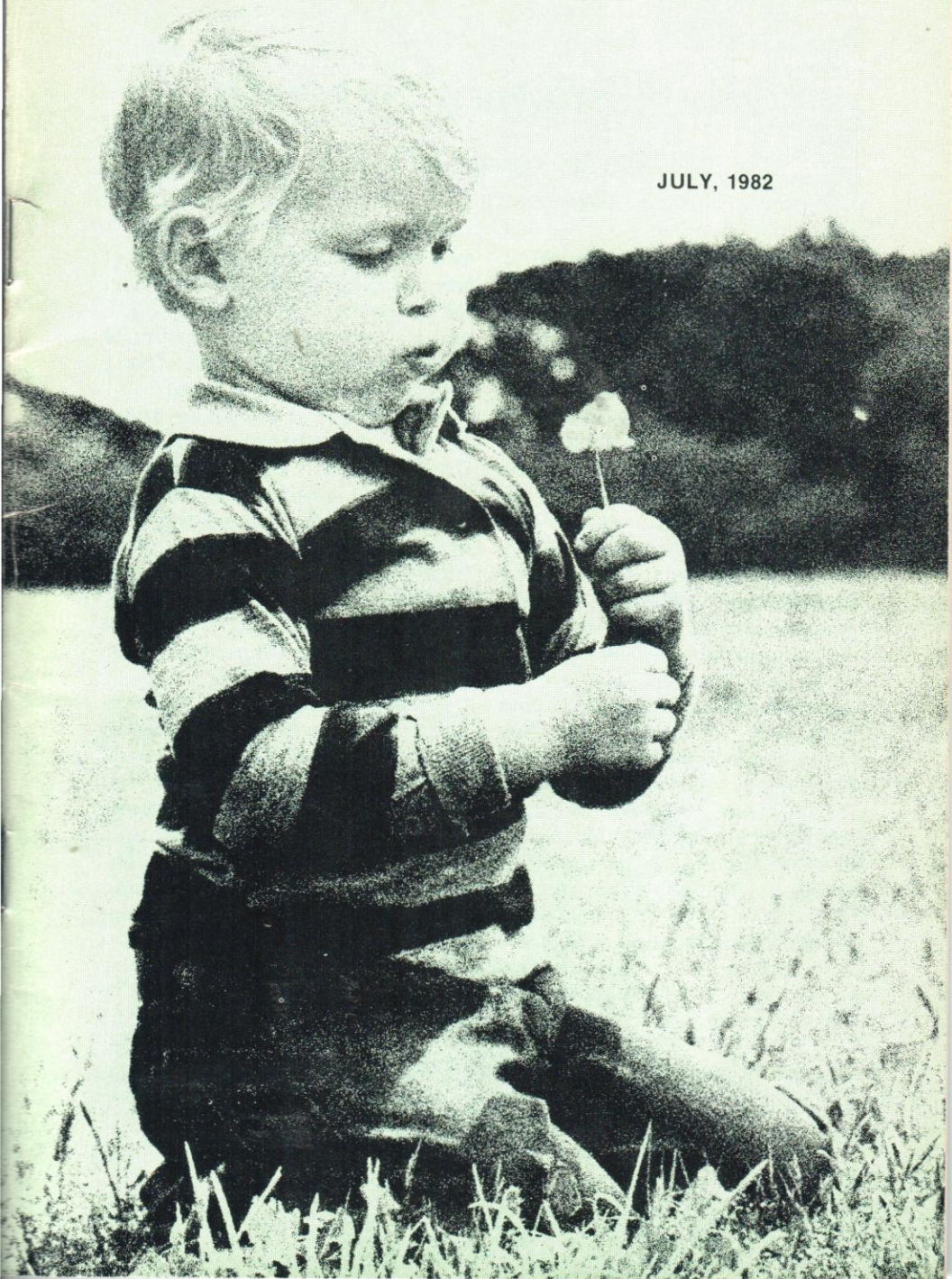


The Sabbath Sentinel

"Go set a watchman,
Let him declare what he seeth."
ISAIAH 21:9

JULY, 1982



The Christian Sabbath

By Dr. Thomas McElwain

CHRISTIANS relate to the day of worship in many ways. Some hold that the gospel dispensation of grace frees us from any such considerations. Some claim one day in seven to be necessary. Many consider binding upon Christians the observance of Sunday, appearing in the Bible as the first day of the week despite recent calendar changes in some parts of the world that make it appear the seventh. Finally, there have always been Christians who recognize the implications of Biblical Sabbath observance on the seventh day of the week commonly known as Saturday.

Jewish practice of Sabbath observance on the basis of the Old Testament and tradition has continued to the present day. Among established state churches in Christendom, Biblical Sabbath observance is to be noted among the Ethiopian Coptics. One of the larger Protestant bodies observing the Sabbath is the Seventh-day Adventist denomination, which rose in the past century. Although there are scores of Sabbath-keeping bodies, among the oldest is the

Seventh Day Baptist, whose oldest continuing congregation dates from the beginning of the seventeenth century. An important group of Sabbathkeepers is to be found among the Churches of God.

In Finland at present are about 10,000 Sabbathkeeping Christians. Of these about six thousand are Adventists. Although no statistics can be obtained, undoubtedly well over 3,000 are members of the native Finnish Sabbathkeeping group known as the Lord's People. Other Sabbathkeeping Christians are found among the Churches of God.

The Sabbath in the Bible

The Sabbath appears in the very first pages of the Bible, in the heart of the Creation story (Genesis 2:2,3). If one maintains a literal interpretation of the Bible, he is forced to consider that the Sabbath is much older than Judaism and its ceremonial laws. The text relates the Sabbath to Creation in an intimate way and presupposes a very special concept of time. If one accepts the Biblical Creation story literally, then it is very difficult to separate it logically from the

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Sabbath.

The Hebrew concept of the Sabbath focuses on the belief in a Creator-God. Therefore the Sabbath commandment is stated in terms of Creation (Exodus 20:8-11). The Old Testament concept does not stop with Creation, however. When the law is repeated in Deuteronomy 5:12-15, it becomes apparent that the Sabbath is observed in relation to God's action as a deliverer. One of the main lines of thought concerning the Sabbath in the Old Testament is that through the Sabbath contact, or covenant, is maintained between

God and humankind (Ezekiel 20:12).

The Sabbath is mentioned often in the Gospels and the Book of Acts. In the latter it is mentioned in connection with preaching and worship services. But in the gospels we get a clearer understanding of the depths of the meaning of Sabbath experience. From Jesus' behavior one gathers that He considered the Sabbath to have been covered over by rabbinical minutiae to the extent that the ordinary person no longer found it a positive religious experience. Jesus can be seen making an active reform in Sabbath



observance. Just as He discarded rabbinical exactions in the Sermon on the Mount, returning to an Old Testament simplicity and then raising it to a high level of individual spirituality, so He did with the Sabbath throughout His ministry.

One of Jesus' first statements on the Sabbath must have been like a fresh breeze to His followers. In Mark 2:27,28 He answers accusations of Sabbathbreaking. He claims that the Sabbath is a gift from God to humankind rather than a means of controlling people. On the basis of this text many

As we follow the pages of the Gospels we are amazed how often Jesus performed His greatest works on the Sabbath day.

Sabbathkeepers today consider the Sabbath to be a special gift of love from God. There is much joy in a gift, especially if it comes from a loved and respected person. Perhaps there are no obligations in a gift, but what one does with a gift reveals, I think, what one thinks of the giver.

According to the Gospel narrative, it seems that Jesus spoke very little about the Sabbath, but actually did that much more in its favor. He does mention the Sabbath, nonetheless, in Matthew 24:20. However one interprets this passage, it is clear that Jesus refers to a time after His resurrection. It seems that Jesus presumes that His followers will be keeping the Sabbath at least until the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, long after His resurrection, since He commands

them to pray that flight or trouble should not disturb their observance of the Sabbath. Although Jesus gives general principles on prayer in abundance, direct commands on what we should pray for are rare. I find only two commands on specifics: that we should pray for our enemies and for the peace of our Sabbath observance. No doubt Jesus knew even then what prayers would be the hardest for the human heart.

As we follow the pages of the Gospels we are amazed how often Jesus performed His greatest works on the Sabbath day. Through His miracles Jesus give the Sabbath a deeper meaning as the reminder of Himself as one who delivers people from sin, suffering, and death. We can imagine what the Sabbath meant to the dying day of a man who was born blind and was made to see by the hand of Jesus on the Sabbath day. It must have been to him a day of joy, a day of remembering his deliverance. Such a day of joy the Sabbath may be to anyone whom the same hand has touched.

Jesus emphasizes deliverance in all of His relations to the Sabbath. The Sabbath in the gospels is so closely associated with salvation that it is difficult to consider them separately. The Bible tells us that Jesus gave Himself up to die for the sins of humankind and was laid in the grave, where He rested on the Sabbath day. As the following day approached and the Sabbath was coming to a close (Matthew 28:1) and the women came to the tomb looking for Him, He was no longer there. He had risen. That Sabbath, a day of sorrow, turned to a day of joy. Thus the Sabbath became in their experience a mark and remembrance of the resurrection through which the

night and sorrow of the soul ends in eternal life.

Sunday in the Bible

Few Biblical passages mention Sunday, or the first day of the week, as the Bible puts it. The greater part refer to the finding of the empty tomb after Jesus' resurrection. These passages indicate no more change in the time of the Sabbath than they do in the gospel of Jesus. They merely note that the tomb was empty on the first day of the week (Luke 23:56-24:3; Mark 16:1,2; John 20:1; and Matthew 28:1).

Some passages note that Jesus appeared to His disciples for the first time after the Resurrection on a Sunday. The passages mention also that they were gathered, not for religious services, but for fear of the Jews. (John 20:19; Mark 16:10-14). The conditions are similar in another situation (John 20:26), so that this too may refer to a Sunday event. There is neither statement nor indication in these passages that anything should be moved from the Sabbath to Sunday.

However, one passage seems to indicate a religious service on a Sunday (Acts 20:7-12). Closer examination, nonetheless, shows that this is an evening meeting. According to the means of reckoning days at the place and time, from evening to evening, the evening of the first day would fall on what would be our Saturday night. Apparently the Sabbath meetings overflowed into the first day, considering Paul's imminent departure. On Sunday morning Paul left, as though he had never heard of Christian worship on Sunday morning. Indeed he had not.

There is one more passage that with certainty refers to Sunday (1 Corinthians 16:2). Here Paul asks Christians to lay aside at home

money for the relief of the destitute so that it will be ready when he will come to take it. Apparently again Paul expects people on Sunday morning to be at home and taking care of their finances.

In Revelation 1:10 is a reference to the Lord's day. There is no indication what specific day of the week this might be. In all fairness one should say that there is room for interpretation. Considering the rest of the New Testament, however, it

Jesus Himself makes the claim that He is Lord of that day. He makes such a claim of no other.

seems that to interpret this as Sunday must be anachronistic. There is no other reference to Sunday observance. The only day of the week ever referred to as the Lord's day is that of Mark 2:27,28 which is the seventh day, or Sabbath. Jesus Himself makes the claim that he is Lord of that day. He makes such a claim of no other.

Conclusions

We have briefly noted the Biblical passages referring to Saturday and Sunday. The facts are as follows: (1) Saturday Sabbath observance is to be found as far as the apostolic church; (2) although there was argument on how the Sabbath should be kept, nowhere in the Bible is any question of its being changed into another day; (3) Sunday, or the first day of the week, appears in the Bible in connection with a religious service only once and on an occasion in which Paul clearly showed that

Sunday worship was unknown to him. Sunday worship has no direct Biblical foundation.

From a religious point of view, the situation is different. Christians do many things that are not taken directly from the Bible: the celebration of Christmas, the use of candles, bells, and organs in churches, the use of a specific type of clerical clothing, all of which may be

The decision is up to the individual whether or not he will respond to Jesus' teaching and practice on the Sabbath question.

considered beautiful and right without making appeal to Biblical authority. We cannot say the Sunday observance is not an ancient Christian tradition. But we can say that it is not Biblical.

There are, of course, in the Bible even direct commands of Jesus that are not observed by most people. Who pays tithe of mint and anise? The decision is up to the individual whether or not he will respond to Jesus' teaching and practice on the Sabbath question. Salvation and judgment are also up to the individual. When one approaches God through the Bible, no one else can make the decision for him.

—From *The Sabbath Recorder*

Dr. Thomas McElwain is associate professor of comparative religion at the University of Turku in Finland. He is a member of the Seventh Day Baptist Church.

Israeli Blue Laws Will Halt Sabbath El Al Plane Flights

Israeli government officials plan to halt Saturday and Sunday flights on the government-owned El Al airline because of objections by the ultra-orthodox Agudat Israel religious party. Agudat Israel made stopping of Sabbath flights a condition for its participating in the coalition government.

Until recently El Al has been keeping its Sabbath flights on low key by not advertising them.

Have You Tried Our Classified Ad Column?

Our classified ads are a new feature being offered as a service to Sabbathkeepers. Based on a per word rate of 30 cents (including names and addresses, with numbers counted as words), copy for classified ads should be sent to THE BIBLE SABBATH ASSOCIATION, FAIRVIEW, OKLA. 73737, for possible placement of an ad. Do *not* send ad copy to the editorial office. We reserve the right to reject any or all proposed copy. The ad will appear the second month from date of receipt at the office.

Publication of an ad does not necessarily imply unqualified endorsement by the Bible Sabbath Association.

We will continue to publish announcements of denomination-wide meetings without charge.

Why not take advantage of this opportunity?

Rating of the Ten Commandments



Americans believe in the Ten Commandments more than the people of most Western countries, a new survey suggests, but they accept some commandments more than others.

In a Gallup Organization study of changing values in the United States, Japan, South Africa and twelve Western European countries, a higher percentage of Americans than members of other nationalities said the commandments still apply fully to themselves.

But while nine in ten Americans feel the commandments against killing and stealing are applicable to themselves, fewer than six in ten feel that way about keeping the Sabbath holy.

Here is how the commandments rate with Americans:

- Thou shalt:
- Not kill: 93 percent say it applies.
 - Not steal: 93 percent.
 - Honor thy mother and father: 90 percent.
 - Not bear false witness: 89 percent.
 - Not covet thy neighbor's goods: 88 percent.
 - Not covet thy neighbor's wife: 89 percent.
 - Not commit adultery: 87 percent.
 - Have no other gods before me: 79 percent.
 - Not take the Lord's name in vain: 68 percent.
 - Keep the Sabbath holy: 57 percent.

God's Immutable Law



OYEZ! Oyez! Oyez! All persons having business before the honorable, the Supreme Court of the United States are admonished to draw near and give their attention, for the Court is now sitting. God save the United States and this honorable Court!

Nine justices, clad in black robes, entered through drapery-covered entrances and took their seats. Then other people in the courtroom sat down. I had seldom experienced a more solemn moment. The highest judicial body in the nation was about to hear arguments and make decisions that could change the course of the nation.

But as I look at them—eight men and one woman—the thought came to me that they are not infallible nor are their decisions irreversible. History has shown that laws declared valid by one court have been reversed by later justices and vice versa.

Mankind's laws are in a constant flux, ever changing, ever being amended. But Yahweh's laws are immutable. Not the crossing of a **t** or the dotting of an **i** is subject to change. We can depend on that.

Eugene Lincoln

THE SABBATH SENTINEL (USPS 474-580)

EDITOR Eugene Lincoln
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS Janyce Royalty, Gilbert Sanford

The object of this non-sectarian, nondenominational association is to bring together into one strong organization all believers in the Biblical seventh-day Sabbath (Saturday) regardless of sect, creed, or denomination, for the sole purpose of spreading knowledge of, belief in, and observance of the Creator's Holy Day. The only qualification is belief in the seventh-day Sabbath.

Annual member contribution: Regular or subscribing members, \$20.00; family membership \$25.00 (individual certificates issued byt only one set of records maintained and only one copy of the Sentinel and other mailings sent); life members, \$500.00 or more during any one year.

WRITERS: Please type manuscripts double spaced and leave wide margins on all sides. Use only one side of paper. If you wish your manuscripts returned, include stamped, addressed envelope. Address to the editor, 1109 Holton Lane, Takoma Park, Md. 20912. We invite manuscripts on various aspects of the Sabbath, but cannot pay for them.

Opinions in articles are those of the writers and not necessarily endorsed by the Bible Sabbath Association.

“An Handful of Corn”

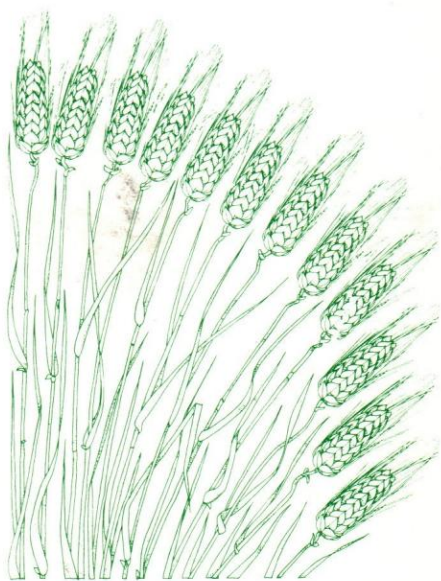
By Kate Queen

WHILE reading Psalm 72 recently, I paused when I came to verse 16, for this verse seems so different from the previous ones — standing out alone, so to speak, and with a message all its own.

“There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.”

There are times when God uses different grains as symbols of people (e.g. Job 5:26; Luke 22:31). Were it not for one little clause in verse 16, we would never know whether God was telling us about good people or bad people. The expression “handful of corn” (few in number) is the key (Matthew 7:13,14). In Holy Writ God’s faithful ones are often spoken of as that “little company” or “pilgrims and strangers” just passing through on their way to a better land. The three little words “in the earth” tell us that the events portrayed in Psalm 72:16 will all meet their fulfillment on Planet Earth before Jesus comes again.

The word *mountains* is sometimes used as a symbol of nations, governments, kingdoms (Daniel 2:35). The fact that this “handful of corn” is *on top* of the mountains would indicate that this



little group (in comparison with the millions living on the earth) is under a theocracy, recognizing no laws governing conscience except God’s perfect code of law. This was God’s ideal for His people as He led them through the wilderness.

But it says that “the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon.” What a beautiful symbol of God’s people! During Biblical history the trees of Lebanon, especially the cedars, were valuable and greatly sought for, their durability being compared to metal. Psalm 92:12-15 compares the righteous to the cedars of Lebanon:

tall, strong, pure, holy, fragrant and upright, unaffected by strong gales, with deep roots often reaching down to the water springs, enabling them to flourish through seasons of drought just as God's people will bear fruit in the closing days when the wicked "wandereth abroad for bread [spiritual food], saying, Where is it?" (Job 15:23).

I like the clause "saith the Lord" as found in Jeremiah 51:25, knowing that we can hold tenaciously to the message here given with full confidence. The "destroying mountain" mentioned here no doubt refers primarily to Satan, but in a broader sense it refers to a general movement. It is the same form of government that we read of in

*God's people will bear fruit
in the closing days when
the wicked "wandereth abroad
for bread, saying, Where
is it?"*

Ezekiel 28 — civil stretch of the imagination, because we now see its ugly head above surface.

Since the attempted change of the Sabbath is the sign, or proof, of Rome's authority (it boasts of this), the future holds for true Sabbathkeepers a test of supreme loyalty.

Jeremiah 51:25 states that this "destroying mountain" destroys "all the earth." How true it is, with the exception of that little "handful of corn" whom God does not count among the nations of earth. (Read Exodus 33:16; Numbers 23:9.) They count not their lives dear unto the death — separate and distinct from

the world, "for love is strong as death" (Song of Solomon 8:6). ". . . and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth."

When studying our Bibles, if we will trace down God's definitions of the symbols which He uses, it will greatly simplify and make plain to us the meaning of the text. Grass, like many other symbols, simply represents people. "All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass" (Isaiah 40:6,7). ". . . and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth" (Psalm 72:16). "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication" (Revelation 14:8). The word *Babylon* means "confusion," and it is called "that great city." Unless we accept the Word of God as our rule of faith and practice, truly we are a part of Babylon, "that great city."

My dictionary says that Babylon means "a scene of noise or confusion." Could it be that with so many false teachings in the world today and with moral standards falling so fast that the world at large will constitute Babylon (confusion), "that great city," with the exception of the "little handful of corn" who stand solely on the Word of God?

It seems that James 1:11 gives us a clue as to *who* "they of the city" are and who constitute Babylon. "For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways." And in Psalm 92:7 we find this: "When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the

workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever.”

Grass, trees, and vines are all symbols of people, and there are two kinds of each: green trees and dead trees, green grass and dead (brown) grass, green vines and dead vines. If these plants have sap (symbol of the Holy Spirit, Christian graces—see Psalm 104:16) in their branches, *then* they are alive; but without this mighty agency we are worthless and bear no fruit for the Master. If the ground on which they are grown is well watered (water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit), then the plants thrive. “For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses (Isaiah 44:3,4).

I am sure that we all want Jesus to come and put an end to the problem of sin which he has had to deal with for so long. My prayer is

that each one who reads these simple lines will be among that company who look up and say, “Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us,” (Isaiah 25:9). Christian love to every Sabbathkeeper.

The writer, Kate Queen, lives on Route 2, Box 128, in Clarksville, AR 72830.

K of C Offers Sunday Booklet

In a widely circulated ad headed “Whatever Happened to Sunday?” the Catholic Information Service of Knights of Columbus offered a free 36-page booklet *Remember the Sabbath . . . Keep It Holy!* It seeks to show that Sunday observance began in apostolic times.

The Sabbath reminds us definitely that we are creatures of time, and that we are finite.

—Leroy C. Bass

—Sabbath Promotional Aids—

Attractive pens, printed with

- “The Seventh Day is the Sabbath” \$3.00 per doz.
- Bumper Stickers \$1.00 each or \$7.00 per doz.
- Sabbath Stamps 100 for \$1.00
- Home Bible Study Series (13-lesson book) \$1.50 each or \$12.00 per doz.

- Book, *History of the Sabbath & Sunday* (Kiesz) \$2.95
- Book, *From Sabbath to Sunday* (Bacchiocchi) \$8.00
- Book, *Divine Rest For Human Restlessness* (Bacchiocchi) \$8.00
- SABBATH DIRECTORY \$4.95
- Back issues of *Sabbath Sentinel* (1980-1981) 50 for \$5.00
- Bible on Cassette (loan - postage only)
- Book, *Right Face* (Lincoln) 2 for \$1.00
- Tracts and leaflets (some 20 titles) Samples free

(Note: Cost of literature is so uncertain because of continuing inflation that we have discontinued pricing the tracts and leaflets. A contribution in the amount of FIVE DOLLARS or more per pound of literature desired would be most appropriate and deeply appreciated.)

THE BIBLE SABBATH ASSOCIATION
Fairview, Oklahoma 73737

**NO. 107. AN ACT TO AMEND
TITLE 13, CHAPTER 74
RELATING TO A COMMON
DAY OF REST.**

(S.19)

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont: Sec. 1. 13 V.S.A. 3352 is amended to read:

3352 PURPOSE

The purposes of this chapter include the establishment of a common day of rest by significantly reducing commercial activity one day a week so that individuals may relax and pursue social, recreational and family activities; to provide that services and activities which are necessary for the public health, safety and good order are not disrupted during a common day of rest; to promote the economic health of small business enterprises which are essential and fundamental to the economy of the state by creating a commercial environment which allows small businesses the choice of enjoying the benefits of a common day of rest; and to promote the conservation of energy resources.

Sec. 2 13 V.S.A. 3353 is amended to read:

**3353. PROHIBITION OF
SUNDAY BUSINESS AND
LABOR**

It shall be unlawful on Sundays, January 1, July 4, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, except for the Sundays between Thanksgiving and



Christmas, for any person, firm or corporation:

(1) to engage in or conduct business or labor for profit in the usual manner and location, or to operate a place of business open to the public; or

(2) to cause, direct, or authorize any employee or agent to engage in or conduct business or labor for profit in the usual manner and location, or to operate a place of business open to the public.

Sec. 3. 13 V.S.A. 3354a is added to read:

**3354a. ALTERNATIVE DAY OF
REST**

The prohibition against doing business or laboring on Sunday shall

Mont Sunday Law

TS, 1981 SESSION



not apply to:

(1) any natural person who in good faith observes a day other than Sunday as the Sabbath, if he refrains from engaging in or conducting business or labor for profit and closes his place of business to the public on that day; and

(2) any business which conducts operations through a single corporation, if substantially all the stock of such corporation is owned by persons who, in good faith, observe a day other than Sunday as the Sabbath and who regularly work primarily at the place of business of the corporation, and if the corporation refrains from engaging in or conducting business for profit

and closes its place of business to the public on that day.

Sec. 4. 13 V.S.A. 3355 is amended to read:

3355. EXEMPTIONS

(a) Nothing in section 3353 shall apply to:

(1) activities which cannot be prohibited under the constitution of the United States or Vermont;

(2) any person, nonprofit organization, or nonprofit corporation that engages in or conducts business or labor, or keeps open its place of business to the public, if the activities of the enterprise are conducted solely for charitable or religious purposes;

(3) any federal, state, municipal or local government department or agency, or its employees, acting in an official capacity;

(4) sales of property by persons not engaged in the sale, transfer, or exchange of such property as a business;

(5) any person, firm or corporation performing acts necessary for the public health and safety;

(6) stores which have no more than 5,000 square feet of interior customer selling space, excluding back room storage, office and processing space;

(7) any business only to the extent that it is engaged in the following:

(A) emergency services,

including but not limited to plumbing, heating, cooling, mechanical and electrical repairs and the distribution of fuels;

(B) the operation of hospitals and nursing homes;

(C) dispensaries of drugs and medicines;

(D) ambulance and burial services;

(E) the operation of public utilities;

(F) water, air and land transportation or shipping and attendant facilities, including automobile service stations;

(G) plant and industrial protection services;

(H) continuous or regular services which are required by the very nature of the service involved; continuous or regular processing which is required by the very nature of the process involved.;

(I) agriculture, timbering, or processing of agricultural products, seasonal stands engaged in the sale of farm products;

(J) newspaper publication and distribution, radio and TV broadcasting, motion pictures, theatrical and musical performances;

(K) educational lectures, forums and exhibits and the operation of libraries;

(L) the operation of restaurants, cafeterias, vending machines and catering services, and automatic self-service laundries;

(M) the operation of hotels, motels, rooming houses, tourist homes, trailer camps and other lodging facilities;

(N) recreational and athletic events and facilities, including parks, beaches, ski areas, tourist attractions, amusement centers, craft shows, fairs, zoos and museums;

(O) the sale of recreational, sporting and gardening equipment and supplies by stores primarily engaged in the sale of such equipment and supplies;

(P) auctions and the sale of souvenirs, novelties or the products of craftsmen;

(Q) the operation of fraternal and service organizations;

(R) general construction work and manufacturing when time is of the essence; or

(S) the sale of real estate.

(b) For the purposes of subdivisions (6) and (7) (0) of this section, a store shall be deemed to be any operation conducted with one building advertising as, and representing itself to the public to be, one business enterprise regardless of internal departmentalization or the division of the building into separately owned or leased sales units; and enclosed shopping malls wherein a person may exit one sales unit and enter another without first having to remove himself out-of-doors provided that the enclosed shopping mall has more than 20,000 square feet or any individual sales unit therein exceeds the criteria of (a) (6).

Sec. 5. 13 V.S.A. 3357 is added to read:

3357. INJUNCTIVE RELIEF

Notwithstanding any of the criminal penalties provided in this chapter, the attorney general or a state's attorney may file a complaint in the superior court to enjoin any violations of this chapter.

Sec. 6. 13 V.S.A. 3358 is added to read:

3358. SEVERABILITY CLAUSE

The provisions of this chapter are severable. If any provision of this chapter, any exemption therefrom,

or any application thereof to any person or circumstance is invalid, the invalidity shall not affect other provisions, exemptions or applications which can be given effect without the invalid provision, exemption or application.

Sec. 7. REPEAL

13 V.S.A. 3354 is repealed.

Sec. 8. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect from passage.

Effective: May 14, 1981.



Looks At Books

Conducted by Kirstian Kristiansen

Bill Stringfellow: *All in the Name of the Lord*. Published by Concerned Publications, Box 1024, Clermont, Florida 32711. 1981. 172 pp. \$2.95.

Concerned Publications is a small, nonprofit company that I doubt many of you have ever heard about.

That, frankly, is a misfortune.

It is a long time, indeed, since I have been so pleasantly surprised in reading a book about the Sabbath.

Bill Stringfellow tells his personal story of how he came to be challenged by an acquaintance to come up with just one Bible text showing Sunday — and not the Sabbath (Saturday) — to be the day of rest enjoined upon New Testament Christians. Although he was a minister, he was unable to quote even a single text. His embarrassment led him into an in-depth study, as a result

of which he came to change his views drastically.

In this book he presents his findings and does so in a fastmoving, interest-filled manner. If you would like to rediscover the world's greatest fraud as it unfolds from Creation to this present date, see the inside story of how Satan has succeeded in selling his counterfeit teachings to almost the entire world, and learn about the conglomerate of religious organizations that will help bring earth's last conflict, the battle of Armageddon, *then* you simply have no choice.

You simply have to buy this book.

Please send copies of books to be reviewed to Kristian Kristiansen, Box 705, DK-5230, Odense M, Denmark.

ORCHIDS and ONIONS

Sar far I have seen nothing but good come from the attempts of brethren to communicate despite differences. Many, of course, get angry and upset at such things, but I don't think they come to much harm. Usually they just close their minds and walk away, believing what they always did . . .

Please send me a list of books from your lending library covering the Sabbath and Creation.

—Howard M. Mesick,
Hartley, Del.

Could I please make a correction to "Another Comment on Pictures of Deity" in your February issue? The article incorrectly reads that pictures of pagan gods were given a name change and transferred into the Christian church along with Christians. This should read "along with Christmas, Sunday worship, etc."

—Jean Dench
Gilgandra, N.S.W., Australia



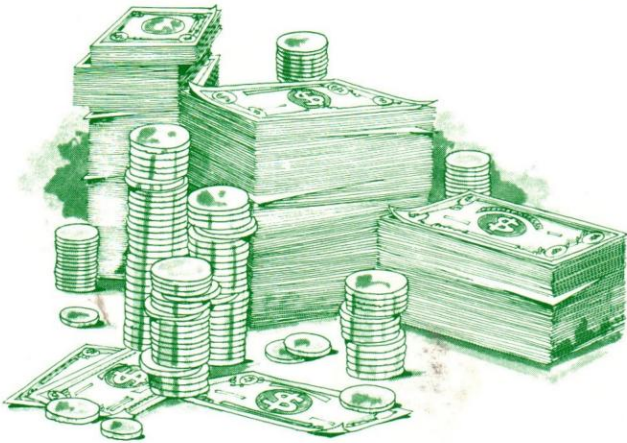
I have read numerous good words of your writing, and I'm sorry for the sarcastic replay made to the "name withheld" who feels his group "has all the truth." . . . Your reply was exactly what I would have been *tempted* to say, but no one (you or I) should response without gentleness and love. I trust that you have already felt embarrassed by your hasty comment.

—Ira Bond,
Nortonville, Kans.

(Editor's Note: You're right. After seeing it in print, I didn't feel it was so smart after all.)

“The Collection for the Saints”

by R.L. Jantz



Acts 20:7 and 1 Corinthians 16:2 have been coupled together to formulate the missing link between the early Catholic writers and the first-century Christians. Actually there are no “first day of the week” passages in any of the early manuscripts. These are interpretations of the time of the event as given by translators who were already well entrenched in the Sunday concept.

All the first-of-the-week passages except 1 Corinthians 16:2 were written to record an event. Here we have something that was to be done at a certain time. It was not the first *day* of the week any more than it was the first *night* of the week. It was simply “the first of the week,” or the first thing after the Sabbath.

The first of the week begins on Saturday evening if we allow the Creator’s example to be our guide (see Genesis 1:5). “There was evening and there was morning, one day”

(RSV). This is stated no less than six times, showing us without question the Creator’s desire to have the evening come before the morning. Since the time was not the first (day) of the week but rather “the first of the week” and since the day began in the evening, the week also began in the evening. This was the time when activity began after the Sabbath was over at sunset.

Notice the Greek text in 1 Corinthians 16:2: “Kata mian sabbaton.” One must certainly use his imagination to come up with “upon the first day of the week,” since ‘kata’ is usually translated “after.” Notice also where this is to be done: *Par heautou*. We get our English word *parallel* from the Greek *para*, meaning alongside, and the word *auto*, which we know means “self.” They were to lay this gift up “alongside self,” or as Thayer puts it, “at his home.”

Are you guilty according to the evidence?

Which Verdict?

By Pastor Bill Shobe

A THOUGHT-PROVOKING question has been directed to me on several occasions: "If it were a crime to be a Christian, would there be enough evidence in your life for you to be found guilty and convicted?"

This is a question that all Christians should ask themselves periodically. Does my life really show enough of Jesus for people to see a difference? Am I truly light and salt in the world? Our honest response can be very sobering.

It occurred to me recently that the same question could be posed relative to the Sabbath: "If it were a crime to keep the Sabbath, would there be enough evidence in your life style for you to be found guilty and convicted?" This also is a question we need to ask ourselves seriously as we pray that other Christians, both as individuals and groups, will be convicted of the Sabbath truth. Is the Sabbath truth really an important part of our beliefs?

One time mere absence from Sunday church attendance or labor on Sunday would indicate that a person might be a Sabbathkeeper. This is no longer the case, as many seldom attend church or regularly work on Sunday. Evidence to convict us of Sabbathkeeping must deal with the special, peculiar way in which we anticipate and celebrate the Sabbath. A prosecutor, for example, might use

the following in his cross examination:

1. *Does the suspect look forward to the Sabbath throughout the week? Does he/she prepare for it, so that it will be a day free of unessential chores?*

2. *Does the suspect consider the Sabbath a holy day, set apart for focus on God and service to others? Does he keep his Sabbath conviction in mind when seeking employment and avoid labor on that day? Does he gather with other suspects for worship and fellowship on that day?*

3. *Does the suspect have a positive attitude about the Sabbath? Is it important to him? Does he share his beliefs freely and positively with others? Does he know why he keeps the Sabbath?*

If it were illegal to be a Sabbathkeeper, according to the above, would we be found guilty? As we seek through prayer and fasting that others will be convicted of the Sabbath, we also need to reflect on the depth of our conviction and the quality of our witness.

"Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, what is *your* verdict? Guilty or not guilty?"

Bill Shobe is the pastor of the Seventh Day Baptist Church in Atlanta, Ga.

Just Suppose

LESTER OWENS

As a small child I used to play a game called "just suppose," why not try this game now regarding Sunday, the first day of the week? It will turn out to be very interesting in our New Testament study.

1. **Now just suppose** Luke 4:16 said "He came to Nazareth, where had been brought up; and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the first day of the week, and stood up to read."

But does it say that? No, it says "the sabbath day," which we call Saturday, or the seventh day of the week.

2. **Suppose** Luke 23:56 said, "And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the first day of the week according to the new commandment."

Does it say that? No, it says "they rested the sabbath day according to the commandment." How could they keep it if the Sabbath had been abolished and nailed to the cross? Remember, this was written many years after the cross. These women were very close to Jesus, and they should have known what He taught.

3. **Just suppose** that Mark 2:28 said, "The Son of man is Lord of the first day of the week." Would not Sunday observers say, "Here is your proof. Sunday is the Lord's Day."

Does it say that? No, it says that He is Lord of the Sabbath day. Yes, the very Sabbath Day, the seventh day of Creation He blessed and made holy and sacred.

Where is the record that He took the blessing off of that day? To be honest, we will have to admit that there is none. Remember that this was written down many years after the Messiah died and rose again. If

He was Lord of the Sabbath day then, He is still the Lord of the Sabbath day.

4. **Just suppose** that Acts 13:14 said that Paul went into the synagogue on the first day of the week. Again it does not say the first day of the week but the Sabbath.

Now you might say that they were Jews and naturally would meet on the Sabbath not believing that Jesus was the Messiah. Verse 44 in this chapter, however, says the next Sabbath almost the whole town came to listen to Paul. They were not Jews, and if it was the practice of the disciples to keep the first day of the week, it looks like they would have encouraged the people to meet with them on the first day of the week. There is no record in the Bible of their doing anything like this.

5. **Just suppose** Acts 16:13 said, "And on the first day of the week we went out. . . by a river side to worship." Since this was not in a synagogue, it seems they could have met any day they wanted to. But it still says "the sabbath." Still no mention of any change of the day of worship.

Ecclesiastes 3:14 says, "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him." So God's blessing still remains on the Sabbath day.

6. In Acts 18:1-11, it tells that Paul was in Corinth for a year and a half. **Just suppose** verse 4 read, "Paul reasoned and preached every first day of the week, or Sunday." Would not our Sunday observers say, "Here is the proof for Sunday keeping." It still says "every Sabbath." Here are about 78

Sabbaths that Paul preached and many other places he preached on the Sabbath.

The book of Acts contains only one record of Paul's preaching on the first day of the week; and since he preached as long as he could and still have time to meet a boat on which he was to sail, he would have done this no matter what day of the week it was. It was not up to Paul to set the sailing date of the boat. We have a record of about a hundred days that Paul preached on the Sabbath and only one that he preached on the first day of the week. With a score like that in a ball game, there would be no doubt as to which side won.

7. Let us consider a little more about the only meeting in the book of Acts that was on the first day of the week. "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" (Acts 20:7).

Many Bible scholars believe this was what we would call a Saturday night meeting. If they came together after sunset on what we call Saturday night, that would be on the first day of the week according to the Bible way of recording time. If they came together, say, on Sunday afternoon and ate and then Paul preached after sunset and preached most of the night, there would still be no contradiction in this text.

At any rate this meeting was governed not by what day they observed but by what day the boat sailed. Paul stayed just as long as he could and still have time to meet his boat.

Some think that this breaking of bread was a communion supper. It may have been; but if they broke bread when they first came together, then they ate again after the young man fell and was healed.

This must have been about midnight. Since they stayed together for many hours, they no doubt got hungry.

There still is no command for any establishment of a custom. There is no record of the disciples' doing this before or since. This, then, was a special occasion.

8. Now let us go far beyond in time of the New Testament, and **just suppose** that God prophesied concerning the New Earth in Isaiah 66:22, 23: "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that, from one new moon to another, and from one first day of the week to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord.

Now **just suppose** that is the way it read, would not our Sunday-observing friends say that this is proof enough that we should keep Sunday now, as we will keep it for all eternity? But it plainly says "from one sabbath to another," and we cannot change what God has spoken.

Where is the scripture for Sunday keeping? It is not in the Bible, but it is only a vain tradition of man. What did Jesus say about vain traditions? "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men," (Mark 7:7). God's saints are described in Revelation 14:12 like this: "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

Jesus is our example, (1 John 2:6) Jesus kept the Sabbath, (Luke 4:16). Paul did also, (Acts 18:4). Let us obey God rather than man, as Peter and the other apostles said they did (Acts 5:29). We cannot do wrong if we do what Jesus did and obey what He said to do.

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We are sorry that the article "Gød Is Boss" on page 10 of the May *SENTINEL* credited to Wilbur Fody should have said "by Wilbur Foor."

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Some Sabbath Quotations . . .

Sabbathkeeping has not produced character and Christian life so exalted so as to compel faith in its importance. This it ought to have done, if it be what we believe it is.

—A. H. Lewis

The Sabbath, if it is to be meaningful in a day of shifting patterns and values, must find its meaning not in the traditions of our denomination or any denomination, but in the spiritual experience that it brings to our lives as the people of God.

—C. Rex Burdick

No other day than the seventh can meet the higher demands of this law, since no other day can keep God in mind through this commemorative sacredness.

—A. H. Lewis

Classified Ads

We the members of the Church of od 7th Day of Sergief Island, Alaska, would like to hear from fellow Christians who believe in and uphold the Law of God — including the sixth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." We believe that this commandment is broken constantly by the organized murder of war.

We believe when one is motivated by the Holy Spirit that he (she) will shun to aid and abet earth's war machine and positively will not don a uniform of this nation or any

nation.

We believe that it is high time a church conference of this persuasion be started here in America. We hereby establish such a conference for God's church. Your prayers are coveted. Those who will join with us please write Elder Lloyd V. Orth, P.O. Box 1171, Wrangell, AK 99929.

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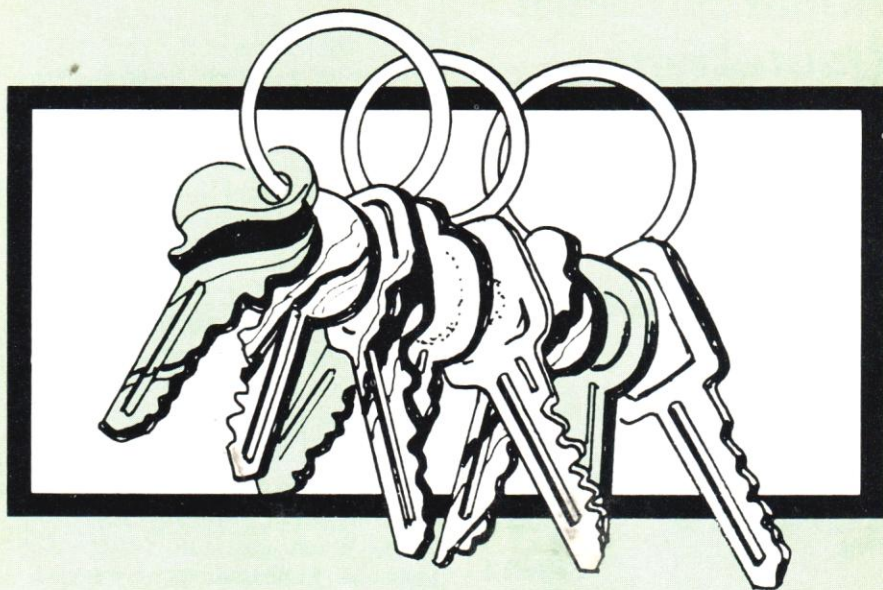
Virginia H. Gushwa, 1338 Astor Way, Woodburn, OR 97071. 62-year-old Sabbathkeeper, married. Enjoy Bible study, letter writing, music, postmark collecting. Not isolated; just enjoy correspondence.

Mrs. Laura E. Williams, 17 W. Townsend, McAlester, OK 74501. Lonely 78-year-old widow. Very strict commandment keeper, undenominational, vegetarian. No others of like faith near.

Jacob Miller, 813 Lawrence Drive, Waco, TX 76710. Want pen pal in Australia, as I hope to move there as soon as I graduate from a Texas university. I am 34 years old, single, and a Vietnam veteran.

Note: This pen pal column is conducted to help Sabbathkeepers to know about each other and to relieve the isolation of many who have no one nearby with whom they can fellowship. There is no charge for having your name listed. Please give pertinent information on a postal card (no more than 50 words) and send it to The Sabbath Sentinel, 1109 Holton Lane, Takoma Park, MD 20912.

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