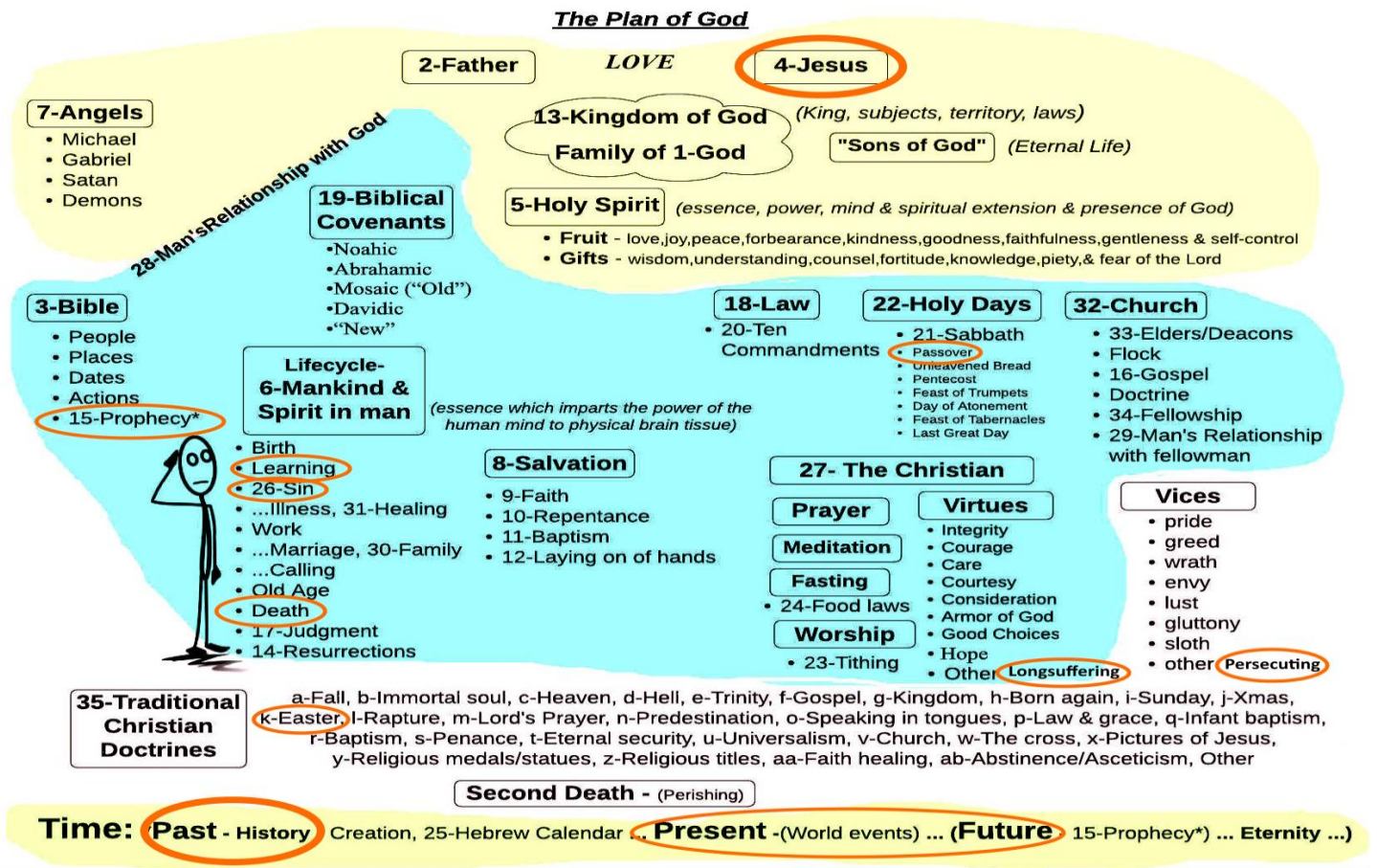


The Quartodeciman (14'ers) Controversy & The Fellowship of His Suffering

Today's message will start with a bit of a "history lesson" ... that most of the world knows nothing about ... but is significant in "church of God" history.



The key point of the "Passover-Easter controversy" revolved around whether the primary Christian spring festival should happen on a day of the month (Nisan 14, the Passover day) or on a day of the week (Sunday). Specifically, does the Church observe the **Biblical** Holy day or **drop the Holy day** to keep a new festival focused on the Resurrection?

The controversy involved three events:

1. the controversy between **Polycarp**, the bishop of Smyrna, and **Anicetus**, the bishop of Rome, that occurred around **AD 155**
2. the more heated controversy between Polycrates, the bishop of Ephesus, and Victor, the bishop of Rome, that broke out around **AD 195** &
3. the decree of Constantine following the Nicene Council in **AD 325**

1. In Rome, near the end of the Second Century, the church from all around came together to discuss the paschal feast. Polycarp was a central figure in this ongoing controversy because like the apostle John, and all the early followers of Jesus Christ, they worshipped on the seventh day Sabbath, Saturday and they kept Passover on Nisan 14, not Easter. Polycarp defended **keeping the Passover** against Roman Bishop Anicetus, who's desire was to see the Passover replaced

by another festival known today as Easter. Polycarp remained faithful to Nisan 14 for Passover, adamant **the apostle John taught him this truth about Passover observance**, not Easter. This became known as the Quartodeciman Controversy.

“A question of no small importance arose at that time. All the parishes of Asia remained faithful to the (biblical) older tradition, heralding that the 14th day of the moon (month) on which the Jews were commanded to sacrifice their lambs, should be observed as the feast of the Saviour’s Passover. (Eusebius, Church History, Book V Chapter 23).

Exo 12:5-6 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. Now you shall keep it until the **fourteenth day** of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight

Lev 23:4-6 These are the feasts of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times. On the **fourteenth day** of the first month at twilight is the LORD's Passover. 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.

Joh 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "**Behold! The Lamb of God** who takes away the sin of the world!

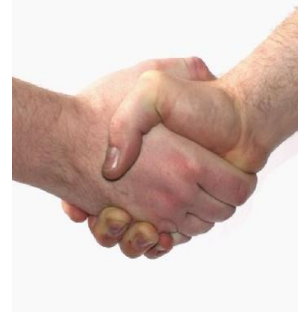
The church at Rome, (focusing on the resurrection), argued that there was no need to depend on the Jewish calendar and that Sunday was the most appropriate day of all.

Result!

A since-lost letter by Irenaeus, quoted by Eusebius and others, tells us what happened: When the blessed Polycarp was at Rome in the time of Anicetus, and they disagreed a little about certain other things, they immediately made peace with one another, not caring to quarrel over this matter. For neither could Anicetus persuade Polycarp not to observe what he had always observed with John, the disciple of our Lord, and the other apostles with whom he associated.... Neither could Polycarp persuade Anicetus to observe it.

After this, **“they parted from each other in peace.”**

Polycarp’s zeal, in favour of Christianity, pointed him out as an object of resentment to the emperor; and in A. D. 202, he was beheaded.



2. A few decades later Polycrates and Victor did not get along nearly as well. The discussion began to degenerate. In anger, Victor **excommunicated** the Quartodeciman ***Polycrates & those who shared his views***.

“We observe the exact day; neither adding, nor taking away. For in Asia also great lights have fallen asleep, which shall rise again on the day of the Lord’s coming, when he shall come with glory from heaven, and shall seek out all the saints. Among these are Philip, one of the twelve apostles, who fell asleep in Hierapolis ... and, moreover, John, who was both a witness and a teacher, who reclined upon the bosom of the Lord ... and Polycarp in Smyrna, who was a bishop and martyr. ...

“All these [the saints and bishops who were listed in his account] observed the fourteenth day of the passover according to the Gospel, deviating in no respect, but following the rule of faith. And I also, Polycrates, the least of you all, do according to the tradition of my relatives, some of whom I have closely followed. For seven of my relatives were bishops; and I am the eighth. And my relatives always observed the day when the people put away the leaven.

*“I, therefore, brethren, who have lived sixty-five years in the Lord, and have met with the brethren throughout the world, and have gone through every Holy Scripture, am not affrighted by terrifying words. For those greater than I have said ‘**We ought to obey God rather than man.**’ Acts 5:29” (paragraphs 1-7).*

Very strong and convicting words! Polycrates was not about to give up the truth about the Passover observance. He stood firm, as did Polycarp. The members of the Church under their leadership continued to keep the Passover on the 14th day.

The Quartodecimans were insisting they would observe Passover, like their earlier brothers and sisters in Christ. They recognized what 1 Cor. 5:7 was saying that Christ is indeed “Our Passover,” not our Easter. Did you note that? The saints of God in the Second Century observed “...the Passover according to the gospel,” not the Old Testament, but the New Testament.



Many bishops protested, such as the aforementioned Irenaeus, though they did not agree with the Quartodeciman position. Victor’s attempted excommunication apparently failed.

Excommunication includes the **spiritual condemnation** of the member or group. Other censures and sanctions sometimes follow excommunication; these include banishment, shunning, shaming & attended civil punishment, sometime including death if the associate crime is serious enough.

3. At the Council of Nicaea, Constantine read out the letter that he would subsequently send to churches everywhere:

“When the question arose concerning the most holy day of Easter it was decreed by common consent to be expedient, that this festival should be celebrated on the same day by all, in every place...

*“And truly, in the first place, it seemed to every one a **most unworthy thing** that we should **follow the custom of the Jews** in the celebration of this most holy solemnity, who, **polluted wretches, having stained their hands with a nefarious crime, are justly blinded in their minds...***

“It is fit, therefore, that rejecting the practice of this people, we should perpetuate to all future ages the celebration of this rite, in a more legitimate order...

“Let us then have nothing in common with the most hostile rabble of the Jews.” (In “How the Church Lost the Way,” by Steve Maltz, Saffron Planet, 2009).



In 315, Constantine issued a law intended to stop those in the “**dangerous sect**” of Judaism (the Jews) from persecuting relatives or friends who converted to Christianity. It was also intended to discourage Christians from converting to the “**abominable sect,**” meaning the Jewish religion. (Laws of Constantine the Great)

At the **Council of Antioch** in 345 AD, Christians were banned from celebrating the Passover Seder (ritual meal) with Jewish friends or neighbors.

Then at the Council of Laodicea in 363–364 AD, the Biblical Sabbath day was outlawed:

“Christians must not judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day, rather honouring the Lord’s Day; and, if they can, resting then as Christians. But if any shall be found to be Judaizers, let them be cursed from Christ.” (Canon 29)

By this time, all things Jewish were understood to be totally incompatible with Christianity.

----- (later)

In 1209, Pope Innocent III decided it was time to crack down on followers of a religious sect that had become popular in Southern France - called Albigensians

The military leader of the army was Simon de Montfort, a French nobleman highly motivated by the Pope’s promise that he could keep the land of any heretics he killed. In Beziers. a town of 20,000 (with many Catholics) the command was ...

“Kill them all and let God sort them out.”

The Beziers Massacre was just one of the first of many atrocities that occurred during the Albigensian Crusades. Over the next four decades, roughly a million more people were killed during those bloody religious conflicts.

In the First Century, Paul wrote a letter to the church of God at Ephesus, admonishing the brethren there to, “Stand, therefore, having your loins girth about with truth...” Paul also spoke of the ravenous wolves that would creep into the church at some point. But now, those stalwarts of the faith had fallen sleep and that very truth is being tested.

Suffering (as Jesus did) - A Christian Expectation?

Php 3:8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ ...

Php 3:10 that I may **know** Him and the **power** of His resurrection, and the **fellowship of His sufferings**, being conformed to His death

1. **Matthew 5:10-12**: "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."
2. **John 15:18-20**: "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also."
3. **Acts 14:22**: "strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, 'We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.'"
4. **2 Timothy 3:12**: "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."
5. **1 Peter 4:12-16**: "Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter."
6. **Revelation 2:10**: "Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life."
7. **Romans 8:35-37**: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: 'For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.' Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us."
8. **2 Corinthians 4:8-10**: "We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body."

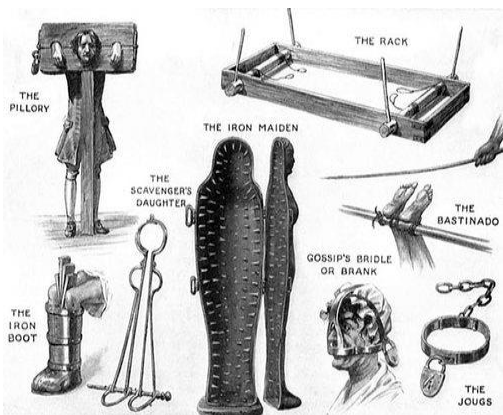
9. **Philippians 1:29-30**: "For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear is in me."

10. **Hebrews 11:35-38**: "Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth."

Jesus suffered ...

- To be made perfect ... to learn obedience (Hebrews 5:8-9)
- To be a better High Priest experiencing the full range of human emotions, including suffering (Heb 4:15)
- By His Stripes we are healed (1Peter 2:24)
- As an example to believers - as we face trials and tribulations in our own lives - believers can find meaning & purpose in our own suffering, knowing that God is at work
- To fulfil the prophecy & role of the "Suffering Servant" (Isaiah 53) - oppressed & afflicted yet silent like a Lamb
- To Lead the way ... **2Cor 4:17** For our "light affliction", which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding & eternal weight of **glory**

Man's inhumanity to man - A legacy of twisted cruelty... Satanic Cruelty



Psychological torture methods

- Blackmail
- Chinese water torture
- Humiliation
- Subjection to periods of interrogation
- Music torture
- Forced nudity
- Pharmacological torture
- Exploitation of phobias;

- Sensory deprivation
- Sensory overload
- Sleep deprivation
- Solitary confinement / isolation
- Threat of severe disfigurement
- Tickle torture
- Waterboarding
- White room torture

Physical torture methods

- Acid attack
- Bamboo torture
- Bastinado
- Birching

- Blinding with light
- Blood Eagle
- Boiling
- Bone breaking
- Branding
- Burning

- Burying alive
- Castration
- Cement shoes
- Chinese water torture
- Cigarette burns

- Coffin torture/Gibbeting
- Cold cell torture
- Combing
- Crucifixion
- Crushing

Cutting	Hanging, drawing, and quartering	Rape	Swedish drink
Dehydration	Immurement	Rat torture	Syrian box torture
Denailing	Jetliner position	Republican marriage	Ta'liq, hanging from a metal bar
Disembowelment	Keelhauling	Riding a rail	Tarring and feathering
Disfigurement	Kicking	Sawing	Tickle torture
Dismemberment	Kneecapping	Scaphism	Tiger bench
Drowning	Mutilation	Sensory overload	Toe/foot removal
Dry-boarding	Necklacing	Sexual assault	Tooth extraction
Dunking	Noise	Shooting	Waist chop
Emasculation	Oxygen deprivation	Sleep deprivation	Walling
Enemas	Palestinian chair	Slow slicing	Water cure
Eye gouging	Parrilla (torture)	Smacking/slapping	Waterboarding
Finger/hand removal	Pins/needles underneath finger/toe nails	Sound	Welcome parade
Flagellation	Pitchcapping	Stabbing	
Flaying	Poena cullei	Starvation	
Foot roasting	Pressure points	Stoning	
Force-feeding	Punching	Strangling	
Forced circumcision		Strappado	
Half hanging		Stress positions	
Hamstringing			

**Inventions - Instruments
of Torture**

Ana-tsurushi	Gag
Batog	Garrote
Birch rod	Head crusher
Boats	Heretic's fork
Branding iron	Instep borer
Brazen bull	Iron Apega
Breaking wheel	Iron chair
Breast ripper	Iron maiden
Cangue	Jiagun / Zanzhi
Castor oil	Judas cradle
Catapelta	Keel
Choke pear	Knee splitter
Coffin	Lead sprinkler
Crucifix	Lingchi
Dunking stool	Mancuerda
Electroshock weapon	Parrilla
Cattle prod	Pau de Arara
Graduated electronic decelerator	Pendulum
Enema	Picana
	Pillory
	Drunkard's cloak
	Shrew's fiddle



Tablilla
Quemadero
Rack
Rhaphanidosis
Rope
Scavenger's daughter
Schandmantel
Scold's bridle
Spanish boot
Spanish tickler
Stocks
Strappado
Thumbscrew
Tongue tearer
Tramp chair
Tucker telephone
Whip
Whirligig
Wicker man
Wooden horse

Jesus' Suffering & Death

Isaiah's Prophecy of Suffering: Isaiah 53:3-5: "He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed."

Jesus' Prayer in Gethsemane: Matthew 26:38-39: "Then He said to them, 'My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.' He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, 'O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.'"

Sweating Blood in Gethsemane: Luke 22:44: "And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

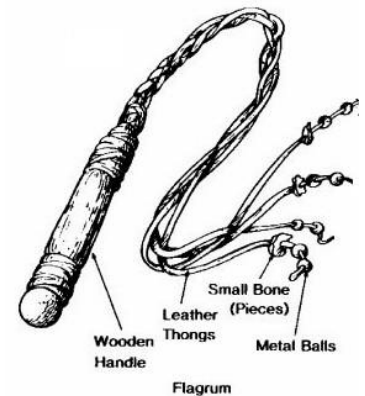
Scouring: Matthew 27:26: "Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified."

Mockery and Abuse: Matthew 27:27-31: This passage describes how Jesus was mocked and abused by the Roman soldiers before his crucifixion. They placed a crown of thorns on his head, put a reed in his right hand, and knelt before him in mockery, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

Carrying the Cross: Matthew 27:32: "Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross." (G4716 - stauros - stake)

Crucifixion: Matthew 27:35: "Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots

Piercing of Jesus' Side: John 19:34: "But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out."



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Rev 6:9-11 When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both *the number of* their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they *were*, was completed.

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1 Corinthians 15:54-57: "So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory.' 'O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?' The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. **But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**"