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"And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO YAH" (Exodus 28:36)

A bi-monthly publication of The Creation Seventh Day Adventist Church



LUDAR SABBATHS

An examination from Scripture and History



Several years ago, I received an email from a young woman proposing what seemed at the time to be a rather odd concept. Her position was that the proper observance of the Sabbath is tied to the cycles of the moon, with the weekly cycle being reset every month on the New Moon. Essentially the idea was that the Sabbath was a lunar holy day kept on specific days of each month, and not "every seventh day" as the Scriptures teach.

We dialogued briefly on the subject, and after what seemed to be a rather obvious problem with her reasoning was presented to her, she left off discussion entirely. That was the last that I heard of the topic until roughly two weeks ago when someone left a book entitled "The Weekly Sabbath is Determined by the Moon" on the kitchen table of the Church, with a contact number and website written in the front cover. In looking through the book and speaking with both the author and the individual who left it, I was surprised to learn that this belief is actually gaining a foothold among some feast-keeping groups, and even more amazingly, among some Seventh-day Adventists.

With this in mind, the intention of this article is to examine the evidence for and against the idea of a lunar Sabbath and see which is the Scriptural precedent – an unbroken cycle of 7 days uninterrupted by the monthly cycle, or a cycle that operates by the moon and is interrupted at the end of each month, thus adding a few extra days between the last Sabbath of a given month and the first Sabbath 7 days after the New Moon of the next.

The following are the four primary evidences cited in support of the lunar Sabbath doctrine that I will be examining in this article:

- 1) In the book of Exodus, there are four specific Sabbaths listed by date; the 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th days of the month. Therefore, it is concluded that all Sabbaths of all months must fall on these days.
- 2) Certain encyclopedias state that the Sabbath was originally kept by a lunar cycle, and was later changed to the current 7-day cycle by the Jews.
- 3) A passage in the book of Psalms says that the moon was given for Yahweh's feast days When is the "7th day?" and festivals. Also, the Sabbath is listed with Holding Back the Winds the feast days and Legal update and the end festivals in Leviticus times 23. Therefore, it is \$\mathbb{Z}\$ reasoned, the Sabbath is Healing of the Nations also be governed by the in Africa moon.

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Some statements of Philo, an Alexandrian Jew and prolific author regarding the laws and customs of Judaism during the time of Christ, are often used to attempt to show that both Philo and the Jewish nation kept lunar Sabbaths in the time of Yahshua.

One thing worthy of note about adherents to the lunar Sabbath doctrine is that there is a wide spectrum of disagreement regarding the specific details of the belief or how to advocate it. For example, some believe that the change from lunar to solar Sabbaths happened during the Babylonian captivity, and thus would actually argue against point 4 listed above. The

implication of this, of course, is that Yahshua, the Lord of the Sabbath, not only failed to correct either His disciples or the Jews during his many, many opportunities to do so, but also "as His custom" went to the synagogues on the wrong day to read the Scriptures.

I have yet to hear a clear answer addressing this issue. As a result, I will be focusing on the view of those on the other side of the lunar fence: Whether Christ and the Jews of His day did, in fact, keep lunar Sabbaths.

1) In the book of Exodus, there are four specific Sabbaths listed by date; the 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th days of the month. Therefore, all Sabbaths must fall on these days.

The first of the points argued in favor of the lunar Sabbath is a relatively easy one to address, however it bears a reply due to the fact that very much of the reasoning for this doctrine hinges on an identical underlying premise – that of assumption. The argument is made, "Exodus lists four Sabbaths by date, and it lists them on the 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th days of the month." This much is true. The conclusion, however, is that "Therefore, because it happened that way one month, the Sabbath must always happen on those days." This is a faulty line of reasoning called "proof by example." While the dates given in Exodus are compatible with the idea of a lunar Sabbath, they by no means prove that it is always kept on these dates any more than Acts 20:7 proves that the early Christians worshipped every Sunday.

Earlier in the book of Exodus we find the record of the Jews' expulsion from Egypt. One of the first verses in the relevant chapter is Yahweh establishing the calendar to Moses and Aaron, saying "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." (Ex. 12:2) Despite the lack of an established calendar, the Jews had at this point already been keeping the Sabbath: "And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now are many, and ye make them rest (*lit.* "Sabbath") from their burdens." (Exodus 5:5)

Exodus 12 also records the institution of the feast of Passover as follows: "Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.

And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire. And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is Yahweh's passover.

For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am Yahweh. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt." (Exodus 12: 3,6-13)

There are two things worthy of notice about this passage and its immediate results. As in subsequent Passover festivals, the slaying of the lamb occurred on the 14th of Nisan. The instruction was given to the children of Israel to "eat it with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand: and ye shall eat it in haste." This was because the next morning – the 15th of Nisan – the Jews were to be expelled from Egypt, as we read:

"And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: [...] and they spoiled the Egyptians. And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children. And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened; because they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themselves any victual." (Exodus 12:35a-39)

The second thing worthy of notice is the command that anything remaining of the Passover meal until morning was to be "burned with fire." All of this occurred on the 15th of Nisan – which according to the lunar reckoning would have been a weekly Sabbath. According to the lunar reckoning, Yahweh specifically arranged the dates so that the children of Israel - to whom we know Sabbath observance proved to be a stumbling block (Exodus 16) - would spoil the Egyptians, prepare their livestock, ready themselves hastily for travel, proceed to travel a large distance, and then cook bread, **all** on a weekly Sabbath. He then, if the 15th was indeed a weekly Sabbath, proceeded to command them that if any of the Passover meal should be left from the 14th to the 15th it was to be burned with fire when Yahweh had plainly said "Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day." (Exodus 35:3)

2) Certain encyclopedias state that the Sabbath was originally kept by a lunar cycle, and was later changed to the current 7-day cycle by the Jews.

By "Certain encyclopedias," I mean specifically three: JewishEnyclopedia.com, The Encyclopedia Biblica (1899), and the Universal Jewish Encyclopedia (1939). Each of these sources makes the implication, if not the statement, that the origins of the Sabbath were a lunar festival tied to the worship of the sun and moon by early Semites and their pagan neighbors, and then was later changed sometime around the Exodus to the current solar cycle.

The problems with this viewpoint are many and obvious, the first one being that it is pure conjecture.

There is no evidence cited in any of the encyclopedias despite the unusual nature of the claims, and they are replete with terms such as "probably" and "possibly." Of course, none of these three sources help the proponents of a lunar Sabbath for a variety of reasons:

- A) The conjecture is based upon a naturalistic view of the Scriptures, not an inspired one. The reasoning is solely grounded upon the assumption that the Sabbath was not instituted in Eden as Scripture declares, but that its origin was as a ritual gained by way of osmosis from other pagan groups that worshipped the moon.
- B) Even these sources acknowledge the lack of a historical reference to this change by qualifying the assertion with terms such as "probably," and place the change from lunar to solar so far back in Jewish history as to be entirely useless for those claiming that the change happened after the time of Christ.

The idea is often advanced that because two of these sources are about Judaism, they are therefore written and endorsed by Judaism and serve as an official statement on behalf of the religion. A brief referencing of the reception the books received is enough to reveal the fallacy of this statement:

"In spite of the eminence of some of the scholars included in the list of editors on the title page, the editorial work leaves much to be desired and errors of judgment as well as errors of fact still abound in many of the contributions. [...] Some will question the propriety of including names of people who have maintained a negative attitude toward Judaism or at most were neutral." [Jewish Quarterly Review, Apr. 1943, "The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia"]

JewishEncyclopedia is much the same. Lunar Sabbath supporters quote the following from the Sabbath entry: "The Sabbath depending, in Israel's nomadic period, upon the observation of the phases of the moon, it could not, according to this view, be a fixed day. When the Israelites settled in the land and became farmers, their new life would have made it desirable that the Sabbath should come at regular intervals, and the desired change would have been made all the more easily as they had abandoned the lunar religion."

Unfortunately, in so doing they ignore the title of the subchapter which is "Probable Lunar Origin" and is subtitled as a "Critical View" of the Sabbath. Further, the very same paragraph from which the quote is pulled begins thus:

"The origin of the Sabbath, as well as the true meaning of the name, is uncertain. [...] It was probably originally connected in some manner with the cult of the moon, as indeed is suggested by the frequent mention of Sabbath and New-Moon festivals in the same sentence (Isa. i. 13; Amos viii. 5; H Kings iv. 23). The old Semites worshiped the moon and the stars (Hommel, "Der Gestirndienst der Alten Araber"). Nomads and shepherds, they regarded the night as benevolent, the day with its withering heat as malevolent. In this way the moon ("Sinai" = "moon ["sin"]

mountain") became central in their pantheon." [JewishEnvclopedia.com, "Sabbath" entry]

There is more to the paragraph, and it all follows this same line of reasoning – the quote which is used in support of a lunar Sabbath is in fact the very closing portion of the section, and the only one that does not include a plain statement of the completely atheistic viewpoint used to arrive at the conclusion.

The Encyclopedia Biblica is much the same, with the full title of the book being "Encyclopaedia Biblica: A Critical Dictionary of the Literary, Political and Religious History, the Archeology, Geography and Natural History of the Bible." The entry on "Sabbath," written by the same man as authored the entry "Holy Days" from which lunar Sabbath proponents take their quote, states that the origins of the Sabbath are "obscure."

The American Historical Association wrote in review of the book that "Folk-lore and legend are abundantly represented, though, strangely enough, the translations of Enoch and Elijah, to which there are so many parallels in ancient beliefs and which suggest so many interesting questions, are passed over with hardly a word of discussion. The volume contains a great number of conjectural emendations of the Hebrew text, some probable, some improbable." [The American Historical Review, July, 1901]

The thread between all three references is readily apparent; so far from being confessions of a Jewish scholar as to the history of Sabbath keeping, the books are written from a naturalistic viewpoint that regards the Scriptures as a myth to be compared with other ancient myths, with "possible" and "probable" conclusions based on suggested similarities. The authors are noted as those who "maintained a negative or at most neutral attitude" towards the subject matter, and the works are cited for conjectural errors by both orthodox Jews and secular historical agencies alike.

Obviously, this is not the sound basis for a Biblical doctrine, and most definitely is not a sound basis for providing a historical fact. The works themselves are replete with the qualifications "probably," "possibly," and "it is unclear," making no claim as to an absolute or any evidence whatsoever that it was so, other than the author's conjecture. As a result, they can by no means whatsoever be considered as an authoritative record of a change in Jewish Sabbath reckoning.

3) A passage in the book of Psalms says that the moon was given for Yahweh's feast days and festivals. Also, the Sabbath is listed with the feast days and festivals in Leviticus 23. Therefore the Sabbath is a feast day and must be governed by the moon.

The primary problem with this argument lies in the interpretation of Psalms 104:19, which reads thus: "He appointed the moon for seasons (*Heb.* "Mo'ed"): the sun knoweth his going down." The word "Mo'ed," it is rightly pointed out, is elsewhere translated as festivals or feasts. The error is in assuming that the poetic reference in Psalms is

intended to be an *exclusive* one; that *only* the moon is given for this purpose. The Scriptures very plainly tell us otherwise: "And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also." (Genesis 1:14,16)

The word for "seasons" in Genesis is exactly the same as the one in Psalms; whereas Genesis states that the sun and the moon were both given for the purpose of *Mo'ed*, proponents of a lunar Sabbath will disregard this in favor of the non-contradictory poetic statement in Psalms. This raises another serious problem with the lunar Sabbath reckoning; namely, that by making the Sabbath operate off of the moon, it changes the Biblical calendar from "luni-solar" to solely "lunar," thus disregarding Genesis 1:14 entirely.

The other half of the argument is that because the Sabbath is listed in Leviticus 23 with the other feasts – all of which are kept by the moon – that therefore the Sabbath must be kept the same way. This is known as "guilt by association." The (flawed) logic goes that because A is listed with B, A and B must be identical. This would be similar to the assertion that because two people in the same building are lawyers, and one of them is a woman, they therefore must both be women.

4) Some statements of Philo, an Alexandrian Jew and prolific author regarding the laws and customs of Judaism in the time of Christ, are often used to attempt to show that both Philo and the Jewish nation kept lunar Sabbaths in the time of Yahshua.

I have saved this for the last evidence because it is the most conclusive against the idea of a lunar Sabbath, and it leads seamlessly into the section on Pentecost, which is the most serious flaw in the lunar Sabbath argument. The purpose of invoking Philo from a lunar Sabbath perspective is that without some proof that the Jews kept the Sabbath by lunar cycles in Yahshua's day, and with absolutely no historical evidence of the change happening after, a serious problem is presented: That Yahshua, the Lord of the Sabbath, kept the wrong day as the Sabbath with the Jews and never once corrected their error. This is obviously a fatal line of reasoning, and as such, much relies on Philo's testimony for the lunar Sabbath idea to hold any water whatsoever.

The assertion is made by proponents of the lunar Sabbath that Philo is a subject that "Saturday Sabbatarians don't like to touch, and for good reason." I found this claim relatively incredible when I began to dig into Philo's writings to research this topic, as he provides one of the clearest proofs that the Jewish nation was positively keeping the Sabbath every seven days – not by a lunar calendar – in the time of Christ.

Take for example the following quote, often cited (amazingly) as a proof for the lunar Sabbath:

"The fourth commandment has reference to the sacred seventh

day that it may be passed in a sacred and holy manner. Some states keep the "holy festival" only once in the month, counting from the new moon, as a day sacred to God; but the nation of the Jews keep every seventh day regularly, after each interval of six days." [Philo, *The Decalogue*, XXX]

The lunar Sabbath argument focuses on the first half of this quote, and using a strange and specious form of logic claims that "because Philo calls it the 'holy festival' when these states keep it once a month by the moon, it therefore means they were using the right method – the moon." This completely ignores the fact that they were also keeping it **only** once a month.

Essentially, the lunar Sabbath argument picks which half of the error it likes, applies the term "holy festival" as an endorsement of that half, and **completely ignores** the conclusion: that regardless of what these other states do, the nation of the Jews keep **every** seventh day regularly, after **each** interval of six days.

The quote does not say "Every seventh day from the New Moon after each interval of six working days, except for at the end of some months, when we have some extra working days in there before the New Moon." If there was plainer language to express the idea of every seventh day regularly—not irregularly—I am unaware of it.

Later in the same work, Philo, while speaking about the Sabbath commandment, begins to speak at length about the virtue of the number 7 and its place among Yahweh's creation. One such quote is "But to the seventh day of the week he has assigned the greatest festivals, those of the longest duration, at the periods of the equinox both vernal and autumnal and autumnal in each year; appointing two festivals for these two epochs, each lasting seven days; the one which takes place in the spring being for the perfection of what is being sown, and the one which falls in autumn being a feast of thanksgiving for the bringing home of all the fruits which the trees have produced. And seven days have very appropriately been appointed to the seventh month of each equinox, so that each month might receive an especial honour of one sacred day of festival, for the purpose of refreshing and cheering the mind with its holiday." [Ibid.]

The places I have found this quote referenced in lunar Sabbath articles tend to leave out the last sentence regarding the seventh month, and for good reason – it makes plain what is being spoken of. The claim is made that Philo is saying each feast starts on the weekly Sabbath, seeing as they both start on the 15th day of their respective months. This, of course, is nowhere in the actual text – Philo explains himself clearly that by assigning to each feast a duration of seven days, Yahweh has arranged so that each feast will have "one sacred day of festival, for the purpose of refreshing and cheering the mind." Because the feasts last seven days, it is guaranteed that regardless of what day of the week they begin on, at least one day will be a weekly Sabbath. The placing of this day – whether at beginning, end, or middle – is nowhere hinted at, only inserted by those with a case to make.

The next quote of Philo often used is as follows:

"For it is said in the scripture: 'On the tenth day of this month let each of them take a sheep according to his house;' in order that from the tenth, there may be consecrated to the tenth, that is to God, the sacrifices which have been preserved in the soul, which is illuminated in two portions out of the three, until it is entirely changed in every part, and becomes a heavenly brilliancy like a full moon, at the height of its increase at the end of the second week." [Philo, *On Mating with the Preliminary Studies*, (106)]

"See!" the lunar Sabbath proponent will shout, "The full moon at the end of the second week! Therefore, weeks are kept by the moon." Well, not so fast. The second week of what? Of the month, quite obviously. Subdividing a greater period of time into "weeks" does not imply that weeks are therefore subject to the thing referenced.

For example, a man may be in the second week of his marriage. Does this mean that he considers the first day of the week to be whatever day he was married on? No, certainly not. Likewise it can be the second week of a term in office, a year, an era, and yes, even a month, without meaning that the weekly cycle now revolves around the thing subdivided. Nothing about saying the moon is full at the end of the second week of the month implies that all weeks are therefore defined by the month, and thus the moon.

This, as it turns out, makes up the majority of the body of evidence pulled from the works of Philo in support of the notion that the Jews in his and Christ's day kept the Sabbath by lunar cycles.

Despite the length of this article, the actual Biblical evidences cited for the lunar Sabbath notion are rather scanty and poorly tied together. The general method of presentation seems to consist of bombarding the reader with repeated poorly-researched references with erroneous claims about their conclusions or relation to one another. Often times such quotes have words added in parenthesis or the phrase "In other words" strewn gratuitously about in the work in such a way that often leaves one to wonder if the conclusion was from the author of the original quote or the one currently commenting on it.

When faced with the lack of verifiable evidence for the position, my experience with lunar Sabbath teachers is that they will quickly change to the defensive, and demand a proof that their hypothesis is wrong; essentially shifting the burden of proof so that those who keep the Sabbath "every seventh day, after each interval of six days" must prove that it has **not** been changed.

Generally this is a logical fallacy – you cannot prove a negative, i.e., that something did not occur; you can only point to the lack of any evidence whatever that something did occur and form a reasonable conclusion based on the evidence, or lack thereof. With the prevailing notion in every reputable source being that of an unbroken 7-day cycle, an extraordinary claim such as the one advanced by the lunar Sabbath camp that it has been

changed requires equally extraordinary evidence – the burden of which is on the one advancing the new claim. As it stands, the only thing extraordinary about the proof for a lunar Sabbath lies in its entire lack of **any** historical and Biblical evidence whatsoever.

Yahweh, however, has not left us to even so much as an educated guess as to which is the right system; the Scriptures themselves give us a plain record that puts the notion of a lunar Sabbath beyond all possibility of being true. This brings us to the counting of Pentecost.

"And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto Yahweh." (Leviticus 23:15,16)

The word "Pentecost" means literally "Fifty Count" in Greek, due to the fact that it occurs fifty days after the offering of the wave sheaf at Unleavened Bread. The passage above states this count two ways, and in so doing, it makes the lunar Sabbath an impossibility. If "the morrow after the seventh Sabbath" is the fiftieth day, then seven Sabbaths must account for 49 days. This is only possible through an unbroken cycle of seven-day weeks between Sabbaths regardless of New Moons or monthly "shifts," because 7x7=49. The lunar Sabbath, by inserting extra days between weekly Sabbaths at the end of each month, comes out to a count of roughly 52-55 days for the day after the seventh Sabbath.

Several interesting attempts have been made to explain away this apparent death-knell to the doctrine, including an insistence that the word "unto" in "unto the morrow" actually means "after." No textual evidence either Hebrew or English is ever cited for this assertion, as the word "ad" in Hebrew undeniably means "unto, until, before." Neither is any source cited to defend the fact that beginning a count of 50 days after seven Sabbaths would place Pentecost over 100 days after the wave sheaf, making the very name "fifty count" a false one.

A second explanation offered is that Pentecost is only 50 "working days" after the wave sheaf, excluding the Sabbaths and New Moons. The evidence cited for this is manufactured by changing the phrase "seven Sabbaths shall be complete" to instead read "seven Sabbaths complete," making "complete" a modifier of "Sabbath." According to the argument, a "complete Sabbath" consists of a week counting only working days, disregarding Sabbaths and New Moons. Once again, no evidence for this definition of the term is provided from any source whatsoever.

Beyond the fact that the definitions applied to plain words such as "complete" and "unto" appear to be entirely imaginary, the Scriptures disallow this as even a possible meaning in the parallel account of Pentecost reckoning, which says simply "seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from such time as thou beginnest to put the sickle

to the corn." (Deuteronomy 16:9)

There is no mention of 50 days aside from seven weeks or of "Sabbaths complete" in the Deuteronomy account, making even a conjectural reading of Leviticus impossible. That the corn and the barley harvests were taken at the same time can be verified by referencing the book of Ruth, which records that "Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, 'Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of *corn* after him in whose sight I shall find grace.' And she said unto her, 'Go, my daughter.' So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of *barley*." (Ruth 2:2,17)

Finally, the most conclusive evidence regarding the way in which Pentecost was reckoned comes from, of all sources, Philo. The Alexandrian Jew states of the practices of Israel in his day that "Also the day on which is offered the sheaf of corn, as an offering of gratitude for the fertility and productiveness of the plain, as exhibited in the fulness of the ears of corn. And the day of pentecost, which is numbered from this day by seven portions of seven days, in which it is the custom to offer up loaves, which are truly called the loaves of the first fruits, since, in fact, they are the first fruits of the productions and crops of eatable grain, which God has given to mankind, as the most tractable of all his creatures." [Philo, *The Decalogue*, XXX (160)]

He does not say "seven portions of seven days plus another 50," nor does he say "7 to 9 portions of 6 working days, sometimes less between the last Sabbath of a month and the following New Moon." No; quite simply, "seven Sabbaths" as the Scripture calls it is "seven portions of seven days" as Philo claims, both of which equate the day after with the number fifty.

A final quote can be taken from Philo's treatise on "Special Laws," the second portion, which lists each of the feasts numerically as they occur from the beginning of the year unto the end along with a description of the rituals associated with their observance. To forever dispel any possibility of the notion that 50 days come after seven Sabbaths after the sheaf offering, we read the following:

"There is also a festival on the day of the paschal feast, which succeeds the first day, and this is named the sheaf, from what takes place on it; for the sheaf is brought to the altar as a first fruit both of the country [...]" [Philo, *Special Laws II* (162)]

The above is the description of the "Sixth Festival," the "paschal feast" of Unleavened Bread / Passover whereat the wave sheaf occurs. The entry on the "Seventh Festival" begins as follows with reference to the preceding festival:

"The solemn assembly on the occasion of the festival of the sheaf having such great privileges, is the prelude to another festival of still greater importance; for from this day the fiftieth day is reckoned, making up the sacred number of seven sevens, with the addition of a unit as a seal to the whole; and this festival, being that of the first fruits of the corn, has derived its name of pentecost from the number of fifty, (penteµkostos)" [*Ibid.*]

Seven sevens plus a single day as a unit, "a seal to the whole," was the manner of keeping Pentecost in the days of Yahshua, the days before Yahshua, and the days since Yahshua.

One individual with whom I conversed about this topic, near the end of our discussion, did something I found somewhat odd at the time – he quoted Sherlock Holmes, the character created by Arthur Conan Doyle, to prove a point. The quote stated that "when the impossible is removed, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth."

Despite the incredulousness with which I looked at the quote being used in lieu of Scripture at the time, I came to realize shortly thereafter that the quote was both true and entirely relevant to the discussion, though in a way different than the fellow intended.

As can be shown from the count of Pentecost, the idea of a lunar Sabbath is an abject mathematical impossibility. On top of this, the plain testimony of historians contemporary with Yahshua establishes that the Sabbath was kept every seven days, and that seven of these weeks plus a unit of one day equaled 50. Not only is the idea that Yahshua kept the Sabbath by the cycles of the moon not verifiable by history, it is flatly denied and the opposite repeatedly affirmed.

In short, it is mathematically *impossible* for the Sabbath to be kept any other way than every seven days as the Jews and the Seventh-day Adventists have always kept it. Thus, for whatever reasons adherents of a lunar Sabbath may find it "improbable," such as an inherent distrust of the idea of an international dateline, the fact remains that it is nonetheless the truth, and the only possible way to keep the Sabbath while being true to the Scriptures.

- L.J. Chartier

"But some men will say, [of 1 John 3:9] 'True: whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin habitually.' Habitually! Whence is that? I read it not. It is not written in the Book. God plainly saith, 'He doth not commit sin'; and thou addest, habitually! Who art thou that mendest the oracles of God?-That 'addest to the words of this book'? Beware I beseech thee, lest God "add to thee all the plagues that are written therein'!"

- John Wesley Reformer and Greek lecturer at Oxford University

Holding Back the Winds



We read in the Book of Revelation, the symbols of which chronicle our current experiences: "And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, 'Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.'" (Rev 7:1-3)

The CSDA Church has experienced several periods of time in which it appears that the winds of strife, which were about to blow, have been held back. We have freely confessed to being surprised by this for, although all that has been predicted to come to pass has done so without exception and in the anticipated order, the timeline has gone on longer than we would have initially thought.

Every prophet with apocalyptic insights (*i.e.*, inspired thoughts about the end of the world) has written that the time of the end would be "soon." Many if not most have believed that it would take place in their lifetime, and their blessed hope would be that they would see Yahshua returning in their generation. The unique thing about the predictions of the nearness of the end as read in CSDA writings is that in every other case, there were a number of large-scale prophecies that had yet to be fulfilled before the last movements could take place.

Even among early Adventists, it was expected that a National Sunday Law would arise, and would expand to global proportions before the time of the end was fully identified. Unfortunately, this was taken as an absolute, unconditional prophecy (a concept that cannot properly be applied to predictions of this type) and the current state of Adventism is now in a "wait and see" posture regarding the Second Advent. This has had the most undesirable effect of lulling the proposed watchmen to sleep, leaving behind precious few to sound the alarm, now that the things which have been prophesied of the end of days has come to pass.

In other words, with nothing left to be fulfilled before Christ's return, (since the last round of persecution is upon us even now) when a Creation Seventh Day Adventist says the return of the Son of Man is "even at the door," this conveys a far more meaningful sense of urgency than at any time in the past.

This may, at first, seem at odds with the way this article began, speaking of delays in the unfolding of events that have caused us some surprise, but if you look at the reason why the winds of strife are held back from the quote in Revelation, the mystery

should immediately become clear. There are some whom Yahweh intends to save, to seal, that have not yet taken hold of the meaning of present truth and current events. There are yet some who will receive the seal of Yahweh before the persecution, which is already upon us, becomes obvious even to the unspiritual and degenerate minds.

For those who have been following the Seventh-day Adventist trademark lawsuit against the Bride of Christ, the latest news is this: In a recent ruling by the judge assigned to the case, Pastor Walter McGill's motion to have the injunction that was entered against the Church (forbidding us to use the God-ordained name of "Seventh Day Adventist" in our labors to save the lost) suspended until the appeals process is finished was denied. At the same time, the General Conference's motion to force Pastor McGill to explain to the court (*i.e.*, "show cause") why he should not be held in contempt was *also* denied.

If this seems like a "draw," it really isn't, and for two reasons.

First, the injunction ordered by the judge is still in effect; the Church's name "Creation Seventh Day Adventist" is still illegal for use in the United States in abhorrent violation of Yahweh's desires, freedom of conscience for the members of that Church, religious liberty, protestant principles, and sound Seventh-day Adventist doctrine. As we have pointed out before, in phrasing their case in mercantile terms (e.g., intellectual property, consumers, products and services, unfair competition from a rival company), and "praying" to the courts for relief from the imagined evils of misrepresentation, the General Conference of Seventh Day Adventists have pulled the "wool" of their sheep's clothing over the eyes of the United States legal system, and have used the civil courts in an idolatrous manner for religious purposes. This is an act expressly forbidden in the inspired writings that Adventists claim to hold dear, and certainly forbidden in the Word of God. Even so, taking the name "Seventh Day Adventist" as a part of the name of Christ's Church remains Yahweh's most recent instruction regarding the name of His people, and as such His people are bound by their faith to obey. Let those devout SDAs who are yet in the mainstream organization (named in the lawsuit as plaintiffs against other Adventist believers) understand that this is their opportunity to escape from such corruption, and to be free of the corporate accountability to which their leaders have subjected them without their knowledge or consent.

Second, while Pastor McGill's motion to stay the injunction was merely "denied," the General Conference's motion to begin the process of holding Pastor McGill in contempt was "denied without prejudice." This means, in simple terms,

that the Conference may present their request again at any time in the future, and it will be considered afresh. Since the Church cannot comply with the current injunction and still retain its integrity as a protestant Christian organization, it appears to be merely a matter of time before the Conference re-files its grievances with the human courts (rather than addressing its perceived woes to the Almighty who is the true Judge of all things relating to His earthly ministers and ministries) and the wheels of imperfect, human justice once more begin to roll against the saints.

This is not a draw, no; it is merely a delay. We pray it is a delay that will prove, at least to a few souls, an extension of a time of great mercy. For those already within the Body of Messiah, it is a call to draw near, and get our spiritual houses in order. It is a time, not for slackening the guard, but for fervent watchfulness and prayer, lest the surprises we experience become unpleasant ones very quickly. It is a call to reach out with great zeal to those who might listen, be educated, and enter the Ark of Safety.

For those who are in the persecuting Body, it is an opportunity for them to understand that while it is not their *fault* that they are a part of what has become an apostate and oppressive ecclesiastical corporation, it is their *responsibility* once they know about it to follow the course laid out to them in the latter part of Acts 2 (verses 36-42).

For those who are not yet within the Body of Christ generally, (because they are in another church, no church, or the world) this period of time represents a powerful invitation to put away all the claims that this current age has upon their bodies and souls, and devote all their energies to seeking the Kingdom of Heaven. Note that this does not mean they should get busy doing "things," like hours of rote Bible study and open acts of charity (although inspired versions of these things are certainly not valueless). It means that they should spend time with the Father and Son in prayer, speaking to them as Friends longing to rescue them from peril, and meditate upon what it truly means to be in Sabbath rest. As Yahshua said to those who asked Him about entering into Yahweh's labor force, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." (John 6:29) Every other "work" must spring forth naturally out of this belief, or it is – from the standpoint of eternity – useless.

Let none who have seen the signs of these times, and comprehended the meaning, delay. As it is written of this great evil, standing in a place it should not be (a formerly faithful Church) and poised to oppress the faithful flock, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand) then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains; let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house, neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. "(Mat 24:15-18) This time has come. Let us go forth into the world with the last warning, and let us not delay for any earthly consideration that may be in our houses, nor let us look back with longing at the things we must now depart without retrieving. "Remember Lot's wife." (Luke 17:32)



One of Ellen White's most notable statements about the ministry of Christian healing is this one, "Medical missionary work is the right hand of the gospel. It is necessary to the advancement of the cause of God. As through it men and women are led to see the importance of right habits of living, the saving power of the truth will be made known. Every city is to be entered by workers trained to do medical missionary work. As the right hand of the third angel's message, God's methods of treating disease will open doors for the entrance of present truth." [Testimonies, Vol. 7, p. 59]

While those who work in the health-related aspects of the ministry in the mainstream SDA Church are well acquainted with the statement that their contribution is intended to be "the right hand of the Gospel," several aspects of the above statement often go unacknowledged.

For example, "God's method of treating disease" is specified, and this is easily contrasted with "the world's method of treating disease." As faithful Adventist believers, CSDAs have continued to promote the cherished pioneer position that natural remedies are the best, and that drug therapy is to be avoided as injurious to the body. While it is true that "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick," (Mat 9:12b) indicating that those who are sick should indeed visit doctors, it must be understood that a) the physicians of Yahshua's day and their methods were a lot closer to Yahweh's ideal for healing, and b) doctors continue to be very useful for diagnostic purposes and for the emergency treatment of physical wounds.

The Creation Seventh Day Adventist Church has taken a firm position of avoiding extremes, of applying divine wisdom and careful reasoning to everything we as the children and representatives of Yahweh do and approve. This is seldom more evident than in our work as healers; healers of the spirits, bodies, and minds of those who are in need of care. It should also be noted that the quote from Mrs. White specifically connects the medical work with "the third angel's message," this being the one that resists the "mark of the beast," or the world's methods of doing things, including not only treating injuries, but also worship and governmental policies. The committed Christian, who belongs to Yahweh in both body and soul, (1Th 5:23) sees all these things as being intimately connected.

As an example of the practical application of the above thoughts, the CSDA Signet is pleased to present testimonies from our evangelists in Africa, who are laboring in the Gospel and its "right hand," the medical missionary work, in a place of great need. It is often where the need is greatest that the holy and perfect principles of Yahweh's Law and instructions shine the brightest, and it is our hope that all readers will rejoice with our workers as they experience the wisdom of Yahweh in a most dramatic fashion.

We read from the pen of one of our workers:

One of our clients is a 78 year old woman that had not been able to move her head up, down, or to the right or left for over 10 years. She was also unable to lift her arms past a certain point for the same period of time. Barb and I were perplexed as to the best treatment for her when Yah impressed upon Barb to use some massage and a product we have that has been known to relieve pain and tension. We advised her to change her bad habits and to drink more pure water, and then Barb asked me to fetch the product. As I went to do this she got the lady relaxed and ready for the treatment.

When I returned with the ointment, Barb began, with the utmost gentleness, to rub it over the neck and shoulders, massaging it in well. She continued to do this for the next 20 minutes and then told the lady to remain relaxed while we went up to care for the other clients who had come in during the time we were treating her. Five minutes later we went back to the lady to let her know that her treatment was finished, and she could go home. She went and sat in the front till our translator was finished talking and then she looked at Barb and lifted her arms. Barb and I began to smile, and when the lady had turned her head, Barb and I could not refrain from thanking Yah for this healing.

Some have asked (with increasing frequency in these wicked times) "Where are the signs? Where are the miracles?" We have read in the Book of Acts that the apostles needed only to wave their hands or stretch out their arms, and healing of the sick and injured was accomplished. It has surprised many people to learn that while this was an important element of the early work of establishing the Christian faith in a heathen land, this was never "Plan A" from our Heavenly Father's point of view.

Ideally, human beings would be raised and educated from birth to make good choices regarding health, including diet, and thus avoid nine tenths of all medical problems. [Medical Ministry, page 225] The other 10%, due to unavoidable deficiencies, would be handled with a natural course of action designed to allow the body to recover its strength while pointing out potential weaknesses in the individual for which he or she could compensate by making small, but necessary, changes in lifestyle.

The further away people stray from this ideal, the more dramatic the "miracles" must be to restore natural order in the human body, yet it is also true that Yahweh our Father will not do for us what we are instructed to do for ourselves. If we, by diet, or the application of natural substances, can relieve pain and suffering while at the same time educating patients to improve the quality of their lives, this is worth much more in the long run than a great sign that restores health, but does not necessarily equip the recipient of this divine mercy with the means of avoiding future or similar ills. Cooperation – this is the key word, and this is the arrangement which Yahweh seeks to have with His ministers on the earth.

We read a second testimony to illustrate this, and to show that true healing is more than just a matter of mending the physical body:

There was another case that involved a 2 and a half year old little boy that had a horribly infected ear, which was causing him great pain. Pastor ["Chick"] was there, and as he looked at this young child he felt that he must do something... but was not sure what to do. He began to pray that the treatment for this child would be revealed to him, and shortly thereafter Yah told him what to do.

Pastor turned to Barb and asked her to get him the necessary items as he and I went to the back with the mother and son. When Barb returned with the supplies we had the mother lay the child on the bed so we could get at the ear to treat it. As the mother lay the child down he began to cry and struggled to get up, so I took hold of the feet and the mother took charge of his little head and shoulders. He fought for some time, but once Pastor had given him the first stage of treatment he began to relax. Pastor gently stroked the head of the child and patted his back and the child relaxed even more, so much so that during the second stage of treatment there was no longer any resistance.

When the treatment was finished the boy was not even crying, had a look of relief, and no longer looked afraid. After we instructed the mother how to keep the infection down, she took her child and went to the lawn to visit with other clients that were also finished. The child sat for some time with the mother but would not stop looking towards the clinic. He finally got up and started back towards the clinic, at which point Pastor saw him coming and went to the door to see what he wanted. The child toddled to him and, looking up at Pastor, held out his little arms for a hug. Pastor took him in his arms and gave the child the hug he wanted.

Barb told us later that she noticed a look of calmness come over all the watching clients and they all acted more relaxed after that. I have never before seen such a wonderful and moving sight as this and will forever be blessed to know that Yah has given us the ability to help people.

May our prayers ever be with those who walk in the service of Yahweh, to keep them safe from harm, protected from Satan's attacks, and successful in their labors. May our praise and thanksgiving be directed to the Throne of Heaven, the source of all mercy, health, and life.

- D.P. Aguilar, with reports by A.J. Martin in Africa

Announcements

FEAST OF TABERNACLES 2009

The fall festival is approaching quickly, occurring from October 2nd through the weekly Sabbath on October 10th. We currently expect to hold the camp meeting at the usual location in Guys, Tennessee. Should our legal situation change between now and October regarding access to the property (by way of Federal marshals), we will have an announcement on the official CSDA website's camp meeting page.

If you would like to attend please call or email in advance letting us know when to expect you and how many will be coming so that we may plan for provisions accordingly. In the event that our websites are unavailable, please write to Bro. David Aguilar at flyingcreature@hotmail.com for relevant updates to the schedule.

CSDA INTERNET RADIO

CSDA Internet Radio is still active, running several inspirational and informative programs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You may access it by visiting www.7thdayadventist.ws, or in the event of further domain confiscation, by searching for "Creation seventh day" in the broadcast list at www.shoutcast.com. Tuning in requires Winamp, Realplayer, iTunes, or similar streaming audio player.

WEBSITE RELOCATION

Due to an extraordinarily liberal interpretation of the judgment against us, the General Conference's attorneys have succeeded in convincing several internet service providers and domain registrars to hand over or terminate the services of most of our websites and domain names—regardless of who had registered

As a result, we have been forced to relocate our website servers to outside of the United States jurisdiction to avoid further loss of time and content. The content remains unaffected by the switch from the user's perspective, however the address is now www.thefourthangel.net. Should some unforeseen persecution be brought against this non-United States site for it's "infringing content" the Advent Gospel, please access of www.csda-adventistchurch.to for a fully functioning mirror well outside of U.S. jurisdiction until service is restored.

LANHAM ACT PETITION

The petition is still active at www.LanhamAct.us to amend the law currently allowing religious observances to be regulated by Federal trade law. As we have long stated in many of our writings, the union of religious observances with the civil power is not only anathema to the founding principles of our nation, it is an abomination to Yahweh and is the very essence of the foundation of Papal rule. We encourage everyone who is able to find access to a computer to do so and register their names in protest against this unholy union of Church and State, and to ask others to do the same.

SIGNET SUBSCRIPTIONS

We have received several hard-copy mailings of the Signet back in recent months, with a note from the Post Office notifying us that the addressee has changed locations and they were unable to forward. If you plan to move, please notify the Distribution department (contact information below) with your updated address to avoid return mailings. Please remember that while subscriptions to the CSDA Signet are free, postage is relatively high and donations to support it are relatively few.

That said, Yahweh's hand is not shortened in providing the message of mercy to the world. If you or anyone you know would like to subscribe to the CSDA Signet, please write or call Giselle Aguilar at the contact information below to request either a hard-copy subscription (please include the name and address of the subscriber) or electronic notification via e-mail when new issues are posted online.

A Publication of the CSDA Church

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