

# !...MY appointed feasts.!

In this edition, my long time friend and brother, Calvin Burrell, responds to my editorial related to one understanding of the scriptures that the Church should be keeping God's Holy Days from the scriptures.

I appreciate the love and patience which my long-time friend exhibited in his response. His response is a good example of the principles of the Bible Sabbath Association in action.

It should be clear to readers of both articles that my brother and I disagree as to what the scriptures are saying about our need to keep the Annual Sabbaths listed with the weekly Sabbath in Leviticus 23. Yet, I can state unreservedly the affirmation that Calvin is my brother in Christ—and that I am his!

With that said, there are a few things that should be said with regard to what my brother wrote.

Calvin wrote that the Holy Days mentioned in the New Testament were just days that the brethren used for timing. The problem with that rationalization is that, while the apostles nowhere write that those days should continue to be kept, they also nowhere write that they no longer need to be kept. We read in Leviticus 23 that those days are God's Days, and they are listed with the weekly Sabbath which we all understand needs to be kept. It would appear to me to be reasonable that unless and until God states that they are not to be kept that we should do so!

You see, those days are not "Hebrew ritual festivals" as brother Calvin asserts. They are God's Feast Days and God makes that clearly understood to Moses when He states, "Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts."

Brother Calvin asserts that by the logic of that article most of the 613 laws of Moses would need to be kept. That certainly sounds logically derived. However,

many of those laws were related to sacrifices for sins and other uncleanness. There can certainly be no doubt that the Passover Lamb decreed in those old laws was replaced by THE Passover Lamb hence rendering those sacrificial laws moot.

Paul does attempt to show a spiritualization of some of those principles found in the law. For instance, while Paul fights mightily against the Jews who tried to convince the new brethren that they needed to be circumcised to be saved, he also goes on to state that circumcision IS required, but that it is of the heart. Many of the rest of those laws can be described as good ideas, such as the laws related to washing. It has been shown that the laws related to marriage are a good idea, although we certainly do not, in general, accept that God *intended* that men have multiple wives at the same time.

My brother Calvin states that if Jesus didn't say that we should keep the Holy Days then we shouldn't require them of our brethren. This is an unfortunate rationalizing around the requirement. We know that the One who became Jesus created all things, that all things were created by Him and through Him. If so then Jesus, as YHVH, did in fact speak to us that we should keep those days. Moreover, if we want to believe that it was the Father who stated that those were His days, then we have to deal with Jesus' statement that He did not come to do away with the Father's Laws. Therefore, either way, Jesus or the Father gave us His Days and ordered them to be kept forever. As an aside here, it is not up to us to require anything of our brethren. It is God whose requirements we should meet and Him to whom we answer.

My dear brother attempts to rationalize away Zechariah 14 by stating that the prophet did not grasp the "greater light of Jesus." The problem with this rationalization is that it was God who gave the vision. The vision was not something that Zechariah

conjured up to put into his writing. It was God giving a prophecy to a holy man of old who wrote it down for us, for our edification and understanding.

It is puzzling as to why Zechariah wrote of a sacrifice in the Kingdom of God. However, what we don't read there is the nature and purpose of those sacrifices. Certainly, our lack of understanding of the sacrifice mentioned does not give rise to stating that the prophet didn't know what he was writing or that God didn't mean what He said when He commanded the Holy Days forever or stated that they would be kept in the Kingdom of God.

That said, my brother makes the unsubstantiated leap to there being animal sacrifices discussed in Zechariah 14 when there is no mention of animal sacrifices. Yes, we do see sacrifices mentioned there, but Paul himself wrote that we are to present our bodies as a living sacrifices well after the start of his ministry; sacrifices still exist!

Christians are indeed blessed with a better covenant based upon better promises, as brother Calvin states. That statement is often used to "prove" that we don't have to obey plainly written commandments. It is used by Sunday-keepers to show that people don't have to keep the weekly Sabbath.

However, it is worth nothing that what we read in Hebrews does not say that it is based upon better or different laws, rules or requirements. It is based upon better *promises*, which promises are eternal life and Sonship with the Father and the Christ. Those promises were not made to Israel in exchange for obedience to God's law. If we accept that Hebrews is saying that we don't have to keep the Holy Days then we have to accept that it means that we don't have to keep the weekly Sabbath, also. They stand or fall together via Leviticus 23. All were spoken as commandments forever by the Word of God.

Calvin states that the weekly Sabbath is rooted in the Creation account of Genesis but that the Holy Days are not. On the surface that appears to be true. But, even so, we have to assume that lack of proof is proof of the lack of that requirement for that point to be relevant. Indeed, there are those that argue that the annual Sabbaths were also hand-

ed down in the Garden by the way some verses related to the Patriarchs read, and that Leviticus was merely a restatement to Israel after nearly 400 years of lost contact with the religion of Abraham. It really doesn't make much difference that Genesis doesn't make direct reference to other than the weekly Sabbath. The facts remain that God said that those days were to be kept forever. Certainly the Word/YHVH, in the days of the Old Testament, knew and understood about the coming of Christ for sin, didn't He?

My brother makes the statement that we can't truly know the correct day on which to keep those days so they must not be meant to be kept. That does fly in the face of God's command to keep them forever. However, again, that same logic is used by Sunday keepers to say that we can't really know which day is the true Sabbath Day so Sunday is as good as any other day! Once again, these days stand or fall together because it was God who spoke and commanded those days forever, not Moses.

In conclusion, it is clear that my brother Calvin and I have serious differences in understanding related to the keeping of the Sabbath just as we saw with the idols discussion in previous issues.

I'm not writing to say that I am absolutely correct or that my brother is in error; we are showing that sincere brethren can have sincere and rational differences of understanding and still be brethren.

There is one thing on which we can all agree. Whatever good we KNOW to do we need to be doing it. If we don't, it is sin to us. Nobody is expected to change their understanding or take action based upon what we have discussed here. We should all be like the noble Bereans and search the scriptures daily, proving for ourselves what is the truth.

We know that the Spirit will lead us into all truth, including the love for each other that exemplifies those who are Jesus' disciples. I thank my brother, and long-time friend, Calvin for his well-written article. As always, he remains my brother in Christ with whom I look forward to eternity in service to our loving Father and His Children!

—Ed.