

The "New" Church of God Messenger  
A Newsletter for the People of God  
April 2, 2022 --- Issue No. 61  
Special Edition

**Passover,  
Obligation, and Love**  
(Copyright) by John W. Ritenbaugh  
(Lancaster, South Carolina)

PAGE 1 **Articles**

**In regard to: A Short Study of  
Five Common Beliefs About the  
Scriptural Calendar**  
Article by Gary Miller  
Comments by Laura Lee  
(Bismarck, North Dakota)  
PAGE 7 **Iron Sharpening Iron**

**To Unsubscribe from this newsletter:**

Send a blank email to [church-of-god-bismarck@hotmail.com](mailto:church-of-god-bismarck@hotmail.com) with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line.

**To Subscribe to this newsletter:**

Send a blank email to [church-of-god-bismarck@hotmail.com](mailto:church-of-god-bismarck@hotmail.com) with "Subscribe" in the subject line.

**To Submit Items for Print:** Send to: [church-of-god-bismarck@hotmail.com](mailto:church-of-god-bismarck@hotmail.com) or Mail to Darwin & Laura Lee, PO Box 2333, Bismarck, ND 58502

The "New" Church of God Messenger is an independent publication. All newsletters may be copied and given to others if they are copied and sent in their entirety.

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

**Contributors:** Laura Lee, Gary Miller, John W. Ritenbaugh

**Website:** Church of God, Bismarck <https://www.church-of-god-bismarck.org>

## Articles

### **Passover, Obligation, and Love** (Copyright) by John W. Ritenbaugh (Lancaster, South Carolina)

Recently in Miami, Florida, a vacationing West Virginian pulled a few crumpled bills from his pocket to tip a valet-parking attendant, mistakenly giving him a thousand dollars! Driving off, he was well on his way back to West Virginia before he discovered what he had done. He returned to Miami to find that the attendant, knowing the man had made a mistake, had given the money to his supervisor to hold in case the man returned to claim it.

The news report primarily focused its attention on the honest young man who returned the money, and well it should have. But what about the vacationer? Did he feel obligated to share some of his good fortune with the young man? Yes, he gave the attendant a much larger tip than normal, though it was a very small percentage of what he almost lost.

We live at a time when many have a weak sense of obligation at best. The dominant idea seems to be "I deserve it" or "The world owes it to me." For example, many entertainers and professional athletes do not feel obligated to conclude their existing contracts. After a "big hit" or a "good year," they try to renegotiate a better contract before the old one expires.

Have the United States and Canada ever seen a time in their histories when people's sense of obligation to nation,

**The "New" Church of God Messenger**  
**A Newsletter for the People of God**  
**April 2, 2022 --- Issue No. 61**  
**Special Edition**

community, or family was at a lower ebb? Though these three institutions give us so much, it seems so easy for so many not to feel a sense of indebtedness to them. Many even lack recognition of our indebtedness. Obviously, human nature does not come naturally equipped with a sense of obligation. It is a quality—a character trait—that we must *learn*.



We come under obligation when a service is rendered to us, causing indebtedness. Very closely related to accountability and responsibility, obligation makes us feel required to follow through to repay the indebtedness. *True obligation is a deep conviction that we owe someone something.* This concept is integral to the seriousness of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

### **Redemption Creates Obligation**

The word "obligation" or one of its forms does not appear in the King James translation of the Bible and only three times in the New King James Version. However, its sense appears scores of times through other words, chiefly transitional words such as "because," "therefore," "wherefore," "for" and "thus." These words precede a Christian requirement, an exhortation to obedience or to a certain godly attitude.

For example, I Peter 1:15-16 states, "But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, 'Be holy, for I am holy.'" Because God our Father, whom we represent, is holy, we are under obligation to be holy. Peter draws on our sense of obligation to the Father to exhort us to obedient conduct. He later intensifies the sense of obligation:

Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world but was manifest in these last times *for you*. (verses 18-20; emphasis ours throughout)

Though we can certainly understand that "you" refers generally to mankind, it has a greater impact if we see it aimed directly at the individual. That is, Christ would still have died if only *you* had sinned and needed redeeming. An individual's sense of obligation stands in direct proportion to his ability to contrast the peerless quality and pricelessness of the gift he has been given as compared to the worthlessness of the purchased possession. A billionaire might consider a thousand dollars to be pocket change. To a bankrupt and destitute person, a thousand dollars is a fortune.

Luke 7:36-47 contains the story of the weeping woman who washed Jesus' feet with her tears and anointed them with fragrant oil. In the parable, Jesus expounds important understanding about obligation:

"There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?" Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more."

**The "New" Church of God Messenger**  
**A Newsletter for the People of God**  
**April 2, 2022 --- Issue No. 61**  
**Special Edition**

And He said to him, "You have rightly judged." Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little." (verses 41-47)

This woman perceived and appreciated the greatness of Jesus, which motivated her to so abase herself as to weep and with her tears, cleanse, kiss, and anoint His feet! Notice her emotion, courage, devotion (oblivious of public opinion), and humility (in performing the task of a slave). We can safely assume that Jesus had turned this woman from a life of sin. She may have been among the crowds who were convicted by His messages. When she heard He was nearby, she rushed to Simon's home, ignoring the scorn of others to express her gratitude to the One who had set her aright.

Her deed expressed her love and gratitude, springing from her recognition of and faith in His greatness as contrasted to her unworthiness. She felt obligated to respond in a way so memorable that God recorded it for all humanity for all time to witness. Note that the Bible shows human lips touching Jesus only twice: here and Judas' kiss of betrayal.

In contrast, Simon the Pharisee, evidently a man of some substance and ambition, was moved to invite the popular Jesus to his home. Self-concerned and inhospitable, he did not offer Jesus even the customary services a host of that time normally provided visitors to his home.

From the context, we can assume that he felt himself to be at least Jesus' equal. His conclusion that Jesus was no prophet probably suggests he felt superior to Him, that He was no more than an interesting celebrity. This biased self-evaluation in relation to Jesus produced in him no sense of obligation and thus no corresponding gratitude, humility, or act of love—let alone common courtesies.

Had he a heart at all? The scene unfolding at his respectable table scandalized him, but God thought it so inspiring, He recorded it for our benefit. Simon judged, "She is a sinner." "No, Simon," Jesus replied, "she *was* a sinner." In this lies a major clue to the difference between the two people.

### **We Cannot Pay**

Simon and the woman had something in common, according to the parable: Both were debtors to the same creditor, and neither could meet His obligation. It is interesting to note in the Model Prayer of Matthew 6:9-13 that sin is expressed through the image of debt, a true metaphor. Duty neglected, a debt to God, must be discharged by a penalty. All have sinned, and the wages or penalty is death (Romans 3:23; 6:23). We are all under a peculiar form of indebtedness, which we cannot pay and still have hope!

Simon and the woman each portray a class of sinner. Though we are all sinners, some have incurred more debt than others through the way they have lived. Some are outwardly respectable, decent, and clean living, and others have fallen into gross, sensual, and open transgression.

Evidently, in the eyes of society, Simon was a great deal "better" than the coarse and unclean woman. She had been wallowing in filth, while he obtained respectability through his rigid morality and precise observance of civility. Because he had kept his nose clean, as it were, he had far less to answer for than she, but he had also received much more from his morality and righteousness. God is not unfair to bless people for the right things they have done.

Nevertheless, *regardless of the size of the debt, neither could pay it.* We all stand in the same relation to God as these two debtors. One's sins may be blacker and more numerous than another's, but when we consider the degree of guilt and the complex motivations that go into those sins, perhaps we might not be so quick to pronounce the harlots' and publicans' sins worse than the Pharisees'. Though the latter's sins were clothed in "respectability," they still could not meet the cost of the debt.

Jesus says, "They had nothing with which to pay." That is precisely our position too! No matter how much guilt we feel, no amount of tears, no amount of self-flagellation or self-discipline, no amount of change of life—no work we can do—will lessen the debt. Some of these may be required by God and are good to do, but forgiveness, the payment of the

---

**The "New" Church of God Messenger**  
**A Newsletter for the People of God**  
**April 2, 2022 --- Issue No. 61**  
**Special Edition**

debt, is by grace, by God's mercy through the blood of Jesus Christ! We cannot pay for it ourselves. If we could, then God would owe us something—He would be indebted to us (Romans 4:1-4)!

In his book *Major Barbara*, George Bernard Shaw, an agnostic at best, says through the character, Cusins, "Forgiveness is a beggar's refuge. . . . We must pay our debts." But Shaw does not say how. Though a man is honorable today, it does not change the fact that he was dishonorable yesterday. Often, historians write accounts that make their nation's actions and motives appear pure. But is it realistic to believe that history can be cleansed, virginity restored, murder undone, slander recalled, or a lie purified? Can we just wipe our memories clean? We cannot return to the past to undo wrongs, let alone redeem ourselves for them.

Even if we mend our ways, it does not rectify the past. Though we may hate the evil, keeping us from doing it in the future, it does not affect our responsibility for what has been done! Our past stands cast in stone with a solemn death sentence written all over it. The author of Hebrews writes on the certainty of judgment, "For if the word spoken through angels [a metaphor for God's law] proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward [penalty] . . ." (Hebrews 2:2).

We cannot pay. We stand before Him in penniless insolvency. Our hands and pockets are empty. But this condition of need is good because, if we expect to be forgiven, we must recognize our insolvency.

If we decide to pay the debt, we must pay it all; if He is going to forgive, we have to let Him forgive all. It must be one or the other, and we must choose which of the two it will be. If we choose the former, the payment is death without hope. If we choose the latter, we fall under obligation to the One who pays our unpayable debt.

But to what are we indebted? Jesus Himself provides the answer in a question in Luke 7:42, "And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?" Jesus draws direct correlations between our recognition of the enormity of the forgiven sins and their payment and our acts of love.

"Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little" (Luke 7:47). One who knows he has been forgiven much feels more obliged to the payer of his debt than the one who thinks his indebtedness small. He feels obliged to live the way the Payer of his debt tells him he should. Those most conscious of forgiveness will bear the most fruit in godly love.

#### **Paul's Example**

The depth and fervor of our Christianity depend more on the awareness of our guilt in contrast with the expanse of God's forgiveness than upon anything else. Perhaps the finest example of that attitude is the apostle, Paul.

He writes, "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (I Corinthians 15:10). Apparently without much consciousness of what others thought of him for doing so, he responded to God with great energy and enthusiasm.

Relating his own experience, Paul tells Timothy:

Although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him to everlasting life." (I Timothy 1:13-16)

Probably the next to last epistle Paul wrote, I Timothy shows that late in his life, the apostle was still very much aware of the enormity of what God had forgiven. He was not carrying a burdensome load of guilt but a realistic recognition of his indebtedness to Christ for all that he was and all he had accomplished.

He also says in Philippians 3:6, "Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." Is there a contradiction between these two assessments? No, because before conversion, Paul was a

---

**The "New" Church of God Messenger**  
**A Newsletter for the People of God**  
**April 2, 2022 --- Issue No. 61**  
**Special Edition**

great deal like Simon the Pharisee. Though a respected and zealous Pharisee, he knew he was guilty of many of the deeds and attitudes Jesus denounced the Pharisees for in Matthew 23. In Romans 7, he saw himself struggling with sin internally but knew Jesus Christ had rescued him from it. His faith was in God's grace, and he lived and worked for God out of a deep sense of grateful obligation.

He was full of wonder and gratitude when he thought of what Christ had done for him. G. K. Chesterton writes, "It is the highest and holiest of the paradoxes that the man who really knows he cannot pay his debt will be forever paying it."

Paul supplies us with definitive answers as to what we are obligated. Summarizing in Romans 12:1, he writes, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God. . . ." To paraphrase, he says, "In light of all I have just told you, this is what you are obligated to do." Chapter 12 primarily concerns relationships within the body and to a lesser extent to those who are outside of it. Chapter 13 begins by stating our obligation to submit to civil governments, respect those in authority, and pay taxes.

Another summary statement from Paul captures the breadth of our obligations:

Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. (Romans 13:8-10)

The apostle presents us with an interesting paradox. On the one hand, he says that we should owe no man anything that he can rightfully claim from us. But on the other hand, we must owe everyone more than we can hope to pay, that is, perfect love.

He extends and intensifies the concept of obligation. We must be more scrupulous within the limits of the common idea of indebtedness and also infinitely widen the range within which it operates. Did not our failure to meet our obligations to God and man accrue for us an unpayable debt? Now that the debt has been paid for us, we are obliged not only to strive to avoid further indebtedness but also to expand and perfect the giving of love.

This paradox is more apparent than real because love is not an added duty but the inclusive *framework* within which all duties should be done. Love is the motivating power that frees and enables us to serve and sacrifice with largeness of heart and generosity of spirit.

If we view love as just the keeping of God's laws, we are stuck on a low-level, letter-of-the-law approach to righteousness. Do not misunderstand, keeping God's law is a necessary aspect of love, but love is far more complex. Commandment-keeping is compulsory and can be done in an "only because" attitude, one that concludes, "I must love the person, but I don't have to like him." Drawing on Christ's teaching, Paul gives an entirely new significance to the idea of obligation.

### **Expressing Our Gratitude**

When the fallen woman washed Christ's feet with her tears, wiped them with her hair, kissed them with her lips, and anointed them with fragrant oil, was her love merely to keep a commandment? Or an exquisite expression of a heart freed to give its all?

I Corinthians 11:17-34 contains the tragic story of gluttony, drunkenness, class distinction, and party spirit that infested the "love feasts" of a Christian congregation. Why were they guilty of these sins? They did not love their brethren! To what did Paul refer to correct their abominable behavior? He reminded them of the Passover service and Christ's death!

Christ's death is the supreme example of unselfish, sacrificial service and love. "For God so loved the world that He gave . . ." (John 3:16). The Father and Son did not make this sacrifice because They were commanded. They freely and generously gave of Themselves in beneficent goodwill for our well-being.

This beneficent goodwill begins when we can finally make a true evaluation of ourselves in relation to God. When we can properly judge ourselves as we are against what was freely paid—sacrificed—for our forgiveness and eventual eternal

**The "New" Church of God Messenger**  
**A Newsletter for the People of God**  
**April 2, 2022 --- Issue No. 61**  
**Special Edition**

life, then we can truly begin to partake of God's favor.

Job cries out to God, "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5-6). Though among the most upright of men, all his life Job had held a wrong evaluation of himself in relation to God and other men. But when God allowed him to "see" himself, he was devastated, his vanity was crushed, and he repented. Only then could he really begin to love.

Concerning the bread and wine, Christ instructs, "Do this in remembrance of Me" (I Corinthians 11:24-25). This command could also be translated, "Do this for the remembering of me," or "Do this in case you forget." God does not want us to let His Son's sacrifice slip very far from our minds. He does not want us to get maudlin over it but to remember that it represents the measure of His love and our worth to Him. Remembering helps us retain a right sense of obligation. He does not wish that our obligation become a burden but to fill us with wonder or awe that He would pay so much for something so utterly defiled.

We are admonished to remember, not only Christ's personality and His sinlessness, but also His role as our Creator, His connection to the Old Testament Passover, His violent death for the remission of mankind's sins, and His sacrifice's connection to the New Covenant. His selfless act becomes the foundation of all loving relationships. It gives us reason to hope that our lives are not spent in vain, motivating us to do what we failed to do, which put us in debt: love.

#### **Our Fellowship Is With Christ**

Paul continues in I Corinthians 11, "For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body" (verse 29). To eat or drink in an unworthy manner is to treat His sacrifice with irreverence, disrespect, or without due appreciation, as shown by the conduct of our lives. To do so means a person is not showing much love in his life because, since he has not seen his sins and brought them before God for forgiveness, he has not been forgiven much. Because he is still wrapped up in himself and his sins, he is not truly free to love others.

In taking the Passover this year, let us strive to remember that *our fellowship at that special time is with Him*. Our brethren with us at the service are only incidental to our relationship with Christ on this occasion. He is the focus.

The Passover service is not primarily an hour of instruction, although we undoubtedly learn from it. Passover is a communion, an act of fellowship with Christ, within the framework of a ritual. If we are in the right spirit of devotion, we are then in the closest relationship with our Savior.

Not only is He the host of our feast, but symbolically, He is also the feast itself:

Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood *abides in Me, and I in him*. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me." (John 6:53-57)

What a sacrifice, what an example, what a purchase price to be obligated to! Nothing better could ever happen to us in our lives!

God intends Passover to teach us these things so that each year begins with getting turned about where we have deviated and "jump-started" in the right attitude and direction.

As this Passover season approaches, let us cry out to God for a better understanding of what we are and what Christ was, did, and is so we may be filled with an awe-inspiring sense of our indebtedness.

---

**Reprinted with permission from: Church of the Great God**  
<https://www.cgg.org/>

## Iron Sharpening Iron

New American Standard Bible (Proverbs 27:17)  
As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

# In regard to: A Short Study of Five Common Beliefs About the Scriptural Calendar

Article by Gary Miller  
Comments by Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)

### The Article:

The Scriptural calendar has been a matter of differing views since time immemorial. A major cause for this uncertainty is the loss in antiquity of the knowledge of the patriarchal astronomers.

Although only sketches remain within the Scriptures, enough details are there to set weekly and annual Sabbaths, New Moons, Land Sabbaths, and Jubilee years. This is not unexpected since Yahweh commands observance of those times in their seasons (Lev. 23:4; Gen. 1:14). How could He command us to keep His Sacred times, which is the sign He sanctifies us (Ex. 31:13; Ezk. 20:12, 20), but leave no record in His Sacred Scriptures showing how to set those times?

### Laura Writes:

**Lev 23:4** These *are* the feasts of the LORD, *even* holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons.

**Gen 1:14** And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:

**Exo 31:13** Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it *is* a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that *ye* may know that I *am* the LORD that doth sanctify you.

**Eze 20:12** Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I *am* the LORD that sanctify them.

**Eze 20:20** And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I *am* the LORD your God.

The above scriptures are talking about God having given His Sabbaths as a Sign between Him and His people. In other words, God gave these set times to us so He would know if we were His people. If we make up our own calendars, then we are not keeping God's set times and there is no sign that we are His people. Gary Miller in this article is making up his own calendar. He is not using the calendar that God left His people to keep.

If you believe that God entrusted the Jewish people to preserve the Holy Scriptures (the Bible) why won't you believe that God also left His calendar with the Jewish people to preserve in order to keep God's Feasts?

### The Article:

A survey of writings on this subject clearly shows numerous calendar dates for those times based on a variety of assumptions which must be compared with Biblical definitions. Separating Bible facts from tradition and private interpretations is often a thorny task.

This short study cannot possibly cover all details of such a vast topic but is intended to focus on a few common views found in literature on the subject.

### Laura Writes:

So let me get this straight, if a person keeps a Saturday Sabbath from even to even for say 25 years, it now becomes a

**The “New” Church of God Messenger**  
**A Newsletter for the People of God**  
**April 2, 2022 --- Issue No. 61**  
**Special Edition**

tradition. However, if a person keeps a Saturday Sabbath from dawn to even that in no way becomes a tradition.

Traditions can include things that are right or wrong. Anyone keeping God’s weekly and annual Sabbaths from year to year for sometimes their entire life, it can certainly be considered a tradition and as long as you are keeping the right days there is nothing wrong with that tradition.

Keeping Sunday as your weekly Sabbath can also be a tradition, but that is not the Day that God tells us to keep for our Sabbath. So even though it becomes a tradition with time, it is a wrong tradition, just like keeping the wrong calendar can be considered a wrong tradition.

Traditions can be right or wrong depending on what you are keeping. It doesn’t have to be a tradition for people to believe something is true. I have yet to read any calendar paper where the author does not truly believe his calendar is the true calendar even when he knows in his heart that he made it up.

**The Article:**

What follows is a brief study of five common beliefs about the Biblical Calendar.

**(1). THE SUNSET-TO-SUNSET DAY**

**(a). Leviticus 23:32:** One of those traditions is the sunset-to-sunset day which the vast majority of Sabbatarians use. Somewhat surprising perhaps, this nearly universally accepted definition has no Biblical basis; especially including Lev. 23:32 which in context, can at the very most, only refer to Atonements; not all Sabbaths (Lev. 23:27-32). Note in verses 27-31 only the tenth of the seventh month is mentioned. Pulling Lev. 23:32 out of context and applying “...from evening-to-evening shall you observe your Sabbath” to all Sabbaths is a common mistake. The complete explanation of this verse requires more than just those facts; but is left to another discussion.

**Laura Writes:**

**Lev 23:27** Also on the tenth *day* of this seventh month *there shall be* a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD. **Lev 23:28** And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it *is* a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God. **Lev 23:29** For whatsoever soul *it be* that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. **Lev 23:30** And whatsoever soul *it be* that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people. **Lev 23:31** Ye shall do no manner of work: *it shall be* a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. **Lev 23:32** It *shall be* unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth *day* of the month at even, from **even unto even**, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.

Please get real here, so I am going to keep the Day of Atonement from even unto even but the rest of the Holy Days I am going to keep at a different time. That is not what my Bible says:

**Joh 19:31** The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away.

**Joh 19:41** Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. **Joh 19:42** There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation *day*; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

The time frame for John 19:31 and John 19:41-42 was the preparation day for the Passover and Christ had to be removed from the cross and placed in the tomb before sunset because Passover started at sunset. We know that Christ was killed around 3:00 PM with the Passover Lambs and these verses prove a sunset-to-sunset day.

**Gen 1:1** In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. **Gen 1:2** And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. **Gen 1:3** And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. **Gen 1:4** And God saw the light, that *it was* good: and God divided the light

**The “New” Church of God Messenger**  
**A Newsletter for the People of God**  
**April 2, 2022 --- Issue No. 61**  
**Special Edition**

from the darkness. **Gen 1:5** And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. **And the evening and the morning were the first day.**

You will notice that in verse 2 God started the day in darkness. Read the verses. Darkness came first and then God made the light. So, God made the day to start with dark and go to light and then dark would start the second day. When God starts the day with darkness and creates the light later to make the Second part of the day then what you have is an even-to-even day.

**Neh 13:19** And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and *some* of my servants set I at the gates, *that* there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day.

Here we have a clear verse showing that the gates were shut as it began to get dark before the Sabbath and the gates were not to be opened until the Sabbath was over.

So far, we have Atonement, Passover, Days of Unleavened Bread, and the weekly Sabbath all being kept from sunset to sunset. Do you still want to say this is wrong when it comes right out of the Bible?

**The Article:**

**(b). Evening and Morning:** Is not the six times the Genesis record (Gen. 1:5,8,13,19,23,31) says “...and the evening and the morning were the first day...the second day...the third day....” definitive; that a Scriptural “day” starts at sunset, at evening, and runs through the night to the next sunset?

**(c). The Place to Start:** No, and for this reason. The place to begin defining the Biblical day is not with those phrases, but the first two lines of verse five that precedes them: “And Elohim [KJV “God”] called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night.” These are His unequivocal definitions of Day and Night. What is “light”? “And Elohim saw the light [was visible] ...and Elohim divided the light from the darkness.” (v. 4; separated one from the other). What light? “...the greater light to rule the day...” (v. 16) which is the Sun (Psa. 136:8).

Clearly, when the Sun’s light rules, that period is by Scriptural definition, the Biblical Day. Equally certain is the period of its rule starts at the earliest light of dawn long before sunrise, until night sets in about an hour or so after sunset. Simple observation shows us the same thing.

The Scriptural Day from dawn-to-dark is 12 to 17 hours or so depending on the time of year. In the summer daylight is longer. Shorter daylight time occurs in winter. The Biblical day is just the light portion of the 24-hour period. That is why day and night are mentioned separately numerous times (Gen. 7:4; 8:12; Ex. 10:13; 13:22; Num. 9:21; 11:32; Deut. 28:66; Jer. 33:20; Matt. 4:2; 12:40; Rom. 13:12...etc.)

No amount of ingenuity can explain away those absolute facts of Scripture defining the Day as light, and darkness as Night. Once we find a solid definition in Scripture, we must stick with it. No other verses can change nor contradict these definitions.

**(d). Contradiction:** Claiming the evening starts at sunset and continues to include the night too, contradicts the clear fact it has already been defined six times as part of the light: evening and morning were...the Day.

All further conclusions about the Sabbath or other Biblical days must conform to those established facts that day is light, and darkness is night. What is left to do is believe, accept, and apply them.

**Laura Writes:**

As gone over previously, God started with dark first and light second. Everyone knows the light part of the day is called day and the dark part is called night and you always have a transition from light to dark and from dark to light. However, you can’t make the sun rule the light part of the day until you can actually see the sun and that does not happen until the transition from dark to light has taken place. Same thing at night once the sun has gone down the light continues to

**The “New” Church of God Messenger**  
**A Newsletter for the People of God**  
**April 2, 2022 --- Issue No. 61**  
**Special Edition**

transition to dark. This is a foolish argument you are making here.

The actual definition of a day can include the entire 24 hour period as well as just the hours of daylight.

**Gen 1:5** And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

All God is saying in Gen. 1:5 is that the light is called day and the darkness is called night but when you add them together, they equal a 24-hour day, and it starts with the evening and goes for 24 hours until the next evening.

**The Article:**

**(e). Where Israel got their Sunset-to-Sunset “Day”:** Now, since the sunset-to-sunset day is not Biblical as shown beyond controversy, where did Israel get that idea?

Notice the historical fact that some Israelites adopted the sunset-to-sunset day while in Babylonian captivity as shown by this frank admission from J. Z. Lauterbach: “There can be no doubt that in *pre-exilic times* the Israelites reckoned...The day began with the dawn... [notice] *in post-exilic times*, however, ...a change in the system of reckoning the day was made, and the day was reckoned as extending from the preceding to the following evening...” (“*When Does the Sabbath Begin?*”, *Rabbinical Essays*, by Jacob Z. Lauterbach, Hebrew Union College Press Cincinnati, 1951; pp. 446-451; my emphasis). The facts of history do not lie.

But there is little doubt such a huge change did not happen overnight. Gradually as apostates seized control of the seats of authority and influence, the non-biblical sunset-to-sunset day prevailed. This is a recurring theme of history in which the truth is pushed aside to make way for apostasy. Once apostasy becomes tradition, eventually the traditions become the “truth” which are then rarely questioned.

The widespread use of Babylonian calendrical methods has replaced the Scriptural Calendar which set the *true Sabbaths* of Yahweh. As a sign of sanctification (plural; Ex. 31:13; Ezk. 20:10, 20), they clearly are a vital part of His plan of salvation; a role not to be underestimated.

**Laura Writes:**

Gary did send me the link to read this Rabbinical Essay by J. Z. Lauterbach. The quote from above is on page 446 and he uses Genesis 1:5 to prove it is right.

[https://archive.org/details/rabbin\\_lau\\_1951\\_00\\_2698/page/n7/mode/2up?view=theater](https://archive.org/details/rabbin_lau_1951_00_2698/page/n7/mode/2up?view=theater)

**Gen 1:5** And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

Not at all sure how anyone can get a morning-to-morning day or a morning to even day from that scripture. It is pretty clear that the evening and the morning made the first day. It is only logical that days begin at evening and end at the next evening. Even God’s creation the earth started in the dark.

Not all Jewish Rabbis and Teachers are created equal when it comes to understanding the Bible. I got on chat with an Orthodox Jewish Rabbi while writing my response and I asked him if the Jewish people ever kept a morning-to-morning Sabbath or a morning to even Sabbath. His reply was: “Nope”. I also asked him if he ever heard of J. Z. Lauterbach and he said he had never heard of him.

So, I started to look into who J. Z. Lauterbach actually was. It says at:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacob\\_Zallel\\_Lauterbach](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacob_Zallel_Lauterbach) that he was an American Judaica scholar. It also says he was a teacher at “Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion.” As you track this down further you find that both J. Z. Lauterbach and the Hebrew Union College are reformed Jews. It is to Orthodox Judaism as Church of God is to Catholicism. Reformed Jews are liberal and do not necessarily keep the law of God.

**The “New” Church of God Messenger**  
**A Newsletter for the People of God**  
**April 2, 2022 --- Issue No. 61**  
**Special Edition**

The Reformed Jews are the second largest group of Jews with the Orthodox Jews being the only Jewish group larger than the Reformed group. Think of Orthodox Jews (Scribes and Pharisees) as being conservative and think of the Reformed Jews as being Liberal and ah I guess we all have a new understanding of what Liberal means with what is going on in our current world.

Perhaps because we do not always check to see which sect of the Jews we are speaking to, is why we have many misunderstandings and misinterpretations of what they believe. We all need to consider the source.

Wikipedia has a page on Reformed Judaism at:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reform\\_Judaism#:~:text=Reform%20Judaism%20\(also%20known%20as,reason%20and%20not%20limited%20to](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reform_Judaism#:~:text=Reform%20Judaism%20(also%20known%20as,reason%20and%20not%20limited%20to)

I didn't read the whole thing, but I read enough to get the idea that they do not believe in a resurrection of the dead and because they are so liberal, they just make stuff up as they go along. I also got the idea they feel they can reform God instead of the other way around.

As far as the Babylonian captivity goes, that happened several hundred years before Christ himself taught in the Temple in Jerusalem. If the Jews at the time of Christ had been keeping the wrong Holy Days, there would be evidence of that. Historically the Jews were in charge of the Temple and Christ was a Jew. Since the Holy Days are a sign between God and His people you are not going to find Christ keeping the wrong Holy Days. Period.

**The Article:**

**(2). THE VERNAL EQUINOX VERSUS “THE TURN OF THE YEAR”**

**(a). The Vernal Equinox** is commonly used as a Biblical marker to start the year. This mimics Constantine's Nicaean Council edict which connected Easter with the vernal equinox. Where is any reference in the Bible to the vernal equinox?

The method generally used is to spot the new crescent in the evening sky relative to the vernal equinox to begin the first month of the year. One choice is the new moon on or next after the vernal equinox of spring (March 21). Another is the new moon closest to the vernal equinox.

The reason given for these methods is to prevent the first month of the year, Easter, or Passover from falling *during winter*; as one typical view states, "...This seasonal shift from winter to spring can only occur at the time we call the vernal equinox.... we begin our count from the new moon after the vernal equinox."

Where does the *Bible* say winter ends and spring begins with the vernal equinox? Where does it show the count of the months begins with the new moon on, after, or nearest the vernal equinox? The fact is, the Bible says nothing regarding the equinoxes setting the seasons of spring and fall nor the first month of the year. The equinoxes are arbitrary secular dates setting spring and fall.

An early Jewish tradition decrees that Passover (14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month) cannot occur earlier than six days after the vernal equinox. The Bible nowhere says nor implies that.

Additionally, the Hebrew calendar, following current Jewish usage, defines the *tekufah* as both the equinoxes and solstices (Arthur Spier, *The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar*, Arthur Spier; Feldheim Publishers, 1986, p. 19).

**Laura Writes:**

**Tekufoth**

With the introduction of the permanent calendar, the solar and lunar years have been adjusted by a calculation which guarantees the coincidence of the lunar months with the seasons as required by the law. Therefore the independent computation of the beginnings of the four seasons, the Tekufoth, has lost its importance. Nevertheless, in all our annual calendars we find the dates of the four Tekufoth listed as:

Tekufath Tishri (Fall Equinox)

Tekufath Tebeth (Winter Solstice)

**The “New” Church of God Messenger**  
**A Newsletter for the People of God**  
**April 2, 2022 --- Issue No. 61**  
**Special Edition**

Tekufath Nisan (Spring Equinox)  
Tekufath Tammuz (Summer Solstice)

**From The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar by Arthur Spier**

1. Tekufat [Nisan](#), the [vernal equinox](#), when the sun enters [Aries](#); this is the beginning of spring, or "eit hazera" (seed-time), when day and night are equal.
2. Tekufat [Tammuz](#), the [summer solstice](#), when the sun enters [Cancer](#); this is the summer season, or "et ha-katsir" (harvest-time), when the day is the longest in the year.
3. Tekufat [Tishrei](#), the [autumnal equinox](#), when the sun enters [Libra](#), and autumn, or "et ha-batsir" (vintage-time), begins, and when the day again equals the night.
4. Tekufat [Tevet](#), the [winter solstice](#), when the sun enters [Capricornus](#); this is the beginning of winter, or "et ha-horef" (winter-time),<sup>[2]</sup> when the night is the longest during the year.

**From Wikipedia:** [Tekufah - Wikipedia](#)

It would make perfect sense to use the different seasons in the calendar or your holy days will soon fall in the wrong seasons so these all need to be considered. Remember the Holy Days picture the plan of God. Passover gave us the resurrection of Christ, very small harvest. Pentecost the resurrection of the First Fruits, a larger harvest and Fall Holy Days, a huge harvest. All the seasons have to be considered in any calendar or all your harvests will be happening in the wrong season. For example, what can you harvest in the winter when it is cold or there is snow covering the ground?

The Hebrew calendar is a Lunisolar calendar, so it uses both the sun and the moon. The Hebrew calendar is set by Tishri one and yes it can be slid by one or two days. This is an adjustment, so the Full moon shows up on Passover and again on Tabernacles.

Psalms 81:3-4 “Blow the trumpet at the time of *the New Moon*, at the FULL MOON, on our solemn Feast Day. **For this is a STATUTE for Israel, and a LAW of the God of Jacob.**” (NKJ)

It is part of God’s Law, so if you do not have a New Moon on Tishri one and a Full Moon on the first day of Tabernacles your calendar is garbage. By setting the calendar by the first day of Tishri, Passover always has a full moon also. There is no full moon if you are keeping Passover on the early part of the 14<sup>th</sup>. The full moon only occurs on a Passover when you keep it at even as we go from the late 14<sup>th</sup> to the early 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan.

**The Article:**

**(b). Turn of the Year; not the Equinox:** The Bible emphasizes the solstices, the sun’s yearly turning along the horizon; not the equinoxes. Those turns, the solstices, are in summer [about June 21] and winter [about December 21]. There is no turning of the sun’s path at the equinoxes.

Notice a clear Biblical reference to the winter solstice: “...arises it [the sun] there...Going toward the south and turning around to the north...” (Eccl. 1:5,6; *Green’s Interlinear Bible; Companion Bible*, p. 907 footnote to Eccl. 1:6; also, the LXX).

The Bible again refers to this turning motion: “...you are to make for yourselves...the Pilgrimage Festival of Ingathering at the turning of the year.” (Ex. 34:22: Hebrew: “*tekufah*”; *Schocken Bible*); “...turn of the year,” (*Green’s Interlinear Bible*).

The turning of the sun along the horizon is also indicated in Deut. 33:14. Notice this translation of verse 14: “...turnings of the sun...” (*Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Lust/Eynikelp/Hauspie, Part II, p 482),

Also, “...turn, turning, turning around...of the solstice...” (Deut. 33:14). (*Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament*, Arndt-Gingrich, p. 824)

And notice how *tekufah* is translated in Psa. 19:6: “...turning (of the sun at solstice) ...” (*A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Holiday, p. 394).

**The “New” Church of God Messenger**  
**A Newsletter for the People of God**  
**April 2, 2022 --- Issue No. 61**  
**Special Edition**

“...coming around...circuit... of the sun...” (*Brown Driver Briggs Heb-Eng Lexicon*; p. 880) ...

Clearly **the turn of the year** (Heb. *tekufah* used in both Psa. 19:6, Ex. 34:22) **is at the solstices**.

Since there is no turning of the sun at the equinoxes, this Pilgrimage Festival of Ingathering (Ex. 34:22) must be at a solstice. But not the winter solstice, for as this verse indicates, this Feast of Ingathering closely follows the wheat harvest of the 49-day Feast of Weeks. It cannot be the Feast of Tabernacles which at no time occurs when the sun turns at some point along the horizon. So, what is this Festival at the year’s turning, solstice? Pentecost.

**Laura Writes:**

And here we have the conclusion to the matter. Pentecost is what you set your calendar by and not Tishri one. I took the liberty to find Gary’s calendar and here it is:

2022 Calendar Pocahontas, AR USA (Lat: 36d 14m, N / Long: 90d 57m W)

<b>Holy Days</b> (and related observances)	
Passover Festival	April 14 – April 20
Passover Sabbaths	April 14 & April 20
Passover Supper	Night of April 14
Feast of Unleavened Bread	April 15 (Unleavened bread eaten April 14 – April 21)
Wavesheaf Offered	May 1
Feast of Weeks	May 1 – June 18
Feast of Weeks Annual Sabbaths	May 7, 14, 21, 28 June 4, 11, 18
Pentecost	June 19
Shoutings (Trumpets)	September 26
Pre-Atonements Sabbath	October 4 (noon–sunset)
Atonements	October 5
Feast of Tabernacles	October 10 - October 16
Sabbaths	October 10 & October 17
Last Great Day	October 17

Please look at it carefully. In order to line up with the summer solstice he starts with Pentecost and counts backwards to find a wave sheaf offering or maybe he does it the other way around. In either case Pentecost in 2022 is two days before the summer solstice and the wave sheaf offering is over a week after the end of the last day of unleavened bread. He seems to keep the rest of the Holy Days in the normal ballpark. I can honestly say I have never seen a calendar like this one. Better yet I would like to see the historical evidence that this is the calendar they were keeping at the time of Christ.

Historically the wave sheaf offering was always done on Nisan 16, the day after Passover.

**Lev 23:10** Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: **Lev 23:11** And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: **on the morrow after the sabbath** the priest shall wave it. **Lev 23:12** And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an he lamb without blemish of the first

**The “New” Church of God Messenger**  
**A Newsletter for the People of God**  
**April 2, 2022 --- Issue No. 61**  
**Special Edition**

year for a burnt offering unto the LORD. **Lev 23:13** And the meat offering thereof *shall be* two tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto the LORD *for* a sweet savour: and the drink offering thereof *shall be* of wine, the fourth *part* of an hin. **Lev 23:14** And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: *it shall be* a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

**Jos 5:10** And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the **passover** on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. **Jos 5:11** And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the **morrow after the passover**, unleavened cakes, and parched *corn* in the selfsame day. **Jos 5:12** And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

The Sabbath you are to make the wave offering after is Passover and not the weekly Sabbath as many have been taught wrongly to do. Your count to Pentecost starts the day after Passover and will always bring you to a Sivan 6 Pentecost. Gary has his wave sheaf falling way after the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The only thing I can think of here is that he lines his Pentecost up to be the Sunday closest to the Summer Solstice and then he counts backward from Pentecost to find his wave sheaf day. What a foolish concept.

**The Article:**

**(3) THE JEWISH CALENDAR**

**(a). Must be Derived from the Bible:** The Jewish calendar has clearly dominated Sabbath and Holy Day observance through the centuries. It is presently the calendar of choice for many professing the Biblical seventh-day Sabbath, New Moons, and annual Holy Days. Others, while differing from that calendar on some few points, generally follow its tenets. If unproven by Scripture, we cannot use the traditional modern-day Hebrew calendar nor one of its surrogates.

**(b). Jewish Calendar is not Biblical:** Though many remain convinced the Jewish calendar in use today comprises the hallowed oracles of Yahweh: "...hallowed order and rhythm..." (Arthur Spier, *The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar*, Arthur Spier; Feldheim Publishers, 1986; foreword p. ix.), where is the Biblical justification for that claim? The oracles the Jews preserved were the Old Testament books (Rom. 3:1,2), and though you may search from Genesis to Malachi, you will not find the Hebrew calendar. Its postponements, sunset-to-sunset day, first visible crescent New Moon setting the first day of the month, its specific nineteen-year cycle of additional months [changed in 142 A.D.], and alternate 29 and 30-day months are all not there. Many oracle advocates do not observe the Jewish Pentecost (Shavuoth) on Sivan 6, an established date on the Jewish calendar.

Remember Yahshua said, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth (John 17:17)." The Bible is the truth; not Jewish or other traditions unless they can be proven from the Scriptures.

**Laura Writes:**

Oh, but we do keep a Sivan 6 Pentecost because it can be proven from scripture that it is on Sivan 6. All of the Holy Days on the Hebrew Calendar as preserved by the Jews can be proven from the Bible. We are very grateful that God did preserve His calendar complete with all His set time dates on it through the Jewish people because it is the most accurate calendar that has ever been used. It has been totally running on calculations with no adjustments at all for almost 2000 years and we still get a full moon on Passover and on the first day of Tabernacles. The accuracy of the Hebrew Calendar should be proof to anyone reading this that it is God's Calendar.

**The Article:**

**(4). THE "PHARISEES" ARGUMENT**

**(a). Yahshua versus the Jews:** Did Yahshua agree with the Jews of His day (Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes) regarding the Sabbath or annual Feasts? If so, the Jewish calendar must be correct with its first month of the year, New Moons, and Feast Days. Many claim this is the case.

If Yahshua did agree, then why did He warn His followers about the doctrines of the Jewish sects of Pharisees and Sadducees? Here are His words: "...ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees...then understood

**The “New” Church of God Messenger**  
**A Newsletter for the People of God**  
**April 2, 2022 --- Issue No. 61**  
**Special Edition**

they...he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the...doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees (Matt. 16:12; also v. 6).”

**(b). Did Not Agree:** “Beware of their doctrines” included their calendar, because it set their new moons and holy days. He told them openly “... Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, *but cannot discern the signs of the times?* (Matt. 16:3; NAS).” What were those “times” He was referring to in that exchange? Yahweh’s feasts? Notice the meaning of that word “times” used in Matt. 16:3 (Gk: *kairos*, SEC 2540): “3. *definite, fixed time. Abs...festal seasons* (Ex. 23:14; Lev. 23:4) ...” (*Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament*; Arndt-Gingrich; p. 396).

As this reference also shows, the Greek *kairos* is grammatically the same as the Hebrew *moedim* translated “feasts” in Lev. 23:2,4,14, etc.

Also, the ancient LXX [*Septuagint*, Greek Old Testament] translates *kairos* “feasts” in Lev. 23:2,4 where the Hebrew is *moedim*, translated “feasts” 17 times in the Old Testament.

These festal [festival] seasons could only be Yahweh’s feasts, and Yahshua was definitely telling the Jews of His day, they could not discern the signs of Yahweh’s Festivals, the Holy Days. This was a major issue, for He knew they did not know exactly when they occurred, and boldly told them. We should still beware of any stealth Pharisaical and Sadducean doctrines.

**Laura Writes:**

**Mat 16:3** And in the morning, *It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?*

What this is saying is that the Pharisees could read the signs in the sky but they could not discern what was going on in front of their eyes that culminated in Christ’s death on the cross. It does not say what Gary wants it to say. Not every place in scripture where it says time and times has to do with Holy Days. It is a stretch to even go there. You need to read all scripture in context and not just pick out a word you like and go “Wow this proves it” when it proves nothing.

**Mat 23:1** Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, **Mat 23:2** Saying, *The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat: Mat 23:3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.*

This is what Christ also said about the Pharisees. What Christ is saying here is as long as the Pharisees read or teach from the law, do as they say but do not do as they do in actual life. In other words the Pharisees did not do as they taught from the law.

In order for your calendar to be valid, you would have to prove that it was the calendar being kept at the time Christ was alive on earth. Christ went to the Temple on the Sabbath and He taught in the Temple. If the Pharisees were keeping the wrong calendar, you would see evidence of that in scripture and there is none.

**The Article:**

**(5). FIRST VISIBLE CRESCENT:** The Hebrew calendar (*The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar*, Arthur Spier, Feldheim Publishers, 1986) sometimes misses the Biblical New Moon by one-to-two days. This is due to its new-crescent adjustments: “...the months are generally adjusted to the days on which the Sanhedrin would have sanctified them on the basis of the observation of the new crescent...” (Spier; p. 15; “Historical Remarks on the Jewish Calendar”, p.1).

**(a). Crescent in Scripture:** Does the new crescent begin the months of Scripture? The word “crescent” occurs three times. “Crescents” or “crescent ornaments” are mentioned In Judges 8: 22,26 and Isaiah 3:18. None of these references show the crescent set the Scriptural new moons.

In Judges 8:22,26 we find: “...ornaments [KJV]...” should be translated “crescents” (*A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic*

**The “New” Church of God Messenger**  
**A Newsletter for the People of God**  
**April 2, 2022 --- Issue No. 61**  
**Special Edition**

*Lexicon of the Old Testament* Holiday, p. 349; *Green’s Interlinear Bible*); “crescent ornaments” (*New American Standard, The Living Bible*).

*Crescent* is also mentioned in Isaiah 3:18 (*Green’s Interlinear Bible, Reader’s Hebrew-English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, p. 213; *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* Holiday, p. 349).

The Isaiah prophecy (Ch. 3:18) tells us Yahweh will take away those pagan symbols of the Midianites Israel had adopted (Judg. 8:5, 21).

So where did Israel get their practice of using the first visible crescent to begin each month? We know they adopted the sunset-to-sunset day during the Babylonian captivity. We know too, the first crescent method was also a Babylonian practice: “...the Babylonian calendar was at all periods [before Israel’s capture in 597 B.C.] truly lunar...the month began with the evening when the new crescent was for the first time again visible shortly after sunset...” (*The Exact Sciences in Antiquity*, O. Neugebauer, 1957; Brown University Press; Dover Publications, Inc.; New York, 1969; p.106).

Since we find no Scriptural evidence of looking for the New Crescent to start the month (including the often cited, Deut. 16:1) it appears highly probable Babylon was Israel’s source of this practice.

In all probability it is a carryover from ancient Babylon where the observation of the new crescent set the beginning of the months. Remember, Israel was a captive, subject to their captors.

Regardless, being a Babylonian practice, we must *come out* of Babylon, not embrace its ways:

“Come out of her [Babylon, v. 2], my people that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues. (Rev. 18:4; also Isa. 48:20).”

**Laura Writes:**

This is one of the worst calendar papers I have ever read. I feel sorry for you Gary and for anyone you have conned into following this garbage. The bottom line is that you do not have any authority to make up your own Holy Day calendar. Do you honestly believe that God would be so stupid as to tell His people they must keep His Holy Days and then not leave us a calendar? Think deeply about that because keeping the wrong calendar yourself is bad enough but when you teach other people to keep that wrong calendar you will be the one who is held responsible for leading people astray.

## Holy Days 2022

**Passover – April 16, 2022 (Observed at Sunset the Evening Before)**

**Unleavened Bread – April 16-22, 2022**

**Pentecost – June 5, 2022**

**Trumpets - September 26, 2022**

**Atonement – October 5, 2022**

**Tabernacles – October 10-16, 2022**

**Last Great Day – October 17, 2022**