

The Adventures of Paul

New Discovery Series

by Elder John VanDenburgh

Welcome to tape two — New Discoveries from Old Manuscripts. Well, Pentecost had happened; Paul was converted and spreading truth north from Jerusalem. Actually, we're going to start about 18 years after the cross when a controversy arose over, of all things, a problem with circumcision. That is, circumcision is the cutting of the flesh ceremony that pointed to the cross along with all other cutting of the flesh and blood rituals. In fact, circumcision is known as "a covenant by blood." So, we're going to take a look at the map to see where Paul is and what's



happening.

If you will notice (see golden arrows) on our map Jerusalem, down at the lower right hand corner, and up north from Jerusalem you'll see Antioch. Notice the squares on the map and you'll see that there are about 50 miles to each square, so we're looking at about a 300-mile trip. Paul is going to make two extra trips because of this controversial issue. It was a serious thing in those days. Ellen White writes about it in the book *Story of Redemption*, page 304 and 305. Notice:

"Certain Jews from Judea raised a general consternation among the believing Gentiles by agitating the question of circumcision. They asserted with great assurance that none could be saved without being circumcised and keeping the entire ceremonial law."

Aren't you glad, now, you know what the ceremonial law is truly all about. Continuing:

"This was an important question and one which affected the church in a very great degree. Paul and Barnabas met it with promptness and opposed introducing the subject to the Gentiles. The matter resulted in much discussion and one of harmony in the church until finally the church at Antioch apprehending that a division among them would occur from any further discussion of the question, decided to send Paul and Barnabas together with some responsible men of Antioch to Jerusalem to lay the matter before the apostles and elders."

Now, notice, I want to bring the last part of this on the screen:

"Meanwhile, all controversy was to cease until a final decision should be made by the responsible men of the church."

Now notice:

“This decision was then to be universally accepted throughout the various churches of the country.”

Well, once again, let’s go to our map. And, on our map, we’ll see where Antioch is again. Now, we’ll put an arrow at Jerusalem. Now, I want you to see the round trip he was making. He would return to Antioch with a decision, so let’s carefully investigate that decision process. We’re going to do that by looking right into the Scripture in Acts 15 verses 19 through 21. Here, James is presiding at the head of the counsel:

“Wherefore my sentence is that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles are turned to God but they write unto them that they abstain from pollutions of idols and from fornication and from things strangled and from blood, for Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him being read in the synagogue every Sabbath day.”

Now friends, if this decision was to be universally accepted then why hasn’t it been accepted by all Christendom today? Why do Christians who eat meat purchase anything but properly prepared kosher products like the Jews were supposed to do when they were under those same, um, shall I say, restrictions? Actually, they were health benefits.

And the reason Christianity doesn’t is because most of Christianity believes all these statutes were nailed to the cross. And besides, meat without blood in it wouldn’t taste very good anyway, just one step above shoe leather.

But, I want you to notice three points. First; they would continue to worship on the Sabbath each week in the local synagogues. And there they would learn the rest of the laws of Moses from week to week. And number three; there were certain necessary things they were to know immediately. Now, let’s get a little more information and a little more confirmation from Acts 15:28 and 29.

“For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us...”

To whom?

“...to the Holy Ghost and to the apostles, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things that ye abstain from meats offered to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication from which if you keep yourselves, ye shall do well.”

Now, please notice four, non-approved items: fornication, things strangled, blood, meats offered to idols. Of all things — meats offered to idols. Why? You see, the new Christians were to immediately understand about meat. They were not to eat meats offered to idols. You see, to eat

such meat, in a sense, was indicating an allegiance to the idols to which it had been offered. This would also be an issue because the Gentiles certainly didn't want to take steps to make their sacrifices kosher — that is, without blood.

Now, the text also says not to eat things strangled. Well, why did they strangle their meat? Well, of course, that would keep the blood in it and make it taste better. Did you know it was also cheaper to purchase this meat offered to idols because that's what it was, an offering, so the priests of the idolatry would make it very cheap to purchase. But such unkosher food had been declared unfit for the children of Yahweh.

So, what would they have to do? Well, they'd have to take their meat home and drain all the blood out of it which is much more a problem than it would be to have done it at the butcher shop. But, regardless, I want you to notice the mutual agreement here between whom? ...mutual agreement between the Holy Spirit, the apostles, and Ellen White. You remember Ellen White quoted that same statute to the butcher — no fat, no blood. In other words, the Holy Spirit, the apostles, and Ellen White all agree that meat with blood in it is unfit, unfit for the universal Christian church, unfit according to the Holy Spirit; it's unfit in the statutes delivered by God to his people through Moses.

Now fornication is another statute negated in the minds of many, many Christians today. The statutes teach that there should be no sexual activity out of wedlock period. But those who teach the Ten Commandments are the only laws of God that need to be observed have opened the flood gates of sin. You see, there's nothing about fornication, rape, incest, sex with animals, and all of these things in the ten, these are all in the statutes.

I'm going to move along a little further now with Paul's journeys and see how he's carrying these things throughout the country. In Acts 16:1 and 2, I'm quoting:

"Then came he to Derbe..."

And, if you remember Derbe, that's where he circumcised Timothy for public relations purposes.

"...to Derbe and Lystra; and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium."

Now I mentioned this text as Paul's traveling up on through Asia Minor because Lystra was a place that had no synagogue and I wanted to mention that because definitely we're getting into gentile country. Now, it isn't that they didn't have Jews all around the country like they do today, they're all over the world, but this is definitely more of a Gentile area.



Now, let's check our map to make sure of where we are. There's our map, we're going to find an arrow to Jerusalem, and Paul went up to Derbe, and to Lystra. Acts 16:4 through 9, now this is an important text on our journey because they will see there they not only talk the talk, but they walk the walk. I'm quoting now from that text:

“And as they went through the cities they delivered them the decrees for to keep that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.”

You see, this decree was to be universally accepted by all churches.

“And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.”

Not that's very interesting because a lot of people think today if the church would lower its standards, anything goes type of thing and have a sort of party affair, and whatever, that the church would grow and people would come into it. And what the situation is, so what? In other words, what we're after here is a people who will follow in the footsteps of the almighty and walk with Christ and in the Elijah message. Now the text goes on to say:

“Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia...”

...see it being underlined (see map on the next page)...

“...and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, after they were come to Mysia...”

...Mysia was a large territory...

“...they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas.”

...you see Troas over there...

“And a vision appeared to Paul in the night and there stood a man of Macedonia...”

...way over to the north left side of your map...

“...and prayed him saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.”



Now please notice how far they are from Jerusalem. Jerusalem is in the lower right of your map, Macedonia is way in the upper left. Now, let's zero in on Paul and where he's going toward Macedonia. Map of Jerusalem and Troas, Troas in the upper middle of the map now. So, here we go to Philippi. Philippi is in the part of Macedonia and in Acts 16:12 when Paul go to Philippi, he found that there was no synagogue there. This is another one of those predominantly gentile areas. In fact, I've been told that they still don't have a synagogue there, though I'm not sure of that.

And in this area, without a synagogue, Paul looked around for Sabbath keepers and he found that they were meeting out by a riverside. And, out by the riverside there, he met on the Sabbath with certain people and baptized a lady called Lydia from the country of Thyatira. But, anyway, how do we know using this text that the Sabbath is still important in the New Testament?

You see, there's nothing in this text that says they kept the Sabbath. There's nothing in this text that says, "Remember to keep the Sabbath holy." Oh, no, simply by example. They were walking the walk.

From there they went on to Amphipolis and then to Apollonia and finally on to Thessalonica. At Thessalonica now, we're about 21 years this side of the cross and the record states in Acts 17:2:



“And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures.”

Now tell me, friend, what scriptures was he using? There wasn't any New Testament yet. He was using the Old Testament, that's all they had, and the Old Testament teaches the abstinence of fat, abstinence of the blood, abstinence of fornication, and the keeping of the Sabbath. In other words, they checked him out, by the scripture, to see whether what he was doing was right. And he proved it to them by the scripture. Once, again, there's no command to keep the Sabbath in the text. The text doesn't say, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." No, it doesn't. So, how do our evangelists use this text in their crusades to prove the Sabbath is relevant? ...the fact that they were meeting on the Sabbath. They were walking the walk and that's evidence

enough. And, also, the fact that he was teaching from the scripture and what did the Old Testament scripture teach regarding the Sabbath?



Now, we went from there to Berea, things got kind of rough for him in that area so he moved down to Berea in Acts 17:10 and it says the Bereans were more noble because they searched the scriptures to see whether what he was teaching was true. Well, once again, what scriptures did they search? Well, they searched the Old Testament [for] the things that Paul was teaching. In other words, if it's not in the Old Testament, it may not be the right interpretation. So, they checked it out to make sure that it was while he was there teaching and preaching and sharing and reading the scriptures with them.

Some of the Thessalonians came down to do him harm. It seems that Paul's straight testimony regarding the statutes did cause some divisions in the churches and did bring about some problems and some persecutions. Well, Paul had to escape and he escaped by sea and he went to Greece. Now he's getting in a ship and he's traveling a little bit more comfortably and a little faster than over land.



Going down to Athens... You remember, this is where the Mars Hill episode took place and he began teaching them about the unknown God and then from Athens, if you move over a little bit to the left you'll see he's going to Corinth. And at Corinth he met and recruited Aquila and Pricilla, the tent makers. You know, he didn't really enjoy Corinth all that much and he didn't want to stay but the Holy Spirit impressed him to stay there for a while. God let him know that he had a lot of good people there so Paul stayed about six months and finally, with Aquila and Pricilla, he sailed to Ephesus.



Well, I want you to see the sailing by dots there and finally I want to underline Ephesus so you'll see right where they went to. But, they didn't stay at Ephesus very long. It was only a short stay. The reason for the short stay is given in Acts 18:20. I want you to see this:

“When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not...”

Oh, the little church at Ephesus was growing and they wanted Paul to stay. He said, no:

“...but bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast which cometh in Jerusalem; but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.”

Now, it may be a little presumptuous, yet, but some assume that it's correct to keep the feasts because that's what he did. He was still keeping the statutes and he was still walking the walk. Some keep the Sabbath simply because that's what he did. But, actually, of course, he did other things in Jerusalem besides keeping the feasts. But, if we take him at face value, that's what he did go for and Ellen White agrees. He did keep the feasts.

I looked up this word keep in Webster's Ninth Collegiate Dictionary and do you know what I came up with, the very first meanings for the word keep? Notice them on the screen, number one, to take notice by appropriate conduct; number two, to be faithful to; number three, to act in fitting relation to such as a Sabbath; number four, to preserve; and the dictionary also said to maintain. In other words, if we just simply use English language, he's saying I must by all means preserve, maintain, be faithful to, use appropriate conduct, and act in fitting relationship to this feast that cometh to Jerusalem. He was not using keep as to keep something in your pocket, you know, that wouldn't make sense at all.

But, wouldn't it be nice if he had used the word Sabbath instead of feast? Now, think about this for a minute. That would have been very helpful. If he had said I must by all means keep this Sabbath that cometh to Jerusalem, meaning the seventh-day Sabbath. I think if he had of done that, we would use that in our arsenal of texts to say that it was the thing to do. Ellen White put it this way, *Acts of the Apostles*, page 269:

“After leaving Corinth, Paul's next scene of labor was Ephesus. He was on his way to Jerusalem to attend approaching festival and his stay at Ephesus was necessarily brief.”

Why was he going to Jerusalem? ...to attend an approaching festival. The Bible said to keep the feast. Were there other reasons? Oh, absolutely, there were other reasons — but this was certainly one of them.

Well, we're back in Jerusalem now. We're moving right along in Paul's journeys. We're about 25 years this side of the cross as we continue. Paul is about to begin his third missionary journey and I want you to notice the map, now, look down at the corner there and see Jerusalem with a little arrow starting to go upward.





This time we're going to take him right through Phrygia and Galatia and then to Ephesus again. And would you believe that this time he stayed about three years? In fact, at Ephesus was where he wrote his first letter to the Corinthians. That letter probably went by ship. I tried to put a few black dashes on the map there to show how much quicker it would have been to send the letter to Corinth by ship than a long round trip through Macedonia.

All right, let's look at some of the letter he wrote. Old Manuscripts, yes, but we're finding new discoveries. I Corinthians 5:7 and 8:

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened."

What does that mean, "ye are unleavened?" Well, there was some sin going on in that church and Paul addressed it and sin represented by leaven, you see, they got the sinner situation taken care of, but it's also true that if they were keeping unleavened, they would have gotten the leaven out of their homes. But one is actually a symbol of the other and those who would keep the unleavened bread are reminding themselves that transgression has to go. So he says:

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us..." praise God for that. "...therefore let us keep the feasts, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

Now, notice, "therefore let us keep the feasts." But how? ...in sincerity and truth. And why? ...to honor the Christ our Passover sacrifice for us.

Now, once again, dear friends, if he had said let us therefore keep, reserve, maintain, be faithful to, act in fitting relationship to the Sabbath, my we would have jumped on that with all fours and used it in every evangelism crusade. As an example, what if it should have read let us keep the seventh-day Sabbath with sincerity and truth and not with lots of malice and wickedness. Would we be using that? But, instead, he encouraged them to have a good attitude toward one another while keeping the Passover.

Now, he continues his letter, I Corinthians 16:7, 8, this is kind of an interesting note, too, where he says:

"For I will not see you now, by the way, but I trust to tarry awhile with you if the Lord permit, but I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost."

What did he say? He said:

“I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.”

So, in conclusion, what he’s saying, to those that enjoy the statutes, is simply, quote:

In Corinth you can keep the Passover without me as I’m not going to be there in time, but do it right with sincerity and truth. After we have Pentecost here in Ephesus, I’ll resume traveling towards you.

Acts of the Apostles talks a little bit about that experience on page 291,

“For over three years Ephesus was the center of Paul’s work. A flourishing church was raised up here and from this city the gospel spread throughout the province of Asia, both among the Jews and Gentiles.”

Friends, that’s a part of the quote. We’ll get to the rest later. But, think about it, if the feasts had been done away, he had three years to get the message across. Actually, to dispense with the feasts, that the Gentiles hadn’t been keeping anyway, would have been a lot easier thing to teach than the absence of blood, fornication, and idolatry. But, there’s no such word like that.

Here, in Ephesus, as in Philippi, a little later, he chose to remain until the feast was completed before going on his journey. In other words, with respect to the statutes, at this point in his experience, he’s still walking the walk.

Now, let’s look at the rest of the story. The rest of Acts of the Apostles, page 291:

“The apostle had now for sometime been contemplating another missionary journey. He purposed in the spirit when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia to go to Jerusalem saying after I have been there I must also see Rome. In harmony with his plan he sent to Macedonia two of them that ministered to him, Timotheus and Erastus. But feeling that the cause in Ephesus still demanded his presence he decided to remain until after Pentecost.”

It’s interesting how the Spirit would impress Ellen White to simply write it like it is. And that was beautiful. You see, this is a perfectly logical thing for a statute keeper to do and it’s certainly something we should investigate a little more thoroughly.

Now, before leaving Ephesus, Demetrius the image maker caused everything to be totally disastrous, in that city, for the apostle Paul. Paul had been preaching against idolatry and Demetrius was a maker of idols and so he got others of his same craft to get rid of Paul because Paul’s preaching was destroying their business. In fact, the text is given in Acts chapter 20, verses 1 through 3, so let’s read it together.

“And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples and embraced them...”

Doesn't that sound good — warm fellowship?

“...and departed for to go into Macedonia. And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece, and there abode three months.”

Now, notice:

“And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria he purposed to return through Macedonia.”



The Gentiles are much more receptive to his message than some of the Jews. Nevertheless, he preached also to the Jews and he loved his countrymen, and many of them were converted, but these were not and they turned on him.

Let's look at Ephesus. In fact, notice the underlining in Ephesus below that red dot. Look at the route to Greece, a long way. My, that would have been a lot shorter to go by boat but then he wouldn't have gotten to preach in Macedonia.

Now, he's in Corinth. And he's having trouble. To stay alive he had to take the long way around. Notice how he had to go. Sailing certainly would have been a lot shorter if you'll notice those little black dots.

Now, *Acts of the Apostles*, by Ellen White, page 389 and 390, tells us about this account. And I'm going to read just a few short paragraphs from that book because some of us may be facing that same type of persecution and here it shows us very clearly that when persecution is in an area, don't just walk in it boldly and preach truth where you know truth isn't going to be wanted.. But, circumvent the area and go somewhere else. Now, notice the quotation:



“Having completed his work at Corinth, he determined to sail directly for one of the ports in Palestine. That's what he wanted to do. All the arrangements had

been made and he was about to step on board the ship and he was told of a plot by the Jews to take his life. In the past, these opposers of the faith had been foiled in all their efforts to put the end to the apostles' work."

Next quote:

"The success attending the preaching of the gospel aroused the anger of the Jews anew. From every quarter were coming accounts of the spread of the new doctrine by which Jews were released from the observance of the rites of the ceremonial law and Gentiles were admitted to be equal privileges with the Jews as children of Abraham."

Praise God for that.

"Paul in his preaching at Corinth presented the same arguments which he urged so forcibly in his epistles. His emphatic statement, 'That there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision' (Col 3:11), was regarded by his enemies as daring blaspheme and they determined that his voice should be silenced."

Oh, can you hear the hate in that?

"Upon receiving the warning of the plot, Paul decided to go around by way of Macedonia."

The long way around by foot or animal, camel, donkey — whatever:

"His plan to reach Jerusalem in time for the Passover services had to be given up but he hoped to be there at Pentecost."

You know, this is getting more interesting all the time, isn't it? Here's a rather long paragraph, let's go through it:

"Accompanying Paul and Luke were Sopater of Berea and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus and of Asia Tychicus and Trophimus. Paul had with him a large sum of money from the Gentile churches which he proposed to place in the hands of the brethren in charge of the work in Judea."

That's good public relations.

“Because of this he made arrangements for these representative brethren from various contributive churches to accompany him to Jerusalem.”

Yes, not only good public relations but the Jews in Jerusalem were being persecuted and they needed it. Now, listen to this last paragraph very closely:

“At Philippi,”

A long way around now, he can't get to Jerusalem in time for Passover — but:

“At Philippi, Paul tarried to keep the Passover.”

He did what? ...still walking the walk.

“Only Luke remained with him, the other members of the company passing on to Troas to wait him there.”

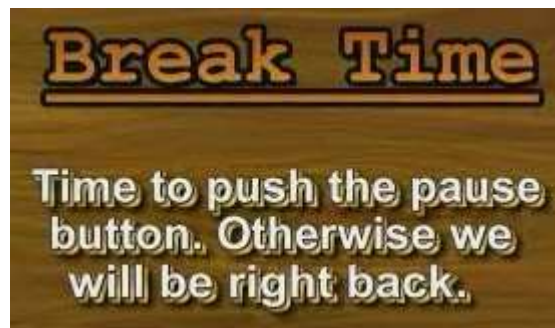
Yes, they went by ship.

“The Philippians were the most loving and truehearted of the apostle's converts and during the eight days of the feast he enjoyed happy communion with them.”

Now, friends, I don't want to belabor a point, but, once again, if the text had said at Philippi Paul tarried to keep the Sabbath — instead of saying Paul tarried to keep the Passover... Oh, wouldn't we be delighted?

Paul didn't keep the Passover to placate the Jews anymore than he kept the Sabbath to placate the Jews. He kept it with his predominantly Gentile converts at Philippi, a city where there was no synagogue.

Well, we're getting into some very exciting things. I don't want to lose any of you because we're going to get deeper and richer very shortly and we're going to see more and more of the statutes in the New Testament. But, right now we're going to take a break and a chance to refresh yourself; maybe reverse a little bit and look at some things again, or just take a break and we'll be right back — we'll be bringing more of the story — new discoveries from old manuscripts, indeed!



Well, welcome back. We had a nice break. I hope you did, too. When we left we were discussing Paul keeping the Passover with his Gentile converts there in Philippi. Now, to a statute keeper, it makes sense. If they were his converts then who had taught them the Passover in the first place? So, actually, what have we seen so far? And keep in mind Ellen White once said, in fact it's recorded two or three times that the festival of the Jews was done away with forever. Pretty soon we're going to have to put that together with what we're seeing; and find that it doesn't contradict.

Well, right now let's look and see that Paul was writing to keep Passover at Corinth; delaying at Ephesus for the Feast of Pentecost; wanting to keep Passover at Jerusalem; keeping Passover and Unleavened Bread at Philippi; and determined to get to Jerusalem in time for the next Feast of Pentecost. Did you ever wonder why he did all of that? Was he actually still walking the walk? Was he still keeping the customs of the Jewish fathers?

Well, at the end of his ministry he certainly said he was. In fact, in Acts 28:17 he told his Jewish friends that he had committed nothing against the customs of their fathers. Then why do so many scholars interpret some of his writings as though he did? We'll look at all of those writings in the near future and we'll see that he really didn't.

Well, the story picks up in Acts 20, verse 6, where it says:

“And we sailed away from Philippi, after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.”

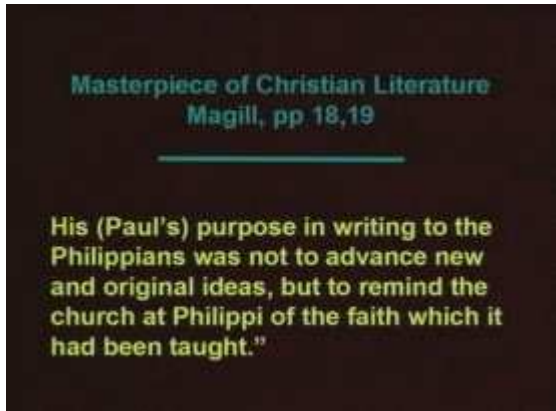
Yes, he is really taking the long way around to avoid that terrible confrontation against those who wanted to take his life. In fact, even this experience, going from Philippi down to Troas added five days to it, plus all the slowness of the travel up to Philippi. But, Paul finally left Philippi; but not until after the full eight days of the feast was completed. No more than he left Ephesus until after the Feast of Pentecost was completed.

Are you finding this interesting? Philippians 4:9 is certainly a powerful text for the book of Philippians is written back to that church where he had just kept the Passover and Unleavened Bread. Now, notice what he tells them in the letter that he writes to them.

“Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do; and the God of peace shall be with you.”

“Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do...”

Friends, what was the last thing they saw him do? ...keep the feast. Did you know that in the very next century Polycarp wrote some interesting words about this text. I'm going to call them up on the screen for you from *Masterpiece of Christian Literature*:



“His (Paul’s) purpose in writing to the Philippians was not to advance new and original ideas but to remind the church at Philippi of the faith which it had been taught.”

Friends, it had been taught the same thing that was taught from the statutes. Actually, how long had these things really been taught? Did you know that they had been taught before Polycarp and before Paul and even long before Moses: who lived 1,500 years before either one of them? In fact, why not trace these things from Moses all the way back to

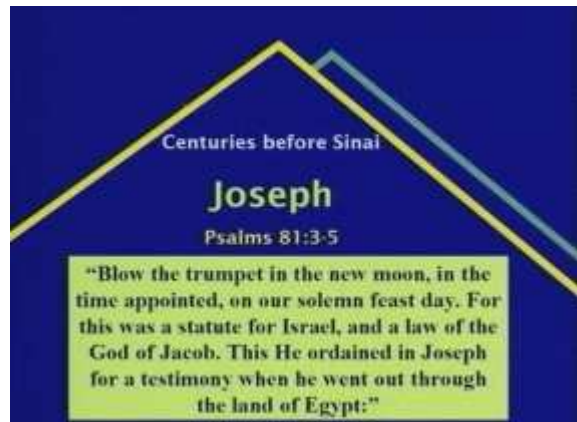
creation. You know, a lot of people think these things were all added because of sin at the cross but not this part.

Let’s take a look. Looking at *Echoes from Mount Sinai*, which was about 1,500 years before Paul, and listen to the writings of Moses.

“Therefore thou shalt love the Lord thy God and keep his charge and his statutes and his judgments and his commandments always.”

Notice the word love in the text? Obedience to God is always considered an expression of love. Now, about 400 years before Moses is the story of Joseph. Everyone admires Joseph because of his integrity, a wonderful person. The story of Joseph should be told to every early teen. But from Psalm 81:3-5 notice what it says:

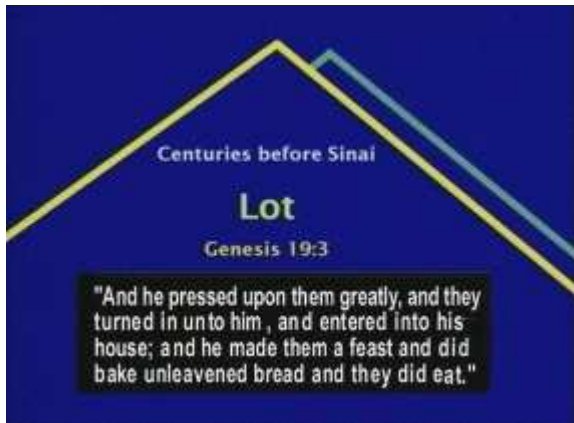
“Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed...” A time appointed is “moed” in Hebrew. “...on our solemn feast day.” What solemn feast day was appointed at a new moon? Well the answer, the Feast of Trumpets on the new moon of the seventh month every year.



The text goes on: “For this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob.” Was the Feast of Trumpets originally a law of Jacob or a law of the God of Jacob? Right away you see it’s the law of the God of Jacob, and Jacob lived centuries before Moses.

The text goes on: “This he ordained in Joseph for a testimony, when he went out through the land of Egypt...”

Oh friends, he may have had a hard time learning the language at first when he went to Egypt but he certainly understood the Feast of Trumpets. And you might wonder, why the Feast of Trumpets? Trumpets was a warning of judgment to come. What was about to happen to Egypt?

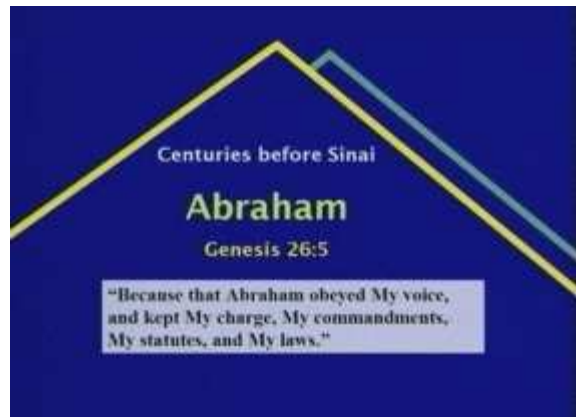


Now, Joseph’s great uncle Lot lived three generations before Joseph. A statute keeper sees his story as something awesome. Notice in Genesis 19:3:

“And he...” ...speaking of Lot... “...pressed upon them...” ...the “them” were angels appearing as men... “And he pressed upon them greatly and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and the made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.”

What kind of a feast? What did they have? ...unleavened bread! Now, Lot would have provided the very best food that he had for his guests, and I’m sure he did, except for the bread. And when it came to the bread — to his special guests — he gave them flat, tasteless, cooked dough. Why do you suppose? One week of unleavened bread is commanded in the statutes, later, but evidently known by Lot, as well as Joseph, and Abraham.

Lot may of well sensed that his visitors were holy men and he wasn’t about to break the statute in their presence. Now, let’s go to Abraham before Lot and, of course, centuries before Sinai where it says, “Because that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.” It’s so amazing that people teach, from pulpits, that the statutes weren’t added until Mount Sinai! Here we have Abraham, centuries before Sinai, keeping the statutes. ...Lot, Joseph, and so on.



In fact, if you want to know the truth about it, the statutes were really a problem before the flood — Noah’s day. That’s right! From Manuscript Releases, Volume Two, notice as I quote it.

“Men may trace, in the broken service of the earth, the evidence of the flood. Men thought themselves wiser than God, and altogether too wise to obey his laws, keep his commandments, and obey the statutes and the precepts of Jehovah.”
(2MR p.307, 4/29/1886)

Well, of course, you know they knew the statutes before the flood, anyway, how else would Noah have known the difference between clean and unclean animals? So, centuries upon centuries later, Polycarp said that Paul was not teaching anything new and original and he certainly wasn’t. His teachings were things of olden days.

Now, they might appear new and original to us but not to Paul or Polycarp. You know, before we complete Paul’s journeys, we should even go further into the past to see that the divine feasts

were established way back at creation — of all things. We’re going to look at creation and we’re going to study from Genesis, chapter 1, verse 14. The writing of the starry heavens at creation, the King James Bible says, speaking of the sun and the moon and the what-not:

“Let them be for signs and for seasons for days and years.”

Now this word seasons is very interesting and I’m glad the SDA Bible Commentary brings it out. First Volume BC page 213, where it speaks of these seasons as yearly returning festival periods. That’s right! Whose yearly returning festival periods? Well, who put them up there? And, of course, other definite times. Now, creation from the New English Version:

“Let them be for festivals and for seasons and for years.”

The signs in the heavens, the sun, the moon and so on, let us tell from those when seasons begin, festivals, for seasons. Whose festivals? Well, who put up the signs? From the Good News Bible:

“Let them serve for the time when days and years and religious festivals begin.”

You see, it was all set in the stars way back at creation. Many centuries after creation, as God’s people were taken out of Egypt, God gave them a reminder of these things through Moses. Let’s see that reminder. We’re going back to Sinai, now. This is centuries, of course, this side of creation. Leviticus 23:2-4, after 400 years of slavery in Egypt:

“Speak unto the children of Israel and say to them concerning the feasts of the Lord which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are My feasts. 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 Lord in all your dwellings.”

It’s even clearer that the Sabbath is his first feasts — in the NIV — but the King James is very good.

“These are the feasts of the Lord.”

Who’s feasts? ...the Lord’s feasts. When were they established? ...at creation. Who enjoyed them? ...the patriarchs and now they are being repeated through Moses.

“Even holy convocations ye shall proclaim in their seasons.”

After this text he discusses the annual ones. All of these are the seasons of the Lord whose timing was set in the stars at creation. The times were set for all eight feasts at creation. They were dishonored in the world before the flood. They’re dishonored in the world now before the

second coming and the fire. But they were honored by Noah, Abraham, by Lot, by Joseph and Moses and by the Apostles and especially Paul. I wonder why we haven't been? We'll talk about that later.

They had been established in the beginning by God and later given to the children of Israel forever and how does that line up with the 144,000 children of the tribes of Israel? We'll take a look at that when we study the 144,000 on a future tape in this series.

Now, this brings us to a very interesting question. When were the feasts changed and by whom? Daniel 7, verse 25, from the Good News Bible, speaking of the little horn representing the Roman power:

"He will try to change the religious laws and festivals and God's people will be under his power for three and a half years."

Oh, yes, there were more institutions than the Sabbath that were wiped out about the same time. Daniel 7:25 by Moffatt:

"He shall plan to alter the sacred seasons and the law and for three and a half years the saints shall be handed over to him."

The NIV, Daniel 7:25:

"He will speak great words against the Most High and oppress His saints and try to change the set times and the laws."

Where were the "set times" set? They were set at creation. But, here's a power that rises itself up higher and says I'm going to change them. Daniel 7:25, the New American Bible:

"He shall speak against the Most High thinking to change the feast days and the law."

Does that sound unusual to you? Friends, it's exactly what happened. The King James simply says:

"He shall think to change times and laws."

And now we're finding out what times. What does the Amplified version say? Look at this, very clear:

"And he shall speak words against the Most High God and shall wear out the saints of the Most High and think to change the times of sacred feasts and holy days and the law."

And our friends, the Catholic, in the Douay version:

“Thinking to change the feast days and the law.”

In the past we have simply said he shall change times and laws but under investigation and honest scrutiny these times have a great deal of significance. The Papacy truly changed every divine institution.

You know, when studying a certain letter as we get together and enjoy lectures on the Mark of the Beast, that letter is often read from Father Enright, Priest Enright. I believe he was the first cardinal for the United States — did a lot of good, for a lot of people, in a lot of ways. But, not all of his letter is quoted when we read about the mark of the beast. But, let’s look at that letter. Here it comes right up on the screen.

“I have offered, and still offer, \$1,000.00 to anyone who can prove to me from the Bible alone that I am bound, under grievous sin to keep Sunday holy. The church made this law long after the Bible was written. ...The Catholic church abolished not only the Sabbath but all other Jewish festivals.”

Well, of course, that’s what the Bible said and that’s what has happened. So, whose eight feasts have been changed and by whom? Our Creator said:

“...these are My feasts...”

Enright said they are Jewish feasts. What do you say? God said:

... I [will] not ... alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. (Psalm 89:34)

Daniel said the little horn would speak great words out of his lips and change the times and laws of God.

Well, friends, we know who established the feasts ... God did. ...that Paul and his converts kept the feasts. ...that the prophet Daniel predicted the little horn will alter them. And we know that he did. We also know that they had previously existed in order for him to have something to change. Now, what else do we need to know? What comfort can we get from all this?

Well, the Spirit of Prophecy, Ellen White, comes to our rescue. *Prophets and Kings*, p.678:

“In the time of the end every divine institution is to be restored. The breach made in the law at the time the Sabbath was made by man, is to be repaired ...”

Friends, the Sabbath is only one divine institution but the others are evidently related to it. Every divine institution, the Sabbath is one, but all the rest were altered at the same time and by the same power.

Now, the apostle Paul didn't live in the time of the end, when these things were to be reinstated, but he lived in a time before they had been changed and that's why he continued in the statutes as he did. In fact, I want you to see how he continues to refer to these festivals on his way back to Jerusalem. Let's continue his trip now. We're in Acts 20 verse 16 and Paul is on his way back to Jerusalem:

“For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus...”

...not going to stay there this time.

“...because he would not spend much time in Asia for he hastened, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.”

...couldn't spend a lot of time in Ephesus because he wanted to spend Pentecost at Jerusalem. And did you notice that the Ephesus called in Asia, today we call it Asia Minor — sometimes Asia Minor sometimes the Bible simply calls it Asia.

Now, evidently by prior arrangement the apostles had decided to gather at Jerusalem during the feast whenever possible. No doubt to discuss church business, church progress, church evangelism, church problems, and to keep the feasts (whenever they could) together.

You know, there are people today who read a certain statute and say a person must travel to Jerusalem to keep the feast. But, in John 4 verse 20-24 that question was posed to Christ and Christ made it clear that the location would no longer be important. Paul's journeys and the things that he did confirms Christ's words.



Well, let's take a look at the map again. You ready for this? There we see the route from Jerusalem to Rome only this time Paul is a prisoner of the Roman government. He was moved in the night to Caesarea by the coast and then notice on a little bit north to Sidon and then across the sea and past the island of Cypress to Myra — then west to Lycia on the island of Crete. It is on the island of Crete that he had a problem. Notice Acts 27:9 and 10 when he says:

“Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past...”

Well, what fast? Oh, he's referring to a statute that a statute keeper would recognize right away. And, so, also to the students of the Bible. The SDA Bible commentary says:

"Evidently the day of atonement on the 10th day of the seventh month."

Of course, that's the fast he would be referring to. The 18th Volume of the Pulpit Commentary says:

"The great Jewish fast on the Day of Atonement."

But, you probably figured that already, didn't you? Now, Paul admonished them and said unto them, continuing the text:

"Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt..."

Well, we're getting into the rough seas of early winter, after the fast, after tabernacles, in October. All right, we're going on to Clauda and then west across the Adrian Sea to Melita and at Melita is where he had that snake bite that didn't bother him and he healed many persons and converted the whole island. But, he's still a prisoner: on north to Syracuse, to Rhegiu, to Puteoli and, finally, to Rome where Paul died a martyr.

But, friends, had he kept the customs of the Jewish fathers? Oh, yes, he did. What did he say about them? Notice, in Acts 28:17, this takes place in Rome during his last testimony as a Jew to Jews. He said:

"I have committed nothing against the customs of our fathers."

Now, dear friend of mine, there are a lot of people, scholars, who use Colossians, Ephesians, and Galatians to teach that he did. But, Paul said that he didn't and they're just going to have to face Paul someday I guess.



Now, I want you to notice the Island of Patmos where John the Revelator wrote letters to the Asian churches because it's in this area that an argument soon developed between these very churches and the Church of Rome. Patmos there on your screen is underlined in yellow and the seven churches in Asia; they are at the end of each black line. And once again, sometimes these churches are referred to as Asia Minor and they received letters from John the Revelator while he was a prisoner on the penal colony of Patmos. We'll soon see the horrors that developed between the church of Rome and those little churches. The horrors, problems, the tribulations, the Roman

government law actually came into existence over the very statutes that we've been studying. And, you know, you and I are about to read some very provocative history. We're going to get into some things from ancient manuscripts that are going to be very revealing but very surprising.

But, for now, let's just look at a recap of some of the things we have already learned together before moving on.



First we see three categories of law — the sacrificial or ceremonial laws, the statutes, and judgments that we've been looking at for awhile. Praise God for the Ten Commandments that have kept us out of a lot of trouble.



We've also looked at the appointed times. And we saw that they were established at creation, honored by the patriarchs, reestablished at Mount Sinai, honored by the apostles.

But, once again, what did Ellen White mean when she said the festival of the Jews is past away forever? How does that compare with all the things we've been reading? Does she really contradict the witness of the apostle Paul? Does she really contradict the promise of Christ to keep the Passover with his friends in heaven? Oh, I don't think so.

And, what about the very next century after Paul? What really did develop between Rome and the churches of Asia? Believe me, friends, this gets more and more exciting as we look deeper and discover things from old manuscripts of Bible and of history. Oh, we're soon going on an adventure. I'm very anxious to get into the next tape. I think you can just hear it that I'm just ready to go.

Well, we've had a good hour together, though, and you can only handle so much at a time. If you need to push the pause button and go back and repeat, just do it — before you get into the next adventure.

Our Heavenly Father, we're so thankful that You've been with us. You've been kind to us. You've shown us some things perhaps most of us haven't even seen or thought about. Oh, God, we do pray that we be a part of the Elijah message. We pray, God, that You will help us to see all that we should see and be a part of the very individuals who will help restore the divine

institutions that were removed when the Sabbath was changed. Bless us with these thoughts as we continue in our studies. Amen.

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