

The Orthodox Church Calendar*

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Genuine Science merely rediscovers Biblical truths and should thus be guided by them.
Hieromonk Cassian, *A Scientific Examination of the Orthodox Church Calendar* p. 30

Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hateth: they are a trouble unto Me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear...
Isaiah 1:14-15

1. The Orthodox Church Calendar is a combination of two cycles, the Menaion cycle of immovable feasts, based on the solar Julian Calendar, and the Paschal cycle of movable feasts, based on the lunar Jewish Calendar. The Julian Calendar, which is a modified version of the ancient Egyptian Sothic Calendar, was developed by the renowned astronomer Sosigenes of Alexandria (fl. 1st cen. B.C.).
2. The early Christians did not necessarily celebrate Pascha at the same time. It thus became imperative to formalize the Apostolic teaching concerning the celebration of this Feast as an inviolable rule. The Seventh Apostolic Canon stipulates that Pascha be celebrated after the Jewish Passover and the vernal equinox. The Passover is always celebrated on the first full moon of spring in the Jewish Calendar. Therefore, the Paschal full moon is determined by the lunar calendar, while the vernal equinox is determined by the solar calendar. It thus became necessary to combine the lunar and solar calendars in compliance with the requirements of the Seventh Apostolic Canon. As an aside, over the course of time, the Jewish and Christian feasts gradually move apart from each other, because the lagging of the Julian Calendar behind the vernal equinox is slightly greater than that of the Jewish Calendar. This gradual drawing apart has a deep theological significance, clearly indicating the proportionally increasing hostility over the centuries of Judaism towards Christianity.
3. In order to synchronize the Julian and Jewish Calendars, it is necessary to determine a period of time after which the dates of each calendar will realign. This is done by utilizing the Metonic and Callipic cycles. The Metonic cycle, named after Meton of Athens, the astronomer who discovered and applied it to the Greek Calendar in 433 B.C., is a 19-year period in which the lunar phases realign with each other. The Callipic cycle, named after the Greek astronomer Callipus who carried out these calculations in 330 B.C., is a 76-year period, or a quadrupling of the Metonic cycle, in which the lunar and solar years both start not only on the same day, but at the same hour as well, thus synchronizing the two calendars.
4. The universal time-reckoning scheme known as the Great Indiction, or Cycle from the Creation of the World, is a period of 532 years, established by joining the 19-year Metonic lunar cycle with the 28-year solar cycle (in which the calendar dates fall once again on the same exact days of the week as they did at the beginning of this cycle), or $19 \times 28 = 532$. Whenever the Great Indiction elapses, the cycles of the sun and of the moon and the days of the week revert to their initial order. The starting point of the Great Indiction is Sunday, September 1, 5508 B.C. Since 1941, we have been in the Fifteenth Indiction. The Great Indiction is the basis of all the service books of the Orthodox Church.
5. The Orthodox Church Calendar impressed the brilliant German mathematician and astronomer, Carl Friedrich Gauss (1777-1855), after whom the unit of measurement of

- magnetic flux density is named, so much that he constructed his own formula for the Orthodox calculation of Pascha: http://www.orthodoxrevival.com/index/Gaussian_Pascha.html
6. In 1514 the Roman Curia invited Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543), the Polish astronomer famed throughout Europe, and his colleagues to Rome to participate in the reformation of the calendar; Copernicus, however, declined because he considered the calendar reform an exercise in futility.
 7. Once work on the new calendar was under way, the famous French scholar Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540-1609) – recognized as the father of modern chronology – was invited to contribute. But like Copernicus before him, Scaliger energetically opposed the idea of reforming the calendar, even writing a major treatise, *A New Work on Improving the Reckoning of Time*, proving the superiority of the chronological system of the Julian Calendar over that of the Gregorian, for which he was victimized by the Inquisition.
 8. The German mathematician Christopher Clavius (1537-1612), a Jesuit and head of the commission established to reform the calendar, confessed several deficiencies of the Gregorian Calendar. The most serious of these was that the data upon which the reform was based – the Prutenic Tables, compiled by Erasmus Reinhold (1511-1553), an astronomer at the University of Wittenberg – were grounded on uncertain, even preposterous hypotheses. Some other deficiencies: the vernal equinox is unstable and thus incapable of being fixed to a certain date, contrary to the stated goal of the reform; the reformed calendar allowed Pascha to fall on a full moon, if not before it, i.e., to be celebrated before or together with the Jews.
 9. The ambitious and power-hungry Pope Gregory XIII, the same one who enthusiastically hailed the French Queen Mother, Catherine de' Médici (1519-1589), who instigated the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre (August 24, 1572) against the Protestants, despite the largely negative reception from the scholarly world, instituted the "new" Gregorian Calendar in 1582. It was met by initial resistance by the Protestants, and led to several bloody uprisings, such as those of Staemark and Augsburg, and to the destructive Thirty Years' War (1618-1648). Eventually Protestant resistance grew weaker and one Protestant country after another acquiesced: Germany, fully accepted in 1778; Denmark, 1700; Great Britain and Ireland (as well as British colonies in North America), 1752; Finland and Sweden, 1753; Netherlands, 1775; Switzerland, fully accepted in 1811. And some non-Christian countries: Japan, 1873, China, 1912, Turkey, 1925.
 10. The Gregorian Calendar was based on the incorrect geocentric model of the universe. Copernicus introduced the heliocentric theory and published *On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres*. In 1616 the Pope placed this treatise on a prohibited list.
 11. The famous inventor of the telescope, Galileo Galilei, subscribed to the heliocentric view of Copernicus. Although suppressed by the Papist Church, in 1632 he managed to publish his work entitled *Dialogue on the Two Chief World Systems*, for which he was persecuted by the Inquisition.
 12. Calculations for historical and chronological purposes are first made according to the Julian Calendar, with a subsequent transition to Gregorian dates.
 13. An orderly, structured chronological system is needed for determining the exact difference between the various systems for the calculation of time, and the only system that can do that is the Julian system. It is the foundation of all other systems. The relationship between these systems is expressed in mathematical formulae, where the basic independent variable is *T – time according to the Julian chronological system*.
 14. The Julian Calendar is fully compatible with the newer concept of time as something relative, dynamic, and flexible in accordance with the theory of relativity developed by the Serbian Orthodox physicist Mileva Maric and her husband Albert Einstein, whereas the Gregorian Calendar is only compatible with the older view of temporality as something absolute, static, and fixed.

15. In countries with Orthodox populations, the Papacy inflicted the reform by force of arms. The so-called “Calendar Riots” burst out in Riga in 1584, protesting the transition to the Gregorian Calendar not only in Poland, but also in the Zadvin Dukedom. The East was to prove much more difficult for the Gregorian reformers. The Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II (1536-1595) recognized the canonical violations of the Gregorian reform and convened three successive Pan-Orthodox Councils in Constantinople (1583, 1587, 1593) condemning the Gregorian Calendar. In the seventeenth century, Patriarch Cyril I (1572-1638) condemned the Papal Calendar numerous times, for which he suffered a martyric death by strangulation at the hands of the Jesuits. In 1756 Patriarch Cyril V (*ca.* 1700-1775) issued an encyclical opposing the Papal reform. In the famous Ecumenical Encyclical of 1848, Patriarch Anthimus VI condemns the Gregorian Calendar. Other examples: in 1672 by Patriarch Dositheos II of Jerusalem, in 1827 by Ecumenical Patriarch Agathangelos, in 1895 by Patriarch Anthimos VII of Constantinople, in 1903 by the Patriarchates of Jerusalem, Russia, and the Church of Greece, in the famous Pan-Russian Church Synod of 1917-1918.
16. A fatal breakdown in the unanimity of the Orthodox in their rejection of the Gregorian Calendar occurred after World War I. One by one the “Orthodox” countries began to adopt the Gregorian Calendar first for civil usage. Bulgaria was the first in 1916, followed by Russia in 1918 by the Jewish Bolsheviks, then Serbia in 1919, and Greece in 1924.
17. In 1920 the Constantinopolitan Church officially cooperated with the Masonically-inspired ecumenical movement by publishing an encyclical by Archbishop Dorotheos of Prusa seeking rapprochement between the various “Christian” Churches and proposing the adoption of a new calendar common to all denominations. In 1923 the Masonic infiltrator “Ecumenical Patriarch” Meletios IV Metaxakis convened a “Pan-Orthodox Congress,” in which he proposed the adoption of the “New Julian” or “Revised Julian” Calendar (Gregorian Calendar thinly disguised, consisting of the incompatible Orthodox Paschalion and the Gregorian Menologion) among other blasphemous innovations. A month later riots broke out in the streets forcing the “Patriarch” to resign from office. In March of 1924 the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Church of Greece – the latter under pressure by the Mason Eleftherios Venizelos - adopted the “New Julian” Calendar, becoming the first traitors to the Orthodox Church Calendar. In the same year, the Churches of Cyprus and Romania followed suit. In 1926 Metaxakis was uncanonically made “Patriarch” of Alexandria and instituted the New Calendar there. Practically on his deathbed, Metaxakis also attempted to become Patriarch of Jerusalem in order to do the same there as well, but died before he could do so. In 1948 the Patriarchate of Antioch was forced to adopt the New Calendar. In the Bulgarian Orthodox Church the calendar reform happened unexpectedly in 1968. In 1969-70 the Masonic World Council of “Churches” pressured the Jerusalem Patriarchate to introduce the “New Julian” calendar. That same year, the Holy Fire did not appear at the Holy Sepulchre, after which the Old Calendar was promptly restored, and the Holy Fire once again appeared the following year and thereafter.
18. Throughout the world, the calendar reform divided the Orthodox Church into two camps – the “Old Calendarists” and the “New Calendarists.” The Old Calendarists in Greece, Romania, Russia, Poland, Finland, Estonia and elsewhere immediately found themselves the victims of ferocious persecution at the hands of the New Calendarists in cooperation with the state. This persecution continues to the present day, although usually in a more cryptic fashion: they are usually not fully recognized by the government of formerly Orthodox countries and have to suffer the manifold consequences of this; infiltrators are sent to create schisms/heresies from within with the goal of dividing and conquering the faithful and eventual submission to the state “Church”; parallel “Orthodox”

- establishments are formed to dupe the simple flock; their hierarchs are repeatedly and unjustly taken to court and thus emotionally and monetarily drained, etc.
19. The following “official” and traditional jurisdictions retain the Old Calendar even to the present day: the Patriarchates of Jerusalem, Serbia, and Georgia, the Moscow Patriarchate/Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, the Macedonian Orthodox Church, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Mount Athos, the Genuine Orthodox Churches of Greece, Cyprus, Romania, Africa, etc., and the Genuine Catacomb Church of Russia.

*Based upon extracts from [A Scientific Examination of the Orthodox Church Calendar](http://www.ctosonline.org/oldcal/SEO.html) by Hieromonk Cassian:
<http://www.ctosonline.org/oldcal/SEO.html>

Genuine Orthodox Church: <http://churchgoc.org/>