

The Third Witness

New Discovery Series

by Elder John VanDenburgh

Welcome to the third adventure in New Discoveries from Old Manuscripts. We're going to make more new discoveries indeed. Actually, the apostles had hardly retired to their graves when a big controversy broke out between the eastern Asiatic churches and the Bishop of Rome.



Now, to get the perspective, I want to put a map up on the screen. And notice, on this map, a dotted line stretching from Rome down into Egypt, in fact, into Alexandria. On the right side of the line are the eastern churches. The eastern, or Asiatic, churches appear as the red dots. They look almost like measles on the map. The history of these churches, regarding this controversy, will get us into a third witness of the truth.

You know, it's Deuteronomy 19:15 that says that:

"...the mouth of two ... or ... three witnesses, shall the matter be established."

Now, you and I looked through the Old Testament witnesses; and we looked through the New Testament witnesses; and now we are going to see a third witness coming from the Asiatic churches.

A man named Polycarp was about 21 years old when John the Revelator died. Some historians believe he was a student of John's. Later, he became bishop over the Asiatic churches and he became involved in this controversy.

So, before we get into it and look at some of the exciting historical quotes, let's stop for a moment and ask God's blessing to be with us.

Our Heavenly Father, we ask, once again, that Your blessings will be with us; that our minds will be open; and that we will be sharp in our thinking; and able to pick up truth. Bless us in this, we ask in Thy Name, amen.

From Ross McKenzie biography:

"As a leader of the church in Anatolia, he (Polycarp) visited Rome to discuss with its bishop the disputed date for the celebration of Easter. It was agreed that the Eastern and Western churches would continue their divergent usages..."

In other words, the Eastern churches would continue with Passover and Unleavened Bread, and its date, and the church at Rome, and the churches of west, would go with the new Easter. Now, the text goes on to say that:

“... After his return to Smyrna, Polycarp was arrested and burned to death. A defender of orthodoxy, Irenaeus says that Polycarp was a disciple of St. John.”

Yes, he probably was. Get used to the idea or the name of Irenaeus as you study ancient Christian history.

Now, we’re going to move on. The very next generation Polycrates was a preacher and author and became even more involved in the divergent usages of God’s statutes than Polycarp did. In fact, he wrote a strong letter to the Bishop of Rome trying to set the bishop straight. You’d be interested in reading this letter, I’m sure. It’s pretty pointed. It’s from the Ninth Volume of the SDA Bible Commentary, page 362, notice the quote:

“Therefore we keep the day undeviating, neither adding nor taking away, for in Asia great luminaries sleep, and they will rise on the day of the coming of the Lord, when He shall come with glory from heaven and seek out all the saints.”

Now, notice who he names.

“Such were Phillip...”

Remember Phillip in the book of Acts?

“...and his two daughters...”

In the book of Acts he had four daughters that prophesied. Perhaps two had apostatized or something.

“...two of his daughters, there is also John...”

This is John the Revelator.

“...who lay on the Lord’s breast, and there is also Polycarp at Smyrna, both bishop and martyr, Thraseas, both bishop and martyr from Eunemaea...All these kept the fourteenth day of the Passover according to the gospel, never swerving but following according to the rule of faith.”

Now, I want you to notice as we continue this quote from history, just how fervent and persuasive the early fathers were — regarding hanging on to these truths and resisting the Roman changes.

They told the Bishop of Rome that in spite of his threats, the Eastern churches would continue to observe God's own set times.

Wow! Powerful! The Commentary goes on:

“And I, also, Polycrates, the least of you all, live according to the tradition of my kinsmen, and some of them have I followed. For seven of my family were bishops and I am the eighth...”

Talk about credentials.

“...and my kinsmen ever kept the day when the people put away the leaven, therefore brethren, I who have lived sixty-five years in the Lord and conversed with brethren from every country, and have studied all holy Scripture am not afraid of threats, for they have said, who are greater than I, ‘It is better to obey God rather than men ... ’”

I want you to please notice the apostles and the church leaders that kept the Passover and Unleavened Bread instead of going along with Easter. There was Philip the evangelist, Acts 8, two of his four daughters have prophesied, Acts 21, and of course there was John the Revelator, Polycarp of Smyrna, Thraceas of Eunemaca, Polycarates, and seven bishops and brethren from every country he said:

“...ever kept the day when the people put away the leaven.”

In other words, dear friends, they were still doing like Paul and his converts at Philippi. They all believed it was better to obey God rather than the man in Rome. Question: Whom do you think it would be better to follow?

You might wonder just what was going on back there. The truth is, Rome was getting stronger and flexing her muscles. Rome was threatening the Eastern churches. That quotation:

“I ... am not afraid of threats ... ”

...lets us know it was getting dangerous to keep the feast. The Roman power was early becoming a persecuting power.

Now, I want you to notice the building belligerence of the man of Rome. From Moshieim, Ecclesiastical History, look, he, Victor, a bishop of Rome:

“He (Victor) wrote an imperious letter to the Asiatic prelates commanding them to imitate the example of the western churches with respect to the time of celebrating the festival of Easter.”

Now, notice the equally belligerent response from the East.

“The Asiatics answered the request with great spirit and resolution, that they would by no means depart in this manner from the customs handed down to them by their ancestors!”

Question: What ancestors was he referring to? Well, here they are, Polycrates, Polycarp, John the Revelator, Phillip the Evangelist, New Testament prophets, and the apostle Paul — who founded their church in the first place.

In fact, in the previous lecture we saw the Old Testament witnesses of Abraham and Lot, and Joseph, Moses, and David, and so on. Actually, dear friends, the line was unbreakable until the council of Nice in 325 A.D.

Daniel had prophesied that it would be broken and broken it was. Centuries before that, prophet had heralded awesome facts that the little horn would change the heavenly appointed set times — the feast days. Yes, even God’s times. But when were these changes consummated?

Friends, they were consummated during the same period of time that the Sabbath was changed to Sunday, and by the same power, just as Daniel had predicted. Finally, at the council of Nice, in 325, Rome got her way with the issue. Notice how this truth is brought out in Medieval and Modern History by Myers. Here’s the quote:

“Not until the Council of Nice in 325 A.D. decreed that Easter should be kept on the Sunday next after the first full moon, on or after the vernal equinox, was there a definite day for the observance of Easter. Here is evidence that it has a human origin, as it was not known until after the fourth century just when Easter would be.”

Friends, Easter then was established in the 4th Century A.D. by Rome. The time of Passover was established at Creation by the Creator. I’m wondering by now with whom you will cast your lots this coming spring. You know, we should look at the Catholic view of the council of Nice — it would be good for our basic understanding. So, let’s take a look at the council of Nice. Here comes the text:

“Since the majority of the early Christians were Jewish converts, it is understandable that from the outset of the Christian calendar was governed by the fact that the death and resurrection of Christ had taken place at the time of the chief Jewish feast, the Pash, or Passover, celebrated on the 14th day of the month of Nisan, that is at the full moon following the Spring Equinox.”

Well, some historians began to call both Passover and the pagan day of Ishtar, by the same name of Easter. However, the opposing dates remained ever obvious and if you were in the east, they would have called it Passover.

But, let's continue with our text. Here we go:

“However, rather than literally follow the Jewish Passover, since this would necessitate the commemoration of the Resurrection on a different day of the week each year, Christian custom (sanctioned by the Council of Nice in 325) fixed the anniversary of Christ’s resurrection on the actual day of the week on which His resurrection had taken place.”

Did you notice who fixed the date? Was it the Scriptures? No. Was it Paul? No. Christ? No. It was the Council of Nice under the direction of the Roman church and the state government. And did you notice that the Catholic Encyclopedia called them all Jewish feasts? Yahweh said they are His feasts. Now, I'm wondering with which you might partake? With whom do you agree?

You know, it might be very profitable to notice Emperor Constantine's part in this thing. He had a great involvement in the issue and the reason it's interesting to you and to me, what he said and what he did, was because the bishops' threats would be rather wimpy until backed by the states. Well, the threats were not wimpy because they did become backed by the state. Notice Constantine's view of the Council of Nice. Here's the emperor, you might notice his radical prejudice as well as he legislates the first Easter law.

“It seemed to everyone a most unworthy thing that we should follow the custom of the Jews in the celebration of this holy solemnity, who polluted wretches! Having stained their hands with the nefarious crime, are still blinded in their minds. It is fit, therefore, that rejecting the practice of this people, we should perpetuate to all future ages the celebration of this rite in a more legitimate order, which we have kept from the first day of our Lord’s passion even to the present times.”

You notice he said “legitimate order?” The word “legitimate” is first explained in Webster's 9th New Collegiate Dictionary this way, it means lawfully begotten; lawfully, legally. In other words, still quoting from the dictionary:

“...accordant with law or with established legal forms and requirements.”

In other words, Constantine was giving it force; he was turning it into a legitimate order. The Bishop of Rome was thereby successful in getting the state behind him to back his decrees and the Asiatic churches were not in trouble.

The text continues, notice Constantine:

“Let us then have nothing in common with the most hostile rabble of the Jews ... and to sum up the whole in a few words, it is agreeable to the common judgment of all...”

Who’s the all? The Roman emperor, the state government and the Roman church.

“...all that the most holy feast of Easter should be celebrated on one and the same day.”

Once again, friends, Constantine’s empire included Asia and the Asiatic churches. They were going to have to conform. Wow! What a story. It gets better. It gets bigger. Maybe I should say it gets worse.

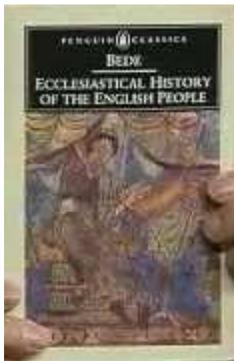
It took more than 300 years to change Heaven’s ordained feasts to Rome’s substitutes — 300 years. And, right now, my heart is praising God for Ellen White and you know why, because she wrote that in the time of the end, right down here in our day, every divine institution is to be restored. And I believe that it is happening. In fact, it *is* happening. Hundreds of people are now restoring them to the rightful place. And now you, too, have an opportunity to help restore them by quietly keeping God’s days and not someone else’s.

Actually, Constantine legitimized two laws. Didn’t he? The Sunday law in A.D. 321 and the Easter law in 325. From the New Catholic Encyclopedia, pages 1062 and 1063, I find a very interesting quote:

“Rome’s custom replaced heaven’s statute in the fourth century A.D.”

Now, think about that one for just a moment. It is so accurate; and so true; and so honest. From the New Catholic Encyclopedia, “Rome’s custom replaced heaven’s statute.”

You see, the little horn really believes he has been successful and why shouldn’t he, all the world goes along with his teachings. All the world? But there have always been Christians who have not accepted the idea that they are of the world. They are in the world but not of it. There’s always that little group, isn’t there?



Bede’s Ecclesiastical History talks about them. I want to show you the book in case you might want to purchase it some time for the historical quotes. Bede’s Ecclesiastical History of the English People. I’m going to quote from it. The history he’s quoting is about 300 years this side of that Easter Sunday law and in this case the Roman church is still admitting that not everyone was capitulating to her authority.

Notice the quote as the Bishop is making his statement in a council:

“The only people who stupidly contend against the whole world are those Irishmen and their partners in obstinacy the Picts and Britons, who inhabit only a portion of these two uttermost islands of the ocean.”

Ah, now it’s time for the spokesman for the king to speak up and notice his determined reply:

“It is strange that you call us stupid when we uphold the customs that rest on the authority of so great an apostle, who was considered worthy to lean on the Lord’s breast...”

In other words, they were still keeping Passover the way John the Revelator was. And it goes on:

“...and whose great wisdom is acknowledged throughout the world.”

Now, Bishop Wilfred has to respond to that and here is his response:

“Far be it from us to charge John with stupidity, because he literally observed the Law of Moses at a time when the Church followed many Jewish practices and the apostles were not able immediately to abrogate the observances of the Law once given by God.”

Well, no, indeed they weren’t. It took almost 600 years for them to abrogate God’s law.

Now, the historian, Bede, goes on to say that John kept the 14th day of Passover not caring what day of the week on which it fell.

I wonder, dear friends, how many Christians, today, know of this horrendous battle in the first 600 years of church Christianity. You may be wondering: well, so what, who cares? Trust me, the “so what” becomes even more important as we continue.

Our understanding of the past may well affect our efficiency in the future — as well as our covenant relationship with God. We’re getting very close to the time of the end and God is looking for a people that will come back to all of His ways.

So, moving this side of 600 A.D., and on, brings us into the Dark Ages. Yes, even through those dark years there remained a faithful people — not only in Ireland and Britain, as we have already seen, but in France and Romania and Hungary. And even in Bosnia, there were people who maintained the days of Scripture.

In fact, in the late 1500, a collection of their hymns was made. Hymns sung during those terrible years of persecution. They were collected and put in a book form. The book is quite appropriate called “The Old Sabbath Songbook.” Let’s take a look at it:

“The hymnal was written in Hungarian ... It consisted of one hundred and two hymns. Forty-four for the Sabbath, five for the New Moon, eleven for Passover and Unleavened Bread, six for the Feast of Weeks [another name for Pentecost], six for Tabernacles, three for New Year’s, and one for Atonement, and twenty-six hymns for every day purposes.”

Oh, yes, in those dark hideout places, trying to escape the persecution of the dark ages, these people were still keeping the right days of God’s calendar.

Speaking of the Bosnia group, Bosnia Cathars, in this same volume where this hymnbook is found, it is written:

“[There were those who] restored the original and true Christianity, in that they actually accepted and practiced Jewish religious customs and statutes which the Old Testament prescribes and which original Christianity observed as binding and only later discarded.”

Yes, it took several years to discard the statutes of the Almighty. Did you know, dear ones, that Ellen White agrees that the religious system should not have been discarded? In fact, she says that anyone who despises the Jewish system is actually denying Christ. It’s interesting how the Holy Spirit impressed her to write such startling statements. This one comes from Signs of the Times, 3/14/78. First she chastises the Jew and then she chastises the Christian. First speaking of the Jews who rejected Christ, she said:

“They rejected Him and refused to accept the plainest evidence of His true character.”

Now, notice what she says to us:

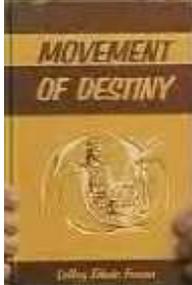
“The Christian church, on the other hand, who profess the utmost faith in Christ, in despising the Jewish system virtually deny Christ, who was the originator of the entire Jewish economy.”

Well, have you ever wondered what would our lives, routines, and church services be like if we had maintained the Jewish economy?

So, in this short time, we have uncovered some very intense facts from history. Haven’t we? We’ve seen the statutes, including the feasts of our God, continued on through the ages in the same holy traditions as Paul and John. Not only Paul and John, but truly in the traditions of the entire Scriptures. The consistency of these things is like a golden thread running through time. For awhile, lost sight of, but now beginning to shine again. What is really extra special for you and me is that all these divine institutions are to be replace. Ellen White uses the word “restored” before Christ comes the second time. Every divine institution she said will be restored. She was using this in the frame of the seventh-day Sabbath but in that setting she says

“every divine institution...” So, there’s more divine institutions involved. The question is, will you help in the restoration? It will take courage. It will take stamina. It will take decision, but is God counting on you? I believe He is.

Now, speaking more of the third witness, let’s move on to 1844 and 1888 and even on to our day. Now most of you know that the big date of 1844 was originally set and established according to the ancient feasts of Yahweh. That is on the date believed to have been correct for the Day of Atonement or today it’s called Yom Kippur. Actually, the roots of our three angel’s messages were founded on the feast days! You might not know, what has pretty well been lost from sight, is that the Millerite movement, pushing for the 1844 situation, was once referred to as The Seventh Month Movement. Yes, originally it was called The Seventh Month Movement.



I want you to notice the book here, it’s called *Movement of Destiny*, by L.E. Froom, in case you want to get the book. And in this book he refers to the old facts that surely it was called The Seventh Month Movement.

Quoting, from page 39:

“So the second angel’s message – declaring the fall of Babylon – sounded forth, and 50,000 to 100,000 came out of the nominal churches into the advent movement under the Seventh Month Movement, or True Midnight Cry, in 1844.”

Friends, the midnight cry was tied to the feast of the seventh month. The final midnight cry is also tied to the seventh month. And that’s why Ellen White wrote about it that way. From *Great Controversy*, 399 and 400, she said:

“In like manner the types which relate to the second advent must be fulfilled at the time pointed out in the symbolic service.”

Well, the seventh month contains three feasts, you know — Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles. Trumpets is a warning of judgment to come; Day of Atonement they thought that was the judgment; and then, of course, followed by Tabernacles when we will be living with Christ forever.

Now, the date 1888... Moving along from 1844 go 1888 is a big step in our history. You know I have earlier alluded to the big fuss that took place at the General Conference Session there in Minneapolis during that year. It’s been loudly heralded that the issues extending from that conference were all about righteousness by faith. Well, I’m sure they were but, actually, I know of no other kind. Righteousness by faith, that’s the only one there is. There had to be more to it than that. There had to be extenuations of things that were righteousness that we would obtain by faith.

Actually, I’m wondering whether Ellen White wasn’t setting the stage earlier in that fateful year, before the conference, when she proclaimed the kind of righteousness that they were to obtain by

faith. And I'm quoting now from the Signs of the Times written in February of 1888. Listen to these astounding words:

"In these last days, there's a call from heaven inviting you to keep the statutes and the ordinances of the Lord."

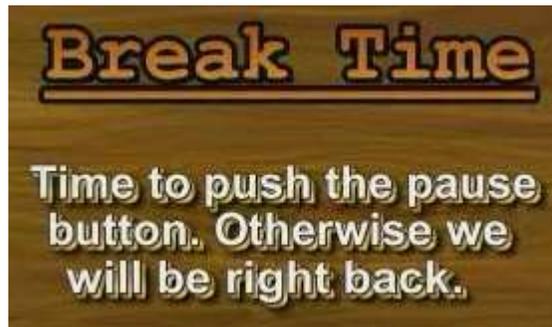
The question is: had you been there, would you have accepted that invitation? The question is, would you accept it now? Another question is, would they accept it in 1888?

Well, one of the principal speakers at that meeting, in 1888, and well favored by Ellen White, was A.T. Jones. Now, we really don't know everything that went on and how much has been swept under the carpet and how much is made known and how much has been lost, but it's most interesting to know what A.T. Jones was writing at the time. Actually, he wrote three books in that era. We'll take a short glance at all three of them to see what you think.



The first one is called The Two Republics. I don't know if you can find it. I had a very hard time finding it. This is an original copy, 899 pages long. It came out just three years after 1888. If you know anything about writing a book, you don't write a book of 899 pages in three years and he was writing it before the controversy and during the controversy.

Now, when we come back from our break, we're going to look right at some of those exciting adventures that he wrote about in past history. And we'll see that some of our forefathers knew these issues very, very clearly. Just as clearly as you're finding them now. Right now, let's take that break and we'll be right back.



Welcome back. I'm anxious to get into this book by A.T. Jones. In the first book we're going to look at, he gets into the Council of Nice, so many centuries before, and makes comments about it. I want you to notice as we begin to read on page 319:

"The Council of Nice in A.D. 325 gave another impetus to the Sunday movement. It decided that the Roman custom of celebrating Easter on Sunday only, should be followed throughout the whole empire."

Well, of course, that would include the Asiatic churches, wouldn't it?

“The Council issued a letter to the churches, in which is the following passage on this subject.”

Continuing the quote:

“We have also gratifying intelligence to communicate to you relative to the unity of judgment on the subject of the most holy feast of Easter; for this point also has been happily settled through your prayers; so that all the brethren in the East...”

Now watch this:

“...all the brethren of the East who have heretofore kept this festival when the Jews did, will henceforth conform to the Romans and to us, and to all who from the earliest times have observed our period of celebrating Easter.”

So, A.T. Jones was fully knowledgeable about the Roman Church, with the power of the state, strong-arming all of Christianity into Easter. But, he did not approve of it. Are you eager to learn more? Let’s watch the next quote:

“The rule of Rome was that the celebration must always be on a Sunday – the Sunday nearest to the fourteenth day of the first month of the Jewish year. And if the fourteenth day of that month should of itself be a Sunday, then the celebration was not to be held on that day, but upon the next Sunday. One reason for this was not only to be as like the heathen as possible, but to be as unlike the Jews as possible.”

So, according to A.T. Jones of the 1888 controversy, the question was simply this: Shall we continue to show ethnic prejudice and, at the same time, continue to be as much like the heathen as possible?

Friends, I think not! Our Heavenly Father knows the truth on this issue the same as you and I do, and it’s not too late for us to change. In fact, it would be a good idea before much more time continues.

Speaking of continuing, let’s continue the quote:

“This, in order not only to facilitate the ‘conversion’ of the heathen by conforming to their customs...”

How about that for church growth?

“...but also by pandering to their spirit of contempt and hatred of the Jews. It was upon this point that the bishop of Rome made his first open attempt at absolutism.”



Oh, I always thought that his “absolutism” came over the Sunday issue. He became the absolute ruler over all Christian leaders over the Sunday issue. Well, he did, but it was the Easter Sunday issue that gave him his strength. The first usurpation of Papal power was to force Easter versus Passover.

Let’s take a look at his other book. Now, I can’t show you much on the cover, because this is a copy of the book. It is called *Great Empires of Prophecy*, by A.T. Jones. This was put out in about the same era and I’m anxious to read a quote from it — and here it comes, watch close:

“From Rome there came now another addition to the sun worshipping apostasy: The first Christians being mostly Jews, continued to celebrate, in the remembrance of the death of Chris, the true Passover; and this was continued among those who from among the Gentiles had turned to Christ. Accordingly, the celebration was always on the Passover day – the fourteenth of the first month.”

Continuing:

“Rome, however, and from her all the West, adopted the day of the sun as the day of this celebration. According to the Eastern custom, the celebration, being on the fourteenth day of the month, would of course fall on different days of the week as the years revolved. The rule of Rome was that the celebration must always be on a Sunday.”

So, shall we hide our head in the sand much longer? So we just can’t see? Or, is it much better to anoint our eyes with eye salve, down here at the time of the end, that we can see the rest of the way out of Babylon.

You know, we’ve used Revelation 18’s call out of Babylon to move folk from Sunday to Sabbath quite effectively. But, actually, the context in Revelation 18 comes just before the seven last plagues. It is a last call to come the rest of the way out of Babylon and even Christ intercedes in this saying:

“Come out of her, My people.” (Revelation 18:4)

In other words, there’s more Babylon that we need to leave.

Now, I want to show you Jones’ third book. This is a much smaller book — didn’t take near as long to write. This book is called the *National Sunday Law* (see next page). You can find this



book in various places. Oh, I know what you're thinking, you've read *The National Sunday Law*, by Jan Marcussen, I suppose. But this is the *National Sunday Law*, a book that came out before Jan Marcussen was born. This one is called the *National Sunday Law*, by A.T. Jones.

Now, you might be wondering, just when did this book come out on the market — and I'm going to tell you. It came out on the market about two months after the 1888 session in Minneapolis. That's right. Seems to me it would be a bit naïve to imagine that this didn't come from his lips at the Minneapolis General Conference in October of that year.

Some of what he wrote comes from the same history books that we have been reading, but he reads more history. He gives us more information. He gives us more punch. So, let's take a look at what he says:

“The arrogant pretensions of the bishop of Rome to secure power over the whole church, was first asserted in behalf of Sunday by Victor, who was bishop of Rome from A.D. 193 to 202.”

Continuing the quote:

“He [meaning Victor, the Bishop of Rome] wrote an imperious letter to the Asiatic prelates commanding them to imitate the example of the western Christians with respect to the time of celebrating the festival of Easter, that is, commanding them to celebrate it on a Sunday.

The Asiatics answered this lordly requisition...with great spirit and resolution, that they would by no means depart in this manner from the custom handed down to them by their ancestors.”

Now, notice this next part:

“Upon this the thunder of excommunication began to roar. Victor, exasperated by this resolute answer of the Asiatic bishops, broke communion with them, pronounced them unworthy of the name of his brethren, and excluded them from all fellowship with the Church of Rome.”

Yes, he was quoting from the historian Moshem, chapter 4, paragraph 11. Think about it, now, the bishop of Rome was excommunicating people for keeping Passover!

So, the excommunication for keeping Passover has its roots deeply set in the authority of power of Papal usurpation and I'm wondering might Rome attempt to excommunicate the Christ who also kept the Passover? ...and plans to in the future? Let's read the quote from Luke 22:15, 16:

“And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer: [this is Christ]

For I say unto you, I will not anymore eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”

Now, dear friends, this word until in the text indicates that Christ is going to enjoy it again and it's going to be very special when he enjoys it with his human family. This is His promise — in spite of the threats of excommunication.

Jones was clearly showing that to continue with Easter was to support the Papacy. To enjoy Passover was in keeping with Christ. Would this not be an exhibition of faithfulness? Righteousness by faith, well, that's a pretty big umbrella. Keeping his statutes is righteousness and we only do it by faith.

Now, in the book *Desire of Ages*, there is a statement about Passover that is often used to contradict both Christ and A.T. Jones. Yes, you heard me right. And we're going to discuss it in a few moments. But, right now, before we get into that, let's realize once again that truth is progressing and should be found out more and more as we get closer to the time of the end.

And, notice again, one of Ellen White's statements much like the first tape that we heard. This is from the Spalding Magan Collection page 306:

“As we gather up the divine rays shining from the gospel, we shall have a clearer insight into the Jewish economy...”

That's what we're doing:

“...and a deeper appreciation of its important truths.”

Now, notice:

“Our exploration of truth is yet...”

Yet what?

“...incomplete.”

This being true, friends, it is for you and I to complete it down here at the end of time. But let's move on:

“We have gathered up only a few rays of light. Those who are not daily students of the Word will not solve the problems of the Jewish economy. They will not understand the truths taught by the temple service.”

You know, she actually goes on to explain that some folk will not understand these things until they enter into heaven. I suppose a lot of things will suddenly dawn on them when they sit down for their first Passover supper with Christ.

I wonder if the folk at the 1888 General Conference Session heard a lot more about the law and the gospel than will ever come to the surface. But, regardless, the truth is certainly out in the writings of A.T. Jones.



Now, let's get a little closer to our day. We're going to move into the 1930s and another Seventh-day Adventist scholar laid his research open as well. It's entitled the *Truth Triumphant*, by B.G. Wilkinson, Ph.D.

Who was B.G. Wilkinson? Well, he was Dean of Theology, Ph.D, one time Dean of our Seventh-day Adventist Washington Missionary College in Tacoma Park. He wrote some very interesting things about the controversy and documented it quite well. B.G. Wilkinson was mocked and discouraged by the brethren. A.T. Jones was, too, but he remained faithful to the denomination anyway. So, let's look at some of the things that he wrote. I think you will be interested.

“The eastern churches celebrated the resurrection of Christ annually two days after the Passover feast.”

That's right, the eastern churches — all those little red dots over there.

“They commemorated the resurrection on whatever day of the week the sixteenth day of the month fell. This was in harmony with the way the Bible regulated the Old Testament Passover feast.”

Continuing:

“In addition to their yearly spring festival at Easter time, sun worshippers also had a weekly festival holiday. As was previously pointed out, the first day of the week had widespread recognition as being sacred to the sun. The bishop of Rome, seeking to out-rival pagan pomp assaulted those churches which celebrated Easter as a movable feast.”

Oh, he went right after them:

“He determined to force Easter to come on the same day of the week each year, namely Sunday. By this he would create a precedent which only a devote and scholarly opposition could expose. By this he would appeal to the popular prejudices of his age, be they ever so incorrect. By this he would claim to be the lord of the calendar, that instrument so indispensable to civilized nations. By this he would assert the right to appoint church festivals and holy days.”

And, oh, indeed, he has multiplied them. We’ll look more at his festivals in the next lecture, and a lot of other festivals of pagan background, as well. Going on with the quote:

“Only those who have read carefully the history of the growth of papal power will ever know how powerful the controversy concerning Easter served in the hands of the bishops of Rome.

God had ordained that the Passover of the Old Testament should be celebrated in the spring of the year on the fourteenth day of the first Bible month. Heathenism, in the centuries before Christ, had a counterfeit yearly holiday celebrating the spring equinox of the sun. It was called ‘Eostre’ from the Scandinavian word for the goddess of spring, from whence we get our word ‘Easter’.”

You see, Eostre and Estare were the same goddess really, just different areas. So we see, dear friends, that the controversy raged between heathenism’s Easter versus the Bible Passover and Unleavened Bread. And this controversy was originally a controversy between the Bishop of Rome and the churches of Asia Minor.



Let’s take another look at this map for just a moment, just a refresher. The line from Rome to Alexandria, east influence versus west influence. The churches favoring Passover are on the right side but it was on the other side where the ordinances were changed for the purposes of church growth. Make it easy for the heathen to join. And on west we could go through Spain and France and in later years eventually to America, as well.

Now let me share some truth with you. Passover points back to the most eventful weekend in human history. Satan does not want that weekend memorialized. Satan would not want that weekend to be understood. If he did, if he cared, he surely wouldn’t have worked so hard to get rid of it.

You know, at one time however, Ellen White wrote something that on the surface sounds quite different from what Christ said and did... what A.T. Jones said... what B.G. Wilkinson said... what the ancient churches of Asia and the historians have said. She said something that appears quite differently. I will read it through and I think you will see that indeed she still harmonizes

with the Word of God, in spite of how many people make her look like she's saying something otherwise. Let's read it. *Desire of Ages*, page 652:

“Christ was standing at the point of transition between two economies and their two great festivals. He, the spotless Lamb of God, was about to present Himself as a sin offering, that He would thus bring to an end the system of types and ceremonies that for four thousand years had pointed to His death. As He ate the Passover with His disciples, He instituted in its place the service that was to be a memorial of His great sacrifice. The national festival of the Jews was to pass away forever. The service which Christ established was to be observed by His followers in all lands and through all ages.”

There are other statements by Ellen White to this effect but they're all pretty similar to this one. Now, listen folk, the truth is, we must not pit Ellen White against Ellen White and her statements to the contrary of what this is made to sound like. And we must not pit Ellen White against the Scripture. Actually, neither is necessary.

So, how do I see that her statement in *Desire of Ages* and still be consistent, for example, with Luke 22 where Christ says He'll continue to keep the Passover and herself in *Acts of the Apostles*, 290 and 391, where she showed the apostles continuing to keep them?

I want to show you the chart. Here is a blank chart. Now, coming across the top of the chart are two words — on the left, Sabbath, and on the right, Passover. So, our chart is divided in half.

Now, look what's coming down as far as time elements are concerned. Under the Sabbath section, on the left side, the time element is the seventh day, given in Exodus 20:8 to 11 and Genesis 2 and 3; and lots of other places, of course. And so, underneath, for the time element, I have the seventh day of the week.

Now, let's go over to the Passover side of the chart and notice the time element there. It's the 14th day of the first Jewish month. That would be the 14th day of Nisan.

<i>The Sabbath</i>		<i>The Passover</i>	
Time Element		Time Element	
7 th	1 st Chron. 23:31	14 th	Exodus 12:21
Ex. 20:8-11	2 nd Chron. 2:4	Lev. 23:5	Deut. 16:2
Gen. 2:3	2 nd Chron. 8:12,13	Num. 9:5	Deut. 16:5
7 th day of the week (Gen. 1:5)	Neh. 10:33	14 th day of Nisan (Ex. 12:1)	2 nd Chron. 30:15
	Ezekiel 45:17		
	Numbers 28:1, 8-10		

Now, coming down in the chart are texts regarding sacrificing. Notice them under the Sabbath, I have several there, 1: Chronicles 23:21, II Chronicles 2:4, II Chronicles 8:12-13, Nehemiah 10:13, Ezekiel 45:17, and Numbers 28:1, 8-10. All of these are text regarding the sacrificial system used on the seventh-day Sabbath. In the Numbers 28 text, they're actually commanded on the Sabbath.

Now, let's look under the Passover side and notice the sacrifices there. I could have put numerous ones there but I put these four for a purpose. I'll explain in a moment. The first one is Exodus 12:21, then Deuteronomy 16:2, Deuteronomy 16:5, and II Chronicles 30:15.

<i>The Sabbath</i>		<i>The Passover</i>	
Time Element		Time Element	
7 th	1 st Chron. 23:21	14 th	Exodus 12:21
Ex. 20:8-11	2 nd Chron. 2:4	Lev. 23:5	Deut. 16:2
Gen. 2:3	2 nd Chron. 8:12,13	Num. 9:5	Deut. 16:5
Lev. 23:3	Neh. 10:33		2 nd Chron. 30:15
Lev. 23:4	Ezekiel 45:17		
Lev. 23:5	Numbers 28:1, 8-10		

Now, I'm going to put Xs over the sacrificial system under the Sabbath. You might wonder why. I think you know why, it's because the animal sacrificing has been taken away but the Sabbath remains.

Now, I'm going to put Xs under the sacrificing on the Passover side of our chart and for the same reason. The ceremonial law of sacrificing is done away. But there's something very unique about the sacrificial text listed under the Passover side.

In this case they refer only to the lamb, to the

sheep. Notice as I quote from them, the Exodus 12:21:

"Kill the Passover."

Well, what were they to kill? They were to kill the sheep, in this case the sheep is called the Passover. Deuteronomy 16:2:

"Sacrifice the Passover."

Well, what were they sacrificing? You see, once again, the sheep here is call the Passover. Deuteronomy 16:5:

"Thou mayest not sacrifice the Passover."

II Chronicles 30:15:

"They killed the Passover on the fourteenth."

So, what I want you to notice without question is the fact that sometimes the word Passover refers to the time element, sometimes it refers only to the sheep and sometimes it refers to both. And the only way you're going to know the difference is to check the context very carefully.

The question is, what was Ellen White referring to in Desire of Ages, page 562 and some of these other like quotes? ...to the time or to the sheep? Pay attention to the entire context:

"Christ was standing at the point of transition between two economies and their two great festivals. He, the spotless Lamb of God, was about to present Himself as a sin offering, that He would thus bring to an end the system of types and ceremonies that for four thousand years had pointed to His death. As He ate the Passover (sheep) with His disciples, He instituted in its place the service that was

to be a memorial of His great sacrifice. The national festival of the Jews was to pass away forever. The service which Christ established was to be observed by His followers in all lands and through all ages.”

You see, once you understand the context and what is going on, Ellen White is not opposed to the Scripture or the works of the apostles. The only way her words harmonize with the ensuing activities of the apostles is to recognize the context of her comments are in reference to “the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.” Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us.

The question is really, when did the apostles take communion? Friends, they took communion on the same day that they ate the Passover, the same day. It’s like the seventh-day Sabbath. When did the apostles keep the Sabbath after the sacrifices were removed from it? Oh, you say, on the seventh day. That’s right. Well, when did they keep the Passover after the Passover sacrifices were removed from it? ...on the fourteenth of Nisan. That’s right.

This doesn’t mean you can’t worship on other days than the seventh day, nor does it mean that you can’t enjoy the ordinances on other days. But the Sabbath is an appointed time for worship and Passover is an appointed time for the ordinances.

Now, listen to me closely, from all of the information you have read, you can put this together without any help from me. But to say that Passover time does not exist is to deny Christ’s actions at the time. It’s to deny His statement regarding keeping Passover in the future. It’s a denial of the life and the example of Paul and John the Revelator, and the leaders of the early Christian church. It’s a denial of the prophets, the patriarchs and the testimony themselves set at creation in the heavens. Friends, that’s just too much denial. We have too much knowledge for that any more.

It was Ellen White, herself, that wrote in her day:

“Said my guide, there is much light yet to shine forth from God’s law and the gospel of righteousness. This message, understood in its true character, and proclaimed in the Spirit, will lighten the earth with its glory.” (2 MR 58)

And friends, the statutes are lightening up. Truly the Old Testament ordinances of sacrifice were simply a law in themselves, done away with, nailed to the cross. They were laws that were only superimposed over the Sabbath and other festivals — in fact, twice daily, and sometimes applied when a sinner came to the temple for some special reason.

The ceremonial laws of sacrifice were added because of sin and therefore added after sin. Pointed like a shadow to the ultimate sacrifice of Christ. On the other hand, the times of God’s appointments were set in the heavens before sin and will continue on into the future after sin as we’ve seen in many cases already.

You see, Ellen White knew that a lot of new truth would be revealed from the law after her day, but she was not permitted to put her finger on exactly what it would be. In fact, perhaps it was taken from her in 1888. But now, in your generation, in my generation, we can clearly see that

Heaven's designed statutes were set in the heavens at creation; desecrated before the flood, just as they are now in the time of the end; honored by the patriarchs; observed by the apostles; kept by Christians for centuries; but, destroyed and replaced by the little horn of Rome.

However, in spite of all of Satan's activities through the centuries, every divine institution is being restored. There are hundreds of people, including members of your own faith, all across the nation that are recognizing these facts and doing something about it, quietly in their own groups.

Actually, Satan's attack against the feasts of Heaven started centuries before the Papacy, or even Constantine's Easter and Sunday laws. Really? Oh, I can hardly wait to share that very next lecture called Sun worship and Galatians Four.

You remember, it was the apostle Paul who said he committed nothing against the customs of the Jewish fathers, Acts 28:17. In fact, in Acts 25:8, he said he had not offended the law of the Jews at all. But people read Galatians and say, yes, he did. Paul said, no I didn't. I say, no he didn't. And many ministers say, yes he did. And they quote Galatians 4. We're going to look at it in our next time. I think you're going to enjoy it. You are going to enjoy our next lecture more than any of the other, I do believe.

Now, it's time for prayer. We have to call this one to a close. I think you're going to have to read this again, so much was covered. Share it with others, won't you? Let's pray:

Our Heavenly Father, we're so thankful that we can see how the church was led in times past. We can see that you have not been taken by surprise but that your prophets knew ahead of time that that golden thread of truth spun all the way through the Scriptures would be covered and changed for awhile — but, not really changed at all. And now is beginning to shine forth again. I pray, God, that You will give us courage to look at the shining light of truth and to walk with it, to accept it, to become a part of it. For I ask for this courage and strength and commitment for these dear people that watch our videos, in the Name of Yahshua our Lord, amen.

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