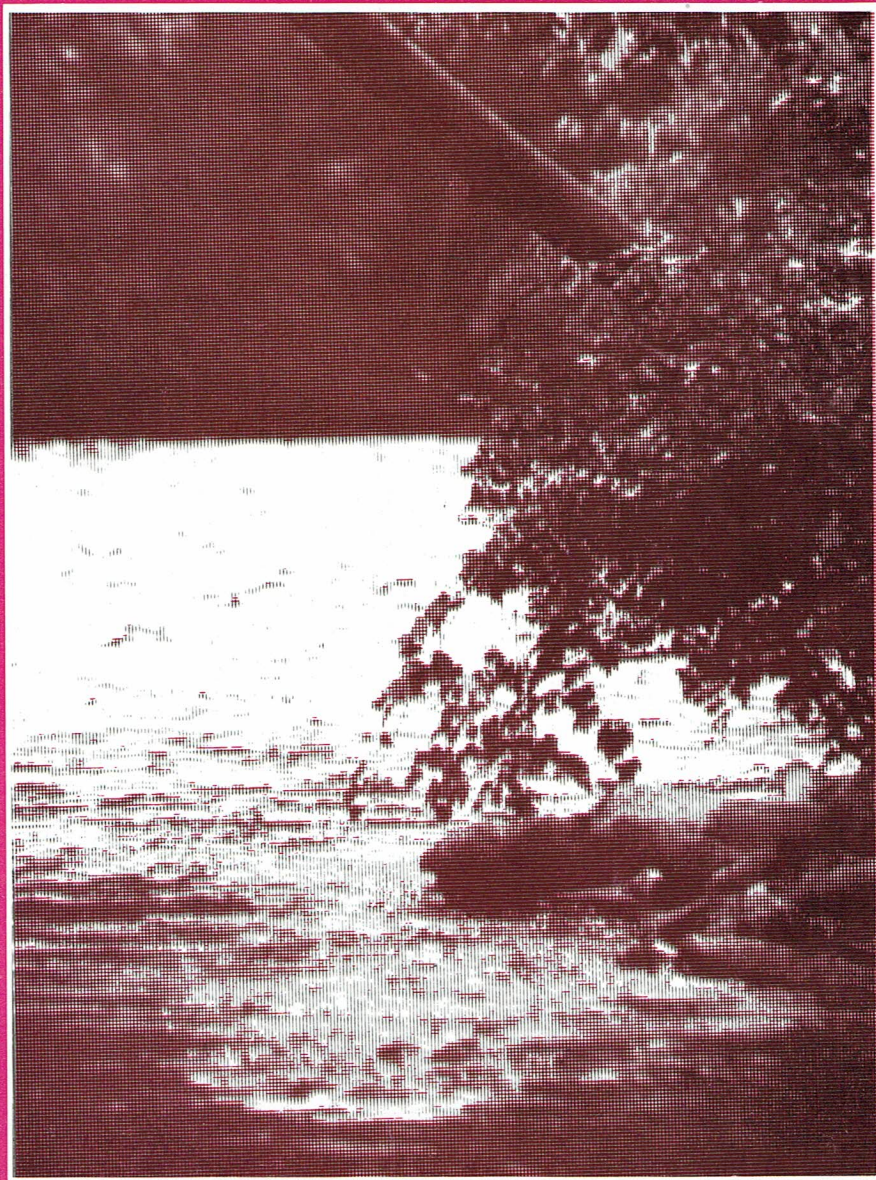


The SABBATH SENTINEL

Serving the Seventh-day Christian Community

AUGUST, 1992



EDITORIAL

Momentous Changes—What Do They Mean?

Twenty-nine years ago, when I was a freshman in college, a president was assassinated. Americans were busy building bomb shelters, and a Soviet leader threatened to bury us. Prophets of the day were preaching the imminent downfall of the U.S. Four years ago, when my son was a freshman in college, we began to witness the breakup of the Soviet Union. By the time my daughter started college last year the Iron Curtain had collapsed and the U.S., by default, had emerged as the only global superpower. And now my son is going to a former Soviet Bloc country (Hungary) to teach English and do missionary work for a year.

Western European countries are striving to become more unified, while practically every ethnic group in eastern Europe is struggling to become more independent. The Czechs and Slovaks seem to be uncoupling without bloodshed, but ethnic groups in Yugoslavia, Moldavia, and elsewhere are realigning their allegiances and their borders with inhumane brutality.

What does it all mean?

Bible students invariably turn to prophecy to make sense of what they see on the landscape of world politics. Right now those who have been seeing a United Europe as a resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire are in the ascendancy; those who saw Soviet domination of the Middle East at the expense of Israel are on the sidelines; and those who saw a declining America—well, they're still seeing it even as our businessmen are busy tapping into vast new consumer markets in eastern Europe, Russia, and China.

But, as we turn to the pages of the Bible to find out what all this means, we need to make sure we are asking the right questions if we expect to get the right answers. Typically we go to Bible prophecy to find out **what** is going to happen and **when**.

Are we asking the right questions?

I submit that the question we should be asking when we study Bible prophecy is **why!** Why does God give prophecy? Does He give it so we can see into the future like astrologers and clairvoyants? Does He give it so we can be prepared and save our physical lives and our property?

The book of Ezekiel is a good case in point. The theme of the book is not "Here's what's going to happen so be prepared." Ezekiel's message was, "Repent of your sins or this is what God will do!" Similarly, the New Testament frequently repeats the warning "Watch!" But watch what? The message is watch yourself that you don't fall into sin! Putting it another way: Keep on repenting! Stay close to God or else!

Bible students will inevitably try to discern predictions of current events in the pages of the Bible. When we try to answer the **who** and **when** and **what next**, we can easily be wrong. But when we seek to answer **why**, we will never be wrong. The **why** is always the same because God's basic desire for all people at all times in all circumstances is that none should perish but that all should come to a knowledge of the truth—which is eternal life through Jesus Christ.

—Richard A. Widenheft

The SABBATH SENTINEL

(USPS 474-580)

Vol. 44, No. 8 August, 1992
Issue No. 424

A Monthly Publication of
The Bible Sabbath Association
RD 1 Box 222 • Fairview, OK 73737

IN THIS ISSUE

The Mysterious 7-day Cycle (Part III)	4
Israel Eckerlin's Last Sermon	13

Plus. . .

Editorial.....	2
News from the 7th-day Community	16
News from the BSA.....	18
Mailbox	19
To Repeat.....	21
Classified Ads.....	22

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

Second class postage paid at Fairview, OK 73737 and Additional Mailing Offices. **Postmaster:** Send change of address to *The Sabbath Sentinel*, RD 1 Box 222, Fairview, OK 73737.

The Bible Sabbath Association is a strictly non-sectarian association dedicated to helping Sabbathkeepers of all persuasions learn about and from one another and to promoting the one commandment that is repudiated by Christendom in general. BSA accepts as members all who acknowledge Jesus Christ as Savior, who regard the Bible as the Word of God, and who uphold the seventh-day Sabbath; it takes no official position on other theological issues.

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Subscription to *The Sabbath Sentinel* only \$12 per year in US; \$14 outside US.

Bulk Subscriptions: Bulk subscriptions are available if 10 or more copies are sent in the same package; \$6 each subscription; \$9 outside US.

Address all correspondence to and make all checks, drafts, and money orders payable to *The Bible Sabbath Association*, RD 1 Box 222, Fairview, OK 73737; phone (405) 227-3200.

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

And now abide
**FAITH,
HOPE, LOVE,**
these three, but the
greatest of these is
LOVE.

The Mysterious 7-Day Cycle

by Kenneth Westby

PART III

Preceding installments presented compelling evidence that a seven-day weekly rhythm actually exists in the building blocks of life. How did this amazing but hidden fact come to light?

The modern science of chronobiology (the study of how living things handle time) teamed with the resolving power of computers recently discovered—much to everyone's surprise—inherent seven-day (circaseptan) cycles in a wide variety of life forms, including us humans.

Clearly then the seven-day cycle is not a cultural or religious invention. Rather, we can now say these four things about the rhythm of seven: 1) it is of "very ancient" biological origin; 2) it is independent from environmental cycles of sun, moon and stars; 3) it is imbedded in all living cells and in short, 4) it is the beat to which all life is tuned.

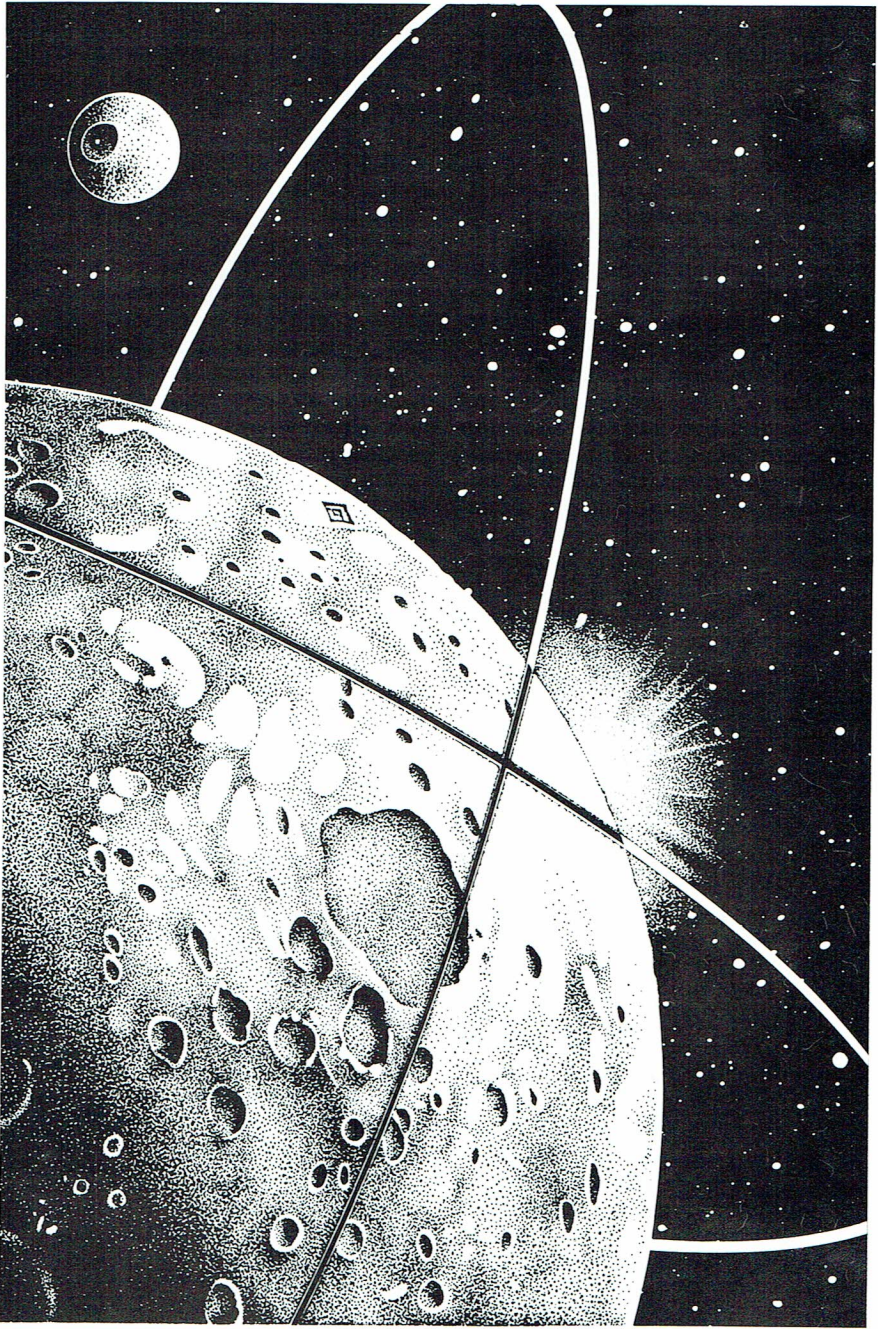
In humans, we found the circaseptan rhythm to be the *key coordinating rhythm* for a complex myriad of cycles, all harmonizing to make up our body clock. The biological base of seven-day cycles (also called heptads or circaseptans) clearly gives this amazing building block priority in time: it existed before culture or religion ever recognized a seven day week in history. Such an intricate, indisputable base and such a fundamental common design require us to reconsider this double question: is there a common beginning, a common designer of all life?

Last issue we suggested that the recently uncovered, stunning evidence of circaseptan rhythms should cause inquiring minds to look for answers in one of mankind's most ancient books—the Bible. This book, as commonly known, claims to be an inspired and direct revelation from an almighty God. But what does it tell us about the Creator's relation to time? Does the Bible say anything regarding timecycles, especially one built on seven (days)? And most importantly, does this revelation say anything about the effect of life rhythms on the most neglected element in human beings: our spirit? Put another way, the Bible reveals God to be Spirit (Gn 1:2; Jn 4:24). Is it logical that the Creator would leave his creatures with no spiritual avenue to reach him?

Time Tells A Story: And A Story Tells Time

When God created mankind he also created time—or did he perhaps connect man to a paced rhythm already a part of his being? Ultimately we cannot know that answer, but we do know the following. The early chapters of Genesis portray the foundational relationships of our world. "In the beginning" the great *Elohim* gave man relationship to himself as Maker, to his mate, to all other living things. God also gave all humans, in their parents Adam and Eve, a relationship to the movement of life and action-time.

Stephen W. Hawking, acclaimed



as the most brilliant theoretical physicist since Einstein, in his work *A Brief History of Time* remarked:

"The concept of time has no meaning before the beginning of the universe. This was first pointed out by St. Augustine. When asked: What did God do before he created the universe? He didn't reply: He was preparing Hell for people who asked such questions. Instead, he said that *time was a property of the universe that God created*, and that time did not exist before the beginning of the universe."¹

Whenever time might have begun, it is inseparably connected to human origins in the creation story. In fact, the story in Gen. 1 is framed within seven daily cycles. The chronology of creation builds each day in this pattern: "evening and morning, day one;" "evening and morning, the second day"². The creation of God's creatures reaches its height with the making of man and woman on the sixth day (v 26-31). The crown and climax of the week, however, is the seventh day when God rests and hallows it as a memorial of all his hands had wrought (the account continues through 2:3 without a break, as commentators recognize). God who made all time now made holy the time of the seventh day.

And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

Later when the Creator established Israel as a nation (Ex. 12-19), he gave his newly redeemed people ten commandments to be the spiritual and moral pillars upon which a national character could be built (Ex. 20). In the middle of that law he thundered from a mountain top was a unique commandment, one which man would have never thought out for himself. "Thou shalt not murder" makes civilized sense, but "rest on the seventh day" is another matter.

Many who honor this great law code themselves assume that its basis must be arbitrary. Let us look carefully at the two versions (statements) of the Ten to see what reasons are given.

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God...For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. (Ex. 20:8-11).

Scripture gives a reason all right, but it is one grounded in the spiritual world: it pictures a divine act in creation itself.

Now Deuteronomy (the name means "second law" or repetition of the law):

Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the Lord your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day (Deut. 5:15).

This time Scripture gives a quite different reason: the people who have the revelation of the Sabbath were saved, delivered-given rest from slavery.

So Scripture presents two important motives behind the Sabbath. But no one, to our knowledge, has ever demonstrated a *physical/scientific reason behind this law*. Based on the brief summaries of a vast body of research given in the previous installments, we can now add a third reason to the two given in Scripture. In the ebb and flow of time, God has engineered-in a cycle of pause points-places to stop from the mechanics of living to consider the purpose of life itself. *The divine design calls for this life-harmonizing pause to occur every seven days.* The Hebrew verb *shabath* means to cease/rest; hence

our name for the seventh day, "Sabbath," actually comes from a Hebrew noun (*shabbath*).

Although the word Sabbath does not mean seven, it has become inextricably bound up the concept of seven - a significant number in the Bible. It will enrich our understanding of the importance of this numeric concept if we quickly trace a few of its uses throughout the Bible.

Sevens, Sevens, and More Sevens

The number seven has special place among numbers used of God in Scriptures. Till now we have had our focus on the seven-day (circaseptan) cycle in living things, on the biblical creation account and on the significance of the seventh-day Sabbath. But the number seven is associated with things and times other than the week.

Seven's place is eminent among "sacred" numbers in scripture. For example: the creation account, and thus the Bible itself, begins with seven Hebrew words which contain a total of 28 (4x7) letters in those seven words (Gen. 1:1). The New Testament also opens with seven words introducing the genealogy of Christ (Mt. 1:1). Beyond those beginnings, seven is typically associated with acts of completion, fulfillment and perfection throughout Scripture.

The rhythm of seven is a pattern for even greater blocks of time. We find a sabbatical year cycle of letting the land rest every seven years;³ and there was a year of jubilee, which followed seven times seven years (the fiftieth year).⁴ There were seven sacred days on the calendar God gave Israel. The Feast of Unleavened Bread in the spring and the Feast of Tabernacles in the fall each lasted seven days.⁵ The Feasts of Trumpets arrives on the first day of the seventh month - which also marks a beginning to the civil year and is believed to be the day of the month when creation began.⁶ A congregation of

annual holidays appears in the seventh month - the Day of Atonement, Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day, each bringing clear pictures of the coming Messianic age.⁷

Old Testament worship ritual often came in sevens: the sprinkling of bullock's blood seven times and the burnt offering of seven lambs; the cleansed leper was sprinkled seven times.⁸ Diseased General Naaman was told by Elisha to dip in the Jordan river seven times to be cleansed of his leprosy.⁹ The priests encompassed Jericho seven times, Elijah's servant looked for rain from God seven times.¹⁰

In the New Testament Jesus fed the four thousand from seven loaves of bread and a few fishes, the seven basketfuls collected afterward may teach us that Christ can satisfy our hunger.¹¹ He sent seventy disciples out to evangelize - symbolically all mankind was viewed as being comprised of seventy nations.¹² Revelation, the great book of future events, is full of sevens. There are seven churches; seven golden candlesticks; seven stars; seven angels; seven lamps of fire; seven spirits of God; a book of seven seals; a lamb with seven horns and seven eyes; seven angels with seven trumpets; a dragon and a beast with seven heads; seven last plagues; and seven golden bowls full of the final wrath of God.

The prophet Daniel was told the Messiah would arrive after "seventy 'sevens'"¹³ and in the first chapter of Matthew the genealogy of Jesus is organized into three groups of fourteen (2x7) generations.

Scripture highlights other "sacred numbers" each having special symbolic meaning, but seven seems to rise above them all as *the rhythmic action of a living God in the affairs of man*. From creation, to a call to pause and worship, to the plan of God in prophecy we find a rhythm of seven as if a fingerprint, a calling card of God.

An Oasis In Time

Billy Graham once summed up the two things he believed mankind needed most to know: 1) The nature of the One who created and orders the universe; and, 2) The nature of man himself. He is correct, of course, and this needed knowledge is at the center of all truth.

At the very center of the ten commandments, Yahweh ("the Lord") our God placed a unique seventh day rest law, forever enshrining in time and symbol the core truth that he is our personal Creator and Savior/Redeemer. This is the "holiness" of the Sabbath—a remembrance and a personal reaction to the primal fact that we were made by God "after his image" for a divine purpose.

And what is that divine purpose? The Creator's purpose makes plain man's proneness to evil, his lack of virtue, his mortality. . . the divine purpose also provides a graceful solution, a way of deliverance from evil and death, and, most importantly, the divine purpose leads to eternal life as brothers and sisters of Christ, sons and daughters in the immortal image of God (Heb. 2; Jn. 10:34; Rom. 8).

Just as chronobiology has discovered the harmonizing power of the seven-day (circaseptan) cycle to keep our bodies in sync—homeostasis, or equilibrium—the seventh-day Sabbath was given to keep us spiritually and morally in sync with ourselves, our Maker and his divine plan for us.

Desmond Ford in his book *The Forgotten Day* notes: "The Sabbath, by putting all things in true perspective, meets that need of the soul to worship and adore the highest good. The distinction between Creator and creature is marked out by creation's memorial, and weekly the reminder is afforded that none of the things made are adequate to satisfy the human spirit, and therefore they should never receive first place in the soul's adoration."¹⁴

The Sabbath serves as an oasis in time—given to refresh and nourish us on our journey through life.

This truth is supremely important; it is why God calls this time holy. Only the Sabbath commandment begins with the word "remember." This most critical knowledge under heaven is enshrined in the call to "remember"—remember that there is a living God; that we are made in his image with great purpose; that he is a loving God who has given us a beautiful earth to enjoy; and as a Father he gives us guidance in how to live upon it. And remember that he has the power to deliver us from the captivity of sin and death, to create in us a new heart, a new character, and to give us life eternal in the never ending Kingdom of God.

Can we now grasp why God made the seventh day holy and included in the great moral/ethical package he delivered from Mt. Sinai? Seen from this perspective, is it any wonder that the Son of God would say "the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (Mk. 2:27)?

Ford offers a mini-sermon that God may have delivered to humanity's first parents. "It is as though God had said to Adam after his creation on the sixth day, 'Adam, behold this wonderful world—full of objects animate and inanimate which call for admiration; but beware—none of them, nor all of them, can satisfy you, not even Eve. You were made for me, your heart can find rest only in me, its source; therefore let us spend your first whole day together as a pattern for your life hereafter.'"

"At that juncture God ushered in sacred time with the glory of the first sunset Adam had ever seen. What a wonderful time that first whole day of existence must have been for Adam and Eve! They walked and talked with their Maker and found in him their fountain of joy and their source of truth and strength. That first Sab-

bath was God's acted-out invitation to all men to find their rest in him."¹⁵

God has invited his creation to pause with him every seventh day for a walk in the cool of his garden. To commune with him and enjoy the nourishing fruit and clear water of his special oasis. Refreshed and in harmony, we then set forth for another six days of work, achievement and accomplishment.

Harmony vs Disharmony: What Our Modern World Has Lost

Mysteriously, the profound meaning of a seven-day weekly cycle and of a holy Sabbath are lost to our present world culture. The human suffering that flows from the loss of this primal knowledge is beyond calculation!

Instead of a world full of the knowledge of the Eternal,¹⁶ in worship, harmony and rest with him every seventh day, we have a world writhing in unrest and disharmony. We have a world that is characterized by its ignorance of God - its pain and tears catalogued by a list of the commandments of God it wantonly or ignorantly breaks. This is the price paid for turning backs to God and his revelation.

The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them.

For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities - his eternal power and divine nature - have been clearly seen, so that men are without excuse. ...Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. ...They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator --

who is forever praised (Rom. 1:18-26.)

In our "savvy" age exchanging the truth about creation for a lie has been made quite respectable through the pseudo-science of evolution. It functions, however, as an intellectual idol just as effectively as wood totems did in past cultures - a natural, earthly substitute for the Holy Creator God.

Often it seems easier, less threatening and more free for man to look inward to find a god. Man even fancies to make himself a god; to be his own lawgiver, his own maker, to make himself the sum of all things. Through a variety of philosophies he attempts to divine-up power, invent a purpose, discover a destiny and even pursue immortality.

If mankind looks outward (instead of inward or upward), another "goddess" offers herself. The modern goddess Evolution sits secure upon her throne in the temples of academia. Worshipped as the force "mother nature," evolution creates through the miracles of mutation, chaos, confusion and blind chance. It creates by some unknown, unprovable and unobservable laws of disharmony which "miraculously" produce a universe of design and ordered life.

What great faith is required of evolutionists to explain creation. What devotion to storied theory! What belief! No longer need they look in churches for the prime examples of superstitious faith.

But mankind does not live in a vacuum. Man's refusal to "remember" who the Creator is has set in motion a flow of thoughts and actions which in time destructively erupts into a variety of plagues. These ever present negatives that characterize the "human condition," that rob a race of its peace and happiness, are a woeful testimony that something is missing.

When we humans reject God's wise instructions on how to live on his

earth, we are doomed to march to another beat. We are resigned to learn from short term experience as we stumble along in moral and spiritual darkness. We are out of sync with our God and as a result, are out of harmony with ourselves and our environment.

By turning our backs on the majestic God and his revelation of the awesome program for his created sons and daughters, we have spun out of sync with God. We have reduced our horizon from an omnipotent, limitless God to a mortal man groping along in the continual accident of evolution. "Evolutionary" man, if such we are, has gotten out of rhythm with life itself.

A Weekly Trip To Eden

A key control to keep humankind in harmony with the created order and with the Creator/Savior himself is the Sabbath institution. It isn't, by any means, the sole path to discovering God and his plan, but it has that as its prime purpose.

Here is how the biblical "circaseptan" could operate to accomplish a harmonizing rhythm between man and God. At the national societal level, a day of rest requires intellectual, philosophical, legal and moral commitment to its institution. Commercial and social affairs would be integrated into a six-day work, seventh-day rest cycle. The Sabbath would be used by society for physical rest and relaxation, for family and social bonding, for biblical teaching, for meditation and spiritual renewal.

At the personal level, a Sabbath would provide an organizing principle for daily life. God's seven-day cycle, (the biblical heptad) would become our cycle and thus our schedules, plans, and affairs would all be influenced by it. Rather than attempting to fit the things of God into our too busy world, we would instead, with purpose, be engaged in fitting our lives into the plan and rhythm of our

Creator. Now that we know of the biological base, the circaseptan of life, this would truly be "getting in to the flow" of power, in tune with the pulse of God's universe.

Of course, mere outward adoption of a seventh-day rest cycle for a nation or an individual without real intellectual and heart involvement would yield only limited benefits. Without sincere spiritual involvement, a Sabbath institution would become in time an ossified relic of history, a cultural tradition. It would sink to a symbol devoid of message and power -- a one dimensional day like any other day of the week.

Witness how the Sabbath day impacts the average Jew in modern Israel today. Except for a few radical legalists, it is a secular day of nationalistic identity borrowed from the religious roots of an ancient past. Witness also how little the Western world is influenced by its substitute Sabbath -- Sunday.¹⁷ It's good to stamp our money "In God We Trust," but the power of the phrase is unlocked only when an individual or nation truly trusts in the living God.

Symbols can only point to the power, to the knowledge, to the message that stand behind them. In the case of the seventh day, we've been given a symbol of time, a rhythmic sign of time in unstoppable motion. We have in this day a symbol, which if examined, pondered and tasted, would tell us of creation and of the nature of the Creator himself. It would tell us of our salvation, of our future and of our eternity.

The seventh-day Sabbath also offers us a perfect picture of the soon-coming Kingdom of God, his Millennium of rest and peace on earth. Utopia follows the age of man that has ended in futile work, much suffering and many, many wars. The millennial sabbath is a welcome relief coming as it does with the return of the Creator and Savior himself, Jesus

Christ. He ushers in a new Garden of Eden that envelops the entire earth. He cleans the environment, and with his saints rebuilds a beautiful world --as it has always been his plan to do. And once again, like Eden, God will walk with his people in the cool of the day. He invites us to enter that rest with him.

Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. ...For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in these words: "And on the seventh day God rested from all his work." ..There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his.

Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience (Heb. 4:1-11).

But if not pondered, if not entered, the Sabbath remains an unlocked symbol - its benefits limited, its great message unpublished.

Time To Get In Time With God

Physicists labor to measure the rhythms, movements, orbits and energy of stars and galaxies in the hope of seeing back in time to the very origins of the universe - to its creation, the "big bang". Astronomers look heavenward with ever deepening penetration, searching to find clues to when and how the universe was created. Steven Hawking has this insight:

With the success of scientific theories in describing events, most people have come to believe that God allows the universe to evolve according to a set of laws and does not intervene in the universe to break these laws. However, the laws do not tell us what the universe should have looked like when it started - it would still be up to God to wind up the clockwork and choose how to start it off. So long as the universe

had a beginning, we could suppose it had a creator.¹⁸

God did "wind up the clockwork" leaving his fingerprints all over the clock. The new science of chronobiology has had some of science's most impressive successes in *seeing back to creation* with its discovery of "primitive origins" to the seven-day cycle found in human cells and other life forms.

God somehow coded into the infinite complexities of physical life a clock that ticks to the time of a seven-day rhythm. Of course we humans have no control over these innate circaseptan rhythms. Therefore, we benefit best by simply living in sympathetic harmony with them. More importantly, the seven-day cycle in physical nature points beyond temporal reality to a far greater spiritual reality.

God, with masterful design, uses time itself and a seventh day rest to call his creation to pause and listen - a call that touches the very heart of human potential. He has a message which explains why we were created and for what purpose. His words are so majestic, so exciting, so unbelievable, so beyond our mundane world that they could only be comprehended

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as coming from God himself. His message dispels ignorance, solves life's grand mysteries, and offers a future almost too beautiful to be true.

His personal message introduces himself as our creator; he gives us dignity and a special relationship to himself by declaring we have been made in his image, he then offers to save us into an eternity with him -- if we but follow him. He invites us to join him on his journey, to walk with him, to talk with him, to learn from him, to even rule with him. How could we refuse such an invitation?

The mystery of the seven-day cycle was never intended to be a mystery, but a call from the Creator to get in harmony, in sync, with him. It is high time we get in step with God.

1. Stephen W. Hawking, *A Brief History of Time* (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1988), p. 8, emphasis ours.
2. Note the important switch from "one" to "second;" see commentaries.
3. Lev. 25:2-6.
4. Lev. 25:8.
5. Exo. 12:15, 19; Num. 29:12.
6. Lev. 23:23-25.
7. Lev. 16; 23; Zech. 14:16.
8. Lev. 4:6; Num. 28:11; Lev. 14:7.
9. 2 Kings 5:10.
10. Josh. 6:4; 1 Kings 18:43.

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11. Mark 8:1-9.
12. Luke 10; Gen. 10:1.
13. Dan. 9:24-27.
14. Desmond Ford, *The Forgotten Day*, (Newcastle, CA: Desmond Ford Publications, 1981) p. 7.
15. Ibid.
16. Isaiah 11:9; 66:22-23.
17. For a historical investigation into how early Christianity -- not Christ or the Apostles -- replaced a Saturday Sabbath (the seventh-day) with a Sunday "Sabbath" (the first day of the week) see Samuele Bacchiocchi's excellent work *From Sabbath to Sunday*, (Rome: The Pontifical Gregorian University Press, 1977).
18. Hawking, p. 140-141, emphasis ours. —Reprinted from the Feb/Mar, 1991 newsletter of the Association For Christian Development, 4449 S. Star Lake Rd., Auburn, WA 98001. The author serves as director of ACD.

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Editor for *The Sabbath Sentinel*

Will have overall responsibility for the publication of the magazine each month. Duties include preparing all copy so it is ready for typesetting and layout; handling correspondence relating to the publication; interacting and communicating with Sabbathkeepers of many different persuasions, reading many Sabbathkeeping periodicals and keeping up on people and events. Relocation not necessary; work may be done from your home or office. Knowledge of and access to desktop publishing equipment helpful.

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Part Time Position

Israel Eckerlin's Last Sermon

by Thomas McElwain

A few years ago I took a number of my students from the university on a field trip to America. Since I was teaching comparative religion, I made a point of showing them places of religious interest. One of these was Ephrata Cloisters.

I had never been to Ephrata before. While telling the young people what I knew about its history and the spiritual tradition it represented, I suddenly found that I had convinced myself of its exceptional value.

Some days later I was telling my grandmother about the place. She was also interested, because it reminded her of some things she remembered her father telling. Her father was a Mellungeon, as such people used to be called, descended from native Americans and some of the earliest Europeans who wandered beyond the bounds of the colonies. He attended the Roanoke Seventh Day Baptist Church. He remembered that his grandparents used to count the days to the Sabbath by making seven notches in a stick. He himself knew some Psalms by heart in German that he had learned from them.

Later I learned that the Eckerlins from Ephrata had lived in the area among the Delaware Indians around the year 1754. They had not been there long before the French instigated a massacre of their humble cloisters. But apparently they were there long enough to inspire and teach some Delaware Indians to observe the Sabbath. Five generations later one of their descendants found his way to a Seventh Day Baptist church. I am the eighth generation since Israel Eckerlin baptized a Delaware Indian and gave him a new vision.

I have tried to imagine what could possibly impress those "simple savages" so much that they would go to the trouble to keep track of the

Sabbath by making notches in sticks for several generations. After much thought and study, I believe I know.

Western civilization promotes rank, wealth, education and the ability to influence people. These things give an individual status. But most eastern woodland Indians, like other native Americans, respect above all things vision. If one lone Indian sees a great vision, it is likely that a number of people will gather about that vision and a so-called medicine society will form.

Nothing could impress an Indian more than the story of a vision that came not to one lone Indian, but to a whole group of people. When Israel Eckerlin told about the giving of the ten commandments and the baptism of Jesus, basic texts for the Sabbath and baptism, those people must have been impressed that God spoke so that all could hear. They treasured up those visions and gave them as a priceless inheritance to their children and children's children.

I am one of those children's children's children. And although times have changed, new languages have come, and old ways have disappeared, those two great visions remain. They are my daily food for contemplation. So the songs of that medicine society of long ago still have power today. They turn the mind and life away from the competitive world of selfish gain and temper the soul with the quiet strength of Sabbath faith, the touch of eternity and the taste of heaven.

Reprinted from *Church News*, Jan., 1989, published by the Snow Hill Society of German Seventh Day Baptists. The author, who earned his doctorate at the University of Stockholm, served until recently as an SDB missionary in Finland.

New and Revised!

Roman Catholic and Protestant Confessions about Sunday

This recently printed booklet combines our two popular tracts of confessions about the true origin of Sundaykeeping. Citing eleven Catholic and seventeen Protestant sources, this booklet provides direct quotations that frankly admit there is no Biblical authority for Sunday observance. It is a great resource for opening the eyes of people who think the Sunday tradition is based on Bible teaching.

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An old photo of a billboard, erected while the headquarters of BSA was still in Pamoma Park, Florida. The back of the photo bears the name and address of O. A. Davis of Phoenix, Arizona. His name is also at the top of the sign. While the photo isn't dated, it was probably taken in the early 50's.

Resources Available From BSA

Books

<i>The Sabbath in the New Testament</i> by Samuele Bacchiocchi (275 pp.)	\$10
<i>From Sabbath to Sunday</i> by Samuele Bacchiocchi (372 pp.)	\$10
<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¢

Directory of Sabbath-observing Groups

Sixth Edition, 1986, only	\$5
Supplement, 1989, only	\$2
Sixth Edition and Supplement	\$7

<i>Sabbath at Sommerhase</i> Story and Lesson Book (128 pp.)	\$7 ea.; \$5 ea. for 6 or more
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(for bulk orders, add 10% of total for postage and handling)	

Back Issues of *The Sabbath Sentinel* (when available) 10 for \$3; 30 for \$5

Booklets

<i>Why the Seventh-day Sabbath?</i> (12 pp.)	20¢ ea.; \$17/100
<i>Roman Catholic and Protestant Confessions About Sunday</i> (12 pp.)	20¢; \$17/100
<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
<i>Questions for Seventh Dayists Answered</i> by T. Littrell (18 pp.)	Out of stock
<i>Has Sabbath Time Been Lost?</i> by Joseph M. McGuire (10 pp.)	Out of stock

Tracts

<i>The Rest of Your Life</i> (2 p.)	10¢ ea.; \$8/100
<i>Whatever Happened to the Sabbath?</i> (2 p.)	10¢ ea.; \$8/100

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NEWS

NEWS FROM THE SEVENTH-DAY COMMUNITY



Church Group Launches Periodical

The Joint Church of God Fellowship, twelve Sabbathkeeping churches that have "banded together for fellowship for 13 years" announces the premier issue of the JCGF News. According to editor David Brooks of Columbus, Ohio, the periodical is a quarterly pictorial news forum for the member congregations, which are located mostly in the northeastern U.S. and eastern Canada. He writes, "there are great news events happening within our churches throughout the U.S. and abroad. This news...is shared through detailed testimonies and inspirational stories." He continues, "This publication is also a forum for

the saints to get to know one another personally and become aware of our multi-faceted ministries." The JCGF News is distributed through congregations which receive bulk subscriptions of 200 or more. These are distributed to members who each mail five to ten copies to friends or relatives. In May the JCGF held their annual weekend convention in Baltimore; some 700 people attended.

Worldwide Church Update

Under the leadership of Joseph W. Tkach the Worldwide Church of God (WCG) continues to move away from many of the teachings of its founder, the late Herbert W. Armstrong. Many of Armstrong's works are no longer being distributed. Shortly after U.S. victory in the Gulf War, in the March 25, 1991, co-worker letter, Tkach wrote, "Many long-time members and co-workers will remember that there was a time when we were preaching based on our interpretation of Bible prophecy that 'America has won her last war!' We were sincere.... But brethren, we were wrong—not about the need to turn to God, certainly—but about using specific prophetic interpretations as the means of getting people to do so. What is the gospel? The gospel is the good news of the Kingdom of God, that is, the redemption of humanity, the reconciliation of all mankind to God from its state of alienation from him (Luke 4:18-19). That reconciliation is possible only through the Son of God, Jesus Christ...."

As the WCG becomes more moder-

ate, and, in the opinion of some observers, seeks to be accepted by mainstream Evangelicals, conservative elements in the church are breaking away. Discontented with the WCG's abandonment of what they believe is the truth God revealed to Herbert Armstrong, a number of ministers and members have left the organization in recent months and years. Gerald Flurry of Edmund, Oklahoma, leads The Philadelphia Church of God, which publishes *The Philadelphia Trumpet*. It and various booklets, modeled on WCG publications, decry the changes Tkach is making and uphold the writings of Armstrong. According to the June, 1992, issue of *Ambassador Report*, John Rittenbaugh of North Carolina "...recently exited with five local elders and about 200 members. He now has congregations in Charlotte, Washington, D.C., Anaheim, Calif., and Chicago, Ill.

At the same time, the church faces declines in other areas. Church income, reported to be over \$211 million in 1990, has been dropping the last several years. Circulation of *The Plain Truth* has declined from over 8 million to under 2.7 million.

1962 Quartet Reunion Tour

The King's Heralds quartet of 1962 is together again during the summer

of 1992, traveling to 11 Adventist summer camp meetings with Voice of Prophecy speakers H.M.S. Richards, Jr., and Lonnie Melashenko. The group includes Bob Edwards, first tenor for the King's Heralds for 24 years and then VOP writer and producer for another 19 years; John Thurber, second tenor for six years, now a field representative for VOP, Wayne Hooper, baritone for 18 years, and Jerry Dill, bass for 15 years.

Vindication & Wedding

Several years ago an Australian Adventist minister and his wife, Michael and Lindy Chamberlain, were convicted in the disappearance of their 9 week-old daughter, Azaria. Now divorced, the couple maintained that a wild dog had dragged their daughter away from their campsite in the outback. Originally convicted of murder, Mrs. Chamberlain was released from prison in 1986 when the infant's jacket, missing from the time of the child's disappearance, was found. In 1988 the Chamberlain's convictions were thrown out by the court, and they received compensation payments. Their story was the basis of the movie "A Cry in the Dark." Mrs. Chamberlain plans to marry Rick Creighton, a Seattle businessman, whom she met on a U.S. speaking tour in February.

Who Gets It?

What becomes of your estate if you die without a will?

The state will decide according to a formula fixed by law. Your loved ones will not necessarily be taken care of as you would want. So regardless of how old you are, you owe it to those you care about to have a valid will. When you make your will, remember that The Bible Sabbath Association deeply appreciates bequests and puts them to careful use.

If you would like further information about making a will, please write:

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Fairview, Oklahoma 73737

BSA

NEWS FROM THE BSA

Editor Visits Howard Mesick

During June my wife and I had the opportunity to stop at Christiana Hospital in New Castle, Delaware, to see TSS department editor Howard Mesick, who suffered a massive stroke last fall. Unfortunately (for us), he was sleeping very soundly after an exhausting day of therapy that involved some walking. When our gentle nudges and verbal greetings failed to awaken him, we contented ourselves with a time of silent fellowship and a prayer for God's miraculous intervention on behalf of this worker for the Kingdom. Please continue to pray for him, his wife, Cathy, their daughter Catherine, (who will attend Susquehanna University in Selingsgrove, Penna., this fall), and their son, Howie. Cards may be sent to Howard at RD 1 Box 299-1, Hartly, DE 19953.

Search for New Editor Continues

Resumes and phone inquiries continue to be received by the current editor and by your association president, Eugene Lincoln. Several qualified individuals are being seriously considered as we prepare for the next phase of the process—telephone interviews with the candidates. Please continue to pray for God's guidance in the choice of a new editor.

Editor's Son to Teach in Hungary

Recently graduated from Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Penna., where he served as president of the Intersarsity Christian Fellowship

Chapter, Richard D. (son of Richard A.) Wiedenheft has chosen to spend the next year teaching English in Hungary under the auspices of Educational Services International. ESI trains Christians in cross-cultural ministry and places them in jobs in foreign countries. While officially Richard D. will be employed by the Hungarian government teaching English to high school students, in his spare time he will be serving as a missionary—sharing the Gospel and ministering to the people of Hungary, many of whom are very hungry for spiritual food. We invite you to pray for him during the next year. Hopefully, he will be able to make contacts with Sabbathkeepers in central Europe.

Take BSA to Fall Festivals

If you would like to have some BSA literature for distribution at fall festivals, now is the time to contact us. We can provide you with a supply of BSA brochures and some literature for distribution as free samples. Other materials are available on a consignment basis.

Your Support Welcomed

Literature is our primary means of sharing the truth of the Sabbath. As we continually work to provide the best possible materials, we thank all who use BSA literature in reaching out to others; we thank all who share in this ministry through prayers, donations, and encouragement; and we welcome your continuing support.

MAILBOX

LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

Opposite View

In the March '92 issue of TSS, (p. 20), was a commentary by Ed Ozalas on the school voucher system. I found the comments to be offensive to your readers' intelligence and strange in that he primarily rails against religious or parochial schools utilizing those vouchers.

I noticed he neglected to mention just what a voucher does. Simply stated, money going to a public school would be diverted to a private school when a child begins to attend a private school.

Why is Mr. Ozalas so worried about money going to religious oriented schools? Why does he speak in the same tones as the American Atheist movement in this regard? Witness his own words: "We must...keep the door between church and state bolted." All semblance of prayer has been banned in public schools due to similar liberalistic and atheistic pressures on a free-wheeling liberal congress.

I think Mr. Ozalas needs to read some American history and the Constitution a bit closer before he blurts out statements as, "Allowing our government to become involved, in any manner, with our churches goes against the very premise that this country was founded on." Not so. Let me quote the First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..." The founding fathers indeed expected religion to be part of our government.

Is Mr. Ozalas aware that we now subsidize the tobacco industry, pornographic arts, birth control type abortions, and the distribution of condoms to grade school children? Why

don't we teach moral values of abstinence, especially relative to AIDS?

Our public school systems overall have broken down. In place of morality, they teach unprovable, godless, materialistic evolution and give sex instructions without sexual responsibility. Because we have abandoned God in this land and in our schools, we are reaping the natural results.

Yes, Mr. Ozalas, our biggest enemy is apathy, and yes, if we sit by we may lose our freedoms. But doing it your way will not preserve freedoms. We've already lost the freedom to teach good morals, righteousness, kindness, mercy, God's love and much more.

Why don't we give morality a boost in this country for a change?

F. Paul Haney
Watertown, Connecticut

On Being Open Minded

(Editor's note: the following is in response to the editorial which appeared in TSS, April '92, p. 2.)

Your job has made you wishy-washy. Either the Sabbath is right or it is wrong. Either the Festivals are God's worship system or they are not.

Let God be true though every man be found to be a liar. All you can depend on is the unchangeableness of God. We change, we grow, we learn, but He is constantly Truth. With Him there is no variableness or shadow of turning.

All these religions can't be right. There is only one Lord, one doctrine (Isaiah 28:9-10). All these Sabbath-keepers are right on the day or worship, but when they disagree on so many other things, then they cannot all be right. Jesus Christ is right. His

word is right.

When men say things that contradict the clear word of God, they, not He, are wrong. You can tell them on the authority of the Scripture that they are wrong. You don't need to be shy or afraid, God will back up His word.

Quit being a politician, you serve the Lord Christ don't you? Remember, you don't have to be "open minded", you have to be grounded in God's truth, the Bible. My mind is made up. God's word is truth, the whole truth.

To debate over God's word is just a work of the flesh, and will only prove who is the better debator. My feeling is, don't debate, don't condemn. Be grounded in the truth, be a light to the world and pray Thy Kingdom come.

Ruth Phillips
Lakewood, Ohio

Overseas Discovery

I am deeply interested in the study of the Sabbath vs. Sunday question. I am collecting literature dealing with the different aspects of this problem.

I learned about the existence of TSS in the book "The Sabbath in Scripture and History" by K. A. Strand. I discovered your address in *Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory* at the library of the Institute Catholique in Paris.

Yvan Andrieu
Herblay, France

Built Upon A Rock

I read the April '92, Mailbox section with great interest. This department of TSS is one of the best features of the magazine.

The point that I'd like to make is that Curtis Blank made constant reference to Holy Scripture and William Ritz made none. This shows me the foundation of each of these persons. A house built upon a rock withstands the storm (Matt. 7:24-25).

The editorial in the same issue was also very soul searching and follows

in this same vein of thought.

Richard John Herring
Dubuque, Iowa

The Real Goods

I congratulate you on the editorial "If You Were Wrong, Would You Want To Know It?" (April '92). It is an exceptional message, succinctly expressed. It should be in tract form.

You and I differ on several doctrinal views, but I sense a mutual approach to confrontations. The current 'conviction or culture' should be unsettling to many of our 'good, established-in-the-faith' fellows.

Years ago, a local Catholic priest, in conversation with protestant Ellery Burdick said, "If I were to change, my mother would be ashamed of me, and if you were to change, your mother would be ashamed of you." Both these persons have passed away long ago.

I want the real goods. I'll never be straightened out completely on doctrines, but that's alright. I have an eager, seeking attitude, in awe of a loving creator, and trust in His ongoing purification of myself.

Ira Bond
Nortonville, Kansas

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TO REPEAT

SIGNIFICANT STATEMENTS BY OR ABOUT SABBATHKEEPERS

Many people do not understand that the keeping of the law of Yahweh constitutes a prerequisite for receiving the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:32, John 14). This law-keeping removes someone from sin. We have the option of either keeping the law or sinning. There is no middle ground. There is no in between - no gray area. Then after Yahweh has given the Holy Spirit in the Messiah's name for obedience, fruits will result in the life of the believer. Those fruits are meant to portray the kingdom way of life.

"The Seven Lamps of Yahweh," *The Sacred Name Broadcaster*,
May, 1992

The kingdom of God is the family of GOD. And who is the head of the family? Christ? Of course not! The Father is the head of the family. ...This is the heart of the gospel! The Father is the central figure, but the WCG (Worldwide Church of God) has relegated him to a lower status. That is why the WCG has moved away from God's true Gospel and now preaches "another gospel." The Gospel, or "good news," reveals that God is about to intervene directly in this world's affairs so He can rule and usher in the glorious World Tomorrow.

"Worldwide Church of God Doctrinal Changes and Tragic Results"
by Gerald Flurry, Philadelphia Church of God, 1992

Before the sinner accepts Christ as his Savior, he too is a Barabbas - a "son of the Father." He may have renounced sonship, but the Father still seeks anxiously for his return home, even though his misdeeds have earned him a sentence of death (Rom. 6:23). As Peter states it, the Father is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).... By confessing our sins and accepting (Christ) as our Savior, we are adopted into His family (Gal. 4:4-5). The sentence of death that we deserve has been carried out on Someone else. Who was Barabbas? He was you and I.

"Barabbas: Son of the Father" by Eugene Lincoln, *Bible Advocate*,
April, 1992

God is interested in you. He cares for you and wants a close relationship with you, but there is something in the way. It is sin. Sin keeps you from enjoying the life God has planned for you. Instead, sin brings sorrow and eventually leads to the destruction of the soul.... God is waiting and willing to forgive you. Admitting that you've sinned, however, can be difficult if your pride is in the way. You will have to humble yourself.

"You Who Seek God". *Bible Advocate*, May, 1992

Paul states: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men" (Titus) 2:11). How has that grace appeared to all men? It is visible to all men by the example of our lives. So let's be sure we are all striving to be living the Christian life as outlined in the epistle of Paul to Titus.

"Titus Part Two: Principles for Christian Living" by Dennis Leap,
The Philadelphia Trumpet, June, 1992

ADS

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"He that committeth sin is of the devil" (1 John 3:8). Write for free booklet: "What Does It Mean to Commit Sin?" Your salvation depends on knowing the answer to that question. Fighters for Truth, Box 1165, Walport, OR 97394. (4-8)

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