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"THE SEVENTH-DAY IS THE SABBATH OF THE LORD THY GOD."

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THE PREPARATION DAY AND THE SABBATH.

BY ALBERT WHITFORD.

A correspondent of the RECORDER strangely misconceives of the relationship between the Preparation day and the Sabbath in the time of the apostles. In order to make it appear that the Preparation on which Christ was crucified was not Friday, he made an unqualified assertion in one communication that "the Sabbath had no Preparation." Though the evidence of the Gospels is conclusive on this point, I cited his attention to the statement of Josephus, that the Jews by an edict of Augustus Caesar were exempted from judicial processes "on the Sabbath or on the Preparation for this day after the ninth hour." To this he replied that Augustus Caesar, a pagan ruler, would not be careful to report Christianity faithfully. Of course not, since he died, according to Luke, fifteen years before Christ began to preach. But Josephus was introduced to testify not in regard to a Christian but a Jewish usage. In respect to this, he is generally considered good authority. After reading this additional testimony, this correspondent again denies that there was any Preparation for the Sabbath and gives this ground for his denial. "Nowhere in the Bible is a Preparation day appointed for the weekly Sabbath." As if the Jews had no customs not expressly enjoined in their Scriptures. Neither is there any appointment for the Feast of Dedication, either by Moses or the prophets; and yet John represents Jesus as walking in Solomon's porch at Jerusalem during the Feast of Dedication. "Hellenist" might claim with no greater absurdity that there was no Feast of Dedication, because nowhere in the Bible is such a feast appointed. To know more of this feast and to corroborate the sacred text, we turn to Josephus and the Apocrypha of the Old Testament. From the same sources additional light is thrown upon the Preparation day. It was so called from the Jewish custom of preparing meals on that day, since the Mosaic law forbade the kindling of a fire and the preparation of food on the Sabbath. By the way, this law permitted these things to be done on the so-called Passover Sabbath.

This correspondent also, cannot be persuaded to accept of the testimony of Mark in regard to the signification of this word. The second Gospel declares that the day of the crucifixion "was the Preparation which was the *pro-sabbaton*," literally the *fore-sabbath*, and properly translated as the *day before the Sabbath*. *Pro-sabbaton* was the name used for Friday among the Grecian Jews before and after the time of Christ as this passage and its usage in Judith and in the early writings of the Fathers abundantly show. Therefore Mark was the first writer of whom we have any knowledge, who interprets for his Gentile readers the Preparation by the Greek equivalent for Friday. Moreover "the Preparation" is everywhere translated by the Syriac name for Friday in the Syriac version of the New Testament, a version that some critics say was made in the second century, and is the oldest version now in existence.

From the time of the crucifixion, the Greek word for the Preparation began to take the place of *Pro-sabbaton* in standing for Friday, and it is plain that the Evangelists use the word in that sense, as Dean Alfred Schaff, and other critics on the language of the New Testament have told us. I have given instances of this usage from the ecclesiastical writers of the first, second, third and fourth centuries, and stated that to day the Preparation is the name of the sixth day of the week in modern Greek. "Hellenist" does not approve of these authorities, any more than he does that of "pagan classical Greek writers, as a basis for the interpretation of the inspired writings." Were it not for the former, he thinks he could give an arbitrary exposition of the phrase "the third day," and make it mean "after the third day," and were it not for the latter, he could maintain that "the Preparation" was not Friday, and such an exposition he would have us believe is in accordance with "the

explicit language of Jesus Christ." He objects to the testimony of the Fathers on these grounds; that they are writers of a corrupted church, that Clement, the reputed author of the Apostolical Constitutions—whose genuine epistle to the Corinthians was certainly written in the first century—was born A. D., 217, that Origen had a turn to mythical interpretations, that Basil was a monk, and that the ecclesiastical histories were interpolated. If all this were true, it does not discredit the fact that they used words standing for "the Preparation" as a name for the sixth day of the week. It is not a question of theological orthodoxy, but a question of the usage of a word; any more than the other is a question of paganism versus Christianity, but whether pagan Greek classical writers did not know how to use the Greek language correctly. But "Hellenist's" allegations against the Fathers are altogether too broad. We have to-day many of their genuine writings, that give no evidence that they were corrupt either in words or doctrine, and this correspondent, I think, is the first to discover that the histories of Eusebius and Socrates were interpolated and are of doubtful authority, compared with other histories. Without these writings and these histories, we would have no sufficient answer to make to the cavil of the infidel that our New Testament Scriptures are the product of a later age. "Hellenist" depends to-day upon the evidence of these same Fathers whom he would discredit for the proof that the Gospels are the genuine writings of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. No, it is not "a modern divine" that first interprets the Preparation by the name of Friday. It is an ancient divine by the name of Mark, and his interpretation is corroborated by the other Evangelists, and by the Fathers of the church, and all commentators of modern date, as Dr. Kendrick informs us. "Hellenist" cannot find one that disagrees with him.

This correspondent would also give an artificial interpretation to the word *sabbaton*, the *Sabbath*. Without the endorsement of a single commentator, and against the published opinions of all Greek scholars, he would interpret *sabbaton*, in Luke 23:54—the Sabbath in which Christ lay in the grave—by the words "the Passover Sabbath." In this he plainly contradicts Luke himself. For this Evangelist says that Christ ate the passover on the fourteenth Nisan, "the day of unleavened bread when the passover must be killed," and that he was crucified on the next day, the fifteenth Nisan, the day of the Passover Sabbath, so-called. But the day of the crucifixion was the day called by this Evangelist as "the preparation." Therefore the Preparation was the day of the Passover Sabbath, and not the next day that Luke calls the Sabbath. The Sabbath falling on the sixteenth Nisan could be only the weekly Sabbath. And yet "Hellenist" moralizes after this fashion. "An interpreted translation may be as mischievous as interpreted histories; they all lack divine authority, and may mislead." He would support this artificial rendering by the statement of John that "that Sabbath was an high day," as if John said that that high day was a (Passover) Sabbath. I have in former communications shown that it is against all usage of the word *sabbaton*, unmodified by word, phrase or context, to interpret it by any other than the weekly Sabbath. In this opinion, I am supported by Robinson and other competent critics. They all agree that the Sabbath here spoken of is the weekly Sabbath. Some disharmonists say that John seems to state that that weekly Sabbath was also a great day of the Feast of the Passover, but others, the harmonists, maintain that there is authority for calling that Sabbath a great day because it fell in the Passover week. In this sense is the word used in the epistle of the church at Smyrna to the church at Philadelphia, giving an account of the martyrdom of their bishop, Polycarp, who was a pupil of the apostle John. This epistle states that Polycarp suffered on the second Hanticas, "being the great Sabbath." Wake, in his edition of the "Apostolic Fathers," and Beveridge on the "Canons of the Apostles," state that "the great Sabbath," in the writings of the Fathers, designated "Saturday in the holy week."

But this correspondent claims that Mark confirms him in his interpretation of *sabbaton*. How? The word *pro-sabbaton* (Mark 15:42) occurs but once in the New Testament, while *sabbaton* in its different forms occurs sixty-five times. The use of *pro-sabbaton* in that one case, instead of the common word for Sabbath indicates that a different idea was to be conveyed. Its connection with the Preparation shows that they were parts of one thing. The Preparation of the Passover immediately precedes the day of holy convocation of the Sabbath of unleavened bread. To apply this word to the Passover Sabbath is legitimate, but it is forced and illegitimate in its application to the weekly Sabbath. John explains that the Sabbath-day following the Preparation was a high day. The holy convocation day of the Sabbath of unleavened bread was a high day. John therefore calls the Sabbath following the Preparation a high day to distinguish it from the weekly Sabbath, and Mark uses *pro-sabbaton* for the same purpose. "Hellenist" has made the astounding discovery that *pro-sabbaton* means the same as the Passover Sabbath. And yet Mark says that Christ was crucified on "the preparation which is the *pro-sabbaton*." Therefore Christ was crucified on the Passover Sabbath. "Hellenist" is right as regards the fact, but no other commentator will accept of his exegesis. This looks very much like the afterthought of some theorist. And we have the authority of "Hellenist" for saying that "the after-thoughts of theorists, added to Bible teachings, are delusive, and show weakness or wickedness."

I have endeavored, in the interest of truth, and of Sabbath reform, to throw light upon a question that need have no bearing upon Sabbath discussion except as we make it so by our own foolhardiness, and I have with great painstaking in former communications given the authority for every important statement I have made bearing upon this question, in the hope that those who disagree with me, may search and judge for themselves of the soundness of my views in reference to these statements and authorities.

ADJUSTMENT OF BURDENS.

BY W. C. DALAND.

It is the glory of the gospel that the service of its Lord is a free and spontaneous heart-service. Yet no other religion ever required so complete a consecration, or was so rigorously exacting in its demands. The religion of Jesus Christ offers free and full mercy to every penitent sinner upon the condition of mere acceptance, and at the same time it satisfies the demands of the most absolute and inexorable justice. These apparently conflicting principles are both vital to Christianity. To lose sight of its free and spontaneous character brings legalism and despair; to ignore its positive requirements leads to laxity and disintegration.

Nowhere does this appear more than in the mutual relations of fellow-Christians. Differences of character, temper and ability render necessary a very delicate and careful adjustment of rights and duties in order to the most efficient and helpful service of those who labor together for their Master. There are no words from an inspired pen more clear than those enjoining mutual helpfulness upon Christian brethren; and yet there are none liable to more frequent abuse. "Bear ye one another's burdens," says the apostle, "and so fulfill the law of Christ." How is this applied in practical affairs in our ordinary churches? Take any department of church work, and you will find that the brunt of the weight falls generally on a few, and too often upon those quite unable to bear it. This injunction is, of course, to be applied by each individual, as his conscience shall determine. Every Christian is under a gospel of free and spontaneous service, and it rests with each to settle for himself what he will do for his Lord and for his brethren. What is the result? In the average congregation, if we take them as they go, by far the larger part want their burdens carried for them. The prayer meeting is generally sustained by a few, who are regularly in their seats and may be depended upon to take part. The sick are visited and the poor remembered by a faithful minority whom the pastor well knows. Almost any minister can tell over on his fingers those to whom he would

naturally go to ask the performance of such a task, or to whom he would entrust an inquiring soul for spiritual counsel. Again, the pecuniary support of most churches is afforded by a scant half of the membership, and the bulk of it, in many cases, by the conscientious few. Many are there who desire their burdens carried. Some there are who are too ready to carry them, who need full well to have their own heavy weight lessened by a helping hand. All honor to those brave souls, but shame upon those who partake of all the benefits of God's ordinances and yet who sit serenely by and watch the hard workers struggle! What wonder that now and then a burdened one becomes embittered in his life and turns from his work disheartened? What wonder that the world scoffs and jeers? What wonder that the progress of God's kingdom is slow?

The same inspired writer in the same chapter in which he says, "Bear ye one another's burdens," says also, a few verses farther along, "For every man shall bear his own burden." Is this a contradiction? No. It is one of those marvelous niceties of Scripture that the words for burden are not the same in the two places. In Galatians 6:2 the word is *βάρως*, "heavy weight" or "excess" of burden. "Bear ye one another's excesses or over-weights." In verse six, the word is *φορτίον*, "load" or "weight fit to be carried." "For every man shall bear his own proper weight." The teaching then is, that we are to relieve one another's excesses of burden in order that each may carry a weight properly adjusted to his shoulders.

Let us apply, then, the principle of free and spontaneous brotherly love to the task of relieving those we see staggering under an excessive burden. Let us likewise apply with rigor the principle of justice and see if we are carrying our full share, our proper weight.

If there is any place where work should be properly adjusted, it is in the church of Jesus Christ. May these two texts help a transfer of some weights to the glory of God our Father.

THE "HELPING HAND."

One of the best compliments that can be given to any enterprise or person is to offer wise and friendly criticisms or suggestions; we therefore welcome the following questions and suggestions relating to our Bible-school lesson help:

"1. Would it not be an improvement to have a pronouncing vocabulary of all proper names in each number?"

"As I visit different schools, I am impressed with the importance of this, and often hear a wish expressed to the same effect.

"2. Do your co-workers make proper distinctions between *doctrines* and *duties*?"

I know doctrines are teachings, and teachings enjoin duties; but I supposed you intended to use the term *doctrines* in its more technical or theological sense.

"3. Do you not think a little more comment should appear under the heading 'Words explained'?"

From another correspondent comes, the recommendation that we use the text of the Common Version instead of the Revised.

1. The need of indicating the pronunciation of difficult words has been felt from the first, and now, steps have been taken to supply this lack.

2. As we use the words, *doctrines* are religious facts or truths to be *believed*; and *duties* are religious acts to be *performed*. The love, holiness, justice and mercy of God; the nature, sinful state, and the destiny of man; the person and work of Christ; eternal life; eternal death; regeneration; a future state; a judgment—these are examples of *doctrines*. What men ought to do and be, in character and conduct, in view of these great facts, are *duties*.

3. The more of valuable comment we can find room for and have the better. And as the general scope and purpose of the *Helping Hand* must now be pretty well understood, the different writers will hereafter be largely left to choose their own methods of furnishing the best possible help, for the main body of our schools, those between the primary and adult classes.

4. Although we should prefer to have the Revised Version of the Bible used, there is

reason to think that many have a preference for the Common Version; and, for the present, the latter will be the lesson text.

We fully believe in the mission of the *Helping Hand*, and all reasonable endeavor will be made to secure its constant improvement.

At an early day, we hope to have an occasional special lesson on such subjects as the Sabbath and Temperance. A. E. MAIN.

WAYSIDE NOTES.

BY J. B. CLARKE.

On coming into the circle of influences which are found at Alfred Centre, one cannot avoid the impression that, in some important sense, he is near the heart of our denomination. Here are many interests vital to our prosperity and usefulness. Pulsations go forth from here that reach the utmost boundaries of the great field we occupy. Even far off China is blessed with them to-day. How necessary then that here may abound that spiritual life most true and vigorous that shall mold and thrill us in all our work as a people. Here zeal, self-sacrifice, consecration, Christ-like service for his truth's sake should shine forth, and not here alone, but in all our churches as well. It is gratifying to find so many signs of spiritual life and power at such a central point where we need them so much. Good work is being done in all departments of the church and the school, and we may well thank God for the sources of blessings so rich, while we pray for their increase many fold through a new baptism from the Holy Spirit.

The necessity of a special effort to raise funds for the growing work of the Tract Society is seen when it is stated that the regular collections of the churches fall far short of providing the amount required. The Board have been obliged, lately, to hire \$2,000 to meet bills for paper, printing, and mailing of over 100,000 copies of the *Light of Home*, and more than 50,000 of the *Out-look*, and the support, besides, of the *Boodschapper* and the *Evangelii Harold*, and other publications for free distribution. The appeals of the Soliciting Agent are not in vain, as shown by the responses wherever he has spoken. A special collection was taken last Sabbath in the First Alfred Church, which, in cash and subscriptions, amounted to nearly \$200, and it is hoped the sum may be increased to \$250 at least, as the Agent goes from house to house to sell the Society's publications. The friends of the Sabbath cause have done nobly in this vicinity hitherto in aiding the publishing establishment located among them, and it seems that many are ready still to foster and sustain the great work to which it is devoted. They can well afford to do this for the sake of the business benefits which it brings to this village.

ALFRED CENTRE, Nov. 29, 1885.

THE ART OF THINKING.

One of the best modes of improving the art of thinking is to think over some subject before you read upon it, and then observe after what manner it has occurred to the mind of some great master; you will then observe whether you have been too rash or too timid; what you have omitted and what you have exceeded; and by this process you will insensibly catch the manner in which a great mind views a great question. It is right to study; not only to think when any extraordinary incident provokes you to think, but from time to time to review what has passed, to dwell upon it, and to see what trains of thought voluntarily present themselves to your mind. It is a most superior habit in some minds to refer all the particular truths which strike them to other truths more general, so their knowledge is beautifully methodized, and a particular truth at once leads to a general truth. This kind of understanding has an immense and decided superiority over those confused heads in which one fact is piled upon another without any attempt at classification or arrangement. Some men read with a pen in their hand, and commit to paper any new thought which strikes them; others trust to chance for its appearance. Which of these is the best method in the conduct of the understanding, must, I suppose, depend a good deal upon the understanding in question. Some men can do nothing without preparation; others little with it; some are fountains, others reservoirs. Sidney Smith.

