

THE EIGHTH DAY

(Scripture verses are NKJV; words in brackets [] were added by the translators; underlining is my emphasis.)

Among the Churches of God there are many divisions. Why? Paul admonished the Called of God in **I Corinthians 1:10** ***“Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and [that] there be no divisions among you, but [that] you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”***

As is known, this unity did not occur in Paul’s time, and has not occurred today. The problem is made clear in **Galatians 2:4** ***“And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus that they might bring us into bondage,)”*** The problem they faced is seen in this scripture.

In Paul’s day there were false ministers and teachers who deceived many. This problem of false teachers and ministers has become so pervasive over the centuries that the truth of the Bible is almost undetectable in the present Christian churches. Many have been deceived. This same problem has crept into the Churches of God despite the teaching of faithful ministers.

John 6:44 ***“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.”*** For those who have been called by God the Father this general deception has little effect. The real danger comes from within the Body of Believers. **Jude 4** says, ***“For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked for this condemnation, ungodly men who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.”***

Ephesians. 4:14 ***“that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,”***

These are men who pretend to be forthright teachers of the word who slip in some “new” teaching, designed to gain for them notoriety and a following. Their refrain is: “Did you know?”

One such teaching that has surfaced is in **John 7:37**, which they say refers to the seventh day of the Feast of Tabernacles, rather than the Eighth Day of the Feast as set apart in the clear instructions of **Leviticus 23:35-36** ***“On the first day [there shall be] a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work [on it]. For seven days you shall offer an offering made to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. It [is] a sacred assembly, [and] you shall do no customary work [on it].***

Clearly it is the last day of that festival that is called out in **John 7: 37** ***“On the last day, that great [day] of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out saying, ‘If anyone thirst, let him come to Me and drink.’”***

It is called “THAT GREAT DAY” by Christ, the Word, and becomes clear when examining the meaning of the word “last.” Strong’s number G2078 is defined as “the extreme, the most remote, and spoken of place and time.”

If Christ had wanted us to emphasize the seventh day of the festival, He would have called it the seventh day, not the last day. It clearly was not the seventh day of the festival, it was the eighth day—the Last Great Day.

Only by understanding what the first seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles stand for will a complete picture of the whole eight days become clear. The instructions for observing this feast are given in **Leviticus 23**. They state that the brethren are to live in temporary housing for seven days. This is an important instruction that defines those seven days.

The first day is marked for its importance by a holy convocation. This is to point directly to the creation of man and his environment of the earth that we presently live in. In total these seven days represent the passage of seven thousand years that man is living in his temporary human body. Not only are our bodies temporary but the whole earth, as we know it today, is temporary. Its surface will be completely destroyed at the end of the seven thousand years.

The first six days of The Feast of Tabernacles represent the first six thousand years of man’s history, where man has gone contrary to God’s way of life.

The seventh day represents the thousand-year reign of Christ, coming to a very ignominious end with the rebellion of most of those alive at that time. **Revelation 20:7-8** “**Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number [is] as the sand of the sea.**”

A question to ask is: Why would God release Satan at this time? The answer is found in understanding what God’s prime directive is; which is the real purpose for the creation of man and his present environment. That prime directive is found in **Genesis 1:26**.

In this verse God the Father tells us why He created man. There are two words which explain the result He wants mankind to achieve; “likeness” and “image.” The word “likeness” is Strong’s H1823 and refers to man’s outline or shape, which is a copy of God’s shape. The word “image” is Strong’s H6754, and the following explanation is from “*The Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*,” page 768, “*God’s image obviously does not consist in man’s body which was formed from earthly matter, but in his spiritual, intellectual and moral likeness to God from whom his animating breath came.*” **Matthew 5:48** “**Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.**” **John 15:1-2** “***I am the true vine and My Father is the vine dresser. Every [branch] in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.***”

Three important points are needed to develop Godly character. First, one must overcome, putting the body under control; the desires of the body to live, or continue to live at any cost—to procreate without regard to what will happen to the offspring, and to obtain wealth and status by any devious means. These drives must be brought under control to be in line with God’s laws, statutes and judgments.

Second: It is necessary to overcome the governments of this world and the control they exercise to force true believers along with the rest of the population to break the commands and directives God gives in His Word.

Last is being able to overcome Satan and his lies in presenting a false gospel, making him appear as God, taking the place of God.

Why would men and women who were living in peace and safety want to go back to the way of life like that which we are presently living in? This way of life has resulted in war, poverty and violence. It has always brought hardship and disease, regimentation and slavery, which the vast majority of humans chose to return to after having the thousand years of freedom and prosperity.

In the last thousand years, represented by the seventh day of the Feast of Tabernacles, people would not have had to overcome these factors, which is why God released Satan. All must pass this test to enter into eternal life.

The truth is that God has given them an independent mind, free to make their own choice; either to follow Satan or to follow God. It is because they have failed to achieve the Father’s character, which would have led them to make the right choice, and because of this failure they will suffer eternal death.

The concluding seventh day of the feast represents the end of man’s temporary life in his human body. Now it becomes clear why Christ called the eighth day “that great day.” The simple, magnificent truth is that the Last Great Day represents an unending time of eternal life which will be experienced by all who are alive at the end of the White Throne Judgment.

John 7:38 says *“He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, ‘out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’”* The final fulfillment is found in **Revelation 22:1** *“And he showed me a pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.”*

The first seven thousand years are allotted to man for the purpose of developing Godly character, because God wants a family of beings that He can trust to handle the wealth of the universe for eternity. It is this unending period of time that is represented by the Last Great Day—the Eighth Day of the Feast.

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