

Aunt Jemima's pancakes or Uncle Joe's fentanyl?

Saw an overdosed guy

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Publisher: Church of God, Bismarck, Darwin & Laura Lee, **Editor:** Laura Lee, **Assistant Editor:** Darwin Lee We do not necessarily agree with all contributors, or their works submitted and printed in this newsletter. It is up to you to get out your Bible and see whether these things are true. Iron sharpens Iron

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Articles

Aunt Jemima's pancakes or Uncle Joe's fentanyl? Saw an overdosed guy

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"The other day I was in Madison (Moscow-on-the-Yahara) less than half an hour before seeing a drug overdose 'victim.'" – from my Facebook page.

THAT WAS A FIRST FOR ME. I've heard of celebrities dying with their head in a toilet, but this guy had his head in a bathroom sink at an Arby's. He seemed alive because he was standing up, sort of. Another customer reported him to the manager, and before we left the police, and an ambulance were there. I don't know if they were administering Narcan or waiting for the coroner.

You can't blame Trump, but we lost 100,000 people to overdoses last year. That's enough people to fill the Rose Bowl; more than 270 per day. And we STILL can't close the border? Thanks for nothing Uncle Joe. What's so hard to understand? A child of five would understand what we need to do. Go fetch a child of five, Joe.

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We're "fixing" problems that don't even exist, but the Gang of Eight has no intention of stopping the invasion from the south. Most of the fentanyl comes through Mexico from China. Does the Big Guy get a cut of the profits?

That's blood money. Trump greatly reduced the inflow of peoples from who-knows-where. Terrorists? Maybe they'll vote for Democrats. Maybe twice. Biden doesn't care.

You can be fined for not wearing a seat belt, but car accidents don't kill half as many people as "recreational" drugs. And didn't the dopes in one state legalize ALL dope? Is Homeland Security even aware of the problem of the "migration" of dope into the country?

WHAT BORDER?

PS: I'd better quit before I start telling you what I *really* think.

PPS: Enjoy a short column for a change, and thanks for the pancakes, Aunt Jemima.

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Why American Christians have a Moral Obligation to Vote in this Election

(Copyright 2022) by Eddie Hyatt (Grapevine, Texas)



In Matthew 5:13-16, Jesus called His followers the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world." These are metaphoric expressions of the positive influence He expects His followers to have on the world in which they live.

The value of salt in Jesus' day was its use as a preservative to keep meat from spoiling. Light dispels darkness, a figure of speech for ignorance and falsehood. We fulfill these words of Jesus through our words, deeds, and prayers.

We also fulfill these words by being good citizens and voting for government leaders whose lives and policies are most conducive to our Christian mission and message of ultimate freedom and peace in Jesus Christ.

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Paul, as well as Jesus, makes it clear that Christians have an obligation to be good citizens. Paul speaks of our duty to the governing authorities in Romans 13:1-7, and sums up his exhortation by saying, *Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.*

In his first letter to Timothy, Paul gave him guidelines for praying for governing authorities, and we can use his words as a guide for voting. Paul told Timothy to pray with two clear goals in mind: (1) that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life and (2) that people may be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.

Paul clearly wants a political situation wherein Christians are free to live out their faith without government interference, which we presently do not have. He also wants there to be freedom for the preaching of the Gospel, for he mentions how God wants all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.

If Timothy had had the privilege of voting for government leaders as we do, I am certain that Paul would have instructed him to vote as well as pray. We, therefore, can keep Paul's instructions in mind when we go into the voting booth. Although there are no perfect candidates, we can both pray and vote with Paul's vision in mind.

Our goal is not to create an “official” Christian nation, but to be free to carry out the commission of our Lord to make disciples for Him in every nation (Matthew 28:18-20). When the people of this nation, or any nation, live by the teachings of Jesus and the New Testament, they will be a more peaceful and happy people. As Psalm 33:12 says, *Blessed is the nation, whose God is the LORD.*

To carry out this Great Commission, we need political leaders whose worldview and policies are favorable to the Christian mission and message of *repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ* (Acts 20:21). This Christian mission will either be opposed or accommodated by those who are voted into power.

John Jay (1745-1829), whom George Washington appointed as the first Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, understood this. Jay was a New York lawyer, governor of New York, and a Founding Father. In 1812, he exhorted American citizens that it was their “duty” to wisely choose their leaders. He said,

Providence has given to our people the choice of their rulers, and it is the duty, as well as the privilege and interest of our Christian nation to select and prefer Christians for their rulers. National prosperity can neither be obtained nor preserved without the favor of Providence (Hyatt, *America's Revival Heritage 2nd Edition*, 93).

It is both foolish and immoral for Christians to leave it to the secularists, socialists, and Marxists to choose those who will govern this nation. Such leaders would most surely oppose our Christian mission and message. Yes, American Christians have a moral obligation to vote in this election.

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Holy Day Articles

Passover 2023

(Copyright) by Richard Frates (Easley, South Carolina)

Read this on Passover at sunset alone or with others. Passover April 5th - 2023. **Exodus 12: 1-16: Verse 13** - “The blood will be a sign for you on your houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will Pass Over You”. When God's Judgment fell on Egypt: God passed over the sins of Israel because of the blood of the Lamb. If the blood of Christ Jesus, the “Lamb slain from the creation of the world” **Revelation 13:8** - is on your house - lives in your spirit through faith - God will Passover your sins on Judgment Day. Hebrews 3:6 “Christ is faithful over God's house. And we are his house” NIV. If through faith, you believe the Lamb of God Christ Jesus paid your debt of sin, the Spirit of God lives in you. Together

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all believers are one in Christ and form the house of God’s Holy Spirit.

The Sacrifice Given: Our Father in Heaven: Paid our Debt of Sin. **Crucifixion and Suffering of the Son of God:**

Mark 15:12 to 15:39 – Crucify him they shouted. Why what crime has he committed? Asked Pilate. But they shouted all the louder, crucify him! Pilate wanting to satisfy the crowd, had Jesus flogged and handed him over to them to be crucified. The company of soldiers put a purple robe on him; they twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. They began to call on him “Hail, king of the Jews!” Again, and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. After they mocked him, they led him out to be crucified. They nailed him hands and feet to the stake of a tree. The chief priest and teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. At the sixth hour darkness came over the land. And, at the ninth hour with a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last breath.

Isaiah 53:1– 12, He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. He took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows. He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities. The punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all like sheep have gone astray, and God, laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. For the transgressions of my people, he was stricken. He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the Father’s will to crush him and cause him to suffer. Though the **Father made his Son a guilt offering**. He will see his offspring and prolong his days. The will of God will prosper in his hands. After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life. By his knowledge, my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will give him a portion among the great. Because he poured out his life unto death and was numbered with the transgressors.”

1 Corinthians 11:23-29, I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed, took – bread - when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way, after supper he took the - cup - saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it in remembrance of me.” For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes. Therefore whoever drinks the cup in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to - examine himself - before he eats this bread and drinks this cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.

The body and blood of Jesus Christ is: The food and drink of salvation: John 6:53-56, Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth. Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood - Remains in me and I in him. Verse 63 – The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.

How to take the Passover in a worthy manner: Examine yourself by, admitting you have sinned, realize that you are subject to death and in need of salvation. Accept the cleansing of your sins by the body and blood of the Son of God. Be thankful and praise your Father in heaven, for paying your debt of sin by the sacrifice of his Son.

1 Corinthians 5:6-11, How to Observe The: Seven days of unleavened bread. “Let us keep the festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth.” For Christ our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. The Apostles and original churches observed the Passover, as instructed by Jesus; and days of unleavened bread; Not Easter, Leviticus 23:1-8. If you do Not hold Sacred God’s Passover: Judgment Day - will be a disappointment, John 5:28-29.

The Lesson of foot washing is: Humility banishes arrogance and pride, forgive others, do not keep a record of their sins or yours; wash them away., John 13:1-17. Jesus poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciple’s feet, drying them with a towel. Now that I your Lord and teacher have washed your feet; you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Now that you know these things, you will be - blessed - if you do them.

Matthew 26:26-27 - “Feast of Unleavened Bread” Verse 17: Jesus took bread, gave thanks, and broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying, ‘Take eat this is my body’. Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and offered it to them, saying “This

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is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sin." Our Heavenly Father Paid our debt of Sin by the body and blood of Jesus Christ. God's Mercy is Forever and Judgments Final.

The Son of God Christ Jesus is: The Bread of Eternal Life. Praise God.

Pentecost: Sunday, Monday, or Sivan 6?

(Copyright 2008) by Bryan T. Huie (Dennard, Arkansas)

Pentecost, also called the Feast of Weeks (Heb. **Chag Shavuot**), the Feast of Harvest (Heb. **Chag haQatzir**), and the Day of Firstfruits (Heb. **Yom haBikurim**) in the Old Testament, is the only Holy Day which wasn't designated to fall on a particular day of the month. Pentecost, which means "count fifty" in Greek, was to be determined by counting fifty days from the time the wave sheaf was offered during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. That sounds simple enough, but the difficulty that arises is **when** to start and end the count.

Almost all will agree that the fifty-day count to Pentecost begins within the seven day Feast of Unleavened Bread, also known as the Feast of Passover (Exo. 34:25; Eze. 45:21). The controversial passage which explains how to derive the date of Pentecost is found in Leviticus 23:

LEVITICUS 23:9 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 10 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. 11 He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; **on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.** . . . 15 And **you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath**, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: **seven Sabbaths** shall be completed. **16 Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath**; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.'" (**NKJV**)

Since at least the time of Yeshua, a debate has raged regarding the proper time to observe Pentecost. One of the primary sticking points has been the meaning of "Sabbath" in Leviticus 23:11 and 15. Some claim that the Sabbath being referred to here is the weekly Sabbath which falls within the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Others believe it is the first day of Unleavened Bread, an annual or high Sabbath upon which "no customary work" was to be done and "a holy convocation" held (Lev. 23:7). A.S. Van Der Woude explains where these different beliefs originated:

After the time of the Old Testament there are different ideas among the Jews as to the day constituting the *terminus a quo* of the seven weeks (Van Goudoever, pp. 18, 29). It concerns here the exegesis of Leviticus 23:11, 15, which speaks of "the day after the sabbath." The Sadducees (and also the Samaritans) took the text as literally as possible. They understood the sabbath mentioned there as being the seventh day of the week . . .

In that case the Feast of Weeks was always on the first day (Sunday). The Council of Nicea more or less went along with this and put Pentecost (even as Easter) on a Sunday. The Pharisees counted differently. Their calculation became officially accepted in Jewish orthodoxy from the second century A.D. According to them the "sabbath" in these texts refers to the first feast day of the Passover. On the following day the sheaf was to be brought and the fiftieth day was to be calculated from that. (p. 389, **The World of the Bible**)

The question of whether Pentecost falls on Sunday, Monday, or Sivan 6 has historically been a divisive one for the sabbath-keeping Churches of God and for messianic groups. Those who believe that Pentecost always falls on a Sunday or Monday interpret "the Sabbath" specified in Leviticus 23:11 and 15 to be the weekly Sabbath which occurs within the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread. These two related views are held by most of the groups which split off from the Worldwide Church of God, with the Sunday Pentecost belief being the most prominent. In fact, Herbert W. Armstrong, the founder of the Worldwide Church of God, taught both a Sunday and a Monday Pentecost during his tenure as WCG leader. Many messianic groups also celebrate **Shavuot** on a Sunday every year, contrary to the traditional Jewish practice. Both Sunday and Monday observances of Pentecost are derived from the doctrines held by the Sadducees.

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However, this understanding occasionally causes problems when the weekly Sabbath of Passover falls on the last day of the Feast. It then becomes impossible to start the count to Pentecost **during** the days of Unleavened Bread. In most cases, those who follow this method compensate by beginning the count on the day after the weekly Sabbath which comes **before** the Feast starts. This way, the count to Pentecost can begin within the days of Unleavened Bread as required.

The difference between those who believe that Pentecost always falls on a Sunday and those who believe it's always on Monday is whether the count is inclusive or exclusive of the fiftieth day. Both groups generally count the Sunday within the Days of Unleavened Bread as day one; fifty days from that Sunday always ends up being a Sunday also. The Sunday Pentecost faction observes this fiftieth day as Pentecost, while the Monday group counts fifty days to the same Sunday, and then keeps Pentecost on Monday, the fifty-first day.

Those who believe that the count to Pentecost begins on the day after the first **annual** Sabbath of the year (the First Day of Unleavened Bread) follow the traditional Jewish method of deriving the proper date. With the current structure of the Hebrew calendar, this holy day now always falls on Sivan 6. Those who hold this belief generally do so because they believe that the Eternal gave his oracles to the Jews, and therefore it is their responsibility to preserve the calendar and God's Holy Days:

ROMANS 3:1 What advantage then has **the Jew**, or what is the profit of circumcision? 2 Much in every way! Chiefly because **to them were committed the oracles of God**. 3 For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? 4 Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: "That You may be justified in Your words and may overcome when You are judged." (**NKJV**)

A look at Jacob's deathbed prophecy to his children shows why Paul lauded the position of the Jews in God's plan. The tribe of Judah is prophesied to continue to be the guardians of the law until the Messiah comes to reign:

GENESIS 49:10 The sceptre shall not depart from **Judah**, nor a **lawgiver** from between his feet, until Shiloh shall come; and to him shall be the obedience of the people. (**RWB**)

Many theologians try to tie the phrase "to him shall be the obedience of the people" to the Hebrew name "Shiloh," which is commonly understood to be the Messiah. However, we must remember the thrust of these prophecies given by Jacob. They were to tell his sons "what shall befall you in the last days" (Gen. 49:1). Therefore, the phrase "to him shall be the obedience of the people" most likely refers to Judah being the lawgiver which the people are to obey until the Messiah returns.

Two of the Psalms echo the fact that God gave the tribe of Judah the responsibility for preserving His law:

PSALM 60:7 Gilead is Mine, and Manasseh is Mine; Ephraim also is the helmet for My head; **Judah is My lawgiver**. (**NKJV**)

PSALM 108:8 Gilead is mine; Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; **Judah is my lawgiver**; (**KJV**)

The Scriptures strongly indicate that the Jews as a whole are responsible for preserving and transmitting God's Law from generation to generation. Going back to the days of Yeshua, the majority of the Jews have considered "the Sabbath" mentioned in Leviticus 23:11 and 15 to be the first high Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Nisan 15), which is the first day of the Feast (Exo. 12:16; Lev. 23:6-7).

The historical works of Josephus, a Jewish Pharisee who wrote late in the 1st century, confirms this:

In the month of Xanthicus, which is by us called *Nisan*, and is the beginning of our year, on the fourteenth day of the lunar month, when the sun is in Aries, (for in this month it was that we were delivered from bondage under the Egyptians,) the law ordained that we should every year slay that sacrifice which I before told you we slew when we came out of Egypt, and which was called the *Passover*; and so we do celebrate this passover in companies, leaving nothing of what we sacrifice till the day following. The feast of unleavened bread succeeds

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that of the passover, and falls on the fifteenth day of the month, and continues seven days, wherein they feed on unleavened bread; on every one of which days two bulls are killed, and one ram, and seven lambs. Now these lambs are entirely burnt, besides the kid of the goats which is added to all the rest, for sins; for it is intended as a feast for the priest on every one of those days. **But on the second day of unleavened bread, which is the sixteenth day of the month, they first partake of the fruits of the earth, for before that day they do not touch them.** And while they suppose it proper to honor God, from whom they obtain this plentiful provision, in the first place, they offer the first-fruits of their barley, and that in the manner following: They take a handful of the ears, and dry them, then beat them small, and purge the barley from the bran; they then bring one tenth deal to the altar, to God; and, casting one handful of it upon the fire, they leave the rest for the use of the priest. And after this it is that they may publicly or privately reap their harvest. They also at this participation of the first fruits of the earth, sacrifice a lamb, as a burnt offering to God. When a week of weeks has passed over after this sacrifice, (which weeks contain forty and nine days,) on the fiftieth day, which is Pentecost, but is called by the Hebrews *Asartha*, which signifies *Pentecost*, they bring to God a loaf, made of wheat flour, of two tenth deals, with leaven; and for sacrifices they bring two lambs; and when they have only presented them to God, they are made ready for supper for the priests; nor is it permitted to leave anything of them till the day following. (p. 96, 3.10.5-6, *Antiquities of the Jews*)

The Jewish Publication Society's *Tanakh* reflects this same understanding in its translation of Leviticus 23:9-11, 15-16:

LEVITICUS 23:9 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 10 Speak to the Israelite people and say to them: When you enter the land that I am giving to you and you reap its harvest, you shall bring the first sheaf of your harvest to the priest. 11 He shall elevate the sheaf before the LORD for acceptance in your behalf; the priest shall elevate it **on the day after the sabbath**. . . . 15 And from the day on which you bring the sheaf of elevation offering - **the day after the sabbath** - you shall count off **seven weeks**. They must be complete: 16 you must **count until the day after the seventh week** - fifty days; then you shall bring an offering of new grain to the LORD. (*JPS Tanakh*)

In their commentary on this passage, Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown concur with the traditional Jewish viewpoint. They write:

11. the morrow after the sabbath – *i.e.*, the day after the Sabbath, not the weekly Sabbath, but the first day of unleavened bread, which was to be kept as a Sabbath; for upon it there was to be a holy convocation . . . **15. Ye shall count . . . from the morrow after the sabbath** – *i.e.*, after the first day of the Passover week, which was observed as a Sabbath.” (p. 497, vol. I, *A Commentary: Critical, Experimental, and Practical*)

At the time of Yeshua's ministry, the Pharisees believed that the second occurrence of the word "sabbath" in verse 15 and "sabbath" in verse 16 indicated a period of seven days, not the weekly Sabbath. This is the way the *Tanakh* translates this passage above, and it is the common understanding of most Jews today.

A parallel passage in Deuteronomy 16 seems to substantiate the common Jewish understanding of "sabbath" in this passage:

DEUTERONOMY 16:9 “You shall count off **seven weeks** [*shiv'ah shavu'ot*], computing them from the day when the sickle is first put to the standing grain. 10 You shall then keep the **Feast of Weeks** [*chag shavu'ot*] in honor of the LORD, your God . . . (*NAB*)

In this Scripture, the word "week" is a translation of the Hebrew root word *shavua'*, which literally means "a period of seven," or "a week." The *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament (TWOT)* says this about the use of *shavua'* in Deuteronomy 16:

In Deut 16:9, *shabu'a* represents a period of seven days (literally "seven seven-periods you shall-number-to-you") . . .

shavua' is also used as a technical term in Deut 16:10, 16 where it denotes the Feast of Weeks (*hag shabu'ot*), *i.e.* the Feast of Seven-Periods. . . . It was so named because it was to be celebrated "on the morrow after" the seventh sabbath after the day of firstfruits (Lev 23:15-16)! Hence it was the feast of the day following the seven

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seven-periods, or the feast of *hamishim yom*, fifty days - "Pentecost" from the Greek. This feast marked the early wheat harvest at about the sixth of Sivan, at the end of our own month of May. (p. 899, vol. II)

At the time of Yeshua, the Hebrew calendar was still being determined by the Sanhedrin every month by visual observation of the new moon. Because of this, Pentecost could fall on either Sivan 5, 6, or 7 (Rosh Hashana 6b, *Talmud*). This was possible because the total number of days in the months of Nisan and Iyar could be either 29 or 30. Now, because the standardized rules for the Hebrew calendar compiled by Hillel II in 358 C.E. call for Nisan and Iyar to always have 30 and 29 days, respectively, Pentecost consistently falls on Sivan 6 of the Hebrew calendar.

Editor's Note: At the time of Christ the moon sightings were only used in order to make sure the Sanhedrin's astronomical calculations were correct. See Maimonides Document

From Babylonian Talmud 6B: The Gemara answers: **As Rav Shemaya taught** in a *baraita*: **Shavuot sometimes occurs on the fifth of Sivan, sometimes on the sixth of Sivan, and sometimes on the seventh. How so?** If **both** the months of Nisan and Iyar **are full** months of thirty days each, the festival of *Shavuot*, which is celebrated fifty days after the second day of Passover, occurs on the **fifth** of Sivan; if **both** months **are short**, with twenty-nine days each, it occurs on the **seventh** of Sivan; and if **one** of them **is full and the other is short**, it occurs on the **sixth** of Sivan. According to this opinion, if both months were full and the festival of *Shavuot* occurred on the fifth day of Sivan, and one made his vow on the day after *Shavuot*, i.e., the sixth of Sivan, and in the following year both months were short, so that the festival of *Shavuot* occurred on the seventh of Sivan, a whole year would have passed without three Festivals.

From Talmud 68B: Rabbi Elazar said: All agree with regard to Atzeret, the holiday of *Shavuot*, **that we require** that it be **also “for you,”** meaning that it is a mitzva to eat, drink, and rejoice on that day. **What is the reason? It is the day on which the Torah was given**, and one must celebrate the fact that the Torah was given to the Jewish people. **Rabba said: All agree with regard to Shabbat that we require** that it be **also “for you.”**

From Talmud 86B: The Sages taught: On the sixth day of the month of Sivan, the Ten Commandments were given to the Jewish people. Rabbi Yosei says: On the seventh day of the month. Rava said: Everyone agrees that the Jews came to the Sinai desert on the New Moon, as it is written here: “In the third month after the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, **the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai**” (Exodus 19:1), without elaborating what day it was.

The inspired word of God, the Bible says the law was given on Sivan 6 which would have been Pentecost.

#1--They arrived at Mount Sinai on Sivan 3. (Exd. 19:1)

#2--They had 2 days of preparation, Sivan 4 & 5. (Exd. 19:10)

#3--They were to be prepared for the 3rd day, Sivan 6, on which they received the law. (Exd. 19:15-16)

The count to Pentecost begins the day after Passover or Nisan 16. (What bride does not count the days until her wedding?)

At the time of Moses, the law was given on Pentecost which is also known as the Feast of First Fruits. Later in the New Testament on Pentecost, God's Holy Spirit was given to His people which is appropriate as the Holy Spirit is the means by which we are able to keep the law of God. On a future day of Pentecost, we believe that it will be the harvest of the First Fruits of God on which the Marriage Supper of the Lamb takes place in heaven.

Good sources outside the bible can and should be used as historical information to help with a better understanding. However, if outside historical sources differ from the bible, then the bible is the source you should use as it is the inspired word of God. Other sources are just evidence for or against the bible and the bible always takes president over differing information. (Laura Lee)

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As John Lightfoot explains, there are two passages of Scripture the Pharisees used to determine that the Sabbath in Leviticus 23:11, 15 was supposed to be the first day of Unleavened Bread (Nisan 15):

"But the scribes, very differently [from the Sadducees], keep strictly to the **sixteenth day of the month of Nisan for offering the firstfruits** without any dispensation, **after the sabbatical day or the first day of the feast is over**. And amongst others by which they strengthen their opinion, those two different places of Scripture, **Exod. xii. 15, "Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread,"** and **Deut. xvi. 8, "Six days thou shalt eat unleavened bread,"** they, according to the sense they have, do thus reconcile, 'seven days, indeed, you shall eat unleavened bread;' that is, unleavened bread of the old wheat, on the first day of the feast, the sheaf being not yet offered; and unleavened bread of the new wheat, the remaining six days, after you have offered the firstfruits." (pp. 23-24, vol. 4, **A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica**)

There is another passage of Scripture found in the book of Joshua that confirms that Nisan 16 is the proper time to begin the fifty-day count to Pentecost:

JOSHUA 5:10 While the people of Israel were encamped at Gilgal, **they kept [ya'asu] the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month in the evening** on the plains of Jericho. 11 **And the day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate of the produce of the land**, unleavened cakes and parched grain. 12 And the manna ceased the day after they ate of the produce of the land. And there was no longer manna for the people of Israel, but they ate of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year. (**ESV**)

God told Moses that when the Israelites came into the Promised Land, they were NOT to eat of the new produce of the land until they had offered a sheaf of the firstfruits of the land as an offering to God (Lev. 23:9-14). This offering, which was to take place AFTER a Sabbath, was then the beginning point for the count to Pentecost (Lev. 23:15-16).

The only way that the Israelites could have eaten the produce of Canaan on "the day after the Passover" is if Passover was the Sabbath referred to in Leviticus 23:11, 15. This would of necessity mean that the term "Passover" sometimes is used to refer to the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

The seeming combination of Passover with the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread has been a cause for some confusion. Regarding the word **ya'asu**, translated "kept" in Joshua 5:10, **TWOT** states that the root word **'asa** "is often used in specialized expressions such as . . . "offer sacrifice" (Exo 10:25), "keep the Passover" (Exo 12:48) . . . , and many more." The meaning of "kept" here is that the Israelites sacrificed the Passover lamb between the evenings on the afternoon of Nisan 14, which was the time commanded by God (Exo. 12:6). They then would have cooked the Passover late on the afternoon of Nisan 14, and eaten the Passover meal after sunset, as Nisan 15 (the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread) was beginning.

Although some have tried to separate the sacrifice of the Passover lamb and the Passover meal from the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the ancient Israelites considered them to be intricately tied together. In fact, Ezekiel 45:21 states that "in the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall observe the Passover, a feast of seven days." Compare this Scripture with the original command for the observance of Passover:

EXODUS 12:17 "So you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance. 18 **In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening.**" (**NKJV**)

In the "Holy Day" chapter of the Law (Lev. 23), we see that the Feast of Unleavened Bread was commanded to be a seven-day feast, beginning on Nisan 15 (Lev. 23:6). The original command shows that the Passover lamb was sacrificed in mid-afternoon of Nisan 14, as the sun was setting. It was then cooked as the day waned and eaten after sundown on Nisan 15, as the Feast of Unleavened Bread started. Although slightly longer than seven 24-hour days, the entire period from mid-afternoon on Nisan 14 to the sunset that ended Nisan 21 was considered to be a period of seven days. Consequently, the period from the afternoon of Nisan 14 to the end of Nisan 15, even though it was longer than 24 hours, was considered to be one day (alternately called Passover or the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread).

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Therefore, we see that Joshua's account of the eating of the new produce of Canaan shows that Passover (from the afternoon of Nisan 14 to the sunset that ended Nisan 15) was the Sabbath referred to in the command that determines the count to Pentecost.

Regarding the symbolism found in the Passover feast, theologians acknowledge that Yeshua was the "Lamb of God," the ultimate embodiment of the Passover lambs (I Cor. 5:7; I Pet. 1:19; John 1:29, 36; Rev. 5:6). He was the one the Passover lambs had represented for centuries. Indeed, He died on the cross on the fourteenth of Nisan at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, the same time that the Passover lambs were being slaughtered in the Temple courtyard. But those who keep a Sunday or Monday Pentecost believe that Yeshua fulfilled another Old Testament symbol, the wave sheaf.

While there is no Scripture that directly links Messiah to the wave sheaf offering, those who hold to a Sunday or Monday Pentecost allege that two passages of Scripture (John 20:17-18 and I Cor. 15:20) prove that he was the fulfillment of the wave sheaf. We will look at each in turn:

JOHN 20:17 Jesus said to her, "Do not **cling to [haptou]** Me, for **I have not yet ascended to My Father**; but go to My brethren and say to them, '**I am ascending to My Father** and your Father, and to My God and your God.'
"18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her. (**NKJV**)

The offering of the wave sheaf (Heb. **omer**) was to be performed as part of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, beginning when the Israelites first entered the Holy Land (Lev. 23:11). Leviticus 23:14 specifically says that no bread, roasted grain, or new grain was to be eaten until the wave sheaf had been offered to God.

Many of those who keep a Sunday or Monday Pentecost claim that this passage of Scripture is proof that Yeshua was the fulfillment of the wave sheaf. They maintain that the reason Mary wasn't supposed to "cling to" ("touch"-**KJV**) the resurrected Messiah on that Sunday morning was because he had not yet been "waved" before the Father. According to this theory, Yeshua ascended to the Father in heaven later that morning at about 9:00 am, the same time the Sadducees were offering the wave sheaf. After having his sacrifice on behalf of the people accepted by God, he later returned to earth and was then able to be touched by his disciples (Matt. 28:9).

This theory has several fatal flaws.

The first comes about due to a misunderstanding of the Greek word **haptou** ("cling to"), a form of the verb **haptomai**. Friberg's **Analytical Lexicon to the Greek New Testament** says that it literally means "to take hold of." Here it does **not** simply mean "touch," as the **KJV** implies. Rather, the connotation is of "embracing," clinging to one in an emotional way, seeking comfort from someone through physical contact.

Mary, understandably emotional when she recognized Yeshua, wanted to embrace him and be comforted and reassured that he was indeed alive and still with them. But Yeshua quickly sought to clarify her misconception of why he had returned. He did not tell Mary that she could not "touch" him; rather, he was saying that their relationship has changed since his resurrection. He was no longer a physical man, but a glorified spirit being. He would not now physically comfort his disciples. Instead, after his ascension to claim the High Priesthood of the New Covenant, he would comfort them through the Holy Spirit (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7), which was to be sent on Pentecost.

In the passage above, Yeshua does say that he is ascending to his Father in heaven; however, he doesn't say **when** he will ascend. Does the Bible tell us when he ascended back to heaven to his Father? Yes. Acts 1:3, 9 tells us that **after** appearing to his disciples during a forty-day period, he ascended to heaven from the Mount of Olives. Nowhere is any other ascension mentioned in the Bible. Those who believe Yeshua ascended to heaven on Sunday morning after his resurrection do so based on their own reasoning, not the Bible.

Those who feel Yeshua is the wave sheaf believe that he had to ascend to the Father that morning to be accepted by the Father. Only after this event, they believe, could his sacrifice on the cross be applied to the sinners who needed it. But does the Bible support this view? No, it does not! In fact, it clearly shows through a symbolic event caused by God that Yeshua's sacrifice was accepted immediately upon his death:

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MARK 15:37 And Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last. 38 Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. (NKJV)

The veil of the temple was the divider between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies (Exo. 26:33). The Holy of Holies represented God's throne in heaven. The ripping of the veil symbolically indicated that believers now had access to the very throne of God through the sacrifice of Yeshua (Heb. 10:19-20). Clearly, this miracle showed that Yeshua did not have to wait until after his resurrection to have his sacrifice accepted by the Father.

Finally, we must realize that even though the Sadducees controlled the high priesthood at the time of Yeshua, their power was severely restricted. *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary* states:

Although the spiritual power of the Pharisees had increased greatly, the Sadducean aristocracy was able to keep at the helm in politics. The price at which the Sadducees had to secure themselves power at this later period was indeed a high one, for they were in their official actions to accommodate themselves to Pharisaic views (p. 1112, "Sadducee").

Alfred Edersheim, a noted Jewish historian, recorded the practical effects of the Pharisees' power in relation to the keeping of Pentecost:

The Pharisees held, that the time between [Passover] and Pentecost should be counted from the second day of the feast; the Sadducees insisted that it should commence with the literal "Sabbath" after the festive day. But despite argument, the Sadducees had to join when the solemn procession went on the afternoon of the feast to cut down the "first sheaf," and to reckon Pentecost as did their opponents. (p. 220, ch. 15, *Sketches of Jewish Social Life*)

It is almost certain that the Sadducean High Priest Caiaphas did **not** wave the sheaf offering on the Sunday morning after Yeshua first appeared to his disciples. History shows that, whatever his personal feelings about Pentecost were, he was forced for political reasons to present the wave sheaf offering at the same time the majority of the nation thought it should be done: the morning of Friday, Nisan 16.

Now let's look at I Corinthians 15:20, which Sunday/Monday Pentecost factions say also proves Messiah was the wave sheaf:

I CORINTHIANS 15:20 But now Christ is risen from the dead and has become the **firstfruits** [*aparche*] of those who have fallen asleep. (NKJV)

Editor's Note: But now Christ has been raised from the dead; He became the **firstfruit** of those having fallen asleep. (Green's Literal Translation 1993)

But now Crist roos ayen fro deth, the **firste fruit** of deed men; (Wycliffe Bible 1382) (Laura Lee)

The Greek word *aparche* translated "firstfruits" above is singular, not plural. Yeshua was the "**firstfruit**," not the "firstfruits" as the verse implies. This distinction will become important as we understand more fully what the wave sheaf offering really consisted of. Let's look at a detailed description of the wave sheaf offering as described by Alfred Edersheim:

. . . They [delegates from the Sanhedrin] cut down barley to the amount of one ephah, or ten omers, or three seahs, which is equal to about three pecks and three pints of our English measure. The ears were brought into the Court of the Temple, and thrashed out with canes or stalks, so as not to injure the corn; then 'parched' on a pan perforated with holes, so that each grain might be touched by the fire, and finally exposed to the wind. The corn thus prepared was ground in a barley mill, which left the hulls whole. According to some, the flour was always successfully passed through thirteen sieves, each closer than the other. The statement of a rival authority, however, seems more rational - that it was only done till the flour was sufficiently fine (*Men.* vi. 6, 7), which was ascertained by one of the 'Gizbarim' (treasurers) plunging his hands into it, the sifting process being continued so long as any of the flour adhered to the hands (*Men.* viii. 2). Though one ephah, or ten omers, or barley was cut down, only one omer of flour, or about 5.1 pints of our measure, was offered in the Temple on the second

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Paschal, or **16th day of Nisan**. The rest of the flour might be redeemed and used for any purpose. The omer of flour was mixed with a 'log,' or very nearly three-fourths of a pint of oil, and a handful of frankincense put upon it, then waved before the Lord, and a handful taken out and burned on the altar. The remainder belonged to the priest. This was what is popularly, though not very correctly, called 'the presentation of the first or wave-sheaf on the second day of the Passover-feast, or **the 16th of Nisan**. (pp. 204-205, *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services*, updated edition)

Yeshua was the firstfruit (singular); however, the wave sheaf offering represented the firstfruits (plural). Who are those firstfruits? They are those called and chosen, the **ekklesia**, the Church. A look at the symbolism of the wave sheaf offering in conjunction with the details of how this offering was performed reveals the truth of this claim.

- The wave sheaf was initially made up of numerous heads of grain (plural), not just one (singular).
- These grains were parched by fire, just as believers in the body of Christ are tried and tested by fiery trials:

I PETER 4:12 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the **fiery trial** which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; 13 but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. (**NKJV**)

- The grains which made up the wave sheaf offering were ground into a fine flour through the milling process, just as we are ground into powder by Yeshua during our refinement:

MATTHEW 21:42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'? 43 Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. 44 And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, **it will grind him to powder.**" (**NKJV**)

- Although ten omers of barley were cut down, only one omer of flour was eventually used in the offering:

MATTHEW 22:14 "For **many** are called, but **few** are chosen." (**NKJV**)

When you consider all aspects of the wave sheaf offering, it's clear that symbolically the wave sheaf represents the Church, not Yeshua.

However, the fact that some Sunday/Monday Pentecost adherents are mistaken about the symbolic identification of the wave sheaf in no way invalidates the duality present in the Eternal's plan. We constantly see antetypes and types throughout the Bible. We see the first man, Adam, and the second man, Yeshua (Rom. 5:14; I Cor. 15:47-49). As mentioned earlier, the original Passover lambs slain in Egypt were types of Yeshua, the true Passover Lamb (I Cor. 5:7). We have the earthly Jerusalem and the new Jerusalem (Rev. 3:12; 21:2). I could cite more examples from the Scriptures, but clearly God's plan is dual in many, if not all, respects.

Conclusion

The entire nation of Judah, following the teaching of the Pharisees, was observing Pentecost on the correct day in the time of Yeshua. No wonder he told his disciples, as well as the people, that "the scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do . . ." (Matt. 23:2-3).

Questionable Article

Tell us why you believe this is a true or false doctrine and why?

Learn to Give an Answer!

Colossians 2:16-17

(Copyright) by Dwight Fleming (Oroville, California)

Colossians 2:16-17 reads: "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ."

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These two verses have caused much controversy among various church groups and individual believers. For some, these two verses support keeping the Holydays and the Sabbath, while for others, it is proof that we no longer have to worry about such "Jewish practices." Why?

Because they were only SHADOWS while Christ is the reality. Christ, the reality, is far greater than any shadows. So why bother with the shadows when we should today focus on Christ. This is how many understand what Paul said with these two verses. The primary problem stems from the translation of verse 17: "Which are a **shadow** of things to come, **but** the body **is** of Christ." Of course, the body is of Christ. Of course, the sky is blue, but what does that have to do with Paul's previous statement about the Holydays being **shadows**?

Many reason that if the Holydays were only **shadows**, then they are of little value today for Christians. Other translations render verse 17 as, "These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ" NIV. "which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ" NKJV. With the phrase that follows the "but," the translators always add a verb which is not in the Greek. They do this to provide their interpretation of verse 17. Therefore, they make Paul to be saying that the Holydays and Sabbath were only **shadows** (and of little value or importance) while Christ is the actual reality or substance.

This is what happens when translators, who know and understand koine or common Greek of the New Testament, inject their own bias into their work of translation. They are human and have their own beliefs, so it happens. Yet, when we look at a New Testament Interlinear, we will find that Paul actually said, "which are a shadow of things to come, but the body of Christ." Notice that there is not another verb after the "but."

Let me use this illustration to explain what this verse is saying that makes sense to me. If I were to write to you, "My shoes are old," what might you conclude from this simple statement? There is a good chance that you might think that since my shoes are old, then they are also worn out and should be discarded. **But** to prevent you from assuming something that is not true, I would need to add a "but" or "yet." This is what Paul did in verse 17. "They are shadows, **BUT** . . . "But what? What else did Paul say about the Sabbath and Holydays? **"But the body of Christ."**

Back to my illustration: "My shoes are old, **BUT they are in good shape.**" Well, that changes everything. If they are still in good shape, then they are probably very comfortable and should not be discarded. Looking at my above sentence, can it be shortened? Could I have just written, "My shoes are old, but in good shape"? With this sentence, I did not repeat the verb after the "but." And this is what Paul did as well, but I'm not a Greek scholar who can explain the Greek. However, the Holy Spirit can help us to understand things despite not knowing the original language.

So, when Paul said, "but the body of Christ," what did he mean? Consider this: "Which **are** a shadow of things to come, but [**are**] the body of Christ." Wait! Is that what Paul actually meant? That the Sabbath and Holydays **ARE** the body of Christ? How can that be?

How are we members of the body of Christ? It is through the Holy Spirit dwelling in us (See I Corinthians 12:13 among others). As you know, the Holy Spirit imparts to us the mind or nature of God. It does not control us like robots. It will guide us, but we have to be willing to follow it rather than the flesh. This is sometimes easier said than done. But God does allow us freewill. Without freewill, God could not work His marvelous plan to bring many sons and daughters to glory. To build Godly character, we must learn to resist various temptations of the flesh and other influences that we may encounter. It is not easy and requires our own diligent efforts in drawing closer to God and being filled with more of His Holy Spirit as Jesus often had to do when He also dwelt in the flesh. Is this what Paul meant when he said to "work out your own salvation"? See Philippians 2:12. Certainly, we can't save ourselves by our own works. But we have to do what we need to do to stay close to God and be filled with His Spirit which does transform us as we **choose** to follow its leading.

Does the Sabbath and the Holydays express the thinking or mind or plan of God? If they do, then can they be considered part of the body of Christ? And is this what Paul was actually saying about them? They are shadows of things to come which makes them prophetic but also of the body. And if they are of the body of Christ, then they still have great value and should not be discarded or ignored. **Keeping them does not give us salvation but it does help us to stay close to God who will save us as we remain in Christ.** And if the Sabbath and Holydays are in Christ, then should we still be observing them? This is the controversy that has plagued New Testament believers for centuries. And when scripture

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is not properly translated, then it does not help with the matter. Yet, people will believe what they want to believe despite how well we may argue for or against something.

Since you are a Sabbath keeper, I hope this makes some sense to you. Yet, Colossians 2:16-17 is often quoted by those who believe the Holydays don't matter anymore. For us reading his words centuries later, Paul's writings are not always completely clear as to what he meant. And having to rely on translations only adds to the problem. Anyway, just wanted to take a little walk in "my old shoes."

Letters

Letter from Ray Daly (March 16, 2023)

Laura,

Looks like winter is finally going to be on its way over beginning in the next week or so. I know that we have enough snow in our backyard that it will take some very high temps to get it all melted by the end of April. BTW, I like your reports on your animals and birds in the yard. We have three or four squirrels in our back yard that we feed all winter. But they do not tease the dogs, they run like everything. We also have three rabbits that we feed, and they too don't hang around when the dogs are out. One of the rabbits has its home in our neighbor's yard, under their patio. We feed about 20 or so Asian doves, and 30-40 smaller birds. But it is hard for them to eat, because there are a couple of hawks that hang around. You should see how they eat it up when the hawks are not present.

The best to you and Darwin, and your health problems.

Ray

We have about 12 Eurasian Collard Doves, a couple of chickadees, three different kinds of woodpeckers, two different kinds of nuthatches, 4 blue jays, 12 Starlings, 1 or 2 Juncos, 100 sparrows, at least 6 squirrels and 2 or 3 bunnies. One day we saw a hawk, but it was only there a couple of minutes, and we haven't seen it since. Every once in awhile a bird shows up that we have never seen before.

Our feeders are in front of our dining room window, so when we eat, we also watch the birds. (Laura)

Prayer Requests

Prayer Request for James McBride (March 12, 2023)

Greetings, and many thanks for asking the brethren for prayer on my behalf. I have long-standing heart failure that has taken a downturn and simply has to be managed. Worst is breathing and extreme weakness, though sleeping has been easier of late. I suppose not unexpected at ninety!

Prayer Request for Darwin Lee (March 17, 2023)

Darwin went for his regular VA medical exam and his pulse rate was 32 the first time they took it and then it was 42 so a few days later they wanted him to come back in. Today they put a heart monitor on him for the next two weeks. They don't think it is serious, they just want to monitor it. I guess in some people a low pulse rate is normal. He has no symptoms of anything, so it is probably nothing.

Prayer Request for Laura Lee (March 17, 2023)

Both of my legs are still stiff, but the pain is gone except for when I step on a cat's tail, they keep putting their tails under my foot all the time, or when I step on a fake mouse. I am walking much better except for the stiffness that seems to come and go. It never goes completely but sometimes it is worse than other times.

Have a Great Feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread!

Iron Sharpening Iron

(Agree or Disagree with Something Printed)
New American Standard Bible (Proverbs 27:17)
As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

In regard to: The Return of Christ

Article by Ray Daly

Comments by Ray Daly (Lincoln, North Dakota) and Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)

Ray writes:

WCG taught that Christ could come with his Angels at basically any time and set up his kingdom. And I have found that many, if not most, of the splits off of WCG continue to feel that way. But ask yourself, and try asking your readers, if the following supports such a teaching.

Mt. 5:18 "...Until heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle SHALL IN NO WISE PASS FROM THE LAW UNTIL ALL BE FULFILLED."

Mat. 26:53-54. "Think not that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of Angels. [With which Angels, his kingdom would be set up.] But how then shall SCRIPTURE BE FULFILLED."

There are several other NT teachings by Christ that support the same doctrine. Or, have the doctrinal changes been put into the hands of human beings.?

Laura writes: I guess, I am not quite sure what doctrine you are talking about here. For starters, everything will not be fulfilled until all people left that want to follow God are spirit beings and living in the Kingdom of God.

Speculation in regard to when Christ will return is based on Scripture. For starters, Pentecost is called the Feast of First Fruits, so that would be a clue from scripture that Christ will probably return on Pentecost. However, with that said, we don't know which Pentecost but perhaps may be able to guess as the end draws near. Even if we are able to guess which Pentecost, we still will not know the hour or the minute He returns until it happens.

Another clue is here:

1Co 15:52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

1Th 4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 1Th 4:15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 1Th 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 1Th 4:17 Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 1Th 4:18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

So, around the time of the last trumpet which would be the seventh trumpet (third woe trumpet) the resurrection of the first fruits will take place. This would be just before the bowls of wrath are poured out on the earth.

Human beings are not to make doctrinal changes that I know of. What is said above comes right from the bible and has been in the bible since the first bible.

Thank You Everyone!!!

In regard to: An Annual Confidence Trick?

Article by John Jewell

Comments by Ray Daly (Lincoln, North Dakota) and Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)

Ray writes:

Regarding the comments made about x-mas. First, observing x-mas began in Babylon in the early 600's BC. At the time, Babylon and Assyria both worshipped Baal, and observed Sunday. But, as mentioned, in the early 600's BC, Babylon changed their day of worship to the seventh day, and they changed their worshipping of Baal to worshipping of "Bel". The story goes as follows.

In the early 600's BC, an individual came along preaching a different message than that of Baal. He had a ministry identical to that of Jesus in the 1st century AD. He healed people, had a following of disciples, and preached a message. About the time of Persia's conquering Babylon, this religion was carried throughout the 127 provinces of the Persian empire. The disciple's name was "Zoroaster" (sp). One can read of what the message of "Bel" was by going to Wikipedia, and looking up the Persian name for Bel, "Mithra(-s)".

I realize that researching this by the readers will likely not take place. But the answer to whom Bel was is the OT "Immanuel". Take it any way you wish. But it is almost certain that Immanuel and his mother were among the Judah captives taken by Rezin, king of Syria/Aram. Whom later were taken by the Assyrians and settled in Babylon.

Laura writes:

Bel was not the old testament Immanuel, Bel was a pagan god and so was Mithra. It would be helpful if you would put links to what you send so people can read what you have found in your research. I did not find a connection between Bel and Mithra on Wikipedia, but I did find it on other websites. Why are you trying to make pagan gods look like God and Christ? Is there a reason for that because I see no good reason for this. You are proposing evil things when you do that.

If you spent even half as much time reading your bible as you spend reading all this pagan god garbage, you would be a really smart bible guy by now.

[Jer 51:44](#) And I will punish **Bel in Babylon**, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him: yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall.

Strong's

H1078

[bêl](#)

bale

By contraction for [H1168](#); **Bel, the Baal of the Babylonians**: - Bel.

In regard to: The Number 40

Article by Gary Miller

Comments by Gary Miller (Pocahontas, Arkansas)

A short note to thank you for finding the error on the Part: "NOAH: Gave a final 7-day Warning (Gen. 7:4)" A typo that slipped by us. Looks like it should have read: "NOAH: Given a final 7-day Warning (Gen. 7:4)" That is, that HE was given a 7-day warning, a heads up of the impending flood.

[Gen 7:4](#) For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth. (KJV Scripture added by Laura Lee)

In regard to: Colossians 2:16-17

Article by Dwight Fleming
Comments by Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)

What Dwight wrote in regard to Col. 2:16-17 was originally sent to me as part of a letter and not as an article. At that time, I thought it was good and I still think it is good in that it eventually led me into a deep dive into scripture and what I found was that translators did not all use the same words in these two scriptures. What we need to understand about those who translated scripture is that they probably seldom had God's Holy Spirit and did not understand the plan of God for the most part. (The major parts of what we disagreed with Dwight in regard to are highlighted in yellow in his article.)

At one point in my research, I probably had these two scriptures displayed in front of me from twenty or more bibles at the same time both new and old.

In the King James Bible, it says:

[Col 2:16](#) Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*: [Col 2:17](#) Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ.

What Dwight is having a problem with is the word "is" in verse 17. It is italicized so it is not in the original text. One problem I found is that not all Bibles italicize the word "is", so you don't always know that it is not in the original text. That is a problem.

What Dwight wants to do is make the verse say, "Which **are** a shadow of things to come, **but [are]** the body of Christ."

He wants to eliminate the word "is" altogether and then insert "are" after but. When he does this, he then comes up with "That the Sabbath and Holydays **ARE** the body of Christ?" As we looked at this closer, we did not think it was clear either way. Something was wrong with the unclearness of the scripture in the bible and also with the conclusion Dwight arrived at because on further thought, Holy Days cannot be the body of Christ. The body of Christ consists of people, the church.

Therefore no man iudge you in mete, or in drink, or in part of feeste dai, or of neomenye, or of sabatis, whiche ben schadewe of thingis to comynge; for the bodi is of Crist. [John Wycliffe Bible 1382](#)

Okay, so that version is a little hard to read, but look at what verse 17 says: "Which be shadows of things to come for the body is of Christ. (This uses the word "is" as if it is part of the original text, but instead of the word "but" it uses the word "for".

Okay, we have all heard of John Wycliffe, but how many of us have ever heard of Julia E. Smith? Until now I hadn't heard of her either. She was a woman that knew Hebrew, Greek and Latin. She went back to the original text and translated it from the original languages into English. It took her eight years and she self-published it.

Now the reason it never became well known to most is because it is a completely literal translation. Most translators put in all these connecting words which don't always help with understanding but does help the bible to read smoothly.

Different translators use different words. For example, go back to the KJV for these two verses. Some translations use conscience for "judge" in verse 16. The word "respect" in verse 16 can be part which is the main meaning for Strong's #G3313. Well, over time part turned into piece and then peace and later regard and respect. It all just depends on the translator.

Julia used the word "turn" instead of respect and if you go back into the Hebrew "turn" and "respect" are part of the same definition, but under respect in Greek you can't find "turn". Notice she does not use "But" or "Is" in verse 17 and even without any connecting words it reads smoother. Some bibles also use regard instead of respect.

Therefore let not any judge you in food, or in drink, or in turn of festival, or of the new moon, or of sabbaths: Which are a shadow of things about to be; and the body of Christ. [Julia E. Smith Translation 1876](#)

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You can find these old bibles at: <https://textusreceptusbibles.com/Interlinear>

In my opinion, I do not believe verse 17 is saying that the Holy Days are the body as Dwight believes. I think a better wording for these two verses would be:

Col 2:16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in **regard** of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the **sabbaths** **Col 2:17** Which are a shadow of things to come **for** the body of Christ. (My Version)

Col 2:16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in **respect** of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the **sabbath days**; **Col 2:17** Which are a shadow of things to come; **but** the body **is** of Christ. (KJV)

As you can see, I did not change much in the verse to make it make more sense: And just for the record where it says “or of the new moon” it is talking about Feast of Trumpets and not about keeping a monthly new moon day. Also, since holyday is already mentioned in verse 16 and some translators use “festival” rather than “holyday” why then would scripture single out “New Moon” or Feast of Trumpets and then it adds weekly sabbaths at the end. I suppose you could lump all sabbaths including the annual ones into that word sabbath because they are all sabbaths, but the problem is that “holyday” or “festival” as some translate verse 16 already includes the annual sabbaths. So why is “new moon” or Feast of Trumpets mentioned separately in verse 16. Feast of Trumpets is the day that the Hebrew Calendar is set from, so I believe that it is a reference to the Hebrew Calendar which is set by the New Moon of Tishri One, which is also called the Feast of Trumpets.

In conclusion, the verse is not saying, not to keep the Holy Days. What it is saying is that the Holy Days are a shadow or a map of where the Church of God, the Body of Christ is going. If you throw that map away, you have no direction and you lose your way.

Dwight made this statement: **Keeping them does not give us salvation but it does help us to stay close to God who will save us as we remain in Christ.**

I sincerely hope you are not teaching this to other people. If you do not keep the Holy Days at the times that God has appointed for them to be kept you will not gain salvation, you will lose it. The Holy Days are part of the law of God, and they are part of the ten commandments. All Holy Days, whether weekly or annual, are sabbaths and we are all commanded to keep them. To remain in Christ, you have to keep all of His Law, which includes the Holy Days.

In Leviticus 23 it tells us these are God’s Feasts, and it goes on to list all of them.

Lev 23:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, *Concerning the feasts of the LORD*, which ye shall proclaim *to be* holy convocations, *even these are my feasts*.

Amo 8:5 Saying, **When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? Amo 8:6** That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; *yea*, and sell the refuse of the wheat? **Amo 8:7** The LORD hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, **Surely I will never forget any of their works.** **Amo 8:8** Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? and it shall rise up wholly as a flood; and it shall be cast out and drowned, as *by* the flood of Egypt. **Amo 8:9** And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord GOD, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day: **Amo 8:10** **And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day.**

And also see: Isaiah 1

Isa 1:14 **Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them.**

In the above verses from Amos and Isaiah, He calls them **your feasts** and He hates them. Throughout the Old Testament they went into captivity or were punished in some way for Sabbath Breaking. Why many people within the Church of God

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do not understand this, I do not know, but the bottom line here is that you are to keep God's Feasts and not your own made-up feasts. God only has one calendar, and He only has one set of Holy Days and if you are not keeping the ones that God has appointed for you to keep then you are Sabbath Breakers and you will not be in the First Fruit Resurrection because you are not keeping the Law of God as stated in Lev. 23 and other places in the bible.

So yes, keeping the holy days as God has appointed is very much a salvational issue.

I hear a lot of people say, what is the difference what day we keep the holydays on just as long as we are keeping them. It makes a difference to God what days you keep them on. If it did not make any difference to God then He would not have to punish people for breaking His Sabbaths. So, continue your lives believing this issue makes no difference to God and see what happens. Do you really want to find out the hard way?

Eze 18:4 ... the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rev 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

1Jn 3:4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

You cannot pick and choose which laws of God you will keep and which ones you will not keep.

Keeping the law of God won't save you from the death penalty because Christ already did that for us when He died on the cross, but it will save you from cremation in the "Lake of Fire" (the second and final death). Those who do not want to keep the law of God will not be in the "Kingdom of God," and that is the bottom line and your choice.

Announcements

Announcement from Craig White (March 12, 2023)

Rosh Article

For those who are interested, my article on the Rosh was published in *Twenty-First Century Watch* magazine here <https://www.21stcenturywatch.com/2023/03/10/the-modern-identity-of-the-peoples-of-western-russia-part-one/>

The ICG publishes that periodical and are part of the Church of God family. Over the years it has been a pleasure having articles published by various of the Churches of God or editing their materials. The holy spirit knows no corporate boundaries.

Announcement from Zac Poonen (March 13, 2023)

Messages

Seek Earnestly For A Heart Of Wisdom

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zPKtsDooY0A>

The Two-fold Testimony In Breaking Bread - Zac Poonen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4f18ZAKEJOc>

CFC Bangalore

<https://cfcindia.com>

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Announcement from Creation Ministries International (March 17, 2023)

Are you interested in hosting a CMI event at your church?

Prayerfully Dependent

By God's grace we are filling our speaking calendar out this year quite quickly! We regularly pray for God to send us where we need to be and for those who need to hear. Has CMI had a speaker come and give a presentation at your church in recent years? Prayerfully consider engaging your church leadership on having CMI come and serve your church!

Powerful Presentations

Each of our speakers give theological, scientific, and evangelistic creation presentations. This is the primary way we serve the local church. These show not only how God's Word can be trusted but how even the science used to deny the Bible really proves it instead!

Profound Impact

A common testimony we hear is the impact these presentations and our resources have on people. Statements include deepening faith, taking Bible study more seriously, confidence with answers for evangelism, and of course, love for Jesus, our Creator. We would be honored to come alongside your church family and serve!

[REQUEST A SPEAKER](#)

Announcement from James Steinle (March 17, 2023)

***** FLASH ***** RUSSIA TO "PRACTICE" SUB-LAUNCHED NUKE STRIKE AGAINST U.S.A. FROM SUBS IN PACIFIC OCEAN

<https://haltunnerradioshow.com/index.php/en/news-page/world/flash-russia-to-practice-sub-launched-nuke-strike-against-u-s-a-from-subs-in-pacific-ocean>

Prophecy

First Trumpet Weapon

(Copyright) by Dwight Fleming (Orville, California)

"And the seven angels with the seven trumpets prepared to sound them. Then the first angel sounded his trumpet, and **hail** and **fire** mixed with blood were hurled down upon the earth. A third of the earth was **burned** up, along with a third of the trees and all green grass" (Revelation 8:6-7).

What kind of weapon will accomplish the devastation of the First Trumpet plague?

Obviously, it will be an incendiary weapon of some kind. This weapon is already in existence. Watch the video linked below and see if the raining of fire by a Russian bomb would fulfill the fate of the First Trumpet plague. This Russian weapon was designed to ignite vegetation, fuel, and buildings.

As I suspected, the war in Ukraine is proving to be a testing ground for weapons that will be used in the future as described by the Book of Revelation. We who have God's protection need not fear.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X4EDTuTeu_s Ukraine becomes testing ground.

Other Items

(Poems, Jokes, Questions etc.)

Can you say Camarasaurus? (Copyright 2023) by David Rives (Lewisburg, Tennessee)

Dear friends,

2023 has been amazing so far. In February, I flew to Salt Lake City to get some firsthand experience with the different options that are available on state-of-the-art projection systems for the planetarium. After comparing projection and server systems, we feel we have made the best choice to fit the type of shows that we plan to have here. We are hoping to start the system install sometime in May. We know that the planetarium will make a great impact on our visitors as they learn about the Wonders of our Creator's Universe.

The last week in February included an invitation to speak at the Sunday morning service at Burns Baptist Church. The next day a long-awaited special delivery was brought in! Upon entering the Rotunda of the Wonders Center, visitors will now gaze up at a 55-foot long-neck Camarasaurus sauropod dinosaur. This model is surely a statement piece and spectacular addition to the museum.

Multiple other displays and children's exhibits have been arriving which I can't wait to share with you.

The first week in March I flew to California to speak at William Jessup University along with my friends Dr. Randy Guliuzza, President of Institute for Creation Research and Dr. Dan Biddle. We had over 500 in attendance.

We are nearing completion on our History and Accuracy of the Bible exhibit and a new ministry friend will be sharing some ancient manuscripts that he has collected as part of the exhibit.

Thank you so much for continuing to keep us in your prayers and thank you for your support. Your donations to the overarching ministry, the new museum, Genesis Science Network, and all of the other aspects and outreaches is making a tremendous difference.

Blessings,
David Rives,
Truly, the heavens declare the glory of God

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To learn more, visit: <https://davidrivesministries.org/>

Holy Days 2023

Passover – April 6, 2023 (Observed at Sunset the Evening Before)

Passover/Unleavened Bread – April 6-12, 2023

Pentecost – May 26, 2023

Trumpets - September 16, 2023

Atonement – September 25, 2023

Tabernacles –September 30, 2023 to October 6, 2023

Last Great Day – October 7, 2023

I Will Bring Evil Upon This Place

(Copyright 2023) by Christian Media (Email)



“I WILL BRING EVIL UPON THIS PLACE” -- *Jeremiah 19:3*

Since a large percentage of Americans don't understand the Biblical concept of evil, an enormous number of people simply cannot believe our own leaders have intentionally released the **Bioweapon** masquerading as a Vaccine upon us. Yet the evidence is overwhelming, as the above humorous cartoon shows, and the powers in charge still continue to push the deadly shots to the world.

“A prudent man foreseeeth the **evil**, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished” – *Proverbs 27:12*.

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This short-sighted vision even extends to the Christians, and although the LORD has sent prophets to warn this generation of the danger, the internal corruption of the church has suppressed this perilous prophetic truth. Just as it was in the days of **JESUS CHRIST** and His disciples, the religious establishment always tries to stop the truth from being transmitted – but God has promised He will always make a way for His Word to go out to those who have “ears to hear” (*Mark 7:16*).

Jesus Our Shepherd

(Copyright) by Dwight Fleming (Oroville, California)

Jesus speaking in John 10:11: "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep."

In John 10, Jesus described many attributes of a good shepherd. Joel P. Kramer produced a 30-minute video from his years of filming sheep and shepherds in Israel. This stirring video will bring the words of Jesus and David found in John 10 and Psalm 23 alive.

On my grandfather's headstone is a quote from Psalm 23:1, "The LORD is my shepherd." That quote has always given me comfort. So, I found this video by Joel very touching and inspiring.

No matter where we find ourselves in life, even at death's door, Jesus will lead us home if we hear and follow His voice (John 10:4).

May the inspiration found in this video be a blessing to you as we head into the upcoming holy day season.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=STAda5RFrxM> Jesus, The Soul Shepherd

Notes