

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



Prayer Requests

Brother Lynnford Beachy recently fell from a two-story building, suffering skull fractures and broken bones in one arm. After spending the night in the ER and then time in an ICU, he has made rapid progress toward recovery. By the time you read this, he may be out of therapy and at home, resting and recuperating. Thank you for your intercessory prayers for him, and we ask that you continue to pray for Brother Lynnford's complete recovery, as well as for his family.

Please also keep Brother Aland Ashton in Peru in prayer, as his health has been very challenged.

Pastor David Sims sends greetings from Fiji, saying the work is going very well, and requests your prayers for his work and his health.

We also request prayer for those in Europe who attended the recent meetings held by Pastor Stump. May the seeds of truth sown yield a rich harvest is our prayer.

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Paul and the Incarnation, Part 1

Introduction

The importance of a correct understanding of the incarnation of Jesus Christ should never be underestimated. We have been told it means everything to us:

The humanity of the Son of God is everything to us. It is the golden chain that binds our souls to Christ, and through Christ to God. This is to be our study. Christ was a real man; he gave proof of his humility in becoming a man. Yet he was God in the flesh. When we approach this subject, we would do well to heed the words spoken by Christ to Moses at the burning bush, “Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.” We should come to this study with the humility of a learner, with a contrite heart. And the study of the incarnation of Christ is a fruitful field, which will repay the searcher who digs deep for hidden truth. (*The Youth’s Instructor*, October 13, 1898)

The Jewish Mindset

As we begin our study, we need to understand the mindset of Paul and of every devout Jew. As we examine some Scriptures, we can see that certain prejudices were easy to develop. The principle of the one true God who was far above humanity was deeply ingrained within the mind of the common Jew. The Shema of Israel stated: “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD” (Deuteronomy 6:4). Numbers 23:19 states: “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?”

It would have appeared to the common Jew in Paul’s day that Christianity went too far beyond the limits of their history and teachings:

But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. (Matthew 9:6)

For a man to claim to have the authority to forgive sins was blasphemous to the Jews.

And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. (Matthew 9:2, 3)

Neither Paul nor the ordinary Jew could see any good coming out of the religion started by the Galilean carpenter. Paul was zealous for the God of his fathers and decided that action was needed. He was one who would stand in the gap! Paul declared that he had “received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished” (Acts 22:5).

And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word. (Acts 8:1–4)

Yet this one who became a man and forgave sins met the Apostle Paul on the Damascus Road:

And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. (Acts 9:1–5)

Who was this Jesus? What did the name *Jesus* mean to Paul? Of course, the name *Jesus*, *Yashua* in Hebrew, meant

Saviour, but to Paul this name had meant nothing more than a Galilean carpenter who had brought confusion into the Jewish faith and who had died, seemingly forsaken of God, on the cross because he sought to destroy the temple services.

Paul must have been puzzled about what could be driving this new religion. Could it have been the reports of Jesus' resurrection? Despite being a Pharisee who believed in a resurrection, Paul did not accept the resurrection of Jesus. He believed the lying report of the guards which the priests suggested, saying that "his disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept" (Matthew 28:13).

Most of the data that Paul had gathered from his orthodox sources convinced him, and seemed to verify, that this Jesus was simply a man.

Could not Paul have realized that God had a son? Though the Hebrew text of Proverbs 30:4 asks "who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and *what is his son's name*, if thou canst tell," we must understand that the 30th chapter of Proverbs and the first nine verses of chapter 31 of the Hebrew text are not included in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament that was universally used by Paul and other Jews at the time of Jesus.

Paul could have known, however, that Nebuchadnezzar looked into the fiery furnace and said in amazement, "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like *the Son of God*" (Daniel 3:25). Paul could have realized that one like *the son of man* would come before the Ancient of Days" (Daniel 7:13). Paul could have realized that God had an associate in creation: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Genesis 1:26).

Today we look at the mindset of Sunday-keeping Christians and wonder why it is so hard for them to break the traditions of their lives in spite of overwhelming evidence, but perhaps Paul faced a greater task in his day.

Now this MAN revealed himself to Paul as the Lord of glory. How could the divine Son of God, deity, become a man and not be recognized as God? To Paul this forever remained what he would, thirty-three years later, call "the Mystery of Godliness" (1 Timothy 3:16)!

Blinded and humbled, Paul was now led into Damascus. His mind was beginning to be cleared of the propaganda of his ecclesiastical superiors, and he began to see the words of the Old Testament as God wished him to understand them. We are told:

Stricken with blindness, helpless, tortured by remorse, knowing not what further judgment might be in store for him, he sought out the home of the disciple Judas, where, in solitude, he had ample opportunity for reflection and prayer.

For three days Saul was "without sight, and neither did eat nor drink." These days of soul agony were to him as years. Again and again he recalled, with anguish of spirit, the part he had taken in the martyrdom of Stephen. With horror he thought of his guilt in allowing himself to be controlled by the malice and prejudice of the priests and rulers, even when the face of Stephen had been lighted up with the radiance of heaven. In sadness and brokenness of spirit he recounted the many times he had closed his eyes and ears against the most striking evidences and had relentlessly urged on the persecution of the believers in Jesus of Nazareth.

These days of close self-examination and of heart humiliation were spent in lonely seclusion. The believers, having been given warning of the purpose of Saul in coming to Damascus, feared that he might be acting a part, in order the more readily to deceive them; and they held themselves aloof, refusing him their sympathy. He had no desire to appeal to the unconverted Jews, with whom he had planned to unite in persecuting the believers; for he knew that they would not even listen to his story. Thus he seemed to be shut away from all human sympathy. His only hope of help was in a merciful God, and to Him he appealed in brokenness of heart.

During the long hours when Saul was shut in with God alone, he recalled many of the passages of Scripture referring to the first advent of Christ. Carefully he traced down the prophecies, with a memory sharpened by the conviction that had taken possession of his mind. As he reflected on the meaning of these prophecies he was astonished at his former blindness of understanding and at the blindness of the Jews in general, which had led to the rejection of Jesus as the promised Messiah. To his enlightened vision all now seemed plain. He knew that his former prejudice and unbelief had clouded his spiritual perception and had prevented him from discerning in Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah of prophecy. (*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 118, 119)

The Riches and Poverty of Jesus Christ

This theme of Old Testament prophecies and stories would form the emphasis of Paul's teachings. When he was first ordained and sent out, during his first recorded sermon at Antioch (Acts 13), we see this theme and manner of presenting Jesus. Paul noted that the rulers and dwellers of Jerusalem rejected Jesus because they did not believe the voices of the prophets that were read to them every Sabbath:

For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him. (Acts 13:27)

Paul also appealed to the second Psalm as proof that Jesus had been raised from the dead (Acts 13:33). And concerning David, Paul said: "Of this man's seed hath God according to

his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus” (Acts 13:23). The Son of God would be from the seed of humanity.

There can be little doubt that Paul pondered upon the points of the incarnation as much as, or more than, any other issue he faced, for even his theology of justification by faith would be based upon and steered by the revelation that the Son of God became the son of man. Paul came to understand one of the greatest revelations of his day, something that we might today take for granted—that Jesus Christ was the visible leader of the children of Israel:

Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. (1 Corinthians 10:1–4)

Paul, in his reflections, began to contrast the glory of the eternal God, a glory that was manifested in the Shekinah glory upon the sacred ark within the most holy place, with the humanity of Jesus.

Jesus had been rich, not just in wealth, but in identity! Jesus had glory with God before the earth began. The night before his crucifixion, he had prayed: “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was” (John 17:5). His nature was divine! “Who, being in very nature God” (Philippians 2:6 NIV).

Yet we are also told that he “did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness” (Philippians 2:6, 7 NIV).

Paul calls this humanity *poverty*: “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his *poverty* might be rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9). The Greek for *poverty* means to “to be a beggar, be destitute” (*New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionary*, Logos Edition). Jesus said, “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head” (Matthew 8:20).

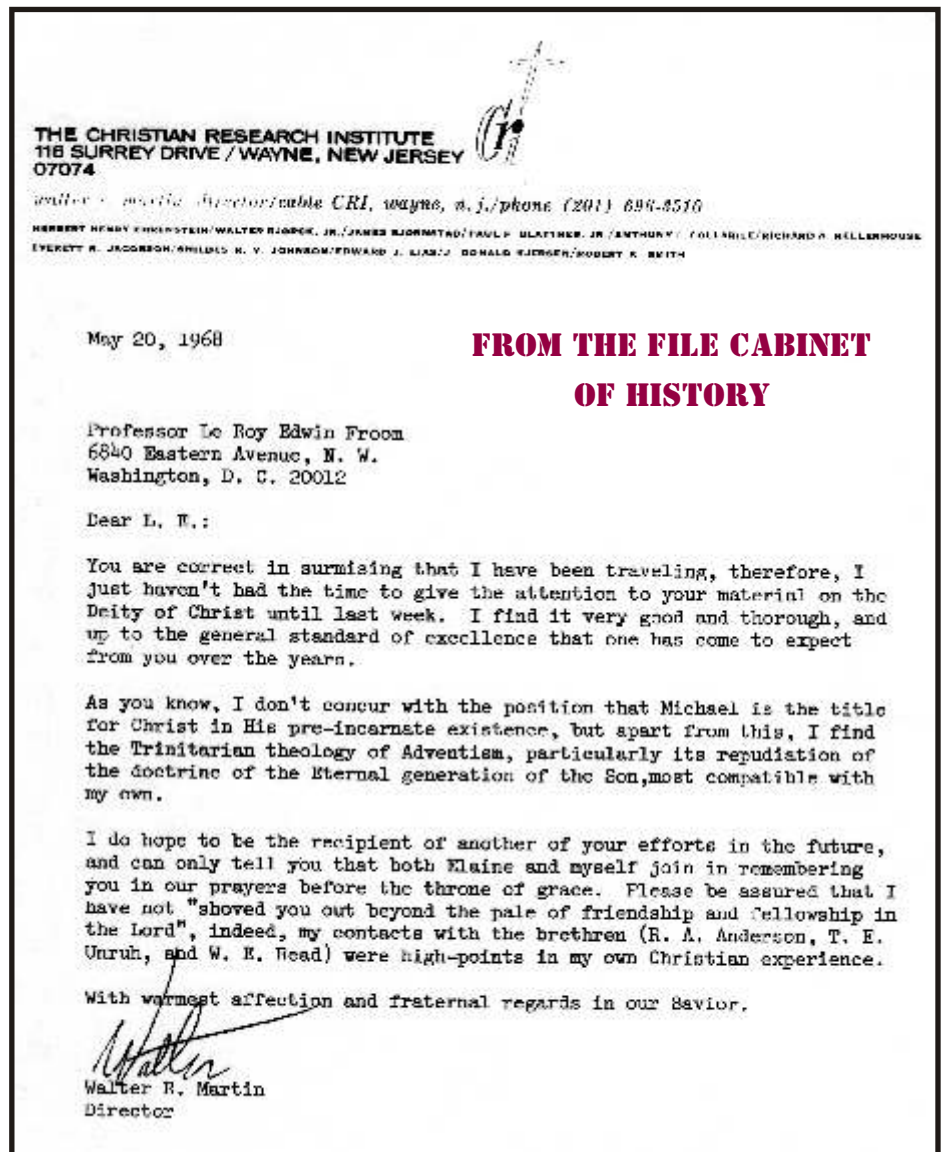
He laid aside His royal robe and kingly crown, and stepped down from His high command, to take the place of a servant. He was rich, but

for our sake, that we might have eternal riches, He became poor. (Ellen White, *Special Testimonies*, Series B, no. 1, p. 23)

Jesus declared, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:3), and he warned against the deceitfulness of the riches of this world (Matthew 13:22). But the poverty that Paul speaks of is not simply a poverty of the riches of this world, but is that Christ accepted the basic poverty of man, the poverty of sin itself. “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21). In the incarnation, Jesus “took upon His sinless nature our sinful nature” (*Medical Ministry*, p. 181) and upon the cross, the sins of the world were laid upon him (Isaiah 53:6).

Because of Jesus’ poverty he understands and is able to help the helpless sinner.

Allen Stump



Paul and the Incarnation, Part 2

In the first part of our study, we examined the background of Paul and Judaism, as they would be able to relate to the revelation of the Son of God becoming the son of man. The second part of this study on Paul and the incarnation will examine Paul's theology in Galatians, Romans, Philippians, and Hebrews.

Paul in Galatians

Paul, writing to the churches in Galatia, noted that “when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons” (Galatians 4:4, 5). The expression *under the law* is void of the article in the Greek, where the expression is simply *hypo nomon* (ὑπὸ νόμου). Christ was born under law, but what law?

As we come to the 125th anniversary of the 1888 General Conference Session this month, we are reminded of the controversy over the law of Galatians 3. What law was to be our schoolmaster bringing us to Christ? E. J. Waggoner took the position that it represented the moral law. Some of the older brethren, like G. I. Butler, believed it was the ceremonial law. Ellen White helped to clarify the issue when she wrote, “I am asked concerning the law in Galatians. What law is the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ? I answer: Both the ceremonial and the moral code of ten commandments” (*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 233).

Though closely connected in arrangement to Galatians 3:24, the focus of Galatians 4:4, 5, however, shifts. Here Paul is not speaking about the moral or the ceremonial law. Neither of these fit the context. Instead, Paul is speaking of the law of heredity, that which is associated with birth. This is the law Christ was born under. Paul says that Christ was “made of a woman, made under the law.”

The Greek word translated *made* twice in this verse is *genomenon* (γενόμενον) which means *to cause to be or to become*. Just as Jesus was born of a woman, so also was he born under, or made under, law.

Christ would be subject to the Jewish law. He was circumcised (Luke 2:27) and participated in the feasts (John 13:1, 2), but this is not what Paul is speaking about. No, Paul is speaking of redemption for all who are under the law of heredity, all who have received the sinful nature from Adam, that they might receive the privilege of sonship, whether they be Jew or Gentile.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:12, 13)

Paul clearly speaks of Christ's human source in the incarnation and ties to that the results of his human involvement “that we might receive adoption to sonship.”

Sin began in Eden with the woman, and it would be her seed that would break the dominion of the serpent over man. “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Genesis 3:15).

Men and women have, all their lifetimes, been subject to bondage but through Christ, they are to receive power to become sons of God, being born again, born from above of God. Thus the dominion of sin because of the law of heredity is broken and the original relationship, reflecting the image and character of God, is reestablished.

For this to be accomplished, Christ came under the same law of heredity to break the dominion and power of sin. This is the principle that Christ himself projected when he asked about binding the strong man of a house: “Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house” (Matthew 12:29). Jesus entered the “strong man's house”—he was born of a woman, born under law.

When Adam's sin plunged the race into hopeless misery, God might have cut Himself loose from fallen beings. He might have treated them as sinners deserve to be treated. He might have commanded the angels of heaven to pour out upon our world the vials of His wrath. He might have removed this dark blot from His universe. But He did not do this. Instead of banishing them from His presence, He came still nearer to the fallen race. He gave His Son to become bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. (Australasian Union Conference Record, June 1, 1900)

Paul in Romans

Paul begins his famous epistle to the Romans by writing:

PAUL, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. (Romans 1:1–4)

The gospel of God is the gift of his Son who was made of the seed of David. The good news of Jesus Christ is the revelation of the power of God that operated in his incarnate life and revealed the righteousness (right doing—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 312) of God. “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith” (Romans 1:16, 17).

The gospel has two points in Romans 1—first what was *done by Christ* because of the incarnation and second what is to be *done in the one* who accepts by faith the power obtained

through the atonement and intercession of Jesus Christ's priestly ministry. "The mystery of godliness" (1 Timothy 3:16) is the revelation that Paul saw connecting heaven and earth and enabling man to break the shackles of sin and once again serve God. The gospel is "concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made (*genomenon*) of the seed of David according to the flesh."

Later in Romans 8 Paul speaks of the necessity of the incarnation due to man's weakness:

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)

Because of the weakness of the flesh, the sinner cannot obey the law of God in his unregenerated state. "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 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 8:6-8). The law could not be obeyed in the flesh, but God sent his Son "and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." The Greek expression *and for sin* is *καί περί ἀμαρτίας* (*kai peri hamartias*). According to *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon*, "περί is used [here] of the design or purpose for removing something or taking it away: περί ἀμαρτίας, to destroy sin, Ro. viii.3. . ." (*Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 501). The power of sin was to be destroyed at its source—man's flesh. To do this, Christ came in the likeness of sinful flesh.

The flesh is set in contrast to the spirit in Romans 8. The Greek word for *flesh* is *σάρξ*. According to Thayer,

σάρξ when either expressly or tacitly opp. to τὸ πνεῦμα has an ethical sense and denotes mere human nature, the earthly nature of man apart from divine influence, and therefore prone to sin and oppose God; accordingly it includes whatever in the soul is weak, low, debased, tending to ungodliness and vice . . . (*Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 571)

Luther said:

Thou must not understand "flesh", therefore, as though that only were "*flesh*" which is connected with unchastity, but St. Paul uses "*flesh*" of the whole man, body and soul, reason and all his faculties included, because all that is in him longs and strives after the flesh. (Luther, *Preface to the Epistle to the Romans*; quotation taken from *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 571)

To meet man's need Jesus came to where man was. But now we ask the question, does *likeness* mean a real identity? If Jesus came in the likeness of sinful flesh, was this a reality or just a something *like* sinful flesh? Philippians 2:7 states that Jesus was "made in the likeness of men," and the Greek

expressions are the same. Jesus was a real man, not a phantom or some ghost!

Thayer indicates that the word ὁμοιωμα, translated *likeness*, means "resemblance, frequently such as amounts well-nigh to equality or identity" (Thayer, p. 445), and Thayer lists Romans 6:5; 8:3 and Philippians 2:7 as examples.

One student of the incarnation explained the balance between Christ's acceptance of the sinful nature of man and his nonparticipation of sin in this way:

Paul was very careful in how he expressed this concept. He did not say, that Christ was in the likeness of the flesh of a sinner, and thus making Him a partaker of sin, nor did he write that Christ was merely in flesh, which would have omitted any connection between the Manhood of Christ and sin. He stated they God sent His Son in the "likeness of sinful flesh" thus "meaning . . . He had a nature like sinful human nature, but had not Himself a sinful nature." (William Grotheer, *In the Form of a Slave*, pp. 45, 46; the quotation within this quotation is from Alford, p. xxx; *elipsis in original*)

Ellen White never wrote that Jesus had *a sinful nature*, but rather that "He took upon His sinless nature our sinful nature, that He might know how to succor those that are tempted" (*Medical Ministry*, p. 181). She further wrote:

How few can understand the love of God for the fallen race in that he withheld not his divine Son from taking upon him the humiliation of humanity! He gave up his dearly beloved to shame and agony, that he might bring many sons and daughters to glory. (*The Review and Herald*, March 18, 1875)

Though He had all the strength of passion of humanity, never did He yield to temptation to do one single act which was not pure and elevating and ennobling. (*In Heavenly Places*, p. 155)

Christ has suffered for us and knows our temptations in a way that we know he knows.

Paul in Hebrews

Paul, the writer of Hebrews, begins his great epistle with a strong expression of the deity of Jesus Christ, so that the humiliation of Jesus in the incarnation might be better appreciated.

Paul states that Jesus is the express image of his [the Father's] person" (Hebrews 1:3). Jesus has "by inheritance obtained a more excellent name" than the angels (Hebrews 1:4).

Jesus is described as being worthy of worship. In fact, the Father commanded such worship: “And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him” (Hebrews 1:6). The Father exalts Christ to be God upon a throne: “But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom” (Hebrews 1:8). Yet this deity stooped to accept humanity and that in its fallen nature.

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. (Hebrews 2:9–18)

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.” Jesus partook of the same flesh and blood that we, the children, have.

It was in the order of God that Christ should take upon himself the form and nature of fallen man, that he might be made perfect through suffering, and himself endure the strength of Satan’s fierce temptations, that he might understand how to succor those who should be tempted. (The Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 2, p. 39; emphasis supplied)

Christ’s identity with humanity is expressed by Paul as an obligation. In Hebrews 2:17 it is stated that it “behoved him to be made like unto his brethren.” The Greek expression for behoved is ὀφείλω (*opheilo*), and it means to be indebted, to owe, or to “be obligatory in view of some moral requirement” (*Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek*, Logos Edition).

Having accepted the responsibility to redeem man, Christ was under moral obligation to be made in all things like unto his brethren whom he came to save. While *made* in all

respects like his brethren, he did not *do* all the things his brethren did.

Jesus was sinless and had no dread of the consequences of sin. With this exception His condition was as yours. You have not a difficulty that did not press with equal weight upon Him, not a sorrow that His heart has not experienced. His feelings could be hurt with neglect, with indifference of professed friends, as easily as yours. Is your path thorny? Christ’s was so in a tenfold sense. Are you distressed? So was He. How well fitted was Christ to be an example! (Ellen White, *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 4, p. 235; writing to son Willie C. White)

Paul Lee Tan, in his book of illustrations, shares the following true story that helps to illustrate the incarnation:

Dr. Stuart Nye Hutchison tells us about a boy whom he knew who had lost his right hand. He felt so badly about it that he did not want to see anyone. His father said, “I’m going to bring the minister in to see you.” The boy said, “I don’t want to see him.” But the father brought him in. When the boy looked up he saw that the minister had no right arm; there was an empty sleeve. He came over to the boy and said, “I haven’t any hand, either. I lost mine when I was a boy, and I know how it feels.” It wasn’t hard for the boy to get acquainted with the minister who “knew how it felt.” So Christ has suffered for us and knows our temptations. (Paul Lee Tan, *Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations: Signs of the Times*, Logos Edition)

Christ has suffered for us and knows our temptations in a way that *we know he knows*. I remember once, as a young minister, trying to console a brother whose wife had left him and who was going through a divorce. After sharing some Scripture, I remarked how sorry I was for him and said, as so often we say in situations like this, “I understand how you feel.” To these attempted words of comfort, he replied; “No, you don’t!” He was right. I did not know, and he knew I did not know. My words came across empty and shallow to him. I then asked an older brother, whose wife had, years before, also left him, to visit this grieving brother. He did not have any different Bible texts to share, but he was able to help in a way I could not because the grieving brother knew the older brother fully understood his position.

Jesus perfectly understands our position, and he is able to help those who are tempted. “For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour [help] them that are tempted” (Hebrews 2:18).

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:15 ESV)

Christ possessed the same nature that man possesses. He was tempted in all points like as man is tempted. The same power by which He obeyed is at man’s command. (*That I May Know Him*, p. 92)

Hebrews 5:7–9 says, “Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to *save him from death*, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.” The Greek for the word *from* in the expression “*save him from death*” is εκ, and in this verse is better translated *out*. Jesus was not saved *from* death, but *out of the* experience of death. Yet, Jesus died; the one who was sinless died for our sins. He was kept from sinning by the power of God. He was heard, yet he died for our sins.

[Jesus] learned obedience by the things he suffered. Now what we already know, we do not have to learn. Jesus did not begin the struggle and the days of His flesh as an already perfected Being. He learned obedience, and “being made perfect” through the experience of conflict with sin, “He became the author of eternal salvation.” The example of sanctification set for man by the One who sanctifies was not even for Him an instantaneous process, but a growth in grace. One with us in blood and flesh; one with us in temptation and trial; He now wants us to be one with Him in the process of redemption – “learning obedience,” and “being made perfect.” (William Grotheer, *In the Form of a Slave*, p. 48)

Paul in Philippians

This epistle is considered by some to be the height of Paul’s theology on the incarnation. The key text is:

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 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: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (Philippians 2:5–8)

Paul says that Jesus was in the form of God. The Greek work for form is μορφή (*morphe*) which “always signifies a form which truly and fully expresses the being which underlies it” (James Hope Moulton, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, p. 417).

The NIV translates Philippians 2:6 as: “Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage.” So completely did Christ enter into the work of our redemption that he yielded up the form, or nature, of deity and accepted the form of a servant (Greek: *doulos*, a bond slave).

Jesus emptied himself or made void himself. Jesus subjected himself to the very depths of the slave experience of man, the bondage of death, even the death of the cross. The humanity he accepted in the incarnation will ever be his and more importantly, it will ever be ours. “Unto us a son is given” (Isaiah 9:6).

To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only-begotten Son to become one of the human family, forever to retain His human nature. (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 25)

Jesus was and shall be glorified in the form of humanity for his victory over sin and death. “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:9–11).

It is the *man* Christ Jesus that mediates at the throne of God: “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5).

Conclusion

Paul writes that “ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9). Paul is not speaking of literal poverty and of literal riches. While it is true that Jesus had little to nothing of this world’s goods and that we shall one day walk upon a street of gold, this verse is not speaking of literal wealth or the lack of it, but of spiritual wealth and poverty. It is through his poverty in the incarnation that his divinity may be joined with our humanity that we may become rich with all the fulness of the Godhead.

Christ yielded up the form, or nature, of deity and accepted the form of a slave.

In 1959 John Howard Griffin, a white American, sought to understand the plight of the African American. He believed that the only way he could truly understand their condition was to become one of them. Using oral medications, sun lamp treatments, and stains, he darkened his skin. Then Griffin began to travel through the South to find out what would happen. The results were unbelievable.

Griffin learned firsthand of the inhuman treatment that his fellow Americans lived with each day. He could not ride in certain vehicles or eat in certain restaurants. Water fountains and bathrooms once open to him were now as dry as a desert to him. There were also hotels where he couldn’t sleep. Griffin was persecuted, slighted, and cheated, and the effect was lasting. Griffin wrote about his treatment in his book *Black Like Me*, a gripping account of life on *the other side of the tracks*.

Beloved, Jesus became human like me and like you. He came to the bottom of the ladder so he could save from the bottom up, and he is able to help save you to the uttermost.

Allen Stump

Set Thine Heart to Understand

The study of the brain in this century has far exceeded the entire study of the last century. In addition to MRIs, CTs, and PET scans, we now have the opportunity of exploring the brain using nanotechnology and microprocessors and just a few days ago, the Human Brain Project officially opened in Lausanne, Switzerland. Attending were hundreds of scientists from the leading universities and research centers of Europe, each one coming together in the hope that biology can converge with twenty-first century computer technology, starting with the brain's processes at the extremely small (nanometer¹) level, in order to better understand the brain.

In April 2013 President Obama announced a brain mapping project set to launch in 2014. Entitled "The Brain Activity Map," this project will last several years and will attempt to map the circuitry of the brain, beginning with the single neuron and moving up in complexity to the circuitry of a million neurons working together. Until now we have not had the techniques nor the tools to study more than a single neuron at a time: "Currently, scientists can monitor the activity of a single neuron using electrodes. They can watch the whole brain in action using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) and other techniques,"² but the area between the single neuron and the whole brain—how the brain networks within itself—is uncharted territory. The brain-mapping project hopes to gain new information that will shed light on autism, schizophrenia, dementia, depression, and other mental and neurological diseases.

In addition, the Champalimaud Centre for the Unknown in Lisbon, Portugal, opened its doors in 2010; a research center at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem is nearing completion and will house thirty laboratories; and new centers for the study of the brain are expected to open soon in New York and in London.

Brain research is complicated and detailed and must integrate many levels of information, including anatomical units, electro-chemical signals, and high-level phenomena, such as perception, action, and emotions. This research involves the nanometers of proteins and genes and moves through the micrometers, millimeters, and centimeters of nerves and their connections to the larger units of behaviors and diseases. The more the brain is studied, the more we see how all the parts of this amazing organ function together in a precise manner heretofore unappreciated.

Dr. Idan Segev³ says this concerning the study of the brain in the twenty-first century:

I want just to also say a word about the structure of such brain centers. Unlike classically, where we thought the brain belongs to biologists, so to speak, and [where] only biologists can understand the brain, we now understand that actually the people that will understand the brain will be the Leonardo da Vinci's of the brain. There will be a very renaissance type of researchers that . . . will have to master many, many fields. They will have to master theory, physics, and mathematics, and computer sciences. They will have to master some aspects of diseases—neurological and psychiatric diseases. They will have to master anatomy and circuit structure of the brain. (Idan Segev in a classroom lecture entitled "The Blossoming of the Brain," accessed at coursera.org on 10-22-13)

And that leads us to the real purpose of this article—the blossoming of what we could call the *Leonardo da Vinci's* of God's word. These da Vinci's will have a renaissance-type of knowledge of Scripture; they will set their hearts to understand (in a Daniel way) the major themes of the Bible. In a systematic style they will be able to move from one biblical topic to the next, making the connections between them, just as neurons make connections with other neurons. Today we think we understand the single neuron and that we will eventually understand how that one neuron networks with numerous other neurons; accordingly, the student of God's word may understand well a particular topic of the Bible, but the true student will need to know how that topic connects with the other teachings of God's word. Being able to do so is a sweet work in progress, so to speak, and requires interfacing the many layers of Christology, soteriology, eschatology, ecclesiology, the sanctuary, the godhead, the Sabbath, the law of God, and more, and depending on the theoretical approach, this scientific-type research into God's word might be called a systematic theology, a biblical theology, a practical theology, or even something else, but regardless of the approach, the texts (and contexts) of a particular topic are first gathered and studied and then are connected into a family of texts, just as neurons connect with other neurons into a network of neurons. Then that biblical topic is connected with another biblical topic (which has also been first studied and joined into its own family), and so on.

Our people need to understand the oracles of God; they need to have a *systematic knowledge* of the principles of revealed truth . . . (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 273; all emphasis supplied)

Continued on page 23

1. One billionth of a meter (A sheet of paper is about 100,000 nanometers thick; your fingernail grows about 1 nanometer/second.)
2. Stephanie Pappas, "Obama Announces Huge Brain-Mapping Project," *livescience*, April 02, 2013; accessed at <http://www.livescience.com/28354-obama-announces-brain-mapping-project.html> on 10-18-13.
3. Professor of computational neuroscience and the former director of the Interdisciplinary Center for Neural Computation at Hebrew University, Jerusalem

Youth's Corner — In the Round Tower of Constance

(This month we continue a series based upon the book *Youthful Witnesses* by W. A. Spicer, published in 1921. This month's story is Chapter 14.)

“Not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection” (Hebrews 11:35).

What a story of faith and constancy and of enabling grace would be told if the stones of some old prison keeps still standing could cry out! To this day, it is said, a stone in the Tower of Constance, at Aigues-Mortes, France, bears literally the register of one young woman's answer of enduring faith to the offer of quick deliverance by compromise of soul.

One unnamed writer has summed up the general history of the prison Tower of Constance as follows:

Aigues-Mortes is situated on the southern coast of France, on the Gulf of Lyons, about four miles from the Mediterranean. The population is about five thousand. It is of great historical interest, and is surrounded by the most perfect old embrasured wall in France, built in the form of a parallelogram. The wall is thirty-six feet high, and is flanked by fifteen massive towers, one of which is the famous round Tower of Constance. This tower is ninety-six feet high and seventy-two feet in diameter, and contains two vaulted superimposed circular chambers used by Louis XIV and Louis XV as prisons for their Protestant subjects of both sexes, who here suffered such cruelties that the Dutch and Swiss governments were roused to interfere in their behalf, and even Frederick the Great is said to have interceded for them, but in vain.

One occupant of the woman's prison was a young girl, Suzanne, brought from a distant part and immured here for her Protestant faith. She had left a mother and a sister in the faith back in the old home village. And how love does battle to find a way to send its messages!

Once a year, the story goes, the mother and the sister, disguised as beggars, made the long journey to Aigues-Mortes. They watched by the tall Tower of Constance until the sentinel was at a distance from the part where their loved one was immured.

Then clearly they sang a psalm, one of the hymns of the old home circle. Then “Suzanne! Suzanne!” cried the mother.

From a narrow opening, far above, we are told, would come the reply, “*Ma mère! Ma mère!*” (My mother! my mother!)

That was all. Then the sentinel on his beat would be coming back. There was no possibility of conversation. But just to hear the daughter's voice, just to send a message of love that lasts till death, the mother would take the long and perilous journeys.

This, too, was the scene of Marie Durand's lifelong witness to the spirit that no power of earth can crush, because it is the gift of Christ, the faithful and the true Witness.

Her story is well-sketched by an unnamed writer, as follows:

In the vicinity of the city of Aigues-Mortes lived Marie Durand, her family, and a young man, Matthieu Serre, to whom she was engaged. Marie Durand's mother died when Marie was a young child, leaving her and a brother several years older to be brought up in the Protestant faith by their godly father. The son became the minister of a Huguenot congregation in a near-by town.

About the time the daughter Marie was fifteen years of age, persecution broke out afresh, and the king's soldiers arrested, among many others in the town, her father and Matthieu Serre, to whom she was betrothed. The only pretext for their arrest was that Etienne Durand was the father of a Huguenot preacher, and that Matthieu Serre was betrothed to the preacher's sister. These two men, the father and the lover, were dragged away to a prison on an island within sight of the shore. Within a short time Marie, too, was arrested for the sole crime of being a sister of a Protestant minister, and was sent to the awful Tower of Constance, a young girl only fifteen years old.

While in these separated prisons, almost in sight of one another, the father and daughter and the lover were permitted to correspond with one another. Many of the letters have been preserved. They show not only the intensest affection, but the sweetest Christian spirit and endeavor to encourage one another under their trials and to confirm their purpose to stand fast in the faith.

How well this purpose was kept is revealed when we know that to Marie Durand and her many companions in suffering, every week on Thursday the offer of freedom was made. A priest came to the door of the cells and offered liberty to every one who would recant. Very few in the course of years ever embraced the opportunity. Marie traced her answer deep in the stone curb, “Resist.” What that meant can be realized when it is known that youth passed, middle age dragged its slow length along, old age and white hair set their seal upon her, and disease racked her frame, but never for thirty-eight years did she change her answer to the weekly invitation, or pass out of the tower; for never would she renounce the Bible as her all-sufficient teacher.

There is in existence today a list of prisoners at one time in that tower. After each of the thirty-three names are written by their jailer these significant words, “*Sa croyance toujours la même*” (Her faith always the same).



Walls of the city of Aigues-Mortes, with the Round Tower in the distance

In the course of years her father was released, her lover was released, her brother died a martyr's death, and most of her relatives became refugees in Switzerland. No one of them changed his faith, but all obtained their liberty through the influence and efforts of Protestants in various European countries.

But those in the Tower of Constance were firmly held, Marie Durand with them, until the year 1768, when she was permitted to go out from her frightful prison, leaving her name as a synonym of that love and faith in God and His divine word which is more than conqueror over all the oppressions of men.

Some years ago the editor of the London *Sunday at Home*, Mr. F. G. Smith, who evidently, only a short time before writing, had visited the tower, made some observations that add interest to the story of Marie Durand. He wrote:



The engraving of Marie Durand that translates *Resist*

More liberally educated than the majority of her companions, it is she who becomes the comforter and adviser of the little community. It is she who attends the sick, reads aloud the word of God, takes the lead in singing the psalms in which the French Protestants were accustomed to

breathe their aspirations, and encourages her weaker sisters to remain faithful and true. In the whole history of Protestantism there is nothing more pathetic than the sim-



The entrance of thy word giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple. (Psalm 119:130)



A Lamp and

*Thy word is a
And a light
(Psalm 119:10
of God] is a
dark place. G
pages, light e
illuminating th
light we see wh*



The lamp in the lighthouse, shining out in the darkness, guides the ship safely to the harbor; thus



and A Light

lamp unto my feet,
unto my path.
5) "It [the Word]
light shining in a
As we search its
enters the heart,
e mind. By this
at we ought to be."

(Ellen G. White
My Life Today, p. 27)



As unto a light that shineth in a dark place
until the day dawn. (2 Peter 1:19)



As Christ's followers are to shine in this dark world, to guide men to Christ and the heavenly home.
(Ellen G. White, *The Story of Jesus*, p. 62)





The Round Tower of Constance

(Photo courtesy of Ingo Mehling)

ple inscription, roughly scratched by Marie Durand on the stone edge of the grating in the ward, an inscription that can still be seen, though almost effaced by time — *Résistez* (or in the original, but incorrect orthography, *Reçister*). The characters are irregularly formed, the spelling is incorrect, but what oratory from impassioned lips can equal the sublimity and eloquence of that simple word with which a brave heart sought to encourage her sisters in the faith? *Résistez!*

Whatever the spelling scratched laboriously into the stone, whether an error or a provincialism, the word was written correctly in Marie Durand’s heart. The poet pen of an English writer, Mr. W. Stevens, passes on the message of the Tower of Constance :

More drear, more drear the circling years
 Within those walls of gloomy fame,
 Where the bright dawn like eve appears,
 And joy and sorrow seem the same.
 None goeth forth but must forswear
 The faith that is the soul’s true breath;
 Yet love is stronger than despair,
 Life crowns the faithful unto death.

Here pines the mother for her child,
 The wife laments her husband lost,
 The grandame withers, maiden mild
 Droops like a flower in northern frost:
 Slow pass the years, yet each one grows
 To riper virtues in her lot;
 Come summer heats, come winter snows,
 She knows the Christ who changeth not.

Here weaker woman waits and prays,
 Enduring in the strength divine;
 A simple faith her spirit stays,
 And round her unseen glories shine:
 She fades and dies. One word alone
 She leaves to rouse the drooping will,
 Fast graven in the dungeon stone,
 “*Résistez!*” — There it speaketh still.

The years shall come, with summer glow,
 Past shining seas, o’er lands all fair,
 And wide the gloomy portals throw,
 And breathe the life of God’s free air.
 “*Résistez!*” still that word abides,
 In strenuous strife of good with ill;
 When pleasure lures, or scorn derides,
 “*Résistez!*”— gird thy fainting will.

W. A. Spicer



Huguenot women in the Tower of Constance

The Big Lie

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

The Unleavened Bread

Let us see how they [the lunar Sabbatarians] twist the calculation of the Feast of 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)

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)⁴

From the above passages of scripture, we understand the feast was to be celebrated from the evening of the fourteenth day to the evening of the twenty-first day, a total of seven days. Now look at how they twist the simple statements of scripture to fit their ideas:

Unleavened bread was eaten on the 14th day of the first month at evening, (along with the rest of the Passover meal, **Exodus 12:8**) and was to be eaten until the 21st at even. This is parts of 8 days, yet **Exodus 12:15** says to eat it for seven days. And so it is. The day part of the 14th is over when eaten on the 14th, so unleavened bread is only eaten on “DAYS” 15 through 21. (Troy Miller, *When Does Scripture Say A Day Begins?*, p. 4; accessed at www.creationcaldendar.com; emphasis in original)

That seems to be a very smart way of getting out of trouble. But trouble is still there! It is not just the *eating* of unleavened bread that the passage mentions, but also the *putting away* of leaven from the houses, and notice when the leaven has to be put out of the houses:

Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses. (Exodus 12:15)

If the *first day* is the *daylight* of the fifteenth, then they had to have put away the unleavened bread on the morning of the fifteenth, but we see they ate the unleavened bread on the previous night (the night of the fourteenth) which means the leaven was put out of the houses not on the morning of the

fifteenth, but on the previous night! So a *day* doesn't begin in the morning, but on the previous night!

Another lunar Sabbatarian camp agrees that the Feast of the Unleavened Bread (or the Feast of the Passover, as it is commonly called), which begins on the fifteenth day of the first month, began on the night of the fourteenth. Here is their statement:

... because it was the *Feast of Passover*, a Holy Convocation, and also called a yearly Sabbath. This Feast of Passover was the only Holy convocation to be kept during the dark hours, which began at sunset on the 14th of Abib. This was not because a seventh-day Sabbath was to begin at sunset. (Accessed 10-20-13 at <http://www.worldslastchance.com/when-does-a-day-begin/i-was-taught-that-the-yahushua-was-crucified-on-a-friday.html>; emphasis in original)

They have not found a way of escape from this plain text of scripture which proves that a day begins at sunset; therefore, they say that this is the “only holy convocation to be kept during the dark hours which began at sunset on the 14th of Abib.” The very fact it is called a “Sabbath” shows that it is related to the seventh-day Sabbath rest. Then how can the seventh-day Sabbath be only from sunrise to sunset, when a yearly Sabbath, based on the pattern of the seventh-day Sabbath, begins its holy hours, called Sabbath, at sunset?

So again the lunar Sabbatarians are *flawed* in their interpretation.

The Day of Atonement

One of the clearest passages of the Bible where the reckoning of a biblical day is given is in the feast of 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....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 23:27, 32)⁵

Listen to what the lunar Sabbatarians have to say about this most clear passage of scripture:

Notice it says that this appointed time was to begin on the 9th at even, and end on the 10th at even. If the 10th day of the seventh month is Day of Atonement, why didn't YHVH just say keep the 10th as a fast? The point is, the affliction of the soul begins on the 9th day at even (this does

4. 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: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land.
5. These verses may seem to offer two different times for the Day of Atonement to begin. Verse 27 begins by stating that it is on the tenth day but verse 32 later states in the ninth day of the month at even. Remembering that the biblical day begins in the evening, we then can understand that just after the end of the ninth day, at the end of the light portion of the day, the evening of the tenth day and the Day of Atonement begins.

not mean the beginning of the day) and ends on the 10th day at even. This time of affliction is spread over two days. (Miller, *Ibid.*)

Does the scripture say the *affliction* spreads over *two* days?

For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. (Leviticus 23:29)

There are not two days of affliction during this *single* Day of Atonement. If the affliction lasted two days, then the word *day* should have been plural—days—but Moses wrote “that same *day*.”

Apart from Leviticus 23, there are two other places in scripture that mention the Day of Atonement and the affliction, and in none of these passages will you see that the affliction is for two days. It is only on the *single* Day of Atonement.

And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you. (Leviticus 16:29)

And ye shall have on the tenth day of this seventh month an holy convocation; and ye shall afflict your souls: ye shall not do any work therein. (Numbers 29:7)

So the Day of Atonement is on the tenth day of the seventh month. It is a *day* of affliction, and it is called a Sabbath because no work was to be done on that day, just like the weekly Sabbath was a day of rest. The scripture is absolutely clear as to when the Day of Atonement (called also the Sabbath) starts and finishes—“from even to evening.”

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...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 23:27, 32)

So we have seen how the lunar Sabbatarians are flawed in their interpretation of the Day of Atonement.

In the Time of Nehemiah

The book of Nehemiah is specific as to the timing of the beginning of the Sabbath. It commences when it is dark and not when it is bright.

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)

What do the lunar Sabbatarians have to say about this clear text?

Nehemiah was “guarding the edges of the Sabbath” so to speak. The Sabbath did not start until dawn . . .” (<http://www.worldslastchance.com/when-does-a-day-begin/what-about-nehemiah-1319-it-gives-support-to-suns-et-to-sunset-day-length.html>)

If the Sabbath was to start twelve hours *later*, how can sunset be the “edges” of the Sabbath? What about the edges of the Sabbath the other side, that is, after the Sabbath? Would the guarding extend twelve hours after the Sabbath is passed? The whole passage in Nehemiah 13:15–22, is *not* talking about guarding the *edges* of the Sabbath, but about guarding the Sabbath itself!

When something is on the edge of something else, it means it is *touching* the other thing. Let me illustrate. If a person is sitting at the *edge* of a bench it means he is in *contact* with the bench. If he is outside the bench then he is not at the edge of the bench, but close to the bench.

When were the gates shut? “. . . began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut” (Nehemiah 13:19). The gates were shut before the Sabbath, while it was beginning to be dark. When were the gates opened? “. . . and charged that they should not be opened till after the Sabbath” (Nehemiah 13:19). They were opened *after* the Sabbath.

All of us agree that the Sabbath ends at sunset. So the gate was opened after sunset. Why did Nehemiah close the gates? “. . .that there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day” (Nehemiah 13:19).

According to the lunar Sabbatarians the holy hours of the Sabbath are only twelve hours—from sunrise to sunset. Instead of closing the gates for just over twelve hours, Nehemiah closed the gates for close to twenty-four hours! That’s not allowing trade for two different days! But Nehemiah shut the gate so that “no burden be brought in on the sabbath day.” He was only guarding the hours of the Sabbath day which were twenty-four hours—from sunset to sunset.

If the Sabbath began at sunrise and Nehemiah was to close the gates from trade and commerce during the Sabbath hours, then the text *should* have read *when the gates of Jerusalem ended to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut*, but Nehemiah wrote “when the gates of Jerusalem *began* to be dark before the Sabbath” (Nehemiah 13:19).

The reason the ancient cities had gates was to protect the city from strangers entering in at night. The gates of the cities were closed every *night*. This was a custom that was practiced by all. For example, look at the city of Jericho. They, too, closed their gate when it was night, when it was dark:

And it came to pass about the time of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out. (Joshua 2:5)

But Nehemiah shut the gates of Jerusalem, before the usual time because he wanted to protect the Sabbath hours

from trade and commerce! Why? Because Sabbath starts at sunset and not sunrise!

So we see the lunar Sabbatharians are also flawed in their explanation of the passage of Nehemiah.

The Crucifixion and the High Sabbath

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 lunar Sabbatharians agree that a high Sabbath or a high day is when the yearly Sabbath and the weekly Sabbath coincide:

A High Sabbath was the term used when a yearly appointed Feast Sabbath landed on a regular seventh-day Sabbath. (Kerrie L. French, *The Twelve Criteria of the True Crucifixion Date*, p. 3; accessed at http://www.thecreatorscalendar.com/Articles/Twelve_Criteria/03_Twelve_Criteria.html)

I couldn't find their reason as to why the legs of the thieves were broken in a hurry before sunset, but I found the passage where they give a reason as to why the embalming of Jesus' body was not done immediately after his death that night.

The only reason Yahushua's body was not embalmed during the dark hours after His death was because it was the *Feast of Passover*, a Holy Convocation, and also called a yearly Sabbath. This Feast of Passover was the only Holy convocation to be kept during the dark hours, which began at sunset on the 14th of Abib. This was not because a seventh-day Sabbath was to begin at sunset. (<http://www.worldslastchance.com/when-does-a-day-begin/i-was-taught-that-the-yahushua-was-crucified-on-a-friday.html>; emphasis in original; accessed 10-13-13)

French is quoted above as saying a high Sabbath is when the "Feast Sabbath landed on a regular seventh-day Sabbath," but in the immediate quotation above, World's Last Chance (author unknown) states the feast Sabbath began on 14th night and the weekly Sabbath began on 15th morning. They are being inconsistent! How can an annual Sabbath be twenty-four hours and the weekly Sabbath be just twelve hours?

John clearly indicates that the High Sabbath was beginning that night; therefore, they did not want the bodies to remain on the cross. Now a high Sabbath, according to their belief as well, is when both Sabbaths meet together. So, that night both Sabbaths started. If this were not so, John should not have called it the "high day" but should have only called it the yearly Sabbath day.

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?⁶

This is the precise reason why they did not embalm the body of Jesus that very night (because it was a High Sabbath), and that is also the precise reason why they broke the legs of the thieves so that they wouldn't be hanging all night, as the High Sabbath (that is—both Sabbaths) would commence that sundown.

So we see the lunar Sabbatharians are contradictory in their interpretation on the High Sabbath. Their explanations are *flawed*.

The Third Day and the Resurrection

The Bible says in the gospel of John that Mary found the stone rolled away when she reached the tomb while it was "yet dark":

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)

What do the lunar Sabbatharians have to say about this clear text?

"Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb" John 20:1 (NKJV)...This is one of the cases where there is some discrepancy in the Gospel Accounts. (www.worldslastchance.com, "*Doctrine and Practice*"; article not available on 10-13-13)

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" which clearly indicates that a new day *began* before sunrise.

The text of John poses a problem to them. So they prefer quoting Matthew, who uses the phrase "as it began to dawn," and Mark, who writes "at the rising of the sun." So the first day of the week is "as it began to dawn" or "at the rising of the sun," and that suits their idea of a day beginning at sunrise.

But since John calls the "yet dark" period as the first day of the week, it's puzzling to them, and they say there is "some discrepancy in the gospel accounts"! For us, it is no discrepancy.

The "yet dark" period and the "rising of the sun" both perfectly fit the first day of the week for us because the first day of the week started at sunset Saturday evening and ends sunset Sunday evening.

John wrote that when Mary came to the tomb it was "yet dark," and the other gospel writers wrote it was "as it began to dawn" or "at the rising of the sun." That is no contradiction, if we carefully see what each of them wrote.

6. The annual Sabbath that began the night after Jesus was crucified was Unleavened Bread.

John mentions only *one* person, Mary, coming to the tomb:

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)

Matthew mentions *two* people:

In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. (Matthew 28:1)

Mark mentions *three* people:

And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. (Mark 16:1)

Luke mentions *more* than three people:

It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles. (Luke 24:10)

Now were there one, two, three, or more than three women at the tomb? The answer is they all did not come there at the *same* time. They were not all staying in the same house. They would all come from different directions and meet at the tomb. Putting all the records together, we can conclude Mary Magdalene came first, while it was “yet dark,” Mary the mother of James joined Mary Magdalene when it “began to dawn,” and Salome joined the two Marys at the “rising of the sun.”

Here is a confirmation, from the pen of inspiration, of the order of events as we have just seen it from the Bible itself:

The Sabbath was past, and Mary Magdalene came early in the morning, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulcher. Other women were to meet her there, but Mary was the first at the sepulcher. (*Christ Triumphant*, p 284)

Mark also confirms that Jesus appeared to Mary first, for she was the first one to come at the tomb.

Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene. (Mark 16:9)

So, you see, for the lunar Sabbatarians there is “some discrepancy in the Gospel Accounts,” but for us there is a perfect and harmonious gospel account of the resurrection of our Lord that took place on the first day of the week, even while it was “yet dark” before sunrise, and that shows a new day is reckoned, not at sunrise, but at sunset.

Talking about the timing of the resurrection, the pen of inspiration records: “The night of the first day of the week had worn slowly away. The darkest hour, just before daybreak, had come” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 779).

In the above quotation the pen of inspiration puts the night of the first day of the week before the day of the first day of the week.

At the brightest hour of the day, there was darkness at the cross. Now at the darkest hour of the night, there was

brightness, at the tomb, when the angels of light and glory descended!

The Night Belonged to Which Day?

We have seen that the night comes first, then comes the day in God’s reckoning of time. The biblical time is important to us when it comes to the sacred hours; otherwise, it doesn’t really matter to us as to which comes first—night or day.

God’s people were under different foreign rules from time to time—the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Medo-Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, etc. As they were living in different influences and cultures, it was natural for them to communicate daily in the most natural way to them.

For example, though we all believe in the biblical time-reckoning, how do we speak today in reference to time? When I ask you about the timing of your breakfast, lunch, and supper, you will answer me in today’s manner of speaking.

For example, breakfast at 8 a.m., lunch at 1 p.m. and supper at 7 p.m. But this is incorrect as far as the biblical reckoning of time goes—8 a.m. is eight hours after midnight (the Roman reckoning of a new day is at 12 midnight), 1 p.m. is thirteen hours after the new day began, and 7 p.m. is nineteen hours after the new day began.

God’s time of reckoning would be breakfast at the second hour (after sunrise, if sunrise was at 6 a.m.), lunch at the seventh hour (after sunrise at 6 a.m.), and supper at the first hour of the night (after sunset).

The lunar Sabbatarians think that the hours in the Bible are only the twelve hours of the day from sunrise, “while the nights are not defined by hours, but by an altogether *different* system of measurement known as the four watches.” (Kerrie L. French, http://www.thecreatorscalendar.com/Articles/three_months/3_02_The_Mountain.html).

But the Bible talks about the hours of the night as well:

And he called unto him two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Caesarea, and horsemen threescore and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night. (Acts 23:23)

Are we wrong in using the Roman reckoning of time in our daily speeches? No! The Bible uses it as well. When was Jesus crucified? Mark says it was the third hour.

And it was the third hour, and they crucified him. (Mark 15:25)

That is the Jewish method of calculating time (3rd hour from sunrise—9 a.m. our time). But look at how the Apostle John writes:

And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be

crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away. (John 19:14–16)

Sixth hour Jewish time would be twelve noon for us. But we know that Jesus was crucified at the 3rd hour—9 a.m. our time.

John was using the Roman method of calculation here. At twelve midnight a new day begins in the Roman reckoning, and the sixth hour would be 6 a.m.

It is not that John always used the Roman time-reckoning; he mixed both. In chapter 4 we see John using the Jewish time-reckoning:

Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. (John 4:6)

That is Twelve Noon

When the Bible says “tonight” or “this night” as in Exodus 12, or “tomorrow” or “morrow” as in the giving of the manna in reference to the morning hours, or “yesternight” as in the case of Lot's story, it is the most natural way of saying it. We who also honor the biblical holy hours speak the same way.

And don't forget the Israelites were used to speaking in the Egyptian reckoning of time when they came out of Egypt, as we are used to speaking in the Roman reckoning of time even today being under the Roman influence as far as the daily manner of speaking goes in reference to time.

Pliny, the great Roman author of the first century, gives us details of how different people and nations reckoned time:

The Babylonians count the period between two sunrises, the Athenians that between two sunsets, the Umbrians from midday to midday, the common people everywhere from dawn to dark, the Roman priests and the authorities who fixed the official day, and also the Egyptians and Hipparchus, the period from midnight to midnight. (Pliny, *Natural History* bk. 2, ch. 79, p. 188, as cited by Jack Finegan in *Handbook of Biblical Chronology*, p. 8 and by Robert L. Odom in *Sunday in Roman Paganism*, p. 215)

So to make a new doctrine based on passages that refer to the common way of speaking is to make unsound doctrine. Would anyone like to make a new doctrine that Jesus was crucified twice; because Mark says he was crucified at the third hour and John says he was still in Pilate's hall the sixth hour the same day?

Paul cautions us of such kinds of deceptions:

That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. (Ephesians 4:14)

But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God

deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. (2 Corinthians 4:2)

The truth is crystal clear for all who want to see it. The holy hours of the Sabbath are *twentyfour hours*. The biblical Sabbath day is *from sunset to sunset*.

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

CHAPTER 3

TWO OR THREE CATEGORIES OF DAYS?

If there are three categories of days—new moon days, six work days, and Sabbath days—then the possibility of Sabbaths being fixed on the eighth, the fifteenth, the twenty-second, and the twenty-ninth of every lunar month is feasible.

But if there are only two categories of days (six work days and the seventh-day Sabbath), then the lunar Sabbath theory falls apart!

The lunar Sabbatarians say that there are three distinct categories of days. They quote Ezekiel 46:1:⁷

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.

Their argument goes like this:

What happens if new moon falls on a Tuesday (on man's calendar)? Is the gate open or shut? There is no right answer. The solution is that the new moon never falls on a work day because it is *not* a work day. It is a third category of day. The gate is closed on all *six* work days. . . .

Do the math—you will discover that there are three separate categories of days in YHWH's calendar: new moon days, work days, and Sabbaths. Since Scripture indicates that these days cannot take place at the same time, do not overlap or share the same space, then we need to re-work our understanding of the calendar. (Troy Miller, *Three Distinct Categories of Days*, pp. 1, 2; accessed at <http://www.4angelspublications.com/pdf/ThreeDistinctCategoriesDays.pdf>; accessed on 10–13–13; emphasis in original)

Their argument may sound logical. If the new moon falls on Tuesday (or on any of the work days of the week) in our calendar and if we open the gate because it is new moon, then we are violating the other part of it which says the gate has to be closed on the six working days. The same is true the other way around. If we close it because Tuesday is a work day,

7. It is not safe to try to build a theology or doctrine upon this section of Ezekiel, concerning a temple which was never built and services which were never performed. This section of scripture, though not to be disregarded, should not be used to determine type and antitype.

then we are violating the other instruction to open it on new moon days.

If the new moon day is a third category of a day, the problem is solved because then it will never overlap, then the command in Ezekiel can always be obeyed, and then all the dates of the months are fixed permanently to the day of the week—the first is new moon; the eighth, the fifteenth, the twenty-second, and the twenty-ninth are Sabbaths; and the rest of the days in the month are work days.

Let's Investigate

Based on the three great accounts of the Bible on the categories of days in Genesis and Exodus, the foundational books of the Bible, we find only two categories of days and not three.

The Genesis account of creation has six work days and the Sabbath day.

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. (Genesis 2:3)

There are only 2 categories of days—six work days and the seventh-day Sabbath.

In the Exodus account when God was feeding his people miraculously for forty years with manna from heaven, God recognized only two categories of days:

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

Again at the giving of the law, we see only two categories of days—the same two categories—six work days and one rest day.

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. (Exodus 20:9, 10).

Based on these three foundational accounts of scriptural categories of days, there cannot be another category of day. Every other special day has to fall on either the six working days or on the seventh-day Sabbath.

To the lunar Sabbatarians' question on what has to be done when the new moon falls on a work day—should the gate of the temple be opened or shut—our answer is *open* the gate because it is a new moon day. If the new moon is a worship day, then it *supersedes* the work day.

Here is their question back to them. Let's look at 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 do no work in that same day: ... It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest. (Leviticus 23:27, 28, 32)

According to the lunar Sabbatarians, the eighth day is a Sabbath on any month; so the tenth is the second day of the workweek. Do you *work* on the Day of Atonement, for it is the second day of the workweek and according to the

ten-commandment law, “six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work,” or do you *rest* according to Leviticus 23:28?

To solve this do the lunar Sabbatarians want to have a fourth category of days? And maybe they should have a fifth category of days, as well, because the final day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which falls on the twenty-first of the first month (the sixth work day of the week according to the fixed lunar calendar), is also a day of rest. Do you rest or work? is our question to them. Whatever their answer will be to our question, the same will be our answer to their question on Ezekiel 46:1 as to whether the gate should be opened or closed if the new moon falls on a week day!

If Ezekiel 46 is taken to prove there are three categories of days, based on the same method of calculation, then Leviticus 23 has five categories of days! They need to re-invent the so-called “Biblical Calendar.” I won't be surprised to see another group coming up with a totally different calendar soon, calling it the “The *Real* Biblical Calendar!”

So you see how the lunar Sabbatarians have twisted the word of God to suit their own scheme of things.

Another text the lunar Sabbatarians keep using to *prove* that there are three categories of days is found in 2 Kings. When the Shunammite woman wanted to meet Elisha the prophet, her husband asked her, “Wherefore wilt thou go to him to day? it is neither new moon, nor sabbath. And she said, It shall be well” (2 Kings 4:23).

The lunar sabbatarians say: “It was during a work day that the Shunammite woman's husband asked” (Troy Miller, *Three Distinct Categories of Days*, p. 2; accessed at, <http://www.4angelspublications.com/pdf/ThreeDistinctCategoriesDays.pdf> on 10–13–13)

The text of 2 Kings proves nothing about three categories of days. Even in the present Gregorian calendar, the above text perfectly fits.

Let us assume: If the new moon is on the eleventh of a particular month in the Gregorian calendar, and the Sabbath is on the fourteenth, the woman going to meet Elijah on the ninth perfectly fits!

The ninth (Monday) is not the new moon (the eleventh—Wednesday), nor the Sabbath (the fourteenth—Saturday). You don't need to have their luni-solar calendar to make the text of Second Kings fit. It fits perfectly in the present Gregorian calendar, as well!

Are All New Moon Days Non-Commerce Days?

Another text the lunar Sabbatarians keep using to *prove* that there are three categories of days is this text in Amos:

Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat. (Amos 8:5)

Again this text perfectly fits in our Gregorian calendar, as well, the same way the Shunammite woman's story of Second Kings fits.

The lunar Sabbatarians assume that they believe the new moon is a non-commerce day always, based on this text. That's the way they can have a third category of a day.

The New Moon is not a weekly Sabbath; a new moon day is a non-commerce day; a commerce day is not a worship day. The Sabbath and new moons are worship days. (Troy Miller, *Three Distinct Categories of Days*, p. 2; <http://www.4angelspublications.com/pdf/ThreeDistinctCategoriesDays.pdf>; accessed on 10–13–13)

Scripture reveals that New Moons, like the seventh-day Sabbath, are worship days. . . .

Ezekiel 46:1 places New Moons together with the seventh-day Sabbath, as opposed to the other six working days . . .

. . . the work abstained from on New Moons, is linked to the same restraint from work on the seventh-day Sabbaths. . . .

If work were allowed on New Moons, the backslidden people would not have been longing for the days of worship to be over so that they could go back to their buying and selling. (*Can we work on New Moon day?*; accessed on 10–13–13 at <http://www.worldslastchance.com/new-moon/can-we-work-on-new-moon-day.html>)

The lunar Sabbatarians are clear that new moon is not a work day; it is a worship day like the Sabbath. The fact is that the Bible talks about only one new moon as a special day of rest among the twelve months of the year:

Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation. Ye shall do no servile work therein: but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD. (Leviticus 23:24, 25)

If all new moons were rest days, holy convocation days, like the Sabbath, then what sense does it make for God to specify all these details? Every first day of the month they would naturally be doing all this—no working, resting, etc.

It is abundantly clear from several passages of scripture that God's holy men never considered all new moon days as worship days, where rest was commanded.

Consider Ezra the great scribe of God. He traveled from Babylon to Jerusalem. When did he start his journey and when did he reach his destination?

For upon the first day of the first month began he to go up from Babylon, and on the first day of the fifth month came he to Jerusalem, according to the good hand of his God upon him. (Ezra 7:9)

Why would the good hand of God lead him to *start* and *arrive* on the new moon day if the new moon was strictly a worship day? Traveling long distance, from one country to another, is *not* worship, but work!

God clearly commanded that no work was to be done on the Sabbath while building the Sanctuary, even though it was the Lord's tabernacle that was being built! How sacred is the day of worship and rest!

Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a sabbath of rest to the LORD: whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death. (Exodus 35:2)

The same Lord instructed Moses when to start building and setting up the sanctuary:

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation. (Exodus 40:1)

Surely the new moon (first of every month) was not a rest day like the Sabbath. It was like a normal day of work.

Also, look when they finished the work in the setting up of the temple. Again, it was on the new moon, the first of the month!

And it came to pass in the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was reared up. (Exodus 40:17)

From Scripture we see only one new moon day was a day of rest—the seventh month, because that day was the feast day of Trumpets.

So, the text of Amos 8:5—of no selling on the new moon—was a reference to the seventh-month new moon and not to all new moon days.

Theologians from other churches also understand that there is no command that every new moon was to be a holy and rest day. Dr. Adam Clarke, the Methodist Bible commentator, comments on this text of Amos 8:5: "When will the new moon be gone—This was kept as a kind of holy day, not by Divine command, but by custom. The Sabbath was strictly holy."⁸

The New Moon and Sabbath of Isaiah 66

The lunar Sabbatarians always quote Isaiah 66:23, as well, to prove that new moon is the third category of a day.

For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make. . . And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD. (Isaiah 66: 22, 23)

This passage in no way indicates that there are three categories of days. Because new moon and Sabbaths are listed separately doesn't mean the new moon and Sabbath can't

8. Dr. Adam Clarke, *The Holy Bible, Old and New Testaments, A Commentary and Critical Notes*, vol. 4, p. 690

overlap. If listing it separately means they are different categories of days, then what about Colossians 2:16?

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days. (Colossians 2:16)

Here, apart from new moon and Sabbaths, “holyday” is mentioned, as well. So according to this faulty reasoning, there would be four categories of days—work days, new moon, Sabbath day, and holydays.

In the city of God there is the tree of life right in front of God’s throne. That tree yields its fruit, every month (or every new moon):

And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. (Revelation 22:1, 2)

That is the reason we come before God’s presence in the new earth on the new moon, not because it is a separate category of a day but because on that day we will be eating of the tree of life!

The Creation Account

We know that in the Genesis creation account there are only six work days and a Sabbath day. Look at what the lunar Sabbatarians say about it:

Now in Genesis chapter one is the account of creation week where we also find the six working days, the sabbath and the new moon day. New moon day would have to be that day before the first day of the week as there are no other types of days left to choose from in scripture. So from this bit of information extracted from scripture we find that we start off with the new moon day then the six working days ending with the sabbath. New moon day is not a week day but is the first day of the month. (www.worldslastchance.com, “Messiah settles the issue forever”; article no longer available online)

You cannot find a greater twist than this! There are only seven days mentioned by God in the Genesis account of creation. Where does it say there are eight days? There are six working days and one Sabbath day. There is no new moon day mentioned at all.

Truth is never assumed; it is never speculated upon. These people are speculating and imagining it.

We all know from the account of scripture that the moon was introduced only on day four⁹, yet the lunar Sabbatarians are seeing a new moon in Genesis 1:1, 2 because they need to find three categories of days somehow in this most foundational passage of scripture. Here is the new moon for them:

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. (Genesis 1:1, 2)

For them, the phrase “God created the heaven” means God created the sun, moon and stars in the sky before day one.

Obviously, there were many things created prior to “day one” when light was created. What was the first thing created (as far as mam [sic] is concerned)? *The heavens and the earth!* . . .

. . . on this un-numbered creation event Yah put into place all the material He would need, then He advanced upon this material for six days before He rested. (Troy Miller, *The Moon Regulates the Weekly Sabbath*, p. 6; accessed on 10-14-13 at http://www.lightbearerministries.com/files/3713/8039/1672/The_Moon_Regulates_The_Weekly_Sabbath_-_As_Proved_By_The_Creation_Account_In_Genesis_1_-_Are_You_Surprised.doc.pdf; emphasis in original)

Since the new moon is dark, the “darkness” of Genesis 1:2 is the new moon that was created, according to them.

Some others believe that the “darkness” of Genesis 1:2 was the devil, as the devil is the *prince of darkness*. God never said that it was the devil or the new moon in Genesis 1:2. Truth is never based on speculations.

Looking at what God declared and wrote on Sinai, we come to know God never included the period before day one into His reckoning of time for us:

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. (Exodus 20:11)

If God included Genesis 1:1, 2 as part of the reckoning of time, as the lunar Sabbatarians do (for creating heaven and earth is work as well), then He should have said—in seven days God made heaven and earth and rested on the eighth day.

The period before the first day account of Genesis *cannot* be the new moon because:

a) The Scriptures are silent on this, telling us the moon was created on the fourth day and not on the first day.

b) If the un-illuminated “sun, moon and stars” were created during that period, God’s word should say that—and it doesn’t. (Rather the lunar Sabbatarians are saying it six thousand years later!)

c) We know that a new moon day has the same length of time, twenty-four hours, in today’s calendar. If that period was the new moon, it should be twenty-four hours like the rest of the days of the Genesis creation account. Then why do they keep emphasizing it is an “un-numbered” creation event?

9. Genesis 1:14–19. We shall investigate this passage in detail under the topic “Does the Moon Regulate the Weekly Sabbaths?”

d) If the new moon was created prior to day one, God should have named his first work period of creation as day one and the Sabbath as day eight of creation.

e) When God is not counting that period, who are we to count it?

When God says in the creation account that only six days are counted and then the Sabbath arrives, why are they counting something that God doesn't count?

Let me *illustrate* how ridiculous their calculation is: We know Jacob had seven children through Leah—six boys and a girl (like the six work days and the Sabbath). For us it is no confusion as to how many *children* Jacob bore through Leah, but with the lunar Sabbatarian's ridiculous method of calculations Jacob would have had eight—six boys and two girls. And you may want to ask them how, and from where did they get that extra person? They would then say, did you forget to count the *first* lady, Leah, whom he married in the darkness

(like Genesis 1:2 darkness) before the kids were born? But the fact is we don't count Leah even though she was a part of Jacob's *family*. We are just counting the *children* of Jacob through Leah—and that is six sons and one daughter. The same way in the creation account—God says he has six work days and one Sabbath day. Who are we to put in that extra period of time and to make it a total of eight days?

We shall deal more on the folly of their interpretation of Genesis 1:2 in a future chapter.

We have investigated and seen that there are not three categories of days at all in scripture; there are only two categories of days—the six work days and the seventh-day Sabbath.

All other days—new moon days, yearly Sabbath days, and feast days—fall either on the six work days of the week or on the seventh-day Sabbath.

To be continued

“Set Thine Heart to Understand” continued from p. 9

This acquirement of spiritual knowledge begins small, just as our physical brains began small: “By the second month of prenatal life, a simple cylinder of nerve cells forms in the center of the growing embryo. From this hollow tube the human brain grows at the incredible speed of a quarter million cells a minute, going from zero to one hundred billion cells at birth” (Devra Davis, *Disconnect*, p. 5).

We are living in the last days and if we expect to spiritually stand amid the onslaughts of Satan just before Jesus returns, our minds must be thoroughly grounded in the word of God:

Only those who have been *diligent students* of the Scriptures and who have received the love of the truth will be shielded from the powerful delusion that takes the world captive. By the Bible testimony these will detect the deceiver in his disguise. To all the testing time will come. By the sifting of temptation the genuine Christian will be revealed. Are the people of God now so firmly established upon His word that they would not yield to the evidence of their senses? Would they, in such a crisis, cling to the Bible and the Bible only? Satan will, if possible, prevent them from obtaining a preparation to stand in that day. He will so arrange affairs as to hedge up their way, entangle them with earthly treasures, cause them to carry a heavy, wearisome burden, that their hearts may be overcharged with the cares of this life and the day of trial may come upon them as a thief. (White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 625)

A new kind of biblical student is needed for these last days. We have always had scholars throughout the centuries who have deeply researched God's word, but they have been the

exception. Today, however, every one of us needs to be a biblical student who focuses, first and foremost, on that deep, diligent searching that offers protection from the deceiver and that promotes a trust in God, to the point that we automatically cling to the Bible and the Bible only during times of spiritual discouragement and of widespread delusion.

In the reverent contemplation of the truths presented in His Word the mind of the student is brought into communion with the infinite mind. Such a study will not only refine and ennoble the character, but it cannot fail to expand and invigorate the mental powers. (White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 596)

Dr. Segev states that the *new* neuroscience student needs to develop an substantial understanding of theory, physics, mathematics, computer science, engineering, disease, anatomy, and the circuitry of the brain in order to adequately participate in brain research. In like manner, the ardent student of God's word needs a substantial understanding of the great themes of the Bible, the great doctrines that God has graciously given us, in order to successively participate in the big-bang ending of the great controversy. You and I are facing that very day, so “let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us” (Hebrews 12:1), and let us plant the truths of the Bible deeply into our minds, so that we cannot be moved.

Those who endeavor to obey all the commandments of God will be opposed and derided. They can stand only in God. In order to endure the trial before them, they must understand the will of God as revealed in His word; they can honor Him only as they have a right conception of His character, government, and purposes, and act in accor-



The brain

YouTube Channel: We are working on getting more videos ready, including our series on the incarnation. We have sermons and interesting science lessons that teach biblical lessons, including the latest video on polymers. Our URL is: http://www.youtube.com/user/swiftkayak?feature=results_main.



Available at: http://www.youtu.be/dCCz_oQR4B0



Tasty Recipe: Ukrainian Lentil Soup

Ingredients:

- ✦ 3 big potatoes
- ✦ 3–4 quarts of water
- ✦ 1 carrot
- ✦ 1½ cups of dry lentils or rice
- ✦ 1 medium onion (chopped)
- ✦ Seasonings to taste, such as bay leaf, onion and garlic powders, and basil

Cut potatoes, onion, and carrot and boil together with lentils. After these are cooked, add seasonings.



Sisters Ira and Veolieta enjoy this tasty soup.

“Set Thine Heart to Understand” continued from p. 23

dance with them. *None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict.* To every soul will come the searching test: Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the rock of God’s immutable word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defense of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus? (*The Great Controversy*, p. 593)

“The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law” (Deuteronomy 29:29). While the secret things belong only to God, great and deep things have been given to God’s people, and a systematic scientific-type study of the truths of the Bible will reveal the deep things that God wills man to understand. In order to do this, however, our physical brains need to be in good health. That means we feed them properly with good food and with the treasures of nature:



Brain neurons

We may enjoy the fruits, the vegetables, the grains, without doing violence to the laws of our being. These articles, prepared in the *most simple and natural manner*, will nourish the body, and preserve its natural vigor . . . (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 50)

The things of nature are God’s blessings, provided to give health to body, mind, and soul. They are given to the well to keep them well and to the sick to make them well. . . .

Nature is God’s physician. The pure air, the glad sunshine, the beautiful flowers and trees, the orchards and vineyards, and outdoor exercise amid these surroundings, are health-giving—the elixir of life. (*Ibid.*, vol. 7, p. 76)

May we treat our brains smartly, and may we also use them diligently to search God’s word as for hidden treasure.

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