

Church of God, The Eternal

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Dear Brethren:

Warmest greetings once again. We have once again arrived at the pressure-time just before the Feast. So many responsibilities to tie together to keep current with our routine work load. With two Feast sites this year, the organizational duties have multiplied.

Nearly all arrangements have been completed for the Feast this year. Final instructions and suggestions will be found in the Announcement Letter.

Because of the length of the outline on the subject of the Holy Days, we have decided to divide it into two parts, making it available for the months of September and October. In this way you should have a completed outline on the subject by the time you find time really to study the information given.

Now to the introduction of the subject.

There are two ways by which Satan can and does deceive people. He will induce them to reject any and all things which have a religious overtone; or, he will influence human beings to corrupt and pervert the Truth. The latter is generally far more exploited than the former concept.

There is no Biblical area in which this perversion occurs more intensely and feelingly than in the case of God's Holy Days. Mountains of material have been written attempting to justify a rejection of these Days on the premise that they are not for Christians today. But the very "logic" of these arguments is disjointed and incongruous. An argument employed to substantiate one particular point will be categorically contradicted when applied to other specific points. There is no consistency.

Because the past faith of so many has been shattered -- regarding the Holy Days and other Laws of God -- it is deemed imperative that a thorough study be presented this year regarding the Holy Days. Please study this matter carefully; for, in the future, your present endeavor may prove lifesaving, literally.

This Monthly Letter will be presented in the form of an outline. Because of its comprehensive nature, we have selected this abbreviated outline form. Regarding general questions that are often asked, we will employ various comments.

Many and varied questions have been raised relevant to the Feasts of God. In chronological sequence we will attempt to cover all bases -- answering, perhaps in a generalized, but not technical fashion, all the questions about which we are aware. Covering all the historical premises, as well as current concepts, the readers should be afforded a comprehensive review and evaluation of the subject. However, an important principle must be stressed here before we proceed with the outline. No single concept can be maintained which flies in the face of other equally significant points. When Truth is fully realized there will exist a state of harmony regarding all the principles involved. An argument used to support a concept desired cannot be, in turn, used to eliminate another. Such manifestations of inconsistency and confusion are frequently seen in religious arguments -- arguments regarding many controversial subjects.

In a word, all the material presented must be consistent and congruous. As stated earlier, there must exist a state of harmony and agreement. For example, if God never changes, how can any doctrinal aberration, regardless of the time, ever be acceptable? Conversely, how can anyone who believes that God has reversed Himself doctrinally confidently assert that promises of everlasting life for faithfulness will be realized? There is glaring incongruity manifested in the application of the two divergent concepts.

Cardinal principles will be employed frequently in the progress of this outline. You must keep these principles in mind in order to arrive at harmonic conclusions.

Now, to the outline:

I. Time Exists By The Creation Of God Only

A. All time is determined by heavenly bodies

Note: Exception of the week: The week exists by the authority of God. It is the passage of seven consecutive days -- a block of time not designated by astronomical indicators.

1. Gen. 1:14-18 -- Regulation of days and years
2. Gen. 1:3-2:2 -- Seven days established

3. Gen. 29:27-28 -- The week recognized in Jacob's time

Note: Astral bodies determine the length of days, months, and years. By His own authority, God welded a succession of seven days into a week. Four other blocks of time exist by the authority of God.

4. Lev. 25:1-7 -- A week of years -- six years followed by a Sabbath of land rest.
5. Lev. 25:8-17 -- A week of Sabbatic years -- followed by a Jubilee -- the 50th year.
6. II Pet. 3:8 -- Years can be blocked into a period of a thousand years. See also Rev. 20:2-7.
7. II Pet. 3:8 -- The sum of thousand-year days is circumscribed by the limits of the week -- a period of seven thousand years.

Note: Rev. 20:2-7 must surely be referring to the 7th-thousand year period of time. Compare Heb. 4:1-11.

II. As Creator, God Only Can Make Time Holy

Note: Within the structure of all blocks of time, God has designated and made specific times holy.

- A. Of the week, God made the seventh day holy.
 1. Gen. 2:1-3 -- Conclusion of the creation week
 2. Ex. 20:8-11 -- A point of the great Decalogue
 3. Deut. 5:12-15 -- Repetition of the Decalogue
 4. Ex. 16:23 -- ". . . holy sabbath [seventh day]. . . ."
 5. Ex. 31:14-15
 6. Ex. 35:2
 7. Lev. 23:3
 8. Neh. 9:14
 9. Neh. 10:31
 10. Isa. 58:13
- B. Of the year, several days are holy.
 1. General application to all days made holy within the year
 - a. Lev. 23:4
 - b. Lev. 23:37
 2. 15th and 21st days of the 7th month (1st and last Days of Unleavened Bread)
 - a. Ex. 12:15-16
 - b. Lev. 23:6-8

- c. Num. 28:17-18, 25
- 3. Variable day of 3rd month (Pentecost -- day after a fifty-day count from Sabbath within Unleavened Bread)
 - a. Lev. 23:21
 - b. Num. 28:26
- 4. 1st day of 7th month (Trumpets)
 - a. Lev. 23:27
 - b. Num. 29:1
 - c. Neh. 8:2; 8:9-11
 - d. Ps. 81:3
- 5. 10th day of 7th month (Atonement)
 - a. Lev. 23:27-28
 - b. Lev. 16:30-31
 - c. Num. 29:7
- 6. 15th day of 7th month (1st day of Feast of Tabernacles)
 - a. Lev. 23:34-35
 - b. Num. 29:12
- 7. 22nd day of 7th month (Great High Day)
 - a. Lev. 23:36
 - b. Num. 29:35

Note: What makes anything holy? Two elements are crucial. Being set apart by God for specific use and the holy presence of God. On Holy Days God commands men to appear. Men may choose not to honor and respect God on these holy times; nevertheless, the times remain holy to the one and only unchanging God.

Holy Days are set (established) appointments between God and man. There are other appointments, also, established by God. To understand this factor of God's Law, let us consider a number of these designated times.

III. God's Purposes Regulated By Great Master Calendar -- Designation Of Times And Limits

- A. The times and bounds of all nations
 - 1. Acts 17:26
 - 2. Deut. 32:8-9
- B. Life span of human beings
 - 1. Job 7:1
 - 2. Ps. 90:10

- C. The state of man's existence
 - 1. Job 7:1-3
 - 2. Ps. 90:7-12

- D. Events of ancient Israel
 - 1. Ex. 9:5
 - 2. Compare: Gen. 15:1-18; Ex. 2:23-24; 12:40-41

- E. Events of Christ's first appearance
 - 1. The first appearance
 - a. Gal. 4:4
 - 2. Preaching the Gospel
 - a. Mark 1:14-15
 - 3. The Crucifixion
 - a. Matt. 26:18
 - b. John 7:6, 8
 - c. Rom. 5:6
 - 4. Christ's ascension
 - a. Luke 9:51

- F. The time of the end
 - 1. Dan. 8:19
 - 2. Dan. 11:27
 - 3. Dan. 11:35

- G. Events of the last days
 - 1. Vision of Habakkuk
 - a. Hab. 2:3
 - 2. Conflict between kings of the North and South
 - a. Dan. 11:29
 - 3. Time of judgment
 - a. Eccl. 3:17
 - 4. Revelation of the wicked one
 - a. II Thess. 2:6
 - 5. Times of Gentiles
 - a. Luke 21:24
 - 6. Destruction of modern Philistines
 - a. Isa. 14:31
 - 7. Resurrection of the just
 - a. Job 14:13-14
 - 8. Judgment of fallen angels
 - a. Matt. 8:29
 - 9. Restoration of all things
 - a. Acts 3:19
 - b. Eph. 1:10
 - 10. Israel restored
 - a. Ps. 102:13
 - b. Acts 1:6-7

Comment: Up to this time God has remembered every "great-event" appointment to which He was committed. Is there any reason to believe He will fail on any future commitments? Or, any other appointments to which He was or is committed -- past, present, or future?

IV. Holy Days Are Appointments -- Between God And Man

A. Holy Days are Feast appointments.

1. Ex. 23:14
2. Deut. 16:16
3. II Chron. 8:13
4. Neh. 10:33-34 -- Set Feasts, appointed times

Comment: The Feasts of God are set times (appointments) comparable every way to the great events of God's Calendar.

V. Times Of Great Prophetic Events Are Not Known By Men -- Until The Time Of Occurrence

- A. Eccl. 8:6-7 -- ". . . to every purpose there is time . . . he [man] knoweth not that which shall be"
- B. Mark 13:32-33 -- ". . . that day and that hour knoweth no man . . . for ye know not when the time is."
- C. Acts 1:7 -- ". . . It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power."
- D. Luke 12:56 -- ". . . ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?"

Comment: Men are capable of observing and evaluating physical things. They can arrive at logical deductions. But, Jesus implied, man cannot, of himself, ascertain spiritual things. They can be comprehended only when specifically revealed.

VI. Specific Appointments Of God Which Involve Men Are Made Known

A. Calendar and Feast days revealed

1. Ex. 12:2 -- Direct revelation from God

2. Ex. 12, 13 -- Events of Passover and Unleavened Bread
3. Ex. 24:12 -- Ten Commandments (tables of stone); Law and Commandments given by God
4. Ex. 25:22 -- God's provision for future revelations to be given to Israel
5. Lev. 23:1-44 -- Weekly and annual appointments of the Calendar: Note verse 44.
6. Neh. 9:13-14 -- ". . . madest known . . . holy sabbath . . . statutes"

VII. Holy Days Are Not Jewish, Israelitish, Or Otherwise Restrictive -- They Belong To God

- A. Ex. 18:16 -- Called statutes of God (Holy Days are statutes -- Lev. 23:14, 21, 31, 41; 16:31).
- B. Lev. 18:5 -- Statutes, laws, and judgments of men forbidden -- must obey those which belong to God.
- C. Lev. 18:26 -- The statutes belong to God.
- D. Lev. 19:37 -- Israel must obey statutes which belong to God.
- E. Lev. 20:8, 22 -- Those set apart must keep His statutes.
- F. Lev. 25:17-18 -- If God is our God, we must observe His statutes.
- G. Deut. 6:2, 17 -- Statutes and Commandments belong to God.
- H. Ps. 19:8 -- Statutes are from God.
- I. Ps. 119 (many vss.) -- The statutes belong to God.

VIII. Sabbaths And Feast Days Are Holy To God

- A. The weekly Sabbath
 1. Ex. 16:23 -- ". . . the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord"
 2. Ex. 31:14-15 -- ". . . the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord"
 3. Lev. 23:3 -- ". . . holy convocation . . . sabbath of the Lord"
 4. Neh. 9:14 -- ". . . thy holy sabbath"

B. The annual Sabbaths

1. Lev. 23:2 -- ". . . feasts of the Lord . . . proclaim to be holy convocations"
2. Lev. 23:4 -- ". . . feasts . . . even holy convocations"
3. Lev. 23:37 -- ". . . feasts . . . ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations"
4. Col. 2:16 -- ". . . of an holyday" (Interesting that Paul called these Feast days Holy, years after they presumably were abrogated by the death of Christ)
5. Ex. 12:16 -- First and last Days of Unleavened Bread are holy. (See also Lev. 23:7, 8.)
6. Lev. 23:21 -- Feast of firstfruits is holy.
7. Lev. 23:24; Ps. 81:3 -- ". . . trumpets, an holy convocation."
8. Lev. 23:27 -- " . . . atonement . . . holy convocation"
9. Lev. 23:35 -- First day of the Feast of Tabernacles ". . . an holy convocation"
10. Lev. 23:39 -- The Great High Day is equal to the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Note: See usage in chapters 28 and 29 of the book of Numbers.

C. General usage

1. Neh. 10:31 -- Nehemiah calls the Feast days holy.

IX. What Makes Anything Holy?

A. The presence of God

1. Ex. 3:5 -- Holy ground because God was then present (See also Acts 7:33.)
2. Josh. 5:13-15 -- Again, other ground holy because God was present there
3. Hab. 2:20 -- Is all heaven holy? Or, the place only where God dwells?

B. Set apart for specific -- holy -- use

1. Amos 2:7 -- Adultery and all forms of immorality profane holy matrimony and the Creator of the marriage relationship.
2. Matt. 24:15 -- Jerusalem is set apart for holy purpose today. Most assuredly it is far from being literally holy -- the place where God resides and His purpose carried out.

X. God Is Inherently Holy

- A. Lev. 11:44-45 -- God says He is (inherently) Holy. (See also Lev. 19:2; 20:26; 21:18; Ps. 99:3 -- see margin; Ps. 99:5, 9.)
- B. Josh. 24:19 -- Physical men cannot arbitrarily serve a Holy God.

XI. The Words Of God Are Inherently Holy

- A. Rom. 1:2 -- Writings of the prophets are the holy Words of God.
- B. Rom. 7:12 -- Laws and Commandments are holy.

Note: The Greek word nomos generally refers to a comprehensive usage -- a complete section of the Bible -- unless a specific law is indicated (Matt. 12:5; Luke 24:44; John 1:17; 7:19, 23; 8:5; I Cor. 9:9; Heb. 10:28; Jas. 2:10; Acts 13:15; 24:14)

- C. II Tim. 3:15 -- The Old Testament portion of God's Word is holy, as is the entirety of the Bible.
- D. II Pet. 2:21 -- The holy Word of God must be revealed and delivered to called servants.

XII. Because Of The Mental Powers Of Men, God Commanded Them Always To Differentiate Between Holy And Profane

- A. Lev. 10:10 -- Ministry must remain sober and knowledgeable of the holy.
- B. But true to the natural nature with which born -- Israel failed to differentiate between holy and profane.
 - 1. Ezek. 22:26
- C. Why do people begin to pervert -- fail to correctly differentiate?
 - 1. I Tim. 4:7 -- They do not resist the natural inclination to question the initial revelation of Truth (see vss. 1-6).
 - 2. I Tim. 6:20 -- (See under "A.")
 - 3. II Tim. 2:16 -- (Vs. 1-18 -- See under "A.")

Comment: The Word of God is holy. That Word is the basis of revealed doctrine. No part of that Word is defective. It is in its entirety holy, honorable, good, and perfect.

XIII. The Holy Days Are A Part Of That Word

- A. Matt. 4:4 -- Required obedience? To every Word of God. Compare Deut. 8:1-6.
- B. Deut. 4:2-4 -- Men must not add to nor take away from the fullness of that Word. (See also Deut. 12:32; Prov. 30:5-6; Rev. 22:18.)
- C. Ps. 12:6 -- All God's Word is pure -- as seven-times tried, refined, and purified silver.
- D. John 5:46-47 -- No difference between the words of Moses and Christ. Both spoke the same thing.
- E. John 1:1, 14 -- The Word existed from the beginning. It was physically manifested in the life of Jesus Christ.
- F. John 17:17 -- The Word (all) of God is Truth.
- G. John 10:35 -- No part of that Word can be broken.

XIV. Holy Days Are A Part Of God's Definition Of The Law

- A. The epitome of all things is God.
 - 1. Eph. 1:23; Rom. 11:36
- B. God is love -- love underlies all that exists.
 - 1. I John 4:8
 - 2. I John 4:16
- C. The summary of love is God's Law.
 - 1. Rom. 13:10
 - 2. I John 5:3
 - 3. II John 6
 - 4. Manifestation of love for God and Christ
 - a. John 15:10 -- How many? All!
 - b. John 14:15, 23 -- Manifestation of indwelling presence of God and Christ: obedience to all God's Words

- D. All Law defined in two great principles
 - 1. Matt. 22:36-40
- E. These two great principles summarize the Ten Commandments.
 - 1. Matt. 22:36-40
- F. These ten great Words summarize the covenant of God.
 - 1. Ex. 34:27-28
- G. The Holy Days are a part of that covenant.
 - 1. Ex. 19:1-25 -- Preparation of the people
 - 2. Ex. 20:1-23:33 -- The Words delivered
 - 3. Ex. 24:1-8 -- Sealing of the covenant

XV. Regarding Man, To Whom Should The Holy Days Be Holy?

- A. Given to Israel
 - 1. Ex. 24:12 -- Given to Moses -- from God
 - 2. Ex. 25:21-22 -- Moses, the intermediary to receive God's Words -- to give to Israel
 - 3. Lev. 10:11 -- Moses to teach Israel the statutes
 - 4. Lev. 26:46 -- Laws and statutes delivered to Israel
 - 5. Deut. 4:44-45 -- Laws and statutes delivered to Israel by Moses
 - 6. Deut. 6:24-25 -- Given to Israel
 - 7. Deut. 12:1 -- Statutes and judgments were given to Israel.
- B. Who did not receive them?
 - 1. Deut. 4:14-20 -- Gentiles possessed a different set of values
- C. Yet today, to whom do the covenants, service to God, opportunity of sonship, glory, and all promises belong?
 - 1. Rom. 9:4 -- To Israelites

XVI. As The Called And Separated People, Israel Is Holy To God: Called To Obey His Holy Word

- A. Ex. 19:5-6 -- A holy nation
Compare Deut. 7:6; 14:2.
- B. Lev. 11:44-45 -- Called to obey
Compare Deut. 14:21; Lev. 19:2; 20:7,26.

XVII. Holy Days Are Not A Part Of The Sacrificial Law

- A. Ex. 20:1-23:33 -- No mention of sacrifices in covenant
- B. Ps. 51:16-19 -- David understood that obedience, not sacrifice, was primary.
Compare Ps. 40:6-7; Pro. 21:2-3.
- C. Isa. 1:10-11 -- Sacrifices were never an end in themselves.
- D. Ezek. 20:24-25 -- They were added for purpose (remember, no sacrifices involved in the Old Covenant).
- E. Jer. 7:21-23 -- Through Jeremiah God sets the record straight.

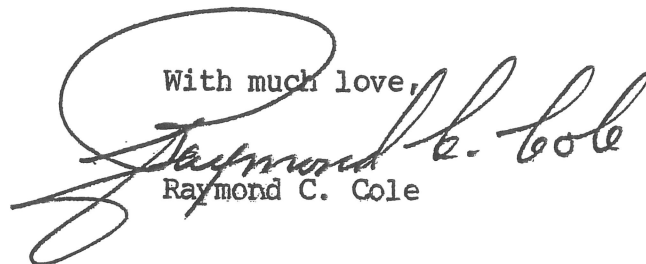
Comment: God and Israel had entered into a covenant (Ex. 24:7-8; Deut. 5:22-33). Repeated by Joshua (Josh. 24:24-25). Especially on specific days, God would appear before Israel to instruct them, by request, through a human servant.

As mentioned, because of length, the Holy Day outline must be divided. The second half will be sent in the month of October. This arrangement will require a little rescheduling of assignments. Mr. Jean Aviolat will write the November issue instead of the October one. The December Monthly Letter will still be written by Mr. George Leeman.

By putting my two Monthly Letters together, you will have the entire outline on the Holy Days by the time most find opportunity really to study it -- shortly after returning from the Feast.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone at the Feast -- just a matter of days from now. Please take care. You are priceless in the sight of God and of us who are privileged to serve you.

With much love,



Raymond C. Cole