

Setting Our Biblical Foundation On THE Rock

Part 6

GOD'S PLAN FOR MANKIND His Sabbath's and Holy Day's

An Ancient Prayer

From the cowardice that shrinks from new truths,
From the laziness that is content with half truths,
From the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth,
Oh God of Truth, deliver us.

INTRODUCTION

The weekly Sabbath's, the Spring Holy Days/Festivals and the Fall Holy Days/Festivals reveal God's plan for mankind. Biblical references will be given for all writings so you may check the validity of what is presented for yourself. We ask you to pray for understanding and wisdom and to keep an open mind. What is presented will fly in the face of most "traditional" Christian beliefs. Ask, and prove for yourself, what are those/your beliefs based on?

We will present an overview, address Leviticus 23 where the Feasts of the Lord are listed and then go over each of God's Holy Days with their Old and New Testament applications.

OVERVIEW

Much of the way man worships today is not Biblically based. Many follow along as they have been taught, making the

assumption that what they do and believe is right. They never take the time to really prove their beliefs.

The holidays observed by most Christians today are not Biblically commanded Holy Days. With very little effort it can be confirmed that they are pagan in origin. The holiday celebrations we know as Christmas and Easter actually pre-date Christianity. Most professing Christians do not care, even though most know this. The claim is they are worshipping the true God. Is this alright? Does our Creator God allow any type of worship? Don't bet your eternal life on it.

When the children of Israel and Judah began to fall away from the true God they were worshipping the same gods as we do now in our Christmas and Easter celebrations. At that time God commanded:

“Hear the word which the Lord speaks to you, O house of Israel. Thus says the Lord, ‘Do not learn the way of the heathen, and do not be terrified at the signs of the heavens; for the nations are terrified at them.’”

(Jeremiah 10:1-2; also, Leviticus 18:1-5)

Referring to His Sabbath's and Holy Days God gives Moses specific instructions in Deuteronomy.

“Take heed to yourselves that your heart may not be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods, and worship them.”

(Deuteronomy 11:16)

“When the Lord your God shall cut off the nations before you, where you go to possess them, and take your place and dwell in their land, take heed to yourself that you do not become ensnared by following them, after they are destroyed before you, and that you

do not ask about their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods that I may also do likewise?' You shall not do so to the Lord your God, for every abomination to the Lord, which He hates, they have done to their gods; even their sons and their daughters they have burned in the fires to their gods. Whatever thing that I command you, be careful to do it. You shall not add to it, nor take away from it."

(Deuteronomy 12:29-32; also, Deuteronomy 4:2; Leviticus 18:1-5, 26, 30; Joshua 1:7; Revelation 22:18)

Remember this, the true God does not change. What He commanded in the Old Testament is as valid today as it was then. If not, He is lying and the entire Bible is of no consequence.

"For I am the Lord, I change not. Therefore you sons of Jacob are not consumed."

(Malachi 3:6)

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever."

(Hebrews 13:8)

God has not and does not change.

Are you following the Bible and God's Commandments or are you following *traditions*? Remember, Jesus addressed the issue of following *tradition*:

Well did Isaiah prophesy concerning you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honors Me with their lips, but their hearts are far away from Me. But in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men.' For leaving the commandment of God, you hold fast the tradition of men,"

(Mark 7:6-8; also Mark 7:8-13; Isaiah 29:13).

Are you worshipping in vain?

Most religion and worship today is based on pagan influence. Their festivals and feasts pre-date Christianity and they did infiltrate the early church. It began to get a foothold in the mid part of the 2nd century and by the 3rd century was well entrenched. Jesus warned of false prophets in His Sermon on the Mount. He was asked for a sign of His coming and His first comment was regarding this issue.

“Then Jesus answered and said to them, “Be on guard, so that no one deceives you. For many shall come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ’; and they shall deceive many.”

(Matthew 24:4-5; also, Matthew 24:11, 24; Mark 13:22)

Apostles Peter, Paul and John also warned of these prophets and apostles coming into the church.

(See; 2 Corinthians 11:12-15;
1 Timothy 1:3-7, 6:3-5, 20-21; 1 Peter 2:1-3; 1 John 4:1-3).

Christians as early as 66 AD, and again in 132-135 AD, were suffering persecution at the hands of the Romans who made Judaism and the Way, as early Christianity was known, difficult in the empire. They tried to worship in secret, keeping weekly Sabbath's and the Holy Days, as Jesus and the Apostle's did, and outwardly worshiping the pagan ways of the Roman's so they would not call attention to themselves. By the beginning of the 4th century the part of the church centered in Rome had a strong pagan influence. By 325 AD and Emperor Constantine's Council of Nicaea, the influence of pagan beliefs was codified in the universal church.

At His last Passover meal with them Jesus told His Disciples,
“For I have given you an example, to show that you also should do exactly as I have done to you.”

(John 13:15; also, 1 Peter 2:21; 1 John 2:6)

After His resurrection He told them to go to all nations and teach them to observe all things He had commanded them.

“Therefore, go and make disciples in all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you always, even until the completion of the age.”
Amen.”

(Matthew 28:19-20; also, Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38-39; Romans 10:18; Colossians 1:23)

The apostle’s tried to keep this influence out of the early church. They continued on keeping the Sabbaths, Feasts and Holy Days as they had done with Jesus. Paul told the Corinthians,

“Be imitators of me, exactly as I also am of Christ.”

(1 Corinthians 11:1; also, Ephesians 5:1-2; Philippians 3:17)

“And they steadfastly continued in the teachings of the apostles and in fellowship, and in the breaking of bread and in prayers.”

(Acts 2:42; also, Acts 1:14; Ephesians 6:18; Hebrews 10:25)

Paul explained the problem of alternative worship to the church in Corinth.

“But that which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not wish you to have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord, and the table of demons. Now do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?”

(1 Corinthians 10:20-22)

As a child Jesus’ and His family observed Sabbaths and Holy Days. They traveled to Jerusalem where, at age 12 Jesus spoke to the religious theologians in the temple astounding them with His knowledge.

“Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast.”

“Now it came to pass that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both hearing them and questioning them. And all those who were listening to Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers.”

(Luke 2:41-42, 46-47)

When Jesus established His ministry He and the Apostles kept these same Sabbaths and Holy days as did the first century church after His ascension into heaven. (See Holy Days/Sabbaths and Feasts of the Lord, attached).

If we are to truly be followers of Jesus Christ we must use Him and the actions of the apostle's after Jesus' death as our guide, not the traditions of men. (Acts 2:42; Mark 7:6-8, noted above).

“The one who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

“Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked.”

(1 John 2:4, 6; also, 1 John 1:6; John 15:4; 1 Peter 2:21)

We are still required to keep God's Sabbath's and holy days.

“And the Lord spoke to Moses saying, ‘Speak to the children of Israel and say to them, ‘Concerning the appointed feasts of the Lord, which you all proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are My appointed feasts. These are the appointed feasts of the Lord, holy convocations which you shall proclaim in their appointed seasons.’”

(Leviticus 23:1-2, 4)

Notice, the Lord spoke to Moses...“concerning the appointed feasts of the Lord ...these are My appointed feasts”. Please note two things. First, Moses was directed by God to speak to the children of Israel which included all 12 tribes that had come out of Egypt, not just the Jews. Secondly, God states *twice* these are His feasts, holy convocations. Nowhere does He say they are anyone else’s feasts. Not mans or the children of Israel or the Jews. These were HIS feasts. In Leviticus 23 we are commanded to keep these feasts throughout our generations forever.

GOD’S OVERALL PLAN

God’s weekly Sabbath’s and holy days are annual memorials for things past and rehearsals for future events. As a shadow of things to come, so to speak.

“Therefore, do not allow anyone to judge you in eating or in drinking, or with regard to a festival, or new moon, or the Sabbaths, which are a foreshadow of the things that are coming, but the body of Christ. Do not allow anyone to defraud you of the prize by doing his will in self-abasement and the worship of angels, intruding into things that he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his own carnal mind.”

(Colossians 2:16-18; also, Hebrews 8:5)

(Note: In these verses Paul is affirming to the Gentile faithful in the church in Colosse (also spelled Colossae) they were to continue doing God’s Holy Days, Sabbath’s and commandments as they had been taught. He was instructing them to disregard criticism from those who were outside the church, the pagan worshippers from where many in the church had come from, and to reassure them they were in the true church.)

The identity of the true believers and the church was also brought out in other scriptures.

“But now Christ has been raised from the dead; He has become the first-fruit of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in

Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruit; then, those who are in Christ at His coming.”

(1 Corinthians 15:20-23; also, James 1:18)

Taken together the Sabbath's and Holy Days lay the ground work for the return of Jesus Christ and His 1000 year reign on earth. They symbolize the various steps in God's plan right up to the White Throne Judgement and the New Heaven and the New Earth detailed in 2 Peter 3:13 and Revelation 20:11-15 and 21:1.

Each year as we keep the holy days we should be able to better understand God's plan of salvation for us. By keeping the weekly Sabbath's and these annual feasts and holy days we are able pass this knowledge on to each generation.

After Jesus was glorified His disciples had a more clear understanding of what had been written about Him and what was done to Him.

“And His disciples did not understand these things at the beginning; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him, and that they had done these things to Him.”

(John 12:16; also, John 7:39; 14:26)

Peter understood God's concept of the dimension of time was vastly different than ours as he explained.

“Now, beloved, do not let this one fact be hidden from you: that with the Lord, one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”

(2 Peter 3:8; also, Psalm 90:4)

Isaiah tells us that God is He who inhabits eternity.

“For thus says the high and lofty One Who inhabits eternity; Whose name is Holy;”

(Isaiah 57:15)

From creation week there have been seven days in the week, six days to work and the seventh day to rest and honor and reflect on God.

“And God saw everything that He had made, and indeed, it was exceedingly good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And by the beginning of the seventh day God finished His work which He had made. And He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it because on it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.”

(Genesis 1:31; 2:1-3; also, Exodus 20:11; Leviticus 19:30; Deuteronomy 5:14)

Paul spoke of God’s Sabbath rest in a more far reaching manner showing us there was to be a more peaceful time following this age, an extended Sabbath rest. (read Heb 4:3-11)

John shows us that the Millennial reign of Christ, after the first resurrection, is to be one thousand years, or one day in God’s timing.

“Then I saw an angel descending from heaven, having the key of the abyss, and a great chain in his hand. And he took hold of the dragon, the ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. Then he cast him into the abyss, and locked him up, and sealed the abyss over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer until the thousand years were

fulfilled; and after that it is ordained that he be loosed for a short time.”

(Rev 20:1-4)

So this extended seventh day Sabbath rest is 1000 years, the first six days will have been the 6000 years of man’s attempt to rule and govern himself since the fall from grace. Each day representing 1000 years in God’s time.

Biblical charting shows there were approximately 4000 years from creation to the birth of Christ, His first coming. Approximately 2000 years have gone by since then, almost six of God’s days. We seem to be approaching the time of Revelation 20.

God’s plan is to bring man back into the glory He created us for.

“And God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the heaven and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that crawls upon the earth. And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him. He created them male and female.’”

(Genesis 1:26-27; also, Isaiah 46:9-11; Romans 8:28-29)

Based on scripture we can look forward to:

The return of Christ as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords to set up his Millennial Kingdom.

(Rev 19:1-21)

The small harvest of God’s Firstfruits, the Saints who are to rule with Christ for the 1000 years, the first resurrection.

(1 Cor 15: 20-23; Rev 20: 4)

Satan is to be bound for 1000 years and cast into the bottomless pit.

(Rev 20: 1-3)

All others who have ever lived will be resurrected and be given a chance, 100 years, to accept the true God and receive eternal life. Those who will reject this will be cast into the Lake of Fire.

(Rev 20:11-15; Isaiah 65: 20-25; Ezekiel 37: 1-28)

After all these things come to pass God the Father will create a new heaven and a new earth, nothing ever tainted by Satan, and His chosen family will live and reign with Him for eternity.

(Rev 21:1-27, 22:1-21; Isaiah 65:17-19)

God's seven annual holy days coincide with the annual harvest cycle of ancient Israel. They fall on the spring harvest, *Passover* and the seven days of *Unleavened Bread*; the early summer harvest, *Pentecost*; and the fall harvest, the Feast of *Trumpets*, the day of *Atonement*, the feast of *Tabernacles* and the *Last Great Day*.

All are listed in Leviticus 23:1-39. As we study them we will explore the significance of each to gain a better understanding of their true meaning in God's overall plan.

As we continue on to the study of each of God's Sabbath's and Holy Days you must:

Do your own research.

Prove all things for yourself.

Your beliefs and practices must be based on proof, Biblical Truth, not man's traditions.

“Why do you also transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? And you have made void the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition. For they worship Me in vain, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men.”

(Matthew 15:3, 6, 9; also, Isaiah 29:13; Ezekiel 33:31;
Titus 1:13-14)

“Diligently study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of the truth.”

(2 Tim 2:15)

THE HOLY DAYS/SABBATHS and FEASTS OF THE LORD

(Leviticus 23:1-39 appointed by God as His days and feasts to be kept by the children of Israel forever throughout their generations.)

| <u>Appointed Time</u> | <u>Biblical Authority</u> | <u>Observed by Jesus, Apostles And 1st Century Church</u> |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| 7 th day Sabbath | Gen 2:2-3; Lev 23:3 | Mark 2:27-28, 6:2; Luke 4:16, John 9:14, Acts 16:13,17:2,18:4, Heb 4:4 |
| Passover | Lev 23:5: | Matt 26:2, 17-19; Mark 14:12-16; Luke 2:41, 22:1, 7-15; John 2:13, 23, 6:4, 13:1-17; 1 Cor 5: 7-8, 1 Cor 11: 23-29 |
| Feast of Unleavened Bread | Lev 23: 6-8 | Matt 26:17; Mark 14:12; Luke 2: 41-43, 22:1, 7; Acts 20:6; 1 Cor 5: 7-8 |
| Feast of Pentecost | Lev 23: 15-22 | Acts 2:1-21, 20:16; 1 Cor 16:8 |
| Feast of Trumpets | Lev 23: 23-25 | (see note below) Matt 24:30-31; 1 Thes 4:16-17; Rev 11:15 |
| Day of Atonement | Lev 23: 26-32 | Acts 27:9 |
| Feast of Tabernacles | Lev 23: 33-43 | John 7:2, 8-14 |
| The Eighth (Last Great) Day | Lev 23: 36, 39 | John 7:2, 8-14 |

Jesus told His Disciples at His last Passover meal with them that He has given them an example and they should do as He had done to them (John 13:15). After his resurrection He told the Disciples to go to all nations and teach them to observe all things He commanded them (Matt 28:19-20). Paul told the Corinthians to follow his example as he follows Christ (1 Cor 11:1). On Pentecost, (after Jesus had ascended to heaven), "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship," (Acts 2:42). 1 John 2:4, 6 tell us, "He that says, I know him, and keeps not his commandments, is a liar and the truth is not in him." "He that says he abides in him ought himself also to walk, even as he walked."

Note: God's Holy Days reveal his plan for mankind, a type of dress rehearsal. The Feast of Trumpets is not specifically named but a number of passages refer to the announcement of the coming of the Lord with a shout of the archangel and with the trumpet of God. (Matt 24:31; 1 Thes 4:16; 1 Cor 15:52).