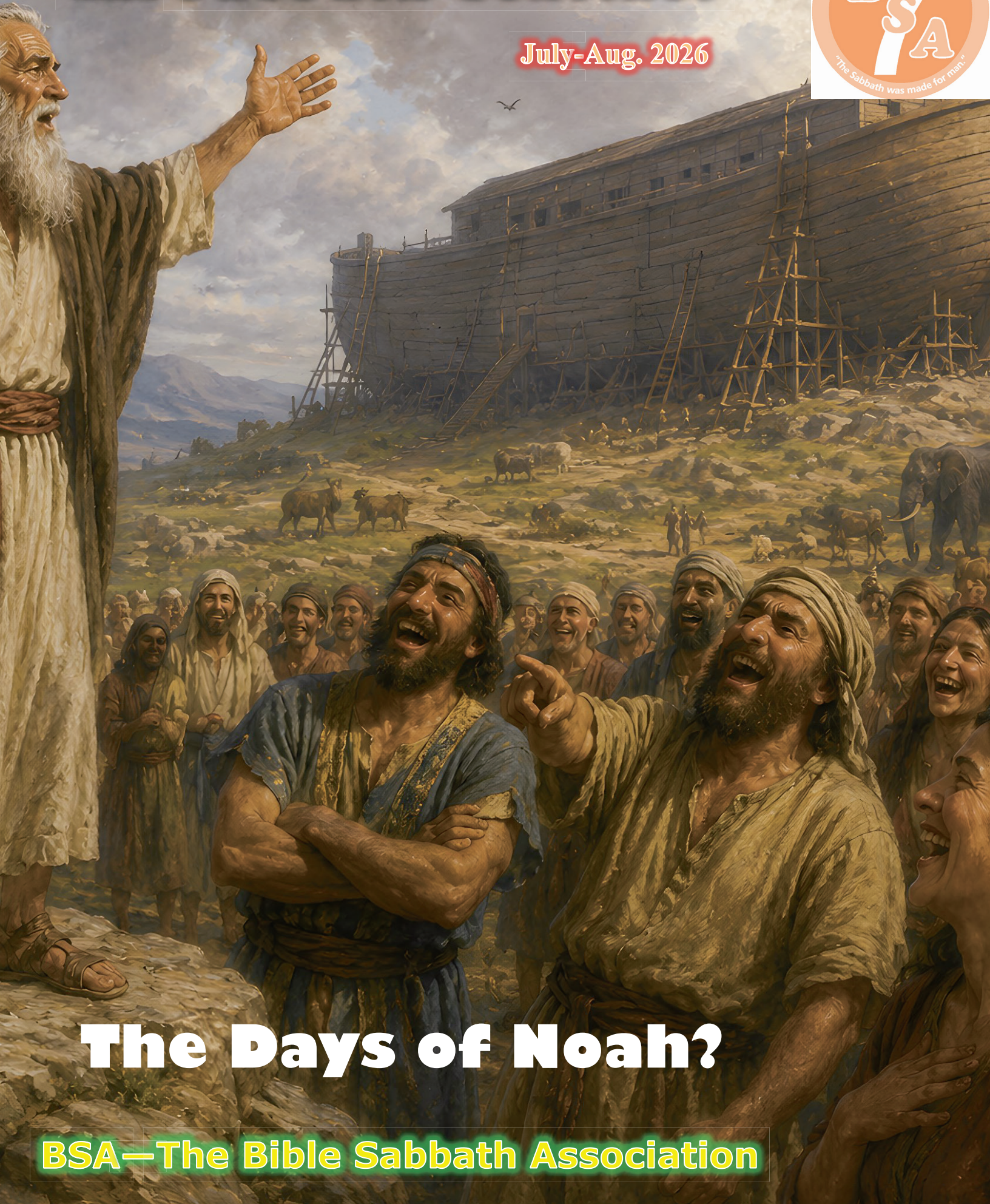


The Sabbath Sentinel

July-Aug. 2026



The Days of Noah?

BSA—The Bible Sabbath Association

The Sabbath Sentinel July-August, 2026

Volume 80, No. 4, Issue 639

FEATURES

3 President's Corner—"Are These Days Like the Days of Noah?"

by Dr. Royce Mitchell

6 "EEOC Brings Lawsuit Against Chick-Fil-A Over the Sabbath"

by Sabbath Keepers Making a Difference

7 "A Prophet's Lament"

by Dorothy Nimchuk

9 "The Sabbath Done Away? In No Way!"

by Paul W. Syltie

11 "Like A Fruitful Vine"

by Sharon Darling

14 "Bibles, Bibles and More Bibles"

by DJ Wellington

15 "Acts 20:17"

by Daniel Botkin

18 "Modern Church Fantasies"

by Darl Arbogast

19 "The Coming Apocalypse"

by Tommy Willis

22 "Why It Takes the Blood of Jesus"

by Mark Carter

Cover photo courtesy of visor.ai.

Please come visit us on our Facebook

page which is located at: [https://](https://www.facebook.com/groups/biblesabbathassociation)

www.facebook.com/groups/biblesabbathassociation

and www.facebook.com/SabbathSentinel.

Don't forget to LIKE us!

If you'd like more information on the Sabbath

Day, please visit

www.biblesabbath.org.

Also, visit our new blog at:

www.sabbathsentinel.org!



The Sabbath Sentinel is published bimonthly by The Bible Sabbath Association, PO Box 372, Stevens Point, WI 54481. Copyright © 2025 by the Bible Sabbath Association (BSA). Printed in the U.S.A. All rights reserved. Reproduction in any form without written permission is prohibited except as noted below. Nonprofit bulk rate postage paid at San Dimas, California.

Editor: Dr. Royce Mitchell, tsseditor@yahoo.com.

BSA's Board of Directors for 2024-2027

President: Dr. Royce Mitchell, tsseditor@yahoo.com.

Vice President: Daniel Russo

Secretary: Sharon Darling

Treasurer: Bryan Burrell

Office Manager: Larry Nelson

Directors at Large: Craig White, John Lemley, Brandy Webb

Copyrights and Trademark: The materials published in *The Sabbath Sentinel* (TSS) are copyrighted and are not for republication without the approval of the BSA Board of Directors (Board) and specific acknowledgement of *The Sabbath Sentinel* and the Bible Sabbath Association (BSA) as the source. The BSA Logo is trademarked and is not to be used for any purpose without the specific permission of the BSA Board.

Subscriptions: write to: The Bible Sabbath Association, PO Box 372, Stevens Point, WI 54481 or email to office@biblesabbath.org. *The Sabbath Sentinel* is sent free of charge to all who request it in the U.S. If you live outside of the U.S., please send us a donation of \$25 (US) to cover overseas postage. **Voluntary contributions to the Bible Sabbath Association make publication of *The Sabbath Sentinel* possible.**

Donations are gratefully accepted and are tax deductible in the United States. Those who choose to voluntarily support this international work to promote the Sabbath and proclaim gospel of the kingdom of God are welcomed as contributors.

Annual membership contributions: **General memberships**—individual membership is \$35/year; Family Membership is \$60/year; Institutional membership is \$100/year; International (non-US) membership is \$50; Life Membership is \$700 in any one year.

Participating memberships—Bridge Builder Membership is \$100/year; Pillar Membership is \$200/year. Participating members may also directly assist the BSA in its direct outreach programs related to the BSA mission. All memberships include an annual subscription to *The Sabbath Sentinel*. Make all checks, drafts and money orders payable to **The Bible Sabbath Association**. (Most major credit cards are accepted).

The Bible Sabbath Association is dedicated to promoting the seventh day Sabbath. As a nonsectarian association for Sabbath-observing Christians, BSA accepts members who acknowledge Jesus Christ (Yeshua the Messiah) as their Savior, believe the Bible to be the Word of the Eternal God, and uphold the seventh day Sabbath. BSA **takes no official position on other theological issues**, and publishes *The Sabbath Sentinel* as a forum to promote understanding and to share items of interest with Sabbath observing groups and individuals.

Opinions expressed in *The Sabbath Sentinel* articles, or in advertising, are those of the submitters and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Editorial Staff or of the Bible Sabbath Association.

BSA Worldwide Web Site: www.biblesabbath.org.

Correspondence and manuscript submissions: Address all inquiries to: *The Sabbath Sentinel*, PO Box 372, Stevens Point, WI 54481.

E-mail: office@biblesabbath.org. **Address Service Requested:** If moving, please update your address.



ARE THESE DAYS LIKE THE DAYS OF NOAH?

Jesus, or Yeshua if you prefer, once explained what the world would be like just before His return. We read about this in Luk 17:26-27: *And as it was in the days of Noah, so it also shall be in the days of the Son of Man. They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark; and the flood came and destroyed them all.* Most people believe that to mean that people would just be going about their lives as if nothing was happening. However, they could not be more mistaken.

In the same context, Jesus also discussed the days of Lot as indicative of how things will be at the end. He is quoted as saying in Luk 17:28-29 *So also as it was in the days of Lot: they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; but the day Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from the heaven and destroyed them all.*

If we did not know the context of those days, we'd be tempted to think that God arbitrarily wiped out the earth and destroyed Sodom for living normal lives. But, that was not the case at all. Let's look at what was going on in those days. Gen 6:1-2 *And it happened, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and when daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were good. And they took wives for themselves from all whom they chose.*

The scripture novice would think, "What's wrong with taking a wife?" However, the meaning is far more sinister than that. What was happening was that powerful, violent men existed during those days and just took the women that they wanted.

Gen 6:4-5 *There were giants in the earth in those days. And also after that, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore to them, they were mighty men who existed of old, men of renown. And YHVH saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

That word translated "giants" is the Hebrew "nephil" or "nephilim." It means a "feller," one who knocks things down, as in a feller of trees. The term implies violence. We know the truth of this

because of what happened with Abram, Sarah and Abimelech. Abraham feared that he would be killed because violent men were just taking anyone's woman for wives. The world in Noah's day was no different, and likely even worse.

Notice what was recorded about those days for us: Gen 6:11-12 *The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth. And, behold, it was corrupted! For all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth.*

The problem was not people living their lives. The problem was that the people of those days were violent and took whatever they wanted, including women. They did not fear God or men.

We read in Gen. 7 how God commanded Noah to build an ark and what was to be loaded in it. After all of this was accomplished, this happened: Gen 7:16 *And they that entered, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him. And YHVH shut him in.*

The fact that God shut them in is an important one for us to consider. Notice this from Rev 3:7 *And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth ...*

God had waited patiently for over 100 years for men to repent and the Ark to be finished. But, once the time was accomplished, God shut the door and the chance for repentance was at an end. There was no sparing those who had not repented by then: 2Pe 2:5 *And He did not spare the old world, but saved Noah the eighth one, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.*

We know from the dimensions of the Ark that it would have taken decades for 1 man, his 3 sons, and possibly Methuselah and Enoch, to build such a huge ship. God could easily have commanded that an Ark would appear and then have Noah and the rest of his family enter into it. But, God did not do that. Certainly, a God who can create an entire universe by saying "Let it be so" could certainly do something as easy as creating that Ark by com-

manding it to appear. What was going on with God at that point?

1Pe 3:20 ... *when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared ...* God was waiting, allowing Noah to preach repentance to the people of the time, allowing them the time to repent, before He closed the door and put an end to all of mankind.

Remember that Noah is called a “preacher of righteousness” 2Pe 2:5. What do we think Noah was preaching about if not repentance and the coming destruction? We see a similar situation happened with Jonah when he was sent to proclaim destruction to Nineveh. The difference between the time of Noah and Jonah was that the people of Nineveh, including their king, did repent and God took away the punishment. It is highly likely that God would have changed His mind about the destruction of the flood if there had been repentance. Most assuredly, repentance was not seen and God unleashed the waters to end the lives of all flesh except those in the Ark.

Something that the serious bible student can ascertain about God is that He wants us to choose Him. He could easily force people to obey but that's not what God is looking for. Even ancient Israel was told to choose after being reminded of the Commandments of God. In the days of Noah, God gave mankind nearly 100 years to repent and choose His way. God was, and is, a long-suffering, or patient, God.

God commends the Church at Philadelphia for their making known that He was allowing things to go on because of His patience. We read this in Rev 3:10: *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.*

When people ask us why God allows such evil to continue, our answer should be because God is patient and wants everyone to repent and choose Him. It is important for us in the Church today to recognize that things continue the way that they have only because God is patient.

However, there is coming a point where God will once again shut the door. Rev 10:5-6 *And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, And swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are,*

and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer ... Once again, God will close the door.

Notice what we read in Rev 22:10-13 *And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.*

Jesus, the YHWH of Old Testament times (see John, chapter 1), is going to say, “That's it.” Rev 10:5-6 previously quoted.

He has left the sure word of prophecy as a warning to all of mankind, including those who claim to be a part of God's Church. But, those who refuse to choose God, or who are lukewarm about doing so (see Rev. 3, Church at Laodicea), will receive a reward that they will not enjoy.

At some point the door is going to be closed by God again, as in the days of Noah. Those who have the Mark of the Beast will receive severe punishment. Notice this: Rev 16:2 *And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.*

Rev 19:20 *And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.*

Those who refuse to repent and choose God and His way are those who will receive the Mark of the Beast. But, everyone gets a Mark. Notice this:

Eze 9:1-6 *He cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near, even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand. And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the north, and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand; and one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side: and they went in, and stood beside the brasen altar. And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's ink-*

horn by his side; And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house.

God tells the destroying angels not to touch those with His mark but not to spare anyone else! The Church is not spared because those of the Church, starting with the elders, who failed to wholeheartedly choose God, are the first to feel the wrath of God through His destroying angel.

The warning message is to the world, yes, but that includes we who are in the Church today. Either we have chosen to do what God says without reservation, or we are part of those who are either lukewarm or outright rebellious. In either case, God is being patient hoping that His Children will repent.

If we are straddling the fence, refusing to learn what God wants and to do it, or if we refuse to do what God commands, then punishment is coming soon. We can't say that we kept the Sabbath and be free from that punishment. Notice what Jesus had to say when He walked the earth in human form: *Mat 15:7-9 Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, this people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*

We CAN claim to worship God but in vain! That kind of worship will not receive the Mark of God. Everyone will get a Mark and if we don't get the Mark of God then there is only one other Mark that we can get, that of the Beast.

We can't claim to worship God, to be doing His will, and not do as He commands: *Mat 7:21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

What a terrible shame it would be for us to hear those words from Jesus, "Go away. I don't know who you are." But, we have been warned and given examples to illustrate this. Here's another:

Mat 25:1-12 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

The door will shut, as in the Days of Noah, and He will say that He does not know them.

We will not be able to say to Jesus, "That preacher (or pastor) you gave me taught me such and such and I took and ate of it." That did not work for Adam (Gen. 3) and it will not work for anyone at that time, either.

Jesus told Satan that man shall live by every word that God speaks. Jesus told the young man who asked what he had to do to receive life that if he wanted life he had to keep God's commandments.

That teaching is as relevant today, for us on whom the ends of the world are soon coming, as it was for those in the days of Jesus as a man. The question is whether we will be a wise or a foolish virgin—or worse, spiritual whores like ancient Israel. We will be prepared by doing what God says to do. We will not be prepared by doing what men say that God says to do.

Violent days are here, and are getting worse. As always, the choice is ours. Will we choose to love God and His way and get His Mark—or not?



EEOC Brings Lawsuit Against Chick-Fil-A Over The Sabbath

Laurel Torode sat for a job interview at a Chick-fil-A franchise operated locally by Hatch Trick, Inc. During the interview Torode disclosed a detail that would later become the center of a federal discrimination lawsuit: she observes the Sabbath from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday as a member of the United Church of God. According to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's complaint and press release, Torode was hired in 2023 and disclosed her Sabbath observance during the hiring process. The franchise initially agreed to accommodate that schedule but later refused the accommodation and instead terminated her employment around March 10, 2024, when she could not work on Saturdays.

The EEOC filed suit on May 14, 2026, in U.S. District Court, alleging that Hatch Trick, Inc. violated Title VII of the Civil Rights Act by failing to accommodate Torode's sincerely held religious practice and discharging her for that observance. The agency's complaint and press release say it seeks relief on her behalf, including back pay, injunctive relief, and compensatory and punitive damages.

News outlets that have covered the case cite the EEOC filings in describing Torode as a member of the United Church of God whose Sabbath observance runs from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday. Reporting published in mid-May 2026 summarizes the complaint by saying the franchise "allegedly tried to force employee Laurel Torode, a member of the United Church of God, to work Saturdays despite initially agreeing to accommodate her faith."

The public record for the case comprises the EEOC's May 14, 2026 press release and civil complaint and the corresponding federal docket entries that list the EEOC as plaintiff and Hatch Trick, Inc. as defendant. Those filings set out the factual allegations above and the statutory claims under Title VII; they do not contain a public, filed statement by Hatch Trick, Inc., admitting or conceding the allegations.

The suit places a local employment dispute at the intersection of workplace accommodation law and religious observance. The EEOC's action frames the agency's position that employers must reasonably accommodate employees' sincere religious practices unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on business operations. The complaint seeks judicial relief to remedy, and to deter, what the EEOC alleges was unlawful treatment of an employee for practicing her faith.

As of the publication date of this story, there has been no known response by Hatch Trick, Inc. or Chick-Fil-A.

Sources: EEOC press release and complaint (filed May 14, 2026); contemporaneous news reports published mid-May 2026, New York Times and others.



A Prophet's Lament

Reprinted by permission from The Bible Advocate, July-August, 2024 edition, a publication of the Church of God (Seventh Day).

By Dorothy Nimchuk

God's promised punishment of His people had come to pass. The elite were carried captive, fulfilling Ezekiel's prophecy (21:27), with those remaining fated to either sword or famine. Forgotten, the years of Egypt's slavery, their forebears' forty-year wilderness trek, their worship of the God who provided for all their needs.

Chosen, sanctified, ordained prior to conception, Jeremiah had been forewarned: These people won't listen. They will fight against you. But I am with you and will deliver you from their attacks. His youthful reluctance overridden, he delivered God's rousing messages:

"Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; then you will find rest for your souls. But they said 'We will not walk in it.'

Also, I set watchmen over you, saying, 'Listen to the sound of the trumpet!' But they said, 'We will not listen.' Therefore hear . . . I will certainly bring calamity on this people . . . they have not heeded My words nor My law, but rejected it" (6:16-19).

"O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps. O Lord, correct me, but with justice; not in Your anger, lest You bring me to nothing" (10:23, 24).

"It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the adversities which I purpose to bring upon them, that everyone may turn from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquities and their sin" (36:3).

However, labeled as stubborn rebels and as lead consumed in a defective smelter with wickedness undrawn, God's people were considered rejected silver.

The dreaded Babylonians had come, conquered, and displaced many, leaving a repressed people to face starvation.

Deserted roadways mourned the passing of devoted pilgrims wending their way to Sabbath celebrations and joyful feasts.

Deep-seated ruts missed the rolling wheels transporting beast or burden as sacrificial offerings.

Children's laughter no longer rebounded off city walls. Near empty streets watched silently as boys and girls fainted from lack of food.

Temple ruins stirred no memories of priest or Levite performing their prescribed service. Hidden within the rubble, the Book of the Law neither invoked nor proclaimed vision. Broken walls looked askance as women, in an effort to stave starvation's rages, killed and cooked infants once cuddled to their breasts.

City gates slunk down into the ground, ashamed of the pervasive devastation. Winds that had carried words of false prophets aloft remained silent.

Doesn't anybody care? The cloud of God's anger lingered over His "footstool" (Jerusalem) as the rain mingled with the tears of the daughters of Zion.



Birds of the air, however, picked up on the prophet's hope: Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, . . . His compassions fail not.

. . . Great is Your faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion, . . . Therefore I hope in Him!" . . . He does not afflict willingly (Lamentations 3:22-24, 33).

Meanwhile, the streets of surrounding nations reverberated to stamping feet, clapping hands, and rejoicing heartbeats at the downfall of the once proud "golden" city (Ezekiel 25:6, 7).

Jerusalem's punishment was greater than that of Sodom. Surely, one killed by the sword was better off than those who starved to death! And the air waves carried a sad refrain. Your throne remains forever, Lord. "Why do you forget us forever, and forsake us for so long a time? Turn us back to You . . . Unless You have utterly rejected us, and are very angry with us!" (Lamentations 5:20-22).

Through the prophecy of dry bones (Ezekiel 37:1-14), God held out a thread of hope: Then He said to me, . . . "these bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say, 'Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!' . . . I will put my Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land" (vv. 11, 14).

God also reiterated His promise of Messiah to come (vv. 24, 25).

Captivity over, roadways groaned under the weight of many feet pilgrimaging homeward. Restored gates rose gracefully from the mire with new bolts and bars installed, ascending walls echoing to the sounds of children at play.

The Jews had long yearned for Christ's coming. Their calculations were correct, but failure to recognize Him left them totally confused. Where were the angels? Trumpets? Attendants? Pomp and ceremony? The unacknowledged, rejected Servant Messiah would weep over Jerusalem for their unbelief.

The rending of the temple veil at Jesus' death negated the old covenant written on stone, and the risen Christ was appointed High Priest, even as Melchizedek, "according to the power of an endless life" (Hebrews 7:16).

"For the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God" (v. 19).

Peter preached this "better hope" at Pentecost, with thousands of Jews baptized daily (Acts 2:14-36). He preached this same hope to Gentiles

gathered in Cornelius' house. The Holy Spirit descended, and more baptisms ensued (10:24-46).

"Thus says the Lord: 'I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. . . . Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each one with his staff in his hand because of great age. The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets. . . .

They shall be My people and I will be their God'" (Zechariah 8:3-5, 8).

Christ's death reconciles us as holy, blameless, and above reproach if we remain steadfast (Colossians 1:22, 23, 27). When we're committed to Christ, this same Spirit indwells our hearts, bringing absolute assurance of eternity (Romans 5:5; 8:25).

So in the Spirit, we eagerly wait!



The time is short.

There is a website out there dedicated to encouraging folks to READ their Bibles instead of just listening to teachers.

How can you search the scriptures and prove all things if you don't read it (1 Thessalonians 5:21)? We should be reading to "prove" what is true and what is not, challenging what is commonly taught in the world.

May our Heavenly Father guide and direct all to draw them closer to Him!

Check it out:

<https://scripturenews2use.org>

The Sabbath Done Away? In No Way!

Colossians 2: 16-17 Does Not Teach Us to Avoid Keeping God's Sabbaths

Paul W. Syltie

A fine article on this subject was authored by Calvin Burrell in the *The Sabbath Sentinel* of April 11, 2017, but I believe it is time to revisit this highly important issue. This article enlarges upon Calvin's discussion, adding some additional information that further expands on his words.

Among certain Scriptures that detractors of God's word sometimes use to claim that God's laws concerning the keeping of the Sabbath and Holy Days are done away, Colossians 2:16-17 often is quoted. So, here is the Scripture (NKJV):

"So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ."

A cursory view of these words might lead a person to think that if you are not to be judged by someone in regard to your observing these days, then you are free to keep whatever days you wish to honor Christ: Sunday, Christmas, Easter, or any other day you may deem proper. Is this view correct? Let us take a quick look at these verses and understand what is being said.

1. The word "substance" in verse 17 is translated from the Greek "soma," which means "body," and is so translated everywhere else the word is used in Colossians: Colossians 1:18, 24; 2:19; 3:15. The translators of the NKJV did not faithfully render the word body in verse 17, leading to confusion in understanding the meaning of the phrase. The phrase should read: "... but the body of Christ."

The verb "is" is inserted, not in the original Greek. We see then that the body of Christ, the church or ecclesia, is to do the judging (krino, "distinguish or decide") regarding festivals, new moons, and Sabbaths, not one's personal opinion or that of some religious entity or corporation, The act of judging

(verse 16) is to be carried out by the ecclesia (verse 17), and they will confirm the truth of Scripture that these days are commanded for us (Genesis 2:2-3; Exodus 20:8-11; Leviticus 23; Luke 4:16, etc.).

As an aside, the new moons of verse 16 are Biblical markers which indicate the beginning of months for the Hebrew calendar. These days were never declared to be sacred Sabbaths, or are listed among the annual sacred festivals.

2. The annual festivals, new moons, and weekly Sabbaths are "shadows" ["sika," metaphoric allusions to the spiritual reality of these things) of future events. These days unveil God's plan for mankind and even picture spirit-realm realities, as did the Tabernacle, the priesthood, and sacrifices, "... *who serve the copy and shadow (sika) of the heavenly things ...*" (Hebrews 8:5).

3. The culture of the Greeks and those in Colossae was ascetic (a religious doctrine that one can reach a higher spiritual state by rigorous self-discipline and self-denial), mixed with pagan traditions, as referenced by Paul in the following verses of Colossians 2:

Verse 8. Philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world;

Verse 15. Principalities and powers;

Verse 18. False humility, the worship of angels, puffed up in one's fleshly mind;

Verses 20-22. Regulations of the world — do not touch, do not taste, do not handle — things that perish with using according to the commandments and doctrines of men;

Verse 23. Self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body.

With this view on life, the criticism of those outside the ecclesia would be to judge those who kept the

feasts in a joyous, festive manner as being unrighteous. In their asceticism they would look down upon these converts to the truth and wonder why, instead of feasting on these appointed feasts, they should not be fasting!

4. Besides being ascetic, the culture of the Greeks also was immersed in gnosticism. This philosophy was a syncretic, esoteric system of mystical religious and philosophic doctrines, stressing gnosis (a knowledge of spiritual things, especially secret and superior knowledge based on an elite law) as essential to salvation; matter was viewed as evil, and ideas of mythology, ancient Greek philosophy, ancient religions, and even Christianity were combined. This philosophy refused to recognize Jesus as supreme and the author of salvation.

Throughout Colossians 2, Paul punctuates the divinity and essentiality of Jesus Christ as the way to salvation as he points out in verse 3 (in Him are all treasures of wisdom and knowledge), verse 9 (in Him the fulness of Deity lives), verse 10 (we are complete in Christ), verses 11 and 12 (He is the true circumciser and baptizer), verses 13 to 15 (He raises us, forgives us, and defeats our enemies, and verse 19 (Jesus is our Head).

By making these assertions, Paul is pulling down the pillars of gnosticism as he focuses on the necessity to avoid vain philosophies. He is not denouncing the need for faith, proper philosophy, baptism, proper eating and drinking habits, self-control, and the correct respect of angels, but placing these in the context of Jesus Christ, to be observed and judged in obedience to Him, not mixed with Greek mythology, philosophy, and religion.

I should also mention a commonly misunderstood verse just before the ones we have been addressing. This is verse 14 of Colossians 2, which says, in context with verses 13 and 15:

"When you were dead in your trespasses and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our trespasses, having canceled the debt ascribed to us in the decrees [dogma, 'decree, ordinance'] that stood against us. He took it away, nailing it to the cross! And having disarmed the powers and authorities, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing

over them by the cross [stauros, 'stake or post']."

Some detractors of the need to keep the laws and commandments of God will claim that when Jesus was crucified on the tree that the commandments "died" with him. Nothing could be further from the truth! With repentance, baptism, the laying on of hands, and the giving of God's spirit to wash away all sins and make of these Colossians new creatures, these newly converted people had their sins metaphorically "nailed to the stake" and removed from them. The removal of sin does not remove the law, but rather we know that sin is defined by the law (I John 3:4). Christ removed the penalty of death by forgiving our sins through His sacrifice on the tree, and as a consequence of that forgiveness we strive to put away sin, not continue in it.

These points all reveal that the words of Colossians 2:16 and 17 in no way say that the Sabbath and annual festivals are done away. Rather, in context they say the exact opposite: these Biblical holy days, as revealed in Genesis 2:2-3 and Leviticus 23, were kept by Jesus Christ and the early ecclesia (Luke 4:16; Acts 20:16; 27:9; etc.) and are to be kept by God's people even today! What a great and merciful Creator God we have who has not left us without hope in a world filled with so much hopelessness!



Like A Fruitful Vine

Sharon Darling

Oh to be thought of in these ways by our husbands and children. Being a daughter of The Most High is not meant to be idle or passive.

How beautiful it is to be able to live in such a way that a woman who is seeking her King can be described in such lovely ways throughout scripture. Have we considered often enough what those descriptions truly mean? She bears fruit because she is busy with her Fathers' work in wisdom, kindness and love. A woman like this is not making her family want to hide from her. She does not pretend to be anything she is not. A vine that is healthy must also be pruned at times to continue to bear fruit in its' season that is not only for a single season never to bless us with its' fruit again. Are we allowing our Pruner to help us to be healthy and continually be able to grow fruit worthy to be consumed and in keeping with repentance? Goals!

No, we do not have to burn ourselves out nor neglect our very real needs and health in the process to prove our righteousness and commitment to Yeshua. Yes, we do need to be wise and sometimes endure the circumstances we find ourselves in, hopefully with others actually showing up as brothers and sisters in Christ should.

A woman of valor cares for and about others that are made in the image of God beginning in her own home. We are not called to be loud, wayward, abrasive, busybodies whose feet are everywhere but at home neglecting our responsibilities and those God entrusted in our care to steward.

Do we search out a precious field and when we find hidden treasure do we sell what we have to gain it? What is the pearl of great price really worth to us? Are we seeking His hidden heavenly treasures and storing those up rather than earthly treasures that get destroyed by rust and moths? Are we using our talents and increasing them for His Kingdom? What is it that we are seeking?

The parables and so much more have a whole lot that we should be paying attention to for Kingdom Work. Are we paying attention?

Do we bother getting our hands dirty planting our own vineyard? What kind of seed are we planting? Is the soil of our heart fertile, good and capable of allowing deep roots to grow strong so that good fruit is produced in our vineyard for His vineyard?

Fruit is supposed to be edible and nourishing. As women striving to be a fruitful vine in His vineyard, what is the state of our fruit? Is it rotten, bitter, stinky, poisonous and just plain awful? Are we bearing a sweet smelling aroma, ripe, delicious, nourishing and pleasant to receive?

Do we stop often enough to consider what we are allowing ourselves to be completely distracted by, including digitally and virtually? What is our entertainment for music, books, tv, games played and everything thing else that we get amused by or get lost in? I know what it is like and have had to take some serious looks at what I was allowing into my ears, my eyes, my mind that did find ways into my heart over the years I have had to admit, repent of and turn from the things that I did come to see were rotten. Even within the last year or two I have come to a personal decision to stop watching what was my favorite show and another series that is much older. Most people would probably say that was not necessary and they are fine, now I disagree and do not want to nor desire to indulge in them anymore. Recently I was telling my husband how unhappy I am thinking about all that wasted time over the years watching and engaging in nonsense. No, I do not have issues with books, shows, documentaries, movies, games, fun and entertainment in general. We are allowed to enjoy things, have fun, "waste some time" and relax in these ways. We are told to have moderation in all things so that is important too. No, I am not telling anyone what to do, just asking us to seriously consider our habits and decisions

we are making, including daily and recognizing the positive and negative effects they do have on us. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. How close can we get to sin and it not burn us? How easy is it to slide into being entertained by something and then possibly getting caught up in that or similar sin? None of us are immune to walking straight into sin.

Smut, romance and relationships that glorifies sin and toxic relationships or does not reflect reality, witchcraft, cruelty, violence, abuse, trauma inflicted, evil, demonic, all manner of sin; things that His word explicitly tells us not to partake in and those that will keep people out of the Kingdom are not meant to be our entertainment. Sometimes we can justify and see absolutely nothing wrong with these things especially when our hearts deceive us and arrive at believing: therefore it is ok, God does not mind. But does He care about what we choose to put into our mind? We say we know our hearts deceive us so should we not examine where they are? So why do we sometimes believe things are sin then turn around and entertain ourselves by them? Does that honor or please Him? Are we trying to live vicariously through them since we would not do them? (And if we are doing them or want to, oh how we need to repent and STOP sinning). Yes, I know, that this all is unpleasant and being convicted can hurt at times.

If we say we want to be a Godly example to our children regarding His ways and show why they are beneficial, what is it that we are actually presenting to them? This one stings harshly at times but is necessary to think long and hard on from time to time at the very least. We can help or make it harder for them to be like the olive shoots around the table that either calls us blessed or may feel quite differently based on our fruit.

Reading the Bible and trying to understand the things in them that are against His will and way is one thing, some of it IS hard to read, but is ungodly things that are within it being used as an excuse to fill our minds with things that do not reflect how we ought to be living? All of what we allow into our minds and hearts eventually comes out of them and reflects in our habits, words, behavior and treatment towards others, even towards ourselves. It can also



affect in many ways how we view and interact with The Father and His Son.

We will sin and we will do things we do not like to have to admit or face where we have fallen short. It is not a matter of if but rather when we do, so how about we be ready to face it, learn from it and grow from a soft humble heart that is after His heart. We have a Savior for a reason. We are to be Holy as He is Holy and to be perfect as He is perfect yet, in the flesh we simply cannot be exactly like Yeshua but the point is we should still be trying and adjusting when we do not behave like we belong to Him. Fruit can still grow even though we have messed up, even when it was big ones as long as we repent, turn towards, abide in and listen to Him. Ask. Seek. Knock. Keep striving and endure until the end. Walk in the Spirit and grow in the fruit of the Spirit. Set our gaze on The Father and The Son.

We would do well to consider our motives along with our choices and if we get convicted, GOOD! Growing pains hurt but are necessary for growing into who we are becoming in Him. Remembering that He disciplines whom He loves when it is needed, can help us in this walk.

So, as we move forward in our day to day all of these things and much more can help or hinder us. Can seeds even take root? Ultimately we are known

by our fruit and even if they are virtually not at all or some are not good, that can change. He prunes us and our soil can be nurtured to be an environment that is rich for growing beautiful fruit that is a blessing. We have the power to turn around and get on the narrow path because of our Savior so let's get on it if we have strayed and stay on it with His help. At times it is very hard but by and through Him we can do all things. So as wives, moms and sisters in Christ what fruit is on our branches attached to the Vine? Consider these things as women in the flesh and spiritually as The Bride of Christ. It is all connected and such a privilege and honor to bear fruit for Him.

Get into His word and feed on it daily, allow it to take root in our heart and watch what good works can come from it that glorifies and honors Him. Don't neglect the lots and lots of prayer that goes hand in hand with abiding in His Word. We get to talk to the Creator and He speaks to us! Wow that is an incredible gift!

Oh to be thought of as blessed and a fruitful vine that our family wants to be around and feels blessed by our presence! Hallelujah what a beautiful opportunity we have!

Proverbs 31:10-31 ESV *An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels. The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life. She seeks wool and flax, and works with willing hands. She is like the ships of the merchant; she brings her food from afar. She rises while it is yet night and provides food for her household and portions for her maidens. She considers a field and buys it; with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard. She dresses herself with strength and makes her arms strong. She perceives that her merchandise is profitable. Her lamp does not go out at night. She puts her hands to the distaff, and her hands hold the spindle. She opens her hand to the poor and reaches out her hands to the needy. She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household are clothed in scarlet. She makes bed coverings for herself; her clothing is fine linen and purple. Her husband is known in the gates when he sits among the elders of the land. She makes linen garments and sells them; she delivers sashes to the*

merchant. Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come. She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue. She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: "Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all." Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates.

Titus 2:2-5 *Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.*

I Tim 5:9-10 *Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years of age, having been the wife of one husband, and having a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work.*

Revelation 19:6-9 ESV *Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure"— for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God.*

May we bear good and righteous fruit and be a blessing to others who in turn see Yeshua through us.



BIBLES, BIBLES, and more BIBLES!

What's a person to do?

DJ Wellington

It seems like every time we turn around, there's a "new" Bible coming out. Now, are these really new? Sadly, most are not—just someone's idea to alter what they think is wrong into what they think is right. But the saddest part of the whole thing is that if the individual/s putting together this "new" Bible are good speakers, good promoters and computer literate, they will have many folks follow them. They may sound intellectual but when you get right down to it, "their" translation is not new at all. So, what's a new believer to do?

I will say up front that this is "MY" opinion--no one else's. YAHWEH's arm is long (Isaiah 59:1) and His desire is for all to come to repentance (Ezekiel 33:11). To repent from what...sin. So, what is sin? 1 John 3:4 says sin is lawlessness (*i.e.*, without law). We are to walk as the Messiah walked (1 John 2:6)—how did He walk? He obeyed every single instruction ("torah") that pertained to Him. So, here in a nutshell, is what we need to learn from the Scriptures—if you believe the Messiah was born a man (Deuteronomy 18:15, Acts 3:22), died on the stake, was resurrected to sit at the Father's right hand and is now our vehicle to be justified BACK to the Father, THEN you need to focus on the instructions.

Not to minimize the validity of learning history and languages, most need to focus FIRST on learning what we need for salvation, THEN improve on that knowledge with the history and language issues.

Since the oldest Bible is virtually thousands of years old, do you think the instructions have changed? I don't. Now, I'm not saying there hasn't been a bit of corruption in translating but it has been shown that the old testament has very few "problem" areas. The new testament has a whole lot of "errors" contained therein. But, again, remember these new testament books were not around when Messiah walked the earth. So He and His disciples walked, talked and taught the old testament scriptures!

So, when a "new" Bible comes out, you should ask "why"? What is different in it? Unfortunately what I have seen is folks (especially those new to scriptures) get preoccupied with promoting this "new"

Bible, yet have no clue why it is different. When one comes out with different books added, such as the apocrypha books, are they suggesting that our Heavenly Father "hid" all this "new information" from those seeking it (Matthew 7:7)? His words have been available for people who seek them FOREVER and, suddenly, there are ones found that drastically change His instructions? What loving Father would do that? Especially if a version changes context—for instance, stating the Father is the Son which goes against what the Messiah said, "My Father is greater than I" (John 14:26)!

There are plenty of resources available in studying the Scriptures, including apocrypha books, historians (Plato, Josephus), commentators, *etc.* but before getting into those or trying to learn Hebrew and Greek, shouldn't you get confident in knowing the basic instructions (which have not changed, Malachi 3:6) and abiding by them? Or, if you are studying a particular subject such as christmas (which isn't IN the Scriptures), you may want to go to secular sources to determine WHERE it came from. The same for Sunday/1st/8th day as Sabbath.

Even a topic as hot (of late) as the calendar...it "should" be in the Scriptures that have been passed down through all generations--not something just "found" in more recent years. Again, what loving Father would do that? No, the Scriptures are not clear (to me, anyway) about the "HOW" to determine Abib, but that is the same for anyone professing the Scriptures clearly show the calendar (or should be unless they are reading more into it). Could it be to force us into more research in His words and/or to see how we get along given diversity? Perhaps...

Let's get back to basics...



Acts 20:7

Daniel Botkin

Excerpt from my book Hermeneutics. To order the book, find it on lulu.com. -DB

*

I do not want to overemphasize the topic of the Sabbath, because that is not the primary focus of our faith. But I do want to look at just one verse that Christians quote to try to prove that the Sabbath was changed to Sunday. I want to discuss this verse for two reasons. First, because it is so often quoted by Sunday Christians in the Sabbath-versus-Sunday debate, and secondly, because it is an excellent example of a verse whose context tells an entirely different story than the story which is commonly believed by so many people. The verse is Acts 20:7:

“And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight” (KJV).

“See?” the Sunday Christian says. “It says right here that they met on the first day of the week, not on the seventh. This is proof that by this time the Sabbath had been changed to Sunday.”

If the Sunday Christian has a Bible with cross references, he might notice that the cross reference at this verse refers him to Revelation 1:10, where John says, “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day.”

“See?” the Sunday Christian says. “The Sabbath had been changed to the Lord’s Day, the first day of the week.”

To a new believer with little knowledge of the Bible, this might make sense. After all, most Christians today worship on Sunday, not Saturday. So Sunday must be the Lord’s Day, right?

Many good Christians sincerely believe this, but they are mistaken. First of all, a cross reference in the margin of a Bible referring the reader to Revelation 1:10 does not prove that the first day of the week was ever called “the Lord’s Day.” It is the uninspired cross references of men, not the inspired Word of God, that suggests that the first day of the week was called the Lord’s Day. There is no place in the Bible where the first day of the week is called the Lord’s Day. You will find this idea only in later post-Apostolic writings of Christian leaders who were leading a Church that was drifting deeper into apostasy.

But aside from the misleading cross reference to Revelation 1:10, what does Acts 20:7 mean in its context? Before we look at the context, let’s look at the original Greek text of the phrase translated “the first day of the week”: *mia ton sabbaton*.

The word *mia* means “one (of)” or “(the) first (of).”

The word *ton* is the plural genitive form of the definite article “the,” so *ton* means “of the.” And because *ton* (“the”) is plural, we expect the next word to be a plural noun, not a singular noun.

So far, we have “one of the [something plural]” or “the first of the [something plural].”

Now, where is the Greek word that is translated “day” in this verse? It is not there. It was added by translators. This is the reason that some translations have the word *day* in italics, to let the reader know that the word is not in the original text, but was added by translators because they felt it was needed to help clarify the passage.

Now let’s look at the final word, *sabbaton*. This word is a cognate, a transliteration of the Hebrew word for “sabbath,” *shabbat*. (Greek has no “sh” sound, so a sigma [s] replaces the Hebrew letter

shin [sh].)

Sometimes sabbaton means “week.” But because the -on suffix is used in Greek to indicate that a noun is plural, sabbaton sometimes means “sabbaths.”

So we have two very different possible ways to understand *mia ton sabbaton*:

1. “the first [day] of the week” (or “one [day] of the week”)
2. “the first of the sabbaths” (or “one of the sabbaths”)

The correct understanding hinges on whether sabbaton means “week” or “sabbaths” in this verse. Which is it?

Most Christians assume it means “week,” and they think the disciples in Acts 20:7 had assembled for church on a Sunday. Then they take it a step further and assume, without any proof, that all of Jesus’ disciples everywhere had abandoned the seventh-day Sabbath by this time, and met for church every Sunday.

That is how most Christians understand it. However, it is interesting that the J.P. Green Interlinear New Testament literally translates it as “one of the sabbaths.” This is not in some book published by Seventh Day Adventists or Messianic Jews. This is the Greek text published by the Trinitarian Bible Society, a mainstream Christian publisher. Therefore Christians should at least consider the possibility that *mia ton sabbaton* means the disciples were assembled on “one of the sabbaths,” and not on the first day of the week, because this is what the text of the Trinitarian Bible Society says.

Now (finally!) let’s look at the context of this verse and see if the context can help us determine whether *sabbaton* should be understood as “week” or “sabbaths” in Acts 20:7.

I see absolutely nothing in the verses that precede Acts 20:7, nor in the verses which follow Acts 20:7, to support the idea that it means “the first [day] of the week.” However, I do see some very clear evidence in the verses which precede and in the verses which follow Acts 20:7 to sup-

Do You Want to Learn More About the Sabbath?

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

The BSA now offers some free resources to help you learn about the Sabbath. We have short, 1 or 2 minute audio clips on topics such as:

“What is the Sabbath?”
and

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

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

1. Go to our website:
www.biblesabbath.org
2. Click on the Products Menu
3. Click on the “Free Resources” Link

port the idea that it means “one of the sabbaths.”

Before we look at those verses, let’s first consider what a phrase like “one of the sabbaths” implies. It implies one of a group of sabbaths. If I say “one of the children,” it is obvious that I’m talking about a child in a specific group of children. If I say “one of the books,” it is obvious that I’m talking about a book in a specific collection of books. Therefore when Acts 20:7 says “one of the sabbaths,” it is talking about a specific group of consecutive sabbaths. “One of” or “the first of” implies that there is going to be a second one that follows, and possibly more after the second one.

Where does the Bible lump a specific group of consecutive sabbaths together? If you celebrate Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread and Pentecost, you already know the answer to that question. We are commanded to count seven consecutive sabbaths between Unleavened Bread and Pentecost, and celebrate Pentecost on the morrow after the seventh sabbath.

Look at the context of Acts 20:7 and you will see the days of Unleavened Bread mentioned in the verse immediately before Acts 20:7 (in verse 6), and you will see Paul hasting to get to Jerusalem in time for Pentecost just a few verses after Acts 20:7 (in verse 16). So the meeting in Acts 20:7 took place on one of the seven sabbaths between Unleavened Bread and Pentecost, which explains why Luke wrote *mia ton sabbaton*, “one of the sabbaths.”

Acts 20:7 is just one of many verses that require a close look at the context to come to a correct understanding.

See Daniel Botkin's website at gatesofeden.online.



Do you like this magazine?

Would you like to help the BSA continue its work of proclaiming Jesus and all that He taught?

The BSA needs more partners like you to help continue and expand this ministry. Recently we had a group of 50 pastors in Africa request to be added to our TSS mailing list. To do this, we need more partners to help with the expense!

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

To everyone who has been supporting this work of love, we at the BSA thank you and want you to know we appreciate you greatly! We could not do this without God and the blessing you provide!

MODERN CHURCH FANTASIES

Darl Arbogast

What is the definition of a fantasy? A fantasy can be related to fanaticism, which is an extreme, uncritical zeal prevalent in religion and politics, especially while imagination and extravagance go unrestrained. Imaginative suppositions with no basis in reality rise to the forefront, which can lead to forming a mental image, a notion or an idea.

This realization seems to be a major part of the pagan religions adopted by the early Roman Catholic Church. These fantasies, in part, were carried forward by the Protestants during and after the Protestant Reformation, which was set off by Martin Luther, a 16th-century monk and theologian, when he nailed his 95 complaints against the Pope on the church door. It is said Martin Luther was one of the most significant figures in Catholic Christian history.

The Protestants and the Catholics were forbidden by the Pope since 325 A.D. from owning or possessing Christian literature or biblical scrolls. What all the people knew about God was taught by the Catholic clergy and church people. They had no recourse but to believe what was written and said by these men; what the people were told was badly polluted and still is to this day by the Catholic Church.

As a result, our Protestant young people of today who read the Bible come up with questions their parents cannot answer. Listed below are a few examples:

I. We are being taught at church that Heaven is the reward of the saved and we will go there when we die. Where is that found in the Bible?

II. We go to church on Sunday. Where does the Bible specify that Sunday is the day to worship when we read in Genesis 2:1 thru 3, Exodus 20:8 and Deuteronomy 5:12, telling us specifically when God wants us to appear before Him?

III. The Eucharist or the Lord's supper is taken several times in a year. Where do we find instructions for these things? It is not the Passover. The Passover

is offered only once a year.

IV. What about Easter, we color eggs and celebrate chicks and bunnies, where are we instructed to observe this occasion in the Bible? What is the connection to Jesus?

V. What about Christmas? We are doing what God tells us not to do, as written in Jeremiah 10. Every December, we observe Christmas; what is it and when did it start? We cut a tree and decorate it, but Jeremiah 10 tells us not to do this as it is a heathen custom. Are we heathen? What about this fairy tale of reindeers pulling a fat man in a sleigh? What is that all about? Where is it written in the Bible?

VI. Where does the Bible tell us to carve a face on a pumpkin every year at the end of October? What does Halloween mean and did God command it? Is it spiritually biblical?

VII. We are told by Jesus Himself that we must be 'born again'; how is that possible? What does it mean to be born again? Is it repentance, is it confession, is it baptism, or just exactly what is it?

A young person conscientious about studying the Bible wants to know about God and His plan for mankind and what He has in His plan for the future. More and more young people are being turned off about God because nothing taught to them matches what the Bible teaches. Parents should be able to answer the questions their children are asking, as inconsistencies build mistrust.

God hasten the day for His righteousness upon the earth.

God bless you in your efforts as you progress.

Darl Arbogast, Minister

The Coming Apocalypse

Tommy Willis

Will the Apocalypse come soon?

What some of us call the End Time, others call the “Apocalypse.” Many feel the prophecies and birth pains are near; and that sudden, cataclysmic events are imminent.

Anxiety has seemed to linger with many ever since the Covid pandemic. “Existential anxiety” is a term used to describe a chronic state of discomfort and fear.

As I listen to people talk, there seems to be more fear and stress than I have seen in my lifetime. People are on edge. It often makes me think of the scripture: *“People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken”* (Lu 21:26) niv. These words indicate extreme fear in people.

Many feel a sense of foreboding, that Western civilization is on the verge of collapsing; and that nuclear war will strike out. Even some military experts have been warning us of nuclear war. Albert Einstein said: “I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones.” This shows an existential gut punch that reminds us how fragile civilization is.

EMP security experts have warned congress of an existential threat of a “doomsday scenario,” that would cause 90 percent of Americans to die within a year from starvation and disease with just an EMP attack!

That got a lot of people’s attention. That certainly would be an “Apocalypse.” I hear more people talking about how it’s like a stack of dominoes

waiting to fall. And if we allow it to, we can let it cause us to fear. The storms of life can feel so overwhelmingly challenging, that if we allow it to, it can pull us down. Life is full of ups and downs. Even the stress of everyday life can cause us to fear.

As the days grow more hectic and confusing, many will look to those who claim special insight into prophecy, feeling it gives them a more secure setting for the future.

But our main focus should be in Jesus Christ; to get our foundation down in Him. Prayer and seeking God should be our focus. It’s more important to get to know Jesus Christ than to know the future.

Because no matter what happens, if we get our trust and foundation down in Jesus Christ, we won’t collapse as society does (Mt 7:25), no matter what kind of “apocalypse” comes upon us.

Our trust should not be in someone’s interpretation of prophecy, but in Jesus Christ. Think of all the times people have told us something would happen in prophecy and it did not happen.

The Bible tells us many times to “Fear not!” How is this accomplished? Fear will hinder our walk with the God. Paul told Timothy: *“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”*

I’m aware that, as some people often say, “Simplistic answers do not solve the sticky problems of everyday life.” But there are biblical principles which, if applied, God tells us will help deal with our fears and problems.

Prayer is what both Jesus and Paul told us to stay

with. It may seem “simple” to some to keep reminding one another to pray and seek God; the action we need to take is simple; but the problem is that it’s not always easy to apply. Why? Because we allow distractions of this life to keep us from praying as we should. Jesus warned us about this (Luke 21:34-36).

Prayer has a powerful effect. I’ve found the more I go to God and seek Him, the less fear I have; but so many of us are distracted from the prayer life necessary.

In this consumer society, the distractions are worse than it was even ten years ago. Our phones alone are enough to devastate the prayer life of many. And it doesn’t have to be because of the end times, for distractions or fear can take us out long before the end times arrive. We may face serious trials next week or next month that can pull us away from God.

The world will constantly throw things at us. We may get a little breathing spell in between trials, but usually it’s not long before another trial comes along. Life can be brutal. If we stay with God as we should, we will be delivered from a fearful heart. One area I found that really helped is simply living.

I learned as a young man to get out of the rat race and live as simply as possible. I live in New Orleans, and my home was destroyed with Hurricane Katrina. I went to Walmart and bought a small tent for about 40 dollars, and this was my home for the next three months. I was living simply before Katrina and learned even more about simple living through this experience. In the rat race of this consumer society, we need to learn to step out of the squirrel cage and into a more simple life. By living simply, you will have less distractions in your life, which will aid you in your prayer life.

“Apocalyptic” was a word I thought of with this storm. Some of the scenes I saw were like those in Apocalyptic movies. Many lost their lives; they

were still finding bodies for weeks and months after the storm. I saw houses in the middle of the street; some were completely gone.

It made me realize even more of how fragile civilization is. We were out of electricity for three months, and without water from the faucet for a month. You realize more what a blessing it is to have a house, electricity and running water, when those things are taking away from you for months.

Yes, civilization is fragile. But if we are praying and meditating as we should, there is no reason to fear: The Bible tells us: *“Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything; tell God your needs, and don’t forget to thank him for his answers. If you do this, you will experience God’s peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will keep your thoughts and your hearts quiet and at rest as you trust in Christ Jesus.”* (Phil 4:6-7) tlb.

These biblical principles are the best way I know of for dealing with these problems. We can say they are “simple” and they are. But, if we learn to apply them—they work! Because it’s God answer to our fears. Scripture tells to go to Him in prayer, and lay our burdens on His shoulders: *“Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.”* (1 Pet 5:7) NLT.

If we are praying and meditating as we should, things will work out. And we will get to know and trust God, and that He is there for us. Prayer is the path to knowing God, for prayer will help us get near Him. We can have His peace that passes understanding. *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”* (Jn 14:27) niv.

David wrote: *“I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.”* (Ps 34:4) kjv David had fears like we all do; but he did something about them; he went to God in prayer and was delivered from the fears. That’s a wonderful

example for us all.

To have the peace necessary we must seek God diligently: *“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”* (Heb 11:5) kjv. If we will go over these Scriptures, they show that the most important thing we can do for the end times is seek God diligently.

If we pray and meditate as we should, we will have His peace we need to deal with the struggles of this life. Therefore, *“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”* (Heb 4:16) kjv.

We may have what we feel is our personal

“apocalypse” with a sudden phone call or visit to the doctor’s office that reminds us of our mortality (James 4:14-16). No matter what kind of “Apocalypse,” should come upon us; if we apply the above scriptures, then God will give us his ability to be at peace and endure. I’m still learning to apply these scriptures that tell us to take our problems to God in prayer. The more I learn to apply them, the more peace God gives me. This will be our true point of success—the Prince of Peace; *“For he is our peace.”* (Eph 2:14).

“Now may the Lord of peace Himself grant you His peace at all times and in every way [that peace and spiritual well-being that comes to those who walk with Him, regardless of life’s circumstances]. The Lord be with you all.” (2 Thessalonians 3:16).



Lashes, Lattes & Leviticus

Conversations for Women of Torah

***Lashes: Appearance & Heart
Lattes: Social & Societal
Leviticus: Torah Tips & Strategies
Plus Much More!***

Join the Conversation!

***Presented By:
Esther 4:14 Ministries***

Podcast

esther414ministries.org

Why it takes the blood of Jesus

Mark Carter

In the very beginning God's spirit moved over the face of the waters to bring order to the chaos the world was in. As I was sitting on top of a 14,000 foot mountain I noticed little spiders running everywhere, in a place where it got far below freezing at night and so hot in the day, from one extreme to the other extreme. Everywhere the water touched there is life and life abundantly. Man has searched the moon and Mars and can not find one organism, because it takes the spirit of God's touch to bring life.

In the garden of Eden Adam and Eve were to eat of the herb of the field and of the fruit of the tree with seed, including the tree of life (Gen 2:15-17) *And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

The only tree of which Adam was not to eat was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. After eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam and Eve knew they had transgressed against God's command. As a futile attempt at self-redemption, Adam and Eva clothed themselves with fig leaves. Just as we can't find redemption on our own, they could not do so either. In Gen 3:21 we find that God clothed Adam and Eve with animal skins. Until this time there had not been any death. But God in his unending love for mankind, took an animal to die for atonement for their sins. Blood had to be shed. The Bible says that "for the wages of sin, is death" therefore something had to die to atone for Adam and Eve's transgressions. Leviticus 17:11 *For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.* It is

the blood that carries the very breath that God breathed into Adam to bring life to the flesh, as we see in Ezekiel 37:5,6 *Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.* As it is in the human body, the blood carries the breath to every part of the body, any part that does not receives that oxygenated blood dies. It is only the breath of God that brings life.

Bringing the shedding of blood upon the land, which had never happen before, was for the atonement for Adam and Eve's transgressions. God took the sins of all mankind upon himself. God was showing Adam and Eve how to temporarily atone for their sins. But they had lost access to the Tree of Life. Gen 3:24 *"he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."* They would be kept away from Life until God himself could atone once and for all the sins of the world.

We see in Numbers 35:33 God makes a statement. The pretext is talking about the blood of murderers and the sanctuary cities. But in that verse God makes the statement *"So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it."* There is no blood in heaven as we see in 1 Cor 15:50: *Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.* We see when Jesus comes to the disciples he takes Thomas's hand and plunges it into his side. His side was not healed and was not bleeding. Jesus's blood was poured out for the sins of mankind.

God had to come in the flesh of the man Jesus to shed his blood to reconcile mankind into the new

covenant containing life and life abundantly. We are to walk in the spirit and not in the flesh until the day of redemption, when we will gain access to the Tree of Life again. Rev 24:14 *“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”* You may ask why did God wait so long to come and shed his blood? It is because He sent the prophets down through time prophesying of the coming Messiah, so that when He came, that all would know who he was and what He had done for all mankind with infallible proof.

Let’s look back to the first covenant that God made with Abraham., the cutting off of the foreskin, the circumcision of the flesh. Gen 17:11,12 *And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed.* Circumcision is a bloody and painful thing. Why would God use such a sign of a covenant with man? We see all throughout out the Old Testament that everything God does with man seems to be of an outward appearance. The atonement for man’s sins was to be done through the death of an animal, an outward sacrifice. The cutting away of the foreskin was a blood sacrifice of one’s self outward flesh, and that the seed of Israel had to pass through that sign of the covenant; the covenant was of inheritance. But the time had come for the new covenant, one of an inward covenant, the inward blood of Jesus Christ: John 19:34 *“But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.”* The Covenant was not of laws written on stone, for man’s heart were hearts of stone, but of the shed blood of the Son of the most high God, the sacrifice that would and could only be the blood of the New covenant. The blood we all must take part of. The sacrifice that Abraham was tested by, the sacrifice of the first born son, the sacrifice that David wrote about in Psalms 22,23 that the prophets saw would come to set man free from the fear of death. Hebrew 2:14,15 *“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself*

likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” This should melt the hardest of hearts of man, and bring him to his knees in humility, through the drawing of the Holy Spirit. This is everything the outward covenant could not do.

Now it’s the lack of the inward circumcision of the heart, a cutting away of the fleshy things in our lives that we hold dear, that keeps us far off from God. It pains us to let go of things of this world, but everything we let go, God doubles back to us in the riches of his love.

It is the blood of Jesus Christ that sanctifies us, sets us a part from sin, in a new life, risen in the likeness of Jesus Christ. Ephesians 5:26 says *“That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,”* telling us that as we read the word of God the Holy Spirit reveals the sins in our lives so that we are able to let go of these sins and cut them away from our hearts, a circumcision of the heart. This is a life long process of removing and cutting away sin in our lives, moving us further away from sin. It is not making us more saved, but making it easier for us to walk in the spirit.

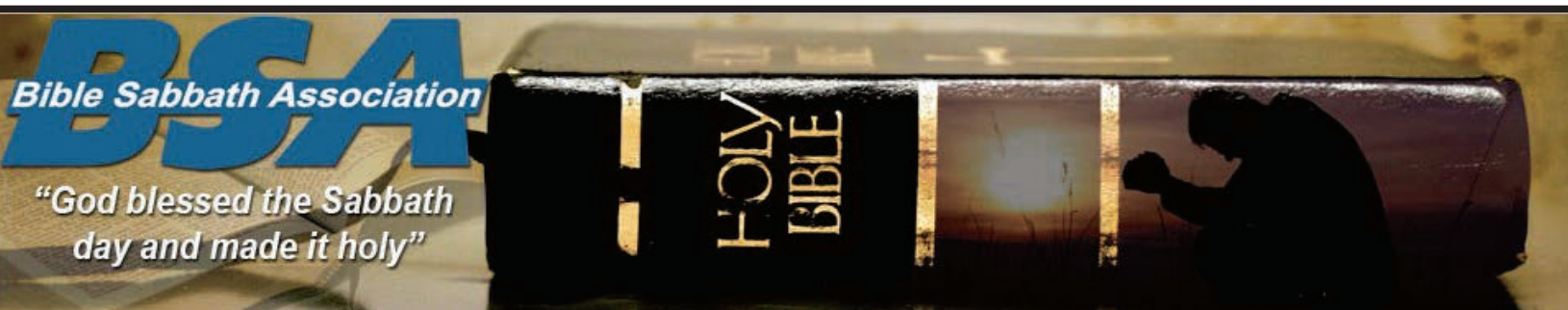
John 3:16-21 *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.*



The Sabbath Sentinel

*A Bi-monthly Publication of
The Bible Sabbath Association
PO Box 372, Stevens Point, WI 54481 USA
Return Service Requested*

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE PAID
CLAREMONT, CA
PERMIT NO. 500



Advertise in The Sabbath Sentinel

Text classified ads (20% discount for second time, 30% thereafter) are available at the rate of \$1.00 per word (including each word and each group of numbers in the address; telephone numbers count as one word) for each issue in which the ad is published.

Display ads are available at \$150 per quarter page, \$250 per half page and \$400 per whole page for each issue the ad is published. Where possible your camera-ready copy will be utilized, or we will design your display ad for you for a one-time charge of \$200. Send copy for all ads and payment to The Bible Sabbath Association, PO Box 372, Stevens Point, WI 54481, USA.

Discounts: Advertise in the TSS for more than one issue and receive discounts: \$1.00 per word 1st issue, 20% off for

2nd issue, and 30% off for subsequent times. Quarter, half and full page ads can be discounted to a one issue free insertion if 5 insertions are paid for in advance.

Ad copy without payment will not be accepted for publication. Deadline is two months prior to publication (i.e. if you want your ad to appear in the September/October issue we must receive it before July). BSA reserves the right to reject or edit any ad copy.

Publication of articles or advertising does not imply endorsement by the Bible Sabbath Association or The Sabbath Sentinel, its editor or staff.