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FROM THE EDITOR



Dear Readers,

Welcome to the spring issue! Spring is a time for starting new things. Seeing flowers bloom and plants grow in spring makes us think about how we, too, can start fresh with Jesus' help. In this issue, we're focusing on four important topics: the Sabbath, the Bible, our health and following Jesus.

The Sabbath is a special day for rest and spending time with God and family. It's a chance to take a break from all the busy things we do every day. When we follow Jesus, we try our best to be kind, loving, and humble, just Him. Jesus told us, "Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another" (**John 13:34** NIV). This means we should always try to show love to others, just like Jesus shows love to us. Let's use this time to really think about different ways we can show love to people around us. Maybe we can help someone who needs it, say kind words, or show our support. Every little act of love helps make the world a better place. This will show people God's love in us (**John 13:35**).

May this season be a time for you to think, grow, and start fresh, ready to follow Jesus with a willing and eager heart.

With blessings,

Amanda Colgan



THE ABBA IN SABBATH

The word "abba" comes from a language called Aramaic. Abba is like what we call our father "daddy" or "papa." In the Bible, the word abba is a nice, honorable way to talk about God. This name is also used for Jesus, who is our Everlasting Father (Isaiah 9:6). God created the Ten Commandments with the Sabbath as the fourth commandment. The Commandments are like house rules from God.

When I was a child in elementary school, I got money, called allowance, every week from my parents. I had to do chores to get this money from my biological (birth) parents. I used to collect sports cards. Collecting sports cards may not be interesting to some people, but it was a thrill for me. Valuable cards were the most thrilling. I enjoyed the extra stuff in the sports card packs, such as bubblegum and puzzle pieces.

If I did not do my weekly chores by Friday evening, then I would not be getting the allowance to buy more cards. The Junk Wax Era packs (sports packs from 1987 to 1994) were about 50 cents and a dollar each, depending on the brand. I could buy about ten packs for five dollars. The prizes inside made it well worth the price. That made me want to finish the chores well enough to get five dollars.

My chores were simple, like sweeping the dining room and kitchen floor, setting the tables for dinner, watering plants, and putting away my toys. I had to remember to do them on specific days. Sometimes I forgot to do them during the first few weeks. God chose to have the Sabbath to be on the seventh day of the week. We can see this in **Genesis chapters 1-2**, where it talks about the Creation.

The Creator rested, blessed, and made the seventh day holy. He wanted us to remember His creations (**Exodus 20:8-11**). Our Abba created the Sabbath for us to remember who He is and what He has done for us. His

Sabbath is on the seventh day, period. The special day is from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday. In the Bible, this is the seventh day. The word Sabbath is also spelled with abba in itself. The Sabbath is our Heavenly Father's special day for us, like our birthdates are to most of us. He desires that we worship Him on the seventh day, not any other day. Similarly, my household chores were expected to be done on specific days.

Supposedly, I decided to water plants, which I was to do on Tuesdays, the next day instead. Do you think I would be receiving the money to buy baseball cards? Most likely not. However, my parents were sometimes softhearted and let that go. Our Abba is a better Father than our biological (birth) or adopted parents. God is firm with His words about the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a specific day to worship Him with specific "tasks" or jobs that we should do on that very day. How would the Abba feel if we worship Him on a different day instead of the seventh?

The Sabbath is very important to God, and He included it in the ten heavenly "rules." When we do not worship Him in church or gather on the right day, it is like watering the plants on Wednesday instead of Tuesday. Like at work, there are specific rules and ways to do our jobs. If we don't follow these rules, we might not get our paychecks, which we need for things like our house, car, food, and bills.

Obeying and doing tasks correctly is important for us to receive God's blessings (and paychecks). Imagine if a worker at Walmart decided to restock cereals later than planned, focusing on stocking other stuff they thought was more important than the cereals. What do you think would happen to that worker? The worker could get in trouble or even lose their job. The Abba, God, would feel sad when we decide to keep the Sabbath on a different day.

Did my biological (birth) father give me simple chores just to make things hard for me? Not really. He did this to teach me how to have responsibilities, prepare me for the future, and show me how to have relationships with people, including with him. Similarly, God created the Sabbath with specific instructions. He wants a close relationship with us. He wants to celebrate the Sabbath with us by having us worship and serve Him on His

special "birthday" every seventh day, from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday. Think about it: would you celebrate a close friend's birthday a month later or too early? What would the friend think? The person would certainly feel upset or even confused.



The Sabbath is all about Abba, our Creator, and what He has done for us. The Sabbath is the perfect day to put aside everyday things and focus on our Heavenly Father. The Bible tells us to go to church on Saturday mornings because God created us and loves us.

It's a way to celebrate all the Creator has created and shown love for us on the day He rested, blessed, and made holy. Celebrating the Sabbath on the day God made strengthens our relationship with Him and brings more blessings. Do you agree?

Boyd Garner is a Deaf writer who lives in Vancouver, WA



ARTHUR W. GRIFFITH

We're the product of chance, So the "scientists" say. Then pray tell me where We got D N A?

It's the blueprint of life
In each wondrous cell
That fashions these bodies
In which we dwell.

All things that men make
Are the product of thought.
So why should they think
That their bodies are not?

All the houses they build Are built to a plan.

How could there be none In the making of man?

We did not develop From ape or primate We have a far higher And nobler state!

The Scriptures inform us That man, from the sod, Was made in His image By Almighty God.

Pastor John Blake

Jesus --FOLLOW ME

God created the world and everything in it perfectly. He created Adam and Eve in God's image. "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." (Genesis 1:26, 27, NIV) When the Bible says that human beings were created in God's image and His likeness, it doesn't only mean that we look like God in form, like the physical shape, but also that human beings were created with the same character as God. In other words. Adam and Eve perfectly followed God's way. God was their role model in this newly created earth. It is the same for us when we were children who looked up to our parents, our role models. We copy their manners and behavior.

From the beginning, Adam and Eve had a perfect relationship with God and could see God in person. Unfortunately, they decided to disobey Him. What happened to them after they rebelled against God? They were forced to leave the Garden of Eden. They could not communicate with God face to face. Sin had changed them completely. Sin separated them from God. Then, they couldn't see God in person as their role model. But God was merciful to Adam and Eve. God continued to communicate with them through voice and dreams to guide them. But, many generations later, the world was destroyed by the flood because human beings were completely disobeying God. Their character was so bad that God had to destroy them. They worshipped idols and false gods. Their beliefs were totally different from God's people's beliefs. The knowledge of God was almost lost for many years, but God had a few faithful people who loved and obeyed him, but they were not perfect.

For 4,000 years. God used different ways to teach His people about Him. First, it was oral communication, but that guickly became lost and mixed up because human minds were not as good as they were in the beginning. Sin has weakened them. So. God used the written messages to help the people to remember what He had taught. Most of the written messages become the Scriptures (the Bible). When Jesus lived on earth, people were using the Old Testament. They tried to follow God's way through the Bible. However, many people still did not get the perfect picture of God because they had different interpretations and wrong ideas about God through human traditions and ways. In Jesus' time, most people looked up to the religious leaders who did not give them a good example. So, it was easy for them to get the wrong ideas about God through wrong teachings and bad examples of the religious leaders.

There are several important reasons for Jesus to come down to the earth as a human being just like us. One is that Jesus came to show the world what God (the Father) was like. The Father sent Jesus to the sinful world to help the people see the true example of a loving and kind God. Jesus wanted the world to know how God treated us with mercy and justice. When Philip asked Jesus to show them the Father, "Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" (John 14:9).

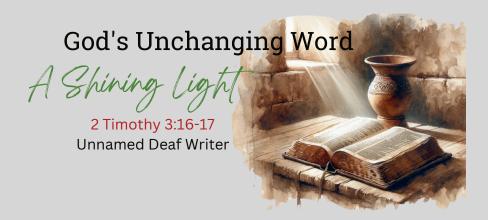
The other important reason is that Jesus, in the human form, just like us, proved that we can obey God. Jesus taught us that we can obey God through faith like Jesus had faith in the Father. Jesus in the human body depended on the Father through prayers and studying the Scriptures.

Jesus had never taught anything differently from the Old Testament. He never acted differently from the Bible. Jesus was the Word. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (**John 1:1**). Jesus helped us to understand the Bible through His example. Which is easier for you to do if you have never changed your car's oil? Read and follow the instructions in the manual or follow the example of a mechanic? Of course, you would choose to follow the mechanic's example. That was how I learned to fix my car. Many years ago, a friend taught me basic car repair, which gave me the confidence to do it on my own.

Jesus is the only true role model the world ever has. "To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. 'He committed no sin, and no deceit (trickery) was found in his mouth." (1 Peter 2:21, 22) Today, some Christians claim that we cannot obey God because we are sinners. But the Bible clearly says that Jesus was tempted like us and didn't sin. "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin" (Hebrews 4:15).

Through faith in God, we are "created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (**Ephesians 2:10**). If we truly want to follow Jesus as our role model, we need to surrender our lives to Jesus as our Saviour and Lord. Then, we become a "new creation" in Christ if we look at Jesus as our role model (**2 Corinthians 5:17**).

In the late 1800s, there was a big snowstorm in the northeastern United States. A family with five children lived on a farm covered with about two feet of snow. In the early morning, the Father opened the door, and the snowdrift blocked it, but the father removed it so the children could go outside to walk to the country school that was still open even after the snowstorm. But, the problem was the children were too short to walk in the deep snow. But the father decided to walk first to make footsteps in the snow. Then, each child followed in the footsteps of their father. Along with the children, the father walked to the school. It was difficult, but they could go to school. Let us follow the counsel of the Psalm: "Direct my footsteps according to your word [Bible]; let no sin rule over me." (Psalm 119:133)



In a world full of confusion, there's a bright light that always stays true and strong—God's Holy Word, the Bible. On January 27, 2024, Pastor Jeff Jordan, who leads the Southern Deaf Fellowship, gave a strong talk called "The Authority of God's Unchangeable Word" as part of the "Prophecy of Hope" series. He talked about how the Bible is always trustworthy and how it changes our lives. Let's explore the key points from Pastor Jeff's talk, with the help of Bible verses, to understand why God's unchangeable Word is so important.

FACT 1: The Bible's Remarkable Reach

The Bible is a special book in history. It's been translated into 717 different languages! Just the New Testament is available in over 1,550 languages. Since 1815, about 3.9 billion copies have been sold. It's the most popular and most-read book ever (2 Timothy 3:16).

FACT 2: The Bible Survived Tough Times

Throughout history, people tried to stop others from reading the Bible. They banned it, burned it, and even hurt people who worked on translating it, like John Wycliffe, William Tyndale, John Huss, and many Christians (**John 10:35**).

FACT 3: The Bible's Remarkable Preservation

The New Testament has over 5,800 copies in the original Greek, plus over 19,000 in other languages. These big numbers show that the Bible has been kept safe for many, many years (**Psalm 12:6-7**).

FACT 4: Science and Archaeological Support

The Bible's teachings often agree with science. For example, it talked about the Earth being round in **Isaiah 40:22**, and it mentioned air weight before scientists did. And finds like the Tel Dan Stele, the Nabonidus Cylinder, and the Dead Sea Scrolls support the Bible's history.

FACT 5: The Bible Always Makes Sense

Even though it was written by 40 different people over 1,500 years, the Bible stays the same. The Holy Spirit guided the writers, like it says in **2 Peter 1:21**: "Those prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit, and they spoke from God."

FACT 6: The Bible's Amazing Prophecies

The Bible has a lot of prophecies—1,817 of them, which is about 27% of its content. This power to predict the future sets it apart from other books. When we see prophecies like Daniel 2 and how Jesus fulfilled over 125 Old Testament prophecies, it shows the Bible is really from God (Isaiah 46:9,10).

FACT 7: The Bible Changes Lives

Finally, the Bible can change many people's lives. As **2 Corinthians 5:17** says, "This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!" Many people have felt different, finding victory over their sins through the Bible.

In conclusion, Pastor Jeff's sermon about "The Authority of God's Unchangeable Word" reminds us that the Bible is a forever source of hope. It's survived challenges and doubt, showing it comes from God and we can trust it. As we go through life, we can lean on the Bible. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we can read it every day and follow what it says. It's a book we can be sure about, giving hope and guidance in a world that can be confusing.

Watch the uplifting SDF Live Sermons in ASL on January 27, 2024: https://vimeo.com/904781296



When I was little, I often woke up very early in the morning if the sun was shining. If I tried to wake up my mom or dad, they told me to go back to bed. So, most mornings in the summer, I slowly woke up in my bed. I thought about things I wanted to do that day, about my family, or think about nothing.

On the windows in my bedroom there was curtains with colorful cartoons of animals from Africa. Monkeys, giraffes, hippos, and birds were living among trees. A monkey was pulling at a giraffe's ear. A bird was flying. A giraffe was eating leaves. A hippo was yawning. I often stayed in my bed, looking at this curtain above my head for a long time. I liked looking at the animals until I found the same monkey, giraffe, bird, and hippo on other parts of the curtain.

If I finished looking at the curtains, I looked at the dolls on the top of my desk, at the ceiling of my bedroom, or at the cute posters on my walls. I stayed in my bed until my brother, or my sister woke up, or when my mom or dad told me to get up. I enjoyed the quiet time early in the morning. I felt a lot of peace when I was in my bed.

I also felt the same way when I went to bed. Sometimes the windows were dark, but sometimes there was some light. In my bed, I waited

for my eyes to close. I liked the quiet in the dark. Sometimes I think about things that happened to me during the day. Most of the time I fell asleep in a few minutes.

When I was a teenager until my early 20's, I went hiking and swimming often. When I was outside, even when I am with other people, I can be quiet. I look at trees, birds, the water, and let my mind rest. I loved being outside on sunny days, cloudy days, or rainy days. Each day was beautiful. I liked the way our earth, trees, and the air smell. I liked how the color of our sky changed from blue to purple to gray. I liked the feel of cold water in late spring, and the warm water in late summer. I still like them, but I don't have enough time anymore. Do you feel like you don't have enough time anymore too?

Today, I don't have a lot of quiet time. When I wake up, I try to spend a few minutes in prayer, but I am often distracted by my phone. Did someone text me? Is there any new news? If there's nothing on my phone, then I am distracted by my cats and dogs. Often, when my dogs see that I am awake, they ask to go outside. Then I need to feed my dogs and cats. Then I must get ready for my day. I read the Bible and pray for about 15-20 minutes. Then I must have breakfast and start working. I sit many hours interpreting and writing. There are many things I must do every day.

When I go to bed, I check my phone again, watch the television, text my friends. Often my pets jump onto my bed and ask for my attention. Sometimes I think about the things that I did today and will need to do tomorrow. Often, I feel upset because of things that happen in my life, or because I did not finish my work. Most of the time I am too tired to think. Often that's my fault. I slept too late, or I woke up too late. I do not make time to sit, be quiet, and think.

I struggle to find some quiet time. When I struggle to find time to think, I feel more pressure, worried, and sad from too many things to do every day. When I feel sad, I move less, do less work, and worry more. When I worry too much, I feel alone. When I feel lonely, my mind can't rest. Do you feel the same way? I think many people do. What can we do about that?

I tried to remember when I felt relaxed and quiet when I was a child. I remembered lying in my bed, looking at my curtains. I remembered the monkey grabbing the giraffe's ear. I remembered the hippo with his mouth open. I remembered the flying bird. My body started to relax. I remembered being quiet while thinking about things early in the morning and late at night. Then I remembered how I felt when I was outside sitting, walking, or swimming when I was a young adult. I remembered I needed time to rest and think. I also understood I was not spending enough time with God.

Do you know what I did about that? I started to think about how to feel less worried, pressured, or sad. I thought about how God helped me through all the bad times in my life. I read about prayer. I noticed I did not have enough time for prayer, because I was always busy. Being too busy all the time with too little exercise made me feel weak, pressured, and worried. Not having time with God made me feel sad. I wanted to improve my life. How can I improve my life if I do not have time to think about it? How can I start feeling better if I do not have time to talk with God.

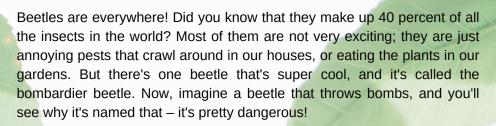
I started thinking a lot about my health, and how I can make more time to think about things, including spending time with God. I am trying to learn more about making time to rest, think, and pray about things. I think learning about my body and my mind helps me understand myself and God more. Maybe you want to learn about those things too? Will you join me to learn more about how our body and mind influence our health?

NATURE CORNER

Bombardier Beetles

Mellisa Hoffman

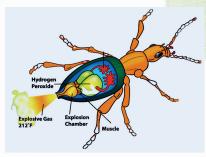
3ABN World (Adapted)



This little powerhouse of a beetle is amazing because it can defend itself by shooting out two special chemicals stored inside its body. When these chemicals mix, they create a hot and poisonous spray that's almost like boiling water. The beetle sprays this hot, smelly liquid and vapor at its attackers. It's painful for humans, but it's not deadly to us. However, for many insects, it's a tough challenge. The tricky part is that the bombardier beetle doesn't give much warning; it makes a popping sound right before it sprays, and it can shoot about 500 times in just one second!

Now, let's talk about something else that's powerful – confidence. It's like our own special "bomb," but not in the exploding way. This confidence is not about what we can do on our own. Instead, it's the trust and belief we have in Jesus. Having confidence in Jesus is like having superpower – it

helps us win battles and even the big war against our enemy. The Bible tells us in **Hebrews 4:16** that we should come to God with confidence! So, when trials, temptations, and challenges come our way, do not be scared. Go forward with boldness because Jesus has already promised us victory!



"Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. Philippians 1:6



If you had a dog that bit one out of every three people who came to your house, would you keep it? Many people who drink alcohol for fun end up depending on it for part of their lives. In the US, about 30% of adults have had problems with drinking in their life. Drinking too much causes 88,000 deaths a year and makes those who die live shorter lives by about 30 years. Alcohol is the most common addictive substance [something that is hard to stop using] in the US. Alcoholic drinks are legal, accepted in society, and not too expensive, but they are harmful.

Some studies about the benefits of alcohol for heart health and living longer are not true. Most of them were paid for by alcohol companies. The better studies did not show alcohol having benefits for our health. The US government has removed advice that light drinking could be good for the heart. Now, government in England says there is no safe amount of alcohol. Even a little can raise the risk of some cancers. Low levels of alcohol can cause harmful chemicals in the body, leading to many diseases, including liver damage.

Alcohol affects the body and brain. It can bother the digestive system, leading to cancers and other problems⁴. Even having just three drinks a week can raise a woman's risk of breast cancer⁵. At first, alcohol might make you feel more awake and less shy, but in larger amounts, it slows down the brain. This can lead to slower reactions, bad judgment, and more mistakes, even when you do not realize you are not thinking clearly. That is why alcohol 6 is connected to many accidents and deaths.

The front part of the brain, which control emotions and thinking, are easily damaged by alcohol. Quitting alcohol can help the brain heal, often making memory and learning better in just six months⁷.

Some people say that drinking wine helps the heart in French people. But really, the French have had lower heart disease rates because of what they eat, not because of wine8. New guidelines say that alcohol, even wine, does not help prevent cancer, heart disease, or memory loss.

Dr. Robert Superko, a heart expert, says that the benefits of alcohol for the heart are exaggerated 10. He says avoiding alcohol, exercising more, and eating less sugar are better for heart health. Alcohol is high in calories, like a candy bar, so avoiding it can help with weight problems 11.

In our culture, wine usually means alcohol. But in the Bible in Greek, the word oinos "wine" also means fresh grape juice. Jesus drank grape juice. He changed gallons of water into sweet grape juice (John 2:1-11).

The Bible warns against alcohol, saying it can harm you like a poisonous snake (**Proverbs 25:32**).

A study called the Adventist Health Study found that eating lots of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and beans, and exercising regularly, can improve heart and immune health, lower stress, and reduce the risk of diseases like stroke and cancer. It can also help you live longer and better.

If you struggle with alcohol, there is hope and support available. Talk to your doctor and ask for help from friends, family, or a support group. Ask God to give you power and strength to find freedom.



- "Do Moderate Drinkers Have Reduced Mortality Risk?" Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs. 2016.
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- 3. UK's Committee on Carcinogenicity on Alcohol and Cancer Risk.
- 4. Ibid.
- 5. <u>www.breastcancer.org/ris</u> <u>k/factors/alcohol</u>
- 6. J Stud Alcohol Drugs 2007 Mar; 68(2):276-81.
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- 8. What Explains the French Paradox?
 NutritionFacts.org, 2015.
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- 10. International Medical News Group, 2003(36)6.11. Ibid.



INGREDIENTS

4 small red potatoes, diced

1 zucchini, sliced

1 yellow squash, sliced

1/4 large red bell pepper, diced

1/4 large yellow bell pepper, diced

1/4 large orange bell pepper, diced

1/4 large green bell pepper, diced

1 cup of cherry tomatoes, cut in half

Salt and seasoning to taste

DIRECTIONS

- Boil enough water to cover potatoes and cook them for 15-20 minutes, then set them aside.
- In a skillet or a pan, cook the zucchini and yellow squash for 5-8 minutes, or until they become a little soft.
- Add the peppers and tomatoes, then cook for another 5 minutes.
- Drain the potatoes and add them just before serving.
- Add salt and your favorite seasoning to make it taste good!
- · Serve with rice with a little salt.

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