

DOCTORS BACCHIOCCHI, MACCARTY, AND DU PREEZ WREAK HAVOC WITH THE SABBATH AND ELLEN WHITE

By

KERRY B. WYNNE

**B. A. English & History, Pacific Union College (1970,1972)
M.A., educational administration, Andrews University (1978)**

WILLIAM H. HOHMANN

B. A., theology, Ambassador College (1979)

Robert K. Sanders

Founder, Truth Or Fables Website

SECOND EDITION

August 1, 2014

INTRODUCTION

This book is for those who wish to study the anti-Sabbatarian content of the New Testament as a supplement to our other three books, including *VERDICT: No Sabbath in Genesis*, and *LYING FOR GOD: What Adventists Knew And When They Knew It*. *LYING FOR GOD* incorporates the book, *VERDICT*, as Part I, but adds a second book, *Ellen G. White And Her Enablers*, for a more complete analysis of the problems of Adventism. It is impossible to separate the Sabbath from Ellen White since she claimed that God showed her in vision that Sabbath-keeping was required of Christians. Finally, *Ellen White and the Chicago Buildings Vision Fiasco* is a shorter work which explores how this prophetic blunder at the turn of the century eventually forced the 1919 Bible Conference to examine the problems of the fraudulent claims of Ellen White. These books are widely available on the Internet. If you can't find them anywhere else, they are posted at SCRIBD.COM.

No study of Sabbath-Sunday Question and the problems of Adventism would be complete without a deep analysis of New Testament considerations in general and the anti-Sabbatarian content of the writings of St. Paul in particular. We have seldom seen such theological inconsistency elsewhere in the writings of Sabbatarian apologists. Together we have forged a treatment of these topics that will demonstrate that the content of the New Testament is decidedly anti-Sabbatarian and that St. Paul went out of his way to explain why Sabbath-keeping is not a requirement for Christians. Our work has been strengthened by other theologians, both Sabbatarian and anti-Sabbatarian, who have reviewed our work and challenged us to research deeper and think more clearly. Many thousands of hours have been spent by all of those who have contributed to this work, intentionally or inadvertently.

The three Seventh-day Adventist authors we challenge were associated, at the time they wrote, in some way or another with Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan—the home of the Seventh-day Adventist seminary. A brief summation of their work is that Dr. Bacchiocchi explained Colossians 2:14-17 in such a way that he Judaized Christianity to the point of absurdity and contradicted the Church prophetess, Ellen White, in several ways. Dr. MacCarty tried to cover Dr. Bacchiocchi's "wolves clothing" with sheep skin, and Dr. du Preez attempted to bridge some elements of Bacchiocchi's work with an approach to Colossians 2:14-17 that he hoped would be more in accordance with traditional SDA thought.

Robert K. Sanders, William H. Hohmann, and myself strongly advise our readers that the minimum prerequisite for embarking on a study of this material is the reading of our book, *VERDICT: No Sabbath In Genesis!* This New Testament material may not be fully comprehensible without a proper understanding of the biblical and historical impossibilities of the teaching that Christians must keep the Jewish Sabbath. Furthermore, the fullest comprehension of what St. Paul said about the Sabbath in Colossians 2:14-17 is only possible if one understands the historical fact that the Jews kept the Sabbath according to the lunar calendar and the four phases of the Moon until the time the second temple was built in Israel. These subjects are fully covered in *VERDICT*.

----- Kerry Wynne

CHAPTER ONE

Dr. Ronald du Preez Tries To Fix Dr. Bacchiocchi

We have touched on the fact within his 1977 book, *From Sabbath to Sunday*, Dr. Bacchiocchi taught that the last of the three sabbaths mentioned in Colossians 2:14-17 was a reference to the weekly Sabbath of the Decalogue, and that it could not possibly be a reference to anything else. We noted that by 1995, with the publication of his book, *The Sabbath in the New Testament*, he appeared to open up to the possibility that it was a reference to a ceremonial sabbath-- perhaps an annual sabbath (See Tom Warner's essay, "Confessions of A Former Sabbath Keeper" at his website, Joyfully Growing In Grace.) We also observed that with the publication of his 1998 book, *Sabbath under Crossfire*, it could be a reference to some kind of weekly ceremonial event. To Dr. Bacchiocchi, the question of this reference was virtually irrelevant to the Sabbath-Sunday issue because he believed that the "shadows" that Paul said Christians should not judge others by were not the observance of the ordinances as listed by Paul, but rather the man-made sets of rules and regulations invented by the Judaizers to regulate these ordinances. However, even many Seventh-day Adventist biblical scholars and theologians found it difficult to accept Dr. Bacchiocchi's "shadow" theory because of the impossible theological baggage that comes with it.

Stepping up to attempt to bridge Dr. Bacchiocchi's original position on the Sabbath reference in Colossians 2:14-17 with that of traditional SDA thinking is Dr. Ronald du Preez, an SDA theologian, who would like very much to demonstrate that the third Sabbath in this passage is merely a reference to annual sabbath feast day. The stakes are high for Dr. du Preez. If he fails to demonstrate that this sabbath of the three is merely an annual feast day, he is forced into a dilemma. Either Paul meant that Christians were not to force other Christians to keep the Jewish Sabbath "shadow," or Christians must keep the Jewish dietary laws, annual sabbath feast days, monthly feast days, as well as the weekly Sabbath. If du Preez succeeds in demonstrating that the Sabbath in the third position is merely an annual feast day, he creates the following difficulties for himself:

- Paul is made to appear to teach that Christians should not judge each other on the basis of whether or not they sacrifice animals to the Lord when this is a practice that Paul would condemn in no uncertain terms. He would remind his readers that the sacrifice on the Cross did away with the need for any animal sacrifices. To suggest that St. Paul would have passed over the issue of Christians offering animal sacrifices in the way Dr. du Preez implies does a great injustice to Paul.
- Dr. Du Perez is almost certainly in error because the Jewish system did not provide for animal sacrificing to be done anywhere but in the temple at Jerusalem.

DR. DU PREEZ IN A NUTSHELL

We have already touched on the concept that in Hebrew thought and writing, Bible writers used a particular structure when discussing the festivals required by the Torah—annual, monthly, and weekly. This phrase had special meaning to the Jews, its mention creating a picture in the reader's mind of one integrated set of sacred days throughout the year. Later we will explore why du Preez thinks Colossians 2:14-17 should be an exception to this rule. For the moment, du Preez asks us to believe, in this case, that another Jewish linguistic convention, called CHIASM, should take precedence here to allow the third entry in the set of obsolete shadows to mirror the first one in the list for a structure like this:

ANNUAL---MONTHLY—ANNUAL

Instead of:

ANNUAL---MONTHLY—WEEKLY

To take the focus off the Weekly Sabbath, du Preez points out that when Bible writers use the ANNUAL–MONTHLY–WEEKLY (OR ANNUAL?) word construction, it is nearly always in conjunction with animal sacrifices. This is an interesting fact, but not much more interesting than saying that when a travel author talks about the great beaches of the world, they almost always mention water. Animal sacrifices seemed to be all-pervasive in the Jewish tabernacle and temple services, so of course they would be mentioned in conjunction with annual, monthly, and weekly feast days. Again, by this approach, Paul is made out to be telling Christians not to argue over whether or not they sacrifice animals to the Lord when we all know he would be obligated to condemn the practice and explain that when Jesus died on the cross, He was the ultimate and final sacrifice.

Now that we see where Dr. du Preez is going with this concept, let us look at more of the details of his reasoning process.

DU PREEZ' METHODOLOGY

Du Preez' Evidence from Classifications of Jewish Holy Days and Leviticus 23

Du Preez theorizes that St. Paul modeled his list of classifications of Jewish holy days after that of a similar list found in Hosea 2:11. He presents a language comparison study, inherently flawed in our opinion, that suggests the possibility that the Hebrew word translated “sabbaths” in the third position of holy day classifications in the Hosea text refers to the “ceremonial” sabbaths rather than to the sacred seventh day Sabbath of the Decalogue. He seems to base this opinion primarily on the premise that there are four items in the Hosea list but only three in the one in Colossians 2:14-17.

Du Preez further theorizes that there is evidence that God made a distinction between two major classifications of Jewish holy days when He outlined a list of them in Leviticus 23. He thinks God used one term to refer to the ceremonial holy days and another term to refer to the sacred weekly Sabbaths. Du Preez explains that there is an equivalent word in Greek for the word that God used to refer to the ceremonial Sabbaths and that Paul chose this equivalent Greek word to refer to the classification of Jewish holy days that falls in the third position in Paul's list in Colossians 2:14-17.

Du Preez' Greek Word, *Sabbaton*, Argument— An Old SDA Defense in New Clothes

In addition to arguing that the third position of holy days in Paul's statement reflects a usage pattern that indicates the yearly classification of holy days types, he resurrects the traditional SDA defense that the Greek word, *Sabbaton*, used in this third position, is the plural form of the word and must, therefore, refer to one of the ceremonial types of sabbath holy days. In doing so, he asks us to strain our trust in his methodology beyond the breaking point.

The word *Sabbaton*, a Greek word in the plural form, is used in the New Testament to refer to either a 7-day week or to the weekly “recurring” (i. e. more than one) Sabbath. In each case where New Testament writers use this word, the context of the sentence easily determines how the word must be translated— either to “week” or to the “sacred” Sabbath day of the Decalogue. In other words, in each case the same word is used, but it would be virtually impossible to translate the word the other way because the statement would not make any sense. Thus we have a wide understanding of the model of Greek usage Paul had in his mind when he wrote Colossians 2:14-17.

According to Bob Pickle, a conservative SDA author and pro-SDA web-host, *Sabbaton* occurs in the NT 68 times. It is singular 41 times and plural 25 times, with the last two times being singular in the **Critical Text** [the Greek text of

B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort first published in 1881] and plural in the **Received Text** [the manuscript from which the King James Version of the Bible was translated] (e-mail Bob Pickle to Kerry Wynne, October 31, 2010). Therefore we have almost 70 occasions to see how New Testament writers used this Greek word, and these writers are extremely consistent from two contrasting perspectives that nearly demand that Paul used this word in Colossians 2:14-17 to refer to the weekly Sabbath. Du Preez is asking us to believe that Paul cast aside his excellent command of Greek usage and used this word in a manner unlike that of any other New Testament writer.

Clearly, du Preez struggles to demonstrate that Bacchiocchi, Brinsmead, Ratzlaff, and others are wrong in their conclusion that the weekly Sabbath is included in St. Paul's list in Colossians 2:14-17. Here is an anonymous blog posted at **theologyweb.com**, which comes up with a Google search for du Preez and Colossians 2:16. It is posted by contributor, *Thief on the Cross*, May 2nd, 2007 at:

<http://www.theologyweb.com/campus/showthread.php?t=130606>

Colossians 2:16 mentions the Greek word *Sabbaton* (Strong's # G4521) which by definition only means 7th day Sabbath and the common word "week?" (You can look this up to verify.) To support this fact, I have listed all the scriptures in the New Testament where this word is used. (Every place speaking of the 7th day Sabbath in the New Testament uses this word.) And note that it only means either the 7th day Sabbath or the common word "week"; thus confirming the definition of this word when you look up its meaning. Here are all the scriptures that use this word:

Matthew 12:1, Matthew 12:2, used twice as 7th day Sabbath in Matthew 12:5, Matthew 12:8, Matthew 12:10, Matthew 12:11, Matthew 12:12, Matthew 24:20, used twice (first as 7th day sabbath and second as the common word "week") in Matthew 28:1...

Mark 1:21, Mark 2:23, Mark 2:24, used twice for the 7th day sabbath in Mark 2:27, Mark 2:28, Mark 3:2, Mark 3:4, Mark 6:2, Mark 16:1, Used as the common word "week" in Mark 16:2, Also appears as the common word "week" in Mark 16:9...

Luke 4:16, Luke 4:31, Luke 6:1, Luke 6:2, Luke 6:5, Luke 6:6, Luke 6:7, Luke 6:9, Luke 13:10, Luke 13:14, Luke 13:15, Luke 13:16, Luke 14:1, Luke 14:3, Luke 14:5, Used as the common word "week" in Luke 18:12, Luke 23:54, Luke 23:56, Used as the common word "week" in Luke 24:1...

John 5:9, John 5:10, John 5:16, John 5:18, John 7:22, John 9:14, John 9:16, Used twice as 7th day sabbath in John 19:31, Used as the common word "week" in John 20:1, Used as the common word "week" in John 20:19...

Acts 1:12, Acts 13:14, Acts 13:27, Acts 13:42, Acts 13:44, Acts 15:21, Acts 16:13, Acts 17:2, Acts 18:4, Used as the common word "week" in Acts 20:7, Also used as the common word "week" in 1 Corinthians 16:2, and lastly it is used in Colossians 2:16 as the 7th day sabbath.

How ironic that the very last scripture that uses this word tells us that it was a shadow of things to come! After this, it is mentioned no more! Also all Sabbatarian New Testament proof-texts that mention the Sabbath are in this above list. How ironic!

I would like to use simple logic here. We know that fish does not come from serpents; neither do they gather grapes from bramble bushes. Even so, God would never misuse a word, as even the use of words has rules. Now it is a fact that the word *Sabbaton* used in all these Scriptures that I've just listed above only means 7th day Sabbath and the common word, "week." Just like "yes" means "yes" and "no" means no. God would never put the word "no" where He means "yes"; and if the 7th day Sabbath did not belong in Colossians

2:16, He would have never used the Greek word *Sabbaton* (which is translated in the KJV as “Sabbath days,” just as it is translated in all those other verses of scripture meaning the same thing consistently all the way to Col 2:16 where it is last used).

If anyone seems to be contentious over this, consider the consistency of how this word is used all over the New Testament until Col 2:16 where it is last used. There can be no exceptions to the rule; if the word *sabbaton* can mean anything other than what it means, then I can use the word “yes” to mean “no.” If this does not agree with your doctrine, it's not what I said that's the problem. You need to count your doctrine to be at a loss and come to terms with the truth. Remember, we can do nothing against the truth. We can only do for it.

THE EZEKIEL 47:17 SIMILARITY PROBLEM: TYPICAL LISTS OF JEWISH HOLY DAYS

Du Preez also finds himself in the uncomfortable position of having to demonstrate that the list of Jewish holy day classifications in Ezekiel 47:17 is significantly dissimilar to that of the one in Hosea. Why? Because du Preez, like most other biblical scholars, sees one of those classifications as a reference to the weekly Sabbath!

Here are the texts so you can see their similarities and differences.

HOSEA 2:11

I will also put an end to all her gaiety,
Her feasts, her new moons, her sabbaths
And all her festal assemblies.

EZEKIEL 45:17

"It shall be the prince's part to provide the burnt offerings, the grain offerings and the drink offerings, at the feasts, on the new moons and on the sabbaths, at all the appointed feasts of the house of Israel; he shall provide the sin offering, the grain offering, the burnt offering and the peace offerings, to make atonement for the house of Israel."

I am indebted to the work of the following scholars for this presentation:

Jason C. Meyer of Bethlehem College and Seminar (Minneapolis)-- his review of the du Preez book in Volume 35, Issue 1 (April 2010) of *Themelios*. You can review the entire document for yourself by accessing the following Internet address or using a search engine to find it:

<http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/publications/35-1/book-reviews/judging-the-sabbath--discovering-what-cant-be-found-in-colossians-2-16>

Hugo Mendez, M. A., Religion, University of Georgia, from his essay, “What Is the “Sabbath” of Hos. 2:11 and Col. 2:16? A Response to du Preez.” [Ed. Note. The link for this document is no longer available.]

Jason C. Meyer makes these observations:

Though this book is a vigorous defense of the Sabbatarian reading, the present reviewer would classify it as a vigorous defense of a very weak position. There is simply too much stacked against this reading to make a successful defense of it. The author acknowledges the challenge of ascribing a ceremonial meaning to sabbatōn in Col. 2:16 (pp. 41–42). His proposed reading is rare to say the least; it is the only alleged example of this meaning out of sixty-nine occurrences.

Furthermore, the reader sometimes will sense that the author is guilty of special pleading or elaborate exegetical gymnastics in order to defend his reading. For example, large segments of the book tackle the issue of identifying the Old Testament parallels behind Col. 2:16. His chapter on the use of the Old Testament in Paul claims that Hosea is the obvious candidate because Paul quotes Hosea three times and alludes to it once, while he only alludes to Ezekiel three times and never utilizes Nehemiah or Chronicles (pp. 100–101). The present reviewer questions the minimalistic nature of these statistics and this overall methodology.

The author engages in these comparisons because he sets his sights on dismissing the traditional “yearly, monthly, weekly” interpretive scheme for the phrase “festival or a new moon or a Sabbath” (Col. 2:16 ESV). He observes that eighty-eight of the ninety-two commentaries he surveys (from 1861 to 2005) defend the yearly-monthly-weekly sequential reading of Colossians 2:16 (p. 56). The traditional reading frequently appeals to Old Testament precedents for this sequence in eight passages (Num. 28–29; 1 Chr. 23:29–31; 2 Chr. 2:4; 8:12–13; 31:3; Neh. 10:33; Ezek. 45:17; Hos. 2:11). The author dismisses the first seven passages as true parallels because they have four or five items in the sequence instead of three (p. 59, 63). Chapter 11 argues that only Hos. 2:11 is a real parallel for Col. 2:16 because it consists of three items in the same sequence and has similar semantic markers (see his six reasons on p. 106).

This analysis is problematic for three reasons. First, the author does not sufficiently take Lev. 23:2 into account. Here the Hebrew term for “appointed times” (moed) serves as an inclusive term for the wider Jewish system, which includes the Seventh-Day Sabbath (Lev. 23:3). Second, the inclusive nature of “all her appointed times” (moed) in Hos 2:11 could show that God will put an end to the wider Jewish system of Lev. 23, which includes the Seventh-Day Sabbath. Third, it is questionable to assume that Paul could not have multiple parallels in mind in Col. 2:16. Why does an additional item in the sequence eliminate similar texts from consideration?

Hugo Mendez argues that the minor differences between the lists of holy day types in these texts are not particularly significant, and he states, “Denotation rarely hinges on number or case, even less so when the linguistic similarity between these two texts is so profound.” Beyond this, he sees a much stronger similarity between Ezekiel 44:17 and Colossians 2:14-17 than between Hosea 2:11:

Col. 2:16 can be distinguished from Hos. 2:11 insofar as it lacks pronominal indications, as well as the absence of the closing construction “all her appointed times” makes the link between Hos.2:11 and Ezek. 44:17 that much stronger than that existing between Hos.2:11 and Col. 2:16.

ANNUAL-MONTHLY-WEEKLY CHART

1 Chronicles 23:31 (New International Version)

And whenever burnt offerings were presented to the LORD on Sabbaths and at New Moon festivals and at appointed feasts. They were to serve before the LORD regularly in the proper number and in the way prescribed for them.

2 Chronicles 2:4 (New International Version)

Now I am about to build a temple for the Name of the LORD my God and to dedicate it to him for burning fragrant incense before him, for setting out the consecrated bread regularly, and for making burnt offerings every morning and evening and on Sabbaths and New Moons and at the appointed feasts of the LORD our God. This is a lasting ordinance for Israel.

Chronicles 8:13 (New International Version)

according to the daily requirement for offerings commanded by Moses for Sabbaths, New Moons and the three annual feasts—the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Tabernacles.

Nehemiah 10:33 (New International Version)

for the bread set out on the table; for the regular grain offerings and burnt offerings; for the offerings on the Sabbaths, New Moon festivals and appointed feasts; for the holy offerings; for sin offerings to make atonement for Israel; and for all the duties of the house of our God.

Isaiah 1:13-14 (New International Version)

Stop bringing meaningless offerings!
Your incense is detestable to me.
New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations—
I cannot bear your evil assemblies.
Your New Moon festivals and your appointed feasts my soul hates.
They have become a burden to me;
I am weary of bearing them.

Ezekiel 45:17 (New International Version)

It will be the duty of the prince to provide the burnt offerings, grain offerings and drink offerings at the festivals, the New Moons and the Sabbaths—at all the appointed feasts of the house of Israel. He will provide the sin offerings, grain offerings, burnt offerings and fellowship offerings to make atonement for the house of Israel.

Ezekiel 46:1-11 (New International Version)

This is what the Sovereign LORD says: The gate of the inner court facing east is to be shut on the six working days,² but on the Sabbath day and on the day of the New Moon it is to be opened. The prince is to enter from the outside through the portico of the gateway and stand by the gatepost. The priests are to sacrifice his burnt offering and his fellowship offerings. [a] He is to worship at the threshold³ of the gateway and then go out, but the gate will not be shut until evening. On

the Sabbaths and New Moons the people of the land are to worship in the presence of the LORD at the entrance to that gateway.⁴ The burnt offering the prince brings to the LORD on the Sabbath day is to be six male lambs and a ram, all without defect.⁵ The grain offering given with the ram is to be an ephah, [b] and the grain offering with the lambs is to be as much as he pleases, along with a hin [c] of oil for each ephah.⁶ On the day of the New Moon he is to offer a young bull, six lambs and a ram, all without defect.⁷ He is to provide as a grain offering one ephah with the bull, one ephah with the ram, and with the lambs as much as he wants to give, along with a hin of oil with each ephah.⁸ When the prince enters, he is to go in through the portico of the gateway, and he is to come out the same way.⁹ "When the people of the land come before the LORD at the appointed feasts, whoever enters by the north gate to worship is to go out the south gate; and whoever enters by the south gate is to go out the north gate. No one is to return through the gate by which he entered, but each is to go out the opposite gate.¹⁰ The prince is to be among them, going in when they go in and going out when they go out.¹¹ "At the festivals and the appointed feasts, the grain offering is to be an ephah with a bull, an ephah with a ram, and with the lambs as much as one pleases, along with a hin of oil for each ephah.

Hosea 2:11 (New International Version)

I will stop all her celebrations:
her yearly festivals, her New Moons,
her Sabbath days—all her appointed feasts.

Galatians 4:10 (New International Version)

You are observing special days and months and seasons and years.

Colossians 2:16 (New International Version)

Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day.

Note that whether the writer begins his list from the weekly end or the annual end, the list goes in the order of smallest to largest or largest to smallest, even if the number of classifications included is different. The "appointed feasts" refer to annual sabbaths. We reiterate Meyer's observation:

This analysis is problematic for three reasons. First, the author does not sufficiently take Lev. 23:2 into account. Here the Hebrew term for "appointed times" (moed) serves as an inclusive term for the wider Jewish system, which includes the Seventh-Day Sabbath (Lev. 23:3). Second, the inclusive nature of "all her appointed times" (moed) in Hos 2:11 could show that God will put an end to the wider Jewish system of Lev. 23, which includes the Seventh-Day Sabbath. Third, it is questionable to assume that Paul could not have multiple parallels in mind in Col 2:16. Why does an additional item in the sequence eliminate similar texts from consideration?

DU PREEZ' ADDITIONAL "MINE" VERSUS "YOUR" THEORY

Du Preez also thinks he has noticed that when God is talking about the holy weekly Sabbath, He refers to them as "My Sabbaths," but when He is talking about the ceremonial sabbaths, He refers to them as "Your Sabbaths." Bill Hohmann researched this theory and concluded that, to the contrary, a consistent pattern is that God referred to them as "My sabbaths" when His people were spiritually close to Him and to them as "Your sabbaths", etc. when His people were spiritually distant from Him.

Bill Hohmann provides the following texts to support this observation:

As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it. – Leviticus 26:35

And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day. – Amos 8:10

Jerusalem remembered in the days of her affliction and of her miseries all her pleasant things that she had in the days of old, when her people fell into the hand of the enemy, and none did help her: the adversaries saw her, and did mock at her sabbaths. – Lamentations 1:7

I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts. – Hosea 2:11

And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for *thy* people, which *thou* broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: – Exodus 32:7

Say ye unto your brethren, Ammi; and to your sisters, Ruhamah. ² Plead with your mother, plead: for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband: let her therefore put away her whoredoms out of her sight, and her adulteries from between her breasts; ³ Lest I strip her naked, and set her as in the day that she was born, ⁴ and make her as a wilderness, and set her like a dry land, and slay her with thirst. ⁵ And I will not have mercy upon her children; for they be the children of whoredoms. ⁶ For their mother hath played the harlot: she that conceived them hath done shamefully: for she said, I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink. ⁷ Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths. ⁸ And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find them: then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now. ⁹ For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal. ¹⁰ Therefore will I return, and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and will recover my wool and my flax given to cover her nakedness. ¹¹ And now will I discover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and none shall deliver her out of mine hand. ¹² I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts. ¹³ And I will destroy her vines and her fig trees, whereof she

hath said, These are my rewards that my lovers have given me: and I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them. ¹³ And I will visit upon her the days of Baalim, wherein she burned incense to them, and she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgot me, saith the LORD. – Hosea 2:1-13

The word of the LORD that came unto Hosea, the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel. ² The beginning of the word of the LORD by Hosea. And the LORD said to Hosea, Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the LORD. ³ So he went and ⁴ took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim; which conceived, and bare him a son. ⁴ And the LORD said unto him, Call his name Jezreel; for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel. ⁵ And it shall come to pass at that day, that I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel. ⁶ And she conceived again, and bare a daughter. And God said unto him, Call her name Loruhamah: for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away. ⁷ But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the LORD their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen. ⁸ ¶ Now when she had weaned Loruhamah, she conceived, and bare a son. Then said God, Call his name Loammi: for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God. – Hosea 1:1-9

Thus saith the LORD, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away. – Isaiah 50:1

To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed ¹² beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. ¹² When ye come ¹³ to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? ¹³ Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling ¹⁴ of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. ¹⁴ Your new moons and your appointed ¹⁵ feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. ¹⁵ And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. – Isaiah 1:11-15

DU PREEZ LEVITICUS 23 AND COLOSSIANS 2:14-17 DEFENSE: "SABBATHS" VERSUS "FEASTS" OF THE LORD

Du Preez believes he finds additional evidence that Paul could not have been referring to the weekly Sabbath in Colossians 2:14-17 in the form of a supposed word usage pattern he finds in Leviticus 23— a chapter in which God explains the various kinds of holy days He has given Israel. He sees two supposed distinctions of importance: (1) between “sabbaths of the LORD” and “feasts of the LORD.” (2) Between the feasts that involved the sacrifices where the Jews would sit down to eat (the “chags”) and all other feast days that didn’t involve eating or which refer to the weekly Sabbath of the Decalogue (the “moeds”).

The supposed “evidence” he finds is that the Hebrew word, “moeds,” has an equivalent word in Greek, “heorte,” and Paul chose to use the word “heorte” in Colossians 2:14-17 in reference to the feast days he mentioned. Our same blogger-theologian outlines a remarkable logical pathway to prove that the argument du Preez uses supports the anti-Sabbatarian view instead (the view that the Sabbath Paul referenced was none other than the weekly Sabbath.) This argument is a complicated one to follow, but a patient reading and re-reading of his outline of the problem is well-worth one's time. A lot is at stake here. If du Preez theory is correct, Paul actually validated the concept that it is okay for Christians to sacrifice animals on Jewish holy days:

The argument against the Sabbath days in Colossians 2:16 meaning the 7th day Sabbath using Leviticus chapter 23 is also of no avail when you consider the original Hebrew text, God's conversation with Moses, how He distinguishes the feasts from the 7th day Sabbath twice in the text, and how Moses responds in verse 44.

God introduces the feast days in verse 4 as one who uses a colon before making a list. Then He begins to specifically give out the details and commandments concerning these appointed times. He mentions the "sabbath of the LORD" in verse 3; then in verse 4 He says, " These are the "feasts of the LORD", even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons." This is the first distinction between the "sabbath of the LORD" and the "feasts of the LORD". I will get to the second distinction in a moment.

I would like to mention how a certain SDA tried to read in a distinction that just did not exist within the text because of the distinction God made twice in the chapter. He tried to make a categorical distinction between the Hebrew words "chag" (Strong's # H2282) and "mo'ed" (Strong's # H4150) used in the text. The “chags” were the feasts that involved the sacrifices where the Jews would sit down to eat. The “mo'eds” were all the rest that did not involve eating, meaning "appointed times" and was also used to summarize all those days besides the “sabbaths of the LORD” in verse 38. This is the second distinction, by the way.

The reason that this SDA's observations of differences between these two Hebrew terms were irrelevant to the debate was because of how God used the term "mo'ed" to summarize all those days that were not classified as “the sabbaths of the LORD”. I will explain the problem.

When God finished speaking to Moses, Moses does exactly what God commanded him in verse 44 which says, "And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the feasts (mo'ed-Strong's # H4150) of the LORD." Notice the word "chag" is not used in this verse. Also notice that the "sabbath of the LORD" was already given to them prior to this chapter, so Moses gave them all these thing[s] that were "besides the sabbaths of the LORD,” using the term "mo'ed" to summarize all these things.

This is interesting because the Hebrew word "mo'ed" (Strong's # H4150) has a Greek equivalent in the New Testament—the term "heorte" (Strong's # G1859) used in Colossians 2:16 as "feast" in most English translations just before the New Moon is mentioned. Everything that was besides the sabbaths of the LORD in Leviticus 23 is covered in the term "heorte" ("feast" in English) in Col 2:16; just like all those things are covered in the

Hebrew term "mo'ed" ("feast" in English) in Lev. 23:44 when "Moses declared to the children of Israel the "mo'ed" (feasts) of the LORD."

We read the Bible in English, so the word for us is feast or feasts. The definition of this term according to the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* is:

1.) an elaborate and usually abundant meal often accompanied by a ceremony or entertainment: Banquet

b. (1): something that gives unusual or abundant enjoyment <a visual feast> (2): Abundance, Profusion <an unprecedented feast of corruption, gargantuan in scale-Neil Sheehan>

2.) a periodic religious observance commemorating an event or honoring a deity, person, or thing.

According to this last definition, we can see that the word "feast" also means "appointed times" and was the correct English term to adequately depict the Hebrew word "mo'ed" in our English text of the Bible, as it also means "appointed times". So, verse 44 which says, "And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the "feasts" of the LORD", is right on the money.

When you truly go through Leviticus 23 with a fine tooth comb, it clearly shows that there is nothing else left for the English term "sabbath days" in Col 2:16 to mean anything other than the 7th day sabbath— even all the times when you see the word “sabbath” in the text of Leviticus 23. For example, when God gives Moses the "Feast of Weeks" or what is now known as "Pentecost", the word “sabbath” is used multiple times. The average SDA would see that and conclude that all these times the word “sabbath” is mentioned here proves that the "sabbath days" in Colossians 2:16 is talking about yearly (annual) feast days.

But... when you read the text closely, the very first time you see the word "sabbath" after verse 4 is in verse 11. Starting from here, let's identify all those usages of the term "sabbath". The word "sabbath" in this verse is the 7th day Sabbath. The priests waved the sheaf offering on the 8th day. Leviticus 23:15 does a count starting from the morrow after the Sabbath, which is Sunday (the day the priests waved the sheaf offering), from there to count 7 sabbaths (seven 7th day Sabbaths).

Verse 16 finishes the thought saying, "Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD." Now note: the Hebrew term used in the text for “sabbath” mentioned since verse 4 to this point is shabbath (Strong's # H7676). I say this because the next use of the English word "sabbath" will not use the same Hebrew term (7676), but the term shabbathon (Strong's # H7677), which has a different meaning than shabbath (Strong's # H7676).

Shabbathon means- a sabbatism or special holiday-sabbath. (H7677)

Shabbath means- intermission, that is, (specifically) the Sabbath: (+every) Sabbath. (H7676)

The next term for "sabbath" is used in verse 24 as shabbathon, referring to the memorial of blowing of trumpets.

The only day that uses the Hebrew term (H7676) other than the 7th day Sabbath in this

chapter is the Day of Atonement in verse 32 where it is used twice, which only occurred once a year. This is the only day other than the 7th day Sabbath that "no work" was to be done "at all". All the other feast days commanded that no "servile work" be done. This meant they could not go to do their trade that day, but could do other things as long as the work was not servile.

This couldn't be used to mean the "sabbath days" in Colossians 2:16 because it is already mentioned in the Greek word "heorte" ("feast" in English) in the same verse covering it just like how it is covered in Leviticus 23:44 in the Hebrew word "mo'ed" ("feast" in English). When verse 44 says, "And Moses declared to the children of Israel the feasts (mo'ed) of the LORD", period, it showed Moses being obedient to God right away giving the children of Israel "everything" that God gave him that was "besides the sabbaths of the LORD" in Leviticus chapter 23, the Day of Atonement being included here.

Next, "Besides the sabbaths (H7676) of the LORD" is mentioned in verse 38. After this H7677 is used twice in verse 39 where they are translated "sabbath" in English, verse 39 being the last verse to mention "sabbath."

Our anonymous theologian blogger summarizes the problems with du Preez' work succinctly as follows:

In conclusion, I would like to summarize my position. I have many scriptural witnesses (over 50) attesting that the "sabbath days" in Colossians 2:16 is indeed the 7th day Sabbath. I covered the definition of the Greek term, *sabbaton*, and how it is used consistently for every instance of the mentioning of the 7th day sabbath in the New Testament— every scripture using this term used it only to speak of the 7th day Sabbath and or the common word week. All the scriptures using this term are unanimous all the way to Colossians 2:16 where the term is last used.

I examined every argument against this fact; including the argument using Leviticus chapter 23 as a proof text against this, when in fact it actually proves that the Sabbath days in Col 2:16 is in fact the 7th day Sabbath.

If for no other reason, there is just nothing else left that it could mean since everything else is covered by the Greek term "heorte" used as "feast" and "holyday" in the English translations; just like they are all covered in Leviticus 23 by the Hebrew term "mo'ed" used as "feasts" in the English translations. The only thing not given in debut by Moses in Leviticus 23:44 is the "sabbaths of the LORD". Everything else besides the sabbaths of the LORD in Leviticus chapter 23 is given in verse 44 definitively; thus giving us infallible proof that the 7th day Sabbath is in fact the Sabbath days mentioned in Colossians 2:16.

These comments were posted by contributor, **Thief OnThe Cross**, May 2nd, 2007 at:

www.theologyweb.com/campus/showthread.php?t=130606

THE DEFENSE OF DR. DU PREEZ BY SDA PROFESSOR, DR. ANDY NASH

In our research no one has given a better nut-shell understanding of Dr. du Preez Colossians 2:14-17 Animal Sacrifices Theory than **Dr. Andy Nash**, professor of Journalism at Southern Adventist University. A brilliant journalist with an excellent grasp of logic, he recently defended the three New Testament passages that anti-Sabbatarians use to prove that the Sabbath is not required in the New Covenant. You can access his excellent article entitled “Unrest Over a Rest Day” by going to the website of the *Adventist Review* and go into the archives for the February 7, 2012 edition. As good as his writing is, his thinking has been conditioned by the traditions of Adventist conceptualization about the Sabbath, so it is only natural that he should exhibit a Sabbatarian bias. Here are the problems we see with Dr. Nash’s article:

So what could Paul mean by “shadow” in Colossians 2:17? Most scholars argue that the shadow is the feasts, new moons, and Sabbaths. The problem with that is that the new moon can’t be a “shadow” because a new moon had no religious significance in itself. A new moon’s only significance was its association with sacrifices.

If Nash is correct, St. Paul is a lousy writer. Paul labeled a group of things as obsolete shadows, and the new moons were included in the group. Paul said it. The only reason for not wanting to believe what Paul said is a not-so-secret agenda that the Sabbatarian belief model must be protected at all costs. What we now know about the lunar Sabbath provides additional evidence that the Sabbath was an integrated and inseparable SYSTEM. The entire SET of sabbaths—annual, monthly, and weekly—represented the REST that Jesus’ coming to Earth and the freedom of the Gospel as articulated by Jesus and St. Paul would provide the follower of God. Israel was required to rest on the new moons just as they were on the weekly Sabbaths. Let us not forget that the requirement that Israel rest on the new moons was an exception, or a change, to the ordinary routine of the citizens of Israel. Animal sacrifices were conducted on virtually all the sacred feast days as well as on special occasions like military victories and deliverances.

Nash appears to make another serious error in his analysis. Annalise the following claim:

Festivals and Sabbath days are both called appointed festivals. The weekly Sabbath wasn’t an appointed festival, so apparently the expression “Sabbath days” in this sequence refers to some of the annual festivals. Maybe that’s what’s going on in Colossians 2, where we find similar wording.

Contrary to Scripture, the Sabbath is listed as the very first appointed festival. We quote from the NIV from BibleGateway.com:

Leviticus 23

The Appointed Festivals

1 The LORD said to Moses, 2 “Speak to the Israelites and say to them: ‘These are my appointed festivals, the appointed festivals of the LORD, which you are to proclaim as sacred assemblies.

The Sabbath

3 ““There are six days when you may work, but the seventh day is a day of sabbath rest, a day of sacred assembly. You are not to do any work; wherever you live, it is a sabbath to the LORD.

The Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread

4 “These are the LORD’s appointed festivals, the sacred assemblies you are to proclaim at their appointed times: 5 The LORD’s Passover begins at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. 6 On the fifteenth day of that month the LORD’s Festival of Unleavened Bread begins; for seven days you must eat bread made without yeast. 7 On the first day hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work. 8 For seven days present a food offering to the LORD. And on the seventh day hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work.”

The Weekly Sabbath of the Decalogue is classified as an “appointed festival.” Notice also that if we were looking for proof texts, we could argue that the first commandment for Sunday-keeping is found in verse 7 above, because the Hebrews were commanded to hold a sacred assembly on the first day of the week (Sunday), and they were not to do any regular work on it! As always, keep in mind that the Weekly Sabbath was superseded by the Ordinance of Circumcision, which makes all the more sense if we understand that it was “just” one of the appointed festivals, along with the annual, monthly, and other special ones. Nash also says:

At this time some Jewish Christians still offered sacrifices and judged other Christians who didn’t. (Paul himself experienced this in Acts 21 when he went back to Jerusalem.)

Contrary to helping Dr. Nash support Dr. du Preez’s Animal Sacrifices Theory, this fact is one of the evidences against it. The Jews could only sacrifice animals at the temple in Jerusalem once the temple had been built. Paul is writing to the Colossians in this passage. Paul was making a general teaching statement that would seem to apply to everyone. If any Christians were sacrificing animals in Jerusalem they had to be among the most uninformed members of the Christian Faith, since the death of Christ on the cross was an immense event that would have told a person of the Jewish Faith that Christ’s death on the cross was the ultimate sacrifice that ended all sacrifices forever. When Paul offered purification offerings (probably not sin offerings) in public at the temple, he did so in an attempt to avoid offending his non-Christian, Jewish brethren in regard to what he viewed as a non-moral, non-essential issue. But, again, Dr. Nash says:

Is there scriptural support for the idea that “shadow” refers to sacrifices? Yes. Strong support. The only other two New Testament references to shadows are associated with sacrifices. They’re found in Hebrews.

Hebrews 8:3-5: “Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. . . . They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven.”

Hebrews 10:1-5: “The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. . . . Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: ‘Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me.’”

Note that the sanctuary is identified as the shadow—not the sacrifice—in this passage. Yes, a sacrifice is a shadow of Christ, who was the Sacrificial Lamb. Unfortunately Paul was not discussing sacrifices in this passage. The sanctuary represented the power of Christ to forgive the sins of the believer. Our beef with Nash is not that he identifies animal sacrifices as a representation of Christ, but that he tries to connect it to a place where no connection is intended by the author. We have another short lapse of logic with this strained comparison. Paul’s writings were inspired by God. We are justified in asking the question, if God was inspiring Paul to write what he wrote in Colossians 2:14-17, would He have let him word the passage so carefully that a plain statement could mean something entirely different? This contrived interpretation of the passage is forced by circular reasoning, which goes something

like, "Since the Sabbath is true, no Bible passage can be interpreted to mean that the Sabbath has been abrogated."

Yes, both sabbaths and animal sacrifices are "shadows" which in their respective ways pointed forward to Christ. They are all part of the set of Jewish ordinances that were to point forward to the coming of the Messiah. Nevertheless, Paul is not talking about animal sacrifices in this passage. He is labeling Jewish dietary laws and three types of sacred Jewish holy days that are tied together by the common element of REST.

CHAPTER TWO

EARL L. HENN'S "PEER GROUP PRESSURE" THEORY

Earl L. Henn (1934-1997), in his paper, "Are the Sabbath and Holy Days Done Away?" posted at BibleTools.Com, a ministry of the Sabbatarian Church, Church of the Great God (Charlotte, NC), theorizes that the pagan community at Colossae was highly "religious" and corporately tended to believe that perfection could be attained by self-denial; therefore, Paul is saying, in Colossians 2:14-17, something like, "Don't let the pagans in the community upset you by their criticisms of how you observe your dietary laws and holy days." Since his theory is well-articulated and plausible, it is worthy of treatment in our discussion. If Henn is correct, we anti-Sabbatarians cannot use Colossians 2:14-17 to show that the Sabbath was abrogated by this passage. Please consider his theory in his own words:

For centuries, people have tried to use Colossians 2:16-17 to say that Christians are not required to observe the Sabbath and holy days. This distortion stems partly from a misunderstanding of Colossians 2:14, which many claim says that the law was abolished and nailed to the cross, and partly from having a carnal mind, which is enmity against God and His law (Romans 8:7). They reason that Paul is saying in verse 16, "Therefore [since the law is done away] don't let anyone condemn you for eating unclean meats or not observing the Sabbath or holy days." Consequently, they interpret verse 17 to mean that Paul dismisses the Sabbath and holy days as unimportant symbols of future events, while emphasizing that the only truly substantive Christian need is belief in Christ. From this, they conclude that we should not concern ourselves about these days because, since Christ died, their observance is not required. This is not true.

The Colossians had been significantly influenced by pagan philosophies that taught that perfection could be achieved through self-denial and abstinence from pleasure. As a result, Colossae tended to be an ascetic community which adhered to a religion of severity, and its citizens thought anyone who was religious should behave as they did. Many of the people who had come into the Christian church in Colossae had brought their pagan philosophies with them, and they soon began to have an adverse influence on the entire congregation at Colossae. Paul corrects the people in the church who were doing this in Colossians 2:20-23. It appears some of the people had begun thinking that this self-imposed asceticism could somehow contribute to their salvation and had begun turning away from trusting in Christ. They had more faith in their unchristian works. Paul warns them about this in Colossians 2:8.

God had called the people in the church at Colossae out of their pagan, ascetic way of life, and they had begun to learn how to enjoy life in a balanced manner as God intended. This included eating meat, drinking wine, and enjoying food and fellowship when observing God's Sabbath and festivals.

Because the converted Colossians were learning how to enjoy life as God intended, the people in the ascetic community began to look down on them and condemn them. In addressing these problems, Paul reminds the Colossians that they are complete in Jesus Christ; they have no need for the pagan philosophies of this world (Colossians 2:9-10).

Paul explains in verse 16 why they need not be bothered by the attitude of the Colossian society toward their practices and way of life in the church. To paraphrase, "Do not worry about what the people in the community think about your enjoyment of eating good food, drinking wine, and joyously celebrating the Sabbath and the festivals. Christ has conquered the world and all of its rulers, so we do not need to be concerned about what the world thinks about us."

In verse 17, Paul mentions that the Sabbath and holy days are "shadows," symbols or types, of future events in the plan of God. The Sabbath is a type of the Millennium when Jesus Christ and the saints will rule the world for a thousand years. The holy days symbolize various steps in the plan of God and remind us annually of God's great purpose in creating mankind.

A literal translation of the last few words of Colossians 2:17 reads, "but the body of Christ." What is the body of Christ? I Corinthians 12:27 shows that the body of Christ is the church! The exact same Greek expression that is translated "body of Christ" in I Corinthians 12:27 (*soma Christou*) is used in Colossians 2:17. Paul tells the Colossians that they should not let any man judge them or call them into question about these things but rather let the church make those judgments. He is pointing the members to the example of the spiritual leaders of the church who set the tone and pattern of worship on the Sabbath and holy days, exhorting them not to worry about what anyone in the community thinks about them. A similar exhortation is given in Colossians 2:18-19.

Far from doing away with the observance of the Sabbath and holy days, Colossians 2:16-17 is one of the strongest proofs that the early church kept these days and that Paul taught the Gentiles to keep them. From Earl L. Henn (1934-1997), "Are the Sabbath and Holy Days Done Away?"

ANALYSIS OF HENN'S THEORY

It seems unlikely that the Gentile converts would be at all concerned with what their pagan neighbors thought about what they ate, what holy days they observed, or how they observed those days. These are such minor issues compared to the profound differences between the morality of the pagans and the Christians. Their pagan neighbors would have been far more likely to make fun of the new moral values of their newly-become-Christian friends, such as the radical concept that heterosexual relationships were only for a life-time committed marriage and homosexual practices were never acceptable under any circumstances. If the Colossian Christians were afraid of being ridiculed for their new faith, it just seems unlikely that Paul would have to be giving them a pep talk so they could face criticism over their dietary and holy day observances.

A study of Colossians Chapter One suggests that Paul's view of the Colossian Christians was that they were basically well-grounded in the faith. Paul's ministry seems to have been focused on the Gospel of Christ and protecting it against the attacks of the Judaizers. A theme that we will see, as our study unfolds, is that Paul understood that the ideas of the Judaizers (but not of Judaism itself) was similar to that of the pagan acetic teachings in that both influences had in common a human, rather than divine, source, and that both sets of teachings promoted

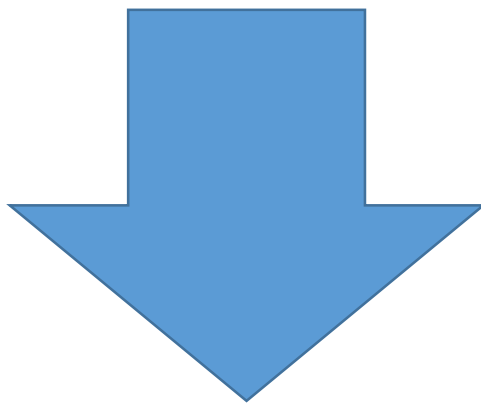
the idea that humans can save themselves by their works. Paul explained to us how the Salvation by Grace of Christianity is superior to the works-oriented characteristics of Judaism.

Henn points out that a Christian is complete in Christ, and as such, not in need of pagan ascetic practices, yet somehow in need of, and indeed required to follow the Jewish, or Old Covenant sabbaths and festivals. There is duplicity in Henn's statements that he apparently is not even aware of.

Henn's attempt to evade the fact that Paul classifies the Jewish dietary laws, annual and monthly sabbaths, and the Weekly Sabbath as "shadows" that were fulfilled when Christ came to this Earth is unconvincing. The idea that the Sabbath is a symbol of the 1,000 year period of time when the saints will rule the Earth with Christ is pure speculation and is based on the interpretation of one text found in the Book of Revelation. His assertion that the word properly translated "body of Christ" means that Paul is telling the Colossians to let God's People, or the Church, determine what is proper in the way of dietary practices and the observance of holy days stretches the accepted principles of literary interpretation way beyond the limits of propriety. It could be, and frankly is painfully obvious, that it is an interpretation designed to bolster the power the "church" has over the individual Christians, supporting the notion that members are subject to the church over that of their own consciences.

Henn also fails to explain why the Sabbath is labeled a "shadow" when Jesus has a body of substance that a shadow does not have.

We observe that not even Dr. Samuele Bacchiocchi stooped to use this argument. Instead, as we shall see, he theorizes that Paul is talking about the ideas of the Judaizers and that he spends his scholarly efforts trying to get around the anti-Sabbatarian implications of Colossians 2:14-17 in an entirely different way. We have already touched on Dr. Bacchiocchi's approach to this passage. Now let us examine his teachings in detail.



CHAPTER THREE

An Exhaustive Study of Dr. Bacchiocchi's Methodology And Conclusions

Our review of du Preez' work on Colossians 2:14-17 demonstrates the extreme difficulties Dr. Bacchiocchi had when he sought to reconcile this text with the necessity of writing a book to prove that even though D. M. Canright was right about the reference to the weekly Sabbath, his conclusions about what those facts meant were wrong. At this point we should be ready to launch into an exhaustive analysis of Colossians 2:14-17 and see that the facts prohibit the traditional defense of Adventism, du Preez' animal sacrifice theory, and the New Sabbatarianism of Bacchiocchi. Since we have touched on some of these things before, it may be easier, now, for our readers to follow our arguments.

Because Dr. Bacchiocchi had some changes in his thinking between the publication of *From Sabbath to Sunday* (1977) and the time he wrote *Sabbath under Crossfire* (1998), an analysis of the latter work is a fairer treatment of his ideas. All the elements of Dr. Bacchiocchi's teachings which we discuss in this section are articulated in the chapter entitled "Paul and the Sabbath" from his 1998 book, *Sabbath under Crossfire*. The entries in blue print and all capital letters represent summaries of his key ideas, rather than quotations from his text. In some cases Dr. Bacchiocchi may have taken several pages to develop a concept, which we have summarized in a few sentences, and in other cases he may have presented an idea in not many more words than we have used, and the wording may be relatively similar. This chapter of his book is fairly short and is accessible to all Internet users by going to Dr. Bacchiocchi's own website. There are no page numbers provided on the Internet version of this chapter, so a page reference for each idea is not possible. At the time this section of this manuscript is being prepared, it appears that Dr. Bacchiocchi's family is maintaining his website. He passed away in December of 2008.

<http://www.biblicalperspectives.com>

In October of 2006 Kerry Wynne sent a rough draft of the following section of this paper to Dr. Bacchiocchi. Wynne asked only that he seek to determine whether or not Wynne had represented his ideas accurately. He replied only that he had skimmed the paper and that it was evident that Wynne did not understand the principles of literary research. There was no hint that he felt Wynne had misrepresented his teachings. While there have been changes to the wording of his rebuttals to his ideas since he read the rough draft, there have been no significant changes to Wynne's summaries of his teachings.

Before beginning our study, a structural analysis will give us a better idea of just what a Sabbatarian is up against when trying to render the passage in a favorable light.

These items are not to be enforced on Christians:

JEWISH DIETARY LAWS

ANNUAL FEAST DAYS

MONTHLY FEAST DAYS

WEEKLY SABBATHS

These items were shadows of things to come and found their fulfillment in Christ:

JEWISH DIETARY LAWS

ANNUAL FEAST DAYS

MONTHLY FEAST DAYS

WEEKLY SABBATHS

If you try to make the “Sabbath Day” of Colossians 2:14-17 into a monthly or annual Sabbath, Paul’s sentence becomes nonsense. In this case, Paul’s sentence would read something like this, if the meaning were ‘monthly:’

“in regard to an annual, monthly, or monthly celebration.”

If the meaning of Sabbath were changed from weekly to annual, it would read something like this:

“in regard to an annual, monthly, or annual celebration.”

A reason would have to be given to Paul’s target audience for no longer requiring the observance of a list of things that had been sacred to the Jews for over a thousand years. What reason did Paul give, as his rationale, for the change? Some kind of set of rules and regulations had gone out of effect when Jesus died on the Cross.

According to Bacchiocchi’s alternate and highly creative interpretation, what was nailed to the cross was not a list of rules and regulations, but rather a list of the sinner’s transgressions of those rules and regulations. He needs this premise to avoid the fact— fatal to Sabbatarianism— that the list of Jewish ordinances listed in the passage are the Old Covenant ordinances which became “shadows” because of something that happened at the cross. Even if we could not determine exactly what was nailed to the cross, Paul has actually told us all that we need to know when it comes to the Sabbath question. These ordinances are no longer enforceable. Let us see if Dr. Bacchiocchi can provide a convincing case for his idea of what was nailed to the cross. We will summarize each point from *Sabbath under Crossfire* (1998) and evaluate it according to biblical facts, concepts, and principles for the integrity of his logic:

DR. B: THE SABBATH IS NOT MENTIONED IN THE CONTEXT OF A DIRECT DISCUSSION OF OLD COVENANT LAW. IT IS MENTIONED IN THE CONTEXT OF PAUL’S INSTRUCTIONS TO AVOID THE ASCETIC PRACTICES THAT WERE THE FOCUS OF THE FALSE TEACHERS (JUDAIZERS) — SYNCRETISTIC BELIEFS AND PRACTICES WHICH INCLUDED ELEMENTS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT. THEREFORE, WE MUST CONCLUDE THAT IT WAS NOT A SET OF LAWS, WHETHER THEY BE MORAL OR CEREMONIAL, THAT WAS NAILED TO THE CROSS.

While it is true that Paul addressed more than one area of the false teachings of the Judaizers, the Sabbath was unquestionably mentioned in the list. From a standpoint of logic, the inclusion of other items has no power to negate the significance of the importance of the mention of any other element in the group. Furthermore, logic dictates that if he condemned all the things in this specific group without differentiating any level of condemnation for the items, all the items in the set must be approximately as wrong as any of the other items in the set. Thus, Paul is indicating that the observance of obsolete Jewish ordinances is just as bad as the practice of other syncretistic practices, including the worship of angels— hardly a flattering commentary on the value of Sabbath-keeping. It is interesting to note that Dr. Bacchiocchi acknowledges the fact that Paul included a condemnation of something that included elements from the Old Testament. Just what were these elements of the Old Testament?

A careful study of Colossians 2 clearly reveals that Paul was warning the Church of two dangers:

1. Greek philosophy.
2. Jewish traditions that would undermine the gospel.

In Colossians 2:8, he warns the Church about the dangers of heeding human traditions:

(NIV) “See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.”

But when it comes to which “elements” of the Old Testament Paul lumps with Greek philosophy and Jewish traditions, he is very specific. The “written code” has been canceled:

Colossians 2:13-15 (NIV): When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.” Paul continues, in Colossians 2:16-17, to explain what impact the cancellation of the Mosaic Law would have on the Church:

Colossians 2:16-17 (NIV) Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.”

The Mosaic Law is the law set that requires the keeping of the Jewish dietary laws, annual sabbath feast days, monthly sabbath feast days, and the weekly Sabbath.

The writer’s language is very clear in regard to the fact that there is no judgment in regard to the keeping or not keeping of these Jewish ordinances— so clear that even if we could not figure out why this was true, we would still understand that we were commanded not to judge in regard to the observance of these things. What other kind of a code has regulations? It sounds like a good description of the Torah, which had 613 of them. It is difficult how one could avoid the conclusion that Paul meant that the Torah was nailed to the cross. This most likely explanation makes sense when we understand the Hebrew way of thinking about Noachian Law versus Torah Law. The end of Torah law did not mean the end of all law to a Jew. Dr. Bacchiocchi does not seem to acknowledge any understanding of this concept, but it is difficult to imagine that he knew nothing about it.

At the highest level of interpretation, the Gospel of Jesus, as articulated by St. Paul, compels us to interpret this passage to mean that in so far as the process of determining the question of our salvation, all law sets of all kinds are nailed to the cross. If a Christian’s compliance with either Noachian or Torah law were to be used to determine our eligibility for salvation, not one of us would be saved. We have all violated not only the letter of the law, but the spirit of the law. Our motives are rotten, even if our outward actions appear to be compliant. In practical terms, no one can escape the laws of God any more than a rock, planet, or star can defy the law of gravity.

Paul made it very clear that the freedom from the fear that the LAW will be used to determine our salvation cannot be used to justify sinful living, and he even went so far as to list a group of sins that will keep a person out of Heaven. The Holy Spirit is the new LAW for the Christian, and the Holy Spirit would never lead a person into sin. The charge of Seventh-day Adventists that the concept that the entire LAW was nailed to the cross opens the flood-gate to sinful

living is no more than a sensational claim and accusation, and does not constitute proper evidence. Surely the Christian does not refrain from sin merely because there is a written law against it! The Holy Spirit works on the heart to lead the Christian because of his or her love for both God and other people. This love “fulfills” the law; a concept hard to grasp for those ensconced in the letter of the law.

DR. B: WHAT WAS NAILED TO THE CROSS WAS NOT THE LAW ITSELF, BUT WAS THE WRITTEN RECORD OF OUR SINS AGAINST THAT LAW. THIS MAKES SENSE BECAUSE THE GREATER CONTEXT OF COLOSSIANS 2:14-17 IS GOD’S FORGIVENESS. PAUL DOES NOT USE THE GREEK WORD FOR LAW (NOMOS) ANYWHERE IN THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS, AND THE WORD PAUL USES IN THIS PASSAGE IS CHEIROGRAPHON, WHICH MEANS A WRITTEN DOCUMENT. IN APOCALYPTIC AND RABBINICAL LITERATURE, THE WORD CHEIROGRAPHON IS USED TO DENOTE THE “RECORD BOOK OF SINS” OR A “CERTIFICATE OF SIN INDEBTEDNESS.”

If Bacchiocchi admits that the Greek word *cheirographon* does actually refer to the Mosaic laws, there is at least a possibility that this passage could include the weekly Sabbath as one of the ordinances that was nailed to the Cross. The problem for Bacchiocchi’s idea that the document nailed to the Cross was merely a record of our sins, rather than the law itself, is that in non-biblical Greek, this word has a number of meanings and may refer to (1) a labor contract, (2) a document giving authority to act, or even (3) to business agreements. It is misleading to say, then, that this word, as used in this passage, simply means the document itself upon which the debt is recorded. It would only make sense that the context in which this word is found would determine what kind of written document it is. This particular *cheirographon* is made up of “ordinances” and “decrees;” an interpretation demanded by Paul’s use of the Greek word, *dogmasin*, which shortly follows the word *cheirographon* and modifies it. An English equivalent example of a word with a modifier in this order would be “the color blue.” There are a number of colors. Which color is it? Blue! What kind of a written document is it? Decrees and laws! Who makes decrees and laws? The King! Who signed the law decree? God Himself! **Notice that the same word, *dogmasin*, appears in a discussion of the Mosaic Law in Ephesians 2:15, indicating both texts deal with similar issues.** (Credit for the information about Greek linguistics goes to Robert D. Brinsmead, “Sabbatarianism Re-examined.”)

It is highly significant to note that Paul’s audience was a mixture of Jewish and Gentile Christians. Paul was not writing for a rabbinical or apocalyptic audience. Paul uses this language devoid of Hebraics, using *cheirographon*, knowing that both Jew *and* Gentile will understand what he is writing about. Dr. Bacchiocchi conveniently ignores Paul’s audience.

Paul uses similar language in another passage, giving strength to the concept that Paul really did mean that the Law of Moses was nailed to the cross:

Ephesians 2:15 (NIV): “by abolishing in His flesh the law with its commandments and regulations.”

The context of this passage in Ephesians is to show that the TORAH was a major barrier between the Jews and the Gentiles and that it was God’s purpose to destroy this barrier with the advent of the Messiah. Another link with this concept is Romans 7:8-13, which further establishes the idea that Paul is discussing the Law of Moses. Now look at Ephesians 2:15 and 16:

By abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. (NIV)

The Bible teaches that it is the Law of Moses that is “against us.” How can Dr. Bacchiocchi conclude that the Law of Moses is not against “us” when the Bible says it is?

Deut. 31:26 (NIV) - "Take this Book of the Law and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God. There it will remain as a witness against you.

Removing the barrier between us and God created by the witness against us of the Old Covenant "Book of the Law" does not mean that some moral void has taken its place. There is the New Covenant of the Spirit, where the believer is led now by the Spirit of God in them. The spirit of the Law is therefore not lawlessness as implied by those who hold to the Old Covenant letter of the law. Faith and love are the criteria for fulfilling the Law as contrasted to the Old Covenant kept in the letter, where faith and love were absent and irrelevant. You could comply with "do no murder" while harboring hatred.

DR. B: PROOF THAT THE WORD, *CHEIROGRAPHON*, MEANS A WRITTEN DOCUMENT CONTAINING THE RECORD OF OUR SINS IS THAT IN THE ORIGINAL GREEK OF COLOSSIANS 2:14, A CLAUSE ADDS THAT THIS *CHEIROGRAPHON* WAS "REMOVED OUT OF THE MIDDLE." "THE MIDDLE" WAS THE POSITION OCCUPIED AT THE CENTER OF THE COURT OR ASSEMBLY BY THE ACCUSING WITNESS. THE IMPLICATION, HERE, IS THAT THE WITNESS WAS TESTIFYING AGAINST A WRITTEN RECORD OF THE PERSON BEING TRIED FOR THE TRANSGRESSION OF THE LAW.

When you go to court, you are being tried for breaking the law itself— not for breaking the written record of that transgression against that law. It is the accusing witness that stands in the middle of the court, and it is the law that accuses and condemns the defendant. If it is the law that accuses and if it is the law which "stands in the middle," it would seem that it is the law itself that would be removed. When a judge hands down a pardon— an event very comparable to what happens when a human being is eternally saved— the "law" has to be removed, or "suspended" for that moment. Recall that Paul utilizes the Greek word, *dogmasin*, which means "regulations" or "ordinances," to modify the word *cheirographon*. What type of written document is it? A list of regulations and ordinances! A piece of paper that documents a person's transgression of a law is not the law itself. Dr. Bacchiocchi is unsuccessful in his attempt to exploit the court metaphor to avoid the suggestion that the Torah, which contains the Sabbath commandment, was nailed to the cross.

Co-author, William Hohmann, provides the following in-depth study of the use of the word, *cheirographon* in regard to the question of whether it refers merely to a written record of our sins, as Dr. Bacchiocchi and other Sabbatarians would like us to believe, or whether it refers to the Law of Moses, which includes the Sabbath commandment as part of its 613 requirements.

Here is the text, Colossians 2:14 with a word study from the Transline Translation:

Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; – KJV

Having put an end to the handwriting of the law which was against us, taking it out of the way by nailing it to his cross; – Bible in Basic English

Having wiped-out⁶ the written-document⁷ against us *with its decrees*⁸, which was opposed⁹ to us- indeed, He has taken it out of the middle¹⁰, having nailed¹¹ it *to the cross!* – Transline Translation

6. Or, "blotted out, smeared out, rubbed out, erased" and therefore "canceled, removed". Same word as in Act 3:19; Rev 3:5. Elsewhere only as "wipe away" in Rev 7:17; 21:4. GK 1981.

7. This word means "hand-written document", and was often used of a certificate of debt. Some

think Paul is referring to the Law, as in Eph. 2:15; others, to a formal written document containing the charges against us, backed up by the decrees of the Law. There are other views. Used only here. GK 5934

8. Some take this with what follows, “against us, which by its decrees was opposed to us”; others, with what precedes, “with its decrees against us”; others, as “written document... with its decrees”. On this word, see Eph. 2:15. The related verb is in 2:20.

9. Or, “set against, hostile, contrary”. This adjective is elsewhere only as “adversary” in Heb. 10:27. GK 5641

10. That is, out from between us and God. On this word, see “midst” in 2 Thess. 2:7.

11. Used only here. GK 4669. Related to “nail” in Jn. 20:25.

Here is a word study from the New Testament Greek Lexicon for the word, Cheirographon:

1. a handwriting, what one has written by his own hand
2. a note of hand or writing in which one acknowledges that money has either been deposited with him or lent to him by another, to be returned at the appointed time

David Woetzel, B.S., in an article posted at the Institute for Creation Research entitled, “It Is Finished,” identifies the phrase, “handwriting of ordinances” as the Greek word, *cheirographon*. Woetzel explains that in Roman culture, this word was used to refer to a legal document of debt. Of special interest to our study is the fact that when the debt was paid off, the civil officials would write, “Cheirographon, Tetelestai,” which meant “finished.” He also says that this word was used to identify a document, posted above the jail cells of people in prison which identified their offenses and its sentences.

Woetzel states that St. Paul used this term, which was familiar to both his Greek and Jewish audiences, to describe the condemnation of the law that hangs over each one of us that was nailed to the cross when Jesus died and said, “It is finished.” The Greek word, *tetelestai*, means finished.

You can read his brief article in full at: www.icr.org/article/18923/ by pasting this link into your browser.

Hohmann continues with his own analysis:

Those who hold to what we would call a “legalistic” position are quick to declare that any association of this *cheirographon* with the Old Covenant law is wrong. Then they proceed to explain why, using erroneous logic and reason as a result, to attempt to prove that “God’s Law” is immutable and can’t be changed. This stance does not make sense, as a study of the themes, principles, and concepts of Scripture will demonstrate.

First, consider that according to St. John, Jesus came to take away the sins of the world. As our study unfolds, you will see that this “taking away the sins of the world” has a deeper meaning that most of us have realized:

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. – John 1:29

In order to understand what Paul means was nailed to the cross, we need to understand where he is coming from, and what audience he is addressing. Paul is writing to the church at Colossae. Like most churches at that time, they are a mix of Gentile and Jewish Christians, and Paul uses terminology familiar to both groups.

This understanding of the *cheirographon* as the legal record of a person's sins can be seen not only in Gentile Greek literature, but in Jewish Greek literature as well. The Greek text

of the apocryphal book *The Apocalypse of Elijah* describes an angel holding a book. The book is called a *cheirographon*, and it contains the record of sins. The traditional Jewish *Avinu Malkenu* prayer likewise paints a similar picture. This prayer is in Hebrew, so it obviously cannot use the Greek word *cheirographon*. However, it describes a scenario similar to Colossians 2:14 when it asks YEHOVAH God to "erase all the documents that accuse us." **Hope of Israel Ministries (Ecclesia of YEHOVAH): What, Exactly, Was Nailed to the Tree in Colossians 2:14? – Dr. Daniel Botkin**, <http://church-of-yehovah.org/nailedtotree.html>

Dr. Botkin puts forth rationalizations, claiming this could not have been the Law, yet his evidence is of a poor nature, being based primarily in rationalizations, one being the claim that this law is of the Father, and the Son surely would not do away with His Father's law. But Scripture reveals Jesus was indeed the God Incarnate of the Old Covenant, and as such, the God who was a party to that covenant law, mediated by Moses. We should look to Jesus and what He had to say about that law. Interestingly, Jesus refers to the law as Moses' Law, and that it was Moses who gave the law to the people. Not once does Jesus claim the law was His or the Father's, or that it was God who gave the Law to Israel.

Paul could not use the Old Covenant law in this context, for the Gentile Christians were never under that Old Covenant law to begin with, but mankind was addressed in the writings of Moses in relation to Noachian law.

Paul, in the opening discussion of the Book of Romans, showed that both Jews, who had the Law, and Gentiles, who did not have the Law, were nonetheless all under sin:

For there is no respect of persons with God. ¹²For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; ¹³(For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. ¹⁴For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: ¹⁵Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) ¹⁶In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel. – Romans 2:11-16

What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;

¹⁰ As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

¹¹ There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

¹² They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

¹³ Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:

¹⁴ Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:

¹⁵ Their feet are swift to shed blood:

¹⁶ Destruction and misery are in their ways:

¹⁷ And the way of peace have they not known:

¹⁸ There is no fear of God before their eyes. – Romans 3:9-18

Paul uses then the metaphor *cheirographon tois dogmasin* to inform his audience that something important was nailed to the cross along with Christ, thus ending its power and influence over the believer. If we look at what is described here in relation to this *cheirographon tois dogmasin*, and what Paul wrote elsewhere regarding any similar discussions, we can put together exactly what Paul is getting at, and eliminate other possibilities that do not stand up to the overall evidence.

1. This *cheirographon tois dogmasin* was something handwritten.
2. It was against “us”.
3. It was contrary to “us”.
4. It was taken out of the way, or more literally, removed from the midst or center.
5. It was effectively removed through the sacrifice of Christ.

This *cheirographon tois dogmasin* was something handwritten.

The *cheirographon tois dogmasin* is a “handwriting in the law” as its most simple translation.

Was the Old Covenant law written by hand according to Paul's writings?

But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: – 2 Corinthians 3:7
And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: ¹⁴But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. ¹⁵But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. – 2 Corinthians 3:13-15

It's plain here that the Old Testament writings were penned by Moses– handwritten by him– which contained the Old Covenant laws that convicted the law breaker of sin and required the shedding of blood to cover that sin should the law be violated. And lest we forget, the tablets of stone were “handwritten” by God Himself, as Adventists are fond of quoting.

Hardly anyone would argue over whether Christ's death took away sins; that sin was metaphorically nailed to the cross, but it would really be pushing the limits of credibility to claim this *cheirographon tois dogmasin* was just sin.

Therefore, we need to examine the relationship between sin and that Old Covenant law as Paul discusses it in his writings.

The Relationship Between Sin and the Old Covenant Law In St. Paul's Writings

Consider the following passages:

For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many

as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; – Romans 2:12

Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: *for by the law is the knowledge of sin.* – Romans 3:20

(For until the law sin was in the world: *but sin is not imputed when there is no law.* – Romans 5:13

The above passages make it clear that, before the Law, there was sin, and that, if there is no law, there is no sin. Therefore, some form of law was in place prior to the ratification of the Old Covenant law. However, one should not overlook the other implications:

Blessed is the man to whom the Lord *will not impute sin.* – Romans 4:8

Because the law worketh wrath: *for where no law is, there is no transgression.* - Romans 4:15

If the Lord does not impute sin when it comes to the Christian under the New Covenant, then there is, by necessity, no law extant that can accuse or condemn him. Jesus paid the price of sin, once and for all. The justice of the Law has been satisfied. You can only pay the penalty once for a crime, and that crime of humanity was “sin.”

For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. ²*For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.* ³*But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.* ⁴*For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.* ⁵*Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:* ⁶*In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.* ⁷⁸*Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.* ⁸*Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law;* ⁹*Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.* ¹⁰*By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.* ¹¹*And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:* ¹²*But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;* – Hebrews 10:1-12

There is here the statement that, with a sacrifice that has taken away one's sins, there would no longer be a need for sacrifices. Likewise, there is no longer a need for that law that required sacrifices, for again, the sin issue has been resolved. To claim the law remains, even after our sins have been removed, makes just as much sense as claiming the sacrifices remain for the same reason. The law defined sin. The law prescribed the punishment for sin. Sin can no longer be imputed to the believer whose sins have been removed; the penalty satisfied. The believer cannot be charged with a transgression because there is no longer a law that can accuse him or her. Christians are dead to the law (Romans 7:4; Galatians 2:19) and dead to sin (Romans 6:2). These are among the “hard facts” of Scripture Adventists labor so hard at overthrowing. They cannot conceive of truly being freed from sin and that law.

This is nothing less than a case of unbelief; a lack of faith in God and His Inspired Written Word.

Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: – Romans 5:20

For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. – Romans 6:14

But, if one is under the law, then sin does have dominion!

What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. – Romans 6:15

Christian Liberty is not license to indulge the flesh, as Paul also points out. From his writings, we see where some Gentiles concluded they were free to commit fornication, which Paul addressed. If, however, Paul had been preaching adherence to the law as codified, there would not have been this confusion to begin with, and no need to single out something in the law they were all supposed to be keeping as a matter of Christian conscience.

For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. – Romans 7:5

What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For *without the law sin was dead*. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. – Romans 7:7-9

Do not overlook the significance here; without the law, sin was (and is) dead. It is rendered ineffectual; powerless.

For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. – Romans 7:14

But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. – Romans 7:23

I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. – Romans 7:25

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. – Romans 8:2

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: – Romans 8:3

The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.-- 1 Corinthians 15:56

Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, – 1 Timothy 1:9

Scripture informs us that Christians are seen by God, and defined by God, as righteous. Why then do Sabbatarians

insist the law is for them and other Christians?

Sin and the law are inherently bound together. Why then are Sabbatarians so resistant to this whole concept, wholly supported by Scripture? For one thing, it removes the ability of “wolves” to control and have power over others, using the fear of sin and its consequences as a means to that control. If people were to “wake up” and see that they have TRULY been forgiven their sins, and that their eternal lives were assured; that the law and sin TRULY had no power or sway over them, and that the wolves in sheep's clothing are left powerless and exposed for what they TRULY are, then the people would understand that they are TRULY FREE. The truth shall make you free. Lies ensnare and enslave. The law and sin make one a prisoner, not only to the law and sin, but to the ones administering the law and sin, taking advantage of the ignorance and fear of the people.

The Law and the Death of Christ In The Writings Of St. Paul

The old covenant between God and the Israelites is likened in Scripture to a marriage covenant, where Israel was the bride of God whom God eventually divorced, due to her “harlotry” which Christ related was the only truly legal reason for divorce. Paul also covers the aspect of the termination of the old covenant in similar fashion to the termination of a marriage through death in Romans chapter 7:

Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? ²For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. ³So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. ⁴Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. ⁵For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. ⁶But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.--- Romans 7:1-6

Death terminates covenants/contracts. Jesus is identified in Scripture as being the God of the Old Covenant Incarnate, and this fact must not be overlooked. His death terminated with finality His earlier covenant with the Israelites. The believer's “death” of the old man; the old “us”, delivered us from that law that made sin alive (v.6).

Christ's death freed Him to now take His new bride– the church. The book of Jeremiah Chapter 31 has God Himself proclaiming this new covenant. This New Covenant is mediated by Christ Himself, and ratified with His own blood. Both old and new covenants are also treated as testaments in this regard. Jesus' death not only ended the old covenant; it instituted the new.

This *cheirographon* tois dogmasin was something handwritten.

It was against “us”; It was contrary to “us”

Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee. ²⁷For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the LORD; and how much more after my death? – Deuteronomy 31:26-27

But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. ⁶⁹And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter. ⁷And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. ⁸And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; ⁹And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. ¹⁰Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? ¹¹But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they. – Acts 15:5-11

Sabbatarian churches redefine “the Law of Moses” so as to separate the Ten Commandments from the Law of Moses in an attempt to preserve the Sabbath command, even though they claim the Sabbath to be a Creation ordinance. It is an example of propping up one falsehood with another, where one’s critical thinking skills are suspended as a result. Where then does Scripture cover tithing? Not in the Ten Commandments, yet it gets cherry-picked from the “Law of Moses” and declared as necessary anyway.

As mentioned in an earlier part of this book, Robert Sanders points out that Moses would have to have written down the Ten Commandments on parchment—the one that was stored in the side compartment—or we wouldn’t have them today. The stone tablets are missing, but we still have them recorded in the Pentateuch.

This claim that the Law of Moses does not contain the Ten Commandments would mean that these “Pharisee Christians” were insistent the Gentile converts had to keep all the “ceremonial” aspects of the “Law of Moses” but were *not* required to keep the Ten Commandments, seen by Sabbatarians as “moral” law and inviolate for all time and applicable to all peoples. It is among the most blatant disregard for the nature of the Old Covenant, where to break even one point of the “whole” law was to be guilty of the entirety, regardless of any such categories being moral, ceremonial, civil, sacrificial, etc. etc. It was the Book of the Law that was codified and ratified as the Old Covenant, sprinkled with blood along with the people. This Book of the Law Moses, also called the Book of the Law of God, was the Old Covenant, and it contained the Ten Commandments, handwritten by Moses, with the Ten Commandments being also “handwritten” by God.

Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? ²²For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. ²³But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. ²⁴Which things are an allegory: *for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.* ²⁵For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in *bondage* with her children. ²⁶But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. ²⁷For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that

bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. ²⁸Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. ²⁹But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. ³⁰Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. ³¹So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free. ^{5:19} *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.* ²Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. ³For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. ⁴Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. ⁵For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. – Galatians 4:21-5:5

Were the Ten Commandments delivered to the people at Mt. Sinai?

Again, Sabbatarians seek to claim the Ten Commandments were not a part of the covenant known as the Law of Moses. But the Ten Commandments ARE equated with being a covenant between God and the Israelites, and were stored where? The Ark of “the” Covenant.

It Was Taken Out Of The Way, Or More Literally, Removed From The Midst or Center

Some Sabbatarian theologians claim this refers to a note of indebtedness, not unlike what would have been written and posted at the place of execution, letting all know what the crime was the guilty party committed. The one who stands in the midst is seen to be the accuser, but this is not entirely accurate, for the accused also stood in the midst. Some commentaries, basing their statement on other things written by Paul, point out that the law stood in the midst, separating Jew from Gentile.

But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. 14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: – Ephesians 2:13-16

A number of things in the Law helped cause a separation between the Israelites and their Gentile, pagan neighbors, such as the dietary laws and Sabbath. The less you have in common with another, along with the less likelihood of sharing meals together, the less influence the other culture is going to have on you and your culture. The Jews, because of the law and their interpretation of the law, had very little interactions with the Gentiles that even dwelt among them. They were, as Paul informs us, cut off from the commonwealth of Israel:

Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; 12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no

hope, and without God in the world: 13But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. – Ephesians 2:11-13

Please note it is the blood of Christ that results in the Gentiles being brought nigh, having hope, being with God, and partakers of these covenants of *promise* and not law.

Sin was taken out of the way, but did sin stand in the midst? Whatever this *cheirographon tios dogmasin* is, it defined the “crime” (sin) and defined the punishment– the condemnation. A list of offenses is not a list of offenses if they do not violate some law. And, it stretches credulity way beyond the breaking point to conclude Jesus Christ died in order to pay the death penalty for handwritten decrees other than the laws codified in the Old Covenant. It was that law that gave the penalty that must be paid for sin, regardless of whether one was Jew or Gentile.

It Was Effectively Removed Through The Sacrifice Of Christ.

Again, we know and understand that sin was removed. Christ was born and came to take away the sins of the world (John 1:29). The real question here then, is, can the Law remain when sin has been banished? This is essentially the position of the Sabbatarian, claiming that it is the *penalty* of the law Christians are not under, and that the law remains as something Christians are to strive to keep, regardless, even though they admit they cannot keep the law perfectly as required.

However, the Sabbatarian also claims and believes that if he was to quit keeping the Sabbath, condemnation results or can result, leading to a loss of one's salvation. So then, the Sabbatarian believes one is both not under the penalty of the law should he keep it, but comes under the penalty of the law should he abandon it, or any selected parts of it, which is another matter in itself. This double standard is another example of cognitive dissonance.

With this position that it is the penalty of the law one is not under, the Sabbatarian demonstrates his *antinomian* position, for a law without teeth is really no law at all. It makes light of this Law that demonstrated the perfection of God and the justice of God.

Law, sin, and condemnation– It is a package deal. You don't have one without the other two, and the Christian's triumph is over all three, and not just sin and its condemnation.

○ death, where is thy sting? ○ grave, where is thy victory? ⁵⁶The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. ⁵⁷But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. – 1 Corinthians 15:55-57

The Sabbatarian does not truly believe sin has been banished any more than he believes the Law has been done away with. To the Sabbatarian, if one who comes to an understanding the Sabbath is binding on Christians and all mankind, who in turn abandons keeping the Sabbath, this one's salvation is most likely forfeit. It is, to them, a case of knowingly and willfully sinning against the law, resulting in condemnation. It's as though Christ's sacrifice never happened.

DR. B: ADDITIONAL PROOF THAT PAUL IS SAYING THAT WHAT WAS NAILED TO THE CROSS WAS MERELY THE WRITTEN RECORD OF OUR SINS– NOT THE LEGAL GROUND (LAW) FOR OUR ENTANGLEMENT INTO SIN– IS THAT IN COLOSSIANS 2:15, THIS ACT OF FORGIVENESS DISARMS THE PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS. BECAUSE THESE EVIL POWERS CANNOT ACCUSE THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, YOU DON'T NEED THE HELP OF A SECONDARY MEDIATOR. THIS INTERPRETATION SEEMS TO SQUARE WITH, AGAIN, THE IMMEDIATE ARGUMENT OF COLOSSIANS 2:14-17, WHICH IS THE FULLNESS OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS.

Only a strong Sabbatarian bias could prompt a claim such as this. There can be no such thing as additional “proof” as Dr. Bacchiocchi would like to provide since his concept about Paul’s intended use of the Greek word *cheirographon* has been shown to be invalid. The immediate argument of this passage is clearly not the fullness of God’s forgiveness. The fact that forgiveness is one of the components of his statement does not identify it as the focus of the passage. The key theme, here, is that the death of Christ on the cross caused a whole set of Jewish ordinances to become obsolete because they were nailed to the cross with Him. The Judaizers and all other parties who attempt to establish unnecessary and obsolete barriers between God and His people, who are now made up of both Jews and Gentiles, are unwittingly teaching a false gospel and are in league with the “principalities and powers who are evil, and who wield this *cheirographon* for their own benefit.”

William Hohmann comments:

Jesus, as the God of the Old Testament, died on the cross, thus ending that covenant even as all such covenants end upon the death of either party to such a covenant. Paul uses the marriage covenant in Romans 7 to explain this obvious fact regarding such covenants. Principalities and powers are those people in position of power and authority who wield their control through the Law and the administration of the Law. If they administer the law of the Old Testament to their own advantage, which they did, then the rug is pulled out from under them by removing the Law they use to control and rule unjustly over others. Even the devil could no longer bring accusation against one freed from that Law. – Wm. Hohmann

Paul indicates these things were accomplished by the death of Christ:

1. Our sins were forgiven.
1. A set of Jewish ordinances that were shadows of Him was set aside.
2. A great victory was won over principalities and powers, including Satan and his evil angels.

Of these three items, Paul gives additional explanation for the second item— the set of Jewish ordinances. He explains that this set of Jewish ordinances has become obsolete because they were merely shadows of things that were to come and that the Reality shadowed by these things is Christ Himself.

To his credit, Dr. Bacchiocchi does not stoop to use the poorly conceived Sabbatarian argument that “things to come” is a reference to events that were still future in relationship to the time Paul was writing his letters to the Churches. The time reference for “things to come” would have to be the time the Mosaic Law was given, since these ordinances were instituted at that time.

DR. B: THE WEEKLY SABBATH IS NOT THE TARGET OF COLOSSIANS 2:14-17 BECAUSE PAUL IS NOT CONDEMNING THE TEACHINGS OF MOSES REGARDING JEWISH DIETARY LAWS, CEREMONIAL ANNUAL AND MONTHLY SABBATHS, AND THE WEEKLY SABBATH. INSTEAD, HE IS MERELY CONDEMNING THE EXTRA MAN-MADE REGULATIONS IMPOSED ON THE KEEPING OF JEWISH DIETARY LAWS, ANNUAL SABBATHS, MONTHLY SABBATHS, AND THE WEEKLY SABBATH ITSELF BY THE FALSE TEACHERS. “A PRECEPT IS NOT NULLIFIED BY THE CONDEMNATION OF ITS PERVERSION.”

Whatever Paul was “targeting,” that “thing” got nailed to the cross. As you may recall from an earlier discussion, Bacchiocchi teaches that it was the written record of our sins that got nailed to the cross— at least plausible, but not the case as is so eloquently established by Robert D. Brinsmead in “Sabbatarianism Re-examined.” The very structure of Paul’s statement and the facts of Greek linguistics forbid any pathway of logic leading to Bacchiocchi’s explanation. Let us review the possible candidates for what might have gotten nailed to the cross that might come to mind:

The extra rules and regulations supposedly invented by the Judaizers – As we have noted already, Dr. Bacchiocchi does not even suggest this candidate himself. It wouldn't make sense that an Act of God would be needed to do away with human traditions. He teaches that it was a written record of our sins that was nailed to the cross— a metaphor that is forbidden by the logistical constraints of the text itself.

The body of laws God gave to all the world at the very beginning, which are not formally codified by Moses in his writings, but which clearly exist because of numerous references to such laws throughout the Book of Genesis – This is not likely, since this would make no more sense than turning off all the traffic signals in New York City at rush hour. Dr. Bacchiocchi himself does not mention this possibility. If he were to do so, the implications would be self-incriminating. It would explain how Paul could talk about the TORAH being nailed to the cross without giving people the freedom to violate “natural” law. Since the mentioned but non-codified laws discussed in the Book of Genesis are, for the most part, simply “scientific” statements of cause and effect, they could not have been nailed to the cross any more than could the law of gravity.

The “ceremonial” part of the TORAH, and not the “moral” part, was nailed to the cross. – Dr. Bacchiocchi does not suggest this himself. It is one of the traditional SDA arguments, which he knows is not even possible, in view of how the Jews thought about the TORAH as a fully integrated and inseparable unit. Furthermore, it would destroy the only possibility of demonstrating that the Sabbath is validated by Colossians 2:14-17, rather than set aside by it —made necessary since there is no way around the fact that the Sabbath of Colossians 2:14-17 is a reference to the Weekly Sabbath of the Decalogue.

A written record of our sins as taught by Dr. Bacchiocchi – We have seen that the structure of Paul's statement in Colossians 2:14-17 places modifiers by the words in the passage that identify the written document as rules and regulations (*dogmasin*). Rules and regulations are far different from a record of a person's transgressions of those rules and regulations. Review the in-depth study of this “candidate” presented earlier. This is Bacchiocchi's choice, but it is a virtually impossible one that is inconsistent with a wide variety of other factors. There is no written record of our sins available to be nailed to the cross – at least not in this passage.

The TORAH; a special set of laws for Jews only, designed to govern Israel from the Exodus to the Cross – We are consistent with the context of the text, as well as the major themes and concepts of the Bible, in concluding that what was nailed to the cross was the TORAH— a special group of laws designed to reign in the rebellious nature of the Jews and keep them headed in the right direction between the Exodus and the cross. It is also a simple explanation that even a child can understand by just reading the passage itself. The TORAH contained the laws requiring the Jewish ordinances of the dietary laws and Sabbath systems, including the weekly Sabbath, as well as the requisite payment or penalty for sin. These ordinances, and especially the Sabbath rest, pointed forward to Christ as symbols of Him. Once He died on the cross, symbol met Reality. Now that the Real Thing has arrived, the shadowy symbols were no longer necessary, just like you can snuff out the candles when the flood lights are turned on.

There is no reason to accept Dr. Bacchiocchi's evasive solution to this problem and every reason to stand with the straightforward reading of the passage. The “shadows” were the Jewish ordinances and they were nailed to the cross in the sense that the temporary law set that required their observance was nailed to the cross. Paul was “targeting” the TORAH with its Jewish ordinances. A set of humanly authored rules and regulations does not even qualify as a candidate for something that requires the death of Christ on the cross to be made of no effect. That TORAH law required a sacrifice for sin, and Christ's death fulfilled that need beyond the animal sacrifices that Scripture informs us could never wash away sin, but merely cover it. The justice of God, as demanded and required by that law was met by Christ. That covenant law has served its purpose and its conditions (requirements) met.

DR. B: THE JEWISH ORDINANCES LISTED BY PAUL ARE NOT LABELED BY PAUL AS THINGS THAT ARE SHADOWS OF CHRIST AND WHICH POINTED FORWARD TO HIS COMING. THE “SHADOWS,” INSTEAD, ARE THE MAN-MADE RULES AND REGULATIONS CREATED BY THE JUDAIZERS FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING THESE

JEWISH ORDINANCES EVEN MORE RIGOROUS TO OBSERVE THAN THE MOSAIC REQUIREMENTS THEMSELVES. THE PRONOUN “THESE” IN “THESE THINGS” REFERS BACK FURTHER TO THE ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS IMPOSED BY THE FALSE TEACHERS– NOT TO JEWISH ORDINANCES THEMSELVES. DR. EDWARD LOHSE, AN IMPORTANT NON-SABBATARIAN EVANGELICAL BIBLE SCHOLAR, SUPPORTS MY [BACCHIOCCHI SPEAKING OF HIS] VIEW ON THIS PARTICULAR POINT.

If judged by conventional principles of literary evaluation, a pronoun must be viewed as referring to something in the sentence or paragraph immediately before it unless such a reading clearly cannot be accommodated within any sense of propriety. In view of the fact that there is no compelling reason to reject the standard literary expectation in this situation, other than Dr. Bacchiocchi's *a priori* bias toward Sabbatarianism, any disinterested party of biblical scholars would likely agree that the items in Paul's list are, indeed, shadows of things which pointed forward to Christ and were nailed to the Cross. In particular, the weekly Sabbath, as we mentioned earlier, was spoken of by the Jews as a symbol of the rest for God's people, both in the (incorrectly) anticipated earthly Messianic kingdom and in the Paradise beyond the grave.

Dr. Bacchiocchi has resorted to a logical fallacy commonly called “an appeal to authority.” Dr. Lohse, as a highly respected theologian, is a valuable resource, but he is still subject to errors of interpretation and understanding. That Dr. Lohse would agree with Dr. Bacchiocchi then, by itself, is no more definitive than taking Dr. Bacchiocchi's own opinion. Neither author provides the proper evidence to support this position.

Dr. Lohse appears not to have thought the whole issue through to its logical conclusion. Perhaps he stands in awe of Dr. Bacchiocchi's tremendous stature as the acknowledged world authority on the seventh day Sabbath and has allowed himself to be taken in by one of Dr. Bacchiocchi's occasional lapses of scholarly excellence. Perhaps he simply cannot comprehend the gripping, overwhelming fixation that compels a dyed-in-the-wool Sabbatarian to protect this belief at all costs. If Dr. Bacchiocchi's reading of this passage is correct, and if his primary way of defending Colossians 2:14-17 in general is correct, Dr. Lohse needs to lead the world of Evangelical Christianity to Judaization. Evangelical Churches would have to open their doors on Sabbath morning, no pork could be served at potlucks, and Church members would be observing all of the annual sabbath feast days and new moons. Perhaps we would find the Evangelical Churches camping out annually to celebrate the Feast of the Tabernacles in Jerusalem, performing the required sacrifices. One way to evaluate the TRUTH of a teaching is to follow it to the end of its logical conclusion.

The Judaization of Christianity cannot be the TRUTH because it clearly opposes everything Paul stood for as God's personally chosen spokesperson for interpreting Christianity to the Gentiles. Paul warned his readers that his Gospel of Grace was the only true gospel and that they were to reject anyone who taught a “different gospel.” Clearly, a gospel of grace plus the requirement to keep a set of obsolete Jewish ordinances as a requirement for salvation is a “different gospel.” Because the teaching purports to achieve a higher level of righteousness than the Gospel of Paul, a teacher of such a theory might be suspect as a wolf in sheep's clothing. In I Timothy 1:5-7, Paul says that those who turn away from a faith-based gospel to teaching the law do not know what they are talking about.

The term “shadow” is used two other times in a figurative sense in the book of Hebrews (Heb. 8:5 and 10:1), and in both cases it is in association with the Law of Moses.

We have seen that it is impossible to get around the fact that the weekly Sabbath is classified, by Paul, with a group of things that are now obsolete because they were mere shadows of “things to come.” The weekly Sabbath, as a Jewish institution, looked both backward to Creation and forward to Christ. The Reality has already come in the person of Christ.

Paul teaches that something that happened when Jesus died on the Cross caused the Jewish ordinances in this list to become of no importance to both Jews and Gentiles. The Gentiles were “grafted” into Israel. The Christian Jew

and the Christian Gentile are now one body in Christ. The “barrier” that stood between them, the TORAH, was ripped down by God Himself when Jesus died on the cross.

A study of a literal Greek translation (available at www.olivetree.com of Colossians 2:14-17 demonstrates that there is no need to question what kind of written document is indicated or which things are shadows. It appears straightforward that what is against us is found in the handwriting composed of decrees. How can you possibly get a list of sins committed by a certain individual out of the term *decrees*? See Deut. 31:26 (NIV)

“Take this Book of the Law and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God. There it will remain as a witness against you.”

Also, there is nothing else that “which” could refer to as a shadow other than the things listed. What kind of scholarship is represented by an effort to prove that it refers to something that isn’t even hinted at in the original language?

14. {HAVING BLOTTED OUT} {THE} {AGAINST} {US} *ceirografon* {HANDWRITING} {IN THE} *dogmasin* {DECREES,} {WHICH} {WAS} {ADVERSE} {TO US,} {ALSO} {IT} {HE HAS TAKEN} {OUT OF} {THE} {MIDST,} {HAVING NAILED} {IT} {TO THE} {CROSS;}

15. {HAVING STRIPPED} {THE} {PRINCIPALITIES} {AND} {THE} {AUTHORITIES,} {HE MADE A SHOW [OF THEM]} {PUBLICLY,} {LEADING IN TRIUMPH} {THEM} {IN} {IT.}

16. {NOT} {THEREFORE} {ANYONE} {YOU} {LET JUDGE} {IN} {MEAT} {OR} {IN} {DRINK,} {OR} {IN} {RESPECT} {OF FEAST,} {OR} {NEW MOON,} {OR} {SABBATHS,}

17. {WHICH} {ARE} {A SHADOW} {OF THINGS} {TO COME;} {BUT} {THE} {BODY [IS]} {OF THE} {CHRIST.}

When we add up all of these considerations, we see that the extra man-made rules and regulations for observing the Jewish dietary laws and all the sabbaths cannot possibly be what was nailed to the cross. If this were to be the case we would appear to need an act of God to make of no effect laws written by human beings. Man-made rules are not used in Scripture to represent large spiritual events or truths; so equating these humanly devised regulations with “shadows” violates a key concept of biblical principles. Jesus cannot be symbolized (shadowed) by man-made rules and regulations.

DR. BACCHIOCCHI AND ROMANS 14:5

(NIV) Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters. 2One man’s faith allows him to eat everything, but another man, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. 3The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him. 4Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. 5One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. 6He who regards one day as special does so to the

Lord. He who eats meat eats to the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who abstains, does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God. 7For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. 8If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

DR. B: ANY ATTEMPT TO SEE THE SABBATH AS ONE OF THE DAYS REFERRED TO IN THIS PASSAGE IS NOT POSSIBLE SINCE THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE WEAK AND THE STRONG OVER DIET AND DAYS CAN NOT BE TRACED BACK TO THE MOSAIC LAW. THE WHOLE DISCUSSION HERE IS NOT ABOUT THE OBLIGATION TO KEEP THE LAW VERSUS FREEDOM FROM ITS OBSERVANCE, BUT RATHER CONCERNS UNNECESSARY SCRUPLES OF CONSCIENCE CAUSED BY HUMAN CONVENTIONS AND SUPERSTITIONS.

We will first deal with Bacchiocchi's approach to this passage and refute him on the basis of his approach. Then we will present an alternative interpretation of this passage suggested by noted SDA journalism professor, Dr. Andy Nash, currently of Southern Adventist University, that might possibly show the anti-Sabbatarians cannot use this passage successfully against the concept of Sabbath-keeping.

THE BACCHIOCCHI APPROACH AND OUR REBUTTAL

Bacchiocchi is correct that the conflict between the weak and the strong can't be traced back to the Mosaic Law. Whether you are weak or strong, you keep the covenant rules, or you die or stand condemned. If you pick up sticks or carry a burden on the Sabbath, you are put to death. A mention of this fact does nothing to further the examination of the Sabbath question.

Since there is no TORAH observance without circumcision, and since the Gentile converts do not have to be circumcised and therefore cannot keep the Laws of Moses, the discussion seems to be about the obligation to keep the Law versus freedom from its observance. Christians are free from its observance. Paul says not to be concerned about disputable matters. The fact that the Sabbath can be disputed is a clear indication that it is not something about which to judge someone. We are in the process of disputing the Sabbath by the very act of writing this book. By contrast, we could not possibly write a credible paper to convince people that they could murder, steal, or commit adultery. In fact, were we to discover tomorrow that there was no God—no Heaven to win or Hell to shun—we would not write a paper like that. Even without an eternal judgment to face, just the natural consequences of these behaviors would create a hell on Earth for us, were we to be so foolish, right in the here and now.

The question raised by this passage of Scripture actually is, "An adherence or lack of adherence to what set of dietary laws and sacred days determines whether a Christian is to be considered weak or strong?" Let us apply a little logic to this question and work at it by the process of elimination:

1. Dr. Bacchiocchi wishes us to believe that these unnecessary scruples of conscience are merely in regard to the traditional man-made rules and regulations for keeping the Jewish dietary laws, annual sabbaths, monthly sabbaths, and the weekly Sabbath. However, as has been demonstrated earlier, the Jewish ordinances themselves are targeted in Paul's list of practices that are obsolete because they are "shadows." In Paul's mind, the Christian is weak or strong, depending on his or her willingness to reject all unnecessary and irrelevant practices, whether they are man-made or part of a divinely instituted covenant which God Himself has declared obsolete. This statement of Paul's is consistent with other things he has said about day sacredness throughout his writings. There is every reason to reject Dr. Bacchiocchi's reading of this passage and no reason to accept it.

1. It is similarly impossible to think that Paul was discussing how a Christian could be judged to be weak or strong on the basis of his or her rejection of pagan dietary laws and pagan sacred days in this particular passage. Did the pagans have any dietary laws at all? The only pagan dietary law we know of is you can eat anything you want. Would a Christian be judged to be strong or weak on the basis of his or her attachment to pagan sacred days? It would seem that any interest in observing pagan sacred days would be considered a definite weakness on the part of a Christian.

There is only one reasonable answer left. Since the Torah was fulfilled in Christ, its requirements exist no more. Adherence to its requirements brought a real sense of security to the Israelites under the terms of the Mosaic Covenant, but under the terms of the New Covenant, any degree of reliance on obsolete ordinances for a sense of spiritual security would be considered a sign of weakness on the part of a Christian. Instead, it is a sign of strength to be able to find security in Christ and His Grace, rather than in the observance of arbitrary ordinances. The very idea that any day of the year has any sacredness in-and-of-itself is superstition, whether those days are sacred to pagans or Jews.

Since all days are now alike, there is nothing wrong with keeping any one of those days if the motivation for keeping such a day is not to win God's favor but to honor Him. Thus, Paul is teaching the Colossian and Roman communities of Christians that the Gentile Christians should not condemn the Jewish Christians for keeping the Sabbath and the Jewish Christians should not condemn their Gentile brothers and sisters for not keeping the "shadow" Sabbath.

DR. B: PAUL, IN THIS PASSAGE, APPLIES THE BASIC PRINCIPLE "OBSERVE IT IN HONOR OF THE LORD" ONLY TO THE CASE OF THE PERSON "WHO OBSERVES THE DAY." IN THIS MATTER, PAUL MAKES A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE DIET ISSUE AND THE "DAYS" ISSUE. HE DOES NOT SAY THAT THE PERSON WHO REGARDS ALL THE DAYS ALIKE DOES SO TO THE LORD. THEREFORE, PAUL DOES NOT GIVE HIS STAMP OF APPROVAL TO THOSE WHO THINK IN TERMS OF ALL DAYS BEING ALIKE.

This is one of the most remarkable statements Dr. Bacchiocchi has ever made. As Jesus' specially chosen interpreter of New Covenant Christianity to the Gentiles, it was Paul's responsibility to point out any real spiritual problem. Paul even rebuked Peter for slighting his Gentile brothers, and he was not known for remaining silent when confronted with error. Knowing Paul, he would have rebuked any Christian who might think in terms of all days being alike if this view was wrong. Since the Sabbath was a particular day, and since Dr. Bacchiocchi thinks that Paul did not teach that Christians don't have to keep the Jewish Sabbath, would not Dr. Bacchiocchi expect a pointed rebuke to all those who were so "misguided" as to regard "every" day alike? If Sabbatarianism were true (which it clearly isn't), those who regarded every day as alike would be wicked violators of an eternal, moral principle. The logic of Dr. Bacchiocchi's argument is absent. In some cases, actively doing something honors God. In other cases, refraining from doing something honors God. We honor God by giving our offerings with a willing heart. At the same time I honor him by not swearing by His name. Paul puts both concerns for ceremonial dietary laws and the ceremonial superstition about the special qualities of any day in the same basket as non-essentials. Since days have no intrinsic sacredness, what difference does it matter if you observe a day or if you don't? The answer is that it doesn't.

DR. B: IF PAUL HAD SET ASIDE THE SABBATH, THE JEWISH CHRISTIANS WOULD HAVE ATTACKED PAUL VICIOUSLY, LIKE THEY DID OVER HIS EFFORTS TO SET ASIDE CIRCUMCISION. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF SUCH A CONTROVERSY ANYWHERE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, INDICATING THAT PAUL NEVER DISCOURAGED SABBATH KEEPING OR ENCOURAGED SUNDAY KEEPING INSTEAD.

The Jewish Christians, and especially the Judaizers, vehemently opposed the exemption from circumcision for the Gentiles because they knew that this automatically exempted them from Sabbath-keeping as well. To these Jewish Christians, their paradigm was that one had to become a Jew first in order to become a Christian second. Their view was that their Christianity was but another sect or branch within Judaism, similar to many of today's Messianic Jewish Christians.

Can Dr. Bacchiocchi really be as theologically uninformed as not to understand exactly *why* there was such a huge fight over circumcision? As we have learned earlier, the Sabbath and circumcision cannot be separated. We have seen that neither Jew nor Gentile could keep the Sabbath without the circumcision requirement being met. Therefore, when the Council of Jerusalem decided not to impose the rite of circumcision on the Gentiles, the Sabbath issue perished forever with it. This is why the New Testament does not mention a requirement for Christians to keep the Sabbath. Nearly everything Jewish about Christianity was destroyed at the Council of Jerusalem. The gateway to Sabbath observance within the Jewish community had always been closed to anyone who was unwilling to be circumcised, whether Jew or Gentile. Without circumcision for the new Gentile converts, there could be no Sabbath-keeping for them. Perhaps a review of this is in order.

The Bible teaches that the Gentile/alien must go through the same process of becoming a Jew by circumcision if he wanted to participate in the Jewish religion. In fact a Jew was a Gentile till he was circumcised.

Exodus 12:48-49 (New International Version)

“An alien living among you who wants to celebrate the LORD's Passover must have all the males in his household circumcised; then he may take part like one born in the land. No uncircumcised male may eat of it. 4The same law applies to the native-born and to the alien living among you.”Exodus 12:43-45 (New International Version)

Passover Restrictions

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “These are the regulations for the Passover: “No foreigner is to eat of it. Any slave you have bought may eat of it after you have circumcised him, but a temporary resident and a hired worker may not eat of it.”

Leviticus 24:22 (New International Version)

You are to have the same law for the alien and the native-born. I am the LORD your God.

Jewish scholars from the very beginning of Jewish history have understood that the TORAH was given only to the Hebrews. By the time of Jesus, the typical Jew may not have been aware of the fact that they, as a people, had never believed that the Gentiles would be lost by not keeping the TORAH. Instead, Jewish thought has always held the belief that the Gentiles would be saved if they kept the Noachian laws. **In fact, Jewish traditional law called for the stoning of a Gentile who kept the Sabbath without first being circumcised.** (This applied to the Gentile who had chosen to become a part of the Jewish community. The Sabbath commandment itself provided that temporary guests— travelers, for example— were to refrain from labor along with their Jewish hosts.)

Paul, in his letter to the Romans, had to use a different approach than in his letter to the Colossians. With a large number of Jewish Christians living in Rome at the time, Paul was careful to show that the Jewish Christians were free to continue to keep the Sabbath. The idea that Sabbath-keeping became intrinsically wrong after the Cross is not part of Paul's teachings.

Dr. Bacchiocchi presents the fact that Paul never encouraged Sunday observance as evidence that Paul never taught that the Gentiles did not have to keep the Sabbath. If the Pauline theory/explanation of Sabbath abandonment is true, this fact would be no surprise. Of course Paul never encouraged Sunday keeping because there is no intrinsic sacredness or “holy magic” about Sunday. Sunday was chosen by Christians primarily as a day to assemble together for reasons that had nothing to do with day sacredness. Meeting together on the Sabbath was not practical. Every New Testament reference to the Apostles being in the synagogues on Sabbaths mentions the fact that they were there to witness to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah. Additionally, Jesus stated that His

followers would be cast out of the synagogues for following Him. Also, understanding the teachings of Paul that Sabbath observance was now **optional**, they may have had communal worship on Sundays so as to distance themselves from the Jews and Judaism, as well as allow those Jewish Christians to rest on the Sabbath. During this period of time, the Jews were highly disliked within the Roman Empire for their frequent uprisings against the government.

Jesus rose from the grave on Sunday. Any other day of the week would have been appropriate for corporate worship, but Sunday had special significance to the believers. The fact that Christians chose Sunday as the day to meet with each other was not merely an accident, but neither was it a choice governed by the concept of day sacredness.

Finally, it is difficult to imagine that Paul would write to the Christians in Rome, counsel them about how they should relate to the observance of sacred days, and fail to give them any instructions about how they should relate to the weekly Sabbath of the Decalogue. Circumcision was included in Paul's comments, and circumcision was excluded from things to be required of the Gentile converts. Since keeping the Sabbath was not provided for within a Jewish community without circumcision, the Sabbath issue was a dead issue.

With a large number of Jewish Christians in its membership, Paul would need to take a somewhat softer approach in conveying the truth about the Sabbath and other Jewish sacred days than he did when writing to the predominantly Gentile Colossian Church. The diversity in the make-up of the Church at Rome prompted Paul to be concerned about them arguing about things that are not essential to the Gospel. He talks about how the LAW is fulfilled by genuine love. A review of Romans 13 is a good way to help understand the context of Paul's statement in the next chapter. Back in Romans 2, he talked about the principles of the Law being in the hearts of the Gentiles through their consciences. Thanks to our understanding of the Jewish differentiation between Noachian and Torah law, it is likely that Paul was thinking in terms of Noachian law when he wrote this passage:

ROMANS 2:12-16 (NIV) - All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. 13For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous. 14(Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, 15since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.) 16This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.

The Gospel of Grace as taught by Paul teaches that there is no salvation earned by Gentiles who follow their consciences or Jews who follow the TORAH, seeing as both the Gentile and the Jew are equally condemned for their failure to measure up to a perfect moral standard, aka "law". Paul's statement in Romans 2:12-16 seems to teach that at least some Gentiles will do well on Judgment Day. It is difficult to comprehend how Dr. Bacchiocchi could possibly conclude that keeping a set of Jewish ordinances could suddenly become essential for Gentiles in the Christian era.

Bacchiocchi argues that the New Testament writers are totally silent about Sunday observance for Christians and that this fact proves Sabbatarianism. This argument through silence is not valid, since the New Testament writers discuss the obsolescence of Sabbath-keeping: (1) Circumcision is a required entrance sign for observing the Sabbath, and Paul clearly taught that the Early Church made the decision at the Council of Jerusalem that circumcision and observance of the Law was not to be required of the Gentiles coming into the Church. (2) Colossians 2:14-17 is a direct command against requiring the observance of the weekly Sabbath of the Decalogue. (3) The Law of Moses must include the Sabbath of the Decalogue simply because to claim the Decalogue was not part of the Law of Moses means that the Jewish members pushing for circumcision and the Law of Moses were claiming that Gentiles had to keep the ceremonial laws in order to be saved, but not the Decalogue.

At the same time he argues that the apostles kept the Sabbath because they went to the Jewish synagogues on the Sabbath day, supposedly setting the example for Christians to follow. This logic is also flawed. The apostles went into the Jewish synagogues on the Sabbath day to witness to them that Christ was, indeed, the Messiah. They went as missionaries. Also, every recorded time when Christians met together themselves, they met on the first day of the week— not on the Jewish Sabbath.

A CREDIBLE ALTERNATIVE APPROACH BY SDA AUTHOR, DR. ANDY NASH?

In Dr. Nash's article in the February 7, 2012 edition of the *Adventist Review*, he does a plausible job of demonstrating that Dr. Bacchiocchi's approach is far-fetched and that this passage may have nothing to say either for or against the Sabbath Question. He points out that the entire passage seems to be focused on dietary considerations, and when you read the whole thing, you can see that Paul starts with comments about food habits and ends with comments about food habits. He calls our attention to an interesting fact about the Roman practice of fasting. A document from the time suggests that the Romans believed it was best to fast on Wednesday and Friday instead of Monday and Thursday. Since Paul was writing to a predominantly Gentile audience in this case, it is entirely possible that the new Gentile converts were still concerned about which days to fast for God, whereas before their conversion to Christianity they had been concerned about which days to fast to please their heathen gods.

If Dr. Nash's approach to this controversial passage is correct, Dr. Bacchiocchi is way off track and your authors have made a mountain out of a mole hill. We must disagree with Nash's parting thoughts on Romans 14 when he notes that Paul spent 21 verses devoted to food and fewer than two verses concerning days, and adds, "It seems highly doubtful that something as important as the Sabbath would be dismissed so casually." We could ask, "Important to whom?" On the contrary, since St. Paul was writing under the influence of the Holy Spirit and God knew that His people would be reading the writings of St. Paul for thousands of years into the future, it would seem that if Sabbath-keeping were to be required of Christians, Paul would have been directed to put in a clear disclaimer, something like this: "I am not saying here that every day of the week is the same in regard to the Sabbath-keeping question. You all know that the Sabbath is an eternal moral law that can't be changed. I am only saying that all the days are the same when it comes to the question of the voluntary practice of fasting."

Over and over again we see evidence that Sabbath-keeping was a non-issue for Christians. Like we have pointed out before, the Jews understood the first mention of the Sabbath was with the giving of the manna, that God marched them through the desert on several Sabbaths before they got to the Wilderness of Sin, and that the Sabbath was given to Israel and Israel alone to set them apart from every other nation on Earth. When the veil of the temple was ripped from top to bottom, thoughtful Jews understood that the Sabbath, animal sacrifices, and the Law of Moses had come to an end. That is part of why the question of Sabbath-keeping is never discussed in the New Testament after the resurrection.

DR. BACCHIOCCHI ON GALATIANS 4:9-11

Please study Galatians chapter 4 for the complete context:

GALATIANS 4:8-11 (NIV) - Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods. But now that you know God-or rather are known by God-how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable

principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again? You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you.

DR. B: THE DAYS OF THIS PASSAGE IN GALATIANS ARE NOT A REFERENCE TO THE JEWISH CALENDAR OF SPECIAL DAYS, BUT A REFERENCE TO THE SPECIAL DAYS OF THE PAGAN CALENDAR. THEREFORE, THIS PASSAGE IS NOT DIRECTED AT THE JEWISH FEAST DAYS OR WEEKLY SABBATH.

The root of the problem with Dr. Bacchiocchi's Sabbatarian interpretation of Galatians 4:10-11 is his singular failure to recognize a massive theme that runs from one end of the Bible to the other, in that the jurisdiction of the TORAH was to be temporary. The immediate context of Galatians chapter 4 is also being ignored, specifically starting in verse 21 here in chapter 4, regarding being slaves now to the old covenant law. As we have seen earlier, the Bible clearly teaches that God did not make the TORAH Covenant with His people prior to Mt. Sinai. Amazingly, in Galatians 3, just one chapter before this passage, Paul is talking about the TORAH having a certain beginning and a certain end. The beginning was at the Exodus, and it was to end when the Messiah arrived. Please examine Galatians 3:15-19:

Brothers, let me take an example from everyday life. Just as no one can set aside or add to a human covenant that has been duly established, so it is in this case. The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say "and to seeds," meaning many people, but "and to your seed," meaning one person, who is Christ. What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise. For if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on a promise; but God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise. What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred has come.

Dr. Bacchiocchi turns to Dr. Troy Martin for support for his idea that this passage in Galatians is a reference to their return to the observation of the sacred days of the pagan calendar, rather than those of the Jewish calendar. Dr. Martin, Professor of Religious Studies at Xavier University in Chicago, published two articles in *New Testament Studies* and the *Journal of Biblical Literature*. He cites Martin as saying that the days of Colossians 2:14-17 are definitely Jewish but that the days of Galatians 4:10 seem to be characteristic of the pagan calendar. Bacchiocchi states that Martin reaches this conclusion on the "time structure" of pagan calendars, as well as the immediate context of Paul's statement, which appears to be "pagan" as evidenced by their "renewed pre-conversion reckoning of time."

In regard to their analysis of what Paul meant in this passage, what both scholars fail to realize is that a COMPARISON between two similar ideas does not perform the function of setting context. This is an error of logic, because it simply does not follow. The thrust of Galatians is directed against the influence of Judaizers— not "paganizers."

Paul chides the Galatians for trading their former slavery to the observance of the days of the pagan calendar for the slavery of their unfortunately adopted observance of the days of the Jewish calendar and covenant. He is saying that observing either set of holy days is a violation of the principles of the freedom that the Gospel brings. No day has any holiness in and of itself, and the need to observe either set of holy days represents a superstition of one kind or another. As cited, Paul reminds the reader that a covenant cannot be added to after it has been established; the Gentiles understanding as a result they could not be required to observe these Jewish days. We see now the same issue being raised; people who are not a party to that covenant altering that covenant in order to include

themselves, observing the sabbath as a result, claiming in turn we are legally obligated to do so.

The context of Chapter Four of Galatians is a focus on fighting the Judaizers from Jerusalem. By the time we get to verse 17, Paul calls the reader's attention back to the previous and over-all context of his remarks:

(NIV) Those people are zealous to win you over, but for no good. What they want is to alienate you from us, so that you may be zealous for them. It is fine to be zealous, provided the purpose is good, and to be so always and not just when I am with you.

If Dr. Bacchiocchi and Dr. Martin had read just a little further in this chapter, they would have noted that by this statement, Paul dispelled any *possible* confusion about whether he was talking about a return to pagan principles or to the slavery of the Law of Moses. Look at verse 21:

(NIV) Tell me, you who want to be under the law, are you not aware of what the law says?

“Those people” refers to Judaizers– not to paganizers. There is no suggestion here that Paul was addressing a problem of pagans trying to win back the new Gentile converts to heathenism. He states plainly that the concern is over their desire to be under the LAW, again-clearly a reference to the TORAH. There is simply no license in this statement of Paul's to use one's theological imagination to force this passage to read in a manner favorable to Sabbatarianism. Martin, who is not a Sabbatarian, seems oblivious to the overwhelming compulsion of Dr. Bacchiocchi to force everything Paul wrote into a light that is favorable to Sabbatarianism. Since the context of this passage is unquestionably one of Jewish things, common sense tells us that we must acknowledge that this is a linguistic question of comparison– not context. This comparison is between the slavery to the days of the pagan calendar to the slavery to the days of the Jewish calendar. The idea that any day on any calendar has intrinsic sacredness and must be honored is superstitious, whether it is a pagan superstition or a Jewish superstition.

In this text, Paul recognizes that the Galatians know God. Logic tells us that if Paul says these people have basically a good relationship with God, he is not likely to mean that he is afraid that these Gentile believers are being tempted to return to pagan practices. Rather, they are just in danger of thinking that they have to observe obsolete Jewish ordinances to keep His favor. In the Book of Hebrews, the author is addressing the problem that the Jewish Christians are being tempted to go back to Judaism and to the inferior things there. If the Jew could be tempted to return to Judaism, it is certainly possible that the Gentile could be tempted to return to heathenism. But Paul clearly indicates in the context in which this passage is found that he is concerned that the Galatians seem to want to return to the LAW, which is exclusive to Judaism; so, again, we are biblically justified in rejecting Bacchiocchi's attempt to make us believe that the Sabbath cannot be one of the “days” included in this passage.

DR. B: THE “DAYS” OF GALATIANS 4:10-11 COULD NOT REFER TO THE JEWISH CALENDAR REGARDING SPECIAL DAYS BECAUSE THE PHRASE “ELEMENTAL SPIRITS OF THE UNIVERSE” IS TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH FROM THE GREEK WORDS *STOIKEIA TOU KOSMOU*, WHICH MOST SCHOLARS INTERPRET AS THE BASIC ELEMENTS WHICH THE PAGANS THOUGHT THE WORLD WAS MADE OF- EARTH, WATER, AIR, FIRE, OR PAGAN GODS WHO CONTROLLED HUMAN EVENTS.

We have reviewed the chapter's context and have found that Paul gives us all the clarification of context that any reasonable reader would expect. Galatians 4:1-7 is a discussion about sacred law. Verse 17 makes it clear that he is discussing the worrisome influence of the Judaizers, and verse 21 clearly identifies the LAW as the subject under discussion. Paul related in chapter 3 how these laws that interfered with faith were elemental in nature, required of children. Therefore, there is no compelling reason to believe Paul was expressing concern in this passage that his beloved Galatians were beginning to observe their former pagan sacred days. The issue was about compromising faith with law, in this case old covenant law. Bachhiocchi would have us believe old covenant law does not, and

cannot compromise faith. Yet in Acts 15 is a statement that teaching old covenant law to Gentile Christians was to subvert their faith.

The translators of the NIV chose to translate the words *stoikeia tou kosmou* as “principles.” From the Greek-Interlinear Bible <http://www.olivetree.com>, we find these possible meanings for this word [*stoikeia*] in the Greek language:

New Testament Greek Definition:

4747 stoicheion {stoy-khi'-on}
from a presumed derivative of the base of 4748; TDNT – 7:670,1087; n n
AV – element 4, rudiment 2, principle 1; 7
1) any first thing, from which the others belonging to some series or composite whole take their rise, an element, first principal
1a) the letters of the alphabet as the elements of speech, not however the written characters, but the spoken sounds
1b) the elements from which all things have come, the material causes of the universe
1c) the heavenly bodies, either as parts of the heavens or (as others think) because in them the elements of man, life and destiny were supposed to reside
1d) the elements, rudiments, primary and fundamental principles of any art, science, or discipline
1d1) i.e. of mathematics, Euclid’s geometry

After discussing the enslavement of the Galatians as represented by their return to the keeping of special days, months, seasons, and years, Paul moves on in Galatians 4:21-31 to explain the two covenants. The first covenant – the Sinaitic Covenant – is represented as a body of arbitrary requirements to which the Jews were slaves. The second covenant is represented not only as freedom from the requirements of the Sinaitic Covenant, but the new freedom to be found in Christ under Grace with the motive of following Christ as a result of the transformation of the heart.

It is strange that when Paul himself uses the term “slavery” to describe the bondage of the Jews to the Law which required them to observe a large calendar of holy days, Dr. Bacchiocchi would presume to declare that Paul is referring to the calendar of pagan holy days. It is clear that Paul is referring to Jewish sacred days because the Book of Galatians is focused on combating the influence of the Judaizers, and the Judaizers were advocating that the Galatians embrace the observance of Jewish, not pagan, holy days. Notice Paul’s words in Galatians 5:1:

Gal 5:1 (NIV) It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

Paul is clearly concerned that his beloved Galatians are being wrongly influenced by the Judaizers to think that their salvation and spirituality is dependent on, or enhanced by, observing the sacred days of the Jewish calendar.

Dr. Martin may believe these “days” are pagan, but another well-respected scholar, disagrees. The ***Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*** says that the “days” of Galatians 4:10 “are in the first instance Sabbaths, though they include other days too, e.g., the Day of Atonement (Eduard Lohse, ***The Sabbath In The New Testament***, 7:30, footnote 232, quoted in Robert D. Brinsmead, **“Sabbatarianism Re-examined.”**) This assessment is in keeping with the sentence structure, as noted earlier, that Hebrew writers used when talking about the Law of Moses.

Also consider that Paul knew how to use the Greek language very well. It could be that no one has ever done such a good job of putting the most profound spiritual truths into language that, in general, can be understood by most readers. Because of his good command of language, it is almost inconceivable that Paul would not add a “disclaimer”

to this passage if the weekly Sabbath were still required of Christians. He would add something like, "I need to clarify something. I don't mean you shouldn't keep the 7th Day Sabbath." Since Paul was a highly articulate writer under the direct influence of the Holy Spirit, he knew what affect his words would have on his immediate target audience. There can be no doubt that Paul's words were inspired by the Holy Spirit in view of how this passage would be understood by readers down through time.

In the next chapter, Galatians 5, we find Paul talking about the LAW again. He teaches that those who attempt to keep the law have fallen from grace.

Gal 5:2–4 (NIV) - Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you₃ that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. Again I declare to every₄ man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.

In keeping with the theme of the Book of Galatians, Paul continues with a discussion of the LAW, explaining that the TORAH has been replaced with non-arbitrary laws that are written on the heart through the Holy Spirit. This is in line with the concept that moral laws are simply statements of cause and effect. In the first chapter of the book of John, John writes that everyone who is born into the world is influenced by the Spirit of God. There is a basic understanding of right and wrong in all cultures and all societies. For example, if you steal something from someone and that person wants his or her property back badly enough to fight you for it, one or both of you may die in that fight. A Gentile growing up in the darkest recesses of Africa can see these self-evident truths, and the Holy Spirit is there to convict through the conscience. However, that same heathen person will never come to the self-evident conclusion that he must not do any work on one of the days of the week, much less be able to figure out, as a self-evident principle, that he should not work on the 7th day of the week. His "week" might have 10 days, or 17 days, or he may have no concept of a week at all. If a law is self-evident and based on natural cause and effect, it is a moral law with eternal implications. If a law is not based on a self-evident principle of natural cause and effect, it is not a moral law and must be classified as ceremonial and temporary. Paul teaches that after the cross the new covenant Christians are led by the law of the Spirit and not the Law of Moses. Christians know what real sin is without having to look at a codified set of laws. Furthermore, Paul says that the Mosaic Law was made for the lawbreakers— those that commit gross sins; those who have a lifestyle of sin. There is never an excuse for breaking a moral law. This cannot possibly be said of the Sabbath law! It is the Sabbatarian who, by fiat, declares the Sabbath to be a moral law. A few examples of when the Sabbath law could be broken include the following:

The work of circumcising a child on the 8th day if the 8th day fell on the Sabbath.

Rescuing an ox from a ditch.

Going to war.

Priests working at the Temple.

Loosing an animal out to water or pasture.

The example of when the Israelites marched around the City of Jericho for seven days in a row.

Joshua 6:15 (NIV) - On the seventh day, they got up at daybreak and marched around the city seven times in the same manner, except that on that day they circled the city seven times.

The army of Israel seems to have been engaged in war on the Sabbath, at least at times. If the army of Israel was engaged in war as a result of following the counsel of God through his prophets, there is a strong suggestion that God

did not object to them fighting on the Sabbath. Additionally there seems to be no record of God rebuking Israel for fighting on the Sabbath days:

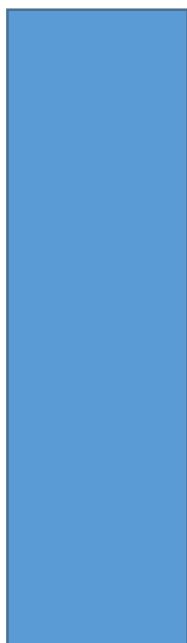
1 Kings 20:29 – 30 (NIV) - For seven days they camped opposite each other, and *on the seventh day the battle was joined*. The Israelites inflicted a hundred thousand casualties on the Aramean foot soldiers in one day. The rest of them escaped to the city of Aphek, where the wall collapsed on twenty-seven thousand of them. And Ben-Hadad fled to the city and hid in an inner room.

The Bible teaches that the LAW is not designed for the righteous:

1 Tim. 1:9–11 (NIV) - We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers-and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.

It is impossible to keep the Mosaic Law. Again we see that Christians that are led by the “Law of the Spirit:”

Romans 8:1 – 4 (NIV) - Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.



CHAPTER THREE

Dr. MacCarty Wreaks Havoc

Chapter Eleven demonstrates that SDA theologian and Sabbath scholar, Dr. Skip MacCarty, exhibits a definite unwillingness to disclose the terms of the belief system he is “loaning out” to his Seventh-day Adventist flock. By the Year 2007, the knowledge that the Hebrew linguistics of Genesis 2, Exodus 16, and Exodus 20, is much better known within the circle of biblical scholars. We explain that it is ethically irresponsible to publish a book that purports to be a serious scholarly work when it fails to address, much less attempts to refute, this fatal argument against the Sabbatarian position. We call attention that he fails to disclose the full truth about what he knows about the impossibilities of the Sabbath; that the Catholic Church changed the Sabbath by stating that this topic is beyond the scope of his subject– an “out” that is not fully ethical because the Early Church rejected Sabbath-keeping on biblical grounds.

Dr. Skip MacCarty, a theologian on the staff of the Pioneer Memorial Church at Andrews University, which hosts the Church’s theological seminary, published a 30-year “tribute” to Dr. Samuele Bacchiocchi’s 1977 book, *From Sabbath to Sunday*, exhibiting an approach to defending Sabbatarianism that is essentially the same as that of Dr. Bacchiocchi’s. However, some of his comments deserve recognition and special treatment in this paper. Dr. MacCarty has given additional thought to addressing the problem of the many passages in the writings of St. Paul which seem to support anti-Sabbatarianism. Furthermore, he has taken more time to provide scholarly opinion from some well-known biblical scholars to support his Sabbatarian interpretation than Dr. Bacchiocchi. The fact that his 2007 book, *In Granite or Ingrained?*, is an official denominational publication, printed by the Andrews University Press, which is affiliated with the Seventh-day Adventist Seminary, gives it the weight of official Church dogma. By contrast, Dr. Bacchiocchi’s books were published independently.

Despite some refinements, however, MacCarty’s views are fundamentally the same as those of Dr. Bacchiocchi.

ANALYSIS OF *IN GRANITE OR INGRAINED?*

CHAPTER 9 - CIRCUMCISION

MacCarty does a wonderful job of showing the deeply spiritual symbolic aspects of circumcision. Later in the chapter, however, he attempts to refute the anti-Sabbatarian argument that circumcision is a requirement for Sabbath-keeping. Let us examine his arguments one at a time. In most cases, we will summarize his arguments, rather than quote them. Verification of his arguments is as simple as reading the appropriate parts of his book.

DR. MACCARTY – THE OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH DOES NOT DEPEND ON THE OBSERVANCE OF CIRCUMCISION. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE IN SCRIPTURE THAT EVEN HINTS AT SUCH A CONNECTION BETWEEN CIRCUMCISION AND THE SABBATH. “If any teaching in the Old Testament needed to be overwritten in the New Testament era, it would be made unmistakably clear, as it was in the case of circumcision (p. 186).”

Either Dr. MacCarty did not do his homework before writing *In Granite or Ingrained?* or he deliberately choose to ignore the mountain of evidence from biblical and rabbinical sources that clearly demonstrate that the Jews had always understood that circumcision was a prerequisite for Sabbath-keeping for both the Jews and proselyte Gen-

tiles. The *Jewish Encyclopedia*, available to Adventists since no later than 1906 (*Wikipedia* article, “Jewish Encyclopedia”), is striking in its position that the Sabbath was given for the first time to Israel at the Exodus and that it was given to no other nation on Earth.

Acts chapter 15 provides us with Scriptural evidence beyond merely a “hint” when the Christian Pharisees made their claim that the Gentile converts needed to undergo circumcision and the attendant observance and adherence to the Law of Moses. Is Sabbath observance a commanded requirement in the Law of Moses? Perhaps Dr. MacCarty believes, as some Sabbatarians teach, that the “law of Moses” is a separate law from the Ten Commandments, and that the Ten are a stand-alone law. This line of reasoning needs to take into consideration. The Ten are still equated with being a covenant, and covenants have parties to them; and that this line of reasoning would also require us to believe the Law of Moses, as written in the book of the law, was written sans the Ten Commandments. If this were true, we would not be holding Bibles with the Ten Commandments written therein. It also implies that the Pharisee Christians were claiming the Gentiles had to keep ceremonial law, but not the Decalogue in order to be saved; a strange claim for a Pharisee indeed!

DR. MACCARTY - IF CIRCUMCISION WERE REQUIRED FOR SABBATH OBSERVANCE, SO WOULD IT BE REQUIRED FOR OBSERVANCE OF THE OTHER 9 COMMANDMENTS.

MacCarty chooses to ignore, once again, the fact that the Jews themselves recognized that all the people of the world were given laws against killing, stealing, adultery, murdering, and so on, at the very beginning, but that the Sabbath law was not introduced to Israel until the Exodus. We have discussed the difference between the Noachian Laws, as the Jews referred to them, and the TORAH– the Laws of Moses– previously. The Sabbath and circumcision are cultic “signs” rather than intrinsic moral laws. MacCarty seems to want to try to distract his readers from following this train of thought by appealing to the flawed concept that the Sabbath and the other 9 points of law are of the same nature; that if we believe we should do no murder, we are obligated to keep the sabbath. If we abandon sabbath keeping, we abandon all law. It is a false association; a logical fallacy, and truth should never be dependent upon such tactics. It ignores the new covenant teachings that revolve around believers “fulfilling” the law through faith and love, where, as Paul has declared, all the law is thus fulfilled, and not all the law sans the sabbath commandment.

Circumcision was indeed required in order to come under that old covenant set of laws. MacCarty here implies that other cultures, including our present ones, would not have similar law sets which include prohibitions against murder, for example, unless they contained a law requiring and enforcing the sabbath. This “logic” of MacCarty's “isn't”.

DR. MACCARTY – GOD PUT THE SABBATH COMMANDMENT IN THE 10 COMMANDMENTS, PERHAPS, IN PART, TO KEEP IT FROM BEING CONFUSED WITH CEREMONIAL REGULATIONS.

Biblical scholars have known since the 1950's that in the historical era in which God gave the Israelites the 10 Commandments, treaties were almost always written up with a ceremonial provision placed near the middle of the list of the terms, as we explained earlier. How can Dr. MacCarty not be aware of this? Most treaties of this era were between a conquering nation and a conquered nation. This ceremony, to be performed on a ritual basis by the nation in a subjective relationship to the treaty, was a way to keep the requirements of the tribute and services due the superior country and king ever before the minds of the subjugated people and their rulers. This fact was available to Dr. MacCarty, having been presented by former SDA, **Robert Brinsmead**, in his essay, “**Sabbatarianism Re-examined.**” Dr. MacCarty, as a scholar purporting to present a scholarly work himself, had an academic responsibility to read this landmark essay before trying to write about the Sabbath himself.

If a law is not introduced at the beginning of the world, and all the people of the Earth lived without that rule for something like 2,000 years before it was introduced to a small country with provisions tailored to that particular part of the world, it has to be a ceremonial regulation, and thus be subject to being utilized for a specific period of time

to meet a specific need. Moral laws are simply statements of natural cause and effect relationships and are, therefore, virtually self-evident to any thoughtful observer of human experience. The Sabbath does not meet the simplest requirements to qualify as a moral law. The breaking of a moral law can never be justified. The Sabbath is not so, as there are many examples of the Sabbath being set aside for more important matters, including circumcision on the 8th day after the birth of a Jewish male child and Israel going out to war on the Sabbath. His assertion here is simply speculative, and designed to draw one's attention away from the real purpose and function of the Sabbath in relation to the Israelites; the sign of that covenant between them and God, and how it serves as a reminder to the people who their God is, and what He has done for them. Basing your beliefs on speculation is not a good idea. You should demand proof; a "thus saith the Lord" over matters of utmost importance.

DR. MACCARTY - THE FACT THAT THE COUNCIL OF JERUSALEM DID NOT MENTION A STANDARD SET OF UNIVERSALLY ACCEPTED MORAL LAWS, LIKE NOT STEALING, KILLING OR COMMITTING ADULTERY, IS EVIDENCE THAT THE SABBATH, A MORAL LAW, WAS NOT SUSPENDED EITHER.

It is a reasonable expectation that a biblical scholar would know both from a careful study of the Old Testament and a study of the writings of the rabbis, that neither a proselyte nor a Jew can keep the Sabbath without the head of the household being circumcised. Therefore, the fact that the Council of Jerusalem revoked circumcision is proof that the Council of Jerusalem placed its official blessing on the elimination of the requirement that (Gentile) Christians keep the Jewish Sabbath. The Judaizers were not primarily concerned about getting the Gentiles to keep basic moral laws. They were focused on getting them to practice ordinances and traditions that were Jewish in nature. Jewish religious practice revolved around the Sabbath. The Council of Jerusalem made it abundantly clear Gentiles were not required to keep the Law; any of it— and that to teach them otherwise was a subversion of their souls. That Dr. MacCarty declares the Sabbath to be a moral law based solely upon its proximity to other laws that are moral does not make it moral. We can stand next to a monarch, but doing so does not make us kings. A moral law is moral based on cause and effect relationships— not its location or association. The Gentiles were not required to keep a single one of the Mosaic laws because it was a Mosaic law, codified within the confines of that covenant law. If other laws of the land were similar in nature, this was not an issue.

The fact that some Gentiles thought their freedom from the Law meant they could indulge the flesh in regards to fornication demonstrates this, for most foreign countries and their laws did not address fornication as a crime. Paul had to correct those Gentiles in this regard, but did not have to address Gentiles who would have had no problem with not keeping the Sabbath. Christianity is a movement away from the letter of the law to the spirit of the law. Not all grasped this perfectly then, and those today who focus on the Old Covenant letter of the law, such as the Sabbath, do not grasp this perfectly either.

The apostolic Church understood that the Sabbath, along with virtually everything else Jewish, would perish along with circumcision. There is abundant evidence both from Scripture and Jewish writings of the inseparable relationship between the Sabbath and circumcision. This principle explains why there is not one word in the New Testament about the requirement for keeping the Sabbath and how to keep it. It is difficult to imagine that the Gentiles coming into the apostolic church would not need any instructions regarding how to keep the Sabbath in relation to New Covenant theology if it were required. As we mentioned before, when Paul instructs his readers not to use their freedom from the LAW to do wrong, he outlines a list of approximately 23 sins that a person who is led of the Spirit will not be found doing. Sabbath-keeping is not mentioned in that list. If Sabbath keeping were a Creation ordinance, and if it were a moral law, how could Paul not have included it in these sin lists?

DR. MACCARTY - "BECAUSE THE 10 COMMANDMENTS WERE TAKEN FOR GRANTED AS UNIVERSALLY APPLICABLE, THE COUNCIL HAD NO NEED TO SPECIFICALLY INSTRUCT GENTILE CONVERTS NOT TO MURDER OR STEAL, TO BE RESPECTFULLY

OBEDIENT TO PARENTS, OR TO OBSERVE THE SABBATH (WHICH IN THE LAW WAS ITSELF ENJOINED UPON “THE ALIEN [HEBREW, GER] WITHIN YOUR GATES,” EXOD. 20:10; CF. ISA. 56:3-7).

As we have discussed before, the Jews believed that the 10 Commandments, included in the Law of Moses, were for Israel and Israel alone, but at the same time believed that the Gentiles were subject to the Laws Of Noah and that their eternal destiny was determined by their observance of those basic laws. Dr. MacCarty is working from the SDA paradigm where it is just *assumed* that the 10 Commandments were universally applicable, but assumptions often lead to errors. Again, this concept is directly opposed to the facts about the way the Jews thought about the concept of LAW. The Sabbath was only a part of the TORAH, or the Law of Moses. It is a huge oversimplification to throw the Sabbath into the mix with a set of laws, which, unlike the Sabbath, are rooted in “natural law” — that is, requirements that are based on observable cause and effect.

A short-stay visitor to a Jewish community was to refrain from work on the Sabbath while staying with his Israelite host. However, were an alien to decide to remain with the Israelite community, the head of household was required to be circumcised before the family could observe any of the Torah’s ordinances. The Law of Moses indicated a difference between the need for a Gentile on short-term stay with Jewish hosts and a Gentile who wished to become a part of the Jewish community. In the first case, the Gentile avoids offending his Jewish hosts by not performing labor. In the second case, the Gentile “keeps” the Sabbath as a religious practice, but not until he has been circumcised.

As we mentioned in the previous section, the Gentiles coming into the apostolic Church would have had little knowledge of the requirements of Sabbath-keeping unless they had been attending a Jewish synagogue. If the apostles believed Christians must keep the Jewish Sabbath, it is reasonable to expect that there would have been some discussion of it in their writings. Look at the controversies over Sabbath-keeping that confronted Jesus on so many occasions! How to keep the Sabbath seems to have been a continual source of debate among the Jews. Jewish Christians, as well as Gentile Christians, would have needed some clarifications on Sabbath-keeping.

MacCarty also misapplies the law while attempting to uphold the law of the Sabbath. It was those Gentiles “within thy gates” of Jewish settlements that were to refrain from work on the Sabbath. The situation with the Gentile Christians in the New Testament era is the reverse of what is found in the law, and what MacCarty attempts to slip by unnoticed. We are discussing Jews living among Gentiles, and it is not reasonable to conclude the Gentiles had to conform to Jewish expectations within their own communities. It is the Jew who is now within the gates of the Gentiles, and to attempt to cite the law regarding foreigners being within the gates of Jewish communities is a clear case of twisting Scripture; something the Law specifically addressed as being forbidden! Perhaps Dr. MacCarty believes that, seeing as this commandment in Scripture regarding adding to, or taking away from God's written Word is not located within the confines of the Ten Commandments, he is free to do so, even though God declares one doing so commits a sin on par with witchcraft and rebellion.

MACCARTY – THE COUNCIL OF JERUSALEM DID NOT HAVE TO LIST THE REQUIREMENT THAT THE GENTILE CONVERTS KEEP THE SABBATH AND THE OTHER 10 COMMANDMENT LAWS BECAUSE THE COUNCIL SPECIFICALLY INDICATED THAT IT EXPECTED THE GENTILES TO GET THEIR COMPLETE MORAL TRAINING BY ATTENDING THE JEWISH SYNAGOGUE WITH THE OTHER CHRISTIANS ON SABBATH. Proof of this fact is that immediately following their official pronouncement of the four requirements that were to be imposed on the Gentile converts, the Council adds, “For Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath (Acts 15:21).

Before attempting to read this aspect of the Council of Jerusalem in a manner favorable to Sabbatarianism, we must fit it into its total context. Please consider the following facts, mentioned in the previous two sections:

1. The only record of Christians attending synagogues on the Sabbath was when they went there as “missionaries” to convince the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah.
1. Every New Testament reference to Christians meeting together took place on Sunday— not Sabbath.
2. As presented elsewhere in this book, the apostolic Christians were likely gathering on Sundays in significant numbers by 50-70 AD., and probably less than 10 years after Paul wrote Colossians 2:14-17. As you will recall the Early Church documents that recorded an almost immediate “abandonment” of Sabbath-keeping by the Church. Why would Paul see a need to have the Gentiles receive education about Sabbath keeping, whether it is in a synagogue or a meeting of Christians, when he had instructed the Church not to enforce Sabbath keeping on them?
3. Christians were driven out of the synagogues for their belief in Christ. The Gentiles would not be able to get their instructions for Sabbath-keeping in the synagogue, even if the first Christians had believed that keeping the Jewish Sabbath was required.
4. “Moses” consisted of the TORAH, all 613 rules and regulations, most of which were ceremonial. Adventists themselves believe that the vast majority of what the delegates to the Council of Jerusalem referred to as “Moses” was nailed to the cross. If MacCarty is correct in his reading of Acts 15:21, the Gentiles are being expected to get extensive training in the very thing that the Council freed them from. Furthermore, the TORAH was nailed to the cross. Why would the Gentiles need any education in these obsolete matters?

A more consistent interpretation of the Council of Jerusalem's statement would be something like this:

Because many of the Gentile converts will be constantly hearing about the requirements of the TORAH when they visit the synagogue with their Jewish friends, or when they go to the synagogue with other Christians to help convince the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah and that the Sabbath met its fulfillment in Him, there is a danger that they will become confused and “Judaized” by the continual harping of the Jews that the 613 rules and regulations of the TORAH must still be observed by Christians. We, the Council of Jerusalem, must strongly convey to our new Gentile converts that they can be confident that this is not so.

Moses and what he recorded as the words of God for Israel (The TORAH) is what was taught in the synagogues. Most of the Gentile converts to Christianity, then, came from those same synagogues, who heard the Law read, and learned of Jewish culture and sensitivities as a result. When you consider this in relation to the prohibitions listed in the previous verse, it becomes plain the issue is also about avoiding offenses in their relationship to the Jewish Christians who, regardless of whether they follow the Law or not, still have those sensitivities in regards to their culture. If we are to conclude that the Gentile Christians received important instructions regarding their conduct as Christians by following Moses, then what Paul wrote in II Corinthians Chapter Three would be most strange in regards to having a veil before their eyes should they choose to live by, and continue in, the teachings of Moses—the Old Covenant.

One last observation. Dr. MacCarty is claiming that the Gentile Christians would have to go and be taught the Ten Commandments and the Sabbath in the Jewish Synagogues; necessary knowledge and practice for a Christian! It begs the question that, if the Ten Commandments, along with the Sabbath, were required of the Gentile Christians, why would they not learn about them from the church? Does the SDA send their members and seminary students to Synagogues in order to learn about the Ten Commandments?

DR. MACCARTY – THE BOOKS OF REVELATION AND ISAIAH PROVE THE ETERNAL NATURE OF THE SABBATH. “The book of Revelation is permeated with direct and indirect allusions to the Ten Commandments, showing their enduring nature.”

Dr. MacCarty cites Revelation’s frequent references to a number of the 10 Commandments as evidence that the 10 Commandments are permanent. This would not be surprising, since most of the other 10 Commandments represent natural laws of cause and effect, many of which were covered in the Noachian laws. As proof that the Sabbath was included, he cites Revelation’s reference to “The Lord’s Day” In Revelation 1:10. Biblical scholars have known for a very long time that the term, “Lord’s Day,” is never used in reference to the Sabbath. In all early Church writings, beginning in 70 AD with such a reference in the *Didache*, the Lord’s Day is always a reference to Sunday, the first day of the week. According to the article on The Book of Revelation in *Wikipedia*, this book was written somewhere between AD. 68-96. Therefore, John’s use of the term, The Lord’s Day, is consistent with early Church writers around 70 AD and thereafter.

Dr. MacCarty cites, as proof that the Sabbath continues to be kept in Heaven, the imagery of John the Revelator in describing the presence of the Ark of the Covenant in the Most Holy Place in Heaven, since the Sabbath commandment is written on the stone tablets that are in the Ark. Here is the biblical basis for what is found in the Ark courtesy of Robert K. Sanders:

Ex 25:21 - 22 (NIV) - Place the cover on top of the ark and put in the ark the Testimony, which I will give you. ²² There, above the cover between the two cherubim that are over the ark of the Testimony, I will meet with you and give you all my commands for the Israelites.

Deut. 10:5 (NIV) - Then I came back down the mountain and put the tablets in the ark I had made, as the LORD commanded me, and they are there now.

1 Kings 8:9 (NIV) - There was nothing in the ark except the two stone tablets that Moses had placed in it at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the Israelites after they came out of Egypt.

Heb 9:3 - 5 (NIV) - Behind the second curtain was a room called the Most Holy Place, ⁴ which had the golden altar of incense and the gold-covered ark of the covenant. This ark contained the gold jar of manna, Aaron’s staff that had budded, and the stone tablets of the covenant. Above the ark were the cherubim of the Glory, overshadowing the atonement cover.

Revelation 11:19 (NIV) -Then God’s temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a severe hailstorm.

MacCarty seems to assume many things for which there is little evidence. The Bible doesn't really tell us what is in the ark that was seen in Heaven. By the time the ark got into the hands of the Philistines, there was nothing left in it but the tables of stone after it was miraculously returned to Israel. Apparently the parchment that Moses wrote the other laws God gave him had long since deteriorated or had become lost. This parchment contained the laws for the annual and monthly Sabbaths. The writer of Hebrews apparently did not see the parchment upon which were

written the other 603 laws of Moses in the ark that was in the heavenly sanctuary. Since Adventists like to use Isaiah Chapter 66 to prove that the Sabbath will be kept in Heaven, there is a problem. If Adventists were to be correct in their reading of Isaiah 66— that the passage is a picture of what is going on in Heaven— Isaiah would teach that the eternally saved will have to keep the New Moon monthly Sabbaths in addition to the weekly Sabbath of the Decalogue. If only the tables of stone are in the ark that is in the heavenly sanctuary, would that not mean that the monthly sabbath laws would not be kept in Heaven? On top of all of this, Adventists believe the new moon sabbath celebrations were nailed to the cross because they were “ceremonial” in nature. Samuele Bacchiocchi and MacCarty are the only SDA Sabbath scholars we know of who contradict Ellen White by teaching that Christians must keep the monthly sabbath celebrations.

DR. MCCARTY – “IT IS BEYOND THE SCOPE OF THIS BOOK TO DISCUSS ALL THE BIBLICAL, THEOLOGICAL, AND HISTORICAL ISSUES INVOLVED IN THAT ON-GOING DISCUSSION [THE SABBATH DEBATE], EXCEPT AS THEY RELATE TO THE OLD AND NEW COVENANTS.” (P. 182)

Dr. MacCarty has wisely chosen to avoid any discussion of the historical issues, in particular. We now have conclusive evidence from early Christian writings that the adoption of Sunday observance was almost immediate. As you recall, the *Didache* is thought, particularly by American biblical scholars, to have been written as early as 50 AD— with somewhere between 50 and 70 AD highly probable. The *Didache* documents Christians worshiping on the first day of the week. More specifically, The *Didache* was a collection of the first Christian writings, and scholars believe that the part of this document that mentions the practice of meeting on Sunday to worship God was possibly written as early as 50 AD but no later than about 125 AD. As you may recall, Dr. Bacchiocchi conceded 140 AD for the universal adoption of Sunday observance— too early for the influence of sun worship and impossibly too early for the Roman Catholic Church to have had anything to do with it unless, of course, the Catholic Church is right about Peter being the first pope!

This history does, indeed, relate directly to New Covenant issues. If neither the influence of the Church at Rome, the influence of pagan sun worship, the influence of the Roman Catholic Church, or the Jewish persecutions between 100 AD and 140 AD caused Christians to “abandon” Sabbath-keeping, the only remaining explanation is that Christians recognized that the end of circumcision and the writings of St. Paul created the phenomenon of Sabbath abandonment. It is no wonder MacCarty does not want to talk about this subject!

THE SABBATH WILL BE OBSERVED IN THE NEW EARTH, SO HOW COULD ANTI-SABBATARIANS TEACH THAT IT WAS A CEREMONIAL LAW THAT WAS NAILED TO THE CROSS?

This topic was covered in great detail earlier. It is reviewed here because this section is devoted to refuting this specific author’s arguments.

After reiterating that the Sabbath was instituted at Creation for the benefit of all humankind long before Israel came into existence, he says the following:

People from every nation who responded to the gospel invitation by putting their trust in God were to be incorporated into His covenant community. It was written in the law: You and the alien shall be the same before the Lord. The same laws and regulations will apply both to you and to the alien living among you” (Num. 15:15-16). Zechariah spoke of a remnant of Philistines who could “become leaders in Judah (Zech. 9:6-7.) Isaiah specifically appealed to foreign converts: “Let no foreigner who has bound himself to the Lord say, “The Lord will surely exclude me from his people.’...For this is what the Lord says:. . .’foreigners who bind themselves to the Lord to serve him, to love the name of the Lord, and to worship him, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant—these I will

bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations” (Isa. 56:3-4, 6-7, NIV)

The same law that applies to both aliens living in the Israelite community and the Israelites themselves requires that the head of household for both groups must be circumcised in order to keep the TORAH, and therefore, to keep the Sabbath. A short-term alien visitor to the Israelite community was merely required to avoid offending his Jewish hosts by not doing any work during on the Sabbath during his stay. The *Jewish Encyclopedia* is clear about this fact.

The “holy mountain” in his passage almost certainly refers to the Jerusalem on this earth, and prior to the death of Christ on the cross. It is no surprise that everyone would be keeping the Sabbath at this time and place in the history of Israel. After all, the people would still be living under the terms of the Old Covenant, the TORAH, with all its 613 rules and regulations, including the requirements of burnt offerings and sacrifices which are NOT a part of the New Covenant dispensation.

MacCarty also attempts to utilize Isaiah 66, which he declares is a situation that takes place in Heaven and presents a picture of everyone coming to worship on Sabbaths:

“As the new heavens and the new earth that I make will endure before me,” declares the LORD, “so will your name and descendants endure.²³From one New Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, all mankind will come and bow down before me,” says the LORD. ²⁴“And they will go out and look upon the dead bodies of those who rebelled against me; their worm will not die, nor will their fire be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind.”

Most scholars recognize that this passage cannot be construed as representing the conditions in Heaven. Note that Isaiah says that their name and descendants will endure for as long as the new heavens and the new earth. There is no compelling reason to read the events of the next sentences to follow as being actually in the New Earth itself. Consider also that Seventh-day Adventists have traditionally followed Ellen G. White’s teaching that all the ceremonial laws were nailed to the cross, including the annual and monthly feast days, yet here we have a picture of people observing the monthly and annual sabbath feast days in Heaven? There will be no dead bodies to look at in Heaven. There will be no annual and monthly sabbath feast days, and there will be no weekly Sabbath either.

What it does say is that those who come before God do so from the time-frame, “from month to month and from week to week”, and not specifically on the Sabbath itself for the purpose of worship.

DR. MACCARTY – THE FACT THAT THE PROVISIONS OF THE VARIOUS COVENANTS CAN PROBABLY NOT BE CHANGED IS ILLUSTRATED BY TWO BIBLICAL STATEMENTS: (1) IN TWO PLACES, PAUL COMPARES THE PERMANENCE OF A PROPERLY EXECUTED WILL TO GOD’S COVENANTS AND STATES THAT THOSE DIVINE COVENANTS ARE LIKE THIS IN THAT THE MOSAIC COVENANT DID NOT DO AWAY WITH THE VALIDITY OF THE PROMISE OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT. (2) IN ANOTHER PLACE, PAUL STATES THAT THE LAW, INTRODUCED 430 YEARS AFTER THE PROMISE WAS GIVEN TO ABRAHAM, DID NOT CHANGE THE PROVISIONS OF THE COVENANT MADE WITH ABRAHAM. (3) MACCARTY ASSERTS THAT A PROPERLY EXECUTED HUMAN WILL CANNOT BE CHANGED “UNLESS THE CIRCUMSTANCES TO WHICH THEY WERE ADDRESSED NO LONGER EXIST OR HAVE MATERIALLY CHANGED (P. 188).” (4) THEN HE ARGUES THAT IN REGARD TO THE SABBATH, NEITHER OF THESE POSSIBLE TYPES OF CHANGES APPLIES, SO, THEREFORE, THE PROVISIONS OF THE NEW

COVENANT CANNOT POSSIBLY ALTER IT. (5) HE STATES THAT JESUS AFFIRMED THAT THERE COULD BE NO CHANGE TO THE SABBATH WHEN HE SAID THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN. (6) HE ASSERTS THAT JESUS NEVER QUESTIONED WHETHER THE SABBATH SHOULD BE KEPT, BUT ONLY HOW AND WHY IT SHOULD BE KEPT.

As we have documented elsewhere in the paper, Paul states that the law (TORAH) was given to the Children of Israel as a “tutor” (Gr. “paidagogos”; one who directs a child) because they were extremely stubborn. The Children of Israel had been slaves for more than 400 years and had picked up some very bad habits of thinking along the way. It would appear that the Sabbath, like many other Jewish ordinances, was designed to keep Israel in line and on a straight path. For example, death was the penalty for picking up sticks on the Sabbath.

Jesus lived during the reign of the TORAH. How could He be expected to teach the Jews of His day that they didn't have to keep the Sabbath while the TORAH was still in force? The people did, in fact, have to keep the Sabbath! But Jesus appeared to be preparing His people to understand that the Sabbath was not a moral commandment because He and His disciples broke the Sabbath at times. Jesus, Himself, made no apology for His own actions, nor did he condemn His disciples for breaking the Sabbath in these incidences. The Scriptures state that Jesus DID break the Sabbath.

William Hohmann has this additional comment:

McCarty overlooks or ignores the fact that both old and new covenants are/were also testaments. The old went into effect upon the death and spilled blood of substitute animals while the new covenant / testament came into force upon the death of God Himself in the personage of Jesus Christ and His spilled blood. Paul amply explains how the first covenant ended also upon the death of Jesus even as a marriage covenant ends upon the death of either party. McCarty's statements would have us conclude a marriage covenant does not really end upon the death of either party. God divorced Israel in the Old Covenant, and His death finalized the dissolution of that relationship with Israel. As Jesus stated before His death in regards to Israel, “Behold, your house is left to you desolate.” If it were not enough that God died thus ending that first covenant, the Jewish convert to Christianity also died to that covenant law through baptism; symbolic of death and burial. MacCarty's actions are one of a person trying desperately to resurrect people back to that which they died to, and that which forever ended upon the death of Christ; the Old Covenant and all therein, including the Sabbath command.

What McCarty does is rehash all the old arguments that Sabbatarians use to prop up the Sabbath, thus reinforcing the Sabbath among his fellow Sabbatarians, but offers no proper evidence to support it in New Covenant theology, and does nothing to address all the evidence to the contrary. This is strange scholarship for one who claims to be a scholar.

If, as he himself claims, that the provisions of the covenants cannot be changed, such as the sabbath, why does he then turn right around and change the provisions by adding Gentile Christians to it? How could even Jesus have changed the provisions, adding all mankind to it, if the Sabbatarian take of Mark 2:27 is correct? Is Christ and the Father really that careless when it comes to their covenants?

DR. MACCARTY – ROMANS 14:5 (REGARDING EVERY DAY ALIKE) CAN NOT POSSIBLY REFER TO THE SABBATH BECAUSE THE CONTEXT OF HIS STATEMENT IS IN REGARD TO DISPUTABLE MATTERS, AND THE SABBATH IS NOT A DISPUTABLE MATTER. A NUMBER OF NON-SABBATARIAN BIBLICAL SCHOLARS CONCUR WITH THIS INTERPRETATION OF ROMANS 14:5.

If the Sabbath were not a disputable matter, we could not be disputing it right now, but we are. On the other hand, it would be impossible for us to write a paper demonstrating that it is alright to murder, commit adultery, or dishonor our parents.

The Sabbath *is* a disputable matter. The SDA has been in the business of disputing the sabbath from their inception. D. M. Canright disputed it beginning in 1887, and his writings live on to plague Adventists till this very day. Dr. MacCarty's claim to the contrary is comical and nothing more than an attempt to obfuscate the issue through semantics. Every SDA scholar we have cited in this book wrote about and debated the Sabbath! They may as well claim the sky is not blue, and refuse to look up as proof of it.

Moses wrote his account of the events of the 7th day of Creation in such a way as to forbid even a remote possibility that Hebrew readers could think, even for one moment, that his words represented the establishment of a Sabbath-keeping ordinance. Colossians 2:14-17 is the clearest possible command that the Church not require the observance of it, any more than they would be required to observe Jewish dietary laws, the annual feast days, and the monthly feast days. The fact that Sabbatarianism requires the keeping of the Jewish dietary laws, annual sabbath feast days, and monthly sabbath feast days is a hugely disputable item in itself. The claim that the Sabbath is indisputable belies the Sabbatarian's psychological make-up that forces a denial of the facts. The mindset is such that the Sabbath *is* required, and *must* be required; therefore, to them, there is no credible, believable evidence to the contrary, period. It is exactly as St. Paul describes in II Corinthians, chapter 3, regarding a veil before the eyes of those who hold to what Moses taught and wrote; the old covenant laws. It is a demonstration of arrogance and pride that is a stench in the nostrils of God. They must have something to brag about; they must have a pride in their own accomplishments, such as "keeping" the sabbath. It all comes down however to lip service.

DR. MACCARTY – COLOSSIANS 2:14-17 DOES NOT TEACH THAT THE 10 COMMANDMENTS, ALONG WITH THE SABBATH COMMANDMENT, WERE NAILED TO THE CROSS. INSTEAD, WHAT WAS NAILED TO THE CROSS WAS THE SINNER'S BOND OF DEBT, OR AN "I-O-U." THIS VIEW IS SUPPORTED BY A NUMBER OF NON-SABBATARIAN BIBLICAL SCHOLARS.

In our discussion of Dr. Bacchiocchi's unfortunate interpretation of Colossians 2:14-17, we thoroughly refuted this claim and provided the reader with a Greek equivalent translation that shows that this interpretation is next to impossible. And, as we have mentioned before, the apostolic Church — that is, the Church in existence during the time the apostles were still alive— seemed to have no difficulty understanding that Paul's statement in Colossians 2:14-17 meant that the weekly Sabbath was nailed to the cross. Nothing else could explain why Christians were coming together on Sundays in significant numbers by 70 AD, and had "abandoned" Sabbath-keeping on a universal basis by 100 to 140 AD. If we have to choose between the interpretation of a small number of modern day biblical scholars and the interpretation of the Christians who actually lived while the Apostles were still alive, there is no contest. The Christians of the early, apostolic Church were right there in the midst of these events and chose to "abandon" the Sabbath even while some apostles were still alive.

Dr. MacCarty creates good rhetoric for his belief system's views when he talks about how a belief that the 10 Commandments were nailed to the cross opens wide the floodgates of sin. He, then, can look good to his readers who are sympathetic to the Sabbatarian cause. He is seen dashing in to protect the honor of God's Law by protecting the Decalogue at all costs. It has been said that half-truths are more dangerous than an out-right lie. What he fails to tell the reader is that a simple understanding of the distinction the Jews made between TORAH and Noachian law negates his ill-conceived argument. He fails to point out that the Noachian laws given to all the peoples of the world in the beginning did not include a Sabbath commandment. These facts provide an insurmountable road block to the New Sabbatarian theology of Doctors Bacchiocchi and MacCarty and their claim that it was an IOU document that was nailed to the cross instead of the LAW itself. In fact these simple facts do away with the need to provide this escape mechanism in the first place.

DR. MACCARTY - PAUL'S REBUKE TO THE GALATIANS FOR RETURNING TO THE OBSERVATION OF "SPECIAL DAYS AND MONTHS AND SEASONS AND YEARS" IN GALATIANS 4 IS A REBUKE TO THEM FOR RETURNING TO THE OBSERVATION OF THE SACRED DAYS OF THE PAGAN CALENDAR, RATHER THAN THE JEWISH SACRED DAYS OF THE TORAH. THUS, IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH SABBATH-KEEPING. THIS IS THE OPINION OF A NUMBER OF NON-SABBATARIAN BIBLICAL SCHOLARS.

This question has been extensively covered elsewhere in this paper, but a review, especially for Seventh-day Adventist readers, might be helpful. Most readers should be able to settle this question in their minds simply by reading Galatians Chapters 3 and 4. This is not a problem for a biblical scholar and only requires a little common sense. When the following considerations are reviewed, it is difficult to imagine how anyone could come to the conclusion that the Sabbath is not targeted by Galatians 4:

1. The entire book of Galatians is targeted at the problem of Judaization in the apostolic Church.
2. Chapter three targets the problem of the Judaizers in the Church at Galatia, rebuking the Galatian believers for their desire to observe points of the Law of Moses. In Paul's discussion of this "law," he states that "it was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come (verse 19)." Furthermore, he says, "So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law (verse 25)." Paul's Jewish readers, understanding the difference between Noachian and TORAH law, would understand that Paul was not saying that Christians were free to disobey the basic moral laws. Note that this law system comes to an end when the Messiah appears, which is consistent with the TORAH concept.
3. At the beginning of Chapter Four, he compares the TORAH to the kind of rules children are subject to and says it represents "slavery under the basic principles of the world (Verse 3)."
4. MacCarty teaches that Paul was admonishing the Galatians for turning back to heathen observances and practices, but Paul states in Verse 8 that they, the Galatians, are known by God. The Galatians are turning back, not to heathen practices, but to outdated, outmoded Jewish practices. Paul says, "...how is it that you are turning back to THOSE weak and miserable principles (verse 9). THOSE is clearly a reference to the "principles" he mentioned in verse 3, which are the principles of TORAH law, designed for children who are released from these laws "at a time set by his father (verse 2)." The second phrase is worded the same way as the first one.
5. The clincher comes just a few sentences later when Paul, while discussing the source of the temptation to return to the observation of TORAH rituals and ordinances, identifies the guilty party. He says, "These people are zealous to win you over, but for no good. What they want is to alienate you from us, so that you may be zealous for them (Verse 17-18)." It is clear that "these people" are the Judaizers Paul has been discussing in Chapters Three and Four. Any other conclusion stretches the principles of literary interpretation to a level that is self-evidently absurd.

In conclusion, Dr. MacCarty's attempt to circumvent the relevance of Galatians 4 to the Sabbath debate by attempting to teach that the passage is a rebuke to the Galatians for returning to the observance of the sacred days of the pagan calendar fails to convince. It does not take a biblical scholar to figure out what Galatians 4 means. All it takes is for someone to apply the simplest principles of common sense interpretation, letting the Scriptures speak for themselves. Bottom line is that Paul is saying that the principle is exactly the same, whether the days of the calendar are pagan or TORAH related. In both cases, it represents additional requirements beyond the Gospel for salvation and a tendency to promote the role of human effort in achieving salvation or spiritual "perfection".