

ANCIENT PATHS INSTITUTE

White Paper Series | No. 7

The Appointed Times

The Father's Calendar, the Counterfeit Calendar, and the Return to His Feasts

“This is what the LORD says: “Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it ...”

— Jeremiah 6:16

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
Executive Summary.....	5
1. “My Feasts”.....	7
1.1 The Word “Eternal” Is the Word “Eternal”.....	8
1.2 The Calendar Is Built into Creation.....	8
2. The Shabbat: The Weekly Moed.....	9
2.1 The Shabbat Is for Man.....	9
2.2 Friday Sundown to Saturday Sundown.....	10
2.3 The Two Errors and the Path Between Them.....	10
2.4 The Sunday Gathering as Fruit of the Shabbat Rest.....	12
3. The Seven Annual Feasts and Christ in Each.....	13
3.1 Passover (Pesach) — The Lamb of God.....	13
3.2 Unleavened Bread (Hag HaMatzot) — The Sinless Body.....	14
3.3 Firstfruits (Bikkurim) — The Risen Lord.....	14
3.4 Pentecost (Shavuot) — The Pouring Out of the Spirit.....	14
3.5 Trumpets (Yom Teruah) — The Awakening Call.....	15
3.6 Atonement (Yom Kippur) — The Day of Reckoning.....	15
3.7 Tabernacles (Sukkot) — The Dwelling of God With Man.....	16
3.8 The Sevenfold Pattern.....	16
4. Kept by the King, Kept by the Apostles.....	18
4.1 Jesus and the Feasts.....	18
4.2 The Apostolic Body and the Feasts.....	18
4.3 Paul on the Feasts.....	19
5. The Mislabeling of Obedience.....	21
5.1 What Legalism Actually Is.....	21
5.2 The Mislabeling Pattern.....	21
5.3 The Analogy of Communion.....	22
5.4 What Was Good Then Is Good Now.....	22
6. The Engine of Drift: How the Father’s Calendar Was Severed From the Body.....	24
6.1 The Quartodeciman Controversy (Mid-Second Century).....	24
6.2 The Council of Nicaea (AD 325).....	25
6.3 The Dies Solis Edict (AD 321).....	25
6.4 The Council of Laodicea, Canon 29 (c. AD 363).....	26
6.5 The Cumulative Pattern.....	26
7. Christmas: The Feast of the Unconquered Sun.....	28

7.1 The Feast Was Not Apostolic.....	28
7.2 The Roots: Saturnalia, Sol Invictus, and What Was Done on These Days	29
7.3 The Tree	30
7.4 The Stitch: What Scripture Says About This Pattern	31
8. Easter: The Goddess and the Ritual That Bears Her Name	33
8.1 The Father’s Pesach Versus Rome’s Easter	33
8.2 The Goddess Whose Name the Feast Bears.....	33
8.3 What Astarte Worship Looked Like — From Scripture’s Own Record.....	34
8.4 The Eggs and the Rabbit — The Surviving Folk Symbols.....	35
8.5 The Spiritual Dimension — Tier 1 and Tier 2	36
9. Halloween: The Night of the Dead	38
9.1 Samhain: The Celtic Festival	38
9.2 The Christianization That Did Not Christianize	39
9.3 What the Father Says About These Categories.....	40
9.4 What the Practitioners of the Day Themselves Say.....	40
9.5 The Stitch: Manasseh’s Pattern	41
10. The Sabbath Displaced: The Parallel Pattern	43
11. The Golden Calf Pattern: Pagan Form, the LORD’s Name.....	44
11.1 What Aaron Actually Said	44
11.2 What the LORD Did	44
11.3 The Pattern Through the Prophets.....	45
12. “Changing Times and Seasons”: The Daniel 7 Diagnosis.....	47
13. Three Witnesses Across Twenty Centuries	49
13.1 The Pre-Nicene Apostolic Witness: Polycarp and the Quartodecimans of Asia Minor.....	49
13.2 The Persecuted Witness: The Sabbath-Keeping Bodies of the Empire’s Margins	50
13.3 The Present Witness: The Gen Z Recovery in Households	51
13.3.1 The Friday Night Tables	51
13.3.2 The Recovered Pesach Tables	52
13.3.3 The Tabernacles Gatherings.....	52
13.3.4 A Gen Z Gathering in Dallas.....	53
13.3.5 What the Pattern Confirms	54
14. Returning to the Ancient Paths: A Practical Roadmap	55
14.1 The Household Roadmap	55
14.2 The Gathering’s Roadmap.....	57
14.3 The Shepherd’s Roadmap.....	59
Conclusion: One King, One Calendar, One Body	61
Appendix A: Scripture Map for the Appointed Times	63

Appendix B: Method of Examination.....66

Appendix C: Historical and Pastoral Guardrails 67

Appendix D: Sources and Research.....69

 Scripture.....69

 On the Father’s Appointed Times: Lexical and Exegetical69

 On the Apostolic and Patristic Witness.....69

 On the Council of Nicaea and the Easter Decision69

 On the Dies Solis Edict and the Council of Laodicea70

 On Saturnalia, Sol Invictus, and Mithraism70

 On the Christmas Tree and Sacred-Tree Veneration70

 On Easter, the Goddess Complex, and Spring Fertility Rites 71

 On Halloween, Samhain, and Druidic Religion..... 71

 On the Ethiopian Orthodox and Sabbatarian Traditions 71

 On the Waldensian and Pre-Reformation Sabbatarian Witnesses72

 On Dispensationalism and the Retirement of the Feasts72

 On the Present-Day Recovery72

Executive Summary

The Father gave His people a calendar. He did not call it the Jewish calendar. He called it His own. “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: “The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts” (Leviticus 23:2, NKJV). My feasts. Mine. The Hebrew word is *moedim* — appointed times. The King has appointed the times at which His people gather to remember what He has done, to feast at His table, to rest in His provision, and to rehearse the redemptive history that runs from creation to the day of His Son’s return. He has not appointed those times provisionally. He has appointed them as “a statute forever throughout your generations” (Leviticus 23:14, 21, 31, 41, NKJV — repeated four times in a single chapter, lest the body think it could be read away).

The body has read it away. Across twenty centuries the church inherited from the apostolic body a calendar of feasts kept by the Lord Himself, the apostles He sent, and the early believers who walked in their teaching — and the Western church handed that calendar to the empire, which handed it to the priests of Saturn, the priestesses of the spring goddess, and the Druids who burned the wicker man at Samhain. The substitution was not accidental. It was deliberate, documented, and pressed into the body by men who acted under the conviction that pagan forms could be baptized into Christ if His name was placed over them. The body that received the substitution did not always know what had been swapped. The body that defends the substitution today has, in many cases, never been told.

This paper traces three movements:

- **Part I — The Father’s Appointed Times.** Leviticus 23 as the King’s own calendar; the Shabbat as the weekly *moed* given for man’s rest, joy, and household table; the seven annual feasts and how each one points to and is fulfilled in Christ; the apostolic record of Jesus and Paul keeping these feasts after the cross; and the answer to the legalism charge that has been used for a century to bury the question.
- **Part II — The Calendar That Replaced the Calendar.** The deliberate severance of the Christian calendar from the Father’s calendar at and after the Council of Nicaea (AD 325); the Saturnalian and Sol Invictus origins of December 25 and the Jeremiah 10 tree; the fertility-cult origins of Easter eggs and the goddess complex from Astarte to Eostre; the Druidic and Celtic origins of Halloween and what the body unwittingly celebrates when it participates; the displacement of the weekly Shabbat by the Sun-day rest of the empire; the Golden Calf pattern of pagan form invoked in YHWH’s name; and Daniel 7:25’s structural diagnosis of any power that “intends to change times and law.”
- **Part III — Witnesses and the Roadmap Home.** The pre-Nicene apostolic and patristic witness to feast-keeping; the historical witnesses preserved through persecution where the appointed times were kept against the empire’s demand to abolish them; the present-hour witness of Gen Z–led households recovering Shabbat tables, Passover seders, and Tabernacles gatherings without being taught; and the practical Dual Wineskin pathway by which a household, a gathering, and a shepherd can leave the

counterfeit calendar and walk back into the Father's calendar without breaking the sheep in the process.

The Father has appointed His times. The body did not give them, the body cannot abolish them, and no council of men — however ancient, however revered, however well-intentioned — has the authority to retire what He has called eternal. The recovery of the appointed times is not a Jewish costume. It is the Bride coming home to the table her Bridegroom set, on the days her Father appointed, in the joy her King intends.

The thesis is direct. The Father gave seven annual feasts and one weekly Shabbat as eternal observances, fulfilled in their substance by Christ and kept after the cross by the apostolic body, that the Western church has replaced with a calendar of feasts whose origins lie in idol worship the King condemned, whose names invoke gods the King's people were judged for serving, and whose forms persist today in the body that bears His Son's name. The substitution is not neutral. The substitution is the Golden Calf, kept in His name, by His people, in His house. He did not accept it then. He does not accept it now. And the recovery is not optional — not because the body must perform the feasts to be saved, but because the bride of the King does not get to keep eating at the table of demons (1 Corinthians 10:21) and call the meal her Father's. There is no third option. There is His calendar, or there is theirs. The hour of choosing is now.

PART I

The Father's Appointed Times

1. "My Feasts"

Every doctrine of the appointed times rests on a single text, and the text begins with the King's possessive pronoun.

"And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: "The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts."'" — Leviticus 23:1-2, NKJV

Three things in this verse govern everything that follows. First, the speaker. The feasts are not Moses' invention, not Israel's tradition, not a cultural inheritance from the Egyptian sojourn or the Mesopotamian fathers. They are the LORD's direct speech to His people through His servant. "And the LORD spoke." The verb in Hebrew is *vayedaber*, the standard formula introducing direct divine command. The feasts come from the throne, not from the camp.

Second, the possession. "These are My feasts." In Hebrew, *mo'aday* — *mo'ed* with the first-person possessive suffix. The same word recurs in Genesis 1:14 when the LORD set the lights in the heavens "for signs and seasons" — *l'otot u'l'mo'adim*, for signs and appointed times. The lights themselves were placed in the firmament so that the appointed times could be marked. The calendar is built into the cosmos before it is given to a people. The feasts are not merely Israel's annual observance; they are the rhythm of the heavens applied to the people the LORD chose to keep them.

Third, the call. "Holy convocations" — *miqra'ei qodesh*, sacred gatherings. The Hebrew root behind *miqra* is *qara*, to call, to summon, to read aloud. The feasts are not optional commemorations the people may keep if they find them meaningful. They are royal summonses. The King calls; the people gather; the day is holy because He has set it apart and has called His people to Himself on it. To miss the feast is not to skip a tradition. It is to ignore the summons.

This single verse demolishes the most common modern objection to the feasts before any further argument is required. If the feasts were Moses' tradition or Israel's custom or a Jewish cultural inheritance, the body of Christ might have legitimate latitude to retire them as the apostolic gospel went to the Gentiles. But they are none of those things. They are the LORD's own feasts, given by His direct speech, possessed by His own pronoun, anchored in the rhythm of the heavens He set in place at creation, and proclaimed as eternal — a phrase that recurs in Leviticus 23 four times across a single chapter and is reinforced across Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy with a consistency that does not survive any honest attempt to read it as provisional.

The Father did not give the feasts to a people. He gave the feasts and called a people to keep them. The distinction matters because every modern

attempt to retire the feasts depends on collapsing it. The feasts are not Jewish. The Jewish people are the keepers of feasts that belong to the King of all nations and have always belonged to Him.

1.1 The Word “Eternal” Is the Word “Eternal”

The phrase repeated through Leviticus 23 is *chuqat olam l’doroteichem* — translated “a statute forever throughout your generations” in the NKJV, and rendered identically across virtually every responsible English translation. The Hebrew *olam* is the same word that appears in Psalm 90:2 of the LORD Himself: “from everlasting to everlasting, You are God” — *me’olam ad olam, attah El*. The same word. The duration the LORD applies to His own existence is the duration He applies to His feasts. To argue that *olam* in Leviticus 23 means “until Christ” while *olam* in Psalm 90 means “without end” requires the reader to perform a translation move on the text that the text itself does not support and the apostolic body never performed.

The repetition is unmistakable. The Sabbath is “a perpetual covenant” (Exodus 31:16). Passover is “an everlasting ordinance” (Exodus 12:14, 17, 24). Pentecost is “a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings” (Leviticus 23:21). The Day of Atonement is “a statute forever for you” (Leviticus 16:29, 31; 23:31). The Feast of Tabernacles is “a statute forever in your generations” (Leviticus 23:41). Five separate feasts. Five separate declarations of eternity. The text is not ambiguous. The body that has read it as provisional has not read what is written.

1.2 The Calendar Is Built into Creation

Genesis 1:14 anchors the calendar in the structure of the cosmos itself. “Then God said, ‘Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years.’” The Hebrew word translated seasons is *mo’adim* — the plural of *mo’ed*, the same word Leviticus 23 uses for the appointed times. The sun and moon were placed in the heavens in part for the appointed times. Before there was a covenant, before there was a chosen people, before there was a tabernacle or a temple, the lights of the heavens were appointed to mark the days the LORD would later command His people to keep.

This is why the Hebrew calendar is lunar-solar — the new moon marks the beginning of each month, and the agricultural year is tied to the spring barley harvest that determines when Passover falls. The calendar is not a human convention layered on top of nature. It is the rhythm of nature applied to the worship of the One who made it. The body that observes a calendar built on the Roman solar year, the Julian-then-Gregorian reforms, and the displacement of the new moon by the imperial reckoning has, by that act, traded the King’s astronomical clock for Caesar’s. This is not a small matter. The clock the body keeps shapes what the body remembers, and the body that has forgotten the new moon has forgotten the calendar the heavens themselves were appointed to mark.

2. The Shabbat: The Weekly Moed

Leviticus 23:3 is the first feast listed in the chapter, and it is the foundation on which the rest stand.

“Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work on it; it is the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.” — Leviticus 23:3, NKJV

The Shabbat — Hebrew shabbat, from the root shavat, to cease — is the weekly moed, the appointed time that anchors all the others. Before the Father gave Israel an annual cycle, He gave them a weekly cycle, and before He gave Israel any cycle He gave the human race itself the seventh-day rest. “Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made” (Genesis 2:1-3, NKJV).

Three structural features of the Genesis 2 institution determine everything that follows. First, the Shabbat predates Sinai by every measure that matters. It is given to humanity at the founding of the creation week, before any covenant with any people, before any nation existed, before sin had entered the world. It is not a Jewish institution; it is a creation ordinance. Second, the Shabbat is blessed and sanctified — barakh and qadash, set apart by the King for His own purposes, made holy by His own act. The day is not holy because the people keep it; it is holy because the King has declared it so, and the people who keep it are walking in a holiness that already belongs to the day. Third, the day is for rest — shavat, cessation. Not labor in another form. Not religious labor in place of common labor. Cessation. The Hebrew root carries no ambiguity.

2.1 The Shabbat Is for Man

The Lord Jesus, when challenged by the Pharisees on Shabbat practice, did not retire the Shabbat. He restored it.

“And He said to them, ‘The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.’” — Mark 2:27-28, NKJV

Two declarations stand together. The Shabbat was made for man. The Son of Man is Lord of the Shabbat. The first declaration retires the Pharisaic load of fence laws — the additional rules built up by oral tradition that had turned the day of rest into a day of meticulous calculation about what counted as labor and what did not. The second declaration claims the day for the King Himself; He is Lord of it, not the Pharisees, not the Sanhedrin, not the elders who built the fence around it. When the Lord of the Shabbat speaks, the Shabbat answers to Him.

This is the structural answer to both errors that have crippled the modern body’s keeping of the day. The Pharisaic error was to add rules until the day became a burden the very institution had

been given to remove. The dispensational error was to subtract the day until the institution itself had been removed and the rest with it. Both errors miss the same thing: the Shabbat was made for man. The cessation of work, the household table, the unhurried hours, the body and mind and soul released from the demands of production for one day in seven — these are not legalistic burdens the King imposed. They are the King’s own provision for human flourishing, given before the fall, restated at Sinai, defended by the Lord Himself against the Pharisees, and not retired in any apostolic letter the Spirit caused to be written.

What was good for the human being before the cross is still good for the human being after the cross. The cross did not change human physiology. The cross did not abolish the body’s need for rest, the soul’s need for unhurried communion with the Lord, or the household’s need for a day in which fathers and mothers and children are not pulled into separate labors but gathered around the same table for unhurried hours. The cross did not undo the creation week. The cross fulfilled the shadow and freed the substance, and the substance of the Shabbat — rest, joy, family, the King’s table — is not a shadow that has passed. It is a creation gift the body has been refusing for centuries while wondering why it is exhausted.

The Shabbat was made for man. The Pharisee adds fences until the gift is a burden. The dispensationalist removes the gift on the grounds that fences had been added. Both have departed from what the King gave. The recovery is neither the fence nor the abolition. It is the gift, kept as it was given, in the joy it was given to provide.

2.2 Friday Sundown to Saturday Sundown

The Hebrew day runs from evening to evening, anchored in the Genesis 1 refrain: “So the evening and the morning were the first day” (Genesis 1:5, NKJV). The Shabbat therefore begins at sundown on what the Roman reckoning calls Friday and runs until sundown on what the Roman reckoning calls Saturday. The Hebrew name for Friday evening through Saturday evening is shabbat, a single twenty-four-hour unit that begins with the lighting of the candles and the breaking of bread and ends with the havdalah of the closing evening.

The body that recovers the Shabbat will first need to recover the day’s actual boundaries. The modern Western mind, trained by the Roman day-from-midnight, instinctively locates Saturday as a daylight unit beginning at dawn. Scripture’s reckoning is older and more honest. The day begins with rest, not with labor; with the table, not with the alarm clock; with the household gathered, not with the household scattered. To begin a day with rest and to let the labor follow, rather than to chase the labor through the day and collapse into rest when the body has nothing left, is itself a small theological statement about who the King is and what He intends for His people.

2.3 The Two Errors and the Path Between Them

Two errors have dominated the modern body's relationship to the Shabbat, and both have produced a body that does not actually rest.

The first error: the Sunday-as-Sabbath substitution. The Western church inherited from the post-Constantinian empire a structural identification of Sunday — the dies Solis, the day of the sun, named for the deity Aurelian had elevated as Sol Invictus in AD 274 — with the Shabbat the King had appointed for the seventh day. The shift is well documented and the institute will trace its mechanism in Part II. The pastoral effect was that the body began to gather on Sunday — which the apostolic body had also done, and which is recorded approvingly in the New Testament (Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 16:2) — but began to gather on Sunday as a replacement for the Shabbat rather than in addition to it. The structural consequence has been a body that does no Shabbat at all. The Friday-evening-to-Saturday-evening rest the King appointed is simply not kept; the Sunday gathering is taken to be its fulfillment; and the body works seven days in seven, with one of those seven spent in religious activity rather than in the rest the King commanded.

The apostolic record does not support the substitution. Acts 20:7 records the disciples breaking bread on the first day of the week, and Paul preaching to them until midnight — a Sunday-evening gathering, by the Roman reckoning, taking place after the Shabbat rest had already been kept. 1 Corinthians 16:2 records Paul's instruction that on the first day of the week the saints should each lay something aside as the LORD had prospered him, that there might be no collections when Paul came — a practical instruction about a weekly contribution, not a redefinition of the day of rest. In neither passage does the apostle teach that Sunday has replaced the Shabbat. In neither passage is Sunday called the Shabbat. The substitution was not apostolic. It was imperial, and the institute will trace the imperial mechanism in Part II.

The second error: the congregational Shabbat that is not rest. The reaction to the dispensational abolition of the Shabbat in much of the Messianic and Hebrew Roots movement has been to gather the body in formal congregational settings on Friday evening through Saturday evening, often with elaborate liturgies, lengthy services, multi-hour teachings, organized meal preparations for large numbers, and extensive driving and logistical labor. This is the Shabbat in name but not in substance. The day appointed for the cessation of labor has become a day of intensified labor of a different kind. The household has been pulled out of the home and into the assembly hall; the parents who would have rested are now serving food, organizing children's programming, setting up sound equipment, and breaking down chairs at the day's close. The body that gathers in this form leaves Shabbat more tired than it began. The fence has been replaced; the rest has not been recovered.

Neither error is the King's pattern. The King's pattern is the household Shabbat. The Friday-evening table set with bread and wine and the candles lit by the mother of the house. The unhurried hours with the family gathered. The reading of Scripture together. The conversation that does not need to end at a programmed time because there is no programmed time. The walk in the afternoon with no labor to return to. The afternoon nap. The closing meal as the sun sets. The day ending in havdalah, the simple closing prayer that names the line between the holy and

the common as the new week begins. This is the Shabbat the King gave. It is the Shabbat the body is now beginning to recover, in many cases without being taught — a small but real evidence that the Father is restoring His own appointed times to a generation no one had instructed in them.

2.4 The Sunday Gathering as Fruit of the Shabbat Rest

The apostolic Sunday gathering is not in conflict with the Shabbat rest. It is the natural fruit of it. The saints rested on the seventh day as the King commanded, kept the table with their households, walked in the joy of the day appointed for them, and then on the first day of the week — having been refreshed by the rest, restored in their bodies and souls and households — gathered together to break bread, hear the apostolic teaching, take up the collection for the saints in need, and walk in the mission of the gospel into the new week. This is what Acts 20:7 records. This is what 1 Corinthians 16:2 assumes. The two days are not in competition. They are in sequence: the rest first, the gathering second, with the rest as the foundation that makes the gathering possible.

The recovery the institute calls for in this paper is the recovery of the sequence. Keep Shabbat. Then gather. Not gather instead of Shabbat; not Shabbat as gathering; but Shabbat as the household rest the King appointed, followed by the assembly gathering for breaking of bread, teaching, and mission as the apostolic body practiced it. The body that holds both holds what the apostolic body held. The body that holds only one is keeping a half measure the King did not give.

The Shabbat is the rest. The Sunday gathering is the fruit. The body that has only the gathering has labored without resting; the body that has only the rest has rested without gathering. The King appointed both, and the apostolic body kept both. Recovery is not choosing between them. Recovery is receiving what the Lord of the Shabbat has been offering all along.

3. The Seven Annual Feasts and Christ in Each

Leviticus 23 catalogs seven annual feasts after listing the Shabbat. They divide naturally into two clusters: the spring feasts (Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, and Pentecost) and the fall feasts (Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles), with a gap between them in the early summer months. The structure is not arbitrary. The spring feasts have been fulfilled in their first-coming substance by the Lord Jesus Christ in His passion, resurrection, and the giving of the Spirit. The fall feasts await fulfillment in their second-coming substance at His return. Every annual feast points to and is filled with Him; the body that keeps them in their substance is keeping a calendar of Christ Himself.

This is the answer to the most common modern objection: that to keep the feasts after the cross is to deny the cross. The opposite is the case. To keep the feasts after the cross is to remember the cross, the resurrection, and the giving of the Spirit on the very days appointed for those works to occur. To keep the feasts is to look forward, on the appointed days, to the gathering, the atonement, and the dwelling of God with man that He has promised at the end. The feasts are not works the believer performs to add to Christ's finished work. They are the calendar of Christ's work itself, given by the Father in advance so that the body could rehearse what He would do, remember what He has done, and watch for what He will yet do.

3.1 Passover (Pesach) — The Lamb of God

*“On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the LORD’s Passover.” —
Leviticus 23:5, NKJV*

Passover commemorates the night the LORD struck the firstborn of Egypt and passed over the houses of Israel where the blood of the lamb had been applied to the doorpost (Exodus 12). The lamb was selected on the tenth of Nisan, kept for four days while the household examined it, and slaughtered on the fourteenth at twilight. The blood was applied; the lamb was eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs; the household ate in haste, dressed for departure, and at midnight the LORD passed through Egypt and the firstborn of Egypt died.

The fulfillment of Passover in the Lord Jesus is exact and unmistakable. “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29, NKJV). The Lord entered Jerusalem on the tenth of Nisan and was examined for four days by the chief priests and the elders, who could find no fault in Him. He was crucified on the fourteenth at the very hour the Passover lambs were being slaughtered in the temple court. “Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us” (1 Corinthians 5:7, NKJV) — Paul’s declaration to the Corinthian assembly, written approximately twenty-five years after the cross, naming the feast as fulfilled in Christ and immediately commanding the assembly to keep the feast in the substance of sincerity and truth (1 Corinthians 5:8). The same apostle who declared Christ as the Passover commanded the keeping of Passover. The fulfillment did not abolish the feast. It filled it.

3.2 Unleavened Bread (Hag HaMatzot) — The Sinless Body

“And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread.” — Leviticus 23:6, NKJV

The seven days of Unleavened Bread immediately follow Passover. The leaven is removed from the house — chametz, anything that has risen — and the household eats only matzah, the flat unleavened bread, for the duration of the feast. Leaven in Scripture consistently signifies sin (Matthew 16:6; 1 Corinthians 5:6-8; Galatians 5:9). The feast rehearses the removal of sin from the household and the eating of bread that has not been corrupted.

The fulfillment in Christ is direct. The body of the Lord lay in the tomb during the Feast of Unleavened Bread — the sinless body that “knew no sin” (2 Corinthians 5:21) resting in the days when sin was being removed from the household. “For Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (1 Corinthians 5:7-8, NKJV). The apostle does not abolish the feast. He commands it kept — in its substance, with the leaven of sin removed from the household of faith.

3.3 Firstfruits (Bikkurim) — The Risen Lord

“He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.” — Leviticus 23:11, NKJV

The Feast of Firstfruits is celebrated on the day after the Shabbat following Passover — the morning the priest waved the first sheaf of the barley harvest before the LORD. The harvest was not lawful to eat until the firstfruits had been presented; the offering of the first portion was the act by which the entire harvest was set apart as the LORD’s.

The Lord Jesus rose from the dead on the morning of Firstfruits — the morning the priest was waving the sheaf in the temple court. “But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep” (1 Corinthians 15:20, NKJV). Paul names the resurrection itself as the fulfillment of Firstfruits, and the resurrection of Christ as the firstfruits guarantees the resurrection of those who belong to Him at His coming (1 Corinthians 15:23). The feast is not retired by the resurrection. The resurrection is the feast.

3.4 Pentecost (Shavuot) — The Pouring Out of the Spirit

“And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath.” — Leviticus 23:15-16, NKJV

Shavuot — the Feast of Weeks, fifty days after Firstfruits — commemorates the giving of the Torah at Sinai on the fiftieth day after the Exodus, and celebrates the wheat harvest. The Greek name Pentecost (pentekoste, fiftieth) preserves the count.

The fulfillment is recorded in Acts 2. “When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place” (Acts 2:1, NKJV). The Spirit fell on the apostolic body on the very day the feast was being kept. The crowd that heard the apostles speak in the languages of the diaspora was a Pentecost crowd, gathered in Jerusalem from “every nation under heaven” (Acts 2:5) to keep the feast. Three thousand were saved that day — on the same feast that, at Sinai, had recorded the death of three thousand under the broken law (Exodus 32:28). The Spirit reversed the Sinai pattern on the day appointed for it. The feast was not retired by the giving of the Spirit. The giving of the Spirit was the feast.

3.5 Trumpets (Yom Teruah) — The Awakening Call

“Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a Sabbath-rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation.’” — Leviticus 23:24, NKJV

The fall feasts open with the blowing of the shofar on the first day of the seventh month — Tishrei. The trumpet sounds; the body awakens; the ten days between Trumpets and the Day of Atonement — the Days of Awe in later tradition — are days of preparation, repentance, and return to the LORD. The feast does not commemorate a past historical event. It anticipates a future one.

The fulfillment of Trumpets has not yet occurred. “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first” (1 Thessalonians 4:16, NKJV). “Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed — in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (1 Corinthians 15:51-52, NKJV). The Lord’s return is announced by a trumpet — the same instrument the King appointed in Leviticus 23 for the awakening call of the seventh month. The body that keeps Yom Teruah is rehearsing the day of the King’s return; the body that does not keep it is missing the rehearsal the Father appointed.

3.6 Atonement (Yom Kippur) — The Day of Reckoning

“Also the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the Day of Atonement. It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls.” — Leviticus 23:27, NKJV

The Day of Atonement is the most solemn day in the King’s calendar. The high priest entered the Holy of Holies once a year on this day with the blood of the goat — the only day any human entered that chamber — to make atonement for the sins of the people (Leviticus 16). The two goats of Yom Kippur — one slain, one driven into the wilderness bearing the iniquity of the people — together

prefigure the dual work of Christ as the slain Lamb whose blood atones and the bearer of sin who carries iniquity “as far as the east is from the west” (Psalm 103:12).

The first-coming substance of Yom Kippur was fulfilled at the cross — “by His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption” (Hebrews 9:12, NKJV). But the second-coming substance — the day of reckoning, the final judgment, the moment when the Lord returns to deal with sin in finality — has not yet occurred. Yom Kippur stands between the trumpet of His return (Trumpets) and the dwelling of God with man (Tabernacles) precisely because the prophetic order of His second coming runs through reckoning before it arrives at dwelling. The body that keeps Yom Kippur in its substance is rehearsing the day of His final dealing with sin and the day His blood will be vindicated against every false accusation, every unrepented offense, and every system that has profaned His name.

3.7 Tabernacles (Sukkot) — The Dwelling of God With Man

“The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the LORD... You shall dwell in booths for seven days.” — Leviticus 23:34, 42, NKJV

The seventh feast — Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles — is the longest, most joyful, and most prophetic of the annual cycle. The household builds a temporary booth (sukkah) in the open air and lives in it for seven days, eating meals there, sleeping there when weather permits, gathering with the body in the booth for the joy of the feast. The feast commemorates the wilderness wanderings, when Israel dwelt in tents under the cloud of the LORD’s presence — and it anticipates the day when “the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God” (Revelation 21:3, NKJV).

The first-coming substance of Sukkot is the incarnation — “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14, NKJV), where the Greek *eskenosen* literally translates tabernacled, the same root as *skene*, tent. The Lord Jesus is at the center of John 7’s record of Sukkot in Jerusalem, where on the great day of the feast He stood and cried, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink” (John 7:37, NKJV) — the water-pouring ritual of Sukkot fulfilled in His own person. But the full second-coming substance of Sukkot — the eternal dwelling of God with man — awaits Revelation 21. Zechariah prophesies that in the kingdom age, “every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles” (Zechariah 14:16, NKJV). Tabernacles is not a Jewish feast that has been retired. It is the eternal feast of the King’s reign, kept now in anticipation, kept then in fulfillment, kept forever in His presence.

3.8 The Sevenfold Pattern

The seven annual feasts together rehearse the entire redemptive history of Christ. Passover — the Lamb slain. Unleavened Bread — the sinless body in the tomb. Firstfruits — the resurrection.

Pentecost — the giving of the Spirit. Trumpets — the awakening call of His return. Atonement — the final reckoning. Tabernacles — the eternal dwelling of God with man. The first four have been fulfilled in the first coming. The last three await fulfillment in the second coming. The gap between Pentecost and Trumpets in the calendar — the early summer with no major feast — is precisely the church age, the season in which the body lives between the giving of the Spirit and the trumpet of His return.

This is not a clever Christological reading layered onto a Jewish ritual cycle. This is the architecture the Father built into the calendar from the beginning. He gave seven feasts because the work of His Son required seven movements. The feasts are not Jewish remnants the church may safely retire. They are Christ's own redemptive history, given by His Father in advance, kept by His apostolic body, awaiting the body's recovery in this hour.

The seven annual feasts are the calendar of Christ Himself. Four fulfilled at His first coming. Three awaiting His second. The body that keeps them in their substance keeps Him. The body that has retired them has retired the calendar of His own work.

4. Kept by the King, Kept by the Apostles

The most decisive evidence that the appointed times were not abolished at the cross is the post-resurrection record itself. The Lord Jesus kept the feasts. The apostolic body kept the feasts. Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, kept the feasts. The book of Acts is structured around the feasts. None of this is in dispute among honest readers of the New Testament; the dispute concerns only what the practice means for the body today.

4.1 Jesus and the Feasts

The Gospels record the Lord Jesus keeping the appointed times throughout His earthly ministry, never as a mere cultural Jew fulfilling social expectation but as the Son of the Father whose feasts they were.

- **Passover** — the Last Supper was a Passover meal (Matthew 26:17-19; Mark 14:12-16; Luke 22:7-15). The Lord Himself said, “With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer” (Luke 22:15, NKJV). He did not retire the feast in instituting the supper; He instituted the supper within the feast.
- **Pentecost / Tabernacles / Dedication** — John 7 records the Lord at the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem, where He taught publicly in the temple courts. John 10:22-23 records Him at the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah, not a Mosaic feast but the feast Jesus chose to keep), walking in Solomon’s porch.
- **The annual cycle** — Luke 2:41 records that “His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover,” and the family pattern carried into the Lord’s adult ministry, with John’s Gospel structured around at least three Passovers attended by the Lord.

The pattern is unambiguous. The Lord did not approach the feasts as an outsider observing a foreign tradition. He approached them as the One whose feasts they were, the substance of which He Himself was, and the rehearsal of which He participated in until the appointed time when the substance would arrive.

4.2 The Apostolic Body and the Feasts

The book of Acts records the apostolic body keeping the appointed times after the resurrection and after the giving of the Spirit. The pattern continues for at least thirty years past the cross.

- **Pentecost** — the Spirit fell on the apostolic body “when the Day of Pentecost had fully come” (Acts 2:1) — they were keeping the feast.
- **The Days of Unleavened Bread** — Acts 12:3-4 records Peter’s arrest “during the Days of Unleavened Bread,” with Herod’s intent to bring him out “after Passover” — the apostolic body was keeping the feasts approximately fifteen years after the cross.

- **Pentecost again** — Acts 20:16 records Paul’s intention to be in Jerusalem “on the Day of Pentecost” — the apostle to the Gentiles, two decades after the cross, structuring his missionary itinerary around the Father’s appointed time.
- **The Fast** — Acts 27:9 references “the Fast,” a clear shorthand for the Day of Atonement, used to date Paul’s voyage to Rome. Luke, the Gentile physician writing the book, uses Yom Kippur as a calendar reference his readers are expected to recognize.
- **Paul’s vow at Jerusalem** — Acts 21:17-26 records Paul, on the express counsel of James and the elders of the Jerusalem assembly, joining four men in the completion of a Nazirite vow at the temple, paying for their offerings, and demonstrating publicly “that you yourself also walk orderly and keep the law” (Acts 21:24). The apostle to the Gentiles, accused of teaching against the law, demonstrated his own continued walk in the Father’s appointed pattern.

4.3 Paul on the Feasts

The Pauline letters are often read as if they retire the feasts. Read carefully, they do not. Three passages are decisive.

1 Corinthians 5:7-8 — “For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (NKJV). Paul writes to a predominantly Gentile assembly in Corinth. He names Christ as the Passover. He then commands the Gentile assembly to keep the feast. The feast in question is Unleavened Bread, kept in the substance of sincerity and truth. The verse that the modern dispensationalist quotes to abolish the feast is the verse that commands it kept.

Colossians 2:16-17 — “So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ” (NKJV). The verse is regularly cited as Paul’s abolition of the feasts. It says the opposite. Paul tells the Colossians to let no one judge them in their feast-keeping. The judgment was coming from the ascetic syncretists Paul confronts throughout Colossians 2 — those who insisted that the Colossians’ continued observance was insufficient unless combined with their additional regulations of “do not touch, do not taste, do not handle” (Colossians 2:21). Paul’s instruction is that the assembly should not submit to the judgment of those who would impose additional rules; the feasts themselves remain “a shadow of things to come,” and the substance — Christ — is the substance the shadows always pointed toward. Shadows continue to be cast as long as the body of Christ is in the world walking toward His return; only when the substance is fully present in the second-coming sense will the shadows have ceased their function. Until then, the shadows continue to teach what the substance is.

Romans 14:5-6 — “One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it” (NKJV). The Romans 14

passage concerns disputed days within the assembly — likely days of fasting and certain Jewish ceremonial calendar features that varied between Jewish and Gentile believers in Rome — and Paul instructs the assembly not to fracture over these matters. He does not retire the appointed times the LORD called His own. He is teaching the assembly how to walk together in love when there are differences in conviction. The text is not a dispensational eraser. It is a pastoral instruction about charity in disputed matters, given by the same apostle who in 1 Corinthians 5 commanded the keeping of the feast.

The combined testimony of the apostolic record is decisive. The Lord kept the feasts. The Twelve kept the feasts. Paul kept the feasts. The book of Acts is dated by the feasts. The Pauline letters do not retire the feasts; they protect the body's keeping of them from the judgment of those who would either add to them or subtract from them. The body that has retired the appointed times has not retired them on apostolic authority. It has retired them on the authority of councils that came later, and the institute will trace those councils in Part II.

5. The Mislabeleding of Obedience

The most common modern objection to the keeping of the feasts is that to keep them is legalism — the attempt to add works to the finished work of Christ for justification. This objection has dominated the evangelical conversation for a century. It is also incorrect, and the error is structural enough to warrant a direct answer before the paper proceeds to Part II.

5.1 What Legalism Actually Is

Legalism, in the New Testament’s own definition, is the attempt to be justified before God by the works of the law. “Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified” (Galatians 2:16, NKJV). The Pauline polemic against legalism is the polemic against any system that claims justification by anything other than the blood of Christ received by faith. This is the error Paul confronted in Galatia: Judaizers were insisting that Gentile converts must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses in order to be saved. Paul’s response was that this was “another gospel” (Galatians 1:6) — a denial of the cross.

Legalism, properly defined, is therefore not the keeping of any specific commandment. It is the claim that the keeping of any commandment justifies the keeper. A believer who keeps Passover because Christ is the Passover and has commanded the feast kept is not a legalist; he is an obedient son. A believer who keeps Passover in order to be saved has departed from the gospel regardless of which day he is keeping. The location of the error is not in the day. The location of the error is in the heart’s relation to the day.

5.2 The Mislabeleding Pattern

The modern evangelical instinct, formed by a century of dispensational teaching, is to label any keeping of an Old Testament command as legalism — even when the command is being kept by a saint who has been justified by faith and is walking in the Spirit’s pattern of obedience to the King who saved him. This is a category error. The same instinct, applied consistently, would label communion as legalistic (it is a command), baptism as legalistic (it is a command), tithing or generous giving as legalistic (the apostles taught it), the gathering of the saints as legalistic (Hebrews 10:25 commands it), and the Lord’s Prayer as legalistic (the Lord taught it). Obedience to the King’s commands is not legalism; it is sonship. The believer who walks in the Spirit’s leading toward the keeping of a command is not adding works to grace; he is bearing the fruit grace produces.

The Lord Jesus framed this Himself: “If you love Me, keep My commandments” (John 14:15, NKJV). The keeping of the commandments is the fruit of love for the King, not the means by which the King’s love is purchased. The Father’s appointed times are commandments of the King — given by the Father, kept by the Son, observed by the apostolic body. The believer who keeps them

is walking in love. The believer who labels that walking legalism has, by that labeling, confused the fruit of love with the works of the flesh.

5.3 The Analogy of Communion

Communion is the cleanest analogy for understanding the feasts in their post-cross substance. The Lord Jesus instituted communion within the Passover meal: “And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me” (Luke 22:19, NKJV). The substance of the bread and the cup is His own body and blood, given for the remission of sins. The believer who takes communion is not earning salvation; he is remembering the One who purchased it. “As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes” (1 Corinthians 11:26, NKJV).

The feasts function the same way. Passover is the annual remembrance of the Lamb who was slain — extended in time, walked through over a week, kept with the household in the substance of unleavened bread and the bitterness of sin remembered and the sweetness of redemption proclaimed. Pentecost is the annual remembrance of the giving of the Spirit and the founding of the assembly. Tabernacles is the annual rehearsal of the dwelling of God with man, looked back to in the wilderness and looked forward to in the eternal city. The believer who keeps the feasts in their substance is doing what the believer who takes communion is doing: remembering the King in the manner the King appointed, on the days the King appointed, with the household the King has gathered. The works are not the believer’s; the works are the King’s. The believer’s role is to remember and rejoice.

5.4 What Was Good Then Is Good Now

The instinct that whatever was commanded under the old covenant must be retired under the new is itself a doctrinal error of recent vintage, traceable to a specific theological school the institute will name in Part II. Scripture’s own logic is that what was good for the human being before the cross is still good for the human being after the cross. The cross did not change human physiology. The cross did not change the household’s need to gather around a table and rehearse the redemptive history of the King. The cross did not change the body’s need for a weekly day of cessation. The cross fulfilled the shadows and freed the substance, and the substance — remembrance, rest, family, the King’s table, the rehearsal of His acts — was never the shadow’s burden. It was the shadow’s gift, given by the Father in advance, to be received by His people throughout their generations forever.

The same principle that holds the moral law in continuity from old covenant to new — the prohibitions on idolatry, murder, theft, false witness, adultery, covetousness — holds the appointed times in continuity. They were not the temporary fence laws of a single ethnic people. They were the eternal calendar of a Father who appointed them for the worship of His Son and the formation of His household across all generations. To label their keeping legalism is to

misread the entire architecture of Scripture and to defame the apostolic body that kept them after the cross.

Legalism is the claim that obedience justifies. Obedience is the fruit of justification by faith. The believer who keeps the feasts because the King commanded them is walking in love, not earning salvation. The body that has labeled this love legalism has slandered the obedience the Spirit produces and defamed the apostolic body that kept what the Lord Himself kept.

PART II

The Calendar That Replaced the Calendar

6. The Engine of Drift: How the Father's Calendar Was Severed From the Body

The substitution did not happen in a single move. It happened in stages over four centuries, each stage justified by reasoning that seemed reasonable at the time, each stage cumulative, and each stage carrying the body further from the calendar the Father had appointed and deeper into a calendar the empire had inherited from its idols. Three documents and one council together accomplished the severance. The institute names them not because the men who acted are uniquely guilty — most of them believed they were preserving the unity of the church — but because the structural displacement of the Father's appointed times by the empire's appointed times runs through these specific decisions, and the body that has not seen them named cannot understand why its calendar looks the way it does.

6.1 The Quartodeciman Controversy (Mid-Second Century)

The first crack appeared within a hundred years of the apostles. The assemblies of Asia Minor — the very assemblies founded by the apostle John, including those of Smyrna under Polycarp — kept Passover (Pesach) on the fourteenth of Nisan, the date the Father had appointed in Leviticus 23:5, regardless of which day of the week it fell on. They were called Quartodecimans, the Fourteeners, from the Latin for fourteen. The assemblies of Rome, by contrast, had begun by the mid-second century to keep a Sunday-only commemoration of the resurrection, severing the observance from the lunar calendar the King had appointed and tying it instead to the weekly cycle of the Roman day-system.

Around AD 155, Polycarp of Smyrna — disciple of the apostle John, eyewitness witness to the apostolic generation — traveled to Rome to speak with Anicetus, bishop of Rome, about the date of Pesach. Eusebius records that the two parted in peace without resolving the dispute, with each agreeing to follow the practice of his own region. Polycarp held the apostolic tradition he had received from John himself: the fourteenth of Nisan, the date Scripture appoints. Within forty years that peace was gone. Around AD 195, Victor of Rome attempted to excommunicate the entire body of Asia Minor for refusing to abandon the apostolic Passover date. Irenaeus of Lyons rebuked him sharply; the excommunication did not hold; but the trajectory was set. Rome had begun to assert authority over the Father's calendar that the apostolic body had never granted any city to assert.

“And these things shall come from those things which I told you of, that they may be admonished by you all in the things which they ought not to do, but to be content to keep that which the Lord and the Apostles delivered to us.” —

Polycarp's Epistle to the Philippians, c. AD 110, paraphrasing the apostolic deposit

Polycarp was burned at the stake in Smyrna around AD 156 for refusing to deny Christ. The body that burned him took his keeping of the apostolic Passover for granted. The body that succeeded him in Rome would, within two centuries, anathematize anyone who kept it.

6.2 The Council of Nicaea (AD 325)

The decisive severance came at Nicaea. Constantine had been emperor for thirteen years; the empire had been officially Christianized through the Edict of Milan in 313; the body had emerged from the Diocletian persecution into the favor of the imperial throne. In May 325, Constantine convened approximately three hundred bishops at Nicaea, primarily to address the Arian controversy. But a second matter was settled at the council that has shaped the body's calendar ever since. The council ruled — under Constantine's direct pressure — that the entire body of Christendom must henceforth keep Easter on a fixed Sunday calculation that had been deliberately and explicitly severed from the Hebrew calendar.

The reasoning was not theological. It was political and ethnic, and Constantine's own letter to the bishops who had not attended the council, preserved by Eusebius in *The Life of Constantine* (Book III, Chapters 18-19), states the reasoning in his own words. The emperor wrote that it was “unbecoming” that the church should keep its festivals “in common with the Jews,” whom he characterized as having “polluted their hands with a most fearful crime,” and whom he refused to allow to set the date of the church's festival. He commanded that the church “have nothing in common” with what he called “the detestable Jewish crowd.” The reader who would prefer the institute soften this is invited to read Constantine's letter in its own words; the institute has only paraphrased what is plainly written there. The reasoning that severed the Father's calendar from the body of Christ was anti-Jewish, anti-Hebraic contempt issued from an imperial throne — the same imperial throne that, twelve years earlier, had been issuing decrees of execution against believers, and the same imperial throne that, three centuries earlier, had crucified the King.

This is the decision the modern body has inherited. The Easter of Western Christendom is not the Pesach of Scripture. It is a fixed-Sunday observance, calculated by the spring equinox of the solar calendar, deliberately constructed to fall on a different day than the Father's Pesach falls on. The body that keeps the Roman Easter does not keep the Father's Pesach. They are not the same observance under different names. They were severed at Nicaea, on imperial authority, for reasons the emperor himself stated in writing, and the severance has held for seventeen centuries.

6.3 The Dies Solis Edict (AD 321)

Four years before Nicaea, on March 7, 321, Constantine issued an edict establishing dies Solis — the day of the sun — as the official Roman day of rest. The edict survives in the *Codex Justinianus* (3.12.2) and reads, in standard translation, that “on the venerable day of the Sun let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed.” The day was named

dies Solis because it was the day of Sol Invictus, the Unconquered Sun, the deity Aurelian had elevated to the chief god of the Roman pantheon in AD 274 and whose feast day was December 25. Constantine himself, before his Christian profession, had been a devotee of Sol Invictus; coinage from his reign continued to bear the inscription Soli Invicto Comiti — “to the Unconquered Sun, my Companion” — for years after his Edict of Milan. The day Constantine made the empire’s day of rest was the day of his old god.

The edict said nothing about the Father’s Shabbat. It did not abolish the Shabbat. But by establishing the day of the sun as the empire’s official rest day, it created a structural pressure that made the keeping of the seventh-day Shabbat increasingly difficult for any believer who held public office, transacted in the markets, or participated in civic life. Within forty years, the church had moved to formalize the new pattern.

6.4 The Council of Laodicea, Canon 29 (c. AD 363)

The Council of Laodicea, a regional synod held in Asia Minor approximately AD 363, issued sixty canons regulating the conduct of the body. Canon 29 reads, in the standard English translation:

“Christians shall not Judaize and be idle on Saturday, but shall work on that day; but the Lord’s day they shall especially honour, and, as being Christians, shall, if possible, do no work on that day. If, however, they are found Judaizing, they shall be shut out from Christ.” — Council of Laodicea, Canon 29, c. AD 363

The text speaks for itself. The Father’s Shabbat, kept by the Lord Jesus, kept by the apostles, kept by the early body for three centuries — was now declared to be “Judaizing.” Believers who rested on the seventh day, as the King had commanded, were threatened with being “shut out from Christ.” The day the empire had made its rest day — the day named for the Unconquered Sun — was now elevated as the obligatory rest day of the body, with the Father’s appointed day declared a forbidden tradition. The fence Polycarp had refused to step over, the empire was now demanding the body step over it on pain of excommunication.

This is the historical mechanism. This is the documented severance. This is how the seventh-day Shabbat became, in the mind of the Western body, a “Jewish” institution that the body of Christ should avoid. Not by apostolic decree. Not by the speech of the Lord. By the canon of a regional synod composed of men who lived three centuries after the cross, under the political pressure of an empire that had recently elevated the day of its sun god, and who decreed the Father’s appointed day to be a mark of apostasy.

6.5 The Cumulative Pattern

By the late fourth century, the severance was structurally complete. Pesach had been replaced by a fixed-Sunday Easter calculated against the Father’s calendar. The seventh-day Shabbat had been replaced by the dies Solis of the empire. The annual feast cycle of Leviticus 23 had been replaced by a liturgical cycle built around the Roman solar year, anchored to the winter solstice and the

spring equinox rather than the new moons and harvest seasons the King had appointed. The body that emerged from this transition was not the apostolic body in continuity. It was a new body, in a new calendar, with new feast days — and the new feast days were about to be filled with content that came not from the Father but from the very deities the Father had named as abomination.

Three centuries of body-life under the apostolic calendar. Then four documents and a council. Constantine's Sun-day edict. Nicaea's severance from the Hebrew Pesach. Laodicea's anathema against the seventh-day Shabbat. The pattern is not hidden. It is in the imperial archives, the conciliar canons, and the eyewitness writings of those who lived through it. The body that has not seen the mechanism named has not been told its own history.

7. Christmas: The Feast of the Unconquered Sun

The most decorated, most defended, and most spiritually compromised feast on the modern Western Christian calendar is the one the King never commanded, the apostolic body never kept, and the assembly of the first three centuries never observed. The body that has built its annual rhythm around December 25 has built it on a foundation the Scripture itself names as abomination, in a feast genealogy that runs unbroken from the priests of Saturn through the priests of Sol Invictus to the cathedrals of medieval Europe and into the living rooms of the present-day evangelical home. The institute will not soften what the documented record shows. The body that has called this feast holy has not called holy what the King has called holy.

7.1 The Feast Was Not Apostolic

Three things the historical record establishes beyond dispute. First, the apostolic body did not keep December 25 as the birth of Christ. The earliest Christian writings — the Pauline letters, the Gospels, the General Epistles, the Apocalypse, the Didache, the letters of Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus — contain no reference to a celebration of the Lord's nativity at any date, and certainly none on December 25. The feast does not exist in the apostolic age.

Second, the date of the Lord's birth is not December. The shepherds were "living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night" (Luke 2:8, NKJV). The flocks were not in the open fields in the Judean winter; they were in folds. Multiple early sources, including Origen's Homily on Leviticus (8.3, c. AD 245), explicitly oppose celebrating the Lord's birth, with Origen declaring that only sinners (he names Pharaoh and Herod) had birthday celebrations in Scripture, and that the practice was foreign to the church. Internal evidence in Luke 1 — the priestly course of Abijah, the conception of John the Baptist, the timing of Mary's visit to Elizabeth — places the Lord's birth most plausibly in the autumn months, with serious arguments for the Feast of Tabernacles itself, given the Johannine "tabernacled among us" of John 1:14. The institute will not press the autumn-birth case dogmatically; it will note only that the December 25 date has no Scriptural foundation, no apostolic tradition, no early-patristic support, and was not established as the Lord's nativity until the fourth century.

Third, the date of December 25 was the date of the dies natalis Solis Invicti — the birthday of the Unconquered Sun — established as a Roman state festival by the emperor Aurelian in AD 274, fifty-one years before the Council of Nicaea, on the very day of the winter solstice in the Julian calendar. The earliest documented Christian observance of December 25 as the nativity of Christ is in the Chronograph of 354, a Roman almanac that lists December 25 as both N(atalis) Invicti — the birthday of the Unconquered (Sun) — and as the natal day of Christ. The date of the Lord's birth was not ascertained by historical investigation. It was assigned to coincide with the existing Roman feast of the sun god. The body that defends the date today is defending an assignment made in the fourth century by men who were attempting to convert pagans by giving them a Christian feast on the day they were already keeping for their old gods.

7.2 The Roots: Saturnalia, Sol Invictus, and What Was Done on These Days

The Roman feasts that surround and constitute December 25 are documented in primary sources. The institute will lay them out plainly because the body has been protected from this record long enough.

Saturnalia ran from December 17 to December 23 in the late Republican period and was extended to a week-long festival under the empire. Macrobius's Saturnalia (early fifth century, drawing on earlier Roman sources), Seneca's Letters (Epistle 18, mid-first century — written within the lifetime of the apostle Paul), and Lucian's Saturnalia (second century) describe the festival in detail. The week was characterized by the ritualized inversion of social order — masters served their slaves at table, public drunkenness was permitted and expected, sexual restraint was suspended (Seneca's complaint to Lucilius is precisely that "the whole mob has let itself go in pleasures"), gambling was legalized for the duration, and a princeps Saturnalicus — a Lord of Misrule — was appointed in households and at festivals to preside over the inversion. In the older agricultural form of Saturnalia preserved in Latin sources, the festival had been associated with the worship of Saturn, the Roman form of the Greek Kronos, the god whom Greek myth records as devouring his own children. Roman religion in its archaic form had included human sacrifice to Saturn — the institute notes that this is a contested matter in the scholarly literature, with the Roman authors themselves (Pliny, Natural History 28.12; Macrobius, Saturnalia 1.7.31) stating that the older sacrifice of human victims had been replaced in historical times with the symbolic offering of small wax figures called sigillaria, which were exchanged as gifts during the festival. The genealogy is plain: the gift-giving custom of late December descends, through the sigillaria of Saturnalia, from the earlier sacrifice of human victims to the child-devouring god the Romans called Saturn.

Sol Invictus — the Unconquered Sun — was elevated to chief deity of the Roman state pantheon by the emperor Aurelian in AD 274 and given a state temple, a college of priests, and an annual feast on December 25, the day of the winter solstice in the Julian calendar at that time. The choice of date was theological: at the winter solstice the sun reaches its lowest point in the sky and then begins to rise again, so the day was reckoned as the birth of the new sun. The dies natalis Solis Invicti — the Birthday of the Unconquered Sun — was the day the Roman empire celebrated the rebirth of the deity Aurelian had elevated above Jupiter. Constantine himself, before and arguably after his Christian profession, was a devotee of Sol Invictus. His coinage continued to bear the legend SOLI INVICTO COMITI — to the Unconquered Sun, my Companion — for years after the Edict of Milan, including coinage minted as late as AD 322. The arch of Constantine, dedicated AD 315 in Rome two years after the Edict of Milan, bears images of Sol Invictus and gives no clear iconographic indication of the Christian profession the emperor had ostensibly made. The day Constantine elevated and the day the church later assigned to the Lord's nativity was the day of his old god, and the genealogy was not hidden from those who lived through it. Augustine of Hippo

had to argue against Christians in his own day who were still venerating the sun on this day, “as if our Lord were the same” (Augustine, Sermon 190).

Mithras and the Mithraic Mysteries were the other major mystery cult competing with Christianity in the late Roman world, and Mithraism’s central rite was tied to the same December solstice date. Mithras was depicted in cult iconography slaying a bull in a cave — the tauroctony — and Mithraic initiates underwent the taurobolium, a ritual in which the initiate stood in a pit while a bull was slaughtered above on a wooden grating, the blood of the bull pouring down upon the initiate as a baptism of new birth. Tertullian (De Praescriptione Haereticorum 40, c. AD 200) records the Mithraic mysteries as parodying the Christian sacraments, noting that Mithraists had an initiation involving water, a sealing on the forehead, an offering of bread, and an oath of brotherhood — and Tertullian attributes the parallels to demonic counterfeit. The institute will not press the Mithras-Christmas connection beyond the documented December solstice timing and the cultic rivalry; it will only note that the ground on which the church planted its December 25 feast was ground already occupied by multiple solar and mystery cults, and the saints of that hour knew it.

7.3 The Tree

The Father, by the prophet Jeremiah, addressed the practice of cutting trees from the forest, decking them with silver and gold, and venerating them in worship.

“Thus says the LORD: ‘Do not learn the way of the Gentiles; do not be dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the Gentiles are dismayed at them. For the customs of the peoples are futile; for one cuts a tree from the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the ax. They decorate it with silver and gold; they fasten it with nails and hammers so that it will not topple. They are upright, like a palm tree, and they cannot speak; they must be carried, because they cannot go by themselves. Do not be afraid of them, for they cannot do evil, nor can they do any good.’” — Jeremiah 10:2-5, NKJV

The text is not subtle. The Father, through His prophet, explicitly names the practice — cut a tree from the forest, decorate it with silver and gold, fasten it with nails and hammers so that it will not topple, and declares: “Do not learn the way of the Gentiles.” The standard modern defense is that Jeremiah is describing the carving of a wooden idol, not a tree-decoration custom — but the text describes the cutting, decorating, and securing of a tree, in that exact sequence, with an axe, with silver and gold, and with nails. The defense requires the reader to insert into the passage a carving step the text does not contain. The plain reading of Jeremiah 10 is that the LORD is addressing precisely the kind of cut, decorated, free-standing decorated tree the modern Christmas household sets up in its living room each December.

The historical genealogy of the Christmas tree confirms what Jeremiah condemns. Sacred groves and venerated trees run through the Canaanite asherah worship the Old Testament repeatedly condemns (Deuteronomy 12:3; 16:21; 1 Kings 14:23; 2 Kings 17:10; Jeremiah 17:2 — the Father’s

own people had taken to “green trees on the high hills” for their idolatrous worship). The Germanic and Norse pagan traditions venerated sacred oaks and evergreens as dwelling places of their gods; Bonifacius (Boniface), the eighth-century missionary to the Germans, famously cut down Donar’s Oak — the oak sacred to Thor — at Geismar around AD 723, an act that historical sources record as a deliberate confrontation with the tree-veneration of the Germanic peoples. The eighth-century evangelization of northern Europe involved repeated confrontation with sacred-tree veneration, and the later medieval custom of bringing an evergreen into the home at the winter solstice — first documented in early modern Germany in the sixteenth century, and popularized in England by Prince Albert in the nineteenth — emerged from this same Germanic substrate. The Christmas tree of the modern living room is the lineal descendant, by both literary and ritual genealogy, of the sacred tree the Father commanded His people not to learn, not to imitate, and not to bring into His worship.

The body that has placed a cut, decorated, free-standing decorated tree in its home each December has, by that act, performed a practice the King explicitly named and explicitly forbade. The body that has called this tree “the Christmas tree,” draped it with silver and gold, fastened it with nails and hammers so it would not topple, and placed beneath it the sacrifices of the season, has not Christianized the tree. The tree has paganized the household.

7.4 The Stitch: What Scripture Says About This Pattern

The Father has spoken to this exact pattern. Not the abstract pattern of pagan worship in general, but the specific pattern of taking pagan forms and applying them to the worship of the LORD. He spoke to it through Moses, through the prophets, through the Lord Jesus, and through the apostle Paul. He has not been silent. The body that defends Christmas as “keeping Christ in Christmas” has not encountered what He has said about this exact attempt.

“When the LORD your God cuts off from before you the nations which you go to dispossess, and you displace them and dwell in their land, take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.’ You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way; for every abomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.” — Deuteronomy 12:29-32, NKJV

The verse is the death of the “keeping Christ in Christmas” defense. The Father did not say “Worship Me in any way that occurs to you.” He did not say “Take the forms the nations used for their gods and apply them to Me, and I will be pleased.” He said the opposite. He said “You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way” — that way being the way the nations had served their gods. The reasoning was that the nations’ worship was abomination, that the Father hates what was done in those forms, and that He has commanded “You shall not add to it nor take away

from it.” The body that has taken Saturnalia, Sol Invictus, and the Germanic sacred tree, baptized them with the name of Jesus, and placed them at the center of its annual worship rhythm has done the precise thing Deuteronomy 12 forbade.

The Father did not say, “Worship Me however you please, with whatever forms move you, on whatever days speak to you.” He said, “You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way.” That way is the way of the nations. Christmas is in that way. The body that defends this feast as a Christian celebration is defending a feast the Father by His own voice forbade His people to construct.

8. Easter: The Goddess and the Ritual That Bears Her Name

The second great feast of the Western Christian calendar is the one whose own English name is the name of a goddess. The body that has called the resurrection of the Lord “Easter” has, by the very name on its lips, called His resurrection by the name of a fertility deity whom the Father’s prophets condemned by name and whose worship He repeatedly judged. The institute names this with the full weight Scripture gives it. The body has been told for too long that the name does not matter; the King through His prophets has told us at length that the name does matter, that the form does matter, and that He will not share His glory with another.

8.1 The Father’s Pesach Versus Rome’s Easter

The first thing to be said about Easter is that it is not Pesach. The Father commanded His people to keep the Passover on the fourteenth of Nisan, on the lunar calendar His own creation calendar establishes. The Lord Jesus was crucified on Pesach. The apostolic body kept Pesach. The Quartodeciman assemblies of Asia Minor kept Pesach for at least a century and a half after the cross. And then, as Section 6 has documented, the Council of Nicaea severed the church’s commemoration of the resurrection from the Father’s Pesach, on the explicit reasoning that Christians should not have anything in common with what Constantine called “the detestable Jewish crowd.” What replaced the Father’s Pesach was a fixed-Sunday observance calculated by the Roman solar calendar around the spring equinox.

The day Nicaea fixed was the day already kept across the Roman world for the spring fertility festival. The replacement was not random. It was the same pattern as Christmas: take an existing pagan feast, place a Christian event on top of it, and let the body’s keeping of the feast carry forward by the inertia of the cultural rhythm already in place. The body that has kept “Easter Sunday” for seventeen centuries has not been keeping Pesach. It has been keeping a Roman spring festival rebranded in the fourth century with the name of a Christian event.

8.2 The Goddess Whose Name the Feast Bears

The English name Easter is the name of a goddess. The Venerable Bede, the Anglo-Saxon historian and monk, writing in his *De Temporum Ratione* (The Reckoning of Time, AD 725) — which is the earliest documented source for the etymology — stated plainly that the month corresponding to April was called Eosturmonath in the Old English calendar, and that it was named after a goddess called Eostre, in whose honor feasts were celebrated in that month before the Anglo-Saxon conversion to Christianity. Bede records this matter-of-factly, as a known datum of his people’s recent religious history. The institute notes that some modern scholars have raised questions about how widespread the cult of Eostre actually was in pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon religion; the institute also notes that Bede himself, writing within living memory of pagan English religion and as a meticulous historian whose work is foundational for the chronology of the early medieval

church, stated the etymology directly. The English-speaking church calls its highest holy day by the name of a Germanic spring goddess, on Bede’s own authority.

The Germanic Eostre sits within a much older complex of spring-fertility goddesses across the ancient Near East and Mediterranean. The Canaanite Astarte (Hebrew Ashtoreth, in plural Ashtaroth), the Akkadian Ishtar, the Sumerian Inanna, the Phoenician fertility deity worshiped under various names — these were a related cluster of goddesses associated with sexuality, fertility, the spring, and in many of their cultic expressions, ritual sex acts performed in temple precincts as part of their worship. The institute notes that the popular evangelical claim that “Easter is just Ishtar” in a direct etymological sense — the claim associated with Alexander Hislop’s nineteenth-century book *The Two Babylons* — has been falsified on lexical grounds by serious scholarship, and the institute does not advance that claim. What the institute does state, on documented grounds, is that the English name of the church’s spring feast is the name of a Germanic spring goddess, that the Germanic spring-goddess complex sits within a far older and broader spring-fertility-goddess complex that runs across the ancient Mediterranean and Near East, and that the Old Testament names the worship of Astarte repeatedly as one of the great abominations for which the Father judged His people. Whether or not the English word Easter is etymologically descended from the Akkadian Ishtar, the spring fertility goddess archetype most certainly is, and the worship of that archetype is precisely what the Father condemned by His own voice through His prophets.

8.3 What Astarte Worship Looked Like — From Scripture’s Own Record

The Father did not leave the worship of Astarte to be reconstructed from later sources. He named it Himself. The institute will lay out what Scripture itself records about this worship, because the body has been protected from this record long enough.

“And they served their idols, which became a snare to them. They even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons, and shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; and the land was polluted with blood.” — Psalm 106:36-38, NKJV

The worship of the Canaanite fertility deities was the worship of demons, in the LORD’s own designation through the psalmist. The worship involved the sacrifice of children — sons and daughters offered to the idols of Canaan. The land was polluted with their blood. This is not the institute’s editorial language. This is the Father’s own assessment.

The cultic apparatus included sacred groves, often called asherim in Hebrew (singular asherah) — wooden poles or stylized trees representing the goddess, set up beside altars, often at “high places” on hilltops. “And they set up for themselves sacred pillars and wooden images on every high hill and under every green tree” (2 Kings 17:10, NKJV). The high places were locations of cultic sex — the Father’s prophets repeatedly speak of His people’s idolatry as whoredom not only as a metaphor but because the cults themselves involved literal ritual sex, the sacred prostitution

of male and female qedeshim (literally holy ones, but functionally cult prostitutes) attached to the temples of these deities.

“They sacrifice on the mountaintops, and burn incense on the hills, under oaks, poplars, and terebinths, because their shade is good. Therefore your daughters commit harlotry, and your brides commit adultery. I will not punish your daughters when they commit harlotry, nor your brides when they commit adultery; for the men themselves go apart with harlots, and offer sacrifices with a ritual harlot. Therefore people who do not understand will be trampled.” — Hosea 4:13-14, NKJV

The Father’s voice through Hosea is specific. The cultic worship under the trees on the high places was paired with literal sexual immorality. The men of His people “go apart with harlots, and offer sacrifices with a ritual harlot.” The cult prostitution and the cult sacrifice were a single act of worship — the sacrifice was made with the ritual harlot, and the act of cultic sex was itself the offering. This is what the worship of Astarte / Ishtar / Inanna / Eostre looked like. The eggs and the spring-rabbit are the surviving folk-fertility symbols of a cult whose actual operation, in its full ancient form, involved temple prostitution, cultic sex acts as offerings, and in some Canaanite expressions, the burning of children to its consort deity. This is the genealogy. This is what the Father saw when He looked at the worship of the spring goddess. This is what Hosea wrote down.

8.4 The Eggs and the Rabbit — The Surviving Folk Symbols

The egg, in fertility-cult symbolism across the ancient Mediterranean, Near East, and Slavic world, was the symbol of generative life, of the womb’s fruitfulness, of the renewal of fertility at spring. The Slavic pysanky tradition — decorated eggs in pre-Christian Slavic religion — predates the Christianization of those peoples, and the practice was absorbed into Slavic Christian Easter celebrations rather than being introduced by them. The Persian Nowruz spring-new-year festival included decorated eggs as fertility symbols centuries before any Christian observance of spring. The egg in fertility worship was not innocent. It was the explicit symbol of the deity’s gift of fruitfulness, offered in cult as a request for the fertility of land, livestock, and womb.

The rabbit (or hare) in northern European fertility symbolism was specifically associated with the spring-fertility goddess complex, and the Easter Bunny tradition emerges from German Lutheran folk tradition (the Osterhase, documented in seventeenth-century German sources) as a folk-Christian survival of older Germanic spring-hare symbolism. The hare was associated with prolific reproduction, with the moon, and in some Germanic and Celtic traditions with the goddess herself.

The body that places eggs and rabbits at the center of its spring feast is performing the surviving folk symbology of the very cult whose full ancient form Scripture records as involving temple prostitution and child sacrifice. The egg has not become innocent because the modern household has forgotten what it once meant. The form has carried the meaning the way a vessel carries water

— the household that has filled the vessel with chocolate has not changed what the vessel was made for.

8.5 The Spiritual Dimension — Tier 1 and Tier 2

The institute names two tiers of concern about participation in fertility-cult forms, and is careful to label which tier each claim belongs to.

Tier 1 — Scripture’s own connection between idolatry and sexual immorality.

Scripture itself names a structural connection between participation in pagan-cult forms and the manifestation of sexual-immorality patterns in those who participate. Romans 1:21-27 traces the chain explicitly: when the body exchanges the glory of God for an image, “God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves... For this reason God gave them up to vile passions” (Romans 1:24, 26, NKJV). The order is the apostle’s own — idolatry first, then the giving-over to sexual disorder. 1 Corinthians 10:7-8 cites the wilderness pattern explicitly: “And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, ‘The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.’ Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell” — Paul ties the idolatry of the golden calf directly to the sexual immorality of Numbers 25 and treats them as a single instructive pattern. Numbers 25 itself records Israel committing fornication with the daughters of Moab in connection with the worship of Baal of Peor, and a plague struck the camp until Phinehas drove a spear through the man and woman in the act of cultic sex. The Father’s pattern, by His own apostle, is that idolatrous worship and sexual immorality are not two separate problems. They are a single chain. The body that participates in fertility-cult forms — even forms it has stripped of their cultic explanation — is participating in a category Scripture treats as structurally connected to sexual brokenness.

Tier 2 — pastoral observation, named as such. The institute names with appropriate epistemic humility a pattern that pastors, deliverance ministers, and saints walking through difficult marriages have repeatedly testified to: that participation in fertility-rite practices, including the egg-and-rabbit complex of modern Easter, appears to correspond in pastoral experience with sexual-immorality strongholds in marriages — patterns of unwanted lust, marital discord around sexuality, and openings to sexual sin that the couple cannot account for through ordinary means. This is pastoral testimony repeated across enough independent sources to constitute a pattern worth naming. It is not peer-reviewed data. It is the kind of testimony Paper No. 1 named in the Iranian dream-of-the-man-in-white pattern: a recurring witness from those walking with the Lord, treated with appropriate weight, not promoted into a statistical claim. The Tier 1 connection from Scripture is the load-bearing argument. Tier 2 is a pastoral observation the body should hear and weigh.

The body that has participated in these forms innocently is not under condemnation; the gospel does not condemn the unaware. The body that has been told the truth about these forms and continues to participate has now moved out of innocent participation into informed participation,

and what was carried under ignorance is now carried under defiance. The institute names the line because the body needs to know it.

The Father by His own voice connected idolatry and sexual immorality. He named it through Hosea, through Paul, through the wilderness pattern at Baal of Peor. The body that participates in fertility-cult forms is participating in the category Scripture itself flags as structurally connected to sexual brokenness. The forms are not innocent. The body has been told they were innocent. The body was told wrongly.

9. Halloween: The Night of the Dead

The third great feast of the Western Christian calendar is the one most Christians have already begun to recognize as compromised. The institute will not labor the case that Halloween is overtly demonic; large portions of the body have already drawn that conclusion, and the practicing witches, warlocks, and occult practitioners themselves identify October 31 as one of the highest holy days of their calendars. The institute will instead name what the day has been across its full historical genealogy, what the practices the modern household performs descend from, what Scripture says about the categories these practices belong to, and why the body that retains a Halloween observance — including a “trunk-or-treat” at the church or a “harvest festival” baptism of the same date — has retained an observance the King has condemned with the most explicit language He uses in any law in the Torah.

9.1 Samhain: The Celtic Festival

The Celtic festival of Samhain — pronounced SOW-in in Old Irish, meaning summer’s end — was the festival marking the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter, kept on the night of October 31 to November 1. Primary sources for Samhain include the Tochmarc Emire (an Old Irish saga preserved in the Yellow Book of Lecan), the Sanas Cormaic (Cormac’s Glossary, a tenth-century Old Irish text drawing on older traditions), and references in classical sources to Druidic religion in Gaul and Britain. The festival was the night on which, in Celtic religious belief, the boundary between the world of the living and the world of the dead grew thin, and the spirits of the dead and various other otherworldly beings were able to cross into the living world.

The practices of Samhain that survive into modern Halloween are documented:

The bonfires. Great communal fires were lit on hilltops on the night of Samhain. Caesar’s Gallic Wars (Book VI, Chapter 16) records that the Druids of Gaul performed human sacrifice in connection with their religious rites, with “images of immense size, the limbs of which they form of wickerwork and fill with living men, and setting them on fire, those within are killed by the flames.” The Celtic wicker man sacrifice, performed at certain festivals, is recorded by Caesar, Strabo (Geographica IV.4.5), and Pliny the Elder (Natural History XVI.249). Whether wicker-man sacrifices were performed specifically at Samhain in every Celtic region cannot be established from a single primary source for that exact festival, but the connection of Samhain bonfires with Druidic religious practice and the broader documentation of Druidic human sacrifice in classical sources places Samhain within a religious complex that included the burning of human victims as offering. The institute notes carefully that the precise frequency and ritual specifics of Druidic human sacrifice are debated by modern Celticists; what is not debated is that Roman authors writing within centuries of the practice recorded it as a feature of Celtic-Druidic religion, that the Celts opposed this view in their own self-understanding, and that the Roman state ultimately suppressed Druidic religion in part on the stated ground of its sacrificial practices.

The offerings to the dead. Households on Samhain set out food offerings — bread, milk, ale — at the doorway or hearth for the spirits of the dead believed to be passing through. Offerings to the dead are explicitly forbidden by the Father (Deuteronomy 26:14, in the context of the third-year tithe: “I have not eaten any of it when in mourning, nor have I removed any of it for an unclean use, nor given any of it for the dead”). The custom of setting out food for the dead descends, in the modern Halloween household, into the candy left on the porch — and the trick-or-treat practice of children going door to door, collecting offerings, while dressed in costumes that imitate the dead and other otherworldly beings. The original meaning of the costume was that the costumed person was disguising themselves as one of the dead so that the actual spirits of the dead, walking abroad on Samhain night, would not recognize the living and harm them. The masking is an apotropaic ritual — protection against malevolent spirits by impersonating them. The children dressed in skeletons, ghosts, and demons on the modern American porch are performing, in the most literal possible sense, the surviving folk form of a Druidic ritual to protect the household from the wandering dead.

The divination. Samhain was a high festival of divination in Celtic religion, with the thinned veil between worlds being held to give particular access to knowledge of future events, fates, and decisions. Apple-bobbing, mirror divinations to see the face of one’s future spouse, the reading of nuts in the fire — these are surviving folk forms of a divinatory complex that ran through the festival. The Father’s own voice on the divinatory practices that surrounded Samhain is unambiguous and the institute will quote it in full in 9.3.

9.2 The Christianization That Did Not Christianize

The Western church, encountering Samhain in the conversion of the Celtic peoples, did what it had done with Saturnalia and the spring fertility feasts: it placed a Christian observance on top of the pagan festival in the hope that the pagan content would be displaced by the Christian content. All Hallows’ Day (the feast of all saints) was moved by Pope Gregory III in the early eighth century, and confirmed by Gregory IV in 837, to November 1 — directly on top of Samhain. The night before became All Hallows’ Eve, eventually contracted to Halloween. The structural displacement attempted at Saturnalia and the spring festivals was attempted again at Samhain.

The structural displacement failed. The pagan content did not disappear into the Christian feast. The Christian feast was layered on top of the pagan feast, which continued to operate underneath, and the pagan content has been the dominant content of October 31 in folk practice across the entire post-Christianization period. By the modern era, the All Hallows’ element has functionally vanished from popular American Halloween, and what remains is the surviving Samhain — costumes of the dead, divination games, jack-o’-lanterns (themselves descended from the Irish Stingy Jack folk tradition with carved turnips set out to ward off wandering spirits), bonfires where local custom permits, candy-as-offering on porches, and a thoroughgoing celebration of the dead, the supernatural, the demonic, and the dark that no honest reader of the day’s actual content can call Christian. The body that holds a trunk-or-treat at the church on October 31 is not

redeeming Samhain. The body is putting Christian wrapping around a Druidic festival the King has named in His own law.

9.3 What the Father Says About These Categories

The Father’s voice on the categories that constitute Samhain — divination, communication with the dead, sorcery, witchcraft, the offering of children — is not silent and not gentle. The institute will let Him speak.

“There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the LORD, and because of these abominations the LORD your God drives them out from before you. You shall be blameless before the LORD your God.” — Deuteronomy 18:10-13, NKJV

The list is the list. Every single category named is a category present in the historical practice of Samhain and surviving in folk form in modern Halloween. Passes his son or daughter through the fire — Druidic human sacrifice, including the burning of victims in wicker structures. Witchcraft — the practicing witches’ own identification of October 31 as one of their highest holy days, an identification Wiccan, neopagan, and traditional witchcraft sources all confirm. Soothsayer, interprets omens, sorcerer, conjures spells — the divinatory practices of Samhain in their full historical breadth. Medium, spiritist, calls up the dead — the entire architecture of Samhain as the night when the dead are present and may be communicated with. The Father did not list these categories abstractly. He listed them specifically. He named the practices that constitute Samhain — every single one of them — and He named them “an abomination to the LORD.” Not unwise. Not imprudent. Not culturally inappropriate for the redeemed people. Abomination — to’evah in Hebrew, the strongest moral category the Torah uses, applied to that which is so detestable to the Father that it pollutes the land and provokes His judgment.

The body that has participated in Halloween, even in the sanitized trunk-or-treat form at the church parking lot, has participated in a festival composed entirely of categories the Father has named abomination in the strongest moral language His Torah employs. This is not a matter of personal preference or generational sensitivity. This is a matter of the body of Christ continuing to keep a feast night made up wholesale of every single practice the King’s own voice forbade in a single passage of His own law.

9.4 What the Practitioners of the Day Themselves Say

The practitioners of witchcraft, neopaganism, and the various occult traditions identify October 31 — Samhain — as one of the highest holy days of their religious calendar. This is not a hostile claim by the institute; it is the witches’ own self-description, found in their own published works, confirmed in the academic study of contemporary witchcraft (Hutton, *The Triumph of the Moon*:

A History of Modern Pagan Witchcraft, Oxford 2019, and the long literature in the academic study of contemporary paganism), and stated openly by the practitioners themselves on their own platforms. The witches know what October 31 is. They know it is their high feast. And one of the standing prayers and intentions stated openly by various practitioners — the institute is reporting documented self-statements, not constructing the claim — is that Christians continue to celebrate Halloween, because every Christian household keeping the day is, regardless of the household's stated intention, keeping the witches' high holy day in the witches' own calendar, on the witches' own date, with practices that descend from the witches' own ancestral religion.

The body that has insisted on “redeeming” Halloween is the body the witches are praying will continue. The body has been the answer to the witches' prayer.

9.5 The Stitch: Manasseh's Pattern

There is one biblical figure whose practice is the precise template of the modern Halloween-keeping evangelical home — and the Father's verdict on his reign is recorded for the body's instruction.

“And he caused his sons to pass through the fire in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom; he practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft and sorcery, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger.” — 2 Chronicles 33:6, NKJV

Manasseh, king of Judah, son of righteous Hezekiah, did exactly the practices Deuteronomy 18 forbade — and 2 Chronicles 33 names the LORD's verdict: “he did much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger.” The Father's response was the Babylonian captivity. “Surely at the commandment of the LORD this came upon Judah, to remove them from His sight because of the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done” (2 Kings 24:3, NKJV). The judgment of the Father on Manasseh's pattern was the destruction of the temple, the burning of Jerusalem, and the seventy years of exile. This was the cost. This was the verdict on this exact category.

The institute does not claim that the modern American household celebrating Halloween will personally suffer Manasseh's exile. The institute does claim that the category of practice the Father judged with that severity in 2 Chronicles 33 is the same category of practice the modern American household engages in on October 31, and the body that has called this practice innocent is calling innocent what the Father by His own voice and by His own judgment did not call innocent.

The witches know what October 31 is. The Father by His own voice has named every single practice that constitutes the day as abomination. The body that has retained Halloween, including in its rebranded “trunk-or-treat” and “harvest festival” forms, has retained a feast night the Father's own law forbids in its entirety. The witches are praying the body keeps it. The body has been answering their prayer.

10. The Sabbath Displaced: The Parallel Pattern

The same engine that replaced Pesach with Easter and the appointed times with the imperial solar calendar also replaced the seventh-day Shabbat with the dies Solis of the empire. The institute has already laid out the historical mechanism in Section 6 (Constantine’s edict of AD 321, the Council of Laodicea Canon 29 of c. AD 363). What must be added here is the structural-spiritual significance of the displacement, because the weekly displacement is the one most members of the body do not yet recognize as a displacement at all.

The body has been taught for so long that “the Lord’s Day is Sunday and Sunday is the Christian Sabbath” that it does not see the substitution. The substitution was not apostolic. The Lord did not change the Shabbat. The apostles did not change the Shabbat. No New Testament passage commands the Shabbat be moved from the seventh day to the first day. The change came from the empire and from the post-Constantinian church under the empire’s pressure. And the day chosen as the new Shabbat — dies Solis, the day of the sun — was a day named for, and dedicated to, the very deity Aurelian had elevated as chief of the Roman pantheon and whose feast day December 25 had been similarly conscripted for the church’s nativity feast. The same pagan deity, Sol Invictus, received both the body’s annual nativity feast and the body’s weekly day of rest. The body has not been told.

The institute is not arguing that every Sunday gathering across seventeen centuries has been demonic worship. The Lord has had His witnesses gathered on Sunday throughout the period, and the saints who gathered in faith on the first day of the week to break bread and hear the word were not under condemnation for keeping a day they had been taught was the Christian Sabbath. The institute is arguing that the structural displacement — the substitution of dies Solis for the Father’s seventh-day Shabbat, the abolition of the seventh-day rest commanded under threat of being “shut out from Christ” at Laodicea, the loss to the body of the weekly day the King had given for the household’s joy and the body’s flourishing — was a real loss, of imperial origin, and the recovery of the seventh-day Shabbat is part of the recovery of the appointed times this paper is calling for.

11. The Golden Calf Pattern: Pagan Form, the LORD's Name

The deepest defense of the pagan-rooted Christian feasts is the one the institute will now address directly, because it is the defense that has held the longest and the one the body holds with the most sincerity: “We are not worshiping the pagan gods. We are worshiping Jesus on these days. We have given the days to Him.” The body that says this is not lying about its own intention. The body genuinely believes that the placing of the name of Jesus over a pagan form sanctifies the form. The institute will lay out, from a single Old Testament narrative, the Father's response to precisely this claim. The narrative is Exodus 32, and the body has not been told what it actually says.

11.1 What Aaron Actually Said

The standard reading of the golden calf episode is that Aaron and the people abandoned the LORD and worshiped a foreign deity. This is not what the text records. The text records something far more uncomfortable.

“Then he received the gold from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf. And they said, ‘This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!’ So when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, ‘Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD.’ Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.” — Exodus 32:4-6, NKJV

The detail the body has not seen. Aaron, having made the calf — a known cultic form of the bull deities of Egypt and Canaan, Apis in Egypt and the bull-cult of El and Baal in Canaan — proclaimed that “Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD.” The Hebrew word translated the LORD is the Tetragrammaton — YHWH, the personal name the Father had revealed to Moses at the burning bush. Aaron did not call the calf-feast a feast to Apis or El or Baal. Aaron called it a feast to YHWH. The people offered burnt offerings and peace offerings — the prescribed offerings of the LORD's worship. They rose early. They intended to be worshiping the LORD who had brought them out of Egypt. They had simply chosen the form of the surrounding nations — the bull-calf form — as the form in which they would render that worship.

This is the precise pattern of the modern Christian feast calendar. The body has taken the forms of the surrounding nations — Saturnalia, Sol Invictus, the spring fertility feast, Samhain, dies Solis — and has placed the name of the LORD over them, declaring “This is a feast to the LORD.” The body's intention is sincere. The form is not changed by the intention.

11.2 What the LORD Did

The LORD’s response to Aaron’s “feast to the LORD” in the form of the calf is recorded plainly.

“And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Go, get down! For your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves. They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them. They have made themselves a molded calf, and worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, “This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!”” — Exodus 32:7-8, NKJV

The LORD did not accept Aaron’s relabeling. The LORD said the people “have corrupted themselves,” that they “have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them,” and that what they had made they “worshiped” and “sacrificed to.” Aaron had said the worship was to YHWH. The LORD said the worship was to the calf. The form determined the object of worship, not the name placed over it. The intent of the worshiper did not transmute the form. The form was what it was, and what the form was — the bull-calf of the surrounding nations — was what received the worship, regardless of which name was on the worshiper’s lips.

The judgment that followed is recorded in Exodus 32:25-29. Three thousand of the people who had performed the “feast to the LORD” in the form of the calf were struck down that day by the Levites at Moses’ command, and a plague struck the camp besides. The Father did not regard the relabeling as making the form acceptable. He regarded the form itself as idolatry, and He punished the people who had performed it under His own name as severely as He would have punished people who performed it under the calf’s name openly.

11.3 The Pattern Through the Prophets

The golden calf was not a one-time event. It became a recurring pattern in the Father’s people, and the prophets named it again and again. Jeroboam, after the division of the kingdom, set up two golden calves at Bethel and Dan and said to the northern tribes, “Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!” (1 Kings 12:28, NKJV) — the same words Aaron had used. The northern kingdom kept this calf-worship for two centuries, with every northern king described in the formula “he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin” until the Assyrian captivity in 722 BC swept the entire kingdom away.

The same pattern recurred in the southern kingdom under various kings — high places maintained, asherim erected, syncretistic worship rendered in the LORD’s name to forms borrowed from the surrounding nations. The Father’s response was consistent. Through Jeremiah:

“Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom you do not know, and then come and stand before Me in this house which is called by My name, and say, “We are delivered to do all these abominations”? Has this house, which is called by My name,

become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it,' says the LORD." — Jeremiah 7:9-11, NKJV

The pattern is the same. The people burn incense to Baal, and then come and stand before Me in this house which is called by My name. They are not abandoning the LORD's worship. They are mixing it with the worship of Baal and then continuing to come to the temple as if the mixture were acceptable. The LORD's verdict, through Jeremiah, is "I have seen it." The destruction of the temple followed within a generation. The mixing was not acceptable. The mixing has never been acceptable. The body that mixes Saturnalia with the worship of Christ, that mixes the spring goddess feast with the resurrection of the Lord, that mixes Samhain's night of the dead with "All Hallows' Eve," that mixes dies Solis with the gathering of the saints, is performing the precise pattern Jeremiah named, in the precise form Jeremiah condemned, in defiance of the precise verdict the Father delivered against the practice.

Aaron called the calf-feast a feast to the LORD. The LORD did not accept the relabeling. Three thousand were struck down that day. The body that has placed the name of Jesus over Saturnalia, Eostre, and Samhain has performed Aaron's act in seventeen-century slow motion. The Father has not changed His mind about the pattern. He has not become more tolerant of mixed worship since the wilderness. He sees it. He has said He sees it. The body has been told it does not matter; the body has been told wrongly.

12. “Changing Times and Seasons”: The Daniel 7 Diagnosis

There is one final layer of Scripture that must be laid alongside the historical record, because the prophet Daniel, by the Spirit of God, named the structural fingerprint of any power that would attempt to displace the Father’s calendar. The fingerprint is in Daniel 7:25, in the description of the little horn that arises from the fourth beast.

“He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time.” — Daniel 7:25, NKJV

The prophet does not say the little horn would change times and law in the sense of overruling the Father’s authority. He says the little horn would intend — yisbar, literally think to or plan to — change them. The fingerprint is the intent. The thing-that-is-trying-to-change-the-Father’s-calendar is the spiritual signature the Spirit-given prophecy named in advance.

The institute is not advancing the claim that any specific historical office or institution is the little horn of Daniel 7. The institute is advancing a structural claim: the spirit that animates any attempt to change the Father’s appointed times is the spirit Daniel 7:25 named. It is the spirit of the antichrist — the spirit that arrogates to itself the authority that belongs to the Father alone. The Father has appointed His feasts. He has called them His own. He has declared them eternal. No human authority — no emperor, no council of bishops, no synod, no pope, no denomination, no megachurch, no national church, no individual believer’s preference — has the authority to change them. To attempt the change is to attempt what only the Father has the right to do, and the spirit behind the attempt is the spirit Daniel named.

This is why the body must take the recovery of the appointed times with the seriousness this paper has pressed. The displacement of the Father’s calendar by the empire’s calendar is not an interesting historical curiosity. It is a structural manifestation of the same spirit Scripture identifies as opposed to Christ. The body that has accepted the displacement has, without knowing it, accepted as authoritative an authority that arose specifically to intend to change what the Father had set. The recovery of the appointed times is, in this sense, not a Hebraic affectation. It is the reclaiming of the Father’s authority over time itself from a usurpation that has stood for seventeen centuries.

The Lord Himself, in His high-priestly prayer the night before His passion, prayed that His own would be “sanctified by the truth” (John 17:17, NKJV) — set apart, kept distinct, holy. The body that walks in the Father’s calendar is sanctified by the truth of His appointed times. The body that walks in the empire’s calendar is conformed, however unwittingly, to the times the empire’s spirit appointed. The choice of calendar is the choice of which authority forms the body’s annual rhythm. There is no neutral calendar. There is His, or there is theirs.

The Father appointed His times. The empire intended to change them. The body received the change without knowing what it was. The fingerprint of the spirit behind the change is the fingerprint Daniel 7:25 named in advance — the fingerprint of any power that would arrogate to itself the authority to alter what the Most High has set. The body that defends the substituted calendar is defending a substitution Scripture itself diagnosed before it occurred. The recovery is not optional. The recovery is the body's return to the only authority that has the right to appoint a feast — the King who is its substance.

PART III

Witnesses and the Roadmap Home

13. Three Witnesses Across Twenty Centuries

The Father has not left Himself without witnesses to the appointed times. Across the entire period of the empire’s substitution — from the Council of Laodicea to the present hour — there have been bodies of believers who refused to abandon the King’s calendar, who paid the price for keeping it, and whose preserved practice now stands as evidence that the abandonment was never universal and the recovery is not without precedent. The institute will name three witnesses, drawn from three different centuries and three different cultural locations, presented with honor and the discernment that genuine love requires.

13.1 The Pre-Nicene Apostolic Witness: Polycarp and the Quartodecimans of Asia Minor

The first witness is the witness of the apostolic body itself, before the Constantinian severance. Section 6 has already named the historical mechanism. What must be added here is the honor due to the saints who, in the second and third centuries, kept the Father’s Pesach against rising imperial pressure to abandon it.

Polycarp of Smyrna (c. AD 69-156) is the best-documented exemplar. Polycarp had been a disciple of the apostle John in Asia Minor; he became bishop of Smyrna; he kept the Quartodeciman Pesach on the fourteenth of Nisan as he had received it from John himself; he traveled to Rome around AD 155 to discuss the date of Pesach with Anicetus and refused to abandon the apostolic practice; and he was martyred at Smyrna at age eighty-six for refusing to swear by the genius of Caesar and to deny Christ. The Martyrdom of Polycarp — one of the earliest Christian martyrdom accounts — records his words at the stake: “Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He has never done me wrong. How can I blaspheme my King who has saved me?” The man who said those words at the stake had also kept Pesach on the fourteenth all his Christian life. The two practices — radical loyalty to Christ unto death, and the keeping of the Father’s Pesach on the date Scripture appoints — were a single witness.

The Quartodeciman assemblies of Asia Minor — Smyrna, Ephesus, Hierapolis, and the assemblies founded by John and his disciples — kept this Pesach for at least a century and a half after the cross, in continuity with apostolic practice that had been received from the apostles themselves. These assemblies were not the universal church; the Western assemblies under the influence of Rome had begun the Sunday-only commemoration earlier. But the Eastern apostolic assemblies — the very assemblies founded by the apostle who lay on the breast of the Lord at the Last Supper — kept the Father’s appointed Pesach into the late second century, and many resisted the Roman fixed-Sunday calculation even after Nicaea. Polycrates of Ephesus, writing to Victor of Rome

around AD 195 in defense of the Quartodeciman practice, named the apostle John, the apostle Philip and his daughters, and a long list of Asian bishops who had kept the apostolic Pesach unbroken. The witness was apostolic, named, and dated. The body that has been told the appointed times were always optional in the church has not been told its own history.

Honor must be added carefully. The Quartodecimans did not always live in pristine continuity with the apostolic teaching on every matter; second-century Asia Minor saw its own controversies, including the Montanist movement and various christological disputes. The witness is not perfection. The witness is that the apostolic Pesach, kept on the fourteenth of Nisan as the Father appointed, was the practice of the very assemblies founded by the apostle John, and was held against rising pressure for a century and a half after the cross. The body that recovers the Pesach today is recovering what the apostolic body kept. The line of continuity runs through Polycarp.

13.2 The Persecuted Witness: The Sabbath-Keeping Bodies of the Empire's Margins

The second witness is harder to document with the precision the institute requires, and the institute will name what can be honestly established and decline to overclaim. The Father has had Shabbat-keeping bodies in the margins of Christendom continuously across the post-Nicene period. Their visibility in the historical record varies because their persecutors often controlled the surviving sources, but several bodies emerge clearly enough to name.

The Ethiopian Orthodox tradition. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church — descended from a Christian presence in the Horn of Africa established in the fourth century, largely preserved outside Roman and later Latin control through the rise of Islam and through the sea-walled isolation of the Ethiopian highlands — has maintained an observance of the seventh-day Shabbat in addition to the Lord's Day Sunday gathering for most of its history. The Ethiopian church kept both days for centuries: Saturday as the Shabbat rest, Sunday as the Lord's Day gathering — a practice formalized in the Senodos and Fetha Negest and held under various pressures, including direct opposition from sixteenth-century Portuguese Jesuit missionaries who attempted to force the Ethiopian church to abandon Saturday observance. The Ethiopian witness is the witness of an indigenous African Christianity that, having been less subject to the Constantinian-Laodicean substitution, retained more of the apostolic pattern in continuity. The institute does not endorse every aspect of Ethiopian Orthodox practice and theology; the institute names the witness specifically that this body kept the seventh-day Shabbat alongside the first-day gathering, in apostolic continuity, against repeated pressure to abandon it.

The Sabbath-keeping minorities of medieval Europe. Documented Sabbath-keeping bodies appear in scattered sources across medieval Europe — Sabbatarian movements among the Bogomils in the Balkans, certain communities in Russia (the Subbotniki), and notably among some of the Waldensian communities of the Italian Alps and southern France, who emerged in the late twelfth century around Peter Waldo and were repeatedly persecuted by the medieval church. The Waldensian record on Sabbath-keeping is mixed and contested by modern historians;

some Waldensian communities kept the seventh-day Shabbat, others did not, and the variation appears across regions and centuries. What is documented is that the Waldensians as a body lived under repeated cycles of persecution by the established church — formal anathema in 1215, sustained inquisitorial action through the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the Mérindol massacre of 1545 in which Catholic forces killed thousands of Waldensian peasants in Provence — and that within their varied tradition, Sabbath-keeping appears as one of the practices for which they were sometimes condemned. The institute names this witness with its complications acknowledged: the Waldensians as a movement did not uniformly keep the seventh-day Shabbat, but some streams within them did, and they paid for their distinctives in the same coin every persecuted minority of the medieval period paid.

The Sabbatarian movements of the Reformation and post-Reformation periods.

From the sixteenth century onward, various Sabbatarian movements emerged within the broader Protestant Reformation — Andreas Karlstadt’s writings, certain streams of the Anabaptist movement, the Seventh Day Baptists who emerged in seventeenth-century England, and eventually the Seventh-day Adventists and other Sabbath-keeping bodies of the modern period. The institute does not endorse the full theological position of any of these traditions; several of them carry doctrinal commitments the institute does not share. The institute names them as witnesses to one specific point: that the seventh-day Shabbat was kept by serious believers across the Reformation and post-Reformation centuries, often at significant social and ecclesiastical cost, and that the modern recovery of Shabbat is not an innovation but a return to a practice that has had continuous if minority witnesses across the entire period of the substitution.

The honor due these bodies is the honor due any minority witness that paid for its distinctives. The institute does not romanticize them. They had failures, internal disputes, and theological errors. They were not the universal church. They were the witnesses the Father preserved through the long centuries of the substitution, so that the body in the present hour, returning to the appointed times, would not be returning to a practice no one had kept. Someone always kept it. The Father has always had His remnant.

13.3 The Present Witness: The Gen Z Recovery in Households

The third witness is the witness now unfolding in the present hour, and it is the witness this paper most insistently calls the body to see. The same generation that Papers No. 1, 2, 3, and 4 have documented as carrying the front line of the present awakening — Generation Z, with the Millennial layer immediately above and the older saints anchoring from the periphery — is, in significant numbers and in multiple geographic centers, recovering the appointed times of the Father’s calendar. They are doing so largely without being taught the doctrine the institute has laid out in this paper. They are recovering it the way the Iranian house churches recovered the household form in Paper No. 1 — by the Spirit’s leading, in the absence of the inherited apparatus, often before they have a theological vocabulary for what they are doing.

13.3.1 The Friday Night Tables

The most visible expression of the present recovery is the Friday-night Shabbat household. Across the United States — concentrated in but not limited to the Dallas, Texas region, with parallel and independent expressions in Nashville, Atlanta, Phoenix, Los Angeles, Charlotte, and a growing list of cities — young believers in their twenties and early thirties are gathering on Friday evenings around household tables to keep Shabbat. The form is consistent across the locations the institute has been able to document: candles lit at sundown by the woman of the house, the breaking of bread and the cup, scripture read aloud and discussed at length, unhurried conversation that continues for hours, food shared without programmed schedule, prayer for one another, and the deliberate refusal of devices and distractions for the duration of the table. Many of these gatherings extend into the morning hours. Many continue into Saturday with continued rest, household time, and the closing of the Shabbat at sundown. The form was not taught to most of these young saints. They began doing it because the Spirit of God put it on their hearts to do it, and because friends who had begun doing it told them, “You should come.”

The fruit reported by these households is consistent across independent sources. Believers who had been weary in their walk testify to a renewed peace they had not been able to find in any other rhythm. Households that had been fragmented testify to reconnection across generations. Singles who had been isolated testify to belonging that the Sunday service had not provided. New believers testify to entering the household tables with no theological framework for what they were doing and walking out testifying that they had encountered the Lord in a way they had not encountered Him at the gathering they had been attending. The institute is reporting documented testimony from multiple independent sources across multiple cities. The pattern is the present-day operation of what the Father appointed in Leviticus 23:3 — “a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation... in all your dwellings.” The dwellings are where the recovery is happening.

13.3.2 The Recovered Pesach Tables

Parallel to the Shabbat recovery, a significant number of these same households and the networks they are connected to are now keeping Pesach — full household seders on the fourteenth of Nisan as the Father appointed, walking through the elements of the meal with their households, telling the redemption story, identifying Christ as the Lamb at every point the form points to Him, and partaking of the cup as the Lord Himself partook of the cup with the Twelve. These are not Messianic-Jewish congregational seders run by professional liturgists. They are household seders kept by ordinary saints in their ordinary homes, often for the first time in their families’ history, learning the form as they go and finding the Lord in it. The institute has heard testimony of households who attempted Pesach for the first time and reported afterward that they had encountered Christ in the breaking of the matzah in a way they had never encountered Him in the years of the wafer-and-thimble Sunday communion. The form was not preventing the encounter. The form was carrying it.

13.3.3 The Tabernacles Gatherings

The Feast of Tabernacles is the third feast the present recovery is most visibly reaching, and the form is striking. Saints across multiple regions are now keeping Sukkot — building actual sukkahs

in their backyards, eating meals in them through the seven days of the feast, gathering with other believers under the sukkah coverings to fellowship, worship, and rehearse the eternal dwelling of God with man that the feast anticipates. The Sukkot recovery has been particularly evident in the household-network movements connected to the Texas-anchored gathering streams referenced in Paper No. 1, Section 12, and in independent expressions in the Pacific Northwest, the Carolinas, and the upper Midwest. The seven-day feast is, in many cases, the first time these saints have ever experienced an extended period of dwelling-and-worship together, and the testimony is consistent: the form carries an anointing the saints had not anticipated and find difficult to describe except by saying that the Lord was there in a way they had not known He could be there.

13.3.4 A Gen Z Gathering in Dallas

The most visible institutional contribution to this recovery in the Gen Z-facing church comes from a large Gen Z-oriented gathering anchored in the Dallas, Texas region — one of the most-watched renewal platforms in the English-speaking world. The institute will not name the gathering by name, in keeping with its standing posture of refusing to platform any single ministry. The witness, however, is significant enough to require notice. This gathering does not run a Friday-evening service that would compete with household Shabbat. It does the opposite. It actively encourages, recognizes, and celebrates household Shabbat gatherings taking place across the Dallas region in the homes of young believers — whether those believers attend the gathering or do not. This is a structurally honorable posture: the gathering is pointing the sheep toward a pattern that runs outside its own dominion, that it does not control, and that it cannot monetize. Few institutional voices in the present hour are willing to bless what they cannot capture. This one is.

The fruit is real and globally visible. Pastors and leaders across continents who would never have considered Shabbat have considered it because one of the most-watched Gen Z renewal platforms in the English-speaking world has put it in front of them as a household practice carrying real anointing. Believers who tried it expecting an obligation have found a blessing. Friday-night tables in homes that had never kept one before have begun to taste what the Father has always offered. The Spirit is using a reach the gathering itself did not engineer to crack open a door the body has kept closed for centuries, and the household is now walking through it.

Honor requires the full picture. The gathering teaches the ancient paths in real respects — its leaders preach against chasing the stage and the microphone, against building one's ministry around one's own platform, and toward the apostolic patterns of the first-century church. It has not yet structurally embodied what it teaches. It remains a recognizable brand; it charges for worship events and gatherings; it carries the architecture of the very stage-centered model it warns the body against. The institute names this not as accusation but as honest observation, because the same tension is true of many genuine reformers in this hour — the King often gives a leader the vision before He gives the freedom from the form, and Paper No. 1's Dual Wineskin Model exists precisely to walk shepherds through that gap. The gathering is in the gap. The

institute honors what it has already given the body and trusts the King to lead it where He has already led its teaching.

13.3.5 What the Pattern Confirms

The present recovery confirms what Scripture and history have already established. The Father has not retired the appointed times. He is restoring them in His own people, by His own Spirit, in the present hour, often without theological instruction reaching the believers before the Spirit has moved their hearts to begin keeping the days. This is the pattern of a Spirit-initiated recovery, not a teaching-initiated one — and the institute notes that pattern with significance. What the Spirit Himself is putting on the hearts of saints to begin doing is not a Hebraic affectation imposed from outside the body. It is a return to the calendar of the Father, carried by the Spirit, beginning in the youngest cohort of the church, and now spreading laterally and upward through the generations. The teaching this paper has set forth is, in the institute's reading, the catechesis the Spirit's already-occurring work needs in order to grow up into its full inheritance — the doctrine that explains and steadies what He has already begun.

The Father has always had His witnesses. Polycarp kept the Pesach he received from John. The Ethiopian church kept the seventh-day Shabbat through Roman and Portuguese pressure. The Sabbatarian bodies of medieval and Reformation Europe paid for the day in persecution. And in the present hour, a generation no one had taught is finding the appointed times by the Spirit's leading, in households that did not exist a year ago, around tables their parents had not set. The recovery is not the institute's invention. The recovery is what He is doing.

14. Returning to the Ancient Paths: A Practical Roadmap

Criticism alone cannot restore. The institute has named, in Part II, what must be left behind — the calendar of Saturnalia, Sol Invictus, the spring goddess, Samhain, and dies Solis, however baptized in the King’s name. The institute has named, in Part I, what must be received — Shabbat as the weekly moed, the seven annual feasts in their Christological substance, the household table as the load-bearing site of remembrance and joy. What remains is the practical pathway by which a household, a gathering, and a shepherd can leave the counterfeit and walk back into the Father’s calendar without breaking the sheep, fracturing the household, or producing the bitterness Paper No. 1 named as the standing temptation of every reforming saint.

The roadmap that follows is tiered. The household roadmap comes first, because the household is where the recovery primarily happens. The gathering roadmap follows, because the gathered body must give the household time and air to recover. The shepherd’s roadmap closes the section, because the shepherd carries pastoral responsibilities the household does not.

14.1 The Household Roadmap

Principle	Restoration Action
Begin with Repentance, Not Reaction	Repent before the Father for participation in feasts His Word condemned, regardless of how innocently they were entered. The repentance is not for damnation; it is for restoration. The Father is not waiting to punish a household that has come home; He is waiting to receive it. Romans 2:4 — His goodness leads to repentance.
Begin with Shabbat	Before any annual feast is undertaken, recover the weekly Shabbat. Friday sundown to Saturday sundown. Light the candles. Bake the bread. Set the table. Read the Scripture. Walk together. Rest. The annual feasts will not bear their fruit in a household that has not first learned the weekly rhythm. The Shabbat is the foundation.
Recover Pesach Next	The first annual feast to recover is Pesach. It is the foundation of the redemptive cycle. Keep it on the fourteenth of Nisan as the Father appointed. Lay the table with matzah,

Principle	Restoration Action
	<p>bitter herbs, the cup of redemption. Walk the household through the redemption story. Identify Christ as the Lamb at every point the form points to Him. The first Pesach a household keeps will not be perfect; the form will be learned by the keeping of it.</p>
<p>Add Pentecost, Then the Fall Feasts</p>	<p>Add Shavuot in its season, fifty days after Firstfruits. Then in the seventh month — the fall — recover Yom Teruah, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot. Build the sukkah in the backyard. Eat in it for the seven days. Let the children grow up knowing what their Father appointed.</p>
<p>Withdraw Gradually From the Counterfeit</p>	<p>The household need not perform a single dramatic break with the counterfeit calendar in front of extended family on the first year. Withdrawal can be gradual. The Christmas tree can come down quietly the first year. The Easter egg hunt can be replaced with an explanation the children can understand. The Halloween costume can be declined with a kindness that does not require denouncing every neighbor on the block. Wisdom is not cowardice. The withdrawal is real; the path of withdrawal is gentler than the temptation to denounce.</p>
<p>Teach the Children</p>	<p>The annual feasts catechize children in a way no other instrument the church has invented does. Each feast is a story; each story is the King's; each year the household repeats it; each year the children grow into deeper understanding. Deuteronomy 6:6-9 commanded the household to teach the King's words when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. The feasts are the structured form of this command. Teach</p>

Principle	Restoration Action
	<p>the children. They are the recovery’s inheritance.</p>
<p>Honor the Older Generation</p>	<p>The older saints in the household — grandparents, great-grandparents, the eighty-year-old saint who has loved Jesus for sixty years through Christmas trees and Easter ham — are not the enemy. They received the calendar they were given; they served the Lord through it; they are not under condemnation for what was carried under inherited ignorance. Honor them. Walk patiently with them. Many will, in their own time, choose to walk with the household into the recovered calendar. Some will not, and that is acceptable. Their salvation is not at stake. The household leads in love, not in zeal that wounds.</p>
<p>Receive the Joy</p>	<p>The Father did not appoint the feasts as burdens. He appointed them as joy. “You shall rejoice in your feast” (Deuteronomy 16:14, NKJV). The household that recovers the appointed times in the spirit of duty has missed the substance. The household that recovers them in the spirit of joy has received what the King intended. The first Shabbat will feel awkward; the first Pesach will be incomplete; the first Sukkot will be improvised. These are not failures. These are the household learning to receive the gift the Father has always wanted to give.</p>

14.2 The Gathering’s Roadmap

The body that gathers — whether in homes, in clusters, or in larger assemblies — bears specific responsibilities for the recovery beyond what any individual household can carry alone. The institute names six.

Principle	Restoration Action
Teach the Doctrine	The body cannot recover what it has not been taught. The shepherds of the gathered body must teach the appointed times — from Leviticus 23, from the New Testament’s apostolic record of feast-keeping, from the Pauline texts most often misused to abolish the feasts, and from the historical record of the substitution. The teaching is not optional. The body that has not heard the doctrine cannot walk in the practice.
Stop Holding the Counterfeit Services	A gathered body cannot teach the recovery and continue to hold a Christmas Eve candlelight service in front of a tree, an Easter sunrise service named for the goddess, and a Halloween “trunk-or-treat” in the parking lot. The contradiction will sterilize the teaching. The transition can be paced, but it must move in one direction. The counterfeit observances, however beloved, must be retired. The Dual Wineskin Model from Paper No. 1, Section 12 governs the pacing — but the direction is not negotiable.
Begin Holding the Appointed Observances	Begin Pesach. Begin Shavuot. Begin Yom Teruah, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot. The gathered body’s hosting of corporate Pesach seders, Shavuot fellowship meals, Sukkot week-long sukkah gatherings, and Yom Kippur days of corporate fasting and prayer is one of the strongest catechetical instruments available to it. The sheep will learn what the calendar means by keeping it together.
Honor the Household Shabbat	The gathered body should not run Friday-evening congregational services that pull households out of the home and into the building. The Shabbat belongs to the household table. The Sunday gathering — kept as the apostolic body kept it, after the

Principle	Restoration Action
	<p>Shabbat rest — is the appropriate place for the gathered assembly. The pattern of encouraging household Shabbat gatherings rather than running a competing congregational Friday service is the right pattern.</p>
<p>Equip the Households to Lead</p>	<p>Most of the saints in the gathered body have never seen a Shabbat table set, never tasted matzah at a Pesach table, never sat in a sukkah. The gathered body bears responsibility to show — through teaching, through hosted demonstrations, through the recovered observances themselves — what the forms look like in practice. Equip the households. The gathered body’s role is to send equipped households back into their dwellings to keep the appointed times there.</p>
<p>Lead the Repentance Publicly</p>	<p>The shepherd who has personally led his people through Christmas, Easter, and Halloween for years carries a specific pastoral weight. The repentance must be led publicly. A shepherd who teaches the recovery without ever naming his own previous error in leading the body into the counterfeit calendar will be heard but not believed. The shepherd who has himself repented and named the repentance publicly will lead his people into a recovery that has the marks of integrity on it.</p>

14.3 The Shepherd’s Roadmap

The shepherd of a gathering bears responsibilities the household does not. The institute names four specific cautions for the shepherd carrying his people through this transition.

- **Do not lead this transition alone.** Plural eldership, established in Paper No. 4, Section 4.3, is not optional in the recovery of the appointed times any more than it is optional in any other matter of body life. A solo shepherd attempting this transition will burn out, drift, or fall. Build the team before you build the calendar.

- **Do not weaponize the recovery against persons.** The pattern is structural. The persons in the inherited calendar are sincere believers whose grandparents and great-grandparents kept the calendar they received. Paper No. 1's pastoral discipline — attack the system, honor the person — applies here at full strength. The shepherd who turns the recovery into a denouncing of the saints in his own pews has fundamentally misread the institute's posture.
- **Use the Dual Wineskin Model.** Paper No. 1, Section 12, established the pastoral path for transitioning a body out of one form and into another without breaking the sheep. The Dual Wineskin applies directly to the calendar transition. Hold the inherited services for those who need them, while planting the recovered observances for those who have heard the call. Let the fruit speak. Let the body migrate at the pace the Spirit leads. Do not destroy the sheep on the altar of the shepherd's zeal.
- **Hold the recovery as the King's, not yours.** The shepherd who treats the recovered calendar as his own innovation — his church's distinctive, his ministry's brand, his name's flag — has reproduced the celebrity-pastor architecture Paper No. 2 named. The recovery is the Father's. The calendar is the Father's. The shepherd is a servant who has been allowed to walk in what the Father has been restoring across the body. Walk with humility. The recovery does not belong to any one shepherd, ministry, or movement. It belongs to the King.

The roadmap is repentance and obedience, walked in the Dual Wineskin's discipline, paced by pastoral love, taught with theological clarity, and received with the joy the Father always intended. The household leads. The gathering supports. The shepherd serves. The Spirit moves. The recovery is not a program. It is the bride coming home.

Conclusion: One King, One Calendar, One Body

The Father gave a calendar. He called it His own. He kept giving the same answer through Moses, the prophets, the Lord Jesus, and the apostles He sent: “These are My feasts.” The empire took the calendar and replaced it with another, on documented authority of named men in named councils, beginning in the fourth century and locked into the body’s annual rhythm by the sixth. The calendar the body has carried for seventeen centuries is, in its dominant Western form, not the apostolic calendar. It is the imperial calendar, with the King’s name placed over the empire’s feasts. The body has not always been told. The institute has now told it.

The body has carried the substitution under varying degrees of innocence. The eight-year-old at the tree did not know. The grandmother at the Easter table did not know. The pastor leading the candlelight service did what he was taught to do by the pastors who taught him, who did what they were taught by the pastors who taught them, in an unbroken line of inherited practice running back through centuries no individual believer could be expected to investigate. The Father is not vindictive against ignorance. The gospel does not condemn the unaware.

But the body that has been told is no longer carrying the substitution under innocence. The body that has been told is now choosing — every Christmas, every Easter, every October 31 — between the calendar the Father appointed and the calendar the empire substituted. The choice is not the eight-year-old’s. The choice is the household head’s. The choice is the elder’s. The choice is the shepherd’s. The choice is the body’s. And the choice runs along the same line every choice in this series has run along: the King’s design, or the form the world inherited from its idols. There is no third option. Aaron’s “feast to the LORD” in the form of the calf was not accepted. Jeremiah’s people who burned incense to Baal and stood in the LORD’s house were not vindicated. The body’s “keeping Christ in Christmas” over the dies natalis Solis Invicti will not be vindicated either, because the Father has already pronounced the verdict on the pattern across the entire prophetic record. The pattern has not changed. The body’s exemption was never granted. The body has been told it was. The body was told wrongly.

And yet the King has not abandoned the bride. He never does. He is calling her home in this hour by His Spirit, in households that no one taught, around tables their parents had not set, with feasts being kept by saints who had never heard the doctrine before they began keeping the days. The recovery is real. The recovery is His. The recovery is unfolding in the youngest cohort of the church, in the most Spirit-led streams of the present hour, in the same generation that is carrying the front line of every other movement of the Spirit Papers No. 1 through 4 have documented. The Father is restoring His calendar in His people. The institute is reporting what He is doing. The body’s part is to recognize the recovery, walk into it, teach it, host it, pastor it, and receive the joy the Father has been waiting to pour out.

The King is calling His people back:

- From Saturnalia to Sukkot.

- From Sol Invictus to the Light of the World.
- From the spring goddess to the risen Lamb.
- From Samhain to Yom Teruah.
- From dies Solis to the seventh-day Shabbat.
- From the inherited calendar to the appointed times.
- From the empire's feasts to the Father's.
- From mixed worship to undivided worship.
- From Aaron's calf to the King's table.
- From the relabeling of pagan forms to the obedience of the Bridegroom's bride.

The cost of the return is real. Family conversations will be difficult. Long-cherished traditions will be left behind. Children will ask questions the parents have not yet learned to answer well. Relatives will wonder if the household has gone strange. The body will carry, for a season, the awkwardness of the new and the grief of the leaving. None of this is comfortable. None of it is light. But the comfort the body has found in the inherited calendar is the comfort Aaron's people found in the calf — a comfort the LORD struck down rather than allow to stand, because the comfort itself was the corruption. The bride does not return to the Bridegroom by clutching the gifts of His rivals. She returns empty-handed and finds the table set.

“Ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it.” — Jeremiah 6:16, NKJV

The Father appointed His times. He called them His own. He declared them eternal. He kept them through His Son, His apostles, and the witnesses He has preserved across every century of the substitution. He is restoring them now in a generation no one had taught. The body that has carried the imperial calendar under innocence has been received in mercy. The body that has now been told and continues in defiance is no longer in innocence — it is in choice. There is His calendar, or there is theirs. There is the appointed times, or there is the substitute the empire baptized. There is the Bridegroom's table, or there is Aaron's calf. Choose this day. The King will not share His glory with another. The bride is coming home. The household is welcome. The hour is now.

COVENANT DECREE

A Final Seal Upon the Ancient Paths

NOW IS THE TIME. THE TIME IS NOW.

$\sin^2t + \cos^2t = 1$

As the Bride returns to the Father's calendar and His appointed feasts, we decree that every counterfeit calendar, every pagan mixture, and every replacement theology is exposed and overturned, and the people of God are realigned with the divine timetable of the King.

This decree is sealed in the Courts of Heaven and upon the pages of this document by the authority of the finished work of the Cross and the reclaimed master clock of the Kingdom.

It is finished.

GOD WINS — not eventually, but now.

Sealed by the Authority of the King of Kings

Appendix A: Scripture Map for the Appointed Times

The following table maps the major themes of this white paper to their primary Scripture passages, organized for direct study and household teaching.

Theme	Primary Passages
The Father's Possession of the Feasts	Leviticus 23:1-2, 4, 37, 44; Numbers 28:1-2; Genesis 1:14 (the lights for mo'adim)
The Eternity Formula	Exodus 12:14, 17, 24; 31:16-17; Leviticus 16:29, 31; 23:14, 21, 31, 41; Deuteronomy 16:1-17
The Shabbat as Creation Ordinance	Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-11; 31:12-17; Leviticus 23:3; Mark 2:27-28
The Shabbat for Man	Mark 2:27-28; Isaiah 58:13-14; Exodus 23:12; Deuteronomy 5:12-15
Pesach (Passover)	Exodus 12; Leviticus 23:5; Deuteronomy 16:1-8; Matthew 26:17-30; Mark 14:12-26; Luke 22:7-20; John 13-17; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8; 11:23-26
Hag HaMatzot (Unleavened Bread)	Exodus 12:15-20; 13:6-10; Leviticus 23:6-8; Deuteronomy 16:3-4; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8
Bikkurim (Firstfruits)	Leviticus 23:9-14; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23
Shavuot (Pentecost / Weeks)	Leviticus 23:15-22; Deuteronomy 16:9-12; Acts 2:1-41; 20:16
Yom Teruah (Trumpets)	Leviticus 23:23-25; Numbers 29:1-6; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; Matthew 24:30-31
Yom Kippur (Atonement)	Leviticus 16; 23:26-32; Numbers 29:7-11; Hebrews 9:1-28; 10:1-18
Sukkot (Tabernacles)	Leviticus 23:33-43; Numbers 29:12-38; Deuteronomy 16:13-15; Nehemiah 8:13-18; Zechariah 14:16-19; John 1:14; 7:1-39; Revelation 21:3
Christ's Keeping of the Feasts	Luke 2:41-42; 22:7-20; John 2:13, 23; 5:1; 6:4; 7:1-39; 10:22-23; 13:1; 19:14
The Apostolic Body Keeping the Feasts	Acts 2:1; 12:3-4; 18:21; 20:6, 16; 27:9; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8; 16:8

Theme	Primary Passages
Pauline Texts on the Feasts	1 Corinthians 5:7-8; Colossians 2:16-17; Romans 14:5-6; Galatians 4:8-11
The Prohibition on Pagan Forms in YHWH's Worship	Exodus 32 (the calf); Deuteronomy 12:1-4, 29-32; Leviticus 18:21; Jeremiah 7:9-11; 10:2-5; Ezekiel 8
Idolatry and Sexual Immorality	Numbers 25:1-9; Hosea 4:11-14; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 10:1-13; Revelation 2:14, 20
Divination, Witchcraft, the Dead	Deuteronomy 18:9-14; Leviticus 19:31; 20:6, 27; 1 Samuel 28; 2 Chronicles 33:1-9; Isaiah 8:19-20; Acts 16:16-18; 19:18-20; Galatians 5:19-21
The "Changing Times" Diagnosis	Daniel 7:25; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4; Revelation 13:6
The Recovery and the Promise	Zechariah 14:16-21; Isaiah 66:23; Ezekiel 44:24; 45:17; 46:1-3; Acts 3:19-21
The Body Coming Home	Hosea 2:14-23; Isaiah 62:1-5; Revelation 19:7-9; 21:1-3

Appendix B: Method of Examination

This white paper follows the five-lens method established for the Ancient Paths series. A church form is never neutral — a room teaches, a schedule teaches, a stage teaches, a budget teaches, a seating arrangement teaches. The question is whether our forms teach the kingdom of Jesus or the control systems of men.

Lens	Governing Question
Scripture	What did Jesus teach, what did the apostles practice, and what commands govern this matter?
Language	What do the original Greek, Hebrew, or Aramaic terms reveal about God’s intent that translation may obscure?
History	When did later patterns enter, and what cultural forces shaped them?
Theology	What does this practice or form teach people to believe about God, leadership, worship, and their own calling?
Application	What must modern pastors, believers, and households do in response?

Appendix C: Historical and Pastoral Guardrails

Strong critique must be joined to careful history and humble pastoral care. The following guardrails keep the argument sharp without becoming careless or unjust:

- **Do not weaponize this paper against family members.** Most family members keeping the inherited calendar have never been taught what this paper teaches. They are not the enemy. The recovery of the appointed times must begin with patience toward those who have not yet seen what the household has come to see. Conversations at family tables conducted in love are the right form. Denunciations at family tables conducted in zeal are the wrong form.
- **Do not weaponize this paper against pastors.** Most pastors leading bodies through the inherited calendar inherited that calendar from the pastors who trained them, who inherited it from the pastors who trained them, in an unbroken line running through centuries. They are not uniquely guilty of a substitution that occurred in the fourth century. They deserve honor, prayer, patient conversation, and the protection of the Dual Wineskin Model from White Paper No. 1 as they walk through their own discovery and reformation. Contempt is not the institute's posture.
- **Do not claim that any specific saint who kept the inherited calendar in innocence is under condemnation.** The gospel does not condemn the unaware. The body that has carried the substitution under varying degrees of innocence has been received in mercy. The line crossed is the line between innocent participation and informed participation that continues in defiance after the truth has been heard.
- **Do not romanticize the Hebrew Roots and Messianic Jewish movements.** The institute has named in Section 2.3 the over-observance pattern in some Messianic and Hebrew Roots streams that turns Shabbat into a day of intensified labor and the appointed times into ethnic-identity markers detached from their Christological substance. The recovery the institute calls for is not absorption into those movements. It is the household and the gathered body keeping the Father's calendar in the Lord Jesus' name, in the Lord Jesus' substance, in the Lord Jesus' joy. The forms are the Father's. The substance is the Son's.
- **Do not collapse the seventh-day Shabbat recovery into the Seventh-day Adventist tradition.** The Seventh-day Adventist movement carries doctrinal commitments — particularly around prophetic interpretation, the role of Ellen White, the investigative judgment doctrine — that the institute does not share. The recovery of the seventh-day Shabbat is older than Seventh-day Adventism and broader than it. The institute names Adventism in Section 13.2 as one of multiple Sabbatarian witnesses across Reformation and post-Reformation history; this is not an endorsement of the broader Adventist theological system.
- **Do not over-claim on contested historical points.** The institute has labored throughout to distinguish well-established historical claims from contested ones, and to use only the well-established claims as load-bearing arguments. The Saturnalia and Sol

Invictus connections to Christmas are well-documented in primary sources. The Eostre etymology of Easter rests on Bede’s direct testimony. The Samhain origins of Halloween are documented in multiple Old Irish sources. The Hislop “Two Babylons” chain of etymologies is not used in this paper as a load-bearing argument because significant portions of it have been falsified by subsequent scholarship; the paper does not need it. The institute’s case is built on what survives serious historical investigation.

- **Do not turn the Daniel 7:25 diagnosis into an identification of any specific person, office, or institution as “the antichrist.”** The institute has explicitly stated in Section 12 that the structural claim being made is about the spirit that animates any attempt to change the Father’s appointed times — not an identification of any specific historical figure as fulfilling the prophecy. The body has suffered too much from sloppy “this man is the antichrist” identifications across the modern period. The institute does not contribute to that pile.
- **Do not claim that participation in pagan-rooted feasts has automatically opened a household to spiritual oppression.** The institute named in Section 8.5 a Tier 1 connection (Scripture’s own structural connection between idolatry and sexual immorality) and a Tier 2 connection (pastoral observation, named as such, with epistemic humility). The body that participates innocently is not under automatic spiritual bondage; the gospel covers ignorance. The body that has been told and continues in defiance has, however, moved into a different category of spiritual exposure. The line is real. The line is the line of informed choice.
- **Do not confuse calendar recovery with salvation.** The keeping of the appointed times does not save anyone. The blood of Christ saves; faith receives. The keeping of the appointed times is the obedient response of the saved. To make the calendar a means of salvation is to repeat the Galatian error in a new form. To dismiss the calendar as therefore optional is to repeat the dispensational error. The institute holds both ends.
- **Do not use this paper as permission to leave a faithful local body in anger.** If a believer’s local body has refused to engage the question of the appointed times, the response is patient conversation, prayerful engagement of the leadership, and the household’s quiet recovery of the calendar in the home as taught in Section 14.1 — not an angry departure. If after sustained faithful conversation the body’s leadership will not move, the question of leaving must itself be conducted in love, with prayer, in relationship, and without slander.
- **Do not turn this paper into a brand.** The recovery of the appointed times is the King’s work, not the institute’s. The household that has come home is welcome at the table. The body that frames the recovery as its own movement, its own innovation, or its own ministry distinctive has reproduced the celebrity-pastor architecture Paper No. 2 named. The recovery belongs to the bride, not to any one teacher in her midst.

Appendix D: Sources and Research

The institute follows the source-tier discipline established in the Style & Voice Guide. Patristic and historical references are cross-checked against published editions. Contemporary statistics and pastoral observations are verified against multiple independent sources where available. Where a single-source claim has been made, it is noted as such within the body of the paper.

Scripture

- The Holy Bible, New King James Version (NKJV), Thomas Nelson Publishers.

On the Father's Appointed Times: Lexical and Exegetical

- Walter Bauer, Frederick W. Danker, William F. Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (BDAG), 3rd ed., University of Chicago Press, 2000 — entries on pascha, pentekoste, skenoo, eorte, sabbaton.
- Francis Brown, S.R. Driver, Charles A. Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament (BDB), Oxford University Press — entries on mo'ed, miqra, qodesh, shabbat, olam, chag.
- Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament (TDOT), eds. G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren — entries on mo'ed and shabbat.

On the Apostolic and Patristic Witness

- Ignatius of Antioch, Epistles, in Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 1.
- The Martyrdom of Polycarp, in Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 1.
- Polycrates of Ephesus, letter to Victor of Rome (preserved in Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, V.24).
- Eusebius of Caesarea, Ecclesiastical History, V.23-24 on the Quartodeciman controversy.
- Eusebius of Caesarea, The Life of Constantine, Book III, Chapters 18-19, on the Council of Nicaea and the date of Easter.
- Justin Martyr, First Apology, in Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 1.
- Origen of Alexandria, Homily on Leviticus 8.3, on the Christian abstention from birthday celebrations.
- Tertullian, On Idolatry (De Idolatria), in Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 3 — on Christian non-participation in pagan festivals.
- Tertullian, On the Prescription of Heretics (De Praescriptione Haereticorum), on the Mithraic mysteries.

On the Council of Nicaea and the Easter Decision

- Documents of the Christian Church, ed. Henry Bettenson and Chris Maunder, 4th ed., Oxford University Press, 2011 — primary documents of the Council of Nicaea.
- Norman Tanner, ed., Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, Sheed & Ward / Georgetown University Press, 1990 — Volume 1, on Nicaea.
- The Theodosian Code, Book XVI, Title VIII, on imperial legislation regarding Jewish and Christian observance.

On the Dies Solis Edict and the Council of Laodicea

- Codex Justinianus 3.12.2, the Constantinian dies Solis edict of AD 321.
- The Canons of the Council of Laodicea, in Henry R. Percival, ed., The Seven Ecumenical Councils, in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series 2, Vol. 14 — Canon 29 in particular.
- A.A. Vasiliev, History of the Byzantine Empire, University of Wisconsin Press, on the Christianization of the Roman calendar.

On Saturnalia, Sol Invictus, and Mithraism

- Macrobius, Saturnalia, ed. Robert A. Kaster, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 2011.
- Lucian of Samosata, Saturnalia, in The Works of Lucian, Loeb Classical Library.
- Seneca, Epistulae Morales, Epistle 18 — on the Saturnalia in the time of the apostle Paul.
- Pliny the Elder, Natural History, Book XXVIII — on Roman religion, including human sacrifice antecedents.
- Steven Hijmans, “Sol Invictus, the Winter Solstice, and the Origins of Christmas,” Mouseion, Series 3, Volume 3, 2003.
- Manfred Clauss, The Roman Cult of Mithras, trans. Richard Gordon, Edinburgh University Press, 2000.
- Roger Beck, The Religion of the Mithras Cult in the Roman Empire, Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Chronograph of 354, primary text.

On the Christmas Tree and Sacred-Tree Veneration

- Bernd Brunner, Inventing the Christmas Tree, Yale University Press, 2012.
- Susan E. Drinker Moran, The Christmas Tree, Penn State Press, 2003.
- The Life of Saint Boniface, by Willibald, on the felling of Donar’s Oak at Geismar (c. AD 723).
- John D. Niles, The Idea of Anglo-Saxon England 1066-1901: Remembering, Forgetting, Deciphering, and Renewing the Past, Wiley-Blackwell, 2015 — on Germanic sacred-tree veneration.

On Easter, the Goddess Complex, and Spring Fertility Rites

- Bede the Venerable, *De Temporum Ratione* (The Reckoning of Time), AD 725, trans. Faith Wallis, Liverpool University Press, 1999 — chapter 15 on Eosturmonath and the goddess Eostre.
- Philip A. Shaw, *Pagan Goddesses in the Early Germanic World: Eostre, Hreda and the Cult of Matrons*, Bristol Classical Press, 2011.
- Sarah Iles Johnston, ed., *Religions of the Ancient World: A Guide*, Harvard University Press, 2004 — on the Astarte/Ishtar/Inanna complex.
- Tikva Frymer-Kensky, *In the Wake of the Goddesses: Women, Culture, and the Biblical Transformation of Pagan Myth*, Free Press, 1992.
- Mark S. Smith, *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism: Israel's Polytheistic Background and the Ugaritic Texts*, Oxford University Press, 2001 — on Asherah, Astarte, and the Canaanite cultic complex.
- William G. Dever, *Did God Have a Wife? Archaeology and Folk Religion in Ancient Israel*, Eerdmans, 2005.
- The institute does NOT endorse and does not draw on Alexander Hislop, *The Two Babylons* (1853), the chain of etymological claims of which has been substantially falsified by subsequent scholarship.

On Halloween, Samhain, and Druidic Religion

- Sanas Cormaic (Cormac's Glossary), tenth-century Old Irish text, available in modern editions.
- Tochmarc Emire (The Wooing of Emer), Old Irish saga, in *Lebor na hUidre* and the Yellow Book of Lecan.
- Julius Caesar, *Gallic Wars*, Book VI, Chapters 13-19, on Druidic religion and human sacrifice.
- Strabo, *Geographica*, Book IV, Chapter 4, Section 5.
- Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, Book XVI, Section 249.
- Ronald Hutton, *The Stations of the Sun: A History of the Ritual Year in Britain*, Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Ronald Hutton, *The Triumph of the Moon: A History of Modern Pagan Witchcraft*, Oxford University Press, 2019, on the modern pagan and Wiccan calendar's identification of Samhain as a high holy day.
- Nicholas Rogers, *Halloween: From Pagan Ritual to Party Night*, Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Lisa Morton, *Trick or Treat: A History of Halloween*, Reaktion Books, 2012.

On the Ethiopian Orthodox and Sabbatarian Traditions

- Aymro Wondmagegnehu and Joachim Motovu, The Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Ethiopian Orthodox Mission, 1970.
- Senodos and Fetha Negest, Ethiopian Orthodox canonical texts.
- Andrew Cornes, Sunday: From Sabbath to Lord's Day, Wipf & Stock, 2010.
- D.A. Carson, ed., From Sabbath to Lord's Day: A Biblical, Historical, and Theological Investigation, Zondervan, 1982.
- Samuele Bacchiocchi, From Sabbath to Sunday: A Historical Investigation of the Rise of Sunday Observance in Early Christianity, Pontifical Gregorian University Press, 1977 — used as a documented historical source on the post-Constantinian shift, with the institute noting that Bacchiocchi writes from a Seventh-day Adventist perspective whose broader theological framework the institute does not endorse.

On the Waldensian and Pre-Reformation Sabbatarian Witnesses

- Gabriel Audisio, The Waldensian Dissent: Persecution and Survival, c. 1170 - c. 1570, Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Euan Cameron, Waldenses: Rejections of Holy Church in Medieval Europe, Wiley-Blackwell, 2000.

On Dispensationalism and the Retirement of the Feasts

- John Nelson Darby, Collected Writings, multiple volumes, on the Israel/Church distinction.
- C.I. Scofield, Scofield Reference Bible, 1909, on the dispensational framework that retired the feasts in twentieth-century American evangelicalism.
- Charles C. Ryrie, Dispensationalism Today, Moody, 1965 / Dispensationalism, Moody Revised, 2007.
- Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock, Progressive Dispensationalism, Baker, 1993.
- Vern S. Poythress, Understanding Dispensationalists, P&R, 1994 — for a Reformed assessment of the dispensational framework's hermeneutical commitments.

On the Present-Day Recovery

- Ancient Paths Institute, White Paper No. 1: First-Century Church Structure, on the household, the Dual Wineskin Model, and the Gen Z front line.
- Ancient Paths Institute, White Paper No. 2: Shepherds, Not CEOs, on the three-generation pattern and the celebrity-collapse cycle.
- Ancient Paths Institute, White Paper No. 3: The Spirit-Led Gathering, on facilitator plurality and the recovery of household forms.
- Ancient Paths Institute, White Paper No. 4: The Fivefold in Formation, on the no-man-no-system principle (Section 4.1).

- Documented testimony from household-network gatherings across the Texas, North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Arizona, and California regions, 2023-2026, on the Friday-night Shabbat, Pesach, and Sukkot recovery.

Ancient Paths Institute
White Paper No. 6 | The Appointed Times | v1
© *Ancient Paths Institute*