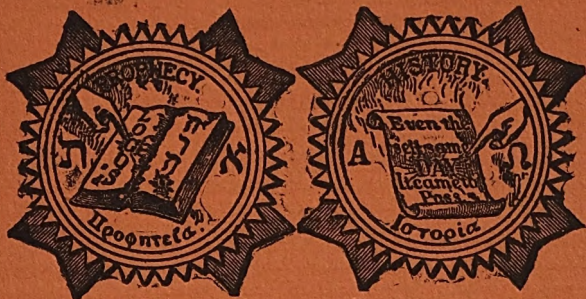


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THE WEDNESDAY THEORY

OF THE WEEK DAY OF THE CRUCIFIXION.

CRITICALLY EXAMINED

"Do not disregard prophecies, but examine all things. Hold fast the good."

—I. Thess. v. 20-21.

* * Ever since we began to publish the results of our chronological studies we have been in no little controversial correspondence with a brother who has contended rather sharply that we were totally at variance with the Scriptures in deciding to favor a Thursday Crucifixion. His own interpretation is that it fell upon a Wednesday, and that exactly $3 \times 24 = 72$ hours are to be measured from the instant of the Saviour's burial at sundown on Wednesday to his resurrection at the sundown of the following Saturday.

We have aimed to answer his positions all along the line, in our chronological Studies themselves, chiefly by setting forth the harmony of all the records as we came to them in their regular chronological order. Nevertheless, neither the harmony of the Exodus data which furnish the Type memorialized and which is found in Study Number Five (pp. 131-144) and amended by subsequent study in Number Eight (pp. 25-31), nor the harmony of the Crucifixion data, which consummated the antitypical fulfillment thereof, and which is found in Study Number Fifteen (pp. 43-154), have had the least effect upon his judgment. We claim no control over that; we are conscious only of the leading of our own, and may God assist that of every other man within the bounds of perfect freedom. In the meantime, because our own judgment has been attacked, we propose to quote and to consider some of the objections advanced against it, as presented in a recent letter, both to give the other side of the matter a fair show, and to show that from our point of view it cannot be a fair exegesis.*

He tells us: "As a chronologist I esteem you as without a compeer in this or any other age of the world, for at least 2500

* For the same reason that we omit a re-statement of our own conclusions, we omit the irrelevant part of quite a long epistle from him and proceed at once to his positions.

hundred years, but as an exegete you have of late proved yourself to be a magnificent failure." Thanks; the honors here are so easily distributed that we can disavow both without an undue exercise of grace. They cancel each other, and leave us free to talk like any other plain man. Next he goes on to say: "I have not time now, and I presume you have not the time, to consider at length any detailed reply to your grist of rubbish in Study Number Fifteen, in alleged proof of a Thursday crucifixion. At much of it I am simply astonished. * * * You have most certainly slipped a cog somewhere. * * * True chronology is surely in agreement with the word of God. * * * You are a day [week day we suppose he means] too late as to the crucifixion.

"I must now call your attention to some mighty truths. * * * In Exodus xi, 6-8, Israel was told not only to kill but also to eat the lamb with unleavened bread on that night, which was the 14th, not the 15th at all, as you say on page 71. Blundering here, you have of necessity blundered all the way through as to crucifixion day."

Yes, brother, if we have blundered here, our conclusion, as to Thursday, is of little value, and we shall have a stock of old lead in our plate boxes. But before we agree to sell them and to change our occupation we propose that you shall re-examine the matter a little more closely than you seem to have done.

Let us do so together: In the first part of verse 6, the direction that the lamb was to be kept up *until* the 14th day must require the process to be continued wholly through the 13th day. Hence, sometime after the 14th day began, and on that 14th day, the lamb was to be slain.

We admit all this equally with you, but with caution, for the rest of the verse now goes on to say, "And the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening." Hebrew *ereb*, marginal gloss of the Bible, "between the two evenings," or in the *afternoon* of the 14th day at about the time of the regular evening sacrifice, so as to be eaten that night which followed the killing, whether it was Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday, and thus, at any rate, actually on the night of the 15th day of Nisan. But our correspondent disputes this, and says the lamb was killed at once, *i. e.*, immediately after the sundown *beginning* of the 14th day. If so, it had to be dressed and cooked, so as to be eaten early that very night.

Now we reject this exegesis upon numerous counts, five of which we will notice, leaving others to come up later against the other phases of this objector's position.

First. It antagonizes, without any adequate necessity or visible benefit, the universal interpretation of the law as a whole. For instance: Josephus states the sacrifice took place

on the 14th day of Nisan; "And they offered the sacrifice, which is called *the Passover*, on the 14th day of the same month, and feasted seven days" (Jos. Antiq., B. XI., c. iv. § 8), and that that sacrifice was slain "from the 9th hour to the 11th" (Jos. Wars, B. VI., c. ix., § 3). The law itself is very explicit: "These are the feasts of the Lord, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. In the 14th of the first month, at even,* is the Lord's Passover, and on the 15th day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread" (Levit. xxiii. 4-6), etc.

Second. The contention that the slaying took place immediately after the sunset beginning of the 14th day and not at its even, *i. e.*, at about 3 P. M., and so before its *closing* sunset, spoils the application of its antitypical fulfillment! for if the proper time to kill the Lamb, as actually celebrated in Egypt, was just after sunset, and so in the first hour of the night (!) we may well ask how it comes that the death of the Saviour fell to the 9th hour of the day?

Third. This erratic position directly violates the patent interpretation of similar and very important parallel texts, over which there has never been any controversy at all. For instance, the very same Hebrew word, *ereb*, "at even," "in the evening," occurs in the Law as to the day by day or continual burnt offering, which was the most common rite celebrated by our ancestors, to wit: "The one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning, and the other lamb shalt thou offer *in the evening*," or, "the other lamb shalt thou offer *at even*" (Numb. xxviii. 4, 8). Now the undisputed facts, nay, the indisputable facts, in the case of this daily sacrifice, govern the interpretation of the whole category of these statutes, and specifically define the meaning of the same phraseology when used in the historical records of the original passover. There can be no possible doubt in this matter, for there is no other earthly way to interpret the law of the burnt offering except the way in which it was actually interpreted and always carried out, one lamb was sacrificed at the third, and the other at the ninth hour from sunrise, *i. e.*, at 9 A. M. and at 3 P. M. respectively. As the Saviour was crucified at the third and died at the ninth hour, he certainly became our continual offering on time; is it then to be admitted that the arrangement of the matter fell short in any other respect as to the type.

Now the continual burnt offering was made on the 14th of Nisan, as well as on other days, the one lamb in the morning thereof, and the other lamb "at even," and a special law, for that particular day only, required the whole assembly of the

* Hebrew *Ereb*, between the two evenings.

congregation of Israel to sacrifice an extra lamb for every group thereof "at even." The two laws have the same identical chronological reading, jot and tittle, in both cases, each received the same natural *Hebrew* interpretation, and the overwhelming agreement of Bible students is to the effect that this was the correct interpretation, and it makes no difference what moderns think: it is a question of fact as to what the fathers did.

Fourth. To have slain, dressed, cooked, and eaten the lamb at once or between the proper chronological origin (sunset) and midnight of the 14th of Nisan, itself considered as the night implied, would have been almost impossible, even in the haste required in Egypt, to say nothing of the unseemly dispatch its antitypical fulfillment would have necessitated if all this was enacted at the Lord's last Supper.* Our objector's main object in this contention is to secure some foundation for placing the crucifixion upon a Wednesday, as the 14th of Nisan, but an exact carrying out of the programme requires him to crowd, and us to admit, all these uselessly additional, and really out of place, preliminaries to that last supper, into an already well filled record of the evening in question. The scenes at the supper itself (2 hours at least) and the long agony in Gethsemane (2 to 3 hours more) to say nothing of the walk thither and from thence, put such an arrangement of the diary of "that night" utterly out of the question, for the Lord passed over Jerusalem that night at midnight.

Fifth. But this objector claims there were two feasts with their specific days of preparation, a right one and a wrong one, and that Jesus followed the original Egyptian order, while the Jews kept a system of their own. We dispute this on the showing of the foregoing specifications, but in the meantime answer this objection by replying that *if so*, and if the objector is right in his analysis, then did Jesus not only die at the *wrong hour* (for to keep the type on this basis, he should have suffered death early in the first hour of the night that followed Nisan 13th, and not at the ninth hour of the day that followed it, and preceded the next! And if so he also died at the preparation for the wrong feast, for if he ate at the right one, he certainly died at the preparation for the wrong one. It surely would have been more in fulfillment of types to eat at the wrong one and die at the right one! whereas (he being the true Passover itself, and there being, as we contend, but one feast, and that the right one), if he did not eat the Passover supper at all, but

* Besides, if this was the proper time and order of procedure, then as the Priests did the slaying of the Lambs, in the Temple, the sacrificing had to take place at night! after the Temple was closed, and in this case, as a special favor to Jesus and his disciples! for it is admitted that the Jews themselves did not sacrifice until the afternoon of the 14th.

merely a Last Supper with his disciples, he was slain at the proper time on the proper preparation day, and fulfilled all the types and rites in a natural and proper way. The fact is, we cannot begin to set forth or even to enumerate the host of fatal objections to which this peculiarly unreasonable contention gives rise. It seems, however, to be perfectly reasonable to him, for he utterly ignores the objections as fast as they are offered, as, for instance, those enumerated in Study Number Fifteen, and contents himself with advancing further gusts of the east wind (Job xv. 2) that have swept over the same old captured base of operations. Now it is a principle in argument, and still more is it one in the earnest search for truth, that a solitary fatal objection to the premises destroys a syllogism, no matter how cherished its conclusion may appear to be. So we have a right to demand an answer to our objections to his novelties, rather than a continuation of his advance in spite of them.

For instance, our correspondent now goes on to say, "Do you know, my dear brother, that Israel, the Jew included, did not keep the Feast in Egypt at all, as God told them to do? They killed the lamb, indeed, * * * but they didn't keep the feast. They didn't have time to bake their bitter bread, much less to stop and keep a seven days feast; no, nor even one day. They were hurried out on that night which was the dark of the 14th, not the dark of the 15th. Here you have also slipped a cog. Do you see it? Probably not. Perhaps there are too many figures on your glasses."

No, my friend, we have too much of Moses in front of our noses, and intend, like him, to keep in the fashion of wearing and following our noses so long as there is good Scriptural ground for so doing. The fact is, the foregoing quotation is a thorough exposé of the defenceless character of your position. It is dogmatic, inaccurate, illogical, narrow, and to say the least, somewhat out of temper. For instance, to take up your rash statements in reverse, we reply that we prefer what Moses says is so, to what under the circumstances may not be so. Thus, in direct contradiction to you, Moses, who "wrote their goings out, according to their journeys," and this "by the commandment of the Lord," tells us "and *these* are their journeys, according to their goings out. And they departed from Rameses* in the first month, on the 15th day of the month, on the morrow† after the Passover, the children of Israel went out with a high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians" (Numb. xxxiii. 3). That is, we admit with you that immediately after

* Gen. xlvii. 11; Exod. xii. 37.

† Hebrew "the time after," be it long or short, and according to the measure intended; in this case, as soon as possible, which could not have been before the next morning, hence on the morrow after that night.

that fatal midnight (whatever its date, you say the 14th because you place the Passover there, we say the 15th because we follow Moses) Pharaoh called for Moses by night and ordered him out, and that the Egyptians were urgent, so they went out. Verily, that Passover "is a night to be much observed unto the Lord for bringing them out of the land of Egypt: THIS is that night of the Lord to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations"* (Exod. xii. 42). Now, brother, I counsel you to note the repetition in this text (as if it said, He that readeth let him attend), and to read what follows, even to the end of the chapter, for the Passover law was also reiterated right there, and on purpose for careless readers, for the last verse tells us that "it came to pass, the self same day, that the Lord did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies" (Exod. xii. 43-51). What day? Why, the Feast day itself, to wit: the morning after that dreadful Passover night, which night and morning were of course in one and the same Hebrew week day, to wit: the 15th of Nisan, as implied, and elsewhere expressly specified.

Now you are wrong also as to their coming out "in the dark." They were expressly forbidden to leave their houses until the morning (*vide* Exod. xii. 22) and though Pharaoh "called for Moses by night," Moses did not go to him at all, for Moses had made his *conge* to Pharaoh the day before (Exod. x. 29). Pharaoh took it out in calling, and Moses understood the message well enough to take his people out without calling on that wicked old sinner. One trouble, brother, with your confusion is that you either have no calendar of your own of these events, or else it is badly mixed; and another is, you do not understand the philosophy of mine, which is based on the Bible, and harmonizes all these things (see Study Number Five, pp. 131-144; Number Eight, pp. 25-26). The last interview between Moses and Pharaoh was on the morning of the 14th day of Abib! It was at that time that God told Moses, and Moses Pharaoh, what was to happen "this night." You forget that the three days of darkness followed the 10th of Nisan, and preceded the 14th, and that the 15th was the first day of freedom! Then, too, you fail to remember that they went out "*in the sight of the Egyptians*." Surely, you do not suppose their late experience in Egyptian darkness had, on the Darwinian hypothesis, actually developed such an increase of their vision as to enable them to see "in the dark"!

Now even Inspiration expects us to use our common sense between its lines; at any rate, I expect to use mine until some inspired writer tells me officially that I must not! Moses wrote

* That is, the events of that night were "the occasion" that led to their release from bondage.

five books, but it would have required 5000 to fill in all the details and anticipate all the misconstructions men would place upon what he did write! For instance, my brother, you do not give the literal text a ghost of a chance to breathe the truth naturally. Of course they kept the feast itself, and that whole seven days of unleavened bread, but they kept the latter on the march. You forget that they were only "making a record," and that they were following explicit directions in so doing. What they did was "the occasion" upon which the subsequent memorial services are based (Exod. xii. 14). All anniversaries have similar origins. From the very nature of the case they could not remain at Rameses, and at the same time make a three days journey into the wilderness. They were directed to do the latter, and they did it, and God himself looked after *that* particular sacrifice, which was not the Passover, for those were even sacrificed who failed to pass over the Red Sea! In the meantime the further the Israelites went in those three days, and in fact, in the seven days, the more their descendants had to commemorate, and they were mighty glad to get out of the wilderness in the process. They had no time to perceive the force of your odd idea that they were expected to do what they could not do, and still get out! and, my friend, if you had been there, and had attempted to follow out your own interpretation in the matter, you would be there still! As for them, they were "hustling" (and there never was a better example of the word) to reach the other side of their journey, and they were safely over the Red Sea by that second day of Holy convocation, which was the 21st of Nisan and the seventh and last of the feast itself. Verily, there are figures enough in Study Number Eight (pp. 26-31) to polish your glasses, if you will use them for that purpose.

Now, brother, another word: do not worry so much about the bread they had to eat on that first Passover night (Exod. xii. 8). They had all the unleavened dough they needed for bread that night, a few hasty cakes were as easy to make as the lamb was to roast, and they had dough enough left over to take with them in order to bake more when they reached Succoth. How do I know they baked it both before and after? Well, simply because they were told to do so, and it is safer and more reasonable to believe that they did this than to say that they did not—particularly where one is contending so strenuously as you are for a so-called verbal interpretation of the Bible. But your method of interpretation is too narrow and inelastic; it strangles all the vitality out of Moses and the prophets, aye, and out of the New Testament also. For we think it is neither literal nor liberal, and your own arguments, so called, have done more to convince us that Wednesday is

out of the question as the week day of the crucifixion, than even those of others have to cancel the claims of Friday thereto. I have to speak plainly here, and am satisfied that I am well founded in the right to do so. We have had error enough in the past, without having latter day truth choked to death before it reaches the people, so it shall be no fault of mine if you fail to see the necessity of at least disposing of the fatal objections to your *theory*, for that is all it appears to me to be, before you press it into further prominence.

I now omit considerable of your letter, of similar strain to the foregoing, and all of which is based on the same untenable premises, and come to the following: "Now, go to Num. ix. 5, read it carefully, and then recall as soon as possible your statement on page 97, Study Number Fifteen, 'Never celebrated except on the 15th of Nisan.' Certainly, here was one exception," etc.

In reply, we would state that we have found no need to consider this an exceptional case. Its incidents fit the same law, and in reality afforded the very first memorial celebration thereof. Whatever was the order of events at the Exodus itself, were now commemorated this next year, at Sinai, at the appointed season, according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof.* We have shown that you are wrong as to the Exodus dates, and of course you are wrong as to those of its commemoration. The Passover law was made before the Exodus, and reiterated after it. There is not the slightest intimation that the method of celebration, either as to dates, rites, or ceremonies, was ever changed, and I take your very intimation that it was changed to be a high handed piece of presumption upon your part, and a dangerous one to any whose mind acquiesces to it for an instant. Why, even the law as to the Little, or Second Passover, which was then instituted for special purposes, was based, date for date, and ordinance for ordinance, upon the very same Egyptian facts and law. "The 14th day of the second month AT EVEN they shall keep it" (Numb. ix. 11). And we have records to show that they understood and followed out both laws to the letter (II. Chron. xxx. 13-15; xxxv. 1-11, 12-14, 16-19). Josiah's Passover, recorded in the last reference, was certainly carried out "according to the word of the Lord by the hand of Moses" (verse 6). Now, that they killed that Passover on the 14th day of the first month, is clear (verse 1†), and that it was in broad daylight is shown from the fact that all the service of the Temple was in such active operation that the Levites had to pre-

* Of course these rites and ceremonies began at the beginning, Nisan 10th, included Nisan 14th, and extended over to Nisan 21st, inclusive.

† II. Chron. xxxv.

pare the lambs of those who were engaged (verses 10 to 15). The sons of Aaron particularly were engaged at the burnt offerings *until night* (verse 14), which shows that the sacrifice occurred "at even," or, as we should say, was an afternoon affair of Nisan 14th. So nothing was interrupted in the service (verse 16), so they "kept the Passover at that time, and the feast of unleavened bread seven days," which therefore must have been the 15th to the 21st inclusive, as Moses, by direction, had ordained, as a commemoration of the actual facts and dates of the Exodus.

What on earth is to be gained, therefore, by suddenly discovering there were two laws, where but one fits all the cases? And by what authority do you contend for the fiction that the various references to the Passover in the books of Moses cover three sets of dates, to wit: a right date for the Exodus itself, and a right and a wrong, or secondary date, for the commemoration thereof, and a wrong date for the little Passover, seeing that any man fit to be a judge, or even to sit upon a jury, ought rather to be able to harmonize all the references to a fundamental law based on the facts, and be jealous for its integrity. I may be as miserable a failure at exegesis as you assert, but I am glad to fail in the premises, *in so far as your point of view is concerned*, for I am satisfied that the higher critics themselves never more uselessly originated a multiplication table of difficulties about a set of texts than you have done about those that pertain to the Exodus, the Passover, and the Crucifixion.

Finally, you ask for a special rendering of Luke xxiv. 21, and offer several good criticisms on some of the details of the free translations in the Common Version, Rotherham, Diaglott, Revision, etc. Your own translation is as follows:

"To-day bears off a third day, the same, since these things happened."

But you spoil its force by attempting to make it fit your Wednesday theory by a very curious chronological contortion, to wit:

"'Since [all?] these things happened,' includes his burial,* at precisely sunset, Wednesday night, at which Thursday began. Thursday *one* day, Friday a *second* day, Saturday a *third* day, which Sunday, the *fourth* day, was then—as they were on the way to Emmaus—bearing off."

Now, my friend, I do not see it as you render it, even accepting your translation, which I think I can improve upon with due regard to all the Greek conditions, which, by the way, these disciples were not subject to, since the men themselves spoke either in Hebrew or a dialect thereof. The original

* We dispute this. They extend from the *arrest* to the *killing*, inclusive, and do not include the burial. You, yourself, read this into the matter.

Gospel is fairly presumed to have been written by St. Luke in a Greek sign manual. If so it could not have given the exact words used, but merely gave a truthful rendering of what was said into Greek. Its value at best was therefore only secondary, even as it flowed from the very pen of St. Luke himself, for nothing but the actual words used can be rated as primary.

Now we have no doubt as to the inspiration of this Gospel, to wit: that it was truthfully written under providential circumstances. But St. Luke nowhere intimates that it was written under stress of any specific or divine command. On the other hand his very preface shows that he undertook the matter as a labor of love, and of his own election. We do not intend to go behind his own returns. St. Luke's Greek words, therefore, are merely a rendering of what these men said; they may afford a literal and closely studied rendering, or they may give a mere idiomatic paraphrase of what the words they did use *meant*. We do not care which position be taken. The question before us is: first, the literal rendering of the Greek into a plain, grammatical English translation; and second, the smoothing of it down into an equivalent idiomatic English paraphrase of both what they said and what they meant. The fact is, the overwhelming majority of readers care more for what they meant than what they said, seeing that we cannot obtain their actual words.

Our only source of information, therefore, being St. Luke, let us go to his Gospel first for the literal English translation. We maintain that *semeron*, "to-day," is the subject of the verb *agei*, "brings out,"* and that the object of this verb is the accusative clause *triten*, "third," *tauten*, "this,"† *hemeran*, "day," hence our rendering is:

"But besides all these *matters*, to-day brings out that* third day since these occurred."

These things, from his arrest to his killing, all occurred on the 14th of Nisan. In 29 A.D. this day fell upon March 17th, which was a Thursday. We arrive at this fact from a thousand and one closely harmonized historical records fitting agreeably to the whole burden of the prophetic writings, not by a mere quibble over a solitary text in the New Testament, and a few Mosaic texts isolated from their collateral and explanatory contexts, and thoroughly confused.

* *Exhibits*, manifests, *expresses*, sets forth, *exposes*, *produces*, brings to view, sets before one, holds up to view, brings to light, unveils, educes, draws out, extricates, brings off, bears off, redeems, delivers, shows up, displays, lifts off, carries away, *counts off*, shows off, etc., etc.

† N. B.—"That," or "the," or "this," not "a," for the word is an emphatic, or, as we would say, an italic, employed to intensify the importance of "third day." In English we would emphasize the subject, and have said "this *very* day brings out the third day since," etc.

Now, without reference to the week day at either end of the period, the expression cannot be made to stretch over more than two intermediate days. We have the current day, which is emphasized as bearing off a day with the designation of "third," and the day on which these things happened and from which to measure. But the date of the conversation was a "first day of the week," *i. e.*, our Sunday, hence the two intermediate days must have been Friday and Saturday, and therefore the day of "these things" must have been a Thursday, as we already know from other circumstances. Or reversing along the facts, and fitting the sentence, as translated, to them, we have Thursday for "these things," Friday for the first day since, Saturday for the second day since, and Sunday for the third day since, which the construction shows was current, and the verb shows, pointed out its numerical designation.

If it had been early in the morning, instead of late in the afternoon (verse 29) we presume they would have used a word that St. Luke would have had to render into a different one than *agei*, and could have been rendered "brings on" in English. In that case our version would have read: "To-day *brings on* that third day since." As it stands, however, they made a very beautiful chronological distinction in order to favor the afternoon part of that day, the entire force of which is worse than lost from your standpoint, in that you fetch yet a fourth day into the matter by means of a most astonishing piece of pure jugglery. Now, if the facts were as you contend, this sentence could not fairly cover them, even in the awkward and roundabout way advanced, and some other wording of this sentence would have been necessarily employed.

We think that these disciples emphasized the *object* of the verb, this or that third day, rather than its subject, "to-day," because they were vaguely associating the fact with the various prophecies that bore upon the third day itself, and because the outcome warranted it; as if they meant, "Moreover, since these things occurred, to-day counts off that third day, to which he so often referred in his discourses." As to the meaning, therefore, we are satisfied with the free translation given in the Diaglott and common version: "To-day is the third day since these things were done," and I conceive that the translators knew as well as you or I do that it was not so much a literal rendering of the words as of their meaning, for I do not believe that one translator or chronologist in 1,000,000,000 would ever, of himself, arrive at your interpretation of the meaning. If that sentence means that "to-day bears off yesterday, which was the third day after these events," or that to-day is the fourth day after these events (and this is the equivalent of your

idea), their language, whether inspired or not, is so fearfully and wonderfully elastic that we may well despair of ever arriving at its truth, its whole truth, and nothing but its truth. As language, however, has a history, we know that its constant aim has been to avoid any such outrageous ambiguity as you detect. The fact is, that particular sentence in St. Luke was a serious one in your horizon, and as you could not maintain your position unless you twisted it out of shape, some such quibble as you have advanced became necessary. That is all we can see in the matter.

But you come back to the attack, and ask: "Is not verbal inspiration a fact?" (Matt. xii. 40), and you tell me, "Your theory and statement that Jesus was in the tomb sixty-one and a fraction hours, must go, or verbal inspiration must go. Which shall it be? Ten Scriptures assert that he should rise the third day. Are they not verbally true? But two Scriptures assert that he should rise *after* three days. Are they not also verbally true? How, please tell me, can both of these sets of the word be true except he rose at precisely the junction of the closing instant of the third day with the opening instant of the fourth day?"

Well, brother, this is your real quandary, and it is well put. If you would only adhere to logic as closely as these sentences imply you expect others to, you would long ago have admitted the fatal force of some of our own logic. But as to your questions, in reverse. Your solution of your own quandary does not satisfy me. He rose on one day or the other, on the third or after it. Which ever you elect violates a set of texts as you hold them. No, you will say; he began to rise *on* the third, and finished rising *after* the third. That might do, were it not for historical records, types, and laws which also have to be fulfilled, and which we have already discussed, and which do not admit of even this solution. The consensus of all the *evidence* forces me to a particular Thursday, that of your quandary forces you to find a suitable Wednesday. Point one out! There was none in 28 A.D., nor in 29 A.D., nor in 30 A.D. Moreover, you cannot move your years and months merely to satisfy such a point as this, for the requirements that fix such elements are an hundred fold more rigid and numerous than your necessities. John was five months older than Jesus. He was thirty in 27 A.D., and came preaching in that year, for the fifteenth year of Tiberius began on August 19th, 27 A.D. The Avocation of Jesus began five months later, January 8, 28 A.D., and lasted but sixty-two weeks. You cannot force its termination out of March, 29 A.D. But Wednesday, March 16th, was the 13th, not the 14th of Nisan, and so does not fit your case. It is a close shave to fit ours, for the moon was new at 3 A.M.

on March 4th. The April moon is still worse for you, etc. What then shall we do?

Well, in the first place, we had better examine those two texts that contain the word *after* to see if you have any solid ground for your quandary. As for ourselves, we do not find in them a stumbling block, for the ten texts forbid our stumbling. One of your stumbling blocks is found in Mark viii. 31: "And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again." You elect to begin the measure of these days at the burial, we elect to begin it at the *suffering*, and to include all else up to the *killing*, only; because the suffering and all the intermediate matters are included quite as much as the killing, in so far as this particular text is concerned, *and the burial not at all*. At any rate, the point from which to measure, in so far as *this* text is concerned, cannot start later than the KILLING, which occurred at 3 P. M., no matter what the day of crucifixion. Now, after 3 P. M. that day there were three hours to the end of a twelve-hour period of daylight, and so one day "*ended*," *i. e.*, both a twelve-hour period of daylight and a twenty-four hour period of "night and day" *ended* there, no matter what the designation. We need two more *such* "ends," or three in all. If the crucifixion occurred on Thursday, then from 3 P. M. to 6 P. M. was in Thursday, and then that day *ended*; twenty-four hours further bring us to Friday *ended*; and twenty-four hours further fetch us to Saturday *ended*. Now, in so far as this text only is concerned, here were three *endings*, and anywhere after the third the resurrection could occur. Nor can you reject this method of explaining this particular verse, so as to harmonize with the ten, because the Greek not only allows it, but DEMANDS it. The Greek construction is *μετὰ τοῦς ἡμερας*, and you will admit that the Greek *μετὰ* with the accusative merely denotes a thing ended, no part being left unfinished. And that is all! *It does not denote the whole of a thing included in that ending!* For instance, *μετὰ* with the accusative covers and counts the three hours of the first day ended as one day quite as well as if the killing ran back to the previous sunset. So, in the face of the ten texts, this one with its peculiar *μετὰ* requires us to include the end of the day of crucifixion as the first end of the three day-ends after which he was to rise again. The text, therefore, does not clash with the ten, but agrees with them, and cannot be made to mean anything else, in fact, it FORCES all the other texts to agree with itself, for it is more explicit than they are. In other words, the text means that he should be killed, and rise again some time *after* the third succeeding sunset. Now, he was killed

three hours before the sunset end of Nisan 14th, no matter what its week-day designation; that sunset counts as the first end; that of Nisan 15th counts as the second end; that of Nisan 16th counts as the third end, and *after* that we are, in Nisan 17th, anywhere *before* the end of which, in so far as this text alone is concerned, we are authorized to expect the resurrection. But we are explicitly informed by other texts that the resurrection occurred on the first day of the week, our Sunday, which was therefore the 17th of Nisan. Hence, the 14th must have been the previous Thursday, and could not have been so far back as Wednesday. This effectually disposes of one of your two misunderstood texts, and if you are a fair man you will at least acknowledge that, as an isolated text, it does not necessarily antagonize the natural interpretation which must be placed by all men, at first sight, upon the ten that refer to his resurrection as on "the third day." But the other (Matt. xxvii. 63)* is like unto it, to wit: the same *μετα* accusative is also used! *i. e.*, after three sunsets, or after the ends of three days, or "three days ended," or "after three day-ends I will arise again." The two texts are thus disposed of by the same argument, and so all these texts agree, *i. e.*, the ten and the two. Now, in the letter in which you cite them you say, "If you are able to give a sound answer to this my difficulty, as above stated, I will acknowledge the corn, otherwise I must abide by the word and reject your Thursday theory." Well, brother, is it not possible that *you* are the theorist? I have no theory at all, for abiding by the Word myself I find that Thursday must have been the day of crucifixion. You can take it or leave it as you see fit; but you cannot teach confusion in the very face of the Word, among these His friends, without my protest being raised in the ears of all concerned.

But how about Jonah? "For LIKE AS Jonas was three days and three nights in the bowels of the fish, so the Son of Man shall be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights" (Matt. xii. 40). This is in reality your "proof-text," and you employ it in the very opposite sense to what we opine is intended. You literally FORCE the twelve texts already discussed, and the whole Mosaic Passover Ritual, and Exodus Record, to fit your personal interpretation of this particular text! whereas, we contend that the prophecies and historic facts in the Saviour's case, and the plain consensus of the Pentateuch, both as to the Ritual and Record, must govern our interpretation of the text itself! Your method would be unreasonable even in

* Most of the Codexes read Mark ix. 31 "the third day will he rise again," but the Vatican Manuscript reads here "*after* three days," etc. Hence, the two readings are equivalent! This only is the fair conclusion. So also Mark x. 34. Vatican Codex "*after*."

the ordinary affairs of human life. You would fail in business if your plans were based on similar narrow miscalculations, and you would certainly lose a law-suit if your case went to a jury composed of simple-minded people, upon such misconstructions. We are confident that the good judgment and common sense of the human mind will resist your inverted methods.

To examine the force of this remark of the Saviour, had we been present when it was made, and before it was put in operation of fulfillment, we should have had to refer to the book of Jonah. There we would have found the type-statement that, "Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights" (Jonah i. 17). It might or it might not imply "exactly seventy-two hours," and the solution would depend, first upon the actual facts as to duration elsewhere given; second, upon the interpretation of similar expressions in the Old Testament, and third, upon the current signification of such an expression. As to the first case, nothing further is given in the book of Jonah, nor in the Old Testament as to the number of hours implied. As to the second case there are several places where equivalent expressions are employed, and the duration was possibly *less* than seventy-two hours! For instance, first broadly, "Come to me after three days" (II. Chron. x. 5), and "Depart yet three days, then come again" (I. Kings xii. 5), and the fact that they "came to Rehoboam the third day" (I. Kings xii. 12; II. Chron. x. 12). Second, specifically, when Esther's fast is instituted: "Fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day; *I also and my maidens will fast likewise*, and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish" (Esther iv. 16). Yet is it stated: "On the third day * * * Esther * * * obtained favor," and that she invited the king and Haman to "come *this day* unto the banquet that I have prepared for him" (Esther vi. 8). So they "came to the banquet" (v. 1-8) that day, for even after it was all over "Haman went forth that day," and yet had ample time to speak to his wife and friends of what was to occur upon *the morrow* (Esther v. 9-14). Nevertheless, we can fairly see that in both of these cases the exact time *might have been* seventy-two hours. So before the crucifixion we could not have known just what to expect, except that colloquial Hebrew idiom (case three) is well known to count a part as the whole, as many commentators have also fairly shown.

What, then, would we have done, to prepare our minds? Why, we would have been forced to fall back upon the other remarks made by the Saviour as to the same matter, some of which specified his intention to rise again "the third day,"

others, "within three days," and yet others, "after the ends of three days," which the Greek means when fully expressed.

Further than these data before the event, we could have had no basis for determination, and I am satisfied that my own judgment would have led me to expect the resurrection some time early upon Wave-Sheaf Day, and after the two full Sabbaths (Passover and weekly) which intervened, had ended. We should have expected the event, first, "*on* the third day" after the arrest as much as after the killing (or burial), each and all of which manifestly did occur well before sundown on Nisan 14th. Second, "*within* three days" necessarily would have implied within less than seventy-two hours from either the arrest or the killing, and not from the burial, for those texts do not refer to, and therefore do not cover *that* ceremony! Third, "*after*" the third "*day-ending*" that succeeded the *killing* specifically, and so anywhere on the third day.

Here we would have rested our case, and waited for the events to define just what was meant, and those events would have explained, and the records do explain, just how long Jonah was in the fish, rather than the reverse!

And here we leave the matter. To search for the truth is not to fight for an extreme case against the broad consensus of a throng of evidences! That the crucifixion could have taken place upon a Wednesday offends my sense of interpretation quite as much as that it could have occurred upon a Friday. I can only speak for myself. God forbid that any word of mine should bias, as if I had authority, my neighbor. But God knows I have confidence in the good judgment of most of my neighbors, and that I believe that my own judgment agrees with their common sense. From all the evidence I have been able to gather I am satisfied that I was born on Monday, the 3d of February, 1851, and from a greater volume of similar evidence I am satisfied that Jesus Christ died upon Thursday, Nisan 14th, March 17th, 29 A.D., and that this date harmonizes with all the records and types, without any resort to any apology, private interpretation, or forced construction, anywhere along the line of argument. These reasons I have merely set forth for others to verify, and then to draw upon their own independent judgment in the premises.

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