

family". If this latter push is successful, then this will automatically make



Saturday the weekend day on which employers would be focusing their work efforts in order to benefit from the Flexi-Week arrangement.

Advances towards Sunday observance include the United States Supreme court ruling that Sunday laws are not unconstitutional or discriminatory. This opens the way for all the present contradictory state laws to be replaced by a national law that will standardize the enforcement of Sunday all over the U.S.

The momentum toward world-wide Sunday observance is reflected in international media reports in which there have been many recent reports of supportive action and advocacy by national associations, industry Boards, Unions, religious leaders, the Courts, Government Councils and the general public in many countries in Europe and the Americas.

Besides the focus on Sunday as a rest day, it is also being promoted as an inter-faith Sabbath. In 2014 the 15th ANNUAL WORLD 'SABBATH' INTERFAITH SERVICE [SUNDAY] - THE INTERFAITH 'HOLY DAY' was held. This - " the interfaith holy day

of Peace and Reconciliation among all religions, races, ethnic groups and nations... begins with a Jewish youth blowing the shofar, a Muslim youth chanting the Muslim Call to Prayer, followed by ... youth giving additional prayers for world peace from many other religions; for example; Jain, Buddhist, Baha'i, Zoroastrian, Christian, Hindu, Native American, Sikh, Quaker, and Unitarian faith traditions."

### Concern Could be Warranted

Clearly, the simultaneous worldwide thrusts could result in Saturday being treated as a standard work day, putting at risk the religious liberty of Sabbath keepers. Moreover, churches' obedience to the ecumenical call (by the Pope), for them to come together and set aside their differences, would make them a powerful force, able to pressure governments and affect laws.

One must consider whether the current simultaneous movements are merely a coincidence and are motivated by genuine benevolent aims or whether there is a dark and powerful force at work. Our vigilance may help us to identify whether the flexi-week thrust contains a wolf in sheep's clothing. If so there could well be reason for SDAs to be concerned.



**I**n this edition of the Newsletter, yet another look is taken at the flexi-week issue, coinciding with the passage of the legislation on September 23, 2014. Additionally, the conclusion of the article "Faith of Our Fathers" is presented.

### FAITH OF OUR FATHERS (Cont'd from June Edition)

The previous Newsletter revealed that God's people will be judged before the Sunday Law crisis begins. Preparation is required in advance to stand when the crisis comes.

#### Preparation for the Crisis

God will not work a miracle to place His name or character in our foreheads. Only as we cooperate with Him will this happen. It will not happen instantaneously or overnight. We must engage the warfare against self, sin and the darts of the devil to be overcomers as Jacob overcame and his name was changed to Israel. Jacob had to have this overcoming experience before he met with his adversary in the crisis of his life. Same would have been required for the three Hebrew boys of Daniel

3, an experience which the Spirit of Prophecy likened to the enforcement of the Sunday Law in our time (Review and Herald April 29, 1890). So each Seventh Day Adventist must have this overcoming experience before we can stand for God in the Sunday Law crisis which will come as an overwhelming surprise to most of God's people. Success depends on diligently studying His Word and striving to conform our lives to its precepts (Prophets and Kings, p. 626, par.1).

Who then will stand? Will you be part of that number, found to have no guile in their mouths and who follows the Lamb whithersoever He goeth? Oh yes brothers and sisters, you can. As you allow the Saviour to blot out your transgressions in the most holy place so that your names can remain in His book of life; you can be part of that number by His grace. Let us purpose in our hearts to be part of that number before it is too late to do so. God bless.

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# FLEXI-WEEK LAW PASSED IN JAMAICA

## Is Paranoia preventing SDAs from accepting a good thing?

Our beliefs as Seventh Day Adventists as to what constitutes the Mark of the Beast have allowed us to roll our eyes somewhat where other denominations have been ready to raise the alarm, such as in developments in technology that allow the implanting of chips into the skin.

## Is there Reason for Uproar?

Well, is it now our time to be concerned where others are calm and can only see a positive? There has been much said in the SDA Community in regards to the "Flexi-week". To see if there is valid cause for this uproar, we must consider the concept in a balanced way.

Various benefits accrue from the different types of Flexi-Work Arrangements, as outlined below.

- Flexi-Time consists of the traditional 40 hour work week, but arranges it differently, whereby the employer establishes a band of time called core time in which employees need to be in office, normally between the hours of 10 am to 2 pm.
- Part-time Work gives employees flexibility to take care of family needs while earning a salary.

- Job Sharing allows for part-time employees to share one full-time job, and the employees divide the time and the salary between themselves accordingly.
- Compressed Work Week, typically within the traditional 40-hour work week, allows the employee to work the same number of hours but in a shorter span of days, typically a 4-day week. This can in effect allow the worker to have a 3-day weekend.

The policy statement on Flexi-Week approved by Jamaica's Houses of Parliament includes the following:-

- i. There should be no set 8 hr. or 10 hr. work day but the work day should be capped at a maximum of 12 hrs.
- ii. The work week should consist of 40 hrs.
- iii. All 7 days of the week should be considered as possible normal working days.
- iv. Overtime should be earned after the worker has completed 40 hrs.

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## Possible Benefits

The impetus behind the implementation of the Flexi-Week in Jamaica includes the fact that there is an international trend in this direction and it is now an integral part of many collective labour agreements. Its introduction is also part of the agreement with the IMF under the current Extended Fund Facility. It is felt that by implementing a flexi-week Jamaica could make tremendous strides in the global marketplace and

could obtain:

- A more attractive investment climate;
- Reduced absenteeism;
- Increase in employment as persons will now be able to exploit part-time work opportunities, second employment and job sharing;
- Increase in tax intake as a result of increased employment;
- More time for family and personal interests;
- Less transportation and meal costs as a result of a possible shorter work week;
- Reduced traffic congestion during the usual peak hours;
- Advantages for businesses using off-peak rates (on Saturdays and Sundays) on overheads such as utilities;
- More efficient use of capital resources;
- Better coordination of work hours with school hours;
- Wider service to customers due to varied opening hours and more business days;
- Chargeable work hours recovered due to employees taking less time to deal with personal business.

## Drawbacks

The proponents of the Flexi-work Arrangements, have highlighted that the Constitution preserves the right of freedom of religion. However,

it is arguable, that in this time of economic recession, and considering the increased labour pool that will emerge with the implementation of these flexible arrangements, employers would be able to pick and choose, and naturally profit would be the number one motivator. It is well known that in many industries, Saturday is a peak day, and an employer would want to have on staff those who will be willing to work on this opportune day. Thus, for those seeking a job, the bar would be put in place and it would be difficult for Sabbath keepers to find steady employment.

Therefore, the protection of the Constitution would be most effective for those who are already employed. But even for those persons in a dispute with their employer, there would be the costs of getting an attorney to defend their case, the wait for a court date and then having to prove their case in court. In truth, the majority of people are not going to go through this trouble and employers know this. Already, some of our own church members have had to leave jobs, or had to tackle the issue of their employers implementing normal Saturday work days.

## Opposite Thrust for Sunday Observance

Of great significance is the fact that in addition to the International thrust to make all seven days work days, being indifferent to Saturday or Sunday, there is also a push in the opposite direction, to establish Sunday as a day of "rest and