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HOW to Study the Bible!

by Garner Ted Armstrong

HOW much of the Bible DON'T you understand? If you are like most others, there are many passages in the Bible you have discovered which *seem to be contradictory*, or which seem to mean that what you believe to be true from other scriptures may not be true, after all!

It has been said of the Bible: "It's the book nobody understands." But do you realize it is God's *intention* that you ultimately come to understand FULLY, COMPLETELY, *every word contained in the Bible?*

Since God actually reveals it is His will for you to completely UNDERSTAND the Bible—why is it that so few really do?

Human Nature

Perhaps it will come as a surprise to you, but the main reason so few people can really comprehend what God is telling them through the scriptures is—*human nature!* Paul wrote of that nature—the natural, physical YOU, just the way you were born and grew to maturity—as a CARNAL, a PHYSICAL nature, interested primarily in the *carnal, temporary, and physical things of this world!* Paul said that the natural mind we were all born with is ENMITY against God: it's just naturally hostile toward God! (Rom. 8:7).

The natural mind, then, cannot understand God's Word in its fullness, nor can it *submit* to God's will and really be obedient to Him. Perhaps some brethren who *do* have difficulty in comprehending certain points need to ask themselves—"Do I have a truly SPIRITUAL mind?"

It is not until that natural, carnal mind

has been CONQUERED by God, and has been totally submitted to Him, that one's understanding can be OPENED to receive spiritual truth.

To really sum up this point, then, a person must come to recognize the absolute AUTHORITY of God and consequently of God's Word—over his life!

"Snap Judgment"

During a visit to a Florida alligator farm, Mr. Armstrong asked an attendant some questions about the huge lizards as they lay basking in the sun, apparently deep in sleep. The attendant cautioned, however, that in reality, the 'gators could snap their jaws together with lightning-like agility if someone were to grow careless and get too near. The alligators use "snap judgment," said the attendant.

Many people are just like the alligators when it comes to reading the Bible! When they come to a difficult scripture, they use "snap judgment," deciding immediately what the doubtful text *must mean!* Having made up their minds quickly as to the meaning of this particular verse, they must then CHANGE their minds about other verses and misinterpret them in order to make them fit with the new one! Using "snap judgment" or trying to *put your own ideas INTO* the Bible is the surest way of MISUNDERSTANDING it entirely.

Simple Rules for Study

Isaiah tells us God's Word is "line upon line, here a little, and there a little," showing us NOT ALL the truth of any one subject is contained in just ONE scripture (Isa. 28:9-13).

In order to correctly understand any

doctrinal truth in the Bible, you must first gather *every scripture* referring to that subject. Use of a concordance will aid you greatly in accumulating EVERY scripture which is a direct reference to, or an example of, or alludes to the subject you are studying.

For example: in the Gospels there are four different accounts of the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ. Each Gospel writer records the truth—but each one differs slightly from the other—in writing from a different point of view, stressing a different facet of Christ's ministry, or grouping Christ's teachings differently. To glean the WHOLE TRUTH from the Gospel accounts, you must first get all FOUR Gospel accounts on any given subject and *put them together.* Take for example the four differing Gospel accounts of what was written over the cross. Matthew records, "This is Jesus the King of the Jews." Mark writes, "The King of the Jews." Luke's Gospel says, "This is the King of the Jews," and John includes "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

Is there any contradiction here? No! Not one Gospel account CONTRADICTS the other—but when you take *all four* together, and add them up as you would any arithmetic problem, you find the answer, which is the SUM TOTAL of all scriptures on the subject, "This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

Principles to Remember

If you will study the following basic principles of Bible study—and *never forget them*—your Bible study difficulties will always be solved:

1) The Bible *never* contradicts itself. Even though "scholars" and Bible critics lay various claims before us of supposed Biblical contradictions, the closer investigation of the claim always proves it to be without basis.

2) Wherever you find a vague or difficult-to-understand scripture, you must understand it in the light of all the other PLAIN, CLEAR, *easy-to-understand* scriptures on the same subject.

3) Wherever it is a vital, essential point you need to know in order to *show you the way to salvation*, God has seen to it the scriptures are PLAIN, and CLEAR, and without any shadow of doubt as to their meaning!

4) Usually always, the vague, ambiguous and difficult-to-understand scriptures will have to do with comparatively minor points, especially with points in prophecy on beyond the coming of Christ. It is nearly always over one of these comparatively minor points that dissension will arise, misinterpretations

and wresting of Scripture will take place, and people will become offended. Always ask yourself, "IS THIS ESSENTIAL FOR MY SALVATION?" If it is not, then be willing to suspend judgment—*wait* on God to SHOW you the meaning later on, rather than becoming disgruntled or worried about a minor point.

The Ideal Attitude

God frankly tells you what the ideal attitude is for completely understanding His Sacred Word! Paul wrote, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (II Tim. 3:16), and Christ said, "THY WORD IS TRUTH!" (John 17:17). If a person has thoroughly been CONQUERED by God, and now recognizes the total *authority* of God over his life, then he needs have no fear of twisting, wresting and misunderstanding scriptural points! Why?

Because of his attitude toward the Bible!

If you are CONVERTED, and have God's Spirit, you will say, with Christ, "Not MY will be done, but THINE" to God. You won't be looking into God's Word just to *have your own way*, but to find out WHAT IS WRONG with your way—to get the CORRECTION and the REPROOF that will CHANGE your way, mold it into GOD'S WAY—a NEW WAY OF LIFE!

If *you* really want to understand the Bible MORE THOROUGHLY, and you are sincere in that desire, then each time before you begin your Bible study, ask yourself if you really do RECOGNIZE the tremendous AUTHORITY of the Book you're about to open. Do you really FEAR to disobey it? Are you in complete SUBMISSIVENESS and *subjection* to it? God says to *you* "... but to THIS MAN will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and TREMBLE AT MY WORD!" (Isa. 66:2).

Do you really TREMBLE before the Holy Word of God? *Are you SURE?*

YOU Can Be a *Success*

Learn the difference between success and failure.

by Herman L. Hoeb

THIS past month has witnessed a great drama in England. It's a lesson to us. WHY did Sir Anthony Eden *fail* as prime minister?

By contrast, WHY has Sir Winston Churchill been recognized as the great man of this century?

Twenty-five years ago Churchill, too, would have been regarded as a near failure! But something happened that *uncovered his traits of character*.

That something was World War II. Here is what happened:

Faith Leads to Success

Churchill demonstrated his *courage*—his *faith* to drive onward to victory. He NEVER GAVE UP! When he knew that his decisions were right he never allowed himself to be swayed by adversity or critical opinions.

When the Germans in World War II heard Churchill's speech to the English people—he promised them "blood, sweat and tears"—they knew then that they were fighting a losing war. They were fighting an *indomitable CHARACTER* who was willing to tell the truth to his people—no matter how desperate the situation might be.

Now contrast this with Sir Anthony Eden's stay as Prime Minister.

For Eden, everything should have turned out right—if he had not made

costly mistakes. England again had a chance to regain her lost inheritance at Suez. Seldom has a nation ever had such an easy opportunity to gain power over another nation as England had over communist-infiltrated Egypt. But England lost that chance because of Mr. Eden's great mistakes in judgment.

Never Give Up!

Here is what happened. Eden led England's attack against Egypt to prevent an air borne Russian invasion of the Suez region. BUT HE WAS AFRAID OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF HIS EGYPTIAN ADVENTURE!

Sir Anthony Eden was *afraid* to openly charge Russia with a plot to seize the Middle East. Fear, not faith, gripped him. He compromised and withdrew. His lack of sustained boldness in his conviction made it appear that England's attack was only against Egypt, instead of in defense of the entire western world.

Sir Anthony Eden lost his nerve at the precise moment he most needed it. He was moved from his firm conviction that he was right. He allowed himself to *give up* the right. Criticism—especially from America—swayed him. His victory turned to failure. America now realizes its mistake and must shoulder the responsibility for part of Eden's

failure. BUT HAD SIR ANTHONY EDEN STUCK WITH WHAT HE KNEW TO BE RIGHT—no matter what the criticism—the entire Middle East would be free today.

A Lesson for Us Today

God has called us as candidates to rule The World Tomorrow. God has promised us offices of far greater responsibility than that of Prime Minister. But we won't even be in the world-ruling Kingdom of God until we prove *in this life* that we can succeed. There are no failures in God's Kingdom.

Let's understand the lesson of this tragic drama unfolded in England.

First, we must *know* what is right. God tells us right from wrong. When we know what is right from the Bible, then we must *act* on it. We must not vacillate. We must not be swayed "by every wind of doctrine" (Eph. 4:14), as was England's recent Prime Minister. Next, we must *never give up* no matter what the circumstances or the criticism. It takes faith not to give up, but "whatever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23). When we lack faith, when we give up doing right, we sin! Sin brings death. Why can't we learn this all-important lesson—*never give up when you know you are right!*

Which Is the CALENDAR Christ Used?

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

by Kenneth C. Herrmann

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

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

Take a look at the calendar on your wall first! Isn't it of Christian origin? History answers:

"Our (Roman) calendar is not Christian in origin. It descends directly from the Egyptians, who originated the 12 month year, 365 day system. A pagan Egyptian scientist Sosigenes, suggested this plan to the pagan Emperor Julius Caesar, who directed that it go into effect throughout the Roman Empire in 45 B.C. As adopted it indicated its pagan origin by the names of the months—called after Janus, Maia, Juno, etc. The days were not named but numbered on a complicated system involving Ides, Nones, and Calends. It was not until 321 A.D. that the seven-day-week feature was added, when the Emperor Constantine (*supposedly*) adopted Christianity. Oddly enough for his weekdays he chose pagan names which are still used." (From "Journal of Calendar Reform," Sept. 1953, footnote p. 128. [*Italics* ours].)

Christ taught that man "shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God" (Luke 4:4). He accepted the writings of Jeremiah as the inspired word of God—writings which contain the command from God, "Learn not the way of the *beathen*" (Jer. 10:2). Certainly Christ did not use this heathen Roman calendar.

Then what is the word of God on this question? What calendar did Christ follow?

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

Our present Roman calendar does not meet this qualification. It divides the year in the dead of the winter. It divides

the day in the middle of the night and its month has no reference to the moon. *It couldn't be God's calendar.*

What, then, is the method of calculating time which God intends?

True Units of Time

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

This division of days was understood and followed in Christ's time. When the Sabbath was drawing to a close, those who wished Him to heal waited, and "when the sun was setting all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them" (Luke 4:40).

Although they understood correctly when the day would come to an end, they were not aware of the fact that Christ was willing to heal on the Sabbath day also. The traditions of their Jewish rabbis had caused them to be ignorant of this point.

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

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

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

The *exact* moment for a day to end

is again revealed by a comparison of Lev. 22:7 with Lev. 15. Individuals designated as unclean by these laws were to bathe and then to be considered clean when the evening came. "When the sun is down, he shall be clean" (Lev. 22:7). A new day would begin at sunset, *not* at midnight.

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

The Origin of the Week

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

Far from it!

Several hundred years prior to the Exodus, Jacob was required to serve Laban seven years for each of his two daughters, Rachel and Leah. Following the first seven years of service for Rachel, Laban tricked him giving him Leah for his wife. A seven day period or week followed before he was allowed to have Rachel also and then only with the stipulation that he was to serve Laban another seven years (Genesis 29:15-30). They already knew at this time the symbol of a day for a year (an important key in understanding Bible prophecy) and they had knowledge of a seven day week.

Though this is the first time the word "week" occurs in the Bible, yet the first week mentioned is back in the very first chapter of Genesis. *Seven* consecutive days are listed. The sixth of these seven days was nearly over when Adam was created. This sixth day came to a close with Adam's naming of the animals and his presentation with Eve.

Six of the days of creation were now past. One thing remained yet to be made for man. A day of *rest* had not yet been set apart. Christ speaks of it in Mark 2:27, "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath." History records the existence of the seven day week in many ancient nations even before the Exodus. It is easy to see
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We ask you to help us *keep* The Good News exclusively a paper for real members *only*. Do NOT give or loan a copy to anybody, whether friends or relatives. If they have been made members of the true begotten family of God, they will be on the list and receive their own copy each month. If not, we ask you not to pass it on to them. *The Plain Truth* is the magazine we send freely, and without charge, to all who request it. But in *The Good News* we wish to be free to say things to you, as our inner family of God's children, which we cannot say to the world. We wish to be free to feed you, thru the columns of *The Good News*, the truly "strong meat" of spiritual food which might choke the carnal minded or prove a stumbling block to the unconverted, and those not wholly yielded to OBEDIENCE to God.

The Good News is the medium in print thru which God's truly called ministers FEED THE FLOCK. *The Plain Truth* is the medium thru which God's called ministers publish the Gospel of the Kingdom of God TO ALL THE WORLD.

For the present we shall be able to

print only 8 pages each issue of *The Good News*. As God makes possible, thru the tithes and offerings of His people, we hope to enlarge *The Good News* to 16 pages. All this costs money, and we shall do whatever God makes possible thru our Co-Workers.

Let us be glad and rejoice in the fact that there are many loyal Co-Workers who are not, as yet, so far as we are able to know, actually members of God's own begotten family. They have progressed far enough in the Truth to recognize it, and want to have a part in spreading it—but perhaps have not, as yet, let it take full root in their own lives. Month by month, however,—hundreds every year—more and more of these do come to full repentance toward God, and surrender fully to Him, accepting Jesus Christ as personal Saviour and as their LORD AND MASTER and HEAD. And so, brethren, I call on you in Jesus' name to PRAY for all these, that God will convict them, and thru His Spirit draw them to Jesus Christ, grant them repentance, and bring them into this glorious family of God to become our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Heart to Heart Talk with the Editor

HERE is important knowledge especially for new members. The GOOD NEWS magazine is *exclusively* the official publication of God's True Church in these closing days of this world.

The Good News is sent *only* to those recognized as MEMBERS of the true Church of God—those in whom we can see evidence, by the fruits borne, that GOD has added them to His Church. It is a holy Church which no man can "join." We are inducted into it by God, thru receiving, and being led by, the Holy Spirit.

The Plain Truth is, as it was from its first issue in February, 1934, the general evangelistic magazine of this Church, sent freely to all who request it for themselves. It is edited for the public—for the world. But it is edited, too, for God's own children, and so you will continue to receive *The Plain Truth* each month, in addition, now, to *The Good News*.

In other words, you whom God has made members of the true Body of Christ receive *both* magazines every month, instead of only one as formerly. But radio listeners are told only about *The Plain Truth*, and *only The Plain Truth* will be mailed to them until we have evidence that God has added them to that consecrated, obedient, faithful inner circle who have been baptized by the Holy Spirit into the one Body of Christ, the true Church of God.

CALENDAR Christ Used

(Continued from page 3)

now why God commanded, "Remember the sabbath day to *keep* it holy." This special seventh day was added to the week the day after Adam and Eve were created. It was made *for them*; thus *it had to be made at the time they were made*—not 2500 years later at the Exodus.

God had completed the physical creation in six literal days, then He "rested on the seventh day, and . . . blessed the seventh day, and *sanctified* it" (Gen. 2:1, 2). To sanctify means to *set apart for a holy use*.

This weekly cycle of six days of labor with a sabbath devoted to our spiritual needs has never been lost by God's true Church. This seven day cycle continued *unbroken* down through Christ's time. It was a part of the calendar He followed and is a vital part of the Christian calendar for today. For detailed proof that the Sabbath of Adam, Abraham, Moses and Christ is known with *absolute* certainty today, write for Mr. Armstrong's free booklet, "Has Time Been Lost?"

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

Astronomy gives us no basis why the week should be a period of seven days. A seven day period does not divide evenly into 29½ day month (from new

moon to new moon); neither does it divide evenly into a 365¼ day year. No signs in the heavens can be held accountable for its origin.

THE EXISTENCE OF OUR SEVEN DAY WEEK DEMANDS an EXPLANATION. Its only sound logical origin is found in *the literal truth* of the account of *creation week* found in Genesis 1 and 2. The week points definitely to a literal seven day period in which God created our present day life forms and brought order out of the chaos that had existed on the earth just prior to this time.

Only by CONTINUAL OBSERVANCE of the Sabbath between Adam and Christ has man been KEPT IN THE KNOWLEDGE of the *correct* beginning of this seven day unit of time. An exception to this was the period of slavery of Israel in Egypt after which the date to begin the week, the month and the year were *again* revealed.

Spring Begins the Sacred Year

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

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

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

To clarify matters for everyone, God had to reveal it. Concerning the spring month of Nisan or Abib, God said: "This month shall be unto you *the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you*" (Exodus 12:2).

The *first day of this month*—which occurs at the beginning of spring—then *would be the first day of the new year*. The first month of God's sacred calendar is not January which lies in the dead of the winter, but rather a spring month when the earth is bringing forth new life. The NEW month and NEW year BEGIN together ON THE SAME DAY, independent, however, of the weekly cycle.

It is interesting to note that while the practice of beginning the new year of the Roman calendar with the first of January was begun by Julius Caesar in 45 B.C., this custom was not introduced into Great Britain until 1752. The colonies in America naturally followed the lead of the mother country. Thus, today's history books record George Washington's birthday as having been February 22, 1732, whereas the event would have been recorded in the Washington family Bible as February 11, 1731.

By moving the beginning of the year backward from April to January, it was necessary to have a forward shift of one year for all dates in between. The eleven day discrepancy was due to another change made in the Roman calendar in Britain at that same time. These changes did not affect the sequence of the days of the week in any way.

Evidence on the Month

The word "month" comes from the word moon. In Hebrew the word for *month* when speaking of the calendar is identical to that for *new moon* or *moon*. The observation of this first faint crescent of the new moon just after sundown was always made from Jerusalem. Word was then spread to the

surrounding area that a new month (or moon) was beginning.

GOD'S MONTHS begin with the new moon. Yet because of certain special considerations they may begin a day or so later than the astronomical "new moon" noted on many of our calendars today. The observation had to be made from Jerusalem and is stated in Jerusalem time, not from the United States and Central Standard or Pacific Standard Time. The seven to ten hours difference in time between Jerusalem and the part of the United States one lives in can make our own observations and estimations as to when we would want to begin a new month somewhat misleading.

You can prove that each month begins with the new moon by comparing Num. 28:11 with I Chronicles 23:31. In every instance THESE MONTHLY OFFERINGS were made ON THE DAY OF THE NEW MOON.

Compare these scriptures: "In the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings" (Num. 10:10). Concerning one of His Holydays, God commanded, "In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath (rest), a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation" (Lev. 23:24). Then in reference to this same day Psalms 81:3 states, "Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day."

These leave no doubt that the start of a new month is to be regulated by the moon. Each new month begins with the discovery of the crescent of a new moon in the western sky just after sundown following the 29th or 30th day of a preceding month.

Do these months coincide with the months of the Roman calendar which was also in existence at Christ's time and with which He was certainly familiar? Not at all. The DATE OF THE NEW MOON on the Roman calendar may occur at any time of the month. The few moments required to prove this to yourself will be profitably spent.

The months God gave average approximately 29½ days, while the Roman months are close to 30½ days in length. This difference causes the months of the true calendar to begin, in general, one day earlier each succeeding month of the Roman calendar. Check this for yourself.

It is important to recognize that the days of these God given months seldom coincided with those of the Roman calendar. The Passover (the day on which Christ was crucified) today varies from about March 26 to April 22 over a ten year period. On the Sacred Calendar it is always Nisan 14.

We have now established a DAILY

CYCLE that begins at sundown, a WEEKLY CYCLE that begins at sundown following the Sabbath (identical with the one in creation week), a MONTHLY CYCLE that begins with the new moon observed from Jerusalem, and a YEARLY CYCLE that begins in the spring with the first day of the month in which the early harvest would take place.

The DAY, MONTH and YEAR are easy to follow by watching the sun in its daily path, the moon in its phases and the seasons as they progress. The signs in the heavens were intended for this purpose. The SABBATH is remembered by its weekly observance.

A Thirteenth Month

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

In fitting the months into the year more difficulties were encountered. The time required for the spring season to return each year is approximately 365¼ days. Twelve lunar months (of 29½ days each) make only 354 days. Unless something were done the beginning of the calendar year and the time of the annual feasts would occur about 11 days earlier in the season each year. This could not be allowed for the feasts throughout the year have a definite relationship with the harvests.

Note Lev. 23:4, "These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons." They could not be allowed to wander through the seasons as do dates on the Mohammedan calendar which always has but 12 lunar months.

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

To keep the month in accord with the year, God intended that a 13th month be added in certain years. Seven times in a 19 year cycle this 13th month must be added to keep the year in line with the seasons. Then the cycle is repeated. Our present year 1956-7 has such a 13th month which ends at sunset April 1. The FIRST DAY of the new year

WILL COINCIDE WITH APRIL 2 but it will begin at sunset April 1 rather than at the moment of midnight.

Confusion or Order?

The appearance of the new moon in the western sky just after sunset is the approximate beginning of a new month. A keen eyed observer might see this first faint sickle a day earlier than his neighbor. Is he justified in starting the new month with that day while his neighbor waits till the following evening? IS ONE MAN ALLOWED TO ADD A 13TH MONTH TO THE YEAR while HIS NEIGHBORS WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT YEAR to add the correcting month? Total confusion would be the result.

Logic requires that there be some central authority guided in the task of determining which months are to have a 30th day and which years a 13th month. *Each man is not left free to choose for himself.*

This need for a true central authority concerning the calendar is absolute proof that such authority existed. Add the fact that God requires us to keep His holydays today and we can only conclude that some such authority on the calendar exists for us today. God never fails to provide man with knowledge that he must know and can not discover for himself.

The perfect clock of the heavens is the timepiece given by God to man. Instructions concerning its use were given after Israel came out of Egypt. They were only a repetition of earlier instructions known to Adam, Noah and Abraham alike. God told Israel through Moses the days to be observed but did not leave it to the individual to devise his own calendar adding an extra day to a month or month to the year when it might please him. Certain men were given an understanding of the mathematical principles upon which the calendar was to be based. Their decisions were accepted by the nation. *God revealed to these men a calendar based on the laws of mathematics and astronomy—the very physical laws God set in motion—A CALENDAR THAT WOULD FOLLOW THE MOVEMENTS OF THE HEAVENLY BODIES far into the future—*one that would be accurate. Not a new calendar, but a mathematical continuation of an original revealed pattern based on the signs of the heavens; a calendar that would lead to order and harmony among God's people in the matter of keeping time.

Is the Sacred Calendar Still Correct?

Who preserved this calendar down to the time of Christ? Who preserved it from that time forward? Has it been preserved intact down to the present

day? If not, then in commanding us to observe His Sabbath and His Holy Days, God has commanded us to do the impossible. If God's calendar is lost, God's commandments in regard to His Feast Days are impossible to keep! But since God does not command the impossible, the calendar is preserved!

To whom was this responsibility committed? The oracles of God were committed to all Israel to be passed on from generation to generation. Acts 7:38 speaks of the Israelites "who received the lively oracles to give unto us." ORACLES ARE COMMUNICATIONS FROM GOD. These were given to all Israel, both the house of Israel and the house of Judah. The house of Israel went into captivity, losing her identity and her knowledge of God. She did not preserve the calendar or the Bible for us. Then who did?

The HOUSE OF JUDAH also went into captivity over 110 years later in 604 B.C., but retained knowledge of her identity and her God. Recognizing the fact that she had gone into captivity for breaking the Sabbath, Judah became very strict in its observance adding many dos and don'ts which Christ ignored completely. *The Jewish people have been forced to retain the knowledge of a Sabbath and a calendar which they however refuse to follow in truth.*

Christ Followed This Same Calendar

Notice what Paul asks: "What advantage then hath the Jew?" Then he answers, "Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God" (Romans 3:1,2). THE JEWS ALONE WERE LEFT TO PRESERVE THE SCRIPTURE, the SABBATH and the CALENDAR. If they did not fulfill this God-given commission, Christ could not have observed Passover, Pentecost, the Feast of Trumpets and the Feast of Tabernacles in their proper seasons during His boyhood. He could not have lived a sinless life. The authority for keeping the calendar was delegated to the Jews. If they did not preserve it to this day, then we have no real basis for calculating and observing the Holy Days of God.

If the Jews did not preserve the Law and the Scriptures, how could Christ have lived His early life in the knowledge of them?

He accused the Jews of "laying aside the commandment of God (to) hold the tradition of men" (Mark 7:8). The commands Jesus followed were the ones written in the Law—the Scriptures Judah was forced by God to preserve, yet Scriptures they refused to believe and obey.

Here is absolute proof of Jesus' recognition of the authority vested in the

religious leaders of Judah at that time. Christ kept the same Sabbath that the Jews around Him did. He observed the same Holy Days, proving that they had a correct knowledge of time. (There were heretical Jewish sects, however, that observed these at the wrong time due to their misunderstanding of the Scriptural instructions.) In speaking of the Scripture, He accepted the same Scripture which had been entrusted to Israel by Moses and the Prophets. Christ recognized that in all three points the house of Judah had carried out its commission. Do you? Or has some other group been used to preserve the Hebrew Scriptures accurately. Has another group preserved the knowledge of the true Sabbath? Or can we trust historians for a rule as to when the Passover should occur?

Are There Other Formulas?

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

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

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

Writers of profane history only contradict themselves. They can not be depended upon to preserve this essential knowledge. God has in no way used them to preserve His Sabbath or Calendar.

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

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

Understanding that God commissioned and required His people, the
(Please continue on page 8)

How to Observe the Sabbath

Here are the answers to those perplexing questions which many of our recent converts have asked us! Should we prepare meals on the Sabbath? Is it a violation of God's law to travel, to care for livestock, or help others to harvest crops on the Sabbath? Does God require us to attend Church?

by Raymond C. Cole

MORE THAN three years have elapsed since we had an article on this vital subject.

No other phase of Christian living presents more constant problems than Sabbath-keeping — since every WEEK presents us with new situations. Yet this constant round of new trials is a *vital* part of our Christian growth—a test to prove whether we are growing spiritually or shriveling up and drying away!

God instituted the Sabbath for a definite purpose.

Christ declared that *the Sabbath was made for MAN*. It is intended for the good of all mankind. And rightly so, for the law explicitly tells us that it is a day of rest—a day on which we cease from all our labors, and worship God. It is a holy convocation, commanded to be observed throughout all generations, *forever!*—for our own good!

Preparation of Meals

No other question confronts our women more than the problem of preparing meals. Unconverted mates are often involved.

God says in Leviticus 23:2-3, "Concerning the festivals of the ETERNAL, which ye shall proclaim to be *holy convocations*, even these are my festivals. Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of REST, an HOLY CONVOCATION; ye shall do NO WORK therein; it is the Sabbath of the ETERNAL in all your dwellings." A festival is a time of great enjoyment—of wholesome fellowship and rejoicing—a time when we may have the finest food to eat.

No work—labor of earning a livelihood—is to be done on the Sabbath! Then, how and when are you allowed to prepare your Sabbath meals? Turn, now, to Exodus 16, beginning with the 22nd verse: "And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, 'This is that which the Lord hath said, tomorrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord: BAKE that which ye will bake today (Friday), and seethe (to stew or boil) that ye will seethe;

and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.'"

Friday is the day of preparation for the Sabbath. Baking, broiling, stewing and other methods of cooking, *which require time and work*, are to be done the day before. On the Sabbath—a day of REST, you may enjoy your meals, *which can be warmed up without the usual time-consuming work required in preparation*.

Again, Christ and His disciples were walking through corn fields on the Sabbath. The Disciples, being hungry, plucked ears of corn to eat. When the Pharisees saw it, they were critical of Christ saying, "Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day." (Matt. 12:1-3.)

Jesus' answer found in Matt. 12:3-6 shows that it is permissible to obtain food to eat on the Sabbath. Christ knew how the Sabbath should be observed. He said nothing to the disciples but did rebuke strongly the Pharisees saying, "But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, YE WOULD NOT HAVE CONDEMNED THE GUILTYLESS." (Matt. 12:7.) The disciples were not transgressing the law of God when eating on the Sabbath. They were merely violating the traditions of the elders. This in no way implies the abolition of GOD'S Sabbath.

Lighting a Fire

Many will ask, "May I kindle a fire on the Sabbath?" This question, of course, is quite natural. How could you warm your meals if you had no fire?

The law against kindling a fire in Exodus 35:3 is *not* to prohibit any fire whatever. Rather it is to prevent unnecessary work in preparing and cooking meals on the Sabbath. Clarke's Commentary, Vol. I, page 479, states: "The Jews understand this precept as forbidding the kindling of fire *only* for the purpose of *doing work or dressing victuals*; but to give them *light and heat*, they judge it lawful to light a fire on the Sabbath day."

The Critical and Experimental Commentary, Vol. 1, page 419, explains: "The Sabbath was not a fast day. The Israelites cooked their victuals on that day, for

which, of course, a fire would be necessary; and this view of the institution is supported by the conduct of our Lord (Luke 14:1). But in early times the Israelites, while sojourning in the wilderness and subsisting on manna, received a double supply on the sixth day, which they cooked also on that day (Ex. 16:25), so that a fire for culinary purposes was entirely unnecessary on the Sabbath day. As the kindling of a fire, therefore, could only be for secular purposes, the insertion of the prohibition in connection with the work of the tabernacle makes it highly probable that it was intended chiefly for the mechanics who were to be employed in the erection; and . . . it was absolutely forbidden to kindle any fire for the sharpening of tools, for the melting of metals, or any other material purpose bearing on the sanctuary."

Hence, according to the spirit of the law—which makes the Sabbath a delight—it is not wrong to heat previously prepared meals or to warm the home in wintry weather.

Care for Cattle

What about feeding livestock, milking cows, etc? Jesus taught: "Doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman . . . be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?"

Here Jesus was showing His critics that inasmuch as *it did not break the Sabbath* to water and care for livestock, people also ought to be healed on the Sabbath. Stock must be fed on the Sabbath. Cows must be milked. If you are not required to take care of these duties on too large a scale, it definitely is no transgression of God's law.

However, when a man runs a dairy requiring the milking of so many cows as to fill the Sabbath day with labor the same as week-days, then perhaps he should change his line of business to one which permits him, and his hired help, to *rest* on the Sabbath.

Take the example of one brother who used to raise turkeys. He ground and mixed his own feed. In late summer and early fall this became a full day's labor.

He solved his problem by grinding and setting aside a one-sixth over-supply on each of the six week-days. When the Sabbath came he had the day's feed already prepared.

Christ implied that if a sheep, ox, or an ass falls into a pit on the Sabbath, it is right to lift it out. (Luke 14:5.) *But*—Sabbath "emergency" is a genuine EMERGENCY, not an excuse to break the Sabbath. *If our material duties begin to replace our Sabbath observance, we must reduce them and put the kingdom of God first.*

Should We Attend Church on the Sabbath?

Let us turn back to Leviticus 23:2 for just a moment. "Six days shall work be done but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an *holy convocation*." A convocation is an act of calling or assembling *by summons*, an assembly or meeting of persons convoked. Thus, the Sabbath is a time when *God summons or commands His people* to assemble together. A summons for convocation is not a call pleading you to come *if you wish*. It is a *command from God* for you to be assembled before Him on the Sabbath.

Many of you are alone in a community of unbelievers and *cannot* assemble with true brethren, God realizes the circumstance which prevents your meeting with the brethren. But God has not left you without fellowship in that He has the message come by The WORLD TOMORROW broadcast—not only into *your* home every night, but also into the homes of thousands of *others*. Indirectly then, *you are in the largest religious fellowship*, gathered to hear God's word.

Doing Good on the Sabbath

Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath?—healing and visiting the sick, helping the widows and fatherless, or visiting the oppressed? Christ was asked this question by the Pharisees. He answered them very curtly, saying, "It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath." (Matt. 12:12.) Jesus *did* these things on the Sabbath. Again, Christ in Luke 6:9, accused the Pharisees of automatically destroying life or doing evil *by not doing good* on the Seventh Day. Thus, a Sabbath duty *where possible* is to entreat others kindly.

But we must not visit the unconverted on the Sabbath merely to have wordly fellowship. Useless gossip inevitably ensues.

Many times the Pharisees and Sadducees accused Jesus of breaking the Sabbath. He never broke it, but denounced the traditions of the elders. These traditions began after the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. The Jewish Rabbis had legislated many regulations for the

observance of the Sabbath. They had been forced into captivity once because of profaning God's annual festivals. As a result, they were determined not to let this happen again. Due to the conditions existing among the Jews in His time, Christ devoted a great part of His earthly ministry to showing the intended purpose of the Sabbath by liberating it from *human* restrictions.

Pleasures on the Sabbath

Is the Sabbath a day of darkness and gloom? Or, is it a day of delight, happiness, and godly pleasure?

We are to honor God on that Day. Our own carnal ways are to be repressed on the Sabbath as one very day. Pleasures, such as going to a baseball game, football game or going for an automobile ride, are not to be done on the Sabbath. It was created a day on which God is to be foremost in our minds doing service which is an honor to Him. Our conversation is to be of a godly nature, not of the matters of livelihood or business. Read Isa. 58:13-14.

The Sabbath is, then, a day of utmost joy and happiness—enjoying already-prepared meals, reading and studying the Bible, the magazines and booklets, listening to The WORLD TOMORROW program, visiting the needy, if possible, and *praying*.

In conclusion, let us say as David did: "Oh how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day. . . . I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word. . . . For thou hast taught me. . . . Therefore I hate every false way."

In a coming issue will be answered such questions as duties of the Sabbath, *instructing children* and many other special problems.

CALENDAR

(Continued from page 6)

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

How to Transfer the Dates

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

determined from the date of this feast.

Let us calculate this year's holydays. From Webster's Dictionary we find that the Feast of Trumpets is Sept. 26. This is the first day of God's seventh month.

Next let us find the first day of the first month. RULE ONE: Get the date of the Feast of Trumpets from a reliable source. RULE TWO: The Feast is the 177th day after the first day of the year. (Three months of 29 days and three months of 30.) You will find that April 2 is the first day of the sacred year.

RULE THREE: The Passover day is the thirteenth day after the first day of the year. This brings us to Monday April 15. (Caution, *all* these days begin the preceding evening.) The Passover service then should be held *Sunday evening, April 14 shortly after sunset*, which is the beginning of the 14th day of God's first month. The seven days of Unleavened Bread are April 16 through April 22.

RULE FOUR: The day of the wave sheaf offering falls on the first day of the week (or Sunday) following the only weekly Sabbath (Saturday) during Feast of Unleavened Bread. The date of the wave sheaf offering is April 21. Though there is no observance of this day it is of utmost importance in figuring Pentecost.

RULE FIVE: Pentecost (meaning *count fifty*) is the fiftieth day *after* the day of the wave sheaf offering. This feast will be on Monday, June 10 this year.

Fall Feast Days

The NEXT Holy Day, the Feast of Trumpets, we found from the dictionary to be Sept. 26 or the first day of God's seventh month. FOLLOWING THIS, "on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement" (Lev. 23:27). The tenth day of the month, which is nine days after Sept. 26 brings us Oct. 5, the Day of Atonement, the fast day.

THEN, "The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD" (verse 34). The fourteenth day after Sept. 26 brings us to Oct. 10 (sunset Oct. 9), the first day of this Feast. It will continue seven days, Oct. 10 through 16, and the eighth day, Oct. 17, is the high day following the Feast.

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

The dates for the Holy Days for this year are included in the calendar we publish and which we will soon send to all members on The GOOD NEWS list.