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QUOTATIONS FROM THE TALMUD PROVE THE POSTPONEMENT RULES OF THE CALENDAR ARE UNBIBLICAL

UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUE:

Most of the Churches of God still observe the annual Holy Days based on an unqualified acceptance of the present Jewish calendar, which is the Church's heritage since Mr. Herbert Armstrong's time. In recent years a number of valid objections have been raised concerning the Jewish calendar. Two of the main objections are:

A) For some years in every 19-year Jewish cycle the present Jewish calendar violates the scriptural injunction of Exodus 34:22, which prohibits the Feast of Tabernacles from starting before the autumn equinox. In those years the Jewish calendar actually starts the Feast of Tabernacles in the summer.

B) Once they have calculated the supposed new moon conjunctions (i.e. the molads), the Jews do not have any scriptural authority to decide to postpone the start of the new year, simply because they do not want the Day of Trumpets to fall on a Sunday or on a Wednesday or on a Friday. The Jewish postponement rules are nothing more than the traditions of the elders, which Jesus Christ so forcefully and so emphatically condemned (see Matthew 15:3-6; Mark 7:8-9; etc.). They have no biblical support of any kind.

These two objections are unrelated and independent of each other, meaning that even if one of them were to be dismissed, that still would not in any way remove the other objection.

It is in an effort to drum up support for the present Jewish calendar that the United Church of God wrote a study paper, in which they attempted to use the account found in John chapters 7-10 to claim that Jesus Christ was crucified in 31 A.D..

The reasoning behind this push for a 31 A.D. crucifixion date is that a 31 A.D. crucifixion would SUPPOSEDLY IMPLY that Jesus Christ accepted and approved of the postponement rules of the present calendar ... since a Wednesday Passover in 31 A.D. (observed on Tuesday evening) would SUPPOSEDLY have required a postponement.

The fact that a Wednesday Passover in 31 A.D. is also obtained without any kind of "postponement" at all is conveniently ignored! In a calendar, where the start of each month is determined by eye-witnesses who reported having seen the first new crescent, the Passover in 31 A.D. would ALSO have been on a Wednesday. NO POSTPONEMENTS NEEDED!

THE FACTS ARE: The claim that a 31 A.D. Wednesday Passover REQUIRED a postponement is based on nothing more than THE INACCURATELY CALCULATED MOLAD, which in that particular year was theoretically postponed to the date determined by visual observations alone.

The facts also are that neither a 30 A.D. nor a 31 A.D. crucifixion date has any influence on what type of calendar the Jews were using at that time! The historical data all seems to point to a 30 A.D. crucifixion date, but the new moon data, which is available to us today, seems to favour a 31 A.D. crucifixion date. But from a calendar point of view this makes no difference. Neither year for the crucifixion has anything to do with the present Jewish calendar.

BUT WHAT IF THE CRUCIFIXION WAS IN 31 A.D.?

For the sake of the argument let us just "suppose" that some historical data could be found to prove that Christ must have been crucified in 31 A.D. after all. Would that somehow represent a full endorsement by Jesus Christ of the present Jewish calendar with all its "postponements"?

NO, IT CERTAINLY WOULD NOT!

I would like to explain this matter, because it shows up THE UTTER FUTILITY IN THE WHOLE ARGUMENT PRESENTED BY THE UNITED CHURCH OF GOD ... in staking everything on a 31 A.D. crucifixion date.

It is well-known that in New Testament times the start of each month was based on visual observation ... after witnesses reported seeing the first faint crescent of the new moon. This is true EVEN IF that "first visibility" was calculated in advance.

Here are some quotations from the Soncino edition of the Talmud, which make this matter quite clear.

QUOTATIONS FROM THE TALMUD

The emphasis in the quotations below is my own.

Mas. Rosh HaShana 7a footnote 24:

"In the time of the Second Temple THE CALENDAR WAS NOT FIXED, but the Beth din declared any year a leap year according as they judged necessary, subject to certain rules."

Beitzah 4b:

"But now that we are well acquainted with the fixing of the new moon 27, why do we observe two days?"

Beitzah 4b footnote 27:

"THE CALENDAR WAS FIXED ABOUT THE BEGINNING OF THE FOURTH CENTURY. [This has been ascribed to Hillel II, v. Graetz IV, pp.316-318.]"

Beitzah 4b footnote 14:

"... For the consecration of the New Moon was determined not only by mathematical calculation but BY THE CONFIRMATION OF WITNESSES WHO HAD SEEN IT. This applies only to the 30th, but on the 31st, the day would be consecrated even without witnesses ..."

Baba Bathra 121a footnote 6:

"THE CALENDAR NOT HAVING BEEN FIXED, the dates of the New Moons and Festivals were determined by the court in Jerusalem on the evidence of witnesses who saw the 'birth' ..."

Nazir 28b footnote 4:

"[IN THE ABSENCE OF A FIXED CALENDAR there was always the possibility of the festival sacrifice being offered on a day earlier or later, and this Baraita explains the procedure to be followed should such an incident occur.]"

Menachoth 64a footnote 10:

"Any who saw the new moon may transgress the Sabbath limits to go and give evidence before the court of the appearance of the new moon. AS THE CALENDAR WAS NOT FIXED the evidence of witnesses was a matter of the greatest importance for the determination of the dates of the Festivals."

I could present numerous similar quotations from the Talmud to illustrate the same point. It is simply a well-known FACT that in the first century A.D. the Jewish calendar was NOT FIXED! This means that in the first century A.D. the Jewish calendar simply did NOT have any postponement rules as yet!

It is nothing more than church-of-God hypocrisy that blatantly refuses to face up to this historical fact! No matter how overwhelming a mountain of evidence is presented against the present Jewish calendar with its postponement rules having existed in the first century A.D., the churches-of-God have hardened their hearts against this evidence!

The facts are:

In New Testament times "witnesses" who had seen the first crescent reported this to the court in Jerusalem. Based on their calculations (NOT for the invisible molad, but for the first visible faint crescent!) the Jewish leaders at this court would either accept or reject the evidence from these "witnesses" ... if it agreed with their calculations they accepted this witness, and otherwise they might reject it.

This system in itself AUTOMATICALLY IMPLIES that you then cannot go and "POSTPONE" the new moon, once you have accepted the evidence of the witnesses.

However, note carefully:

Witnesses could NEVER present evidence for having seen "the molad", i.e. the INVISIBLE conjunction!

It is well-known that there will be at least 16 hours or so (and usually 18 hours or more) after the invisible conjunction before it is possible to see the new moon here on earth (ignoring a lunar eclipse). In practice it will always be the day after the actual conjunction took place (and sometimes even two days after the actual conjunction) before the new crescent will be visible. The incorrect molad calculations confuse this matter somewhat.

A general comment about those who have written articles expressing unqualified support for the present Jewish calendar:

They frequently use a great amount of REASONING FROM A MINIMUM OF FACTS. There would be no objections to the reasoning presented IF THIS REASONING WAS NOT PRESENTED AT THE EXPENSE OF OBVIOUSLY IGNORING OTHER KNOWN FACTS! It is the total glossing over of known

facts about the Jewish calendar that exposes the obvious bias of those who write in support of the present Jewish calendar. When known facts are obviously ignored and completely left out of the picture, then the best reasoning in the world is of no value.

Here are some "known facts" from the Talmud.

MORE QUOTATIONS FROM THE TALMUD:

Below are some fairly lengthy quotations from the Soncino edition of the Babylonian Talmud. They are presented exactly as they appear in the original, without any changes or additions from me. All capitalizations are also as they appear in the original. Each quotation consists of two parts: first is the quotation and then follow all the footnote references relevant to the quotation, exactly as they appear in the Talmud. The numbers in the text of the Talmud quotations refer to the footnotes that follow.

After all the footnotes for each quotation I then present some comments, assessing the quotations and the footnotes.

If the quotations appear to be rambling and difficult to follow, I apologize for putting you through this exercise, but that is precisely the way the entire Jewish "oral law" (i.e. the Talmud) is: trivial, picky, rambling and often lacking any real focus. It largely takes the format of: this man said such-and-such, and another man said this, and another man replied with that, etc., etc., etc..

Here are the quotations from the Talmud.

Talmud - Mas. Shabbath 114b (CHAPTER XV)

"Yet let it [the Shofar] be blown, so that they might know that the trimming of vegetables is permitted [on the Day of Atonement] from the [time of] minhah 11 and onwards? 12 Said R. Joseph: Because a shebuth 13 is not superseded in order to give permission. 14 While R. Shisha son of R. Idi answered: A shehuth [of] immediate 15 [importance] was permitted; a shebuth [of] distant [importance] was not permitted 16 But did they permit a shebuth [of] immediate [importance]? Surely we learnt: If a Festival falls on Friday, we sound [the shofar] but do not recite habdalah; 17 [if it falls] at the termination of the Sabbath, we recite habdalah 18 but do not sound [the shofar]. 19 But why so: let it be sounded so that it may be known that killing [animals for food] is permitted immediately [the Sabbath ends]? 20 Rather it is clear that it is as R. Joseph [answered]. R. Zera said in R. Huna's name _ others state, R. Abba said in R. Huna's name: If the Day of Atonement falls on the Sabbath, the trimming of vegetables is forbidden. R. Mana said, It was taught likewise: How do we know that if the Day of Atonement falls on the Sabbath, the trimming of vegetables 21 is forbidden? Because it is said, Shabbathon; it is a shebuth. 22 Now, in respect of what [is it stated]: shall we say. In respect of labour 23 surely it is written, thou shalt not do any work? 24 Hence it must surely refer to the trimming of vegetables; 25 this proves it.

A. Hiyya b. Abba said in R. Johanan's name: If the Day of Atonement falls on the Sabbath, the trimming of vegetables is permitted. An objection is raised: How do we know that if the Day of Atonement falls on the Sabbath, the trimming of vegetables is forbidden? Because shabbathon is stated: it is a shebuth. In respect of what: shall we say in respect of labour, _ surely it is written, `thou shalt not do any work'? Hence it must surely refer to the trimming of vegetables! _ No: in truth it refers to actual work, but [it is stated] to [show that] one violates an affirmative and a negative injunction on account thereof. 26 It was taught in accordance with R. Johanan: If the Day of Atonement falls on the Sabbath,"

[MY COMMENT: This sentence is continued below, after the 26 footnote references, as the first part of section "Talmud - Mas. Shabbath 115a". That is how this appears in the Talmud.]

- "(1) R. Zera was a Babylonian who studied at home first and then emigrated to Palestine,
- (2) Lit., `said',
- (3) As on ordinary Fridays, supra 35b.
- (4) In the evening prayer, V. Glos. When a Festival falls on Sunday, habdalah is recited in the evening to signify that there is a distinction between the holiness of the Sabbath and that of Festivals.
- (5) Since he maintains that the fats of the Sabbath may not be burnt on the Day of Atonement and vice versa, he evidently holds that they each enjoy equal sanctity. Therefore neither habdalah nor the sounding of the shofar is required, for these are necessary only to mark a difference in the degree of sanctity.
- (6) For the sounding of the shofar would teach that the Day of Atonement possessed a lower degree of holiness.
- (7) Who burn the fats.
- (8) They take care to know the law and need no reminder.
- (9) This was done in the Temple, and he assumed that it was in order to remind the priests,
- (10) In reference to another matter; v, Yoma 37b,
- (11) V. Glos.
- (12) In this it differs from the Sabbath, when it is forbidden, V. infra.
- (13) V. Glos.; the blowing of the shofar is a shebuth.
- (14) But only where it is necessary to emphasize prohibitions, e.g., if Friday is a Festival, so that many things permitted thereon are forbidden on the Sabbath,
- (15) Lit., `near',
- (16) If it were of immediate importance, the shebuth would have been permitted. But in any case when the day of Atonement falls on Friday, the vegetables, even if trimmed, cannot be cooked on the Sabbath. So that the sounding of the shofar would only be of importance for subsequent Days of Atonement, and in such a case the shebuth is not superseded.
- (17) On Friday evening, because habdalah is recited only when a more stringent holiness is left behind.
- (18) On Saturday evening.
- (19) Saturday afternoon.
- (20) For the preparation of food is permitted on Festivals, Ex, XII. 6.
- (21) I.e., cutting away those parts of vegetables which are not edible. The reference is of course to unattached vegetables.

(22) Ex. XVI, 23: E.V. (solemn) rest. Here it is translated as shebuth, and thus intimates such labour as trimming vegetables.

(23) I.e., the word forbids actual labour, e.g. the trimming of vegetables that are still attached to the soil, supra 73b. _ The discussion here treats of vegetables already cut off from the ground.

(24) Ex, XX, 9, hence shabbathon is superfluous.

(25) The verse is merely a support (asmakta), the prohibition being a Rabbinical one only (Ri).

(26) Shabbathon is an affirmative command, bidding one to rest,"

Talmud - Mas. Shabbath 115a (CHAPTER XV)

"... the trimming of vegetables is permitted. Nuts may be cracked and pomegranates scraped from the [time of] minhah and onwards, on account of one's vexation. 1 The household of Rab Judah trimmed cabbage. Rabbah's household scraped pumpkins. Seeing that they were doing this [too] early, 2 he said to them, A letter has come from the west in R. Johanan's name [to the elect] that this is forbidden. 3

(1) Lit., `grief of the soul'. It would be very vexing if the breaking of the Fast had to be delayed whilst these are prepared (Baal Ha-Ma'or V. Marginal Gloss,; Rashi explains it differently)

(2) Before the time of minhah.

(3) Such letters afford examples of early Rabbinic Responsa."

ASSESSMENT OF THE ABOVE QUOTATIONS:

1) Note that "the trimming of vegetables" was permitted on the Day of Atonement. QUESTION: WHY would anyone possibly want to trim vegetables on the Day of Atonement, when they were supposed to be fasting?

2) Next, note that if Atonement fell on a Friday then the trimming of vegetables was permitted, but if it fell on a Saturday, THEN the trimming of vegetables was not permitted. Other Jewish sages taught differently.

3) Notice footnote 16: "But in any case when the day of Atonement falls on Friday, the vegetables, even if trimmed, cannot be cooked on the Sabbath." Clearly, in the early N.T. times the Day of Atonement DID sometimes fall on a Friday! And on that Friday the Jews were permitted (by their customs!) to trim their vegetables ... even though they would not be allowed to cook them on the following day (a weekly Sabbath).

THIS PROVES THAT THE PRESENT JEWISH CALENDAR WITH ITS RULES OF POSTPONEMENTS WAS NOT IN FORCE AT THAT TIME!

4) Notice also this quotation: "It was taught in accordance with R. Johanan: If the Day of Atonement falls on the Sabbath, the trimming of vegetables is permitted. Nuts may be cracked and pomegranates scraped from the [time of] minhah and onwards, on account of one's vexation. 1 The household of Rab Judah trimmed cabbage. Rabbah's household scraped pumpkins."

So here were some Jewish sages who would PREPARE FOOD ON THE DAY OF ATONEMENT, EVEN WHEN IT WAS A WEEKLY SABBATH DAY! This shows that they would spend time on the Day of

Atonement preparing food, irrespective of which day of the week that happened to be.

5) In regard to this last quotation notice also the totally carnal reasoning that was employed by the Jews: Referring to the comment "... on account of one's vexation" footnote 1 explains: "It would be very vexing if the breaking of the Fast had to be delayed whilst these (i.e. the cracking of nuts and the scraping of pomegranates) are prepared". THAT SEEMS ALMOST INCREDIBLE!

Do you mean that when the sun goes down at the end of the Day of Atonement, you cannot wait for even five minutes while a few pomegranates are being scraped out and a few nuts are being cracked? Must the nuts and the pomegranates be ready in edible form the very minute the sun goes down, or you suffer from vexation and frustration? And in order to avoid such vexation it is supposedly perfectly acceptable to spend a part of the Day of Atonement preparing such food?

Let's move on to the next quotation from the Talmud.

Talmud - Mas. Menachoth 100b

"... when Sabbath eve 1 approaches let it then become hallowed and also invalidated! 2 _ Raba 3 said, We must assume that he had removed it before then. 4 Mar Zutra, or as some say, R. Ashi said, You may even assume that he had not removed it before then, since, however, he had set it down not in accordance with its prescribed rite 5 it is as though a monkey had set it. 6

MISHNAH. THE TWO LOAVES WERE EATEN NEVER EARLIER THAN ON THE SECOND DAY 7 AND NEVER LATER THAN ON THE THIRD DAY. HOW IS THIS EXPLAINED? [NORMALLY] THEY WERE BAKED ON THE DAY BEFORE THE FESTIVAL 8 AND EATEN ON THE FESTIVAL, THAT IS, ON THE SECOND DAY. IF THE FESTIVAL FELL ON THE DAY AFTER THE SABBATH, 9 THEY WOULD BE EATEN ON THE THIRD DAY. THE SHEWBREAD WAS EATEN NEVER EARLIER THAN ON THE NINTH DAY AND NEVER LATER THAN ON THE ELEVENTH DAY. HOW IS THIS EXPLAINED? [NORMALLY] IT WAS BAKED ON THE DAY BEFORE THE SABBATH AND EATEN ON THE SABBATH [OF THE FOLLOWING WEEK], THAT IS ON THE NINTH DAY. IF A FESTIVAL FELL ON THE DAY BEFORE THE SABBATH, 10 IT WOULD THEN BE EATEN ON THE TENTH DAY. IF THE TWO DAYS OF THE NEW YEAR [FELL BEFORE THE SABBATH], 11 IT WOULD THEN BE EATEN ON THE ELEVENTH DAY. [THE BAKING] OVERRIDES NEITHER THE SABBATH NOR THE FESTIVAL. R. SIMEON B. GAMALIEL SAYS IN THE NAME OF R. SIMEON, SON OF THE DEPUTY [HIGH PRIEST], IT OVERRIDES THE FESTIVAL BUT NOT THE FAST-DAY. 12

GEMARA. Rabina said, According to him who rules that offerings in fulfilment of a vow and freewill-offerings may not be offered on a Festival, 13 you should not say that Biblically they are allowed [to be offered] but the Rabbis forbade them only as a precautionary measure lest one defer [those offerings until the Festival], 14 but even Biblically they are not allowed [to be offered]; for the Two Loaves are obligatory for that day, 15 so that there is no reason to apprehend lest one defer [them until the Festival], 16 yet [our Mishnah] states: [THE BAKING] OVERRIDES NEITHER THE SABBATH NOR THE FESTIVAL.

CHAPTER XII

MISHNAH. IF MEAL-OFFERINGS AND DRINK-OFFERINGS BECAME UNCLEAN BEFORE THEY WERE HALLOWED IN A VESSEL [OF MINISTRY]. THEY MAY BE REDEEMED; 17 IF [THEY BECAME UNCLEAN] AFTER THEY WERE HALLOWED IN A VESSEL, THEY MAY NOT BE REDEEMED. BIRD-OFFERINGS, THE WOOD, THE FRANKINCENSE, AND THE VESSELS OF MINISTRY, 18 MAY NOT BE REDEEMED, FOR THE RULE OF REDEMPTION APPLIES ONLY TO [OFFERINGS OF] CATTLE.

GEMARA. Samuel said, Even though they 19 are clean they may be redeemed, for so long as they have not been hallowed in a vessel of ministry they are holy only as to their value, and whatsoever is holy as to its value may be redeemed. But have we not learnt [in our Mishnah] BECAME UNCLEAN? _ The rule is the same even though they were not unclean, but because the Tanna wished to state the next clause, AFTER THEY WERE HALLOWED IN A VESSEL THEY MAY NOT BE REDEEMED, in which case even though they were unclean they still may not be redeemed, he therefore stated in the first clause, BECAME UNCLEAN.

IF [THEY BECAME UNCLEAN] AFTER THEY WERE HALLOWED IN A VESSEL, THEY MAY NOT BE REDEEMED. 20 But this is obvious, for they are holy in themselves! _ It was necessary to be stated, for I might have argued that since what is blemished is described as unclean, then surely what is unclean should be like that which is blemished; and therefore as that which has become blemished may be redeemed even though it was holy in itself, so this too may be redeemed; we are therefore taught that the Divine Law did not describe what is blemished as unclean in that sense, 21

(1) Lit., 'the night of the twilight (of the Sabbath eve)', i.e. Friday night.

(2) Since the night is considered 'in time' as on the day itself, then the bread and the frankincense should become hallowed on the Friday night, and after seven full days, i.e., on the Sabbath morning after the second Friday night, the bread should become invalid. According to our Mishnah, however, the bread may be eaten the whole of the second Sabbath day until midnight!

(3) In MS.M. and in the parallel passage in Yoma: 'Rabina'.

(4) The priest had removed the bread and the frankincense on the Friday just before the Sabbath set in and had replaced it at its proper time on the Sabbath.

(5) For it is out of time, being set down six days too soon.

(6) Hence the table will not hallow it as soon as the Sabbath eve approaches neither will the Sabbath day itself hallow it, but the priest will have to enter on the morrow, remove it and replace it anew, and only then will the table hallow it. Where, however, the handful was taken from the meal-offering at night and put into a vessel of ministry, since night is not considered 'out of time', the vessel will hallow it; v. Yoma (Sonc. ed.) p. 138 and notes.

(7) After the baking.

(8) The Feast of Weeks or Pentecost.

(9) The Two Loaves would then be baked on the Friday, since the baking does not override the Sabbath.

(10) The Shewbread would then be baked before the Festival, on Thursday.

(11) It would then be baked on Wednesday. The Festival of the New Year was generally kept two days, even in Palestine. V. R.H. 30b.

(12) The Day of Atonement. Where the Day of Atonement fell on a Friday the Shewbread was then baked on a Thursday.

(13) V. Bez. 20b.

(14) One would thus be accumulating work specially for the Festival; moreover the owner may be

prevented by some unforeseen circumstance from offering them on the Festival and will then have failed in the fulfilment of his obligations.

(15) Sc. the Feast of Weeks.

(16) For they can in no wise be brought before the prescribed day.

(17) For an offering so long as it has not been hallowed in a vessel of ministry is holy only for its value, ohns ,ause and may be redeemed; once it has been hallowed in a vessel of ministry it becomes holy in itself, ;udv ,ause and may not be redeemed.

(18) So all MS.S. Cur. edd. add: After they have become unclean.

(19) Sc. meal-offerings and drink-offerings.

(20) So according to MS.M., Sh. Mek. and Z.K. This is a new passage introduced by a separate Mishnah heading.

(21) I.e., unclean after having been hallowed in a vessel of ministry."

ASSESSMENT OF THE ABOVE QUOTATIONS:

1) Note the comment which has footnote 12 attached to it, and also footnote 12 itself. This footnote reads: "The Day of Atonement. Where the Day of Atonement fell on a Friday the Shewbread was then baked on a Thursday."

This comment again makes clear that the Day of Atonement DID sometimes fall on a Friday, in which case the Thursday was used for preparation, as far as the Shewbread was concerned. Therefore why could the Thursday not also be used for PERSONAL FAMILY preparations?

AGAIN THIS CONTRA-INDICATES THE PRESENT JEWISH CALENDAR WITH ITS RULES OF POSTPONEMENTS!

2) Note also the reference to eating bread on the ninth day or even on the tenth day after it had been baked! This should make very clear that there was absolutely no problem at all with eating bread that was "ONLY" three or four days old! Thus there was really no difficulty at all with baking bread on a Wednesday or on a Thursday (when Atonement fell on a Friday!) and then eating this bread on the Saturday after Atonement had concluded ... when the bread was still ONLY two or three days old. Thus there was really NO NEED (in the case of Atonement falling on a Friday) for food to be prepared on the Friday ... it could very easily be done on the Thursday! Yet, as these quotations show, they chose to prepare some foods on the Day of Atonement anyway.

Let's look at the next quotation from the Talmud.

Talmud - Mas. K'rithoth 19a

"... R. Simeon holds he is exempt in the latter instance. R. Simeon b. Judah maintains in the name of R. Simeon that he is exempt in all instances. 1 Even in the former? 2 _ Said Raba: Here we are dealing with the case of one who passed through one road, and when passing through the other he forgot that he had passed through the first. And they differ in this: The first Tanna holds, A partial knowledge is like a complete knowledge; 3 while R. Simeon maintains, A partial knowledge is not like a complete knowledge.

The Master said: 'If he passed through one and entered [the Temple precincts], and was sprinkled upon once and also a second time, and immersed himself; and then he passed through the other and entered [the Temple precincts], he is liable'. Why should he be liable? There had at no time been [definite] knowledge [of uncleanness]! _ Answered Resh Lakish: This statement follows R. Ishmael's view that knowledge at the beginning is not essential. R. Johanan answered: It may conform to the view of the Sages, but here they made doubtful knowledge [of uncleanness] like [definite] knowledge. Now it is assumed that 'here they made', and the same holds good in all the laws of the Torah. There is thus a contradiction between the two expositions of R. Johanan, and also a contradiction between the two expositions of Resh Lakish. 4 It will be granted that there is no contradiction between the two expositions of R. Johanan, for [we may say that he meant] only here they made [doubtful knowledge like definite knowledge] but not everywhere in the whole Torah did they do so, the reason being that in the case of uncleanness it is written: It being hidden from him that he is unclean, 5 [indicating that] even [if there is some] uncertainty in connection with his knowledge, Scripture still renders him liable; but regarding the other laws of the Torah, it is written: If his sin be known to him; 6 that is to say, only if he has definite knowledge is he liable. But with Resh Lakish there is a difficulty; why does he establish [the Baraitha] in accordance with R. Ishmael's view? Let him establish it as being in accordance with Rabbi's view! _ He wished to let us know that R. Ishmael, too, does not require knowledge at the beginning. But is this not already the contents of a Mishnah? As we have learnt: R. Ishmael said, Scripture mentions twice 'and it be hidden', 7 to teach us that one is liable both for forgetfulness of the uncleanness and for forgetfulness of the Temple. 8 _ It is necessary, for I might have thought that although he [R. Ishmael] does not derive the rule from the text, he yet accepts it as a tradition. Therefore he [Resh Lakish] informs us [that this is not the case].

MISHNAH. [IF BOTH] HELEB AND NOTHAR LAY BEFORE A PERSON AND HE ATE ONE OF THEM BUT DOES NOT KNOW WHICH, OR IF HIS MENSTRUANT WIFE AND HIS SISTER WERE WITH HIM IN HIS HOUSE AND HE UNITED, IN ERROR, 9 WITH ONE OF THEM AND DOES NOT KNOW WITH WHICH, OR IF SABBATH AND THE DAY OF ATONEMENT [FOLLOWED EACH OTHER] 10 AND HE DID FORBIDDEN WORK AT TWILIGHT AND DOES NOT KNOW ON WHICH DAY: R. ELIEZER DECLARES HIM LIABLE TO A SIN-OFFERING, BUT R. JOSHUA DECLARES HIM EXEMPT. REMARKED R. JOSE: THEY DID NOT DISPUTE ABOUT WHETHER HE THAT DID WORK AT TWILIGHT WAS EXEMPT, FOR I MAY ASSUME THAT PART OF THE WORK WAS DONE ON THE ONE DAY AND PART ON THE FOLLOWING DAY. 11 ABOUT WHAT DID THEY DISPUTE? ABOUT ONE WHO DID WORK DURING THE DAY ITSELF BUT HE DID NOT KNOW WHETHER HE DID IT ON THE SABBATH OR ON THE DAY OF ATONEMENT, OR IF HE DID WORK AND DID NOT KNOW WHAT MANNER OF WORK HE DID: 12 R. ELIEZER DECLARES HIM LIABLE TO A SIN-OFFERING, AND R. JOSHUA DECLARES HIM EXEMPT. SAID R. JUDAH: R. JOSHUA EXEMPTS HIM EVEN FROM A SUSPENSIVE GUILT-OFFERING. R. SIMEON AND R. SIMEON SHEZURI SAID: THEY DID NOT DISPUTE REGARDING TRANSGRESSION OF THE SAME DENOMINATION 13 WHEN [IT IS AGREED THAT] HE IS LIABLE. ABOUT WHAT DID THEY DISPUTE? ABOUT TRANSGRESSIONS OF DIFFERENT DENOMINATIONS: R. ELIEZER DECLARES HIM LIABLE TO A SIN-OFFERING, AND R. JOSHUA DECLARES HIM EXEMPT. SAID R. JUDAH: EVEN IF HE INTENDED TO PICK FIGS AND HE PICKED GRAPES, OR GRAPES AND HE PICKED FIGS, WHITE [GRAPES] AND HE PICKED BLACK ONES, OR BLACK AND HE PICKED WHITE ONES, R. ELIEZER DECLARES HIM LIABLE AND R. JOSHUA DECLARES HIM EXEMPT. SAID R. SIMEON: I WONDER WHETHER R. JOSHUA INDEED DECLARED HIM EXEMPT IN SUCH A CASE. BUT THEN 14 WHY IS IT WRITTEN, WHEREIN HE HATH SINNED? 15 TO EXCLUDE UNPURPOSED ACTION. 16

GEMARA. It has been taught: R. Eliezer argued, In any event [he has transgressed]; if it was the heleb he ate he is liable, if the nothar he is liable; if it was his menstruant wife with whom he united he is liable, if his sister he is liable; if it was Sabbath when he did the work he is liable, if the Day of Atonement he is liable! Replied to him R. Joshua: It says, 'wherein he hath sinned': 17 it must be known to him wherein he sinned. And for what purpose does R. Eliezer employ the word 'wherein'? _ To exclude unpurposed

action.

(1) Tosef. Toh. VI, 5.

(2) I.e., in the first and third instances, where there is no reason whatsoever to exempt him from a sacrifice.

(3) Since he passed through both roads he is definitely unclean, but his knowledge is incomplete, for when walking in the second road he had forgotten about the first. Yet he is liable, for incomplete knowledge is like complete knowledge.

(4) For R. Johanan maintains above that consciousness of doubtful sins is not valid and here he states that the Sages, i.e., the accepted authority hold it is of avail with regard to all the laws of the Torah. And Resh Lakish maintains above that Rabbi, the author of the Mishnah, holds that consciousness of doubtful sins is of no avail, whilst he feels compelled to quote R. Ishmael as the author of this view.

(5) Lev. V, 2.

(6) Ibid. IV, 28.

(7) Heb. okgbu ibid. V, 2 and 3.

(8) Shebu. 14b. The term 'hidden' is the source of the rule that knowledge at one time of the uncleanness is essential, cf. Shebu. 4a. As R. Ishmael uses this expression to derive another law, it may be assumed that he disagrees with that rule, and does not require knowledge in the beginning.

(9) I.e., thinking it was his wife and that she was clean. In all these instances the fact that he committed a trespass is afterwards established beyond doubt, though the transgressor was unaware of it at the time of action, but it is unknown which law was broken.

(10) I.e., when the Day of Atonement fell upon Friday or Sunday.

(11) Viz., each time less than the requisite standard.

(12) I.e., he is sure that his work was a forbidden act, but does not remember, e.g., whether he ploughed or sowed.

(13) I.e., of the same category, e.g., if he picked a certain fruit but did not know from which tree.

(14) I.e., if R. Joshua indeed agrees that he is liable in the last instance, even though his intention had not been realised, because he was after all set upon a forbidden act.

(15) Lev. IV, 23. The word 'wherein' is considered superfluous, to imply that in that particular act lay his intention.

(16) Heb. exg,n, lit. 'occupy oneself'; the transgression resulting from his act was not purposed, for his intention was to do what was permitted. V. Gemara.

(17) V. p. 148, n. 5."

ASSESSMENT OF THE ABOVE QUOTATIONS:

1) This illustrates how odd the reasoning of the sages really is! Look at this quotation: "... OR IF HIS MENSTRUANT WIFE AND HIS SISTER WERE WITH HIM IN HIS HOUSE AND HE UNITED, IN ERROR, 9 WITH ONE OF THEM AND DOES NOT KNOW WITH WHICH, OR IF SABBATH AND THE DAY OF ATONEMENT [FOLLOWED EACH OTHER] 10 AND HE DID FORBIDDEN WORK AT TWILIGHT AND DOES NOT KNOW ON WHICH DAY: R. ELIEZER DECLARES HIM LIABLE TO A SIN-OFFERING, BUT R. JOSHUA DECLARES HIM EXEMPT ..."

Here is a man who has sex with either his own menstruant wife or with his own sister ... and he supposedly doesn't even know with which of these two women he had sex!?! But this is precisely what the Jewish "oral law" is all about ... arguing about unrealistic, hypothetical situations. Note also that some of these sages would argue to declare a man in such a situation "exempt"! It didn't seem to occur to these sages that the two women in question would certainly have known which one of them had had sex with this man with such low cognitive powers!

Note also that in both cases we are dealing with situations where BOTH OPTIONS are wrong! It was wrong for the man to have sex with his menstruant wife, and it was wrong for him to have sex with his sister. It was wrong for the man to work before the end of the Sabbath day, and it was wrong for him to work at the start of the Day of Atonement. In both cases neither one of these situations presents the possibility where the man could have been guiltless of sin. Yet they argue about this.

2) Notice also in the same quotation that a Sabbath and the Day of Atonement could follow each other! The argument is about a man working at twilight between the two days [twilight is really already a part of the second day!] and he supposedly doesn't know on which of the two days he was working ... just as he didn't know which of the two women he had slept with.

It should be clear though, from this comment, that the Day of Atonement could also fall on a Sunday. This again makes clear that the present Jewish calendar with its rules of postponements was not being used at that time.

3) See also footnote 10 which reads: "I.e., when the Day of Atonement fell upon Friday or Sunday." Again this clearly contradicts the present Jewish calendar. This means that the present Jewish calendar, with its rules of postponements, was simply not in use in the first century A.D., and specifically it was not in use at the time of Jesus Christ's ministry.

Let's look at the next quotation from the Talmud.

Talmud - Mas. Sukkah 54b

"If [the omission is to be justified] on account of the omission of the eve of the Passover, [the latter, it may be pointed out], is no omission, for this statement 1 is made according to 2 R. Judah who stated, Never in the life of the third group did they reach the verse, I love the Lord, for he heareth my voice, 3 since the people composing the group were few in number. 4 But 5 did you not say that the earlier part of our Mishnah is not in agreement with R. Judah? 6 _ Is it not possible that our Tanna agrees with R. Judah on one point 7 though he disagrees with him on another point? 8 What else then was omitted that we might say that this also was similarly omitted? _ The other omission was the eve of the Passover which fell on the eve of a Sabbath, when six blasts are to be subtracted 9 and six 10 are to be added.

AND NEVER MORE THAN FORTY-EIGHT. No? But is there not the eve of the Passover which falls on the Sabbath, on which, if the statement is in agreement with R. Judah, there were fifty-one blasts, and if it is in agreement with the Rabbis 11 there were fifty-seven? 12 _ [Our Mishnah] mentioned only those which recur annually, but does not mention the case of the eve of the Passover which falls on the Sabbath, since it does not occur every year. Does then the eve of the Sabbath in the Intermediate Days

of a Festival occur every year? May it sometimes not happen at all, this being the case 13 when, for instance, the first day of the Festival coincides with the eve of the Sabbath? 14 _ No, when the first day of the Festival would coincide with the eve of the Sabbath, the Festival is postponed. 15 What is the reason? 16 _ Because if the first day of the Festival were to fall on the eve of the Sabbath, when would the Day of Atonement [of that year] be? On the [previous] Sunday. 17 Therefore it is postponed. 18

But do we postpone it? Have we not in fact learnt, The fats [of offerings performed on] the Sabbath 19 may be offered on the Day of Atonement; 20 and R. Zera furthermore stated, When I was 21 in the school of Rab in Babylon 22 I used to say that that which has been taught, `If the Day of Atonement fell on the eve of the Sabbath, they did not sound the trumpet, 23 and if it fell at the conclusion of the Sabbath 24 they did not recite the Habdalah' 25 is agreed to by all, 26 but when I came up to Palestine 27 I found R. Judah the son of R. Simeon b. Pazzi that he sat at his studies and taught that it was in agreement with R. Akiba only? 28 _ This is no difficulty since the one statement 29 is according to the Rabbis 30 and the other 31 according to `the Others', 32 for it has been taught, `Others' say, There cannot be more than four weekdays' difference between the Pentecost of one year and the next, and between one New Year and the next, 33 and if the year was prolonged, 34 there would be five days. 35

An objection was raised: 36 If New Moon fell on the Sabbath, the Psalm of the New Moon 37 supersedes the Psalm of the Sabbath. 38 Now if the law were [as R. Aha stated], why 39 should not one say both that of the New Moon and that of the Sabbath? 40 _ R. Safra replied: What is meant by `supersedes'? That it 41 supersedes it 42 in the sense of taking precedence over it. But why? [Does not then] that which is constant take precedence over that which is not constant? 43 _ R. Johanan answered, [The New Moon Psalm was given precedence] in order that people should know that the New Moon has been fixed 44 at its proper time. 45 Do we then use this 46 as a distinguishing sign? Do we not in fact use another distinguishing sign, as we have learnt: 47 `The fats 48 of the Daily Morning offering were placed on the lower half of the Ascent [of the altar] on its east side, 49 while those of the additional offerings were placed on the lower half of the Ascent on its west side; 50 while those of the New Moon were placed beneath the rim of the altar below,' 51

(1) The maximum of forty-eight blasts on the eve of the Passover.

(2) Lit., `this according to whom'.

(3) Ps. CXVI,1; sc. they did not complete the Hallel even once. The number of blasts in their case was, therefore, no more than three.

(4) Pes. 64a; most of the people having joined the first, or the second group. Only in the case of these two groups, the offering of whose sacrifices took longer than the singing of the Hallel, owing to their large number, it was necessary to read it a second and a third time.

(5) For the reading cf. Rashal. Cur. edd., `surely we have established'.

(6) Who, contrary to our Mishnah, enumerates a minimum of seven and a maximum of sixteen (v. supra 53b). Now is it likely that the latter clause will be in agreement with his view while the earlier one is not?

(7) As regards the Passover eve.

(8) The number of blasts. As this is, of course, possible the instance of the eve of the Passover could not obviously have been cited and, consequently, could not be regarded as an omission.

(9) From the blasts for the third group, in agreement with R. Judah's statement.

- (10) Of the blast common to every Sabbath eve, the three for ceasing work and the three that served as a mark of distinction between the holy and the profane.
- (11) Who, contrary to R. Judah's statement, maintain that the Hallel was recited three times by the last group also.
- (12) Six more, three for each repetition of the Hallel.
- (13) Lit., 'and how is this to be imagined?'
- (14) The Water-Drawing does not override the first day of the Festival if it is a Sabbath, and the following Sabbath is already the Eighth Day of Solemn Assembly on which the Water-Drawing ceremonial no longer took place.
- (15) By one day. The previous month of Ellul is made to have thirty days instead of twenty-nine, so that the Friday which would have been the fourteenth of Tishri is the thirteenth of the month.
- (16) For the postponement of the first day of the Festival, and consequently, the first of Tishri by one day.
- (17) Since the first day of the Festival is on the fifteenth of Tishri and the Day of Atonement is on the tenth of that month.
- (18) The Day of Atonement was not allowed to fall on a Sunday on account of the difficulties involved. (V. R.H. 20a).
- (19) Sc. the daily evening sacrifice.
- (20) Which immediately follows it. (Shab. XV, 5).
- (21) [So MS.M. V. Shab. 114b, cur. edd. 'we were'.]
- (22) R. Zera was a Babylonian who emigrated to Palestine.
- (23) To warn the people to cease work, since in any case no work was done on that Friday on account of the sanctity of the Day of Atonement.
- (24) Since the Day of Atonement is no less holy than the Sabbath day.
- (25) The prayer of 'distinction' between a holy day and a weekday and between one holy day and another.
- (26) Sc. by R. Ishmael and R. Akiba.
- (27) Lit., 'there'.
- (28) Shab. 114b. Now in any case both the Mishnah and the Baraita cited prove that the Day of Atonement may fall on a Sunday. How then could it be maintained that if it were to fall on a Sunday it must be postponed?
- (29) Our Mishnah which implies that there is no Intermediate Sabbath every year.

- (30) Who allow the addition of an extra day to Ellul to meet certain exigencies. Hence the postponement.
- (31) The Baraita which implies that the Day of Atonement can fall on a Sunday.
- (32) Sc. R. Meir who allows no addition of any extra day to a month to meet certain exigencies and, consequently, no postponement.
- (33) I.e., if in one year it falls on a Sunday, in the next it must be on a Thursday, since the twelve months consist of 29 and 30 days alternately or $6 \times (29 + 30) = 354$ days $= 354/7$ weeks $= 50$ weeks and 4 days.
- (34) By the addition of an extra month.
- (35) The additional intercalated month being always twenty-nine days, R.H. 6b.
- (36) Against R. Aha's view (supra p. 54a) that the trumpet was sounded separately for every additional offering of the day.
- (37) Ps. CIV.
- (38) Ps. XCII.
- (39) Since the sounding of the trumpet accompanied the singing of the Psalms.
- (40) I.e., a separate Psalm for each additional offering, in the same manner as there was a separate sounding of the trumpet.
- (41) The Psalm for the New Moon.
- (42) The Sabbath Psalm.
- (43) It is a general principle that that which has the more common incidence takes precedence over that of the less common occurrence. Why then should not the Sabbath Psalm take precedence over that of the New Moon?
- (44) By the Great Beth din in Jerusalem.
- (45) Not every one can see the birth of the New Moon, and the fact that its Psalm was given preference served as an assurance of the official recognition of the date.
- (46) The precedence of the Psalm.
- (47) Cur. edd. in parenthesis, 'it was taught'.
- (48) The term here refers to all parts of the sacrifice.
- (49) Var. lec. 'west side'.
- (50) Var. lec. 'east side'. So also Maimonides.
- (51) Var. lec. 'on the rim of the altar above'. V. Shek. VIII, 8."

ASSESSMENT OF THE ABOVE QUOTATIONS:

1) Notice footnote 18: "The Day of Atonement was not allowed to fall on a Sunday on account of the difficulties involved. (V. R.H. 20a)." Here we see the influence of postponements being introduced. This is to be seen in conjunction with the subsequent footnotes. Beware of people who try to use this footnote quotation out of context. Above you have the entire context.

2) Notice this quotation: "... I used to say that that which has been taught, 'If the Day of Atonement fell on the eve of the Sabbath, they did not sound the trumpet, 23 and if it fell at the conclusion of the Sabbath 24 they did not recite the Habdalah'25 is agreed to by all ..." This speaks about Atonement falling on a Friday or on a Sunday.

3) The relevant footnotes for this above quotation read: "To warn the people to cease work, since in any case no work was done on that Friday on account of the sanctity of the Day of Atonement." (23) and: "Since the Day of Atonement is no less holy than the Sabbath day." (24).

The Jews knew that the Day of Atonement was NOT "less holy" than the weekly Sabbath days. Yet we have also seen that various sages sanctioned the "trimming of vegetables" on both, the Day of Atonement and on the weekly Sabbath days.

4) Notice carefully also footnote 28: "Shab. 114b. Now in any case both the Mishnah and the Baraitha cited prove that the Day of Atonement may fall on a Sunday. How then could it be maintained that if it were to fall on a Sunday it must be postponed?"

This footnote tells us in plain terms that both, the Mishnah and the Baraitha, "PROVE" that the Day of Atonement may fall on a Sunday! Do you still need "more proof" that the present Jewish calendar with its rules of postponements was not in use at the time of Christ?

5) Notice also footnote 32: "Sc. R. Meir who allows no addition of any extra day to a month to meet certain exigencies and, consequently, no postponement." This refers to a teacher who rejected the postponement rule created to meet "certain exigencies" (i.e. not allowing the Day of Trumpets to fall on a Sunday, Wednesday or Friday).

Because the writing of the Talmud covers such a lengthy period of time (it spanned several centuries), therefore it is also clear that some comments written at a later time may make reference to customs that had been recently introduced, but which did not exist in earlier centuries.

Let's look at the next quotation from the Talmud.

Talmud - Mas. Rosh HaShana 25a

"AND IN THE EVENING IN THE WEST. 1 R. JOHANAN B. NURI THEREUPON SAID, THEY ARE FALSE WITNESSES. 2 WHEN, HOWEVER, THEY CAME TO JABNEH RABBAN GAMALIEL ACCEPTED THEM. ON ANOTHER OCCASION TWO WITNESSES CAME AND SAID, WE SAW IT AT ITS PROPER TIME, 3 BUT ON THE NIGHT WHICH SHOULD HAVE BEEN NEW MOON 4 IT WAS NOT SEEN, AND RABBAN GAMALIEL [HAD ALREADY] ACCEPTED THEIR EVIDENCE. 5 RABBI DOSA B. HARKINAS SAID: THEY ARE FALSE WITNESSES. HOW CAN MEN TESTIFY THAT A WOMAN HAS BORN A CHILD WHEN ON THE NEXT DAY WE SEE HER BELLY STILL SWOLLEN? 6 SAID R. JOSHUA TO HIM: I SEE [THE FORCE OF] YOUR ARGUMENT. THEREUPON RABBAN GAMALIEL SENT TO HIM TO SAY, I ENJOIN UPON YOU TO APPEAR BEFORE ME WITH YOUR STAFF AND YOUR MONEY ON THE DAY WHICH ACCORDING TO YOUR RECKONING SHOULD BE THE DAY OF ATONEMENT. 7 R. AKIBA WENT [TO R. JOSHUA] AND FOUND HIM IN GREAT DISTRESS. 8 HE SAID TO HIM: I CAN BRING PROOF [FROM THE SCRIPTURE] THAT WHATEVER RABBAN GAMALIEL HAS DONE IS VALID, BECAUSE IT SAYS, THESE ARE THE APPOINTED

SEASONS OF THE LORD, HOLY CONVOCATIONS, WHICH YE SHALL PROCLAIM IN THEIR APPOINTED SEASONS, 9 [WHICH MEANS TO SAY THAT] WHETHER THEY ARE PROCLAIMED AT THEIR PROPER TIME OR NOT AT THEIR PROPER TIME, I HAVE NO APPOINTED SEASONS SAVE THESE. 10 HE [R. JOSHUA] THEN WENT TO R. DOSA B. HARKINAS, WHO SAID TO HIM: IF WE CALL IN QUESTION [THE DECISIONS OF] THE BETH DIN OF RABBAN GAMALIEL, WE MUST CALL IN QUESTION THE DECISIONS OF EVERY BETH DIN WHICH HAS EXISTED SINCE THE DAYS OF MOSES UP TO THE PRESENT TIME. FOR IT SAYS, THEN WENT UP MOSES AND AARON, NADAB AND ABIHU AND SEVENTY OF THE ELDERS OF ISRAEL. 11 WHY WERE NOT THE NAMES OF THE ELDERS MENTIONED? TO SHOW THAT EVERY GROUP OF THREE WHICH HAS ACTED AS A BETH DIN OVER ISRAEL IS ON A LEVEL WITH THE BETH DIN OF MOSES. 12 HE [R. JOSHUA] THEREUPON TOOK HIS STAFF AND HIS MONEY AND WENT TO JABNEH TO RABBAN GAMALIEL ON THE DAY ON WHICH THE DAY OF ATONEMENT FELL ACCORDING TO HIS RECKONING. RABBAN GAMALIEL ROSE AND KISSED HIM ON HIS HEAD AND SAID TO HIM: COME IN PEACE, MY TEACHER AND MY DISCIPLE _ MY TEACHER IN WISDOM AND MY DISCIPLE BECAUSE YOU HAVE ACCEPTED MY DECISION.

GEMARA. It has been taught: Rabban Gamaliel said to the Sages: This formula has been handed down to me from the house of my father's father: Sometimes it [the moon] traverses [the heavens] 13 by a long course and sometimes by a short course. 14 R. Johanan said: What is the reason of the house of Rabbi? 15 Because it is written, Who appointest the moon for seasons, the sun knoweth his going down. 16 It is the sun which knows its going down, but the moon does not know its going down. 17

R. Hiyya once saw the [old] moon in the heavens on the morning of the twenty-ninth day. 18 He took a clod of earth and threw it at it, saying, Tonight we want to sanctify you, 19 and are you still here! Go and hide yourself. 20 Rabbi thereupon said to R. Hiyya, Go to En Tob 21 and sanctify the month, 22 and send me the watchword, 'David king of Israel is alive and vigorous'. 23

Our Rabbis taught: Once the heavens were covered with clouds and the likeness of the moon was seen on the twenty-ninth of the month. The public were minded to declare New Moon, and the Beth din wanted to sanctify it, but Rabban Gamaliel said to them: I have it on the authority of the house of my father's father that the renewal of the moon takes place after not less than twenty-nine days and a half and two-thirds of an hour and seventy-three halakin. 24 On that day the mother of Ben Zaza died, and Rabban Gamaliel made a great funeral oration over her, not because she had merited it, but so that the public should know that the Beth din had not sanctified the month. 25

R. AKIBA WENT AND FOUND HIM 26 IN GREAT DISTRESS. The question was asked, Who was in distress? Was R. Akiba in distress or was R. Joshua in distress? _ Come and hear, since it has been taught: 'R. Akiba went and found R. Joshua while he was in great distress. He said to him, Master, why are you in distress? He replied: Akiba, it were better for a man 27 to be on a sick-bed for twelve months than that such an injunction should be laid on him. 28 He said to him, [Master,] will you allow me to tell you something which you yourself have taught me? He said to him, Speak. He then said to him: The text says, 'you', 'you', 'you', three times, 29 to indicate that 'you' [may fix the festivals] even if you err inadvertently, 'you', even if you err deliberately, 'you', even if you are misled. 30 He replied to him in these words: 'Akiba, you have comforted me, you have comforted me'. 31

HE THEN WENT TO R. DOSA B. HARKINAS etc. Our Rabbis taught: Why were not the names of these elders mentioned? So that a man should not say, Is So-and-so like Moses and Aaron? Is So-and-so like Nadab and Abihu? Is So-and-so like Eldad and Medad? 32 Scripture also says, And Samuel said to the people, It is the Lord that made Moses and Aaron, 33 and it says [in the same passage], And the Lord sent Jerubaal and Bedan and Jephthah and Samuel. 34 Jerubaal is Gideon. Why is he called Jerubaal? Because he contended with Baal. Bedan is Samson. Why is he called Bedan? Because he came from Dan. Jephthah is Jephthah

- 1) We should naturally suppose this to mean that they saw the old moon in the morning and the new moon in the evening.
- (2) Presumably because according to what has been stated above (20b) the old moon is never visible for twenty-four hours before the new appears. But v. infra at the beginning of the Gemara and notes.
- (3) Apparently this must have been on the thirtieth day shortly before nightfall.
- (4) Lit., 'the night of its carry-over', i.e., after the nightfall with which the thirty-first day begins, when it should have been clearly visible.
- (5) And declared the thirtieth day New Moon.
- (6) Lit., 'between her teeth'. Similarly the old moon would still be 'between the teeth' of the new.
- (7) The New Moon in question was that of Tishri, and consequently the Day of Atonement according to R. Joshua would fall a day later than according to R. Gamaliel.
- (8) Because he had been ordered to profane the Day of Atonement.
- (9) Lev. XXIII, 4.
- (10) V. supra. 89.
- (11) Ex. XXIV, 9.
- (12) Seeing that most of the members of that Beth din also bore no names of distinction.
- (13) Lit., 'it comes (to its setting place)'.
- (14) This would seem to show that (in the first case mentioned in the Mishnah) the witnesses said that they saw the new moon on both occasions, and R. Johanan b. Nuri rejected them, on the ground that it could not go from, east to west so quickly, while R. Gamaliel held that it could. V. Rashi s.v. rea hsg in the Mishnah.
- (15) Rabbi was a descendent of Rabban Gamaliel.
- (16) Ps. CIV, 19.
- (17) I.e., its speed varies.
- (18) Which was a sign that the new moon would not appear for at least twenty-four hours.
- (19) So that the Day of Atonement should not be on Sunday.
- (20) [Before nightfall, so that there should be no appearance of the old moon after the closing of the twenty-ninth day, which would prevent the thirtieth day from being proclaimed New Moon (Rashi); v. supra p. 85, n. 5].
- (21) A place in Judah where the Beth din [used to meet to sanctify the month. V. Tosaf. s.v. khz .
- (22) Disregarding what you have seen.

(23) I.e., the moon is reborn. The expression is based on Ps. LXXXIX, 38.

(24) Lit., 'parts' (sc. of one hour), $73/1080 \times 60 \text{ m} = 4 \text{ m } 3 \frac{1}{3} \text{ sec}$. The new moon, therefore, could not be seen on the twenty-ninth day.

(25) As a funeral oration would not be delivered on New Moon, which was regarded as a holy day.

(26) [MS.M. omits 'HIM' which explains the question which follows].

(27) [Var. lec.'me'. V. Maharsha.]

(28) Var. lec. 'on me'. V. Maharsha.

(29) I.e., the word o,ut (them) in Lev. XXII, 31, XXIII, 2 and XXIII, 4 is read o,t (you) for homiletical purposes.

(30) By the witnesses.

(31) By showing me that Rabban Gamaliel was within his rights. V. Maharsha ad loc.

(32) I.e., if a man does say so about the Beth din in his own time, we can answer him that they may be at least like the seventy elders who are unknown by name.

(33) 1 Sam. XII, 6.

(34) Ibid.11. These are here put on a par with Moses and Aaron."

ASSESSMENT OF THE ABOVE QUOTATIONS:

1) Notice the statement: "R. Hiyya once saw the [old] moon in the heavens on the morning of the twenty-ninth day. 18 He took a clod of earth and threw it at it, saying, Tonight we want to sanctify you, 19 and are you still here! Go and hide yourself."

Footnote 19 explains: " So that the Day of Atonement should not be on Sunday." Again, this indicates that Atonement COULD have fallen on a Sunday, which R. Hiyya wanted to avoid. It is unlikely that this would have been stated this way if R. Hiyya knew he could rely on a convenient "POSTPONEMENT RULE" to ensure Atonement would not be on a Sunday.

IN SUMMARY:

From the above quotations from the Talmud we can see the following things:

1) The Jews had conflicting views on almost every issue. And the Talmud records these conflicting views. The reasoning is in many cases very shallow and purely hypothetical.

2) It is quite clear that much of the Talmud was written BEFORE Hillel II made his calendar publicly known in the 350's A.D. And thus we find a number of clear references to the fact that before the time of Hillel II the Day of Atonement DID fall on both, Fridays and Sundays.

3) The Talmud also shows that various sages were quite willing to prepare their food ON THE DAY OF ATONEMENT, rather than wait for the Day of Atonement to conclude before cracking their nuts and scraping out their pomegranates and washing their cabbage leaves. To have to wait for a few minutes

after sundown before breaking their fast was considered a "vexing" experience.

4) Since the Day of Atonement DID fall on Fridays and on Sundays, THEREFORE the postponement rule which is specifically designed to prevent this from happening, and which postponement rule is an integral part of the present Jewish calendar, simply did not exist in the first century A.D.

5) Since this postponement rule did not exist during the time of Christ's ministry, since it only came into existence LONG AFTER the Church of God was founded and long after the destruction of Jerusalem, THEREFORE this postponement rule cannot be claimed to have God's approval!

6) Specifically: IF the Church of God from its inception in 30 A.D. (Or if you prefer, in 31 A.D.) observed the same calendar as the Jews did AT THAT TIME, it means that the Church of God STARTED OUT (!!)

observing the Holy Days based on a calendar which did not accept any postponements ... a calendar where ALSO FOR THE CHURCH OF GOD the Day of Atonement could and did fall on Fridays and on Sundays.

For example:

Without the existence of this postponement rule the Day of Atonement fell on a Friday or on a Sunday almost 30 times during the first century A.D.. It was a COMMON occurrence for Atonement to be on a Friday or on a Sunday.

It follows that if more than 100 years later the leaders of the JEWISH religion decided to introduce some postponement rule to make the timing of the Day of Atonement more convenient for themselves (so they wouldn't have to wash their cabbage leaves and crack their nuts and scrape out their pomegranates on the Day of Atonement, etc.) ... THEN THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH WHAT THE CHURCH OF GOD IS TO DO!

When the Church of God in the first century A.D. started out with a calendar which did not recognize any postponements for convenience's sake, why are WE TODAY supposed to adhere to such postponements, which were LATER introduced to comply with unbiblical traditions?

7) For those who insist that in Romans 3:1-2 the Apostle Paul also intended to include the calendar: for the sake of the argument let us suppose that Paul DID intend to include the calendar here. So at the time Paul wrote this in the 50's AD he had in mind a calendar which did not allow the Day of Atonement to be postponed away from a Friday or away from a Sunday (as proved by the Talmud). So in Paul's mind "the oracles that were committed to the Jews" meant that Atonement DID fall on Fridays and on Sundays (in fact about 9 times between 31 AD and 55 AD inclusive). If well over 100 years after Paul's death the Jews introduce A CHANGE to the calendar, a change which Paul had no idea would ever be thought of, then Paul's statement of 100 years earlier cannot be used to justify this change. By introducing this change (i.e. creating a postponement rule to avoid "hardships" on the Day of Atonement) the Jews were in fact DEPARTING FROM the oracles that had been delivered to them. In the same way they have also "departed" from the oracles that were delivered to them in regard to when they observe the Passover and when they observe the Day of Pentecost. Simply because the oracles of God were "delivered" unto them, this does not guarantee that the Jews would remain faithful to abiding by those oracles! The whole Talmud is a testimony that they have not, in their own beliefs and practices, remained faithful to the truth that was delivered to them.

What we need to understand about Romans 3:1-2 is this: the Jews have been faithful in preserving THE WRITTEN WORD OF GOD, the Old Testament part of it! THAT'S ALL!

They have NOT been faithful in the customs and traditions they observe and adhere to! They in many

cases don't even pretend to practice the things they have preserved! Thus: they have "preserved" the truth that the Passover should take place on the 14th of Nisan; yet they themselves do NOTHING AT ALL ON THE 14TH! Instead they do something on the 15th! The 14th doesn't feature in their observances! Their observance of Pentecost is a similar case in point. Their traditions, as recorded in the Talmud, in many cases blatantly contradict clear biblical statements! It has been a major fallacy over the years for people in God's Church to look to the Jews and their customs and their traditions for some kind of guidance and leadership, in the hope that this will increase our understanding of God's plan and purpose.

All they have done is "preserve" a part of the written Word of God! But in many cases they don't have any REAL understanding of what they have been used to preserve. It is EXACTLY the same with the Greeks! The Greeks don't have any more REAL understanding of the part of God's Word they have been used to preserve, than do the Jews of the part they have preserved. Surely we in God's Church understand 1. Corinthians 2:11, that ... "the things of God knows NO MAN, but (by revelation from) the Spirit of God"?! This applies just as much to the Jews, as it does to the Greeks, as it does to ALL people who have not unconditionally submitted their minds to God.

8) For those who wish to argue that the Jews were justified in introducing postponements in order to avoid "hardships": can we not see how UTTERLY CARNAL the Jewish reasoning is?? It is considered "vexing" to have to wait a few minutes after sundown at the end of the Day of Atonement while a few nuts have to be cracked and a few pomegranates have to be scraped out ... even though bread (only two or three days old!) is available IMMEDIATELY for those who feel they can't wait a few minutes longer. Water for drinking would ALSO have been available IMMEDIATELY. The Jewish argument about any delay being "vexing" is just as ridiculous as the argument about the man who didn't know whether he had had sex with his own menstruant wife or with his own sister!

There is simply no substance to the Jewish argument that postponements were introduced to avoid "hardships"!

Thus, in summary, not only is there no biblical support for the postponement rules of the Jewish calendar; but the Jews themselves have preserved the evidence (in their Talmud) that these postponement rules did not exist in the first century A.D. They only came to the fore much later, around the time of Hillel II, in the 300's A.D.

By that time the Church of God had been observing the Holy Days based on a calendar which did not recognize any postponement rules for several centuries, assuming they had started out with the same calendar the Jews had in the first century A.D. WHY should the scattered Church of God in the fourth century A.D. (they had long left the area of Palestine) have followed the Jews in this new idea of "POSTPONING" the Holy Days in order to avoid them falling on "inconvenient" days? God's people would have known that the early apostles didn't use a calendar with such postponements. So would God's people not have questioned the authority on which such postponements were introduced? After all, by the fourth century A.D. there was no such thing as any PHARISEE "sitting on the seat of Moses" ... that had come to an end centuries earlier!

Also, would God's people in the fourth century A.D. not at least OCCASIONALLY have looked at the sky and observed the appearance of the new moon ... and wondered why the Jews around them wanted to "postpone" the start of the month? [Sometimes a postponement of 2 days is invoked.]

And WHY should the scattered Church of God have followed the changed sequence of leap years which Hillel II formally instituted ... when this changed sequence of leap years SQUARELY placed the ENTIRE Feast of Tabernacles FULLY into the summer for at least TWO years in every 19-year cycle? Examples: in 360 A.D. (right after Hillel's reform) the 7th Day of Tabernacles (according to Hillel's calendar) would

have been on September 17th!! And in 368 A.D. it would have been on September 19th! And in 379 A.D. it would have been on September 18th! These are all dates that are still before the end of summer on September 22nd!

Would God's people in the 360's A.D. REALLY have started to keep the ENTIRE Feast of Tabernacles in the summer?

The Talmud proves conclusively that the present Jewish calendar was not used in the first century A.D., at the time when the Church of God was founded. And this evidence is at this present time not well-received by any of the major branches of the Church of God. That's rather sad.

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