

## About the Jewish Sabbath

By Ronald L. Dart

What did the First Christians believe about the Jewish Sabbath day? When I speak of the First Christians, I am talking about those Christians who were alive and working while the New Testament was being written. I am talking about Peter, James, John, Aquila and Priscilla, Paul, Apollos, and the entire leadership and membership of the Christian community. What did they think about the Sabbath day?

I'm going to state a proposition for you to consider, and then I'm going to explain why I think it is so: During the total time when the New Testament was being written, the entire Christian church throughout the known world observed the Sabbath day. No, I don't mean Sunday. I mean what most people would call "the Jewish Sabbath," Saturday. As late as the 80s and 90s of the first century, when the last words of the New Testament were being written, the New Testament church universally observed the Sabbath. This is beyond dispute. It is not a matter of a few proof texts and technical arguments. It is something woven into the very fabric of the New Testament.

What may be the first subtle clue is found in Luke's account of one of Jesus' earliest sermons. It was not long after his baptism when Jesus, "came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read."

No one can doubt for a moment that the seventh day Sabbath was the universally recognized day of rest and worship among all Jews when Christ came on the scene. So it was Jesus' custom, his ethos, to attend synagogue on the Jewish Sabbath and that Sabbath was, week by

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### *An Example to Imitate . . .*

"My good friend Richard provides a weekly Bible study on the Sabbath for McNeil Island prisoners. We are ardent fans of your *Law and Covenant* book and have donated a few copies to the prison library. Richard is teaching from the book and limiting check out times to a week, because of a waiting list. Also, the inmates are allowed to have th[eir] own personal cassette tape recorders. The prison library has accepted and categorized several hundred of the CEM tapes accumulated over the years, that were donated. . ." (WA). Think what a difference this could make in the lives of prisoners if a concerted effort were made to get *Law & Covenant* and *Born to Win* CDs in prisons throughout this country. Will you do your part?

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week, on the day we call Saturday. Jesus was a member of this synagogue and had been accepted there ever since he was a boy. This was surely not the first time he had stood to read in this synagogue.

### **The Sabbath identified their God**

Here is my question: How did the Jews in that synagogue think of the Sabbath? What was the status and meaning of the Sabbath day in their faith and practice? How important was it? Bear in mind also that all Jesus' disciples were Jews. They had grown up attending synagogue and had learned to read the Scriptures in synagogue schools. How did Jesus' disciples look at the Sabbath? These are questions we can answer with clarity.

First and foremost, the Sabbath was the fourth of the Ten Commandments. It was the heart and core of their covenant with God. But for the Jew of those days, the Sabbath was more than that. It lay at the very heart of the identity of their God. They all knew well the significance of this passage from the book of Exodus:

“And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you’” (Exodus 31:12-13 NKJV).

Due to a curious convention in most Bibles, something here is easily overlooked. Whenever you see the small caps LORD in your Bible, it means the Hebrew word

there is “Jehovah” (with the J pronounced as Y). It all depends on the vowels inserted. YHWH (written Hebrew has no vowels). It is pronounced “Yahweh,” or more familiarly, “Jehovah.”

The Sabbath, then, was not merely a sign of who the Jews were, but the sign that identified who their God was—by name. “Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am Jehovah.” For a Jew in that time and place, changing the Sabbath was unthinkable. It would have been tantamount to changing his God. The Sabbath was not going away. It was a perpetual covenant to last forever. It even carried the penalty of death for a presumptuous violation. For a Jew of the first century, the Sabbath could not be taken lightly.

### **Not keeping the Sabbath led to being exiled**

They all knew from Ezekiel's prophecies that failure to keep the sign of the Sabbath was a direct reason why their fathers had spent 70 years in Babylonian exile. Ezekiel was already a well recognized prophet when the Jews found themselves in Babylon. Some of the elders came to him to inquire of God, but God was having none of it. “Speak to these elders,” God said to Ezekiel, “and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: Have you come to inquire of Me? As I live, says the Lord GOD, I will not be inquired of by you’” (Ezekiel 20:3 NKJV).

These are strong words, and strongly put. He went on to say,

“Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies them (Ezekiel 20:11-12 NKJV). Note that well. God gave them the Sabbath as a sign so they might know who their God was. They were just coming out of Egypt where there was one set of gods, and they were headed for Canaan where there was yet another set of gods. The Sabbath was more than just another law. It was the law that identified their God. It told them whose laws and rites to practice. This is extremely important in understanding the mind set of all the Jews of the first century.

What does that have to do with Christians? That is what I explain in a new set of programs in the *First Christians* collection. To get a *FREE* CD with two programs on this important subject, just check the box on the enclosed card and return it. You won't want to miss this—it explains the Sabbath from an entirely different perspective.

### *In Memory*

Christian Educational Ministries is especially grateful for the generous donation given in memory of Leanna Hollon who was recently killed in a tragic automobile accident leaving her parents' home in Hamilton, Ohio, to choose her engagement photographs. She was engaged to Kevin Bradley, and is survived by her son, Connor, and parents, Glen and Rebecca Hollon. Our prayers and deepest sympathy go out to all of these fine people in this time of such great loss.

# 2009 Feast of Tabernacles

## *Sermon Schedule*

All services will be held in the Emerald Coast Conference Center

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Speaker</b>
Friday, October 2	7:30 p.m.	Ronald L. Dart
Saturday, October 3	11:00 a.m.*	Ronald L. Dart
Sunday, October 4	11:00 a.m.	John Reedy
Monday, October 5	11:00 a.m.	Larry Watkins
Tuesday, October 6	11:00 a.m.	Jeff Osborn
Wednesday, October 7	11:00 a.m.	Ronald L. Dart
Thursday, October 8	11:00 a.m.	Jim O'Brien
Friday, October 9	11:00 a.m.**	Youth Day
Saturday, October 10	11:00 a.m.	Ronald L. Dart

\* A Holy Day offering will be taken

\*\* Youth Day 2009

## *Seminar Schedule*

(subject to change)

You will be provided another full season of seminars to learn and enjoy. You will be learning from Nehemiah, Esther, and Paul. Our actions in accountability, prayer, serving, the little things we do, how we handle conflict, and our finances will be examined. We will take a closer look at love, the patriarchs, and the principle objects of the Tabernacle. And finally, we will explore “The Privileged Planet” God created for us and the incredible gift in His Word. I hope you will join us in partaking of this wonderful feast of presentations. (Ushers will be passing out the Seminar Brochure with the seminar descriptions and schedule.)

### **Sunday, October 4, 9:30 a.m.**

**Pam Dewey:** *Little Things Mean a Lot*—Jesus’ parable said that those who are faithful regarding a “few things” or “a little” will be in charge of “many things.” This seminar will explore just what might be included in the idea of “little things.”

**Phil McCollum:** *Nehemiah’s Message to You (Part 1)*—We’ll look at Nehemiah’s motivation for service, how he tackled obstacles, and how his actions can be applied today in our marriages, families, churches, and communities.

### **Monday, October 5, 9:30 a.m.**

**Pam Dewey:** *Reaching Out to a Generation in Search of Answers*—If you are a Christian, you have answers that multitudes of people around you in this generation on earth desperately need right now. This seminar will help you explore what you can do to remedy that situation.

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*Seminar Schedule  
continued from page 3. . .*

**Monday, October 5, 9:30 a.m. (continued)**

**Phil McCollum:** *Nehemiah's Message to You (Part 2)*—In this seminar we'll examine some clues found in the last five chapters of Nehemiah that will help us understand what appears to be important to God. Prepare to be surprised.

**Elaine McCollum:** *It's Tough Being a Woman*—In this seminar I will be sharing highlights from the Beth Moore Bible Study on Esther.

**Tuesday, October 6, 9:30 a.m.**

**Larry Watkins:** *Conflict Resolution*—When we handle conflict healthily, we create feelings of safety and relationships can actually even flourish through conflict. Come and learn how to handle conflict safely!

**Terry Gray:** *Missionary Journeys of Paul*—A description/map/display of the Apostle Paul and his missionary journeys, including who he was prior to his conversion on the road to Damascus, his travels through Asia Minor, Italy, and parts of Europe, and a brief look at his letters to the churches.

**Scarlett Stough:** *All Kinds of Prayers*—A presentation and interactive discussion on the value of prayer through knowing God's character and his purpose for prayer.

**Wednesday, October 7, 9:30 a.m.**

**Rick Hoot:** *The Tabernacle*—Explores the principle objects of the Tabernacle and their spiritual significance. Lecture and video.

**Ken Swiger:** *Older Than Dirt*—Are the life spans of people in the Old Testament literal? Join us as we prove from the Holy Bible that they actually were years as we know them today—and learn why it should matter to you as a believer.

**Nancy Vandemark:** *Share How You Serve*—Come and share how you or your congregations serve. Are you looking for a way to serve? Find out why and how people have come to do the service they are performing.

**Thursday, October 8, 9:30 a.m.**

**Larry Watkins:** *Biblical Economics, the Solution to Hard Times*—Theology and economics go together far better than most think! So we can be content, we can feel safe and secure as we seek not man's, but *God's*, fix for our finances.

**Jeannie Hinds:** *What is Love, Anyway?*—Since “God is Love” we can, through an in-depth study of love, work toward becoming “unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

**Friday, October 9, 9:30 a.m.**

**Rick Hoot:** *The Privileged Planet*—Presents scientific evidence that the earth is the product of intelligent design. One hour video with questions & answers.

**Jeff Osborn:** *God's Gift, Our Package*—God has given us an incredible gift in his Word. There is something of far more worth and value than any physical gift awaiting us. How often have we lacked gratitude for what God gives us because we focus too hard on the package it came in?

**Drs. Ryan and Justin Berlin:** *Restoring The Temple (a wellness lecture)*—God has given us a body, his temple, and taught us how to keep it. Drs. Justin Berlin and Ryan Berlin lead a journey into restoring the temple. Learn how to live a clean lifestyle that will produce health and draw others to Christ so that our Father and his house may be honored.

## ***YEA Feast Classes That Sizzle***

Put a bunch of fun in the Feast for kids 3 to 20 with well-planned, action-packed daily classes and seminars, from Sunday, October 4<sup>th</sup> through Friday, October 9<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Never has the teaching staff been better. For six days there will be untamed excitement that will make Bible lessons be long remembered.

Kids and/or parents should register Friday, October 2, beginning at 6:30 p.m., or Sabbath morning between 10 and 11 a.m. *FREE* YEA full-color books will be provided to each student.

Themes and lesson titles are listed below:

### **Beginners (3-5)**

Theme: ***Tales from The Kingdom***

- Lesson 1: Feast for a King
- Lesson 2: God Tells the King “No”
- Lesson 3: God’s New House
- Lesson 4: A Friend Indeed
- Lesson 5: Josiah the Child King
- Lesson 6: Crown Her Queen Esther

### **Primaries (6-8)**

Theme: ***Going Places***

- Lesson 1: You are Tabernacling!
- Lesson 2: What Would Jesus Do?
- Lesson 3: A Good Example
- Lesson 4: Giving is Good
- Lesson 5: Jesus was a Child, Too!
- Lesson 6: Quit and Quote!

### **Juniors (9-11)**

Theme: ***Exploring God’s Word***

- Lesson 1: Anyone Camping?
- Lesson 2: An Awesome Prayer
- Lesson 3: Be Bold!
- Lesson 4: Bible Heroes
- Lesson 5: Equipped With Love
- Lesson 6: Faithful Friends

### **Intermediates (12-15)**

Theme: ***Get Real***

- Lesson 1: Learn Something!
- Lesson 2: Life’s Puzzle
- Lesson 3: Your Gifts
- Lesson 4: Bumps in the Road
- Lesson 5 Money Matters
- Lesson 6: Where Are You Going?

### **Senior Teens Seminars (16-20)**

Theme: ***Smart Talk***

- Seminar 1: Feast Talk
- Seminar 2: Parent Talk Isn’t Cheap
- Seminar 3: Say It Better
- Seminar 4: Tune-In
- Seminar 5: Money Talk
- Seminar 6: Power Talk

## ***Youth Day 2009***

### **“The Great Deliverance”**

After years of slavery, a new nation is delivered. Join us as our youth lead us through the plagues to the rescue of a great nation. Our youth will entertain and edify through songs, testimonials, and a skit.

Come join us on Friday, October 9, to worship with our youth.

# Activities for All Ages

The Feast is a time for great rejoicing. Whether young or old, we have something for you. Every activity is organized to add to the joyful atmosphere of the Festival. Many opportunities are available for fellowship. Please check the Activity Table and/or monitors for complete details of every activity and join in on the fun!

## **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3**

**YEA Orientation** immediately following the worship service in Palm Room 1. This is a command performance for all teaching staff. Lunch will be provided by CEM

**Teen/Young Adult Meet & Greet** 7:00 p.m. See “old” friends, meet new ones

## **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4**

**Teen/Young Adult Beach Party** 1:30 p.m. Fun in the Sun, snacks and refreshments provided by CEM Location TBA

**Pie & Ice Cream Social** 7:00 p.m. Fun and fellowship, Emerald Grand Ballrooms II, III, IV, refreshments provided by CEM

## **MONDAY, OCTOBER 5**

**Family Picnic** 2:00 p.m. Clement Taylor Park, games, fellowship, clown, lunch provided by CEM

**Young Adult Dinner and Social** 7:00 p.m. Waterscape Condominiums

## **TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6**

**Festival Association Meeting** 1:00 p.m. Members and future members invited, snacks and drinks provided by CEM

**Family Dance** 7:00 p.m. Refreshments, music for all ages, Emerald Grand Ballrooms

**Young at Heart Dance** 7:00 p.m. Refreshments, music for “younger ears,” Emerald Grand Ballrooms

## **WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7**

**Senior Luncheon** 1:00 p.m. Olive Garden, 216 Miracle Strip Pkwy. (across FW Bridge, on left)

**Variety Show Practice** 3:00 p.m. Emerald Grand Ballroom I

**Variety Show** 7:00 p.m. Emerald Grand Ballroom I, a fun-filled night of music and entertainment

## **THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8**

**Youth Day Practice** 1:00 p.m. Emerald Grand Ballroom, all participants must be there (and parents of the little ones), pizza and drinks provided by CEM

**Golf Scramble**, 1:00 p.m. 4-person mixed scramble at Signal Hill Golf Club

**Young Adult Worship Service** 7:00 p.m. Contemporary Worship Service for all ages

## **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10**

**Farewell Luncheon** 1:30 Location TBA

# Come, and Learn

By Paula Hughes

“There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down” (Matthew 24:2). The disciples could not believe that the strong, mighty Temple, the very seat of God, was not to be a permanent fixture of life into the distant future. In their minds, such a catastrophe could only occur at the end of the world. Had they missed an important lesson of the Feast of Tabernacles, even though they had observed the Feast all of their lives?

Could you be missing the lessons of the Feast, too? Mark K. Smith (Learning Theory, 2003) wrote of a learning continuum, with acquisition learning at one end and formalized learning at the other. We are all familiar with formalized learning—it is what we experience in school. Smith described acquisition learning as those “unintentional and usually accidental learning events that occur continuously as we walk through life.” This kind of learning takes place within families, especially as family members learn their roles, tasks, and responsibilities to one another by their daily contacts.

Don’t miss this opportunity to learn your place in the family, to connect with your brothers and sisters, and to learn other lessons of the Feast, including our own status as strangers and pilgrims in this life. Jesus invited us to come and learn of him, promising we’d find rest unto our souls (Matthew 11:29).

At the Feast, both ends of the learning continuum meet for young and old in informative, in-depth sermons, YEA classes and seminars, adult seminars, and in the simple fact of your presence as you participate in worship, activities, and fellowship. Come, and learn.

## Remembering Our Departed Loved Ones

Some of our loved ones will be missing from our midst this Feast of Tabernacles because their temporary life on this earth has ended. They added much to our lives and much to the Feast. We’ll miss them and we want to honor them in a PowerPoint slide presentation. If you will send a few pictures and a brief remembrance of a loved one who passed on during this past year to Ken Swiger at [sdcaorg@aol.com](mailto:sdcaorg@aol.com), or mail them to Ken Swiger, 7343 Shaw Ferry Rd., Lenoir City, TN 37772, you can share your fond memories as we honor our departed loved ones who have gone before us.



## **SPECIAL OFFER** Time with God, Reflections on the Psalms 55-73

**New! Just off the press!** This brand new book by Ronald L. Dart, the fourth in a continuing series of *Reflection on the Psalms* is for readers. This is another book (TWG04) you will want to add to your collection. The psalms are a rich source of the thoughts of men of God. They will touch you because you have some of the same fears, the same hurts, the same loves. Reflecting on these psalms will change your life. There is much to be learned from the psalms. Make this chapbook and the others in the series a part of your daily prayer and mediation. These books will make a perfect Feast gift for a friend or loved one. Each book can be carried in your briefcase or purse to read on a plane, or while you are in a doctor’s waiting room. All 150 psalms were initially produced in audio form for people on the move. This beautifully presented ten CD album (PCDS) is also available from Christian Educational Ministries. Spending time reflecting on the psalms can change your prayers—it can change you! Paperback only, \$7.95.

## Exciting Opportunity

By Heather Holmes

An exceptional 2009 Feast of Tabernacles awaits us all in Fort Walton Beach, Florida. You have an exciting opportunity to make this Feast even better. A fabulous Feast such as the CEM Festival Association provides for you cannot happen without many volunteers giving of their time and talents. Your help is needed for various activities and events at this Feast. My hope is to compile a running list of volunteers, noting where each of you feels comfortable doing what you enjoy. We hope you will keep coming back in the future. If you are interested in serving in any capacity, please contact me, Heather Holmes, your friendly Festival Association Coordinator, at [holmes\\_hl@yahoo.com](mailto:holmes_hl@yahoo.com).

## *What Our Listeners Say. . .*

“The Bible Study Series is just great and I look forward to my time with you each Friday night. Ezekiel has been a tough book but a very interesting one. Keep up the good work” (M, Omaha, NE).

“Mr. Dart, I have read your essay, ‘A Broken Wall’ three times now. I have understood a little more of the points you were making as I’ve read and meditated on the essay. Having listened to your Samuel and Kings radio shows, I have a better insight into the cause of the decline of Israel and Judah. Our nation’s decision to not acknowledge our Creator has harmed us in so many ways. This really begins to undermine the current health care reform debates, in that we can no longer look to the endowment of our Creator as the giver of life. Where does that leave the infirm, the handicapped, and the elderly? Expendable in the name of saving money?”

“Thank you for the work you do. I know you have mentioned you have no desire to be a prophet; however, thank you for continuing to yield in service to God” (DL).

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## Live Streaming of Feast Sermons

Quite a nice group of people enjoyed the CEM Feast of Tabernacles last year through live streaming of the sermons on the Internet. For further details watch our website at [www.borntowin.net](http://www.borntowin.net) and sign up for the CEM newsletter to stay current and informed.

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Feast of Trumpets, Dallas/Ft. Worth Area** - CEM will meet with the North Texas Church of God for this Festival, September 19, 2009 at 2 p.m. at the Browning Heights Presbyterian Church, 5121 Stanley Keller Rd., Haltom City, TX. Ronald L. Dart will conduct the worship service, followed by a potluck meal. Coming from Arlington: go north on I-820; at North East Mall, stay on I-820, it will change to I-820 west; continue to the Old Denton Hwy. (377) exit, turn left (south) at the light; go about 2 miles, turn right on Stanley Keller Rd.; go about two miles to the Browning Heights Church on the right. For more information, please contact Ralph Collins of Fort Worth by phone, 817-246-1874, or by email, [r.collins@sbcglobal.net](mailto:r.collins@sbcglobal.net)—or call Larry Watkins at the Christian Educational Ministries’ office, 1-888-BIBLE 44, or email him at [lsw@cemnetwork.com](mailto:lsw@cemnetwork.com).

**Atonement Service** - Destin, FL area at 11 a.m., September 28. Call 1-888-BIBLE-44 or check [www.borntowin.net](http://www.borntowin.net) for location.

### *Christian Educational Ministries*

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*That the man of God may be proficient  
and equipped for every good work.*