

The Cambrian Peshier

A Voice of the Desposyni to the Dispersion

The Peshier for St. Aidan's Day, 2025 *vulgaris*
August 31st 2029 *Anno Domini*

Beloved Friends:

FROM OLIVET TO THE UPPER ROOM: THE SABBATH, THE NEW MOON, & THE FREEMAN

*Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from
Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.*

- Acts 1:12

Work and the Sabbath

Six days shalt thou work . . . but the seventh is the sabbath.

- Exodus 20:9, 10

It should not come as much surprise that a slothful and gluttonous generation should lose focus on the true meaning of the 4th Commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

That is only half of the commandment. The other part that is of equal value and importance, yet almost entirely forgotten, is the command to work for "six days." The labor of those days makes it possible to enjoy the seventh.

Adam was to work faithfully for six days, and from the sufficiency of this righteous dominion, he was then left free to rest on the Sabbath. It is from the failure to properly work on those six days that the temptation exists to violate the seventh. **Rest was meant to be the reward for a biblically sound work ethic.**

Rest, Not Worship

Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest.

- Hebrews 4:11

This shift of emphasis may at first seem obviously quaint, but failure to understand the work/rest ethic leads to a different perversion of the day: enslavement to religious institutions. Contrary to puritanical churchists, “worship” is not the primary benefit or purpose of the day – since from the beginning, we were called to worship *every* day (Genesis 3:8) – but rather “rest”: the cessation from our dominion tasks. **We don’t work six days so that we can go to church on the seventh.**

The meaning of the word “holy” (H. *qadesh*, G. *hagios*) the lexicons tell us is strictly speaking, “set apart” or “separate.” “Keep the sabbath day *separate*.” The day is not set apart by worship but by rest. Lost in translation, we mistakenly believe the failure to worship (i.e. go to church or synagogue) is to somehow profane the day. Or if we engage in play or otherwise entertain ourselves, we have somehow defiled it.

Like any other day, the faithful will seek the fellowship of fellow believers and eschew the cursing rioters of sporting events, for example. Using the Sabbath for such unedifying “entertainment” would not be appropriate, just as it would not be for any other day. The Sabbath affords us the extended convenience to find such comfort and edification in leisurely discourse and feasting with godly people, as long as the distance for such a gathering is not more than a “Sabbath’s journey” (Acts 1:12; Exodus 16:29).

Travel Restrictions Require Local Worship

Let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.

- Exodus 16:29

The existence of the “Sabbath’s-day journey” created an interesting restriction that supported local gatherings and not far away ones. The tradition of the Sabbath-day journey prevented the existence of the “mega-synagogue” where people could “drive” across town or to a different city to meet-up with a large, more popular group. **A Sabbath-day journey kept the worshipper close to home.**

It should be noted, also, that the historical practice of gathering the Covenant community on the Sabbath at a place of worship was a compensation for the condition of slavery and exile. Prior to the Israelite deportation, the synagogue did not exist as a fixed institution in Israelite society. The place of congregation was the home site of the respective family patriarch where the extended family and servants gathered for instruction and a communion of souls.

Synagogues did exist in the cities of Israel, of sorts, which began as an extension of Levitical hospitality to a mixed population of Israelites and foreigners. The dwellings of local Levites were used as places of gathering and opportunities for evangelism and discipleship. The Levites were tasked with providing instruction to the people. Cities were places where disinherited people from fractured families could live. In the designated Levitical cities, this priestly tribe served as a social safety net which ministered to the wayward and unfortunate. The countryside, on the other hand, was the province of the landed gentry. It was their responsibility to provide that safety net for their families and for all those who lived on their land.

Synagogues: Weekly Gatherings for the Slaves in Exile

And remember that thou wast a servant . . .

- Deuteronomy 5:15

During the time of the Exile, Israelite estates had been destroyed by the invasions and the people – now slaves in a foreign land – could not congregate except during the night hours after their servile labor had been completed. Their pagan slave masters usually had no regard for the Sabbath and did not offer them an opportunity to observe their former festivals.

These conditions carried over into the early Church for the believers who “synagogued” (James 2:2) in remembrance of Jesus Christ. The first Christians, especially among the Gentiles, were slaves or wives of unbelievers. Their observances were often secretly kept, as the bloody tales of the early persecutions tell us.

The practical reality was that as a sect within Judaism (*cultus licitus*), Christians could legally congregate on the Sabbath, as did the Jews, but afterwards, in the wee hours of the First Day of the week; they could congregate with fellow Christians before their work day began. It remained a custom reflecting their condition of slavery. It was not a characteristic of the time when they live in freedom in the Promised Land.

Home Gatherings for the Free

To the church in thy house . . .

- Romans 16:5 (cf. 1 Cor. 16:19; Phm. 2)

Only in lands beyond the Roman frontiers, in Parthia, Armenia, and Britain were believers free on their own land and could practice their faith according to the ancient ways. They remained at home for their Sabbaths and were not compelled to journey to places of worship.

Latin clerics would later accuse these people of paganism because they did not have dedicated places of Christian worship or a sacerdotal order of priests as did the Romans. They did not comply with the various creeds and canons of the Roman Imperial councils nor did they comply with the peculiar monogamist practices of Greco-Roman culture.

The word “pagan” originally meant “the country people,” and carried within it the pejorative which city-folk have always had for the “rustic” country folk.

This disdain carried over through the centuries unto this day, in which the ordained clergy either condemn or hold in contempt the renewed interest in home worship.

The Feast of the New Moon as the Family Sabbath

And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD.

- Isaiah 66:23

The hour cometh, when ye shall not in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

- John 4:21

As explained below, the New Moon Sabbath was a two-to-three day Sabbath and provided the opportunity for gatherings of the extended family from adjacent homesteads.

The pre-Exilic period of Israelite history followed a lunar calendar to restart each month a new cycle of Sabbaths, beginning with the “Feast of the New Moon” celebrated at the family homestead and then with seven-day weeks following until the next New Moon.

While Saturday Adventists will chide “Lord’s Day” observers as “Sun worshippers,” the accusation can be as easily turned on them that Adventists are worshippers of Kronos (Saturn): Saturn Day worshippers.

Lunar observers might be accused of being “Moon worshippers,” also, except there is one important difference: **a New Moon Sabbath is not a “Full Moon” Sabbath.** The Moon is dark and absent in the night sky at the New Moon. Just as the absence of the Sun means the ending of a day, so the absence of the Moon signals the end of a month. At that time, there is no celestial lord to worship in the night sky.

Wiccans and other animists might worship at the Full Moon, but the children of Israel worshipped at the New Moon.

Our first account of creation in Genesis (1:14-16) tells us that God created two great lights: one to rule the day (the Sun) and another to rule the night (the Moon). The Sun rises and sets, but its circuits lengthen and shorten in a repeating cycle of shifting latitudes. We use this pattern to predict the seasons and the year.

The Moon is different. It rises and sets, but it also waxes and wanes in a predictable pattern of approximately 28-29 days.

The ancient Israelites counted their weeks by the number of seven sunrises, but they calculated their months by the cycles of the Moon. The Feast of the New Moon would be an extended Sabbath of 1-3 days in order to adjust for the quarterly and annual passage of the Sun in its seasons and years. From that monthly reset, the following four, seven-day weeks would be counted according to the sunrises until the Moon would wane again and signal a New Moon and a new month.

For the ancients, the solar year was first 360 days, and then because of some unknown catastrophe, it became 365.25 days. To the best of our knowledge, the Moon’s circuit has remained the same, although its orbit is eccentric. Whatever perfect synchronicity which might have existed between these two celestial bodies at the time of creation; it has been lost, and maybe will be lost yet again in a future cataclysm.

Because of geophysical and historical uncertainties, it cannot be known whether any “seventh” day insisted upon by partisan sabbatarians today should correspond correctly with the sequence of days from the time of Creation. Nor can we know for certain that a Sabbath day which is adopted matches the calendar which existed at the time of the giving of the 4th Commandment.

Regardless, the Feast of the New Moon is a known calculation and still yet provides the opportunity for gathering at the principal family estate for the extended family.

Summary and Imperative

My father works . . .

- John 5:17

Jesus declared Himself to be the “Lord of the Sabbath” (Matthew 12:8 *et al*). He stipulated that “the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27). Consequently, the question is left to the prerogatives of personal sovereignty and responsibility. The landed gentry must decide.

Work six days and rest the seventh. That is the mandate.

If you have servants, employees, or other hired workers, make sure that they have their Sabbath. If you rule a nation, it is your prerogative and responsibility to select a Sabbath for the collective of the people.

Can a day of the week be chosen to the satisfaction of everyone? Probably not. God has not set the day for us, but if you are convinced that He has, you must win your freedom and personal sovereignty to control your schedule such that you can observe the day according to your conscience. That is what freedom is all about.

From Olivet to the Upper Room

And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives . . .

- Zechariah 14:4

The common thread - “in that day” - associated with this Messianic prophecy (so beloved by Dispensationalists of Jesus “splitting” the Mount of Olives at the battle of Armageddon) belies the literalist interpretation as disingenuous. Occurring no less than 15 times in Zechariah chapters 12 through 14, we find it laden with references to Christ’s own ministry and sacrificial death. In fact, Jesus cites 12:7 – “smite the shepherd” – in Mathew 26:31 as a specific fulfillment of that prophecy.

Scholars, of course, disagree as to whether the other features of this prophecy should be considered partially unfulfilled or whether a symbolic fulfillment was intended. We prefer the latter because Christ claimed to have fulfilled *all* of the Messianic prophecies and His Messianic claims were founded upon that fact (Luke 24:44 *et al*). A failure at this point in the literal interpretation, with integral parts separated by

two thousand years (remember they are linked by “in that *day*”) – and events yet to occur, I might add – seems to disprove the former claim.

Jesus did in fact *physically* set His post-Resurrection *feet* upon the Mount of Olives at His Ascension, but there was no earthquake, no splitting of the mountain to create a subsequent canyon or gorge reaching unto “Azal.” **Azal** is a name which might refer to a specific geographical location, or in its Hebrew etymology, it might simply mean to “go away,” “vanish,” or “exhaust/evaporate.” A Preterist would want to interpret the scenario described here as one fulfilled in the Roman siege of Jerusalem in 70 AD, and that, per the historical account provided by Josephus, the forewarned took flight around the mountain to disappear into the wilderness east of the city. Petra was the logical destination, and as archaeologists describe it, it was a hidden city carved out of the cliffs used by Christian refugees escaping the horrors of the siege. When Jesus told His disciples to flee the city, they could have easily “vanished” to Petra and the wilderness beyond Olivet. Whether taking the northern or southern ridges in a symbolic “split” of the mountain, they both would have provided safe passage. The Romans were approaching from the west and had not yet “encompassed” the city.

Additionally, these prophecies in Zachariah of “in that day” – as in the Day of the Lord – would correspond eschatologically to the *dais* of Christ on each respective “Lord’s Day” when Christ sets to rule through His Desposynic bishops, a thing which began with the martyrdom of James the Just, the Lord’s brother and first Lord Bishop of Jerusalem and continues until the “synagogue of Satan” shall be no more.

Was the Ascension Day a Sabbath?

The Lunar Sabbath doctrine provides a more satisfactory explanation as to why Luke would have referenced “a Sabbath day’s journey” and not the usual “furlongs” or other terms to describe distances. Acts 1:12 is the only instance in the New Testament where it is used. Why he should use it as an expression otherwise associated with Pharisaical legalism, yet in defiance of it begs for a different explanation. The traditional view of a “sabbath day’s journey” is six tenths of a mile. The distance from the slopes of Olivet just beyond Bethany to Jerusalem was two miles. Why would Luke insist that it was a Sabbath day’s journey?

That explanation would have to be that the day of Christ’s Ascension was in fact a Sabbath but not the traditional Sabbath. It was a Sabbath based upon the lunar calendar.

Scholars smugly tell us, of course, that it could not have been a Sabbath because it occurred on a Thursday with the Sabbath being a Saturday. This is only true for traditionalists who follow a strictly solar calendar. But remember, our modern practice of naming the days of the week is a Western tradition and was not typical of the ancient world, and certainly not that of the Jews.

However, the Lunar calendar, as explained above, started each new month when the Moon disappeared from view and the first day of its appearance in the crescent – usually the next day or two – ended the month's first Sabbath. Each of the Sabbaths followed according to the subsequent seven-day reckoning until the Moon disappeared again and started the new month.

With this in mind, the lunar calendar would reveal the following:

- 1) Passover occurred on the 14th – 15th day of Abib (Nisan) which would have been the third Sabbath of the month, the 1st day being the first Sabbath (New Moon) and the second being the 7th day of Abib.
- 2) If Pentecost were 50 days following Passover (7 weeks plus 1 day), then the total of days from 1 Abib would be 64 plus the two days for the intervening New Moon Sabbaths or totaling 66 days.
- 3) If Christ's Ascension occurred ten days prior to Pentecost and we subtract 10 from 66 we get 56 days from 1 Abib or exactly 8 Sabbaths.

The Ascension occurred on a Sabbath according to this calculation.

In the alternative, if we were to compute Christ's 40 days communing with His disciples, as Luke says, "after his passion," we arrive at the same results. The 40 days do not commence with the Crucifixion but with the "First Day" of the week, the day of His Resurrection. But from the time of His Crucifixion it would have been 42 days, at least 2 full days in the tomb. As in the instance above, 42 is evenly divided by 7 into 6 Sabbaths, proving again, according to the Lunar calendar, the Ascension occurred on a Sabbath.

(N.B. Christ would have been buried on the eve of the traditionalist's Sabbath, not the lunar Sabbath. The "First Day" of His Resurrection would not have been the first day of the traditionalist's week, but a new lunar week. His Passover was Thursday of the previous week; His Crucifixion was on Friday. But "three days and three nights" would make the Resurrection on the morning of the following Tuesday: the first day of the new lunar week and the third day of the traditionalist's week)

What this suggests, of course, is that the Ascension is separated from Pentecost by eight days and not the ten days as assumed by traditionalists. The "eighth day" would be the first day of a new week. Thus, Pentecost would have been a Lord's Day or "Day of the Lord," as so eloquently affirmed by Peter's first sermon in Acts 2.

A synchronicity of days shouldn't matter except to strict Sabbatarians. We may be edified by these calculations, but we are certainly not bound by them. Leading His disciples "as far as Bethany" and then to the slopes of Olivet, He made sure that their return complied with this Christian version of the sabbatical regulation. It proves for us

that sabbatical travel restrictions are in force in the Post-Resurrection and Post-Ascension covenant community.

Home worship is the standard.

August 31st: St. Aidan's Day (590-651AD)

Many people do not know that the Anglo-Saxons came to Britain as pagan invaders. They were hostile to Christianity. Before they came, Celtic Briton had been Christian for centuries extending back even before the Romans. In fact, as the story is told, Rome had to settle for a treaty to annex Britain during the 2nd Century (See *Britannia*, <https://2046AD.org>). They couldn't make good on a conquest outright. The Anglo-Saxons encountered the same stubborn resistance.

As is typical of invaders, the Anglo-Saxons first practiced a scorched-earth policy, but soon relented when they found the Celtic Britons to be a hard-working and industrious people. They knew the land and the seasons and the invaders did not. They scarcely could survive without that indigenous knowledge.

Their sense of racial superiority eventually gave-way to the charms of Celtic brides and the patient work of Celtic missionaries. St. Aidan was the first to succeed at converting them in Northumbria, the northern flank of the invasion. Roman clerics succeeded in the south. But that would occasion future friction.

While Catholic tradition would later claim Aidan as one of their own, he was on the other side of the Synod of Whitby (664 AD). He would have been a Culdee, not a Roman.

He came from the famous Isle of Iona, a wind-swept enclave of Celtic scholarship with an abbey founded by St. Columba. Aidan was his episcopal successor but later came to mentor an earnest exiled Saxon royal who was first a student of the Trivium at the abbey but later became King Oswald of the Northumbrians.

Aidan would use his meager funds to purchase the freedom of slaves, feed and train them, then ordain them for Christian missions. King Oswald shared in this fosterage at the behest of the royal family. But he would have been raised among former slaves as his equals. If anything, he would have learned the humility of Christ.

While the controversies settled at Whitby would occur after Aidan's death (651) – and Oswald's who earlier died in battle – Aidan's shadow still lingered. The dating of Easter was the principal thing in controversy. The Romans had their revised calculations, the Culdees had theirs. With both Aidan and Oswald gone, an untested king – Oswiu - ruled Northumbria in his place. And even though he was still taught in the ways of the Culdees, his queen followed Rome.

He convened a synod to settle the controversy and bring peace to his household. It was a watershed moment, not so much because of the doctrinal issue itself, but rather how it was handled. While the Culdees appealed to St. John, the Roman clerics appealed to St. Peter. The Papal claims to possess the “keys of the kingdom of heaven” trumped the claims of St. John.

Even at such an early date, the true identity of St. John had been lost to these Culdee pioneers. They had the true tradition but did not know its true origins.

Had they known that it was Desposynic which had precedence over the Apostolic, the outcome could have been different.

But Britain had been cut-off from its spiritual roots for three centuries and these Culdee priests either did not know or were unwilling to divulge the hidden history of their origins.

Aidan’s legacy protected the Culdees, even after they lost at Whitby. But the future of the Island lay with the Papists which would not be overcome for a thousand years.

It is left to us to complete the Reformation.

A Servant of Jesus,

James

Collect for the Day:

Lord of all power and might, who art the author and giver of all good things: Graft in our hearts the love of thy Name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and bring forth in us the fruit of good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Cambrian Peshier is the pastoral epistle of the Cambrian Episcopal Desposynic Church, a fellowship and abbey adhering to a spiritual tradition from ancient Wales. We use the Authorized Version of the Bible (King James Version) as our default translation based upon the Codex Bezae. We use the Book of Common Prayer of the Episcopalian Church for liturgical guidance. We are not an affiliate of any denomination.

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