

## SHOULD WE OBSERVE

# HOLIDAYS OR HOLYDAYS?

*There are days of the year which are set aside to observe as holidays. Most people look forward to these days with great anticipation not only for their meaning, but also because of the time of rest, relaxation and recreation that they will experience. What is a holiday? Where do they come from? Should we observe them?*

As stated, there are certain days of the year that are looked forward to with great anticipation. These days are looked forward to, not only because of their meaning, but because of the time given off from work. They are generally set aside or dedicated as days of observance with rest, relaxation, celebration and recreation. The whole year is full of these days beginning with New Year's Day, President's day, Martin Luther King Day, Easter, Memorial Day, the 4th of July, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas, etc.

Is there anything wrong with these days? Should they be observed with such fanfare? Just what is a holiday anyway? Here is the definition of holiday given by *Webster's New World Dictionary*; **n.** [< ME. *holidei*, with shortened first vowel < OE. *haligdæg*: see HOLY & DAY] **1.** a religious festival: see HOLY DAY **2.** a day of freedom from labor; day set aside for leisure and recreation **3.** [often pl.] [chiefly Brit.] a period of leisure or recreation; vacation **4.** a day set aside by law or custom for the suspension of business, usually in commemoration of some event.

The dictionary further defines HOLY DAY as **a day consecrated to religious observances or to a religious festival.**

Since the word "holy" is involved, we also need to look at its definition; **ho·ly** **1.** dedicated to religious use; belonging to or coming from G-d; consecrated; sacred **2.** spiritually perfect or pure; untainted by evil or sin; sinless; saintly **3.** regarded with or deserving deep respect, awe, reverence, or adoration. (*Webster's New World Dictionary*.)

From these definitions we learn that the word "holiday" is the same as "holy day." It is a day or period of time that is set aside in consecration to G-d and is observed with religious rites, while business is suspended.

## THE ORIGINAL HOLY DAYS

Holidays are essentially a by-product of Holy Days that were originally commanded by Yahweh. The complete list of these holy days is found in Leviticus 23. The very first commanded holy day was the weekly Sabbath, "And Yahweh spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, *Concerning* the feasts of Yahweh, which ye shall proclaim *to be* holy convocations, *even* these *are* my feasts. Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day *is* the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; **ye shall do no work therein**: it *is* the sabbath of Yahweh in all your dwellings," v.v. 1-3.

The rest of the chapter focuses on enumerating the other "rest" days that were to be observed annually. Passover and Unleavened Bread are covered in verses 5-8, Pentecost in verses 9-22, Trumpets in verses 23-25, Atonement in verses 26-32, and Tabernacles and the Last Great Day are dealt with in the remaining verses (33-44).

Yahweh commanded the observance of these days wherein all regular business activity was to cease. However, the majority of the world, with the exception of the Jewish community and some certain religious organizations who have deemed the importance of these days, does not give any credence to the observance of these days. The majority of the world observes "holidays" with much fanfare. Does this mean that Yahweh's commanded days are no longer in effect?

## MAN'S HISTORY

The problem is that man's history has been a history of disobedience and disbelief when it comes to the commands of Yahweh. The first man, Adam, was given a job to do. That job was to dress and keep the garden of Eden with the permission to eat of the fruit of all the trees of the garden EXCEPT the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam and his wife Eve disobeyed, ate of the forbidden tree and were banished from the garden to a life of pain, grief, suffering, corruption and death.

Yahweh called Israel out of Egypt, made His covenant with them, warning them against going the way of the heathen who were dwelling in the land. Israel was to fulfil the law (Torah) given to them by Yahweh. But Israel disbelieved and disobeyed Yahweh and had to be cast out of the land with much pain, grief, suffering and death. Most of the survivors went into a captivity that was harsh and oppressive indeed!

In these last days, the Savior Yahshua has appeared on earth. He set an example for us that we should walk in His steps (1 Pet. 2:21). Notice verse 22, "Who did **no sin**, neither was guile found in His mouth." Sin is defined by the Apostle John as the transgression of the law (1 Jn. 3:4). If Yahshua did no sin then he fulfilled (obeyed) the law. This is the very thing that He promised He would do at the beginning of His ministry, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil," Mt. 5:17.

Many people erroneously teach that Yahshua came to do away with the law, but such is simply not the case. According to Scripture, Yahshua never sinned, therefore, He perfectly fulfilled (obeyed) the law, setting an example for us that we should follow Him. This means that He observed the Sabbath and Holy Days in accordance with the commandment.

## MAN RESPECTS MAN

Yahweh sets aside His own Holy Days and proclaims them to be special rest days. Man sets aside his own holidays and proclaims them to be special rest days. The age old problem is that man highly respects his own holidays that he himself proclaims, but when it comes to respecting that which Yahweh sets aside, he doesn't even give it a second thought.

Yahweh proclaimed that the seventh day Sabbath was to be sanctified and made holy. Man declares that the first day of the week, Sunday is sanctified and holy. Yahweh says not to work on the seventh day Sabbath, but man says that that day will be his biggest and most important day of business while he sets aside another day (the first) to refrain from work.

Yahweh established His own annual Holy Days, but man goes about establishing his own "**holidays**," esteeming his own as being greater and more important than Yahweh's. Look at how all of man's days are observed compared to Yahweh's. Few of man's days are set aside to worship the Creator. President's day, Martin Luther King Day, Memorial Day, the 4th of July and Veteran's Day are dedicated to the sacrifices that many have made in helping to establish this nation to become what it is today.

While Sunday, Christmas and Easter are supposedly dedicated to the worship of the Creator, they ARE NOT periods of time which He has declared to be set aside for observance in His Holy Word.

Yahweh has also given us a set of righteous laws to live and govern our lives by, yet man decides to go about making his own set of laws, rules and regulations. He is always more fervent in the enforcement of his own laws while carelessly apathetic and heedless to Yahweh's decrees.

Man respects and esteems his own chosen ways over those commanded ways that His own blessed Creator has declared.

## REBELLION/WITCHCRAFT

When man disesteems the things of Yahweh, he is found to be in open rebellion and disobedience to Him. The Prophet Samuel proclaimed to King Saul, "For rebellion is as the sin of **witchcraft** and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry," 1 Sam. 15:23.

Sorcery and witchcraft are great sins in the eyes of Yahweh. Yahweh commanded, "Thou shalt not suffer a **witch** to live," Ex. 22:18. "There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter or a **witch**, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer," Dt.18:10-11. The Hebrew word for sorcerer and witch is the same.

When man stubbornly clings to his own ways rather than submitting to Yahweh's it is regarded as iniquity and idolatry. As a matter of fact, Christmas, Easter and Sunday were associated with heathenism, paganism and idolatry before being incorporated into Christianity. (Write for our tracts entitled *Just Whose Birthday*

*Is December 25th? and Just Who Is Santa Claus?)*

## **PLAN REVEALED**

Yahweh's plan of salvation is actually revealed in the Sabbath and Holy Days. Through the observance of the Sabbath day we learn that Yahweh has apportioned 7000 years in order to perform His work of salvation. The Apostle Peter reveals that a day is to Yahweh as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day (2 Pet. 3:8). Yahweh has allotted 6000 years for man to do his own work, but the last period of 1000 years belongs to Yahweh and His Son Yahshua. It will be a tremendous period of rest from wars, sins and other grievous conflicts.

Through the observance of Passover and the days of Unleavened Bread (Lev. 23:4-8), we are brought to our Passover that is sacrificed for us (1 Cor. 5:7) and are able to eat of the bread of life that came down from heaven (Jn. 6). The feast of Pentecost (Lev. 23:15-16) reminds us of the giving of the Holy Spirit, the seal of promise which Yahweh bestows to those of His firstfruits assembly. These will be in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6). The feast of Trumpets (Lev. 23:24-25) reminds us of Yahweh's soon coming intervention into this world's affairs in order to take power and rule (Rev. 11:15). The day of Atonement (Lev. 23:27-32) reveals the atonement received through the Savior (Ro. 5:1-11). The feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:34-35) reminds us of the millennial rule of Yahshua and His saints in Yahweh's kingdom (Rev. 20:4-6). Finally, the last day (Lev. 23:36) points us to the final great white throne judgment period (Rev. 20:11-15).

Those who observe Yahweh's commanded holydays are reminded of His plan and purpose on a weekly and annual basis. Those who observe the first day of the week and the annual holidays have a tendency to forget Yahweh and His plan of salvation. Sunday and holiday observance are misleading and help to sow confusion and error.

It is our admonition that people repent and turn to Yahweh with all their heart, restore the Sabbath and holydays and knowledge of the great Creator.

For a more in-depth expose' on the true meanings of holydays and holidays, you may order our *FREE* booklet entitled "*Col. 2:16-17 Or Holidays Vs. Holydays?*"

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