

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php

cede for us with the Son. That we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ (1 John ii. 1), who ever liveth to make intercession for us (Heb. vii. 25; Rom. viii. 34), Bernard knew just as well as we; but yet he followed the romantic course of his church, and addressed, at least in his sermons on Mary, the feminine saviour, Mary. But fortunately this aberration occurs scarcely ever in his other sermons. It is only in his sermons on Mary that he thus addresses and praises her. With our whole heart we reject this error, and belong to a church which to the present day has kept such errors far from her; yet still greater is the error of those who call upon neither Mary nor Jesus Christ, but only upon an imaginary universal Father; and yet with these we must live, at least externally, in one church.

ARTICLE VIII.

THE SABBATH: THE CHANGE OF OBSERVANCE FROM THE SEVENTH TO THE LORD'S DAY.

BY REV. WILLIAM DELOSS LOVE, D.D., SOUTH HADLEY, MASS.

In a previous Article on the Sabbath we have seen that there was a possibility, and even probability, of a change of observance from the seventh to some other day of the week. We now resume and proceed with the discussion.

5. The Lord's day in the new dispensation was the chief of all days with the apostles and early Christians, and was their special day for rest and religious worship.

(1). The Lord's day during the Apostolic age. (a) Christ, in the first instance, gave great significance and emphasis to his resurrection day, by appearing five different times to his disciples during its hours,—to Mary Magdalene (John xx. 14-17), to the other women (Matt. xxviii. 9, 10), to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke xxiv. 13-31; Mark xvi. 12), to the apostle Peter separately (1 Cor. xv. 5), and to ten of the apostles collected together (Mark xvi. 14; Luke

xxiv. 36-49; John xx. 19-23). In respect to power, he might just as well have risen on the seventh day. Why did he not do it, and give it the more honor? But simply appearing so many times on the day that he rose might not in itself have made it a sacred festival, either weekly, monthly, or annual. Yet *much* more notice of it in its weekly round, either by himself or his apostles, would be nearly certain to make it a noted day, and sacred to the Christians.

Objection: These admitted facts of Christ's appearance on the day that he rose do not prove a change of sacred time.

Reply: Seventh-day authors are profuse in their representations that First-day keepers adduce Christ's several manifestations of himself on his resurrection day as proof that that day in its weekly recurrence should be kept holy, and the seventh day be spent as secular. Thus they mislead tens of thousands of their readers and adherents.¹ First-day observers claim this: that the occurrences on the day in the morning of which Christ rose, constitute the *beginning* of a series of events, which soon led to the universal keeping by Christians of the first day of the week as sacred; and that that early observance and its causes have made the first day chief and holy in nearly the whole militant church in all subsequent ages.

(b) But Christ, while not appearing again, so far as we learn, during the next six days after that of his resurrection, not even on the Sabbath embraced in that number, did appear on the next *first* day, at least to the eleven, and in commemoration, it would seem, of his resurrection, as well as mercifully to convince the doubting Thomas (John xx. 24-29). For some reasons, a portion of which apparently do not appear, the disciples, and especially the sacred writers, at once came to regard the first day of the week as sacred and honored. There it stands, with them a marked and remarkable day.

Objection First: Christ and his disciples did not keep the day

¹ Andrews, *Hist. Sab.*, p. 143; also, *Examination of Seven Reasons for Sunday-keeping*, pp. 8, 9.

on which he rose as sacred and holy; he and two disciples travelled to Emmaus on that day and returned; the women went to embalm his body, which they would not have done on the Sabbath.¹ *Reply:* It is not claimed that there was a constitutional change in the time of the first day, nor admitted that the *Sabbath's* hours were different in *nature* from the time of other days; nor was it intended that the first day should be observed before its purport was understood; neither does any divine law prescribe how far it is proper to walk or ride on the Sabbath or the Lord's day.

Objection Second: The "eight days"² after the resurrection of Christ, when he appeared unto the eleven, were a day more than a week, and consequently the time was on our Monday.³ *Reply:* By the Hebrew reckoning it *was* at the *beginning* of the eighth day from Christ's resurrection. Just seven days from that event was the *first day morning*, and the following evening after sunset was the beginning of the Jewish eighth day — the close of the Roman seventh day — what we call Sunday evening. There was just a week between the two appearances of Christ to his apostles, or perhaps a few hours more than a week. The Jews were accustomed to speak of "eight days" when the eighth had been only commenced, not completed. The circumcision of Christ occurred "when eight days were accomplished" (Luke ii. 21), which was when the eighth day had been reached, not ended.⁴ For, the law was, that "in the eighth day" of the child's life the rite of circumcision should be observed (Lev. xii. 3); and in the case of John the Baptist, "on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child" (Luke i. 59). Therefore, since the phrase "when eight days were accomplished" means only after the eighth day was begun, the phrase "after eight days" (John xx. 26) does not necessarily mean any more. And since "the same day" (John xx. 19) reckoned from was the day, and not the later evening of the day, on which Christ rose, it was near the beginning of

¹ W. H. Littlejohn, *Constitutional Amendment*, pp. 34-36. ² John xx. 26.

³ Andrews, *Hist. Sab.*, pp. 147, 148. ⁴ See Townsend's *Notes on Luke ii. 21.*

the eighth day from his resurrection when he appeared the second time to his assembled apostles, Thomas being with them. And therefore the time was the evening of Sunday, and *not* of Monday, as the seventh-day Sabbatarians claim.

Further, the terms "first day" and "eighth day" were interchangeable by common usage. They evidently meant the same, and the writings of the early Fathers show such use. Justin says, "The first day after the Sabbath, remaining the first of all the days, is called, however, the eighth."¹ It was therefore natural to speak of the second "first," or "eighth," day as "eight days" after the first, the two extreme days being counted. Such method of reckoning was common in that age, as also that of excluding the two extremes. In Luke ix. 28 is a case of the inclusive method, and in Matt. xvii. 1 and Mark ix. 2 a case of the exclusive, both cases pertaining to the same event—the transfiguration of Christ. Both modes of computing were occasionally employed by the same writer. In Tacitus's History, chapter xxix., Piso speaks of himself as Caesar—within the extremes of—six days; and in chapter xlvi. Piso is described as Caesar during four days.²

Still further, though the Jews in Christ's time in some respects used the Hebrew chronology, they evidently often reckoned days by the number of different times the sun appeared. At evening, after sunset, and during the night, they would speak of the next morning as the "morrow," just as we do, though by the Hebrew reckoning it was the same day. Paul preached at Troas in the night time, "ready to depart on the morrow" (Acts xx. 7), at the next sun, the next day; yet, by Hebrew chronology it was really *not* the "morrow," but the same day. One man said to another, "The day groweth to an end, lodge here, . . . and to-morrow get you early on your way" (Judges xix. 9). He did not mean after sunset, but after the next sun came. If it were already after sunset, he would have said the same.

¹ Dialogue with Trypho, chap. xli.; Ant. Nic. Lib., Vol. li. p. 139.

² See Webster and Wilkinson's Com. on Luke ix. 28.

“ Her judges are evening wolves ; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow ” (Zeph. iii. 3). Wolves prowl in darkness ; yet the next sun was called the “ morrow,” though strictly, by Hebrew reckoning, the morrow was not till after the next sun had set.¹ When Paul “ continued his speech until midnight,” it was reckoned as the same day. He left Troas “ at break of day ” the next morning, and that was counted as “ on the morrow ” (Acts xx. 7, 11). The night and the next morning were counted as parts of two different days. So, when Jesus was with his apostles during the evening next following his resurrection, it was a part of one day ; and the next morning was a part of another day. Reckoning thus is strictly Biblical, and counting thus, the next Sunday, even in the morning, was “ eight days ” after.

(c) Some suppose that Christ’s *ascension* was on the first day of the week, making their inference from a passage in the epistle of Barnabas, as follows : “ We celebrate the eighth with joyfulness, on which Jesus rose from the dead, and when he had manifested himself he ascended into the heavens.”² Hefele, also Gebhardt, Harnack, and Zahn, editors of the latest edition of the *Apostolic Fathers*,³ reading the passage with only a comma, instead of a period, after the word “ dead,” suppose it teaches that Christ both rose and ascended on the eighth day. This view does not seem to be sufficiently well founded.

(d) Whatever admissible rendering be given to Acts ii. 1, it is apparent that the descent of the Holy Spirit was on the day of pentecost, and the general learned opinion now is, and the ancient Christian tradition was, that the day of pentecost occurred on the first day of the week, our Sunday. The reckoning which results in that conclusion is this : The preparation for Christ’s last paschal supper (Matt. xxvi. 17 ; Mark xiv. 12 ; Luke xxii. 8) was made near the close of

¹ See also, Ex. xxxii. 5, 6 ; Lev. vii. 15, 16 ; Josh. vii. 13, 14 ; 2 Chron. xx. 16, 17, 20 ; James iv. 13, 14.

² Ant. Nic. Lib., Vol. i. p. 128 ; see also, “ The Apostolic Fathers,” translated by Rev. G. A. Jackson, and edited by Prof. G. P. Fisher, p. 97.

³ *Patrum Apostolicorum opera*, Vol. i. p. 57.

Thursday, the fifth day of the week, the fourteenth of the month Nisan, at which time the passover lamb among all the Jews at Jerusalem was slain. Jesus ate the passover meal at the usual time, the beginning of the sixth day, their Friday, our Thursday evening; and at that time the feast of unleavened bread commenced. He was crucified on the sixth day, after the night succeeding Thursday. The wave-offering was made on the seventh day, Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, which was the second day of the feast, and the sixteenth of Nisan; and fifty days from that (Lev. xxiii. 15, 16) was the pentecost, on the first day of the week. According to this, the evidence is that the Redeemer again put special honor upon the day of his resurrection, by fulfilling his promise in the descent of the Holy Ghost on the seventh first day after that on which he rose from the dead,—seeming thus to require the continued observance of the sacred week of seven days, and to appoint the first day, instead of the seventh, as the honored and especially religious one henceforth. That was the complete opening of the new dispensation, and the first day was then made the “birthday of the Christian church.”¹ Such significance already given the first day by divine acts, together with the effusion of the Holy Spirit at pentecost, suggests the probability, that further and definite instruction was given by the Saviour in person before his ascension, or by his Spirit afterwards, concerning the continued observance of that day, which instruction was well understood by the apostles, and communicated by them to the Christians of their time, though not recorded for our reading.

Objection: “It is generally supposed that this pentecost fell on the Jewish Sabbath, our Saturday.”² *Reply:* 1. We think it now generally supposed that this pentecost fell on our Sunday. But we seek truth, not merely the opinion of the majority. 2. The date of this pentecost depends on certain dates connected with the Jewish passover,

¹ Schaff, Church History, Vol. i. p. 61; also, Dr. Smith's Old Test. Hist., p. 265.

² Hackett, Com. on Acts ii. 1.

and on the date of Christ's last paschal supper, and of his death. It is, therefore, involved in difficulties. Dr. Schaff speaks of it as an "intricate question,"¹ and Alford as "extremely difficult."² Some authors, however, have added to the inherent difficulties by their own errors. Professor Hackett and Dr. William Smith, for example, agree in fixing upon Friday, the fifteenth of Nisan, as the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, and as that of Christ's death, and upon Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, as the time fifty days after which (Lev. xxiii. 15, 16) the day of pentecost occurred.³ And yet Professor Hackett infers that pentecost that year "fell on the Jewish Sabbath, our Saturday," and Dr. Smith that it "fell on Sunday." The cause of this discrepancy must be this: The former reckons Saturday, the second day of the feast, as the first of the fifty days, and the latter reckons the day following as the first of the fifty. Who reckons scripturally? Probably Dr. Smith, as we shall hereafter attempt to show.⁴

But if Professor Hackett and others err in their manner of counting, Dr. Lange seems to err in the counting itself. He assumes correctly, we suppose, that the second day of the passover or feast of unleavened bread that year was Saturday, and that the fifty days were to be counted from that. But in the same paragraph he obliges himself to reckon that Saturday as the first of the fifty, by saying, "This feast of [seven] weeks was celebrated on the fiftieth day after the first day of the passover festival."⁵ Reckoning Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, as the first of the fifty, inevitably makes pentecost come on Saturday. But Dr. Lange

¹ Lange's Com., Matt. p. 454, note.

² Com., Matt. xxvi. 17-19.

³ New Test. Hist., pp. 314, 380.

⁴ We have more recently found that Dr. Smith in his Old Testament History, p. 264, has this: "From the sixteenth of Nisan seven weeks were reckoned *inclusively*." He includes the sixteenth, the Sabbath; doing that, his deduction in his New Testament History, p. 380, note, is incorrect. He is inconsistent with himself, or has changed his opinion. Beginning with Saturday, and counting seven weeks brings us to the eighth Saturday, and does not include it, and that Saturday is the fiftieth day.

⁵ Com., Acts ii. 1, p. 26.

says it came that year "on our Sunday." His general knowledge of the subject seems to bring him to a right conclusion; but his reasoning would lead to a wrong one.

Olshausen says: "It was from Friday evening at six o'clock that the fifty days began to be counted,"¹ committing thus the same error in dating that Professor Hackett does. He also agrees with him in the conclusion that the fiftieth day fell upon Saturday. Yet on the same page he virtually contradicts himself, by saying that "pentecost in the year of our Lord's death fell upon Saturday; but it began at six o'clock in the evening, when the Sabbath was at a close, and it lasted till six o'clock on Sunday evening." That is saying that it came on Sunday, when he had before said it came on Saturday. Beginning with Saturday and closing on Sunday would give fifty-one days. We do not find that these discrepancies and errors in counting have heretofore been noticed. We therefore conclude that by them the real difficulties of the subject may have been unduly magnified in the minds of many.

8. It seems to be a certainty that the early Christians regarded the event of the outpouring of the Spirit—that is, pentecost—in the year in which Christ died, as occurring on the first day of the week. And ever since the primitive era the Christian world in general have conceived of Whitsuntide as commemorative of the descent of the Holy Spirit at pentecost. Neander speaks of the feast of pentecost as the equivalent of Whitsuntide, observed in remembrance of Christ risen and glorified, and of the effusion of the Holy Spirit.² Dr. Schaff says: "The church always celebrated pentecost on Sunday, the fiftieth day after Easter."³ Olshausen says: "The whole church, so far as we can trace the history of pentecost, have celebrated the feast on Sunday."⁴ Wieseler supposes that the Western church changed the celebration of pentecost from the seventh to the first day in conformity with her observance of Easter on that day.⁵ But

¹ Com., Acts ii. 1; Vol. iii. p. 191. ² Hist. Ch., Vol. i. p. 300 (Torrey's Trans.).

³ Hist. Apost. Church, p. 194, note.

⁴ Com., Acts ii. 1.

⁵ Alford, New Test. for English Readers, Acts ii. 1-4

his supposition is not confirmed by proof; and if it were, it would not account for the celebration on the first day by the church in general. The Syriac New Testament was found divided into lessons to be read in public worship, and in the list of Sundays is the "Sunday of pentecost."¹ The Peshito-Syriac version dates back, as the learned agree, to the close of the second, or beginning of the third, century, and some suppose to the close of the first or beginning of the second. So much evidence of belief in the primitive church that pentecost came on Sunday could hardly exist, unless it were founded on truth. And such general belief is entitled to much weight in discussing the question before us.

4. Among the fixed data on this subject are the following: Christ was crucified on Friday, and rose the next Sunday.² The preparation for the passover, including the killing of the paschal lamb, was to be made on the afternoon of the fourteenth of Nisan (Ex. xii. 6, 18; Num. ix. 3; xxviii. 16), and the passover was to be eaten just after, at evening, near the beginning of the fifteenth (Lev. xxiii. 5). With the fifteenth the feast of unleavened bread, or passover, was to commence, and on that day was to be held a holy convocation (Lev. xxiii. 6, 7). The feast of first-fruits, including the wave-offering, was to be observed during passover-week, on the morrow after the Sabbath (Lev. xxiii. 10, 11), and fifty days from that, inclusive or exclusive, was to be the day of pentecost (Lev. xxiii. 15, 16). Among the unsettled data are these: Was the Friday of that year on which Christ was crucified the fourteenth or fifteenth of Nisan? Was the Sunday on which he rose from the dead the sixteenth or seventeenth of Nisan? Did Jesus eat the passover meal at the usual Jewish time, or one day previous, i. e. at the begin-

¹ Murdock's Translation, note, pp. 487, 489-496.

² Dr. Gustav Seyffarth holds the view that Christ died on Thursday, not Friday. See Lange on Matthew, Dr. Schaff's note, p. 454, note, and p. 457. Rev. J. K. Aldrich holds the same theory, and presents a strong, yet not satisfactory, argument in its favor. See *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. xxvii., July 1870. But as they both regard Friday as the fifteenth, their view in respect to the day of pentecost need not be inharmonious with the one advocated in these pages.

ning of the fourteenth or of the fifteenth of the month? Was the Sabbath on the morrow after which the wave-offering was to be made the regular weekly Sabbath (Lev. xxiii. 11), or the first day of convocation in the passover week? Did the fifty days reckoned from the morrow after the Sabbath (Lev. xxiii. 15, 16) embrace the morrow itself?

We know, from the evangelists, that Christ rose from the grave on the first day of the week, and that the day preceding was the Sabbath, and that Christ was crucified on the day preceding the Sabbath — Friday. And according to the first three evangelists we know that Jesus ate the passover meal at evening, the beginning of Friday, apparently at the usual time. That usual time was certainly at the beginning of the fifteenth of Nisan (Lev. xxiii. 6; Num. xxviii. 17); and later in the day, it would seem, Christ was crucified. This reckoning makes Friday the fifteenth, and not the fourteenth, of Nisan, in the year of Christ's death. Nothing would make it seem otherwise, except this: The apostle John speaks of the Jews as on Friday forenoon yet to eat the passover (xviii. 28). If they had not already partaken of the first and chief passover meal, and were to do it the following evening, then this Friday was the fourteenth, and not the fifteenth, of the month.

We need to determine the meaning of the phrase, "But that they might eat the passover" (John xviii. 28). In the New Testament the word "passover," Πάσχα, has three significations. (1) It means the paschal *lamb*, as, "And the first day of unleavened bread, when they *killed the passover*" (Mark xiv. 12).¹ There is the same use of the Hebrew word for passover in the Old Testament (Ex. xii. 21; Deut. xvi. 2, 5, 6). There is the same use of the Greek word in Josephus.² (2) It also means the one meal called the paschal supper, the first in the week of unleavened bread; as, "I will keep the passover at thy house. . . . And they made ready the passover" (Matt. xxvi. 18, 19).³ The Old Testa-

¹ See also, Luke xxii. 7; 1 Cor. v. 7.

² Ant. b. iii. ch. x. sec. 5.

³ See Luke xxii. 8, 13; Heb. xi. 28.

ment has like use of the word, and the Septuagint translates the Hebrew by the Greek word for passover (Ex. xii. 48; Num. ix. 4, 5). With this meaning Josephus also employs the word.¹ (3) It means, further, the passover *festival* itself, or the feast of unleavened bread, lasting seven days; as, "Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the passover" (Luke xxii. 1).² And Josephus says of the feast of unleavened bread, the seven days, "And is by the Jews called the passover."³ Nothing forbids this third meaning of the word "passover" in John xviii. 28, unless the word "eat" confines it to the meaning of paschal supper. But such limitation is not always given by that expression. The word "eat" is employed in the sense of celebrate, and that in reference to this same festival: "And they did eat the festival seven days" (2 Chron. xxx. 22). Such is the literal rendering.⁴ The word "eat" seems to have been used in preference to the word "keep," because the act of eating unleavened bread was prominent. Therefore the passage in question (John xviii. 28) does not necessarily imply that the Jews at the time of Christ's trial and crucifixion had not eaten the first passover meal the evening previous. They may have had in prospect their voluntary peace-offerings, and the eating therewith, which were observed by private individuals and families, particularly on the first day of the passover week. Such offerings were provided for by Jewish law (Lev. vii. 15, 16; Num. x. 10).

The foregoing conclusion is strengthened by chronological calculations, which show, that in the year of Rome 783, of Christ, 30 (really 34), the year of his crucifixion, the fifteenth of Nisan fell on Friday.⁵ And such seems now to be the trend of discussion. Dr. Schaff in his "Apostolic Church," published in 1858, said, "While this Friday, according to the synoptical Gospels, seems to have been the fif-

¹ Ant., b. ii. ch. xiv. sec. 6.

² See Luke ii. 41, 43; Matt. xxvi. 2; John ii. 13; vi. 4.

³ Wars, b. ii. ch. i. sec. 3.

⁴ See Robinson's Eng. Harmony, notes, p. 201.

⁵ Wieseler in Herzog's Encyc. xxi. p. 550, quoted by Dr. Schaff, Lange's Com., John, p. 563.

teenth of Nisan, an unbiased interpretation of several passages in the Gospel of John would make it the fourteenth."¹ But in Lange on Matthew² he in one sentence favors the opposite view, and in Lange on John, published in 1875, he still more favors it.³ This is doubtless a change in the right direction.

Did the fifty days reckoned "from the morrow after the Sabbath" (Lev. xxiii. 15, 16), include the morrow itself? In respect to this question, we have seen, that different men have reckoned differently,⁴ but we do not find that they themselves have noticed the difference. The direction is, "And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave-offering; seven Sabbaths shall be complete; even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall ye number fifty days" (Lev. xxiii. 15, 16). The Septuagint reads, "Ye shall number to yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day on which ye shall offer the sheaf of the heave-offering, seven full weeks; unto the morrow after the last week ye shall number fifty days." Does this language mean "from" in the sense of *after* the day on which the wave-offering was made, or from in the sense of *with*, or inclusive of the day for that offering? We think the language is not decisive of that question in either the Hebrew or the Septuagint. We have in this Article seen instances of both the inclusive and exclusive.⁵ Still, the Scripture phrase, "seven Sabbaths shall be complete," meaning, or at least implying, seven *weeks*, seems decidedly to favor there being seven complete weeks after the wave-offering, and before the pentecost; seven weeks exclusive of both extreme days. The Targum has the following: "And number to you after the first feast day of Pascha, from the day when you brought the sheaf for the elevation, seven weeks; complete shall they be. Until the day after the seventh week you shall number fifty days." The phrase, "until the day after the seventh

¹ Apostolic Church, p. 193, note.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 455, 556, note.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 562, 563.

⁴ See pp. 361, 362.

⁵ See p. 358.

week," shows that pentecost, at one extreme was not to be included; and we may well infer, it would seem, that the day for the feast of first-fruits, at the other extreme, was also not to be included. And the phrase, "complete shall they be," still further seems to indicate, that the seven weeks were to be complete without either of the two feast-days standing at the extremes of the weeks. Turning to Josephus, we get additional light. He speaks of the festival of first-fruits, of the wave-offering, and says, "When a week of weeks has passed over after this sacrifice (which weeks contain forty and nine days), on the fiftieth day, which is pentecost, etc."¹ The phrase "*after* this sacrifice" favors *excluding* the day of the wave-offering in numbering fifty days. Dr. Robinson says that pentecost was "seven weeks after the sixteenth day of Nisan;"² by which we understand him, that seven weeks were completed after that day, and then came pentecost; seven full weeks intervening between the first day of passover week and pentecost. Dr. Robinson held that Christ's crucifixion was on the fifteenth of Nisan,³ and, that being Friday, by his view pentecost was on Sunday. The sixteenth of Nisan in the year of Christ's death being the day of the wave-offering (Lev. xxiii. 6-11), and being also Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, counting fifty days after that day we come to Sunday as the day of pentecost.

If Friday, the day of crucifixion, was the *fourteenth* of Nisan, as some hold, and the first day of unleavened bread was Saturday, the fifteenth, and the wave-offering, it being the second day of the feast, was on Sunday, the sixteenth, then numbering fifty days *inclusive* of the day of the wave-offering, would bring the day of pentecost on Sunday. We think the *former* reckoning the true one, but either is possibly correct. We feel bound to have in mind the fact that the primitive Christians said the day of pentecost was on Sunday. And we are aiming to show that, notwithstanding all

¹ Ant., b. iii. ch. x. sec. 6.

² Greek and English Lexicon, Πεντηκοστή.

³ Harmony of Gospels, notes; also Bib. Sac. Vol. ii., Aug. 1845.

disagreements in the reckoning made by different scholars, nothing proves the primitive testimony untrue.

One more question on this point: Was the "Sabbath" on the morrow after which the wave-offering was to be made, the regular weekly Sabbath (Lev. xxiii. 11), or the first day of convocation in the passover week (v. 7)? The Hebrew word is that for the weekly Sabbath, and is never applied to any other day elsewhere, so far as we find, except twice to the day of atonement (Lev. xxiii. 32; xvi. 31). Since searching the whole of the Old Testament in vain to find a single clear case where שַׁבָּת is unquestionably applied to any day except the weekly Sabbath and twice to the day of atonement, we have come upon this, on the question before us, from Professor Murphy, the noted commentator: "The term 'Sabbath' is not elsewhere applied to any day but the weekly Sabbath and day of atonement."¹ But observe this: The word *Shabbath* simply, is not even applied to the day of atonement; *Shabbathan* is added, or the verb from the same root, "ye shall rest" (Lev. xxiii. 32). So that the word שַׁבָּת, unqualified, is in no case applied to any day but the weekly Sabbath, unless it refers to the first day of convocation now being considered. In accord with this Prof. Charles M. Mead says: "So far as I know, the word שַׁבָּת is nowhere used of any other day than the seventh day of the week, unless in the passages Lev. xxiii. 11, 15, 16." He also excepts the two passages concerning the day of atonement, where *Shabbathon* is added to *Shabbath*. Moreover, there is no *usage* which justifies calling the first day of unleavened bread a full Sabbath. Chas. Ed. Caspari says: "The fifteenth of Nisan was celebrated strictly as a Sabbath."² This statement is contrary to Scripture. Of the first day of unleavened bread, which is the first of the two days of convocation in that feast, the direction is, "Ye shall do no *servile* work therein" (Lev. xxiii. 7). The same is carefully said of the second day of convocation. But of the weekly Sab-

¹ Bib. Sac., Vol. xxix., Jan. 1872, p. 77.

² Translated by Dr. D. W. Simon, Bib. Sac., Vol. xxviii., July 1871, p. 471.

bath it is said, "Ye shall do *no* work therein" (Lev. xxiii. 3). And "In it thou shalt not do any work" (Ex. xx. 10); and of the day of atonement, "Ye shall do *no* work in that same day" (Lev. xxiii. 28). Where merely *servile* work was forbidden, manual labor was not allowed, but business, trade, and ordinary cooking were allowed. That is a wide difference, and nothing can justify calling the two kinds of day substantially the same. One significant fact is that, this case aside, no Sabbath is anywhere mentioned in connection with the feast of unleavened bread, in either New Testament or Old, except the weekly Sabbath. Further, in Lev. xxiii. 15, where it is stated that "Seven Sabbaths shall be complete" between the wave-offering and pentecost, the word for "Sabbaths" is that for the weekly day. And though properly understood to imply *weeks*, the philosophy of the implication clearly seems to be that these weeks were reckoned by the weekly Sabbaths, whether they commenced with the first day following the Sabbath or some other. But the plural for שָׁבֻעַ in this case is evidently that for the true weekly Sabbath. Therefore, it seems more probable that the same word in the singular in the same verse, and verse following, and eleventh verse, has the same meaning, that of the weekly Sabbath, and not in either verse that of the first day of convocation in the passover feast. Still more, nothing in the text or context obliges us to define this Sabbath as the day of convocation, the first day of the feast of unleavened bread. It may mean the weekly Sabbath, and the day of first-fruits and the wave-offering may have occurred, regularly on the day following the weekly Sabbath, which came, in later times at least, during the passover week. In that case, counting fifty days therefrom, including the day for the wave-offering, would bring pentecost on Sunday. Keil and Delitzsch say that the word "Sabbath" (Lev. xxiii. 11) means the first day of convocation in the feast of unleavened bread, because it is preceded by the definite article.¹ But why not just as well say that it refers to the weekly Sabbath, because in

¹ Com., in *loc.* nota.

the fourth commandment the Hebrew word for "Sabbath" has the definite article prefixed in the first instance there of its use (Ex. xx. 8)? They also object that if the feast of first-fruits came always after the weekly Sabbath of passover week, "the festival of the passover itself would be forced out of the fundamental position which it occupied in the series of annual festivals."¹ We see no important force in that objection. No matter when in the week the feast of first-fruits came, the time could not change the command to commence the passover "in the fourteenth day of the first month at even" (Lev. xxiii. 5). If even the weekly Sabbath was at times the *last* of the seven days of unleavened bread, the feast of first-fruits could immediately follow it, making eight days of the whole festival. Josephus, for some reason, once speaks of the feast of unleavened bread as being "eight days" in length.² But the usual interpretation has been to make *מִצֵּי־בָרֶכֶת* in Lev. xxiii. 11, refer to the first day of convocation (verse 7). Yet, after perceiving that there is no usage to justify such application of the word, we found that the Caraites, one of the most ancient and noteworthy sects of the Jewish synagogue, "indefatigable opponents of rabbinical traditions,"³ long ago held the same view on this point, contending that "Sabbath" in this case refers to the weekly sacred day. Dr. Schaff⁴ and others admit that if their view be taken it obviates all difficulties in the case, and the day of pentecost always came on the first day of the week. But the interpretation of the Caraites cannot be traced back to the time of Christ, though they were successors of the Sadducean school. Keil and Delitzsch,⁵ and Bähr, cite Josh. v. 11, and Lev. xxiii. 14, as proving that the feast of first-fruits was kept on the sixteenth of the month, the day following the feast of unleavened bread. But Josh. v. 11, in connection with the preceding verse, leaves it doubtful whether the "corn" of the land was not eaten on the fifteenth, and *not* as

¹ Com., Lev. xxiii. p. 440, note.

³ Herzog's Encyc., Vol. i. p. 572.

⁵ Com., Josh. v. 10, 11, note.

² Ant., b. ii. ch. xv. sec. 1.

⁴ Apostolic Church, p. 194, note.

a part of the feast of first-fruits ; or, if as of that feast, whether for some reason it was not eaten out of the usual time. The "passover" must have been the *meal* at "even" of the fourteenth, and, according to general usage, the "morrow" after that must have been the fifteenth.¹ But the strongest apparent objection to the Caraitic view is the statement of Josephus, that the festival of the first-fruits was "on the second day of unleavened bread, which is the sixteenth day of the month."² This is irreconcilable with the theory of the Caraites, if unattended with explanation. Two theories of explanation may be named. First, there were some periods of Jewish history when all the ceremonial feasts were omitted. At some time, on resuming them, or on some other occasion, this rule given by Josephus, of having the feast of first-fruits on the second day of the feast of unleavened bread, may have been added to the Scripture direction. For it is a pure addition. One thing in Josephus favors this suggestion, and to us makes it seem quite probable. Referring to Jewish historical affairs nearly one hundred and fifty years before Christ, he says, "That festival which we call *pentecost*, did then fall out to be the next day to the Sabbath."³ If this be a true explanation, it may account for the apparent occurring of the feast of first-fruits on the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, or fifteenth of the month, as recorded in Josh. v. 10, 11. The fourteenth of the month may have been the Sabbath, and the feast of first-fruits and first day of unleavened bread may have both followed on the "morrow." Secondly, another explanation may possibly be that the first day of the feast of unleavened bread may have always been the Sabbath, and Friday may have been the preparation day for both the feast and the Sabbath. The beginning of the year with the Jews had no fixed date, as with us. The first month, Abib or Nisan, commenced with the new moon. That time was doubtless determined upon by its appearing, and not by astronomical calculation. The months were lunar, and yet in part

¹ See Evidence, etc., pp. 358, 359.

² Ant., b. iii. ch. x. sec. 5.

³ Ant., b. xiii. ch. viii. sec. 4.

spurious, because they nominally had each thirty days. There were twelve months in the year, making three hundred and sixty days; and to those days must be added between five and six days more for each year, in order to keep pace with solar time. The months were to be adapted to the seasons, and that necessitated an allowance of an additional month once in five or six years. Otherwise, the months intended for harvest would soon fall into the season for seed-time, and those for winter into the place for summer. Though the months were lunar, the year was essentially solar. The three great festivals were inseparable from the seasons. That of the passover was near the barley harvest; that of pentecost near the wheat harvest; and that of the tabernacles at the ingathering of other fruits. There was, of necessity, a frequent adjustment of months and of the year. The dating of each month was not by the appearing of the moon to each person, or in each locality, but by announcement of the rulers. Among the later Jews an intercalary month was introduced from time to time, at the rate of seven such months in the course of nineteen years.¹

By the religious reckoning the Jewish year commenced with the month Nisan. Each month was entered upon with special sacrifices. But the first noted feast in the year was that of the passover, commencing in the later part of the fourteenth day of Nisan. It would be easy for the rulers to adjust this one month of the year, so that the fifteenth day, or first day of unleavened bread, should each year occur on Saturday, or Sabbath. Then, on the second day of that feast, the special feast of first-fruits occurring, would be on Sunday; and fifty days from that inclusive would be pentecost. This arrangement would cause the weekly Sabbath to be always the first day of convocation of passover week. That, however, would not strictly accord with the interdiction of merely all *servile* work on the first day of convocation (Lev. xxiii. 7); for the law of the Sabbath forbade *all* work.

But this adjustment theory agrees well with the view that

¹ Smith and Barnum, Dictionary of the Bible, p. 672.

Christ's last observance of the passover was on the evening of the thirteenth, or beginning of the fourteenth, one day in advance of the usual time. That reckoning would also bring pentecost on Sunday. The Caraitic view seems to accord well, on the whole, with Scripture; but not well with one passage of Josephus. Yet whichever of the three chief views be taken, we are allowed this conclusion: *That the day of pentecost in the year of Christ's crucifixion came on the first day of the week.* The view that the Friday of Christ's death was the fifteenth of Nisan, and the feast of first-fruits was on the Sabbath, by beginning the fifty days, as Josephus says, "after this sacrifice," brings pentecost on Sunday. The view that the Friday of his death was the fourteenth, and the feast of first fruits was Sunday, the sixteenth, beginning the fifty days with Sunday, also brings pentecost on Sunday. The Caraitic view, that the Sabbath, on the morrow after which they were to begin to count the fifty days, was always the weekly Sabbath, inevitably brings pentecost again on Sunday. Whatever doubts or differences there may be on this subject, it is noticeable that each of the foregoing views accords with the fact that, according to the early tradition of the Christian church, the pentecost on which the descent of the Holy Spirit came with such wonderful manifestations was on the first day of the week. All theories having any probability in their favor seem to be adjustable to the assertion of primitive church history, that the day of pentecost in the year of Christ's death came on Sunday, and was ever after observed by the Christians on that day. It is a very noteworthy fact in the series of first-day events, that the new dispensation, so far as can be decided, opened on Sunday, and not on Saturday.

(c) We have thus far considered events which occurred within less than fifty days after Christ's resurrection. We have no more in their immediate vicinity of time concerning the first day. We must wait to see whether those we already have, in connection with others unknown, will work any particular change of observance in sacred days, or whether those

events, having passed by, will stand in history as isolated facts, without any special sequence. But we eagerly pass to the earliest date of apostolic or evangelistic writings, to see whether we discover any indications of change. The first three, or the synoptic Gospels, are the first writings of that kind which we may expect to find. They were written between about twenty-five and thirty-five years after Jesus' resurrection, and John's Gospel, fifty years or more after that event. We have been speaking of the "first day of the week;" but we do not find any such expression coming from the Saviour's lips, or from any of his disciples at the time of his death. He had foretold his death and resurrection; but the latter he spoke of as to occur on the "third day." Each of the three synoptic Gospels make record of it; Matthew (xx. 19) and Luke (xviii. 33) each once, and Mark three times (viii. 31; ix. 31; x. 34). The Scribes and Pharisees heard of that prophecy of his the next day after his crucifixion, and made it the basis of their request of Pilate for a guard to be stationed at his tomb in readiness for the third day morning (Matt. xxvii. 62-66). The angels repeated the prophecy to the women at the sepulchre on the morning of the resurrection (Luke xxiv. 7). The two disciples going to Emmaus reminded the Saviour of the "third day" on which he was to rise again (Luke xxiv. 21); and he spoke of it himself to his apostles assembled on the evening of the "third day" (Luke xxiv. 46). Nine several times the evangelists make some record respecting that "third day." That was the current phraseology, then, concerning the day of Christ's resurrection. It was the "third day," not "first day." But when from twenty-five to fifty years have witnessed the inauguration of the Christian dispensation, what do we find? Each of the four evangelists, in his account of Christ's resurrection, says that he rose on the "first day of the week," and Mark and John employ that term twice each (Matt. xxviii. 1; Mark xvi. 2, 9; Luke xxiv. 1; John xx. 1, 19). Luke in his Gospel four times mentions the prophecy that Christ would rise the "third day"; yet, from twenty-

five to thirty years after that frequent expression used at the time of the resurrection, he, in both his Gospel and treatise on the Acts of the Apostles (Acts xx. 7), speaks of the "first day" as though it were a phrase in common use, and dedicated to that one event. And about twenty-five years subsequent to Christ's death the apostle Paul uses the same term, "first day" (1 Cor. xvi. 2), as though not only it had peculiar significance, but was in some way specially observed at that time. The only way to account for this change of historic phrase from "third day" to "first day," and for this occasional, yet incidental, mention of it by different inspired writers, is to suppose that it was already a noted day among all Christians, and was well understood to be such. And the term "first day" seems to imply some contrast in the ordinary conceptions of the people between that and "seventh day"; as though the two days may have been observed by different classes in some special manner.

(f) When, therefore, we come to read, "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them" (Acts xx. 7), we are prepared to accept the natural implication of the language, that on the "first day" the disciples customarily observed the Lord's supper, and held other religious services. That inference receives additional force from the fact that, as recorded in the previous verse, the apostle and his companions, having come to Troas, "abode seven days"; as though they had waited for the usual time for assembling. We find no intimation that the disciples were called together for a special occasion.

The evangelists were not careful always to mention the same things. But in regard to so important an event as Christ's resurrection no one is silent. And no one fails to state that he rose on the "first day of the week." There must be meaning in that fact. And just about then when they record it, one of them also records that the latest of the apostles holds a meeting with the disciples on a "first day of the week." He does not speak of it as though it were an

unusual event. At that meeting a sacrament is observed, which was instituted in that series of events which culminated in Jesus' resurrection. The intent seems to be to bind into a close union the sacred commemoration of his sufferings and death, and the celebration of his victory over the grave. The one is placed in the hours of the other. The ordinance is sacred; the day seems to be sacred. And we find this fact in a line of events all of which conspire to give note and peculiarity to the "first day of the week."

Objection: The "first day of the week" could not have been regarded as sacred or religious, because Paul set out upon a journey on that day. Conybeare and Howson tell us that the meeting at Troas was on "the evening which succeeded the Jewish Sabbath."¹ Dr. George B. Bacon² and many others have expressed the same opinion. *Reply:* (1) But Conybeare and Howson admit that the opposite view may be correct, and quote Greswell, who "supposes that they sailed from Assos on the Monday." (2) The question whether Paul and his companions journeyed from Troas on Sunday or Monday depends upon whether Luke reckoned by Jewish chronology, or by Roman, or Babylonian. The Jewish commenced and closed the day at sunset; the Roman, at midnight;³ the Babylonian and Persian, at sunrise.⁴ If the reckoning was either Roman or Babylonian, the evening in question belonged to the first day of the week, and the morrow to Monday. The highest authorities affirm that in the time of Christ Jewish chronology had become modified by the Roman.⁵ In some things it was the one; in others, the other. It had also become affected by the Babylonian.⁶ Passages in the Old Testament show that by the Jewish reckoning there were only three watches in the night: the first, or "beginning of the watches" (Lam. ii. 19), the "middle watch" (Judg. vii. 19), and the "morning

¹ Life and Epistles of St. Paul, Vol. ii. p. 206. ² Sabbath Question, p. 105.

³ Hegewisch's Introduction, Chronology, p. 18. ⁴ Ibid., pp. 17, 71.

⁵ Smith's Bible Dic., "Chronology, Day," p. 313; Horne's Introduction, Vol. iii. p. 162.

⁶ Hegewisch's Introduction to Chronology, pp. 17, 71.

watch" (Ex. xiv. 24; 1 Sam. xi. 11). But in the New Testament Matthew speaks of the "fourth watch" (xiv. 25), and the Saviour, of four sections or watches (Mark xiii. 35). Therefore Christ and the apostolic writers, in respect to night-watches, used Roman chronology; for the Romans had four watches.¹

But some will object that the Jews, on one occasion, brought their sick to Christ for healing on the Sabbath, as the "sun was setting," or had set (Luke iv. 40; Mark i. 32; Matt. viii. 16). This they would not have done on the Sabbath itself; therefore they kept Jewish time, and closed the day with sunset.² *Reply:* First, they may have been only the more rigid Pharisaic Jews that would not bring their sick to be healed on the Sabbath. Secondly, though the Jews of Christ's time did close the Sabbath with sunset, that does not prove that the evangelists, twenty-five or fifty years afterwards, reckoned the day in the same manner, when writing for Christians, chiefly converts from the Gentiles, who reckoned the day by the Roman method.

A mixed chronology prevailed in that age, especially among the Jews. Though they originally commenced the day of twenty-four hours with sunset, they had now partly adopted the Babylonian method, and spoke of the lesser, the daylight day, as commencing at sunrise, or six in the morning. "Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day" (John xi. 9)? The evangelists use the same natural day in speaking of the hours "third," "sixth," "ninth" (Matt. xxvii. 45; Mark xv. 25; Luke xxiii. 4; John xix. 14) when Christ's crucifixion occurred. And the Greeks and Romans also often reckoned by the lesser day of twelve hours, extending from sunrise to sunset.³ With such reckoning, it was natural to speak of the later or dusky evening as part of the daylight day which had just preceded it. A convenient, though varied, chronology was in the ascendancy.

¹ Smith and Barnum, Bible Dic., p. 1175.

² Rev. W. A. Littlejohn, Constitutional Amendment, p. 176.

³ Lange on John i. 39, p. 93, 1st col.

Did Luke use Roman chronology in his account of Paul's visit at Troas? The following reasons indicate that he did: (a) He wrote mainly of and for Gentile Christian congregations in the Roman empire, and would be likely to use their chronology, which was Roman. (β) The meeting at Troas was held upon, or continued into, the later evening more of that day; the day had already some signs of being or less sacred; by Jewish reckoning the later evening ruled the next "morrow"; Paul and his Christian companions did not spend that morrow sacredly; therefore the evening previous did not belong to the morrow; and the chronology was not Jewish. The signs of sacredness in the first day already found are, the distinction given to it by Christ, by his evangelists, by Luke in this case under consideration. To which should be added — what occurred even earlier — Paul's direction to have certain sacred gifts decided upon and set aside on the "first day" (1 Cor. xvi. 2). That by Hebrew reckoning the later evening ruled the morrow, and made it sacred if itself were sacred, is shown in the case of the yearly passover supper. That occurred after sunset, and was the beginning of the first day of the feast of unleavened bread (Lev. xxiii. 5, 6; Deut. xvi. 6-8). "The evening and the morning were the first day" (Gen. i. 5). Therefore, if the time of the meeting at Troas were at all sacred, Luke in this record did not use Jewish chronology. (γ) The series of noted events that occurred during the day of Christ's resurrection commenced in the morning, and not in the evening. If it were, as some claim, the evening next following the Jewish Sabbath that the meeting was held in Troas, then the apostles celebrated that wonderful event the night preceding the morrow or day of the week on which it occurred. That is altogether improbable. They would wait, at least, until the glad morning came; they would not wish to commemorate the day of his rising from the tomb and appearing to so many at so many different times, while they would yet have to say that the weekly day was not till the "morrow";¹

¹ See Discussion on "Morrow," pp. 358, 359.

and therefore, doubtless, the evening of that meeting belonged to the daylight day preceding it, and not to the one following it; and the chronology used was Roman; and the next morrow was Monday, and not Sunday. (δ) The apostle John probably used Roman chronology in describing a similar meeting subsequent to Christ's resurrection, and doubtless while writing more for Jewish Christians than Luke did in the Acts of the Apostles; and therefore it is nearly or quite certain that Luke employed Roman, and not Jewish chronology in the case now under consideration. John, having in his Gospel, recorded the fact of Christ's resurrection, says that he came and stood in the midst of his assembled disciples, "the same day at evening, being the first day of the week" (John xx. 19). It was the evening of the "first day of the week" (xx. 1). Was it the evening of the first day by Jewish or Roman chronology? The answer will depend, in part, upon whether that evening was before or after sunset. It was after sunset; First, because, as the doors were shut "for fear of the Jews" (vs. 19), it is altogether probable that they had sought shelter under the shades of evening. Secondly, because the two disciples who that day went to Emmaus, and communed with Christ on the way, had there, "toward evening, sat at meat" with him (Luke xxiv. 29, 30), then had travelled to Jerusalem, and there had found the disciples, before Jesus stood in the midst of them (Mark xvi. 12-14). It cannot reasonably be supposed that all this was done previous to sunset. Thirdly, because the disciples at Jerusalem were "at meat," at their evening meal, when Christ appeared among them (Mark xvi. 14). And the Jews' evening meal was not usually taken until their day's work was done, which was at sunset. And on this day, so full of strange events, the disciples, in fear because of the Jews, would be likely to take their evening meal later than the usual time, rather than earlier. Fourthly, it was after sunset, the later evening, because the apostle John expressly says it was *ὄψις*, *late*, the late evening (xx. 19), when Jesus appeared among his disciples.

Objection : The word *ὀψίας* is sometimes applied to hours in the afternoon previous to evening ; as, when Christ was about to feed five thousand, we read, “ When it was evening ” (Matt. xiv. 15). And it could not have been as late as sunset, or night-fall ; for the people were in a desert place, and returned to their homes the same day, after being fed.

Reply : The word, in Greek or English, is used relatively ; and when the five thousand were fed it was, no doubt, late, as compared with the forenoon ; the latter part of the afternoon had commenced. In the same passage (vs. 23) the same Greek word is used again, signifying the time when Jesus was alone, the people having departed, and he having gone into a mountain to pray ; the idea of *late*, in whatever language expressed, unlimited and undefined by anything in the connection, would signify a time near or after sunset, or later still. Such is its acknowledged general meaning. In the case when the Saviour appeared to his apostles on the evening of his resurrection, instead of any circumstances indicating that it was only about the middle of the afternoon, there are several showing that it was as late as what all nations naturally understand by the full evening.

By Jewish computation there were two evenings — one, between three in the afternoon and sunset, or about six o'clock ; and, one after sunset. By *late*, *ὀψίας*, the later evening would certainly be meant, unless something in the connection confined it to the earlier. And all Greek linguists seem to agree that in this instance the later evening is the one indicated ; as Robinson, Lange, Alford. The terms “ earlier ” and “ later ” are used relative to each other ; though by Jewish chronology they belonged to two different days. The earlier evening would not be after sunset, at the beginning of the Jewish day, and the later one in the afternoon, at the close of the Jewish day, but just the reverse ; the two evenings that touched each other at six o'clock being compared with each other, and the one coming last being the late one.

When Jesus manifested himself to his disciples John says

it was "the same day at evening [later evening], being the first day of the week" (John xx. 19). The later evening, belonging to the first day, by Jewish reckoning was the evening preceding, Saturday evening, that following the Jewish Sabbath. Therefore, if Jewish chronology is used, this meeting of Christ with his disciples was the evening before his resurrection, while yet his body lay in the tomb. That conclusion is absurd. Therefore the inevitable inference is, that not the Jewish, but the Roman or Babylonian, chronology is employed in this narrative; and the evening of the first day was the same as our Sunday evening; and the morrow after that evening was Monday, and not Sunday.

In this meeting of Christ with his apostles at Jerusalem, we have a key of interpretation in the case of the meeting at Troas. John using Roman chronology to describe an event at Jerusalem which occurred just after the Redeemer's resurrection, there is no good reason to suppose that Luke employed Jewish chronology to describe an event thirty years after at Troas, far towards Rome from Jerusalem. The meeting at Troas was certainly in the evening of "the first day of the week" (Acts xx. 7), or was continued into the evening and until after midnight. By the Roman reckoning, that evening belonged to the daylight day preceding; the next day, or morrow was the second day of the week or Monday. Paul and his companions travelled from Troas towards Assos, not on Sunday, but on Monday, and that first day of the week at Troas was apparently and, so far as appears, wholly devoted to religious services; it would seem, according to the usual custom. It follows that this passage in Acts xx. 7 presents a strong front against both the seventh-day Sabbatarians, on the one hand, and those who hold that the apostles and their contemporaries did not religiously observe the first day, but practised secularity upon it, on the other.

(g.) The next notice we find in the sacred record respecting the "first day" is Paul's direction to the church at

Corinth : " Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come " (1 Cor. xvi. 2). It was a " collection for the saints " (vs. 1), persecuted and poor, at Jerusalem. It was in part a return for the noble acts of the Christians there, who, during the protracted continuance of pentecost, to supply the " need " of those who had come from far, freely sold their lands and houses, and laid the " prices down at the apostles' feet," in the sacred cause of Christian benevolence (Acts iv. 31, 37). Equally sacred was the act enjoined upon the saints, and all the saints, at Corinth. This was no mere secular call, or business transaction. Each one was directed to decide upon and set aside the amount of his gift at home, or by himself, on the " first day." Yet there were to be " gatherings," and that before he came. This implies collections, and some one place of deposit, — a church treasury. When were those " gatherings " most naturally made? " Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread " (Acts xx. 7). This is rendered nearly or quite certain, by the testimony of Justin Martyr, born only about forty years after this writing of the apostle Paul. In his account of the religious services held by Christians on Sunday, in connection with that part relating to the Lord's supper, he says : " They who are well to do, and willing, give what each thinks fit ; and what is collected is deposited with the president, who succors the orphans and widows, and those who through sickness or any other cause are in want, and those who are in bonds, and the stranger sojourning among us, and, in a word, takes care of all who are in want."¹ Paul's injunction and Justin's record evidently refer to the same practice, and help interpret each other. Paul says, " Upon the first day of the week " ; Justin describes what occurred " upon the first day of the week," Sunday. Paul prescribes for the need of the afflicted saints ; Justin tells what was done for such. Paul says, " Let every one of you lay by him in store," judging for

¹ Ant. Nic. Lib., Vol. ii. pp. 65, 66.

himself; Justin says, "They who are well to do, and willing, give what each thinks fit;" Paul speaks of "gatherings" of the gifts; Justin of "what is collected." Paul implies that there was some depository of the contributions; Justin says that contributions were "deposited with the president." Paul's direction, or a similar one given by all the apostles, probably gave birth to the practice recorded by Justin; and since in Justin's time the gifts were "collected" on Sunday, so doubtless they were in Paul's time.

(h) Justin's record, and Paul's injunction taken together, would lead us to expect allusions, at least, to collections for the poor in other New Testament churches. Accordingly, we find that the apostle gave the same "order to the churches of Galatia" (1 Cor. xvi. 1). They were "churches," more than one; Galatia was a large region. The injunction to the church at Corinth began thus: "Upon the first day of the week." Surely, the "fore-front" of it was not omitted in the "order to the churches of Galatia." They, too, were to attend to this "upon the first day of the week."

Further, the apostle commended the example of the Corinthians in this thing to the believers in Macedonia (2 Cor. ix. 1, 2), and that not in vain, for their zeal "provoked very many." And he commended the example of both the Corinthians and Macedonians to the saints at Rome (Rom. xv. 26). In all these instances the contributions were, as he says, "for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem." All for the same object, they were unquestionably all to be taken by substantially the same measures. A specific direction that the money be laid aside in one case "upon the first day of the week," was no doubt repeated and deemed important in all cases. It was a part of their religious service, just as it was in Justin's day. We do not hear of any who determined to do it on the seventh day instead of the first. The facts increase in number, which show that the first was a noted and special day throughout all the Christian churches of Asia; and if there, everywhere.

Objection: The observance of the first day of the week in

the primitive Christian church, arose from the spontaneous feelings and judgment of the early Gentile churches while under apostolic supervision, and did not commence first at Jerusalem, or with Jewish Christians. *Reply*: Why, then, do we not hear of some difference of opinion on this point between Jewish and Gentile converts? Not a breath of it appears. If Sunday-keeping arose far off among the Gentiles, should we not hear of some dissent from it at Jerusalem? Some Judean professed believers, hearing of the work among the Gentiles, went down to them from Jerusalem teaching that circumcision "after the manner of Moses" (Acts xv. 1) was necessary to salvation. If the keeping of the Lord's day was first commenced there contrary to custom at Jerusalem, would not these same Jewish teachers have hastened down to administer correction? The question concerning circumcision was respectfully sent back from the region of the Gentiles that it might be decided by the church, apostles, and elders, at the great religious centre. If the Lord's day were not already observed at Jerusalem, would not a similar question respecting it have been sent there from the Gentile Christians for decision? At Jerusalem Jesus rose from the dead; at Jerusalem appeared to so many on the day that he rose; at Jerusalem appeared to the eleven on the next return of the "first day of the week"; at Jerusalem on the day of pentecost, on the Lord's day, fulfilled his promise to send the Holy Spirit. At Jerusalem the great foundation facts occurred on which is based the observance of Sunday at all. And the cheering and fruitful idea of making that a day of sacred commemoration, did it arise not at Jerusalem, but far away among the Gentiles? It is certain that the words "first-day of the week" became consecrated phraseology in the apostolic churches. Yet the apostle and evangelist Matthew uses that language (xxviii. 1); and his Gospel was first written of the four, and was written especially for Jewish converts in Palestine, and he, according to tradition, resided in Jerusalem fifteen years after the resurrection of Christ, and wrote his Gospel at about the time that Paul and Peter

were founding the church at Rome. It appears that of all writings extant, his was the first to contain the expression, "first day of the week," as applied to our Lord's resurrection. Which is the more probable; that the early church used that phrase as synonymous with Lord's day, and the latter term as in some sense sacred, contrary to the view and practice of Matthew, or in accordance with them? And if after leaving Jerusalem he preached the gospel for a period in other parts, as tradition states, and was thus laboring when Paul met the disciples at Troas on the "first day of the week," and gave direction to the church at Corinth to set aside their gifts for the poor on the "first day of the week," is it at all probable that the idea of keeping the first day sacred was new or unacceptable to the apostle Matthew, or to Christians with him? What! did Paul give strict instruction to various Gentile churches to decide upon, and set apart their contributions for the poor saints at Jerusalem, "upon the first day of the week," and those saints themselves know nothing about observing that first day, or receive the suggestion first from their Gentile brethren? Did Paul and Barnabas carry up the new project of keeping sacred the first day, when they went from the Gentile churches to Jerusalem? If so, strange that we do not hear about it! Professor Stuart says that the early Christians "all agreed to keep holy" the first day of the week,¹ and we have yet to learn that any real evidence to the contrary anywhere appears. It will not be wise to assume or suppose that there is such evidence until it is produced.

Objection: Jerome, one of the fathers, seems to sanction visiting the tombs of martyrs, and the making of garments on Sunday. *Reply:* Jerome lived nearly three centuries after the apostles, and what was approved by him, or practised by some in his day, cannot be considered as having apostolic sanction. Visiting martyrs' tombs was certainly not gross desecration of the Lord's day; the making of garments may have been in stress of circumstances for the poor

¹ Com., Gal. iv. 10.

or those in bonds, and not a usual practice ; these things may have been only in Jerome's locality, and a laxness in observing the day may have prevailed in that age which was not known in the apostolic period. This does not constitute proof that the early Christians were disagreed about keeping the first day sacred. Dr. Hessey,¹ who quotes Jerome on this point, admits that the testimony of that Father is affirmative and positive respecting the religious observance of the Lord's day in the early centuries of the Christian era.

Objection Second : Macknight says, the practice of abstaining from labor on the first day was condemned by the Council of Laodicea, A.D. 364, as Sabbatizing.² Many others have followed him in the statement. *Reply* : This objection seems to have arisen from an error in reading. What the Council of Laodicea did condemn was Judaizing on the seventh day. In consequence they decided that the New Testament Scriptures as well as the Old ought to be read at religious services whenever held on the seventh day, and that labor ought not to be wholly abstained from on that day. Their decision in substance was just the opposite of Macknight's statement. Authority for this representation is given by Neander,³ Eadie,⁴ and the act of the Council itself.⁵

(i) The instance at Troas is the first mention of the first day of the week in connection with a Gentile congregation. Other instances are those relating to the church at Corinth, to the churches of Galatia, Macedonia, and Rome. The Christian Gentiles, having Christ's resurrection as the foundation of their hope and joy, and his resurrection day as the time for many, at least, of their religious assemblies, and not having had the custom of observing the Jewish Sabbath, it is nearly or quite certain that their one sacred festival day was the first of the week. This occasion at Troas was about twenty-five years after the resurrection of Christ. And the Pauline instructions to the churches of Galatia, Achaia,

¹ Sunday, p. 74.

² Com., Col. ii. 16, p. 389.

³ Church Hist. (London ed.), Vol. iii. p. 422. ⁴ Com., Col. ii. 16.

⁵ Canon, xxix. Morris's Lib. Fathers, St. Ephrem, p. 391, note.

Macedonia, and Rome, were at about the same period. All evidence bearing on the subject is, that the disciples then regularly met on the first day; and since it is known that the inspired teachers exhorted and commanded regular attendance on stated worship (Heb. x. 25), the time for it in general, with the Gentiles at least, must have been on that day. One of the strongest evidences that the first day of the week was then observed by the Christians through some divine authority, is this: The Gentile believers had been unaccustomed to the sacred observance of a septenary division of time, and now, for some reason, clearly seem to have been wont to attend the Lord's supper, and to set aside sacred gifts, on "the first day of the week." No ordinary cause could have produced such a revolution. And with inspired men for their religious teachers, how they could have made such a change without supposed divine authority is incomprehensible. Further, their religious teachers being known to them as having wrought miracles, and as professedly speaking by divine inspiration, how those Christians could have been led to suppose that they had divine authority for keeping the first day, unless they really had it, is equally incomprehensible.

Objection: "The Lord instructed his disciples that the Sabbath would exist at least forty years after his death; since he taught them to pray continually that their flight at the destruction of Jerusalem, which occurred A.D. 70, might not take place on that day" (Matt. xxiv. 20).¹ *Reply:* First, the gates of all cities were closed on at least the weekly Sabbath, and travelling on those days could be only with the greatest difficulty. Hence the prayer that their flight might not be in such unfavorable circumstances. Secondly, if travelling on the Sabbath were in all circumstances inherently wrong, the Saviour would not have given conditional permission for it by enjoining prayer that if possible it might be prevented. Thirdly, the Jewish Sabbath did exist at the destruction of Jerusalem, though among Christians chiefly

¹ W. H. Littlejohn, *Constitutional Amendment*, p. 65.

superseded by the first day, and strict Jews and Jewish authorities still in power would interpose many obstacles to the flight of Christians or others on the seventh day.

(j) Tracing the course and instructions of the apostle, we find that the Christians of his time had special religious services of their own, separate from those of the Jews. Giving directions respecting the incestuous person, the apostle Paul says: "When ye are gathered together" (1 Cor. v. 4). Speaking of abuses that had crept into the observance of the Lord's supper by the church at Corinth, — certainly a meeting separate from the Jews, — he says: "Ye come together not for the better. When ye come together in the church. When ye come together, therefore, into one place" (1 Cor. xi. 17, 18, 20). Writing concerning the exercise of spiritual gifts, he remarks: "In the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding. If therefore the whole church be come together into one place. When ye come together. If there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church" (1 Cor. xiv. 19, 23, 26, 28). Speaking of women, he says: "Let your women keep silence in the churches. It is a shame for a woman to speak in the church" (1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35). In all these instances they must have been Christian, and not Jewish, assemblies. The apostles ordained elders in the churches (Acts xiv. 23), which must have been in Christian, and not Jewish, assemblies. Apostles and Christians met for consultation and advice (Acts xv. 4, 6, 23; xx. 17, 28), which must have been in meetings by themselves. Each church was regarded as a "flock" (1 Pet. v. 2, 3), a company, and they could not have been without meetings distinctively their own. They must have had their assemblies or synagogues of worshippers, under the superintendence of their own church officers (James ii. 2, 3). In the nature of the case, these meetings of Christians could not have been held ordinarily at the time of Jewish assemblies; for the Christians frequently attended the latter (Acts v. 42; xviii. 4; xix. 8), and desired the Jews to attend their religious services (1 Cor. xiv. 23).

When, therefore, were these distinctively Christian meetings held? We have no trace that one of them was held on the seventh day. We have positive evidence that one or more were held on the first day, with many probabilities that that was the chief day for all Christian assemblies (Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2, etc.). The only day named in the New Testament for the observance of the Lord's supper after its institution is the first day of the week. Contributions for the poor were determined upon and set aside, and probably collected on that day. Naturally, even if not by command, the chief Christian assemblies would cluster upon some one day of the week. Those distinctive assemblies must have been numerous, and all the probabilities are that their special day was the first, and not the seventh, of the week.

(To be continued.)