

God's Calendar Outlawed

The act of outlawing the calendar God established at Creation is a deed of such heaven-daring defiance that it is held up in scripture as one of the most treasonous acts against the government of Heaven. The Bible reveals that Lucifer's stated goal to establish his own times of worship was one of the main areas in which he wanted to be like the Most High. (See, "Battle of the *Mo'ed*" on the *Articles* webpage.) This right is also claimed by the little horn power of Daniel seven: "He shall insult the Most High, he shall torment/wear out the holy ones of the Most High, and he shall attempt to change the calendar and the ordinance" (Daniel 7:25, John Knox' translation.)

The Roman Catholic Church is very open that she is solely responsible for changing the Sabbath to Sunday; a day which bears no divine credentials whatsoever. In a series of articles, published in *The Catholic Mirror*, the office of Cardinal Gibbons made a compelling case against the inconsistency of Sunday-keeping Protestants. In the following passage, the Catholic Church is adamant that she is responsible for this change:

Chief amongst their [Protestants'] articles of belief was, and is today, the permanent necessity of keeping the Sabbath holy . . . The keeping of the Sabbath constitutes the sum and substance of the Biblical theory . . . [But the irony is] that whilst the Pharisees of old kept the *true Sabbath*,¹ our modern Pharisees [Sunday-keeping Protestants], counting on the credulity and simplicity of their dupes, *have never once in their lives kept the true Sabbath* which their divine Master kept to His dying day, and which His apostles kept, after His example, for thirty years afterward

The history of the world cannot present a more stupid, self-stultifying specimen of dereliction of principle than this [Protestants keeping Sunday while claiming to abide by *sola scriptura*.] The [Protestant] teacher demands emphatically in every page that the law of the Sabbath be observed every week, by all recognizing it as "the only infallible teacher," whilst the disciples of that teacher have not once for over three hundred years observed the divine precept! . . . All the Biblical sects occupy the same self-stultifying position which no explanation can modify, much less justify.

How truly do the words of the Holy Spirit apply to this deplorable situation! "*Iniquitas mentita est sibi*" – "Iniquity hath lied to itself." Proposing to follow *the Bible only* as teacher, yet before the world, *the sole teacher* is ignominiously thrust aside, and the teaching and practice of the Catholic Church – "the mother of abominations," when it suits their purpose so to designate her – adopted, despite

¹ All emphasis in original.

the most terrible threats pronounced by God Himself against those who disobey the command, “Remember to keep holy the Sabbath.”

. . . The Catholic Church for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday . . . The Protestant world at its birth found the Christian Sabbath too strongly entrenched to run counter to its existence; it was therefore placed under the necessity of acquiescing in the arrangement, thus implying the Church’s right to change the day, for over three hundred years. The Christian Sabbath is therefore *to this day*, the acknowledged offspring of the Catholic Church . . .”²

A question frequently asked when a person is first confronted with the truth of a change in calendars is, “So, when was this switch made?” Sabbatarians have long pointed to Constantine’s “Sunday Law” as the time when the change occurred. It has been assumed that the substitution was merely Sunday for Saturday. However, Constantine’s Sunday law was far more deceptive and diabolical than exchanging one day for another in an already existent calendar. Nor was it a mere rearrangement of the calendar. God’s entire system of luni-solar calendation was outlawed and the pagan Julian calendar was put into place by civil legislation. The reason: temporal expedience on the part of the emperor; political ambition on the part of the Bishops.

In the early part of the fourth century the emperor Constantine issued a decree making Sunday a public festival throughout the Roman Empire. The day of the sun was revered by his pagan subjects and was honored by Christians; it was the emperor’s policy to unite the conflicting interests of heathenism and Christianity. He was urged to do this by the bishops of the church, who, inspired by ambition and thirst for power, perceived that if the same day was observed by both Christians and heathen, it would promote the nominal acceptance of Christianity by pagans and thus advance the power and glory of the church.³

The calendar change law unified the empire and established the papacy in a position of power.

Little by little, at first in stealth and silence, and then more openly as it increased in strength and gained control of the minds of men, “the mystery of iniquity” carried forward its deceptive and blasphemous work. Almost imperceptibly the customs of heathenism found their way into the Christian church . . .

This compromise between paganism and Christianity resulted in the development of “the man of sin” foretold in prophecy as opposing and exalting himself above God. That gigantic system of false religion is a masterpiece of Satan’s power – a monument of his efforts to seat himself upon the throne to rule the earth according

² “The Christian Sabbath: The Genuine Offspring of the Union of the Holy Spirit and the Catholic Church His Spouse. The Claims of Protestantism to Any Part Therein Proved to be Groundless, Self-Contradictory, and Suicidal,” September 23, 1893, quoted in *Rome’s Challenge: Why Do Protestants Keep Sunday?*

³ GC 53

to his will.⁴

This change of calendar took place at the council of Nicæa in 321-324 A.D.

Up until the Council of Nicæa, the Christian Easter, especially in the East, had been celebrated for the most part at the time of the Jewish Passover, and “indeed upon the days calculated and fixed by the Sanhedrin in Judaea for its celebration.”⁵ On the contrary, in Europe, “some earlier, some later, were intercalating the months . . . The Europeans were placing their cycle at the equinox, and were celebrating the Passover on the next full moon after the equinox.”⁶ These contentions had agitated the churches of Asia since the time of the Roman bishop Victor, who had persecuted the churches of Asia for following the “14th-day heresy” as they called it, in reference to the Passover.⁷ But at the Council of Nicæa, “the last thread was snapped which connected Christianity with its parent stock.”⁸ The future Easter observance was to be rendered independent of Jewish calculation according to these words, which have been attributed to Constantine:

“Henceforward let us have nothing in common with this odious people; our Saviour has shown us another path. It would indeed be absurd if the Jews were able to boast that we are not in a position to celebrate the Passover without the aid of their rules.”^{9 10}

This is a civil law enforcing the pagan calendar. Calendars calculate time and at the Council of Nicæa it was determined to remain independent of *Jewish* calculation. Changing the way time is calculated will affect when the Sabbath falls. Again, this was not merely a rearrangement of an existing calendar. The law made it illegal to use the Biblical luni-solar calendar and it persecuted those who still tried to use it.

In subsequent years, the Jews went through “iron and fire.”¹¹ The Christian [papal Roman] emperors *forbade the Jewish computation of the calendar*, and did not allow the announcement of the feast days. Graetz says, “The Jewish [and apostolic Christian] communities were left in utter doubt concerning the most important religious decisions: as pertaining to their festivals.”¹²

The immediate consequence was the fixation and calculation of the Hebrew

⁴ GC 49-50

⁵ Heinrich Graetz, *History of the Jews*, Philadelphia, 1893, Vol. II, 563.

⁶ Joseph Scaliger, *De Emendatione Temporum*, Francofurt, 1593, 106.

⁷ Op. cit.; see also Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book V, Ch. 24.

⁸ Op. cit.; Graetz, Vol. II, 563.

⁹ Graetz, Vol. II, 564; see also Eusebius; *Life of Constantine*, Book III, Chapter 18.

¹⁰ Grace Amadon, “Report of Committee on Historical Basis, Involvement, and Validity of the October 22, 1844, Position”, Part V, Sec. B, 17, Box 7, Folder 1, Grace Amadon Collection.

¹¹ David Sidersky, *Astronomical Origin of Jewish Chronology*, Paris, 1913, 640.

¹² Graetz, Vol. II, 571.

calendar by Hillel II.¹³

Being unable to communicate among themselves and having to go underground in their observances, led the Jews to “fix” the calendar. They tied it to the new moon *nearest* the vernal equinox. It was now independent of any barley harvest. This practice explains why the Jewish feasts of today are typically one month too soon. This is also why in 1844, the Jews observed September 23 as Day of Atonement rather than October 22. When mocked for insisting on a date that was contrary to that observed by the Jews themselves, the Millerites with confidence could say: “Every scholar knows that we are correct according to the original luni-solar reckoning.”

The decrees of Nicæa “destroyed the Temple of the Law in Judea,” as it were, and the ancient regulation of Moses for harmonizing the course of the moon with that of the sun was ultimately replaced by calculations involving the vernal equinox,¹⁴ after which the nearest full moon was chosen to be the paschal moon. From this equinoctial point, the church built up her ecclesiastical calendar and its Easter feast. It is easy to gloss over the real significance of the Council of Nicæa and its bearing upon the Jewish system of time, for though the church desired to depart from Jewish calculation, and to adopt a movable feast,¹⁵ yet in the end, it turned out that both the Jewish and Roman Catholic festivals came to be computed from the same point of time . . . the vernal equinox. Although it is clear that the responsibility for this change rests with the bishops of Nicæa, yet, according to Clavius, the church merely enjoined that which had been sanctified by the ancient Roman Pontiffs:

“The Catholic Church has never used that [Jewish] rite of celebrating the Passover, but always in its celebration has observed the motion of the moon and sun, and it was thus sanctified by the most ancient and most holy Pontiffs of Rome, but also confirmed by the first Council of Nicæa.”^{16 17}

When the term “Roman Pontiffs” is heard, “pope” is generally what is thought. But the ancient “holy Pontiffs of Rome” here mentioned referred to the original *pagan* heads of the Babylonian religion. In fact, even the title *Pontifex Maximus*, now used exclusively by the pope, originated in Babylon.¹⁸

The spirit of concession to paganism opened the way for a still further disregard of Heaven’s authority. Satan, working through unconsecrated leaders of the

¹³ Amadon, “Report of Committee on Historical Basis, Involvement, and Validity of the October 22, 1844, Position”, Part V, Sec. B, 17-18. Parenthetical comments and emphasis supplied.

¹⁴ Sidersky, *Chronology of the Jews*, 624.

¹⁵ Christopher Clavius, *Romani Calendarii A Gregorio XIII P.M. Restituti Explicatio*, 54.

¹⁶ Clavius, 54.

¹⁷ Amadon, “Report of Committee on Historical Basis, Involvement, and Validity of the October 22, 1844, Position”, Part V, Sec. B, 18.

¹⁸ For an in-depth look at how the Roman Catholic religion is merely pure paganism in a Christian disguise, read *The Two Babylons: Or The Papal Worship Proved to be The Worship Of Nimrod And His Wife*, by Alexander Hislop, England, 1916.

church, tampered with the fourth commandment also, and essayed to set aside the ancient Sabbath, the day which God had blessed and sanctified (Gen. 2: 2, 3), and in its stead to exalt the festival observed by the heathen as “the venerable day of the sun.”¹⁹

Seventh-day Adventists have been mistaken in assuming that the only change made was a change from Saturday to Sunday. According to David Sidersky in his *Astronomical Origin of Jewish Chronology*, “It was no more possible under Constance to apply the old calendar.”²⁰

Under the reign of Constantius (337-362) the persecutions of the Jews reached such a height that . . . the computation of the calendar [was] forbidden under pain of severe punishment.²¹

The whole world has wondered after the beast – even modern Jews themselves have settled upon a cycle that follows a regulation of the Roman Catholic Church.

It should be recognized and made perfectly plain that the plan of the church and of the modern Jewish calendar as well, to regulate the Passover with reference to the position of the sun at the spring equinox, and of the full moon next after, has to be referred back, according to Clavius, to the “most ancient and most holy Roman Pontiffs,” and has no connection at all with the original Mosaic command.^{22 23}

The calendar now in use, named after Pope Gregory XIII, is but a continuation of the old pagan solar calendar implemented by Julius Cæsar in 46 B.C. and adopted into the church by the Council of Nicæa.

The differences between the “full-moon-of-barley-harvest” Mosaic rule, and the “first-full-moon-after-the-vernal-equinox” Nicæan regulation of the church are vital. Though both were featured by a period of time, which was to be marked by the first light of the full moon, yet the barley-harvest period did not always coincide with the equinoctial²⁴ and both rulings were wide apart in character, purpose, and meaning. This will be seen by the following outline:

Barley Harvest Moon

1. A command of Moses for Jewish Time.

Equinoctial Moon

1. A decree of Nicæa for the church calendar.

¹⁹ GC 52

²⁰ As quoted in Amadon, “Report of Committee on Historical Basis, Involvement, and Validity of the October 22, 1844, Position”, Part V, Sec. B, 8, footnotes.

²¹ Excerpted from *The Jewish Encyclopeida*, “Calendar.”

²² Clavius, op. cit., 56; Sidersky, *Chronology*.

²³ Amadon, “Report of Committee on Historical Basis, Involvement, and Validity of the October 22, 1844, Position”, Part V, Sec. B, 19.

²⁴ The moons were different in leap years when an extra month was added to reconcile the lunar year to the solar year.

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| <p>2. Only one moon.</p> <p>3. A permanent and regular control of Jewish feasts.</p> <p>4. Coincided with “first month,” or Nisan.</p> <p>5. A sure index to the crucifixion Passover.</p> | <p>2. Could be two moons.</p> <p>3. A very irregular index to the time of Easter.</p> <p>4. Coincided with the sign, Aries, and often with Adar.²⁵</p> <p>5. Not the paschal moon which marked the death of Christ.</p> |
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Of these two methods of determining a festival feast, the barley harvest has been commonly regarded as a period too elastic to represent an actual point of time. But be it noted, that the controlling conditions relating to the barley-harvest moon in the time of Christ were as exact, if not more so, than those which have thus far governed the vernal equinox in its control over Easter. The time of barley harvest in the Ashes-Valley field across the Kidron was remarkably accurate and permanent in its regulation of the passover festival. The latter rain extended into the first week in April, and very quickly thereafter the barley would ripen. Into this defined and limited period *one full moon only could occur.*²⁶

Three conditions: 1) the ending of the latter rain, 2) the regular period of the ripened barley, and 3) the fulling of the one moon possible in that limited time after the first week in April - exactly determined the paschal feast and all the other festivals of the Jewish year. The results were dependable and specific. *This was the rule which Moses had commanded.* It persisted to the generation in which Christ came, and definitely was followed by the Jews until the time of their general dispersion.²⁷ These facts lead to one vital conclusion: that *the Jewish year in the first century of the Christian era was governed by the barley harvest moon specification which had been ordained of God, and upon which the application of astronomy in relation to the crucifixion year is definitely and consistently dependent.*²⁸

Of course, the other differing characteristic between the two calendars is that the pagan calendar provides a continuous weekly cycle, while the Mosaic calendar has the weekly cycle start over each month with the observation of the new crescent moon.

Satan, who hates the law of God, not only *thought* to change “times and laws” – he has *done* it. There can be no question but that the little horn has done exactly what he thought to do and by

²⁵ Adar was the *last* month of the Jewish year, not the first.

²⁶ Emphasis original.

²⁷ Sidersky, *Chronology of the Jews*, 615, 624.

²⁸ Amadon, Report of Committee on Historical Basis, Involvement, and Validity of the October 22, 1844, Position, Part V, Sec. B, 21. Emphasis supplied except where otherwise noted.

observing a Saturday Sabbath, Jews and Saturday-keeping Sabbatarians have, unknowingly, paid homage to that power which thought to (and did) change “times and laws.” The Sabbath is more than a memorial of creation - it is a sign between God and His people. It is a sign of their loyalty to Him, and of His ability to make them holy.²⁹ The Sabbaths are God’s appointed times to meet with His people and sanctify them. When believers meet with the Father at His appointed time, on His appointed day, He fulfills His part of the covenant - He does for them that which they cannot do for themselves. Satan has sought to disrupt this by substituting a calendar that designates a spurious sabbath. And he has done it so successfully and so long ago, that were it not for the mercy of God, no one would have ever seen it.

God’s luni-solar calendar has been set aside and a pagan, solar calendar accepted in its place. The prophecies of Daniel warned of this. The “little horn” spoken of in Daniel is a symbol of the papacy. Daniel 7:25 clearly spells out just what this power would do: “And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.”

The “time, times and the dividing of time” refers to the 1260 years of papal supremacy that stretched from 538 A.D. to 1798. Because it is prophetic time (a day equals a year), it is broken down this way: 1260 days = 1260 years. Or, said another way, 1260 days = 3 1/2 years in literal time. A “time”, then, is a year. This text reveals that the little horn would think to change *years*. The law, of course, refers to God’s law. What hasn’t been recognized is that the little horn has indeed changed years - how they are calculated.

John Knox’ translation of Daniel 7:25 makes it even more clear: “He shall insult the Most High, he shall torment/wear out the holy ones of the Most High, and he shall attempt to change the calendar and the ordinance”

Emperor Constantine, at the Council of Nicæa, changed both paganism and Christianity by combining them into a new organism. The true luni-solar calendar was forcibly eliminated and the pagan/Julian calendar with its continuous cycle of weeks was exalted and supported by the Church/State. So was born the Papacy, and so was lost the true calendation instituted by God, Himself, at Creation. The darkness of ignorance began to enshroud the world.

This is much more than dry, ancient history. This has huge import for the last generation who has been warned:

History will be repeated. False religion will be exalted. The first day of the week, a common working day, possessing no sanctity whatever, will be set up as was the image at Babylon. All nations and tongues and peoples will be commanded to worship this spurious sabbath. This is Satan’s plan to make of no account the day instituted by God, and given to the world as a memorial of creation.³⁰

²⁹ “I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.” Ezekiel 20:12

³⁰ Mar 214

Those who love the Sabbath need to know the history of the Christian church. This is vital because the devices Satan has successfully used before against the church of God, he will use again. *The Great Controversy* was written with the express purpose of shedding light on the *future*, not the past.³¹

In the great final conflict, Satan will employ the same policy, manifest the same spirit, and work for the same end as in all preceding ages. *That which has been, will be*, except that the coming struggle will be marked with a terrible intensity such as the world has never witnessed. Satan's deceptions will be more subtle, his assaults more determined. If it were possible, he would lead astray the elect. Mark 13:22, R.V.

As the Spirit of God has opened to my mind the great truths of His word, and the scenes of the past and the future, *I have been bidden* to make known to others that which has thus been revealed -- to trace the history of the controversy in past ages, *and especially so to present it as to shed a light on the fast-approaching struggle of the future . . .*

In these records we may see a foreshadowing of the conflict before us. Regarding them in the light of God's word, and by the illumination of His Spirit, *we may see unveiled the devices of the wicked one*, and the dangers which they must shun who would be found "without fault" before the Lord at His coming.

. . . It is not so much the object of this book to present new truths concerning the struggles of former times, as to bring out facts and principles which have a bearing on *coming events*. Yet viewed as a part of the controversy between the forces of light and darkness, all these records of the past are seen to have a new significance; and through them *a light is cast upon the future*, illumining the pathway of those who, like the reformers of past ages, will be called, even at the peril of all earthly good, to witness "for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."³²

The *Great Controversy* is far more than just a history book - it, *the entire book*, gives a view of "the fast-approaching struggle of the future" and it does this by unveiling "the devices of the wicked one." It shows the "dangers which they must shun who would be found 'without fault' before the Lord at His coming." It would be well for all to study it more with this in mind.

Life spans today are so short that it has worked to Satan's advantage. This whole change of calendars took place nearly 1,700 years ago! The words of Ellen White have great force when seen in the light of this ancient change of calendars:

³¹ Ellen White herself wrote the introduction to *Great Controversy* and in it she explicitly spelled out her reasons for writing the book.

³² GC XI-XII, emphasis supplied.

There is no excuse for anyone in taking the position that there is no more truth to be revealed, and that all our expositions of Scripture are without an error. The fact that certain doctrines have been held as truth for many years by our people, is not a proof that our ideas are infallible. Age will not make error into truth, and truth can afford to be fair. No true doctrine will lose anything by close investigation.³³

Worshipping on a wrong day, unsanctified by the Creator, is an abomination that desolates the soul. It directs one's worship to a false god: he who, in heaven, declared his intention to be like the Most High. The words of Joshua still apply today: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve."³⁴

³³ CW 35

³⁴ Joshua 24:15