

“Watchman, what of the night ?”

*“The hour has come, the hour is striking, and striking at you,
the hour and the end!”* *Ezekiel 7:6 (Moffatt)*

▶ THIS ISSUE'S READING

**FEAST DAY OBSERVANCE:
Progressive Truth or
Type / Anti-type Confusion?**

Let's Talk It Over pg. 7

Editor's Preface

The topic under consideration for this issue's publication brings into focus a growing agitation over the observance of the Mosaic festivals (feast days). It appears to have originated within the ranks of the Messianic Community, a large and diverse non-denominational 'movement' which emphasizes a return to the Hebraic roots of the Christian faith. The expansion of this movement over the last few decades has increased its influence, in varying degrees, over portions of Christendom that it has managed to penetrate its way into. And while the basic premise of the Messianic Movement is sound (the foundation of Christianity being Hebraic / Jewish and certainly not, as it has reached down to our time, Greco-Roman / Pagan), overall this movement is at least as confused and riddled with error as the denominational Christian Community which it generally denounces and seeks to overturn or replace.

One of the prominent teachings of the Messianics is the notion that the seven annual feasts listed in Leviticus Chapter 23 (Passover, Unleavened Bread, Barley Firstfruits, Pentecost, Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and Tabernacles) must be observed like the weekly seventh-day Sabbath is kept. This means that the literal time specified for each annual feast day or days must also be set aside from the normal round of hu-



man activities and devoted to spiritual activities just like the weekly Sabbath day. In other words, the main point stressed in this doctrine centers in a particular understanding of the significance of the time element of each festival; an understanding which, like the weekly Sabbath, makes the observance of the festal day/days, in and of itself, a major determinate factor defining the importance of the festival's purpose and meaning. This teaching has infiltrated into and been adopted by a certain segment of Seventh-day Adventists. Primarily, it is being disseminated and promoted mostly by the independent Adventist Community along with some in various Adventist denominational circles as a binding, necessary, salvational, source of "new light." As such, it has become a subject of increasing concern as it affects an ever expanding part of the Seventh-day Adventist Movement.

The main article in this bi-monthly's WWN was written by Bill Caloudes. Brother Caloudes is a member of the board of directors for Adventist Laymen's Foundation of Iowa, Inc. and resides in Santa Barbara, California. His devotion in seeking out the truth on this matter, along with his familiarity and experience with those who have embraced the tenets of this belief, has motivated him to write the relatively short, yet quite encompassing study which he has entitled: "*Stephen and the Customs of Moses*." In addition, he has also penned the preface to the study to explain its purpose and provide a biblical context to place it within. Finally, we have attached an "Addendum" consisting of email excerpts by brother Caloudes to another Ad-

ventist brother which we believe is pertinent to this discussion.

We are aware that the content concerning this question is not exhaustive. Hopefully, this will spur further investigation and study by the honest seeker for truth. Our prayer is that this presentation will prove to be informative to all, especially those who have already accepted or may be taking into serious consideration the claims being promulgated by the adherents of this doctrine.



THE MOSAIC FEAST DAYS - TYPE OR ANTI-TYPE, WHICH?

PREFACE:

For at least the last 20 years, a movement centered on the keeping of "the feast days" associated with the Hebrew sanctuary has grown explosively in the ranks of conservative Adventism. For those who have become a part of this movement, the commands given by God to Moses and other prophets regarding the feast days are accepted in good faith as applying to all of God's people for all time.

However, I believe the services of the Hebrew sanctuary including the feast days were teaching tools used by God to point forward in time to the realities that would be fulfilled in the earthly life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ as well as His High Priestly ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary. These realities were revealed to the people of God starting with the follow-

ing prophecy in the Garden of Eden: "And I will put enmity Between you [Satan] and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel." (Genesis 3:15 NKJV †). This truth was further explained to Abraham: "But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, 'My father!' And he said, 'Here I am, my son.' Then he said, 'Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?' And Abraham said, 'My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.'" (Genesis 22:7-8 NKJV †, emphasis added). This truth continued to be enhanced by other prophets. Finally, it was revealed to David that the Messiah would become the true High Priest in the Heavenly Sanctuary:

"The LORD has sworn And will not relent, 'You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.'" (Psalms 110:4 NKJV †, emph. added).

In the New Testament, the apostle Paul reveals an important difference in the new covenant: "Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts 13:38-39 NKJV †). Further, Paul states: "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus." (1 Timothy 2:5 NKJV †). The first ten chapters of the book of Hebrews go into great depth to explain the ministry of Christ in the Heavenly Sanctuary in the context of the new covenant. These teach-

ings are summarized in the following verse: "They [the Levitical priests] serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly sanctuary." (Hebrews 8:5 RSV *, emph. added). This is saying the services in the Heavenly Sanctuary superseded the types and shadows of the services in the earthly sanctuary, which included the feast days. The foundation of the new covenant is as follows: "The correct understanding of the ministration in the heavenly sanctuary is the foundation of our faith." (Ellen G. White, Letter 208, 1906, emph. added).

This teaching of the new covenant is most forcefully and dramatically portrayed in the ministry and experience of Stephen the deacon summarized below.

Stephen and the Customs of Moses

Why was Stephen arrested by the Jewish religious authorities and brought before the Jewish religious council:

"And Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, arose and disputed with Stephen. But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. Then they secretly instigated men, who said, '**We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God.**' And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and they came upon him and seized him and brought him before the council, and set up false witnesses who said, '**This man never**

ceases to speak words against this holy place [the temple in Jerusalem] and the law; for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place, and will change the customs which Moses delivered to us.' And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel." (Acts 6: 8-15 RSV *, emphasis added, brackets supplied).

We see that Stephen was accused of demeaning the significance of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem and the services that were conducted there by the Aaronic priests – that is, **"the customs which Moses delivered to us."**

What did Stephen say about the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem:

"But it was Solomon who built a house for him. Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands; as the prophet says, 'Heaven is my throne, and earth my footstool. What house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest?'" (Acts 7:47-49 RSV *).

Stephen said that God does not dwell in buildings made by mankind!!!!

What did Stephen say that he saw in Heaven:

"But he [Stephen], full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and he said, '**Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God.**'" (Acts 7:55-56 RSV *, emph. added, brkts. supplied).

Stephen was saying to the Jewish council that "the Son of man" – that is, Jesus Christ – was the true Messiah, who had assumed the honor as God's co-regent and a "priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek" thus superseding the priesthood of Aaron and the cere-

monies and customs of the earthly temple. This made the Jewish religious authorities angry beyond description BECAUSE THEY UNDERSTOOD THE MEANING OF WHAT HE SAID. Stephen was referring to the following prophecy of David:

"The LORD says to my lord: 'Sit at my right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool.' The LORD sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your foes! Your people will offer themselves freely on the day you lead your host upon the holy mountains. From the womb of the morning like dew your youth will come to you. The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, 'You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.' **The Lord is at your right hand;** he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath. He will execute judgment among the nations, filling them with corpses; he will shatter chiefs over the wide earth." (Psalms 110: 1-6 RSV *, emph. added).

Does the Bible tell us that the Jewish Temple along with its Levitical Priesthood and associated ceremonies, which foreshadowed the plan of salvation, changed at the death of Jesus on the cross?

In the Old Testament, a sinner seeking the forgiveness of God would present the sacrifice of a lamb, a goat, or sometimes another animal in order to show his faith in the promised Messiah. John the Baptist anticipated this change when he prophesied: **"Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"** (John 1:29 RSV *).

The book of Hebrews alludes to this change as well as the prophecy of Psalm 110:

"But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God." (Hebrews 10:12 NKJV †).

What is the main point of the first ten chapters of the book of Hebrews:

"Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: **We have such a High Priest [Jesus Christ], who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.** For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore it is necessary that this One also have something to offer. For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, **since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things,** as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, 'See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.'" (Hebrews 8:1-5 NKJV †, emph. added, brkts. supplied).

CONCLUSION

Were the Temple and all the ceremonies of the Jewish law to last forever:

"The tabernacle, or temple, of God on earth was a pattern of the original in Heaven. **All the ceremonies of the Jewish law were prophetic, typical of mysteries in the plan of redemption.** The rites and ceremonies of the law were given by Christ himself, who, enshrouded in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, was the leader of the hosts of Israel; and **this law should be treated with great respect, for it is sacred. Even after it [the ceremonial law] was no longer to be observed, Paul presented it before the Jews in its true position and value, showing its place in the plan of redemption and its relation to the work of Christ;** and the great apos-

tle pronounces this law glorious, worthy of its divine Originator. That which was to be done away was glorious, **but it was not the law instituted by God for the government of his family in Heaven and on earth;** for as long as the heavens shall remain, so long shall the law of the Lord endure." (Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, July 29, 1886, emph. added, brkts. supplied).

What was the ultimate fulfillment of the ceremonial law:

"The Lord Jesus was the foundation of the whole Jewish economy. Its imposing rites were of divine appointment. They were designed to make the worship of God impressive, and to teach the people that at the time appointed One would come to whom these ceremonies pointed. **But the Jews exalted the forms and ceremonies, and lost sight of their object.** The traditions and maxims and enactments of men hid from them the spiritual lessons that God intended to convey. These maxims and traditions became an obstacle to their understanding and practise of true religion. **And when the reality came, in the person of Christ, they did not recognize in Him the fulfilment of all their types, the substance of all their shadows. They rejected the Anti-type, and clung to their types and useless ceremonies.**" (Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, November 3, 1898, emph. added).

The Ceremonial Law of the earthly tabernacle was a shadow of things to come. Except in the foreknowledge of God, it had no existence prior to the entrance of sin into this world. Afterward, everything associated with it pointed to Christ who was the fulfillment of the entire Jewish economy, which included circumcision, the sacrifices, the new moons, the annual feasts and their sabbaths. The entire system was done away with at the Cross

when type met antitype:

"Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." (Hebrews 10:8-9, emph. added).

* *The Revised Standard Version Bible* (New York, NY: American Bible Society, 1952, 1971).

‡ *The New King James Version Bible* (New York, NY: American Bible Society, 1990 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.)

[ADDENDUM] - Excerpts from an email correspondence by Bill Caloudes to an Adventist brother regarding this issue:

Brother ... ,

Thank you for your response to my email. What you may not understand is that the "feast day movement" among Adventists has gone worldwide. There are many independent ministries and some regular church pastors who have given their hearts and souls to this movement. On a personal note, many of my close friends have been captured by this delusional theology.

My observations about Feast Day keepers:

1. The nicest and most committed Christians are generally the ones who become Feast Day keepers. These people seem to be searching for "new ways" to please God.
2. They circle their wagons: the Feast Days, the Shema, the Torah, the statutes and judgments, etc. They generally become closed to new truth even though they say that they are open to it.
3. Because they keep the Feast Days, these people seem to deemphasize, discard or ig-

nore other MAJOR BIBLE DOCTRINES such as: the Sanctuary Message, the Three Angels' Messages, and the Final Atonement.

4. The leaders of the Feast Day movement give you the impression that they are showing you the way to a more exalted relationship with God when in fact they are leading you away from truth into darkness. Their messages in books, DVDs, etc., "cherry-pick" quotes out of context from Ellen White, the Bible, and other sources ...

It is difficult to measure the impact of [those] ... that promote the feast days and other related errors – especially about the Godhead and the non-emphasis of the sanctuary truth. All I can say is that I have witnessed the dramatic growth and influence of this movement as well as "the conversion" of many of my friends to these false teachings. This movement seems to promote an ultra-literalistic method of interpreting the Bible ...

The interpretive method of this movement includes the following:

1. Ultra-literalism.
2. Lack of emphasis on the concept of types and shadows.
3. Cherry-picking Bible versions in order to find interpretations of verses to fit their paradigm.
4. Quoting the Bible and the Writings **OUT OF CONTEXT** and giving meanings to words and sentences that are delusional; this is practiced to such extremes that you would not believe...

The purpose that I had in mind when writing Stephen and the Customs of Moses was twofold:

1. Keep regular non-feast day keeping Adventists within the general paradigm that SDAs have used to interpret the Bible.

2. Give some doubt to feast day keeping Adventists in order that they may see the need to reevaluate their interpretive paradigm ...



💡 LET'S TALK IT OVER

The fact that this feast day keeping obsession has spread itself substantially among Seventh-day Adventists is another testimony to the deepening Laodiceanism found within our ranks. Its prevalence among the independents clearly shows the denominational structure has not monopolized apostasy.

The error that lies at the root of this issue is the failure to recognize, understand, and acknowledge the amount of discontinuity with a type that occurs in the experience of God's people when that type is superseded by the anti-type. The entire purpose of a biblical "type" (representation) is to symbolically foreshadow and roughly outline the biblical "anti-type" (reality). This is inspired by the Holy Spirit through picturesque examples, rites, exercises, and ceremonies which are all meant to illustrate, inform, and prepare the believer to embrace the anti-typical reality when it does appear and manifests itself. The extent of the discontinuity (and continuity for that matter) with the type when it is succeeded by the anti-type must be determined by "rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2: 15b).

The New Testament explicitly details how the annual Mosaic festivals typically pointed forward to and were fulfilled, or will be fulfilled, - both according to event and timing - by the Lord Jesus. The first four Spring festivals, at the beginning of the Gospel era, through Christ's death (Passover), burial (Unleavened Bread), resurrection (Barley Firstfruits), and ascension into Heaven

(Pentecost); and the last three Fall festivals, at the close of the Gospel era, through Christ's intercessory ministry (Trumpets), judgment/second coming (Day of Atonement), and eternal reign in glory (Tabernacles). This basic interpretive principle regarding typological theology formed the very foundation of the Seventh-day Adventist Movement (see WWN (Iowa), Issue # 3).

To exalt an aspect of a biblical type in a manner which is not in harmony now with its anti-typical significance is a corruption of the purpose for which the type was originally instituted. ❖ **GLP**

>>> All Scripture quotations are from the King James Version unless otherwise indicated.

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