

God's Sacred Calendar

The Roman calendar on your wall originated with Julius Caesar about 45 B.C. But God gave Israel a DIFFERENT calendar! Without a knowledge of it you can not obey the Creator!

by Kenneth Herrmann

WHAT is the *true* calendar provided by God? Has God left it up to each individual to follow whatever calendar he pleases? Or is there an accurate one which He has preserved for us today?

How can we *know* the proper time to keep Passover, the Feast of Tabernacles and the other sacred days *which God commanded* for the church?

True Units of Time

The first evidence of God's calendar is found in Genesis 1:14. The *sun* and *moon* are "for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years."

The present *Roman calendar* does not meet this qualification. It divides the year in the dead of the winter. It divides the day in the middle of the night and its month has no reference to the moon. *It couldn't be God's calendar.*

What, then, is God's method of calculating time?

The first unit of time revealed in the Bible is the *day*. Six times in Genesis 1 the term "evening and morning" is used, always with the evening or dark part of the day preceding the morning or daylight part of each day. *The day* as revealed by God *does not begin in the middle of the night but at sunset.*

This division of days was correctly understood at Christ's time. When the Sabbath was drawing to a close, those who wished him to heal them waited, and "when the sun was setting all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them."

They understood when the day would come to an end, though they were not aware of the fact that Christ would heal on the Sabbath day also.

Could "the lights in the firmament of the heaven . . . divide the day from the night" (Gen. 1:14) *unless* the moment of sunset were used as the proper *division* of one day from another?

Notice what Mark also records: "And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils." They brought these people to Christ when the Sabbath day was over, "when the sun did set" (Mark 1:32).

That a new day begins with nightfall

is also confirmed by the description of the Day of Atonement occurring on the tenth day of the month. "In the ninth day of the month at even, *from even unto even*, shall ye celebrate your sabbath" (Lev. 23:27-32). Notice that the tenth day began at the very close—the evening at sunset—of the ninth day.

The exact moment for the end of a day is again revealed by a comparison of Lev. 22:7 with Lev. 15. Unclean individuals were instructed to bathe and were then considered clean *when the evening came*. "When the sun is down, he shall be clean" (Lev. 22:7). A new day had begun at sunset, not at midnight.

God wants you to begin the observance of His holydays at sunset, not in the middle of the night according to a man-made watch.

The Origin of the Week

When did the period of time called the week come into existence? Was it first revealed to Moses and the children of Israel when they came out of Egypt?

Far from it!

Notice Genesis 29. For several hundred years prior to the Exodus, Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel, served Laban seven years for each of his two daughters, Rachel and Leah. That seven year period was termed a "week." So they already had the knowledge of the week as a seven day period. (They also knew that a prophetic day might be used symbolically to represent a year—an important key to the understanding of Bible prophecy.)

The first time the word "week" occurs in the Bible is in connection with Jacob's service to Laban, yet the *first week* mentioned in the Bible was nearly over when Adam was created. The sixth day of this first week came to a close with Adam's naming of the animals, his presentation with Eve and with God's commands concerning man's position and duties on the earth.

Six of the days of creation were past; yet there remained one thing which the Eternal God had yet to make for man. Christ speaks of it in Mark 2:27; "THE SABBATH was made *for man*, and not man for the sabbath." Completing six days of physical creation, God rested on the seventh day of this first week, blessed

it and set it apart for holy use. This weekly cycle of six days of labor and a seventh devoted to our spiritual needs *has never been broken* and continues for us today. Write for Mr. Armstrong's free booklet, "Has Time Been Lost?" for proof.

Yes, those who observe the seventh day of the week, called Saturday today, are observing the same seventh day God rested on, blessed and sanctified!

There is no basis from astronomy why the week should be a period of seven days. It does not divide evenly into the month or the year. No signs in the heavens can be held accountable for its origin. THE VERY EXISTENCE OF THE WEEK IS PROOF OF THE TRUTH OF THE SEVEN DAY CREATION WEEK OF GENESIS 1 AND 2.

The continual observance of God's Sabbath kept man in the knowledge of this seven day unit of time. And the fact that the week has continued is strong evidence that God's Sabbath has never been lost.

Spring Begins the Sacred Year

We have found that the new day begins just as the sun sinks below the horizon *and that the week begins with the sunset FOLLOWING THE SEVENTH DAY*. This was true in Adam's time. It was still true over 4000 years later after Christ's death when *the day after the Sabbath* was the first day of the week or Sunday (Matt. 28:1).

But where does the Scripture give us information concerning the month and the year? When were they first made known to man?

The Eternal God instructed Israel, while they were still in Egypt, when to begin a new year. Why was this necessary? Weren't these facts known to the patriarchs and followed by them? They certainly were. The reason for the reissuing of this knowledge is that the descendants of Israel had been in slavery in Egypt for two centuries after the death of Joseph and had lost contact with the true God. They had lost God's method of keeping time. Only a few may have retained a partial knowledge of these things.

To clarify matters for everyone, God had to reveal it. Concerning the spring month of Nisan or Abib, God said:

"This month shall be unto you *the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.*" (Exodus 12:2).

The first day of this month—which occurs at the beginning of spring—then would be the first day of the year. The first month in God's sacred calendar isn't January which begins in the middle of a dead winter.

The word *month* comes from the word *moon*. In Hebrew the word for month when speaking of the calendar is the same as for new moon or moon. God's months begin with the new moon. However, these months may seem to begin a day or so following the actual new moon because of certain special considerations. The observation of the new moon is to be made from Jerusalem, not from the North American continent. The seven to ten hours difference in time between Jerusalem and the part of the country you live in will make actual observation of the new moon from America misleading.

More Evidence on the Month

You can prove that each month began with the new moon by comparing Num. 28:11 with I Chronicles 23:31. In every instance the monthly offerings were made on the day of the new moon.

In the second year of their exodus from Egypt, God commanded Israel concerning the blowing of trumpets; "*In the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings.*" (Num. 10:10). Concerning his holydays, he said, "In the seventh month, *in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath (rest), a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation.*" (Lev. 23:24). In reference to this same day Psalms 81:3 states, "Blow up the trumpet *in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day.*" There can be no doubt that the start of a new month is regulated by the moon. Each month began with a new moon.

Do these months coincide with the months of the Roman calendar? Not at all.

The date of the new moon on the Roman calendar may occur at any time of the month. The few moments required to prove this to yourself will be profitably spent. The astronomical months God gave us average approximately 29½ days, while the Roman months are close to 30½ days on the average. The difference in length causes the months of the true calendar to begin, in general, one day earlier each succeeding month of the Roman calendar.

It is important to recognize that the days of God's months seldom coincide with those of the Roman calendar. The

Passover, for instance, being the 14th day of God's first month varies from about March 26th to April 22nd over a ten year period.

Thus we have established the *daily cycle* beginning at sundown, the *weekly cycle* beginning at sundown following the Sabbath, the *monthly cycle* beginning with the new moon and the *yearly cycle* beginning in the spring with the first day of the month in which the early harvest would take place. The *day, month and year* are easy to follow by watching the sun in its daily path, the *moon* in its phases and the *seasons* as they progress. The signs in the heavens were intended for this purpose. The Sabbath is *remembered by its weekly observance.*

There Are Complications

In setting up this true calendar, some minor complications do arise when an attempt is made to relate the day to the month and the month to the year. For example, the length of time between new moons is slightly more than 29½ days. To solve this, one month in general has 30 days, the next 29. Minor adjustments from this pattern take care of the remaining fraction.

In fitting the months into the year more difficulties are encountered. The time required for the spring season to return each year is approximately 365¼ days. Twelve lunar months make only 354 days. Unless something were done the calendar would slip about 11 days behind the seasons each year. This could not be allowed for *the feasts throughout the year have a definite relationship with the harvests.* Note Lev. 23:4, "These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim *in their seasons.*"

The Passover had to be at the time of the early grain harvest for the high priest waves a sheaf of the new grain crop on the morrow after the Sabbath during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. "Keep this ordinance *in his season* from year to year." (Ex. 13:10). No other grain could be cut until the wave sheaf was offered. (Check Ex. 23:14-17, Deut. 16:9-16 and Num. 28:2 also.)

To keep the month in accord with the year, God intended that a 13th month be added in certain years. *Seven* times in a 19 year cycle this 13th month must be added to keep the year in accord with the seasons. Then the cycle is repeated.

Confusion or Order

The appearance of the new moon in the western sky just after sunset is used to determine the beginning of a new month. A keen eyed observer might note this first faint sickle a day earlier

than his neighbor. Is he justified in starting the new month with that day while his neighbor waits till the following evening? Can one man add a 13th month to the year and another wait until the next year to add the correcting month. No. It would be confusion.

Is there to be confusion or order? Logic would require that some CENTRAL AUTHORITY be guided in the task of determining which months should have the 30th day and which years should have a 13th month.

This need for a true central authority concerning the calendar is absolute proof that such authority existed. Add the fact that God requires us to keep *His holydays today* and we must conclude that some SUCH AUTHORITY ON THE CALENDAR EXISTS FOR US TODAY. God never fails to provide man with knowledge that he must know and can not find out for himself.

While no mention is made in Scripture concerning the need for some months to have 30 days and others only 29 or that some years have 13 months and others only 12, the facts of astronomy—the exact measurement of the length of the day, month and year—taken with the commands of the Scripture prove that this must be necessary.

Who Are the Calendar Specialists?

The perfect clock of the heavens is the timepiece given by God to man. Instructions concerning its use were given after Israel came out of Egypt. They were only a repetition of earlier instructions known to Adam, Noah and Abraham alike.

Certain men were given understanding in this matter so there would be order rather than confusion. "Of the children of Issachar, were men that had *understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.*" (I Chr. 12:32) God had commanded Israel to observe the holydays in their seasons and also in definite months. To keep the seasons in accord with the calendar year, a thirteenth month had to be added every 2 or 3 years. God did provide men with understanding as to when to add these extra months. They understood when to add a 30th day to a month regularly having only 29, a necessity in keeping the calendar accurate.

Thus we conclude that there were men whose GOD-GIVEN AUTHORITY IN THE MATTER OF KEEPING THE CALENDAR WAS RECOGNIZED AND FOLLOWED BY ALL THE PEOPLE. God told Israel the days to be observed but *did not leave it to the individual* to devise his own calendar adding an extra day to a month or month to a year when it might please him. Certain men specialized in this

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Are Babies "Saved" If They Die?

by Rod Meredith

GOD IS working out a great purpose in our lives which very few people understand.

We mortal human beings were not born with perfect characters. We came into this world with a carnal mind which from birth is enmity against God's way (Romans 8:8).

But God is developing perfect, spiritual character in us through *experience* and *suffering*. We have all heard the expression, "Well, he certainly learned his lesson that time!" Experience is a great teacher. We can profit from our mistakes if we "learn our lesson" and quit repeating those mistakes.

Few Know What Salvation Is

But most people find it hard to apply this principle to the spiritual realm because they don't know what salvation really is. God is not trying to save everyone now. Only certain ones are being "called." Salvation involves *learning that our own way is wrong, repenting of it, accepting Christ as Savior and acquiring God's character* to fit us to become sons of God—MEMBERS of the GODHEAD—and kings and priests under Jesus Christ in the kingdom of God (Rev. 5:10).

Failing to understand this, some people believe that little children and babies are "saved" if they die. To justify this teaching, they refer to Matthew 18:3-6 which reads, "Verily I say unto you, except you be converted, and become AS little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself AS this

little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Notice that Jesus *didn't* say, "Children are converted and will be greatest in the kingdom." He was speaking to his disciples, telling them to cultivate characteristics that little children ought to have. He knew that a normal, well-trained child will be humble before his parents and have implicit faith in their love, wisdom, and power to help him. Christ was simply pointing out that his followers need this quality in order to inherit God's kingdom.

Christ repeated this same principle when he said, "Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein" (Mark 10:13-16). It is the *mature, converted* Christian who through a lifetime of experience humbles himself as a little child, keeps God's commandments and acquires God's character, who has a right to eternal life in the family of God and enters into the gates of the eternal city (Rev. 22:14).

God's great purpose is that we learn the value of His ways through *experience* and trial and test and even suffering. Even Christ, "though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered" (Hebrews 5:8). Before giving us eternal life, with all of its powers and responsibilities, God intends that we learn *obedience* to His law—the right and happy way of life.

No Spiritual Growth

Little children have *not* had oppor-

tunity for this *spiritual growth*. They were born mortal and have had no eternal life in them because they *did not* receive the Spirit or life of God which imparts eternal life. "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Romans 8:11). Little children die without having been begotten by this Spirit, or life, of God.

We read that "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34). Yet He permits many little children to die without knowing the truth. Therefore, he would have to raise them from the dead and give them their first and only opportunity to gain eternal life!

All people—young or old—who have died in ignorance of God's laws and ways will be given their opportunity for salvation. This is the Great White Throne Judgment described in Rev. 20:12-13.

The July 1952 issue of the "Good News" contains an article which fully explains this subject. If you are a new reader, write for the July 1952 issue *immediately* so you can read the article "Is this the ONLY Day of Salvation?"

God deals fairly and equally with every person. He does not have the hurried and confusing way of "saving" people that misguided preachers have imagined. We need *time* to "grow in grace and knowledge." Everyone, including little children needs character development which comes *before* we inherit the precious gift of eternal life.

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field of astronomy. Their decisions, *guided by Scriptural instructions*, were accepted by the nation.

Is the Sacred Calendar Still Correct?

Has God's calendar been preserved intact for us today? If not, then in commanding us to observe these holydays, God has asked us to do the *impossible*. If God's calendar is lost, God's commandments in regard to these feast days are *impossible to keep!*

But since God doesn't command the

impossible, THE CALENDAR IS PRESERVED!

To whom was the responsibility committed? The oracles of God were committed to all Israel to be passed on from generation to generation. Acts 7:38 speaks of the Israelites "who received the lively oracles to give unto us." Oracles are communications from God. These were given to all Israel, *both* the house of Israel and the house of Judah. The house of Israel went into captivity in 721 B.C. losing her identity and her knowledge of God. *She did not preserve the calendar or the Bible* for us. Who did?

The house of Judah went into captivity in 604 B.C. but retained knowledge of her identity and her God. Recognizing the fact that she had gone into captivity for breaking the Sabbath, Judah became very strict in its observance and retained it for us today.

Notice what Paul asks himself: "What *advantage* then hath the Jew?" Then he answers in part, "Much every way: chiefly, because that *unto them* were committed the *oracles of God*." (Romans 3:1, 2) The Jews alone were left to preserve *the Scripture, the Sabbath* AND THE CALENDAR. If they did not fulfill this God-given commission,

we have no real basis for calculating the Holy Days of God.

Christ Followed Same Calendar

If the Jews did not preserve the law, could Christ have lived His early life in the knowledge of it?

He accused the Jews of "laying aside the commandment of God (to) hold the tradition of men." (Mark 7:8) The commands Jesus followed were the ones written in the Law—the Scripture they had preserved, yet refused to obey.

Had they not preserved the knowledge of *keeping time*, as well as the Scripture, Christ could not have observed Passover, Pentecost, the Feast of Trumpets and the Feast of Tabernacles in their proper seasons during His boyhood. He could not have lived a sinless life. The authority for keeping the calendar was delegated to the Jews and THEY DID PRESERVE IT.

Here is absolute proof of Jesus' recognition of the authority vested in the religious leaders of Judah at that time. Christ kept the same Sabbath that Jews around him did. He observed the same holydays, proving that they had a correct knowledge of time. In speaking of the Scripture, He accepted the same Scripture which had been entrusted to Israel by Moses and the Prophets. Christ recognized that IN THESE POINTS the house of Judah had carried out its commission.

Are There Other Formulas?

Some sects disagree with the calendar which the Jews preserved and have developed their own formulas for beginning the year. The "authorities" they use are the writers of profane history.

Some believe the ancient reckoning of Passover was from the actual sight of the new moon NEAREST the vernal equinox and cite Josephus, a Jewish historian, to indicate that Passover could never be earlier than March 20th, or later than April 19th. Yet this same Josephus is quoted in *Hasting's Bible Dictionary* as saying the vernal equinox (March 21) always occurred in Nisan. This means the year began with the new moon PRIOR to March 21st and that Passover could be as early as March 5th but not later than April 3rd.

Thus one writer quotes Josephus (Ant. I,X,5) to begin the year with the new moon PRIOR to March 21st; another uses the same Josephus to prove we ought to take the new moon NEAREST the same date; still another source, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, asserts that the year ALWAYS began with the first new moon AFTER March 21st.

Writers of profane history only *contradict* themselves. They can not be depended upon to preserve this essential

knowledge. God has in no way used them to preserve His Sabbath or calendar.

Neither the oracles of God nor the preservation of His times were committed to writers of profane history.

The Jewish nation has preserved the Scripture, Sabbath and calendar for us even though individuals in that nation lacking guidance from God have strayed from the truth on these issues.

From Observation to Calculation

At first observation was the chief method for the determination of the beginning of a new month or new year. Gradually, after years went by, a *definite pattern* began to emerge in the insertion of the extra days and extra months. For example, when weather did not permit actual observation of the faint sickle of the growing new moon, those entrusted with the matter were able to determine the correct day by astronomic calculation. But observation continued to be used in connection with calculation by keen-eyed men stationed on the heights about Jerusalem to watch for sign of the new month.

So long as the people were in close contact with one another observation was satisfactory. Foreseeing world conditions ahead where the Church as well as the Jews would be scattered, GOD GUIDED THESE MEN TO SET UP A CALENDAR based on the laws of *mathematics and astronomy*—the very physical laws God set in motion—a calendar that could be prepared far into the future—for our day—one that *would be ACCURATE. NOT A NEW CALENDAR*, but a mathematical continuation of the original one based on observations of the signs of the heavens over a period of nearly 2000 years; a calendar that would lead to order and harmony among God's people in the matter of keeping time.

This Is Our Part

Understanding that God *commissioned* and *required* his people, the Jews, to keep the calendar intact, we have left only the problem of transferring the dates from the true calendar of God to the present day Roman calendar. (Caution, do not accept the Jewish dates for Passover or Pentecost as the Jews have departed from the *Biblical instructions* as to when these days must be observed.)

Lacking a Jewish calendar, or wishing perhaps to know the dates for coming years one may use a somewhat more difficult method. The dates for the Feast of Trumpets for the coming years are given in *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*. This feast occurs on the 1st day of the 7th month and the rest of the holydays in the year are quite easily

determined from the date of this feast.

How to Transfer the Dates

Let us calculate this year's holydays. From Webster's Dictionary we find that the Feast of Trumpets is Sept. 10th. This is the first day of God's seventh month.

Next let us find the first day of the first month. Rule one: Get the date of the Feast of Trumpets from a reliable source. Rule two: The Feast is the 177th day after the first day of the year. (Three months of 29 days and three months of 30.) You will find that March 17th is the first day of the sacred year.

Rule three: The Passover day is the thirteenth day after the first day of the year. This brings us to Monday, March 30th. (Caution, *all* these days begin the preceding evening.) The Passover service then should be held *Sunday evening, March 29th, shortly after sunset*, which is the beginning of the 14th day of God's first month. The seven days of Unleavened Bread are March 31 through April 6.

Rule four: The day of the wave sheaf offering falls on the first day of the week (or Sunday) following the first weekly Sabbath (Saturday) during Feast of Unleavened Bread. The date of the wave sheaf offering is April 5th. Though there is no observance of this day it is of utmost importance in figuring Pentecost.

Rule five: Pentecost (meaning *count fifty*) is the fiftieth day *after* the day of the wave sheaf offering. This feast will be on Monday, May 25th, this year.

Fall Feast Days

The next holyday, the Feast of Trumpets, we found from the dictionary to be Sept. 10th or the first day of God's seventh month. Following this, "on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement" (Lev. 23:27). The tenth day of the month, which is *nine days after* Sept. 10th, brings us Sept. 19th, the Day of Atonement, the fast day.

Then, "The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD" (verse 34). The fourteenth day after Sept. 10th brings us to Sept. 24th (sunset Sept. 23rd), the first day of this Feast. It will continue seven days, Sept. 24th through 30th, and the eighth day, Oct. 1st, is the high day following the Feast.

How very clear it is that God has provided mankind with His holy Calendar. He preserved that calendar through the Jewish people. Through them God has given you His sacred calendar so you would be able to observe the days He commands.