

THE OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2004 SENIOR SABBATH SCHOOL QUARTERLY

The current Quarterly overviews each of the 12 chapters in the book of Daniel. Here are several helpful points to consider:

1 - Page 49: The reader is told that Ellen White said that, when the National Sunday Law is enacted, “Adventists should hold additional worship services on Sunday, as well as on the true Sabbath,” because this is what is taught in *9 Testimonies*, 232-233.

The Quarterly thus gives the impression that Sunday morning worship services should be held at that time. *This is not true!* Read *9T 232-233, CT 550-551, 5T 713-715, Ev 232, 9T 235-238*. (See quotations at the end of this article.)

When it is enacted, the National Sunday law will require attendance at a worship service on Sunday. That is the heart of the law. *Our Quarterly should not instruct our people, worldwide, to “hold additional worship services on Sunday” at that time!* To do this is to prepare them for disaster when the crisis arrives!

This is a very serious matter. If, when the National Sunday Law is enacted, any of our local Adventist churches obey the law by holding worship services on Sunday morning, they will not experience persecution—because they will be obeying the law. Because they know that only the Bible Sabbath is the only true day of special worship but, in obedience to the law are worshipping on Sunday, they will receive the mark of the beast.

What does it mean to obey the National Sunday Law? We know that it does not mean cessation from physical labor, because in *9T 232-233* and *CT 550-551*, we are told that, at that time, we should not openly do physical work on Sunday; instead we should conduct missionary activity in the community.

Obeying the National Sunday Law does not require going to a Catholic Church. It does not require joining a regular Sundaykeeping Protestant church. It does not mean

having normal, everyday morning and evening family worship at home. **It means attending a church—any church—on Sunday morning, in obedience to the law, in order to worship God. We must not do that!** *We must not tell our people, when the crisis arrives, they should do that.*

2 - Page 60: “Christians of the first four centuries never confused Sabbath with Sunday but for a time celebrated both.”

That is partly correct, but could lead to a historical error. First, Christians in various localities kept both days for many, many centuries, not just during the first four centuries. Second, it was not until the 18th century that any Christians called Sunday the “Sabbath.” The Puritans initiated this practice, calling it the “Christian Sabbath” while still acknowledging that the true Sabbath (“the Jewish Sabbath”) was on the seventh day of the week. It is a historical fact that, throughout the Dark Ages, Christians knew that the Sabbath was not Sunday. They were told that the Sabbath was the day the Jews kept in honor of the Ten Commandments but Sunday, the Lord’s Day, was to be observed in honor of Christ’s resurrection.

3 - Page 72: “The historical context of the chapter [Daniel 8] shows that it’s talking only about the sanctuary in heaven.”

The author’s objective may be very good; but, in reality, the first part of the chapter (the first 9 of its 27 verses) refers to events on earth, not to the Sanctuary in heaven.

4 - Page 58 (and 75): The assumption is made that pagan Rome and papal Rome are identical. But this is not true.

“In the sixth century the papacy had become firmly established. Its seat of power was fixed in the imperial city, and the bishop of Rome was declared to be the head over the entire church. *Paganism had given place to the papacy.* The dragon had given to the beast ‘his power, and his seat, and great authority.’ Revelation

13:2.”—*Great Controversy*, 54.

Although it is true that papal Rome arose within the territory formerly held by pagan Rome, pagan and papal Rome constitute two separate entities. Some of the previous empires (Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Grecia) also had overlapping territories.

5 - Page 91: “‘To finish the transgression’ [Dan 9:24]. Transgression refers to the break in relationship between God and humankind. Through His sacrifice on the cross, Jesus brought to an end the broken relationship and restored us to God.”

It should be clarified that, defining sin as a broken relationship with God (as the above statement in the Quarterly says) is a new theology concept, based on Isaiah 59:2: “But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear.”

In reality, *Great Controversy*, 493, explains that “the only definition of sin” is given in 1 John 3:4: “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” Sin is breaking God’s law; it results in separation from God. Separation is not the cause of sin, but one of its terrible effects.

6 - Pages 10:2, 6; 12:5; 28:2 encourage skepticism and disbelief about the Bible and moral principles. Those paragraphs should not have been included.

WHAT TO DO WHEN THE SUNDAY LAW IS ENACTED

In obedience to the command, “Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work” (*Ex 20:9*), we are to worship God on the holy Sabbath day **and use Sunday for work—not ordinary labor, but missionary work of all kinds**, including evangelistic meetings and small group Bible studies. **It is urgent that we understand what to do when the National Sunday Law is enacted.**

Here are several statements which clarify this. (Some of the statements referred to a Sunday law in Australia.)

“Seventh-day Adventists were to show their wisdom **by refraining from their ordinary work on that day, devoting it to missionary effort** . . . Keep right on with your missionary work, with your Bibles in your hands, and the enemy will see that he has worsted his own cause. One does not receive the mark of the beast because he shows that he realizes the wisdom of keeping the peace **by refraining from work that gives offense, doing at the same time a work of the highest importance. When we devote Sunday to missionary work**, the whip will be taken out of the hands of the arbitrary zealots who would be well pleased to humiliate Seventh-day Adventists . . .

Sunday can be used for carrying forward various lines of work that will accomplish much for the Lord. On this day open-air meetings and cottage meetings can be held. House-to-house work can be done. Those who write can devote this day to writing their articles. Whenever it is possible, let religious services be held on Sunday. Make these meetings intensely interesting. Sing genuine revival hymns, and speak with power and assurance of the Saviour’s love. Speak on temperance and on true religious experience. You will thus learn much about how to work, and will reach many souls.”—9 *Testimonies* 232-233.

[The phrase, “religious meetings,” in the above passage obviously refers to evangelistic meetings and Bible studies, not to regular church services of our own people. The parallel passage, below, does not mention “holding religious meetings.”]

“Let the teachers in our schools **devote Sunday to missionary effort**. Let them take the students with them to hold meetings for those who know not the truth. Sunday can be used for carrying forward **various lines of work that will accomplish much for the Lord**. On this day house-to-house work can be done.

Open-air meetings and cottage meetings can be held. Make these meetings intensely interesting. Sing genuine revival hymns, and speak with power and assurance of the Saviour’s love. Speak on temperance and on true religious experience. You will thus learn much about how to work, and will reach many hearts.”—*Counsels to Parents and Teachers*, 551.

“Employ Sunday in doing missionary work for God. Teachers, go with your students. Take them into the bush [rural areas in Australia], and visit the people in their homes. Let them know that you are interested in their soul’s salvation.”—9 *Testimonies*, 237.

“The very best course for you to pursue is to **engage in missionary work for the people of the neighborhood and in the nearby settlements**. Whenever you are listening to an interesting discourse, take notes and mark down the passages that the minister uses, so that you can review the subject carefully. Then after faithful study you will soon be able to give a synopsis of the discourses, in the form of Bible readings, to some who do not come to our meetings.

“The older students decided to follow this suggestion. They had evening meetings for studying the Scriptures together. They worked first of all for one another, and as a result of the Bible studies among themselves, a number of the unconverted were won to the truth.”—*Counsels to Parents and Teachers*, 549-550.

“At another time when our brethren were threatened with persecution and were questioning in regard to what they should do, I gave the same advice that I had given in answer to the question concerning the use of Sunday for games. I said, **‘Employ Sunday in doing missionary work for God**. Teachers, go with your students. Take them to the homes of the people, near and far, and teach them how to talk in a way to do good. Let the people know that you are interested in their souls’ salvation.’”—*Counsels to Parents and Teachers*, 551.

“Those who seek to compel men to observe an institution of the papacy, and trample upon God’s authority, are doing a work similar to that of the Jewish leaders in the days of the apostles. **When the laws of earthly rulers are brought into opposition to the laws of the Supreme Ruler of the universe, then those who are God’s loyal subjects will be true to Him.**

“We as a people have not accomplished the work which God has committed to us. We are not ready for the issue to which the enforcement of the Sunday law will bring us. **It is our duty, as we see the signs of approaching peril, to arouse to action.** Let none sit in calm expectation of the evil . . . **The people need to be aroused in regard to the dangers of the present time** . . . The time is fast approaching when those who choose to obey God rather than man will be made to feel the hand of oppression. **Shall we then dishonor God by keeping silent while His holy commandments are trodden underfoot?**

“While the Protestant world is by her attitude making concessions to Rome, **let us arouse to comprehend the situation and view the contest before us in its true bearings.** Let the watchmen now lift up their voice and give the message which is present truth for this time. **Let us show the people where we are in prophetic history** and seek to arouse the spirit of true Protestantism, awaking the world to a sense of the value of the privileges of religious liberty so long enjoyed.

“God calls upon us to awake, for the end is near. Every passing hour is one of activity in the heavenly courts to make ready a people upon the earth to act a part in the great scenes that are soon to open upon us. These passing moments, that seem of so little value to us, are weighty with eternal interests . . .

“The law of God should be loved and honored by His true people now more than ever before.”—5 *Testimonies*, 713, 715-717.