

Christians Kept Jewish Feasts and are still obligated to

Summary:

There is no definite statement in the New Testament that the Jewish feasts are done away. They had to be kept under obligation to divine law. A God who does them away would make it clear. Acts 20:6 shows the apostles still observed Judaism and the feasts after they were supposedly done away. The proof texts against the keeping of feasts refer to man-made feasts not the divinely instituted feasts of the Law of Moses. See Galatians 4:10. Galatians was not written against Jews but against heretical Jews who said that you have to be circumcised to get into Heaven. Old Testament doctrine however teaches that circumcision is not about Heaven but about the right to be Jewish and to inherit the Holy Land.

Christians say that Jesus and the apostles revealed God's will that the Jewish feasts are no longer binding on us. As Jesus took care of what the feasts pointed to they are not needed anymore. If we cannot find any proof of this doctrine in the New Testament that means the feasts are still binding under divine law. God cannot make laws and then permit us to ignore them unless he clearly reverses them.

The real reason the feasts are no longer kept is because of the Catholic Church's delusion that it has the authority to decree that they must be dropped.

The Christians kept the feast of Pentecost when they with the apostles were in Jerusalem after Jesus had departed this world (Acts 2). They had lives elsewhere so they are in Jerusalem to keep the feast and they must have been together to celebrate the feast. Big get-togethers attract attention and they were scared showing how deeply they felt about celebrating the feast. Now, they all believed they were in great danger from the haters of Jesus so if they had thought that the feast had been done away they would not have been in Jerusalem which was the most dangerous place of the lot. They believed it was their duty to be there despite the risk. If it had not been their duty it would have been a sin for them to take the risk. The resurrection had removed some of their previous unreasonable cowardice so Jesus must have told them to keep the feast after his resurrection. It did not matter where they were when the Spirit came like he did that day so they were not sent to Jerusalem to wait for him. If the apostles had expected the Spirit to come and push them out to preach on the streets to an audience that was likely to be vicious and hostile they wouldn't have set foot in Jerusalem. If they had not been frightened they would have been out evangelising before the Spirit arrived. They were there to celebrate the festival.

Christians preach, "Paul said that Jesus our Passover has been sacrificed so that we should keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread (1 Corinthians 5:6-8). And Paul uses leavened and unleavened to picture unholiness and holiness respectively. When they are metaphors so is the reference to the keeping of the feast. He did not mean literal Passover, literal leaven or literal unleavened bread. He was not telling us to celebrate the Passover or the Feast of Unleavened Bread here. Keep the feast means act as if you are celebrating that Jewish feast but are eating not unleavened bread but spiritual food or grace".

But if the leaven and unleavened bread are symbols then Paul could still tell us to celebrate the feast and mean a literal feast. He could want the eating of the unleavened bread to represent renouncing leaven or evil. The principle of take the simplest meaning tells us that the feast is literal. We are to celebrate the feast of Unleavened Bread.

In the Book of Acts it is strongly suggested that the apostles continued in the feasts (20:6). There, it is reported that Paul who had the apostles' approval of his religious actions and others sailed from Phillipi after the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This is such an odd detail for Acts had no interest in time structures in mundane matters and when it was not relevant. When it is stated so apparently foolishly the only explanation is that it is hinting that they sailed after they kept the festival which would make sense of it all and fit into the pattern of Acts.

Galatians 4:10 has Paul criticising the Galatians because they observed holy days, holy months and years. This means pagan celebrations not the ones of the Torah because of the Torah never commanded holy months. The Torah only declared that the weekly Sabbath and seven annual feasts are to be kept holy and of course the Jubilee or Sabbatical Year. The previous verse condemns the Galatians for going back to serving Gods that were not Gods. Then Paul tells them that they are going as far as to bring back the holidays. This proves that he meant pagan holidays. Re-introducing God's feasts could not be worse than serving other Gods. Christians merely assume that he means Jewish feasts for if the people had been instructed to carry on with them they would have known he didn't mean these feasts.

Paul's desperation to get to Jerusalem by Pentecost reveals that he wanted to go there to keep the feast (Acts 20:16). He either wanted to catch the festival or to meet people there. But he had plenty of delegates and if he wanted to preach then

why didn't he do it in Asia which he bypassed? So it was the festival he wanted to keep.

The fast in Acts 27:9 is the fast of the feast of the Atonement. We are told that it was kept on the ship Paul was on. The fast caused danger we are told. Paul was not excluded in the text so it is probable that he fasted as well. He would not have been on the boat if it meant being pressurised into abetting or doing something wrong. He did not think it was wrong to cause trouble over keeping a fast.

Christians are still to follow the feasts. But they have new additional meaning for them. To the Jew, the Passover, for example, was a memorial of the saving power of God when he killed the firstborn of Egypt to persuade that country to let his people go. To the Christian it means the same thing but also that God killed his son to free the world from sin. All the feasts can be used as reminders of various events in Christian salvation history.

God said in the Law of Moses that it was a sin not to keep the feasts. God does not invent sins so it must really have been wrong to do so. God cannot change right into wrong so the feasts must still be for keeping. Their moral purpose was for instilling and expressing gratitude therefore feasts are morally required.

Jesus told the Devil that man lives by every word from the mouth of God (Luke 4:4). He meant the Old Testament scriptures. He meant that everything they command should be done. The Devil would have understood him to mean every man not just Jews for the Devil is not a Jew.

MOSES' FEASTS TO BE KEPT FOREVER

The annual festivals of God that are listed in the Torah are, the First Day of the Sacred Year, Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day.

There is also a Night to Be Much Observed in commemoration of the departure of Israel from Egypt that is often confused with the Passover (Exodus 12:41,42).

The festivals were celebrated in Jerusalem. God chose this location when King David gained control over the city. If anybody could not get to Jerusalem they would still have had to keep the festival as best they could. It was not part of the Law to go to Jerusalem so Jesus changed this permitting the worship to be one wherever you are (John 4:21).

Sacrifices were offered but the feasts could still be compulsory if sacrifice had been done for us in the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross but no longer law. If the law of sacrifice has been kept for us the feasts will have to be celebrated.

As everybody knows it is normally only Jews who keep the festivals now. Christians mostly do not bother. They say that they have been made obsolete by the death of Jesus on the cross.

It is falsely alleged that there is no explicit proof in the New Testament that these feasts have to be kept by Christians. But suppose that this is true, it certainly does not say that Jesus has abolished them. Silence is consent here. You would have to keep the feasts to be on the safe side and if God knew you had the sense to do that he would not need to be explicit.

The Torah says that the feasts must be kept forever. The Feast of Tabernacles or Booths is forever (Leviticus 23:40,41). The same was said of the Passover (Exodus 12:14) in which a lamb was sacrificed and eaten. The feast came around once a year. God told the Jews that it was for all their generations. Yet the hypocritical Churches won't let Christians who have Hebrew blood in them celebrate the feasts because the sacrifice of Jesus allegedly made sacrifice unnecessary! The Passover feast required that a Lamb be killed. The Worldwide Church of God teaches that Jesus has replaced the lamb with bread and wine which he called his body and blood. There is no biblical warrant for this substitution theory. The gospel says that Jesus celebrated the Passover (Luke 22). This proves that the meal is still to be kept by the world in the way Jesus did it in the evangelist's opinion. The Christian's view is that the feast was done away because Jesus was the sufficient sacrifice and our delivery from sin is more important to recall than God refusing to kill the firstborn of Israel which is remembered at the Passover. But Jesus regarded neither of these as a reason for abolishing the Passover for he celebrated it himself. He added the element of remembering himself to the Passover. When he said over the Passover bread that it was his body and that he wanted this done in memory of him it is most likely that he meant the Passover was to be celebrated as before but with this new commemoration. If I take Passover bread and do what he did with it, it is most likely I am telling you to do this with Passover bread at Passover time and not just any bread at any time. Remember, he was breaking bread and talking in a Jewish Christian context.

Passover was celebrated once a year.

Christianity regards the Book of Zechariah as scripture and that book says that the Feast of Booths will be kept in the messianic age with God's approval (14). This will happen when God is the only ruler of the world in the future. All the nations will go up to Jerusalem to keep the feast. This will happen when the world population will be so low that the whole

world will be able to squeeze into Jerusalem. Zechariah must have assumed that angels will transport them there for it is too fanciful to say that he had aeroplanes in mind. If Gentiles and Jews have to keep that feast forever then they have to keep others as well.

Leviticus 16:30 lays it down that the Day of Atonement is to be had forever. This was to be a day for sacrificing animals and fasting.

The Feast of Pentecost was meant to be kept forever (Leviticus 23:15).

We conclude that as the Jewish feasts had to be kept forever that Christianity is disobedient. If it is true that the feasts were abolished by the Church for they did not fit the message of Jesus then clearly Jesus was a fraudulent Messiah.