throughout).

Because Saturninus was a Gnostic, he taught that marriage was prohibited, clean animal meat was forbidden, and that some prophetic words in the Old Testament were from angels and others were from satan. He considered himself to be an angel. He denied that Christ had come in the flesh and that He only appeared as an apparition (ibid, sec. 2). He thought marriage and procreation were from satan (Hippolytus, Refutation of All Heresies, 7.16). Moreover, he promoted the idea that Christ was sent to destroy the God of the Jews.

Basilides was another false teacher of this time. His beliefs are summarized below:

“Basilides again, that he may appear to have discovered something more sublime and plausible, gives an immense development to his doctrines...Those angels who occupy the lowest heaven, that, namely, which is visible to us,

formed all the things which are in the world, and made allotments among themselves of the earth and of those nations which are upon it. The chief of them is he who is thought to be the God of the Jews; and inasmuch as he desired to render the other nations subject to his own people, that is, the Jews, all the other princes resisted and opposed him. Wherefore all other nations were at enmity with his nation. But the father without birth and without name, perceiving that they would be destroyed, sent his own first-begotten Nous (he it is who is called Christ) to bestow deliverance on those who believe in him, from the power of those who made the world. He appeared, then, on earth as a man, to the nations of these powers, and wrought miracles. Wherefore he did not himself suffer death, but Simon, a certain man of Cyrene, being compelled, bore the cross in his stead...” (Irenaeus, Against Heresy, 1.24.3-4; emphasis mine throughout).

Basilides had viewpoints similar to Saturninus. He taught that Christ was sent to save the world from the God of the Jews. He also denied Christ's suffering in the flesh and affirmed that salvation came to the soul alone (ibid, 1.24.4). His followers engaged in idolatry, magic, and sorcery, yet claimed it was part of his worship of the true god.

The attack of these heretics was clear: they sought to portray the God of the Old Testament as a separate God than that of the New Testament. They went so far as to say that Jesus came to destroy the God of the Jews! How could anyone read the New Testament and come to such conclusions? When we read the New Testament, we learn that through Christ all things were created (John 1:1-3, Col. 1:15-17). Saturninus operated out of Syria and Basilides in Alexandria.

Heresy in Rome

The most popular and dangerous of the gnostic teachers were Valentinus, Cerdon, and Marcion. They greatly influenced people in the city of Rome. We will review their beliefs below. Irenaeus is also one of our chief sources about them.

“For Valentinus came to Rome in the time of Hyginus, flourished under Pius, and remained until Anicetus. Cerdon, too, Marcion's predecessor, himself arrived in the time of Hyginus...Marcion, then, succeeding him, flourished under Anicetus, who held the tenth place of the episcopate” (ibid, 3.4.3; emphasis mine throughout).

Irenaeus listed the bishops of Rome under which these false teachers proposed. To give you an idea of the period we are discussing, we will list the years that these bishops served:

- Hyginus (136-140 AD)
- Pius (140-154 AD)
- Anicetus (155-166 AD)

It is interesting to note that Anicetus' time as the bishop of Rome was fruitful for these heretics. As reviewed in the January-February 2023 edition of The Sabbath Sentinel, Anicetus was the first bishop of Rome to defect from the observance of Passover. This event initiated the Quartodeciman Controversy.

Many of these Gnostic teachers claimed to have derived their doctrine from Simon Magus. If you recall from Acts, chapter 8, he was the man who tried to buy the power of the Holy Spirit. Irenaeus wrote: "...declaring at the same time the doctrine of Simon Magus of Samaria, their progenitor, and of all those who succeeded him. I mentioned, too, the multitude of those Gnostics who are sprung from him..." (Against Heresies, 2.Preface).

We will start with the Valentinians. They blended Bible verses with other common sayings from their day to present what they portrayed as a more perfect truth. They were known for creating fables in the moment to justify whatever belief was convenient (Tertullian, Against the Valentinians, 1). The Valentinians were very numerous and influential. Below, we have quotes from Tertullian and Irenaeus about this group.

"The Valentinians, who are no doubt a very large body of heretics--comprising as they do so many apostates from the truth, who have a propensity for fables..." (Tertullian, Against the Valentinians, 1).

"They gather their views from other sources than the Scriptures; and, to use a common proverb, they strive to weave ropes of sand, while they endeavour to adapt with an air of probability to their own peculiar assertions the parables of the Lord, the sayings of the prophets, and the words of the apostles, in order that their scheme may not seem altogether without support. In doing so, however, they disregard the order and the connection of the Scriptures, and so far as in them lies, dismember and destroy the truth. By transferring passages, and dressing them up anew, and making one thing out of another, they succeed in deluding many through their wicked art in adapting the oracles of the Lord to their opinions" (Irenaeus, Against Heresies, 1.8.1).

"...he did not invent Scriptures to square with his own subject-matter, but adapted his matter to the Scriptures; and yet he took away more, and added more, by removing the proper meaning of every particular word, and adding fantastic arrangements of things which have no real existence..." (Tertullian, Prescription Against Heretics, 38).

"But those who are from Valentinus, being, on the other hand, altogether reckless, while they put forth their own compositions, boast that they possess more Gospels than there really are. Indeed, they have arrived at such a pitch of audacity, as to entitle their comparatively recent writing 'the Gospel of Truth,' though it agrees in nothing with the Gospels of the Apostles, so that they have really no Gospel which is not full of blasphemy. For if what they have published is the Gospel of truth, and yet is totally unlike those which have been handed down to us from the apostles..." (Irenaeus, Against Heresies, 3.11.9).

The Valentinians melded Christianity with pagan festivals and encouraged breaking the commandments of God. They believed it was necessary to satisfy the lusts of the flesh in addition to satisfying their spiritual needs (ibid, 1.6.3). They accused God of creating a defective earth and that mankind was not made from the earth as described in Genesis (ibid, 4.33.3, 5.15.4). Moreover, they declared birth as an evil event, which subsequently led them to deny the bodily birth, suffering and resurrection of Christ (Clement of Alexandria, Stromata, 3.17.102).

Archaeology Confirms Irenaeus

In the mid-twentieth century, several ancient works were found compiled in a codex, which has been called the Nag Hammadi Library. Within this codex are a spectrum of works, some of which are non-gnostic, some are semi-gnostic, and others are certainly gnostic. Even some of Plato's writings were found in it. Among these works are several books titled as 'gospels', including one titled 'the gospel of truth.' The Codex Tchacos, which contains similar content, was found later in the same century.

These archaeological findings confirm Irenaeus' statement that there were more gospels in circulation than originally composed in the first century, especially the 'the gospel of truth.' Some of these other gospels propose to have sayings of Jesus and contain some quotes which are found in the original gospels, but they also contain much content which is not found there. This also corroborates with the description of them given by Irenaeus and Tertullian.

Cerdo and Marcion

The last heretics we will discuss are Cero or Cerdon and his apprentice Marcion. Cerdon taught that there were two gods: one of the Old Testament and one of the New Testament. He taught Jesus was the son of an entirely different deity than the Father discussed in the Old Testament. He came to Rome during the time of Hyginus (which was the same time Valentinus arrived). Initially, he professed loyalty to the Roman church and spread his false teachings secretly. As time passed, he taught these things publicly.

Marcion succeeded him and deepened the heresy even further. In about 144 AD, Marcion came to Rome. His teachings diffused throughout the Christian world. Justin the Martyr remarked that his heretical doctrine had influenced people of every nation (First Apology, Chapter 26).

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We will briefly look at the primary sources from this time which discuss his work.

“Cerdon was one who took his system from the followers of Simon... He taught that the God proclaimed by the law and the prophets was not the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ... Marcion of Pontus succeeded him, and developed his doctrine. In so doing, he advanced the most daring blasphemy against Him who is proclaimed as God by the law and the prophets, declaring Him to be the author of evils, to take delight in war, to be infirm of purpose, and even to be contrary to Himself” (Irenaeus, Adv. Haer., 1:27:1-2; emphasis mine).

Marcion developed Cerdon's doctrine even further, which we will briefly discuss. He taught that Christ's statements in Matthew chapter 5 forbidding adultery, murder, and swearing were an indication that they had been overturned and no longer applied (Irenaeus, Adversus Haereses, 4.13.1). He prohibited marriage (Tertullian, Against Marcion, 5.7). He taught that Christ's actual body was not crucified – but a phantom body (ibid, 4.40). He did not believe that the resurrection of the flesh was possible, but only the salvation of the soul (ibid, 5.10).

Among the doctrines more specific to his teaching was a hatred for the Law of God. Tertullian related the following about him:

“Marcion's special and principal work is the separation of the law and the gospel... [his works] aim at committing the gospel to a variance with the law, in order that from the diversity of the two documents which contain them, they may contend for a diversity of gods also. Since, therefore, it is this very opposition between the law and the gospel which has suggested that the God of the gospel is different from the God of the law... Marcion, the author of the breach of peace between the gospel and the law. Now this peace, which had remained unhurt and unshaken from Christ's appearance to the time of Marcion's audacious doctrine, was no doubt maintained by that way of thinking, which firmly held that the God of both law and gospel was none other than the Creator, against whom after so long a time a separation has been introduced by the heretic of Pontus” (ibid, 1.19).

Tertullian contended that before Marcion, the law and the gospel were taught in harmony with each other. Marcion caused this breach, which unfortunately has continued down to our present day. He had a much greater influence than the other heretics in dividing the two testaments, which are truly one.

The Sabbath

Marcion and other Gnostics had a special hatred for the Sabbath. He claimed that Christ broke the Sabbath and rescinded it (ibid, 4.12). Consider the following quote attributed to Marcion:

“Since that day is the rest of the God of the Jews, who

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made the world and rested the seventh day, we therefore fast on that day, that we may not do anything in compliance with the God of the Jews” (Epiphinaus, Panarion, 42; english translation from Bingham, p 52).

Why did they have such a disdain for the Sabbath? One chief feature of the seventh day is that it is a memorial of creation. Since they viewed the material world as being created by an evil god, it led to their rejection of the Sabbath.

Marcion was also known to take verses out of the Bible that were inconvenient to his doctrine. For instance, He removed statements that refer to Christ as an Israelite so that Christ would not have any connection to Israel (Tertullian, Against Marcion, 4.7). He removed Matthew 5:17 from the gospel (ibid). He also removed the section from Ephesians 6:2 that explained honoring one’s father and mother was the first one with a promise (ibid, 5.18). He rejected the book of Revelation (ibid, 4.5). He attempted to compile a canon of the New Testament, which included one gospel (Luke), but it was greatly edited (ibid, 4.7). He admitted only 10 of Paul’s letters.

Conclusion

Over a twenty-year period, these heretics flooded Christian communities with false doctrine. They mixed the teachings of the first Apostles with their own ideas and Greek philosophy. Valentinus, Cerdon, and Marcion had their greatest impact in the city of Rome. Among the scarier parts of these heretical teachers is that they all viewed themselves as Christians! “...All who take their opinions from these men, are, as we before said, called Christians...” (Justin, First Apology, Chapter 26). People who lived in the ancient world had to be very confused concerning the definition of a Christian.

These heretical teachers tried to diminish the Old Testament. They decried Biblical practices, including the Sabbath, and laid the foundation for anti-Sabbatarian doctrine. They sought to edit the New Testament to remove anything that was contrary to their doctrine and then mixed the remaining text with common sayings to create a mutilated text.

With these events going on in the city of Rome, who would intervene? Who would stand up to this rising tide of heresy in Christendom? God preserved a man to stand against them all. His name was Polycarp – we will discuss him more in the next Sabbath Sentinel magazine.

To read about this subject in more depth, download our free book “The Life of Polycarp” from www.sabbathsentinel.org (Free Resources Page).

To view the Bibliography, see pp 84-87 from the book The Life of Polycarp. It can be downloaded for free from www.sabbath.blog.



HEADLINES!

Tommy Willis

UFOs, World War Three, financial markets wobbling, runaway inflation, rising mortgage rates; a new plague— monkeypox!

Those were some of the headlines I was reading this past week.

All of the above, along with the government seriously looking into UFOs, because they can't explain it, has some saying that it's sounds like a monster movie, or a twilight zone episode.

Others, even many Christians, are angry at the news. But as Christians, we can't stay in this the kind state of mind and be praying always as Jesus said (Luke 21:36).

Part of "Watching" as Jesus said to do, is watching our spiritual state. And it's difficult to do that when you let the news get you riled up night after night. It plays on your emotions; this is how they get ratings; the news people may not even realize they are doing this; but as Christians, we need to be aware not to get caught up in it all. Stay with God's ways, and you will stay at peace.

When Jesus told us to watch, let us be aware that it involves watching our spiritual state so we can pray always, to be praying or being in a state of prayer. And you can't do that if you let the news get you in a state of anger or bitterness night after night. Brethren, this is dangerous. Turn it off, and go pray.

My dad and I used to find ways to lighten up a bit and laugh. I was thinking how with this current situation with the congress searching into UFOs, we would have joked, saying things like: "I knew it dad; we are finally going to find out about those

UFOs and have full disclosure!" And we would be laughing. With everybody angry and stressed out with the news, there's nothing like a good laugh to stop taking yourself too seriously.

It's not that the above matters are not serious, they are, and war is very serious! and I'm not trying to belittle those who are trying to find out what the UFOs are, because many are putting forth sincere effort, and I respect their effort. But we often take ourselves too seriously with much of the headlines. We get caught up in our little moment of vanity, which can lead to anger and bitterness—and hatred. Then we can get ourselves in danger and off the narrow road.

My dad knew he never had much longer. When we focus on how we will all be gone soon, it can help us look at the big picture, when we realize we are just a mist soon gone-- as the Bible tells us:

"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.

Brethren, if, like so many Christians, you find yourself becoming angry and bitter at the news—and wanting to throw things at the TV as some have said—then think of the big picture. It doesn't matter what the world does; as Christians, we need to keep our mind on God, and He will keep our mind at peace.

We need to keep the big picture in mind—the Bible tells us twice in the New Testament that we will all stand before the judgement seat of Christ, and when we do, we will not be pointing our finger at some "other sinner" as so many are riled up about today.

No, we will have to give account as to whether we stood with the will of God. And Jesus said the will of God is to love even our enemies and do good to them. After telling us to love all people and our enemies also, and do good to them, Jesus says:

“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say? As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built.” (Luke 6:46-48) NIV.

This is how we get our foundation down in Jesus Christ. Some are staying with the love of God. But with all the bitterness and hatred growing even in the churches today, you often can’t tell the difference between Christians and the world. It reminds me of what a mature minister I knew told me one time, as he tried to explain to me about how few of us understood the danger of our human nature, and he said: “Religious people scare me to death.”

When he told me that over 40 years ago, I never knew why; but I do understand it today. Because I have been down this road of failure of not loving people as God commands; and I have seen this failure in my own life; and the danger of my human nature. I used to have that unforgiving heart also for many years until God brought me to repentance. And now, thank God, I have not held anything against anyone for decades now.

When we don’t understand how much of a sinner we are, we will continue to point at the sins of the world, and fail to look at our own lives. This principle is laid out well with the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11). And they brought her to Jesus and wanted to stone her to keep the law. And Jesus said, *“Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.”* NIV.

Once you find out you can’t throw stones, you will stop picking them up. I had to learn the hard way.

This is how we will stay in focus brethren, with all the hatred growing in the nation.

The world will continue to be filled with chaos. And as the “Headlines” become more troubling to many—our hope needs to be in God not this world. And no matter how bad it gets, even if we have societal collapse, God will keep us in His peace if we draw close to Him.

And we will need much prayer for that. Let us remember what Jesus said:

“Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you suddenly like a trap. For it will come on all those who live on the face of the whole earth. Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.” (Luke 21:34-36) NIV.

With many becoming distracted with today’s headlines, the way they are, they can’t watch as Jesus told us to do. One of the biggest distractions is allowing yourself to become angry and bitter while “watching” the news.

Jesus said many Christians will become offended, have their love wax cold, and turn from the faith, but those who endure till the end will be saved. Let us see the connection here with staying with the love of God and enduring through the dark days ahead (Mt 24:10-13).

Let us pray. No matter what tomorrow’s “headlines” bring, whether it be the collapse of our society, even nuclear war, God will keep us at peace amidst the chaos of the world. Pray and stay with God brethren—we cannot make it on our own strength.



YAHWEH AND THE LAMB

Darl Arbogast

Proverbs 30:4 states, “Who has ascended into heaven, or descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, and what is His Son's name, if you know?”

John 3:13 (NKJ throughout) tells us something that is very important - “*No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.*” (There is no evidence that any human, Enoch, nor Moses nor Elijah are in heaven therefore they are still in the place God laid them to rest and they will be resurrected at His second coming.)

Genesis 1:1 states: “*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*”

Genesis 1:26 NKJ tells us: “*Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.’*”

Isaiah 45:6,7 continues, “*I am the LORD, and there is no other; I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create calamity (evil); I, the LORD, do all these things.*”

Elohim is God, the plural meaning, more than one in Hebrew, such as ‘Most High, Creator, Spokesman and the Word’ is God in English. However a clear picture is needed to give us an understanding of just Who did the creating as Two Spirit Beings make up the Godhead and they are both God as written in Genesis 1:26.

‘El’ was the most common general designation of deity in the ancient near East. Elohim was capitalized for YAHWEH but not capitalized if referenc-

ing to pagan deities (gods). Our text, the Holy Bible, usually reveals which is meant when using God the Father or God the Son or some pagan deity. Elohim can mean only one even though it is plural! Other el’s can refer to other deities or El’s can also refer to God the Father or God the Son. For example Israel means ‘people of God,’ Bethel means ‘house of God’ a holy place both capitalized, both Israel and Bethel end in ‘el’. God also has the name, Elshadi and Adonai, Eleyon and Elolam (the everlasting God).

JESUS THE CREATOR

Colossians 1:15-18 states: “*He (Jesus the Christ) is the image of the invisible spiritual God, the firstborn by His resurrection over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He (Yahushua, the lamb) may have the preeminence.*”

Jesus had the power of creation. He created the Heavens and the earth, the sun, moon and the stars. He give talents to the men He had created through Adam’s descendants. Isaiah 45:7 and 54:16 NKJ – 7 “*I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create calamity; I, the LORD, do all these things.*” 16 “*Behold, I have created the blacksmith who blows the coals in the fire, who brings forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the spoiler (Satan) to destroy.*”

It is very clear that Satan — first named Lucifer — was also created. Our Creator did not intend for Satan to

become an adversary. It was Lucifer's desire to be like the 'Most High' God the Father. Today Satan has the power of sin and death. He can kill suddenly and make men suffer but he doesn't have the power to resurrect.

It is written in Genesis 2:16,17, *"And the LORD God (Yahweh Elohim) commanded the man (Adam), saying, 'Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.'" We are also told in Genesis 3:3,4, "but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God (Yahweh) has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.' Then the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die.'"*

Satan did not make Adam and Eve sin; they had made the decision to do so on their own. Today we have the same choice to believe God or not, to resist temptation or not!

God is in control and owns us all as written in Job 12:10, 13-17: *"In whose hand is the life of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind? With Him are wisdom and strength, He has counsel and understanding. If He breaks a thing down, it cannot be rebuilt; If He imprisons a man, there can be no release. If He withholds the waters, they dry up; If He sends them out, they overwhelm the earth. With Him are strength and prudence. The deceived and the deceiver are His. He leads counselors away plundered, and makes fools of the judges."*

Who can tell God what to do? Revelation 6:16,17 tells us: *"Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him (Yahweh) who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"*

Mankind was created with the intention of not having to die, apparently on the condition that Adam would keep the serpent out of the Garden of Eden and Adam would obey God's commandments.

Adam did not have the strength, stamina or forti-

tude to stand up to the beguiling serpent nor could he take charge and correct Eve, his wife who yielded to temptation first, then coaxed Adam to sin.

We are not told the age of Eve when she died but Adam lived 930 years. They could have continued to live on and on if they had not sinned against God as written in Genesis 3:22, *"Then the LORD God (Yahweh Elohim) said, 'Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever.'"*

Eating fruit from the tree of life consistently would have kept Adam and Eve living indefinitely therefore it was taken away and they were forced to leave the Garden of Eden. The Tree of Life will resurface again as written in Revelation 22:2 after the New Jerusalem descends.

After the Great White Throne judgment takes place and after death and graves are cast into a symbolic lake of fire which is the second death, a new pristine atmosphere with no pollution accompanied with a re-landscaped earth will be replacing what we have on the earth now; the oceans and the mountains will be gone. All pollution will be underground or burned to ash and buried deep underground or under where the oceans use to be.

THE NEW JERUSALEM

There will be no temple in the New Jerusalem as the Father and the Son called Yahweh and the Lamb, they are its Temple. The 'temple is a sacred place' and the phrase 'bosom of Abraham' is figuratively used of a 'place of blessedness'.

There will be a throne on the earth in the city of 'New Jerusalem' with a river of pure water proceeding from under God's throne itself. The tree of life will be reemerged by that time bearing twelve types of fruit and leaves containing medicine for the healing of the nations as written in Revelation 22:12,14 *"And behold, I am coming quickly, and My re-*

ward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. ... Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city."

Revelation 22 indicates there will be human life continuing after New Jerusalem comes down from heaven. The angels and the resurrected saints will be spirit beings therefore not getting sick nor are they subject to diseases so no need for medicine for them. The leaves on the Tree of Life is there for the healing of the nations (the people).

Satan has the power of death but when he is gone there is no more death. Hebrews 2:14 reminds us: *"Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself (Jesus the Christ) likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil."*

1 Corinthians 15:24,25,26 and 2 Timothy 1:10: *"Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death." ... "the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."*

The churches in the past did not teach us everything but perhaps more knowledge and wisdom will open up to us now!

Let's read, study, pray, seek knowledge and wisdom sharing with each other what we have learned.



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PAUL W. SYLTIE



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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!

The Time is at Hand ...

Are YOU Ready?

Aubrey Duncan

In His predication of the final events of Bible prophecy, Jesus warned that deception will be the most powerful sign that will precede His second coming (Matthew 24:5, 11, 24).

Of course, He talked about all the other signs with which we all are so familiar. The wars, cultural strife, disturbances in nature and climate upheavals. But the issue of deception seemed to be uppermost on His mind. After outlining all these signs, Jesus declared, *"All these are the beginning of sorrows"* (Matthew 24:8). In addition to the prophecies of Jesus, we also have the record of the Jewish Feast Days which gave a most definite timeline of the life and ministry of Jesus from His crucifixion to His second coming.

The knowledge of the sanctuary and the lessons it teaches have been largely neglected and forgotten by most of Christendom. In the process, they have deprived themselves of the power of those lessons that enables one to live a victorious Christian life. As a direct consequence, many have allowed themselves to be engrossed in and are deceived into accepting a plethora of false doctrines, firmly believing them to be true.

The sanctuary gives the correct view of God and His dealings with His people. It reveals God's true perspective of sin and His plan for human redemption from it. The sanctuary reveals Jesus Christ and His plan and purpose for the salvation of fallen man. As we study the sanctuary and its services, all false doctrines are turned upside down and God's truth comes alive in their places with brightness and glory.

Take for example the Feast Days. An understanding of the Jewish Feast Days and their application to end-time prophecy will not only help you to understand where we are in salvation history; but will inspire and help you to get prepared for what is about to come upon this world as an overwhelming surprise. Here's a brief listing of those Feast Days which foreshadowed the life and ministry of Jesus Christ and their application to the times in which we live.

Passover/Unleavened Bread (Leviticus 23:4-8)

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Corinthians 5:7).

First Fruits (Leviticus 23:9-14)

"But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are of Christ's at His coming" (1 Corinthians 15:20-23).

Pentecost (Leviticus 23:15-22)

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-5).

Trumpets/Atonement (Leviticus 23:23-32)

This was and is the most solemn and consequential of the Feast days. It pointed to the time in which we are living. You may disagree or debate when that time began; but one thing is certain; no one can deny that we are indeed living in the antitypical Day of Atonement.

Moses explains the seriousness of the typical event: *"Also, on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD. And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God. For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people"* (Leviticus 23:27-30).

On the Day of Atonement, the High Priest ministered in the Most Holy place of the sanctuary. The only piece of furniture in the Most Holy place is the Ark of the Covenant which contained the ten commandments, the terms of the Covenant. It is the ONLY standard by which God judges. The Day of Atonement was a time of both cleansing and judgment. It was indeed a rather profoundly serious time. Here's how the Jewish Encyclopedia describes it: "God, seated on His throne to judge the world, at the same time Judge, Pleader, Expert, and Witness, openeth the Book of Records; it is read, every man's signature being found therein. The great trumpet is sounded; a still, small voice is heard; the angels shudder, saying, this is the day of judgment: for His very ministers are not pure before God. As a shepherd mustereth his flock, causing them to pass under his rod, so doth God cause every living soul to pass before Him to fix the limit of every creature's life and to foreordain its destiny. On New-Year's Day the decree is written; on the Day of Atonement, it is sealed who shall live and who are to die, etc. But penitence, prayer, and charity may avert the

evil decree" (Zunz, "Literaturgesch." p. 107).

We are living in the time of that Feast of which the Jewish sanctuary prophesied. God is sending out a clarion call, *"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters"* (Revelation 14:6-7).

This is God's loving appeal for His people to reflect the character of Jesus Christ and honor Him as Creator by keeping holy His blessed Sabbath-day. Of course, this is in contrast to the ever increasing movements to promote and establish Sunday sacredness.

John the Revelator further points to the antitypical event: *"And he saith unto me, 'Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be'"* (Revelation 22:10-12).

Now, more than ever before, those who claim the name of Jesus must be shining lights for Him in this dark and doomed world ever speeding on its irreversible collision course to a destructive destiny. It is neither popular nor politically correct to say something like that; but it is the truth. It is what God's word says, and God's word is truth.

Don't be deceived; the time is at hand. Question is, are you ready?





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SINNERS

DJ Wellington

Have you seen the many books and heard the many talks on “You are what you speak and/or think?” There is lots of evidence that the way you think is the way you are. On top of that, if you believe you ARE a sinner, it makes sinning a bit more “acceptable”-- after all, we’re all sinners, right? It has always bothered me when people I know and love refer to themselves as “sinners.” If you believe yourself to be a “sinner,” aren’t you seriously endangering your innermost being? First, we MUST understand what sin is because, surprisingly, many do NOT know: 1 John 3:4, “*Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness [without law].*” So if you think the law was “done away with,” then sin is non-existent.

Let’s look at just a couple verses to show what I am saying regarding a person calling and believing that they ARE a sinner:

Proverbs 11:31 (quoted in 1 Peter 4:18), *If the righteous will be recompensed on the earth, how much more the unrighteous AND THE SINNER.*

Proverbs 13:22, *A good man leaves an inheritance to his children’s children, but the wealth of the SINNER is stored up for the righteous.*

In John 9:16, some of the Pharisees actually accused the Messiah of being a sinner. Why? Because He did not keep the Sabbath (as the oral law/tradition said it ought to be kept— placing burdens on the people that Yahweh’s words do/did not). Many of the Israelites sinned, repented, and were forgiven; some died because of their sin. On a couple occasions when Yahshua healed someone, He said, “Go and sin no more.” Isn’t that indicative of no longer being “a sinner”?

Unfortunately, people have been taught most all their lives that “we’re all sinners,” when that is NOT what the Scriptures teach. Romans 3:23 says we have ALL sinned and fallen short of the glory of Yahweh and

we’re told in 1 John 1:10 that if we say we have not sinned, we make Him out to be a liar! Do you see the difference? If you are currently “living in sin,” practicing sin on a daily basis, THEN you could rightfully call yourself a sinner but beware of what you are doing. See the scriptures above and the many more that show “BEING a sinner” is not a good place to be!

When I’ve approached this topic with some, many have immediately perceived I was being “self” righteous but that is not the case whatsoever. I am “striving” towards righteousness, just as all the patriarchs, apostles, etc. were. Again, look at some of our examples. David was the apple of Yahweh’s eye, yet he sinned—but repented (Psalm 17:8; 2 Samuel 24:10, 17). Noah and Lot were both called “righteous” (Genesis 6:9; 7:1; 2 Peter 2:7), yet we know they had sinned.

Most all know the power of prayer, but did it occur to you that “The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much” (James 5:16)? Does our Father hear and/or answer the prayers of “sinners”? Isaiah 59:2 says that sin has separated them from their Elohim and His face was hidden so He will NOT hear. I want my prayers to be effective ones and answered by my Father in the manner He prescribes! I’m pretty certain those reading this would as well!

Let’s look at 1 Peter 3:12 (referencing back to Psalm 34:15-16): *For the eyes of Yahweh are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers, but the face of Yahweh is against those who do evil.*

Now for the clincher—1 John 3:9 says, “*Whoever has been born of Yahweh does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of Yahweh.*” I’m fairly certain people interpret this verse in different ways, but let me explain it in simplistic terms--“IF” you love your Father and you know your

Father's instructions and keep them in the forefront of your mind, it truly is impossible to sin. How could a person think "I know I should not steal this, but I want it," at the same time he has the command "Do not steal" in the forefront of his mind? If you have been baptized in the Name of Yahushua, did you not come up a "new" person, born of the Father? And we are also told several times how the "new" covenant is His laws in our hearts and minds (what we say and do).

Here are a few other verses to consider the next time you want to refer to yourself as "a sinner":

Proverbs 13:6, *Righteousness guards him whose way is blameless, but wickedness overthrows the sinner.*

Ecclesiastes 2:26, *For Elohim gives wisdom and knowledge and joy to a man who is good in His sight; but to the sinner He gives the work of gathering and collecting, that he may give it to him who is good before Elohim.*

Ecclesiastes 9:18, *Wisdom is better than weapons of war; but one sinner destroys much good.*

Luke 7:37, *And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Yahushua sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil.* NOTE: We are not really told why this woman was a sinner yet we are told further down in verse 47 that her sins WHICH WERE MANY, were forgiven. So, she was no longer a "sinner," right? We are told the Messiah told her in verse 50, "faith has saved you, go in peace"--the implication: "Go and sin no more."

The Scriptures are replete with opposites—good and evil, day and night, morning and evening, summer and winter, sin and righteousness. So, the next time you decide to call, think or refer to yourself as a sinner, think twice—you may be a sinner but, if you are, it would benefit you to read the scriptures, repent and turn FROM being a sinner to one who is striving for righteousness! Remember what the Messiah said often: "Repent and sin NO MORE." He absolutely knew we would slip because a we're human and that is WHY we need a mediator, and praise Yahweh for providing one in His Son!



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A Note on the Name:

'Church of God (Adventist)'

CM White

Was the name Church of God (Adventist) ever officially used or registered?

I pose this question as I noticed that term used in 1973 or 1974 in a book and later it was brought up by prominent Church of God historian, Richard Nickels. This short note in no way means to disparage Richard whom I had been in frequent contact with since 1977. Rather, it is to correct a minor matter that had arisen and somehow, inexplicably, found its way into various books.

This matter has always puzzled me. Search as I may, I could not find anything conclusive and based on what information I had, I inserted this information into an article I wrote in 1996 Sabbatarian Groups. [A Scattered and Little Flock](#).

Later, in 2000, I included the following in an article The Independent Sabbatarian Groups c1800- 1860. Compilation of Research Notes:

"For instance, I read about the Church of God (Adventist) in a book listing the religious denomination in America that I found either in the school or local council library (I think it was Handbook of Religious Denominations in the United States). The minister above [whom was counselling me] could not understand who they were, so I commenced my own research into the matter. It took many years to find out that this was, apparently, the non-official name for the group that became known as the Church of God (Seventh Day) in 1923." (p. 3)

This was clearly a mistake which was subsequently corrected. Let us examine a little more about this issue.

The Issue

The issue is simple: is there any evidence for the name Church of God (Adventist) having been ap-

plied to the General Conference of the Church of God (as named since 1884) or for any other Sabbatarian group?

The articles listed below were sent to me by Marian de Berg, Secretary, Ellen G. White/SDA Research Centre, upon my request:

- Christman, G (1974) The [Early Development of the Church of God \(Adventist\)](#).
- Sabo, J (1977) The [History of the Marion Party](#).

My intention was to ascertain whether these items would throw any light on the matter or provide proofs. A thorough reading of these and other documents did not provide any proof whatsoever, but provided a clue: that an historical error has somehow crept into various books over the years. Apparently, commencing from one error that either assumed the name Church of God (Adventist) or it was used by an author to encompass all non-Seventh-day Adventist and non-Seventh Day Baptist sabbatarian groups – it was perpetuated over the years and decades until it formed a myth that found its way into Church of God literature.

Like anything and everything, once an error is found, it must be removed from articles and websites. Even something as minor as this.

Even the booklet The Radio Church of God. How its teachings differ from those of the Seventh-day Adventists (1970) makes the innocent mistake of stating that Dugger's break-away group which located in Salem, West Virginia, in late 1933 as Church of God (Seventh Day) and the parent group at Stanberry, Missouri, as Church of God (Adventist). In fact, the former is officially known as Church of God (7th Day) and the latter as General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day) which moved head office to Denver, Colorado in 1950.

Another is Some History and Some Information Regarding the Church of God Adventist and Seventh-Day (1944) by a variety of Seventh-day Adventist authors. The collection includes:

- I. An Introduction Statement by A L White
- II. The Early History of the "Marion" Movement by G I Butler
- III. Later Developments in the Church of God – Adventist by J N Loughborough
- IV. Experience of Mr Cranmer by J N Loughborough
- V. Church of God Census Statement – 1926
- VI. Church of God (Adventist) Census Statement - 1936
- VII. Church of God (Seventh Day) Census Statement - 1936
- VIII. Confessions of Prominent Men in the Church of God

In section I, White mentions the Church of God split in 1905 but assumes that the parent group was known as Church of God (Adventist) (p. 3). In section V we find this statement concerning those that did not join the Seventh-day Adventists in the 1800s or left it for a variety of reasons:

"In a few cases such individuals formed independent local churches, not identified ecclesiastically with the Church of God, and yet somewhat affiliated with it. In 1906 these were registered as a separate body under the title of Churches of God (Adventist), Unattached Congregations. Such organizations, if any of them existed, were probably included in both 1916 and 1926 among the independent churches or merged with other Adventist bodies." (p. 15)

While Section VI states:

"Some of the churches formed remained independent from the general organization, although holding the same beliefs. In 1906 these were registered as a separate body under the title of Churches of God (Adventist) Unattached Congregations. Many such congregations still exist." (p. 17)

As the writer extends further into the article, he inexplicably confuses the Churches of God (Adventist) with the General Conference of the Church of God. It is rather puzzling how he manages to do that! Further, no proof of registration has been found to date.

The groups which made up this loose association probably consisted of various scattered groups that eventually died out (I list them below by their periodical because, in most cases, we do not know the actual names of these groups. To make matters even more difficult, it appears that they never registered themselves with the authorities, so great was their opposition to structure and unified effort.

- Remnant of Israel (1915-31) - Published by G. G. Rupert, an associate of the Church of God (Seventh Day).¹
- The Gathering Call (Riverside, California) (Early 1900s) - The editor was A. F. Ballenger. Mentioned by G. G. Rupert in his Remnant of Israel periodical.
- Bible Banner (Early 1900s) – A magazine of the Michigan "White Cloud and Bangor congregations, pastored by John C. Branch and his brother, Lemuel Branch, respectively" of the General Conference of the Church of God (e-mail from Griffin to White, 18 Sept 2021) but may have been very loosely associated with the other scattered groups in this list. W. C. Long was the editor for a short while. The White Cloud and Bangor congregations eventually withdrew completely from the General Conference of the Church of God in 1917 and joined the Seventh Day Baptists (Robert Coulter, The Journey. History of the Church of God (Seventh Day), pp. 171- 73).
- Torch of Israel (Early 1900s) - Published in Washington, DC by Elder Ziegler. According to the New York Public Library catalog: "Ceased publication with v. 31, no. 1 (March 1946). "Israel's prophetic witness." "Successor to the Evangel of Hope."" Given that its last publication (vol. 31) was in 1946, suggests that it commenced publication in 1915.
- The Evangel of Hope (Joplin, Missouri)

(Early 1900s) - Mentioned by G. G. Rupert in his Remnant of Israel periodical.

- The Shining Light (Almira, New York) (Early 1900s) - Mentioned by G. G. Rupert in his Remnant of Israel periodical.
- The Mispah (Enid, Oklahoma) (Early 1900s) - Mentioned by G. G. Rupert in his Remnant of Israel periodical.

Nickels calls Rupert's group Church of God (Independent) but I have been unable to find evidence for that title anywhere. Rather, his group was known as Remnant of Israel as was his periodical.

- Religious Liberty (Washington, DC) (Early 1900s) - Mentioned by G. G. Rupert in his Remnant of Israel periodical.
- There were likely other publications during that period, now long lost to time.

Many of the above were in contact with one another and perhaps we could assign them the tag of 'a loose association of unattached congregations.'

A thorough scan of the libraries of the cities where these newsletters were published is in order in an attempt to recover them for our research purposes. A volunteer is required for this exercise.

Let us now turn to the correspondence between Jerry Griffin and Richard Nickels. Griffin, was Director, Summit School of Theology, Church of God (Seventh Day) at the time when he corresponded with Richard Nickels about whether the General Conference of the Church of God was also known as Church of God (Adventist). This assertion by Nickels appeared in an article Church of God Adventist! which appeared in several Sabbatarian periodicals.

In that article Nickels claimed that the General Conference of the Church of God (which had functioned under that name since 1884 and changed to General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day) in 1923), was also known as Church of God (Adventist).

Mr. Griffin stated in his 3 July 1998 e-mail to Nickels (which I have held on to ever since), that there is not

the slightest shred of information in Church of God archives, publications or registration papers to suggest that this was the case. He demonstrates that though the term Church of God (Adventist) is used in Elmer Clark's Small Sects in America (1937) as well as in the 1926 and 1936 editions of Census of Religious Bodies by the United States Census Bureau, Clark would likely have obtained this name from the Census books. As Griffin pointed out

"I believe that the misnomer originated with the Census Bureau who used "(Adventist)" as a tag to identify us from other Churches of God." Then, relying on the census reports, the Federal Yearbook, Mead, Clark, and others have innocently perpetuated the misnomer." (e-mail to Nickels, 23 July 1998)

Concluding Remarks

Given all my attempts over the years to find evidence for a registered name of Church of God (Adventist) or its use in various Church of God publications, these have not produced any evidence.

Perhaps this grouping of unaffiliated congregations which split from the General Conference of the Church of God in 1905 and joined with others such as GG Rupert's Remnant of Israel, called themselves Church of God (Adventist) in a way that was an overarching term. Or the Census Bureau used that term to encapsulate all these different congregations including the General Conference of the Church of God.

I thought it fit to correspond with Mr. Griffin about all of this given his insights, and in 2020 I sent three old Seventh-day Adventist articles to him to show how this error had somehow perpetuated through various sources over the decades. He agreed of course, given his understanding of the issues and previous attempts to correct them. He had articulated detailed thought and investigation which can only be described as "impeccable" and I make no attempt to re-hash what he has already undertaken.

In an e-mail response he remarked:

"These three SDA articles demonstrate how an early mistake in a reference book gets passed on as true. It's the proverbial "feathers in the wind." Once

they're scattered, it's virtually impossible to retrieve them all." (E-mail to Craig White, 12 Nov, 2020)

How true. So, it behooves us to correct any mistakes in Church of God history to ensure accuracy and that 'urban myths' cease. We owe this to historians, our members, and future generations. That would be the most responsible thing to do.

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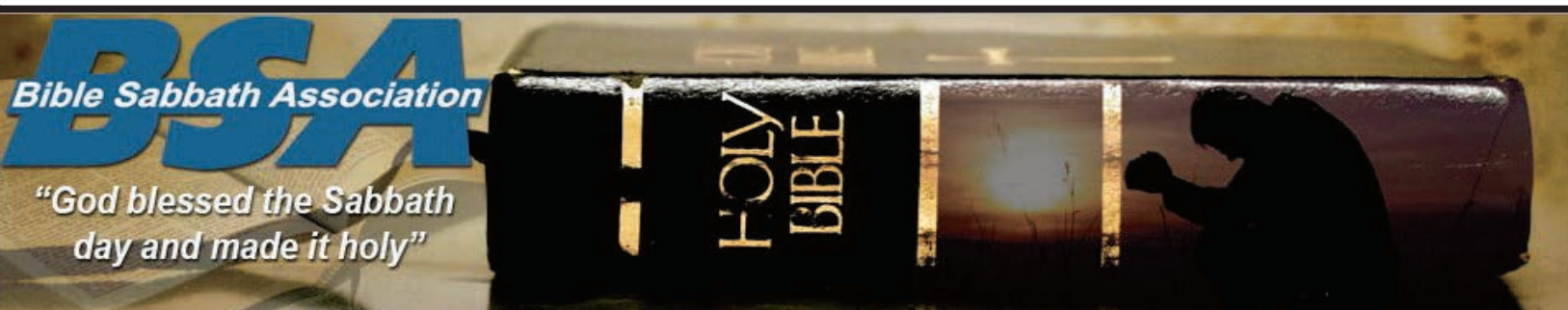
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