

"BORDERLINES OF THE SABBATH", MEETING AT SKODSBORG, DENMARK

February 28 - March 1, 1980

1. Summary of the Findings for the Borderlines of the Sabbath
 - A. From the study of the biblical material the following points became evident:
 - i. "Evening" marks the beginning and the ending of the day (d^ogn).
 - ii. "Evening" is the transitional period between light and darkness.
 - iii. Within "evening", sunset is the most specific point marking this transition.
 - iv. Thus, the cycle of the day is governed by natural phenomena.
 - v. The above definitions also apply to the time for beginning and ending the Sabbath.
 - vi. In this study the committee found no other terms designating time with bearing on the beginning and ending of Sabbath.
 - B. Ellen G White, by both statements and practice, demonstrated after 1855 her support for sunset as being the point of time which marks the beginning and ending of Sabbath.
 - C. The committee considered historical material dealing with Sabbath observance among Seventh-day Adventists. The evidence on the whole confirmed adherence to the sunset principle as governing the beginning and ending of the Sabbath (among material considered was that relevant to the Norwegian situation).
 - D. The committee also reviewed Rabbinical material on the beginning and ending of Sabbath.
2. Summary of the Conclusions for the Borderlines of the Sabbath
 - A. Based on the biblical data we re-affirm that sunset designates the time for the beginning and ending of Sabbath. However, these data offer some flexibility in defining "evening" which makes it cover the period of diminishing light prior to actual darkness.

- B. Consequently, it is recognised that the biblical material may offer a basis for a flexible definition of "evening" in areas where the diminishing of light rather than the setting of the sun is the observable natural phenomenon. Such definition of "evening" would nevertheless remain in close touch with the sunset criterion.
3. 2B above is a guideline for Sabbath observance, and not an arbitrary, rigid rule for the violation of which members are criticized, censured or disfellowshipped. Workers and members are urged to avoid divisiveness and condemnation, but to respect each other's conscience and to look with genuine Christian love upon those who conscientiously differ in regard to the time to begin and end the Sabbath in the "dark period".
4. Procedural Points
- A. These findings and conclusions shall be submitted as the report of this study committee to the NEWAD Committee for its further consideration and action.
- B. The papers presented to this study committee are prepared for the NEWAD Biblical Research Committee and are not available for duplication or publication at this stage. However, copies of each paper should be deposited with and be available for reading at the offices of NEWAD, General Conference Biblical Research Institute, West Nordic Union Conference, Swedish Union Conference, Finland Union Conference.
- C. The publication of the findings of this study committee is subject to the action of the General Conference and NEWAD.