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Open Forum

The Sabbath

Editor Journal.—The recent review of the Sabbath question from the pulpit can hardly be allowed to pass without challenge. The statement that "immediately after the ascension of Christ the disciples began to observe the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath" is wholly without foundation. There is not the first inference in the Bible attaching any sacredness to Sunday or the first day of the week. The day is mentioned eight times in the New Testament, and in not a single instance is there a hint that it was to take the place of the Sabbath. Let us examine these texts carefully, and honestly. The first four occur in the Gospels, and simply state the day of the resurrection. Matthew 28:1, Mark 16:2, Luke 24:1 and John 20:1. Then in Mark 16:9 is the statement that he appeared FIRST to Mary Magdalene. Then in John 20:9, "the same day at evening" Jesus appeared to his disciples as they were gathered together behind locked doors for fear of the Jews. These men were in their own home where they all lived to gather. See Acts 13. Mark 16:14 describes this same meeting and says Jesus appeared to them as they sat at meat, partaking of their evening meal, which shows they were not having a religious meeting of any kind. They did not believe he had risen, verses 11 and 13, and Jesus upbraided them for their unbelief, verse 14, last clause. It was evening, the first day was past; the second day was at hand. Surely we can find no Sunday sacredness here. Now Thomas was not present at this first appearing and when the disciples told him of it he would not believe. So, "AFTER EIGHT DAYS," Jesus appeared to them again, very likely in the same place, Thomas being present, and was convinced, John 20:26. Sunday keepers try to make it appear

that this was another Sunday meeting, but they have to strain pretty hard to get "after eight days" in between two Sundays. Now the object of writing these things is plainly stated in verse 13. "These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name." They were not written to establish Sunday sacredness. Acts 20:7 gives an account of a meeting held on the first day of the week. This meeting was at Troas. Paul had been with them seven days and was about to depart on the morrow. The meeting was in the evening, at the close of the Sabbath. They came together to break bread, possibly the Lord's Supper, although there is no word to that effect: Paul preached to them till midnight. The young man Eutychus fell out of a window and was killed, verse 9. Paul went down and restored him to life, verse 10. They then came up into the upper room and broke bread again, and Paul preached till day, verse 11. (Now if this story had been published in one of our daily papers, what would be the outstanding feature, the young man being restored to life, or the day upon which it was done?) Then Paul, on Sunday morning, departed on his journey across the isthmus to Assos, a distance of 19 miles on foot, while his companions sailed around in the night, a distance of 40 miles, to meet him at Assos, when they took him in and sailed on the Metylene 35 miles further, all on Sunday, verses 13 and 14. No Sabbath keeping here, surely, and this meeting occurred 80 years after the ascension.

The last mention of the first day of the week is found in I Cor. 16:2 [where Paul tells the disciples to lay by HIM IN STORE, on the first day of the week, a certain portion of his earnings for the poor saints of Jerusalem. This was not a collection taken at a public meeting, as some would have us believe. Other translations and Bible commentators make it plain. Grunfield says, "by one's self at home;" Robinson, "by one's self, in one's house at home;" "at one's home or house," Liddell or Scott.

Well, the query naturally arises, how did Sunday come into the church? How do we come to be keeping Sunday for the Sabbath? The historian makes it plain. Calls it "The Venerable Day of the Sun," "The Wild Solar Holiday of all all Pagan times."

The day was set apart for sun worship. It started in Babylon more than 2000 years before Christ. Nimrod, the first sun worshiper, great grandson of Noah, went down into the land of Shinar and built Babylon and a temple

dedicated to the worship of the sun. It is traced from that day right down through the ages to the present time. It came into the Christian church through paganism in the fourth century. Pa an Rome, nominally converted to Christianity under Constantine, brought in their pagan rites and ceremonies into a ther. fallen church, the Papacy. Included in these was the pagan Sun day, the old festival of the Sun God Astart, which became Easter, and the Yule festival, which was also a form of sun worship, revamped into Christmas or Christ mass. The change from the seventh to the first day of the week came about gradually, taking about a hundred years to make it complete.

No, to the careful and honest Bible student, seeking for truth, there is not the slightest evidence in support of Sunday keeping. But the SABBATH OF JEHOVAH, THE SEVENTH DAY, instituted at the CREATION, SANCTIFIED and set apart for a HOLY and SACRED use, planted right in the heart of his law at Sinai, and living in the hearts of his people from that day to the present time, and will be perpetuated in the "Earth made new." See Isaiah 66:22-23, is as eternal as God himself. L. MACLAFFERTY.

Man, Mortal or Immortal?

Editor Journal.—Having shown in previous articles that the popular doctrine of hell and of devils are both unscriptural, and having made the statement that both doctrines are the result of belief in the inherent immortality of man, we will now produce Scriptural proof to show that man, instead of being an immortal being, is just the reverse; that he is subject to death, and the only hope he has of life in the future is through a resurrection of the body at the last day when the righteous, and they only, shall PUT ON immortality.

At creation God breathed into Adam the breath of life and man became a living soul. Not an immortal one, mark you, for he was told that in the day he sinned he would surely die. The word immortal is used but once in the Bible, and then applied to God, I Tim. 1:17, and the word immortality but five times; once that God ONLY hath it; once that we should seek for it; once that it is brought to light through the Gospel, and once that it is to be put on at the resurrection. I Tim. 6:16, Rom. 2:7, II Tim. 1:10, I Cor. 15:52-54. The phrases "immortal soul," "never dying soul," "immortal spirit," "deathless spirit," "spirit land," etc., which are so often heard from the clergy, ARE NOT IN THE WORD OF GOD; YOU CANNOT FIND ONE OF THEM IN THE BIBLE.

Can you believe man to be immortal when the word of God nowhere teaches such an idea?

Can you believe the soul will never die when God says "The soul that sinneth shall die." Ezek. 18:4.

Can you believe that Job endorsed this dogma when he said "my soul chooseth strangling and death rather than my life." Job 7:15.

Can you believe that David endorsed the doctrine that the soul would never die when he proclaims that "none can keep alive his own soul?" Again "He (God) spared not his soul from death." Psa. 22:29; 78:50.

Can you believe that when the breath or spirit goes forth from man at death and he returns to the earth that his thoughts live on when the Bible says "In that very day his THOUGHTS PERISH?" Psa. 146:4.

Can you believe that the dead are praising God when the word of God so plainly says that "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence?" Psa. 118:16.

Can you believe that sheol or hades is a place of consciousness when the Scriptures say "There is no work nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave (sheol, Hebrew; hades, Greek) whither thou goest?" Ecc. 9:10.

Can you believe that the dead know more than the living when God declares "The dead know not anything?" Ecc. 9:5.

Can you believe that man is immortal when the Bible tells you that "man's mortal?" Job 4:12.

Can you believe that man has an immortal soul or is now immortal when the apostle teaches that we must SEEK FOR immortality by patient continuance in well doing?

Can you believe that man gets immortality at birth into this world when the Bible shows it is not put on until the resurrection of the dead? I Cor. 15:53-54.

David says "In death there is no remembrance of thee." Psa. 6:5. Peter says that "David is not ascended into the heavens," and remember David was "a man after God's own heart." If, then, David has not gone to heaven, what reason is there to believe others less favored in God's sight are there?

Do you think that Paul believed the dead to be living in heaven or hell when he wrote that if the dead rise not again "Then they also who are fallen asleep in Christ are perished?" I Cor. 15.

Can anyone doubt from the foregoing testimonies that man is of the earth, earthy?" and without a resurrection from the dead his case is hopeless? As Paul says, "if the dead rise not again let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die" I Cor. 15:32.

The whole tenor of Scripture is to the effect that the dead are unconscious, "asleep," awaiting the resurrection morn. To suppose that they are now alive in heaven or hell and will be brought forth at the day of judgment to see if they should have been in those places is unreasonable. Immortality is not inherent in the human soul. Only by patient continuance in well doing can anyone hope for immortality, and then the only promise is that it will be conferred at the resurrection, not at death. Man in his nature is mortal, subject to death and disintegration, and his sole hope is that at the judgment at the last day he may be accounted worthy to receive the "gift of God which is eternal life." Rom. 6:32.

Explains Scripture

Editor Journal.—In regard to your correspondent's explanation of the passage "verily I say unto you this generation shall not pass until all these things be fulfilled," I would like to say a few words.

A careful reading of the context will readily show the impossibility of all the events spoken of being comprehended in one generation. This difficulty, which apparently involves a contradiction of the Bible, arises from a faulty translation of the original Greek text.

In this explanation the word "generation" is given much attention, while the real trouble lies in the word fulfilled." This word "fulfilled" is from the Greek "ginomai" and according to Robinson (as good an authority as any) means "to begin to be." According to the Greek text Jesus does not say that "this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled," but "till all these things begin to be fulfilled," a statement in perfect accord with the facts of history, both sacred and secular.

SEALED BIDS.

Scaled bids for truck drivers, carry-all drivers and janitor will be received at the office of the clerk for District No. 26. The bids for janitor should be for the brick school house, also another bid for the two houses. Bids will be opened August 29. The board reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

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