

The Plan of God, Restored

For many years the people of God have been grateful for the knowledge provided by Herbert W Armstrong that God has a great plan for all mankind, which is revealed through the keeping of the Holy Days listed chronologically in Leviticus 23. Those of us who have kept these Holy Days for many years, never imagined that there could be inbuilt error in what we understood, that can be traced directly to the Hebrew or rabbinical calendar, which had been assumed to be correct, and the one used to determine those Holy Days for us.

And then, many years ago now, along to the church which I pastored at the time, came an old couple in their late 80's who had been disfellowshipped from PCG because they had discovered that that assumption was false – that the rabbinical calendar was only finalised into its present form some 900 years after the death of Christ.

At that time, like almost all of God's people I was quite ignorant of that fact because I had never investigated the rabbinical calendar. Months later I had built a pile of A4 paper a foot high from every possible source I could find about that calendar, some highly complex and hard to understand, but in the end the truth was found to be simple indeed, as you would expect from our great God. I found the true Biblical calendar is simply based on observation, not highly complex calculations.

The Biblical year is based upon the Month of the Abib, the start of the first month of God's year, when the abib barley crop (barley ripe enough to be ground into flour) is found to be mature enough to begin the firstfruit barley harvest in Israel.

The Biblical month is simply based on the observation of the first appearance of the crescent new moon. The first sighting of the crescent moon from the Jerusalem area begins each month.

That's it! No calculations, no postponement rules, no other man made rules – even a child can understand how it works, just as one would expect from the Master of the universe. But what impact did this new knowledge have on our understanding of God's Plan for all mankind?

1. We learned that the true Holy Days picture the **consecutive** stages in God's Plan. There are none out of place, destroying the carefully developed flow, as in the man-made rabbinical/Hebrew calendar. Thus God's harvest of His *spiritual* firstfruits to become the Bride of Christ, takes place at the time of the harvest of the *physical* firstfruit barley (abib barley) in Israel. This places the resurrection during the first month of 'the Abib', not during the seventh month of the year as in the rabbinical calendar.
2. The day of the Wavesheaf offering becomes the most likely time of the first resurrection, when all of the scriptures, especially those mentioning 3 ½ years, are taken into account – replacing the totally illogical and out of place timing of the resurrection at the Feast of Trumpets, which is when Christ finally returns WITH His Bride, after 3 ½ years in Heaven, on the Sea of Glass.
3. This recognition that Christ first returns *for* His Bride, and 3 ½ years later *with* His Bride, is confirmed by the quite different trumpets sounded at the two events. At the resurrection, the Lord God blows the trumpet, as is declared in both the Old Testament and the New. But as Christ returns *with* His Bride, the trumpet that sounds to celebrate the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, is blown by an angel.

4. Once we understand from the scriptures that the resurrection takes place at the 6th Seal, not at the end of the 7th, and that His true followers of this age are represented by the firstfruits of the seven week *barley* harvest in Israel, we can understand that a second and later group of 144,000, plus an innumerable multitude are represented by the two *wheaten* loaves representing the later wheat harvest which are waved by the High Priest at the Feast of Pentecost. These also are firstfruits, but like the virgins that were not prepared for their Lord's return, they are left behind to repent during the Great Tribulation. Revelation chapter 7 reveals that when they are resurrected, it will logically have to be in the 2nd resurrection, for the 1st resurrection takes place at the 6th Seal, not the 7th. This is quite different from the current belief of many, that the two loaves waved at Pentecost represent those in the first resurrection, but this reflects the sad result of being unprepared by looking to a man or men rather than directly to the words of God, once we are spiritually mature.

5. Finally, we can now recognise in the simplicity of God's Plan that when Christ returns *with* His Bride at the Feast of Trumpets, He will begin to establish His Kingdom over the World. It is patently obvious that the symbolism of Trumpets is appropriate to indicate a time of war that will continue until Satan, the god of this world, is cast into the bottomless pit, and the armies of the world are finally defeated. It was never appropriate to suggest that the first resurrection, and the marriage of Christ to His Bride before His Father's throne on the Sea of Glass in heaven could take place then, at the time of Armageddon, but then, we should expect more to be revealed and restored at the time of the end.

"He answered, *'Go on your way, Daniel, because these matters are wrapped up and sealed until the time of the end.* ISV, Daniel 12:9.

To allow the flow of God's Plan to be clearly obvious to the reader, almost all Biblical references have been deliberately omitted, but these are to be found on our 'God's Calendar' and 'End Time' tab.

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