

## 4. More Lunar Sabbatarian “Hardball”: Associating Modern Judaism with the Term “Saturday”

Lunar sabbatarians believe that in the distant past, Judaism gave up the “true” method of Sabbath observance, which was based upon the lunar cycle, and adopted a “pagan” continuously-repeating weekly cycle, including the heathen names that had been given to those days of the week. They like to play a little “hardball” with this belief by referring to the day “Saturday” with such terms as “Saturn’s Day,” “Saturday” or even “Satyrday.” Certainly, as they hope their reading audience will think, anyone who worships on “Satyrday” must have adopted heathen traditions!

The following commentary from yet another supporter of the Lunar Sabbath teaching illustrates a subtle approach to the use of this “hardball” tactic:

Have you been finding yourself weary of having fallen to deceit at every turn since your birth? If Yahweh has been leading you on His path to truth, at every turn now, you find that man (at Satan’s instigation) has devised ways to supplant Yahweh’s ways. Let’s count a few of them.<sup>1</sup>

The above author, Ernie L. Hoch, goes on to list 12 “false teachings” that he believes the adversary has allowed to creep into the assembly at large. Notice which item makes “number two” on his list:

2. Sabbath was ‘fixed’ to a Saturn’s day or a Sun day instead of being determined according to Yahweh’s faithful witness, the moon and its lunar cycle.<sup>2</sup>

Please note Hoch’s subtle attempt to portray the regular weekly Sabbath handed down to us by Judaism as being fixed to “Saturn’s Day.” This, of course, is clever propaganda designed to subtly persuade the reader that the Jewish Sabbath stems from heathenism. By attempting to associate Judaism’s day of rest with the name given to this day by heathens, the author apparently hopes to succeed in discrediting the Jewish day of worship. However, it is common knowledge that it *wasn’t Judaism* who attached heathen designations to the seven days of the week; rather, *it was heathens!*<sup>3</sup> Moreover, we could equally deride lunar sabbatarians for choosing to recognize *all* the heathen idols after whom the days of the week are named, since their weekly Sabbaths will indeed fall on *each day of the week* throughout the year. For example, we visited a lunar sabbatarian website, where they nonchalantly display their version of the calendar, illustrating the days of the week on which the lunar sabbath is

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<sup>1</sup> From “The Burning Question: Sabbath – When is it?” by Ernie L. Hoch, <http://www.yahwehmusic.com/covenants/burningquestion.htm>, 01/18/2002, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> For those who might question whether or not the names for the days of the week *really* came from heathens, we cite the encyclopedia *The New Book of Knowledge*, Vol. 4, Grolier, Incorporated, New York, 1972, article “Days of the Week,” p. 47, where we read the following: “The English names for the days originated so long ago that it is difficult to trace their source. However, all of them are of Teutonic (Germanic) origin.” Elsewhere, on this same page, we read about the origin of the name “Saturday”: “The Roman word for Saturday, *dies Saturni*, (‘day of Saturn’) really challenged the Teutons. The Romans named that day after Saturn, a god of farming and planting—two occupations fit only for slaves, thought the Teutons. They had no god even remotely resembling Saturn. The problem was solved by their clumsy attempt to pronounce the word. It came out a harsh-sounding ‘Saeternesday.’ However, some Teuton tribes noticed that the Roman soldiers bathed on Saturday. These Teutons liked the custom so much that they named Saturday ‘bath day.’ In Iceland, Saturday is called *Laugardagur*, and in Sweden and Denmark it’s *Loerdag*. Both words mean ‘bath day.’” Notice that the word “Saturday” is a *Roman word*, not a Jewish word! Nevertheless, we have found that lunar sabbatarians in essence mock the day recognized by Judaism as the Sabbath by drawing attention to the designation applied to it by heathens.

|  |                                  |                                |                                |                                |
|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Sunday<br>February 18<br>NEW MOON 12         | Sunday<br>February 25<br>SABBATH | Sunday<br>March 4<br>SABBATH   | Sunday<br>March 11<br>SABBATH  | Sunday<br>March 18<br>SABBATH  |
| Monday/Tuesday<br>March 19-20<br>NEW MOON 13 | Tuesday<br>March 27<br>SABBATH   | Tuesday<br>April 3<br>SABBATH  | Tuesday<br>April 10<br>SABBATH | Tuesday<br>April 17<br>SABBATH |
| Wednesday<br>April 18<br>NEW MOON 1 (Aviv)   | Wednesday<br>April 25<br>SABBATH | Wednesday<br>May 2<br>SABBATH  | Wednesday<br>May 9<br>SABBATH  | Wednesday<br>May 16<br>SABBATH |
| Thursday<br>May 17<br>NEW MOON 2             | Thursday<br>May 24<br>SABBATH    | Thursday<br>May 31<br>SABBATH  | Thursday<br>June 7<br>SABBATH  | Thursday<br>June 14<br>SABBATH |
| Friday/Saturday<br>June 15-16<br>NEW MOON 3  | Saturday<br>June 23<br>SABBATH   | Saturday<br>June 30<br>SABBATH | Saturday<br>July 7<br>SABBATH  | Saturday<br>July 14<br>SABBATH |

*This is an actual calendar as found on a lunar sabbatarian website, depicting lunar sabbaths that fall on Sundays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. In response to lunar sabbatarians who refer to the weekly Sabbath as handed down by Judaism as falling on "Saturday," we could justifiably state that the Sabbaths they observe during the above months fall on Solsday, Tiwesday, Wodensday, Thorsday and Saturnday.*

expected to fall each month. We are displaying a portion of that calendar on this page<sup>4</sup>. As their own calendar clearly demonstrates, these lunar sabbatarians have no problem with identifying the day of the week on which the lunar Sabbath falls with the planetary names, which are in turn named after heathen idols.

Aside from the hypocrisy of blaming "Saturday Sabbatarians" for doing something that they themselves do (and even *more* so, technically-speaking)<sup>5</sup>, I believe I can reasonably equate the decision of lunar sabbatarians to hold Judaism accountable for names imposed upon the days of the

week by heathens with a court's decision to hold McDonald's Corporation accountable for a woman who burned herself by spilling hot coffee in her lap.<sup>6</sup> Consider the similarities: The weekly Sabbath that falls on the day commonly known as "Saturday" was passed down to us by Judaism. The hot coffee was passed to the woman by an employee of McDonald's Corporation. It was the *heathens* who erred in naming each day of the week after the idols they worshipped, not the Jews. It was the *woman* who erred in spilling the coffee on herself, not McDonald's Corporation. Lunar sabbatarians subtly place the blame for the heathen designations given to the days of the week upon the Jews, even though Judaism had nothing to do with it, other than teaching and practicing a seven-day week that ends with a day of rest! The court of our land put the blame on McDonald's Corporation for the coffee incident, even though McDonald's had nothing to do with the woman's carelessness in not taking the proper precautions to keep the coffee from spilling ... and even though they had the words "Caution contents hot" stamped on the cup. In similar fashion, many lunar sabbatarians, including Ernie Hoch, place subliminal suggestions into the minds of their readers ... suggestions cleverly designed to coerce them into believing that the common

<sup>4</sup> This lunar sabbath calendar excerpt (for the year 2007) was taken from a lunar sabbatarian website, which may be accessed at the following URL: <http://www.lunarsabbath.org/>

<sup>5</sup> For those who may regard my use of the word "blame" as being an exaggeration, I will share the following quote from lunar sabbatarian Eric Bess: "I apply the heathen designation because it applies. This is what I'm trying to get across to anyone willing to hear. That is, if your [sic] are keeping the Sabbath on the day of the moon that corresponds to 'Saturday' then you ARE using the Gregorian calendar, and thus a pagan system." This quote is taken from a posting submitted by Eric Bess on 12-31-2006 at 04:17 PM in the thread entitled "**60 Pinpointed Sabbaths**," located at [www.elijah.com](http://www.elijah.com).

<sup>6</sup> This famous lawsuit was the catalyst for many parodies on the United States' judicial system, including the annual "Stella Award" for the year's most frivolous lawsuit, named after the woman involved, Stella Liebeck. More details on this lawsuit can be found at the Oklahoma Bar Association's website, found at: <http://www.okbar.org/public/judges/mcdonaldsspeech.pdf>.

designation for the day recognized by Judaism as the weekly Sabbath, i.e. “Saturday,” was instituted by the Jews, even though nothing could be further from the truth. They thus attempt to leverage what *heathens* did as a subtle means of coercing a gullible audience into believing that it’s the *Jews*’ fault!

There is a reason as to why lunar sabbatarians do not believe we can justifiably associate them with the heathens who named the days of the week after the idols they worshipped. It’s because those days of the week are associated with the continuously-repeating weekly cycle, whereas the lunar sabbatarian method of reckoning weekly Sabbaths requires a monthly interruption in the seven-day cycle. Lunar sabbatarians believe Judaism was practicing lunar sabbathkeeping until an unspecified, unrecorded time in history when they switched to their current method. It was at that point in history when, according to lunar sabbatarians, Judaism began observing “false Sabbaths” and accepted the “heathen” method of observing a continuously-repeating weekly cycle. Since the heathens gave names to the days of the week contained in the continuously-repeating weekly cycle ... and since those names were the names of idols, lunar sabbatarians believe Judaism might as well adopt the *names* given to those days by the heathens.

To give an example of the lunar sabbatarian position on this matter, I will present a brief exchange between myself and lunar sabbatarian Eric Bess, who demonstrates a proclivity for identifying those who practice the observance of continuously-repeating weekly Sabbaths with heathens. The following exchange took place in the “True Sabbath” forum, a special forum discussion created for discussing lunar sabbaths by the forum owner. In response to an unflattering insinuation that those of my persuasion observe a day that is stained with a heathen name, I submitted the following answer:

I reply: “Saturday” means nothing to me, Eric. I know Arnold [Bowen] hasn’t caught on to the fact that it was the heathens who gave this designation to Shabbat. I’m hoping you will have the sense to understand this truth, and the subsequent fact that “Saturday” means **nothing** to me. I have no use for heathen designations. If I wanted to make a case for heathen designations as they relate to lunar sabbatarians, I might insinuate that you worship on “Friday” this month (named after Frige, the Germanic goddess of beauty), and that, in fact, you worship on a different heathen idol day each month. But I won’t do that because I know you don’t worship heathen idols, and this argument isn’t about the names that heathens gave to the days of the week.

Regarding the continuously-repeating weekly Sabbath, I am very comfortable explaining why I believe this is what YHWH gave to His children, whether it be to you or to YHWH. I would be very nervous trying to explain a concept that is never once outlined in all of Scripture.<sup>7</sup>

In response to my comment that I was hoping he had the **sense** to understand that it was heathens who gave the “Saturday” designation to the Sabbath, and that “Saturday” consequently means nothing to me, Eric issued the following reply:

I REPLY: One day I may have “the sense” to believe this, but not today. I do believe, however, that this may very well have gone the other way historically, as I do not believe that the Shabbat has ever corresponded to the day called Saturday on a continuous basis.

In other words, the “Jews” adopted the pagan system of Sabbath keeping rather than pagan corrupting the true one. As they have done many, many times in documented Scriptural history.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> From a posting I submitted on 12-31-2006 at 05:57 AM to the “True Sabbath” forum thread entitled “**60 Pinpointed Sabbaths**.” This forum is located at [www.eliyah.com](http://www.eliyah.com).

<sup>8</sup> Taken from a posting submitted by Eric Bess on 12-31-2006 at 04:17 PM in the “True Sabbath” forum thread entitled “**60 Pinpointed Sabbaths**,” located at [www.eliyah.com](http://www.eliyah.com).

Please notice that Eric offered no evidence pointing to Judaism adopting a “pagan system of Sabbath keeping,” as all he had to offer was his speculation of how things “must have happened” based upon his interpretation of Scripture. In other words, I could just as easily make the statement that it was the unregenerate heathens who carried forward the continuously-repeating weekly cycle, having retained it from their Torah-observant ancestors, though in a corrupted manner. Having already abandoned Sabbath observance, they further corrupted the Sabbath when they adopted the names of idols for the previously numbered days of the week. If I were to offer such an opinion without simultaneously providing supportive evidence, my comment would only serve as biased speculation.

As it turns out, however, unlike Eric’s unsubstantiated commentary, I can offer historical evidence supporting that the above scenario I presented is indeed what occurred. Let’s consider the following:

- **Cornelius Tacitus:** It is no secret that the ancient weekly Sabbath day fell on the day known by heathens as “the day of Saturn.” For example, even though the Roman senator and historian Tacitus (ca. 54 – ca. 117 C.E.) had a very distorted view of *why* Judaism practiced things the way they did, he had a workable knowledge of *what* they did and *when* they did it. For example, he knew that Jews abstained from eating pork, but he didn’t know *why*. He wrote that they did it because “pigs are subject to leprosy, the foul plague with which they too [i.e., the Jews] were once infected; so they abstain from pork in memory of their misfortune.”<sup>9</sup> In the same way, Tacitus knew the day on which the Jews abstained from working [the day of Saturn], but he didn’t understand *why*:

They are said to have devoted the seventh day to rest because that day brought an end to their toils.<sup>10</sup> Later, finding idleness alluring, they gave up the seventh year as well to sloth. Others maintain that they do this in honour of Saturn, either because their religious principles are derived from the Idaei, who are supposed to have been driven out with Saturn and become the ancestors of the Jewish people; or else because, of the seven stars which govern the lives of men, the star of Saturn moves in the topmost orbit and exercises the mightiest influence, and also because most of the heavenly bodies move round their courses in multiples of seven.<sup>11</sup>

Please bear in mind the fact that Tacitus, born in the year 54 C.E., was a teenager when the temple was destroyed. Notice also that Tacitus identifies the “seventh day” with Saturn, which solidifies the understanding that during the first century C.E. Rome understood the “day of Saturn” as representing the seventh day of the week. It is very unlikely that Tacitus was not aware of the day on which Judaism rested, and he offers no allusion whatsoever that the Jews ever “gave in” to a weekly cycle mandated by the Roman government. If they had, we can be certain that he wouldn’t have stopped with just the one jab at them being idle on the “day of Saturn.” He most certainly would have also taken aim at the fact that they paid homage to a weekly cycle originally introduced to them by his people, the Romans.

<sup>9</sup> Cf., Tacitus, *The Histories*, translated by W. H. Fyfe, Book V, section 4, Oxford University Press, 1999.

<sup>10</sup> According to the explanatory notes found in this translation of Tacitus’ *The Histories* (p. 288), “their toils” is a reference to Tacitus’ belief that the Israelites’ “wilderness wandering” took only seven days (instead of 40 years).

<sup>11</sup> Tacitus, *The Histories*, translated by W. H. Fyfe, Book V, section 4, Oxford University Press, 1999.

- **Justin Martyr:** Justin Martyr, writing less than 40 years after the death of Tacitus, expressed the understanding that Yeshua the Messiah rose the day after “the day of Saturn”:

Sunday is the day on which we hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God, having wrought a change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Savior on the same day rose from the dead. For He was crucified on the day before that of Saturn (Saturday)<sup>12</sup>; and on the day after that of Saturn, which is the day of the Sun, having appeared to His apostles and disciples, He taught them these things which we have submitted to you also for your consideration.<sup>13</sup>

Had the “day of Saturn” changed between the days of Tacitus and the days of Justin Martyr? If so, it is essential that lunar sabbatarians produce the record of the change. More significantly, Justin Martyr understood the “day of Saturn” (and “the day of the Sun,” which follows it) to be the same “day of Saturn” and “day of the Sun” sequence/pattern that occurred during the days involving Yeshua’s crucifixion. Again, if there was a change in the understanding of how the “day of Saturn” and the “day of the Sun” were reckoned, Justin Martyr certainly didn’t record it. Lunar sabbatarians, then, need to produce the record of a change, and Justin Martyr will obviously not help them in their attempt to locate it. If it occurred between the days of Yeshua and the days of Justin Martyr, Justin failed to inform his reading audience (or maybe he himself had not been informed). These are idiosyncrasies that lunar sabbatarians need to explain, but after all this time, including three years of participation in a “lunar sabbath” discussion forum, no explanations are forthcoming ... only proposed explanations based upon a “what *must* have happened” speculative perspective.

- **Sextus Julius Frontinus:** There is yet another witness adding additional weight to the already-overwhelming stack of evidence that the “day of Saturn” of Justin Martyr’s day is the same “day of Saturn” of Tacitus’ day ... and the same “day of Saturn” of Yeshua’s day. That witness is a Roman soldier and writer by the name of Sextus Julius Frontinus (ca. 35-103 C.E.). Frontinus, in his work *The Stratagems*, referring to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., wrote that Vespasian “attacked the Jews on the day of Saturn, on which it is forbidden for them to do anything serious and defeated them.”<sup>14</sup> Was “the day of Saturn” on which the Jews were attacked in 70 C.E. the *same* “day of Saturn” that Tacitus wrote about in describing the “slothful Jews”? Was it the same “day of Saturn” that fell before the “day of the Sun” on which Justin Martyr worshipped? If not, lunar sabbatarians need to provide *evidence* instead of unsubstantiated remarks about what “must have happened” in view of their interpretation of Scripture.

<sup>12</sup> Justin Martyr believed that Yeshua was crucified on the day before the Sabbath. While we do not agree with this interpretation, this in no way alters the fact that he understood the “Day of Saturn” of Yeshua’s day as occurring in the same sequence as the “Day of Saturn” of *his* day.

<sup>13</sup> Justin Martyr, *First Apology* 67 (written between 147 and 161 C.E.)

<sup>14</sup> This quote is taken from the book *From Sabbath to Sunday* by Samuele Bacchiocchi, The Pontifical Gregorian University Press, Rome, 1977, p. 245. Bacchiocchi adds this footnote: “Frontinus, *Strategemata* 2, 1, 17, *LCL*, p. 98; Dio Cassius’ account is strikingly similar: ‘Thus was Jerusalem destroyed on the very day of Saturn, the day which even now the Jews reverence most’ (*Historia* 65, 7, *LCL*, p. 271).” Note: Dio Cassius was a 2<sup>nd</sup> century Roman historian.

- **Albius Tibullus:** Going back even further, we encounter the Latin poet Albius Tibullus (ca. [54-19 B.C.E.](#)). Samuele Bacchiocchi, in his book *From Sabbath to Sunday*, offers the following insight as revealed by Tibullus' poem *Carmina*:

In one of his poems, Tibullus explains what excuses he could have found for staying in Rome with his beloved Delia: 'Either birds or words of evil omen were my pretexts or that the sacred day of Saturn had held one back' (*Carmina* 1, 3, 15-18).<sup>15</sup>

According to Bacchiocchi, this poem was authored ca. 29-30 B.C.E. A Jewish web site offers the following perspective regarding Tibullus' reference to the day of Saturn:

One way or another, it seems almost certain that, even though he was not a Jew, Tibullus was referring to the Jewish Sabbath — whose ban on travel, if one was looking for a superstitious excuse to stay at home, might deter a non-Jew, too.<sup>16</sup>

As indicated by the non-Jewish poet Tibullus, who wrote his poem some 30 years prior to the birth of Yeshua, the “day of Saturn” was considered a “sacred day.” Was this “day of Saturn” the same “day of Saturn” recognized by Tacitus, and later, Justin Martyr? If not, it is encumbering upon lunar sabbatarians to demonstrate otherwise.

- **When the Moon Got the “Boot”:** Some lunar sabbatarians believe Julius Caesar “booted” the moon out of the calendar in the year 46 B.C.E., and this, they claim, is the root of when lunar sabbaths were abandoned.<sup>17</sup> If this is true, then by the time each of the above-listed writers were born, the moon had already been “booted,” and the continuously-repeating weekly cycle was already in place. Of course, lunar sabbatarians don't believe Rome was powerful enough to actually *enforce* this enactment, so it took a few centuries to “catch on.” One argument used by lunar sabbatarians to promote this g-r-a-d-u-a-l change involves the metric unit of measurement. As one lunar sabbatarian puts it:

<sup>15</sup> Samuele Bacchiocchi, *From Sabbath to Sunday*, The Pontifical Gregorian University Press, Rome, 1977, p. 243.

<sup>16</sup> Quoted from the article entitled “The Sabbath Planet,” dated 01/05/2007, as found on *The Forward*, a Jewish online publication. The article may be read in its entirety by accessing the following URL: <http://www.forward.com/articles/the-sabbath-planet/>

<sup>17</sup> Lunar Sabbatarian Arnold Bowen is on record of promoting the belief that, prior to Julius Caesar changing the calendar in 46 B.C.E., Rome practiced lunar sabbaths. In 46 B.C.E., according to Mr. Bowen, Caesar “booted the moon out of the calendar”: RESPONSE; I have answered Larry over and over again on these matters with quote from Josephus and Philo, I believe that it was such common knowledge that there was no need for them to come out and say that the Sabbaths are by the moon, no more than to say that blood is red, because it was common knowledge. The whole world kept lunar weeks, months, and lunar days, and in 46 B.C. a man named Julius Cesar introduced a new calendar which only used one of the great lights, and that is the sun. He booted the moon out of the calendar and this can be proven from any Encyclopedia all you have to do is look under calendar.” -- From a posting submitted by Arnold Bowen on 05-06-2004 10:54 PM in the “True Sabbath” forum thread entitled “**NEW/OLD evidence on Lunar Shabat, very compelling!**” Arnold makes the same claim on page 9 of his booklet “Proof That Weekly Sabbath Days are Determined by the Moon”: “A man called Julius Caesar broke the cycle in 46 B.C. when he had a calendar made and disregarded the Moon cycles in the calculations.” Lunar sabbatarians base the belief that the moon was once used in determining weeks, but then “booted out,” on the following item from *World Book Encyclopedia*, Vol. 3, p. 28: “In 46 B.C., Julius Caesar asked astronomer Sosigenes to suggest ways to improve the calendar. Acting on Sosigenes' suggestions, Caesar ordered the Romans to disregard the moon in calculating their calendars.” Please notice that there is nothing in the encyclopedia article suggesting that the *weeks* on the Roman calendar had been previously determined by the lunar cycle.

It takes awhile to completely phase in a major change as the measuring of time, same as the measuring of measurements such as the standard and the metric system. They are both being used as we speak, but when our generation dies out, the standard system will be almost gone. Maybe a few of our grand children may keep using it along with the metric for awhile as perhaps the Roman soldier did, but it will eventually go and the one world metric system will take over, same as Rome's calendar.<sup>18</sup>

Perhaps, on the surface, this lunar sabbatarian's reasoning may appear reasonable ... until it is given some thought. Using the metric system as an example doesn't really work because we all know that as soon as it becomes "official" that the United States has "gone metric," the news will not only make the newspapers and the evening news report, it will make the history books as well, and students in every state in the Union will be taught which year it was that the metric system was officially implemented. The news will not be hidden or otherwise "kept under wraps" from the public. Of course, there would be some stragglers who wouldn't immediately catch on, but the fact that it took a while for some folks to "catch on" would *also* make the history books. That information, too, would not be kept secret. In the same way, if Julius Caesar had replaced "lunar weeks" with a continuously-repeating weekly cycle, we can be certain that this news would not have been suppressed or otherwise kept hidden. The record of stragglers who were slow in adopting the "new system" is absent from the record of history. Is there no record of stragglers who were slow to give up lunar sabbaths because the record was suppressed and kept hidden ... or is it because it never happened in the first place? The record of Jews who would certainly have protested such a change ... some to the point of death ... would not likely have been kept silent. Indeed, if the scenario proposed by lunar sabbatarians is true, then we must believe that all Jews would rather "switch than fight"! If not, then those who dared to fight were extinguished without a trace of evidence that they had so much as offered a whimper of protest!

We have thus produced solid historical evidence demonstrating that the ancients, from at least 30 B.C.E. and continuing to 70 C.E., 100 C.E., 160 C.E. and beyond understood that the "day of Saturn" on which Judaism abstained from work is none other than the same weekly Sabbath observed by Jews today, as handed down to us by their ancestors. The time span we have provided here encompasses the earthly ministry of Yeshua the Messiah. Yeshua is on record as observing the weekly Sabbath alongside the rest of Judaism with no hint that any within their ranks had begun observing it "on the wrong day."

### ***Did the "Victors" Rewrite History?***

In addition to playing "hardball" with the use of the heathen designation "Saturday," lunar sabbatarians are very quick to dismiss the record of history, especially when it clashes with their interpretation of Scripture. The historical evidence we have just presented here is definitely out of kilter with their interpretation of Scripture. In the process of dismissing this historical evidence, they simultaneously attempt to portray those who don't share their disdain of the historical record of putting the writings of man above Scripture. One such lunar sabbatarian, when I informed him that I am not

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<sup>18</sup> From a posting submitted by Arnold Bowen on 03-04-2005 at 09:17 PM in the "True Sabbath" forum thread entitled "Historical Information," located at [www.elijah.com](http://www.elijah.com).

willing to discard the historical record for the sake of believing a certain interpretation of Scripture, issued the following insinuation that those of my persuasion “depend on man” instead of Scripture:

**RESPONSE**, I STILL DETECT a lack of confidence in the Word of YHWH i.e. scripture and scripture alone to make us COMPLETE and INTIRE and when you say “I am not one of those who discards history for the sake of believing my interpretation of “Scripture and Scripture alone.” That Sounds like you need history to support scripture. Do you believe that the scripture is sufficient within it’s self to find when to start the count for the weekly Sabbath, or do we have to depend on man for when to start the count for the weekly Sabbath?

I would have said it like this; I am not one of those who discards “Scripture and Scripture alone.” for the sake of believing my interpretation of history.<sup>19</sup>

On the surface, this lunar sabbatarian’s approach seems very noble. Isn’t there something wrong if we can’t prove from Scripture that the day we set aside for worship is the day blessed by our Creator? In answer to this question, I would have to say that it is just as wrong if we can prove from Scripture that the method we use in determining the weekly Sabbath *isn’t* blessed by our Creator. This is why we must be diligent in studying this issue from all angles, leaving nothing to speculation and supposition. Is it possible for the historical record to dovetail with the understanding we have of what is presented in Yahweh’s Word? We believe it is possible, and this is why we do not discard the historical record in order to validate our understanding of Scripture.

Another lunar sabbatarian pushing his interpretation of Scripture over the evidence from the record of history is Troy Miller, who submitted the following in the “True Sabbath” forum:

Also, I respectfully disagree that when we differ in opinion we need to look to the historical record. We need not step outside of The Word to settle any difference. If Scripture is silent on the matter, then we need not haggle over the issue. Relying on the historical record is leaning on the arm of flesh to settle disputes. This is a foundation of sand.<sup>20</sup>

Again, Mr. Miller doesn’t address what should be done when one’s interpretation of Scripture happens to align with the record of history. This can only be because his interpretation is lacking in historical support. As we are about to see, Mr. Miller believes the reason history doesn’t line up with his interpretation is because the “arm of flesh” has rewritten and falsified the historical record.

Another lunar sabbatarian is more blunt in expressing his distaste for the historical record:

The whole "historical record" concept is a farce to begin with.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> From a posting submitted by Arnold Bowen on 03-15-2005 at 08:07 PM in the “True Sabbath” forum thread entitled “**International Date Line**,” located at [www.elijah.com](http://www.elijah.com).

<sup>20</sup> From a posting submitted by Troy Miller under the screen name “B. A. Berean” on 02-25-2004 at 08:37 PM in the “True Sabbath” forum thread entitled “**3 distinct catagories of days in Scriputre, not just 2 (work days, Sabbaths)**.”

<sup>21</sup> From a posting submitted by Eric Bess (under the screen name “elbessr”) on 01-01-2007 at 10:56 AM in the “True Sabbath” forum thread entitled “**Modern History of Lunar Sabbath Movement**.” Note: Eric didn’t seem to mind discussing historical support for his viewpoint when he expressed agreement with Joey Thompson’s suggestion that the year 46 B.C.E. might be the “smoking gun” that lunar sabbatarians have been looking for. In the forum thread entitled “**Historical Evidence**,”



Other lunar sabbatarians are more detailed in offering their explanations of how their interpretation of Scripture, which they term “a FIRM FOUNDATION,” is superior to my interpretation of Scripture which, combined with my regard for the historical record, is referred to as “trusting in man to tell you they keep the right timing”:

No, Larry, I refuse the corrupted religious records of today put forth by those in religious power who want us to follow their man-made traditions. All the while, other historical sources speak of the ancient Hebrew being guided to keep the set appointments according to the luminaries' testimonies. You ignore that. What is the difference? This is why I state that we must first start with a FIRM FOUNDATION from scriptural doctrine. The scripture we have clearly lays down the foundational doctrine that the luminaries are for set appointments. Anything (feast, chag, etc) that is a set appointment with Yah. Regardless of how we try to twist words or contexts, if a meeting is a set appointment in time, it is moed and must be kept by the luminaries. I trust YHWH and his WAY, Larry. You are trusting in man to tell you they keep the right timing for you. Do you trust man? Because you have no scriptural foundation for sun-sat. At least, in all of this arguing you have not produced so much as one foundational doctrinal statement from scripture, much less 2-3 witnesses for establishing it, that shows us we are to trust a count of seven that goes from creation week forward forever.<sup>22</sup>

Once again, lunar sabbatarians resolve their lack of historical support by reducing this issue to one of “the firm foundation of Scripture” (i.e., their *interpretation* of it) vs. my regard for the record of history, while ignoring my claim that “the firm foundation of Scripture” (*my* interpretation of it) aligns with the historical record.

Finally, as I mentioned earlier, lunar sabbatarians believe the “crooked historians” succeeded in expunging the true record of history, and since they believe the “heathen continuously-repeating weekly cycle” prevailed over the “true lunar-based weekly cycle,” the victorious heathens must have systematically wiped out any records that anyone ever so much as protested the change from lunar-based weekly cycle to continuously-repeating weekly cycle. Troy Miller expresses his belief that the victors rewrote and revamped Yahweh’s calendar in his online study entitled “*Historical Evidence Proves the Creator’s Calendar. It also proves that the Gregorian Calendar is corrupt, pagan and bereft of light*”

Remember this well, whoever is in charge is also in charge of the calendar. Who is in charge of YOUR calendar? Julius Caesar? The Greek Astronomer, Sosigenes? Constantine? Pope Gregory XIII? Jesuit astronomer Christopher Clavius? Or YHWH Almighty,

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he wrote, “Joey actually did a pretty great job answering these so no need for me to. Except I would add that I believe that 46 BCE IS the "smoking gun". Only because he [Caesar] is the one specifically prophesied about in Daniel chp 7. Nevertheless, the ‘shot fired’ by Julius was not immediately fatal (as Joey pointed out), rather it wounded the concept of time as it had always been known and eventually afflicted the world, including the Jews, in such a way that the Sabbath would slowly ‘bleed’ to death.” This was posted on 05-03-2007 at 8:29 PM.

<sup>22</sup> Posted by a lunar sabbatarian who only identifies himself as David, under the screen name “ShieldofDavid,” on 02-06-2006 at 11:51 AM in the “True Sabbath” online forum thread entitled “**Are ALL ‘Moedim’ Moon-related?**”, located at [www.eliyah.com](http://www.eliyah.com).

the Creator of the Universe? YHWH wrote His calendar in the heavens where man could not mess with it.<sup>23</sup>

Did the victors rewrite the historical record? Certainly, there have been several recorded calendar changes over the centuries, including the one in 46 B.C.E. What became of the record that this “change” included switching from lunar-based weeks to a continuously-repeating weekly cycle? One thing to bear in mind as we ponder the likelihood of the historical record of a “Sabbath switch” is the fact that those who enforce any such changes believe they have the divine right to do so. Why would anyone believing he’s been divinely appointed to change the weekly cycle try to cover up the evidence of what he did? Logically-speaking, if you believe what you’re doing has the blessing of the Creator, you’re not going to be concerned about expunging the record of what you’re doing! This same adage holds true for lunar sabbatarians. There is no reason to doubt that if lunar sabbatarians should emerge victorious in their quest to convert the world to the observance of lunar sabbaths, they will not make any attempts to erase the memory of the brand of Sabbathkeeping that they replaced. Even if they were to *try*, though, we all know that some dim-witted clerk or other record-keeper who didn’t care one way or the other would have written about the folks who discontinued observing the continuously-repeating weekly Sabbath because they chose to recognize a lunar-based weekly cycle. *Something* would be recorded!

### ***Consider the Roman Inquisition***

A. H. Lewis, in his book *A Critical History of the Sabbath and the Sunday in the Christian Church*, cited a man who survived the Inquisition. The Inquisition is the name given for an organization formed by the Roman Catholic Church that was set up to defend their version of “truth,” securing the “confessions” of accused heretics with horrendous methods of torture. One of the accounts of the Inquisition that Rome wishes had never surfaced comes from a man who lived to tell the story of what he witnessed. His name is Charles Dellon (1649 - 1709). Dellon was a member of the Protestant church, who left France for the Indies in 1668. He worked as a physician in Daman, where he was arrested by the Inquisition in 1674 for atheism. He was condemned to five years of hard labor and sent to Goa, from where he was expelled to Portugal in 1676. Dellon's case was reviewed again in Lisbon, and he was released after the intervention of Bossuet. He returned to France in 1677, and became physician to the Prince of Conti. Dellon gives an impartial, objective description of the events leading to and during his punishment in his book *An account of the inquisition at Goa*.

The following excerpts from Dellon’s book are borrowed from A. H. Lewis’ book:

"Amongst the crimes cognizable in the Inquisition there are some which may be committed by one person alone, as blasphemy, impiety, etc., and others again which require several, as assisting at the Jewish Sabbath."

In chapter 20, on "The injustice committed in the Inquisition toward those accused of Judaism," he says:

"But when the period of the Auto da Fe approaches, the Proctor waits upon him and declares, that he is charged by a great number of witnesses, of having Judaized; which means, having conformed to the ceremonies of the

<sup>23</sup> Cf., Troy Miller’s online study entitled “[Historical Evidence Proves the Creator’s Calendar. It also proves that the Gregorian Calendar is corrupt, pagan and bereft of light.](#)”, page 10. This study may be read in its entirety by accessing the following URL:

[http://www.creationcalendar.com/CalendarIssue/7-Historical\\_Evidence\\_Proves\\_Creation\\_Calendar.doc](http://www.creationcalendar.com/CalendarIssue/7-Historical_Evidence_Proves_Creation_Calendar.doc).

Mosaic law, such as not eating pork, hare, fish without scales, etc., of having attended the solemnization of the Sabbath, having eaten the Paschal Lamb, etc. He is then conjured "by the bowels of the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ," (for such are the terms affected to be used in this Holy House,) voluntarily to confess his crimes, as the sole means of saving his life; and the Holy Office desires, if possible, to prevent his losing it. The innocent man persists in denying what he is urged to confess; he is, in consequence, condemned as "convicto negativo," (convicted, but confessing not,) to be delivered over to the secular power, to be punished according to law, that is to be burnt.

He, perhaps, then concludes, that he shall be discharged; but he has other things to perform, which are infinitely less easy than what he has hitherto done; for the Inquisitors, by degrees, begin to urge him in this way – "If thou hast observed the law of Moses, and assembled on the Sabbath-day as thou sayest, and thy accusers have seen thee there, as appears to have been the case; to convince us of the sincerity of thy repentance, tell us who are thine accusers, and those who have been with thee at these assemblies."<sup>24</sup>

Lunar sabbatarians such as Troy Miller hopefully understand that the Roman Catholic Church was "in charge" during the period known as The Inquisition. Certainly the Roman Catholic Church would have liked nothing better than to have suppressed the unspeakable atrocities that it perpetrated upon millions of people who refused to "confess" to the Inquisitors' fabricated charges of crimes against the Church. In fact, confession was no guarantee that the confessor's life would be spared! However much the Roman Catholic Church wanted to prevent the news from leaking, though, they simply couldn't plug enough holes in the dike to erase or "explain away" the truth of what they did. Just because the Roman Catholic Church was "in charge" of things, including the calendar, doesn't mean they could implement a seamless, silent conversion upon the nations of the earth.

Yet, this is what lunar sabbatarians expect you and me to believe.

The Roman Catholic Church dominated world history during the days of The Inquisition, so certainly, if it had the power to eradicate the memory of its actions, it would have done so. Lunar sabbatarians, who as we have seen, are hypercritical of anyone who dares to regard the importance of the historical record, should be prepared for countercharges of putting more faith in the victors' ability to suppress the truth than in Yahweh's ability to preserve a remnant of faithful believers. The Inquisition is just one example of how the record of Jewish protests over a switch from a lunar-based weekly cycle to a continuously-repeating one could not have been suppressed.

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<sup>24</sup> Charles Dellon, *Account of the Inquisition at Goa*, translated from the French-Paris, 1684. Hull, England, 1812, pp. 83,56,58, as quoted in *A Critical History of the Sabbath and the Sunday in the Christian Church*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., revised, by A. H. Lewis, D.D., LL.D. This excerpt may be read online by accessing the following URL: <http://www.walkinthelight.ca/sabbath%20historical%20information.htm>.

The screenshot shows the Catholic World News website interface. At the top, there is a search bar and a login section. A navigation menu on the left includes links for Home, Headlines, Yesterday, Archives, News Types, CWN Dossier!, Off the Record, Phil's Forum, Sound Off, Most Popular, Gift Subscriptions, Free News Ticker, Resources, Reading Lists, Advertise, About CWN, Help, and My Items. The main content area features a news article titled "Vatican to release study on Inquisition" dated June 9, 2004. The article text is as follows:

Vatican, Jun. 9, 2004 (CWNews.com) - The Vatican will soon publish a study on the Inquisition, containing the proceedings of an international conference held in Rome in 1998.

The Vatican has scheduled a press conference for June 15, at which three cardinals will speak about the new study. Cardinal Roger Etchegary was involved because the original conference on the Inquisition, held in October 1998, was organized by the committee to prepare for the Jubilee Year 2000, which he chaired. Cardinal Georges Cottier, the theological of the pontifical household, presided over the conference. And Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, the Vatican archivist, has custody over the records that remain from the work of the Inquisition.

The October 1998 conference brought together 30 scholars, who met behind closed doors to discuss the actions of the Inquisition, putting that work in the proper historical context. The research submitted to that committee was partially responsible for the decision by Pope John Paul II ([bio - news](#)) to issue an apology for the episodes of intolerance that have marked the history of the church; he included the use of coercive methods by the Inquisition.

Cardinal Cottier had been asked by the Jubilee preparatory committee to preside over a theological commission that would assess the excesses and errors committed by Catholics in the name of the Church. Prior to the conference on the Inquisition, he had also chaired a previous meeting, in October 1997, on the roots of anti-Jewish bias within Christianity.

On the right side of the page, there is an advertisement for a book titled "Introduction to the Devout Life" by Jane Powell de Sales, priced at \$10.95. Below the ad is a "Featured Product" section with a small image of the book cover.

This is a news report from Catholic World News regarding the Pope's 2004 apology for the "episodes of intolerance" that marked the history of the Church. Many expressed outrage that the Pope did not admit to the Catholic Church's use of torture during The Inquisition, and instead chose to whitewash the role it played in the death of millions of people. The Roman Catholic Church was left with no choice but to admit to its guilt due to the overwhelming abundance of evidence brought to bear against its perpetrators. There is no shortage of evidence implicating the Roman Catholic Church and the Papacy of the cruel actions imposed upon those deemed to be threats to the Church. For those who would like more details, we suggest reading the "Church History" section found at the back of Halley's Bible Handbook. Under the heading of "Papal Power Maintained by the Inquisition," pp. 776-77, we read, "The Inquisition, called the 'Holy Office,' was instituted by Pope Innocent III, and perfected under the second following Pope, Gregory IX. It was the Church Court for Detection and Punishment of Heretics. Under it everyone was required to inform against Heretics. Anyone suspected was liable to Torture, without knowing the name of his

accuser. The proceedings were secret. The Inquisitor pronounced sentence, and the victim was turned over to Civil Authorities to be Imprisoned for Life, or to be burned. The victim's property was confiscated, and divided between the Church and the State. In the period immediately following Pope Innocent III the Inquisition did its most deadly work against the Albigenses, but also claimed vast multitudes of victims in Spain, Italy, Germany and the Netherlands. Later on the Inquisition was the main agency in the Papacy's effort to Crush the Reformation. It is stated that in the 30 years between 1540 and 1570 no fewer than 900,000 Protestants were put to death in the Pope's war for the extermination of the Waldenses. Think of Monks and Priests, in holy garments, directing, with Heartless Cruelty and Inhuman Brutality, the work of Torturing and Burning alive Innocent Men and Women, and doing it in the Name of Christ, by the direct order of the 'Vicar of Christ.' The Inquisition was the Most Infamous and Devilish Thing in Human History. It was devised by Popes, and used by them for 500 years, to Maintain their Power. For its record none of the subsequent line of 'Holy' and 'Infallible' Popes have ever apologized."<sup>25</sup> Halley's Handbook was originally published in 1924, long before the above news item was reported. At long last, we finally read of an apology, albeit one of very little substance. However, this in itself constitutes an admission of guilt – an admission that the historical record, as unpleasant as it is, reflects the heartrending truth: It happened.

You can be certain that lunar sabbatarians would dearly love to produce the record of innocent lunar sabbatarians who were punished for not submitting to the "Roman calendar," but after years of reading their literature and participating in a forum discussion, we are not hopeful that they will come forward with the necessary data. Instead, what we can expect to hear is continued rhetoric directed against those who do not share their interpretation of Scripture, as well as continued scolding for putting historical evidence on a higher level than they appreciate.

This intense distrust for the historical record as handed down to us by Judaism, which is not disputed by anyone except lunar sabbatarians, reminds me of an elderly neighbor we knew during my farming days. Florence had lived a quiet, respectable life, and was highly regarded by all who knew her.

<sup>25</sup> From *Halley's Bible Handbook*, by Henry H. Halley, Regency Reference Library, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1965 (originally published in 1924), pp. 776-777.

However, a few years before she passed away, she became senile, and very distrustful of others. For example, she repeatedly called the police to her home because she was certain that a certain neighbor was trying to gas her to death. The investigating officer, upon completing his walk through her home the first time he investigated her complaint, was puzzled. He told her he couldn't smell any gas. The woman became very agitated and exclaimed, "**You can't smell it, but it's there!**" Lunar sabbatarians tell us, "We cannot produce the evidence of a switch from a lunar-based weekly cycle to a continuously-repeating weekly cycle, but it happened!" Those who are not persuaded of their claim due to the lack of evidence are portrayed as placing a higher regard for "the arm of flesh" than for Scripture.

Lunar sabbatarians can also be expected to continue associating non-lunar sabbatarians with the designations originally applied to the Jewish Shabbat, including the derogatory use of such heathen terms as *Saturday*, *Satyrday*, *Saturn's Day*, etc. We certainly find this ploy utilized by Ernie L. Hoch. We previously quoted from Mr. Hoch's article entitled "The Burning Question: Sabbath – When is it?", and we now return to that same article as we bring this chapter to a close.

On page two of Mr. Hoch's article, he refers to the day on which the continuously-repeating weekly Sabbath falls as "the Saturday Sabbath," even though, once again, it is common knowledge that it was the heathens, not the Jews, who associated any days of the week with the names of the planets:

Have you noticed how the NEW MOONS generally go by unnoticed among humanity in this day and age (except for a few small groups that this matters to)? Could this be because man has not found a good way to supplant them with an alternative? For how then could it be called the "new moon"? It couldn't so man has let slide into obscurity that which he cannot change and promote/proscribe the Saturday Sabbath because man has now determine and "fixed" it to a 7th day Saturday in a seven day circle devised by man. Man has therefore rejected Yahweh's establishment of the Sabbath according to the "laws of the moon" and His "faithful witness".<sup>26</sup>

As with any false teaching, the above commentary contains *some* truth. Humanity in general has rejected new moon observance. June and I strive to counter that rejection by looking for the new moon each month, and we maintain a calendar based upon new moon sightings. However, the fact that we observe the new moons does not mean we are "lunar sabbatarians"! Ernie Hoch's approach is to attempt to produce a connection between the "lost and forgotten art" of new moon observance and Sabbath observance, even though Scripture never teaches that the weekly Sabbath is determined by the lunar cycle. By adding the term "Saturday Sabbath" to his commentary, he plays a little "subliminal hardball," adding a negative heathen flair to the day handed down by Judaism, possibly in hopes of psychologically persuading his reading audience of how "heathen" that particular day is. It is up to the reader to investigate how valid this approach is.

The author then concludes his treatise by making the following appeal to his readers:

Can I say to you, "BEWARE OF THE TRADITIONS OF MEN"? Yahshua warned the people of His day concerning the traditions of men. I personally believe that the Lunar Sabbath was primarily being observed during Messiah's day and that the seven day circle (known as the "week") was instituted by man after the time of Messiah. CAUTION: If it is a widely accepted and celebrated holiday or tradition in this world today, I'd caution, BEWARE.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> From "The Burning Question: Sabbath – When is it?" by Ernie L. Hoch, <http://www.yahwehmusic.com/covenants/burningquestion.htm>, 01/18/2002, p. 2.

<sup>27</sup> From "The Burning Question: Sabbath – When is it?" by Ernie L. Hoch, <http://www.yahwehmusic.com/covenants/burningquestion.htm>, 01/18/2002, p. 13.

With this commentary, Ernie L. Hoch joins the previously quoted lunar sabbatarian (Arnold Bowen) in lumping the continuously-repeating weekly Sabbath in with the “traditions of men.” Even though those who observe the weekly Sabbath on the day commonly known as “Saturday” are considerably fewer in number than those who worship on Sunday, apparently their numbers are still “too high” in the opinion of the author just quoted, and this consequently serves as a “red flag” indicating that the “true Sabbath” cannot fall on a Saturday each week. If the continuously-repeating weekly Sabbath as handed down to us by Judaism is truly a “tradition of men,” then certainly we need to examine this issue very closely and reevaluate our decision to set aside that day for rest and worship. On the other hand, if the day blessed by Yahweh can be shown as being the very day handed down to us by Judaism, then it is most certainly *not* a “tradition of men,” and those who promote such an agenda are themselves guilty of subverting Yahweh’s Word, as well as profaning the very day He blessed at Creation.

Although the author of the above commentary attempts to use the power of persuasion in his attempt to sway his reading audience into believing that the “Saturday Sabbath” is not the true Sabbath of Yahweh, he rightly proceeds to challenge his readers to even question his writings, which is commendable. Indeed, all of us should be open to correction. Nevertheless, in spite of Hoch’s expressed openness to being questioned, the appeal to the senses has been made: If you observe something being practiced by large numbers of people, deception “must” be involved. He suggests joining his small-numbered “Remnant Bandwagon” to be safe from deception – something he could not promote if the majority of Sabbathkeepers were lunar sabbatarians. Of course, the same logic employed by Ernie Hoch could be directed at those who believe in a Creator. Since nearly all Bible believers believe in a Creator, this should arouse our suspicions, at least if we pursue the reasoning he promotes. For those who prefer a more controversial analogy, I might point out that Hoch’s reasoning could *also* be directed at those who believe Yahweh is *male*. Some believers, including some lunar sabbatarians we’ve met, believe Yahweh is both male *and* female. Could it be that they pursued this particular belief because the belief that Yahweh is 100% male is predominantly accepted by Jews and Christians alike? Since the “majority” of believers regard Him as all-male, some may reason that this belief must, on those grounds, be erroneous. This is simply how *Reverse Numbers Logic* works.

We suggest that, instead of focusing our attention on climbing aboard the latest “Remnant Bandwagon,” each of us should look before we leap, focusing our attention on the truth of Yahweh’s Word, using *it* as our ultimate guide. His **Word** should be our “measuring stick,” not the numbers of people found to be practicing a certain belief. The Apostle Paul admonished the Thessalonian believers to “prove all things,” holding fast to that which is virtuous.<sup>28</sup> We believe he would give us that same advice today. Furthermore, when historical evidence aligns with the “measuring stick” of Scripture, the truth of the matter is confirmed.

It was at this point of his review of our original study that Eric Bess offered the following response to the above paragraph:

“WE” suggest that you take your own advice and get on with the business of using the Word to show us why the Sabbath as reconciled by the moon is false. And show us the Saturday Sabbath in Scripture, if you can.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Cf., I Thessalonians 5:21.

<sup>29</sup> From a response entitled “Something Different/Something Renewed,” chapter two, which we received via e-mail from Eric Bess, Jonesboro, GA, on September 5, 2006.



I do not believe the burden of proof has ever been on non-lunar sabbatarians to prove to anyone that “the Sabbath as reconciled by the moon” is false, especially since there is not a single verse of Scripture stating that the Sabbath *is* reconciled by the moon. Nevertheless, since there are indeed several passages of Scripture that *do* invalidate “the Sabbath as reconciled by the moon,” I will be producing those texts throughout this study. First, however, I will accommodate Mr. Bess’ request that I show him “the Saturday Sabbath in Scripture.”