

Why Keep the Holy Days, Dr. Herman L. Hoeh, Oct 1, 1955, Feast in Big Sandy, TexasHLH004B

When we look in the Old Testament, here are some of the things we find.

The God called the Israelites out of the land of Egypt in the days of Moses.

He called final human beings just like your neighbors.

He finally convinced them, after a great many difficult tasks, that they should leave Egypt, and they finally left it in that first month.

Here were two to three or more million people, unconverted, cryo-people, constantly arguing with Moses.

God had already shown them supernatural signs, which no man was not even Moses himself could have performed.

God brings them to Mount Sinai, and if you will read the 20th chapter of Exodus, I want you to notice that Moses stood down below on the mountain with the people.

Now, in order that there should not be a snake, that Moses wouldn't be pulling the wool over the eyes of these millions of Israelites, God insisted that Moses get asked to mount.

There was no loudspeaker system that Moses could use to deceive the people.

He wasn't hiding in a cave up there and shouting, so that they would think it was God.

He was down on the ground where the other people separated from that mountain.

Then on the top of the mountain came a voice, and that voice gave the ten commandments.

God spoke to over two million people, carnal, unconverted people, who had to recognize that there wasn't a man on earth who could have performed that miracle there of speech, and they recognized that he was gone.

There was no possible way for fakers.

We have, then, to start with the basis of the historical evidence of the Bible, as far as Isaiah said, that if they do not speak according to the law and the testimony, there is no day dawning for what they prophesied.

All things are based on the law.

Jesus said, on the two commandments in which the ten are based, loving God and loving man, hang all the law and prophets.

So God started out revealing his will, and it is called in the Scripture, the oracles.

The oracles had reference to God's living will, being revealed in written form to man.

And he himself, on top of Mount Sinai, spoke so that the whole congregation could hear.

There was no doubt in their mind as to what the law was.

Now they did recognize that Moses was sent of God.

Then John told Moses to come up to Mount Sinai, when the message is, I don't want to hear any more of your voice.

And so God told Moses to tell the people, I won't talk to them, I promise I won't talk to them any more orally, but he said, I have some other things to tell them.

Now Moses, you come up here on the mountain, and I'll tell you and you tell the people.

Now they recognized who Moses was, they recognized who was the servant of God.

And so Moses then writes all of the laws that God himself said, Moses is just a secretary.

They are the laws of the Lord, those which follow the Ten Commandments.

Now in this original speech that God gave Moses, after he went on to Mount Sinai, we found, or we find in the 23rd chapter of Eurydice, this is before the Old Covenant was sealed, and I mean the 23rd chapter of Exodus, I'm sorry, Exodus 23, this states that God tells, this is before the Old Covenant was finished, this is the part of it, that he says three times he will keep a feast unto me in the year, that is verse 14 of chapter 23.

The feast of Unleavened Bread, and of course then the Festival of Harvest, the first feast of the labors, and then the feast of Imgazing at the end of the year, which was Tabernum Day, another term, and use it here before the Lord, God told Moses, these three times.

Now let's get the picture.

Now there are many things in God's law, many things in God's law which are not revealed prior to the Old Covenant, which are of the Old and Principle.

God started revealing the annual festivals while over still in Egypt before there was ever an Old Covenant, and he told them to keep it forever.

But it is the common assumption that whatever God said in the Old Covenant must be stripped out because it isn't for us today that it was only for the Jews.

Now let's notice how else could God reveal his will in a nation that had departed, I should say in a whole world that had departed from his truth, unless he should call out a nation to make known his will.

How else could he, when all of the nations had departed from the truth, how else I asked you, could he make known what he wanted the world to do? How could he again reveal his truth, for the reason Abraham kept God's commandments, his statutes, his charge in his laws? How could God reveal to new generations his truth unless he should call out a family and make that known? Now I want you to grasp this point.

There are many things that we today do in this church, which God's church, one obedience to him, has always done.

And many of these laws are not directly revealed prior to the making of the Old Covenant.

Now Jesus came and said in Matthew the fifth chapter that he didn't come to destroy the law and the prophets, but he came to fulfill it to carry them out perfectly.

And then he goes down the line and shows that in this Old Covenant the letter of the law only was given to a carnal people, but in Matthew 5 and 6 he lifts it up and shows what the intent and the purpose of the letter of the law should have been, and summarizes it by saying, Be you therefore perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect.

That is the conclusion of the law.

In other words, God said to Moses, You tell the people, You be holy as God is holy, that if You be set apart for a right purpose, You develop God's character in the letter, as God himself is perfect in the spirit.

Now Jesus came then with a new covenant, and I'll explain the meaning of the covenant in a moment, showing that not the letter but the spirit of the law that God was revealing then is to be fulfilled by us.

Now a covenant is an agreement.

That is one party, the nation Israel is another party, but in this agreement are many laws written.

Now the children of Israel could not have inherited the land of Palestine for their lifetime unless they kept that bargain, that is, the covenant.

Now they could only have the promises then of the material life in the land of Palestine by being obedient to the letter of the law.

There's nothing wrong with the letter of the law, and when they both recovered, they were actually being disobedient to the very laws that would give them the opportunity to live their lifetime in happiness, even though they were only in the letter.

Jesus then comes with a new covenant, which He will finally ratify with us, in which He says, None of us here can have eternal life unless we first obey these same laws, not in the letter but in the spirit.

You see, if you obey in the letter, that's only as far as the flesh is concerned, the flesh perishes.

They could only have temporary promises.

If we are to be eternalized, that is the life which comes only from spirit, therefore we have to have the law in the spirit.

That is a law which can be obeyed fully and correctly in every point, a law which concerns right from long under every circumstance, a law which is perfect, and which is actually the way a person lives and does, day by day.

Now God is perfect in character.

He is composed of spirit and His perfect character is merely an attribute of His nature.

Our sin is merely an attribute of our human nature.

So that when God was making the Old Covenant, He wasn't giving the Jews something harsh, something that was bad for them, as Mr. Armstrong mentioned last night and again this morning, that most of the people have that idea, but He was revealing for the first time in a world that was totally departing, that there was no truth at all except the corruption.

He was revealing to one nation His will, but He started it out by giving them His will in the letter.

Just the letters of an alphabet, as we have them written here.

As the news went by, the people, of course, foresaw God's will and they broke His covenant.

Now we read, I'm sure that most of you have been familiar with Jeremiah 7, 21, 22, where God said, I want you all to turn to that for the moment, that in the days that I brought you out of the land of Egypt, He says, I didn't speak to your fathers, nor did I command them at that time concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices, but I told them in the first place, hear my voice, and I'll be your God, and then you'll be my people.

And it may be well that you read it, Jeremiah 7, 21, 22, and 23, obeying God's voice then makes it possible for things to go well with us.

It doesn't bring curses, it brings blessings.

People don't understand the difference in the law because they haven't noticed a simple little key of the time lapse between two laws.

Remember that the children of Israel approached Mount Sinai on the third month in the very year that they came out of Egypt, Exodus 19-1.

In the third month after the children of Israel were gone out of the land of Egypt, they come to Mount Sinai, Moses tells them, now, keep yourselves clean, and appear before God, and He's still going to give you a law.

After this Moses goes up and receives the rest of the law, as I have already mentioned, of which was written in the book of the covenant, of which a part of it was, Exodus 23, about keeping these annual festivals.

Now, after this covenant was sealed in the letter, and God had begun to, let's say, re-reveal His will to the world, we find the tabernacle being built.

Now, you just glance over the headlines that may be on the top of the pages of your Bible, and you will find that the rest of the chapters in Exodus are taken up with the ordination of the priesthood and with the building of the tabernacle.

And so we read in the last chapter Exodus, the following matter, that the tabernacle and the tent was set up, God appeared in the tabernacle and in the tent now, or sometimes one version has tent, sometimes another one has tabernacle.

A whole year had elapsed because it was the first day of the first month.

We may turn to that in Exodus 40, verse 17, and it came to pass in the first month, in the second year, and on the first day of the month, the tabernacle was raised up.

That means then about nine months had elapsed since the Old Covenant had been finished.

Nine months had elapsed since the Old Covenant was finished, how do you prove it? Exodus 19-1 tells you when God gave the Covenant, Exodus 40, verse 17 tells you when the tabernacle was reared up, and now we turn to the book of Leviticus, chapter 1, verse 1, and the Lord called unto Moses, he was in the tabernacle and said to him, Out of the tent of meeting, I will not slay thee when the Covenant was made, but nine months later, when God had been in the tent of meeting, after it was raised up, after the Aaronic piece that was established, he said, Now you speak unto the children of Israel and say to them, And here we have the laws of the burnt offerings and the sacrifices in all of

these customs, separately and distinct, just as Jeremiah said in chapter 7, 21-23, that when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, and first spoke to them, I didn't say a single word concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices, and anyone including the Sabbath-day Adventists who say that there are only two laws, the Ten Commandments, and all the rest is to call the ceremonial law, are not only hopelessly ignorant, but if they have read this, they are point blank liars, and I have had Adventists have to admit that to me, because, apart from the Ten Commandments, there are many other laws which God wanted to reveal to Israel, but they wouldn't listen with their ears. Now, God didn't stop. You just, the Ten Commandments can say the rest is going to be done away. There are ten specific points which cover the whole of human conduct, that he had many more to reveal, and the people didn't want to hear it directly, but they were willing to let Moses tell them. And in that group, we do have these sacrifices excluded, but we have the annual festivals given prior, nine months before there was ever a sacrifice to be offered on any of these days. Now, when someone comes up with this argument, but look, the holy days were made for the purpose of offering sacrifices, you show them that the first place where we have any statement with regard to the three major seasons of the year, and this includes the Feast of Tabernacles, is found in the 23rd chapter of Exodus, which occurred when Moses was called up from Mount Sinai, just after God spoke the Ten Commandments. And then God told him after that covenant was sealed, after the people had known all about the festivals, he told them, now, let's build a Tabernacle, let's have a human priesthood, and when that was finished, a whole year had elapsed.

In the second year now, Exodus 40, the first day of the first month that was built up, Jesus Christ, who was the God of the Old Testament, appeared in that Tabernacle and said to Moses, now that we have a physical Tabernacle, I want you to come in here a moment, and I'm going to tell you about the sacrifices and the offerings of you to teach these people. Now, why do you think God gave them those sacrifices and offerings? Because in the past nine months, they have been breaking His law, and so they wouldn't continually break His law without discretion. God said, I'm going to impose a certain kind of ceremony on them, which is called, said, to be a reminder of sin, that every time they sin and break the laws that I have given, they must come before me and give these offerings. Now, what could be planned? God began to reveal His will through the Old Covenant, just the very faint letter of the law. And if we could only grasp as we read the Bible, we can see that more and more the prophets begin to touch not on the letter of the law, but on the Spirit until the whole life, all human conduct is covered by the time Jesus Christ arrives to tell us the spirit of the law. Now, we're familiar with the fact that God punished the Israelites and punished the Jews for breaking not only the Sabbath, but these annual holy days.

Mr. Armstrong will take that subject up. I'm not going to go into all of this now, but I want you to get a picture. God punished those people in that day because they disobeyed His laws. They tried them underfoot. In other words, disobedience brought a certain amount of punishment. This obedience doesn't bring blessings, and obedience brings cursing, it's just the reverse. Obedience brings blessings, and disobedience brings cursing.

So we come to the New Testament times, and here is Jesus Christ, as will be explained, keeping many of these festivals recorded time after time. He appeared at the Feast of Tabernacles.

We have that record in John's account. We have all of the Passover festivals recorded.

Jesus went up to observe these. It will be proved to you later that Jesus never offered a single sacrifice included within this statement of burnt offerings and sacrifices, which would be a type of sin. He never offered one of those on these festivals. He constantly forbade the Jews to follow their customs. He said to those who had listened to him that don't follow the traditions of the elders. He

told the Jews themselves who were the elders that you are disobeying God's law by putting your traditions in place of it, and yet He Himself observed these festivals.

Now, if Jesus did not offer burnt offerings and sacrifices, if he forbade the Jews who wanted to know the truth to follow their own customs, which was just a simple type of the customs that the world has developed today, then why did he keep the festivals unless he himself was the God who ordained them in the day of Moses, and he came here to fulfill the keeping of them and to set us an example that we should keep them also year by year. Jesus never once forbade them, and he was under obligation. Jesus Christ is under obligation to teach his people in this word that they should not keep those Jewish customs, as the world calls them, if they were on.

But instead, he sets the example and observes them. He goes to the apostolic church and we find in the first chapter of Acts a very simple and very clear translation, and when the day of Pentecost was being fulfilled, the apostles were carrying it out. The disciples, men and women were gathered there. The day of Pentecost was being fulfilled. That's the life translation.

They were carrying it out just the same as after Jesus died on that Sabbath. They rested according to one of the Ten Commandments before. They were still fulfilling God's law, and all through the Book of Acts, you will notice that they kept these festivals. Not alone in Jerusalem, where the Jewish Christians were, but in Gentile areas, you may go up to Asia Minor, that's where Turkey is, in the last city of Ephesus, the seat parts of all Asia Minor at that time. Paul said in 1 Corinthians the 16th chapter that he was going to abide there for the day of Pentecost before leaving, you'll find that in verses 8 and 9. We go up a little further into Macedonia, which is north of Greece. In Philippi, the city that was the center of the province of Macedonia, and we find in Acts 20 that in Philippi, just after the days of unleavened bread had been completed, remember the 20th chapter of Acts, often said to be the proof of Sunday observance, we were here just left Philippi after the days of unleavened bread. We go down into Achaia, which is Greece's proper today, and we find the major city of Corinth, and there Paul told the Corinthians to observe the days of unleavened bread, as we read in 1 Corinthians, the 5th chapter. Not only has Christ been sacrificed for us to pay for our sins to start us on the road to conversion, but we should continue obeying God and not coming under the penalty of his law for which Christ died by now observing the festival. It says in verse 8, 1 Corinthians 5, 8, wherefore let us keep the festival, and not with oleaven, not with oleaven, though, nor for that matter, with any leaven, figuratively speaking, is in the heart. So God all the way through here is showing, under inspiration, that these days were accepted and were assumed to be observed by the whole church and didn't have to be proved to the Gentiles, because the Gentiles who wanted to be converted recognized that the Jews alone of all people had the truth. The Gentiles in that day recognized those who wanted to know who God was, they had to come to the Jew who had the truth. And how did the Jew know, unless that they should go back to the law, that God revealed at Sinai, when he took out of a blinded world a people to reveal in his will? So that the New Testament doesn't have to prove, as one woman said to me, no more than five days ago, I don't believe we should observe the piece of tabernacle because there's no proof, or for that matter, any of the other festivals, that after Jesus rose he very ever kept them.

Now, that woman wants to have the proof that Jesus observed all of these things after he was dead, because she's reasoned this way that we can't rely on what he did before he was dead.

Well, that makes sense, doesn't it? And so I said to her, and Jesus staunch, plow words from the Seventh-day Adventist doctrines, can you show me one place where after Jesus rose from the dead, he as an individual ever rested on the Sabbath day? None of you will find it either. But that doesn't mean that Jesus doesn't observe the Sabbath today, and through us, he didn't keep it when he was

on earth, even after he rose from the dead. How many times does God have to tell us what his will is before he will believe it? He said in the beginning three times in a year he was going to appear before me, didn't he? And he repeats it over and over and over again in the Old Testament. Jesus showed that he fulfilled that by observing those days. And so some people say, but, Lord, Jesus died, I want to know that he didn't do it after. I can't believe anything he said beforehand, I want to know that he did it after. And since they don't find that he did some of these things afterwards, they feel, look, that's not for me. They're just the same as saying that from the beginning of time, when Jesus Christ, who was the Logoth, the spokesman of the Old Testament, revealed his will to man that that Jesus Christ, called the Lord, the eternal in the Old Testament, was wood-winking the whole world from the days of Adam to the time of his death.

And it was only after the resurrection that he supposedly revealed the things of earth to do now. Now, that's the way some people reason in their wisdom. As Paul said, that because they wanted to appear wise, they became foolish. I hopefully understand that when God begins to reveal his will, that he doesn't have to tell us even more than once. But I'm quite convinced that he tells us sometimes a good many times because most people are so hard-hearted that they won't listen just once. And I suppose most of you wouldn't have listened if God had just said this at one time. But since it is written time and time again, and God punished them for disobeying these things, and since it is taken for granted as observed in the New Testament Church, and it is even directly stated in several places, who are we to argue with God and say, I'm not going to kick you all off. I won't obey you unless you come right here down now and write, for me, the proof that Jesus Christ observed these days after he rose from the dead.

Now, that's the kind of attitude that many people have. They insist that God not only should rewrite all of the things of the Old Testament that they were to observe, that is, if they were to observe them, but they even want to have it that he would take it all away.

Very strange, very illogical reasoning, but after all, isn't that what most of us as a whole expected before we learn the truth? We dismissed all of the things that God revealed to the time he came on earth, and most people dismissed even what Jesus Christ did on earth in that three and a half years ministry, and then they dismissed what the apostles in the New Testament times.

Now, we know further. Let's turn, by the way, to some of these texts in Romans, so we grasp it.

What proof have we that the Gentiles recognized that to the Jews was the knowledge revealed, and that the Gentiles were without an understanding of his revelation, just blank. They had no knowledge of God. We read in the second chapter of Romans, speaking to a Jew here, that if you bear the name of a Jew, Paul says, Romans 2.17, and you rest upon the law, you're assured that God's law is the thing to do, and you glory in God, yes, you know who he is, but the Gentiles, don't they worship idols, and you know the will, and approve the excellent things being instructed out of the law. Now, this is Paul speaking to both Jews and Gentiles, some of whom are converts, some who are beginning to be converts, at the city of Rome.

And he says, just as plainly as they here, that the Jews knew the will of God, they understood some of the law, and they could approve and understand the things which were excellent, which were good for the human being. They learned it not because they broke God's law, but they learned it as they were instructed out of the law. And so we read going over the same thing in verse 1 of chapter 3. Now, what advantage has a Jew? The answer, generally, is none, because the Gentile was closer to God than the Jew. God had settled all these laws that can slave the Jews, and the Jews had departed so far from God that you have to go to the customs of the Gentiles to learn the truth. And so the

whole world today follows the very customs that the Gentiles are practicing in the days of Jesus Christ, only under different names, and the very things that the Jews and the early New Testament church were practicing they had described. And yet we read here, but what advantage then has a Jew over a Gentile in that day and age? One, Paul says, for first, indeed, that they are entrusted with the oracles of God.

These are the oracles of God.

God spoke in word as it has been preserved in writing for us. So the Jew then, and his greatest advantage was that he alone had the revelation of God. You see, God never revealed his will to the nations. They had long ago departed, but the time is coming when he will begin now to reveal his spoken will. Now, Paul asks the question. This is the argument that people begin to put up.

Now, what if some Jews didn't believe the oracles of God? Shall their unbelief and their disobedience, the fact that they didn't believe God's oracles as it was spoken from the very beginning of time, shall that make void the faith of God as revealed here? Now, the faith of this church is found in this book, or these books, or the New Testament.

Now, Paul says, because the Jew did not obey, is the faith of God, which is revealed here, is that made void? Did the Jews corrupt it? Did the Jews change it so that we don't know what the will of God is? Could the Jews who constantly, generation after generation, disobey the truth? I'm using the term Jew because Paul is using it here, but it includes Gentiles. I mean Gentiles who came within the Commonwealth of Israel and also all of Israel, who came to all of our ancestors of being with speaking world in the democratic countries. What is the cost custom if you call the nation Jews? I'm just going to limit it to this New Testament term here, because after all, God did preserve most of his will through the tribe of Judah, not through Israel.

Now, it says, because the Jews disobeyed, generation after generation, did that make void the faith as God revealed it here? Paul answers, be it not so. Let God be found true. What he has said here, let that be found true, but every man a liar, as it is written, that you might be justified in your words and might prevail at your judging. But God would say that his will, preserve all of this time, would be true even though every man who would profess and base as most Jews at that time are doing, basing their conduct on the law, would be doing that which is wrong and evil and breaking the law itself. And yet they would boast that they keep the law. Now, that's not unnatural, because the whole world today boasts of Jesus Christ. And yet the world does not obey him, any more than the Jews who boasted of the law obeyed the law, did they? Now, we have God's will preserved here. We have seen that it started before there was ever any, that is as far as the annual festivals, before there were ever any sacrificial offerings.

But God punished disobedience. That Jesus fulfilled the very law in the spirit.

Year by year, somebody says this, well look, Jesus Christ fulfilled the law when he kept the piece of Cabernacles. You don't have to fulfill it again. Now, if that is true, why did Jesus observe the Passover more than once?