

Fundamentals of Belief #13C: The Holy Days and the Old Covenant

Edited Sermon Transcript
Jon W. Brisby; 4-21-2001

Getting right into the sermon for this afternoon, brethren, we want to continue in this long series that I have been covering on the Fundamentals of Belief of the Church of God, The Eternal. We are in the midst of covering fundamental number thirteen concerning the Holy Days. Let me read again the fundamental as it is written. We have twenty-six fundamentals at this time; this is number thirteen:

We believe the seven Annual Holy Days as given to ancient Israel by God through Moses, kept by Christ, the Apostle Paul, and the New Testament Church, as evidenced by the books of Acts and Corinthians, are to be kept today. The sacrifices, which were added, are not to be kept on those days nor any other day of the year. During the spring festival of seven days, leavening in any form is not to be eaten, as Paul instructed the Corinthians.

That is the quote. In the last two sermons, we have already covered what I think are the most important principles concerning the Holy Days—the understanding of the real value of those days and what they mean. At the beginning, I intentionally avoided getting into the technicalities of proving that the Holy Days are to be kept. I thought it most important to emphasize the value of those days, why God created them, and what they represent. It is a whole lot easier for us to accept, to value and then to act on that knowledge if we see and understand what it is there for, rather than just hearing that there is a command and expectation, and then doing it as if it is a burden. Those things are required also for our obedience, but God has given us not just a command to keep His Holy Days, but also the understanding of why, what they mean, and what they picture for us.

The Holy Days, as we have already seen, picture that perfect plan He has orchestrated for the salvation of mankind. They cover all of those principles that are so misunderstood by the people of this world, including the nature of man, what we are, why we need a Passover lamb, and the meaning of the Days of Unleavened Bread. They also include the requirement of the Holy Spirit—pictured by Pentecost—in order to share the very mind of God and have that communion with Him. It is the power of the Holy Spirit which gives us the ability to act upon that way which has been revealed to us.

We understand the times of salvation—God's choice in calling only a very few now to understand that priceless way of life. The majority will not receive their opportunity until the return of Christ, pictured by the Feast of Trumpets. The Day of Atonement pictures the actual, literal reconciliation of mankind with God. All of the sins of the world will be placed upon the head of the adversary who has plagued us continually. Then, the Feast of Tabernacles pictures the Millennial rule of Jesus Christ upon this earth, when this earth will be remade into that glorious environment God intended from the beginning. It could have existed and been developed had man obeyed God. However, we could not have learned, except for six thousand years of hard, bitter experiences while being separated from God; but that will be recovered in the Millennial reign.

One thousand years will be followed by the resurrection of the millions and billions of those who never before had their opportunity to understand that plan—that purpose—or to have a close relationship with God at all. They will receive their opportunity before the final fulfillment of that great harvest—the final judgment and the extinction of those who refuse to bend the knee to God. They will not burn in hellfire forever and ever, but they will be taken mercifully out of the way. They will be destroyed and put out of their misery; the only ones who remain—who are given eternal life—are those who have truly accepted God. They will be given their priceless reward—the opportunity to be in that glorious family with God; not as angelic beings, but as sons and heirs with Christ to reign in that family for all eternity.

It is a valuable plan, and it is pictured totally through the Holy Days. That is the real value. We also went through and saw the actual commands in Leviticus 23 for the specific keeping of those Holy Days and how they were instructed.

Now, we are ready to look at some of the specific, technical explanations to unravel some of the difficulties that are presented by those who want to argue against

the keeping of the Holy Days. They want to say that the Holy Days are done away; they are not for Christians today. So now, we are ready to address some of those complexities.

We want to focus on that part of our fundamental that says, ". . . the seven Annual Holy Days as given to ancient Israel by God through Moses . . . are to be kept today." Our subtopic for the day is *The Holy Days and the Old Covenant*. We are going to spend a lot of time talking about the law and the covenant, those things that do involve the Holy Days.

The classic assertion by most so-called Christians today is that the Holy Days were done away because they were either 1) a part of the Old Covenant or law of Moses, 2) a part of the sacrificial system, or 3) said to be done away for Christians by the Apostle Paul. I can tell you, we are not going to complete this topic today because I have a lot of material. In the next sermon, we are going to look at most of the New Testament scriptures that involve examples of Holy Day-keeping. We will look at all of the examples of the Apostle Paul and what his actions were, as well as the example of Jesus Christ.

Today, we want to talk about the arguments against Holy Day-keeping on the basis of attributing them to the things that are done away. In that respect, we are going to do a little bit of review of some of the material I gave you in fundamental number seven on *Sin and Law*. I think it is especially appropriate, as it applies to the Holy Days, to refresh these things in our memories.

Let me first ask the questions, are the Holy Days a part of the Old Covenant and are they a part of the law of Moses? If so, does that mean they are done away? First of all, is the term "Old Covenant" synonymous with the term "law of Moses"? That is where a lot of the confusion comes from for those who try to evaluate what it is that was done away.

The Old Covenant was the exchange of promises made between God and Israel. That is what a covenant is, isn't it? It is an agreement between two parties. The question is, was the disannulling of the Old Covenant synonymous with the law of Moses? We know that the Old Covenant, which was made between God and Israel, came to its completion with the death of Jesus Christ. Are not agreements between parties disannulled at death? Those who will argue to do away with the Holy Days say, "See, that Old Covenant was done away with by the death of Christ; so now, none of those things apply for Christians."

It begs the question that we need to be able to answer and to understand because we may be asked at some time. We need to be ready to give an answer. Why is it that we continue to keep those old days that were a part of an Old Covenant which was done away with by the death of Jesus Christ? Very few others are doing those things at all. So how are we going to answer?

The Old Covenant was an exchange of promises made between God and Israel, His people. Those promises were based upon obedience to God's law. Let me give you this example, so as not to confuse that covenant with the law itself. Let's say, for instance, that a father makes a pact with his teenage son. The teenage son has just gotten his driver's license, and the father is afraid of the son getting himself into trouble. To give his son an incentive, he makes a pact with his son and says, "Son, if you will promise me that you will obey the traffic laws of the state and city—no speeding, stopping at every stop sign, not running red lights, signaling when you change lanes, and all of the other things that are a part of the book—then I promise to give you certain liberties. I will allow you take the car. I will allow you to have freedom in order to enjoy the opportunity to use the vehicle to go here and there, to take your friends, and do different things."

That is a covenant, isn't it? That is a covenant between a father and a son—privileges, special considerations in exchange for the son doing something. And what was that? Obeying the laws of the land while in a motor vehicle. However, let me ask you this: although he accepts his father's proposal, agrees, shakes his hand, and enters into this covenant relationship, what happens if the son doesn't live up to his bargain? If he gets out on the road and is spinning around, speeding, becoming a nuisance and putting himself and others in harm's way, does his violation of the covenant make those laws of the state and city null and void? If he breaks the covenant with his father and therefore takes himself out of the option to have those special privileges of using the car, does that mean that, all of a sudden now, the traffic laws that apply within the state are also done away? Not at all.

In this particular example, the covenant included a requirement to obey the existing laws of the land. The breaking or disannulling of the covenant between the father and the son has no bearing on the applicability of those laws for everyone else. They are still in force because they existed before. They were already there on the books. They apply to everyone who has a driver's license or gets behind the wheel of a car, regardless of any additional covenant that may be made between parties.

The simplest way to understand the technicalities involved in the Bible concerning the Old Covenant between God and Israel and how it applies to the law of Moses is to recognize that the immutable laws of God existed long before the special covenant He made with His people, Israel. That covenant was made as God gave them a special opportunity to be His holy nation. He set them apart and gave them special privileges, honoring them with His mercy and every benefit—if they would obey His laws. Did He create those laws for the very first time at that same time? No, those laws already existed from the beginning.

With those things in mind, let's look at some of the scriptures which support that very orientation. The Old Covenant was an exchange of promises made between God and Israel, and those promises were based upon obedience to preexisting laws.

Jeremiah 7:22–23:

For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices . . .

Here, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Jeremiah is recording that the original covenant which God made with Israel had nothing to do with sacrifices.

But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people [Here is a recounting of the special covenant relationship that God offered.]: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.

The covenant was based upon Israel obeying commandments and laws. Those laws were not created at the very time of the covenant; they were only confirmed. God's law preceded that special covenant established with Israel because His law already existed.

Let's notice Romans 5:12–14:

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world . . ." What is sin? The transgression of the law. So, anytime we are speaking of sin, we are speaking of a state involving law and an infraction of a law.

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world . . .

Even until the reconfirmation of the law on Mt. Sinai, sin was already in the world. How do we explain that? It seems confusing, doesn't it?

. . . but sin is not imputed when there is no law. [How could sin have existed prior to Mt. Sinai if there was no law?] Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

How could Adam have been a transgressor if there had been no law? Transgression is an infraction of a law, is it not? If the law had not been instituted until Mt. Sinai, then how could Adam have been guilty of anything? The only way that Adam was considered a transgressor was because there was a law that he broke. What law did Adam break? If there had been no law in force, Adam would not have been guilty of transgression—of law-breaking—and neither would have Cain. Yet, we know Cain was a murderer.

We don't need to turn to those first chapters in Genesis; you remember the story. Cain was guilty of murder, but others would have you believe that the law against murder didn't exist until Exodus 20 when God instituted it for the first time on Mt. Sinai. If that is true, then in what way is Cain guilty of anything and why did he receive God's condemnation, except that the law against murder was in effect from the very beginning?

So Adam was a transgressor, which means there was a law that was in force. God's original spiritual law became a part of the covenant made at Mt. Sinai. That is where the confusion comes in. God incorporated His immutable, spiritual laws that already existed from the very beginning and made them a part of the special, unique covenant He made with Israel. From that time forward, those laws became synonymous with and were even referred to as the law of Moses. The law of Moses included and involved that covenant, and it obviously included the immutable laws of God because they were a part of the covenant. The thing that we understand, brethren, is that the disannulment of the covenant by the death of the parties that are involved cannot disannul the law that it did not bring into effect.

Just because the covenant was broken as a result of the sins of Israel and by the death of Jesus Christ, does not mean that the law that was included as a part of that covenant was done away with at all. It preexisted, it was still established, and it is still here, just as much as the laws of the land are still in effect regardless of whether or not that young teenage son abides by the covenant with his father. It has no effect whatsoever upon the laws that were a part of the covenant.

The law of Moses translated God's spiritual laws into a civil law for the nation. By the codification on two tables of stone of that immutable law that had existed from the beginning, the Ten Commandments, it provided the foundation for an entire civil law to be codified for this special nation that God selected. That civil law was developed and expanded from ten fundamental commandments into statutes and judgments for application within everyday life in Israel. First, let's notice that it was a perfect law.

Psalms 19:7–9:

The law of the [Eternal] is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the [Eternal] is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the [Eternal] are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the [Eternal] is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the [Eternal] is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the [Eternal] are true and righteous altogether.

Now, if there is a problem with these commandments, statutes, and judgments which means that they needed to be abrogated or done away, then why are they called perfect, pure, right, true, and righteous? No, these are referring to the immutable laws of God which preexisted that covenant relationship with the Israelites.

Those Ten Commandments were expanded into a civil law in the same way you might think about it within our country. The Congress in our government is the law-making branch of the government. They institute new laws. Now, is that the end? Does Congress write a law, then vote on it and pass it? Is that it?

Let's take the IRS as an example. The Congress passes a new law in the tax code; what has to happen next? The original law is written on a high level, as thick and as many pages as it can be, as much paper as you can use for writing a new law

that comes out of Congress. It still is a very high-level document, just like one of the commandments in the Ten Commandments is a high-level principle.

How do you take that new law and apply it in day-to-day circumstances? How does the IRS take a new law passed by Congress and then implement it into the specific administration of individual tax returns? They do so by further amplifying it with regulations. IRS regulations are an expansion of the original law that is written.

Then, to that are added interpretations that come from lawsuits, which you can classify as judgments. What are judgments? Those are the tests that occur when a dispute comes out about how best to apply the law; does it really mean this, or does it really mean this? What about this circumstance? It is a gray area. We didn't know what to expect. What did Congress mean? So, based upon the intent of the law, a judge rules and makes decisions in individual cases. Then, that case law is used as a precedent to make consistent decisions in future cases.

The very same principles are involved in that which God set up for His people. The Ten Commandments are the high-level laws, but they needed to be interpreted in greater detail so that the Israelites knew specifically how to use them in their lives. What is murder? We can all agree that one of the Ten Commandments says that you shall not murder, but is everything that is killing considered murder? Are there certain times when human lives are taken which is not considered murder? Absolutely.

The specific statutes and judgments found within the law recorded by Moses gave the detailed level that the Israelites needed in order to apply all of the laws within that civil environment. That is how the statutes and judgments further explain and give details of the original law. Then, they are used collectively to fulfill the very spiritual intent of those original commandments.

So Psalm 19 tells us that those commandments, statutes, and judgments are all right, pure, righteous, and perfect. They are not the things that were done away with by the death of Jesus Christ. That covenant included the law of Moses. It was called the law of Moses because it included the Ten Commandments and the expansion of those commandments, statutes, and judgments. The nation of Israel used this as their civil law—the same way we have laws that govern everything affecting our local governments.

Israel was not a part of another nation, subject to that nation's civil laws. Their civil laws were based upon those very spiritual principles that God gave from the beginning, the Ten Commandments. What a blessed nation they were, that their civil law was the very spiritual law.

When Christ returns, what will it be like for us to live in an environment in which we will have that very circumstance for the first time? We will not have to be subject to a mundane, physical law created by men—as long as it doesn't violate God's principles—and have to live under God's principles along with man's in a dual situation. The only law that will exist to govern all manner of life upon this earth—civil and spiritual, religious and otherwise—will be based upon the Ten Commandments. Will that not be a very glorious existence?

That is what Israel had the opportunity to live under, had they valued and appreciated it. To that covenant and the law of Moses were added temporary laws for Israel—other specific statutes and judgments that regulated rituals, including sacrifices, the lighting of candles, burning incense, and various washings. What was the point of the addition of these particular statutes and judgments? They were there to remind Israel of the penalty for disobeying God, for breaking and transgressing His perfect law. Those added rituals that were temporary in nature were put there to remind Israel of those holy commandments. Those added laws, later called the carnal ordinances, are referenced in Hebrews 9.

Hebrews 9:8–12:

The Holy [Spirit] this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience . . .

The sacrifices were never set up as something that would take away sin. The rituals and sacrifices were there temporarily because they pointed to something else—something not yet fulfilled.

Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.

So yes, there were certain ordinances that were only temporary. They were only to last for a particular length of time.

But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

What was it that those sacrifices represented, those ordinances added to the immutable laws of God? They pictured the very sacrifice of Jesus Christ who would become that High Priest. Through His shed blood we would receive redemption. The sacrifices that were added temporarily to God's perfect laws were only to remind Israel of the penalty for sin, for transgressing the laws.

We are reminded also, as the Church, of the penalty for breaking God's immutable laws. We are reminded through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ that there is no way to receive an annulment of the death penalty which we have incurred, except that we accept the very blood of Christ. He then offers, and has offered, to pay that price for us through His sacrifice. In spite of our guilt and transgression, we can have that penalty of law-breaking removed from us—washed away in His blood.

Through the sacrifices that God ordered them to fulfill, the Israelites pictured that coming sacrifice of Jesus Christ. All of the washings and sacrifices were there as a picture of that which Christ was going to do. As we have already seen, those physical sacrifices in and of themselves did not wipe away the penalty for sin. Because Israel was a physical body, a physical people, and a physical nation, they could not live up to God's perfect laws. God was merciful and upheld His covenant with them long after anyone would have expected. In spite of their infractions, in spite of their disregard for the Sabbath and the Holy Days and their running to all of these pagan practices, how merciful He was for so long. Had they fulfilled what was required, they would have had an opportunity physically to receive every good thing, but Israel was a type of the Church—that which you and I have been called to become a part of.

Galatians 3:17–19:

"And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before . . ." This is talking about the covenant between God and Abraham, when God promised that He

was going to make of him a great nation. That promise was that Christ would be born of him physically. The Savior actually would come from a descendant of Abraham.

And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

Which law are we talking about? Are we talking about the eternal, immutable laws of God that He instituted from the very beginning?

For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions . . .

We are not talking about the immutable laws that God instituted from the beginning, but some law that was added afterward—those requirements for Israel concerning the rituals, washings, and sacrifices.

It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

There was a law that was added. Why? Because of transgressions. Doesn't that seem confusing? There was a law that had to be created for the first time because of an existing transgression. Wait a minute. Doesn't transgression in and of itself require that a law be broken? You can't have a transgression if there isn't an existing law, can you? So how do these people try to claim that the law that was added was all of God's laws, including the Ten Commandments? We are talking about a law that was added because of a transgression that already existed. If the transgression already existed, doesn't that mean there was a law that already existed? How can there be a transgression that required the addition of a new law if there wasn't already an existing law?

I know that can get confusing, but what you find is that there had to be an existing law that was broken; and because of the breaking of an existing law, God provided a means to remind Israel about the penalty for sin. It was by the addition of certain ordinances—those that were referred to as the carnal ordinances.

So we have a covenant that was based upon the immutable, preexisting laws of God. Then, to that covenant were added (besides those Ten Commandments which were a part of the preexisting law) additional ordinances to remind Israel of sin. They were to point to Him who would give us true redemption, Jesus Christ. By the fulfilling of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, those added carnal ordinances had run their course and were no longer required. They in no way repudiated or did away with the original laws that existed prior to the covenant.

Both the immutable, spiritual laws and those temporary laws fall under what is called the law of Moses. Both of them—the preexisting laws that were there from the beginning as well as those temporary ordinances—were a part of that body of law called the law of Moses. That is what confuses many, many people.

The law of Moses is synonymous with the law of God. It wasn't Moses who created it whatsoever. They were all a part of that which God ordained.

Luke 2:21–24:

And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called Jesus, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb. And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished . . .

Here, the law of Moses is referenced as definitely including those temporary laws, right? We are talking about laws of purification, which were a part of those rituals required of the Israelites. Obviously, that was a part of the law of Moses.

. . . when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; (As it is written in the law of the Lord [I thought we just said it was called the law of Moses, but here, we find it synonymously called the law of God.], Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) . . .

Where was that law written? Was that a law that was given at Mt. Sinai at the time of the covenant and the institution of sacrifices—those carnal ordinances? No, we are referring to a law that existed prior to the time of Mt. Sinai. No need to turn to it, but you will find it in Exodus 13, where the law was given to Israel at the time they were exiting Egypt. That was weeks before they arrived at Mt. Sinai; and yet, the law

was given to Israel concerning the setting apart of the firstborn, and it was called the law of the Lord.

And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.

So within this very same body of law—which is called synonymously the law of Moses and the law of the Lord—sacrifices are included. They are one and the same. A part of the law of Moses is still absolutely in force today. A part of it was, indeed, done away. The law of Moses included both the original, immutable, eternal laws of God, including the Ten Commandments, as well as the temporary laws involving sacrifices and rituals that pointed to Christ. They were all collected together as a part of the law of Moses.

The problem with those who want to say that the Holy Days, the Sabbath, and all of God's other immutable laws are done away, is that they want to put all of those laws into one bundle and treat them as those temporary sacrifices. You have to recognize that the law of Moses included both parts—the temporary laws and, most importantly, the immutable, spiritual laws.

Even the two great commandments that Jesus taught, love God and love your neighbor, came from the book of the law that Moses taught to the people. Let's notice just a couple quick examples.

Leviticus 19:18—this is a part of that law that people want to say is done away:

Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the [Eternal].

That is a part of the law of Moses—love thy neighbor as thyself. Was that done away by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ? Did He really do away with a law that says we are supposed to love one another? King Josiah, as I have shown you before, was praised for keeping this commandment about love towards God.

2 Kings 23:25:

And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the [Eternal] with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him.

King Josiah was fulfilling the commandment, the law of Moses, to love God. Isn't that what Christ commanded His people to do? To love God with all of your heart—that first and great commandment. These are the very same two great commandments that were proclaimed by the Apostle John for Christians today. Let's notice it in 2 John 1:4–6:

I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father. [What commandment? One that existed from the very beginning.] And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.

That doesn't mean from the beginning of Christ's own ministry in the flesh. Christ did not originate the commandment to love one another. He only repeated the existing commandment that had been confirmed from the very beginning. It was given to Israel and codified as a part of that immutable law, and it was a part of the law of Moses. If the law of Moses is done away, so is the commandment to love one another.

And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. [What commandments?] This is the commandment [in case there is any confusion], That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

It refers all the way back to that which is called the law of Moses. They were God's laws, and they contained every principle of righteousness including love toward God and love toward fellow man. Were those laws really done away? Did the sacrifice of Jesus Christ annul the requirement for love? Did it open up the way for us to steal, murder, commit adultery, covet, lie, and cheat? Not at all.

Those who believe that falsehood only want to apply it to the Sabbath and Holy Days. They agree with and uphold the principles involved in just about all of the other commandments except for the Sabbath and Holy Days. Because we keep the weekly Sabbath and God's commanded annual Feasts, they think we are rejecting the very sacrifice of Christ because He did away with those things. They do not realize that they are the ones who are absolutely rejecting Christ and His immutable laws that He established. He made them a part of that first covenant with Israel and renewed them in His covenant with the Church. The New Covenant that He established with the Church, which we became a part of at baptism, is that which the Old Covenant

pictured. Both of those covenants are founded upon the immutable laws of God—those laws that have not been done away.

When you stop to think about what we have discussed before about God's Holy Days and what they picture—God's dealings with man, that plan of salvation that no one else understands, how He is working His perfect plan for the calling of mankind and the harvesting of the souls of men to place within His eternal family, those things yet to be fulfilled—we have to know and understand that those days have not been done away with at all. The fact that they were incorporated into the Old Covenant with ancient Israel does not annul them whatsoever for the Church.

Some might ask, "How can the law of Moses be done away when the very commands are there 'to love'?" Some don't understand, and they think that the Gentiles were not compelled to keep the law of Moses. Let's turn quickly to Acts 15:5:

But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.

The inference is, "See, the Gentiles were not keeping the law of Moses—the Sabbath, the Holy Days, and all of those things." Is that what it is saying? No. What was the issue here? It was that Paul was in a controversy with the Pharisees who had become Israelites because certain of them wanted to command the additional temporary laws and rituals, including circumcision, and apply that to the Gentiles. Was Paul really teaching against Sabbath and Holy Day-keeping?

Notice Acts 21:21:

And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs.

We are not talking about Sabbath and Holy Day-keeping here, brethren; we are talking about the added rituals with which Paul did not encumber the Gentiles. He recognized, even though he himself was raised a Pharisee under the law, that the significance of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was to do away with those things that were no longer applicable to the Church. They were the temporary laws found in the

rituals and washings, not the immutable laws which were from the beginning, including the Sabbath and the Holy Days.

Next, the Holy Days became a part of the Old Covenant, but they were among those commands instituted prior to the Covenant. It is easy for people to overlook that, and yet it is very easily proved.

Turn to Exodus 31:12–13:

And the [Eternal] spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep . . .

"Sabbaths"—that is plural. It is not just referring to the weekly Sabbath, but collectively to His Sabbaths. That means the weekly and annual days.

. . . 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 [Eternal] that doth sanctify you.

Yes, they became a part of the covenant relationship between Israel and God, but He did not create those Sabbaths at the very time of that covenant. He was referring to an existing set of laws that were already required. He was only incorporating them into the special covenant and the promises that He was going to give to Israel—just like that example of the father who was going to make special promises to his teenage son if he would obey the laws of the road.

The weekly Sabbath was also a part of the law of Moses. We can verify that in Exodus 20:8. Let's read that command very quickly. The Sabbath was a part of the law of Moses, but as you already know, the Sabbath was created when? Was the Sabbath created at the time that God codified it on two tables of stone and commanded Moses to teach it? We know that it was a part of the codification here in Exodus 20:8–11:

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the [Eternal] thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the [Eternal] made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh

day [It refers back to the first time that the Sabbath day was instituted.]:
wherefore the [Eternal] blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

When? On Mt. Sinai? When did He bless and hallow the Sabbath? He blessed and hallowed it at the time of creation when He kept it Himself. Yet, the Sabbath became a part of the law of Moses, even though it preexisted the law of Moses by centuries. So, too, did the Holy Days. The Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread specifically were instituted before the covenant relationship on Mt. Sinai. They were already made law at that time. Notice Exodus 13:6–10:

Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and in the seventh day shall be a feast to the [Eternal]. Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days; and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters. And thou shalt shew thy son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the [Eternal] did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt. And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that the [Eternal's] law may be in thy mouth . . .

This was weeks before Mt. Sinai, the covenant, and the codification of the Ten Commandments, but there is something here specifically called "the Eternal's law." That law did exist. That means if a law existed, then there was a penalty for law-breaking.

. . . that the [Eternal]'s law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the [Eternal] brought thee out of Egypt. Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year.

So Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread were called an ordinance. They were a part of God's law, and they existed prior to the special covenant that God established with His nation weeks later. Therefore, could the Holy Days have been a part of the Levitical ordinances? We see that Passover and Unleavened Bread were commanded long before then.

Believe it or not, there are some people—because of this very fact which they have to admit—who will then say, "Well ok, then I accept that the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread must be kept, but all of the other Holy Days were not mentioned until Mt. Sinai, so they are a part of that temporary law and those things

that were done away." They will agree to keep Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, but they think all of the other ones were done away. How ridiculous.

Again, brethren, those Holy Days either stand or fall together, because they picture one story from start to finish of that which God is working out upon this earth for the salvation of mankind. If one applies, they all apply; or else none apply at all. You cannot break them up and say that the Days of Unleavened Bread are applicable to Christians today, but Pentecost, Trumpets, Atonement, Tabernacles and the Last Great Day are not. Utter foolishness.

I am going to stop at this point because, next time, we will get into the next section concerning the specific sacrificial law. There are a few comments I want to make on that before getting into the specific New Testament examples of the keeping of the Holy Days by Christ and the Apostles.

Next time, more on the sacrificial law, and then the New Testament examples.