

Questions About Seventh-Day Adventists Neglecting the “Times”, “holy days” and “festivals”

By Pastor Ed Anderson

Have 7th-day Adventists gone far enough in their desire to obey God's Law? Are "times" the same as "holy days and festivals"? Have we neglected "times"? SDA is strong on obeying "law" but seem weak on obeying "times"...am I in error?

Answer:

This is an excellent and spiritually discerning question — and you’re touching on an area that deserves careful biblical reflection. Let’s explore it in full: **Have Seventh-day Adventists gone far enough in obeying God’s “times” — or have we been too narrow in our focus on the “law”?**

1. What Do You Mean by “Times”?

In the Bible, “times” can refer to:

- **Appointed times:** Hebrew *moedim* (מוֹעֲדִים) — God’s holy appointments (Genesis 1:14; Leviticus 23)
- **Prophetic time periods:** e.g., “time, times, and half a time” (Daniel 7:25; Revelation 12:14)
- **Sacred calendar cycles:** such as the Feast days (Passover, Trumpets, Day of Atonement, etc.)
- **Sabbath rhythms:** weekly Sabbath, 7-year land sabbath, Jubilee cycles, etc.

So when you ask about “times,” it could involve:

- **God’s festivals** and sacred calendar
- **Prophetic timelines**
- **Sacred rhythms of worship and rest**

Seventh-day Adventists have strongly emphasized the **weekly Sabbath**, the **Day of Atonement** (antitypical), and prophetic “**time of the end**” calculations (e.g. 1260 years, 2300 days).

But many wonder: have we neglected **God's appointed festivals or sacred times**? That's where your question leads next.

2. Did God Ordain "Holy Times" for His People?

Yes. Leviticus 23 lists:

- **Weekly Sabbath** (v.3)
- **Annual Feasts:**
 - Passover & Unleavened Bread
 - Firstfruits
 - Pentecost
 - Trumpets
 - Day of Atonement
 - Feast of Tabernacles

These were called "**appointed times**" (**moedim**) and were "holy convocations" — sacred assemblies.

"These are the appointed festivals of the Lord, holy convocations, which you shall proclaim at the time appointed for them." — Leviticus 23:4

3. Are These Feasts Still Binding Today?

Here's the Adventist and broader Protestant understanding:

- These festivals were **shadows** (Hebrews 10:1) pointing forward to Christ.
- Jesus fulfilled them in His life and ministry:
 - **Passover** → His death
 - **Firstfruits** → His resurrection
 - **Pentecost** → Outpouring of the Holy Spirit
 - **Day of Atonement** → Pre-Advent judgment
 - **Tabernacles** → Future kingdom and final harvest

"Therefore let no one judge you... regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is Christ." — Colossians 2:16–17

Therefore, while the moral law (Ten Commandments) is permanent, these “appointed times” were part of the **ceremonial system** that found fulfillment in Jesus.

That said — and this is where your point shines — there’s a distinction between **being required to keep** the feasts **versus learning from and honoring the rhythm and meaning of the feasts**.

4. Have We Neglected the Value of God’s Rhythms and Times?

Yes, to some extent.

While the Seventh-day Adventist Church rightly upholds:

- The **weekly Sabbath**
- The **prophetic Day of Atonement**
- The **2300-day timeline**
- The **Sabbath as God’s end-time sign**

...we may not have gone far enough in **teaching the meaning, patterns, and spiritual truths** embedded in God’s appointed times.

For example:

- **Feast of Trumpets** teaches urgency and repentance.
- **Tabernacles** reminds us we are pilgrims, and points to our heavenly home.
- **Unleavened Bread** teaches cleansing and sanctification.
- **Firstfruits** reminds us of resurrection hope.

These are not legalistic rituals, but **prophetic lessons, Messianic patterns, and powerful devotional tools**.

5. Did Early Adventists Consider the Feasts?

Some early Adventists wrestled with this. Joseph Bates and others studied the feast days, but the church settled on the position that:

- The **weekly Sabbath** is moral and permanent
- The **festivals** were **fulfilled types** pointing to Jesus, and not binding
- However, **their meaning still carries value**

In recent years, some Adventists and Messianic believers have returned to **studying and honoring the festivals** — not as legal obligations, but as **spiritual gifts**, times of deeper devotion and gospel reflection.

6. Is It an Error to Keep the Festivals?

No — **as long as** it's done **not for salvation or superiority**, but for learning, remembrance, and celebration of what Christ has done.

Paul warned against:

“...observing days and months and seasons and years” — *Galatians 4:10*

when used for **legalistic righteousness**.

But he also said:

“One person considers one day more sacred than another... Each of them should be fully convinced in their own mind.” — *Romans 14:5*

7. Conclusion: You Are Not in Error

Your discernment is valid. Here's a summary response:

Law	Times
Moral	Ceremonial (fulfilled in Christ)
Ten Commandments	Feasts, sacred calendar
Permanent	Shadows of Christ
Still binding	Still valuable

Adventists have done well to uplift the law, especially the Sabbath.

But we could go deeper in **honoring the rhythms and revelations** in God's appointed times — **not to rebind the ceremonial law**, but to understand and celebrate **God's redemptive timeline**.

Final Reflection

“God works in rhythms, seasons, and patterns. While Christ fulfilled the ceremonial law, the lessons from God’s appointed times still echo in eternity. To understand the rhythms of God is to understand the heartbeat of heaven.”