

Old Paths

Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. Jeremiah 6:16

The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant. Psalm 25:14

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Let him [the father] point them [his children] to the beautiful flowers, the lofty trees, in whose very leaves they can trace the work and love of God. He should teach them that the God who made all these things loves the beautiful and the good. (The Adventist Home, p. 222)



A Total Saviour

On April 14, 2003, researchers announced that the Human Genome Project had completed a high-quality sequence of essentially the entire human genome. Today you can buy the Geno 2.0—Genographic Project Participation and DNA Ancestry Kit from the National Geographic Society, and your DNA will be analyzed so that you can supposedly know your ancestors. The Mormon website, genealogy.com, advertises to build “your family tree and search the world’s largest online family history resource for family stories.” It is not wrong to desire to know your genealogy. The Bible speaks a great deal about genealogy. Arguably the greatest scientist of all time, Isaac Newton, was a student of biblical genealogy and chronology and wrote more on the Bible than he did on math and science.

While the Bible gives a selected genealogy of all the twelve tribes of Israel, it specifically deals with the genealogy of our Lord Jesus Christ. The first seventeen verses of Matthew and the second half of Luke 3 deal with Christ’s earthly genealogy. We have been told:

*The story of Bethlehem is an exhaustless theme. In it is hidden “the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God.” Romans 11:33. We marvel at the Saviour’s sacrifice in exchanging the throne of heaven for the manger, and the companionship of adoring angels for the beasts of the stall. Human pride and self-sufficiency stand rebuked in His presence. Yet this was but the beginning of His wonderful condescension. It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man’s nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. Like every child of Adam He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity. What these results were is shown in the history of His earthly ancestors. He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us the example of a sinless life. (Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 48, 49; all emphasis in this article supplied unless otherwise noted)*

When people discuss their genealogy, they like to note the famous and notable people in their heritage. It is interesting to note, however, some of the cast of characters that are in the line of Jesus Christ’s genealogy. Notice this illustrious list:

- Jacob: Matthew 1:2 — Jacob means supplanter or deceiver. He cheated his brother Esau out of the birthright blessing.
- Tamar: Matthew 1:3 — Deceived Judah and played the role of a prostitute
- Rachab: Matthew 1:5 — A Canaanite prostitute
- Ruth: Matthew 1:5 — A Moabitess
- David: Matthew 1:6 — A murderer, liar, and adulterer
- Manasses: Matthew 1:10 — Wicked beyond measure (2 Kings 21:1–9)

Of unique interest is the name *Jacob*. Jacob overcame and was named *Israel* and over two hundred times in Scripture, Yahweh calls himself the “God of Israel.” Yet, he also calls himself the “God of Jacob” twenty-five times. For example, in Psalm 20:1, we read: “The LORD hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee.” Thus God shows that he is willing to associate his holy name with the name of a sinner and be his or her help. Help is certainly what the sinner needs, for we are told:

Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. (Romans 8:7, 8)

The carnal or fleshly mind (spirit) is not subject to the law of God, and it is so depraved that it cannot be subject to God’s law. Unaided, man cannot live a righteous life and please God:

In our own strength it is impossible for us to deny the clamors of our fallen nature. Through this channel Satan will bring temptation upon us. Christ knew that the enemy would come to every human being, to take advantage of hereditary weakness, and by his false insinuations to ensnare all whose trust is not in God. And by passing over the

ground which man must travel, our Lord has prepared the way for us to overcome. (*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 122, 123)

Of course, the Father and his Son well understood the plight of man, and Jesus came to walk in the same path that man must walk to be able to prepare a way for sinful man to cease to be sinful and to overcome sin and to live in harmony with the law of God.

The Early Years

Scripture shares very little on the early life of Jesus. The Spirit of Prophecy calls this period the “hidden years” (Ellen White, *Testimonies on Sabbath School Work*, p. 105). The Bible tells us that “the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him” (Luke 2:40). This text tells us that he grew. This means that in some real, concrete manner, Jesus matured and developed. Luke 2:52 says that “Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.” Jesus not only grew in stature, or physically, but he grew and increased in wisdom. If Jesus came to this earth omniscient, then he could not have increased in wisdom, for to be omniscient means that one already has all the knowledge of the universe.

Ellen White draws back the curtain on the hidden years some, though, and tells us:

This record of the childhood and youth of Jesus is to be an encouragement to all children and youth. *Jesus is the perfect pattern*, and it is the duty and privilege of every child and youth to copy the pattern. Let children bear in mind that the child Jesus had taken upon himself human nature, and was in the likeness of sinful flesh, and was tempted of Satan as all children are tempted. *He was able to resist the temptations of Satan through his dependence upon the divine power of his heavenly Father, as he was subject to his will, and obedient to all his commands. He kept his father’s statutes, precepts, and laws. He was continually seeking counsel of God, and was obedient to his will.* (Ellen White, *The Youth’s Instructor*, August 23, 1894)

Here we are told that *Jesus is the perfect pattern*. A pattern is used so that something can be reproduced in the same fashion. While Jesus is our substitute, he is also clearly our perfect example, even the perfect example for children. His victory over sin was accomplished by his dependence upon the divine power of his heavenly Father. He did not depend upon divine power within himself. That would not help me. I naturally have no divine power within me to draw upon in my battle with sin. If Jesus had access to something I cannot access, then how can I overcome as he overcame?

Writing to her nephew, Frank E. Belden, Ellen White explained the nearness of Jesus Christ to humanity:

He was “made like unto His brethren” (Hebrews 2:17). He felt both joy and grief as they feel. His body was sus-

ceptible to weariness, as yours. His mind, like yours, could be harassed and perplexed. If you have hardships, so had He. If you have conflicts, so had He. If you need encouragement, so did He. Satan could tempt Him. His enemies could annoy Him. The ruling powers could torture His body; the soldiers could crucify Him; and they can do no more to us. Jesus was exposed to hardships, to conflict and temptation, as a man. He became the Captain of our Salvation through suffering. He could bear His burden better than we, for He bore it without complaint, without impatience, without unbelief, without repining; but this is no evidence He felt it less than any of the suffering sons of Adam.

Jesus was sinless and had no dread of the consequences of sin. With this exception His condition was as yours. (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 20, p. 72)

The Temptations

No person has ever been tempted more than, or as severely as, Jesus was. It is not a sin to be tempted. James tells us, “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed” (James 1:13, 14). It is not a sin to be tempted, but it is a sin to give into temptations. Often when we think of temptation, we think of the devil and his imps encouraging us to do wrong things, but this text teaches us that we do not need a devil or anyone else in order to be tempted. The draws of the flesh from within, our own lusts, entice us and naturally pull us away from God. Was this, however, also true for Jesus? Did he struggle with the desires with which we suffer? When Jesus was upon the cross, he cried out: “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46). Was there meaning in this for Jesus and for us, or was this just play-acting? Paul writes and notes that “we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). If Jesus was not tempted from within as we are, but only from without by Satan or his agents, how could Paul truly say that Jesus was tempted in all points like we are tempted?¹ The truth is that he cannot!

Unless there is a possibility of yielding, temptation is no temptation. Temptation is resisted when man is powerfully influenced to do a wrong action; and, knowing that he can do it, resists, by faith, with a firm hold upon divine power. This was the ordeal through which Christ passed. *He could not have been tempted in all points as man is tempted, had there been no possibility of his failing. He was a free agent, placed on probation, as was Adam, and as is every man.* (*The Youth’s Instructor*, July 20, 1899)

1. The expression *all points* in the Greek text is *panta* which is an adjective form of the Greek word *pas* which means *all*. There is no noun in the text for *panta* to modify; therefore, a word must be supplied. The thrust of the text is that Christ was tempted in *all*—all ways, all points—with nothing excluded!

Passions

With temptations that are within, the concept of passions cannot be left out.

The lower passions have their seat in the body, and work through it. (Ellen White, *Spalding and Magan Collection*, p. 209)

Our impulses and passions have their seat in the body, and it must be kept in the best condition physically and under the most spiritual influences in order that our talents may be put to the highest use. (Ellen White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 346)

We all have to contend with passions due to inheritance. We, however, do not have to allow evil passions to control us. Why? Because through Jesus, we may overcome our passions as he overcame. Did Jesus have to contend with such passions? Yes, or he was not tempted as we are and could not be the total Saviour. He lived as we may live:

He knows how strong are the inclinations of the natural heart, and He will help in every time of temptation. (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 177)

Questions and concerns about the incarnation of Jesus are not new. In Ellen White's time there were questions and erroneous ideas:

Letters [plural] have been coming in to me, affirming that Christ could not have had the same nature as man, for if He had, He would have fallen under similar temptations. If He did not have man's nature, He could not be our example. If He was not a partaker of our nature, He could not have been tempted as man has been. If it were not possible for Him to yield to temptation, He could not be our helper. It was a solemn reality that Christ came to fight the battles as man, in man's behalf. His temptation and victory tell us that humanity must copy the Pattern; man must become a partaker of the divine nature. (Ellen White, *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 408)

The victory gained was designed, not only to set an example to those who have fallen under the power of appetite, but to qualify the Redeemer for his special work of reaching to the very depths of human woe. By experiencing in himself the strength of Satan's temptation, and of human sufferings and infirmities, he would know how to succor those who should put forth efforts to help themselves. (Ellen White, *The Review and Herald*, March 18, 1875)

Man's plight has not always been so dismal. When Adam first came from the hand of his Creator, all things were perfect. "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day" (Genesis 1:31). When Adam was first created, he could only be tempted from without, for he had no bent from within to evil. After Adam sinned his nature was changed, and he then possessed a bent to evil. If Jesus was going to be tempted in all points as we are, then he must, too, be able to be tempted from both without and within.

The great work of redemption could be carried out only by the Redeemer taking the place of fallen man. Burdened with the sins of the world, he must go over the ground where Adam stumbled. He must take up the work just where Adam failed and endure a test of the same character but infinitely more severe than that which had vanquished Adam. It is impossible for man to fully comprehend the strength of Satan's temptations to our Saviour. Every enticement to evil which men find so difficult to resist was brought to bear upon the Son of God in as much a greater degree as to man as was his character superior to that of fallen man.

When Adam was assailed by the tempter he was without the taint of sin. He stood before God in the strength of perfect manhood, all the organs and faculties of his being fully developed and harmoniously balanced; and he was surrounded with things of beauty, and conversed daily with the holy angels. *What a contrast to this perfect being did the second Adam present, as he entered the desolate wilderness to cope with Satan, single-handed.* For four thousand years the race had been decreasing in size and physical strength, and deteriorating in moral worth; and, in order to elevate fallen man, Christ must reach him where he stood. He assumed human nature, bearing the infirmities and degeneracy of the race. He humiliated himself to the lowest depths of human woe, that he might fully sympathize with man and rescue him from the degradation into which sin had plunged him. (Ellen White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 88)

The fight against sin which Christ entered was no play or sham; it was real, and there was eternal risk. In Isaiah's famous prophecy "the government," we are told, would "be upon his shoulder" (Isaiah 9:6). This certainly was no earthly government, but rather the government of God; the stability of the whole universe was at stake.

Satan in heaven had hated Christ for His position in the courts of God. He hated Him the more when he himself was dethroned. He hated Him who pledged Himself to redeem a race of sinners. Yet into the world where Satan claimed dominion God permitted His Son to come, a helpless babe, subject to the weakness of humanity. He permitted Him to meet life's peril in common with every human soul, to fight the battle as every child of humanity must fight it, at the risk of failure and eternal loss.

The heart of the human father yearns over his son. He looks into the face of his little child, and trembles at the thought of life's peril. He longs to shield his dear one from Satan's power, to hold him back from temptation and conflict. *To meet a bitterer conflict and a more fearful risk,* God gave His only-begotten Son, that the path of life might be made sure for our little ones. "Herein is love." (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 49)

The Purity of Christ

Though Jesus “took upon His sinless nature our sinful nature, that He might know how to succor those that are tempted” (Ellen White, *Medical Ministry*, p. 181), he was not defiled by sin. Jesus could come in direct contact with sinners and not receive contamination. Mark records one of the most unique gospel accounts:

And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils. And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed. (Mark 1:39–42.)

Jesus did something that had probably never been done before in the history of humanity—he voluntarily touched a leper. Those who did this were to be unclean, but not Jesus. He received no pollution, and the leper was immediately cleansed.

Thus it is with the leprosy of sin,—deep-rooted, deadly, and impossible to be cleansed by human power. “The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.” Isaiah 1:5, 6. *But Jesus, coming to dwell in humanity, receives no pollution.* His presence has healing virtue for the sinner. Whoever will fall at His feet, saying in faith, “Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean,” shall hear the answer, “I will; be thou made clean.” Matthew 8:2, 3, R. V. (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 266)

This experience has an important lesson beyond the basic narrative. In accepting our fallen humanity, Jesus was in constant touch with the drives, the strengths of passion, and the inclinations of humanity. We are told:

With his human arm, Christ encircled the race, while with his divine arm, he grasped the throne of the Infinite, uniting finite man with the infinite God. He bridged the gulf that sin had made, and connected earth with heaven. In his human nature *he maintained the purity of his divine character.* (*The Youth’s Instructor*, June 2, 1898)

Paul, writing to the church at Rome, stated a great truth: “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of *sinful flesh*, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Romans 8:3, 4).

Of interest is the term *sinful flesh*. The Greek phrase is *sarkos hamartias* (σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας) which literally translates *of flesh of sin* (both words are in the genitive case). God sent his Son to battle sin in the flesh that knew sin and its weaknesses. When we translate *sarkos hamartias* as *sinful*

flesh, we should realize the meaning of the suffix *ful*. As Ralph Larson noted:

Dictionaries offer as a meaning of the suffix *ful*, *to have a tendency toward*. (See *Webster’s Unabridged: The New American Handy College Dictionary*, et al.) This falls short of describing an actual act. The term *sinful*, according to this usage, does not refer to any act of sinning, much less to being *full of sin*, as some would read it. It means having a tendency toward sin, which accurately describes the flesh (nature) in which we fallen humans live. (*The Word was Made Flesh*, p. 16; emphasis in the original)

Though Jesus accepted the fallen flesh of humanity with all of its ability to tempt from within, Jesus was pure and spotless in connection to sin:

We should have no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ. Our faith must be an intelligent faith, looking unto Jesus in perfect confidence, in full and entire faith in the atoning Sacrifice. This is essential that the soul may not be enshrouded in darkness. This holy Substitute is able to save to the uttermost; for He presented to the wondering universe perfect and complete humility in His human character, and perfect obedience to all the requirements of God. (*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 256)

While Inspiration states that Jesus took upon himself our sinful nature, it never hesitates to state that Jesus had perfect sinlessness which would be defined as a state of being sinless.

Jesus is able to save today, and he touches humanity today because with his human nature he reaches to humanity but with his divine nature, he reaches to the throne of the infinite God. In his perfect humanity and in his perfect divinity, Jesus is able to bridge the gulf between you and God. He is able to lift you up and present you faultless before God. Jesus reaches us not in some sham, but with the genuine article of his own perfect righteousness. Jesus still keeps bad company, and he will keep company with you! He is able to save you to the *uttermost* (Hebrews 7:25).

I have a friend whom we will call Robert. Robert was a soldier in the United States Army during the Vietnam War. He has described some of the horrors of the war to me. He has told how innocent children would be strapped with bombs and sent into the American troops as suicide bombers. At times the only way to live or to save his fellow soldiers was to shoot and kill these children. Robert sadly estimates that he may have killed over one hundred children, beside enemy soldiers. As terrible as that is, the blood of Jesus is able to save Robert, for the blood of Jesus is able to save to the uttermost! The Greek word for *uttermost* means *through all things*.

We look at this temporal life as being eternal, but God sees time in its correct value. Because of the death of his Son, God can forgive the sinner. We cannot take eternal life from someone, only their temporal life, and only God can take eternal life. We are told to “fear not them which kill the body, but are

not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matthew 10:28). We should fear, respect, and love the one who can give eternal life.

The Lord’s Supper

When we think of Satan’s weapons, we might think of his false teachings, such as Sunday worship, the trinity, the immortal soul, the atonement finished at the cross, and other abominations, but there are two tools with which he finds great success which do not deal with doctrine. They are not alcohol and tobacco, though they may become indirectly involved. These two weapons, in fact, we provide to him. They are the hereditary nature of man to sin and the cultivated tendencies of mankind to sin. As we examine the last few hours of Christ’s life, let us see how he provides total victory, since he is the total Saviour.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the synoptic gospels because they form a general outline of the life of Jesus and give a summary, or a synopsis, of his life. Concerning the communion service, we learn of the bread and the cup in the synoptics.

Matthew 26 begins with the rulers conspiring against Christ, followed by Mary anointing Jesus, Judas’ betrayal, the Passover, Christ telling of the betrayal, and then the Lord’s Supper.

Mark 14 begins with the conspiracy against Jesus and follows with the anointing, Judas’ betrayal, Christ telling of the betrayal, the Passover, and then the communion.

Luke 22 begins with the leaders’ conspiracy against Jesus and their covenant with Judas and then proceeds to the betrayal, the Passover, the communion, and the statement of betrayal by Peter.

In the communion service we commemorate the Lord’s death till he comes again. The bread and wine represent the body and blood of Jesus. We acknowledge and accept his sacrifice through the partaking of the communion symbols.

John’s gospel is different. John focuses upon the events prior to the bread and juice. John’s gospel is the *didactic* gospel, from the Greek word *didaskō* which means *to teach*. The *didactic* gospel is interested in teaching the main lessons of Jesus. Interestingly, the communion service is not touched upon in John, but John mentions the foot-washing, something that the synoptics do not include.

And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray him; Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never

wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. (John 13:2–8)

It was the custom during the time of Jesus for a servant to wash the dusty feet of the master, when he entered the room. “According to Jewish custom extending back probably to the time of Jesus, the washing of the master’s feet was one of the duties of a foreign slave . . . Inasmuch as no servant was present on the occasion of the Last Supper, one of the disciples should have undertaken the task, but none volunteered” (*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1028). This was not done because none of the disciples was willing to perform this service. The Bible says that Jesus “laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.” The Greek word for garments is *himation*, “an outer garment” (*Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon*, Liddell and Scott). This removal was symbolic of his laying aside his divine power to accept the slave nature of man which was symbolized by his girding himself with a towel (Greek: *lention*). *Thayer’s Lexicon* states *lention* was that “which it was supposed the nakedness of persons undergoing crucifixion was covered.”

Jesus Christ, who was Michael and who shared the glory of God, his Father, was willing to become and to serve as a slave so that sinners need not perish.

Paul says that Jesus divested himself of the form of God: “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men” (Philippians 2:5–7). The English Standard Version translates it like this:

Who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. (Philippians 2:5–7)

Ellen G. White states:

Now, of the human: “He was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death.” He voluntarily assumed human nature. It was his own act, and by his own consent. He clothed his divinity with humanity. He was all the while as God, but he did not appear as God. He veiled the demonstrations of Deity, which had commanded the homage, and called forth the admiration, of the universe of God. *He was God while upon earth, but he divested himself of the form of God, and in its stead took the form and fashion of a man.* He walked the earth as a man. For our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. He laid aside his glory and his majesty. He was God, but the glories of the form of God he for a while relinquished. (*The Review and Herald*, September 4, 1900)

Jesus Christ laid off His royal robe, His kingly crown, and clothed His divinity with humanity, in order to become a substitute and surety for humanity, that dying in humanity, He might by His death destroy him who had the power

of death. He could not have done this as God, but by coming as man, Christ could die. By death He overcame death. The death of Christ bore to the death him who had the power of death, and opened the gates of the tomb for all who receive Him as their personal Saviour. (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 10, p. 173)

Calvary

After washing the disciples feet, Jesus asked the question, “Know ye what I have done to you?” (John 13:12). The washing of the disciples feet was a symbol of their being washed in his shed blood at Calvary. “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood” (Revelation 1:5). At Calvary an infinite sacrifice was made for mankind:

Christ has made an infinite sacrifice. He gave His own life for us. He took upon His divine soul the result of the transgression of God’s law. Laying aside His royal crown, He condescended to step down, step by step, to the level of fallen humanity. He hung upon Calvary’s cross, dying in our behalf, that we might have eternal life. (*The Review and Herald*, April 30, 1901)

For Jesus to fully help his people, he had to battle as they have to battle and to fight as they must fight. At the cross the final and full reality of this experience was exemplified. At his birth Jesus accepted the fallen nature of man, and at the cross he accepted the committed sins of mankind. “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53:6). “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

When Christ bowed his head and died, *he bore the pillars of Satan’s kingdom with him to the earth*. He vanquished Satan in the same nature over which in Eden Satan obtained the victory. The enemy was overcome by Christ in his human nature. The power of the Saviour’s Godhead was hidden. He overcame in human nature, relying upon God for power. This is the privilege of all. In proportion to our faith will be our victory. (*The Youth’s Instructor*, April 25, 1901)

Through death the Saviour destroyed him that had the power of death. In the very act of grasping his prey, death was vanquished; for by dying, Christ brought to light life and immortality through the gospel. Never was the Son of God more beloved by his Father, by the heavenly family, and by the inhabitants of the unfallen worlds, than when he humbled himself to bear disgrace, humiliation, shame, and abuse. By becoming the sin-bearer, he lifted from the human race the curse of sin. In his own body he paid the penalty of that on which the power of Satan over humanity is founded—sin. (*The Youth’s Instructor*, June 28, 1900)

Christ in his own body brought down the two pillars upon which the kingdom of Satan rests. The first pillar is the weakened hereditary nature of man. The second pillar is the cultivated tendencies to sin that reside in us because of our lives of iniquity that have formed unbreakable habit patterns.

For thirty years Jesus demonstrated that weakened hereditary was no excuse for sin, but what of the cultivated tendencies to sin? Could Jesus carry the weight of this accumulated transgression and remain faithful and true? Could Jesus understand and overcome the habit patterns of sin? No wonder heaven looked on with amazement as the cup trembled in the hand of the divine Sufferer! Yet, he drank the last, bitter dregs:

The dark cloud of human transgression came between the Father and the Son. The interruption of the communion between God and His Son caused a condition of things in the heavenly courts which cannot be described by human language. Nature could not witness such a scene as Christ dying in agony while bearing the penalty of man’s transgression. God and the angels clothed themselves with darkness, and hid the Saviour from the gaze of the curious multitude while He drank the last dregs of the cup of God’s wrath (Letter 139, 1898). (Ellen White, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1108)

In his closing hours, while hanging on the cross, he experienced to the fullest extent what man must experience when striving against sin. *He realized how bad a man may become by yielding to sin*. He realized the terrible consequence of the transgression of God’s law; for the iniquity of the whole world was upon him. (*The Youth’s Instructor*, July 20, 1899)

Notice that Jesus “*realized how bad a man may become by yielding to sin*.” He did not simply understand what hereditary does, but also what yielding does. Even though the Father had hidden his presence from the Son in the darkness and though he “could not see through the portals of the tomb” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 753), Jesus, by faith, grasped the pillars of Satan’s kingdom and brought them down, providing an example to man:

Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given his Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress his own character upon the church. (*The Review and Herald*, May 19, 1904)

The book of Judges provides an experience that parallels the experience of Jesus at the cross. In the closing experience his life, Samson grasped the two pillars that supported the temple of Dagon, and Samson destroyed that Satanic temple into a heap (Judges 16:26–30). As Samson brought down the temple supported by its two pillars, it brought about his own death. Even as it cost Samson his life, so it cost the Son of God his life. He resisted unto blood, as his life strived against sin.

When Jesus cried out, “It is finished” (John 19:30), he was declaring that the great demonstration had been completed, the law of equivalence had been met, Satan’s charges had been refuted. Christ, as man, had overcome Satan, using only the power available to humanity.

A. T. Jones said, “O, He is a complete Saviour. He is a Saviour from sins committed and the Conqueror of the

tendencies to commit sins. In Him we have the victory” (*General Conference Bulletin*, February 21, 1895).

First Corinthians 15:57 says, “But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” This is true in him; let it be true in you.

Allen Stump

Youth's Corner — The Maiden Martyr of the Solway

When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee.
(Isaiah 43:2)

The field preachings were on in Scotland. In those days people generally were supposed to accept change of religious faith along with change of government. Episcopacy had come into power by the union of England and Scotland. The Scottish people of Presbyterian convictions refused to accept “prelacy.” The solemn covenant was signed in old Greyfriars churchyard, Edinburgh, and approved by hearts over all the realm.

There is on record a covenant drawn up and signed by young girls, in earnest but childlike phrase pledging themselves to listen only to the ministry of the word by their own beloved pastors.

But field meetings, or conventicles, were forbidden. Attendance at them was a crime, and the Covenanters were hunted over moor and mountain — men, women, youth, and children.

There was living in Glenvernock a man of means, named Wilson, who conformed to the Episcopacy. His children, however, Margaret, aged eighteen, Thomas, sixteen, and Agnes, thirteen, would not attend the Episcopal service, “but fled to the hills, bogs, and caves,” says the old Scottish writer, Wodrow, “though they were yet scarce of the age that made them obnoxious to the law.” Young as they were, their parents were forbidden “to harbor them, supply them, or speak to them, or see them.”

The boy got away to Flanders, across the sea. The two girls were finally seized and condemned to death at Wigtown. The father was allowed to purchase the freedom of Agnes, but Margaret was led out to die along with another Margaret, a M’Lauchlan, aged sixty-three.

They were to be tied to stakes, set in the Wigtown sands at the mouth of the Solway, so that the rising tide would cover first the elder Margaret, then the younger, except they renounced the Covenanter faith.

Truly the grace of Christ has sustaining power for those whose trust is in the living God. At the stake young Margaret sang the twenty-fifth psalm — “from verse seven downwards.” Here are a few of the verses in the Scottish psalm book meter, inspired prayers and promises that were Margaret’s strength and support that day:

My sins and faults of youth do Thou, O Lord, forget:
After Thy mercy think on me, and for Thy goodness great.
Now for Thine own name’s sake, O Lord, I Thee entreat
To pardon mine iniquity; for it is very great.
Mine eyes upon the Lord continually are set;

For He it is that shall bring forth my feet out of the net.
Turn unto me Thy face, and to me mercy show;
Because that I am desolate and am brought very low.
O do Thou keep my soul, do Thou deliver me:
And let me never be ashamed because I trust in Thee!

So the young girl prayed in the psalmist’s words as the waters rose. All thought of who was looking on was banished; Margaret Wilson had seen the elder Margaret far out go down beneath the waves that now crept higher and higher about her with every wash of the incoming tide. And these words of God, expressive of communion with Him, held true. The divine words are sufficient for the supreme hour when the soul is face to face with God and eternity.

The cord that held her close to the stake was loosened once, as the waters were covering her; and she was drawn up a bit, and asked finally to yield her faith and conform.

“No,” she cried, “no; let me go. I belong with the Lord’s scattered people.”

At the very last, as the waters rose about her neck, Margaret repeated or read from her treasured Testament the closing verses of Romans 8. How truly does the believing heart in dire need turn to the word that answers always with comfort and hope!

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
(Romans 8:35, 37–39)

How sweetly, powerfully, must the words have come! They were all-sufficient then for one true heart; they are surely all-sufficient still for the heart that believes.

Then as Margaret prayed, the water covered her.

As her face turned upward on the wave, said those who watched, the sun burst through a rift in the clouds, full shining in glory upon her face as it sank below the waters.

Much more to be noted is it that the glory that is above the brightness of the sun shone into Margaret’s soul. And through her, again, as through others aforetime, was left the witness for all time that the promise of God never fails: “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee.”

W. A. Spicer

The Lunar Sabbath

A *Wind* of Doctrine



Last month we began a focus on the lunar Sabbath which included an article by Dr. Gerhard Pfandl, of the Seventh-day Adventist Biblical Research Institute, and the first part of an article by Brother Lynnford Beachy. Due to a very busy schedule, Brother Beachy is not able to present the second part of his study this month, but we hope to offer it soon.

This month we are beginning Michael Pedrin's extensive study on the lunar Sabbath entitled *The Big Lie*. We will print his study in installments over the next few months and then publish it as a book.

The following article is the first part of an updated version of a study on the lunar Sabbath I originally wrote for *Old Paths* in 2007. It looks at the issue from a biblical perspective, but it does not cover the topic of the length of the Sabbath day because this was covered last month in Brother Beachy's article and because it is also covered in detail in Brother Pedrin's study this month. The conclusion of my article will be published in a later issue and will be on the true Sabbath, as detailed in the Spirit of Prophecy.

May God sincerely bless you as you endeavor to keep both the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ.

Introduction

When I became a Seventh-day Adventist in 1978, the church was being rocked by issues concerning the sanctuary that were being raised by Desmond Ford. I later learned that this was not the only attack upon the truths that God had given to the remnant people. Many years earlier the stage had been set, so to speak, with the 1955–1956 SDA-Evangelical conferences which resulted in the book *Questions on Doctrine*. Ford was merely a chicken come home to roost. Not only was the sanctuary under attack, but the truth on the incarnation was also being undermined. A new view of the Spirit of Prophecy, as well, was coming into the church. How surprised I was to learn that all of these changes were possible because of even earlier compromises and changes in the doctrine about God. Yet amid these heresies, the Sabbath, though lightly regarded, seemed safe from attack. No longer! A recent movement has focused on the lunar Sabbath.

The Lunar Sabbath

The concept of the lunar Sabbath, like the trinitarian doctrine, is tedious to define, for there are various interpretations to it. Most variations state that when the moon is in its new moon phase, the month begins, and biblically this is the way the children of Israel counted their months after the exodus. We agree with lunar Sabbath-keepers on this point, but the

lunar Sabbath proponents claim that the Sabbath is then determined by counting seven days *after* the new moon. Most people who believe in the lunar Sabbath teach that the eighth, the fifteenth, the twenty-second, and the twenty-ninth days of the lunar month are Sabbath days. With this system, the day of the week of the Gregorian calendar on which the Sabbath falls varies each month. This is because the weekly cycle of days becomes disrupted. In other words, during some months the lunar Sabbath comes on what is commonly called Sunday. In the next monthly cycle, the lunar Sabbath may move to Monday, with a month of Sabbaths on Monday. Each month the day of the lunar Sabbath will change. Thus, the Sabbath floats each month from one day of the week to another. (Floating from one day of the week to another is based on the standard seven-day week with which we are familiar, as in the Gregorian calendar.) Furthermore, the cycle of the week is broken at the beginning of each month. While the weeks of the lunar Sabbitarians are said to be seven days long, there is an interval of one or two days between the last day of the prior month's last week and the first day of the new month's first week! So the time between the last Sabbath of the current month and the first Sabbath of the next month will be either eight or nine days. Sometimes it is claimed that the extra days are not actually part of the week, but are special days (transition days). However, this destroys the concept of the week as being a subdivision of time. It would be like saying an hour is sixty minutes long but sometimes there are an extra three or four minutes between hours that really do not fit anywhere else. The doctrine of the lunar Sabbath teaches that the seventh-day Sabbath, as we have commonly understood it and upon which we have been worshipping God, is a product of Satan.

It is said that the lunar Sabbath was the Sabbath of the patriarchs but that somehow it was lost. There are different versions of when it vanished, but many say that it happened during the Babylonian captivity and that when the Jews returned to Jerusalem they continued to follow the Babylonian calendar that they had become accustomed to. There is, however, no reliable historical documentation to prove this.

In Romans 10, we find counsel from Paul that would be wise for us all to heed: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved" (v. 1), and I hope that is your prayer for me, and it is my prayer for you and for all of God's people. We should have a great desire that all will be saved. "For I bear them record that they

have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end [or the goal] of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Romans 10:2-4). Paul is speaking of people who are looking for righteousness and who have a zeal for God but it is not according to knowledge. Today, there are many who are serious about the lunar Sabbath. In fact, in reading through some of the literature on the lunar Sabbath, I have seen a people who appear very sincere in wanting to know and follow truth, but I have to say that Paul would declare their earnestness to be a wrongly-placed zeal.

I want to emphasis very plainly, unequivocally, and without any question that I believe the lunar Sabbath concept to be a trap of Satan to use the good zeal of the saints to finally disobey God, and I will show you why I say this before we are finished.

In this study, I want to re-examine the Sabbath of the Bible and to explore the reasons why I find it impossible to reconcile the lunar Sabbath with the Bible.

The Seventh-day Sabbath Founded at Creation

The first part of this study should be *old school* to most of us, but I want to review the biblical teaching of the Sabbath, for there may be those who do not understand this concept. We will start in chapter 1 of the book of Genesis. In the first chapter of the first book of the Bible, we have the initial account of creation. The Bible teaches that in six literal days God created the heaven and the earth. In chapter 2, we read:

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made (vs. 1-3).

Chapter 1 of Genesis provides an outline of what was created on each day of creation week, and on the fourth day it says that God created the heavenly bodies:

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day (Genesis 1:14-19).

Some have argued that the moon was created on the first day and was declared on day four to be a sign for seasons and

times, but notice the language of the verses. God is speaking, and when he spoke, creation occurred. (See Psalm 33:6, 9.) Genesis 1:16 plainly says God made the sun, moon, and stars; and the reference point given in verse 19 is the fourth day.

Now, it is interesting that although it does say the sun, moon, and stars are to be for "signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years," nothing is mentioned about weeks here.

In Genesis chapter 2, we read that God blessed the seventh day. The lunar Sabbath teaching says that the Sabbath is the seventh day after the new moon; however, this is very hard to reconcile with the creation account because on the first Sabbath the moon was only three days old, having been created on the fourth day. Even if that moon was in its new moon phase when God created it, the seventh day of creation was still too early for a lunar Sabbath. It might be argued that the moon was created in a phase that was four days after a new moon. That is possible; however, guess work or conjecture must be employed to arrive at such a position, and that is never safe. God would not require his people to base something as important as the Sabbath on speculation. The Bible says the seventh day was blessed (Genesis 2:3), and we know that the Bible says the seventh day is the Sabbath (Exodus 20:8), the great memorial of creation. This is important to remember. Some have argued that the Sabbath is never called a memorial of creation. While it is true the exact phrase *memorial of creation* is not in the Bible, the concept surely is. In both Exodus 20:8-11 and Revelation 14:6, 7, we see a call to worship God as the creator and the Sabbath is the reminder of it.

J. N. Andrews, in his book *The History of the Sabbath*, writes:

The importance of the Sabbath as the memorial of creation is that it keeps ever present the true reason why worship is due to God. For the worship of God is based upon the fact that he is the Creator and that all other beings were created by him. The Sabbath therefore lies at the very foundation of divine worship, for it teaches this great truth in the most impressive manner, and no other institution does this. The true ground of divine worship, not of that on the seventh day merely, but of all worship, is found in the distinction between the Creator and his creatures. This great fact can never become obsolete, and must never be forgotten (p. 510).

This statement was felt to be such a valid point that it was included in *The Great Controversy* on pages 437, 438.

The Sabbath in the Heart of God's Law

One thing I like about the message we call *the truth about God* is that it is a straight-forward and plain message. When I listen to trinitarians, I listen to many assumptions, and I hear a lot of ambiguity in phrases, such as *it is assumed* or *only by faith can we accept this*. I am glad that the truth about God is very plain and straight-forward, and I believe the same is true about the doctrine of the seventh-day Sabbath. It is a plain, straight-forward truth and for over one hundred sixty years, the Advent

people have been preaching it. We have been preaching that it is a plain, straight-forward truth. It is not a truth that is found in hints and in insinuations. Right in the middle of God's Ten Commandment law, in the fourth commandment, we read: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work [notice the prohibition against doing any work] thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it" (vs. 8–11). In Genesis we read that God blessed the seventh day and in Exodus 20, the day he blessed is called the Sabbath day.

Interestingly, in Exodus 31:15–17, we read: "Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed." Who rested and who was refreshed? God! Is it not amazing that God was refreshed on the seventh day Sabbath? God was saying, in effect: *I have enjoyed this experience so much that I want this experience to continue every week with my people.* So God instituted the Sabbath. If you look at the record, he rested first and then instituted the Sabbath. He did not institute the Sabbath and then rest. Sometimes we gather on the evening of the Sabbath to *welcome the Sabbath*, but, friends, it is not the Sabbath that we are to welcome. We are welcoming the God of the Sabbath. That is the point. The Sabbath provides a special time of blessing whereby we can associate, communicate, and commune with our God in a special, close way that we do not have during the rest of the week.

What is it that really makes something holy? It is the presence of divinity. When Moses was at the burning bush (Exodus 3), he was instructed to take off his shoes, for the ground he was standing on was holy ground because the Lord was there. In Colossians 1, we find the Son active in the creation with the Father. Referring to Christ, we read: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and *invisible*, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he [Jesus] is before all things, and by him all things consist" (vs. 14–17). Did Christ have anything to do with the Sabbath day? He surely did. He played just as much a part in the institution of the Sabbath day as did the Father.

In Matthew 12:8, Jesus says: "For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day." The Sabbath is a memorial of Christ's creative power, not only to create the heaven and the earth, but to recreate a new heart in us. That is truly the importance of the matter. In Psalm 51:10, we read David's prayer: "*Create* in me a clean heart." How was his heart to be cleansed? Through the Word of God! The Word is powerful (Hebrews 4:12); it is full of power to bring about salvation. Jesus said, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (John 15:3).

First Corinthians 1:30 states: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." The Sabbath is not only a memorial of creation, but it is the sign that Jesus has the power to create in us a clean heart. That is why in Ezekiel 20:12, we read: "Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them."

God has measured off the days of creation, beginning in Genesis 1 and 2. Seven consecutive days are mentioned, and there is no reference of any days before this. Genesis 2:3 is either mentioning the seventh-day of the week or the seventh-day of the month. The month could not have begun before Creation. Unlike the day, month, or year which depend upon the heavenly bodies for their cycles, there is no rational for the week in the heavenly bodies.

When you look at the law as given at Mt. Sinai, what is the fact upon which the Sabbath is based? It is the fact that God created everything in six days. Nothing is said at all concerning the moon. If the Sabbath was to be on the eighth, the fifteenth, the twenty-second, and the twenty-ninth of each month, why did God not make it clear when he made all the other commandments so clear? There is no reason to believe that the weekly cycle has been broken from the time of creation until today.

As Seventh-day Adventist people, we carry a peculiar message. We carry a message that is very strange to many people, and we know this message specifically as the three angels' messages. The three angels' messages are what Adventism is built upon. It is part and parcel of all that we are and of who we are. Revelation 14:6, 7 says:

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

As Adventist people we have been quick to recognize that these verses are virtually a quotation from the fourth commandment of the Decalogue, and it is a call to return to the worship of God as the Creator. As a people we have historically recognized this call to be a call to keep the seventh-day

Sabbath. God's creatorship is given in his Word as the reason he is worthy of worship. In Jeremiah 10, we read:

But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation. Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion. (vs. 10–12)

God says, *This is one way you know that I am God—I have created all things.* Again, the memorial to that creation is the seventh-day Sabbath.

The Seventh-day Sabbath in the New Testament

In Revelation 4, we read about how the heavenly hosts worship God.² Verse 11 records what these hosts say to the Father, who is sitting upon the throne: “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created” (Revelation 4:11).

Did Jesus keep the Sabbath? Let us look at Luke 4:16: “And he [Jesus] came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read.” Now, whatever day this is, it is a day that he had acquired a custom in keeping, and it is a day that was observed at the synagogue on a regular basis. There are people in the synagogue. Jesus is not meeting there by himself. This is clear from the context because quite a commotion arose over what he read. Jesus tried to correct many of their misconceptions about the Sabbath. He told them that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath and that he was Lord of the Sabbath day (Mark 2:27, 28). Jesus was accused many times of breaking the Sabbath day because he did not keep it as the religious leaders of his day held it but interestingly, he was never accused of breaking the Sabbath because of *when* he kept the Sabbath.

Isaiah 42:21 prophesied that Christ would “magnify the law, and make it honourable.” In John 15:10, Jesus said: “I have kept my Father’s commandments.” The Sabbath that Jesus kept when he was in the synagogue with the worshipers is the same Sabbath we know today. It is the same Sabbath that clearly has been continued historically from the time of Christ until today. There is a verse in Acts 15 that helps us to understand this very clearly. During the council at Jerusalem, James said: “For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day” (Acts 15:21). He said, *Moses is preaching in the synagogue every Sabbath day.*

Now, it is interesting to note that the text does not say *being read in the synagogues on what they believe to be every Sabbath day* or *on every false Sabbath day*. It says very plainly that they acknowledged that what was going on in those synagogues was during the Sabbath day. Now, perhaps you think James was wrong or mistaken. The Bible is inspired of God, and we know it is a true record, but we realize that not everything in it that is spoken of is a truth. Sometimes lies were told, and those lies are faithfully recorded. (See 1 Kings 22:11.) You might think that James did not understand this truth and that he was mixed up, but Peter was present and he did not correct James, nor did Paul, Barnabas, or any disciple correct James.

Acts 13:14, 15 speak of Paul and Barnabas at Antioch: “But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down. And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on,” and of course they spoke on. The story continues in verses 42–44: “And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath... Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.” We might say that the Sabbath these verses speak of is a lunar Sabbath, but there is no contextual evidence for this. It would go against the historical record that the Jews at this time were keeping the seventh day of the week, what we call Saturday today, as Sabbath. We realize the name *Saturday* has no authority under inspiration, but if you look at the historical cycle of the seven days, it is the day that we put on the end of the calendar week, regardless of what it is called.

Acts 17:2 records Paul being at Thessalonica, and it says: “And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures.” Again, Sunday-keepers take this verse and say: *It is not because the seventh day was the Sabbath anymore that Paul went there, but because it was still the Jewish Sabbath and Paul went there to witness to the Jewish people.* This, of course, is reading something into the text that is not there. Nowhere in the Bible is the Sabbath called the Jewish Sabbath.

In Acts 18:4 Paul is at Ephesus, “and he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.” We see that the apostles were preaching to the people in the synagogues on the Sabbath, and there is no mention

2. Dr. Richard Davidson has stated: “I believe the celestial worship in the heavenly sanctuary is the divine pattern after which the earthly sanctuary rituals of the Torah are based, and could well provide a blueprint for all earthly worship, be it Christian or Jewish” [*Shabbat Shalom*, 53, no. 3 (2006): 5; accessed at http://www.andrews.edu/~davidson/Publications/Sanctuary/Sanctuary_065G.pdf].

in any of these examples of a moon, a new moon, or of anything that would show that the Sabbath was a lunar Sabbath.

Problems with the Lunar Sabbath

I would like to explain some of the reasons why I cannot accept the lunar Sabbath concept, beside what I consider a clear lack of Scriptural evidence.

The Manna: In Exodus 16, we have the story of how God miraculously fed the children of Israel for forty years with bread from heaven:

Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no. And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily. . . . And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that which the LORD hath said, To morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the LORD: bake that which ye will bake to day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning. (Exodus 16:4, 5, 22, 23)

The manna came on a regular basis for five days. Five days they were to gather up a certain portion. On the sixth day the manna came, and they were to gather up a double portion. If any extra was gathered up during the first five days and kept over until the next day, the Bible says that it stank and bred worms. In verse 20 we are told some people decided that they would take more than they needed for the day. Perhaps their faith was not mature, and they thought that the manna would not be there the following day, so they gathered extra. “Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank: and Moses was wroth with them” (v. 20). But when they gathered the double portion on the sixth day, it did not stink or breed worms. “And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade: and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein” (vs. 20, 24). Now, what was the difference? In verse 24 it is talking about the manna they got on the sixth day. The manna they got on the sixth day was miraculously preserved, and this continued for forty years. Now, please think about this. If they gathered extra manna on any day other than the sixth, that manna on the next day would stink and breed worms. On the sixth day they were to take a double portion.

The Bible never makes a provision for a triple portion or a quadruple portion to make up for the extra day(s) the lunar Sabbath proponents claim are at the transition between months and do not belong to any week. Neither is there any mention that after the fifth Sabbath, supposedly on the twenty-ninth of the month, the people were to fast. Instead the Bible says this process of the manna continued every week for forty years. The reason I bring this up is because when the new

lunar month begins, the time from the last lunar Sabbath of the prior month to the first lunar Sabbath of the next month always has a time period of either eight or nine days. It is not seven days. The cycle changes because the moon does not change its phase in twenty-eight days, which would be four weeks of seven days each. The moon works in a twenty-nine and one-half day cycle; therefore, you have a shifting of about a day to a day-and-a-half every month. Exodus 16:35 says: “And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.” This continued for forty years, with no record of an interruption.

Pentecost: The concept of the lunar Sabbath also requires me to miscalculate Pentecost. I have a degree in mathematics, but one does not have to be a rocket scientist to count to fifty. I say this because God has set things in an orderly way in his word. He is not the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33). If you look in Leviticus 23, you will notice the appointed feasts of the Lord and when you come to the one we call Pentecost, (although it is not called Pentecost in the Old Testament), you read: “And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat [meal] offering unto the LORD” (Leviticus 23:15, 16). These verses tell of seven Sabbaths, but this is to be understood as seven weeks. It is speaking actually of weeks. In the English translation of the Septuagint, we read: “And ye shall number to yourselves from the day after the sabbath, from the day on which ye shall offer the sheaf of the heave-offering, *seven full weeks*.” This feast is also called the “feast of weeks” in Exodus 34:22; in Deuteronomy 16:10, 16; and in 2 Chronicles 8:13. If a week is seven days and if you have seven times seven, that is forty-nine days. When you add one more day, you have fifty days. It says that it would be on the fiftieth day. The term *Pentecost* means fiftieth. It comes from the Greek expression (*pentekoste*) which means fiftieth. Pentecost was fifty days after the wave sheaf was offered.

As we study the history of man, we understand that this earth has been in existence for about six thousand years, and there is going to be a millennium (one thousand years), and these time periods—the idea of six units and then a seventh unit—parallel the week.

I know that many, if not all, lunar Sabbath proponents know about many of the things I am sharing now, and some of them claim to have honest answers, just as much as Sunday-keepers claim to have an honest answers to Exodus 20, Genesis 2, and many other verses. I have to look, however, at the weight of evidence and as we look at the evidence, we will see this brings an indictment with which the lunar Sabbatarian might not be pleased.

Prohibition against Work: The prohibition against work on the annual feast days also teaches us an important lesson.

The Sabbath commandment states: “In it thou shalt not do any work [*melakah*], thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates” (Exodus 20:10). Life’s work is to shut down during the Sabbath. Only the most absolute essentials are to be done on the Sabbath. That is why we cook our food the day before, why we iron our clothes before Sabbath, and why we take care of all the things that are necessary *before* Sabbath.

Let us consider Leviticus 23. It speaks of the seventh-day Sabbath, and notice what it says to confirm what we read in Exodus 20: “Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; *ye shall do no work [melakah]* therein: it is the sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings” (Leviticus 23:3). On the seventh-day Sabbath, they were to do *no* work. Is the prohibition the same for all the annual feasts? No. The Day of Atonement has a similar prohibition, but let us look at some of the other feasts first. In Leviticus 23:5–8, we read about the Passover: “In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD’S pass-over. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do *no servile work [abodah melakah]* therein. But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do *no servile work [abodah melakah]* therein.”

Pentecost is mentioned next, in verse 21: “And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, that it may be an holy convocation unto you: ye shall do *no servile work [abodah melakah]* therein: it shall be a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.” Again at Pentecost the prohibition is different than on the seventh-day Sabbath.

The Feast of Trumpets is mentioned and in verse 25, the Bible says: “Ye shall do *no servile work [abodah melakah]* therein.”

On the Day of Atonement, no work at all was to be done. “And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work [*melakah*] in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people. Ye shall do no manner of work [*melakah*]: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings” (Leviticus 23:30, 31). The Day of Atonement was so important that God made it clear the people were not to do any type of work on that day. God proclaimed a fast for that day. They were not to worry about cooking or preparing any food ahead of time, for it was a day of fasting. We are living in the antitypical Day of Atonement, friends, and even though we cannot fast every day, we should have that spirit.

Now we come to the Feast of Tabernacles:

Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD. On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do *no servile work [abodah melakah]* therein. Seven days ye shall offer an offering

made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do *no servile work [abodah melakah]* therein. (Leviticus 23:34–36)

The first day of the Feast of Tabernacles was the fifteenth day of the seventh month. The last day of the Feast of Tabernacles was the twenty-second day of the month. By most accounts of the lunar Sabbatarians, these days were seventh-day Sabbaths, but the Bible says that they were to do *no servile work*. Why did God state it this way instead of saying no work at all, if these days were seventh-day Sabbaths? God makes a distinction here. If the fifteenth and the twenty-second days of the month were seventh-day Sabbaths, then the prohibition against work should have been total and not just against servile work, but it is not!

It has been asserted by some advocates of the lunar Sabbaths that every Sabbath in the Bible that has the day of the month mentioned in connection with the Sabbath occurs either on the eighth, the fifteenth, the twenty-second, or the twenty-ninth day of the month; however, examples cannot be used to *prove* doctrine. Even *if* every Sabbath mentioned is on the eighth, the fifteenth, the twenty-second, or the twenty-ninth day of the month, we are not assured that all the other Sabbaths were also on these days of the month and if one Sabbath can be found that is not on the eighth, the fifteenth, the twenty-second, or the twenty-ninth, then we have disproved the lunar Sabbath theory. Such a Sabbath is found in Acts 20.

Paul at Troas: Paul was traveling from Europe to Asia and in Acts 20:6, we read: “And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.” As you read this, it might seem ambiguous, and you could think it possible that they left sometime after the feast but not immediately thereafter, but Ellen White tells us in *The Acts of the Apostles* on page 391 that they left right after the feast.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread is finished at the end of the twenty-first day of the first month. This would make their departure on the twenty-second of the month, a day that is supposed to be a lunar Sabbath!

If the journey to Troas took two days, you would expect them to arrive on the twenty-third or twenty-fourth day of the month, but it took five days, bringing them to the twenty-sixth or twenty-seventh day of the month, depending if they started on the light or on the dark part of the day. After arriving, they were there for seven days.

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. And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together. (Acts 20:7, 8)

The Bible says: “Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.” Paul left for Troas after the days of unleavened bread.³ It says Paul abode with them for seven days, and if you do the math, friends, it brings the time down to the either the third or fourth day of the following month, depending on if you use inclusive reckoning or not. Paul was preaching to them that night. This was upon the dark part of the first day of the week. It was a Saturday night, and the next morning Paul was going to be leaving, which was Sunday morning. Anyway you do the math and anyway you figure whether the lunar Sabbath is the twenty-first or the twenty-second, you cannot correlate his leaving with the lunar Sabbath. It just does not fit. There is no way the math works.

Travel on the Lunar Sabbath: On at least one occasion, the children of Israel were commanded to work on the twenty-second day of the month, which is claimed to be a lunar Sabbath. Numbers 10:11, 12 say:

And it came to pass on the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from off the tabernacle of the testimony. And the children of Israel took their journeys out of the wilderness of Sinai; and the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran.

Verse 33 says: “And they departed from the mount of the LORD three days’ journey: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD went before them in the three days’ journey, to search out a resting place for them.” This happened on the twentieth day of the month. If you take three days, anyway you add it up, that is traveling over the twenty-second day of the month. So, what God was telling them to do was, *Pick up all the camp, and move the camp during the Sabbath.* It is enough work just to pitch camp someplace temporarily, like at camp meeting, and it does not seem consistent with either the concept of the Sabbath nor the weight of evidence of other things that we will soon examine. Breaking camp, moving, and then setting up again for two and a half million people is a lot of work. According to Jeremiah 17:21, 22, they were not to

carry great burdens in and out of their houses on the Sabbath, let alone carry their houses with them!

Interestingly in Exodus 12, we read that the children of Israel departed from Egypt on the fifteenth day of the month, a day that it is claimed to be a Sabbath:

And it came to pass, that at midnight the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants,

and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead. And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as ye have said. (Exodus 12:29–31)

We know that the Passover occurred on the fourteenth and on the night after the Passover, the beginning of the fifteenth

day, Pharaoh was anxious for Israelites to get out.

If we read Numbers 33:3, we see that “they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians.”

History of the Week

The weekly cycle has its origin in Eden and almost all nations and civilizations, even those outside of Christendom, have adopted a seven-day weekly cycle. The ancient Hindus, the Babylonians, and the ancient Chinese people all had a seven-day week. The Romans at first had no week, but began to adopt an eight-day cycle, with the market day being the eighth day. I found it very interesting, though, that the eight-day cycle began to fall out of custom during the time of Augustus Caesar. Do you remember who was born during the reign of Augustus Caesar? Jesus Christ was. So, even though it was not an official law or set up by the empire to

Paul’s Travel to and Stay in Troas

First Day	Second Day	Third Day	Fourth Day	Fifth Day	Sixth Day	Sabbath
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15 Beginning of Unleavened Bread	16	17	18	19
20	21 End of Unleavened Bread	22 Left Philippi for Troas right after the feast (AA, p. 391)	23	24	25	26 Arrived in Troas
Five days in travel						
27	28	29	Transition Day	New Moon	1	2
Seven days before the meeting on the first day of the week						
Meeting on the first day of the week which began Saturday night	Even if the new moon came one day later, the first day of the week does not come soon enough to meet the requirements for the lunar Sabbath to be true.					

3. According to Acts 16:11, this was normally a two-day trip.

have a seven-day week, the custom of the people by the time of Christ's life was to actually have a seven-day week. In AD 321, Constantine made the seven-day week an official part of the Roman calendar, but unofficially the Romans had been using a seven-day week for over three hundred years. During Constantine's reign, the current names were given to the days of the week, but the names have nothing to do with the cycle of days.

The ancient Mayan calendar used a thirteen and also a twenty-day week. In ancient Egypt the length of the week was ten days, as it was also in the France during the French Revolution. Communist Russia tried a five and then a six-day week, but these were all exceptions. History traced into antiquity reveals many ancient people observing a seven-day week.

Also, in almost all ancient languages as well as in modern languages, the word for the seventh day of the week is Sabbath. William Meade Jones was a Sabbatarian who did research in the nineteenth century concerning different languages, such as Hebrew, Chaldean, Samaritan, Babylonian, Assyrian, Arabic, Coptic, and many others. He listed the names of the days of the week as the ancients called them. They all had seven-day cycles, and it is interesting that the Hebrews would say: *One day into the Sabbath, second into the Sabbath, third into the Sabbath*, and so on. All these ancient people had a word for the seventh day that meant Sabbath.

This is true for many modern languages also. For example, the Spanish word for the seventh day of the week is *Sabado* and in Portuguese the word is *Sabbado*. William Meade Jones also made a list of over one hundred languages, ancient and modern, that used the word *Sabbath* for the seventh day of the week. This would be highly unlikely and improbable if this idea of the seventh-day Sabbath did not really originate in Eden many years ago.

Sunday worshipers have said that the Sabbath became changed or the days of the week became mixed up, and we respond that for the days of the week to have gotten mixed up, every Jewish person would somehow have had to have overslept a whole day or a day would somehow have had to have passed by with not one Jewish person being aware of it. They would all have had to have gotten mixed up at the same time. We understand that the probability of that happening is astronomical.

I have been studying the history used by the proponents of the lunar Sabbath. At times they quote Josephus, Philo, and others, and interestingly some people who argue against the lunar Sabbath also quote these same historians and sometimes the exact same passages to prove their points.

There really is no accurate, reliable, historical reference or way to ever prove that the lunar Sabbath was something kept by ancient Israel, by the apostles, or by Jesus himself!

Keeping the lunar Sabbath might not be as easy as some might think. I have heard the argument that by using the new

moon as a guide the common shepherd or the common person in the field can always know when the Sabbath begins; however, this is not true. In fact, it is harder for someone to understand when the lunar Sabbath starts than to keep track of every seventh day. Let me explain.

I have been alive for over fifty years, and I know without any question or doubt that the weekly cycle has not changed in the last fifty years. If you go back one generation, my mother or father could tell you the same thing. We can all count seven days. Seven is not hard to count to, but think about this: Suppose you were a shepherd out in the field, waiting for the Sabbath to arrive, but a three or four-day storm came, and it was cloudy those nights. It would be hard to know when the new moon truly began, if you did not have astronomical knowledge. If you were to depend upon sight alone, you would not always be able to see the new moon because some days the moon would be obscured, not allowing you to see the conjunction of the moon.

Also, the moon is not a static body in the heavens. I am sure that most of you are aware of the fact that the moon moves around the earth in such a fashion that the same side of it faces the earth at all times. The visible side of the moon is always the same. I was listening to someone speaking on creation recently. The issue was not the Sabbath or anything concerning lunar Sabbaths, but it was an explanation on the unique motion of the moon through space. The speaker said this type of motion could not have happened by chance. He said there had to be an extremely intelligent design for this to have occurred, and I believe it. Every other known heavenly body makes its revolutions in such a way that you have the opportunity to see the front, the back, the sides, and all parts of the body in its revolution, but this is not possible with the moon. The only way we know what is on the back side of the moon is from the pictures the astronauts took when they went around the moon. The fact is that from the earth we see only one side of the moon and just as God arranged this in an exact fashion, he could also have set up an exact twenty-eight day orbit of the earth by the moon with seven-day cycles. It would not have been hard for God to have done this, but he did not.

I am going to make a very bold statement, but I believe it is true. The lunar Sabbath doctrine requires us to believe that the papacy really *did not* change the Sabbath day; for, and please listen very well, the acceptance of the lunar Sabbath requires us to believe that the seventh-day Sabbath, what we call Saturday, is NOT JEHOVAH'S day any more than Sunday is—Saturday is no more the Sabbath than Sunday is! In fact, some claim the Saturday Sabbath to be a child of Satan! Inspired history, however, disagrees with this concept.

Allen Stump

The Big Lie

(Dr. Pedrin has graciously granted us permission to publish his book, *The Big Lie*. He may be contacted through his website, clearbibleanswers.org. Editor)

PREFACE

In my nineteen years of ministry, I had never come across a challenge of such magnitude. I was introduced to the lunar Sabbath doctrine when one precious family in my local church, which I minister to, got trapped into it last year. By the grace of God, truth triumphed at the end, and they are back into the fold.

Of late, I hear that many thousands of precious souls have stopped observing the seventh day Saturday Sabbath and are observing the lunar Sabbath and feast days and after reading the erroneous materials on the Internet, several others are confused as to what is the real truth.

One thing is certain—the lunar Sabbath doctrine is not truth and is not from God because it does not convince people, but it *confuses* them! When something is truth even a child can grasp it, but the lunar Sabbath doctrine defies simple reasoning and math as well.

As creation was an easier process for God than redemption, to get someone to the truth is easier than to get them *back* to the truth, but with God all things are possible.

I dedicate this book to all who are struggling to see the light.

Michael Pedrin, Ph.D.
March 2010

Chapter 1 THE CHALLENGE

We know that the biggest deception is yet in the future—when Satan impersonates Christ. Why does Satan do so? He does it in a desperate attempt to get one class of people who have *not* been a prey to his guile. They are ready to receive the seal of the living God and to be declared secure for eternity. He wants to have a last go at them.

In vivid details the Pen of Inspiration lays down this warning message:

As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. . . . he claims to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed. He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are blaspheming his name by refusing to listen to his angels sent to them with light and truth. This is the strong, almost overmastering delusion. (Ellen White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 624)

We are warned about great perplexity and confusion creeping in as a part of the enemy's strategy to derail the precious faith of the saints:

The days are fast approaching when there will be great perplexity and confusion. Satan, clothed in angel robes, will deceive, if possible, the very elect. . . . Every wind of doctrine will be blowing. (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 80)

God will purge His church, and He has many ways to do it. We are told one way is by the introduction of false doctrines:

When the shaking comes, by the introduction of false theories, these surface readers, anchored nowhere, are like shifting sand. They slide into any position to suit the tenor of their feelings of bitterness. (Ellen White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 112)

The Lunar Sabbath Deception

Of late, a strange doctrine seems to be trapping many precious souls into a great deception. Many times in the last century it has tried to pop up but since a decade or so, it has gained momentum, and it seems to be spreading rapidly on the Internet.

From the book of Revelation, we know that the final issue will be the seal of God versus the mark of the beast—the true Sabbath versus the false Sabbath.

Why does Satan impose the Sunday law? The only reason is to force the true Sabbath-keepers to stop keeping God's day holy. The rest of the world he doesn't need to force—he has deceived them already, and they are not keeping the true day.

As the Sunday law is to *force* Sabbath-keepers into disobedience of the true Sabbath, the lunar Sabbath doctrine is to *deceive* the Sabbath-keepers into disobedience of the true Sabbath. The targets of both are *Seventh-day Adventists*.

It is claimed that many tens of thousands of Seventh-day Adventists have left the faith and have aligned themselves to this new theory. A website which was, till late, staunchly defending the true Saturday Sabbath has moved into the grand deception of the lunar Sabbath doctrine. This site boasts of over ninety thousand members who have joined them in a period of less than a year. There are several other websites and independent ministries who are former Seventh-day Adventists promoting this spurious doctrine.

The Issues

What are the *issues* and *challenges* of the lunar Sabbath doctrine?

Its adherents agree that the seventh day of the week is the Sabbath, but they say that the seventh day of the week is not Saturday or Sunday and neither is its seventh-day Sabbath fixed on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday!

They say the Gregorian calendar that we are using now to identify the weekly Sabbath is not in harmony with the biblical calendar. The solar Gregorian calendar which we use has weeks that are *continuous*. They claim that the weeks during biblical times were based on the luni-solar calendar and that the weeks did not run continuously for more than four weeks.

How is the luni-solar calendar different from the Gregorian solar calendar that we use today? The Gregorian calendar is not guided by the *phases* of the *moon*. The new moon can fall on any date of our months. The months in our calendar have thirty or thirty-one days, except February which has twenty-eight or twenty-nine days.

In the luni-solar calendar, the new moon begins a new month, and the months have twenty-nine or thirty days. Why it is that one month has twenty-nine days and the next month thirty days? It is because there are about twenty-nine and one half days from one new moon to the next new moon. Since we cannot have half days, they alternate between twenty-nine and thirty days.

Now, twelve lunar months of twenty-nine and one half days will be about 354 days. That is close to eleven days short of the a solar year that has about 365 days.

As the solar calendar adds one day (February 29) every fourth year, the luni-solar calendar adds one extra month (a thirteenth month) every two or three years. In a nineteen-year period, they add seven months extra.

In our calendar, the days of the week are *independent* of the months. Whether a month has twenty-eight, twenty-nine, thirty, or thirty-one days does not affect the weekly cycle. The weekly cycle is a *continuous* cycle, and the Sabbath comes every seventh day of the week, regardless of the number of days in a month.

The lunar Sabbatharians say that the week is regulated by the new moon. Now, the new moon is the beginning of a month in the Bible. According to them, the week-count begins the next day after the new moon, so the first day of the week is the second day of the month, and the first Sabbath of the month, therefore, will be on the eighth of the month.

The Sabbaths are, therefore, fixed for them. They are always on the eighth, the fifteenth, the twenty-second, and the twenty-ninth of every month, and the first of every month is the new moon.

Lunar months alternate between twenty-nine and thirty days. Six times in the year the months have thirty days. What do they do with the extra day, the thirtieth day, because the twenty-ninth is their fixed Sabbath and the first is the new moon? They call the extra day either a transition day, a repairing day, or the translation day of the new moon.

Two or Three Categories of Days?

We believe that there are just two kinds of days—six work days and the seventh-day Sabbath. At no time in our calendar can the Sabbath come on a work day. That is because they are two distinct days.

They believe there are three kinds of days—six work days, the Sabbath day, and the new moon day. They quote a verse in Ezekiel which says:

Thus saith the Lord GOD; The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the sabbath it shall be opened, and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened. (Ezekiel 46:1)

In our present calendar the new moon can fall on a Sabbath (it does once in a while) and based on the above text of Ezekiel 46:1, the gates had to be opened on new moon days and on Sabbath days. So, it is no problem; the gates can be opened.

Again, based on our present calendar, the new moon can also fall on one of the six work days of the week (and most of the time this is so), but if the new moon falls on one of the six work days of the week, what has to be done? Are the gates to be *opened* or *closed*? The text in Ezekiel says to keep them open six working days and keep them closed on the new moon days. So, do we keep them opened or closed?

The problem, they say, is solved only when we consider the new moon as a third category of the days in the month. The three categories of the days are the new moon, the six work days of the week, and the seventh-day Sabbath. These are three distinct days, and they don't overlap one another, so they say.

According to the lunar Sabbatharians, the new moon day, therefore, does not fall on a Sabbath or on the six working days of the week. The new moon day is the first day of the month. The first day is a worship day like the Sabbath, but is not a Sabbath day, neither is it a work day of the week.

If that is the case—that the new moon day is a separate day that does not fall on one of the six working days—then there is a *serious problem* because then Saturday cannot be the seventh day of the week and *cannot* be the Sabbath!

According to the Bible the new moon is always the first day of the month. The new moon starts a new month. The word *month* comes from the word *moon* and according to the lunar Sabbatharians, since the new moon is not a Sabbath, neither is it a work day of the week. The work days of the week and the Sabbaths of the month are fixed on particular dates of the month, just like the new moon is.

The lunar Sabbatharians say the weekly Sabbaths are always fixed on the eighth, the fifteenth, the twenty-second, and the twenty-ninth of each and every lunar month, without any exceptions. According to them, the biblical calendar is like this: the first is the new moon; the eighth, the fifteenth, the twenty-second, and the twenty-ninth are Sabbaths; if there is a thirtieth day, it is the translation day of the new moon or an extra day of the new moon; and the remaining days are the work days of the week.

The Two Proofs: The Manna and the Crucifixion

The lunar Sabbatharians provide at least two *proofs* to show that the Sabbaths always fall on one of the above-mentioned dates.

The Old Testament proof they show is the manna, and the New Testament proof they show is the days of the week in the crucifixion account.

When did the children of Israel arrive at the wilderness of Sin?

And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt. (Exodus 16:1)

When did God promise to give manna?

I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God. (Exodus 16:12)

Based on the above two verses, they claim that the manna started to be given on the morning of the sixteenth.

Did God give them manna on the Sabbath?

Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none. (Exodus 16:26)

If the commencement of the manna was on the sixteenth day of the month and that was the first day of manna-giving, then the seventeenth was the second day of manna, the eighteenth was the third day of manna, the nineteenth was the fourth day of manna, the twentieth was the fifth day of manna, the twenty-first was the sixth day of manna, and the twenty-second was the seventh day with no manna because it was the Sabbath.

So if twenty-second of that month was a Sabbath, the next Sabbath would be seven days later—the twenty-ninth. The previous Sabbath before the twenty-second would be seven days earlier—the fifteenth—and the previous Sabbath before fifteenth would be seven days before that, the eighth of the month. This is their solid Old Testament proof that the Sabbaths are fixed always on eighth, fifteenth, twenty-second and twenty-ninth of each and every month.

Their New Testament proof is the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Jesus died on the Passover day, and the Passover day is always on the fourteenth day of the first Jewish month:

In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S passover. (Leviticus 23:5)

The day after Jesus died was the fifteenth day of the first month, and wasn't it the seventh-day Sabbath? Luke calls the day Jesus died as the preparation day, and the next day was the Sabbath. Luke wrote:

And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on. (Luke 23:54)

If the fifteenth day of that month was a Sabbath, then seven days before that was the eighth, and seven days after the fifteenth was the twenty-second, and seven days after the twenty-second was the twenty-ninth. So even in the month Jesus died, you have the eighth, the fifteenth, the twenty-second and the twenty-ninth as Sabbaths!

They claim these two great *proofs* from the Old and New Testament make their point—that Sabbaths are always fixed on the eighth, the fifteenth, the twenty-second, and the twenty-ninth and are almost indisputable! They have other narrations from Scripture that they use to further prove that

the Sabbaths are fixed on the above-mentioned dates, but those other narrations are even less forceful than the manna and the crucifixion accounts. We will look at the other accounts later.

Another Issue

Another serious issue the lunar Sabbatarians have raised is the reckoning of a biblical day. We believe a day is counted from *sunset to sunset*, but they say that a day is reckoned from *sunrise to sunrise*. They show many texts, but here are a few:

And the people stood up all that day, and all that night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quails. (Numbers 11:32)

In the above text we have “that day,” “that night,” and “the next day.” What they are saying is that there are two days mentioned in the above verse—“that day” and “next day,” and one night in between called “that night.” If a new day begins at night (after sunset), then the night should be called *next night*. Since it is called “that night,” it is a proof to them that the night belonged to the *previous* day and not the *next* day. So according to them, a day should be from sunrise to sunrise and not sunset to sunset.

Also, they quote the killing of the Passover lamb which was on the fourteenth day of the first month:

In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S passover. (Leviticus 23:5)

We know from the Scriptures that the death angel came at night. Now look at the wording of the Scripture carefully:

For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night. (Exodus 12:12)

The lunar Sabbatarians say if at sunset a new day begins and God was visiting His judgments on the Egyptians at midnight, then the night should be referred to as the *next* night but by calling the night of fourteenth as *this* night, it indicates that the night belonged to the fourteenth and not to the fifteenth! That is another proof for them that a new day is reckoned from sunrise to sunrise. They quote other similar texts as well.

Twelve-Hour Sabbaths?

They also say that the Sabbath is only the daylight part of the day—just twelve hours—and is not twenty-four hours. They say that nowhere does the Scripture mention Sabbath *night*, but only says Sabbath *day*.

Just like we believe that the Sabbath ends at sunset, the lunar Sabbatarians, too, believe the same. But we say it is from sunset to sunset, but they say it is from sunrise to sunset. The sunset ending is clearly indicated in the ministry of Jesus while He was working miracles. When Jesus was healing the people on the Sabbath day, the leaders of Israel told the people not to come for healing on the Sabbath day.

And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day. (Luke 13:14)

That is the reason we see people coming to Jesus after sunset:

And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. . . . And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils. (Mark 1:32, 34)

So ending at sunset is not an issue for either group. The difference is whether the Sabbath *begins* at sunset or sunrise.

For them, all the days begin at sunrise, so the Sabbath also begins at sunrise. They quote the story of the giving of the manna to prove that the Sabbath started in the morning:

And he said unto them, This is that which the LORD hath said, To morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the LORD. (Exodus 16:23)

They say that if Sabbath was to begin at sunset, Moses should have said *tonight* is the rest of the holy Sabbath; however, Moses said “*to morrow* is the rest.”

The Main Points

These are the main points in the lunar Sabbath challenge:

- a) The Sabbaths are fixed on the eighth, the fifteenth, the twenty-second, and the twenty-ninth of every month in the Bible.
- b) A day is reckoned from sunrise to sunrise and not from sunset to sunset.
- c) The holy hours of the Sabbath are only the twelve hours of daylight and does not include the twelve hours of night.

Chapter 2 WHEN DOES A DAY BEGIN?

We say a biblical day begins at *sunset*. The day is from sunset to sunset. The lunar Sabbatharians say a biblical day begins at *sunrise*. They say the day is from sunrise to sunrise.

Let Us Investigate

What is mentioned first in the first chapter of the Genesis creation record—darkness or light?

And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. (Genesis 1:2)

Darkness was there even before the light was introduced. Logically speaking, the light that came later cannot be placed ahead of darkness in regard to time. That is exactly what the word of God says about each creation day—darkness first, light next.

God then proceeds to make two distinct periods of time where previously only one—darkness— existed:

And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. (Genesis 1:3, 4)

God then names those two periods of time:

And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. (Genesis 1:5)

So, “light” and “day” are synonyms, and “darkness” and “night” are synonyms.

And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. (Genesis 1:5)

There are only two segments in the twenty-four-hour orbit of the earth—light and darkness. We now have different terminologies for the two segments of time in the above verse of Genesis 1:5—light, day, darkness, night, evening, and morning. Light, day, and morning are synonyms. Darkness, night, and evening are synonyms.

Look at the order of the two periods of time:

And the evening and the morning were the first day. (Genesis 1:5)

There are only two periods of time—darkness/night/evening and light/day/morning. So, “evening and morning” means *night and day* or *darkness and light*.

How do we know that “the evening and the morning” of Genesis 1 embraces a twenty-four-hour period and not a twelve-hour period, as the lunar Sabbatharians believe?

This same phrase of “the evening and the morning” is used also in the book of Daniel and is clearly a twenty-four-hour period of time. This is the only other place, apart from Genesis 1, where the phrase “the evening and the morning” is used:

And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days. (Daniel 8:26)

How many days are “the evening and the morning” of Daniel?

And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed. (Daniel 8:14)

The Hebrew words translated *days* in Daniel 8:14 are the same words in the Hebrew of Daniel 8:26, where it is translated as “evening” and “morning.” The Hebrew words are *ereb* and *boqer* which are the exact words used in Genesis 1 for “evening” and “morning.”

The two thousand three hundred evenings and mornings are two thousand three hundred full twenty-four-hour periods. The lunar Sabbatharians also agree to this. If “the evening and the morning” is a twelve-hour period only, the two thousand three hundred evenings and mornings would be just 1150 days (half of two thousand three hundred days) and would end in AD 694 instead of in AD 1844.

So, if the lunar Sabbatarians agree to the two thousand three hundred evenings and mornings as two thousand three hundred twenty-four-hour days, then it is inconsistent to interpret “the evening and the morning” of Genesis as just compassing twelve hours.

From the very first chapter of the Bible, we see *when* a new day *begins*. It begins in “the evening,” at darkness.

The Unleavened Bread

And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. (Leviticus 23:6)

So, the feast of the unleavened bread starts on the fifteenth day, and it continues for seven days. If a reckoning of a twenty-four-hour day begins at sunrise, then it has to start on the morning of the fifteenth but as we saw in the Genesis creation record, a twenty-four-hour day begins at “evening.” Notice *when* the fifteenth day begins:

In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses. (Exodus 12:18, 19)

Genesis gave us the rule of *how* to reckon a day and from *when* to reckon it. Exodus confirms the same reckoning—it is from “evening” to “evening.”

The Day of Atonement

Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD. (Leviticus 23:27)

Notice, *when* does the tenth day begin, according to God, on the morning of the tenth or on the evening of the ninth?

It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath. (Leviticus 23:32)

Here we have the first three books of the Bible in a row—Genesis, Exodus and Leviticus—all attesting to the evening as the beginning of a new day!

The Time of Nehemiah

And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day. (Nehemiah 13:19)

The Sabbath begins when it is dark, when the sun is set. “Began to be dark” is the time when the sun is beginning to set, just before the Sabbath. The gates were closed just before the Sabbath commenced.

The above phrase “began to be dark before the Sabbath” clearly indicates that the Sabbath began when it was dark. “Began to be dark” means the darkness was imminent—darkness followed not later, but immediately. “Before the sabbath” means the Sabbath was imminent—the Sabbath followed not later, but immediately.

The Crucifixion

A person worthy of death was to be hanged on a tree, but God instructed His people to follow a procedure; they were not to remain hanging at night.

And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance. (Deuteronomy 21:22)

Joshua followed this rule when he hanged the king of Ai:

And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until eventide: and as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his carcase down from the tree. (Joshua 8:29)

At the time of Jesus, this rule was followed as well.

The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. (John 19:31)

The bodies were not to remain on the cross during *any* night. How much more so when it was a Sabbath night!

If the Sabbath only began at sunrise, then why were they rushing to break the legs of the thieves and take them down from the cross nearly fifteen hours before the Sabbath began?

There is no command in the Old Testament that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath. The command was that the bodies should not remain on the cross at night. It does not say in John 19:31 that the bodies should not remain on the cross at night, but that “the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day.” This clearly implies that the Sabbath started that night, at sunset, and not at sunrise.

This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. . . . And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on. (Luke 23:52, 54)

The Revised Standard Version translates Luke 23:54 this way:

It was the day of Preparation, and the sabbath was beginning.

“The sabbath drew on” or “the sabbath was beginning” does not make sense if the Sabbath was beginning nearly fifteen hours *later*!

This again shows that the Sabbath began not at sunrise, but at sunset, the end of the sixth day.

The Resurrection

The apostle John gives us the period during which Mary Magdalene visited the sepulchre to anoint the body of Jesus:

The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. (John 20:1)

When it was “yet dark” means the sunrise had not yet taken place. John calls this time, the time before sunrise, as “the first day of the week.”

This proves that the first day of the week started even before the sun could rise! That means the first day of the week, according to John, did not start at sunrise but at sunset the previous night.

The Third Day Resurrection

For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day. (Mark 9:31)

The lunar Sabbatarians agree that Jesus died on Friday, the sixth day of the week, at 3 p.m. According to the above text of Mark 9:31, after Christ was killed, the third day He would rise.

The day of His death was Friday (sixth day of the week), the next day after His death was Saturday (seventh day of the week), and the third day was Sunday (the first day of the week).

If sunrise is the beginning of a new day, according to the lunar Sabbatarians, and not sunset, then Jesus rose on the second day and not the third day! Here it is—John wrote:

The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. (John 20:1)

If the stone was removed from the sepulchre while it was “yet dark,” it means Jesus rose while it was “yet dark”!

Let’s count it from the lunar Sabbatarians’ viewpoint: On the sixth day of week Jesus died (the first day of His death), the seventh day of the week Jesus rested (the second day from His death), and the first day of the next week Jesus rose before sunrise (still the second day).

If sunrise begins a new day, then Jesus rose on the second day and not the third day!

Sabbath—Twelve Hours or Twenty-Four Hours?

The lunar Sabbatarians believe that the holy hours of the Sabbath are just twelve hours and not twenty-four hours. The reason they believe this is because if the Sabbath is twenty-four hours long, then the quails pose a very big problem. The lunar Sabbatarians believe that the fifteenth of any month in the Bible was a Sabbath, but God sent quails on the fifteenth!

... on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt. . . . And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp. (Exodus 16:1, 13)

So how do they escape? Since quails came in the evening, after sunset, the lunar Sabbatarians came up with the theory that the holy hours of the Sabbath are only the daylight part and not the dark part! This is what they say:

Have you ever heard of a Sabbath night mentioned in Scripture or were we only told to remember the seventh DAY? (Elesha YisraEl, quoted by Troy Miller in “When does Scripture say a day begins?” p. 10; emphasis in original; accessed at www.creationcalendar.com at the link entitled “When does a day begin, evening or morning, midnight or noon?”)

That explanation is totally unacceptable and illogical. For example, when a person is born in the *night*, it is still called birthday and not birthnight! Don’t people have birthday celebrations in the night as well—is that wrong? It doesn’t matter at what part of the twenty-four-hour period an event occurs—it is still called—Independence *Day*, Liberation *Day*, Anniversary *Day*, etc. And those who work on night shifts, while on vacation, they say I am on *holidays*, and not *holinights*! Just because it is called Sabbath day, to conclude there is no Sabbath night is absurd!

The day before the Sabbath is called the preparation *day*:

And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath. (Mark 15:42)

If the Sabbath hours are only from sunrise to sunset (twelve hours), then *why* do we need a preparation *day*, just the preparation *night* might be all that would be required!

Having a preparation *night*, instead of a preparation *day*, could make sense if the Sabbath were just twelve hours!

Does Day Mean the Daylight Part Only?

The lunar Sabbatarians keep emphasizing that a *day* in the Bible is only the daylight part and not the night:

The word **day** refers to **light** only. (YisraEl, p. 10; emphasis in original)

They forget to realize that the word *day* has more than one meaning in Scripture and also in English and other languages.

Yes, *day* can mean the daylight period, when the sun shines, in contrast to the night, the dark part:

Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world? (John 11:9)

But *day* in Scripture can also mean a twenty-four-hour period—the dark part and the light part combined:

Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread . . . In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall

eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even. (Exodus 12:15, 18)

So here, seven days means seven days and seven nights. *Day* in Scripture can also mean a bigger period of time:

For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. (2 Corinthians 6:2)

Can anyone say that since salvation is called the “day” of salvation, one cannot accept the gospel message in the night?

The lunar Sabbatarians keep saying day means day and night means night, and you can’t make the day as night and the night as day. Then what do they do with the following text?

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. (2 Peter 3:10)

Though the Lord comes as a thief in the *night*, it is called “the *day* of the lord” and not the *night* of the Lord!

If it is true, as quoted earlier, that “the word day refers to light only,” what do we do with the words of Jesus in gospel of Mark?

And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. (Mark 14:30)

The above statement was made during the night hours, after the Lord’s Supper was over, while they were heading towards Gethsemane. And Christ called the night as day! They have nothing to say for this. Would they like to accuse Jesus of doing this?

The lunar Sabbatarians are twisting simple math. In the website article quoted earlier, this is what they say:

According to **Leviticus 8:35**, Aaron and his sons were to remain at the door of the Tabernacle, **day and night, seven days**. How many **nights** did they remain?

(A) - Six nights. Count ’em . . . D–N–D–N–D–N–D–N–D–N–D–N–D [A for answer, D for day, N for night]. (YisraEl, p. 11; emphasis in original)

First, please note that they are mistaken and then, let’s expose their mathematical tricks. The “day and night, seven days” ends on the *eighth day* and not on the seventh day. Just two verses later, in the very first verse of the next chapter, Moses writes about the day when Aaron and his sons came out of the Tabernacle:

And it came to pass on the eighth day . . . (Leviticus 9:1)

So, if it ended on the eighth day, the seventh night is included in the “day and night, seven days.” Period!

Let us see a parallel reckoning of time. For how long did it rain in Noah’s time?

And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. (Genesis 7:12)

A little further down, the Bible uses a little different method of counting:

And the flood was forty days upon the earth. (Genesis 7:17)

When we compare the above two passages, there is no contradiction for us—forty days equals forty days and forty nights—but for the lunar Sabbatarians who say the word *day* means light only, there is a problem! Did it rain just during the light hours, as per Genesis 7:17? Or did it rain during the light and dark hours, as per Genesis 7:12? Or were there two floods—one for forty days only and the other for forty days and forty nights?

From creation to resurrection we have clear proofs from the word of God that a biblical day is counted from “evening to evening,” from sunset to sunset, and *not* from sunrise to sunrise!

Also, we have seen the word *day* doesn’t always mean the light part, when the sun shines. *Day* also means the dark and light parts combined as well, apart from having other meanings too.

Only Twelve Hours of Worship?

The lunar Sabbatarians use the text of Psalm 113:3 to prove that Sabbath worship is just twelve hours—from sunrise to sunset:

If the celebration of our Sabbath **days** and our new moons (**Isaiah 66:23**) begins in the **evening** when the sun is going down, why would Our Creator state that all nations shall praise His Name and worship Him from the “rising of the sun until the going down of the same (sun)”?
From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same YHVH’s name is to be praised (Psalm 113:3).

(A[nswer]) If the Sabbath started in the **evening**, as many of our people believe, then this verse would make no sense whatsoever. (YisraEl, p. 11; emphasis in original)

The above quoted verse or even the entire Psalm of 113 does not mention the Sabbath or Sabbath worship at all! If that text of Psalm 113:3 is the recommended time to worship God, what about Psalm 55, which comes before Psalm 113?

Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice. (Psalm 55:17)

This looks more like Sabbath worship, for it starts at evening, then morning, and then noon. But we don’t interpret scriptures based on assumptions. If Psalm 113:3 is the recommended time of worship for them, then what about Paul and Silas praising God at midnight?

And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. (Acts 16:25)

This text of Acts 16 looks more like a congregation at worship than does Psalm 113. In Acts 16 there was a gathering of people (prisoners) present too, apart from Paul and Silas—preachers and singers! And, it was a *midnight* service, not *midday*!

Again, we don’t build our doctrines on assumptions! We build our doctrine on the plain command of Scripture which

says, “From even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath” (Leviticus 23:32).

“The evening and the morning” of Genesis 1

What do the lunar Sabbatarians have to say to these many clear-cut proofs that we have for a sunset reckoning? We will now look at their explanations to the texts we have quoted and see why their interpretations are flawed and not sound. This is what they say:

The Genesis account defines the day as evening and morning, which are the two parts of the radiant sunshine of “daylight”, and have nothing at all to do with the night. (Kerrie L. French, “Three Months in a Row, Part 2 – The Manna”; accessed at http://www.thecreatorscalendar.com/Articles/three_months/2_02_The_Manna.html#.Uh-hERafMpo)

Evening and morning is not synonymous with night and day, but rather evening and morning are two halves of the “daylight” hours . . . (Kerrie L. French, “Part 3 – The Mountain”; accessed at http://www.thecreatorscalendar.com/Articles/three_months/3_02_The_Mountain.html#.Uh-jBhafMpo)

The evening together with the morning make up the first daylight. This is a simple math equation: $.5 + .5 = 1$ whole daylight. Therefore the first daylight was made up of two parts, morning and evening. Morning begins at dawn and ends at noon; evening begins at noon and ends at dusk. (Unknown author, “When Does a Day Begin?”; accessed at <http://www.worldslastchance.com/yahuwahs-calendar/when-does-a-day-begin.html>)

If God meant the evening and the morning to be the “two halves of the ‘daylight’ hours,” as they claim, then there was an *easier way* of putting it. God should have said it the other way around that the morning and the evening were the first day, etc., and *not* “the evening and the morning”! Was God calculating *backwards*?

The lunar Sabbatarians say, as quoted above, that “the evening together with the morning make up the first daylight,” but the Bible says that “the evening and the morning were the first day” (Genesis 1:5).

The Bible doesn’t say first *daylight*, it just says “first *day*”! The lunar Sabbatarians are making people believe something that the Bible does not say!

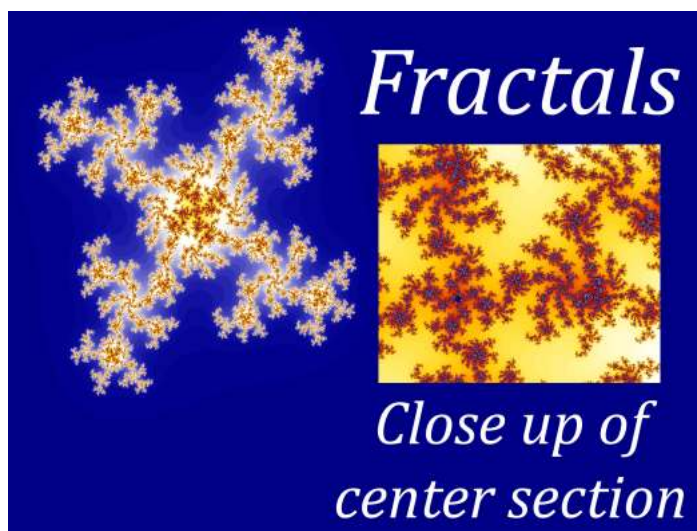
The lunar Sabbatarians also say, as quoted above, that “the Genesis account defines the day as evening and morning, which are the two parts of the radiant sunshine of ‘daylight’, and have nothing at all to do with the night.” Now look at a story where God sent quails in the evening and manna in the morning:

At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God.” (Exodus 16:12)


The quails came on the evening of the fifteenth (they agree to this). If evening and morning are the two parts of the “daylight,” did the quails come on the daylight of the fifteenth? And if quails came during the daylight of fifteenth, then by their own rule the quails came on the daylight of the Sabbath! (For them, the daylight of the fifteenth of any month is a Sabbath.) That should be the end of all issues regarding the lunar Sabbaths!

So you can see how they have misinterpreted the Genesis reckoning of time of “the evening and the morning.”

To be continued



Fractal: The above image is called a fractal and is generated by a mathematical formula. A fractal is defined as “a geometric pattern that is repeated at ever smaller scales to produce irregular shapes and surfaces that cannot be represented by classical geometry. Fractals are used especially in computer modeling of irregular patterns and structures in nature” (<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/fractal>).

Mathematicians have discovered, that fractal features are in tree branch patterns, blood vessels, snow flakes, and even DNA. God certainly is a wonderful Architect! 

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Editor Allen Stump—editor@smyrna.org
Associate Editor Onycha Holt—onycha@smyrna.org