

## Colossians 2:16 Ordinances, Feasts And Holydays – <http://www.colossians-2-16.info>

It is disappointing that this verse is rapidly becoming one of the most abused passages in the Word of God. It has also long been one of the enemy's favourite passages to have Christians believe that the fourth Commandment or [God's Ten Commandments](#) are abolished. But it does not stop there. If our adversary can add enough confusion, then he still succeeds as Christians get to the stage where they do not know what to believe and so the truth remains elusive. Sadly, it is abused even through those that know that all Ten Commandments still stand but this deceived group manipulate the meaning of the words in Colossians 2:16 to insist that Paul is saying that Christians should still be keeping all the Holy Feast days such as Passover etc that were nailed to the cross. Here is the passage in contention.

**Colossians 2:14-17** *"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. 16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink [offerings], or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: 17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."*

The following are the four most common misunderstandings, or to the grievousness of God, because some are not looking for truth, but instead are looking for a smooth, easy, comfortable religion that allows them to live anyway they please and still give assurance of salvation. There is indeed no true religion that can do that, and sadly, Matthew 7:21-23 describes the potential outcome for those who choose that path. It is my heartfelt prayer that they and the rest of us all seek after truth in love and humility. They say:

1. Colossians 2:14-16 abolishes all Ten Commandments.
2. Verse 16 abolishes the fourth Commandment only. (A favourite among many)
3. Verse 16 does away with the foods God called an abomination. (unclean)
4. Colossians 2:14-17 says we have to keep the ordinances being the sacrificial part of the Mosaic Law such as Passover and all the other Holy feast days. (ceremonial law)

The following list is the most common reasons as to how the above four misunderstandings are justified.

1. The word ordinances in verse 14 means the Ten Commandments.
2. The phrase *"blotting out the handwriting"* in verse 14 means the Ten Commandments because the Ten Commandments were written with God's finger and they say you don't get much more handwritten than God's finger.
3. The phrase *"sabbath days"* (Plural) in verse 16 is referring to the fourth Commandment the Sabbath.
4. The Greek New Testament shows the declension for *"sabbath"* in verse 16 as N-GPN, which stands for "Noun-Genitive-**Plural**-Neuter," that is, *"sabbaths"* or *"sabbaths days."* Some say the phrase *"sabbath days"* is not plural because the KJV Bible has translated other verses in the singular where the Greek New Testament shows the declension for sabbath as N-GPN, therefore *"sabbath days"* must be singular, that is, *"the Sabbath."*
5. The unclean foods are abolished in this passage because modern Bible translations say *"Do not let anyone judge you in what you eat or drink."*
6. The word *"sabbath"* in verse 16 is the ceremonial sabbaths and the fourth Commandment the Sabbath because the word used in both cases in the New Testament is *"Sabbaton."*
7. In regards to those who insist that Paul is saying that the feast holydays must still be kept, it is said that ALL commentaries that say verse 16 is referring to the ceremonial sabbaths only and that they were nailed to the cross, are commentaries belonging to a specific Church.

### **What is the True Meaning of Colossians 2:16?**

So what does the entire passage of Colossians 2:14-17 really mean? One by one we will cover all the above heresies but first let's do some ground work. What are the Ten Commandments and what was done to make reconciliation for sin before Christ died on the cross?

The Bible speaks of two Laws of which there is much confusion but it need not be as when one breaks down the purpose of these laws it becomes very clear. Law Number 1 is called *"the Ten Commandments or Two tablets of the Testimony,"* the *"Moral Law,"* and the *"Decalogue."* Law Number 2 is called the *"Mosaic Law or Law of Moses,"* the *"Book of the Law or Book of the Covenant,"* the *"Ordinances"* and the *"Ceremonial Law."* If an Israelite sinned, he broke Law Number 1, the Ten Commandment Moral Law. He then had to bring his offering according to Law Number 2, the Sacrificial Law to receive forgiveness. This is the relationship between these two laws. Law Number 1 defines sin, as sin is the transgression of the Law (1 John 3:4) and Law Number 2 defines sacrifices, the ceremonial Law which was the remedy for sin.

So put simply, when the Israelite sinned he broke Law number 1. To make atonement for his sin he had to obey Law number 2. This Ceremonial law is easily identified in the Bible as it talks about circumcision (a religious Jewish rite), sacrifices, offerings, purifications, holydays, and other rites that were associated with the Hebrew sanctuary service. So here are two very distinct laws. Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ permanently took the place of Law Number 2 when He cried out *"It is finished"* and bowed His head and

died. When that unseen hand tore the temple curtain from top to bottom, (Matthew 27:51) this signified that the ceremonial law was once and for all permanently nailed to the cross.

So what is sin and why did Jesus die on the cross for us? If I were to commit adultery, would that be sin? Of course! What about murder or stealing? Would that be sin? How about worshipping idols or taking the Lord's name in vain? These of course would all be sin and it is because of this sin that Jesus died on the cross for us. Having already identified what sin is, let's see if the Bible agrees with us.

**1 John 3:4** "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."  
**Romans 4:15** "Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression."

Romans 4:15 corroborates 1 John 3:4 and shows that if there was no law then there would be no transgression of the law, which is sin. Hence, if we have sin then we have a law. If there is no sin then there is no law. It does not get more simple than that. It is no different in secular society. If there was no law, then people could murder, steal and do what ever they wanted as there would be no law and so there would be no transgression of man's law and society would be dreadful, fearful and chaotic and everyone would be fighting for their lives. Today we have murder, suicide, rape, adultery, fornication, thefts, muggings, idolatry, pornography, child abuse and classmates shooting classmates. There are even elderly men and women being beaten in their homes for a few dollars. You can understand those belonging to this world not wanting any law to follow, but what sort of message does it send to secular society when Christians start teaching that these ten great laws of love, the Ten Commandments are abolished? Is any one of us without sin? There was of course only ONE who was perfect and without sin.

**Romans 3:23** "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"

**1 John 1:8** "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

What does the Bible say the consequences for sin are? **Romans 6:23** "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." However, **1 John 1:9** says "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

So did Jesus die to redeem us from consequences of sin and hence pay the penalty for our sin, or so we could continue living in sin? The following passage is the easiest and clearest way to answer this question.

**Hebrews 10:26-29** "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, ... **28** He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: **29** Of how much sorer punishment, suppose you, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden under foot the Son of God, and has counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and has done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"

Since sin is transgression of the law and Hebrews 10:26 says that there is NO SACRIFICE that will cover wilful sin, then it becomes perfectly clear that Jesus did not die so we could continue living in sin. We are told that to continue in sin (breaking God's Commandments) is to tread the Son of God under our feet. Does anyone desire to tread Jesus under foot in thanks for His sacrifice and love? We are also informed it is to count the blood of the New Covenant as an UNHOLY thing despite being under God's Grace. Having covered the groundwork, let's look at the most common excuses used with Colossians 2:14-17.

### Explanation number 1

Explanation number 1 was that the ordinances are the Ten Commandments. I don't believe one can come to this conclusion without being intentionally misled. Let's look at the meaning of the Greek word for "ordinances" used in verse 14 as well as for the Greek words for "Law" and "Commandments."

**Colossians 2:14** "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances [dogmah]."

**Strong's Definition: G1378** dogma, pronounced dog'-mah.

From the base of G1380; a law (civil, ceremonial or ecclesiastical): - decree, ordinance.

The Strong's dictionary states that it can be a type of law but what type? Does it say that it is the Ten Commandment law or God's law? No it does not. It says that it can be a "civil law," "ceremonial law" or "ecclesiastical law" and a decree or ordinance.

When one studies the context of this passage, it becomes clear that it is the "ordinances" which is also known as the ceremonial law (*a phrase used by many famous theologians but does not occur in scripture*) being the sacrificial part of the "Law of Moses" which is also known as the "Mosaic Law."

For further clarity, what is the basic definition from the Thayer dictionary?

**Thayer Definition: G1378** dogma

**1)** Doctrine, decree, ordinance

**2)** The rules and requirements of the Law of Moses; carrying a suggestion of severity and of threatened judgment

**3)** Of certain decrees of the apostles relative to right living

As one would expect, the Thayer dictionary supports the Strong's dictionary but also gives further clarity by stating directly the "Law of Moses" although only the sacrificial part of it. So how do people get the Ten Commandments from the Greek word "dogmah"? You obviously cannot. It is just one of many lies from the enemy to convince Christians that they no longer need be obedient to God in love or one of many excuses from those who simply do not want truth. This is not loving God with all ones heart, might and soul and can only end with one conclusion, and no one should desire to go down that path.

Let's look at what Greek words would have been used in order for the Ten Commandments to have been referred to even though the context of the passage would still be totally incorrect. The Greek word for "Commandments" that is used consistently all through the New Testament when referring to the Ten Commandments according to the Strong's dictionary is:

**Strong's Definition: G1785** entole, pronounced *en-tol-ay'* From G1781; *injunction*, that is, an authoritative *prescription*: - commandment, precept.

The following verse is before the cross where the Ten Commandments and the sacrificial ordinances were both still relevant. Here we find the use of the word Commandments, (*entole*) that is, the Ten Commandments, and the word ordinances referring to the Hebrew sacrificial sanctuary system. Are the "Ten Commandments" and the "Ordinances" the same thing? It should now be starting to come clear that they definitely are not.

**Luke 1:6** "And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the **commandments** AND **ordinances** of the Lord blameless."

Below a few more examples of verses using the Greek word "entole" used for the Ten Commandments.

**Luke 23:56** "And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the **commandment**."

**John 14:15** "If you love me, keep my **commandments**."

**Romans 13:9** "For this, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not kill, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, You shall not covet; and if there be any other **commandment**, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, You shall love your neighbour as thyself."

**1 Corinthians 7:19** "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the **commandments** of God."

**1 John 2:3-4** "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his **commandments**. 4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his **commandments**, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

**1 John 5:2-3** "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his **commandments**. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his **commandments**: and his **commandments** are not grievous."

**Revelation 12:17** "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the **commandments** of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

**Revelation 14:12** "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the **commandments** of God, and the faith of Jesus."

**Revelation 22:14** "Blessed are they that do his **commandments**, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

Why didn't Paul use this Greek word if he was referring to the Ten Commandments? Because Paul is speaking of the ordinances of the ceremonial law, which we will also soon see from the passage context.

The other word that could have been used if Paul was referring to the Ten Commandment law would be to actually use the word "Law." In more than 99% of the uses of the word "Law" in the New Testament, the word "Law" is either referring to the "Law of Moses" or the "Law of God" being the Ten Commandments. The Greek word for "Law" is "nomos" and the Strong's definition is below.

**Strong's: G3551** nomos, pronounced *nom'-os*. From a primary word nemo (to *parcel* out, especially *food* or *grazing* to animals); *law* (through the idea of prescriptive *usage*), generally (*regulation*), specifically (of Moses [including the volume]; also of the Gospel), or figuratively (a *principle*): - law.

So again, why didn't Paul use the word "nomos" if he was referring to the Ten Commandments or for that matter, the entire "Law of Moses?" Paul did not use the word "nomos" either because he is referring ONLY to the sacrificial part of the "Law of Moses" which is called the ceremonial law or to use the Biblical term, the "ordinances" as very accurately translated by the King James Bible.

The argument that the Greek word "dogmah," which is most accurately translated to ordinances, is referring to the Ten Commandments is total ignorance or an absolutely sorrowful attempt by those who do not want to acknowledge God's Commandments. Satan is always busy looking for anyone he can manipulate into spreading false doctrine to keep as many as possible from the kingdom. Sadly, he has had no trouble in finding many people in the last few decades and the amount of heretical teaching is on the rapid increase as we draw nearer to Earth's final days. This is something we should of course expect.

## Explanation number 2

The phrase "*blotting out the handwriting*" in Colossians 2:14 means the Ten Commandments because the Ten Commandments were written with God's finger and they say you don't get much more handwritten than God's finger.

How God must grieve when he hears reasons like this one given in avoiding loving obedience to Him. The ordinances which were part of the "Law of Moses" were handwritten while the Ten Commandments were written by God's finger. Is a child painting with their finger called finger painting or hand painting? Did God ever write any ordinances with His hand? He did NOT in fact. It is slowly going to become clearer and clearer that this passage is and can only be referring to the sacrificial part of the "Law of Moses," which was written by the hand of Moses. So is the following hand writing or finger writing by God?

**Exodus 31:18** "*And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, **written with the finger of God.***"

Now note in the following verse that the "ordinances" were by the "hand of Moses" and that the "ordinances" are SEPARATE from the "Whole Law" and the "Statutes." The Ten Commandments are indeed separate from the "ordinances," which was also demonstrated well in Luke 1:6 shown previously.

**2 Chronicles 33:8** "*Neither will I any more remove the foot of Israel from out of the land which I have appointed for your fathers; so that they will take heed to do all that I have commanded them, according to the **whole law** AND the **statutes** AND the **ordinances** by the **hand of Moses.***"

## Explanation or Reason number 3

The phrase "sabbath days" (Plural) in Colossians 2:16 is referring to the fourth Commandment the Sabbath.

I call this an explanation or reason as many do legitimately misunderstand this. The word "sabbaths" or phrase "sabbath days" is the correct translation as the Greek is plural here as these were ceremonial sabbaths that were part of the ordinances. It is now time to establish a clearer meaning of this whole passage to understand this. Do you remember from earlier that the sacrificial law, which was also called the "ordinances" was to make reconciliation for sin? If we look closely now at the context of Colossians 2:14, we will note that Paul is saying that these ordinances were "*against us*" AND "*contrary to us.*" Why?

**Colossians 2:14** "*Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was **against us**, which was **contrary to us**, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;*"

Here Paul pushes the point very hard that these ordinances were bondage but even more significantly, Paul says they were taken out of the way and nailed to the cross. To establish what was nailed to the cross, all we have to do is ask ourselves what was it that Jesus Christ died on the cross for. He was nailed to the cross to redeem us from the consequences of our sin. And what was it that was practiced to make reconciliation for our sin before the cross? The sacrificial law! It was the ordinances that were nailed to the cross as Jesus brought an end to the whole sacrificial system by becoming that ONE and final perfect sacrifice, which was also signified by the unseen hand tearing the temple curtain from top to bottom.

**Matthew 27:51 NIV** "*At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split.*"

This passage and its context is really very simple but let's look at a passage in the Old Testament for even more clarity that you will note speaks of some of what the "ordinances" entailed and that is was to make reconciliation for sin and included the Holy Feast days such as Passover. Note especially verse 17 which is the perfect parallel to Colossians 2:16. So what is it that is being referred to in this passage?

**Ezekiel 45:13-25 KJV** "*This is the **oblation** [offering] that you shall offer; the sixth part of an ephah of an homer of wheat, and you shall give the sixth part of an ephah of an homer of barley: **14** Concerning the **ordinance** of oil, the bath of oil, you shall offer the tenth part of a bath out of the cor, which is an homer of ten baths; for ten baths are an homer: **15** And one lamb out of the flock, out of two hundred, out of the fat pastures of Israel; for a meat offering, and for a burnt offering, and for peace offerings, **to make reconciliation for them**, saith the Lord GOD. **16** All the people of the land shall give this oblation for the prince in Israel. **17** And it shall be the prince's part to give burnt offerings, and **meat offerings, and drink offerings**, in the **feasts** [holy day], and in the **new moons**, and in the **sabbaths**, in all solemnities of the house of Israel: he shall prepare **the sin offering**, and the meat offering, and the burnt offering, and the peace offerings, **to make reconciliation for the house of Israel.** **18** Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the first month, in the first day of the month, you shall take a young bullock without blemish, and cleanse the sanctuary: **19** And the priest shall take of **the blood of the sin offering**, and put it upon the posts of the house, and upon the four corners of the settle of the altar, and upon the posts of the gate of the inner court. **20** And so you shall do the seventh day of the month for every one that erreth, and for him that is simple: so shall you reconcile the house. **21** In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month, you shall have the **Passover**, a feast of seven days; **unleavened bread** shall be eaten. **22** And upon that day shall the prince prepare for himself and for all the people of the land*



a bullock for a sin offering. 23 And seven days of the feast he shall prepare a burnt offering to the LORD, seven bullocks and seven rams without blemish daily the seven days; and a kid of the goats daily **for a sin offering**. 24 And he shall prepare a meat offering of an ephah for a bullock, and an ephah for a ram, and an hin of oil for an ephah. 25 In the seventh month, in the fifteenth day of the month, shall he do the like in the feast of the seven days, according to the sin offering, according to the burnt offering, and according to the meat offering, and according to the oil." Parenthesis are added.

The "ordinances" were what was practiced to make reconciliation for the sin of the people. It involved **meat offerings** and **drink offerings**, **Holy day** festivals [feasts] in the monthly **new moons** and on the various ceremonial **sabbaths**, such as Passover and the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) for instance, which were all yearly ceremonial sabbaths.

Most modern Bible translations have mistranslated meat and drink offerings to "what you eat or drink" as in unclean foods. This is incorrect as unclean foods are not part of the "ordinances" of the sacrificial system in any way whatsoever. Not only did they mistranslate this, but if the translators had of stopped and thought about it, they would have realized that there is *no* such thing as unclean drinks. Unclean drinks are not found anywhere in the Word of God as they do *not* exist. It is therefore impossible for unclean drinks to be referred to here since there is *no* such thing and unclean foods are not part of the ordinances and so do not fit the context in the slightest. Meat and drink offerings on the other hand fit the context perfectly and *are* part of the ordinances as we also saw in Ezekiel 45:17.

The original Greek text often has words left out were the translators have to work out what word is missing and add it in. See [false teachings and doctrines exposed](#). When the translators of the KJV and NKJV Bible add a word in, it is added in *italics* to show that it did not exist in the original Greek text. The translators of the KJV Bible have done the most accurate job at translating this particular passage, but in Colossians 2:16, even they apparently did not realize that the word "offerings" was missing and so we ended up with "meat, or in drink" instead of "meat, or in drink offerings," which is exactly what was in the ordinances. Observe below that the missing word has been added and then compare it with Ezekiel 45:17.

**Colossians 2:16** "Let no man therefore judge you in **meat, or in drink** [offerings], or in respect of an **holyday**, or of the **new moon**, or of the **sabbath days**:" Parenthesis are added.

It is a perfect parallel as you would expect since Ezekiel 45 is referring to the ordinances that was to make reconciliation for sin which is exactly what Jesus brought to an end when He died on the cross. Jesus became our Passover Lamb and even died on Passover at exactly the same time the Passover Lamb was about to be sacrificed in the temple. This is what is known as *type* and *antitype*. For every feast there is an antitype. To fully comprehend the purpose of the ceremonial ordinances, one must understand the principle of *type* and *antitype*. The sequence of days observed for the feasts as shown in scripture is the "*type*." This sequence of days is symbolic of what was to come in the future and for its fulfilment which is the "*antitype*." The *type* and *antitype* MUST and WILL match precisely. Feast of weeks for instance is the *type* and Pentecost is the *antitype* and its fulfilment. This is what is meant by shadows in verse 17.

**Colossians 2:17** "Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ."

All the various feast holydays of the ceremonial ordinances were a "shadow" of something to come. What were they a shadow of? Passover was the *type* and shadow of the death of Jesus on the cross who became our Passover Lamb. When Jesus was crucified, Passover and the *antitype* was fulfilled and the shadow disappeared, that is, it was nailed to the cross and ended for ever. **Leviticus 23:5** says, "In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S Passover." And the feast the day after was a shadow of the time Jesus spent in the grave. **Leviticus 23:6** "And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days you must eat unleavened bread." The Feast of weeks, which occurred fifty days after Passover, was a shadow of Pentecost, which of course was fifty days after Jesus was crucified. It also coincided with the giving of the Ten Commandments. **Leviticus 23:15-16** "And you shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall you number fifty days; and you shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD." The fourth Commandment the Sabbath on the other hand is not and cannot be a *type* of anything as it was established before the fall, and so has no *shadow* and is eternal as are all Ten Commandments.

Note that the word "holyday" in Colossians 2:16 is synonymous with a feast day as feast days are festivals and holydays. Note the Strong's dictionary definition.

**Strong's: G1859** heorte, pronounced *heh-or-tay'*. Of uncertain affinity; a *festival*: - feast, holyday.

For instance, "Alexander Campbell's" Living Oracles uses the word festival which means feast day, in place of Holyday that is used in the KJV Bible and is an exact parallel of Ezekiel 45:17.

**KJV** "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink [offerings], or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:"

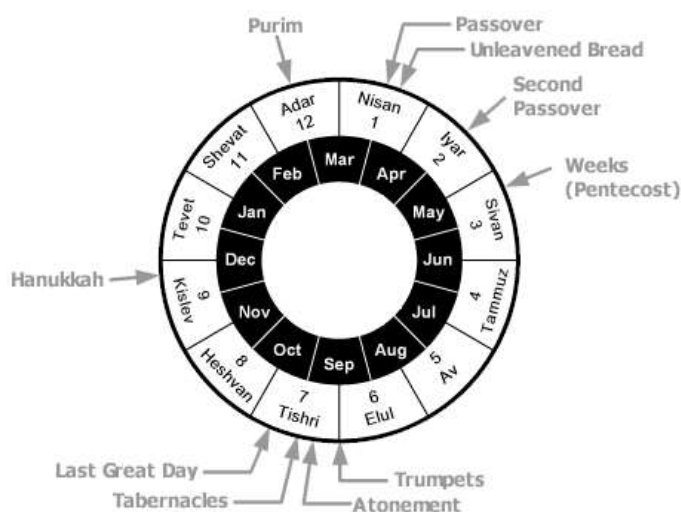
LONT "Let no one, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink [offerings], or in respect of a festival, or of a new moon, or of sabbaths;"

The ordinances had seven ceremonial sabbaths such as Passover, which you would have observed in Ezekiel 45:21 previously. The table below gives an overview of the various feast Holydays that were part of the ordinances, which is also referred to as the ceremonial law. The phrase "ceremonial law" does not occur in scripture but is used by many famous theologians and Bible commentaries as it is a law and it involves various ceremonies. This law was written in a book by Moses (hence two of its names, Book of the Law and Mosaic Law) and you will note that this law had several ceremonial sabbaths that so often get confused with the fourth Commandment (written in stone by God) of the Ten Commandments which is the Sabbath of the Lord and is eternal for everyone as are the other nine Commandments. The ceremonial sabbaths on the other hand were temporary and for literal Israel only, and WERE nailed to the cross.

2 Chronicles 8:13 "Even after a certain rate every day, offering according to **the commandment of Moses**, on the **sabbaths**, and on the **new moons**, and on the solemn **feasts**, three times in the year, even in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles."

Spring Festivals					Autumn Festivals			
Passover	Unleavened Bread			Pentecost	Trumpets	Atonement	Tabernacles	
Leviticus 23:4-5	Leviticus 23:6-8			Leviticus 23:15-21	Leviticus 23:23-25	Leviticus 23:26-32	Leviticus 23:33-44	
		Leviticus 23:9-14						
14th Day 1st Month (Nisan)	A Week Long Festival 15th to 21st Day 1st Month (Nisan)			50 days from 15 Nisan (6 Sivan)	1st day 7th Month (Tishri)	10th Day 7th Month (Tishri)	An Eight Day Festival 15th to 22nd Day 7th Month (Tishri)	
Erev Pesah	Pesah 1st Day of Festival	Omer Firstfruits	Yom Tov 7th Day of Festival	Shavuot Feast of Weeks or Firstfruits	Rosh Ha-shanah	Yom Kippur	Sukkoth 1st Day of Festival	Shemini Atzeret 8th Day of Festival
	15th Day 1st Month (Nisan)	16th Day 1st Month (Nisan)	21st Day 1st Month (Nisan)				15th Day 7th Month (Tishri)	22nd Day 7th Month (Tishri)
	A Sabbath	Not a Sabbath	A Sabbath	A Sabbath	A Sabbath	A Sabbath	A Sabbath	A Sabbath
Crucifixion		Resurrection		Holy Spirit	Warning	Judgment	Ingathering	
	In Jerusalem			In Jerusalem			In Jerusalem	
	Barley Harvest			Wheat Harvest			Fruit Harvest	
	Latter Rains						Early Rains	

The following image shows the various feasts and the time of year they were held.



#### Explanation number 4

The Greek New Testament shows the declension for "sabbath" in Colossians 2:16 as N-GPN, which stands for "Noun-Genitive-**Plural**-Neuter," that is, "sabbaths" or "sabbaths days." Some say the phrase "sabbath days" is not plural because the KJV Bible has translated other verses in the singular where the Greek New Testament shows the declension for sabbath as N-GPN, therefore "sabbath days" must be singular, that is, "the Sabbath."

The declension given is accurate in the Greek New Testament and sometimes different translations have translated elsewhere in the singular where it should have been plural but this is the mistake of the translators and does not change the fact that plural is

correct in the KJV Bible and the majority of others that got this right, and as we have seen, this fits the context of the passage perfectly where one of the Ten Commandments can not possibly be referred to as the Ten Commandments are not the ordinances and did not end at the cross. Why should they? Did love end at the cross? I have devoted a whole web site to this one topic so if you would like to look at this more in depth then please read [Plural or Singular?](#)

#### Explanation number 5

The unclean foods are abolished in this passage because modern Bible translations say "Do not let anyone judge you in what you eat or drink."

This was previously explained in explanation number 3.

## Explanation number 6

The word sabbath in verse 16 is the ceremonial sabbaths and the fourth Commandment the Sabbath because the word used in both cases in the New Testament is "Sabbaton."

This argument is used by those who keep the Sabbath of the Lord but also insist that the ceremonial sabbaths must also still be kept. The argument is that every use of the Greek word "Sabbaton" in the New Testament that says "Sabbath Day" other than Colossians 2:16 are referring to the fourth Commandment so therefore, since it uses the same Greek word "Sabbaton" for sabbath days, it must be referring to the Sabbath of the Lord also. This is really bad exegesis and theology. One cannot base their theology on how many other places a particular Greek word is translated in a certain way.

It saddens me to say that this person titled this following quote under the title "Rocket science update!!!"

*"Thus it is reasonable and logical to conclude, regardless of your I.Q., that the Greek word Sabbaton in Colossians 2:16 also refers to the weekly Sabbath. This is the conclusion of every single bible commentary known to man. With one exception, the SDA bible commentary."*

The above statement in regards to "This is the conclusion of every single bible commentary known to man" is dishonest and casts serious doubt as to whether this person can be trusted at all and is only trying to convince others of what they want to believe. See excuse number 7. This person is attacking a particular Church in an attempt to twist this passage into saying that the ordinances still have to be followed, that is, we still need to keep all the feast holydays such as Passover. The context of this passage was totally ignored by this person who just played on the Greek words in an attempt to justify their argument. The Greek word used for Sabbath is "Sabbaton" all through the New Testament as it simply means a day of rest. It just means "Sabbath." The fourth Commandment is called "Sabbath" and the ceremonial sabbaths are also called "sabbath." Why would one expect the Greek word to change? It just means "Sabbath," which means a day of rest. There is only one way to establish if it is the Sabbath of the Lord or a ceremonial sabbath being referred to and that is by the context and wording of the passage.

Sometimes it is easy as God calls His Sabbath "MY Sabbath" where the ceremonial sabbaths were called "HER sabbaths" as in they were for Israel only. These first two you will note refer to the fourth Commandment the Sabbath of the Lord.

**Exodus 31:13** "Speak you also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily **my sabbaths** you shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that you may know that I am the LORD that does sanctify you."

**Ezekiel 20:20** "And hallow **my sabbaths**; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that you may know that I am the LORD your God."

These next two verses refer to ceremonial sabbaths that were for Israel only. You will note the resemblance in the next verse once again to Colossians 2:16. Note how it refers to the **holy feast days**, the **new moons** and the **sabbath days** that God WILL bring to an end, that is, to cease.

**Hosea 2:11** "I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her **feast days**, her **new moons**, and **her sabbaths**, and all her solemn feasts."

**Lamentations 1:7** "Jerusalem remembered in the days of her affliction and of her miseries all her pleasant things that she had in the days of old, when her people fell into the hand of the enemy, and none did help her: the adversaries saw her, and did mock at **her sabbaths**."

## Explanation number 7

In regards to those who insist that Paul is saying that the feast holydays must still be kept, it is said that ALL commentaries that say Colossians 2:16 is referring to the ceremonial sabbaths only and that they were nailed to the cross, are Seventh Day Adventist commentaries.

The person responsible for this statement gave me a link to their web site in order to try and convince me to come around to their way of thinking. See their "Rocket science update!!!" in "Explanation number 6"

I informed this person that this was incorrect and gave them commentaries for proof. I was thanked for the information that they should have already known and was told that this would promptly be corrected. I checked a few weeks on to see if they had done what they promised but sadly, I found this incorrect and dishonest information still on their web site. Why? To leave this information on their site that they do not deny is wrong is willful sin of which no sacrifice will cover as this is deliberate un-repentant sin. (Hebrews 10:16) They acknowledged this error but failed to change it. Why not? Something is seriously wrong here. This person also stated on their web site that Jesus kept the feast Holydays that **ended at the cross** and He is our perfect example so we should keep them also. Again, there is something seriously wrong this statement and theology. They ended when He died on the cross! Did Jesus keep them after the cross? No, He did not. Oddly enough, it is normally Christians avoiding obedience to God in regards to the fourth Commandment the Sabbath but in this case these dishonest and nonsensical statements are being used to justify obeying God in something that Paul called bondage and was nailed to the cross. Keeping these

feasts denies the work of Jesus on the cross, and it is wrong to teach others false doctrine based on their own desires that add confusion and loss of truth. Jesus ABOLISHED these "ordinances" at the cross.

**Ephesians 2:15** "Having **ABOLISHED** in his flesh the enmity, **even the law of commandments contained in ordinances**; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;"

Here are three very famous and well known Bible commentaries that I gave them that do not belong to any particular denomination. You will note that the first one totally disagrees with this person's theology on the use of the word "sabbath." Their statement "regardless of your I.Q." is very sad as it implies that even if you are unintelligent, you should still see it their way even though it is wrong and unbiblical.

#### **Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Albert Barnes (1798-1870)**

**"Or of the Sabbath days** - Greek, "of the Sabbaths." The word Sabbath in the Old Testament is applied not only to the seventh day, but to all the days of holy rest that were observed by the Hebrews, and particularly to the beginning and close of their great festivals. There is, doubtless, reference to those days in this place, since the word is used in the plural number, and the apostle does not refer particularly to the Sabbath properly so called. There is no evidence from this passage that he would teach that there was no obligation to observe any holy time, for there is not the slightest reason to believe that he meant to teach that one of the ten commandments had ceased to be binding on mankind. If he had used the word in the singular number - "the Sabbath," it would then, of course, have been clear that he meant to teach that that commandment had ceased to be binding, and that a Sabbath was no longer to be observed. But the use of the term in the plural number, and the connection, show that he had his eye on the great number of days which were observed by the Hebrews as festivals, as a part of their ceremonial and typical law, and not to the moral law, or the Ten Commandments. No part of the moral law - no one of the ten commandments could be spoken of as "a shadow of good things to come." These commandments are, from the nature of moral law, of perpetual and universal obligation."

#### **Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible, Adam Clarke, LL.D., F.S.A., (1715-1832)**

**"Blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances** - By the hand-writing of ordinances the apostle most evidently means the ceremonial law: this was against them, for they were bound to fulfill it; and it was contrary to them, as condemning them for their neglect and transgression of it. This law God himself has blotted out.

Blotting out the hand-writing is probably an allusion to [Num 5:23](#), where the curses written in the book, in the case of the woman suspected of adultery, are directed to be blotted out with the bitter waters. And there can be little doubt of a farther allusion, viz., to the custom of discharging the writing from parchment by the application of such a fluid as the muriatic acid, which immediately dissolves those ferruginous calces which constitute the blackening principle of most inks. But the East India inks, being formed only of simple black, such as burnt ivory, or cork, and gum water, may be wiped clean off from the surface of the paper or parchment by the application of a wet sponge, so as to leave not one legible vestige remaining: this I have often proved.

**Nailing it to his cross** - When Christ was nailed to the cross, our obligation to fulfill these ordinances was done away. There may be another reference here to some ancient mode of annulling legal obligations, by nailing them to a post; but I do not recollect at present an instance or example. Antiquated laws are said to have been thus abrogated."

**"Let no man - judge you in meat, or in drink** - The apostle speaks here in reference to some particulars of the hand-writing of ordinances, which had been taken away, ... and the necessity of observing certain holydays or festivals, such as the new moons and particular sabbaths, or those which should be observed with more than ordinary solemnity; all these had been taken out of the way and nailed to the cross, and were no longer of moral obligation. There is no intimation here that the Sabbath was done away, or that its moral use was superseded, by the introduction of Christianity. I have shown elsewhere that, Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, is a command of perpetual obligation, and can never be superseded but by the final termination of time. As it is a type of that rest which remains for the people of God, of an eternity of bliss, it must continue in full force till that eternity arrives; for no type ever ceases till the antitype be come. Besides, it is not clear that the apostle refers at all to the Sabbath in this place, whether Jewish or Christian; his [σαββατων](#), of sabbaths or weeks, most probably refers to their feasts of weeks, of which much has been said in the notes on the Pentateuch."

#### **Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown Commentary**

**"holyday** — a feast yearly. Compare the three, [1Ch 23:31](#).

**new moon** — monthly.

**the sabbath** — Omit "THE," which is not in the Greek (compare Note, see on [Gal 4:10](#)). "SABBATHS" (not "the sabbaths") of the day of atonement and feast of tabernacles have come to an end with the Jewish services to which they belonged ([Lev 23:32](#), [Lev 23:37-39](#)). The weekly sabbath rests on a more permanent foundation, having been instituted in Paradise to commemorate the completion of creation in six days. [Lev 23:38](#) expressly distinguished "the sabbath of the Lord" from the other sabbaths. A positive precept is right because it is commanded, and ceases to be obligatory when abrogated; a moral precept is commanded eternally, because it is eternally right. If we could keep a perpetual sabbath, as we shall



hereafter, the positive precept of the sabbath, one in each week, would not be needed. [Heb 4:9](#), "rests," Greek, "keeping of sabbath" ([Isa 66:23](#)). But we cannot, since even Adam, in innocence, needed one amidst his earthly employments; therefore the sabbath is still needed and is therefore still linked with the other nine commandments, as obligatory in the spirit, though the letter of the law has been superseded by that higher spirit of love which is the essence of law and Gospel alike ([Rom 13:8-10](#))."

The truth is that all commentaries I looked at had no trouble in understanding that these ordinances were referring to the old Jewish sacrificial system that was nailed to the cross.

Satan has done such a good job of [changing the Sabbath to Sunday](#) in favour of Sun worship through the [Roman Catholic Church](#), it is hard enough already for those who want truth to discover what the enemy has done here in regards the fourth Commandment, but I never thought I would see the day that Satan would throw further confusion in by trying to convince people that they still have to obey the feast holydays that were nailed to the cross. This first came about through a man called Herbert Armstrong who claimed to be something that he was not. When he died, the Church fell apart and went into several splinter groups and it is these groups that have continued with this mans false, heretical teaching even though he is now a recognized cult leader. When they are challenged on this, they ignore this truth and fall back on the Word claiming it is what the Bible says. The problem is that they never learned it from the Bible. They learnt it from this man or one of the groups that came from the Church break up or someone from it. He also taught a heretical [Wednesday crucifixion theory](#). Select the link for the real truth.

It is not just Colossians 2:16 these Christians have to explain away as Galatians 4:9-10 is also referring to the ordinances and Paul is exhorting to the Galatians that they were putting themselves under bondage by still keeping these various festivals. The context does not change. The ordinances are "*against us*," "*contrary to us*" and in Galatians 4:9-10, Paul calls them "*bondage*." Those who would insist that we must still keep the feasts that Christ nailed to the cross typically justify Galatians 4:9-10 by saying that Paul is referring to pagan days, but this does not fit the context of the whole book of Galatians yet alone this passage. It is also not possible because Paul continues on by giving an allegory of the two Covenants by comparing them with a bondwoman and a freewoman. Did God make a covenant with anyone on pagan days? I don't think we need continue with this heresy. [Galatians 4:23-26](#) "*But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. 24 Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. 25 For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. 26 But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.*"

This group further attempt to support this heretical teaching by stating that nowhere in the Bible are there months and so have to be pagan. Perhaps they do not know what the New Moon festival was! See also "**new moon**" under the *Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown Commentary* above.

The entire context of Galatians chapters 1-5 is Paul explaining that some judaizing teachers who insisted that the Mosaic Law and associated feast days were still necessary for salvation were wrong. Read the [Galatian heresy](#) for more. Now back to those two controversial passages. Note carefully the colour coding.

[Galatians 4:9-10](#) "*But now, after that you have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn you again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto you desire again to be in **bondage**? 10 You observe [Holydays] **days**, and **months**, [new moon] and times, and **years** [sabbatical years such as Passover]."*  
[Colossians 2:14-16](#) "*Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was **against us**, which was **contrary to us**, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; ... 16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink [offerings], or in respect of an **holy day** [Holy **days**], or of the **new moon** [**months**], or of the **Sabbath days**: [**years** eg; Passover sabbath]" Parenthesis are added.*

What was written in the Book of the Law was "**against us**, which was **contrary to us**" and why Paul calls this law "**bondage**" in Galatians 4:9-10. The Ten Commandments on the other hand are the "*perfect law of liberty*" and LIBERTY is the exact opposite to BONDAGE, which of course means FREEDOM. Since the Bible does not contradict itself, this also identifies that the "ordinances" are being referred to and not the Ten Commandments. If Paul is calling it "bondage," than he can only be speaking of what is written in the "Book of the Law" by the hand of Moses. This old sacrificial system was bondage that Christ freed us from.

[James 1:25](#) "*But whoso looketh into **the perfect law of liberty**, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.*"

[James 2:10-12](#) "*For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. 11 For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if you commit no adultery, yet if you kill, you are become a transgressor of the law. 12 So speak you, and so do, as they that shall be judged by **the law of liberty**.*"

### Do the Feasts still have to be kept?

Ezekiel 45:17 informs us that the ordinances had "**meat and drink offerings, feasts, new moons, and sabbath days**" which were because of sin. Colossians 2:16 also says that the ordinances had "**meat and drink offerings, feasts, new moons, and sabbath days**" which Paul says very plainly in Colossians

2:14 that these ordinances were against us, and contrary to us, and nailed to the cross and hence were also because of sin. Those that try and convince others that we still need to keep these feasts often say that the sacrificial part of the law did not include the Holy Feast days such as Passover etc. But did these ordinances which Ezekiel 45 states were for a sin offering include the feasts? Absolutely. Observe verse 21 for instance. "Passover" and the "Feast of Unleavened bread" are clearly included.

**Ezekiel 45:17-21 KJV** "And it shall be the prince's part to give burnt offerings, and **meat offerings, and drink offerings**, in the **feasts** [holy day], and in the **new moons**, and in the **sabbaths**, in all solemnities of the house of Israel: he shall prepare **the sin offering**, and the meat offering, and the burnt offering, and the peace offerings, **to make reconciliation for the house of Israel.** 18 Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the first month, in the first day of the month, you shall take a young bullock without blemish, and cleanse the sanctuary: 19 And the priest shall take of **the blood of the sin offering**, and put it upon the posts of the house, and upon the four corners of the settle of the altar, and upon the posts of the gate of the inner court. ... 21 In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month, you shall have the **Passover**, a feast of seven days; **unleavened bread** shall be eaten."

One of the most important feast days is called "Yom Kippur" or the "Day of Atonement" The Day of Atonement was the day of condemning, avenging and coverings of sin. On this day, the sins of the entire Jewish nation were covered over. Once a year on this day, the High Priest would dress in a plain linen robe. He would bathe, and sacrifices would be offered, and the people would pray and confess their sins. And then with the blood of the sacrifice in his hands, he would make his way through the Holy Place to the veil. Pushing it to one side, he would enter into the presence of God, and sprinkle the blood upon the lid of the Ark, the Mercy Seat, and pray for the people. And then he would exit, not to enter for another year.

So are these Holy feast days associated with the sanctuary and the whole sacrificial system? It absolutely cannot be debated. This is exactly what they were all about. This is why they pointed forward to the work of Jesus on the cross and why they were spiritually fulfilled and ended at the cross. How could and why would these things that made reconciliation for our sin continue after the cross? Did Jesus cover our sin or not? When Jesus proclaimed on the cross "it is finished" it was *all* accomplished. It is not possible to separate the sacrificial sanctuary system from the feasts as they were and integral and primary part of the sanctuary system. Just for a reminder and further clarity, what did Jesus end at the cross?

**Ephesians 2:15** "Having **ABOLISHED** in his flesh the enmity, **even the law of commandments contained in ordinances**; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;"

So did these ordinances that were handwritten by Moses, which had **feasts, new moons**, and ceremonial **sabbaths** include the feast Holy days? Firstly these feasts are the Holy feast days and we just observed in Ezekiel 45 that they did, but here is yet another of many verses that could be quoted that still further demonstrate this plain truth. This one adds the feast of weeks (Pentecost) and the feast of tabernacles.

**2 Chronicles 8:13** "Even after a certain rate every day, offering according to **the commandment of Moses**, on the **sabbaths**, and on the **new moons**, and on the solemn **feasts**, three times in the year, even in the **feast of unleavened bread**, and in **the feast of weeks**, and in the **feast of tabernacles.**"

Looking at the above verse, whose Commandments were these? God's or Moses? God of course gave the Ten Commandments (Exodus 19-20). The ordinances were handwritten as Colossians 2:14 informs us, and by whose hand were these ordinances written by? Are the ordinances separate from the whole law?

**2 Chronicles 33:8** "Neither will I any more remove the foot of Israel from out of the land which I have appointed for your fathers; so that they will take heed to do all that I have commanded them, according to the **whole law** AND the **statutes** AND the **ordinances** by the **hand of Moses.**"

Luke 1:6 shows before the cross we had the Ten Commandments and the ordinances, which are clearly different things but what else shows that the ordinances were nailed to the cross with the New Covenant?

**Luke 1:6** "And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the **commandments** AND **ordinances** of the Lord blameless."

So the Old Covenant had these ordinances that included the feast days that were part of the sanctuary service but does the New Covenant still have them? Hebrews 9:1 says the first Covenant "**had also...**" which means in addition to something else and Luke 1:6 above tells us what. So we see below that the New Covenant no longer have the ordinances so what is left? Quite simply, *just* the Ten Commandments!

**Hebrews 9:1-2** "Then verily the **first covenant** **had also ordinances** of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. 2 For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the showbread; which is called the sanctuary."

Moving on just a few verses, again, what were these ordinances for that we saw once again are *gone* in the New Covenant and why did they end at the cross? And who became our high Priest and our final perfect sacrifice that ended these Holy feast days that pointed to the work of Christ on the cross?

**Hebrews 9:10-14** Which stood only in meats and drinks, [offerings] and divers washings, and **carnal ordinances**, imposed on them **until the time of reformation. 11 But Christ being come an high priest** of good things to come, **by a greater and more perfect tabernacle**, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; **12** Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. **13** For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: **14 How much more shall the blood of Christ**, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

### **Scriptures Used to Support Keeping the Feasts**

Those that insist we should be keeping the Holy feast days use many scriptural references to support their argument which contradict Paul and many other passages. But why do more than 95% of the scriptures they quote occur before the cross? Since these feasts ended at the cross, then it becomes pretty pointless to quote scriptures of anyone keeping the feasts before the cross as they would of course still be keeping them then! They are clearly very anxious for others accept their heresy, but to quote so many scriptures that are irrelevant is very strange as the truth seekers are going to realize they are before the cross and see right through this. They will lose credibility with the wise when they do this but perhaps that is a good thing as it helps others to see the truth and not get led astray by this incorrect teaching. If you feel a particular scripture is not perfectly clear, we can still be sure by the fact that Paul and the Bible never contradicts himself or itself. I am not going to waste your time covering the scriptures that were before their literal fulfilment as I think these are very clear and easy to see.

**NOTE:** It is very significant that the Jews especially were still keeping these feasts while Gentile Christians who heard the Gospel and accepted Christ were not. So why were Jews keeping them but not the Gentiles? The Gentiles had never kept them before but now the Gospel was also for them, the Gentiles which accepted Christ knew there was no obligation to keep the feasts as they had ended. Let's go back to a previously discussed scripture for even more clarity on this very important point.

**Ephesians 2:15** "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances;..."

### **Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible (1798-1870)**

**"The enmity** - Between the Jew and the Gentile. Tyndale renders this, "the cause of hatred, that is to say, the law of commandments contained in the law written." This is expressive of the true sense. The idea is, that the ceremonial law of the Jews, on which they so much prided themselves, was the cause of the hostility existing between them. That made them different people, and laid the foundation for the alienation which existed between them. They had different laws; different institutions; a different religion. The Jews looked upon themselves as the favorites of heaven, and as in possession of the knowledge of the only way of salvation; the Gentiles regarded their laws with contempt, and looked upon the unique institutions with scorn. When Christ came and abolished by his death their special ceremonial laws, of course the cause of this alienation ceased.

**Even the law of commandments** - The law of positive commandments. This does not refer to the "moral" law, which was not the cause of the alienation, and which was not abolished by the death of Christ, but to the laws commanding sacrifices, festivals, fasts, etc., which constituted the uniqueness of the Jewish system. These were the occasion of the enmity between the Jews and the Gentiles, and these were abolished by the great sacrifice which the Redeemer made; and of course when that was made, the purpose for which these laws were instituted was accomplished, and they ceased to be of value and to be binding.

**Contained in ordinances** - In the Mosaic commandments. The word "ordinance" means, decree, edict, law; Luke 2:1; Acts 16:4; Acts 17:7; Colossians 2:14."

So after the cross Jews were still keeping the feasts "contained in ordinances" as described in Colossians 2:16 that Paul mentioned in verse 14 (as also mentioned in the above Commentary) as they had not heard the Gospel and did not know that Christ brought an end to them. But the Gentile Christians were not keeping them as they had never kept them before and understood from the Gospel message that they had in fact ended. So Paul really had his work cut out for him in trying to get through to the Jews that they no longer had to keep them either. Attending the feasts that were still being kept by the Jews was of course the perfect time to do this and so Paul would have attended them all for this purpose.

### **Passover** - Leviticus 23:5

1 Corinthians 11:23-29 - In this passage, Paul speaks of communion which was first instituted on Passover as this was the perfect opportunity before His death. **1 Corinthians 11:26** says "For **AS OFTEN** [as often as you choose] as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you do show the Lord's death till he come." The death of Christ replaced Passover as He became our Passover. Parenthesis are added.

### **Unleavened Bread** - Leviticus 23:6-8

**Acts 20:6** - Reads, "after the days of unleavened bread" with no reference to it actually being kept. See Commentary below.



### **John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible. Dr. John Gill (1690-1771)**

**"after the days of unleavened bread;** or the Passover; which is mentioned only to observe the time of year when this voyage was taken; and not to suggest to us that Paul and his company stayed at Philippi, and kept this feast there; for the Passover was only kept at Jerusalem, and besides was now abolished, and not to be observed by Christians:"

**1 Corinthians 5:8** "Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

When you look at the context of this passage, you can see that Paul is not speaking literally of keeping the feast, but is symbolically saying that Christians should continually keep themselves free from the defilement of sin. That is, "old leaven" should be kept purged from his soul. Paul is using this symbolic example to show that in the same way a little leaven leavens a whole mass of dough, so just one sin or sinner can send a corrupting influence through the whole church. Here are two Commentaries for clarity.

### **The People's New Testament (1891) by B. W. Johnson**

**"Let us keep the feast.** Let us keep feast, or festival. There is no article in the Greek. The reference is not to the Lord's Supper, or to Easter, as some have supposed, so much as to a constant duty. We always have a Paschal Lamb; hence it is always our duty to keep festival by casting out all leaven; either the **old leaven** of heathen vice, or of **malice and wickedness**, or any sin."

### **Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible (1798-1870)**

**"Let us keep the feast** - Margin, "Holy day" *ἐορτάζωμεν* *heortazomen*. This is language drawn from the paschal feast, and is used by Paul frequently to carry out and apply his illustration. It does not mean literally the paschal supper here - for that had ceased to be observed by Christians - nor the Lord's Supper particularly; but the sense is "As the Jews when they celebrated the paschal supper, on the slaying and sacrifice of the paschal lamb, put away all leaven - as emblematic of sin - so let us, in the slaying of our sacrifice, and in all the duties, institutions and events consequent thereon, put away all wickedness from our hearts as individuals, and from our societies and churches. Let us engage in the service of God putting away by all evil."

**Not with the old leaven** - Not under the influence, or in the indulgence of the feelings of corrupt and unrenewed human nature - The word "leaven" is very expressive of that former or "old" condition, and denotes the corrupt and corrupting passions of our nature before it is renewed.

**The leaven of malice** - Of unkindness and evil - which would diffuse itself, and pervade the mass of Christians. The word "malice" (*κακίας* *kakias*) denotes "evil" in general.

**And wickedness** - Sin; evil. There is a particular reference here to the case of the incestuous person. Paul means that all wickedness should be put away from those who had been saved by the sacrifice of their "Passover," Christ; and, therefore, this sin in a special manner.

**But with the unleavened bread ...** - That is, with sincerity and truth. Let us be sincere, and true, and faithful; as the Jews partook of bread unleavened, which was emblematic of purity, so let us be sincere and true. It is implied here that this could not be done unless they would put away the incestuous person - No Christians can have, or give evidence of sincerity, who are not willing to put away all sin."

Before discussing the next one, remember the issue of the enmity between the Jews and Gentiles and consider the following. How many Jews had heard the Gospel just after the cross and what was the task given to Paul and the disciples? The Jews had been habitually keeping these Holy feast days for centuries and none of them would know the feasts had ended unless someone told them. So how do you tell such a massive number of Jews the Gospel message that means no longer having to keep the feasts? This would be a monumental task that could take a lifetime. There would have to be an easier way!

Ideally you would need to find all God fearing Jews altogether in the same place at the same time. So was there any event that occurred in those days where you would find all the Jews in the same place at the same time? There was in fact. To state the obvious, the feast days themselves! Thus everyone that had not heard the good news would be present and you could tell them all at the same time while preaching the good news to the crowds. This would sure make the job a lot easier wouldn't it?

So if you were Paul, would you attend the feasts since everyone who had not heard the Gospel would be in the same place at the same time so you could tell everyone in one easy speech? One would of course realize this was the perfect opportunity to do this! Any other way would be just plain foolishness!

Now Paul was obviously not saying, these *ordinances* (Mosaic Law) are against you., SO KEEP DOING THEM, they are contrary to you., SO KEEPING DOING THEM, and they were nailed to the cross., SO KEEPING DOING THEM. So do not let anyone judge you for STILL KEEPING these sacrificial **meat and drink offerings**, **Holy feast days**, **new moon festivals** and the **yearly Sabbaths** that I have just said was AGAINST YOU, and CONTRARY TO YOU, and WERE NAILED TO THE CROSS! Believe it or not there are some that will tell you that this is what Paul was saying! After debating this with one person to the point where he had nowhere left to go, he left me speechless with this most ridiculous statement, "The passage does not say what it appears to say!"



Some will also try and tell you that only the sacrificing of animals was done away with but the Holy feast Days still have to be kept. Nowhere does scripture say this or separate them! In Colossians 2:14-16, Paul says that it is the **meat and drink offerings**, **Holy feast days**, **new moon festivals** and the **yearly sabbaths** that were part of the ordinances and *all* these were nailed to the cross as described by Paul in verse 16.

So if Paul says these ordinances are contrary to us and against us and bondage and were nailed to the cross, is he going to keep them? Of course not! So why did Paul try to attend the feasts when it was possible as stated below? For the same reason we would if we were Paul. There was no better opportunity to teach the truth and preach the Gospel. This would be the perfect time as all Bible Commentaries state.

**Pentecost** - Leviticus 23:15-22

**Acts 20:16** *"For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost."*

Does Paul say that he is personally going to keep this feast or that he wants to be there on that day? Paul in no way implies he is keeping this feast but if possible wants to be in Jerusalem on that day. Why? Below are two trusted Commentaries for clarity and the obvious answer previously discussed.

**John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible. Dr. John Gill (1690-1771)**

**"for he hasted, if it were possible, for him to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost:** which was near at hand; for it was but fifty days from the second day of the Passover, which feast was over when he sailed from Philippi; and at Troas he stayed seven days, and he had been several days sailing already; see **Act 20:6**. And his great desire to be at the feast of Pentecost was not in order to keep that feast, according to the usage of the Jews; but that he might have an opportunity of preaching the Gospel to a great number of Jews, out of all countries, whom he knew would come to that feast."

**Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible, LL.D., F.S.A., (1715-1832)**

**"To be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost** - That he might have the opportunity of preaching the kingdom of God to multitudes of Jews from different places, who would come up to Jerusalem at that feast; and then he no doubt expected to see there a renewal of that day of Pentecost in which the Spirit was poured out on the disciples, and in consequence of which so many were converted to God."

**1 Corinthians 16:8** *"But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost."* An invalid argument as Paul does not say or even imply he is going to keep this feast. Let Paul explain for himself why he wanted to stay around until this time in the verse that follows. **1 Corinthians 16:9** *"because a great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me."* Paul chose to stay around to do the work he had been commissioned to do and undo any damage from those who opposed him. See Commentary below.

**John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible. Dr. John Gill (1690-1771)**

**"But I will tarry at Ephesus till Pentecost.** The feast of weeks, or of harvest, which was fifty days from the Passover; See Gill on **Act 2:1** which though abrogated at the death of Christ, was observed by the Jews, and is mentioned by the apostle, not as a festival that the Christians were obliged to regard, or did regard, but as pointing out the time he intended to stay at Ephesus: and we elsewhere read, that he was greatly desirous of being at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, **Act 20:16** not to keep it, but because there would then be abundance of people from all parts there, to whom he should have an opportunity of preaching the Gospel."

**Acts 18:21** *"But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus."*

This is one the most pushed verses as you would expect. But they fail to mention that the majority of Bible versions very significantly omit the phrase *"I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem"* such as the Amplified, ASV, BBE, CEV, CJB, CENT, DRB, ESV, GNB, GW, HCSB, ISV, MRC, MSG, NASB, NIRV, NIV, NLT, NLV, NRSV, RSV, RSVA, RV, TCNT, UPDV, WNET and WNT. The Darby greys out this text and like the King James Version, when it is greyed out, it means it is added text. **Acts 18:21** *"but bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep the coming feast at Jerusalem; I will return to you again, if God will: and he sailed away from Ephesus."* The Commentary below explains.

**Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible, LL.D., F.S.A., (1715-1832)**

**"I must - keep this feast** - Most likely the Passover, at which he wished to attend for the purpose of seeing many of his friends, and having the most favorable opportunity to preach the Gospel to thousands who would attend at Jerusalem on that occasion. The whole of this clause, *I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem*, is wanting in ABE, six others; with the Coptic, Ethiopic, Armenian, and Vulgate. Griesbach leaves it in the text, with the mark of doubtfulness; ... **Without this clause the verse will read thus:** *But he bade them farewell, saying, I will return again unto you, if God will."*

So this commentary says that without the added text, this verse would just say, *"But bade them farewell, saying, I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus."* There are a few texts in the Bible that have been added by overzealous people in the early centuries that had their own ideas of what particular verses should say that were not the original inspired words of God, and this is one of them.

Even if this text was legitimate, it would be for the reason given by the two Commentaries below that obviously did not know this text was added. The Jews kept the feasts after the cross as they did not accept Jesus as the Messiah. But this was a great opportunity for Paul to preach the Gospel to the right people in all the one place at the same time. So Paul would have tried to attend all these Jewish festivals.

### **Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible (1798-1870)**

**"Keep this feast** - Probably the Passover is here referred to. Why he was so anxious to celebrate that feast at Jerusalem, the historian has not informed us. It is probable, however, that he wished to meet as many of his countrymen as possible, and to remove, if practicable, the prejudices which had everywhere been raised against him, [Act 21:20-21](#). Perhaps, also, he supposed that there would be many Christian converts present, whom he might meet also."

### **Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown**

**"I must...keep this feast** - probably Pentecost, presenting a noble opportunity of preaching the Gospel."

### **Trumpets** - Leviticus 23:23-25

Matthew 24:30-31; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 11:15 - These verses refer to the sound of the trumpet blown with the second coming of Christ and are INCORRECTLY and perhaps dishonestly linked to the blowing of trumpets which was done just before the Day of Atonement. There is nothing here but erroneous assumptions to imply Paul kept the feasts that he said were nailed to the cross.

There is no doubt about the fourth and the other nine Commandments being eternal but the feasts had a purpose. The Bible tells us that they were our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ but then were no longer necessary. (Galatians 3:24-25) What was it that these feasts also had? They had sacrificial offerings to make reconciliation for our sin. When Jesus said "it is finished," had he finished the job or not? There was certainly something nailed to the cross. So what was nailed to the cross? It was whatever it was that was practised to make reconciliation for sin before Christ died on the cross. These feasts had burnt offerings etc. If one insists they must keep these feasts then they have to do it properly according to how the Bible instructs they are to be kept. You cannot just decide what part of them you want to do. You do it all or you don't do it at all. Here is just one example for Passover. If one insists on keeping these feasts, then this is what you have to do for Passover just to begin with!

[Ezekiel 45:21-25](#) "In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month, you shall have the passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten. [22](#) And upon that day shall the prince prepare for himself and for all the people of the land a bullock for a sin offering. [23](#) And seven days of the feast he shall prepare a burnt offering to the LORD, seven bullocks and seven rams without blemish daily the seven days; and a kid of the goats daily for a sin offering. [24](#) And he shall prepare a meat offering of an ephah for a bullock, and an ephah for a ram, and an hin of oil for an ephah. [25](#) In the seventh month, in the fifteenth day of the month, shall he do the like in the feast of the seven days, according to the sin offering, according to the burnt offering, and according to the meat offering, and according to the oil."

Now here is the problem. If you start doing burnt offerings to make reconciliation for sin then you say to Jesus, "Hey Jesus! When you said it was finished, it was not finished at all...You did not finish the job on the cross at all so I still have to follow these feasts and the burnt offerings etc to cover my sins..."

I would hope no one would want to deny the work of Jesus on the cross! This is why they were nailed to the cross, as Jesus fulfilled this sacrificial system with these feast days. I know what the COG teaches and all the other offshoots of the WWCG, which Herbert Armstrong taught who yes, were proven to be wrong on many things including the feasts etc, and he was found to be a cult leader and why the Church collapsed. The problem is that the enemy is recruiting more and more people into this system he started.

[Galatians 3:10](#) "All who rely on observing the [Mosaic] law are under a curse, for it is written: Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do **everything** written in the Book of the Law." Parentheses added.

Those who keep the feasts claim that only the sacrificial law was nailed to the cross and the feast days remain but the above verse from Paul says not so. If you are going to keep these feasts that are written in the Book of the Law then you have to keep **everything** including the sacrifices or you are cursed!

The Contemporary English Version translates [Galatians 3:10](#) this way. "Anyone who tries to please God by obeying the [Mosaic] Law is under a curse. The Scriptures say, "Everyone who doesn't obey everything in the [Book of the] Law is under a curse." Parentheses added.

Before concluding this document, here are four more erroneous arguments I have heard so I will cover them in brief. First it was stated that Colossians 2:16 says "let no man" and by looking at other scriptures using this phrase, it was argued that these were people outside of the Church so therefore Paul was saying do not let people judge you for *still* keeping them! It is a fool's theology to say this verse here says this so therefore this one must mean the same thing! The fact that Paul *and* the context of this passage says that these were *against us* and were *nailed to the cross* did not even enter into the equation. "Let no man" in this case means just that. In the Church or outside the Church makes no difference to what Paul is saying anyway. Paul says these ordinances are abolished and that applies to everyone.

And secondly, it was argued that since verse 17 in the KJV says, "*which ARE a shadow of things to come*" that this must refer to after the cross and so the feasts are still valid. Firstly, the learned know that translating Greek to English is not an exact science and that you cannot hinge an argument on *one* word such as "*are*," and especially when it contradicts other black and white scriptures such as verse 14 and 16. Secondly, the Greek word for "*are*" (*esti*) means "*third person singular*" and hence is not necessarily the word "*are*" anyway, and so some translations use the word "*were*" instead of "*are*" such as the first two below, which are also correct. Thirdly, this argument would contradict Paul saying the feast days are against us and nailed to the cross. Fourthly, Paul is speaking past tense as in these feasts that were kept in the past pointed forward to the future of when Christ died on the cross. And last, most translations more clearly say something like "*what was to come*," and since most feasts have met their literal fulfilment, then "*what was to come*" that gave the shadow would be gone now anyway making this argument irrelevant. Below are some other translations that verify the above points.

(WNT) These were a shadow of things that were soon to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.

(NCV) These things were like a shadow of what was to come. But what is true and real has come...

(NIV) These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

(CEV) These things are only a shadow of what was to come. But Christ is real!

(NASB) things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.

(NIRV) They are only a shadow of the things that were going to come. But what is real is found in Christ.

(RSV) These are only a shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.

The third is Zechariah 14 where it speaks of keeping the feast of tabernacles. This chapter is a conditional prophecy that is a description of events in connection with the second coming in terms of how this event would have come about if the Israelites who returned from captivity had fulfilled their destiny. They did not so it does not apply. Not only that but verse 21 says it includes sacrifices, so this is before the cross!

And the fourth is that some say Matthew 5 refers to the ceremonial law also but it can only refer to the Ten Commandments as proven by the context of the rest of the chapter, which refers to the moral law only. There is not even a hint of the feast system being referred to in the entire chapter.

Those teaching observance of the feasts typically use underhanded techniques like painting an ugly picture for Easter and Christmas to try and turn people from them and then to their Church for the answer to escape this. Yes, there is paganism involved in the origin of these things that one can easily avoid, and do not forget that Satan wants this to happen and for these two events to be lost as much as possible because they *do* result in *many* people coming to Christ. If the world followed Armstrong's teaching then the world would never hear about Christ and that is exactly what Satan wants. Jesus out of the picture! He also wants to add confusion here to keep as many as possible from the fourth Commandment that really is important. It is sin not to keep the Commandments but this feast system was to make reconciliation for sin (breaking the Ten Commandments) and pointed forward to Christ. Big difference! We need to understand this. And yes, we have just seen there are some verses that can be cleverly used and misunderstood to make a convincing argument but there are clear answers to these scriptures if one wants them that also prevents all the contradiction with other scripture that you would otherwise have.

We must not deny the work of Jesus on the cross and in turn add to the confusion that will keep more people from finding the blessings of the Sabbath truth and entering the kingdom.

### **Colossians 2:16 Conclusion:**

**Colossians 2:14-17** "*Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; ... 16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink [offerings], or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: 17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.*"

So to paraphrase this passage, Paul is saying, "*These ordinances that had meat and drink offerings, new moon festivals, holydays and sabbath days are now against us and contrary to us and hence are bondage and are nailed to the cross. So therefore don't let anyone judge for no longer keeping these meat and drink offerings, new moon festivals, holydays and sabbath days that are now against you as they have been nailed to the cross and hence are gone and no more.*"

It is extraordinary that this verse requires such long winded explanations for what should be blatantly obvious to any studious Christian looking for truth, but I also understand that the enemy has no trouble in finding people he can deceive and encourage others to follow them in order that confusion reigns. So let's just put the simple facts forward just one more time. See also [Wednesday crucifixion](#).

The ordinances were handwritten by Moses, they were bondage and against us and because they were the sacrificial part of the Law of Moses, they were no longer required after the cross and so were nailed to the cross. Paul informs us that these ordinances had meat and drink offerings, feast holydays, new moon festivals and various ceremonial Sabbaths, which were a shadow of what was to come. This is a perfect parallel to all other related Bible passages and the context is perfect. So is Paul saying don't let anyone judge you for keeping or not keeping these ordinances that were AGAINST US and NAILED to the cross?