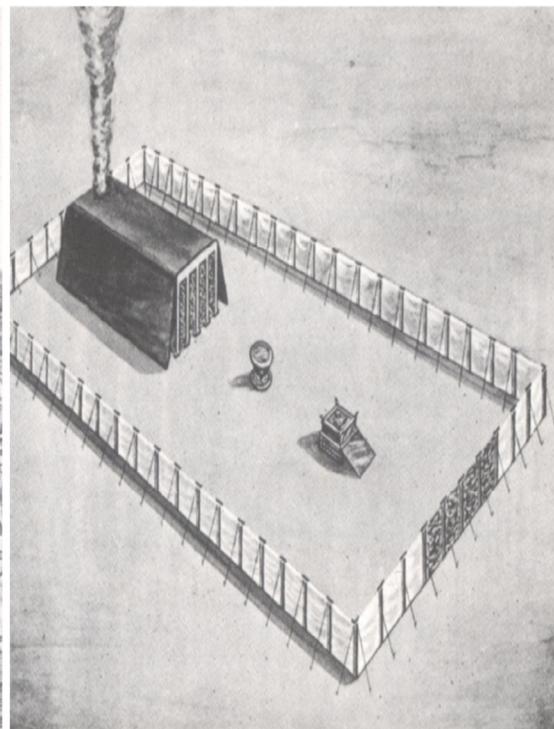


# SHOULD CHRISTIANS KEEP THE CEREMONIAL SABBATHS



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## **SHOULD CHRISTIANS KEEP THE CEREMONIAL SABBATHS?**

1. There are some modern Christian sects that teach that the ceremonial feast days of Israel **MUST** be kept by God's Church of today. Among those teaching this revival of ancient Ebonite heresy are the Assemblies of Yahweh and the House of Yahweh.
  - a. The Bible teaches about the Seventh-day Sabbath. Exodus 31:13-17.
  - b. The Bible also teaches about ceremonial Sabbaths. Leviticus 23:1, 2, 4-8, 15,16,24,27, 34.
  - c. These Sabbaths are "lunar Sabbaths" since they came according to the dating of the new moon. Colossians 2:16; Isaiah 1:13, 14.
2. To show the folly of those claiming that these Sabbaths are to be kept today by the Church of God, we need to consider that each of these holy days or ceremonial Sabbaths are only **truly** kept if they are associated with various animal and other sacrifices; and these sacrifices are only legitimate **if** they are done by the priests of the Levitical order, and this means that there **MUST** be a sanctuary on earth to legitimately carry out these sacrifices thus feast days. Hebrews 9:1-7.
3. The **Passover** was the first feast. Leviticus 23:6.
  - a. It was only kept with the slaying of a lamb for each family with other rites. Exodus 12:1-11.
  - b. There is now a neo-Passover given by Christ to the Church to keep. 1 Corinthians 11:23-29.

4. The Passover was associated with the seven days **Feast of Unleavened bread**. Leviticus 23:6; Numbers 28:16, 17.
  - a. In this feast two ceremonial Sabbaths were to be kept. There were certain sacrifices to make it legitimate, thus there had to be priests and a temple to fulfill it. Leviticus 23:7, 8, 10-12; Numbers 28:18-25.
5. The next feast was called **Pentecost**. Leviticus 23:15, 16; Numbers 28:26.
  - a. This feast too was associated with various sacrifices to make it truly the feast day that it was, and the sacrifices needed priests of the Levitical order and the sanctuary so that the feast would be legitimate. Thus it cannot be kept without a priest or the sanctuary to perform its various sacrifices. Leviticus 23:17-21; Numbers 28:27-31.
6. The next feast was called the **Feast of Trumpets**. Leviticus 23:24. Numbers 29:1.
  - a. This feast was also associated with sacrifices, thus to keep it (the feast) Levitical priests and the sanctuary were **absolutely** necessary. Leviticus 23:25; Numbers 29:2-6.
7. The next feast was called the **Day of Atonement**. Leviticus 23:27; Numbers 29:7.
  - a. This day too was associated with animal sacrifices and meal offerings that could only be done by the priests of the Levitical order, and the sanctuary which was absolutely necessary. Leviticus 23:27; Numbers 29:8-11.
  - b. The Day of Atonement had a peculiar service that was done by the High Priest alone. He went into the second apartment before the mercy seat with the blood of the sacrifice. Leviticus 16:2, 3.
  - c. Two goats were necessary for this service, one for YHWH and the other for Azazel. Leviticus 16:5, 7, 8.
  - d. YHWH's goat was slain and his blood taken into the second apartment

by the High Priest and sprinkled upon and before the mercy- seat, then it was sprinkled in other places. Leviticus 16:9, 15-19.

- e. But the other goat, Azazel or the scapegoat was led out into the wilderness to wander and die after all sins were confessed upon him. Leviticus 16:10, 20-22.
  - f. This particular service of the two goats and entrance into the second apartment of the sanctuary by the High Priest alone is what made this Day of Atonement the feast that it was. To remove the Levitical priesthood and the sacrifices, to have no sanctuary is to be totally unable to keep this feast, no matter how hard one may try to keep it. Leviticus 16:29-34; Hebrews 9:6, 7.
8. The final feast was the eight-days **Feast of Tabernacles**. Leviticus 23:33-36, 39-43; Numbers 29:12.
- a. This feast also needs its sacrifices, priests and sanctuary to make it what it is, or else it cannot be kept. Leviticus 23:36.
  - b. In this eight-days feast the offerings for **each day** was outlined by God, thus it needed priests of the Levitical order, and a sanctuary if it were to be truly kept. Numbers 29:12-38.
9. Thus to keep all these feasts, certainly also meant the need for their particular sacrifices, Levitical priesthood and thus the sanctuary to keep them all legitimately. Leviticus 23:37, 38; Number 29:39.
10. To show why these feasts **CANNOT** be kept today after Christ's ascension into heaven we need to consider certain points. First of all, the priesthood was given strictly to the tribe of Levi; they only were anointed together with the sanctuary in its inauguration. Leviticus 8:1-15.
11. The priesthood was **only** for the Levites, only they could legitimately offer sacrifices to God. No other tribe had that authority. Hebrews 7:5, 14.

12. The Levites alone offered the sacrifices. Hebrews 7:27; Hebrews 9:6; Hebrews 10:11.
13. The Levitical priesthood system, however, was annulled, thus the law of the priesthood and its sacrifices were all abolished, thus the feasts also. Hebrews 7:12, 18, 19, 28; Hebrews 10:1-9.
14. There was instituted a new priesthood system with Jesus Christ as the High Priest. Hebrews 7:11, 13-15, 21, 22, 24-28; Hebrews 8:1, 2.
15. There was also a heavenly Sanctuary over which Jesus Christ presides. Hebrews 8:1-6.
16. Christ also had His own sacrifices to offer. Hebrews 9:10-14, 23-26; Hebrews 10:12, 14, 19-21.
17. The whole First Witness (N.T.) sacrificial services came to an end at the death of Christ when the veil of the temple was rent in two. Matthew 27:50, 51; Mark 15:37, 38; Luke 23:44, 45.
18. Then the whole system was to decay and vanish away. Hebrews 8:13.
19. The ceremonial Sabbaths were a part of the commandments contained in dogmas that was abolished. (Ephesians 2:15; Deuteronomy 31:9, 24-26).
20. These sacrifices and holy days which were all symbolical of Jesus Christ were the **enmity**, or the carnal mind of the Jews, and were all abolished. (Ephesians 2:15; Romans 8:6-8; Isaiah 1:10-15; Romans 2:27).
21. We are therefore **not** to keep the ceremonial Sabbaths or holy days which all came after the new moon, the beginning of the month. (Colossians 2:16; Psalms 81:3; Numbers 10:10; Numbers 28:11; Isaiah 1:13, 14; Hosea 2:11).
22. We are to notice that it was the **handwriting of ordinances** that was nailed to the cross, not the Law written with the finger of God. Colossians 2:14.

23. The Greek word translated “ordinances” is “dogma”. Of this in Colossians 2:14, we are told:

“The word referred to a legal obligation, a binding law or edict placed in a public place for all to see ... a document containing or consisting of degrees.” Cleon Rogers JR. and Cleon Rogers 111, **The New Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament**, p. 465.

24. This is really the book of the law placed in the side of the ark as a witness for the priests. Deuteronomy 31:9, 24-26.

25. This is not the Ten Commandments; they were written with the finger of God and placed in the ark, covered down hidden with the mercy seat. Deuteronomy 9:10; Deuteronomy 10:1-5.

26. We are told that these holydays were a “shadow”. The Greek word is “skia” and shows that they have no substance, but are faint outlines of the person and work of Jesus Christ. Colossians 2:16, 17.

“... shadow. The word refers either to a shadow which in itself has no substance but indicates the existence of a body which casts the shadow, or it indicates a dim outline, a sketch of an object in contrast with the object itself. This would mean that the O.T. ritual observances were dim outlines of the N.T. redemptive truths ...” Ibid, p. 465.

27. The Ten Commandments or Seventh-day Sabbath are not shadows of anything, they are NOT symbols, but MUST be kept. James 2:8-12; Hebrews 4:9, 10.

28. The phrase “things to come” are those parts of the feasts days that were not yet and are not yet fulfilled concerning the work of God from Paul’s time, and even from this day. Colossians 2:16, 17.

a. The **Passover** was fulfilled in Christ’s death. 1 Corinthians 5:7.

b. The **Unleavened Bread** is Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 5:8.

c. The **Pentecost** of the wave sheaf was fulfilled in the Pentecost outpouring

of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:1-4.

29. The things that were not yet fulfilled in Paul's time was the **Feast of Trumpets**. This has since been fulfilled in the great Advent awakening of 1833. (Isaiah 58:1; Revelation 14:6, 7).
30. The **Day of Atonement** began in 1844 when the heavenly judgment started. (Revelation 11:18, 19; Daniel 8:14).
31. The **Feast of Tabernacles** is yet to be fulfilled in the future when all the harvested saints of the earth will be gathered into the kingdom. (Revelation 14:15, 16; Matthew 24:31, 32).
32. Even though there were animal sacrifices made on the Sabbath day, these were no part of the Law as commanded by God, or of how they were to be kept in the Ten Commandments; God added no more to the central Law. (Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:22).
33. The feast we must keep is not the ceremonial feast days, with the old Passover and feast of unleavened bread which were both tied together in Paul's time, but the neo-pasak or Passover, this feast was not observing the day or time, it was observing the experience of a clean heart religion. 1 Corinthians 5:7, 8.
34. The neo-Passover given to the Church by Christ had no relationship, tie up or dependence on the Levitical priesthood and the temple. Had He meant for the Church to keep the other feast days He would have made a distinction as to what to keep and what not to. I Corinthians 11:23-29.
35. The Judaism that survived after the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the sanctuary by the Romans in 70 A.C.B. was an apostate religion that denied Jesus was the Christ.

“It is related that in the midst of the internecine strife within the walls in which the Jews were destroying themselves while the Romans looked on, Rabban ben Zakkai made his escape from the city to the Roman camp, and (in one form of the story) obtained from the commander permission to settle in Jamnia and established a school there. Thus, even before the final

catastrophe, the study of the Law had found refuge in the new seat from which the restoration was to proceed. What is certain is that at Jamnia (Jabneh), under the lead of Johanan ben Zakkai in the years immediately following the destruction of Jerusalem, the work of conservation and adaptation was accomplished ...” George Foot Moore, **Judaism Vol. 1**, pp. 83-84.

“The re-opening of the schools was not, however, the only contribution of Johanan to the restoration of Judaism. There was urgent need of a body competent to determine matters of the utmost importance to all Jews, foremost among which was the fixing of the calendar with the correct dates of all the festivals and feasts, for which the law prescribed days certain as of the essence of the observance. Innumerable questions arose also from the cessation of the temple worship, for which there was no rule or precedent, and about which an authoritative decision was necessary if there was not to be endless perplexity of conscience and confusion of practice. The doctors of the Law in Jamnia and its vicinity, under the lead of Johanan ben Zakkai, accordingly formed themselves into a council, which assumed such of the functions of the Sanhedrin as did not inevitably lapse with the loss of its political character.” **Ibid**, pp. 84-85.

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