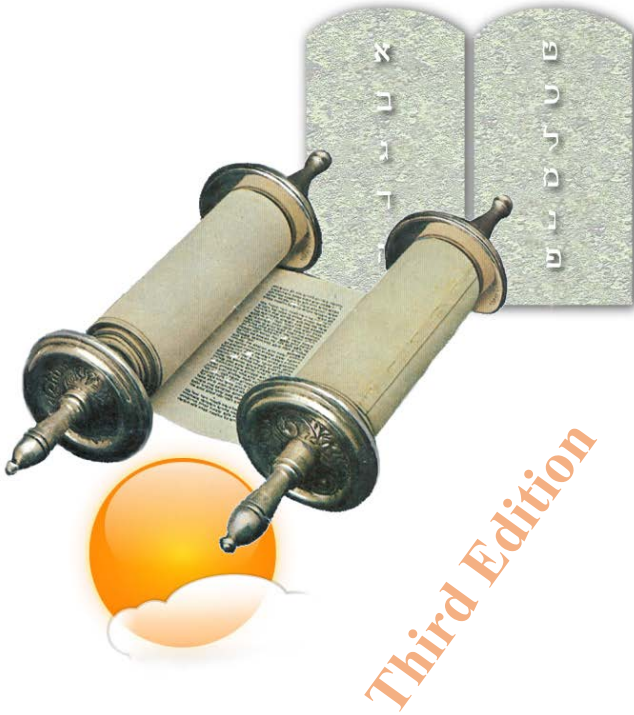


What About the Feasts?



**Questions and Answers
about Commandments,
Statutes, and Appointed Times**

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March 2016**

Abstract Summary

We keep the seventh-day Sabbath. Some call it the Jewish Sabbath but it was blessed and sanctified at creation and is for all men (Gen 2:1-3). Should we keep it? If God says it is His Sabbath and has blessed it, then I want that blessing and I want to be in harmony with Him and His time. We know that it will be kept in heaven, for Isaiah tells us that from one new moon to another and from one Sabbath to another shall all flesh come before the Lord to worship Him (Isa 66:23).

The first feast given to Israel was at the 10th plague and coincided with their deliverance from Egypt. But the Passover Lamb prefigured Christ, the Lamb of God, the true sacrifice and thus the sacrifices and oblations have ceased. We continue to remember the sacrifice of Christ with a new symbol of unfermented grape juice and the original unleavened bread, both symbols of his sinless life—but no roasted lamb! And while Passover occurred only once a year, we have traditionally celebrated the Lord’s supper four times a year, yet the sacrificial system had at least morning and evening sacrifices which now are replaced with morning and evening worship—at least they should be. Must we keep these times as morning and evening sacred appointments? We miss an important blessing if we don’t.

The Adventist movement was born on the 2300th anniversary of the Day of Atonement when Artexerxes, the king of Persia, made his decree in the 7th year of his reign (which is found in Ezra 7). Determining the exact day that the fast of the 7th month occurred in 1844 was a critical factor found by careful scriptural and historical study. The validity of that fulfillment proves at least that the feasts have a prophetic significance. This was the basis of Peter’s Pentecostal message, that prophecy was being fulfilled, citing Joel 2 “when the day of Pentecost had fully come.” We look forward to a final fulfillment of a Pentecost experience at the Latter Rain. Will it actually be at the time of the annual Pentecost? Can’t say for sure, but it could be. Wouldn’t want to miss it.

But of all the festivals beside Pentecost, Tabernacles is the one I’m paying most attention to. It’s the only one not yet fulfilled, and the last one on the list. Of course, the Day of Atonement is not completed yet. These days each year all deal with an important aspect of the Father and Son in their work to save us. Even “keeping” the Sabbath each week does not “save us.”

There are folk who get caught up in a lot of minutiae and nitpicky details, endless debate about how to calculate the timing, and all that. We can make

the weekly Sabbath a burden if we're not careful. But for me the greatest blessing is the gathering together, to fellowship, study, share, and encourage one another while receiving a special gift of the Spirit of Christ.

The spring appointments focus on the sacrifice of the Father, the death and resurrection of His Son, features the Lord's Supper with unleavened bread and unfermented grape juice, and the ordinance of foot washing all symbols of His victory over sin; and the ones in the fall emphasize Christ's cleansing intercession in the Most Holy Place, the promise of the latter rain, and His return to harvest this earth in the glory of His Father, twice a year, six months apart is really quite a nice arrangement.

Special thanks to David Barron, and Linda Allevato for their valuable contributions in updating and correcting this edition.

Are the Feasts necessary for us to keep today?

The answer to that question depends on how we answer a number of other related questions:

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Now, let's explore the answers to each of these questions.

1. Are the Statutes required for us to keep today?

The same prophet we appeal to in every sermon on stewardship and tithing also wrote these words from Jehovah:

Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, *with the statutes and judgments*. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. Malachi 4:4,5

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. One more thing to remember. Moses didn't command Israel to keep it, the LORD did. And so we remember the Sabbath every seventh day as God instructed Moses (not only in Exodus 20:8-11, but 16:26; 31:15; 35:2; Leviticus 23:3; Deuteronomy 5:14; and Ezekiel 46:1).

We are now living "before the great and dreadful day of the LORD." John the Baptist was "Elias which was for to come" Matt 11:14. But that was not the great and dreadful day of the LORD. Are we not yet to remember the law of Moses, the statutes and judgments? It would appear so.

Here are the words of another prophet on this subject:

Christ gave to Moses religious precepts which were to govern the everyday life. These **statutes** were explicitly given **to guard the Ten Commandments**. They were **not shadowy types to pass away with the death of Christ**. They were **to be binding upon man in every age as long as time should last**. (*Review and Herald*, May 6, 1875 par. 10, see appendix A.)

In these last days there is a call from Heaven inviting you to **keep the statutes and ordinances** of the Lord. The world has set at naught **the law of Jehovah**; but God will not be left without a witness to his righteousness, or without a people in the earth to proclaim his truth. (*Signs of the Time*, Feb 3, 1888.)

If you can accept the testimony of Ellen White before 1898, then these statements are quite conclusive that the statutes are not to pass away but are binding as long as time should last and that even in these last days the statutes and ordinances are still the law of Jehovah. If not, then let her confirm her earlier statements at least 12 years after the later date:

‘This day the Lord thy God hath commanded thee to do these **statutes and judgments**; thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul....’

This is not the voice of man; it is **the voice of Christ** from the infolding pillar of cloud. ...**These scriptures present the never-ceasing obligation of all** whom God has blessed with life and health and advantages in temporal and spiritual things. The message has not grown weak because of age. God’s claims are **just as binding now**, just as fresh in their importance, as God’s gifts are fresh and continual.” (RH, Dec 25, 1900)

“The **instructions given to Moses** for ancient Israel, with their sharp, rigid outlines, are **to be studied and obeyed by the people of God today**.” (Letter 259, 1903). {1BC 1103.4}

“**The covenant that God made with His people at Sinai is to be our refuge and defense...**’ if ye will obey my voice indeed, and **keep my covenant**, than ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.’... **This covenant is of just as much force today as it was when the Lord made it with ancient Israel**.” (SW March 1, 1904). {1BC 1103.10}

“It would be a scene well pleasing to God and angels, would his professed followers **in this generation unite**, as did Israel of old **in a solemn covenant to observe and do all the commandments of the Lord our Lord, and His judgments and His statutes**.” (Southern Watchman, June 7, 1904)

“**This is the pledge that God's people are to make in these last days**. Their acceptance with God depends on a faithful fulfilment of the terms of their agreement with Him. God includes in **His covenant all who will obey Him**.” (RH June 23, 1904). {1BC 1103.11}

From these quotations we can see that statutes, precepts, and ordinances are a never-ceasing obligation and are still an important part of the law of Jehovah and His truth today. That would make them present truth.

The covenant God proposed to make with Israel was backed by His promise to carry them and help them. Israel turned this around and promised God to do all these things in their own strength and turned it into an Old Covenant. Yet

God's everlasting covenant promise has always been "I will bless you" and as He repeated later, "I will put my spirit within you, and **cause you to walk in my statutes**, and ye shall **keep my judgments, and do them.**" Ezekiel 36:27.

The next question is, "Are the yearly assemblies, the "feasts of the LORD", included in the statutes? The following statement indicates that they are.

"If the children of Israel needed the benefit of **these holy convocations** in their time, **how much more do we need them in these last days** of peril and conflict? And if the people of the world then needed the light which God had committed to His church, how much more do they need it now!" (*Testimonies* vol. 6, pp. 39, 40)

Jesus told a parable about a feast, a great supper, that was offered to many but ignored for a number of interesting reasons.

Luke 14

13 "When you make a **feast**, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind"
16 A certain man made a **great supper**, and bade many; 17 and sent his servant **at supper time** to say to them that were bidden, "Come, for all things are now ready." 18 And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of **ground**, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. 19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of **oxen**, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. 20 And another said, I have married a **wife**, and therefore I cannot come.

Too busy with my work, or I'm married to a woman, a church, whose creed forbids me. This parable is addressed in the following words of Ellen White. *Testimonies* volume 2 p. 573

"God gave direction to the Israelites **to assemble before Him at set periods**, in the place which He should choose, and **observe special days** wherein **no unnecessary work was to be done**, but the time was to be **devoted to a consideration of the blessings which He had bestowed** upon them. At **these special seasons** they were to bring gifts, freewill offerings, and thank offerings unto the Lord, according as He had blessed them." ... "Besides these special religious feast days of gladness and rejoicing, the yearly Passover was to be commemorated by the Jewish nation. The Lord covenanted that if they were faithful in the observance of His requirements, He would bless them in all their increase and in all the work of their hands. **God requires no less of His people in these last days**, in sacrifices and offerings, than He did of the Jewish nation." {2T 573.1}

Men who possess thousands remain at home year after year, engrossed in their worldly cares and interests, and feeling that they cannot afford to make the small sacrifice of **attending the yearly gatherings to worship God**. He has **blessed them in basket and in store**, and surrounded them with His benefits on the right hand and on the left, yet they withhold from Him the small offerings He has required of them. {2T 574.2}

Let all who possibly can, attend these **yearly gatherings**. All should feel that **God requires this of them**. {2T 575.2}

To excuse ourselves from God's invitation to gather together at His appointed times was happening even in Paul's day.

Hebrews

10:24 And let us consider one another **to provoke unto love and to good works**:

10:25 **Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together**, as the manner of some [is]; but exhorting [one another]: and so much the **more, as ye see the day approaching**.

The manner of some 30 years after the cross was to forsake the times of assembling together. These gatherings were opportunities to encourage one another to love, good works, and to offer the sacrifice of praise!

Hebrews

13:15 By him therefore let us **offer the sacrifice of praise** to God **continually**, that is, the fruit of [our] lips giving thanks to his name.

13:16 But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with **such sacrifices** God is well pleased.

1 Chronicles

23:30 And to stand **every morning to thank and praise the LORD**, and likewise **at even**;

23:31 And to offer all burnt sacrifices unto the LORD in the sabbaths, in the new moons, and on the set feasts, by number, according to the order commanded unto them, **continually** before the LORD:

Morning and evening worship is our time for coming before our Father in praise and thanksgiving for "His wonderful works to the children of men" Psalm 107:8.

Amazing Grace p. 76

God teaches that we should assemble in His house to cultivate the attributes of perfect love. This will fit the dwellers of earth for the mansions that Christ has gone to prepare for all who love Him. There **they will assemble in the sanctuary from Sabbath to Sabbath, from one new moon to another**, to unite in loftiest strains of song, **in praise and thanksgiving** to Him who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever. {AG, 76.4}

Moses was instructed to call the people to assemble at specific times.

Numbers 10

10:2 Make thee two **trumpets** of silver; of a whole piece shalt thou make them: that thou mayest use them for the **calling of the assembly**, and for the journeying of the camps.

10:3 And when they shall blow with them, **all the assembly shall assemble themselves** to thee at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

10:10 Also **in the day of your gladness**, and **in your solemn days**, and **in the beginnings of your months**, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; that they may be to you for **a memorial** before your God: I [am] the LORD your God.

Passover was a solemn day; Pentecost was a day of gladness.

Atonement was a solemn day; Tabernacles was a day of gladness.

Specified times, the beginning and ending of your day, the beginning of your months, the beginning of your year, the end of your year—these were important appointed times for worship and communing with God.

“Neglect the exercise of prayer, or engage in prayer spasmodically, now and then, as seems convenient, and you lose your hold on God.”

{GW 254.4}

Not spasmodic, haphazard times when it is convenient, but regular morning and evening worship, weekly worship, monthly worship, yearly worship, pray, thanksgiving and praise will maintain our hold on God.

Deuteronomy

28:1 And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe [and] to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:

28:2 And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.

28:3 Blessed [shalt] thou [be] in the city, and blessed [shalt] thou [be] in the **field**.

28:4 Blessed [shall be] the **fruit of thy body**, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy **cattle**, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.

28:5 Blessed [shall be] thy **basket and thy store**.

28:11 And the LORD shall **make thee plenteous in goods**, in the fruit of **thy body**, and in the fruit of **thy cattle**, and in the fruit of **thy ground**, in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers to give thee.

28:12 The LORD **shall open unto thee his good treasure**, the heaven to give the **rain** unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.

The three areas that were the source of excuse for those not accepting the invitation to come to the feast, the great supper, are the very things God will bless if we come.

Zechariah 14

14:16 And it shall come to pass, [that] every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up **from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles**.

14:17 And it shall be, [that] whoso will not come up of [all] the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them **shall be no rain**.

14:18 And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, **that [have] no [rain]**; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up **to keep the feast of tabernacles**.

14:19 This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up **to keep the feast of tabernacles**.

While the feast of tabernacles is the occasion for gathering “year to year” to worship the LORD and the promise of rain for those who do, this passage in Zechariah is confusing as to exactly when this takes place. The chapter begins with an attack on Jerusalem, the descent of Christ on the Mount of Olives, the consumption of tongues and eyes and legs of the wicked suggest the setting is after the millennium. But the description of punishment on those who do not come to the feast would not apply to the post-millennial context where only the saints reign in universal harmony with God and the Lamb.

Leviticus 26

2 Ye shall **keep my sabbaths**, and reverence my sanctuary: I [am] the LORD.

3 **If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments**, and do them; 4

Then **I will give you rain in due season**, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.

14 **But** if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments; 15 And **if ye shall despise my statutes**, or if your soul **abhor my judgments**, so that ye will **not do all my commandments**, [but] that ye **break my covenant**: 16 I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that **shall consume the eyes**,

34 Then shall **the land enjoy her sabbaths**, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye [be] in your enemies' land; [even] then shall **the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths**. 35 As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it.

Commandments and Statutes

Notice the definite relationship here between the commandments and the statutes. The commandments were first spoken by the Lord from Mount Sinai and then the statutes were given to Moses to teach and instruct the people. While the judgments and testimonies are also mentioned along with these two, the commandments and statutes are frequently listed alone together.

“give ear to his **commandments**, and keep all his **statutes**”

Exodus 15:26.

“walk in my **statutes**, and keep my **commandments**”

Leviticus 26:3.

“keep therefore his **statutes**, and his **commandments**”

Deuteronomy 4:40.

“keep all his **statutes** and his **commandments**” Deuteronomy 6:2.

“keep the **commandments** of the LORD, and his **statutes**”

Deuteronomy 10:13.

“do his **commandments** and his **statutes**” Deuteronomy 27:10.

“do all his **commandments** and his **statutes**” Deuteronomy 28:15.

“keep his **commandments** and his **statutes**” Deuteronomy 28:45.

“keep his **commandments** and his **statutes**” Deuteronomy 30:10.

“keep my **statutes** and my **commandments**” 1 Kings 3:14.

“to walk in his **statutes**, and to keep his **commandments**”

1 Kings 8:61.

“keep my **commandments** *and* my **statutes**” 1 Kings 9:6.

“he kept my **commandments** and my **statutes**” 1 Kings 11:34.

“keep my **statutes** and my **commandments**” 1 Kings 11:38.

“keep my **commandments** *and* my **statutes**” 2 Kings 17:13.

“my **statutes** and my **commandments**” 2 Chronicles 7:19.

“of the **commandments** of the LORD, and of his **statutes** to Israel”

Ezra 7:11.

“If they break my **statutes**, and keep not my **commandments**”

Psalm 89:31.

“thy **commandments**, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy **statutes**” Psalm 119:48.

The commandments written on stone were placed in the ark of the covenant. They were not accessible to the people, not even the priests, only the high priest was allowed in the Most Holy place where the ark was placed, and even then it was beneath the covering of the mercy seat. Thus, the commandments were invisible to the people. But the statutes and judgments were written in the book of the law which was placed in the side of the ark and a copy of which was given to the priests to teach the people, reading it to them at the feast of tabernacles every seven years. Deut. 31:10, 11.

The commandments were first invisible; the statutes were given next and were a visible copy or image of the commandments. The statutes explained and magnified the commandments.

This relationship between the commandments and statutes is mirrored in the Source-Channel relationship between other Father-Son types.

The Father of lights who is the Source of every good and perfect gift (James 1:17), “invisible, the only wise God” (1Tim 1:17), “whom no man has seen, nor can see” (1Tim 6:16), and “His dear Son...the image of the invisible God” (Col 1:13,15), “the express image of His person” (Heb 1:3).

Invisible Source

God, the Father

Commandments

the greater light (sun) (Genesis 1:14)

hidden at night

Visible Manifestation

Jesus, the Son

Statutes

the lesser light (moon)

dependent on the sun

Just as “all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father” (John 5:23), so also we should honor the statutes even as we honor the commandments.

2. What are included in the Statutes?

These **statutes** were explicitly given to **guard the Ten Commandments**...These commands were **enforced by the power of the moral law**, and they **clearly and definitely explained that law**. (*Review and Herald*, May 6, 1875 par. 10, see appendix A.)

The statutes guard the Ten Commandments, express the principles of the law of God's kingdom, are enforced by the power of the moral law, clearly and definitely explain that law and state plainly the blessings of obedience. They are directions which the Lord gave His people.

And now the complete 1900 Ellen White reference without the ellipsis:

“This day the Lord thy God hath commanded thee to do these **statutes and judgments**; thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in His ways, and to keep His statutes, and His commandments, and His judgments, and to hearken unto His voice.’

This is not the voice of man; it is **the voice of Christ** from the infolding pillar of cloud. Read carefully all of **Deuteronomy 26, also chapters 27 and 28**; for here are stated plainly the **blessings of obedience**. These directions, which the Lord gave to His people, express the **principles of the law of the kingdom of God**, and they are **made specific**, so that the minds of the people may not be left in ignorance and uncertainty. **These scriptures present the never-ceasing obligation of all** whom God has blessed with life and health and advantages in temporal and spiritual things. The message has not grown weak because of age. God's claims are **just as binding now**, just as fresh in their importance, as God's gifts are fresh and continual.” *Review & Herald* Dec 25, 1900

The statutes, then, are subordinate to the Ten Commandments but receive authority and power from that moral law. The statutes represent, explain, and magnify the ten precepts. The relationship between the statutes and the Law of God is parallel to that between the Son of God and His Father, the Ancient of days—“the source of all being and the fountain of all law” *Great Controversy* p. 479.

So, what are in these three chapters that Ellen White recommends we read carefully?

Deuteronomy 26 instructs the people to

1. Offer their **first fruits** to the Lord, worship Him, and remember how God led Jacob from the land of Laban to Egypt to Canaan. Rejoice in every good thing the Lord has given us.
2. **Tithe of the third year** is for the priests, strangers, fatherless and widows.

Deuteronomy 27 instructs them to

1. Set up great plastered **stones in mount Ebal** and write on them the words of the law.
2. Not make any **graven image**
3. Not dishonor your **parents**
(sounds like the Ten Commandments)
4. Not remove your **neighbor's landmark**
5. Not make **the blind** to wander out of the way
6. Not pervert the judgment of the **stranger, fatherless, or widow**
7. Not **lie with** your father's wife
8. Not **lie with** any animal
9. Not **lie with** your sister, aunt, or mother-in-law
10. Not **smite** your neighbor secretly
11. Not take a **reward to slay** an innocent person (no hit men).

Chapter 28 simply lists all the **blessings** for keeping these statutes and all the **curses** for ignoring them.

But these are not the only statutes.

Beginning with chapter 12 there in another list:

1. **Destroy all the idols** and heathen gods of the land when you enter it.
2. Do not **eat the blood**.
3. Do not **eat the tithes** of your crops at home, but with your family and the minister where he serves.

Chapter 13 continues:

1. Stone to death any prophet or family member that tries to get you to serve **other gods**.
2. Completely destroy any city that tries to get you to serve **other gods**.

Chapter 14 has more statutes:

1. Don't **cut yourself, or shave your head** when mourning for the dead.
2. Don't **eat abominable things** such as camels, rabbits, pigs, eagles, vultures, hawks, crows, owls, pelicans, stork, and all flying insects.

Chapter 15 also:

1. Release your slaves and all debts **every seven years**.
2. **Be generous with the poor** and lend them what they need.
3. Don't work the **firstborn cows** or shear the **firstborn sheep**.

Chapter 16 continues with more:

1. Observe the first month and keep the **Passover**.
2. Eat **unleavened bread seven days** and the seventh is a solemn no work day.
3. Count **seven weeks** and give to the Lord according to His blessings.
4. **Rejoice** before the Lord with your family, stranger, minister, fatherless, and widow.
5. Observe the **feast of tabernacles** seven days after harvesting your crops.
6. **Three times a year** all males shall appear before the Lord:
 - a. Feast of unleavened bread
 - b. Feast of weeks
 - c. Feast of tabernacles
7. Judges must not receive **bribes**.
8. Don't plant **groves** near your altars or set up any **images**.

Chapter 17:

1. Don't sacrifice **animals with blemishes**.
2. Stone to death anyone who **worships another god**, sun, moon, or the hosts of heaven.
3. Accept the **verdict of the judge**;
Stone those who refuse to accept his judgment.
4. Only set **kings over you** from among your own people.
5. The king must **read from the law** and follow it all the days of his life.

Chapter 18:

1. Priests are supported by the **offerings and first fruits**.
2. Do not pass your **children through the fire**, use **divination**, or **observe times**.
3. Do not allow any **enchanter, witches, charmer**, consulter of familiar spirits, **wizards, or necromancers** in the land.

We should have no problem with almost all of these stipulations. Stoning people and sacrificing animals are the two glaring exceptions. Christ caused "sacrifice and oblation to cease" when He died on the cross, Dan 9:27. Stoning was part of the statutes that were not good. They were annexed to the law because this was a practice Israel had brought with them from Egypt. Eze 20:25, Ex 8:26; Ex 17:4, 1SP 265.2.

Notice right there in chapter 16 the extensive details provided for the observance of the three times a year when the people would gather to worship God and rejoice before Him. The feasts appear to be very much a part of the

statutes. They must not, however, be included in the “observing of times” prohibited in chapter 18.

3. Do the feasts contain moral principles?

“Again the people were reminded of the **sacred obligation** of the Sabbath. **Yearly feasts were appointed**, at which all the men of the nation were to assemble before the Lord, bringing to Him their offerings of gratitude and the first fruits of His bounties. The object of all these regulations was stated: they proceeded from **no exercise of mere arbitrary sovereignty**; all were given for the good of Israel. The Lord said, “Ye shall be **holy** men unto Me”—worthy to be acknowledged by a holy God.” (*Patriarchs and Prophets* p. 311)

The Sabbath is a moral law. The yearly feasts were appointed to remind them of the sacred obligation of the Sabbath. The yearly feasts are a reminder of the moral principle in the Sabbath. The yearly feasts provided for the expression of gratitude and thankfulness for the goodness of God. These are moral principles. The yearly feasts were not an exercise in arbitrary sovereignty, meaning that God did not decide to make them do this because He simply wished it. These feasts were for their *good*. Good is a moral principle.

The calling of all Israel together to worship created an expanded opportunity for fellowship and praise. This makes the annual Sabbaths an expansion and magnification of the principles of the weekly Sabbath. The suggestion that an annual sabbath was only ceremonial casts a shadow on the weekly Sabbath itself, and downgrades the meaning of the Sabbath. But in order for the yearly feasts to be a reminder of the sacred obligation of the Sabbath it had to include an expansion of that very moral principle, otherwise it could not be a reminder of the Sabbath in spirit and in truth.

4. Must we keep the statutes to be saved?

Take this question a step further.

Must we keep the Ten Commandments to be saved?

Rom 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

To keep the 10 Commandments as a *means* of salvation will never justify a person. Salvation is obtained only through Christ’s sacrifice. But once we obtain this salvation by faith in Jesus, God keeps His promise and writes His law upon our heart.

Heb 8:10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

This fact is the same for the statutes as well as the 10 Commandments. Neither are a *means* of salvation yet both will be revealed in the life of the saved because the *principles* of the law will be written on our hearts. We see this principle clearly revealed in this next statement.

The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the command-ments of God. *Testimonies to Ministers* p. 92

Justification by faith leads to obedience to all the commandments of God and His commandments are not grievous.

1 John 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

5. Why do we keep some of the Statutes but not all?

The statutes are a mix of some rather reasonable and also some utterly impractical regulations. But if tithing and discriminating between clean and unclean foods is accepted, what do we do with the rules regarding kings, animals with blemishes, firstlings from the flock?

Some argue that we can't just pick and choose which statutes we should observe—it's either all or none, they say. But there is at least this one principal we can follow: those that deal with the sacrificial system are no longer applicable. Meat and drink offerings, sin offerings, trespass offerings, thank offerings, red heifer purification rites, leprosy cleansing rites—anything that involved a sacrifice of blood or fire—can be discarded, Dan 9:27. The only sacrifice we are told to make today is a living sacrifice of ourselves and the sacrifice of praise. Romans 12:2; Jeremiah 33:11; Hebrews 13:15.

The Sabbath command within the 10 Commandments tells us to allow our servants and our cattle to rest. This does not mean that every Sabbath keeper must have servants and cattle. It is included for the context where it applies. The same is true of all the statutes. Statutes prohibiting seething a kid in its mother's milk or prohibition from putting marks in your beard to honor the dead have no application in our society today. The key is to discern the principle and apply it.

The epistle to the Hebrews makes a scriptural allusion to the sacrifice of praise associated with the daily, weekly, monthly and annual appointed times described in 1 Chronicles.

“By him therefore let us offer the **sacrifice of praise** to God **continually**, that is, the fruit of *our* lips giving **thanks** to his name.”
Hebrews 13:15

“And to stand every **morning** to **thank** and **praise** the LORD, and likewise at **even**; ³¹ And to offer all burnt **sacrifices** unto the LORD in the **sabbaths**, in the **new moons**, and on the **set feasts**, by number, according to the order commanded unto them, **continually** before the LORD” 1 Chronicles 23:30, 31.

The burnt sacrifice of innocent animals ceased with the death of the Lamb of God. However, we continue to offer the sacrifice of praise. Both before and after the cross these were offered “continually.”

There is also the problem with applying certain judgments today. We don't stone people that gather sticks on the Sabbath, worship other gods, or commit adultery, because we do not live under the nation of Israel. The practice of stoning was added because of the hardness of their hearts; it reflected their own thinking. Israel brought the practice of stoning from Egypt.

And Moses said, It is not meet so to do; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the LORD our God: lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us? Exo 8:26

And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me. Exo 17:4

Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: Num 14:28

For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. Matt 7:2

Today we are subject to the laws of the land we are living in. Rom 13:1,2

6. Are the Feasts part of the sacrificial system?

The sacrificial system included all the detailed provisions for which kind of animal was required for different kinds of offerings. A lamb of the first year for a sin offering; a bullock for a trespass offering, a pair of turtle doves if one was poor, etc. There were specific procedures to be performed in preparing the sacrifice, arranging it on the altar, what to do with the blood and the ashes, what could be eaten and whether there were meal or drink offerings included, etc. And nearly everything was done with a sacrifice—everything.

The feasts, all the feasts of the Lord, had certain sacrifices associated with them. From Numbers 28 we learn the following:

Sabbath: 2 lambs with meal and drink offerings
plus morning and evening offerings
Passover: 2 bullocks, 1 ram, 7 lambs, 1 kid, and a Passover Lamb
Unleavened: 2 bullocks, 1 ram, 7 lambs, 1 kid,
plus morning offering for 7 days
Pentecost: 2 bullocks, 1 ram, 7 lambs, 1 kid, plus morning offering
Trumpets: 1 bullock, 1 ram, 7 lambs, 1 kid, plus morning offering
and monthly offering
Atonement: 1 bullock, 1 ram, 7 lambs, 1 kid, plus 2 kids
Tabernacles: 13 bullocks, 2 rams, 14 lambs, 1 kid,
plus morning offering for 7 days
with one less bullock each successive day

All the feasts had burnt sacrifices, even the weekly seventh day Sabbath.

7. Is the seventh-day Sabbath a statute or a feast of the Lord?

The very first feast mentioned in both Leviticus 23 and Numbers 28. is the feast of the weekly Sabbath.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 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*. Six days shall work be done: but **the seventh day is the sabbath of rest**, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work *therein*: it is the

sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings. These *are* **the feasts of the LORD**, *even* holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. Leviticus 23:2-4

And on the sabbath day **two lambs** of the first year without spot, and two tenth deals of flour [for] **a meat offering**, mingled with oil, and **the drink offering** thereof: *This is* the burnt offering of every sabbath, **beside the continual burnt offering**, and his **drink offering**. Numbers 28:9,10

Four animal sacrifices and two additional offerings were made every Sabbath. But even though the sacrifices ended at the cross the Sabbath was not affected because it is both commemorative and typical. The Sabbath of creation is the foundation of an entire system of its own, a system of cascading Sabbaths, all having the weekly Sabbath as their foundation or source. The seventh week, seventh month, seventh year Sabbaths are derived from and have their origin in the weekly seventh day Sabbath. It is a fountain of blessing that bring seasons of spiritual refreshing.

Time frame	Event	Sixes, Sevens and Rest	Reference
7 th Hour	Daily Sacrifice	6 hours between morning and evening sacrifice. 6 hours that Christ laboured on the cross then rest.	Mark 15:25; 15:34; Acts 3:1; Ps 141:2; Num 28:8
7 th Day	Sabbath	6 days of work then rest	Ex 20:8-10
7 Days	Unleavened bread	7 days of Unleavening	Lev 23:6
7 Weeks + 1	Pentecost	Count 7 weeks to Pentecost then rest	Lev 23:15
7 th Month Count 7 Moons	Trumpets, Atonement, Tabernacles (7+1 days)	Count 6 months then 3 feasts in 7th month	Lev 23:24-39; Isa 66:23, 2 Kings 4:23; Eze 46:1
7 th Year	Land Sabbath	Count 6 years then 7 th year of rest	Lev 25:3

7X7 Years + 1	Jubilee	Count 7x7 years to Jubilee then rest	Lev 25:8-10
7 th x1000 Years	Millennium	Count 6 times 1000 years then rest	Rev 20:6

8. How many Sabbaths are there?

At the end of six working days is the seventh day Sabbath of the Lord. First month 15th day is the first unleavened bread annual Sabbath. After seven days there is the second unleavened bread annual Sabbath. At the end of seven weeks each year is the Pentecost annual Sabbath. In the seventh month and first day is the annual Sabbath of trumpets. On the tenth day that month is the annual day of atonement Sabbath. On the 15th day that month is the first annual tabernacles Sabbath. After eight days there is the second annual tabernacles Sabbath. At the end of six planting seasons the land keeps a Sabbath of rest. After seven land Sabbaths the land keeps another jubilee land Sabbath. This occurs in the 50th year resulting in two consecutive land Sabbaths. At the end of six thousand years of sin the earth will keep a seventh millennium, 1000 years of Sabbath rest for the entire world.

That's a lot of Sabbaths!

Every seven years and every 50th year the land kept sabbath in which no planting was performed, farmers took a vacation, and the land rested. This was the sacrifice, not of livestock, but a sacrifice of work while trusting wholly in the promised blessing of Jehovah to work a miracle on the sixth year, just as He did on the sixth day when there was a double portion of manna in the wilderness. And on the sixth year of the seventh land sabbath a triple blessing to sustain them through the seventh (and now 49th) year and also through the 50th jubilee year as well!

Should we let the land rest every seven years and year of jubilee? Modern organic gardeners recognize the wisdom of letting the land rest, rotating crops and letting the soil and its delicate ecosystem rejuvenate.

9. What is the Sabbath Blessing?

“And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from the works which he had made. And God **blessed** the seventh day, and **sanctified it**” Genesis 2:2,3

“For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD **blessed** the Sabbath day, and **hallowed** it.” Exodus 20:11

The seventh day weekly Sabbath was blessed by God and sanctified. However, the Sabbath blessing extends to all the additional Sabbath principles—the seventh week, the seventh month, the seventh year, the seventh-seventh year, the jubilee. This is why we are told to learn to number by sevens.

On account of the special honors God conferred upon the seventh day, **he required his people to number by sevens** lest they should forget their Creator who made the heavens and the earth in six days and rested on the seventh. 3SG 53.1

Notice also this reference about *each* Sabbath institution not simply *the* Sabbath institution:

Each sabbath institution bears the name of its author, an ineffaceable mark that shows the authority of each. It is our work to lead the people to understand this. 6T 352

Every seventh year the land was to rest, “a sabbath of rest unto the land, a Sabbath for the LORD” Leviticus 25:4.

“Then I will command my **blessing** upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years.” Leviticus 25:21.

Like the manna blessing on the sixth day in Exodus 16, the sixth year before the 49th year would receive a triple blessing, enough to sustain the people for three years (the 7th year land Sabbath, and the 8th year Jubilee land Sabbath) until a harvest could be reaped again.

The blessing also was provided for those who would be coming three times a year to gather for the appointed holy convocations.

“Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days...Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD shall choose: *because* the LORD thy God shall **bless thee** in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice. Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of

weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty: Every man *shall give* as he is able, according to the **blessing** of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee.” Deuteronomy 16:13-17.

Not only the seventh day and the seventh year, but the seventh month is distinguished as a special time for rest. Leviticus 23:24 introduces the seventh month with an interesting expression in the Septuagint version:

λάλησον τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραὴλ λέγων τοῦ μηνὸς τοῦ ἑβδόμου μιᾶ
Speak unto sons Israel saying in-the month of seventh first

τοῦ μηνὸς ἔσται ὑμῖν **ἀνάπαυσις** μνημόσυνον σαλπίγγων κλητῆ
of-the month it-is your **high-rest** memorial trumpets assembly

ἁγία ἔσται ὑμῖν
holy it-is yours

The first day of the seventh month is the feast of trumpets, the only new moon festival that has a sabbath rest, in Greek it’s the word *anapousis*.

ana- a prefix indicating increase, elevate, build up.
-pousis meaning pause, rest. Together a “high Sabbath.”

Ten days later is the Day of Atonement.

Notice *anapausis* as it appears again in Leviticus 16:31:

σάββατα σαββάτων **ἀνάπαυσις** αὕτη ἔσται ὑμῖν καὶ ταπεινώσετε
Sabbath of sabbaths **high-rest** it it-is yours and you-afflict

τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν νόμιμον αἰώνιον
the psyche yours a-law forever

The day of atonement is the only annual holy convocation that is a *shabbat* sabbath. Like the weekly Sabbath, it is also a day in which no work at all is to be done. That’s why it is called the Sabbath of the sabbaths. It is also the only place in scripture where direction is explicitly given as to the time to begin and end observance of the Sabbath.

σάββατα σαββάτων ἔσται ὑμῖν καὶ ταπεινώσετε τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν ἀπὸ
Sabbath of-sabbaths it-is yours and you-afflict the psyche yours at

ἐνάτης τοῦ μηνὸς ἀπὸ ἑσπέρας ἕως ἑσπέρας σαββατιεῖτε τὰ σάββατα

ninth of-the month at evening to evening you-sabbath the Sabbath

For ancient Israel it was the most holy day of the entire year. From sunset to sunset the people were to “afflict” their souls. Failure to do so that day would result in permanent separation. For spiritual Israel today the antitypical “day” is a time of sober preparation and soul cleansing because at the end of this time our High Priest will leave the Most Holy place to make the solemn pronouncement, “He that is holy let him be holy still...he that is filthy let him be filthy still” Revelation 22:11.

Five days later the seven day festival of Tabernacles begins. The first and last days are Sabbaths for *anapausis*, increased rest as in Leviticus 23:39:

καὶ ἐν τῇ πεντεκαιδεκάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ μηνὸς τοῦ ἑβδόμου τούτου
and in the fifteenth day of-the month of-the seventh when

ὅταν συντελέσητε τὰ γενήματα τῆς γῆς ἐορτάσετε τῷ κυρίῳ
you-gather the fruit of-the land you-will-keep master

ἑπτὰ ἡμέρας τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ πρώτῃ **ἀνάπαυσις** καὶ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ
seven days the day the first **high-rest** and the day the

ὄγδοῃ **ἀνάπαυσις**
eighth **high-rest**

An intensification of rest occurs in the seventh month with four of the seven annual sabbaths occurring at that time.



The 8th day of Tabernacles, called the Great Day (the blue G) positioned after the 7 day fall feast, mirrors Passover (black P) located before the 7 day feast of unleavened bread in the spring.

The LXX Septuagint Greek translation of the Old Testament scriptures only uses the word *anapausis* for the three fall festivals. When Jesus stood up on

the last day of the feast of Tabernacles, on the Great Day, and said “He that is thirsty, come unto me and drink!” he was repeating the invitation he gave in Matthew 11:28, “Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will ἀναπαύσω”, I will give you *anapausis*, I will increase your *rest*.

This increased rest received through the Sabbath appointments makes a difference between the wise and the foolish virgins. The wise had extra oil in their vessels. They were standing on the Moon and clothed in the Sun. They know that the Lord has appointed the moon for appointments. Ps 104:19.

It is significant that the virgins hear the midnight cry and awake. In Adventist history the Midnight Cry was the message that was delivered by Samuel Snow from July 1844 onwards. This message told of the timing of the Day of Atonement according to biblical calendar. Ellen White was told by the angel that this message would light the path all the way to the city of God.

While I was praying at the family altar, the Holy Ghost fell upon me, and I seemed to be rising higher and higher, far above the dark world. I turned to look for the Advent people in the world, but could not find them, when a voice said to me, "Look again, and look a little higher." At this I raised my eyes, and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world. On this path the Advent people were traveling to the city, which was at the farther end of the path. **They had a bright light set up behind them at the beginning of the path, which an angel told me was the midnight cry.** This light shone all along the path and gave light for their feet so that they might not stumble. If they kept their eyes fixed on Jesus, who was just before them, leading them to the city, they were safe. EW 14.

The *anapausis* or blessed rest of Christ that comes through the Sabbath began to dawn upon the minds of God's people through the message of A.T. Jones in February of 1893, a year that was exactly 49 years from 1844.

Now another thing: Who was the real present agent in creating? [Congregation: "Christ."] Who was it that rested? [Congregation: "Christ."] Who was refreshed? [Congregation: "Christ."] Who blessed? [Congregation: "Christ."] Whose presence made it holy? [Congregation: "Christ's"] Whose presence is in the day? [Congregation: "Christ's."] Then the man whom the presence of Jesus Christ does not sanctify, and does not make holy and does not bless and to whom it does not bring rest, why, he can't keep the Sabbath. Don't you see, it is only with Christ in the man that the Sabbath can be kept; because the Sabbath brings and has in it the presence of Christ. A.T. Jones, GCB Sermon 20, 1893.

Christ is the Lord of the Sabbath and it is His Spirit that comes into the hearts of those who wait for Him at every seven. Each seven is a preparation for the final seven when the millennium of rest begins. As we take hold of each seven we receive more oil in our vessels to be prepared for the cry at midnight, go ye out to meet Him. Those who have been watching and waiting at each seven will be those who are prepared for the final crisis. They will be ready for the final Jubilee.

And when the never-ending blessing was pronounced on those who had honored God in keeping His Sabbath holy, there was a mighty shout of victory over the beast and over his image. [35] **Then commenced the jubilee**, when the land should rest. EW 34,35

God's people will keep the Jubilee seven just at the Second Coming of Christ, Does this not suggest that this Sabbath seven will be still applicable in these last days?

10. Why do we keep the weekly Sabbath but not the other sabbaths?

The weekly Sabbath was commanded to be kept in the Old Testament; it is not commanded *per se* in the New Testament, but the example of Jesus and the apostles testifies to its continued importance and validity.

The annual sabbaths were commanded to be kept in the Old Testament; they're not commanded *per se* in the New Testament, but the example of Jesus and the apostles testifies to their continued importance and validity.

This is the inheritance principle. As Christ inherited the authority of his Father, so the annual sabbaths inherit the reality of the weekly Sabbath. There are some who deny the inheritance of the Son of God; others deny the inheritance of the annual Sabbaths. Both miss a great blessing.

As many seek to prove the divinity and authority of Christ as independent from His Father so also many seek to prove and disprove the annual Sabbaths independent from the weekly Sabbath. When we hold the key of inheritance in the sonship of Christ then we can unlock the blessed inheritance found in the annual Sabbaths from the weekly Sabbath.

The seventh-day Sabbath is both commemorative and typical. Every seven days we worship the Creator for His great creative power, and the weekly Sabbath has its antitypes in the seventh week, the seventh month, the seventh year, the seventh land sabbath , and the seventh millennium.

So, too, the annual sabbaths are both commemorative and typical. Though they also had sacrifices associated with them, when the sacrificial system ended at the cross, their relevance continued because they are both memorials and types.

Memorials

The feasts originally commemorated events in the experience of ancient Israel. So,

- **Passover** commemorated the last night in Egypt and deliverance from Pharaoh.
- **Unleavened bread** commemorated the simple food they had as they left Egypt.
- **Pentecost** commemorated the descent of God and His Son on mount Sinai

The fall festivals are less obviously associated with a known event that year of the Exodus. Was the first day of atonement conducted that fall? Were trumpets blown ten days prior? The wilderness sanctuary would have to have been constructed first. Could that have been accomplished in time? Moses was in the mount 80 days and there is only about 130 days (give or take) between Pentecost and Atonement. Moses would certainly need to oversee the work. There is just no detailed timing of when it might have occurred that year. We must also consider the apostasy with the golden calf and the removal of the Sanctuary from Israel that stifled their forward advance. Did this have any effect on their worship of Jehovah?

Tabernacles commemorated living in tents for 40 years in the wilderness. But that started as soon as they left Egypt, or at least when they reached Elim, their first extended encampment. Later it was tied to the fall wheat harvest, but that did not begin until they were settled in Canaan. And the spring wave sheaf also required an established barley harvest—something that did not occur during their time in the wilderness.

The fall types just do not have convenient events to which commemorative events can be tied.

Types

The feasts also were not only commemorative but also typical.

Besides being memorials of past historical events, they were preludes to future fulfillments. The spring festivals presaged the death, burial, resurrection, and inauguration of the coming Messiah as High Priest in the Holy Place of the

heavenly sanctuary. The fall feasts were in anticipation of his final work in the Most Holy Place and his return to harvest the earth.

Passover

“The Passover was to be **both commemorative and typical**, not only pointing back to the deliverance from Egypt, but forward to the greater deliverance which Christ was to accomplish in freeing His people from the bondage of sin.” *Patriarchs and Prophets* p. 277.1

When the Passover type met the antitype at the death of Jesus, the Lamb of God, there was no further need for animal sacrifices. “In the midst of the week” He caused “sacrifice and oblation to cease” Dan 9:27. To continue the sacrifices would despise the sacrifice of Christ.

“To continue these **rites** would be **an insult to Jehovah. Eating of the body, and drinking of the blood, of Christ, not merely** at the sacramental service, but daily partaking of the bread of life to satisfy the soul's hunger, would be in **receiving His Word and doing His will.**” *Review & Herald* June 14, 1898

To continue to sacrifice lambs would be a blatant disregard for the sacrifice of Christ. The sacrificial rites were to cease with the death of Jesus. But a commemoration of His sacrifice remains in the ceremonies of the Lord's Supper, baptism, and the ordinance of foot washing. The Communion Service also has ritual and ceremony and if performed without regard to its true significance can become meaningless and empty. Merely “eating” the *unleavened* bread, “drinking” the *unfermented* grape juice without “receiving His Word and doing His will” would also be an insult to Jehovah.

The Passover also commemorates the covenant that God made with Abraham in Genesis 15. Israel came out on the self-same day.

But like the stars in the vast circuit of their appointed path, God's purposes know no haste and no delay. Through the symbols of the great darkness and the smoking furnace, God had revealed to Abraham the bondage of Israel in Egypt, and had declared that the time of their sojourning should be four hundred years. "Afterward," He said, "shall they come out with great substance." Genesis 15:14. Against that word, all the power of Pharaoh's proud empire battled in vain. **On "the self-same day" appointed in the divine promise, "it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt." So in heaven's council the hour for the coming of Christ had been determined. When the great clock of time pointed**

to that hour, Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Exodus 12:41. {DA 32.1}

This clearly reveals that although the “national festival of the Jews was to Passover away forever” in the release from Egypt, the commemoration of the everlasting covenant with Abraham still remained. The same is true of the Seventh day Sabbath. In Deuteronomy 5:15 Israel was to remember the Sabbath as a release from their national slavery. This specific application ceased at the cross but the previous memorial of creation found in Exodus 20 remained.

Unleavened Bread

The unleavened bread continued to be a symbol in the Lord’s Supper. This part of the Passover ceremonial service persisted in both a **commemorative and typical** way. It points back to the sinless life that Christ lived and it points forward to the victory over sin that He promises to give to those who walk after the spirit, when they will sit down with him at the marriage supper of the Lamb and Christ fulfills his promise not to eat of the unleavened bread or drink of the fruit of the vine until He does so new in His Father’s kingdom. Luke 22:16,18; 26-29.

Passover occurred only once a year, we have traditionally celebrated the Lord’s supper four times a year, but the sacrificial system had at least morning and evening sacrifices which now are replaced with morning and evening worship—at least they should be. Must we keep these times as morning and evening sacred appointments? We miss an important blessing if we don’t.

Pentecost

So too, we look forward still to the final outpouring of the Spirit at the time of the Latter Rain when the day of Pentecost will then be really “fully come.”

“These scenes are to be **repeated**, and with greater power.

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit **on the day of Pentecost** was the former rain, but **the latter rain will be** more abundant. The Spirit awaits our demand and reception. **Christ is again to be revealed** in His fulness by the Holy Spirit's power.” *Christ’s Object Lessons* p. 121.1

“Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul-temple of every defilement. Then **the latter rain will fall upon us** as the early rain

fell upon the disciples **on the day of Pentecost.**” *Christian Experience and Teachings* p. 189.2

It was *after* the day of Pentecost that Peter said, “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when **the times of refreshing** shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ” Acts 3:19,20. He was expecting a future time when the presence of the Lord would be manifested by the sending of Jesus as a great time of refreshing rain, the Latter Rain.

Will the Latter Rain actually fall on a future day of Pentecost? Can’t say for sure, but it could be. Wouldn’t want to miss it. So far five events have been fulfilled exactly on one of the appointed times.

1. Christ died on Passover;
2. He rested in the tomb without seeing corruption as the true Bread from heaven on the first day of unleavened bread;
3. He rose from the grave on the day of the Wave Sheaf;
(not a feast but an appointed time)
4. He poured out the gift of His Spirit on the day of Pentecost; and
5. He entered into the most holy place as our high priest to begin His work of judgment on the day of atonement.

If the Latter Rain does fall on Pentecost it would be a repeat as Ellen indicates it will be. Will there be a Passover experience repeated?

Not Christ’s death certainly, but a death decree is foretold. Will the close of probation occur on an appointed time? I have no evidence for that. It seems that it would occur with the end of Christ’s mediation in the most holy place and perhaps might appropriately relate to the day of atonement, but the events of that “day” will not be final until the time when the scapegoat is sent into the wilderness. Is that Satan’s solitary confinement during the millennium? Or does the great white throne judgment at the end of the millennium ultimately finalize the day of atonement? These are all unanswered questions.

Trumpets

Now we come to the fall feasts and their antitypical fulfillment. If the spring festivals were fulfilled “not only as to the event, but as to the time” (GC88 p. 399.2), then we should expect the same for the fall feasts even though they are separated from their spring counterparts by 37 jubilees (exactly, I might add). To me the convergence of exact jubilee intervals (49 years) between the ascension of Christ to *begin* his Holy Place ministry and when he *began* his

work in the Most Holy Place exactly 37 jubilees later ($37 \times 49 = 1813 + 31$ a.d. = 1844) is a powerful confirmation that at least the year which terminates the 2300 year prophecy of Daniel 8 is certain and sure.

But the only event that occurred exactly on an appointed time in 1844 was the day of atonement. Perhaps the hiatus of 1813 years caused a corresponding dilation of intervals between the final antitypes. How much expansion of time would there be? Having established the exact timing of the seventh month and tenth day, where do we find the first day of that antitypical month?

William Miller received his ministerial credentials on the feast of Trumpets in the year 1833 a prophetic ten days before the 1844 Day of Atonement. If that was a significant year-for-a-day expansion, then we should have expected the pattern to continue with the antitypical feast of Tabernacles fulfillment five years following 1844 in 1849. But Christ didn't come with sickle in hand to reap and harvest the earth that year. Nor has he since. We now have a very big gap approaching 170 years.

If 170 years corresponds to five days (assuming Christ could come within the next few months), then the antitypical feast of Trumpets should have been fulfilled (on the very day of that feast) 340 years prior to 1844, in 1504. Can't find any trumpet type event around that year. Maybe 1492 or 1517. Discovery of the New World certainly made global news. Luther's 95 Theses reached the headlines. But now we're searching history instead of Scripture.

Why would the antitype fulfillments at the time of His second advent not also be fulfilled "in real time" just like those at His first advent? That's a good question. A good answer is yet forthcoming. But some are led to look for yet a future fulfillment of that feast. Does that render October 22, 1844 invalid? Not if multiple, repeating fulfillments like Pentecost is promised to be can also occur. Perhaps 1844 marked the beginning of the heavenly day of Atonement and some future day of atonement will mark the end of services in the Most Holy place and the pronouncement of Revelation 22:11. Could the final Trumpets, Day of Atonement, Tabernacles all transpire within 15 days? Something to consider.

Tabernacles

"The Feast of Tabernacles was **not only commemorative but typical**. It not only pointed back to the wilderness sojourn, but, as the feast of harvest, it celebrated the ingathering of the fruits of the earth, and pointed forward to the great day of final ingathering, when the Lord of the harvest shall send forth

His reapers to gather the tares together in bundles for the fire, and to gather the wheat into His garner.” PP p. 541.2

The Feast of Ingathering is the final and only festival that has not yet met antitype. This will be fulfilled at the second coming. It certainly was not made of no effect at the cross. Will it be the final appointed time to mark the return of Christ in the clouds with His reaping sickle? I don’t know but Jesus said, “Watch and be ready.” Watching for the new moons to know when the 7th month arrives could be part of that watching. It’s possible. I think I’ll pay attention just in case.

11. Did God Cause the Feasts to Cease?

Yes and no. When the northern tribes of Israel split away from Judah and Benjamin, Jeroboam changed the timing of the fall feasts from the seventh to the eighth month and established alternative centers of worship in Dan and Bethel festooned with a pair of golden calves.

1Kings 12:32 And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the **fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that [is] in Judah**, and he offered upon the altar. So did he in Bethel, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made.³³ So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Bethel the fifteenth day of the eighth month, [even] in the month **which he had devised of his own heart**; and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel:

For northern Israel the “feasts of the LORD” most certainly came to an end as prophesied by the prophet Hosea.

“I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts.” Hosea 2:11

In no uncertain terms, Jehovah would end

“her feast days” (הַגָּאֵת hag-gath, ἑορτὰς *heortas* in the LXX)

annual

“her new moons” (הַשְּׁבִיעִיּוֹת הֹד־דַּע־שְׁחָה, νομηνίας noumenias LXX)

monthly

“her sabbaths” (הַשַּׁבָּתוֹת šhab-bat-t, σάββατα sabbata LXX) and

weekly

“all her solemn feasts” (הַמִּזְבְּחֵי מוֹ'עַד, πανηγύρεις panegureis LXX) **daily and all the above**

Hosea lived in the northern kingdom of Israel and was instructed by God to enact a prophecy to the wayward tribes.

“So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim; which conceived, and bare him a son. And the LORD said unto him, Call his name Jezreel; for yet a little *while*, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will **cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel.**” Hosea 1:3,4.

In 722 BC the northern tribes were taken into captivity by Assyria, never to return. 130 years later Babylon hauled off the southern kingdom of Judah for 70 years of captivity. But Judah returned under Ezra and Nehemiah restored the feasts, especially the Feast of Tabernacles.

“And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made *booths*, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness.” Nehemiah 8:17

Even the Hebrews, the Jews, the children of Israel didn't keep the feasts for many centuries. And then they were restored. Even as the old paths are being restored today.

12. How many laws are there?

One of the first indications that there are a number of laws is what the Lord said concerning Abraham, over 400 years before the Law was given at Mt. Sinai.

“Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my **laws.**” Genesis 26:5

But beside His laws, there were also commandments and statutes. Abraham kept the ten commandment principles in worshipping only the true God Creator of heaven and earth, respecting the life and property of others in his rescue of Lot and all his goods, faithful to Sarah till death did they part—even obeying her offer of Hagar, not coveting the fertile cities of the plain. But what statutes did Abraham keep? He paid tithe to Melchisedec and offered sacrifices to the Lord. He circumcised himself, his sons, and all the males in his household. He even washed the feet of visiting strangers and served them a meal of clean meat and unleavened bread.

Commandments, statutes, and laws. This is similar to another combination which appears frequently in the Pentateuch: commandments, statutes, and judgments.

Deut 4:13-14 And he declared unto you His covenant, which He commanded you to perform, even Ten Commandments; and He wrote them upon two tables of stone. And **the LORD commanded** me at that time to teach you **statutes and judgments**

Deut 6:1 Now these are the **commandments, the statutes, and the judgments**, which **the LORD your God commanded** to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it:

Deut 7:11-12 Thou shalt therefore keep the **commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments**

And besides the close association of these three, notice the commandments, statutes and judgments, all three are God's, they are His, they belong to Him.

Deut 6:17 Ye shall diligently keep the **commandments of the LORD your God**, and **His testimonies, and His statutes**, which **He** hath commanded thee.

Deut 11:1 Therefore thou shalt love the LORD thy God, and **keep His charge, and His statutes, and His judgments, and His commandments**, always.

Deut 26:16,17 This day **the LORD thy God hath commanded** thee to do **these statutes and judgments**: thou shalt therefore keep and do them **with all thine heart, and with all thy soul**. ¹⁷Thou hast avouched the LORD this day to be thy God, and to walk in **His ways**, and to keep **His statutes, and His commandments, and His judgments**

Deut 30:16 In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in **His ways**, and to keep **His commandments and His statutes and His judgments**, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

Leviticus 18:4-5 Ye shall do **My judgments**, and keep **Mine ordinances**, to walk therein: I am the LORD your God. Ye shall therefore keep **My statutes, and My judgments**: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the LORD.

But these statutes, judgments and laws are also called the law of Moses because it was given to Moses to give to Israel.

Lev 26:46 These are the **statutes and judgments and laws, which the LORD made** between him and the children of Israel in mount Sinai **by the hand of Moses.**

Moses was the channel, the agent through whom, by whom the law was given. The statutes and judgments are detailed examples, amplification, magnification of the general principles expressed in the Ten Commandments. So also Christ came to magnify the law (Isaiah 42:21) and He too went up into the mount and taught the people the law in greater detail.

Deut 4:44,45 And this is the law which Moses set before the children of Israel: These are the **testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which Moses spake** unto the children of Israel, after they came forth out of Egypt.

The Father's law was spoken from mount Sinai by the Son of God; He is the Word of God. "I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak," Jesus said in John 12:49.

The commandments and statutes are closely associated.

Deut 4:40 Thou shalt keep therefore **His statutes, and His commandments**

Deut 6:2 That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all **His statutes and His commandments**, which I command thee

Deut 27:10 Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the LORD thy God, and do **His commandments and His statutes**, which I command thee this day.

Deut 28:15 But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all **His commandments and His statutes** which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:

Deut 30:9-10 And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand ...¹⁰If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep **His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law**, and if thou turn unto the LORD thy God **with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.**

The book of the law contained both the Ten Commandments and the statutes.

When David turned the kingdom over to his son Solomon, he advised him to “keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in **His ways**, to keep **His statutes**, and **His commandments**, and **His judgments**, and **His testimonies**, as it is written in the law of Moses,” 1 Kings 2:3

Deut 17:18,19 And it shall be, when he [the king] sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall **write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites:** ¹⁹And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to **keep all the words of this law and these statutes**, to do them

The copy of the law in the book contained “this law” and “these statutes.” Thus the ten commandment law was included in the book of the law for access and reference by the priests and the king. The original law was inside the ark. It was not placed on public display. No one would know what the Ten Commandments said if they remained inside the ark. A copy was included in the book of the law.

2 Chron 34:14,19, 21, “Hilkiah the priest found a book of the law... given by Moses.” “And it came to pass, when the king [Josiah] had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes.” “because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD.”

In 2 Chron 17:9 Jehoshaphat sent Levites with “the book of the law of the LORD” throughout the country to teach the people. In Nehemiah 8:1 Ezra brought “the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded to Israel” “on the first day of the seventh month” (Feast of Trumpets verse 2)

Verse 8: “they read in the book in the law of God”

Verse 9: “This day *is* holy unto the LORD your God; mourn not, nor weep”

Nehemiah 8:18 “the book of the law of God.”

Nehemiah 9:3 “the book of the law of the LORD their God”

This book was much more than simply the law of Moses. It included Exodus 20-23 which contains the Ten Commandments, the statutes, and judgments.

A Sign in the Hand and Forehead

Therefore shall ye lay up these **my words in your heart and in your soul**, and bind them for a **sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.** Deuteronomy 11:18

What words were these? A sign on your hand and in your forehead. In Revelation 13 a mark is to be made in the right hand or in the forehead. In Revelation 7 the seal of God is placed in the forehead and in chapter 14 appears as the name of the Father. Hebrews 8 repeats the New Covenant promise of Jeremiah 33 where God promises to write His law in our minds.

Deut 31:9-12 And **Moses wrote this law**, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and unto all the elders of Israel. ¹⁰And Moses commanded them, saying, **At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles,** ¹¹When all Israel is come to appear before the LORD thy God in the place which He shall choose, thou shalt **read this law** before all Israel in their hearing.

In the days of the apostles at least portions of this law were read every week, “For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day” Acts 15:21.

13. Were any laws abolished at the cross?

Paul’s letter to the Ephesians might give that impression.

“For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, **having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances**, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace.” Ephesians 2:14, 15.

It sounds like the law of commandments contained in ordinances was abolished in His flesh.

NIV

“setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations”

New Living Translation

“ending the system of law with its commandments and regulations”

ESV

“abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances”

Holman

“made of no effect the law consisting of commands and expressed in regulations”

Aramaic

“canceled the hatred by his flesh and the law of commands in his commandments”

God's Word Translation

“brought an end to the commandments and demands found in Moses’ teachings”

Douay-Rheims

“making void the law of commandments contained in decrees”

Young's Literal Translation

“the enmity in his flesh, the law of the commands in ordinances”

This law, whatever it was, caused enmity and separation. When man first sinned in Eden there was an immediate separation between man and God: Adam and Eve hid themselves in fear. But Christ promised to put enmity between the seed of the woman and the serpent (Gen 3:15). Enmity is hostility, animosity, opposition, antagonism, ill will. This was the feeling between Jews and Gentiles; they too were separated by an enmity that was as a “middle wall of separation” between them.

Part of the hostility that existed between them was the result of certain commandments contained in ordinances. Whose ordinances? This word in the Greek is dogma and means decree or regulation. Dogmas can be religious or civil, God-ordained or man-made. Jesus referred to the Jewish laws saying, “In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” (Matt 15:9). The Jews added many, many additional rules and regulations to all of God’s laws, statutes and judgments, making them a burden and discriminating against the filthy, unclean, uncircumcised Gentiles who reacted with feelings of prejudice, hostility and animosity.

The Jews called Gentiles uncircumcised dogs. David directed this epitaph to Goliath in 1 Samuel 17:26, 43. Uncircumcised males could not partake of Passover (Ex. 12:48) nor enter the sanctuary (Ezekiel 44:9). Joshua had the people circumcised again before entering Canaan because no one had been circumcised during the wilderness wanderings (Joshua 5:7). Peter referred to this at the Jerusalem Council which was convened because “certain men which came down from Judaea [a certain sect of Pharisees] taught the brethren, “Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses [and keep the law of Moses], ye cannot be saved” Acts 15:1, 5, 9. They were recommending this to uncircumcised Gentile brethren. Then Peter “rose up” and defended the Gentiles, saying that God “put no difference between us and them.” No difference between the Jews and Gentiles? What was the difference? Circumcision.

“Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?” Peter asked in verse 10, the fathers didn’t bear the yoke of circumcision during their years in the wilderness.

So, James concluded that “we trouble not them” (to be circumcised), but only that they abstain from idols, fornication, and eating blood. But the law of Moses was still important to respect because the Law of Moses was read in the synagogues every Sabbath (verse 21).

It was not only this enmity of circumcision that was abolished at the cross, but also the enmity between all men and God. “Because the carnal mind [is] enmity against God” Romans 8:7.

When Christ, the Lamb of God, died He abolished the enmity in His flesh, the final ultimate sacrifice; He ended the sacrificial system, the earthly temple services, and all rituals, rites and regulations related to the sacrifices.

Nailed to the Cross

“...having **blotted out the handwriting of ordinances** that was against us, nailing it to his cross” Colossians 2:14.

Most of Christendom interprets the “handwriting of ordinances” as the law of God which was nailed to the Cross and thus, they believe, there is now no New Testament obligation to keep the Sabbath nor the rest of the Ten Commandments, no “continuing moral imperative” to keep the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath of the Lord.

On the other hand, Sabbath-keeping Christians have traditionally held that there is a difference between the moral and ceremonial laws, and it was this other law, the “law of Moses” that was nailed to the cross. Thus it is the “ceremonial sabbaths” in the law of Moses and not the Seventh-day Sabbath of the Ten Commandments that ended with Christ’s death because, they believe, it is not the law of God but the law of Moses that is against us.

Against Us

What exactly is against us? Some contend it is the “book of the law.” They assume it is only the law of Moses that is against us because of the following text of scripture:

Deut 31:25,26 “That Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying, **26Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant** of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a **witness against thee.**”

This is one of the most famous passages used to say the Law of Moses was against the people and then connect it with Colossians 2:14. But reading the

context we find that this book of the Law is not against the people but is simply a “witness” against them. Notice verse 28:

“Gather unto me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears, and call **heaven and earth to record against them.**” Deut 31:28.

The book of the Law is no more against the people than “heaven and earth” are. If I go shopping with you but warn you not to steal anything before we go, yet you do anyway (and right while I’m watching you!), does this mean I was against you? No I am simply a witness to your breaking the law and my witness will stand as evidence in court in the case against you. Notice this same idea in Deut 4:25,26

“When thou shalt beget children, and children's children, and ye shall have remained long in the land, and shall corrupt yourselves, and make a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, and shall do evil in the sight of the LORD thy God, to provoke him to anger: ²⁶**I call heaven and earth to witness against you** this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed.”

Also Deut 30:19

“**I call heaven and earth to record this day against you,** that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.”

Heaven is not against us, but does watch our decisions.

Handwriting of Ordinances

A third understanding of this passage is that “blotting out the handwriting of ordinances” is simply restating the immediately preceding phrase “having forgiven all your trespasses” in verse 13 which establishes the important context: “you, being dead in your **sins** and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having **forgiven you all trespasses**”, your iniquity, sins. How did Christ forgive us our sins? By blotting them out, “bearing them in his own body on the tree” (1 Peter 2:24). The “handwriting of ordinances” is thus the debt of sin and the enmity that results from the carnal mind that were nailed to the cross.

Besides the KJV “handwriting of ordinances” other translations include “the charge of our legal indebtedness” NIV, “the record of debt” ESV, “the certificate of debt” NASB, “the bill of our debts” Aramaic Bible in Plain English. These are all expressing the Greek *cheirographon tois dogmasin* phrase found here in Colossians 2:14.

The context begins with 2:12, where Paul speaks of being "buried with Him in baptism." The result of that "burial baptism" is resurrection to a new life and cleansing from sin. Paul refers to that cleansing with two participle phrases that are parallel, the second repeating the thought of the first. The first of those two phrases is "having forgiven us all our trespasses" (verse 13, RSV). The parallel and repetitive phrase is "having canceled the bond [*cheirographon tois dogmasin*] which stood against us" (verse 14, RSV). Both phrases mean essentially the same thing, the second simply repeating in different terms what it meant for him to forgive our sins. Thus forgiveness of our sins has resulted in the canceling of the bond that was against us. (William E. Richardson, Andrews University, “Sabbath nailed to the cross?” *Ministry* magazine, May, 1997)

Dogmasin, from which we get the word dogma, law, decree, ordinance, statute, is easy to understand. Cities have ordinances, local laws regulating parking, littering, loitering, soliciting, etc. And associated with each ordinance is a penalty for its infraction. *Cheirographon* in this epistle is the only occurrence of the word in the New Testament. It is literally translated “handwriting” as the KJV provides. But handwriting of what? In other Greek literature this word is found in legal, courtroom settings, where the document listing the charges against the accused is called the *cheirographon* which is displayed by the plaintiff in the middle (*tou mesou*) of the courtroom. Paul also uses this second legal term when he says that Christ took the *cheirographon* “out of the way” *tou mesou*, out of the middle, removing the middle wall of separation.

Satan, the Accuser of the brethren, points to the certificate of our debt, but our Advocate with the Father simply says, “The Lord rebuke you!” Christ simply removes the record.

“Take away the filthy garments from him” Zech 3:2,4. He takes it out of the way. “I have caused your iniquity to pass from you, and I will clothe you with change of raiment.”

This is why the very next verse says that Christ “spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it” Colossians 2:15. Christ *spoiled* them by *robbing* the “principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, the spiritual wickedness in high places” of their accusations. The evidence is removed from the case, and our accuser stands empty-handed with nothing to condemn us. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus!” Romans 8:1.

Blotting Out

Jesus blotted out our sins by his death on the Cross where he earned the right to “forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1John 1:9). This is when the Son of God had “mercy upon me” “according to [his] loving kindness” and did “**blot out** my transgressions” to “**blot out** all mine iniquities” Psalm 51:1, 9. This is when he “**blotted out**, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions” Isaiah 44:22. This is the first blotting out of our sins. But there is a final blotting out when our “sins may be **blotted out**, when the times of refreshing *shall come* from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ” Acts 3:19, 20. This is a time that is still yet to come in the future during the final atonement in the Most Holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. This aspect of the day of atonement is still a shadow of good things to come.

So, Christ did not take the *dogmasin*, the dogma, the ordinance, the law, out of the way; He removed the *cheirographon*, the **record** of the charges out of the way, by taking the **debt** upon Himself, “made to be sin, who knew no sin”. He takes the record of our sins with all the details—places, dates and times, testimony of witnesses—and blots it out, wiping out our debt, and takes it out of the way. How? By taking our debt, our sins, upon himself. No law was nailed to a tree, but Jesus was. The only law that ended at the cross was the law of sacrifices.

Paul expressed this in a letter to Philemon, when he said, “I Paul have written with mine own hand, I will repay [it]” Philemon 18, 19. Philemon was a member of the Colossae church. Paul would not blot out the handwriting that promised payment, but he would blot out the debt by paying it.

Ended at the Cross

The sacrifices and all the rites, regulations, and ceremonies associated with them, as we have already noted, indeed ended at the cross. No more earthly priesthood; no more temple services; no more temple! But did *all* the laws of Moses end at the cross? No. We continue to recognize and appeal to the Levitical laws of health, tithing, sunset-to-sunset Sabbath observance, etc.

Furthermore, to accept that it was the statutes, judgments, and commandments which were given by Christ Himself to Moses which were nailed to the cross, means that they are what is “against us” and “contrary to us” and that the Son of God provided His people with a curse and not a blessing.

The context of Colossians 2 is in regards to the imposing of *man-made* rules and regulations. Six times the words *man* or *men* appear in Colossians chapter 2:

- 2:4 “And this I say, lest any **man** should beguile you”
2:8 “Beware lest any **man** spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of **men**”
2:16 “Let no **man** therefore judge you”
2:18 “Let no **man** beguile you”
2:20-22 “why...are ye subject to ordinances (touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using) after the commandments and doctrines of **men**?”

The feasts of the Lord are not the commandments and doctrines of men. The dietary laws, the statutes on tithing, are not the commandments of men. Then why does Paul list meat and drink, festivals, new moons, and Sabbaths as the subject of condemnation? Let’s look at Paul’s list.

Meat and Drink

First, the Greek words translated “food and drink” are *brosis* and *posis*. It’s tempting to think that they have something to do with Mosaic food and drink offerings that ended with Christ’s death. But these Greek words are never used with reference to meal and drink offerings in the Septuagint or the New Testament. Actually, *thusia* is the technical word for meat sacrifice, and *spendo* was the term meaning “to offer a libation or drink offering.” Paul would have used these if his intention was to indicate the meat and drink offerings.

Also, **these two words have action endings**, and should be translated “**eating and drinking.**”

Accordingly, they refer not to Mosaic rituals, but to the **prohibitions** being **advocated by some false teachers** to abstain from various worldly pleasures. They were advocating “self-abasement” to the Colossian believers, saying, “**Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!**” (Verses 18, 20, 21, and 23.) Depriving one’s self of food and water may appear devotional, but really has no spiritual value. Let no one condemn you for your social fellowship on festivals, new moons, or the Sabbath.

Festivals, New Moons, Sabbaths

The phrase "festivals, new moons, or sabbaths" (*heortes, noumenias, sabbaton*) in verse 16 is found **nowhere else in the New Testament**, but occurs **five times in the Septuagint** (2 Chron. 2:4; 31:3; Neh. 10:33; Eze. 45:17; Hosea 2:11). Each time the reference is to the Sabbaths (weekly), new moons (monthly), and appointed feasts (yearly). Sometimes the order is reversed, but in each case, "new moon" is in the middle, thus making a **logical sequence** from weekly to yearly or yearly to weekly. The implication is that this is describing the weekly Sabbath.

To plead that these are ceremonial Sabbaths (part of the annual feasts) makes Paul needlessly repeating himself: 'Let no one pass judgment on you in regard to a feast day/ceremonial sabbath, or in regard to a new moon, or in regard to a ceremonial sabbath,' "a statement **neither logical nor likely.**" (William E. Richardson, *Ministry* magazine, May, 1997)

Some argue that the plural form of the word "sabbath" here (*sabbaton*) indicates something other than the weekly Sabbath. But the plural form is used many times for the weekly Sabbath, and only in a secondary sense meaning seven days, a week.

For example the plural nature of *sabbaton* can be seen in Mark 15:42 "it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath [*sabbaton*]" i.e., the day before every Sabbath. Luke 4:16 "as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day [*sabbaton*]" i.e., on every Sabbath. These plurals indicate the recurring nature of the weekly Sabbath.

But there is an interesting use of the plural in Matthew 28:1 "After the sabbath [*sabbaton*] as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week [*sabbaton*]" i.e., the first day after every Sabbath. The second occurrence demonstrates the typical "every Sabbath" connotation, but the first *sabbaton* should pertain to that particular Sabbath yet it, too, is plural. Why? Because there were two Sabbaths that particular Sabbath that occurred on the same day: the weekly seventh-day Sabbath and the first day of Unleavened bread, one of the seven annual sabbaths associated with the feasts. John 19:31 refers to that Sabbath as a "high day."

Acts 13:14 "when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day [*sabbaton*], and sat down." Why plural here? This is describing one particular Sabbath when the apostles visited the synagogue in Antioch and were invited to speak. Either this was the first of several Sabbaths that they attended the synagogue there or perhaps this was another high Sabbath conjunction of a weekly and annual Sabbath.

So, while it is clear that the weekly seventh-day Sabbath is included in Paul's list of things for which we should not let any man condemn us, it is also true that these were not what was nailed to the cross or blotted out or abolished or taken out of the way.

Let No Man Judge You

Who was doing the judging anyway? Jews or Gentiles?

Those inside the church or outside?

Paul's great concern in this letter is about false, Christ-less teachings. The single repeated theme that dominates his message is the impoverished view of Jesus that prevailed in "the Colossian heresy." The strongest statements regarding the deity of Christ in the entire New Testament are found here.

The dear Son of God (1:13) is the image of the invisible God (15) who created all things in heaven and earth (16). He is the firstborn of every creature (15) because he is before all things and by him all things consist (17). He is the head of the body, the church, the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, and has preeminence over all things (18) because it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell (19). For in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (2:9) because he is the head of all principality and power (10) and sits on the right hand of God (3:1).

There were indeed Judaizers who "were of the circumcision" and sought to impose their customs on the Gentiles. They did the same to Jesus, accusing him of breaking *their* Sabbath ordinances and ignoring *their* ceremonial handwashing requirements. But there were also others who used "enticing words of man's wisdom," 1 Cor 2:4. "philosophy and vain deceit," promoting "the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world" Col 2:8. Paul then gave some examples of these enticing, philosophical words, traditions, and rudiments in verses 21-23. "Touch not; taste not; handle not," "will worship", "neglecting of the body" and not "satisfying the flesh."

This describes very well the asceticism that characterized Gnosticism, the teaching that exalted human wisdom over the inherently evil human body. Paul opposed this vain philosophy by pointing to the Father and Christ, "in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" Col 2:3, not the mind of man, for "we have the mind of Christ" 1 Cor 2:16. But didn't these types and shadows and ceremonies end at the cross?

"These maxims and traditions became an obstacle to their understanding and practice of true religion. And when the Reality came, in the person of Christ,

they did not recognize in Him the fulfillment of all their types, the substance of all their shadows. They rejected the antitype, and clung to their types and useless ceremonies. The Son of God had come, but they continued to ask for a sign.” (*Christ Object Lessons* p. 34)

For the Jews who rejected the Son of God, the types and ceremonies had indeed become useless traditions. But for those who believe on His name and see in Him the fulfillment and substance of all these shadows, what was once glorious becomes even more glorious! Fulfillment does not mean abolition, but to *fill full* with meaning and significance. That’s why Jesus did not come to destroy the law but to fulfill it (Matt 5:19), to give it richer meaning, to magnify the law and make it honorable (Isa 42:21).

“When as a sinless offering Christ bowed His head and died, when by the Almighty’s unseen hand the veil of the temple was rent in twain, a new and living way was opened. All can now approach God through the merits of Christ. It is because the veil has been rent that men can draw nigh to God. They need not depend on priest or ceremonial sacrifice.” (*Ms 148, 1897, pp. 7, 8 in 1MR 111.4*)

The earthly priesthood and ceremonial sacrifices were ended in the “midst of the week” when “sacrifice and oblation” ceased (*Dan 9:27*).

“The Jews had always prided themselves upon their divinely appointed services, and many of those who had been converted to the faith of Christ still felt that since God had once clearly outlined the Hebrew manner of worship, it was improbable that He would ever authorize a change in any of its specifications. They insisted that the Jewish laws and ceremonies should be incorporated into the rites of the Christian religion. They were slow to discern that **all the sacrificial offerings** had but prefigured the death of the Son of God, in which type met antitype, and after which the **rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic dispensation were no longer binding.**” (*Acts of the Apostles, 189.3*)

The rites and ceremonies that pertained to all the sacrificial offerings were no longer binding. The death of the Son of God brought an end to the sacrificial system but not to the work of Christ in pouring out His Pentecostal Spirit, in cleansing our temples, and dwelling in us.

“This was **virtually the last passover that was ever to be celebrated;** for type was to meet antitype in the slaying of the Lamb of God for the sins of the world. But at the crucifixion type met antitype, and **the typical system there ceased.**” (*That I Might Know Him* p. 17.4)

The killing of passover lambs ceased with the crucifixion of Christ. ***Virtually*** the last passover? For the Lamb of God yet appears before the Father's throne "as it had been slain" Rev 5:6 offering, not the blood of lambs or goats, but His own blood for us. The typical system has ceased. Now the Real Lamb, who was dead but is now alive forevermore, is our Passover; therefore, let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (1 Cor 5:7,8).

"In the last Passover our Lord observed with His disciples, **He instituted the Lord's Supper in place of the Passover**, to be observed in memory of His death. **No longer had they need of the Passover**, for He, the great antitypical Lamb, was ready to be sacrificed for the sins of the world." (*Youth's Instructor*, May 1, 1873 par. 12)

In place of the typical Passover lamb, they now had the antitypical Lamb. Yet the significance of the Passover deliverance from Egypt lives on in the commemoration of Christ's death (at the same time) in our deliverance from sin by His death on the cross as the Lamb of God. It also lives on in the commemoration of the covenant God made with Abraham in Genesis 15.

There is a law which was abolished, which Christ "took out of the way, nailing it to His cross." Paul calls it "the law of commandments contained in ordinances." **This ceremonial law**, given by God through Moses, with its **sacrifices and ordinances**, was to be binding upon the Hebrews until type met antitype in the death of Christ as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. **Then all the sacrificial offerings and services were to be abolished**. Paul and the other apostles labored to show this, and resolutely withstood those Judaizing teachers who declared that Christians ought to observe **the ceremonial law**. (*Bible Echo*, April 16, 1894 par. 2)

The ceremonial law concerned the sacrificial offerings and ordinances (laws) related to them. There is no question that the sacrifices and oblations (ordinances dealing with the shedding of sacrificial blood) have ceased and are abolished.

14. Are the feasts shadows or types that end with the antitype?

Shadow and Body

The solution to Colossians 2:16 is not in attempting to defend a plural interpretation of *sabbaton* in order to exclude the weekly seventh-day Sabbath from Paul's list. The problem is in a wrong assumption about the body of

Christ. Not only is the word “days” supplied in the KJV but also the word “is”. Rather than “the body is of Christ” the actual Greek wording is simply, and much more clearly, “the body of Christ.”

Colossians 2:16 is commonly read as “holy days, new moons, and the Sabbaths which are shadows of things to come **but** the substance is Christ.” Reading just this portion of the passage makes it appear that the Greek conjunction “*de*” is contrasting the shadows with the substance. However, the usage of Greek *de* is predominately rendered “moreover” which indicates expansion, amplification, magnification.

Let no man therefore judge you
(how?)
in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an Holyday,
or of the New Moon, or of the Sabbaths:
(what kind?)
which are a shadow of things to come;
moreover the body of Christ.

Let’s examine these two dependent clauses.

1. *The adverbial clause.* How are they not to be judged? In regards to holy days, new moon days, and “sabbaths” all of which (except for the Day of Atonement) were known for their “eating and drinking.” These were commemorative festivals of past events and typical celebrations of future fulfillments.
2. *The adjective clause.* What kind of days were these? They **are** a shadow of things to come. Rather than having ended their significance, they still **are** a foretaste of even better things to come which proves the shadow is not in contrast with reality.

When we worship from the 7th day Sabbath all the way to the Last Great Day, it shows the world Whom we serve. Every moment we take to focus on Christ the solid Rock and His movements through the sanctuary is a moment that the gates of hell cannot prevail against us.

“Through faith [Moses] kept the Passover and the sprinkling of Blood” Heb 11:28. He and all the children of Israel that night did what they did by faith. They didn’t put the blood on the door posts because they were “under the law” but because they had faith in the God of Israel who had miraculously sheltered them from the plagues of Egypt. It was the Egyptians who did not have faith in the instructions of Jehovah that were under His law and experienced its penalty.

The ascetic Gnostics condemned the Christians for enjoying fellowship meals, breaking bread, eating and drinking together, assembling weekly, monthly, and annually because they believed in isolation, solitude, and deprivation.

Paul said,

Let no one condemn you for eating and drinking. Let no one condemn you for enjoying feasts and Sabbaths together. These things *are* a shadow connecting us to the body of Christ now and the future reality when the saints will meet each month at the tree of life for the fruit and worship of God and the Lamb (Revelation 22:2).

Paul did not say, nearly 30 years after the cross, that they *were* a shadow, but they *are still* a shadow of things to come. The shadow is not opposed to the reality but dependent on the source. They all speak of Him who is the fullness of all things. Every item in the sanctuary is a symbol of the Son of God. Every feast is a reminder of what He has done, is doing, and will accomplish soon!

The Old and the New Testament

One of the underlying problems concerning an understanding of the law stems from an understanding of how the Old and New Testament relate to each other. Many Christians contrast the Old and the New Testament as law versus grace or even works versus faith. In this framework Christ is placed in opposition to Moses as to suggest that Christ replaces Moses. Yet the Bible clearly states that Christ came to fulfill the law and magnify it. Matt 5:18; Isa 42:21.

John 5:46, 47 “For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?”

Jesus is saying that He is the expression of what Moses wrote. To Moses was given the root to which Christ would come and magnify and bear the fruit in its fullness. So Christ is not in contrast to Moses but rather the complete expression of all that is written in the law and the prophets.

“The law is the gospel embodied, and the gospel is the law unfolded. The law is the root; the gospel is the fragrant blossom and fruit which it bears.” (*Christ Object Lessons* p. 128)

This change in understanding can be reflected in the words of Jesus:

John 1:17 “For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”

The relation between Moses and Christ is expressed by the supplied word *but*. This suggests a contrast in opposition. Yet the contrast is truly in magnification of what Moses had written. We could use the word *and* just as easily to create a multiplication of thought:

John 1:17 “For the law was given by Moses, *and* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”

With a correct understanding of how the law relates to the gospel, many supposed difficulties are removed.

Thy Way is in the Sanctuary

One simple way to know what was retained and what ceased at the cross is to look at the sanctuary

Rev 11:1-2 “And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. 2 **But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not;** for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty *and* two months.”

God’s people are to measure the temple and the altar and them that worship there. But the court was to be left out. This means the sacrifices and offerings and washings of the court are left out but the things contained in the temple of the holy and most holy place were kept. Where was the law of Moses kept? It was not in the court but in the Most Holy Place. Knowing that the Most Holy Place ministry has application especially to 1844 and onwards and that the Law of Moses was residing in the Most Holy Place, does this not suggest that the statutes and Judgments would also be written on the heart during the ministry of the Most Holy Place?

15. Should Christians keep the feasts today?

Many Christians already do. They keep Christmas, Easter, Saint Valentine’s Day, All Hallows’ Eve a.k.a. Halloween followed by All Saints Day. Some observe 40 days of Lent, the Ascension, Assumption, and Advent. Then there are the Twelve Days of Christmas, the Adoration of the Magi, Saint Patrick’s Day, Mary Mother of God day a.k.a. New Year’s Day, Immaculate Conception Day, Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Pentecost Sunday, Trinity Sunday, and Corpus Christi. But these are not mentioned at

all in the Bible. Are the feasts which *are* mentioned in the Bible part of the statutes, precepts and requirements or included in the shadowy types? It appears they were ordinances included among the statutes.

“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**.” Exodus 12:17.

The perpetuity of keeping this everlasting ordinance “throughout your generations” applies to both the seventh-day Sabbath and the annual feasts of the Lord. Both are enjoined with the same perpetual throughout-your-generations language

Sabbaths of the Lord

“Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it *is* a sign between me and you **throughout your generations**”

“Six days may work be done; but in the seventh *is* the sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD”

“keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath **throughout their generations, for a perpetual** covenant.” Ex 31:13, 15, 16.

God’s Sabbaths are to be a sign on the hand and on the forehead.

“And it shall serve as a **sign to you on your hand**, and as a reminder **on your forehead**, that the law of the LORD may be in your mouth; for with a powerful hand the LORD brought you out of Egypt. Therefore, you shall **keep this ordinance at its appointed time from year to year**.” Exodus 13:9,10.

This ordinance is the feast of unleavened bread. The three verses immediately before these two confirm this:

“Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and in the seventh day *shall be* a **feast to the LORD**. Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days; and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters. And thou shalt show thy son in that day, saying, *This is done* because of that *which* the LORD did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt. Exodus 13:6-8.

Those who worship the beast and his image will receive a mark in their

forehead or in their hand (Revelation 14:9); those who worship the Father and His Image will be sealed with a sign on their forehead and on their hand—they will have the Father’s name in their forehead (Revelation 14:1); and the name of Jesus, His “new name” written on them (Revelation 3:12); perhaps on their hand, even as he has engraved us on the palms of His own hands (Isaiah 49:16).

Feasts of the Lord

Like the weekly Sabbath, the feasts with their annual Sabbaths were commanded to be kept “throughout your generations” and were called ordinances and statutes.

Ex 12:14 Passover: “a feast to the LORD throughout your generations...an ordinance for ever.”

Ex 12:17 Feast of unleavened bread: “in your generations by an ordinance for ever.”

Lev 23:14 and “a **statute** for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.”

Lev 23:21 Pentecost: “a **statute** for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.”

Lev 23:31 Day of Atonement: “a **statute** for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.”

Though we understand that “forever” can mean “only as long as something lasts” and is so interpreted in the case of the “smoke of their torment shall ascend up forever,” we must be careful in how we selectively apply this to those things which belong to God. The feasts of the LORD, the sabbaths of the LORD, the LORD’s Passover are described with the same enduring language as His sabbaths, His statutes, and His judgments (Lev 23:2-5 37,38; Ezekiel 20:11-13, 18-20).

Sure enough, the unleavened bread has continued to be taken in our observance of the Lord’s Supper even today. At least we have perpetuated the symbol as Christ instructed.

Jesus kept them

“After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.”

John 5:1.

“But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.” John 7:10.

“Among the Jews the twelfth year was the dividing line between childhood and youth. On completing this year a Hebrew boy was called a son of the law,

and also a son of God. He was given special opportunities for religious instruction, and was expected to participate in the sacred feasts and observances. It was in accordance with this custom that Jesus in His boyhood made the Passover visit to Jerusalem. Like all devout Israelites, Joseph and Mary went up every year to attend the Passover; and when Jesus had reached the required age, they took Him with them.” (*Desire of Ages*, 7:75)

Paul kept them

“Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”
1 Cor. 5: 7.8.

In Acts 18 Paul stayed for a year and a half in Corinth where he “reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath” persuading the Jews and the Greeks that Jesus was the Christ. Sabbath-keepers use this passage as important evidence that Paul continued to worship on the seventh-day years after Christ died on the cross thus demonstrating the perpetuity of the Ten Commandments and the observance of the Sabbath by the apostles in the New Testament.

This same chapter is also cited as evidence that Paul did not at times keep the annual feasts, since he remained in Corinth for more than an entire year with no mention of him observing any of the appointed festivals, and the fact that he was not in Jerusalem where all the feasts were kept by the Jews.

But Paul did not always keep the feasts in Jerusalem. Upon leaving Corinth he said, “I must by all means keep this feast that comes in Jerusalem.” Yet since he learned of a plot by the Jews for his assassination (Acts 20:3, 16) he altered his course and went through Macedonia, and in Philippi he kept the Passover and “days of unleavened bread” with his Gentile converts. From there he “hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.” Not only did Paul *want* to be in Jerusalem for Passover that he might meet with his Jewish countrymen, but his enemies *wanted* him to be there so that they might take his life. Thus he changed his route and planned instead to be at Pentecost. But he still kept Passover even though he wasn’t in Jerusalem. Ellen White commented on this in *Acts of the Apostles*:

“At Philippi Paul tarried to keep the Passover. Only Luke remained with him, the other members of the company passing on to Troas to await him there. **The Philippians** were the most loving and truehearted of the apostle's **converts**, and during **the eight days of the feast** he enjoyed peaceful and happy **communion with them.**” {AA 390.4}

Paul diverted his course through Macedonia and tarried at Philippi for Passover. The Philippians were Paul's Gentile *converts*. He had no reason to keep Passover with Gentile converts; they were not his Jewish countrymen and they were already Christians. Why would he observe Passover if it was among the rites that he was telling Jews they were now released from keeping? He spent all eight days of the feast with them. Why not just a couple days and press on? It certainly appears that he was honoring the full extent of the proscribed feast including the final Sabbath on the eighth day.

The early Christians kept them

“So, John, according to the custom of the Law, began the celebration of the feast of Easter (Passover) on the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month, paying no attention to whether it fell on the Sabbath or on some other day.” (*Bede's The Ecclesiastical History of the English People* for The Great Histories Series by Washington Square Press, N.Y., 1968)

Polycrates: “Therefore we keep the day undeviatingly, neither adding nor taking away, for in Asia [Minor] great luminaries sleep, and they will rise on the day of the coming of the Lord, when he shall come with glory from heaven and seek out all the saints. Such were Phillip... and two of his daughters...[p. 507] There is also John who lay on the Lord's breast... And there is also Polycarp at Smyrna, both bishop and martyr, and Thraseas, both bishop and martyr, from Eumeneae...[Also] Sagaris,... Papius,...and Melito...all of these kept the fourteenth day of the Passover **according to the gospel**, never swerving, but following **according to the rule of the faith**. And I also, Polycrates, the least of you all, live according to the tradition of my kinsmen, and some of them have I followed. For seven of my family were bishops and I am the eighth, and my kinsmen ever kept the day when the people put away the leaven. Therefore, brethren, I who have lived sixty-five years in the Lord and conversed with brethren from every country, and have studied all holy Scripture am not afraid of threats, for they have said, who were greater than I, ‘It is better to obey God rather than men.’” (SDA Bible Commentary, Vol. 9, p. 362)

Notice he does not say “kept the Passover according to the tradition” but “kept the fourteenth day of the Passover according to the Gospel”

Waldenses kept them

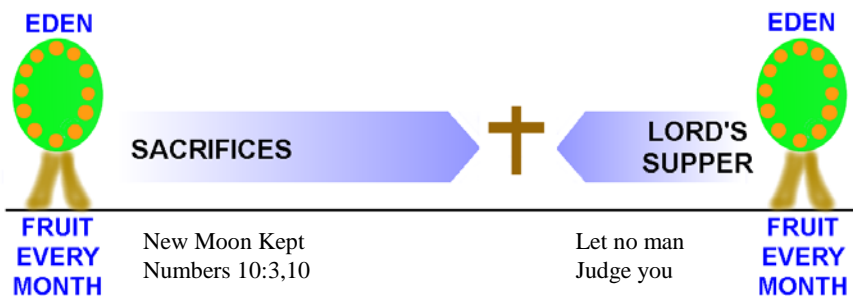
“Catholics had also spent a very long time trying to pretend that these people had no continuous history and that they were local aberrations in time and space of a peculiar and heretical Judaizing mind bent.... Jews and Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants have all tried to pretend that there was no continuous or even long extant Sabbatarian church. A non-Trinitarian

Sabbath-keeping church keeping the **festivals** and the food laws and the other **non-sacrificial laws** of the Old Testament and the teachings of the Christ and the New Testament since the time of the apostles and the NT Church is an embarrassment.” (Editor’s Forward, *The Sabbatarians in Transylvania*, by Samuel Kohn, 1998 p. 3)

“Behind the lofty bulwarks of the mountains—in all ages the refuge of the persecuted and oppressed—the Waldenses found a hiding place. Here the light of truth was kept burning amid the darkness of the Middle Ages. Here, for a thousand years, witnesses for the truth maintained the ancient faith.” (*Great Controversy* pp. 65-66)

16. Will we keep the feasts in heaven or on the new earth?

Every month we will eat of the fruit of the tree of life when from one new moon to another we will all come to worship before our Creator (Isa 66:23).



The tree of life in the new earth will yield “her fruit every month” and would have done so in Eden before the fall. The new moons, like the weekly Sabbath were always kept and will continue to be kept.

“And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of **the throne of God and of the Lamb**. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there the tree of life*, which bare twelve *manner of* fruits, and yielded her fruit **every month**: and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations.” Revelation 22:1, 2.

“This will fit the dwellers of earth for the mansions Christ has gone to prepare for them that love Him. Then they will assemble in the sanctuary from Sabbath to Sabbath, **from one new moon to another**, to unite in loftier strains of song, in thanksgiving and praise to Him who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb forever and ever.” (Manuscript 24, 1898)

After describing the destruction of those the wicked who “come up against Jerusalem” corresponding to the gathering of Gog and Magog to encompass the Holy City in Revelation 20. Zechariah 14:16 says,

“And it shall come to pass, *that* every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.”

Finally, the promise of Jesus Himself to his disciples as, “With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.” Luke 22:14-18

Jesus said that the Passover would be fulfilled in the kingdom of God and when it came, He would once again “eat thereof” and “drink of the fruit of the vine.” Thus, at least two festivals, the first and the last of the seven annual holy convocations, are described in the context of the new earth.

Appendix A

Ellen White, *Review & Herald*, May 6, 1875

God gave a clear and definite knowledge of his will to Israel by **especial precepts**, showing **the duty of man to God and to his fellow-men**. The worship due to God was clearly defined. A special **system of rites and ceremonies** was established, which would **secure the remembrance of God** among his people, and thereby serve as a hedge **to guard and protect the** Ten Commandments from violation. {RH, May 6, 1875 par. 3}

God's people, whom he calls his peculiar treasure, were privileged with a **two-fold system of law; the moral and the ceremonial**. The **one, pointing back to creation** to keep in remembrance the living God who made the world, whose claims are binding upon all men in every dispensation, and which will exist through all time and eternity. **The other, given because of man's transgression** of the moral law, the obedience to which consisted in sacrifices and offerings pointing to the future redemption. **Each is clear and distinct from the other**. From the creation the moral law was an essential part of God's divine plan, and was as unchangeable as himself. The ceremonial law was to answer a particular purpose of Christ plan for the salvation of the race. The **typical system of sacrifices and offerings** was established that through these services the sinner might **discern the great offering, Christ**. But the Jews were so blinded by pride and sin that but few of them could see farther than the death of beasts as an atonement for sin; and when Christ, whom these offerings prefigured, came, they could not discern him. **The ceremonial law was glorious; it was the provision made by Jesus Christ in counsel with his Father**, to aid in the salvation of the race. The

whole arrangement of **the typical system was founded on Christ**. Adam saw Christ prefigured in the innocent beast suffering the penalty of his transgression of Jehovah's law.

The law of types reached forward to Christ. All hope and faith centered in Christ **until type reached its antitype in his death**. The **statutes and judgments** specifying the duty of man to his fellow-men, were **full of important instruction, defining and simplifying the principles of the moral law**, for the purpose of increasing religious knowledge, and of **preserving God's chosen people distinct and separate** from idolatrous nations.

The **statutes concerning marriage, inheritance, and strict justice** in deal with one another, were peculiar and contrary to the customs and manners of other nations, and were designed of God **to keep his people separate from other nations**. The **necessity of this** to preserve the people of God **from becoming like the nations** who had not the love and fear of God, **is the same in this corrupt age**, when the transgression of God's law prevails and idolatry exists to a fearful extent. **If ancient Israel needed such security, we need it more**, to keep us from being utterly confounded with the transgressors of God's law. The hearts of men are so prone to depart from God that **there is a necessity for restraint and discipline**.

The love that God bore to man whom he had created in his own image, led him to give his Son to die for man's transgression, and lest the increase of sin should lead him to forget God and the promised redemption, the **system of sacrificial offerings** was established **to typify the perfect offering of the Son of God**.

Christ was the angel appointed of God to go before Moses in the wilderness, conducting the Israelites in their travels to the land of Canaan. **Christ gave Moses his special directions** to be given to Israel. "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ."

"In the **last day, that great day of the feast**, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." These words were called out by witnessing a representation by the Jews of water flowing from the flinty rock. This **commemoration of bringing water from the rock** in the wilderness moves the heart of the Son of God to tenderest compassion and pity for their darkened understanding; for they will not see the light which he has brought to them. **Christ tells them that he is that rock. I am that living water**. Your fathers drank of that spiritual rock that followed them. That rock was myself. It was through Christ alone that the Hebrews were favored with the especial blessings which they were continually receiving, notwithstanding their sinful murmurings and rebellion.

In consequence of continual transgression, **the moral law was repeated** in awful grandeur from Sinai. **Christ gave to Moses religious precepts which were to govern the everyday life**. These statutes were explicitly given **to guard the Ten Commandments**. They were **not shadowy types to pass away with the death of Christ**. They were **to be binding upon man in every age as long as time should last**.

These commands were **enforced by the power of the moral law**, and they **clearly and definitely explained that law**.

Christ became sin for the fallen race, in taking upon himself the condemnation resting upon the sinner for his transgression of the law of God. Christ stood at the head of the human family as their representative. He had taken upon himself the sins of the world. In the likeness of sinful flesh he condemned sin in the flesh. **He recognized the claims of the Jewish law until his death, when type met antitype**. In the miracle he performed for the leper, he bade him go to the priests with an offering in accordance with the law of Moses. Thus **he sanctioned the law requiring offerings**.

Christians who profess to be Bible students **can appreciate more fully** than ancient Israel did **the full signification of the ceremonial ordinances** that they were required to observe. If they are indeed Christians, they are prepared **to acknowledge the sacredness and importance of the shadowy types**, as they see the accomplishment of the events which they represent. The death of Christ gives the Christian a correct knowledge of the system of ceremonies and explains prophecies which still remain obscure to the Jews. Moses of himself framed no law. **Christ, the angel whom God had appointed** to go before his chosen people, **gave to Moses statutes and requirements** necessary to a living religion and **to govern the people of God**. **Christians commit a terrible mistake in calling this law severe and arbitrary, and then contrasting it with the gospel** and mission of Christ in his ministry on earth, **as though he were in opposition to the just precepts** which they call **the law of Moses**.

The law of Jehovah, dating back to creation, was comprised in **the two great principles**, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these." These two great principles embrace the first four commandments, showing the duty of man to God, and the last six, showing the duty of man to his fellow-man. The principles were more explicitly stated to man after the fall, and worded to meet the case of fallen intelligences. This was necessary in consequence of the minds of men being blinded by transgression.

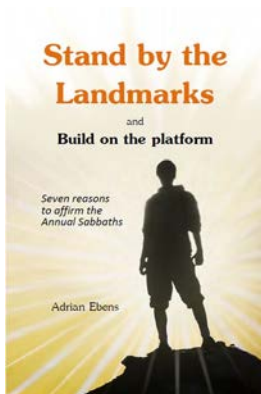
God graciously spoke his law and wrote it with his own finger on stone, making a solemn covenant with his people at Sinai. God acknowledged them as his peculiar treasure above all people upon the earth. **Christ**, who went before Moses in the wilderness, **made the principles of morality and religion more clear by particular precepts**, specifying the duty of man to God and his fellow-men, for the purpose of **protecting life, and guarding the sacred law of God**, that it should not be entirely forgotten in the midst of an apostate world.

Professed Christians now cry, Christ! Christ is our righteousness, but away with the law. They talk and act as though Christ's mission to a fallen world was for the express purpose of nullifying his Father's law. Could not that work have been just as well executed without the only beloved of the Father coming to this world and enduring grief, privation, and the shameful death of the cross? Ministers preach that

the atonement gave men liberty to break the law of God, and to commit sin, and then **praise the free grace and mercy revealed through Christ under the gospel, while they despise the law of God.**

They cast aside the restraint of the law, and give loose rein to the corrupt passions and the promptings of the natural heart, and then triumph in the mercy and grace of the gospel. Christ speaks to such: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven; but **he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven.**" What is the will of the Father? That we **keep his commandments. Christ, to enforce the will of his Father, became the author of the statutes and precepts** given through Moses to the people of God. **Christians who extol Christ, but array themselves against the law governing the Jewish church, array Christ against Christ.**

The death of Jesus Christ for the redemption of man, lifts the veil and reflects a flood of light back hundreds of years, upon **the whole institution of the Jewish system of religion. Without the death of Christ all this system was meaningless.** The Jews reject Christ, and therefore their whole system of religion is to them **indefinite, unexplainable, and uncertain.** They attach as **much importance to shadowy ceremonies of types which have met their antitype,** as they do to the law of the Ten Commandments, which was not a shadow, but a reality as enduring as the throne of Jehovah. **The death of Christ elevates the Jewish system of types and ordinances,** showing that **they were of divine appointment,** and for the purpose of **keeping faith alive** in the hearts of his people.

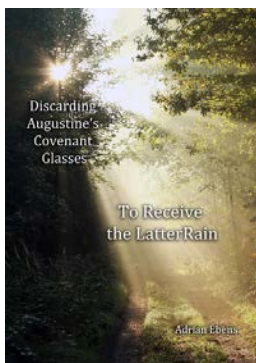
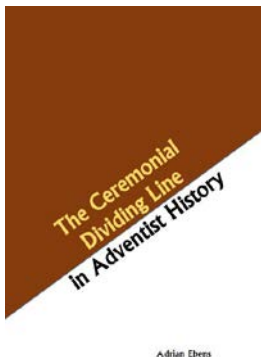


Standing by the Landmarks

The Adventist movement was built on the foundation of Revelation 14:12 as those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. From this foundation this booklet reveals the connection to an understanding of the righteousness of Christ that is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God.

The Ceremonial Dividing Line

Adventist history is full of struggle and debate over the issue of when and where did the Old Covenant with all of its rites and ceremonies begin and end. Like all other Protestant churches from which they came, the Adventists long accepted the prevailing notion that all things old and Jewish came to an end at the death of Jesus. For all the other Protestants that meant the seventh day Sabbath as well. Not so, said the Adventists, newly convicted by the Fourth Commandment. The Moral Law is permanent; the Law of Moses was nailed to the cross. But what about tithes, intoxicating liquor, and unclean meats? Soon a growing list of Mosaic statutes were moved across the Ceremonial Divide. And then came 1888. The implications were undeniable. Something had to give. The battle lines were drawn, and the rest—well, the rest is History.



Discarding Augustine's Covenant Glasses

Learn how the covenant systems developed by Augustine helped to short circuit the receiving of the Latter Rain through the most precious message preached in 1888.

What about the Feasts?

Good question.

This booklet answers the following questions:

- Are the Statutes required for us to keep today?
- What are included in the Statutes?
- Do the feasts contain moral principles?
- Must we keep the Statutes to be saved?
- Why do we keep some of the Statutes but not all?
- Are the Feasts part of the sacrificial system?
- Is the seventh-day Sabbath a statute or a feast of the Lord?
- How many Sabbaths are there?
- What is the Sabbath blessing?
- Why do we keep one of the Sabbaths but not all?
- Did God cause the feasts to cease?
- How many laws are there?
- Were any laws abolished at the cross?
- What was nailed to the cross?
- Are the feasts shadows or types that end with the antitype?
- Should Christians keep the feasts?
- Will we keep the feasts in heaven or the new earth?

Printed in Australia

Maranatha Media

Maranathamedia.com

Printed in the USA

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