

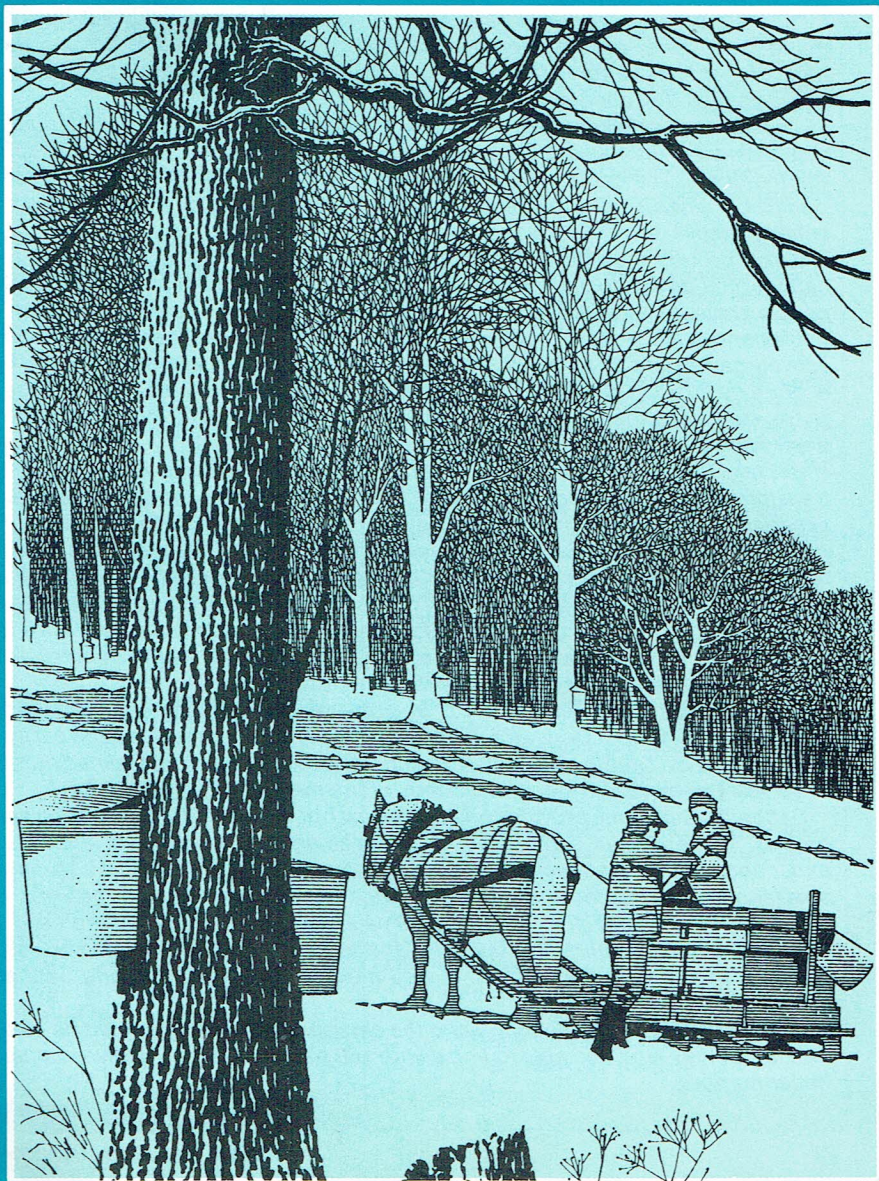
# The SABBATH SENTINEL

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Serving the Seventh-day Christian Community

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FEBRUARY, 1992





## EDITORIAL

# *Small is Beautiful*

Lured by the apparent status and impact of televangelists and large churches, many congregations dream of growing big—so they can do something really great “for the Lord.” But a closer look at large churches reveals several important facts. First, there are very, very few of them; second, they are frequently led by a very gifted preacher or dynamic leader—something not easily duplicated; and third, most of them have a very effective small group program—something that is easily duplicated by any congregation of any size.

The idea of small groups isn't new. Jesus worked intimately with just 12 disciples, more intimately still with 3—Peter, James, and John. He could preach to the multitudes, he could feed the thousands, he could heal and do miracles in public; but when it came to effectively teaching and training others, he did it with a small group.

Large groups may be great for sermons and corporate worship—but they cannot provide the social, emotional, and spiritual contact that most (but not all) people crave. Even Sabbath school classes of 25 or 30 can be much too large. If you attend such a class, take notes sometime on the number of people who actively participate. See if the 80/20 rule holds true for your class: 80% of the talking is done by 20% of the people. How many of the others have ideas they'd like to share, questions they'd like to ask, experiences they'd like to tell? But they just aren't willing to compete with the vocal 20%.

But take those silent 80% and put them in small groups of 5 to 12 and watch the transformation. They become actively involved, they can ask questions, relate experiences, and make comments. They can begin to really get to know the other members of the group. Personal rapport and trust grows. The members begin to feel a sense of responsibility to the group and to one another. If one suffers, all will suffer; if one rejoices, all will rejoice. If one is absent, he will truly be missed—and hopefully, one or more members of the group will communicate their love and concern to him. In a small group, visitors can feel at home within minutes—in a large congregation, it may take weeks or months.

Small groups don't require a lot of preparation or strong leadership—just someone to serve as a facilitator. If he can't attend, another member can easily fill in. The focus isn't getting through a prescribed lesson or a predetermined number of verses; the focus is the spiritual needs of the members.

Sabbath school time provides one of the best opportunities for developing small groups. While people sometimes resist breaking up the one big adult class, experience shows that overall attendance increases when there are a variety of smaller classes to choose from. Small groups can also meet during the week—in homes or offices as well as at church. Small groups, whether they are used for evangelism, for discipling, for teaching and training, or just for fellowship, are a powerful tool that, in my opinion, is very much under utilized among Sabbath-keeping churches.

Human beings crave intimacy—and the church is where they should be able to find it. But they won't be able to find it with 100 people at once. Twelve is a much better number.

—Richard A. Wiedenheft

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FAITH,  
HOPE, LOVE,  
these three, but the  
greatest of these is  
LOVE.

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**Opinions expressed in articles** are those of the writers and not necessarily of The Bible Sabbath Association.

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**For those who don't know Him—  
Jesus Christ and Him Crucified!  
For those who do know Him—  
the liberty of His Sabbath!**



# Remember the Sabbath To Keep it Holy or Forget the Sabbath and Call it Common?

## Part 2

by Daniel Botkin

### Concern #6:

#### The New Covenant

Hundreds of years before Christ, God promised that He would someday make a new covenant with his people (Jer. 31:31-34). The New Covenant was instituted by Jesus at the Last Supper (Mt. 26:28). The difference between the New Covenant and the covenant made at Sinai is this: Under the Old Covenant, the law was written on stone. Under the New Covenant, God says, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts" (Jer. 31:33). Many Christians mistakenly interpret this to mean that we need nothing more than an inward law of 'personal conscience' or 'personal convictions' for moral guidance. This belief results in the same kind of moral anarchy we read about in the book of Judges, when "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Jdg. 17:6).

The important question is this: When God says, "I will write *My law* on their hearts," what law is He referring to? The answer is found in 2 Corinthians 3, where Paul speaks of the contrast between the "tables of stone" and the "fleshly tables of

the heart." It is significant that Paul refers to the *tables* of the heart. If God says that the laws written on the tables of our heart are to be *His laws*, and if He wrote His laws on *stone tables* at Sinai, does it not make sense that He would write *the same ten laws* on the *fleshly tables* of our heart? The fact that so many Christians *do* attempt to give a special place to one day in seven by Sunday church attendance is an indication that the Sabbath law is written on the fleshly table of the heart. Though written on the heart, it is either misread and misunderstood by most believers, partly because they are unaware of the origins of Sunday observance.

It is unsafe to depend on nothing more than a subjective law of 'personal conviction' for moral guidance. We still need God's laws. The good news of the New Covenant is that God writes His laws in our inward part, on our hearts. This means that we are motivated by an *inward desire* to obey rather than by *outward compulsion*. It is the difference between "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" and "the law of sin and death" (Rom.



8:2). This change of motivation causes the old system to fade away (2 Cor. 3:11). Under the Old Covenant ("the oldness of the letter"), we felt *forced* to obey, as slaves. Under the New Covenant ("the newness of the spirit"), we *want* to obey, as sons. It is no longer "I *have* to obey," but "I *want* to obey."

Augustine wrote, "The same law which was given Moses becomes through Jesus Christ grace and truth" (Enarr. in Ps. 32 Sermo 2:6). Under the New Covenant, the Ten Commandments are transformed into ten promises to be believed and embraced. This is especially clear in the Hebrew text. The words, *lo tinaf*, for example, can be understood as either a command ('Don't commit adultery') or a future tense promise ('You won't commit adultery'). Because the law is written on your heart, you will not want to disobey. To do so would go against your nature as a son of the New Covenant.

The ten laws that were written on stone at Sinai are now written on our hearts. New Covenant people need God's laws as much as Old Covenant people did. A tamed horse needs the bridle as much as a wild stallion does. The wild, rebellious horse will resist the Master's bridle. Even after the bridle is on, he will fight against it and resist its guidance. The horse who has been tamed and broken will joyfully accept the bridle and humbly submit to its guidance.

#### Concern #7:

##### Shadow and Substance

Some people resist Sabbath observance by viewing the Sabbath as an Old Testament type, or prophetic shadow, or the inward rest we experience in our souls as a result of having our sins forgiven through the death of Jesus. "Because the fulfillment has come," they say, "we can ignore the type. Why embrace the shadow (a weekly sabbath) when you already have the substance (daily rest in the soul)?" The main weakness of this argument lies in the fact that the

inward rest of our souls is only a partial fulfillment of the prophetic shadow. The Sabbath prefigures not only our present inward rest; it also speaks of the future rest and restoration of the entire earth in the age to come. Jews and early Christians understood this, and often referred to the Sabbath as a foretaste of the age to come.<sup>13</sup> As pointed out earlier, the Sabbath will still be observed in the new earth (Isa. 66:22f). The inward rest which Jesus gives (Mt. 11:28f) is a wonderful thing, but it is only a measure of the final, complete rest He will one day bring to the world when He returns.

Even if we assume that our present inward rest *is* the complete and final substance of the Sabbath (which it is not), would that be a reason to discard the shadow? There are other acts of worship and obedience that we practice which are shadows of an inward, spiritual reality. The most obvious of these are baptism and the Lord's Supper.<sup>14</sup> These are both outward rituals (shadows) which serve as visible demonstrations and reminders of inward realities that the believer experiences (substance). By baptism, we demonstrate our identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord (Rom. 6:3-5). By partaking of the Lord's Supper, we "show the Lord's death till he comes" (1 Cor. 11:26). Very few Christians suggest that we discard baptism and communion just because we inwardly experience the realities that they symbolize.

We must be careful not to overlook the fact that our inward rest is, indeed, a partial fulfillment of the Sabbath. It is a precious measure of the substance, and we do not want to minimize it or lose it. Nor do we want to lose sight of the fact that the Sabbath is not an end in itself, but a means to remind us each week that a complete and final rest awaits us in God's Kingdom. Aesop's fable of the dog with a bone has a lesson for us. The dog, seeing his

reflection in the water, thought it was another dog with a bigger bone. When he barked to try and frighten the 'other dog,' his bone fell into the water and was lost. We must beware that we not lose the substance by grasping at the shadow. We don't want to worship the Sabbath of the Lord instead of the Lord of the Sabbath. Proper Sabbath observance, however, need not result in losing the substance. Rather, it can serve to make us more aware of the substance. The present, inward rest and the future, global rest will be most appreciated by those who now embrace the shadow of that substance.

### **Practical Implications and Guidelines**

Keeping the Sabbath holy naturally raises questions about what kinds of activities should and should not be done on the Sabbath. The Scriptures do not provide a long list of regulations; therefore, there is a need for a certain amount of liberty. The rabbis felt a need to compile a precise list of Sabbath regulations that would deal with every situation imaginable. Sabbath-breaking was one of the major sins that led to the Babylonian captivity (Jer. 17:21-27; Ezk. 20:13, 16, 21, 24), so this reactionary move was understandable. Unfortunately, this resulted in countless man-made restrictions that made the Sabbath seem more of a burden than a blessing. The Essenes, one of the most extreme groups, went so far as to forbid defecating on the Sabbath.<sup>15</sup>

The Pharisees obscured God's Sabbath by attaching man-made restrictions in the name of legality. We do not want to make the same mistake, nor do we want to go to the opposite extreme and strip the Sabbath of all restrictions in the name of liberty. If we make the Sabbath nothing more than a holiday of recreation instead of a holy day of rest, we will obscure the Sabbath as much as the Pharisees did. We will be doing it in a different way, but the result will be the same.

The true meaning and purpose of the Sabbath will be lost.

There are a few specific restrictions in the Scriptures which we must heed. Each person must determine to what extent these Scriptural restrictions apply in different areas of his life. In addition, we must remember the principles Jesus taught about the Sabbath in Matthew 12: Genuine needs for the health and wellbeing of a person overrule the Sabbath restrictions (v.3f). The work of the ministry is to continue on the Sabbath (v.5). Acts of mercy, such as healing, are lawful on the Sabbath (v.7,10,12). Unforeseen problems of an urgent nature overrule Sabbath restrictions (v.11).

Keeping the Sabbath holy can be a delight instead of an inconvenience if we make the necessary preparations ahead of time. By completing our shopping, cooking, housework, etc on Friday ('the day of preparation'), we are free to enjoy God's Sabbath rest from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday.

### **Loss of The Sabbath**

The Church's abandonment of the seventh-day Sabbath is rooted in the anti-Judaism of the post-apostolic Church Fathers. During the early years of the Church, both Jewish and Gentile believers continued to worship in the synagogues every Sabbath (Acts 13:42ff; 18:4). As tensions increased between Christians and non-Christian Jews, the two communities drifted further apart. After the death of the apostles, the Church Fathers wanted to distance, differentiate, and divorce Christianity from Judaism as much as possible. This led to the abandonment of things that made Christianity appear 'Jewish,' including the Sabbath.

The abandonment of the Sabbath resulted in the need for a substitute day of worship. One of the main reasons Sunday was chosen as the new day of worship was because the pagan masses of Rome were already



using the first day of the week to pay homage to the sun. By making Sunday ('the Venerable Day of the Sun') the day of worship, the Church leaders altered Christian worship to make it more appealing to the pagan population.<sup>16</sup>

Sunday was selected as an alternative day of worship early in the Church's history, but it was not regarded as a sabbath until later. In the Fourth Century, Constantine made Sunday worship official, and thereby opened the way for the Catholic Church to declare Sunday as 'the New Testament Sabbath.'<sup>17</sup>

Catholic theologians and historians openly admit that the Catholic Church was responsible for changing the Sabbath day from Saturday to Sunday. This presents a dilemma for non-Catholic believers who observe Sunday. One Catholic writer puts it quite bluntly: "Protestantism, in discarding the authority of the (Catholic) Church, has no good reasons for its Sunday theory, and ought logically to keep Saturday as the Sabbath."<sup>18</sup> The only other alternative is to reject the authority of the Ten Commandments as a moral guide for Christians. One Protestant writer (a non-Sabbatarian) admits this when he writes, "To become a seventh-day Sabbatarian is the only consistent course of action for anyone who hold that the whole Decalogue is binding as moral law."<sup>19</sup>

### Restoration of the Sabbath

Martin Luther said, "Learn from me how difficult a thing it is to throw off errors which have been confirmed by the example of all the world, and which, through long habit, have become second nature to us." Luther failed to throw off some very serious errors in his own thinking, but his message of justification by faith was at least a beginning in God's plan to restore the Church to her former glory.

Since Luther's time, God has continued to restore blessings to the Church, blessings which were lost

and buried under layers of man-made traditions. I am persuaded that proper Sabbath observance is among those things which the Lord intends to restore to His Church. Scripture shows that there is a definite link between Sabbath observance and restoration (See Isa. 58:12-14). Keeping the Sabbath holy may be an important key to releasing the Church from its 'Babylonian captivity.'

While I am persuaded that God would have all believers to embrace the seventh-day Sabbath, I am also persuaded that God is merciful, patient, and slow to anger. The measure of a person's accountability is determined by what he knows, not by what he does not know (Lk. 12:47f).

The Church Fathers' desire to rid Christianity of its 'Jewish' elements was a mistake. It not only alienated Jews who might otherwise have been drawn to their Messiah, it also robbed the Church of great blessings, the Sabbath being perhaps one of the greatest. As the Lord continues to restore lost blessings and truths to the Church, let us be willing to recognize the errors of our predecessors and humbly make the necessary adjustments in the practice of our faith.

<sup>13</sup>For examples, see A. J. Heschel, *The Sabbath, its Meaning for Modern Man* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Young, 1951), p. 10; Theodore Friedman, "The Sabbath: Anticipation of Redemption," *Judaism* 16 (1967): 445, The Epistle of Barnabas, 15.

<sup>14</sup>Some may object by saying that these are *New Testament* rituals, whereas the Sabbath is an *Old Testament* institution. However, both baptism and communion had their origins in Old Testament rituals. Baptism was taken from the ritual immersion of the Jews, and the Lord's supper was taken from the Jewish Passover.

<sup>15</sup>It may well be that Paul was referring only to *man-made* restrictions when he wrote, "Let no man therefore judge you...in respect of...the sabbath days," i.e., do not let others condemn you if you do not

observe the Sabbath according to man-made rabbinical restrictions.

<sup>16</sup>Many people mistakenly believe that the apostles changed the Sabbath to Sunday to commemorate the Resurrection of Christ on that day. That simply is not true. Bacchicchi does an excellent job of tracing the origin and rise of Sunday observance in his book, *From Sabbath to Sunday*.

<sup>17</sup>Constantine's attitude to the Jews seemed to be reiteration of the anti-Judaism of the Church Fathers: "Let us then have nothing in common with the detestable Jewish crowd....All should unite...in avoiding all participation in the perjured con-

duct of the Jews" (Eusebius, *Life of Constantine* 3,18-19 (*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2nd Series. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1971 reprint, pp. 524-425)).

<sup>18</sup>John Gilmary Shea, "The Observance of Sunday and Civil Laws for its Enforcement," *The American Catholic Quarterly Review* 8 (Jan. 1833): p. 152 (fn. 7).

<sup>19</sup>Carson, p. 392.

This article is reprinted from material the author has asked The Bible Sabbath Association to publish as a booklet. We are favorably disposed to do so and would welcome any input our readers might care to offer.

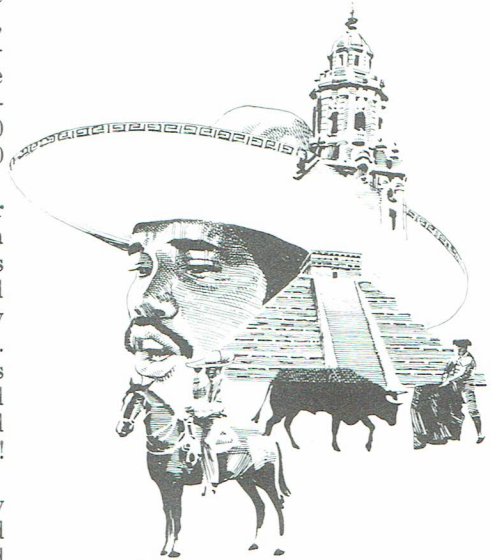
# Ministering in Mexico

by Elmer Bolt

On June 8th near San Diego I met with Ron and Cathy Burnham and their team of 21 other enthusiastic brothers and sisters from Idaho, Washington, and California. We arrived at the Mexican border on the night of June 9th carrying approximately 3,000 Spanish Bibles, 3,000 Spanish New Testaments, and 40,000 gospel booklets.

It was the easiest, quickest border crossing ever. I took immigration office officials only about 20 minutes to issue our 24 individual visas and two vehicle permits—with absolutely no inspection of our vehicles or cargo. And when we arrived at the customs inspection station, they merely asked if we had obtained our visas and permits and waved us through. Whew! I was relieved and grateful!

The team from the north was very willing in their work and worship and aggressive in their witnessing and ministering in the homes, missions, streets, and plazas (despite the heat, the blowing dust, and bouts with the unmentionable plague which often troubles visitors from the north). We





had a wonderful nine days of ministry and worship in the Guaymas area before my companions had to leave for home in the USA. I miss them all!

I continued south on Hwy 15 to the Yaqui Indian village of Vicam. This town as well as the surrounding area is home to many thousands of these quiet, patient people who are native to this western coastal area of the Mexican state of Sonora; they speak their own native language, and most speak at least some Spanish.

I stopped here to visit a native pastor who recently lost a leg to gangrene. He is doing quite well, ministering again among his people with the help of an artificial limb and a crutch—what courage!

Since I don't understand Yaqui, I had intended only a brief visit to encourage my brother and resupply his literature stock. But as I rolled into town, I heard some funny noises that weren't really funny coming from the rear axle of my 37-year-old bus. Upon checking the differential, I found that the ring and pinion gears were destroyed.

Disassembling the gears and bearings, I went into the city of Obregon, about 30 miles to the south to see if by chance I could obtain the parts. No chance! In fact, after making calls to the major cities of Mexico, I learned that there are, apparently, no known parts available in Mexico. Since the old GMC coach is now immobile, I may have to leave it here in Vicam while I return to the U.S. to look for a used drive gear assembly.

I will be glad to have the smaller, newer bus prepared for use in the work down here (it is only 25 years old). Maybe it will be ready for the next trip.

Meanwhile, our all-wise Father, has me here among some very poor and precious Yaqui people who are hungry for the Living Word. They keep me busy nightly preaching and teaching from the Word of God—and busy

during the day trying to teach Yaqui to me.

Many of the Yaqui people live in simple huts made of *carriso*, a fast-growing cane. Most wear *huaraches* (sandals) and like bright clothing. Most adults have not had the privilege of learning to read. Their native language had to be put into an alphabet so that New Testaments could be printed for them. As yet, very few have any portion of the written Word of God.

There is much that needs to be done here. I do not yet know how long I expect to be here. I'm daily seeking our Lord's direction and timing while working here among the Yaqui people.

The author receives mail at P.O. Box 404, Gilroy, CA 95021.

### New BSA Leaflet

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# BSA — 1945

The Bible Sabbath Association was founded in the 1940s by George A. Main and other Sabbathkeepers who believed that by cooperating together they could be more effective in sharing the Sabbath and in opposing laws that hindered Sabbath-keeping.

Given below are the names of BSA members as of July 1, 1945. The list was prepared by Ruby C. Babcock, secretary of the association at the time. Her note at the end of the list reads as follows: This list of members of The Bible Sabbath Association arranged by states has been prepared with the hope that it might help those reasonably near together to get acquainted and to cooperate in furthering the work of the Association and growth of its membership. We want members in every state and a large increase in membership everywhere. In union there is strength.

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# Sabbath in New Guinea Predates Christian Era

by Lester N. Hawkes

Probably few Seventh-day Adventists realize that the seventh-day Sabbath was observed in the South Pacific islands even before the coming of Adventist missionaries.

In 1946 my wife and I were sent to a small medical outpost on the sands of Aroma beach in Papua, some 72 miles (116 kilometers) east of Port Moresby. One day I was discussing with the mission staff some outreach plans that involved letting the thousands of village people know something special was to happen on a certain Sabbath. Talking in Motu, I said the meetings would be held on *Laga-ani-Dinana*, the words for *Sabbath*.

But when I suggested that the adherents of the London Missionary Society (LMS) would surely think we meant Sunday if we used the word for *Sabbath*, Pastor Lui Oli, Pastor Tauku, and others spoke up. "No. They'll know that we're speaking of our Sabbath. They'll know what day we mean. *Laga-ani Dinana* is the name of that day."

Again I objected. "But the words *Laga-ani Dinana* mean 'day of rest'—and for them, that's Sunday."

Again the pastors made it clear to me that we weren't using Adventist terminology. We were simply using the name in the Motu language for the day known in English as Saturday.

That staggered me. So I asked a-

bout the local Aroma language. "What name does it give for Saturday?"

"In the Aroma language the name for Saturday is *Mara Vakula*, which also means 'day of rest.'"

"All right," I said, "if both the Motu and Aroma languages call Saturday 'the day of rest,' why do the people around here worship on Sunday? Why don't they call Sunday 'day of rest'?"

The national pastors told me that all along that part of the Papuan coast the people traditionally had kept the seventh day as a day of rest. Thus the name "day of rest" in all the local languages. Intrigued, I asked to be told the whole story.

They suggested that I'd get the best account by talking with an Adventist name Kualua. This is what he told me.

## Kualua's Story

Back in the early days of the Australian administration of Papua, the government divided the territory into spheres of influence for the various mission bodies wishing to work there.

The Anglicans were allocated one area, the Methodists another area, and the LMS yet another. The LMS was granted responsibility for much of the Papuan coast, including the eastern section, where Kualua and his family lived.

When the first LMS missionaries



came to the Aroma coast, they were amazed to find that the locals followed a weekly cycle, and that the seventh day of each week was set aside as the *Laga-ani-Dinana* or *Mara Vakula*.

The day wasn't a worship day. Rather, it was a day of no work. If there was to be a village discussion, this was the day. So while there were often meetings on Saturdays, they weren't really religious meetings.

The LMS missionary told the people that they were quite correct in abstaining from work and meeting together one day a week. But, he pointed out, they held their *Mara Vakula* one day too early. He suggested that they change.

Kualua told me how he went home from this meeting wondering about all he had heard.

That night he had a dream that remained etched in his memory. "Someone in bright-white clothes came to me and stood right there," Kualua said, pointing to a spot. "He told me that I wasn't to change with the rest of the village people. Instead, I was to continue to keep our traditional day until another White man came who would teach the same day we had always observed.

"I waited for some years. Then when Pastor Ross James came to live at Aroma, I and my family asked him what day he kept—for we hadn't forgotten the dream. He told us that he kept the seventh day, not the first.

"We questioned him further. And when we knew for certain that he did keep *Mara Vakula*, we decided that we'd attend his mission."

About two years ago Pastor Ross James visited Australia, and I met him at the retired workers' meetings at the Waitara church in Sydney. I asked him if he recalled the events I've outlined.

Pastor James' face lit up. "Certainly. I remember that day well. I remember Kualua and his family, and how the work in the Aroma district

opened up when they discovered that I worshipped on the day that traditionally had been their day of rest."

So I had confirmation of Kualua's story from the pastor involved. Unfortunately, it never occurred to me to ask Pastor James just what year this incident happened. However, according to the *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, page 957, he began his work in Aroma in December of 1931—a mere 15 years before my wife and I took up work among the Aroma people.

### A Day To Do Nothing

Naturally, after talking with Kualua I developed deep interest in the matter of a traditional day of rest among the Papuan people. As I moved around and met people in a position to give further information, I found for instance, that in the Domara district, 18 miles (30 kilometers) or so east of Aroma, the local people had also observed the seventh day as a "day to do nothing."

In the Hula area the language included the name *Puka Omana*, which translates "day of rest" or "day to do nothing." The Papakaka language, in the bush areas behind Hula, used the word *Koe Pogina*, which again indicates a "day to cease labor."

But only once did I find a language in which the word had a vestigial meaning of worship. I was discussing with Pastor Yori Hibo the languages in the area behind Port Moresby. There the traditional name for the seventh day is translated, in the main, as "day of rest"—but it does carry the connotation of worship as well.

The last time I was in the Aroma district, in 1980, I found that among the younger generation there was no knowledge at all of the old words. They've now slipped from use. The people have used the English names for the days of the week (Sunday, Monday, etc.) for so long that the younger generation doesn't know what the older names were. But when I spoke with the patriarchal group, it

was different.

The older people were thrilled to think that someone knew words from their own language—even though they had ceased to be used. And they confirmed again that it was true: in earlier times they had abstained from normal garden work on the seventh day.

They told me that it had been an enjoyable rest day. Occasionally they'd go fishing on the seventh day. Or they'd hold a village conference. Or they'd do whatever struck their fancy at the time. But I could detect no suggestion at all that it was considered a day for worship.

Still, to find a group with knowledge of a weekly cycle was amazing enough, for there's no natural phenomenon to indicate a week. The sun indicates the year. The moon marks out the month. But nothing marks out a week.

The week must have been handed down to them from the distant past—too far back for anyone to know when and where. For their forebears to have selected the idea of one day in that week to be set aside for different activ-

ity was a further interesting point. But the selection of the seventh day of the week to be the day that was different from the rest of the week has to be more than coincidence.

I can only assume that the origin of this Papuan rest day dated far back into antiquity, back beyond the time of Christ, maybe even back to the dispersion of the nations at the time of the Tower of Babel.

The concept of the seventh day of the week as a "set-aside day" is found in many languages. For example, European languages refer to Saturday as *Sabado* or some variant of the word *Sabbath*. But it came as a surprise to me to find the same thought reflected in the languages of one of the world's more isolated areas, an area where it was obvious that the concept of a week and a weekly day of rest couldn't have been introduced by Christian missionaries.

The author was a missionary to Papua New Guinea for many years before his retirement. Reprinted by permission from *Adventist Review*, June 8, 1989; © 1991, Review and Herald Publ. Assn.

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| <i>Divine Rest for Human Restlessness</i> by Samuele Bacchiocchi (320 pp.) ..... | \$10 |
| <i>History of Sabbath and Sunday</i> by John Kiesz (64 pp.) .....                | \$3  |
| <i>God's Sabbath for Mankind</i> by Richard A. Wiedenheft (64 pp.) .....         | 60¢  |

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| <i>Sabbath at Sommerhase</i> Story and Lesson Book (128 pp.) ..... | \$7 ea.; \$5 ea. for 6 or more |
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| <i>The Bible Sabbath: Seventh Day or First Day?</i> (6 pp.) .....                       | 14¢ ea.; \$12/100 |
| <i>Bible Truth About "Salvation by Grace Through Faith"</i> by F. Walker (32 pp.) ..... | 35¢ ea.; \$6/20   |
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| <i>Has Sabbath Time Been Lost?</i> by Joseph M. McGuire (10 pp.) .....                  | Out of stock      |

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# BSA

## Department Editor Suffers Stroke

Howard Mesick, BSA life member and TSS department editor, suffered a severe stroke late in November. At the time of this writing a month later he is still in a coma being sustained with breathing and feeding tubes. Please pray for a miracle for him, for his wife, Cathy, and for their children, Catherine and Howard.

In addition to his work for TSS, Howard had been actively ministering to brethren in Delaware and Eastern Pennsylvania during the summer and fall. Ed Ozalas from Feasterville, Penna., will be handling some of the TSS columns that Howard did.

## Bibles for Mexico

A number of BSA members have contributed to the Bibles for Mexico project sponsored by the Seventh Day Church of God, Caldwell, Idaho. Paul Woods reports the following: "This past Friday (October 25), we sent a check for \$9,300 to the Bible League for 6000 Bibles. We had formerly thought we would have to purchase the Bibles here in the States and take them across the border (which is illegal according to Mexican law). God had a different plan all along. At the Bible League we were told we could pickup the Bibles in Mexico City from their office there. We are scheduled to do this on November 12. Money is still coming in for Bibles, so we are still trusting God for the 10,000 Bibles He originally laid on our hearts."

## Announcements for Summer Meetings

It's none too early to be planning summer conferences and campmeetings. It is our policy to publish announcements of such meetings—provided they are open to all Sabbathkeepers and are conducted by in-

dividuals or groups basically in harmony with the purpose of BSA. March 15 is the deadline for the May issue, April 15 for the June issue.

## Letter from Chosen People Ministries

BSA Vice-president John Conrod shares with us a letter he received from Harold A. Sevener, President Emeritus of Chosen People Ministries, Inc. of Charlotte, N.C. (formerly American Board of Missions to the Jews). In response to an inquiry from John Conrod about why Christians refuse to worship on the Sabbath, Sevener wrote, "We believe the Bible teaches that as followers of Yeshua (Jesus) we are free to worship the Lord on any day of the week. This includes the Sabbath and/or Sunday. Most Christians feel they cannot worship on Shabbat because it is the Jewish Sabbath and that by doing so they would be keeping the law, or be legalizers. This is not the case. Such teaching is erroneous. I do trust you will continue to pray for our ministry as we seek to reach Jewish people with the Gospel and as we establish Messianic congregations around the world."

## Do You Read Seventh-day Periodicals?

If so, perhaps you can help the editors. We're always on the lookout for news items for "News from the Seventh-day Community" and "On the Legal Front," short quotations for "To Repeat," and outstanding articles for excerpting or reprinting. If, in your reading, you come across material that you'd like to see passed on to other Sabbathkeepers, please send it to the editor or to BSA at Rt 1 Box 222, Fairview, OK 73737.



# NEWS

## Live Longer

In their book, *The Seventh-day Diet*, authors Chris Rucker and Jan Hoffman claim that North American strict vegetarians live 12 years longer than non-vegetarians.

The book describes Seventh-day Adventists as America's healthiest people. In studying SDA statistics, the writers have found that the Adventist diet has lowered their fatality rates for the 10 leading causes of death in America.

The authors also claim that SDA's have more energy than others and "feel and behave decades younger than their years."

## Restrictions Requested

Three Adventist hospitals have been asked to recognize certain guidelines when deciding to perform abortions.

Last September, a special constituency session of the Potomac Conference voted 190 to 58 to request that abortions be performed only if the pregnancy threatens the mother's life, if the fetus is gravely deformed, or if the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest. The subject of abortions at the Potomac Conference hospitals has been under study by an appointed commission since 1987.

The request came after a three hour polite, but emotional discussion.

## Melting Pot Merger

Two South African SDA union conferences voted to unite into one single conference.

The two groups are the Southern Union Mission, (comprised mostly of Black members), and the South African Union Conference, (made up Primarily of White and Asian members). The merger became complete at a joint constituency session last December February 1992

ber.

Commenting on the agreement, Chairman of the General Conference-appointed Commission on the Church in South Africa Jan Paulsen said "The Spirit of God has been in control throughout this whole process. The Adventist family in South Africa has embarked on a course that will bring honor to God and his church."

## SDB Clean Up

Combining hard work and community service, the Nortonville, Kansas, Seventh Day Baptist Church has found a new way to advertise.

After the SDB Church decided to adopt a highway to keep clean, the Topeka Highway Department agreed to install signs telling motorists who was responsible for the clean up. Church members picked up debris and placed it in sacks provided by the Highway Department. State trucks later picked up the sacks.

In spite of high temperatures and a local drought last summer, workers said, "It is not only good to have clean highways, it's a way to get plenty of exercise!"

## Church in Cambodia

A new SDA church has been founded in war-torn Cambodia. After the Adventist Development and Relief Agency opened an office in Phnom Penh, the church started with 16 members.

Their ranks grew to 28 after only four meetings. Pastor Thy San Sam, a convert from Cambodian refugee camps in Thailand, returned to his native land from the United States to help the church get started. The pastor is from the Lowell Cambodian Adventist Church in Lowell, Massachusetts.

# Methods of Tract Distribution

by Roy Garrison

Editor's note: While tract distribution is not as popular among Christians as it once was, many continue to practice and promote it as an effective method of disseminating truth. The following is condensed and adapted from a long article by the author, a strong advocate of tract distribution.

God says "My word shall not return unto me void" (Isaiah 55:11) and that "The word of God is quick and powerful" (Hebrews 4:12). History has proven those words to be wonderfully true. The world over, great results have come from Bible tracts. They have turned many people from murder, suicide, stealing, and lying and have saved marriages from divorce. They have been the source of the start of wonderful organizations to lead the world's people. And Bible tracts continually bring people to God's eternal and perfect kingdom.

No matter where you are you can prayerfully distribute Bible tracts—even from a wheel chair or a hospital bed. But the most important factor in tract distribution is keeping a good supply on your person at all times. Opportunities for distribution are everywhere. Here are some of the possibilities:

(1) Pass out tracts at a busy location; but before you leave the area, be sure to gather up the discarded tracts. Don't be discouraged even if a person throws away a tract or tears it in pieces. God can use a discarded tract or even a small piece of torn tract on the ground or in the refuse dump to bring people to His salvation in Christ.

(2) Kindly and tactfully give them to people you engage in conversation, especially if you can maneuver the conversation around to a topic that relates to the tract.

(3) Place a tract on the seat when you leave a bus, train or plane.

(4) Place tracts in religious literature racks (or even in non-religious



racks) in various waiting rooms, (bus, train, plane, doctor's, etc.) They can also be placed on magazine and writing tables in post offices, banks, embassies, and consulates.

(5) Place tracts on the bulletin boards found in supermarkets, post offices, and many other places.

(6) Place tracts in library and other circulating books, magazines and newspapers.

(7) Include tracts in personal correspondence. Tracts can also be sent to individuals whose addresses are found in obituary and other columns in the newspapers. They can be mailed to stores selling pornographic magazines. All tracts have the potential to turn people to eternal and perfect life.

(8) Send gospel or Sabbath tracts or letters about prophecy to world leaders.

(9) Tracts can be placed by the



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doorsteps or doorknobs of homes and businesses.

(10) Tracts can be placed by the flag arm outside of private mail boxes, but it is illegal to place them inside private or government mail boxes. It is legal to place tracts in the mail slots many businesses and offices have in their front doors.

(11) Place tracts through the open windows of parked cars. But be sure no one is inside as you may frighten them. Be cautious if a dog is in the car. Tracts placed under windshield wipers (as is often done with commercial literature) can cause resentment. Tracts can be easily dropped into open backs of parked trucks.

(12) Tracts can be placed in many strategic places in telephone booths.

(13) Before leaving a hotel or motel room, place a tract in front of the Bible and all other books which may be there. Leave one in the bureau's correspondence drawer, another on top of the bureau (for the maid), and yet another on the backs of any pictures hanging on the wall.

(14) When giving money to the poor, always give a tract too.

(15) Place tracts in well corked bottles and throw them in the oceans from ships or off piers or even from the beach when the tide is going out. A free chart of the world's ocean currents can be obtained from the Federal Maritime Commission, 1100 L St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20573. Tracts in bottles can also be placed in rivers

and lakes.

(16) Always place tracts in the pockets of clothes and in other articles given to the Salvation Army and other charity organizations.

(17) Tracts can be laid in an open spot on any supermarket shelf, especially among the liquor bottles in the liquor department.

(18) A very light salvation tract tied to a small, helium filled balloon can travel high and far before coming down. God can guide the tract to a strategic place.

(19) A message of Bible verses about salvation can be rubber stamped, printed, typed or written on the back of U.S. post cards; for 19 cents each they can be sent anywhere in the U.S.A., including Hawaii and Alaska, and such possessions as Guam, American Samoa, and the Virgin Islands in the Caribbean. For a few cents more, they can be sent to Canada and to countries anywhere in the world. These cards can be sent to kings, queens, presidents, statesmen, millionaires, non-Christian religious and occult leaders. God can cause them to fall on fertile soil where the seeds can bear fruit for the bettering of this fallen world and for the increase

of the Kingdom of God.

(20) Whenever a person offers you a tract, always accept it graciously and then offer him one of your tracts. This writer has never yet been refused. Do the same with those who offer you commercial circulars and flyers.

(21) Permanent boxes for tracts can be placed out of doors on private property where people pass or congregate. Permits can sometimes be obtained for placing such boxes in city and state parks where many people pass by or congregate.

(22) In the places where gambling is done, tracts can be placed beside slot machines and on the gambling tables not in use. But make sure to avoid all appearance of gambling.

(23) Rubber stamps with salvation or Sabbath messages can be made by almost any local printing shop. These can be as large as a post card or small enough to fit in your pocket. Take the rubber stamp with you wherever you go—in the U.S. or overseas. You can stamp out tracts on post cards in your hotel room in a foreign country. You can stamp them out—on letters and magazines and alongside obscene and blasphemous statements on walks and other places. The following is one of the messages the writer uses: *“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love HIM”* (1 Cor. 2:9, Isa. 64:4). *“Believe in the LORD JESUS CHRIST”* (Acts 16:31). *“As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise”* (Luke 6:31). *“Pray for ME”* (Jer. 29:31). *“With*

*GOD all things are possible”* Matt. 19:26, Ps. 62:11).

Using verses such as these and many others, you can make tracts that contain a powerful message of God's love, or a message about the Sabbath, or about the importance of helping the poor, or about repentance.

The Bible teaches that “Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth” (Luke 15:7). “He that winneth souls is wise” (Prov. 11:39). “They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever and ever” (Dan. 12:13).

God's Word tells us to publish the good news of His salvation: “When thou art converted strengthen thy brethren” (Luke 22:32). Tracts are a wonderful tool we can use to communicate the messages of God's word so that other people in this temporal, fallen world can live in the eternal and perfect paradise of the great Creator.

The author, an octogenarian from Santa Monica, California, reports that he has been distributing tracts since 1927—on land and sea and in airplanes. His work experience includes 8 years as a subway conductor and 39 years in the U.S. Merchant Marine, during which he sailed through five wars. He has distributed tracts in all 50 states, 9 provinces in Canada, and in 100 other countries of the world.

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## ON THE LEGAL FRONT

### **To Ordain or Not To Ordain**

Chaplains serving the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs no longer need to be ordained, as a result of *Murphy v. Derwinski*.

Mary Murphy wanted to become a Catholic chaplain for a VA hospital in Denver, Colorado, but was turned away because she was neither endorsed nor ordained by the Roman Catholic Church. In addition to being required to have attended seminary school and three years of pastoral experience, all VA chaplains must be ordained and endorsed by their church.

After failing to prove discrimination on the basis of sex, Murphy claimed violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. A federal judge ruled that the VA can require an applicant to be endorsed but not ordained. Murphy's victory has turned sour since the Catholic Church does not endorse applicants who are not ordained, and they do not ordain women.

### **Battle Won By Sabbatarian**

Consolidated Freightways was found guilty of religious discrimination and ordered to pay back wages and benefits to Corine Proctor, a Seventh-day Adventist.

Although Consolidated worked employees on Saturday, Proctor didn't have to because there were enough people qualified to do her job on that day. When she later bid for and received a promotion, she was asked, but refused to sign a statement that said she might be required to work on

Saturdays.

When she refused to work on Saturdays, she was fired.

### **A Rose By Any Other Name**

The U.S. District Court of central California has decided that the term 'Seventh-day Adventist' can refer to either a member of the SDA Church or to a person who agrees with a certain body of doctrine.

The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists unsuccessfully tried to stop Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International, Inc., from using the SDA title. Kinship was formed in 1981 to provide support for SDA's who are gay or lesbian.

The court noted that the General Conference has not opposed the use of the SDA title by at least two break-away groups, (the SDA Church Reform Movement and the Davidian SDA Association).

### **When Not To Use The Bible**

York County (Pennsylvania) District Attorney H. Stanley Rebert had no idea of the repercussions that would ensue from his using the Bible when speaking to jurors.

Karl S. Chambers was convicted of robbing and killing a 70 year-old woman in 1988. In his closing remarks to the jury at Chamber's sentencing hearing, Rebert said "Karl Chambers has taken a life. As the Bible says, 'And the murderer shall be put to death.'" The jury handed down the death sentence for Chambers.

In an appeal, the Pennsylvania State Supreme Court threw out the

## ON THE LEGAL FRONT

sentence because prosecutors used religious works in support of the death penalty. The case was then sent to York County Common Pleas Court for resentencing.

Calling the decision "outrageous," Rebert told the Associated Press, "I don't know of any God-fearing prosecutor that has not used some scriptural or religious reference in arguing to a jury. God's law is the basis for Pennsylvania law and all law."

### When Not To Pray

North Carolina District Judge H. William Constangy opened each session in his Mecklenburg County courtroom with a prayer.

When challenged by the state branch of the American Civil Liberties Union a federal appellate court ruled that the practice violates the separation of church and state. The court said "For the judge to start each day with a prayer is to inject religion into the judicial process and destroy the appearance of neutrality."

Constangy, a Roman Catholic, composed the prayer himself. Commenting on the prayer, the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said "In particular, the prayer that Judge Constangy recited gave the appearance of seeking divine intervention in the courtroom proceedings."

Constangy plans to appeal the decision to the U.S. Supreme Court where he is "very optimistic of (his) chances."

### When Not To Preach

Tennessee evangelist Guy Aubrey

was attending game two of last year's World Series, when security guards tried to evict him from the game. He was holding up a sign that read "John 3:16."

Aubrey has filed suit with the U.S. District Court in Cincinnati claiming that his freedom of speech had been violated and that the stadium is a public forum. A guard had told him that the sign violated the rules of Major League Baseball.

In 1989, a similar event took place at a stadium in Washington, D.C. which resulted in stadium officials apologizing.

### No Extra Days

Connecticut teacher Ronald Philbrook has lost his chance to be heard by the U.S. Supreme Court on his attempt to increase the number of paid leave days for religious observances.

A member of the Worldwide Church of God, Philbrook tried to have three days 'personal leave' converted for religious use. School officials said that it was against their policy and he would have to take the time off without pay.

A Federal District Court ruled in favor of the school district and the high court refused to hear an appeal.

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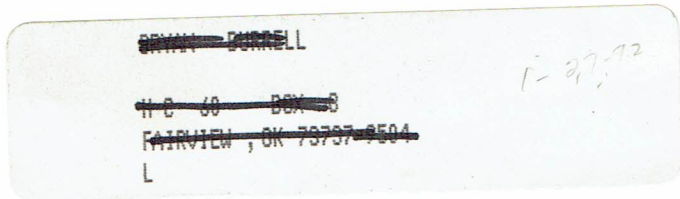
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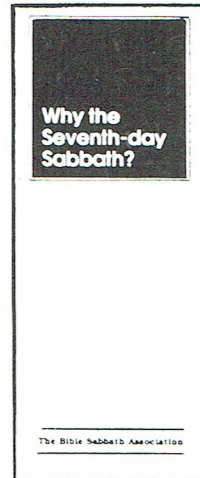
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