

# SABBATH SCOOP

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## Which Celebrations Should We Keep?

*The Old Testament lists seven feasts to observe. Mainstream Christianity has rejected them and replaced them with Christmas, Easter and birthdays. Does it matter which days we keep?*

By Gregory Dullum

One of my favorite Bible translations is the *New Century Version* published by World Bibles in 1991.

Throughout this Bible are 260 one-page articles written by a team of more than 70 Bible scholars from a variety of theological backgrounds. I love to read the Scriptures in this Bible but the articles are like the little girl in the nursery rhyme: when they are good, they are very, very good. When they are bad, they are horrid!

Last month, I read an article titled, "Celebration." It states, "We have many different types of celebration today. We celebrate religious holidays like Christmas and Easter, and other non-religious events like birthdays. What does the Bible say about celebrations, and does it have anything to say about our own practice today?" (p. 290). My curiosity was piqued as to how these Bible scholars would answer this question.

### Lord's Appointed Feasts

The article correctly explains that "the Lord's appointed feasts" were established at set times for the nation of Israel and refers to Leviticus 23.

It further states, "The feasts continued to be observed by the Jewish people in the New Testament. Jesus used many of them to teach about himself."

I thought, Wow! This article is accurate! I was ready for it to take the obvious step and state that because Christ and the New Testament church kept these feasts, we, today, should too.

But the article did not go there. Instead, it veered off in a completely different direction. It continued, "Indeed, we can see that Jesus fulfilled the feasts, so we don't observe them anymore."

To support this claim, the article says that during the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus promised people could have



NAPS photo

Most professing Christians celebrate Easter, with its pagan fertility symbols, instead of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which are commanded to be kept in the Bible. Why?

rivers of living water flowing from them if they believed in Him (John 7:37-38); on Pentecost, the holy spirit was given to the church (Acts 2); and Jesus has become our Passover lamb (1 Cor. 5:7).

None of these examples *give us a reason to stop keeping God's feasts!* In fact, the final example, 1 Cor. 5:7, continues in the next verse with this command: "Therefore let us keep the feast" (v. 8).

### Shadows of Things to Come

The article, "Celebration," continues, "We don't observe these Old Testament festivals any more because Jesus has fulfilled them. They were shadows that were looking forward to New Testament realities. Indeed, Paul makes it very clear that no one is obligated to celebrate these special days, including the Sabbath, in the way they did during the Old Testament period (Colossians 2:16)."

Did Paul really say that the Sabbath and feasts are no longer to be kept?

Paul wrote this epistle to the Colossians about A.D. 61-62. He warned of false teachers: "Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ" (Col. 2:8).

After explaining "according to Christ" in verses 9-15, Paul warned, "Therefore, let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ" (vv. 16-17).

It's important to note that the Colossians *were keeping the Sabbath and feast days*. If they had not been keeping them, this would NOT have been an issue. Paul didn't tell them to stop keeping them! He wrote, "Let NO ONE JUDGE (or condemn) YOU regarding the keeping of these days." Who was judging them? Who wanted them to change their manner of keeping them or to stop observing them altogether? The FALSE teachers Paul warned about in verse 8!

Why KEEP the Sabbath and feast days? Paul wrote, "They ARE a shadow of things TO COME." This was 30 years after Christ died and was resurrected. They still, A.D. 61-62, pictured "things to COME." So Christ could NOT have *fulfilled these holy days while He was on the earth!* They picture FUTURE events!

### Who Should Judge?

Paul's final phrase, "but the substance is of Christ" has been misinterpreted, causing confusion. The word translated "substance" literally means "body," according to the marginal note in the *New King James Bible*.

In the *King James Version*, the word

**CELEBRATIONS**

Continued on Page 2

## Celebrations

Continued from Page 1

“is” is in italics, indicating it is NOT in the *original* Greek. If we remove “is” from the phrase and use the word “body” instead of “substance,” Paul’s last phrase is, “...but the body of Christ.” The BODY OF CHRIST is the Church of God (Eph. 4:11-12)!

This phrase is the conclusion to Paul’s opening statement, “Therefore let no one judge you.” Paul told the Colossians, “Let no one judge you...but the body of Christ—the Church of God—in regard to how you keep the Sabbath or feasts.”

In other words, Paul wrote, “Don’t let false teachers condemn you for keeping the Sabbath and feasts as instructed by the Church of God!” Rather than being an instruction to STOP keeping God’s feasts, Col. 2:16 is a command to CONTINUE keeping the feasts!

### The Lord’s Supper

The article, “Celebration,” continues, “But the church does celebrate the death and resurrection of Christ by participating in the Lord’s Supper. At this time, we not only remember Jesus with the bread and wine, we also look forward to the time when Jesus will come again.”

Many professing Christians take bread and wine, calling these the “Lord’s Supper.” Bread and wine are NOT the “Lord’s Supper” (1 Cor. 11:20-26, esp. v. 20).

The REAL Lord’s Supper was the supper Jesus ate—the Passover meal of roasted lamb commanded in Ex. 12:5-11. He ate this with his disciples on the night before He was crucified (Mat. 26:18-21, Mark 14:16-18, Luke 22:13-16, John 13:1-2).

On that night, Jesus gave New Testament meaning to Old Testament Passover symbols. He didn’t do away with Passover observance! He replaced the lamb by becoming our Passover lamb. Eating unleavened bread and drinking wine symbolize eating his body and drinking his blood; i.e. accepting his sacrifice for our sins (Mat. 26:19-20, 26-28, Mark 14:22-24, Luke 22:17-19). He also added the footwashing ceremony (John 13:1-16).

Partaking of this bread and wine should NOT be done *any old time*. As a MEMORIAL of Christ’s *death*, this should be done ONLY on Passover—the *day Christ died*.

### Other Celebrations

The article, “Celebration,” continues, “Until then [Christ’s coming], everyday is a celebration. We have no special religious requirement to celebrate events like Christmas, Easter, or birthdays, but neither are they prohibited.”

It’s TRUE that the Bible NOWHERE *requires* us to observe Christmas, Easter or birthdays! But it is FALSE to claim they are not prohibited in the Bible!

Where are they prohibited?

First, we must understand the origins of these days. It’s not hard to find the origins. Most encyclopedias, many books and even the Internet can tell us.

### Origins of Christmas

After explaining why Christ was NOT born on Dec. 25, the *World Book Encyclopedia* says, “The early Church Fathers probably chose December 25 because the feast of the sun, or winter solstice, was a familiar Roman feast celebrating the victory of light over darkness. The idea was easily turned from a pagan to a Christian one, since Christians consider Christ as the light of life” (“Christmas,” *The World Book Encyclopedia*, 1956, vol. 3, p. 1425).

Other sources tell us that Christmas trees, lights, presents, carols, holly, etc., all come from pagan celebrations that were held around Dec. 25.

### Origins of Easter

What about Easter? Jesus didn’t rise on a Sunday morning! His followers arrived at his tomb early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, and the tomb was empty (John 20:1)! He had *already* risen! He rose on the Sabbath, just before sunset, EXACTLY three days and three nights after he was buried on a Wednesday evening, prior to the first holy day (“high day”) of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Mat. 12:40, John 19:31, 38-42).

So what are the true origins of Easter?

Easter began as a pagan celebration of fertility and rebirth of plant life in the spring. “In myth, Attis, beloved of Magna Mater, castrated himself, died, and was reborn. Male consort of the Great Mother, he was a vegetation god who returned every spring” (*Classical Living: Reconnecting with the Rituals of Ancient Rome* by Frances Bernstein, 2000, p. 81).

Attis was known by other names as well: “Under the names of Osiris, Tammuz, Adonis, and Attis, the peoples of Egypt and Western Asia represented the yearly decay and revival of life, which they personified as a god who annually died and rose from the dead. In name and detail the rites varied from place to place: in substance they were the same” (*Adonis, Attis, Osiris: Studies in the History of Oriental Religion* by James George Frazer, 1961, p. 6).

Worshippers of Tammuz mourned his death by singing laments and fasting (Frazer, p. 8). Lamenting and fasting for Tammuz is the basis of the 40-day fast that today is called Lent. God condemns

this practice and the Easter sunrise service that followed it (Ezek. 8:14-18).

The article in my Bible is WRONG! Easter observance—although not mentioned by name—IS condemned in the Bible!

Easter is associated with eggs and rabbits that are pagan fertility symbols.

### Birthdays

The article, “Celebration” says birthdays are not religious. However, they are *intimately connected* with astrology and horoscopes (*The Lore of Birthdays* by Ralph and Adelin Linton, undated, p. 53). Birthday wishes originated from magic spells, round birthday cakes came from moon worship and birthday candles with wish-granting power came from magic spells and pagan altars (ibid., pp. 18-21).

While most people today note birthdays simply to mark milestones in their lives, astrology, magic and sorcery, which are intimately connected with birthday customs, are condemned in the Bible (Isa. 47:13-14, Jer. 10:2, Deut. 18:9-12, Lev. 19:26, Gal. 5:19-21, Rev. 21:8).

### Which Days Should We Keep?

God tells us NOT to worship Him the way pagans worshiped their gods (Deut. 12:29-32). We are to have NOTHING to do with IDOLS and *pagan practices* (1 Cor. 6:14-18). God doesn’t want his people using pagan celebrations and customs to honor Him! He wants his people keeping HIS appointed feasts!

The article, “Celebration,” teaches the OPPOSITE of what the Bible surrounding it teaches! The article says don’t keep God’s feasts but keep instead the celebrations of Christmas, Easter and birthdays! God Himself says, “Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it” (Deut. 12:32).

## The SABBATH SCOOP

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*Who Is this God We Serve?*

# Our Mighty Protector

*With God as our Father, we can feel safe and secure!*

**By Gregory Dullum**

I love the sound of my Dad's voice. Listening to him talk gives me a sense of calm and peace. I may be 53 years old but when I'm with my Dad, I feel like a kid again, and the world seems all right because Dad is with me.

Perhaps my feeling of security goes back to when I was in third grade. I stayed after school for a student council meeting. As I walked home much later than usual, I met a classmate walking in the opposite direction. He told me he was sorry. I had no idea why he apologized—until I got home.

In my backyard, Dad and I had built an "army fort" out of logs. That afternoon, some of my classmates had sneaked into our backyard and had torn down the fort. Dad ran out there and caught a number of the boys. He made those he caught give up the names of those who ran away. He and Mom called their parents and made all the boys come back and re-build the fort.

Dad had my back, protecting my fort when I wasn't there. God is like that. He is our mighty Protector!

No one knew this better than King David. During much of his life, David was on the run from someone trying to kill him. He trusted God for his protection.

## God Kept King David Safe

When David fled from his son Absalom, he wrote: "Many are they who say to me, 'There is no help for him in God.'... But you, O LORD, are a shield for me, my glory and the One who lifts up my head.... I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the LORD sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around..." (Ps. 3:2-3, 5-6). David's confidence in God's protection allowed him to sleep peacefully!

In another psalm, David prayed that God would keep him safe, like a mother hen protecting her chicks: "Keep me as the apple of Your eye; hide me under the shadow of Your wings, from the wicked who oppress me, from my deadly enemies who surround me" (Ps. 17:8-9).

When David was rescued from the hand of Saul, he praised God as a strong fortress that kept him safe: "The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I trust; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my

stronghold" (Ps. 18:2). Imagine how much safer people felt behind castle walls or protected by army garrisons in an Old West fort! God provides that same protection!

God places "a hedge" about his people, protecting them from Satan (Job 1:8-10).

## Present Help in Any Trouble

When the whole world is falling down around us, we need not fear because God is with us and will protect us! "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea" (Ps. 46:1-2).

Often, "mountains" are used symbolically in the Bible for governments. When we see society crumbling around us, when we see governments toppling, we need not fear. God is *VERY present*. He is *close by*, like a BIG, STRONG BODYGUARD.

If we hire a human bodyguard to protect us, there are times when that guard is off duty. Our God protects us 24 hours a day, seven days a week! "He will not allow your foot to be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, He who keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is your keeper [margin: protector]" (Ps. 121:3-5).

## A Shepherd Guards His Flock

God is a shepherd who guards his flock: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young" (Isa. 40:11 *KJV*).

The former shepherd, David, understood this principle when he wrote Psalm 23, which begins, "The LORD is my shepherd." He added, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me" (Ps. 23:1, 4).

The rod was a club used to attack wolves or other enemies of the sheep. The staff was a long pole with a crook, used to rescue sheep which had fallen into crevasses or gotten into other trouble.

## Protected When We Travel

God protects us when we travel: "The

LORD shall preserve you from all evil; He shall preserve your soul. The LORD shall preserve your going out and your coming in from this time forth, and even forevermore" (Ps. 121:8).

While God can—and often does—protect our belongings, this is not an all-encompassing promise to do so. God protected Job's belongings at first but then allowed Satan to take them away to test Job (Job 1:9-12). Some of God's people have had their homes burglarized while they were away or have had things stolen from them.

As Christians, we are promised trials and problems (John 16:33, Acts 14:22). God is concerned more about *our lives* and *our spiritual growth* than *our physical property*. Let us not confuse trials with a lack of God's protection! *Never lose faith* that God PROTECTS us!

When the Apostle Paul was preaching the Gospel in Corinth, he must have had some doubts and fears about preaching there. God offered him encouragement:

"Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, 'Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city'" (Acts 18:9-10).

## Strong Hand, Outstretched Arm

God defends us when we are attacked! King Hezekiah comforted the people of Judah when they were under attack by an army of Sennacherib with these words: "With him [Sennacherib] is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah the king" (2 Chron. 32:8 *KJV*).

We can depend upon God, because He doesn't have a weak arm of flesh! We are told over and over that He has a mighty hand and an outstretched arm—reaching out to protect his people (Deut. 4:34, 5:15, 7:19, 9:29, 11:2, 26:8, Ps. 136:12, Jer. 32:21, Ezek. 20:33-34)!

God's hand has not grown weak, nor has His arm shortened over the years! Today, in the 21st century, He is *still FULLY ABLE* to protect us! "Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy that it cannot hear" (Isa. 59:1).

# College Letters:

## Lessons of Life Learned at Ambassador College

*Swallow your pride and ask for help when you need it.*

*God watches over us, protects us and provides for our needs.*

Monday, Jan. 6, 1975

Part 2

[Editor's Note: Last month we began the tale of my crazy date to Disneyland on Jan. 5. After a three-hour eventful city bus ride that cost more than I had expected, Mary Hamilton and I arrived at Disneyland. We saw the Ambassador College Big Sandy bus in the parking lot and hoped to bum a ride home with them. When we got to the entrance, it cost \$12 for the two of us to get in and I had only a \$10 bill left in my wallet! What was I to do?]

### Chapter 5

Mary said she had \$2 with her. And I checked my change. I had \$1 in big change. I asked if I could have one of her dollars. She said sure. So we got in.

I was so glad I had asked Mary to go with me. A lot of other girls probably would have been bothered by everything that happened—but not Mary. We just had a blast experiencing all this junk together. It seems that everything that could go wrong did. Yet, we had a blast anyway! And she didn't mind using her money. It was as if it weren't she and I—two people—but us—a team. We were sharing experiences.

And now we were experiencing extreme hunger. She had had breakfast. I hadn't. Neither of us had had lunch. And it was 1:30. But we only had \$1.50 between us. It would take 50¢ for us to get from L.A. back to Pasadena. And it cost 70¢ for a hamburger. One wouldn't be enough for the two of us. But two would take all of our money.

We went to America the Beautiful first. Then we went to the Enchanted Tiki Room. It was neat, with singing birds, flowers, and a colored water fountain. I would have really enjoyed it except for one thing. We sat in the back row. And a guy who was maybe 20 or so, sat beside me. "Hi!" he said. The smell of whiskey rolled off his breath. Mary burst into laughter. I just cried silently, Not again! I could smell his breath the whole time. I just hoped he would leave me alone. He did. But we left before the thing was completely over along with some others.

I couldn't believe it! Two drunks in one day!

But we had a real blast from then on—(except for hunger pains). All of the rides we went on were more impressive than the first time (we had both been to Disneyland once before). On the Matterhorn, after passing the waterfall once, Mary said we should try to catch the water in our mouths. I tried, but failed. But we had a super good time!

We kept our eyes peeled for any people who looked like AC students from Big Sandy. Mary only knew one. We even tried saying things like, "Boy, I sure would like to meet someone from Big Sandy," and "I hear Big Sandy is a really neat place" in unusually loud voices,

hoping someone would say, "Hey, I'm from there..." but it never happened.

At 4 p.m. we checked the bus. No one. Came back in. We checked at 4:30 and at 5. By now, the sun had gone down, and Disneyland was lit up. We had never been there at night before. It was really cool. We couldn't decide what to go on next. I suggested the Haunted House (Hutned Huse for Brad). [Editor's note: When we were kids, other neighborhood kids had made a "haunted house" at Halloween but their sign had misspellings. From then on, Brad and I called haunted houses "hutned huses."]

On the way there, through Adventureland, guess who we met? The ONE person from Big Sandy that Mary knew!



photo by Gregory Dullum

In 1975, with a paid admission to Disneyland, visitors were issued coupon books. Each coupon was worth a certain amount of money and was good for admission to those rides listed on the coupon or to other rides at that price. The "A" coupons were worth 10¢, and allowed one to ride the King Arthur carousel or a Main Street vehicle. The "B" tickets were 25¢ and admitted one to the Main Street Cinema, Casey Jr. circus train, or Swiss Family tree house. Refunds for unused tickets were not given but they could be used on subsequent visits. The six coupons in this picture were left over from my day at Disneyland Jan. 5, 1975.

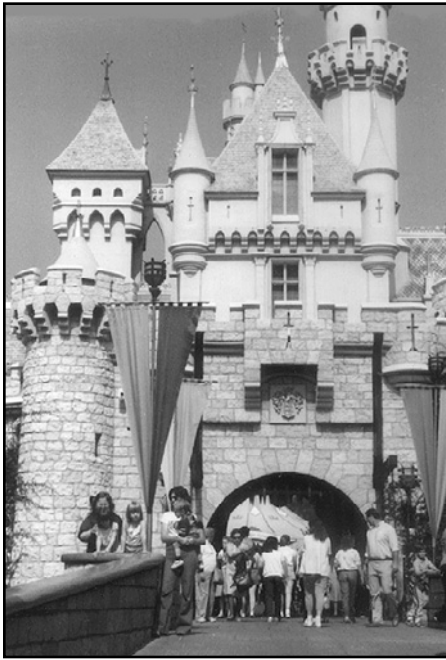


photo by Gregory Dullum

The Cinderella castle is perhaps the most recognizable landmark of Disneyland. It sits in the center of the theme park. Through this gate lies Fantasyland.

## Chapter 6

We ran over to them—he was with a date. He said there would be room for us, because three students weren't going back with them—they were going someplace else. And he said the bus left at 7 p.m. This was a big relief. Now we didn't have to keep checking on the bus, and worry about missing it. And we could spend our \$1.50! And EAT! And I still had two bus tickets, but I didn't care. I just wanted to take the AC bus!

Well, right across the path was a refreshment center, and they had all beef hot dogs! At 55¢! We bought two, using Mary's dollar, and a dime of mine. We put on ketchup and mustard to make them more filling. We discussed how coincidental that we should take this route to the haunted house at this time, and meet the *ONE* person she knew, and find a stand with cheap ALL-BEEF hot dogs! Someone must be watching over us! (I sure hope so—we did enough praying on a certain bus!)

We didn't want to buy anything to drink, so I asked if there was a drinking fountain. I was told, "Second tree down." We just cracked up. And when I drank from the fountain, I got water on my glasses. But I didn't even care!

The haunted house—we got there just as the ride began. We didn't have to wait in line! And it was cool! Perhaps it was

better because it was at night. Perhaps it was the company. Or both.

Then we rode the Mark Twain steamboat ride. That was so romantic at night with the water and the lights, and the woods, and deer, etc. I really enjoyed that. It probably would not be as neat during the day. We then used four tickets Mary had left over from the last time to go through It's a Small World and Bear Jamboree. We got there just in time for those two things too. When the Bear Jamboree was over, we only had 12 minutes to get to the bus. So we ran from the farthest point in Disneyland all the way to the gate. And the buses were gone!

## Chapter 7

There was only one bus left. And we couldn't see if it was the AC bus. There was something in the way. We ran to it. It was the AC bus. We climbed aboard and sat together. "I could kiss this bus," Mary said. I said I could too.

We laughed all the way home about all the weird things that happened to us. We now have our own language. All we have to say is "suitcase" and we burst out laughing. Or:

"Why are you wearing your coat, Mary?"

"It's cold out there on the golf course in the morning." Or:

"You know why my hands are dirty?"

"Why are your hands dirty?"

"Playing golf." Or:

"Have you thought about me yet?"

"A little." We crack up every time we do this little skit. It took us only 45 minutes to get back. Three hours there and 45 minutes back.

Oh, it felt so good to be back! We were so HAPPY to be home!

I remembered Grant's tape. I had left it on the console when I had written the note. We looked for it. It was nowhere to be found. So I walked Mary home. I told her, "I really don't like Sabbath dates. I like to do unusual and different things for dates. I like to do things to remember. I think I succeeded," I said. "You certainly did," she agreed. "I'm never going to forget this."

"Why are your hands dirty, Mary?"

"From playing golf..." We cracked up. We kept it up all the way to her dorm. I thanked her—and even thanked her for her \$2 and coupons. But it was such a blast!

## Epilogue

After telling the whole story to Steve, I

## COLLEGE LETTERS

Continued on Page 6

## Fun Fact



Drawing and Fun Fact are courtesy of NAPS

At the Jewish Passover meal, it is traditional for the youngest child to ask "the four questions." These are questions about the difference between the Passover meal and regular meals.

## Witerature

*Wit and wisdom to complement the truths of the Holy Bible can be found in secular writings.*

*The Oregon Trail* by Francis Parkman, University of Nebraska Press, 1847 (reprinted 1994), p. 116.

## Show No Fear

"This timorous mood of the emigrants was doubly unfortunate, as it exposed them to real danger. Assume, in the presence of Indians, a bold bearing, self-confident yet vigilant, and you will find them tolerably safe neighbors. But your safety depends upon the respect and fear you are able to inspire. If you betray timidity or indecision, you convert them from that moment into insidious and dangerous enemies. The Dakota saw clearly enough the perturbation of the emigrants, and instantly availed themselves of it. They became extremely insolent and exacting in their demands."

**Deut. 20:1-3, 8; Josh. 1:9, 10:25; Isa. 35:4; Luke 12:32**

## Quotable Quote

"Constant kindness can accomplish much. As the sun makes ice melt, kindness causes misunderstanding, mistrust, and hostility to evaporate."

—Albert Schweitzer

## Memory Scripture

"Speak 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.'"

—Ex. 31:13

## College Letters

Continued from Page 5

figured Mary had done the same thing to her roommates. So I called her. She had. We talked a while.

“Why are you wearing your coat, Mary?”

“It gets cold out there on the golf course in the morning, you know.” What a day!

The End

(Letter continued on back)

Well. That was 7 pages of yesterday. I found out that Grant had picked up the tape from the console. So I didn't have to worry about that.

Weird things didn't stop after the phone call to Mary. But the next weird things have nothing to do with the story. And I'm tired of writing.

I was going to say something about New Year's and the Rose Parade. But the weirdness of that cannot compare to yesterday, and would be anticlimactic. And one long story is enough for one letter.

Needless to say, I was up all night New Year's Eve. The next day I lay down, all my clothes on, threw a jacket over my shoulders, for a nap at 3 p.m. I woke up at 8 a.m. the next morning. And I was just gonna take a nap!

It was cold out there in the parking lot on Fair Oaks and Del Mar New Year's Eve. I worked from 2 a.m. to noon. Before that, we had walked along the parade route and watched all the people camped out on the sidewalks and grass and gutters.

We parked 77 cars at \$3.50 per car. The lot next to us charged \$3.00 and a guy out at the street signaling all the cars to come into his lot. But once they turned into his lot, some cars would come and turn into our lot. We would explain to them that we charged \$3.50 compared to his \$3.00, and that he was doing all the work, and they'd laugh, say it didn't matter, and park in our lot anyway. Somebody was working for us. But that other guy got mad. He got 17 cars (his lot was smaller).

The only incident at the lot was a hub cap was supposedly stolen overnight. Stan Martin, the lot head, told the guy to call Dan Boyce, student body president. Stan figured if Dan wanted to pay the guy, let him. I saw 1/2 hour of the parade. It didn't thrill me.

Well, I told ya about New Year's anyway. I figured you probably wondered. Today I bought my books for next semester (\$31.00). Tomorrow is the last day before classes start. Got Brad's letter today. The statement about the tape cracks me up. Stay healthy, smile, and I'll see y'all.

Love,  
Greg



### Gunmen Kill in Alabama, Germany; injure in Missouri

Three recent incidents of violence indicate we are living in the last days. One occurred in Alabama, one in Germany (both were reported March 12) and a third in Missouri (reported March 4).

“The gunman, wearing a vest loaded with ammunition and carrying four guns, went from town to town, leaving a trail of gruesome crime scenes over 20 miles of rural southern Alabama.

“He first killed his mother and the family dogs in Kinston, Ala., authorities said, then drove 10 miles to Samson, where he shot five members of his extended family, including the uncle who raised him. Next, his violence became random, as he sprayed bullets at cars, stores and police officers, killing neighbors, a man walking down the street, a woman at a convenience store and a passing motorist, they said.

“All told, the gunman, identified as Michael K. McLendon, 28, killed 10 people, in what law enforcement officials called the worst mass shooting in Alabama history, and wounded six before fatally shooting himself” (“Officials Identify Alabama Gunman” by Shaila Dewan and A. G. Sulzberger, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, March 12, 2009, p. 1).

Across the Atlantic Ocean, the following tragedy also occurred:

“A teenage gunman killed 15 people, most of them female, on Wednesday [March 11] in a rampage that began at a school near Stuttgart in southern Germany and ended in a nearby town, where he then killed himself after the police wounded him.

“The attack left Germany... struggling to understand the carnage that had befallen it, a country with relatively little violent crime....

“The authorities identified the attacker as Tim Kretschmer, 17, who graduated last year from the school he later attacked” (“Teenage Gunman Kills 15 at school in Germany” by Carter Dougherty, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, March 12, 2009, p. 1).

A strange shooting occurred late in February. On Feb. 27, a man exited I-

55 at Jackson, Mo., and shot two electric linemen for no known reason.

“Detectives with the Jackson Police Department, along with other law enforcement agencies, are still trying to determine why a Perryville man shot two Ameren UE linemen working at a substation in Jackson....

“The shooter has been identified as Aaron C. Hemingway, 32, of Perryville.

“Five linemen were working at the substation. Two-man crews were in two buckets while a fifth employee was on the ground. Jackson Police Chief James Humphreys told *The Cash-Book Journal* that the linemen do not know why Hemingway shot at them. In a brief interview at the scene shortly after the incident, Humphreys said, ‘The linemen were as surprised as anyone. They have no clue.’ ”

The shooter fled the scene in his pickup truck. When he was later approached by police, they observed that he had fatally shot himself (“Perryville man shoots Ameren UE workers, then kills himself” by David Bloom, *The Cash-Book Journal*, March 4, 2009, p. 1A).

We read in 2 Tim. 3:1-4: “Remember this! In the last days there will be many troubles, because people will love themselves, love money, brag, and be proud. They will say evil things against others and will not obey their parents or be thankful or be the kind of people God wants. They will not love others, will refuse to forgive, will gossip, and will not control themselves. They will be cruel, will hate what is good, will turn against their friends, and will do foolish things without thinking. They will be conceited, will love pleasure instead of God” (*New Century Version*).

### LEAVENING CORRECTION

Canned ravioli may have bread crumbs or crackermeal (crushed crackers) mixed with the meat as a filler. These are leavening. In last month's *Sabbath Scoop* crackermeal was mistakenly listed as not leavening. We regret the error.