

Beauties of the Truth

A Forum for the Publication of Scriptural Viewpoints
Thought to be Harmonious with God's Plan of the Ages
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Principles of Biblical Quotations

"Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21).

From time to time we note what appear to be inaccuracies when New Testament writers quote from the Old Testament. Sometimes words are left out, added, or changed. Many times what we have learned in the Harvest Message applies to the second advent, is applied to the first advent. Other times a quote seems unrelated to the original scripture. In this study we consider some of the principles at work in these cases, to determine the reason for what at first seems to be an inconsistency.

The Bible is the Word of God. We should not think of the writers as being merely human agents like ourselves, who frequently make mistakes in quoting or injecting our own ideas. "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets" (Hebrews 1:1, NIV). "No prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the holy Spirit spoke from God" (2 Peter 1:20, 21, NAS).

This does not mean that there are no errors in our common version. It is estimated that there are literally thousands in it. However, most of these are due to errors of translation from the original Hebrew and Greek into English.¹ Thus it is important to check various translations. I usually at least check Rotherham, the most accurate translation overall, and the Hebrew and Greek lexicons in Strong's Concordance to see the true meanings of the original words.

THREE TYPES OF QUOTATIONS

There are three types of quotations in the scriptures: (1) Old Testament passages quoted by later Old Testament writers, (2) secular poets quoted by Paul, (3) Old Testament passages quoted in the New Testament.

(1) Old Testament Citations in the Old Testament. There are many examples. We will cite just one example, comparing Isaiah 2:4 with Micah 4:3. "And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they

shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

We find that Micah 4:3 quotes this almost word for word. Most of these Old Testament parallel quotations follow the sense very closely, even if the words are not always identical. We do find some transcription errors when two accounts describe the same historical event. However, these are very few and most are clarified by other scriptures. In fact it is amazing to think of thousands of copies of the scriptures, transcribed by hand over thousands of years, with so very few scribal errors — part of God's overruling providence.

(2) Secular Poets cited by Paul. This category is small with only four instances that are not of much significance. An example is when Paul at Athens on Mars Hill spoke to the Greeks about the Unknown God, as he quoted from two Greek Poets in Acts 17:28. "For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said."

(3) Quotations in the New Testament from the Old Testament. This is the most fertile ground for examination, and here we spend the chief part of our investigation. New Testament quotations from the Old testament often differ considerably. The most important reason for this is that almost

IN THIS ISSUE

<i>Principles of Biblical Quotations</i>	1
<i>Memorial Observances</i>	4
<i>Memorial Dates</i>	5
<i>Lunar and Solar Calendar</i>	7
<i>A Passover Experience</i>	8
<i>Financial Report</i>	8

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all of these quotes are drawn from the Septuagint. This was a Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures for the benefit of Greek-speaking Jews dispersed in Egypt and various other countries, who were no longer fluent in Hebrew.²

Since the apostles were told by our Lord to “make disciples of people of all nations,” it is easy to understand why they wrote the New Testament in Greek, the common unifying language of the day in the near east. Naturally, they would quote the Greek translation of the scriptures when citing the Old Testament.

Thus the main reason for the differences in the wording of the New Testament quotes of the Old Testament, as we will see, is that the Greek Septuagint was not a very accurate translation. However, it is beautiful to note that God’s holy Spirit overruled the matter. Sometimes the thought being conveyed was the same. At other times, when the Septuagint expressed an incorrect thought, the matter was overruled so that the New Testament writer translated the Hebrew, rather than using the Septuagint.

THE THOUGHT IS THE SAME

Following are two examples of the first case, where the thought is the same in both the Septuagint and Hebrew versions, even if different words are used.

- Hebrew, Isaiah 45:23, “I have sworn by myself ... That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.” This is cited from the Septuagint in Romans 14:11, “For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” The words may vary, but the thought is basically the same.

- Hebrew, Isaiah 28:16, “Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation.” This is cited from the Septuagint in 1 Peter 2:6, “It is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious.” The basic thought is the same, even though the Septuagint is not an exact translation.

THE SENSE IS DIFFERENT

However, there are other times that the Septuagint definitely gives the wrong thought as compared to the original Hebrew. When this occurred, notice how wondrously the Lord overruled in the following examples.

- Hebrew, Zechariah 12:10 (KJV), “They shall look upon me whom they have **pierced**.” Notice how different the Septuagint translation of this verse. “Then will they look to me whom they **jeered**.” But when John quoted Zechariah 12:10, under God’s direction he drew from the Hebrew text: “They shall look on him whom they **pierced**” (John 19:37, KJV).³

- Hebrew, Isaiah 25:8, “He will swallow up death in victory.” Notice how different the Septuagint translation, “Mighty death had swallowed [all] up.” But again in this case, the error was corrected by Paul being directed to quote from the original Hebrew. “Death is swallowed up in victory” (1 Corinthians 15:54).



Reverent study of the Word of God is highly commendable.

- Hebrew, Zechariah 9:9, “Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee.” The Septuagint translated it, “Make proclamation, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold thy king is coming for thee.” But again, this error was corrected by Matthew. “Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee” (Matthew 21:5).

At other times, when the difference involved in the Septuagint translation was slight, and it did not interfere with the purpose which the New Testament writer had in view, the Septuagint version was allowed to remain.

THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

In the entire book of Hebrews all quotations but one are from the Septuagint and were not changed. Here are two examples.

- Psalms 40:6, “Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened.” The Greek Septuagint, “Sacrifice and offerings Thou didst not desire, but preparedst for me a body.” Now notice that the New Testament quotation kept this Septuagint rendering. “Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me” (Hebrews 10:5).

The Hebrew Old Testament phrase, “mine ears thou hast opened,” is a metaphor. For a person’s ears to be opened implies they obeyed God’s word. The New Testament Septuagint rendering, “a body hast thou prepared me,” was allowed to remain because it actually gave a deeper understanding to the Hebrew. For it tells us how Jesus’ ears were opened allowing him to obey. It was because God did prepare a perfect body for Jesus that allowed him to obey the law perfectly. So we should not think of Hebrews 10:5 as a mistake, in that it did not quote the original exactly. God’s overruling providence caused it to be written in this way for a purpose.

- Jeremiah 31:32; “which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD.” The Greek Septuagint reads, “Because they did not abide by this covenant of Mine, therefore I took no care of them.” The rendering in Hebrews 8:9, “Because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.” Because the Septuagint rendering was not an incorrect thought, God allowed the thought to remain with a slight change in wording.

ANOTHER REASON FOR DIFFERENCE

The main reason the wording of New Testament quotes from the Old Testament sometimes differs, is that almost all are taken from the Greek Septuagint Translation. But there is another reason. Namely, common people had often quoted them from memory. The Scriptures were intertwined with every aspect of life and would be partially quoted in everyday conversation as we often do. Here is an example:

- Jeremiah 9:24, “But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD.” The text from 1 Corinthians 1:31, “That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

OMITTED WORDS

Sometimes words are left out because they are not pertinent to the immediate subject, or it is not yet the due time for the fulfillment of that portion. For example:

- Isaiah 61:1, 2, “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God.”

Now notice how the New Testament quote based on the Septuagint adds some words and changes others. Here it is, from Luke 4:18, 19. “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”

Notice, in addition to the minor changes, that it completely leaves out the last phrase, “and the day of vengeance of our God.” This is left out in Luke because it was not yet time for our Lord to proclaim the “Day of Vengeance.”

COMBINED QUOTATIONS

Note that the text in Luke, cited above, includes this phrase (KJV): “To set at liberty them that are bruised.” This is not in the passage in Isaiah 61. Our Lord here combined another text from Isaiah 58:6, which in the Septuagint, reads “But loose every bond of iniquity; dissolve the obligations of onerous contracts; set at liberty them who are oppressed.” There are many quotations which combine two or more Old Testament scriptures.

INTRODUCTION TO A QUOTATION

The next point we call attention to is the words used to introduce a quotation. For example, a prophecy regarding our Lord from Psalms 22:18 is quoted in John 19:24. “They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots.” The phrase “that the scripture might be fulfilled” means the text refers



Ancient Bible Scrolls

to a fulfillment of some specific prophecy in the Old Testament. In this case the reference is to Psalms 22:18, “They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.”

By comparison, when a text is prefaced by the words “The Scripture saith” — or “as it is written” — this is not necessarily a fulfillment of some specific prophecy, it refers to a general fact or principle mentioned in the Old Testament. For example, 1 Corinthians 2:9. “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” This refers to Isaiah 64:4, “For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.”

UNSPECIFIED QUOTATIONS

There are many quotations from the Old Testament where there is no indication in the context that something is being quoted. For example, Romans 2:6, “Who will render to every man according to his deeds.” The casual reader might suppose this is simply a statement by the Apostle Paul. Actually it is taken from Psalms 62:12, “For thou renderest to every man according to his work.” The Companion Bible is helpful in such cases, for whenever a text draws from the Old Testament, the type is in bold with a text cited. In addition, it has excellent notes calling attention to the basic Hebrew and Greek meanings of key words, and calling attention to parallel scriptures.

— George Tabac

(1) Editor’s note: In many cases, the translation of the Greek is accurate, but the scholarship to establish the readings of the original Greek manuscript readings did not become well refined until after the 18th century, when the oldest Greek manuscripts were investigated, studied, and the original text, rather than the corrupted “received text,” or *Textus Receptus*, was restored. This is an ongoing area of research as new texts come to light and are translated.

(2) Editor’s note: Ptolemy II funded the Pentateuch translation.

(3) Editor’s note: There is also another word of interest in this text. The RVIC reads, “They shall look **unto** me whom they have pierced” (rather than “upon” me as in the KJV). When John cites this in John 19:37, he uses *eis* — this preposition could be “into” or “to.”

Memorial Observances

*“For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us”
(1 Corinthians 5:7).*

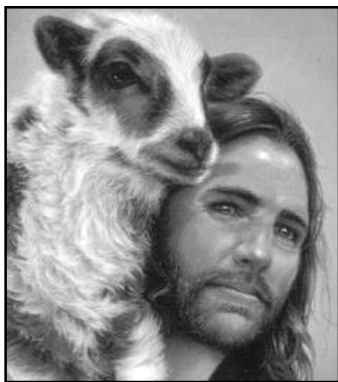
Eight “Questions” about the observance of Memorial were treated in earlier articles, February 1996 and August 2008. Here follows a Ninth Question in this series.

Question Nine — How do the Temple Festivals relate to the Passover-Memorial service?

The cycle of Temple festivals provided much of the same joyful anticipation for the Lord’s people under the Law Covenant that we, the Lord’s people today, enjoy in our various regular conventions. Whereas it is customary to highlight the three major feasts or “appointed times,” there were actually seven that were enjoined upon Israel by the LORD, through Moses. All seven are outlined in Leviticus chapter 23, with the first four occurring in the spring, and the remaining three six months later in the autumn of the year. The first three, “the LORD’s Passover” (Leviticus 23:5), “the Feast of Unleavened Bread” (Leviticus 23:6), and “the Feast of the Firstfruits” (Leviticus 23:10, 11), all related directly to the Passover and were to be observed during the Jewish month Nisan, which was the first month of the religious year. This month corresponds to March/April in our Gregorian calendar. The fourth feast was to be celebrated fifty days later, during the Jewish month Iyar, and was called “the Festival of Weeks,” or “Pentecost” (Leviticus 23:15-21); it thus is also related to the Passover, but more indirectly.

The final three festivals occurred in the autumn, beginning with “Rosh Hashanah,” New Year’s Day in the civil calendar, also called “the Feast of Trumpets” (Leviticus 23:24); this was on the first day of the seventh month, Tishri, corresponding to our September/October. The Jewish high holy days are observed during the ten-day period that follows. The sixth festival, “Yom Kippur,” also known as “the Day of Atonement” (Leviticus 23:27), occurs on the tenth day of this month and is a time of humble introspection for the pious Jew. Overall, this period of the year is a joyful one, culminating in the seventh festival, “the Feast of Tabernacles,” also known as “the Feast of Ingathering” or “Booths” (Leviticus 23:34), which begins on the fifteenth day of the same month Tishri. (See “Rosh Hashanah and the Civil New Year,” *The Dawn Magazine*, Oct. 2006, article based largely on Alfred Edersheim, *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services at the Time of Christ*, 1874.)

Retracing our steps now for a closer look, we find the first Temple festival, “the LORD’s Passover,” pertained to the



Jesus, our Passover Lamb

sacrificial feature of the ceremony which involved the slaying of a lamb. This was a reminder of how the blood of the lamb, sprinkled on the doorposts and lintels of the Jewish houses, acted as a deterrent to the death angel and caused him to “pass over” and spare them from the tenth plague of death on the firstborn of all Egypt. *Pesach* is used in the Hebrew to describe the offering that was made on this day — the 14th day of Nisan — and this remained the unvarying practice of the Israelites throughout the course of their history until the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 AD.

The second festival, “the Feast of Unleavened bread,” was the holiday of Passover which in the Hebrew is called *Chag Hamatzos*. The holiday of Passover was consistently observed on the 15th day of Nisan throughout Jewish history, with festivities continuing for seven days (eight days outside Israel). The chief activity of the holiday consisted of eating the *Paschal* lamb which had been slaughtered on the eve of the festival (on the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan) and roasted for the feast. After the destruction of the Temple, only the home celebration (called the *Seder*) of the first night was retained and the *Haggadah* read (a recital of the original Passover narrative). Since the lamb was no longer slain, the only aspect of the festive meal still valid was the eating of unleavened bread with the bitter herbs. (See *Jewish Encyclopedia*, “Passover Sacrifice,” and *Standard Jewish Encyclopedia*, “Haggadah, Passover.”)

In relating these first two festivals to our Memorial observance, we note that the subject of when Christ died on the cross and when the Last Supper was observed, has been a matter of unending controversy among scholars in the field as well as some Bible Students. Alfred Edersheim (1825-1889), cited above, believed that “the Lord instituted His Supper on the very night of the Paschal Feast [as it was observed by the Jews] and that consequently His crucifixion took place on the first day of the 15th of Nisan.” In opposition to this, Dr. Fredrick W. Ferrar (1831-1903) wrote that “Jesus ate His last supper with the disciples on the evening of Thursday, Nisan 13, i.e. at the time when, according to Jewish reckoning, the 14th of Nisan began.” He thus believed “the crucifixion took place on the 14th [of] Nisan, ‘between the evenings’ of which the Paschal lamb was slain,” and based this largely on the statements made in the Gospel of John. He also wrote that there was a “sense of inherent and symbolical fitness in the dispensation which ordained that Christ should be slain on the day and at the hour appointed for the sacrifice of the Paschal lamb.” (See Alfred Edersheim, *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services at the Time of Christ*, Appendix.)

We would certainly agree with Dr. Ferrar, noting the force of the type/antitype relationship and the clear intent of the Apostle Paul’s statement that “Christ our Passover [Lamb] is sacrificed for us” (1 Corinthians 5:7). In regard to the exact time of day on the 14th of Nisan that the lamb was slain in the type, a continuing controversy has arisen among Bible Students which requires more space to fully consider than can be allocated here. This subject is fully treated in

the book, Charles Redeker, *Foregleams of the Messiah: Old Testament Passover Type Sheds Light on Identity of the Messiah*, with both points of view (whether the lamb was slain at the beginning or toward the end of the 14th day) being examined. (A printout of the book may be obtained from the web site of Zion's Tower of the Morning: www.zionstower.com or the "Bible Students Library" computer data base.)¹

The third and final of the festivals to be enlarged upon here, "the Feast of the Firstfruits," presents an interesting tie-in of the first agricultural harvest with the Passover events. The priest was to bring a wave offering of the barley "on the morrow after the Sabbath." This Sabbath was understood by Rabbinical judgment and the Pharisees (but not the Sadducees) to pertain to the Feast Day of the Passover, the 15th day, and thus the firstfruits were offered on the 16th day of Nisan. To Bible Students, such a sequence becomes a precise type of the resurrection of Jesus on "the third day" (counting inclusively); and it offers strong confirmation that our Lord was not in the tomb for three full twenty-four-hour days, but for parts of three days. Thus Jesus was crucified and died on the 14th day of Nisan, was in the tomb for all of the 15th, and was raised early in the morning on the 16th day — perhaps just minutes after sunrise. (See Reprints, page 5191 and footnote; also *Smith's Bible Dictionary*, "First-fruits.")

— Charles Redeker

(1) Editor's footnote: Three points of view are offered in the PBI booklet, "The Last Supper, a Dialogue," accessible at www.heraldmag.org/bookstore/booklet_lastsupper.htm

Memorial Dates

"For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us"
(1 Corinthians 5:7).

What has been the historical record of Bible Student reckoning of the Memorial and what are some future dates?

BIBLE STUDENTS RECKONING 1880-1920

The Christian Memorial is celebrated after sunset on Nisan 14. The Gregorian (European-American) calendar day corresponds to the Jewish Nisan 13 (which ends at sunset). The Gregorian dates for the past hundred years (1870-1969), and a hundred more, are given here, for the sunset beginning the Jewish Nisan 14 (see page 6).

Watch Tower dates for the actual Memorial celebration are first available in 1880. The actual celebrations through 1919 coincide with Nisan 14 in all but six cases:

- 1880 March 24, Wednesday
- 1881 April 14, Thursday
- 1883 April 21, Saturday
- 1899 March 26, Sunday
- 1905 April 16, Sunday
- 1914 April 10, Friday

None of the actual celebrations deviates from Nisan 14 by more than 2 days, and the reasons for the deviations are various. Reasons: 1880 (1 day early) unknown. 1881 (2 days late) thought to be Nisan 14. 1883 (1 day late) day before Jewish Passover celebration (which is actually on the afternoon of Nisan 15, rather than 14). 1899 (2 days late) because full moon was on March 27; 1905 (2 days early) thought to be Jewish reckoning. 1914 (1 day late) because full moon was on April 11. The 1880 and 1883 dates are the only celebrations before 1920 to fall on Wednesday or Saturday (both are excluded in the Jewish calendar).

In 1919 the Watch Tower and the Pastoral Bible Institute (PBI) used the Jewish date. The Watch Tower in 1920 celebrated on April 2, reckoning from the new moon. In 1921 Jewish reckoning and the full moon, in 1922 Jewish reckoning, and in 1923 the new moon led them to use the Jewish dates. The full moon led to 1924, April 18, and 1925, April 8, celebrations. In 1929 the actual Watch Tower celebration was in March, rather than on April 23, probably reckoned by the new moon nearest the vernal equinox.

In 1920 the PBI used the April 2, Friday, Watch Tower date, rather than the Jewish date. In every other year since 1919 they have recommended the Jewish date. The Dawn has used the Jewish dates uniformly since it first published them in the late 1930's.

It may be concluded that all Memorials prior to the 1920's closely followed the Jewish dating (occasionally with a day or two variance). At no time was the new moon nearest (or the new moon next after) the vernal equinox used for reckoning where it would have resulted in a whole month's deviation from the Jewish date, although 1913, 1910, 1902, 1894, 1891, and 1883 (1918, 1915, 1912, 1907, 1904, 1899, 1896, 1893, 1888, 1885, 1880) provided opportunities to do so.

The Scriptures appear to be silent as to the correct way to construct the calendar. It would appear that a celebration of unity in the Body of Christ should, in so far as reasonably possible, be celebrated in unity — on a single evening throughout the world. Today there is nothing resembling a Sanhedrin to fix Memorial dates for us. But the Jewish calendar is a lunar (actually lunisolar, compare Genesis 1:14) calendar published and readily available throughout the world. Since that calendar has been followed from our earliest available records, and since there appears to be no strong



Jesus Instituting a Memorial of his Death

**TWO HUNDRED YEARS OF MEMORIAL DATES
NISAN 13 OF THE FOLLOWING YEARS**

(The Memorial is held on the evening of Nisan 14, which is calendar Nisan 13)
(*Denotes observance deviating from the Jewish calendar)

1870 Apr 14 Th	1910 Apr 22 Fr	1950 Mar 31 Fr	1990 Apr 08 Su	2030 Apr 16 Tu
1871 Apr 04 Tu	1911 Apr 11 Tu	1951 Apr 19 Th	1991 Mar 28 Th	2031 Apr 06 Su
1872 Apr 21 Su	1912 Mar 31 Su	1952 Apr 08 Tu	1992 Apr 16 Th	2032 Mar 25 Th
1873 Apr 10 Th	1913 Apr 20 Su	1953 Mar 29 Su	1993 Apr 04 Su	2033 Apr 12 Tu
1874 Mar 31 Tu	1914 Apr 09 Th*	1954 Apr 16 Fr	1994 Mar 25 Fr	2034 Apr 02 Su
1875 Apr 18 Fr	1915 Mar 28 Su	1955 Apr 05 Tu	1995 Apr 13 Th	2035 Apr 22 Su
1876 Apr 07 Th	1916 Apr 16 Su	1956 Mar 25 Su	1996 Apr 02 Tu	2036 Apr 10 Th
1877 Mar 27 Tu	1917 Apr 05 Th	1957 Apr 14 Su	1997 Apr 20 Su	2037 Mar 29 Su
1878 Apr 16 Tu	1918 Mar 26 Tu	1958 Apr 03 Th	1998 Apr 09 Th	2038 Apr 18 Su
1879 Apr 06 Su	1919 Apr 13 Su	1959 Apr 21 Tu	1999 Mar 30 Tu	2039 Apr 07 Th
1880 Mar 25 Th*	1920 Apr 01 Th*	1960 Apr 10 Su	2000 Apr 18 Tu	2040 Mar 27 Tu
1881 Apr 12 Tu*	1921 Apr 21 Th	1961 Mar 30 Th	2001 Apr 06 Fr	2041 Apr 14 Su
1882 Apr 02 Su	1922 Apr 11 Tu	1962 Apr 17 Tu	2002 Mar 26 Tu	2042 Apr 03 Th
1883 Apr 20 Fr*	1923 Mar 30 Fr	1963 Apr 07 Su	2003 Apr 15 Tu	2043 Apr 23 Th
1884 Apr 08 Tu	1924 Apr 17 Th	1964 Mar 26 Th	2004 Apr 04 Su	2044 Apr 10 Su
1885 Mar 29 Su	1925 Apr 07 Tu	1965 Apr 15 Th	2005 Apr 22 Fr	2045 Mar 31 Fr
1886 Apr 18 Su	1926 Mar 28 Su	1966 Apr 03 Su	2006 Apr 11 Tu	2046 Apr 19 Th
1887 Apr 07 Th	1927 Apr 15 Fr	1967 Apr 23 Su	2997 Apr 01 Su	2047 Apr 09 Tu
1888 Mar 25 Su	1928 Apr 03 Tu	1968 Apr 11 Th	2008 Apr 18 Fr	2048 Mar 27 Fr
1889 Apr 14 Su	1929 Apr 23 Tu	1969 Apr 01 Tu	2009 Apr 07 Tu	2049 Apr 15 Th
1890 Apr 03 Th	1930 Apr 11 Fr	1970 Apr 19 Su	2010 Mar 28 Su	2050 Apr 05 Tu
1891 Apr 21 Tu	1931 Mar 31 Tu	1971 Apr 08 Th	2011 Apr 17 Su	2051 Mar 26 Su
1892 Apr 10 Su	1932 Apr 19 Tu	1972 Mar 28 Tu	2012 Apr 05 Th	2052 Apr 12 Fr
1893 Mar 30 Th	1933 Apr 09 Su	1973 Apr 15 Su	2013 Mar 24 Su	2053 Apr 01 Tu
1894 Apr 19 Th	1934 Mar 29 Th	1974 Apr 05 Fr	2014 Apr 13 Su	2054 Apr 21 Tu
1895 Apr 07 Su	1935 Apr 16 Tu	1975 Mar 25 Tu	2015 Apr 02 Th	2055 Apr 11 Su
1896 Mar 27 Fr	1936 Apr 05 Su	1976 Apr 13 Tu	2016 Apr 21 Th	2056 Mar 30 Th
1897 Apr 15 Th	1937 Mar 25 Th	1977 Apr 01 Fr	2017 Apr 09 Su	2057 Apr 17 Tu
1898 Apr 05 Tu	1938 Apr 14 Th	1978 Apr 20 Th	2018 Mar 29 Th	2058 Apr 07 Su
1899 Mar 24 Fr*	1939 Apr 02 Su	1979 Apr 10 Tu	2019 Apr 18 Th	2059 Mar 27 Th
1900 Apr 12 Th	1940 Apr 21 Su	1980 Mar 30 Su	2020 Apr 07 Tu	2060 Apr 13 Tu
1901 Apr 02 Tu	1941 Apr 10 Th	1981 Apr 17 Fr	2021 Mar 26 Fr	2061 Apr 03 Su
1902 Apr 20 Su	1942 Mar 31 Tu	1982 Apr 06 Tu	2022 Apr 14 Th	2062 Apr 23 Su
1903 Apr 10 Fr	1943 Apr 18 Su	1983 Mar 27 Su	2023 Apr 04 Tu	2063 Apr 12 Th
1904 Mar 29 Tu	1944 Apr 06 Th	1984 Apr 15 Su	2024 Apr 21 Su	2064 Mar 30 Su
1905 Apr 18 Tu*	1945 Mar 27 Tu	1985 Apr 04 Th	2025 Apr 11 Fr	2065 Apr 19 Su
1906 Apr 08 Su	1946 Apr 14 Su	1986 Apr 22 Tu	2026 Mar 31 Tu	2066 Apr 08 Th
1907 Mar 28 Th	1947 Apr 03 Th	1987 Apr 12 Su	2027 Apr 20 Tu	2067 Mar 29 Tu
1908 Apr 14 Tu	1948 Apr 22 Th	1988 Mar 31 Th	2028 Apr 09 Su	2068 Apr 15 Su
1909 Apr 04 Su	1949 Apr 12 Tu	1989 Apr 18 Tu	2029 Mar 29 Th	2069 Apr 04 Th

reason to change that reckoning, it seems most reasonable to continue the practice of using the Jewish calendar for reckoning the Christian Memorial dates. Therefore the Memorial dates for the next sixty years are also given. (It is hoped the Church will be complete long before the last of them.)

—James Parkinson

Lunar and Solar Calendar

“And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years” (Genesis 1:14).

As is well known, 12 lunar months aggregate to somewhat shy of a solar year, 354 days as compared to 365 days. How did the Jews adjust the lunar and solar calendar?

CALENDAR RECKONING

In Biblical times it was the responsibility of the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem to determine matters connected with the calendar, and in practice this was done by a council of three men. The month began when the moon was first seen in the evening. The determination that the new moon had actually appeared and the declaration that the new month had thereby begun had to be made by the council just referred to. The testimony of at least two witnesses was required to establish that the new moon had been seen.

In the event that weather obscured the moon the months were alternated at 29 days (“deficient”) and 30 days (“embolismic,” or full). It was also agreed that the year should not have less than five nor more than seven “embolismic” months. The science by which these determinations were made was known as the “fixing of the month” or as the “sanctification of the new moon.”

It was also necessary for the same council of the Sanhedrin to determine when an intercalary month should be added to the year. The rabbis taught that “a year may be intercalated on three grounds: on account of the premature state of the corn crops; or that of the fruit trees; or on account of the lateness of the Tequfah (season). Any two of these reasons can justify intercalation, but not one alone.” Only an Adar could be intercalated. The length of the month (29 or 30 days) was left to the judgment of the council. One chief of the Sanhedrin (Rabbi Simeon ben Gamaliel) wrote, “We beg to inform you that the doves are still tender and the lambs still young, and the grain has not yet ripened. I have considered the matter and thought it advisable to add thirty days to the year.”¹ Finegan cites other vivid examples of calendar determination too.²

In the current Jewish calendar the months are tied in closely, but not precisely, with the new moons. Calculation is used, rather than observation. The calendar may be shifted

Jewish Months

No.	Month	Length
7	Tishri	30
8	(Mar) Heshvan	29 (30 if embolismic year)
9	Kislev	30 (29 if deficient year)
10	Tebet	29
11	Shebat	30
12	Adar	29 (30 if leap year)
(13)	(V-adar)	(29 leap year only)
1	Nisan	30
2	Iyyar	29
3	Sivan	30
4	Tammuz	29
5	Ab	30
6	Elul	29

by a day so that certain days will not conflict with sabbaths. The Jewish months and their lengths are given above.

Tishri 1 is the new years day, Rosh Hashanah. The standard year of 354 days is called a “normal ordinary year,” and of 384 days is called a “normal leap year.” Years of only 353 and 383 days are called “deficient years.” Years of 355 and 385 days are called “embolismic years,” or “full years.” (E.g., 385 days constitutes an embolismic leap year.) Calendar information is available several years ahead in common almanacs.

The current Jewish calendar was published by Rabbi Hillel II ca. 359 AD. His calendar could be calculated centuries in advance, which provided a uniform calendar for all Israel in Diaspora (dispersion). In the 4th century Nisan 1 was very nearly the day of the new moon nearest the spring equinox. In the 20th century the calendar has crept so that Nisan 1 is essentially the new moon nearest the 6th day after the spring equinox.³ Calculation of the Jewish calendar is detailed by Zinberg,⁴ and tables are given for the Gregorian years 1700-2200 AD (18th to 22nd centuries). [The Gregorian year plus 3761 equals the Jewish year, except for Tishri, Heshvan, Kislev, and sometimes Tebet, which occur on the preceding Gregorian year.]

The Jewish calendar is arranged so that Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement, Tishri 10, itself a sabbath) will not fall on the day preceding or following a sabbath (Saturday), and so that the physical ritual of Hoshana Rabba (Tishri 21) will not fall on the sabbath. Thus Tishri 1 does not fall on Friday, Sunday, or Wednesday. So also, the First Day of Passover (the feast, Nisan 15), occurring 23 weeks and 2 days previously, never falls on Wednesday, Friday, or Monday. Similarly, Nisan 13 (and the sunset beginning of Nisan 14), never falls on Monday, Wednesday, or Saturday, etc.⁵

ADDENDUM

The American Ephemeris⁶ summarizes the Jewish calendar in the following manner:

“The ancient Jewish calendar year contained twelve months, each beginning with the first visibility of the crescent Moon as determined by actual observation, and an intercalary month inserted at irregular intervals by repeating the twelfth month. The intercalations were determined by the public authorities, and in the early centuries of the Christian era by the Sanhedrin. The year began with either the spring month Nisan or the autumn month Tishri, according to the country.

“This ancient empirical calendar was replaced, probably during the fourth century of the Christian era, by the fixed calendar which is still used. ... Dates in the Jewish calendar during the period before it had become a fixed calendar cannot be converted with certainty to dates in the Julian calendar unless contemporary historical records are extant that contain the appropriate information.”^{6a}

Contrariwise is this single statement on another page: “The Passover was observed on 14 Nisan, and in the ancient Jewish calendar the beginning of this month was determined by observation of the lunar crescent nearest the vernal equinox.”^{6b}

New moon conjunctions have recently been published to high accuracy,⁷ which makes possible good estimations of the ancient Jewish months (prior to AD 359), but one day or one month errors are possible, except where contemporary calendar information is available. However, none of this influences the present Jewish calendar.

— James Parkinson

(1) The criteria were practical matters. The lambs needed to be old enough for sacrifice (Exodus 12:5-8), and the firstfruit crops needed to be ripe enough to offer on the first Sunday of the Feast of Weeks (Leviticus 23:10-11).

(2) Finegan, Jack, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology*, Princeton University Press, 1964, pages 41-44.

(3) Thus in the 20th century, about 8 times in 10 Nisan 1 is the new moon nearest the spring equinox, and 7 times in 10 it is the new moon next after the spring equinox. Nisan 1 occurs no earlier than March 12 and no later than April 11, while the spring equinox is within a day of March 21. Note also that calculations of the new moon for America will differ slightly from those for Jerusalem. Jerusalem local time is about 7 hours 20 minutes faster than Eastern Standard Time (e.g., New York).

(4) Zinberg, George, *Jewish Calendar Mystery Dispelled*, New York: Vantage Press, 1963. A lucid textbook for the Jewish calendar.

(5) Note that if the conjunction of the new moon were to determine Nisan 1, the full moon (occurring a mean 14.765 days later) would occur on Nisan 15 or 16. The full moon can occur on Nisan 14 only because Nisan 1 is reckoned according to first *visibility*, so that the calendar Nisan 1 is displaced a day later.

(6) Explanatory Supplement to the Astronomical Ephemeris and the American Ephemeris and Nautical Almanac, 1961. (a) page 432. (b) page 412.

(7) Goldstine, Herman H., “New and Full Moons,” 1001 BC to AD 1651; Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1973. In conjunction with Bryant Tuckerman, “Planetary, Lunar, and Solar Positions,” 601 BC to AD 1, and AD 2 to AD 1649; American Philosophical Society, 1962 and 1964; lunar and solar eclipses may also be determined.

A Passover Experience

“Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James the brother of John with the sword ... he proceeded further to take Peter also. Then were the days of unleavened bread” (Acts 12:1-3).

Herod (Agrippa I, grandson of the Herod who sought the life of the baby Jesus) had espoused the religion prevalent in his kingdom, and was seeking favor with the Jews by his zeal for Judaism — which meant his zeal and energy against Christianity. The Jews had begun persecutions against the church, but were hindered by their troubles with Caligula Caesar; but the latter was now dead, and the persecuting tendencies of misconducted fervor could proceed.

The Apostle James, whose death is here recorded, was one of the most noble and notable of the apostles. He was one of the three who accompanied our Lord in the most confidential capacity, with his brother John, and Peter. It was he and his brother whom our Lord surnamed Boanerges, “sons of thunder,” probably because of their eloquence and forcefulness of speech.

They were both faithful, James being amongst the earliest of the martyrs for the cause, and John living to a life of old age. The record of James’ ministry is brief in the extreme but it contains nothing that gives the slightest suggestion of anything except zeal and faithfulness to the Lord and to his cause.

Probably James’ death was accomplished suddenly, while Peter was held over in bonds. This gave the church time to consider how much she had already lost, and how much she might lose further were not the Lord to interpose for her protection. They had already sustained a great loss, and no doubt Peter’s life and his service seemed much more precious to them since the loss of James.

It is comparatively easy to see the Lord’s peculiar assistance with Peter, who was delivered. But the Lord’s providential care was none the less in the case of James. So far as James was concerned, it could matter little to him which way the Lord directed, if, in the Lord’s wisdom, he had finished his course, perfected his character and stood the test.

Our trials and difficulties are not to be esteemed as the results of divine carelessness in respect to our interests, but as the outworkings of divine providence for our good.

— Adapted from R3002-3004

Financial Report

2,800.18	Balance January 1, 2008
1,444.89	Donations
- 2,412.50	Expenses
1,832.57	Balance January 1, 2009
541	Current Subscribers