

The SABBATH SENTINEL

Serving the Seventh-day Christian Community

August, 1990



EDITORIAL

Why They Come -- Why They Stay

People visit churches for a variety of reasons. They may be attracted because of a doctrinal teaching (the Sabbath, for example). They may visit because a close friend or relative invited them. They may attend because they're curious, because they've heard the preaching is dynamic, or because they're searching for a place for their children to have fellowship.

But how does a group motivate visitors to continue coming?

Some groups use the activity approach. They work very hard to get new people involved in various activities--Bible studies, outreach programs, community services, etc.

Others use the guilt approach. They teach that church attendance is a divine command, and that anyone who fails to attend is less than righteous. They make absentees feel guilty with a subtle "Where were you last Sabbath?" or a more direct "We're afraid you're falling away."

Then, there's the "we only" or the "we're the best" attitude. These groups speak critically of all others--claiming that theirs is the only one that is truly serving God, or that theirs is serving God most effectively. Some lay it on the line: "Make your choice. Make a commitment to attend here regularly or go somewhere else." A few even go so far as to teach that anyone who doesn't attend with them is serving the devil.

Many congregations actually work to scare visitors away--not consciously, of course. They make newcomers feel like they're intruding on a happy, private affair; subtly conveying the message: "We're all one big happy family and you're a stranger; we'll be more comfortable when you leave."

The activity approach may work for a while, but eventually people begin to feel used or just plain worn out. The guilt and "we only" approaches wear thin when people start thinking for themselves and realize that there's more to God and to spiritual growth than regular attendance with one church.

But there is one approach that works over the long haul. If visitors feel that they are loved, they'll come back. If they feel they are really wanted and accepted, they'll return. If they sense that a group is continually extending open arms to newcomers, they'll keep coming. If they feel that they can grow spiritually, that they can minister to others and be ministered to themselves, they'll want to be a part of the congregation.

God doesn't force us to obey Him; He wants children who serve him because they love him, because they choose to love him, because they are overwhelmed by His love for them.

We can follow His example in our local assemblies. Let the magnitude of God's love flow through us so that others are enticed into our fellowship.

--Richard A. Wiedenheft

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

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

Part 4 of 4

The Old Testament Sabbath

by Rodney Nelson

Editor's note: In the previous article the author discussed the Sabbath as a sign of Yahweh's covenant with Israel and as a time of worship. This concluding article deals with the Sabbath of the Old Testament as test of obedience; it also focuses on the spirit of Sabbath observance as intended by Yahweh. All four articles in this series were taken from a research paper for a college course in Old Testament studies. The works cited by author and page number are listed at the end of the article.

The Sabbath as a Test of Obedience

The fourth function which will be discussed is the Sabbath as a test of obedience. This is an often overlooked aspect of the Old Testament Sabbath, but one which was very important. The first instance of the Sabbath being seen in the context of a test is Exodus 16:23-30. This entire passage has a couple of pertinent things to say. First, despite the fact that the food which was saved was preserved from spoilage (v. 24), the people still went out to look for more food (v. 27). This was done even though they were told no food would be found (v. 25). Second, God tells Moses that the Sabbath is a gift from Yahweh to Israel (v. 29). Despite this they stubbornly went about their business as if nothing was said. The themes of gift and preservation are vital in this context. They are in the wilderness with no means of sustenance except for the graciousness of Yahweh, yet they continue to doubt His trustworthiness and graciousness. Though he gives them enough, they want more. Thus, the test arises for Israel as to how they will react to God in a time of desperate need. The Sabbath becomes in this context a gracious gift to be obeyed for Israel's

own welfare. They do not have to worry about getting enough food for that one day because God would graciously give a double portion the previous day.

The very first time we have a human response to the Sabbath portrayed, the 'test' nature of the day is stressed. . . Note v. 4 in all modern versions where the word 'test' is used with reference to the holy day. (Ford 144).

What is further significant in this chapter is that the Sabbath is seen prior to the Decalogue, yet "the people of Israel were (being) trained in the keeping of the Sabbath as a day in which there was no need to do the daily chore since the Lord had provided for them a rest" (Dressler 24). In Exodus 16 the Sabbath is seen as a "testing ground of man's relationship with God. . . A refusal to keep the seventh day Sabbath means a refusal to obey God's will as expressed in His commandments and laws" (Hasel 27). Thus, Exodus 16 provided for Israel an initial test of obedience with the Sabbath as a focal point. However, the Sabbath would remain a test of obedience, as well as the entire law, well into the future.

The Sabbath as a test in Israel's

future is especially brought out in Jeremiah 17:21-22 and Nehemiah 13:17-18. At this point in time the test was covenant fidelity. Would Israel show fidelity to the covenant or spurn it? The Sabbath becomes a test in that the desecration of it symbolized and was in connection with the overall disobedience to the entire law. In Jeremiah and Nehemiah the Sabbath was treated as any other day of the week. Buying and selling proceeded at a furious pace and all sacredness was lost in the frenzy for a profit. God through His prophets rebuked this sacrilege.

But if you are careful to obey me, declares the Lord, and bring no load through the gates of this city on the Sabbath, but keep the Sabbath day holy by not doing any work on it, then kings who sit on David's throne will come through the gates of this city with their officials. They and their officials will come riding in chariots and on horses, accompanied by the men of Judah and those living in Jerusalem, and this city will be inhabited forever. (Jer. 17:24-25).

"The far-reaching implications of the Sabbath test become apparent on reflection. According to Jer. 17, if Jerusalem had observed the Sabbath, the city would have stood forever" (Ford 144).

The fact that Israel was profaning the Sabbath by engaging in worldly matters signified how far they were from Yahweh. It would have been one thing to periodically do it, but it was so rampant and common-place that they did not even see the harm it was doing to their covenant loyalty.

A holy day is profaned when it is considered like any other day, lacking any special significance. Such profaning can be done if one continues to work

on the Sabbath as one does on any other day. . . . As Israel developed into a commercial nation, an additional prohibition would forbid carrying wares and goods into the community to sell. (Dressler 27).

Thus, Israel did not develop its covenant loyalty through time. The exile had so desensitized them in Jerusalem that when Nehemiah arrived he closed the gates. Such was the state of affairs. As can be seen, the Sabbath became a perfect indicator of Israel's covenant fidelity or disloyalty. The Sabbath as test became a gauge through which Yahweh could witness characteristically Israel's fidelity or disloyalty. It seems that Israel's condition could be diagnosed by her obedience to the Sabbath commandment.

The Spirit of Sabbath Observance

Any discussion about the Sabbath in the Old Testament would not be complete without dealing with the spirit of Sabbath observance. It is at this point that one begins to see the real value in the Old Testament Sabbath. It is also at this point that much of the misconception arises regarding the purpose and function of the Old Testament Sabbath. In this section we will attempt to see the original intent of the Sabbath, especially in regard to the motive for observing it. Also, a discussion of the legalistic tendencies which arose in Sabbath observance will be handled.

The magic of Sabbath observance is found in its original intent for man. The first thing which must be stated regarding the Sabbath in the Old Testament is that it was not originally meant to be a legalistic-ritualistic dogma. It was not to simply be a day in which man was to conform to a dead set of rules and regulations. The Sabbath was to live and have meaning.

The keeping holy of the seventh day forms an emphatic reminder that God is the Lord of Time, and that no business, however pressing, must be allowed to keep men from regularly seeking his fellowship; but the joyful character of the day of rest also brings home to the worshipper that his God is a kindly Master, who does not lay on men a yoke too heavy to bear. (Eichrodt 1: 131-33).

As Eichrodt further points out (1: 131-33), the above fact is not often recognized. However, the Sabbath as a day of joy in which no yoke was too heavy to bear for the God of grace is not the typical picture we have of this day of rest.

The true spirit of Sabbath observance consisted of entering "into this day with a thankful spirit, praising God's loving loyalty and faithfulness, proclaiming the omnipotence and righteousness of Yahweh, at the same time keeping justice and doing righteousness as his covenant people" (Dressler 33). Truly, the Sabbath day was a day of *Shalom!* The Sabbath was never meant to be a burden to Israel or anyone who observed it. The only "burden" which the Sabbath ideally consisted of was doing *mishpat* and *hesed* to others. There was simply no excuse on the part of Israel to later make the day a legalistic burden. The spirit of Sabbath observance was mercy, peace, longsuffering, service, worship, sharing, kindness, freedom, and love. God meant the Sabbath to be an extension of His own love and care so that man could find rest in that love.

Sabbath observance was never meant to be divided from faith. In fact, Sabbath observance was meant to stem from a faith relationship with Yahweh. From the earliest history of Israel, God had been attempting to find faith in the house

of Jacob. However, the faith He pursued was given back in apostasy and rebellion. Hasel and Murdoch express it well by stating that the "Sabbathkeeper will delight in God, because true Sabbathkeeping cannot be separated from a genuine faith relationship with the Lord of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is not a burdensome, ritualistic, and legalistic institution. It is the sign of God's lordship over the Sabbathkeeper" (49). Faith and Lordship are the essence of truly Biblical religion. The Sabbath in the Old Testament was meant to express the Lordship of Yahweh over the creation and as Lord of Israel.

Sadly, the Sabbath's true purpose and intent was eroded by the human tendency to legalism. The Sabbath was later made into nothing but rules and regulations to be obeyed without a real heart response. "It was not until in later Judaism a religion of harsh observance had replaced the religion of the Old Testament that the Sabbath changed from a blessing to a burdensome duty" (Eichrodt 1: 133). Notice the contrast existing in the above statement. It was later Judaism which "replaced" the Old Testament meaning of the Sabbath. Apparently, the period of time that this occurred was during the Exile and post-exilic era.

What was occurring during this period was the total misrepresentation of true Sabbath observance. Rather than observing the Sabbath as a sign of the covenant, Israel observed it as a national religious holiday (Dressler 33). Rather than viewing the Sabbath as a privilege, they viewed it as a deprivation. Rather than fellowshiping with God, they saw it as hardship and inconvenience. Rather than worshiping freely, they made the Sabbath a day of bondage. Rather than seeing Sabbath as a day of freedom, they viewed it as

bondage to legalism (Dressler 35). Hence, the spirit of the law was forgotten. The law became a means to an end. "Keeping the Sabbath was not simply an external affair; it was a spiritual attitude as well, since every Sabbath celebration was, in a sense, a renewal of the covenant relationship" (Dressler 33). This was forgotten and forsaken by Israel which doomed her to legalistic obedience.

The attitude of the prophets to the desecration of the Sabbath was to hearken back to the ideal covenant relationship as expressed during Mosaic times. Time after time the prophets stressed the covenant relationship set up between God and Moses as the ideal for Israel. Israel should reclaim this forsaken heritage in order to preserve her election. Ezra and Nehemiah, upon returning from the exile, found a completely disorganized kingdom of Judah. They sought to rectify the situation by reinterpreting the Torah to meet the needs of that day. When they had to they not only reinterpreted old traditions, but made new regulations of holiness and spirituality. "They applied a progressive approach also to the Sabbath, a basic institution of Judaism" (Barack 17).

With Ezekiel and Nehemiah, as we have seen, the Sabbath became a sign of the covenant.

On the whole, therefore, there is no impoverishment of the Sabbath in this literature, whereby the Sabbath is relegated to 'mere law.' There is, rather, an enrichment of it, involving the collection of old laws, formulation and reformulation of new laws, as well as creative theological reflection upon them. (Andreasen 234).

The focus of the prophets was to reinvoke Old Testament traditions of the Sabbath and renew the community by doing so.

However, the stressing of the prophets also proved in the end to lead to nothing more than more extreme forms of legalism. By the time of Christ, the Sabbath had become such a burden, due to the schools of Shammai and Hillel, that the Old Testament Sabbath was almost forgotten regarding its true intent and purpose. It was left to Jesus to clarify and reinterpret Sabbath observance and point to its original meaning.

To sum up the true spirit of Sabbath observance and what it truly means one must turn to Isaiah 58:13-14.

If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath and from doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight and the Lord's holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words, then you will find your joy in the Lord, and I will cause you to ride on the heights of the land and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob. The mouth of the Lord has spoken.

This is truly the genuine spirit of Sabbath observance.

One could analyze further the perversion of this spirit by legalism, but that would defeat the purpose. The object of discussing legalism is to see how such a wonderful revelation as the Sabbath could be so distorted to meet man's own lust and greed. Truly, the Sabbath was the number one institution of the Old Testament which felt the horror of Israel's perversion and apostasy. While they were observing it ritualistically, people were starving and justice was dead. Only God could see the horror of it all.

The Sabbath is a misunderstood institution even to this day. The original spirit of Sabbath observance was one of freedom, peace, joy, and

love toward Yahweh. Legalism almost destroyed this meaning by focusing Israel's attention of herself and flipping law and grace on its head. We now conclude with a portion of Psalm 92 which is a psalm for the Sabbath.

It is good to praise the Lord and make music to your name, O Most High, to proclaim your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night, to the music of the ten-stringed lyre and the melody of the harp. For you make me glad by your deeds, O Lord; I sing for joy at the works of your hand. How great are your works, O Lord, how profound your thoughts! (verses 1-5).

After receiving his master's degree from Northwest Christian College in the spring

of 1991, the author plans to enroll in a seminary. He hopes this paper can help many to see the Sabbath in the context of grace rather than legalism.

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Roman Catholic and Protestant Confessions about Sunday

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James Ockford, Banned in Britain

by Don A. Sanford

The first known writing for the seventh-day Sabbath by a Baptist was published in London, England, in 1650, with the title, *The Doctrine of the Fourth Commandment, Deformed by Popery; Reformed & Restored to its Primitive purity*. In his introduction, James Ockford wrote:

"Out of a true devotion to God, and sincere affection to thee; I have presented to thy consideration, a duty, which my conscience telleth me, thou ought to perform to the Lord thy God, for the furtherance of his honour and thy salvation. Namely the duty of Observation and Sanctification of the Lord's seventh day-Sabbath (the day called Saturday) commanded by the Lord himself, Exod. 20:8. Which duty we and our Fathers have neglected neer 1300 Yeers."

According to information sleuthed out by Rev. Oscar C. Burdick, associate librarian for collection development at the Graduate Theological Union Library in Berkeley, California, a letter in the library at Oxford University from the mayor of Salisbury dated February 27, 1649 (Julian) reports that a packet of copies of Ockford's book was seized at Salisbury. The mayor asked the Speaker of the English Parliament what should be done with a book which undermined the observance of the "Lord's Day." The letter was read to Parliament, who acted in typical legislative manner—they referred it to a committee. About a week later the committee reported back, recommending that the book be burned and that the author and publisher be punished.

The proclamation of Parliament, under the heading *Die Veneris, 8 Martii, 1649*, reads:

"Mr. Milligan Reports from the Committee of Plundered Ministers, the matter of Fact touching the Book entitled, *The Doctrine of the Fourth Commandement Deformed by Popery, Reformed & Restored to its Primitive purity, &c.* And examination of Augustine Nicholas, Servant to Gertrude Dawson, Printer of said Book for James Oakeford; and the examination of John Hide.

Resolved by Parliament,
That this Book (entitled, *The*

Doctrine of the Fourth Commandement. . .) asserting the observation of the Jewish Sabbath, and condemning the observation of the Lords day as the Christian Sabbath, is Erroneous, Scandalous and Prophane, contrary to the practice of the Apostles, and all the Christian Churches.

Resolved by Parliament,

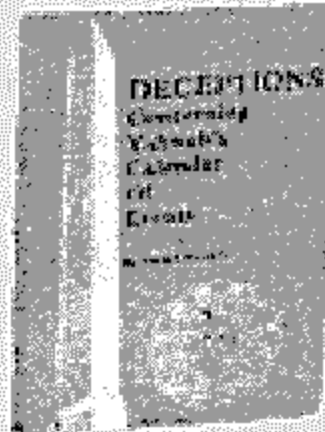
That all the Printed Copies of the said Books be burnt; and that the Marshall be required to do the same at the Exchange and in Cheap-side.

Resolved by Parliament,

That all Printed Copies of the said Book, wheresoever they shall be found in England and Wales, shall be brought to the Chief Magistrate of the place where the same shall be found, who is hereby required and enjoined to cause the same to be burnt accordingly.

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one copy can be learned much of the beliefs and attitudes of the early Sabbathkeeping Baptists of the mid-seventeenth century who eventually became known as Seventh Day Baptists.

James Ockford assures his readers that he is fully Christian, saying, "I am no Jew, nor inclined to any Jewish opinions; I seek not righteousness by the law, but by faith in the Son of God, according to the Gospel." He saw the Sabbath as a delight and a joy, stating, "Happy shall the church be, that worshippeth God according to his law, and giveth him his due, by placing on the seventh day, the honour which God requireth to be performed on it."

In this book on the Sabbath, Ockford does not specifically identify himself as a Baptist. However, in 1652, one of Ockford's opponents,

Daniel Cawdry, refers to him as a "Sabbatarian Anabaptist." The name *Anabaptist*, at this time in England, was the term often used for Baptists by their opponents. Possibly this is the same James Oakeford which the 1631 city records of Salisbury lists as being among the "Anabaptists" who had been absent from the parish church service. The spelling of his name is the same as that which was used on Parliament's proclamation banning his book.

Oscar Burdick has secured a copy of this book. It and a copy of the proclamation of Parliament have recently been added to the library of the Seventh Day Baptist Historical Society.

Reprinted from *The Sabbath Recorder*, July 1987. The author, a retired teacher, serves as SDB historian.

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More Pastors-- Less Growth

Editor's Note: The following was written with the Seventh-day Adventist Church in view. However, the point the author makes is undoubtedly applicable to many Sabbathkeeping groups--indeed to many Christian groups.

In North America we often get a slanted view of what a pastor is supposed to do, attributable, I'm sure, to the fact that we "enjoy" the second-highest pastor-to-member ration (1:242) of the 10 world divisions [of the SDA Church] and the highest pastor-to-church ration (1:1.15). We also "enjoy" the second-worst growth rate. Compare these figures with Eastern Africa, where they have only one pastor for every 1,023 members and 4.3 churches, and have the highest growth rate in the Adventist Church.

tics reckon only officially organized churches, not the thousands of additional church companies pastors must minister to.

Yes, money is the answer to providing more pastors, but that may not be the answer for church growth. In fact, the statistics alone say the opposite—that where the church has the fewest pastors, it is growing the fastest!

It is the laypeople, struck by the gospel commission, who are joyously administering thousands of churches, holding tens of thousands of evangelistic crusades, and bringing hundreds of thousands of individuals to Christ.

Would we dare say, then, that to help the church grow in certain areas, particularly the Westernized countries with low growth, the best scenario for the church would be to *reduce* the number of pastors and allow, or expect, the members to pick up the work?

In Western nations, we essentially have become lazy, pampered churches. We have degenerated into an unhealthy mode of ministry that relies heavily upon paid, full-time pastors to run our churches and to do our ministry for us. What seems right to us is wrong. Look at the other nations where growth is occurring. It is the laypeople who are ministering, not expecting to be pampered by their pastors, *but to be put to work by them*. Ellen G. White is right in saying that the laypeople will finish the work (see *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 117).

The answer to greater church growth is not more pastors for our members, rather greater expectations from our laypeople. I believe they will rise to meet the challenge!

—Excerpted from *Adventist Review*, Oct. 12, 1989;
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As you apply for a job. . . .

When Do You Bite the Bullet and Tell All?

By Mitchell A. Tyner

Where do you draw the line between honesty and naivete? Sometimes it isn't easy, no matter how well-intentioned you may be.

Suppose, for instance, that you are a journeyman califragist, and you answer an advertisement placed by Acme Widget Corporation seeking to hire califragists. Acme is a large transnational corporation involved in a wide variety of manufacturing, wholesale and retail activities. As a califragist you might be employed in a wide variety of these activities. You are aware that some divisions of Acme operate seven days a week, around the clock, while others work a normal five-day week. You are thus aware that a potential problem with Sabbath observance exists.

The pre-employment questionnaire you fill out asks the normal questions: education, work experience, salary history. It does not ask about the hours you are available for work.

During the interview that follows, the personnel officer goes over much of the same material requested on the questionnaire. She discusses the operation of the various divisions in which califragists are needed, and indicates the general hours of operation of each division. She does not indicate a particular division to which you might be assigned nor does she inquire as to your availability to work any particular shift.

Two days later you are asked to return to Acme to meet Jonathan Jackboot, the personnel manager. Mr. Jackboot discusses salaries and fringe benefits, then offers you a job.

You would be one of a team of 16 califragists supervising production line testing in Acme's Central Manufacturing Division. This is a heavy manufacturing operation which operates around the clock, seven days a week. While fewer califragists are necessary on weekends, actual shifts are assigned by seniority. As the junior member of the team, you would be assigned initially to a shift with some weekend hours.

At what point should you tell Acme that you observe the Sabbath and

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cannot work during that time? The answer has both legal and moral components.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission states: "A prospective employee does not have a duty to inform a prospective employer of a need for accommodation. It is only after a person is hired that the duty to inform arises, because that is when the need for accommodation arises." So legally you may accept the job and then immediately request an accommodation for the Sabbath.

Employers may feel misled by such a course. And certainly the Christian also has a duty not to mislead. But neither does a Christian wish to prematurely bring up a potentially negative aspect. To bring up the Sabbath before one has been identified as a good candidate may cause a prospective employer to turn away from one whom he labels as potentially troublesome. Such might have been the result if you had volunteered information about the Sabbath either on the pre-employment questionnaire or during the initial interview. But as soon as the subject of work hours is raised, an honest answer must be given. Whenever the question of availability for weekend work arises, whether on a written questionnaire or in an inter-

view, the Sabbath must be discussed.

When an employer asks about availability, he takes a chance. The use of such inquiries is considered to be discriminatory unless they can be justified by a business necessity. Thus if Mr. Jackboot asks if you are available for Saturday work and then doesn't hire you after you say that you aren't, he is guilty of unlawful discrimination unless he can show that it was necessary for the person filling that job to be present on Saturdays and that no means of accommodating a Sabbath keeper exists that would not cause undue hardship.

Yet Sabbatarians are denied jobs in such circumstances, and the employers are rarely found guilty of discrimination, often because of the difficulty in proving why a person was not hired. So there exists, in practice, a "window of Vulnerability" between the time of discussing the Sabbath and the time of hiring. A Christian applicant may minimize the vulnerability by not broaching the subject prematurely, but must not in so doing mislead a potential employer.

—Reprinted from *Liberty Sentinel*, published bi-monthly by the Religious Liberty Assn. of North America and the Dept. of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty, SDA Church.

WANTED:

People attending campmeetings and festivals!
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BSA

NEWS FROM THE BSA

Executive Director to Relocate

If all goes as planned, this month TSS editor will be moving to Owosso, Michigan, where he will assume a part time position as director of development and business manager for Spring Vale Academy, the boarding high school of the Church of God (Seventh Day). The editor anticipates that his part time work for BSA will continue basically uninterrupted; however, Department Editor Howard Mesick may assume more responsibilities. Watch the September issue for a new address for the editor.

Bulk Mailings from Fairview

The Burrells report the following bulk mailings from Fairview during the first six months of 1990: 3146 back issues of TSS; 3238 mailings that included two flyers—one advertising the directory supplement and the other for *Sabbath at Sommerhase*; 3659 miscellaneous, for a total of 10,063. That's a lot of licking! However, their job is made easier by a semi-automatic addressing machine for attaching labels to envelopes.

SOUND Tour Boosts BSA

The editor's wife had the opportunity to go along with the Spring Vale Academy SOUND on their tour to the West Coast—and to promote BSA. Between May 28 and June 11, the eleven-member choir gave 17 concerts in churches in IA, MO, CO, NM, AZ, CA, OR, WA, and ID. At almost every church Mrs. Wiedenheft was able to leave a supply of BSA brochures and back issues of TSS. In Oregon the group gave a short concert at a nursing home;

among the residents present was Stanley J. Kauer, the founding principal of Spring Vale Academy. Mr. Kauer died a few days after the concert in his honor.

Sunday Restrictions

During the first six months of 1990, the executive director assembled information about restrictions on high school athletic activities on Sunday. Most of the 50 state interscholastic athletic associations responded after the first or second inquiry, a few after the third. As of this writing, Mass., Miss., Mo., Neb., and DC have failed to respond at all. NJ responded but declined to provide the information. During June a preliminary summary of the survey was mailed to all the associations for their comments. In a month or two, the results will be published in TSS and submitted to other periodicals for publication.

A copy of the preliminary summary has been sent to the Penna. Human Relations Commission, which is currently considering a complaint against the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association because of its ban of all athletic activities on Sunday.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS????

By all means notify us in advance when you move. If we send a *SENTINEL* to your old address, the post office charges us 30¢ to return it—and you risk missing that issue.

LAW

ON THE LEGAL FRONT

Religious freedom in public schools received a major boost when the Supreme Court declared 6/4/90 that prayer and Bible study groups must be allowed to meet if other non-curricular clubs are allowed. Eight justices declared constitutional the 1984 Equal Access Act forbidding discrimination against student clubs based on "religious, political, philosophical, or other content of the speech at such meetings." Some fear that this ruling will open the door for communist, racist, or other unsavory groups; but most Christians are delighted to have a chance to counterbalance evolutionist indoctrination many public school children are forced to endure. Schools still may ban all clubs not dealing with subject matter taught in class; but most schools will not be willing to so restrict student activities. For background, see this column 9/89.

Federal officials warned churches and televangelists in May to watch out for mail bombs. On April 27, a package exploding in the mailroom at the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) wounded a guard. On Jan. 30, the daughter of Rev. John Osteen of Houston was hurt when a package blew up as she opened it. An April 17 arson destroyed the office of gospel singer Sandi Patti, taking with it many irreplaceable mementos. Pat Robertson, CBN president, sees a possible "pattern of attacks" against evangelicals. The CBN bomb was crude but powerful and could have killed guard Scott Scheeper if its shrapnel had hit else-

where than his thigh. Both that bomb and the Houston one were mailed from Bladen County, North Carolina.

Holyday absences from school resulted in favorable court rulings for 7th-day families in two separate cases. Last October, US District Judge Joseph E. Stevens, Jr. ordered the Polo, Missouri, school system to reinstate High school senior Jamie L. Carroll to the cheerleading squad and to stop harassing her for unexcused absences. The honor student's family belongs to the Remnant Church of God, which observes Old Testament holydays, during which she misses school. The family earlier had won the right for Jamie to avoid inoculations. The school has admitted no wrongdoing. A lawsuit continues.

Ruth and Manuel Martinez of New Mexico got their five children's holyday absences legalized in the court of US District Judge Juan Burciaga this April. He ordered the Chama Valley school district to allow Hadassah, Israel, Moses, Isaac, and Jeremiah, whose parents belong to the House of Yahweh, to make up schoolwork they have missed. The five children and three others have been in state custody since April 1989, though press reports did not indicate whether the Martinez's loss of custody involved religion.

Thanks, readers, for sending clippings (with publications' names & dates). H. Mesick, Box 299-1, Hartly, DE 19953.

NEWS

FROM THE SEVENTH DAY COMMUNITY

Is COG Chill Thawing?

In a move unusual within Sabatarian denominations, Calvin Burrell, president of the Church of God (Seventh Day), complimented another group's president, Joseph Tkach of the Worldwide Church of God. Your department editor rarely hears one 7th-day group mentioning another, let alone positively. Writing an editorial on love in the May-June 1990 *Harvest Field Messenger* Elder Burrell felt an easing of WCG's exclusionist attitude, evidenced in a recent *Plain Truth* editorial by Mr. Tkach.

Like the Jehovah's Witnesses, World-widers have been told not to talk religion with outsiders or read any other church's materials. Many from the Church of God (Seventh Day), however, have said kindly things about WCG to this editor. Some have attended WCG's Ambassador College. There is hard feeling on both sides, however, because Worldwide was founded by an ex-COG (Seventh Day) minister, Herbert W. Armstrong, and in its early years grew primarily by taking members from the latter body. Recently some leaving WCG have joined COG (SD). Doctrinally the two organizations are quite close, differing primarily on church organization, the keeping of OT holydays, and the present identify of the ten tribes of ancient (northern) Israel. In matters of policy and culture they are worlds apart.

This scribe has noted some hopeful signs recently at WCG under Mr. Tkach. Apparently Elder Burrell also has and now has made a move

of his own. Is there real opportunity or only illusion? In addition to this most tenuous approach to Worldwide, the Church of God (Seventh Day), headquartered in Denver, has kept open a dialog with smaller Church of God denominations and independent groups. For years its leaders have held quiet theological talks with influential SDA ministers.

Female SDB Ministers

Since World War II a handful of women have been accredited to the ministry by the General Conference of SDBs. Some others have served as ministers or pastors in various churches; a few more have shared offices with their husbands. SDB churches can appoint ministers as they choose without permission from the GC. Four times since 1965 a woman has been GC president.

A poll taken at the 1989 General Conference indicated that men and women tended to prefer men to perform traditional male roles (preaching, baptizing, etc.) and women to perform traditional female roles (teaching children, etc.). While women were more likely to see females playing a broader part in church leadership, they still favored men for many positions of authority. A significant minority of men and women had no preferences in any category. On a question about God's gender, 30% viewed him as male, 40% as having no gender, and 30% as having aspects of both genders. Because only 151 questionnaires were returned, representing 42% of delegates and visitors, the poll can-

not be seen as a scientific survey of the GC or SDBs at large. Nonetheless it provides valuable data.



Baptist Senator Honored

Fifty-six years ago US Senator Jennings Randolph of West Virginia proposed an interstate highway system to Congress. This year the 88-year-old SDB gentleman was honored as the West Virginia legislature named US route I-79 in the state, Jennings Randolph Highway. Now retired, the Senator lives at a nursing home in St. Louis. His son Jay, is an NBC sportscaster.

COG Mother Wins NEH Grant

Lori Bogle, Church of God (Seventh Day) member, mother of four, and Missouri college student, won a research grant from the Younger Scholars Program of the National Endowment for the Humanities. For 1989 she was the only student from Missouri and one of 91 in America to get the award, which enabled her to study desegregation in and around the city of Joplin. The history major's paper will be published in *The Missouri Historical Review*.

Adventist Joinings

Soviet Union SDAs have linked with Baptists, Lutherans, Pentecostals, and others to form the Russian Bible Society. The Russian Orthodox Church does not officially participate, perhaps hoping to retain special privileges enjoyed under the Czars and even the Communists. An Evangelical Alliance has formed in *Romania* between Baptists, Plymouth Brethren, Pentecostals, the Reformed church, Lutherans, evangelical Orthodox groups, and Adventists. The government has not recognized the organization. Indeed, unlike other Eastern Europe nations, *Romania* has retained a largely Communist government after its recent revolution, the bloodiest in the region. Churches are still restricted; and a new law is contemplated to restore the domination of the Romanian Orthodox Church that existed before the 1923 Communist takeover. In *Hungary*, meanwhile, "official" and "unofficial" SDAs are trying to unite by September 1990. Your scribe does not know if this reconciliation involves the Bible School Community, a group of unofficial SDAs which has attained government recognition of its own. See this column Sep. '89.

Adventists were linked to Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Pentecostals in a letter by Mexican and Californian Catholic bishops warning church members against groups which "oppose the historical churches." The message called for ecumenism and an end to proselytism. The bishops said they did not condemn the non-traditional groups.

-Compiled by Howard M. Mesick

TO REPEAT

SIGNIFICANT STATEMENTS BY OR ABOUT SABBATHKEEPERS

We are interested in hard-hitting and original books expounding the lifestyle of Atheism and criticizing religion. We would like to see more submissions (of book manuscripts) dealing with the histories of specific religious sects, such as the L.D.S., the Worldwide Church of God, etc.

From the entry for the American Atheist Press in *1990 Writer's Market*, a book listing publishers of freelance material

If you don't know the Gospel, you'll punish yourself for your sins until you think you've paid for them.

From a sermon by Desmond Ford of Good News Unlimited

Those of us in the ministry have noticed... a growing number of letters from those... involved in violent crime; from inmates in prison, to those who are currently under arrest or on probation. Sadly, we have had to read any number of letters which involve murder, even... of one's own parent!... The cause (of murder) includes drug abuse and alcoholism... America's penchant for violence is in entertainment... is another major causal factor. Television, literature, comic books, even kiddie cartoons continually... extoll violence as a means to solving problems. Couple the massive problem of divorce, live-in arrangements... single parents in the work place, and the complete disintegration of the family; and you are dealing with the root cause of mounting crime.

Letter from Garner Ted Armstrong to general mailing list of the Church of God, International

Massive drought and famine is prophesied to strike our modern "Israelite nations" and the Ten Tribes of Northern Israel, including especially the birthright tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, beginning in fall/winter of 1990 and lasting for three and one half years, until spring 1994, when the Great Tribulation, itself, starts, with national invasion, captivity, and enslavement by foreign Gentile powers.

"Questions from Our Readers," *Prophecy Flash* by William F. Dankenbring, Apr. 30, '90

What is our goal today? To build beautiful buildings? Lay plush carpets?... Perhaps the greatest need today is for the Church of God to rediscover its divine purpose, which is to evangelize the world! The church that is... not putting forth an effort to evangelize the heathen nations has in truth forfeited her credentials and her right to exist.

"The Church of God and Missions" by Terril D. Littrell *The Fellowship Herald*, Sep. '89, Churches of God, 7th Day

Quotes don't necessarily reflect the views of The Bible Sabbath Association.

Resources Available From BSA

Books

<i>The Sabbath in the New Testament</i> by Samuele Bacchiocchi (275 pp.)	\$10
<i>From Sabbath to Sunday</i> by Samuele Bacchiocchi (372 pp.)	\$10
<i>Divine Rest for Human Restlessness</i> by Samuele Bacchiocchi (320 pp.)	\$10
<i>The Law, the Gospel and the Sabbath</i> by Frank M. Walker (91 pp.)	\$3
<i>God's Sabbath for Mankind</i> by Richard A. Wiedenhaupt (64 pp.)	60¢

Directory of Sabbath-observing Groups

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

<i>Sabbath at Sommerhase</i> Story and Lesson Book (128 pp.)	\$7
Activity Packet	\$3

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

Booklets

<i>Why the Seventh-day Sabbath</i> (12 pp.)	20¢ ea.; \$17/100
<i>Roman Catholic and Protestant Confessions About Sunday</i> (12 pp.)	20¢; \$17/100
<i>The Bible Sabbath: Seventh Day or First Day?</i> (6 pp.)	14¢ ea.; \$12/100
<i>Bible Truth About "Salvation by Grace Through Faith"</i> by F. Walker (32 pp.)	50¢ ea.; \$8/20
<i>Questions for Seventh Dayists Answered</i> by T. Littrell (18 pp.)	Out of stock
<i>Has Sabbath Time Been Lost?</i> by Joseph M. McGuire (10 pp.)	15¢ ea.; \$9/60

Tracts

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

Sample copies of tracts are available free if you enclose with your request a self-addressed #10 Envelope with 45¢ postage.

Promotional Aids

BSA Brochures	No Charge
Sabbath Calendars	\$1.75 ea.; \$1.50 ea. for 10 or more
Ball point pens with imprint: "The Seventh Day is the Sabbath"	\$5/dozen
Bumper Stickers: "I Break for the Sabbath"	\$1 ea.
Sabbath seals	\$1/dozen
Post cards with Sabbath message on one side, space for personal message and address on the other side	\$1/dozen

Cassette Tapes Write for Complete List

Please add \$1 to all orders for shipping and handling.

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Members of BSA may take a 20% discount off the single quantity prices of all items.

MAILBOX

LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

Appreciates Magazine

I have just finished reading the May issue of TSS, cover to cover. I find a great deal of encouragement from this small publication. I've experienced the pain that is too often associated with being a part of a group of exclusivists and "we only" Christians. The last 12 years have been a period of growth in love and understanding of my fellow Sabbath-keepers. I have worshipped with a number of groups. I find it totally unnecessary to dwell on argumentative points of doctrine. While my own studies convict me on these points, I try to be of a spirit willing to allow change. Certainly as future members of God's kingdom we *will* find it necessary to tolerate our brothers and sisters. Perfection belongs only to our Christ and God the Father. Your magazine helps to promote a certain amount of harmonious atmosphere via the printed word. God bless you and keep up the good work.

San Mateo, Florida

Inquiry About Tapes

Do you still have tapes by Dr. Samuele Bacchiocchi. I have a copy of his book and I love to study. I see how wrong people are by keeping Sunday. It's like taking a burnt cake and covering it with frosting. Also, do you have the book, *A History of the Sabbath and Sunday*.

Moberly, Missouri

Inspiring Confidence

One of your subscribers shared a copy of TSS with me this past week.

I was particularly interested in your editorial [June 1990] about the social activities, business activities, and other things in news reports of church publications. I've enclosed a couple of copies of the Columbia Union *Visitor*. We try to blend inspirational material into every copy. As our Mission Statement says, "we try to inspire confidence in the Saviour and His church. . ."

Kermit L. Netteburg, Comm. Dir.

Columbia Union Conference
The Seventh-day Adventist Church

Requests Gratis Subscription

Recently I was given a copy of TSS. It was very enlightening and I would like to have you send it to me. I can't afford to pay since my husband has left me and three children. I would be very grateful if you could find it in your hearts to send a subscription anyway.

Fresno, California

Editor's Note: The generosity of others makes it possible for us to send a limited number of "love" subscriptions to those who cannot pay. One is being sent to this person.

Renewal

I am enclosing a \$20 donation for one more year membership. I do not want it to run out. Praise the Lord for BSA.

Lebanon, Oregon

We welcome your letters, preferably short and concise. We reserve the right to condense and excerpt. Names can be withheld if requested. Address to *The Sabbath Sentinel*, RD 1 Box 222, Fairview, OK 73737.

ADS

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Myths of Christianity revealed in *A Search for Truth*. Send \$10 donation to Family of God, 7119 Western Tr., San Antonio, TX 78244. (8)

Attention: If you have contact with Pastor C. I. Alozie of Aba, Nigeria, please contact me immediately. Harold Kupp, P.O. Box 975, Mill City, OR 97360. (8)

Free sample copy: Scripture "Original Text Studies," Hebrew and Greek. Editor John Purvins, Box 1, Little Chute, WI 54140. (8)

Free Booklet: What is the Name by Which You Must be Saved? Write to Blessed Be The Name, 11 Barker Fork Rd., Chapmanville, WV 25508. (8)

What really happened to Enoch & Elijah? Ask Family of God, 7119 Western Tr., San Antonio, TX 78244. (3-8)

Earth's Exact Age From Eden, \$1 postpaid, 7 pages. John R. Lewis, 517 S. College Ave., College Place, WA 99324. (8)

Yahweh's People Wanted—to start a fellowship in the Tacoma, Puyallup, WA area. If interested, contact Yahweh's People, 11004 128 St. E.; Puyallup, WA 98373 or call (206) 841-0238. (8)

Brother Lonny Kennedy, co-founder and former pastor of Apostolic Church in Christ Jesus, Home-dale, ID. was killed in a tragic car

accident. He is survived by his wife, Vera, who was critically injured in the accident, five grown children, and two pre-schoolers. You can help the family by sending a \$5 or more donation for a tape of Lonny and his wife singing. All proceeds will go to Sister Vera to help with expenses. Send order and check to Seventh Day Church of God, Box 804, Caldwell, ID 83606. (8,9)

Plain-speaking, in-depth magazine of Bible truth—with insight into current events and prophecy. Free. Write YNCA, P.O. Box 50, Kingdom City, MO 65262. (2-8)

Adventist Church of the Promise (Messianic), serving northwest central Florida, invites you to weekly Sabbath services. For information call (904) 795-1758 or write P.O. Box 2426, Crystal River, FL 32629. (9-8)

Greetings from the Independent Church of God of Ft. Payne, Alabama. You are invited to attend services with us on the 1st and 3rd Sabbath of each month, starting at 10 a.m. For additional information call (205) 672-2581 or (205) 492-7565. (3-9)

"Does a Christian Commit Sin?" A free booklet for Christians who have been told that perfectionism is a curse. Write: Fighters For Truth, Box 975, Mill City, OR 97360. (7-9)

Free subscription to The Prophetic Word Magazine! Learn the prophecies now being fulfilled! Learn the prophecies for our future! Write

Box 2442, Abilene, TX 79604. (2-1)

Want to contact the oldest, healthiest, active people? Write Hazel Richards, HCA #1 Box 12-69, Niland, CA 92257. (4-1)

Lantana, FL: The Christian Church of God holds weekly Sabbath services. Serving southeast Florida (West Palm Beach area). For information write P.O. Box 3827, Lantana, FL 33465. (4-3)

Good News Unlimited Meetings featuring Dr. Desmond Ford: Sacramento, CA: August 25, Sacramento Forum, contact Sally C. (916) 878-7222, ext. 7040 or Michael S. 758-2887. Portland, OR: Aug. 31-Sept. 1, contact Ed R. (503) 628-2474. Cleburne, TX: Sept. 7-8; Contact

Mark R. (817) 645-2101. For full schedule, write GNU, 11710 Education St., Auburn, CA 95603. (8,9)

Meet Sabbath Singles! For pen pals or that special life-time companion. For information contact: Sabbath Singles, P.O. Box 1382, Odessa, TX 79760-1382. (8-10)

Classified ads are available at the rate of 30¢ per word (including each word and each group of numbers in the address). Copy for classified ads should be sent, along with payment, to The Bible Sabbath Association, Fairview, OK 73737. Deadline is the 15th of the month for the issue of the second subsequent month (e.g., April 15 for June issue).

BSA reserves the right to reject any copy; publication does not necessarily imply endorsement by The Bible Sabbath Association.

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