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THE FLAWS IN WADE COX'S REASONING ABOUT NEW MOONS

Here is a short 3-4 page article from Wade Cox that was forwarded to me for comment. The writer stated that Wade's arguments for the new moons were logically and biblically very difficult to refute. Since I strongly disagreed with that assessment, I decided to write down my response to Wade's article. For ease of reference in my comments, I have numbered the 21 paragraphs of Wade's article with #1 to #21. My comments then follow Wade's article.

START OF WADE COX'S ARTICLE:

Dear Friends,

(#1) Many people in today's Christianity try and hold to the view that the Church had the right, under the Bishop of Rome, to change the days of worship of the Church and to do away with the Sabbaths, New Moons and Holy Days.

(#2) Trinitarians hold that the Church changed the Sabbath to Sunday and had the authority to do so (see the paper *Rome's Challenge: Why do Protestants keep Sunday? (No. 249)*). They also claim they had the authority to do away with the New Moons and Feasts on the basis of Isaiah 1:10-16.

(#3) Isaiah 1:10-16

[10] Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom! Give ear to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomor'rah! [11] "What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the LORD; I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of he-goats. [12] "When you come to appear before me, who requires of you this trampling of my courts? [13] Bring no more vain offerings; incense is an abomination to me. New moon and sabbath and the calling of assemblies -- I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly. [14] Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hates; they have become a burden to me, I am weary of bearing them. [15] When you spread forth your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood. [16] Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil,

(#4) A careful reading of the text shows that the Sabbaths, New Moons and Feasts are being kept in iniquity and that God hates the way in which they are kept, not the fact that they *are* kept. God says He cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly. It is not that He hates solemn assembly - which He Himself commanded to be kept - but rather the iniquity in which it is kept. It is for that reason Judaism is not allowed to keep the true Calendar (see the paper *Distortion of God's Calendar in Judah (No. 195B)*).

(#5) Ministers of the various Churches of God use the argument that Isaiah 66:23 does indeed state that God demands that all flesh will come and worship Him from one Sabbath to another and from one New Moon to another, but they don't have to keep the New Moons now. They only have to keep them when Christ comes.

(#6) Isaiah 66:19-24

[19] and I will set a sign among them. And from them I will send survivors to the nations, to Tarshish, Put, and Lud, who draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands afar off, that have not heard my fame or seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the nations. [20] And they shall bring all your brethren from all the nations as an offering to the LORD, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says the LORD, just as the Israelites bring their cereal offering in a clean vessel to the house of the LORD. [21] And some of them also I will take for priests and for Levites, says the LORD. [22] "For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before me, says the LORD; so shall your descendants and your name remain. [23] From new moon to new moon, and from sabbath to sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, says the LORD. [24] "And they shall go forth and look on the dead bodies of the men that have rebelled against me; for their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh."

(#7) That view is essentially a Trinitarian and Catholic argument. Surely one can see the logic that if the New Moons don't have to be kept by the Church now, but will be kept when Christ comes, and then the same argument applies to the Sabbath and the Sabbath does not have to be kept now, then the Trinitarians would be justified in not keeping the Sabbath now and can keep Sunday or Tuesday or any other day they like until Christ comes.

(#8) They are thus also free from the New Moons and the Feasts. God is thus not immutable but is a respecter of persons, as He requires different standards from humanity over the ages.

(#9) In the same way, Zechariah 14:16-19 demands that the Feasts are kept in the millennial system, but God says that He hates their Feast in Isaiah 1:10-16 above. Therefore, the Feasts do not have to be kept now. It is only when Christ comes that any of it needs to be done, so it is reasoned.

(#10) Zechariah 14:16-19

[16] Then every one that survives of all the nations that have come against Jerusalem shall go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of booths. [17] And if any of the families of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain upon them. [18] And if the family of Egypt do not go up and present themselves, then upon them shall come the plague with which the LORD afflicts the nations that do not go up to keep the feast of booths. [19] This shall be the punishment to Egypt and the punishment to all the nations that do not go up to keep the feast of booths.

(#11) Obviously, from Isaiah 66 and Zechariah 14 above, if the Sabbaths, New Moons and Feasts have to be kept on pain of death in the Millennium, and they do not have to be kept now by the followers of Christ, then God is not immutable and Christ is not the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. God is thus in respect of persons. However, we know that God is immutable and Christ is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow (Mal. 3:6; Heb. 13:8). Therefore, the reasoning involved is wrong and attributes sin to God, and is thus blasphemy.

(#12) Now, it follows also that if the Laws of God are discretionary, then we do not have to keep any of them until Christ comes. We are thus free from the Law and we can transgress the Laws of God with impunity. However, John said that transgression of the Law is sin, in that sin is transgression of the Law (1Jn. 3:4). Thus any person who reasons against the Law of God and teaches men likewise cannot be a servant of God and Christ, and cannot be a proper member of the Body of Christ, and there is no light in

them (Isa. 8:20).

(#13) Thus no person of the Body of Christ can argue that the Sabbaths, New Moons and Festivals do not have to be kept, and kept in a spirit of holiness on a permanent basis.

(#14) Trinitarians argue that they had the authority of Jesus Christ to change Sabbath to Sunday. Catholics argue thus and Protestants have no defence against the assertion.

(#15) The real problem with the argument is that Christ gave specific example in that he and the Apostles and the Church kept all the Sabbaths, New Moons and the Feasts, and Paul said they were to let no man judge them in how the Church kept them. He did not say let no man judge you in how you did **not** keep them!

(#16) Colossians 2:16:

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the New Moon, or of the Sabbath [Days].

(#17) Christ also stated that the Sabbaths would be in effect in the Last Days in the final tribulation when Christ would come again. Christ showed thereby that he expected the Church to be keeping the Sabbaths when he came, and that the entire structure of the Fourth Commandment stood - as did all the Law and the Prophets.

(#18) Matthew 24:15-29

[15] "So when you see the desolating sacrilege spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), [16] then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; [17] let him who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house; [18] and let him who is in the field not turn back to take his mantle. [19] And alas for those who are with child and for those who give suck in those days! [20] Pray that your flight may not be in winter **or on a sabbath**. [21] For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. [22] And if those days had not been shortened, no human being would be saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened. [23] Then if any one says to you, 'Lo, here is the Christ!' or 'There he is!' do not believe it. [24] For false Christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. [25] Lo, I have told you beforehand. [26] So, if they say to you, 'Lo, he is in the wilderness,' do not go out; if they say, 'Lo, he is in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. [27] For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of man. [28] Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together. [29] "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken; (emphasis added).

(#19) Mark 13:17-18 omits reference to the Sabbath. However, it is clear in Matthew.

(#20) It is quite clear that Christ will come in that great tribulation and the entire world will be aware of it.

(#21) It is also clear that the Church is expected to be keeping the Sabbaths from the time of Christ until his return, and those who teach otherwise are without excuse and will be counted least in the Kingdom of Heaven. In the same way, any person purporting to be a minister of God who teaches against the

Sabbaths, New Moons and Holy Days is condemned by God, and the same penalties apply. God and Christ expect obedience of us now. God established a vineyard and left it to His tenants. They disobeyed Him and when he sent his son to collect what should have been his, they killed him and set about abusing each other. The Church is expected to be the loyal servants tending the vineyard in obedience until the very end. The vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the whole House of Israel and Judah, his special plant (Isa. 5:7). We of the Church of God are the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts, being spiritual Israel. Be diligent.

Wade Cox

Coordinator General

END OF WADE COX'S ARTICLE:

Here are my comments on the above article.

1) PARAGRAPH 1: What "rights" the Pope may have had are *not* an issue for anyone in the CoG's. This is a distraction. *But* this statement has enabled Wade to *already* place the new moons into *the same category* as the Sabbaths and Holy Days. He has *assumed* that all 3 fall into the same category of God-ordained observances, something for which he has not and does not present any proof at all at any point in this article. And he wants his readers to assume that these three form one category.

2) PARAGRAPH 2: Wade makes a totally artificial argument regarding new moons. He is building a strawman, which he can then easily knock down, by claiming that the Catholics used Isaiah 1:10-16 to do away with *the new moons*! That is simply not correct! The Catholics didn't make any efforts to do away with new moons because new moons were simply not the issue for the Catholic Church. The Julian calendar did away with new moons, and the Julian calendar was in use before the Catholic Church was ever formed. And furthermore, what the Catholic Church may or may not have done has nothing at all to do with this. The argument here is artificial.

3) PARAGRAPH 4: THIS IS WHERE WADE DRAWS WRONG CONCLUSIONS!

"A careful reading of the text" first of all shows that Wade didn't read it very carefully at all. A careful reading of the text *in actual fact* shows *only* God's disapproval of something the Jews (i.e. verse 1 shows that this is *concerning* Judah & Jerusalem) were (and still are) doing! There is not a single statement in Isaiah 1:10-16 that in any way spells out which days we actually *are supposed to keep*!

Can we see that verses 10-16 only spell out that the Jews were doing something that God *strongly* disapproved of; but that these verses *in no way whatsoever* spell out what we actually should be doing? There is no instruction of any kind here that tells us which days we should be keeping. Can we see and acknowledge this? In other words, we have to look elsewhere in the Bible to find out what days we **SHOULD** be keeping, because these verses here are not an instruction to keep anything.

Next, in verse 13 God spells out the problem with the Jews in general terms. In general terms the problem involves "the new moons and Sabbaths and the calling of assemblies". The next verse zooms in closer by spelling out more specific facts about these problems.

Regarding verse 14, can we see that there is a vast difference between God saying "I hate **THE** new moons" (which God does **NOT** say), and God saying "I hate **YOUR** new moons" (which God **DOES** say)? Can we see that there is a vast difference between God saying "I hate **THE** Holy Days" (which God does **NOT** say), and God saying "I hate **YOUR** Holy Days" (which God **DOES** say)?

[Comment: "Appointed feasts" in verse 14 is a translation of the Hebrew word "mow'ed", which is a reference to annual Holy Days.]

Wade Cox without any justification asserts that God's indictment here is against "*the way in which they were kept*". But there is no evidence of any kind to support this assertion. For Wade's assertion here to claim validity the text would have to, *in some way or other*, tell us *what they were doing wrong on those days!*

One cannot assert "a wrong way" of doing something without any evidence of what that wrong way actually involved doing. WHAT exactly were the Jews supposedly doing wrong on the new moons and on the Holy Days? These verses tell us *nothing* in that regard.

A careful reading of this chapter also makes clear that the issue God addressed in verse 14 was NOT "pagan customs or rituals". The first 20 verses of Isaiah 1 are not directed against pagan customs. Paganism is not the issue here. There are no references here to baal worship or to similar pagan customs.

Exactly *how* were the Sabbaths, new moons and Holy Days supposedly being kept "in iniquity"? What is that statement supposed to mean? Yes, the offerings the Jews were bringing were useless (i.e. "vain oblations"), but *why* were they useless? Without any hints of baal worship or of other pagan customs *what* were (and are) the Jews doing wrong to evoke this hatred from God Himself?

Why does God not spell out the problem in any way *other than* expressing hatred for "YOUR new moons" and "YOUR Holy Days"?

It is a fact that O.T. Hebrew simply did not have a word for "calendar". (The same is true for N.T. Greek.) Do we accept this statement? It is equally a fact that back then God had the ability to look into the future to know in advance the general trends that would prevail 500 or 1000 or 2000 years later. Do we accept THIS statement? Now let me ask you a question.

If you were in God's place back in Isaiah's time, and IF YOU had wanted (just for argument's sake) to express hatred for *the calendar* the Jews would use at some point in the future (i.e. from 360 A.D. to the present) for calculating *their* observances of the annual feasts and Holy Days (Isaiah is a book of prophecy, right?), *exactly what would YOU have said?* You could not have said "I hate *your calendar*", because there was no specific word in the Hebrew language for "a calendar", even though *the concept* of an annual calendar was obviously something the Jews were familiar with, since they kept an accurate record of the passage of years, by keeping a record of the passage of new moons. They just didn't have a word for "calendar". So what would *you* have said in the above-pictured situation? Or would *you* in utter frustration just have said nothing?

To make this quite clear: *the only way* God could possibly have said "I hate your calendar" in biblical Hebrew back in the 700's B.C. would have been to say "I HATE YOUR NEW MOONS"!

Look, the new moons aren't even religious observances (except for one specific new moon, the Day of Trumpets); other new moons are *never* called "holy convocations". So *why* would God HATE the new moons of the Jews? And *why* did God in verse 14 list the new moons *first*, and the Holy Days second? Are the Holy Days less important than the new moons? And *why* did God in verse 14 NOT also say "I hate YOUR SABBATHS"? *Why* hate only their "new moons" and their "Holy Days" in this context?

In verse 13 God expresses a dislike for the whole system of Jewish religion (expressed by oblations, incense offerings, new moons, Sabbaths, calling of assemblies, and solemn meetings). But in verse 14 God expresses a *hatred for only two specific things*.

It is a fact that the Jewish observances of the annual Holy Days depend 100% on "the new moons" their calendar would establish. The weekly Sabbaths the Jews would keep did *not* depend on the new moons at all; but their Holy Days depend 100% on the new moons. So *if* the determination of the new moons does not meet with God's approval, *then* the determination of the dates for all of the annual observances would AUTOMATICALLY *also not meet with God's approval*, because the dates of all the annual observances depend 100% on those new moons.

Verse 14 shows that God *hates* the Jewish calendar (i.e. YOUR new moons) and therefore God also *hates* the annual Holy Days that are based on that calendar (i.e. YOUR Holy Days). This calendar and the observances based on it are "a trouble to God", and God is tired of putting up with the observances based on that calendar (i.e. "I am weary to bear them").

King Saul of Israel used to have some kind of banquet on the new moon (1 Samuel 20:5). Was that okay or was that keeping the new moon "in iniquity"? What does someone have to do to keep the new moon "in iniquity"? How can the way of keeping a new moon be wrong, when the Bible never states what people are supposed to do to "keep a new moon"?

The truth is that Isaiah 1:14 is the only possible way that in biblical Hebrew God could have said: I HATE YOUR CALENDAR AND YOUR HOLY DAYS BASED ON THAT CALENDAR! This thought could in Old Testament times not have been expressed in any way other than the statement in Isaiah 1:14.

Isaiah 1:14 has nothing whatsoever to do with disapproving of some activities on the new moons as opposed to approving of other activities on those days. It is simply a statement of God's hatred for the present Jewish calendar.

Consider further: God did NOT say "I hate YOUR ACTIVITIES on MY new moons and YOUR ACTIVITIES on MY Holy Days". No, the way Isaiah 1:14 is worded God's hatred is directed AGAINST THOSE SPECIFIC DAYS (their new moons and their Holy Days), rather than against any unspecified activities on those specific days. It is the days themselves that God hates, not what the people were supposedly doing on those days. THOSE DAYS are a trouble to God, and it is THOSE DAYS that God is tired of putting up with. The reason is that those new moons and those Holy Days are based on a calendar that God hates.

Consider what God says about the Sabbath later in this same Book of Isaiah. In Isaiah 58:13 God said:

If you turn away YOUR foot from the Sabbath, from doing YOUR pleasure on MY HOLY DAY, and call the Sabbath a delight ... (Isaiah 58:13)

There is a clear contrast between the way God speaks about the Sabbath in Isaiah 58, and the way God speaks about new moons and Holy Days in Isaiah 1. In Isaiah 58:13 the problem is that the Jews were "doing the wrong things" on GOD'S Sabbath days. The problem is one of people doing things that are wrong on a day that GOD claims as HIS day. And God's anger is very clearly directed at "the wrong activities on the right day". It is a matter of "YOUR foot" and "MY Holy Day".

It should be immediately apparent that in Isaiah 1:14 God is expressing something completely different from what we find in Isaiah 58:13. In Isaiah 1:14 God is expressing a hatred for SPECIFIC DAYS: THEIR new moons and THEIR Holy Days. Comparing these two Scriptures and how God has used the personal pronouns in both cases should illustrate that in Isaiah 1:13 the days themselves are the problem and the focus of God's hatred, while the activities that may have been involved don't even get mentioned. But in Isaiah 58:13 the day is not the problem at all; rather here it is the activities on that day that are the real problem.

The way God has worded Isaiah 58:13 should make clear that the only possible application for Isaiah 1:14 is the present Jewish calendar, which God hates. If in Isaiah 1:14 God had said: "turn your foot from MY new moons and MY Holy Days", then God's hatred would very clearly have been directed against the wrong activities on those days; but that is simply not the case. By saying: "I hate YOUR new moons and YOUR Holy Days" God is unambiguously directing His hatred against those specific days themselves.

It is clear that God hates the observances of Christmas and Easter and Valentine's Day, etc. Now *if* God had said: "Your Christmas and your Easter and your Valentine's Day My soul hates", what conclusion would you draw? Would you assume that God really means: "I actually LOVE Christmas and Easter and Valentine's Day; I just HATE the wrong things you do on those days, but I have nothing against those days themselves"? Is that the understanding you would get from God saying "I hate Christmas and Easter and Valentine's Day"? That's not the meaning I would get! I would conclude that God really does HATE those specific days, irrespective of what activities those days may involve. And when God says very bluntly: "I hate your new moons and your Holy Days, and they are a trouble to Me", then I cannot avoid concluding that it is THOSE DAYS that God really hates, irrespective of how people may be observing those days.

God's focus here is on the specific days themselves, not on supposed specific activities on those days.

Furthermore, don't underestimate the importance of pronouns! They can change things very dramatically.

In Leviticus 26:2 (also in Leviticus 19:30) God says very clearly "you shall keep MY Sabbaths". In Leviticus 23:2 it is "the Holy Days (Hebrew here is 'mow'ed') OF THE ETERNAL" that God also calls "MY Holy Days" (again 'mow'ed'). But in Isaiah 1:14 God is speaking about "YOUR new moons" and "YOUR Holy Days". And in Amos 8:10 God says that He will turn "YOUR Feasts (Hebrew here is 'chag', feasts) into mourning". That's not the same as saying that God will turn HIS Feast of Tabernacles into mourning, is it?

Notice also Hosea 2:11.

I will also cause all HER mirth to cease, HER feast days (hebrew 'chag'), HER new moons, and HER sabbaths, and all HER solemn feasts (Hebrew 'mow'ed'). (Hosea 2:11)

This verse is very similar to Isaiah 1:14 in its condemnation of the days Israel and Judah observe. Notice that God here says that THEIR "new moons" are going to cease, i.e. they will be done away and stop to exist! How plain is that in spelling out that this is not talking about the same new moons and feasts and Holy Days that will be observed during the millennium? If they will cease to exist it must mean that those days themselves are the problems God is speaking about, not some supposed iniquitous activities on those days.

Wade's statement that Judaism "is not allowed to keep the true Calendar" seems very strange. Where do we get the idea that some people are "not allowed" to do something that is right before God? Is Judaism "allowed" to keep the right day for the weekly Sabbath? Why are they allowed to do this, when they have clearly defiled the Sabbath in so many ways, if at the same time they are somehow "not allowed" to keep the right calendar? What about years when the Jewish calendar happens to be in full agreement with "the true calendar"? Are they "allowed" to keep the right days in those years?

Reasoning about some people supposedly not being "allowed" to do what is right is always foolish. Don't the next few verses in this very context (i.e. Isaiah 1:18-19) talk about God desiring people to be

obedient (which includes using the right calendar)? So the claim that Judaism "is not allowed" to keep the correct calendar is foolish.

4) PARAGRAPH 5: Here Wade states: "Ministers of the various Churches of God use the argument that Isaiah 66:23 does indeed state that God demands that all flesh will come and worship Him from one Sabbath to another and from one New Moon to another, but they don't have to keep the New Moons now. They only have to keep them when Christ comes."

What ministers use as an argument is besides the point. Wade is building another strawman to knock down.

THE FACTS are that by the end of the Book of Deuteronomy ALL OF THE LAWS for Old Testament times have been given. After the Book of Deuteronomy NO NEW LAWS are ever introduced until we come to the new "Lawgiver", the one like Moses (see Deuteronomy 18:15). And the new Lawgiver (i.e. Jesus Christ) basically expanded and amplified the laws that had been given by God through Moses, and He also modified a few (e.g. the details regarding the observance of the Passover, etc.). Jesus Christ Himself referred to the whole Old Testament as consisting of THREE SECTIONS: the LAW of Moses, the PROPHETS, and the WRITINGS (or Psalms). See Luke 24:44-45.

The laws God gave to His people in the Old Testament are NOT found in "the Prophets", and they are NOT found in "the Writings". ALL of the laws God gave are found in "the Law". Anybody who finds additional "laws" in either the Prophets or in the Writings, which laws are not *first* recorded in the books of Moses, is twisting the Word of God! The only laws mentioned in the Prophets and in the Writings are laws already recorded earlier in "the law of Moses".

While the foundation of God's laws (i.e. Mark 12:28-31) was in force from Adam's creation onwards, the Bible gives us a record of only two periods of time during which God gave laws: first during the time of Moses, and second during the time of Christ's ministry. That's all. Now consider Deuteronomy 18:15 very carefully.

The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, *like unto me*; unto him ye shall hearken; (Deuteronomy 18:15)

This verse prevents any new laws from being given after Moses UNTIL Jesus Christ would come along. The first person after Moses that had God's authority to present new laws would have fulfilled Deuteronomy 18:15. This verse prevents any new laws from being given after Moses, until the time of the New Testament. So we cannot look for "laws" in Isaiah or Jeremiah or Ezekiel or Hosea, etc. The "like unto me" in this verse means "another person authorized by God to also act as a Lawgiver".

In some cases the Prophets record God's response to how people were or were not keeping the laws that had been spelled out in the first five books of the Old Testament; but the Prophets do not present any "new" laws. Likewise the Writings do not present any new laws.

Now the explicit purpose of Leviticus 23 is to list ALL the days in the year which God wants us to observe. That is why God starts off (verse 1 has GOD speaking all these instructions) with the weekly Sabbath, followed by the Passover and the three annual Feasts and the seven annual Holy Days within the context of those annual Feasts.

Did God somehow slip up, by forgetting to instruct us to also observe the new moons? (As Paul said in 2 Corinthians 11:23, I speak as a fool.) WHY does God nowhere in the law instruct us, in this present age, to keep new moons?

There are no days outside of Leviticus 23 which God expects His people to observe in this age from Moses to the second coming of Christ. What God may require IN THE FUTURE has nothing to do with the present. In the past God allowed Abraham and Jacob and David to practice polygamy; but that does not mean that God allows us to practice polygamy today. In the past God allowed Abraham to marry his half-sister Sarah; but that does not mean that God allows a man today to marry his half-sister. In this present age God allows divorce in certain circumstances; but that does not mean that God will allow divorce during the millennium.

What God may require on the new moon days after Jesus Christ's return has nothing to do with what God expects or requires of us today. We are not to use specious reasoning TO INFER some or other "law" that God has never stated anywhere in the Bible.

There are very clear statements that command us to observe the Sabbath. There are equally clear statements that command us to observe the Passover and the Feasts and Holy Days. But there is no statement anywhere in the Bible that commands us to keep the new moon days. We certainly "keep a calendar" because we are motivated to record the passage of time, but "keeping a calendar" has no religious importance (other than knowing what day in the year this happens to be). We "keep a calendar" by saying: yes, I know that today is July 7, 2008, or March 15, 2006, etc. That's all that "keeping a calendar" involves. And that is precisely the same reason why people in Old Testament times (and the Church in N.T. times in the environment of the Roman Julian calendar) "kept new moons". They "kept new moons" so that they could know: today is the first day of the 4th or 5th or 7th month, etc. In the Old Testament "keeping a record of new moons" was their only way of keeping track of the passage of time. But "keeping a record of new moons" is not the same as religiously "keeping the Sabbath" or "keeping a Holy Day".

When God in His law instructs us to "KEEP" a day (Sabbath, etc.), then God also spells out quite clearly what such "keeping" is to entail! We don't have to guess how God expects us to keep the Sabbath, and we don't have to guess how God expects us to keep the Feasts and the Holy Days. God clearly spells out every important requirement for "keeping" the days He wants us to keep. But God tells us *nothing whatsoever* regarding "keeping" the new moons. Anybody who tells us to "keep" the new moons has to come up with his own rules for such "keeping", because God assuredly has not given any instructions in this regard.

Consider WHY God commanded us to observe the days He wants us to observe.

A) God has commanded us to observe the weekly Sabbath because that points to the creation, as well as indicating God's, in general terms, 7000-year plan.

B) The observance of the Passover points to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on our behalf.

C) The three annual Feasts (Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Tabernacles) point to the three stages by which God builds His Family.

D) The seven annual Holy Days serve to highlight various aspects within that overall plan of God.

SO WHAT DO ALL THE NEW MOONS PICTURE?

WHY would God have commanded us to observe all of the new moons in some way or other (other than keeping track of the passage of time)? How do they tie into the picture of the 7000-year plan (i.e. 7000 years in general terms, more like 7100 years in actual terms)? What would they picture? What purpose would their observance serve?

If the new moons featured in any way, supposedly representing some specific aspect of God's overall plan, then God would surely have commanded their observance somewhere in the context of the law. When Jesus Christ rules things will certainly be vastly different from the way they are today, and whatever God may require in that context was not written as an instruction for us today.

Initially God did not require animal sacrifices. Then, in the days of Moses, God instituted a formal system of animal sacrifices. Since the time of Jesus Christ's ministry animal sacrifices have not been required. However, simply because animal sacrifices are not required today, that does not mean that they will not be required during the millennium, if Zechariah 14:21 and the last few chapters of Ezekiel are any indication. Ditto for new moons.

5) PARAGRAPH 7: Wade's claim that this is essentially "a Trinitarian and Catholic argument" is interesting, because it is HIS ARGUMENT that in actual fact completely parallels the trinitarian arguments! He appears not to realize this? Look, it is because of statements like "baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19) that the trinitarians can reason: God the Father is a person, and Jesus Christ is a person. And since the Holy Spirit is mentioned *in the same context*, therefore the Holy Spirit must also be a person.

The trinitarian reasoning is by association. *Because* the Holy Spirit is mentioned right along with God the Father and Jesus Christ, how can anyone possibly claim that the Holy Spirit is not a person?

Trinitarians draw the wrong conclusions from different things that happen to be mentioned in the same context. That's the trinitarian argument. But Matthew 28:19 is not the Scripture that defines what the Holy Spirit is. To define the Holy Spirit we have to look to other Scriptures.

Likewise, Isaiah 66 is not the Scripture that defines what we are to observe and do in this present age. We know that we are to keep the Sabbath because that is spelled out in the law, not because the Sabbath is mentioned in Isaiah 66:23. And all that this verse tells us about new moons is that *in the future*, after Jesus Christ has returned, all mortal human beings will also come before Christ on the new moons. But this passage says nothing for today!

We don't have to second-guess God! If God wanted us to observe new moons today, He would have spelled that out in unmistakable terms, as is the case with the Sabbath and Feasts and Holy Days.

It should also be clear that the new moons Isaiah 66:23 is speaking about will not be 29 days apart, as they are today. Those new moons will be different from the new moons we experience today, in that it will again be exactly 30 days from one new moon to the next new moon. And in the context of a totally different calendar from the one we are forced to use today (forced by 29 day months and 365 day years) Isaiah 66:23 indicates a future religious significance for new moons.

Wade's argument in this paragraph is foolish. We don't keep the Sabbath because we have to *infer* its observance from Isaiah 66:23! We keep the Sabbath because God has very clearly and unmistakably spelled this out repeatedly in the law! Reasoning about "Sunday" or "Tuesday" requires the deliberate rejection of clearly stated laws (Exodus 20:8-11, etc.). But for the new moons there is no law to appeal to. Equating the new moons with the Sabbath days is like equating horses with rabbits because both animals happen to have four legs.

6) PARAGRAPH 8: Having presented a foolish line of reasoning in paragraph 7, Wade now builds on that flawed reasoning. The reasoning about being "free from the new moons and the Feasts" is without any logic, because here he equates new moons with "a law". But there is no law regarding keeping new moons, and he has made no attempt to find any law in this regard. The Bible clearly commands the observance of the Feasts in Leviticus 23, but there are no commands regarding new moons. This is

Wade's parallel to the trinitarian reasoning about the Holy Spirit being a person. Trinitarians claim that the Holy Spirit is like God the Father and Jesus Christ. Wade claims the new moons are like the Sabbath and the Feasts. Can we see the parallel in this line of reasoning?

Wade's statement about God "requiring different standards from humanity over the ages" reveals a lack of understanding. There is a very clear difference between "THE THINGS" God may require, and "THE STANDARDS" God requires. "The standard" that God requires has always been Matthew 22:37-40: to love God above all else, and to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. That "standard" has never changed. But the practical details within that standard have at times been modified by God, to accommodate changing circumstances.

Here are some examples of things "changing" from one age to another.

While there is one single reference to Abraham tithing on the spoils of war (not even on his own agricultural produce), there is no indication that God expected Abraham to tithe on all his income every year. Yet today God clearly requires His people to tithe. There is no indication that anybody prior to Moses kept all of the annual Feasts and Holy Days. Yet today God's people are clearly required to observe these days. There is no indication that prior to Exodus 12 anybody had ever kept a Passover. Yet today converted Christians are certainly required to observe the Passover. For the hardness of people's hearts God "allowed" polygamy and also divorce, but that will change when Jesus Christ rules. Prior to Christ's last Passover observance nobody had ever practiced the footwashing at the Passover service. But today that is a part of that service.

The thing that is "immutable" about God is that God simply will not lie (see Hebrews 6:18). But "immutability" is not something that applies to every aspect of God's mind! God has repeatedly changed His mind in response to human conduct. For example, God had created man in good faith. But when humanity became totally wicked and perverse, then God had a change of mind. This is expressed in Genesis 6:6 by the statement "and IT REPENTED THE LORD that He had made man on the earth". And with this change of mind God did something that He had originally not planned at all: He brought a worldwide flood upon the earth.

In Exodus 32:10 God decided to consume all of Israel. After Moses had interceded for Israel, God changed His mind. Exodus 32:14 tells us: "and THE LORD REPENTED OF THE EVIL WHICH HE THOUGHT TO DO UNTO HIS PEOPLE".

In Jeremiah 18 God states a principle.

If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I WILL REPENT OF THE EVIL THAT I THOUGHT TO DO UNTO THEM. And [at what] instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant [it]; If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I WILL REPENT OF THE GOOD, WHEREWITH I SAID I WOULD BENEFIT THEM. (Jeremiah 18:8-10)

While the English text here uses the word "repent", this basically tells us that God will change His mind if people change. But "immutable" means "not capable of change". Yet these verses (Exodus 32:14; Jeremiah 18:8-10; etc.) show that God is quite capable of changing His mind.

When God has allowed polygamy in one period and then later does not allow polygamy, that too is a change in what God may require at different times. Before the exodus God had not required specific sacrifices (see Jeremiah 7:22), but after the exodus God instituted a sacrificial system. Since the time of Christ's ministry that sacrificial system has not been binding on Christians. Yet during the millennium the

sacrificial system may very possibly again be instituted.

And while the standards always remain constant, the details as to how those standards are expressed and implemented may well change from one age to another.

It is an enormous jump in logic to reason that "being free from the new moons" somehow makes God "a respecter of persons". Simply because Abraham never kept a Passover, let alone participated in the footwashing at a Passover, does that make God "a respecter of persons"? It should be clear that BEFORE the death angel "passed over" the houses of the Israelites in Egypt, nobody had ever kept a Passover. So Abraham will be in the first resurrection (Luke 16:22-31 is pretty clear in this regard) and yet he has never even kept a single Passover. Does that make God "a respecter of persons"? What difference does it make that Abel and Enoch and Noah and Abraham never kept a single Passover? It makes no difference at all. So what if some people go through life without ever keeping a new moon in a religious way, while others (during the millennium) use every new moon as a worship day; what difference does that make? None at all.

The key is to be always cooperatively responsive to whatever instructions God may give at the particular time of history during which we happen to live. If you had lived at the time of king David, God would have allowed you to also marry two or three wives. But if you today want to have two or three wives, God will not accept that. Times have changed and in this age polygamy is no longer acceptable before God.

7) PARAGRAPH 9: This still expresses the same flawed reasoning as in the previous paragraph. The Feasts are a law (Leviticus 23), but the new moons are not a law. To elevate new moons to the level of Feasts is totally without biblical support. It is misguided thinking. On top of that Wade seems to be unaware of the difference between "THE Feast" and "YOUR Holy Days". They are not the same.

8) PARAGRAPH 11: This is totally illogical. Wade writes: "Obviously, from Isaiah 66 and Zechariah 14 above, if the Sabbaths, New Moons and Feasts have to be kept on pain of death in the Millennium, and they do not have to be kept now by the followers of Christ, then God is not immutable and Christ is not the same yesterday, today and tomorrow."

Wade's reference to "on pain of death" is clearly a reference to Zechariah 14, since Isaiah 66:23 does not mention death as a penalty. But Zechariah 14 does not mention either the Sabbaths or the new moons. This Scripture mentions ONLY the Feast of Tabernacles. Isaiah 66, which mentions the new moons and the Sabbaths does not say anything about "on the pain of death". Here we are dealing with a classic example of applying a conclusion from one Scripture (i.e. from Zechariah 14) to a different Scripture (i.e. to Isaiah 66), which "different Scripture" really expresses our main point. So by linking the two Scriptures we can "transfer" the conclusion from Scripture 1 to Scripture 2. Not necessarily very logical, but nonetheless often quite effective in fooling some people.

We should also keep in mind that keeping the Feast of Tabernacles in the millennium "on pain of death" has nothing whatsoever to do with whether or not the observance of new moons is something that God expects from us in this present age. In this age new moons cannot be compared to Feasts. If God wanted us to think of new moons in the same light as His Feasts, then He surely would have told us that in Leviticus 23.

Consider Leviticus 23:2 very carefully (see also verse 4).

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, [Concerning] the feasts (Hebrew "mow'ed", meaning Holy Days) of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim [to be] holy convocations, [EVEN] THESE [ARE] MY feasts (Hebrew "mow'ed", again HOLY DAYS). (Leviticus 23:2)

Do you grasp what God is really telling us in this verse?

THE ONLY DAYS THAT GOD CALLS "HOLY DAYS" ARE THOSE DAYS THAT ARE LISTED HERE AFTER VERSE 2 AND BEFORE VERSE 44! THERE ARE NO OTHER "HOLY DAYS" HIDING IN ANY OTHER PASSAGE IN THE BIBLE!

Verse 2 is God's introductory statement, and verse 44 is the concluding statement for this context. These days are "it"! When verse 44 says: "And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the Holy Days (Hebrew here is "mow'ed") of the LORD", it means that there are NO OTHER HOLY DAYS! Any day or occasion that is not listed in this chapter cannot be "a Holy Day of God" in this present age.

Verses 2 and 44 set very clear bounds for ALL of the days in the year that God wants us to observe, until God chooses to give us new or added instructions.

It is not for us to "reason out" additional religious observances. And threatening to attribute sin to God, if new moons are NOT required to be observed in this present age, is very strange indeed. Sin is the breaking of God's laws. So Wade here implies that new moon observance is A LAW; yet he has made no attempt to show us that law. Are there "laws of God" by which we are expected to live, and yet those laws are not recorded anywhere in the Bible? And do Leviticus 23 verses 2 and 44 really mean what they say or not?

9) PARAGRAPH 12: Now Wade builds an enormous strawman. He writes: "Now, it follows also that if the Laws of God are discretionary, then we do not ...". Nobody has said that the laws of God are "discretionary"; this is something Wade himself has made up. *First* show us THE LAW that commands new moon observance. There is no law like that anywhere in the Bible, and Wade knows that. That is why he has not attempted to show us any law. Those who do not observe new moons are not in any way "reasoning against the Law of God".

All he has done is use a Scripture in which God expresses His hatred for the present Jewish calendar (Isaiah 1:14), followed by a positive statement about worship during Christ's future rule, which includes worship on new moon days (Isaiah 66:23), followed by a threatening Scripture regarding people who might refuse to keep the Feast of Tabernacles in the millennium (Zechariah 14:17-19). He has then transferred this threat to people who in the present time don't keep the new moons. His claim that "there is no light in them" (i.e. in those who don't teach new moon observance in this present age) is rather foolish, to put it mildly.

Note that his entire argument hinges on elevating new moon observance in this present age to the level of "a law". And since he has no scriptural support for this claim, therefore he is limited to using "references to new moons". But "references" to anything don't ever establish a law!

10) PARAGRAPH 13: Now he can smash the strawman he has built. Now he finally spells out what he means by "keeping new moons". He states that the new moons have to be kept "*in a spirit of holiness on a permanent basis*".

So Wade Cox has decided that new moons are holy! That puts them on a par with the Sabbath! And that is without any biblical evidence or support, not even a shred of support! That is rather presumptuous.

Nowhere does God call the new moons "holy time" (or words to that effect). Demanding "a spirit of holiness on a permanent basis" for new moons depends entirely on Wade Cox himself conferring this "spirit of holiness" onto new moons. But Wade Cox does not have the right, let alone the power, to confer a spirit of holiness on ANYTHING!

Furthermore, IF new moons are holy time, on a par with the weekly Sabbath and the annual Holy Days, THEN people are also not allowed to work on new moon days. This means that Wade has added 11 or 12 new "holy days" to the year (since one new moon, Trumpets, really is a Holy Day already). So instead of 7 annual Holy Days, Wade Cox now has 18 or 19 annual Holy Days (depending on 12 or 13 new moons in a year). But if people are allowed to work on their normal jobs on new moon days, then they are not keeping the new moons "in a spirit of holiness".

11) PARAGRAPH 14: This is a distraction and has nothing to do with new moons. The Catholics changing the Sabbath to Sunday has nothing to do with new moons. The logic is also flawed in this regard, that the Catholics actually "changed a law", whereas those who don't accept the observance of new moons refuse to accept "an imaginary law". Where in the Bible is the new moon law? Give us Book, Chapter, Verse! Isaiah 1, Isaiah 66 and Zechariah 14 do not give us any statements of laws; so exactly *where* has "the law regarding new moons" been hidden in the Bible? Distractions about Catholics and Protestants don't add anything.

12) PARAGRAPH 15: Now Wade pulls a fast one on his readers, hoping they don't catch his unsubstantiated assertion. There is not one shred of evidence anywhere in the gospels that Jesus Christ and His Apostles kept "all the new moons".

The Greek word for "new moon" is used only one single time in the entire New Testament! Just once! And that is not even in the gospels! That one occurrence is found in Colossians 2:16, where the Apostle Paul is explaining things to non-Jewish converts into the Church of God.

So without a single reference to new moons in any of the four gospel accounts Wade Cox unilaterally asserts that Jesus Christ and His apostles kept (and Wade means "in a spirit of holiness") "all the new moons". He has no more proof for this claim than if he were to say that Jesus Christ kept Valentine's Day (which he obviously doesn't say). Without proof his claim must be treated in exactly the same way as any other unsubstantiated claim, i.e. it must be rejected! Wade offers no proof for his claims.

Furthermore, Wade's statement "Paul said they were to let no man judge them in how the Church kept them" (referring to Colossians 2:16) is also not true! In Colossians 2:16 Paul did not even use the word "keep"! This word is simply not contained in this verse!

13) PARAGRAPH 16: This is the text of Colossians 2:16. This verse says: "Let no man judge you ... in respect of a holy day or of a new moon or of the Sabbath days". The words "for keeping" or "for observing" do not appear in this verse! Paul's intent in these verses was: "look to the Church, and not to any man, regarding food and drink and holy days and new moons and Sabbath days". The word "keep" would not have been appropriate in the context Paul had in mind, because we don't "keep" food and we don't "keep" drink.

If this admonition had been written by Mr. Armstrong to a young congregation of the Church of God in the early 1960's, a somewhat isolated congregation that was facing strong local peer pressure to leave the Church, this admonition might have been worded as follows: "Let the Church, and not the people in your local community, guide you in regard to what we should eat and drink (i.e. don't eat unclean foods, and only drink alcohol in moderation), and concerning attending Sabbath services and weekly Bible Studies and Spokesmen's Clubs, and which calendar to use for determining the dates for the annual Feasts and Holy Days". Do some of the things mentioned here involve "keeping"? Yes, some do. Do all of the things mentioned here involve "keeping"? No, all of them don't. Is it acceptable to mention Bible Studies in the same context as Sabbath services and Holy Days? Certainly. Would a statement like this define what God has ordained for us "to keep"? Certainly not!

If you think that my inclusion of "Bible Studies and Spokesmen's Clubs" in the above list is stretching

things a bit, consider that Paul was not really referring to any direct "law" when he mentioned "drink", the second item in his list here, in addition to there not being any law about new moons. In the Old Testament God commanded the priests not to drink "wine nor strong drink" before performing their priestly duties in the tabernacle (see Leviticus 10:9), but this law would not have applied to the Christians in Colossae, none of whom were priests. Also, this reference to "drink" has nothing to do with any "drink offerings" from the Old Testament, since the Christians in Colossae did not come from a Jewish background, and since "drink offerings" have no part in the Church of God.

So "what laws" was Paul thinking of when he said "let no man judge you IN DRINK"? You could argue that "meat" refers to the laws regarding clean and unclean animals; but "drink" doesn't refer to any specific law. Rather, Paul was in all likelihood applying the principle of God's instruction to the priests in Leviticus 10:9, which principle allowed Paul to draw the obviously correct conclusion that applies to all people and not just to priests; namely, that no drunkards shall inherit the kingdom of God, something Paul had also confidently stated to the Corinthians (see 1 Corinthians 6:10).

The point is that Paul's reference to "drink" here in Colossians 2:16 shows that Paul was giving the people some general advice, mentioning some things that were defined by the laws of God, and mentioning other things that were not references to specific laws, but references to principles derived from laws, which principles were clearly significant to their Christian lives. "Meats, Holy Days, and Sabbaths" were appeals to specific laws of God. "Drink and new moon" did not appeal to specific laws, but to the application of principles which were certainly also significant to their lives. "Drink" referred to using alcoholic drinks either in moderation or not at all, setting a right example for outsiders. "New moon" referred to the calendar they needed to keep track of, to enable them to keep God's Holy Days on the correct days.

The point is that neither the theoretical statement by Mr. Armstrong, nor Paul's statement in Colossians 2:16, defines what God has ordained for us to keep and to observe. In both cases these statements also expand on the laws of God, and these statements are made to people who *already* have a certain amount of understanding. They already know that some things were ordained by God (e.g. the Sabbath and the Holy Days), and that other things were instituted by the Church for the purpose of assisting us in our Christian lives (e.g. Bible Studies and Spokesmen's Clubs).

Now in the context of the Roman world, in which new moons were ignored in favor of the Julian calendar, it was well-nigh impossible for an isolated congregation to know the correct dates for all of the annual Feasts and Holy Days without those people themselves keeping a constant record of all the new moons. Locally keeping track of the new moons was really the only way to know when the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, and all the other annual days should be observed. But "keeping track of the new moons" has nothing to do with keeping the new moons "in a spirit of holiness on a permanent basis", as Wade Cox puts it.

Furthermore, Colossians 2:16 doesn't attempt to state exactly what they were to do regarding new moons. Keep in mind that for both biblical languages (i.e. Hebrew and Greek) "new moon" was the only possible term to express the idea of "a calendar". And for religious purposes the Colossian Christians were certainly using a different calendar from the calendar people in their local community were using (i.e. the Julian calendar), something that undoubtedly also attracted criticism from outsiders.

A statement like "don't let people judge you" is not the same as saying "these are the things that you must keep". And we are here dealing with the only reference to "new moon" in the entire New Testament, a reference that is almost incidental. And like the Old Testament, so the New Testament is also totally devoid of any command to "keep new moons holy". It just isn't there! And reading such a command into this verse is not honest.

14) PARAGRAPH 17: Wade's statements regarding the Sabbath are irrelevant to the question of new moons. Without having directly said so thus far, Wade now *infers* that new moons are somehow included in the fourth commandment. THAT IS ABSURD!

The word "Sabbath" means "a day of cessation from work", thus by extension "a day of rest". But new moon days were *never* observed as "rest days" (apart from the Holy Day of Trumpets). New moon days were *never* included in the fourth commandment! The fourth commandment defines the seventh day of the week, hardly a suitable definition for new moon days.

15) PARAGRAPH 18: Here he quotes 15 verses from Matthew 24 because they happen to contain the expression " Pray that your flight may not be in winter *or on a sabbath*". The exhortation to pray that our flight will not be "on a Sabbath" has nothing to do with new moons. But this is the same tactic that was used earlier. Earlier Wade tried to confer the threat for not keeping the Feast of Tabernacles during the millennium (Zechariah 14:17-19) to the statement about new moons in Isaiah 66:23. Now Wade tries to confer the warning against doing something on a Sabbath to supposedly being a warning against doing something on a new moon day. This is not an honest way of dealing with the Scriptures.

16) PARAGRAPH 19: This really says nothing regarding the subject of new moons.

17) PARAGRAPH 20: Christ coming during the tribulation likewise has nothing to do with new moon observance. What point is this paragraph supposed to make about new moons?

18) PARAGRAPH 21: Yes, certainly, we are supposed to keep the Sabbaths. But that has nothing to do with new moons.

Without ever saying so in a direct statement, Wade has attempted *to infer* that the new moons are a part of the Sabbath commandment. He has not proved this, and not even attempted to prove it. He has simply inferred it without any scriptural justification whatsoever.

Wade writes: " In the same way, any person purporting to be a minister of God who teaches against the Sabbaths, New Moons and Holy Days is condemned by God, and the same penalties apply".

THIS STATEMENT IS BIZARRE.

First of all, here Wade doesn't really say what he *really* means. He is not thinking of "ministers of God" teaching against the Sabbaths, or teaching against the Holy Days. No, he REALLY means ministers who teach "AGAINST THE NEW MOONS", and that is all he really means. If anyone teaches against the Sabbaths and against the Holy Days, it is unlikely that Wade would even refer to such people as "ministers of God".

So he has deliberately couched what he REALLY means into a more general context with which a lot of people are likely to agree. After all, I myself agree that anyone who teaches against the Sabbaths and against the Holy Days is going to be punished by God in some way or other. And the overwhelming majority of people in the churches of God would also basically agree with that.

But that has got nothing at all to do with new moons!

Simply slipping new moons into holy company (i.e. placing new moons between the Sabbath and the Holy Days) doesn't make new moons holy. Holiness is not something that somehow "rubs off" if something is just close enough to the holiness. Sunday has always been extremely close to the holy Sabbath, yet the sanctity of the Sabbath has never rubbed off onto a Sunday. Likewise, Wade repeatedly placing new moons between the Sabbath and the Holy Days doesn't somehow make some of

that holiness rub off onto the new moons.

Now let's summarize the things we have covered.

1) Wade Cox's article is OBVIOUSLY not intended to prove the Sabbath or the Holy Days. Anyone who wanted to present biblical proof for the Sabbath and the Holy Days would present the Scriptures that obviously support these teachings (i.e. Exodus 20, Leviticus 23, etc.). But these "obvious proofs" Wade has deliberately avoided. This avoidance exposes that he is simply using the Sabbath and the Holy Days as "padding" for his arguments about the new moons. "Padding" is never real proof.

2) He is very careful to never discuss the new moons in isolation, because they cannot stand on their own feet. They can only stand if they are supported by "the feet of" the Sabbath and the Holy Days. But presented on their own they would fall. Wade finds holiness for the new moons not by a decree from God, but by association with other days that *are* decreed holy by God. You have heard of "guilt by association"? Well, Wade Cox has attempted to confer "holiness by association".

3) Wade has built his whole argument on basically 5 passages of Scripture. NONE of his references come from "the Law", even though his whole appeal is supposedly to the Law. This tells us that he has been quite careful to avoid all direct quotations from laws.

4) The Scriptures he has used are as follows:

A) He starts with Isaiah 1:10-16, which is really an expression of God's hatred for the present Jewish calendar, and the religious system that is built on that calendar. Wade here totally misunderstands and also misapplies God's reference to "new moons". Obviously, there is no statement about "law" in this passage.

B) He then goes to Isaiah 66:19-24 regarding people worshipping on the new moons when Jesus Christ will be ruling. It's a great Scripture, but it has nothing to do with any "laws" that God has given for the present age, and this Scripture makes no claims as to what people are expected to do or not do now in this age.

C) Then he presents Zechariah 14:16-19, which is a dire threat for people who might refuse to keep the Feast of Tabernacles during the millennium. That's also a great Scripture, but it also is not a statement of any law. And neither does this Scripture mention new moons.

D) He then asserts that Jesus Christ and His Apostles kept all of the new moons (implied is "in a spirit of holiness"), even though "new moons" are never mentioned in any of the gospel accounts. So instead of any new moon quotations from the gospels, Wade now appeals to Colossians 2:16. In this Scripture Paul admonished the Colossians (amongst other things) to not let anyone judge them for the calendar they used to determine the observance of the annual Holy Days. There is no statement, or even hint, that the Colossians were supposed to observe new moons "in a spirit of holiness on a permanent basis".

E) Lastly Wade quotes a lengthy passage from the Gospel of Matthew, Matthew 24:15-29. His only reason for quoting this passage is the admonition to pray that our flight would not be on a Sabbath day. Wade wants to use "the legs" of this Scripture to prop up new moon observance "in a spirit of holiness"; i.e. holiness by association. It should be obvious that there is no way that Matthew 24:20 makes any statement about new moon observance.

And that concludes Wade Cox's whole argument in favor of new moons.

Of interest is that while Wade quoted Isaiah 1:14, where he felt he could explain away God's hatred from

"YOUR new moons", he was careful to not mention Hosea 2:11, which makes a similar statement to Isaiah 1:14, but with the difference of saying that "HER new moons" will cease to exist. Hmm, interesting.

The most compelling argument against Wade's demand to keep the new moons "in a spirit of holiness" is Leviticus chapter 23, a chapter Wade was very careful to avoid.

The introduction in verse 2 (THESE are to be proclaimed as holy convocations, and therefore no others!), and the repetition of this statement in verse 4 (THESE are God's Holy Days and holy convocations) shows that God divided all the commanded observances into two categories: the first category is made up of the weekly observance of the Sabbath. Verse 2 specifically introduced this category. The second category is made up of the annual observances. Verse 4 is the introduction for this category.

IF there really was a category of monthly observances (i.e. the new moons), THEN that category would have been placed between verses 3 and 4, between the weekly and the annual observances. But there is no monthly category.

Verse 44 concluded this discussion. When it says that "Moses declared unto the children of Israel THE HOLY DAYS (Hebrew "mow'ed") of the Eternal", this is like closing the door on this subject of days that God wants His people to observe. Verse 44 represents closure.

When you carefully consider verses 2 and 4 and 44 of Leviticus 23, it should be quite clear that there cannot possibly be any other days that God wants His people to observe, not until "another Lawgiver" gives additional instructions. That appears to be the case for life during the millennium. But for this present age the days God wants His people to observe are limited to the days that are mentioned in Leviticus 23.

The question that arises is: so is it wrong for anyone to go out and to look for the new moon crescents, and to record such observances on his calendar? Not at all! If people want to look for the new moons for themselves, that's fine. And if people want to do something special to take note of new moon days, that's also fine. There is no problem, and there never has been a problem, with people wanting to visually observe and take note of new moons.

A problem only arises when people insist on attaching some kind of religious significance to such observations. A problem arises when people attempt to attach "a spirit of holiness" to the new moons, because it is quite clear that for this present age God has NOT attached any "holiness" to the new moons (other than to the Day of Trumpets). A problem arises when people insist that "keeping new moons" is something that God expects from us in this age. But simply keeping track of the passage of new moons, by personal visual observations, without attaching any religious significance to this activity is not a problem at all, and never has been a problem.

Well, so much for Wade Cox's article. Regarding the claim that his article is "logically and biblically very difficult to refute", I beg to differ.

Frank W. Nelte