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CONSIDER YOUR VERDICT!

The discussion about which calendar the Church of God should use to determine the Feasts and the annual Holy Days has been going on for well over five years now. One thing has become very clear in this process. And that is this:

ALL THE EVIDENCE AGAINST THE JEWISH CALENDAR IS WILLINGLY IGNORED BY THOSE WHO SUPPORT THE JEWISH CALENDAR! FACTS ARE SIMPLY NOT ENOUGH TO CONVINCE THEM! FACTS ARE NEVER ENOUGH TO CONVINCE PEOPLE WHO SIMPLY DON'T WANT TO BE CONVINCED!

That has always been the case throughout human history. That's what Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong found when he tried to explain to the Church of God Seventh Day that God requires us to also observe His annual Holy Days; FACTS were not going to achieve anything with those people who were simply not prepared to change.

And the bottom line is this:

It is exactly the same thing today with the calendar. No amount of facts can achieve a change in those people who have set their minds against changing. Once they have set their minds, then the facts of the matter are really immaterial, they couldn't care less about the facts. Facts have no value for people who refuse to accept those facts.

Consider the facts that have been presented to us all over the past few years, facts which show that the present Jewish calendar simply does NOT have God's approval:

1) The meaning of the Hebrew word "tekufah" in Exodus 34:22 is simply beyond question. The Jews know ABSOLUTELY that this word refers to 4 specific days in the year, the 2 equinoxes and the 2 solstices in the year, and to the 4 seasons that start with those 4 days. How WE TODAY IN OUR SOCIETIES define the seasons has nothing to do with this. THE FACT is that GOD in Exodus 34:22 requires the Feast of Tabernacles to be TOTALLY in the season that starts with the autumn equinox, on September 23. Since its inception in 359 AD the present Jewish calendar has ALWAYS started FoT in some years in each 19-year cycle before September 23, and this is still the case today. So since its inception in 359 AD the present Jewish calendar has REGULARLY VIOLATED GOD'S INSTRUCTIONS!

Those who defend the present Jewish calendar are WILLINGLY IGNORANT of this evidence against the Jewish calendar. They either present some extremely feeble (i.e. without any strength at all) attempt at explaining away Exodus 34:22 or they intentionally ignore this instruction.

2) It is equally beyond any question that THE NEW MOON (Hebrew is "chodesh") that GOD designated as the first new moon of the year in Exodus 12:2 is to be in the season of SPRING, which according to the biblical meaning of "tekufah" starts on March 20 or 21. The Church has over the past several decades REPEATEDLY acknowledged this intent by God in its literature. The Church has NEVER been so brazen as to state publicly in print that God INTENDS the year to start in the WINTER! Yet with the Jewish calendar the year VERY COMMONLY starts in the winter! So again the present Jewish calendar REGULARLY VIOLATES GOD'S INTENTIONS!

Those who defend the present Jewish calendar are also WILLINGLY IGNORANT of this evidence against the Jewish calendar. Again, they either ignore completely what is GOD'S INTENT for when the year is to start, or they present some feeble attempt at trying to obscure the precise timing of the four seasons.

3) It is beyond any question that "the oracles of God" in Romans 3:2 have NOTHING AT ALL to do with THE CALENDAR! It was a totally unjustified and incorrect assumption by Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong to claim that "the oracles of God" refer to the Jewish calendar, an assumption that was then perpetuated by Kenneth Herrmann in 1953 and by Dr. Hoeh in 1981. I realize that this statement is going to anger some people who believe everything Mr. Armstrong taught was inspired and above being examined for correctness, but it has to be said because it is the truth.

THE JEWS THEMSELVES will state categorically that "the calendar" has nothing to do with "the oracles they received from God". When confronted with this information, which had been provided by a Jewish scholar, one man who vigorously defends the Jewish calendar simply replied with: "I DON'T ACCEPT THAT!" Talk about being WILLINGLY IGNORANT!

So here we have a situation where we in the Church of God supposedly know better than the Jews themselves what "oracles" the Jews have preserved. THE JEWS say: "the calendar is NOT a part of the oracles we have preserved", but SOME PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH OF GOD say: "you Jews simply don't know what you are talking about; of course the calendar is a part of the oracles you have preserved."

Once again, those who defend the present Jewish calendar are WILLINGLY IGNORANT of the evidence that makes clear beyond any doubt that Romans 3:2 has nothing at all to do with the calendar.

4) Starting with Mr. Armstrong's article in 1940, defenders of the present Jewish calendar have missed the real point by having a wrong focus. They have asked the question: WOULD THE JEWS HAVE LOST THEIR CALENDAR? But that is simply not the real question! No one is claiming that they "LOST" something which they fervently intended to preserve.

The real question that gives the correct focus is:

Would the Jews have CHANGED their calendar?

And the answer to this question is: CERTAINLY they would CHANGE whatever they felt like changing! They changed God's instructions for the Passover, they changed God's instructions for Pentecost, and Jesus Christ Himself said that by their traditions they TWISTED God's instructions. Jesus Christ's words were: "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition" (Matthew 15:6), and: "full well YOU REJECT THE COMMANDMENT OF GOD" (Mark 7:9).

So consider this: The Jews have changed the whole package! In the spring they have changed the days on which God commands the Passover and Pentecost to be observed. And in the autumn they have postponed away from "inconvenient days" Trumpets, Atonement, the First Day of Tabernacles, and the Last Great Day. So what is still left on the days that GOD selected?

Those who defend the present Jewish calendar are also WILLINGLY IGNORANT of Jesus Christ's statements about the Jews in Matthew 15 and in Mark 7, statements that are a reflection on character and on integrity, or a lack of it.

5) It is also ABSOLUTELY CLEAR, BEYOND ANY DOUBT WHATSOEVER, that at the time of Christ's

ministry and throughout at least the whole first century AD the Day of Atonement DID fall on both Fridays and on Sundays! This means that it is absolutely clear that during the first century AD the Jews had a calendar that did NOT have any postponement rules! All of the original apostles lived and died without ever once postponing the Day of Atonement away from a Friday or from a Sunday.

The defenders of the Jewish calendar are also WILLINGLY IGNORANT of this fact! The attempts to justify the unbiblical Jewish postponement rules range from feeble to utterly absurd! They just don't want to know that Jesus Christ and the original apostles kept Atonement on Fridays and on Sundays. This year of 2000 AD we have such an unbiblical postponement in the Jewish calendar, and there is no way such a postponement can be justified in the sight of God!

6) The Jews themselves FREELY ADMIT that their present calendar is NOT THE SAME as the calendar of the biblical period! This is also beyond question! They acknowledge that their calendar went through different stages of development, first the calendar of the biblical period (that's the right one!), then the calendar of the talmudic period, and today the calendar of the post-talmudic period. This means that today's calendar is admitted to be DIFFERENT from the calendar of the biblical period.

The defenders of the Jewish calendar are also WILLINGLY IGNORANT of this fact! The claim that the present Jewish calendar goes back to AT LEAST Old Testament times is simply not true! The Jews themselves contradict such a claim. And THE FACTS contradict such a claim!

7) In the opening verses of the Book of Isaiah (i.e. Isaiah 1:14) God states CATEGORICALLY that He HATES the Jewish "new moons", a clear reference to the Jewish "CALENDAR"! God also says that He hates the Jewish Holy Days (i.e. "YOUR mow'ed's") determined by that calendar.

The defenders of the Jewish calendar are also WILLINGLY IGNORANT of this fact! They simply don't want to know this verse. So they just ignore it, as if God had never said anything about the Jewish calendar and the Holy Days determined by use of that calendar.

8) The Book of Genesis makes ABSOLUTELY CLEAR that in the days of Noah God still had Noah using a calendar where EVERY MONTH had EXACTLY 30 DAYS, and where therefore EVERY YEAR had EXACTLY 360 DAYS! Genesis shows 5 consecutive months being equal to exactly 150 days, an utter impossibility with present lunar cycles. Back in Genesis those were the cycles that God had pronounced "VERY GOOD" (Genesis 1:31).

The defenders of the Jewish calendar are also WILLINGLY IGNORANT of this fact! And so they grasp at straws in trying to explain how with our present lunar cycles we could explain such 5 months being equal to exactly 150 days. But ALL THE INFORMATION regarding lunar cycles that we can muster has no evidence of any such 150 days 5-months period.

With all the data available to astronomers today they can only come up with either 147 days or 148 days for such a 5-months period (this is NOT based on Jewish "molads", but on what astronomers ASSUME to have been the real new moon conjunctions in those years) in the years from 2375 BC to 2365 BC, the approximate period during which the flood occurred. What this means is that THE BIBLE IS CORRECT in Genesis 7-8, and astronomers are in error because they have no way of determining what lunar cycles were like before they were corrupted to their present state because of mankind's sins.

But this makes ABSOLUTELY clear that the present Jewish calendar is DIFFERENT from the calendar Noah used at the time of the flood.

9) While there is no clear-cut calendar for our present age spelled out in detail in the Bible, there are nevertheless CLEAR REQUIREMENTS stated in the Bible, with which a correct calendar has to comply.

The defenders of the present Jewish calendar SIMPLY REFUSE to present a clear list of all the biblical requirements that a correct calendar must meet. They simply don't want to know about ANY BIBLICAL requirements for a correct calendar. They avoid such biblical requirements like the plague! This refusal to face up to ALL biblical requirements is again nothing other than being WILLINGLY IGNORANT!

10) It is clear beyond any doubts whatsoever that the Jews who returned from the Babylonian exile ACCEPTED THE BABYLONIAN CALENDAR that was in use throughout the Medo-Persian Empire at that time. God's servant EZRA instituted this calendar and KNOWINGLY replaced good Hebrew names like "Abib", etc. with such Babylonian names as "Nisan" and "Tammuz" (a pagan god). This change in the names of the months to the names used throughout the Empire makes quite clear that Ezra IMPLEMENTED the Babylonian calendar for use by the Jews.

The defenders of the present Jewish calendar are WILLINGLY IGNORANT of the fact that you simply cannot claim that this Babylonian calendar, which Ezra clearly sanctioned, was somehow "God's sacred calendar" or "divinely given to the Babylonians". The claim that the Babylonians got their calendar from Daniel and his three friends is absurd, since the preserved records of the Babylonian calendar precede the time of Daniel's arrival in Babylon. Ezra used that calendar because there was nothing wrong with it, it met ALL biblical requirements, but it was certainly not "divinely revealed to the Babylonians".

11) It is absolutely clear that at the time of Christ's ministry the start of each new month was based on VISUAL OBSERVATION of the first new crescent. The Jews FREELY acknowledge this! This means that, as far as the type of calendar that was used is concerned, IT IS TOTALLY IMMATERIAL WHETHER JESUS CHRIST WAS CRUCIFIED IN 30 AD OR IN 31 AD!

With the VISUAL OBSERVATION that was used at that time, A WEDNESDAY PASSOVER is THE ONLY POSSIBILITY FOR 31 AD! A Wednesday Passover in 31 AD has absolutely nothing at all to do with supposedly requiring some postponements to achieve a Wednesday Passover! It is PURE COINCIDENCE that the INCORRECT MOLAD CALCULATION FOR 31 AD plus a "postponement" happen to arrive at the correct date of first visibility!

The defenders of the present Jewish calendar are also WILLINGLY IGNORANT of this fact! Their attempt to use the account in John 7-9 to prove that this account somehow requires a calendar "WITH POSTPONEMENTS" is absurd! It shuts out everything else (i.e. all of the above points) in favour of arguing about 31 AD requiring postponements to have a Wednesday Passover, when in a calendar WITHOUT POSTPONEMENTS, but based on the historically proven first visibility of the new crescent, a Wednesday Passover is the only possibility!

12) It is AN ABSOLUTE ASTRONOMICAL FACT, which simply cannot be refuted, that the new moon conjunctions (all 235 of them in every 19-year cycle) move to ONE DAY LATER IN THE SEASONS FOR EVERY 216 YEARS! Thus it is an indisputable fact that ALL the new moons fall 9 DAYS LATER IN THE SEASONS for every 2000 years that pass.

It is not a matter of the Jewish molad calculations moving away from the actual new moon conjunctions; they continue to fluctuate around the true new moons as they have since the inception of the fixed Jewish calendar. It is the new moon conjunctions themselves that are constantly moving to a later date in the seasons, because 19-year cycles are only an approximation and not an accurate reflection of the astronomical realities.

IT IS AN ABSOLUTE FACT that no amount of postponements has any effect in influencing this steady shift to a constantly later date in the seasons. It is an absolute fact that the fixed Jewish calendar has no mechanism at all to take this steady shifting to later dates into account, and the Jews themselves readily acknowledge this fact!

The defenders of the present Jewish calendar are also WILLINGLY IGNORANT of this fact! Their claims that the Jewish postponements are somehow INTENDED to compensate for this steady shifting to a later date are absurd. No amount of postponements can prevent this steady shifting of the actual new moon conjunctions to a later date in the seasons.

13) The Jewish molad calculations CLAIM to calculate the actual new moon conjunctions to an accuracy of within three seconds. Yet it is AN INDISPUTABLE FACT that the molad of Tishri calculations are NEVER this accurate! It is a fact that the molad calculations err from being up to 3 hours earlier than the actual new moon to being up to 15 hours later than the actual new moon. The Jewish postponements frequently COMPOUND THIS ERROR, by then postponing the start of the month even further away from the actual conjunction.

This error is not in any way connected to the previously mentioned problem of the new moon conjunctions shifting to later dates in the seasons. This error is simply due to the fact that the averaged out Jewish calculations are simply not good enough when applied to any one specific new moon conjunction in the year.

The defenders of the present Jewish calendar are WILLINGLY IGNORANT of the fact that the Jewish molad calculations don't really stack up with the astronomical realities that confront us. They claim that "averaged out" calculations are GOOD ENOUGH! Yet during Christ's ministry, when every new month was started with the report of the first sighting of the new crescent, the Jewish leaders NEVER accepted "averaged out" results; they were at that time EXTREMELY METICULOUS in determining that first visibility had indeed taken place.

14) It is AN INDISPUTABLE FACT that when Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong wrote his 1940 Good News Letter he actually THOUGHT that the Jewish calendar attempts to be in full agreement with "first visibility of the new crescent". This is quite clear from the following quotation from that 1940 Good News Letter:

"The New moon occurs, IN JERUSALEM, (World Almanac), at exactly 10:18 P.M., the night of April 7th, which is the eve of April 8th. However, God had the new moon observed by the naked eye and by this method the first day of the 1st month begins the following sunset, April 8th." (GN Letter of 1940)

Mr. Armstrong's appeal to the World Almanac PROVES that Mr. Armstrong thought that the Jewish calendar establishes exactly the same dates as had previously always been established by visual observations. This irrefutably proves that in 1940 Mr. Armstrong did NOT understand what really happens with today's fixed Jewish calendar, which is TOTALLY AND COMPLETELY UNCONCERNED WITH FIRST VISIBILITY! Mr. Armstrong simply did not understand that first visibility is never, at any stage, a consideration in the present Jewish calendar.

The defenders of the present Jewish calendar are WILLINGLY IGNORANT of the fact that Mr. Armstrong had a flawed understanding of the present Jewish calendar at the time when he endorsed this Jewish calendar.

15) It is AN INDISPUTABLE FACT that in 1940 Mr. Armstrong made A WRONG DECISION at the precise same time and in the precise same context in which he endorsed the present Jewish calendar. In that same 1940 Good News Letter Mr. Armstrong changed his observance of Pentecost from Sivan 6 to always keeping it on a Monday. This change he only explained in detail three years later, in 1943. But he made this change already in 1940, as can be seen from this quotation from that letter:

"Pentecost this year is JUNE 17th, sunset, until sunset June 18th, instead of June 12th as erroneously figured on our calendar printed three years ago." (GN Letter of 1940)

"June 12th" in 1940 was a Wednesday and it was Sivan 6 of the Jewish calendar for 1940. Mr. Armstrong INTENDED to say that Pentecost that year was to be ON A MONDAY, which would have been from "June 16th sunset until sunset June 17th". June 18th in 1940 was actually a Tuesday. So Mr. Armstrong also made A TYPING MISTAKE in that letter; he intended to state that Monday, June 17th was to be kept as Pentecost, but he accidentally stated that TUESDAY, June 18th was to be Pentecost. We can certainly overlook this typing error.

However, Mr. Armstrong's decision to change the observance of Pentecost from Sivan 6 to always being on a MONDAY was biblically INDISPUTABLY INCORRECT! It was contrary to clear biblical instructions. Clearly Mr. Armstrong did NOT have God's guidance in this decision.

The defenders of the present Jewish calendar are WILLINGLY IGNORANT of this lack of God's guidance on Mr. Armstrong's 1940 "calendar examination". It is utterly illogical to claim that "GOD GUIDED" Mr. Armstrong in 1940 to endorse the present Jewish calendar, while at the same time acknowledging that in the very same context "GOD ASSUREDLY DID NOT GUIDE" Mr. Armstrong's decision to fix Pentecost observance to always be on a MONDAY! Mr. Armstrong's Monday-Pentecost decision PROVES that he did not have God's guidance at that specific point in time.

16) It is an indisputable fact that the Jewish calendar calculations could not possibly have existed BEFORE THE JULIAN CALENDAR was introduced! The whole purpose of the Jewish calendar calculations is to establish the dates for the Jewish calendar IN TERMS OF ANOTHER CALENDAR! It is impossible for the Jewish calculations to establish the date for Tishri 1 in terms of a scale of Tishri 1 - Tishri 30. Where would you possibly place Tishri 1 on such a scale ... other than on Tishri 1?? Without the existence of the Julian calendar, it is absolutely impossible to in any way use the Jewish calendar calculations to calculate anything!

The only purpose of those calculations is to establish the dates for ONE calendar (i.e. the Jewish calendar) in terms of ANOTHER calendar (i.e. the Julian calendar). So the Jewish calculations are built on THE FOUNDATION of the Julian calendar. All Jewish astronomers obviously understand this, and they would be embarrassed to claim that their calculations supposedly predate the Julian calendar.

Yet the defenders of the present Jewish calendar SIMPLY REFUSE to face up to the utter impossibility of those calculations supposedly going back to BC centuries. They don't want to know that the present Jewish calendar could not function without the existence of the Roman calendar.

Well, these are some of the facts that show quite clearly that the present Jewish calendar is anything but "God-given" or "inspired" or "sacred". But none of these facts mean anything to those who have set their minds to defend the Jewish calendar at all costs. They have no problem with totally ignoring all of these facts, on the assumption that if they will just steadfastly ignore these facts, then maybe they will just go away. People have always done this with evidence they simply don't want to accept; it is precisely the same thing that people in the world's churches do when they reject the Sabbath and the Holy Days and the truth about heaven and hell, etc..

A few months from now the Jewish calendar invokes a postponement that moves Trumpets, Atonement and Tabernacles one day further away from the new moon of the seventh month than God has instructed. There is no way this postponement can be justified in the sight of God. It is simply wrong, placing human traditions ahead of faithful obedience to God.

The Day of Trumpets should be kept on Friday, September 29, and not on September 30.

The Day of Atonement should be kept on Sunday, October 8, and not on October 9.

The First Day of Tabernacles should be kept on Friday, October 13, and not on October 14.

The Last Great Day should be kept on Friday, October 20, and not on October 21.

I don't know how you, whoever you are, feel about this issue. You have the evidence before you. All of the above 16 points are explained in detail in some of the other articles I have previously written. There are a great many people who will be WILLINGLY IGNORANT of these 16 points, or who talk themselves into believing that some clever argument against one or two of these 16 points can somehow make all 16 points vanish into thin air. There are obviously also many people who simply don't understand, because the whole issue is just too complicated for them.

Anyway:

I just wanted to say: examine all of these basic points about the calendar and then CONSIDER YOUR VERDICT! But be careful about dismissing any of these points without any real proof. After all, you yourself surely don't want to be "willingly ignorant" of these things, do you?

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