

THE DAY OF
OUR SAVIOUR'S CRUCIFIXION



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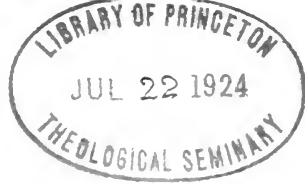
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THE DAY
OF
OUR SAVIOUR'S CRUCIFIXION.

THURSDAY—NOT FRIDAY.



A

CRITICAL EXAMINATION

OF THE

Question in Regard to the Time

OF

OUR SAVIOUR'S CRUCIFIXION:

SHOWING

THAT HE WAS CRUCIFIED ON THURSDAY, THE
FOURTEENTH DAY OF THE JEWISH
MONTH NISAN, A.D. 30.

BY

✓
REV. J. K. ALDRICH,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, WELLFLEET, MASS.;
LATELY OF THE OLIVE STREET (PILGRIM) CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH, NASHUA, N.H.

B O S T O N .

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To All

WHO BELIEVE THAT THE BIBLE IS THE INFALLIBLE
RECORD OF THE DIVINE TESTIMONY, AND ARE
INTERESTED IN ITS EXPOSITION,

This Volume

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.



PREFACE.

THIS book is the result of careful study, and fills a place heretofore unoccupied. It is written to correct the great misapprehension of the Western church, Roman Catholic and Protestant, in regard to the day of our Saviour's crucifixion.

The false theory that He was crucified on Friday, the fifteenth day of the Jewish month Nisan, seriously calls in question the veracity and credibility of the Word of God; and hence the importance of correcting it. And as an investigation of the Scriptures and other sources has convinced me that it is a mistaken one, erroneous in itself, and fraught with irreconcilable difficulties, a sense of duty impels me to give the result to the public.

I have followed no preconceived theory. My only desire has been to determine the question of fact; to settle in regard to it, the inquiry, "What is truth?" I have endeavored to discuss it fairly, and in every instance have appealed

“to the law and to the testimony.” The book, therefore, accords with the declarations of the inspired volume; shows that the Scripture narrative in regard to our Saviour’s crucifixion is literally true, and removes the apparent discrepancy between John and the other evangelists.

It asserts, not a theory, but a fact, and consequently is irrefutable.

I send it on its mission, believing that it will commend itself to all who are interested in the exposition of Bible truth.

J. K. A.

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THE DAY OF OUR SAVIOUR'S CRUCIFIXION.

I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE Day of our Saviour's crucifixion has been a subject of controversy from the days of the Christian Fathers. So diverse were their opinions concerning it, that the "Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Cyclopædia," M'Clintock and Strong, says, under the head of "Passover," *vol. vii. p. 747*, "It seems that nothing whatever can be safely inferred from them respecting the day of the month of the Supper or the Crucifixion." And Dr. Smith, in his "Dictionary of the Bible," revised and edited by Professor Hackett, *vol. iii. p. 2352*, says, "Not much use can be made, in the controversy, of the testimony of the Fathers."

Clement of Alexandria, and Origen, appeal to the Gospel of John as deciding in favor of our Saviour's having eaten the Supper with His disciples on the thirteenth day of the month Nisan. St. Augustine was in favor of the fourteenth. While Chrysostom expressed himself doubtfully between the two.

Thus it will be seen, that a controversy on this question has existed from a very early period in the history of the church.

It is claimed also, that differences of opinion in regard to the time of the Supper, and of our Saviour's crucifixion, were held at so early a period, that the evidence, even from rabbinical authorities, cannot be considered conclusive (*see Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible," vol. iii. p. 2352. Also "Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Cyclopædia," M'Clintock and Strong, vol. vii. p. 747*).

If Clement of Alexandria, one of the Fathers of the second century after Christ, and Origen of the third, and St. Augustine and Chrysostom of the fourth, held different opinions concerning it, it must be admitted

that the commonly received opinion of the Western church is liable to be a mistaken one.

Further, the question has been a controverted one from the days of the Fathers until now; the majority of the Western church maintaining that our Saviour was crucified on the 15th of Nisan, and Dr. Gustave Seyffarth, Erasmus, Grotius, Suicer, Carpzov, Lücke, Ideler, Tittman, Bleek, De Wette, Neander, Tischendorf, Winer, Ebrard, Martin Luther, Alford, Ellicott, and others, holding that he was crucified on the 14th.¹

“The chronological difficulty concerning the true date of Christ's death, and the true character of His last Supper, divides the Greek and Latin church, but was not made an article of faith in either. The Greek writers generally hold that Christ, as the true paschal lamb, was slain at the hour appointed for the sacrifice of the Passover, on the 14th of Nisan; and hence the Greek church uses leavened bread in the Eucharist.

“The Latin church, using unleavened bread

¹ See Appendix.

in the Eucharist, assumes that Christ himself used it at the institution of this ordinance, and that He ate therefore the true paschal Supper on the first day of unleavened bread, — i.e., the 14th of Nisan, — and died on the day following," the 15th (*Foot-notes in Lange on Matthew, Am. Ed., p. 454*).

From this it will be seen, that the Greek and the Latin church are still divided on this question; the Greek church believing that Christ was crucified on the 14th, and the Latin church that He was crucified on the 15th, of Nisan.

The fact, then, is undeniable, that it has been a controverted question from the days of the early Christian Fathers until the present day, and that it is still unsettled.

This will be seen also from the following in regard to the Day of Pentecost: —

“The question on what day of the week this Pentecost fell” (referring to the Pentecost which followed the Saviour’s crucifixion, recorded in Acts ii. 1), “must of course be determined by the mode in which the doubt

is solved regarding the day on which the last Supper was eaten (PASSOVER, III.). If it was the legal paschal supper on the 14th of Nisan, and the Sabbath during which our Lord lay in the grave was the day of the omer, Pentecost must have followed on the Sabbath. But if the Supper was eaten on the 13th, and He was crucified on the 14th, the Sunday of the resurrection must have been the day of the omer; and Pentecost must have occurred on the first day of the week" (*Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible," vol. iii. p. 2433*).

From the above, published in 1871, and regarded by scholars as of high authority, it will be perceived that the whole matter is left entirely unsettled. Nothing is determined in regard either to the day of the Supper, or of the crucifixion, and consequently in regard to the day of Pentecost. That the Day of the Saviour's crucifixion is still a subject of controversy, is therefore beyond question.

The Protestant church has generally held to the theory that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, because this was the theory that

had been adopted by the Latin church, from the bosom of which it came. According to the Protestant belief, the Latin or Romish church cherishes the gravest errors in many points of Christian doctrine; and in holding that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, the 15th of the month Nisan, it has erred in regard to the fact. Martin Luther, the great Protestant Reformer, believed that our Lord was crucified on the 14th; and why shall we not follow him in this, as well as in points of doctrine?

The assumption that our Saviour was crucified on Friday leads to the following inevitable results, and is therefore manifestly erroneous. On this theory, —

1. He cannot have been crucified on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan, when the paschal lamb, of which He was the great Antitype, was killed, but must have been crucified on the fifteenth, the day when the Passover was eaten, — the “high Sabbath” of the festival. He cannot have been crucified, as stated by the evangelists, on the “day

of preparation," but must have been crucified on the day following, — the "day of holy convocation."

2. He can have lain in the grave only on Saturday and a part of Sunday (*see chap. iv. pp. 125–138*), and but two nights, — Friday night and Saturday night, — and cannot be said to have been three nights in the grave, and to have risen on the third day. He can have been in the grave but two nights instead of three, and must have risen on the second, and not on the third day, according to the Scriptures.

3. He can have been in the grave only over one Sabbath; and we have no satisfactory explanation of Matthew's use of the plural *Σαββάτων*. 'ΟΨΕ ΔΕ ΣΑΒΒΑΤΩΝ, "the end of the Sabbaths" (*Matt. xxviii. 1*).

4. The "six days" and the "two days before the Passover" cannot be explained consistently with the general belief of the church, and the opinion that has generally been expressed by commentators in regard to them.

5. His triumphal entry into Jerusalem cannot have been on Sunday, called "Palm Sunday," as has been the general belief of the church, but must have been on Monday.

6. We are unable to account for the occupation of the several days of Passion Week, and the concealment that hangs over Wednesday.

7. There is plainly an irreconcilable discrepancy between John and the other evangelists, and John is made to contradict himself.

While His having been crucified on Thursday makes Him to have been crucified on the fourteenth of Nisan, the day in which the paschal lamb was killed, and in which, as the great Antitype "our Passover," He should have been killed, and not on the fifteenth; makes Him to have lain three nights — Thursday night, Friday night, and Saturday night — in the grave, and all day Friday and Saturday, and a part of Sunday, and, consequently, to have risen on the third day; accounts for Matthew's use of the plural *Σαββάτων*; explains the "six days" and the "two days before the

Passover" consistently with the general belief of the church, and the generally expressed opinion of commentators in regard to them; makes His triumphal entry into Jerusalem to have been on Sunday; accounts fully for the occupation of the several days of Passion Week, and removes the concealment which hangs over Wednesday; reconciles the apparent discrepancy between John and the other evangelists, and removes the apparent discrepancies in his own statements; in short, removes every difficulty.

It will be seen, therefore, that the false theory, that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, presents the Bible student with *insuperable* difficulties.

Among those which have been mentioned, the attention of the reader is here called more particularly to the following:—

1. It makes the Saviour to have lain in the grave but two nights—Friday night and Saturday night—and over one day, and consequently to have risen on the second day, which is in direct contradiction to His assertion that

He should be "three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (*Matt. xii. 40*), and should "rise again the third day."

2. John, on this theory, is made to contradict himself; and there is a manifest discrepancy between him and the other evangelists, which has been found to be irreconcilable.

The sad result of this has been, that some theologians and commentators have *rejected certain portions of the Scripture narrative.*

The removal of a difficulty so serious cannot fail to awaken an interest in every true believer.

That I have not exaggerated this difficulty, will be seen from the following quotations:—

"This difference" (between John and the other evangelists) "is one of the most litigated questions in the criticism of the Gospels." "John designates the day on which the Passover should have been eaten as the day on which Christ was crucified. The contrary date, fixed by the Synoptists, which would make the crucifixion fall on the 15th of Nisan,—that is, on the first day of the feast,

— is encumbered with great difficulties” (*Tholuck on the Gospel of John*, p. 302).

And again, “The larger portion of the modern critics have been led by an examination of this subject to the ultimate result that there must be a mistake on one or the other side, — either on the part of John, or on that of the first three evangelists” (*Tholuck on John*, p. 303).

And yet again, “It is not surprising that some modern critics should have given up as hopeless the task of reconciling this difficulty.

“Several have rejected the narrative of St. John (Bretschneider, Wiesse); but a greater number (especially De Wette, Usteri, Ewald, Meyer, and Thiele) have taken an opposite course, and have been contented with the notion that the first three evangelists made a mistake, and confounded the meal with the Passover” (“*Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Cyclopædia*,” *M. Clintock and Strong*, vol. vii. p. 743. See also *Smith's “Dictionary of the Bible,”* vol. iii. p. 2348).

The reader will see from this, how grave the

difficulty is acknowledged to be, when some have been led by it to reject the narrative of John, and others to claim that the first three evangelists made a mistake.

To reject the narrative of John, is to claim that it is not true, and consequently that it is not inspired: and to claim that the first three evangelists made a mistake, is not only to claim that which is most unreasonable, but to discredit their Gospels, and assume that they were not written under the guidance of divine inspiration; and, if the Scriptures be not inspired, they cannot be a revelation from God (*see chap. ix. pp. 175–177*).

But we are not following “cunningly devised fables.” We know that the Scriptures are what they purport to be; that they were given by “inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, for correction, for instruction in righteousness;” and, being inspired, it must be admitted that they can contain no real, but only apparent, difficulties, and that all such, when rightly understood, must admit of a satisfactory explanation.

The fact then, that, on the falsely assumed theory that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, the statements in regard to the time of His crucifixion, as recorded by the evangelists, have now for more than eighteen centuries been found to be irreconcilable, while His having been crucified on Thursday harmonizes them completely, — all difficulties disappear, — should be sufficient to commend the truths presented in this book to the careful attention of every one who is jealous for the honor of the Word of God.

Light, that makes the Bible more luminous, more easily and literally to be understood, that obviates the necessity of resorting to seeming subterfuges and sophistical reasoning to explain its apparent difficulties, should be sought after and welcomed.

Because a mistake has inadvertently crept into the church, is it wise to shut our eyes to it, and ignore the plainest facts to the contrary? to persist in the vain endeavor to square the Word of God to a mistaken theory? To this there can be but one answer. Far better to

examine the subject, bring all the light possible to bear upon it, apply the test of criticism, and subject it to the severest scrutiny, assured that error will become manifest, and truth will stand.

It will be seen, therefore, that the question as to the day of our Saviour's crucifixion is an important one, and that a fundamental principle (the death of Christ as our Passover), and the correct interpretation of Scripture truth, is involved in it.

It will, I think, also be admitted, that the question, whether our Saviour was crucified on Thursday, the 14th of Nisan, or on Friday the 15th, is an important one considered merely as a question of fact.

STATEMENT.

FRIDAY, in the year that our Saviour was crucified, was the fifteenth day of the Jewish month Nisan.



II.

FRIDAY, THE FIFTEENTH OF NISAN.

As presumptive evidence that Friday, in the year that our Saviour was crucified, was the 15th of Nisan, we have the general opinion and united testimony of the great majority of the Western church, which believes, as we have already shown, that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, the 15th. In its belief that Friday was the 15th of the month Nisan, the Western church is correct; but it is not correct in the belief that our Saviour was crucified on that day.

Another presumption in its favor is, that it cannot be shown to the contrary.

However unwilling men may be to admit that Friday was the 15th, it is not possible for them to prove the contrary. It follows, then, necessarily, that it cannot be proved that Fri-

day was the 14th. Those who assert the most dogmatically that it was the 14th, do not deny that it may have been the 15th; and by this admission they acknowledge that they have no evidence that Friday was the 14th. If they had evidence, it would establish the fact. The evidence that Friday was the 14th would show that it was not the 15th.

In proof of our assertion, that those who claim that Friday, in the year that our Saviour was crucified, was the 14th of Nisan, are, nevertheless, compelled to admit that it may have been the 15th, it is sufficient to cite the following, from a writer in the "Bibliotheca Sacra," July, 1871, p. 472: "In the modern Jewish calendar, the new moon, and accordingly the 1st of Nisan, is no longer settled by observation of the moon's actual phases, but by astronomical calculations; and indeed in such wise that the 15th never falls on FERIA second, fourth, and sixth, that is, on a Monday, Wednesday, or Friday, in the Jewish sense. That there was no such limitation, however, in early times, as, for example, in the age of

Christ, can be clearly proved from the 'Talmud.' In 'Mishna' (*Pesachim vii. 10*) we read that the remains, i.e., the bones, etc., of the paschal lamb, were burned on the 16th of Nisan, but, if the 16th were a Sabbath, on the 17th. From which it follows that the 16th might be Feria 7, and the 15th, Feria 6, or Friday.

"So also in 'Mishna' (*Chagiga ii. 4*) is the case discussed in which the day of Pentecost would fall on a Sabbath; but, as this feast occurred on the same day of the week as the 16th of Nisan, this latter must then have been a Saturday, and, accordingly, the 15th a Friday." And then he adds, "We might have passed over this circumstance, had it not been maintained, that, in the year of Christ's death, the 15th of Nisan could not have been a Friday, but must have been a Sabbath, because, as is commonly assumed, the 15th of Nisan could not, in any case, fall on a Friday." And then he says further, "We also believe, that, in the said year, the day of Passover was a Sabbath day; but we felt it right to say why we can make no use of this argument."

Here it will be seen, that the writer, though believing, as he says, that the day of Passover, the 15th of the month Nisan, was a Sabbath, and consequently that Friday was the 14th, is, notwithstanding, in fairness compelled to admit, that Friday in the year that our Saviour was crucified may have been the 15th, not the 14th, of Nisan.

We now proceed to show, not only that Friday, in the year that our Saviour was crucified, may have been the 15th of the month Nisan, but that it was the 15th.

In confirmation of this, we quote, first, the assertions of distinguished writers. These assertions are confirmatory, as showing the probability that Friday was the 15th, in so far as the opinion of the writers, as derived from learning and research, has weight as evidence in its favor; but for proof, we rely on the Scripture narrative.

Dr. Robinson says, in his notes to his "English Harmony of the Gospels," p. 191, "Our Lord was crucified on the day before the Jewish Sabbath, that is, on Friday; and,

as He had eaten the Passover on the preceding evening, it follows that the 14th of Nisan fell that year on Thursday." It cannot fail to be seen from this, that, while Dr. Robinson claims (erroneously as we shall show hereafter) that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, he also claims that Thursday was the 14th of Nisan, and consequently that Friday was the 15th.

This is also the opinion of Lange. In his "Notes on Matthew," Am. Ed., p. 454, we read, "Then follows the preparation of the Passover on the first day of unleavened bread; that is, on the 14th of Nisan, the morning of Thursday. On the evening of the 14th Nisan, the beginning of the 15th, came the Passover itself." Here it is stated plainly, that Thursday was the 14th of Nisan, and Friday, beginning with Thursday evening, the 15th.

Again, p. 457, "According to Wieseler (*p.* 386 *sqq.*), Jesus was crucified on the 15th of Nisan, of the year 30 A.D., or 783 from the foundation of Rome, and that day was a

Friday." Here it will be seen, that though Lange claims, that, according to Wieseler, our Saviour was crucified on Friday, he also states distinctly, that, according to Wieseler, Friday was the 15th of Nisan.

If the reader will refer to Dr. Smith's "New-Testament History," the student's series, pp. 304-316, he will see that Dr. Smith arranges the days of Passion Week as follows: —

Palm Sunday, the 10th of Nisan; Monday, the 11th of Nisan; Tuesday, the 12th of Nisan; Wednesday, the 13th of Nisan; Thursday, the 14th of Nisan, making Friday the 15th. We find the same arrangement of days also in his "Dictionary of the Bible," *vol. ii. pp. 1372-1376.*

Few names are of higher authority on this question than that of Dr. William Smith.

Again, it is an indisputable fact, admitted by all commentators, that the Passover was eaten on the beginning of the 15th of Nisan, and consequently, that the 15th was the "feast-day" (*Lev. xxiii. 6; Num. xxviii. 16,*

17). Recognizing this, Dr. Whedon, in commenting on the passage, "And they said, not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people" (*Matt. xxvi. 5*), says, "They thus decided that it should not be on the feast-day, that is, on Friday." Here, also, it will be seen, that, according to Dr. Whedon, Friday was the "feast-day," and consequently the 15th.

In the article on the Passover, in the "Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge," p. 910, the writer says, "It is the most general opinion of the Christian church, as well Greek as Latin, that our Saviour kept the legal Passover on the Thursday evening as well as the rest of the Jews." Now, if the statement of this writer be admitted, that "it is the most general opinion of the church that our Saviour kept the legal Passover on Thursday evening," then it follows, that it is the general opinion of the church that Thursday evening was the time of the legal Passover; and, as the Passover was to be eaten on the 15th, and was eaten on Thursday evening (and

Thursday evening, according to the Jewish reckoning, was the beginning of Friday), it follows also, that it is the general opinion of the church that Friday was the 15th of the month Nisan.

We rest our conclusion, however, that Friday was the 15th of Nisan, not on the general opinion of the church and the authority of great names (we have quoted these simply in confirmation), but on the evident meaning and intent of the Gospel narrative.

The evidence thus derived will now be considered.

1. That Friday was the 15th of Nisan is confirmed by the phraseology used in Matt. xxviii. 1. "In the end of the Sabbath" (or, more correctly, "after the Sabbath"), "as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre."

The quotation here is from the King James version. The translation in the revised New Testament, "late on the Sabbath day," is incorrect. It was not "late on the Sabbath

day," but on Sunday morning, the first day of the week, at "early dawn," according to the translation of Luke xxiv. 1, in the revised version, and, according to the translation of Mark xvi. 2, "when the sun was risen." The Sabbath terminated at six o'clock the evening before; and this, so far from having been "late on the Sabbath day," was twelve hours after it had ended.

The reader will see, by referring to the original, that it is 'Οψὲ δὲ Σαββάτων, "the end of the Sabbaths." Now this, to say the least, is consistent with the idea that a *plurality* of Sabbaths preceded the first day of the week, which must have been the case, if, according to the general belief, Friday in that year was the 15th of Nisan. Since Friday, being the 15th, must have been the day when the Passover, or paschal lamb, was eaten; for the paschal lamb was killed on the 14th, and was eaten the same evening, after the 15th of Nisan had begun (*Exod. xii. 6, 8*). On this point all are agreed, and hence there can be no difference of opinion in regard to it.

Now, the 15th, being the day on which the paschal lamb was eaten, was, according to the divine command, regarded by the Jews as a Sabbath.

The 15th, then, was the "feast-day," and was reckoned as the "first day of the feast." This will be seen from *Lev. xxiii. 6, 7.*

It will be seen also (*Lev. xxiii. 7*) that the first day of the feast, the 15th, and (*Lev. xxiii. 8*) the seventh day, or the 21st of Nisan, were Sabbaths; that is, "days of holy convocation, in which no servile work was to be performed." The same is set forth also in other places. "In the first day shall be a holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of servile work therein" (*Num. xxviii. 18*). "And on the seventh day ye shall have a holy convocation. Ye shall do no servile work" (*Num. xxviii. 25. See also Exod. xii. 16*).

That these days of "holy convocation," in which "no servile work was to be done," were strictly Sabbaths, will appear further, from the following: "In the first day of the month shall ye have a Sabbath . . . a holy convoca-

tion. Ye shall do no servile work therein" (*Lev. xxiii. 24, 25*).

Here it will be seen that a day of "holy convocation," in which "no servile work was to be done," is distinctly called a Sabbath; and hence it follows that the fifteenth and the twenty-first days of the month Nisan (the first and last days of the feast), being days of "holy convocation," in which no servile work was to be done," were Sabbaths, on whatever day of the week they might fall. Friday, therefore, the 15th of Nisan, must have been a Sabbath. Accordingly Dr. Robinson says, in his notes to his "English Harmony of the Gospels," p. 197, "The first and last days of the festival were each a day of convocation and rest, and hence were strictly Sabbaths, distinct from the weekly Sabbath, except when one of them happened to fall upon this latter." In "Smith's Dictionary of the Bible," *vol. iii. p. 2343*, we read, —

"On the sixteenth day of the month, the morrow after the Sabbath; i.e., after the day of holy convocation." Now, here it will be noticed that the fact is stated, that the 16th

was the day after the Sabbath, and consequently, the 15th, the day before the 16th, was the Sabbath; that is, "the day of holy convocation."

The writer in the "Bibliotheca Sacra," July, 1871, to whom I have referred, says, p. 471, "The 15th of Nisan was a day of convocation, like the 21st, and bore the name Sabbath, whatever day of the week it might be;" and again, "The 15th of Nisan was celebrated strictly as a Sabbath."

Yet again, Hobbs says, in his article on the "Day of Pentecost," "That Saturday, May 27, A.D. 30, was the fiftieth day after the paschal Sabbath, has already been proved." This fact we think no one will deny. Now, reckoning back fifty days from Saturday, the "Day of Pentecost," it will be seen, makes the paschal Sabbath to have been on Friday, the 15th.

We might multiply quotations to prove this, but it is unnecessary. Nothing can be shown more definitely from the Bible than that the fifteenth day of the month Nisan

was regarded by the Jews as a Sabbath on whatever day of the week it might fall, and this by divine appointment.

And that the Jews not only regarded it as a Sabbath, but also as a "great day," or "high day," according to John xix. 31, is equally evident.

In John vii. 37, we read, "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood, etc." The day referred to, was the last day of the feast of Pentecost, and was called a "great day," because it was a "day of convocation." That the first and last days of the feast of Pentecost and of the feast of Tabernacles were "days of holy convocation," or Sabbaths, as were the first and the last days in the feast of the Passover, will be seen from Num. xxviii. 26, and Num. xxix. 12, 35.

That the word "great" in John vii. 37, "The last great day of the feast," signifies the same as the word "high" in John xix. 31, "The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, for

that Sabbath day was a high day," is evident from the fact that the Greek word *μεγάλη* is used in the original in both instances; thus demonstrating conclusively that the 15th of Nisan was a "high day," not because it was the Jewish Sabbath, or Saturday, occurring in the Passover festival, but because it was the 15th of Nisan, the "first day of the feast," the "day of holy convocation."

In further confirmation of this, I quote again from the writer in the "Bibliotheca Sacra," July, 1871, whose assertion is the more gratifying, and should be the more convincing, because it comes from one who holds, and is contained in an article written in the endeavor to prove, that our Saviour was crucified on Friday. He says, p. 478, "The 15th of Nisan was so exceptionally sacred, that the ordinary Sabbath might be turned for it into a day of preparation. When the 15th of Nisan fell on the Jewish Feria 1, and accordingly the 14th of Nisan was a Sabbath, the latter might be broken so far as preparations were necessary for the feast (*"Mishna,"*

Pesachim iii. 6; vi. 1; *Jews, Pesachim, fol. xxxiii.* 1). From which it follows, that the Passover was more sacred than the Sabbath." This is sufficient to show that the 15th of Nisan was a Sabbath, and a "high day" more sacred to the Jews than any ordinary Sabbath.

Friday the 15th, then, being a Sabbath, and Saturday (the day following) being the ordinary Jewish Sabbath, *two Sabbaths* must have intervened between the crucifixion of our Saviour and His resurrection; and Matthew might appropriately say, 'Ὁψὲ δὲ Σαββάτων, "At the end of the Sabbaths," or, more correctly, "after the Sabbaths" (*see chap. ix. pp. 229-232*).

This expression, therefore, goes incidentally to prove that Friday was the 15th of Nisan.

2. Another proof is found in our Saviour's arrival at Bethany. The apostle John says (*John xii.* 1), "Then Jesus six days before the Passover came to Bethany." By the Passover we are to understand the 15th of Nisan, the day on which the Passover, or paschal lamb, was eaten, and not the 14th; for that

was not the Passover, but the day of preparation for it.

We have here the fact definitely stated, that the arrival of Jesus at Bethany was "six days before the Passover." If, now, we can determine the day of the week on which He came to Bethany, it will be easy from this to determine the day of the Passover.

The general opinion of the church, and consequently the opinion most commonly set forth by commentators, is, that Jesus arrived in Bethany on Friday evening, or some time in the day of Saturday. Dr. Smith says, in his "New-Testament History," Student's Series, *book ii. chap. x. p. 300*, "He arrived at Bethany six days before the Passover, that is, on Friday the 8th of Nisan, the eve of the Sabbath." By the "eve of the Sabbath" he means the "late evening," or after six o'clock on Friday; that is, after the Sabbath had commenced.

Tholuck says, in his "Commentary on the Gospel of John," *chap. xii. p. 288*, "It is not probable that the journey and arrival" (at

Bethany) "took place on the Sabbath. They occurred perhaps, therefore, on Friday, late in the evening;" that is, after six o'clock, when the Sabbath had begun. That he means that it is not probable that the journey and arrival at Bethany took place in the daylight of the Sabbath, or between sunrise and sunset, is evident; for, according to the Jew's reckoning, "late in the evening" of Friday would be the Sabbath, or Saturday.

Dr. Maclear says, in his "Class-Book of New-Testament History," *part vii. chap. i. p. 259*, "It was apparently on a Friday evening when the Saviour reached the hamlet of Bethany." Canon Farrar, in his "Life of Christ," says, "Christ arrived at Bethany on the evening of Friday, Nisan 8, March 31, A.D. 30, six days before the Passover." Other writers might be quoted to show that this is the general opinion. (It will be noticed in passing, that Smith and Farrar both speak distinctly of Friday as being the 8th of Nisan, which, according to their reckoning, makes the following Friday the 15th.)

Some writers say that our Saviour arrived at Bethany on Saturday; but whether they mean by this, that He arrived there in the daylight of Saturday, or on Friday evening, since that would be the beginning of Saturday, we have no means of determining.

According to Kitto, our Lord reached Bethany on Saturday (*see Kitto's remarks on the triumphal entry in his "Daily Bible Illustrations"*). Dr. Whedon, Lange, Olshausen, and others, believe that He arrived in Bethany on the Jewish Sabbath, or Saturday. This is the view set forth in "The Comprehensive Commentary." These also, with other commentators, claim that the Sabbath on which our Saviour arrived at Bethany was the ninth day of the month Nisan; though some, while admitting the arrival to have been on the Sabbath, claim that that Sabbath was the eighth day of the month Nisan. Lange says of such, in his "Notes on John," Am. Ed., p. 370, "Meyer reckons with Ewald from the 14th back to the 8th of Nisan: he also asserts, however, that it was a Sabbath, in accordance with the false

assumption that Jesus died on the 14th of Nisan, and yet on a Friday." It will be seen from these remarks in Lange, that Ewald and Meyer first assume that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, and then that He was crucified on the 14th of Nisan, and therefore that Friday must have been the 14th; and then they reckon back six days to Saturday, making it, in their estimation, the 8th: but, as the result is based on mere assumptions, it has no evidence in its favor.

Whether we adopt the opinion that our Saviour arrived at Bethany "late on Friday evening," or in the daylight of Saturday, the reckoning is the same. In either event, the arrival was on Saturday.

We now proceed to show why the general opinion, that the arrival at Bethany took place on Saturday, is the correct one. If we assume that our Saviour arrived at Bethany on Friday, then Friday must have been "six days before the Passover;" and consequently, on this theory, Thursday must have been the day of the Passover, the 15th of Nisan, and Friday, the

16th: and hence, if our Saviour was crucified on Friday, He must have been crucified on the 16th of Nisan, a theory which has never been advocated.

That the arrival cannot have been on Sunday, as set forth by Dr. Robinson and others, is equally apparent; for John says (*John xii. 12*, the King James version), "On the next day," (the revised New Testament), "On the morrow," showing that our Saviour's triumphal entry into Jerusalem was the day after His arrival at Bethany; and this has always been reckoned by the church as "Palm Sunday."

Dr. Whedon says, in his "Notes on Matthew," p. 238, "I see no good ground for adopting any other than the scheme of the ancient church, sanctioned by Olshausen, Tholuck, and others. It supposes the triumphal entry to have been on Sunday, called "Palm Sunday."

Now, on the assumption that our Saviour arrived at Bethany on Sunday, His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, being the day after,

would have been on Monday, not on Sunday, called "Palm Sunday," which would be against the universal belief of the church.

That He arrived at Bethany, not on Friday or Sunday, but on the Jewish Sabbath, or Saturday, would seem also to be confirmed by the following: In Lange's "Notes on Matthew," Am. Ed., p. 454, we read that the anointing in Bethany took place "on the evening of the Saturday before Palm Sunday." Dr. Smith agrees with this (see "*New-Testament History*," p. 300, also "*The Comprehensive Commentary*," *Matthew—John*, p. 738). This would seem also to be the teaching of John xii. 2.

That this is a controverted point, we admit; but the only reason is, the supposed difficulty in reconciling it with Matt. xxvi. 6, 7, and Mark xiv. 3, which we shall consider hereafter. Now, as, according to Dr. Smith, Lange, and others, this anointing took place on Saturday evening, our Saviour must have been in Bethany on Saturday. The evidence, therefore, is conclusive, that Jesus arrived at

Bethany on the Jewish Sabbath, or Saturday. and, as He arrived there "six days before the Passover," the day of that Passover must have been the following Friday; and consequently Friday must have been the fifteenth day of the month Nisan.

3. An examination of the "two days" (*Matt. xxvi. 2; Mark xiv. 1*) leads us to the same conclusion. Dr. Whedon says (*Notes on Matthew,* p. 303), "This was uttered probably at sunset on Tuesday." And as, at that season of the year, the sun does not set in Jerusalem until after six o'clock, which (according to the Jewish mode of reckoning) was the beginning of the next day, it must have been said on the beginning of Wednesday. Dr. Smith says (*New-Testament History,* book ii. chap. xi. p. 313), in speaking of Wednesday, the 13th of Nisan, "that this announcement was made on the preceding evening," thus agreeing with Dr. Whedon. According to Dr. Maclear (*Class-Book of New-Testament History,* book ii. part vii. chap. iv. p. 277), our Saviour said this on Tues-

day evening, and, after saying it, "retired in all probability to Bethany." According to Lange (*"Notes on Matthew," Am. Ed., p. 454*), the announcement "after two days is the feast of the Passover," was made by our Saviour to His disciples more probably on Wednesday than late on Tuesday evening. No commentator, so far as we know, has ever put the announcement later than Wednesday: while some, as we have seen, put it on Tuesday evening, which is, in reality, on Wednesday; for the Jews reckoned their days from six o'clock on the preceding evening. Tuesday evening, therefore, would be the beginning of Wednesday. So that on this point, whether we say that the announcement was made on Tuesday evening, or in the daylight on Wednesday, there is, so far as the reckoning is concerned, a substantial agreement. It would be Wednesday in either case; and "two days" after Wednesday would be Friday, which, according to our Saviour's announcement, must have been the day of the Passover, and, consequently, the 15th of Nisan.

That our Saviour meant the day of the Passover festival, and not the day of preparation for it, is clear from the expression in Mark xiv. 1, 2, "After two days was the feast of the Passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take Him by craft, and put Him to death. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar of the people." Now, this shows that the day to which our Saviour referred in the expression, "After two days is the feast of the Passover," was the "feast day;" that is, the day on which the paschal lamb was eaten, the 15th of Nisan (*Num. xxviii. 17.* "And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast"): and, therefore, as this was said on Wednesday, the feast-day must have been Friday; and consequently Friday must have been the 15th of Nisan. This is confirmed by Dr. Whedon, who says (*"Notes on Matthew,"* p. 305), "'Not on the feast day.'" "They thus decided that it should not be on the feast-day; that is, on Friday."

It is said in Lange, "Notes on Matthew,"

Am. Ed., p. 454, that Jesus announced to His disciples, that, "After two days He should be crucified."

That this is a mistake, is plainly to be seen. Jesus made no such announcement. He said (*Matt. xxvi. 2*), "After two days is the feast of the Passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified." Revised New Testament, "delivered up to be crucified." It will be noticed that He said nothing in regard to the time of His crucifixion. He announced simply (1) the time of the feast ("After two days"), and (2) the fact of His betrayal. The statement in Lange, therefore, is incorrect: and it leads into the error of making our Saviour's crucifixion to have taken place on the 15th of Nisan instead of the 14th; for we read (*Lange on Matthew, p. 454*) that "the preparation of the Passover on the first day of unleavened bread was on the 14th of Nisan, the morning of Thursday. On the evening of the 14th of Nisan, the beginning of the 15th, came the Passover itself." Here it is stated plainly that Thurs-

day was the 14th of Nisan, and Friday the 15th.

This agrees with the previous reckoning, but, on the falsely assumed theory, that our Saviour was to be "*crucified* after two days," makes Him to have been crucified on Friday the 15th of Nisan, not on the 14th; and, to substantiate this position, we find the following (*Lange's "Notes on Matthew," Am. Ed., p. 457*): "According to Wieseler (*p. 386 sqq.*), Jesus was crucified on the 15th of Nisan of the year 30 A.D., or 783 from the foundation of Rome; and that day was a Friday."

It will be seen, we think, clearly from the foregoing, that Friday, in the year that our Saviour was crucified, must have been the fifteenth day of the Jewish month Nisan.

We know that some claim that Friday in that year fell on the 14th, but have never seen it sustained by a particle of evidence. It has been mere assertion, and has been based entirely on the assumption that our Saviour was crucified on Friday; and therefore, as the paschal lamb was to be killed on the 14th, it has

been assumed that Friday in that year was the 14th of Nisan. But the premise being wrong has led to a false conclusion.

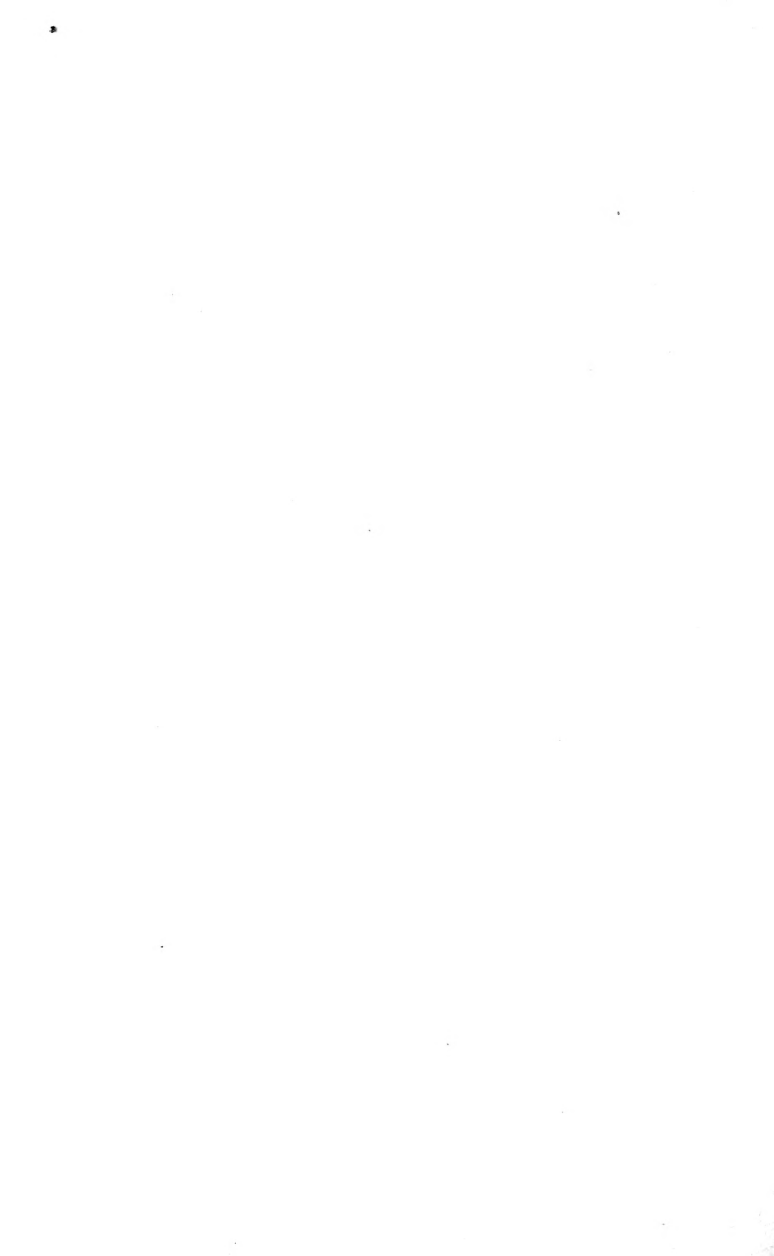
To recapitulate briefly, we have shown :—

1. That it has been the almost universal belief of the Western church, that Friday, in the year that our Saviour was crucified, was the 15th of the month Nisan.

2. That it is not and cannot be denied, by its most strenuous opponents, that Friday, in the year that our Saviour was crucified, may have been the 15th of Nisan.

3. That it is positively asserted by Lange, Wieseler, Dr. Robinson, Dr. Smith, Dr. Whedon, Canon Farrar, and others of our most distinguished theologians and commentators, that Friday was the 15th of Nisan.

4. That it is evident from the Bible narrative.



STATEMENT.

OUR Saviour was crucified on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan ; and therefore, as Friday was the fifteenth, He must have been crucified on Thursday.

III.

OUR SAVIOUR WAS CRUCIFIED ON THE FOURTEENTH OF NISAN.

HAVING shown that Friday, in the year that our Saviour was crucified, was the fifteenth day of the month Nisan, we proceed to the second point in the argument, that He was crucified on the 14th, and that consequently, as Friday was the 15th, He must have been crucified on Thursday.

Our first argument in proof of this is drawn from the fact that Christ was the great Anti-type of the Passover.

1. It is well known that the paschal lamb was a type of Christ. Therefore the apostle says (1 *Cor. v. 7*), "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." Albert Barnes, in commenting on this passage, says, "Our Passover, our paschal lamb, for so the word *πάσχα* usually signifies." John the Baptist also pointed his

disciples to Christ, as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world" (*John i. 29, 36*). And the song of the redeemed in Heaven is "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain" (*Rev. v. 12*).

2. The paschal lamb was to be without blemish (*Exod. xii. 5*). So Christ was without blemish.

3. It is known that our Saviour was crucified at the time of the Passover.

4. The paschal lamb was to be "taken," that is, set apart from the flock for sacrifice, on the tenth day, and to be kept until the 14th (*Exod. xii. 3, 6*): and, in our argument to prove that Friday was the 15th of Nisan, we have shown that the supper in Bethany took place on the evening of Saturday after six o'clock, and, consequently, after the 10th of Nisan had begun; and hence, as our Saviour was anointed by Mary on that occasion, it follows, that, as the great Antitype, *He* was thus set apart for sacrifice, according to the commandment, on the tenth day of the month Nisan.

The only objection that can be made to this, is the apparent difficulty in reconciling it with the account of the supper as recorded by Matthew and Mark (*Matt. xxvi. 6-13; Mark xiv. 3-9*).

It will be clearly seen that this is not a real, but only an apparent, difficulty. Because Matthew and Mark have recorded the supper in Bethany, in connection with and *after* the saying of our Saviour ("After two days is the feast of the Passover"), it has been thought that the supper must have taken place after those words were spoken, and, consequently, that it must have taken place but "two days" instead of "six days before the Passover;" and, on account of this, some have attempted to show that there were two suppers in Bethany, at both of which Jesus was anointed by Mary, and Judas made complaint, one, having taken place two days before the Passover, and the other, six. It is manifest, however, that these, as recorded by Matthew, Mark, and John (*John xii. 2-8*), are different accounts of the same supper. They are so nearly alike, that

the idea of two suppers would never have been suggested, if it had not been to remove an apparent difficulty. But such an attempt increases it. In the effort to avoid Scylla we run into Charybdis.

The mistake, evidently, has been in supposing that the evangelists Matthew and Mark have recorded the saying of Christ ("After two days is the feast of the Passover") and the supper in Bethany, in the chronological order of their occurrence.

That Matthew and Mark have not recorded them chronologically, is apparent, because they would thus conflict with the statement as made by John, and also, from the narratives themselves. The record is simply (*Matt. xxvi.* 6), "Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon," etc. From this it will be seen, that no reference is made to the time. From any thing that appears in the narrative, it may have been after the saying ("After two days," etc.) recorded of Jesus, or it may have been some time before. Matthew had been speaking (*Matt. xxvi.* 3, 5) of "the plotting

of the chief priests and scribes to put Christ to death;" and it would appear as though that circumstance had suggested to his mind the occurrence of the supper at Bethany, which had taken place the previous Sabbath evening, when Mary had anointed the Saviour for His burial: and so he placed it in this connection, recording it in the following verse (*Matt. xxvi. 6*).

It appears also to have been the same with Mark. He, like Matthew, makes no mention of the time when the supper in Bethany took place, but says (*Mark xiv. 3*), "And being in Bethany in the house of Simon," etc.

It is believed that Mark wrote his Gospel as he received it from Peter; and it is not improbable that the "plotting of Christ's death," and "the anointing Him for His burial," may have suggested, the connecting of the two incidents, to him, as well as to Matthew.

Further, it is known that the Gospel of Matthew was extant at the time when Mark wrote his Gospel, some believing it to have

been written as early as A.D. 37, which was from twenty to twenty-five years previous; and, having Matthew's Gospel before him, Mark would very naturally follow its order in certain instances, and may have done in this. This appears the more probable, when we consider the well-known fact that Matthew wrote for Jews, and Mark, for Gentiles. This may be admitted without charging that "the striking coincidences between the two Gospels are such as to show that Mark compiled his Gospel from Matthew," as Augustine, Simon, Calmet, Adler, Owen, Harwood, and other learned men have claimed. (*For the discussion of this, see Horne's Introduction, vol. ii. part vi. chap. ii. sect. iv. p. 306.*)

There is nothing, then, in the account as given in Matthew and Mark, that really conflicts with the statement in John xii. 2, which implies that the supper took place the evening after our Saviour's arrival at Bethany. Now, this being seen, it will be admitted that the supper in Bethany took place, as we have shown, on the evening of the Jewish Sabbath,

or Saturday, which, according to the Jews' manner of reckoning, was on the beginning of Sunday, the tenth day of the month Nisan. And at that supper our Saviour said, according to John xii. 7, "Against the day of my burying hath she kept this;" and according to Matt. xxvi. 12, "In that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial;" and according to Mark xiv. 8, "She is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying."

Now, when we consider that priests and prophets and kings were set apart to their respective offices by being anointed with oil, and that all these offices inhered in Christ, that He was our priest to atone for us, our prophet to instruct us, and our king to rule over us, we see how significant His anointing by Mary becomes in setting Him apart for sacrifice as the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world," especially when we take it in connection with the fact that the anointing took place on the tenth day of the month Nisan, the time when, according to

the commandment, the paschal lamb was to be set apart for sacrifice.

5. The paschal lamb was to be killed (*Exod. xii. 6*) in the evening, or (as in the marginal reading, which is according to the Hebrew), "between the two evenings."

It is claimed by some, that the meaning of the phrase, "between the two evenings," is a doubtful one. We admit that there have been different opinions concerning it, but the meaning is by no means doubtful. The Karaites and the Samaritans consider it as the interval between sunset and dark. That this cannot have been its meaning is evident; for in that case the lamb must have been slain after sunset, which, as the Jews reckoned their days from evening to evening, must have been after the beginning of the 15th, and would make it to have been slain on the 15th of Nisan, not on the 14th, according to the commandment. The Pharisees and Rabbinites held that the first evening commenced when the sun began to go down; that is, at twelve o'clock M., and that the second evening

began at sunset. This was its true meaning. For a fuller discussion of this subject, see "Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Cyclopædia," M'Clintock and Strong, *vol. vii. p. 735*, and Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible," *vol. iii. p. 2342* (foot-notes).

But while the true meaning of the phrase, "between the two evenings," is between twelve o'clock and sunset, the meaning practically in this instance is to be derived from the practice of the Jews. If we can ascertain at what time they killed the paschal lamb, we shall learn what they understood by the command to kill it "between the evenings." Josephus is good authority; and, according to him ("Wars," *book vi. chap. ix. sect. 3*), "the lambs were slain from the ninth hour till the eleventh;" that is, between three and five o'clock in the afternoon.

This is confirmed by the "Mishna" (*Pesachim, v. 3*) and by Maimonides, who says they were killed immediately after the evening sacrifice, which was offered at the ninth hour, or three o'clock in the afternoon.

It will be seen that they began to slay the lambs at the ninth hour, or three o'clock, which was exactly midway between the two evenings; as the first evening was the time when the sun began to go down, or twelve o'clock M., and the second, at sunset; and this was the time when the death of our Saviour took place, at, or more probably soon after, three o'clock, the ninth hour (*see Matt. xxvii. 45-50; Mark xv. 33-37; Luke xxiii. 44-46*).

6. The apostle John says (*John xix. 33*), "They brake not His legs." And again (*John xix. 36*), "For these things were done that the Scriptures should be fulfilled,— 'A bone of Him shall not be broken.'" The Scriptures said to have been fulfilled are *Exod. xii. 46* and *Num. ix. 12*, and in both instances it was spoken of the paschal lamb; and its fulfilment in Christ shows that He died as our paschal lamb, our Passover, the great Anti-type of the Jewish Passover. This being seen, it will be seen also, that as the Passover was to be killed on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan (*Exod. xii. 6*), so our Saviour must have been crucified on that day.

7. That the type ceased when the great Antitype was offered, is another evidence that Christ died as our Passover; that the sacrifice of the paschal lamb found its fulfilment in Him. The feast of the Passover is not an ordinance of the Christian church, because the Lord's Supper has been instituted in its place. And this latter is to be observed by Christ's followers in commemoration of His death ("This do in remembrance of me," *Luke xxii.* 19; *1 Cor. xi.* 24, 25. "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come," *1 Cor. xi.* 26). And the reason is obvious. As the Passover pointed the Jew forward to Christ as his Passover, the Lamb of God, the great sacrifice that was to come; so the Lord's Supper points the Christian back to Christ as his Passover, the Lamb of God, the great sacrifice that has been offered.

8. That Christ died as our Passover, and rose again for our justification, was typified in the wave-offering. The law in regard to the wave-sheaf is recorded in *Lev. xxiii.* 10, 11.

“Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, when ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.” In this there are three points to be noticed. The first is, that the wave-sheaf was a sheaf of the first-fruits, and was a type of our Saviour’s resurrection from the dead. As the sheaf of first-fruits was a pledge to the Israelites of the future harvest; so the resurrection of our Saviour from the dead was a pledge to God’s spiritual Israel of the coming resurrection; symbolized the truth expressed by our Saviour to His disciples in John xiv. 19, “Because I live, ye shall live also.” This was spoken only the day before His death, and had reference to His death and resurrection. This will be seen by taking the passage in its connection. “Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see

me: because I live, ye shall live also." The world would not see Him because of His death. This is confirmed by the fact, that after His death the world saw him no more; for He appeared only to those who were His followers, and not unto the world after His resurrection. Tholuck says in his "Commentary on the Gospel of John," p. 406, "The enemies of the Redeemer were to see Him no more when He had risen. This was the privilege of His friends alone." Clearly the truth conveyed in the passage "Because I live, ye shall live also," is, that the disciples would live because of His resurrection. This truth, typified by the waving of the first-fruits, is set forth also by the apostle, when he says, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept" (1 *Cor. xv.* 20). This is the general opinion of commentators (" *Comprehensive Commentary, Gen.—Jud.,*" p. 431). "This sheaf of first-fruits was typical of our Lord Jesus, who is risen from the dead as the first-fruits of them that slept." Dr. Scott also, in

speaking of it, says, "The first-fruits presented to God with a sacrifice implied that the title of the Israelites to the fruits of the earth rested on the gift of a reconciled God, through the sacrifice of the promised Saviour. . . . They also prefigured Christ, not only as the first-fruits from the dead, and the earnest of the great harvest of the resurrection, but as the first-fruits of all the race of Adam; and who, having sanctified Himself to be obedient to the precept and to endure the penalty of the law of God, presented Himself unto the Father as the earnest of an innumerable multitude of His brethren being consecrated to God through Him." Similar quotations might be multiplied.

The second point in the argument is, that the priest was to "wave the sheaf before the Lord to be accepted for them" (*Lev. xxiii. 11*), prefiguring God's acceptance in behalf of His spiritual Israel of the sacrifice of His Son as their Passover, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. This idea is presented in the "Comprehensive Commentary," Gen.—

Jud.," p. 431: "That branch of the Lord was then presented to Him, in virtue of the sacrifice of Himself, the Lamb of God; and it was accepted for us." It was a beautiful figure. The wave-sheaf, the new grain from the old kernel that had perished, was the most striking and impressive emblem of the resurrection that could have been presented."

The third point in the argument, is the time. "On the *morrow after the Sabbath* the priest shall wave it" (*Lev. xxiii. 11*). On the part of some of our most distinguished commentators there has been plainly a misunderstanding in regard to it. They have supposed the Sabbath here spoken of to have been the fifteenth day of the month Nisan, the "day of holy convocation," or "high Sabbath" of the Passover festival, and hence that the sheaf was to be waved the day after, that is, on the 16th. Thus Dr. Smith says (*"Dictionary of the Bible," vol. iv. p. 3487*), "On the second day of the Passover, a sheaf of corn in the green ear was to be waved." Dr. Scott says,

“The Sabbath here mentioned was the day of holy convocation.” And as the day of holy convocation was the 15th, the day after, when the sheaf was to be waved, according to his belief, was the 16th. It is inconceivable that commentators so eminent should have been led into this mistake. The text is so plain, it would seem to have been impossible. For we read (*Lev. xxiii. 15, 16*) “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; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord.” Here we have the manner of the counting of the days until the feast of Pentecost. From “the morrow after the Sabbath,” the day of the sheaf-offering, seven Sabbaths were to be made complete. It is evident that these Sabbaths cannot have been “days of convocation,” for between the festivals there were no “high Sabbaths,” or “days of convocation.” The seven Sabbaths, therefore, that

are here mentioned, must have been the ordinary Jewish Sabbaths, or Saturday; and as the Sabbath, the day before the wave-offering, is spoken of in connection with them, that also must have been the ordinary Sabbath. So that we have eight weekly Sabbaths mentioned in succession. The first is the Sabbath that occurred during the Passover festival, the day immediately preceding that of the offering of the first-fruits, from which last, the count for the days began; and the eighth Sabbath is the day preceding the Pentecost.

Now, as the Passover was determined by the moon, it did not always fall on the same day of the week; and, consequently, the ordinary Sabbath might, or might not, fall on the 15th of the month Nisan: and it was only at rare intervals that the day after the Sabbath, when the sheaf-offering was presented, would fall on the 16th. The Sabbath before the day of the wave-offering, then, being the Jewish Sabbath, or Saturday (not the "high Sabbath"), was always the seventh day of the week; and hence the day after, when the sheaf of first-

fruits was waved before the Lord as the type of our Saviour's resurrection, was always the first day of the week. And as it was a type of our Saviour's resurrection, and was always offered on the first day of the week, it signified that our Saviour should rise from the grave on that day; and, accordingly, He, the great Antitype, rose on the day after the Jewish Sabbath, or Saturday, on the first day of the week. Dr. Scott, in alluding to this, says, "Thus the first day of the week was the day of offering the first-fruits, on which day Christ arose, the first-fruits from the dead." D'Oyly and Mant, in their "Notes on the New Testament," on Matt. xxviii. 1, "As it began to dawn towards the first day of the week," etc., says, "The day of our Lord's resurrection was that on which it was before designed that He should rise. Accordingly on this day" (that is, the day after the Sabbath, the first day of the week) "the sheaf of their first-fruits, by which their harvest was to be consecrated, was lifted up before God among the Jews (*Lev. xxiii. 10*), to signify that Christ,

our first-fruits, should, on that day, be raised up by God, and so become a surety to us of our future resurrection." We have here, then, another evidence of the exact fulfilment of the type in the resurrection of Christ, the Anti-type, on the day prefigured as the day of His resurrection, by the waving of the sheaf of first-fruits before the Lord "to be accepted for them."

The points thus far presented, when taken together, form a network of evidence, going to show conclusively, that, as our Passover, our Saviour must have been crucified on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan.

To put it more concisely, since it is well known that the paschal lamb was a type of Christ; and that as it was to be without blemish so Christ was without blemish; and that Christ was crucified at the time of the Passover; and that as, by divine appointment, the paschal lamb was taken or set apart for sacrifice on the tenth day of the month Nisan, so Christ was anointed for His burial, or set apart for sacrifice, by Mary, on the tenth day

of the month Nisan ; and that he died at the ninth hour, the same time in the day that the paschal lamb was to be killed ; and that the Scriptures were fulfilled that (as with the paschal lamb) “ Not a bone of him was broken ; ” and that the sacrifice of the paschal lamb ceased, when Christ the great sacrifice was offered ; and that, in commemoration of that event, the Lord's Supper has been instituted in place of the Passover ; and that He arose from the dead on the first day of the week, the day signified by the sheaf-offering, all going conclusively to show that He died as our Passover, and that in Him every possible condition pertaining to the sacrifice of the paschal lamb was fulfilled, — it follows necessarily that the *one other condition* must have been fulfilled ; that He must have been crucified on the day that the paschal lamb was killed, the *fourteenth* day of the month Nisan.

This is further evident from the assertion of our Saviour, recorded in Matt. v. 17, 18, “ Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets : I am not come to

destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Now, the law was, that the Passover should be sacrificed on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan: and as Christ was our Passover, the great sacrifice, of which the paschal lamb was the type, and to which it pointed as the Lamb of God which in the divine purpose was "slain from the foundation of the world;" and "He came," as He said, "to fulfil the law," and has assured us that "not one jot or tittle shall pass from it till all be fulfilled," — it follows, that the law must have been fulfilled in His death, in even the minutest particular, and hence, that He must have been crucified on the day that the paschal lamb was to be killed, the fourteenth day of the month Nisan.

The paschal lamb was the type, and therefore was figurative. Its value as a religious offering lay only in its significance, and it was God's design in the Passover to call attention to Christ as the great Antitype. Without

the sacrifice of Christ, the offering of the paschal lamb would have been meaningless. The paschal lamb was only the shadow, Christ the substance.

Now, is it reasonable to suppose, that God would have been so particular in regard to the time of sacrificing the paschal lamb (the mere shadow of that which was to come); that He should have required it to be sacrificed "between the evenings" on the "fourteenth day of the month Nisan;" and then, when the great Antitype was killed (with reference to whom the Passover was instituted), He would have permitted that requirement to be broken, our Saviour to have been crucified on some other day than the fourteenth day of the month Nisan, and this when, as we have seen, all the other conditions were so minutely and distinctly fulfilled? that God would be strict in His requirement in regard to the less, and allow it to be violated in the greater? Believe it who will, who can. As God, He foresaw the crucifixion of Christ when He instituted the Passover; and surely He could

so arrange, or, at the least, take advantage of circumstances, as to secure the accomplishment of His designs. To claim otherwise would be to make Him less than God.

Christ, then, as our Passover, must have been crucified on the fourteenth day of the Jewish month Nisan; and His crucifixion is an evidence of the truth of divine revelation, the Jews thus being unwittingly made the instruments of preserving the symbolism of that paschal lamb, of which Christ was the Anti-type, and of fulfilling, even to the minutest particular, the predictions contained in the Old Testament concerning Him.

In further confirmation of the fact that our Saviour was crucified on the day that the Passover lamb was slain, we quote the remarks of Ryle. He says, in his "Expository Thoughts on the Gospel of Mark," p. 303, "We ought to mark the intentional connection between the time of the Jewish Passover and the time of Christ's death. We cannot doubt for a moment that it was not by chance, but by God's providential appoint-

ment, that our Lord was crucified in the Passover week, and on the very day that the Passover lamb was slain. It was meant to draw the attention of the Jewish nation to Him as the true lamb of God. It was meant to bring to their minds the true object and purpose of His death. Every sacrifice, no doubt, was intended to point the Jew onward to the one great sacrifice for sin which Christ offered; but none, certainly, was so striking a figure and type of our Lord's sacrifice as the slaying of the Passover lamb. It was pre-eminently an ordinance which was a school-master unto Christ (*Gal. iii. 24*). Never was there a type so full of meaning in the whole circle of Jewish ceremonies as the Passover was at its original institution.

“Did the Passover remind the Jew of the marvellous deliverance of his forefathers out of the land of Egypt when God slew the first-born? No doubt it did. But it was also meant to be a sign to him of the far greater redemption and deliverance from the bondage of sin, which was to be brought in by our Lord Jesus Christ.

“ Did the Passover remind the Jew, that, by the death of an innocent lamb, the families of his forefathers were once exempted from the death of their first-born? No doubt it did. But it was also meant to teach him the far higher truth, that the death of Christ on the cross was to be the life of the world.

“ Did the Passover remind the Jew that the sprinkling of blood on the door-posts of his forefathers' houses preserved them from the sword of the destroying angel? No doubt it did. But it was also meant to show him the far more important doctrine, that Christ's blood sprinkled on man's conscience” (*Heb. x. 22*) “cleanses it from all stain of guilt, and makes him safe from the wrath to come.

“ Did the Passover remind the Jew that none of his forefathers were safe from the destroying angel, in the night when he slew the first-born, unless he actually ate of the slain lamb? No doubt it did. But it was meant to guide his mind to the far higher lesson, that all who would receive benefit from

Christ's atonement must actually feed upon Him by faith, and receive Him into their hearts.

"Let us call these things to mind, and weigh them well. We shall then see a peculiar fitness and beauty in the time appointed by God for our Lord Jesus Christ's death on the cross."

As yet further evidence that our Saviour was crucified on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan, we have, —

1. The testimony of the Jews.

It is affirmed in the Talmud, that Jesus, "on the day before the Passover, was stoned and hung;" which, as the Passover was eaten on the 15th, must have been on the 14th of the month Nisan.

Again, it is said in the "Gemara" (*Sanhedrim*, vi. 2), that our Lord, having vainly endeavored during forty days to find an advocate, was sentenced, and, on the 14th of Nisan, stoned, and afterwards hanged. Other rabbinical authorities countenance the statement, that Christ was executed on the 14th of the month (see *Jost*, "*Judenth.*," i. 404).

Certainly it would seem that these rabbinical authorities, being Jews, and living so near the time of the crucifixion, would be competent witnesses. It has, however, been objected that their testimony is worthless, because (as it is claimed) "the difficulty of the Gospel narratives had been perceived long before these statements could have been written; and as the two opposite opinions on the chief question" (the one that our Saviour was crucified on the 14th, and the other that He was crucified on the 15th, of the month Nisan) "were both current, the Jewish writers might easily have taken the one or the other" ("Smith's Dictionary of the Bible," vol. iii. p. 2352, also "Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Cyclopædia," M'Clintock and Strong, vol. vii.).

This objection is not well taken. The fact that the two opposite opinions concerning the day of our Saviour's crucifixion were both current before the statements were written, so far from invalidating the Jewish testimony, would have the contrary effect, and is a strong

evidence in its favor. The Jewish rabbins had no interest in reconciling the New Testament narratives. They did not accept Christ as the Saviour, and, consequently, would have scouted the idea that He died as the great Antitype of the Passover; and therefore, if they had had no definite knowledge concerning the time of His death, if, as it is claimed, they might easily have taken up the one or the other opinion, it is plainly to be seen that Jewish prejudice would have impelled them to say that Christ was executed on the 15th of Nisan rather than on the *fourteenth*, the day when the paschal lamb was killed. Believing Christ to have been an impostor, they would scarcely have been disposed (with evidence, much less without) to state that Christ died on the 14th; for they were thus showing that He was not an impostor, but the true Antitype of the Passover, and virtually condemning themselves for not believing on Him. Again, if they had had no certain knowledge of the day of His death, there would not have been such an agreement. If, as it is

claimed, they might easily have adopted either view (aside from Jewish prejudice, which, as we have seen, would have impelled them to place His execution on the 15th and not on the 14th), it is altogether probable that some would have adopted one view, and some the other. The perfect agreement, therefore, in the different accounts, especially when we consider that they assert that He died on the 14th, shows conclusively that their statements were based on evidence.

It has also been said, that "this seems to be a case in which numbers do not add to the weight of the testimony" (see "*Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*," foot-notes, vol. iii. p. 2352). This is a very singular statement, easily made, but incapable of proof. If there had been a disagreement among them, the statement might be admitted; but even then the weight of evidence, aside from any other determining circumstance, would have rested with the majority. But as the same date, the 14th, is given, numbers do add to the weight of the testimony, because of their agreement.

As further evidence that our Saviour was crucified on the 14th of Nisan, we have, —

2. The testimony of the Greek church, of some of the Christian Fathers, and of distinguished commentators (*see* “*Introductory*,” pp. 15–19). In addition to the names there given, the attention of the reader is called to the following: —

Ryle says, in his “*Expository Thoughts on the Gospel of Mark*,” p. 303, “Our Lord was crucified in the Passover week, and on the very day that the Passover lamb was slain;” and that is clearly shown in *Exod. xii. 6* to have been on the 14th.

T. M. Preble, in his article, “Types relating to the Sabbath, the Wave Sheaf and the Wave Loaves,” says, “Christ was crucified on the fourteenth day of the first month, or moon, the day the paschal lamb was killed.”

The writer in the “*Bibliotheca Sacra*,” July, 1871, says, at the conclusion of his argument, p. 484, “According to all the four Gospels, the day of the Lord’s death was the *παρασκευή*, the 14th of Nisan;” though he claims

erroneously, as we have shown, that the 14th fell on Friday.

3. The hurried burial of our Saviour, that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the "high Sabbath" of the festival (*John xix.* 31), which, as we have seen, was the 15th of Nisan, shows that the day on which Christ was crucified (the day preceding the "high Sabbath," the 15th) was the fourteenth day of the month Nisan.

4. Our Saviour cannot have been crucified on the 15th; for that, as we have seen, was a Sabbath, a "day of holy convocation in which no servile work was to be done," and "more sacred than an ordinary Sabbath: so that if the 14th of Nisan happened to fall on Saturday, the ordinary Jewish Sabbath, that Sabbath might be made a day of preparation for it." Knowing how sacredly the Jews regarded and observed the ordinary Sabbath; and that they charged the Saviour with breaking it, because He had healed on the Sabbath day, it is not to be presumed that they would have taken Him prisoner, brought

Him before the high priest Caiaphas, and tried Him before the Sanhedrim, spit upon Him, buffeted Him, crowned Him with thorns, mocked Him, and then led Him away to Pilate to be condemned and crucified, on Friday, the fifteenth day of the month Nisan, the "great" or "high Sabbath" of the festival. In further proof of this, Tholuck says, in his "Commentary on the Gospel of John," pp. 314, 315, "Movers, for the most part, indeed, after Lightfoot, has collected most diligently the various examples. When, now, he shows from the Talmud, that it was forbidden on the Sabbath to bear arms, to hold court, to carry wood, to go through the streets with spices; and when we see the servants of the high priest, on the night in which our Saviour was betrayed, bearing arms; the high priest sitting in judgment; the condemned persons bearing the cross; Nicodemus bringing no less than one hundred pounds of spice, — who can persuade himself that all this occurred on the first day of the high festival?"

An attempt has been made to show that the "high Sabbath" of the festival, or "day of holy convocation," was less sacred than the ordinary Sabbath; whereas, we have shown, from the testimony of the writer in the "Bibliotheca Sacra," July, 1871, that it was the reverse, being so much more sacred than the ordinary Sabbath, that, when the ordinary Sabbath fell on the day before, it might be made a day of preparation for it. But because it is said, in Exod. xii. 16, "No manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat," the claim is set up, that, on the first and last days of the Passover, permission was given to prepare food, which, it is claimed, was not allowed on the ordinary Sabbath.

In answer to this, we say, that, in other passages of Scripture, the language in regard to the "days of holy convocation," and in regard to the ordinary Sabbath, is similar. Compare Lev. xxiii. 7; Num. xxviii. 18, 25; with Exod. xx. 10; xxxi. 14, 15; xxxv. 2. If it be said that the word "*servile*" is used

in the prohibition in regard to the "days of holy convocation," and is not used in regard to the ordinary Sabbath, we refer the reader to the following passages, which have reference to "days of holy convocation," in which the word "servile" is omitted, and the language used is precisely the same as that which is used in regard to the ordinary Sabbath. "Ye shall do no work in that same day" (*Lev. xxiii. 28*). "Ye shall do no manner of work" (*Lev. xxiii. 31*). It will be noticed here that the command is absolute and exclusive, — "no manner of work;" and were it not for the permission given in *Exod. xii. 16*, "Save that which every man must eat," we should understand from it that every kind of work was forbidden. The command in every sense is as strict and as positive as can be found anywhere in regard to the ordinary Sabbath. Let it also be borne in mind, that, though commands in regard to the "days of convocation" are given elsewhere, the only place in which the expression, "Save that which every man must eat," is found, is *Exod.*

xii. 16 ; and yet, though not mentioned in the other passages, it must evidently have been understood : and so, though not mentioned in the commands in regard to the ordinary Sabbath, it must have been understood ; for the Jews ate on the Sabbath as on other days. They were not allowed to kindle a fire for the preparation of food on the ordinary Sabbath (*Exod. xxxv. 3 ; Num. xv. 32-36*) ; and there is no reason to believe that they were allowed to do it on the “ days of holy convocation,” or “ high Sabbaths ” of the festival. The command applied in the one case equally as in the other. The command that they should “ do no work, save that which every man must eat,” had reference to the bringing of the food together, and setting it in order upon the table ; to preparing or arranging the food, but not cooking it ; for this *necessary* arranging of the food would involve a certain amount of work : and it is clear that this was permitted on the ordinary Sabbath. Indeed, it was customary for them to give feasts and to entertain guests on the Sabbath day ; for we

read (*Luke xiv.* 1) that our Lord dined with a chief Pharisee on the Sabbath. That it was a feast for invited guests is evident from the Saviour and others being present, as will be seen from the third verse: "For Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees," showing plainly that a company was present. Now, when we consider that this was at the house of a chief Pharisee, and that the Pharisees were exceedingly strict in the outward performance of religious duty, and in observing all the ordinances and commandments of the law, and that Christ (who, as God, was the giver of the law, and the embodiment of divine purity) did not rebuke the Pharisee, but gave the sanction of His authority by gracing the occasion with His presence, we are forced to the conclusion, that there was in it no violation of the Jewish law, and therefore that it must have been permitted. And hence it follows, that, as the Jews were permitted to give entertainment on the Sabbath to invited guests, it must have been lawful for them to do the work necessary to arrange the food.

Further, we read (*Matt. xii.* 1-8 ; *Mark ii.* 23-28 ; *Luke vi.* 1-5), that, when the Saviour and His disciples plucked the ears of corn and did eat on the Sabbath day, the Pharisees charged Him with doing that which was not lawful, evidently, because they regarded the act as a species of reaping, which was forbidden (*Exod. xxxiv.* 21). But the answer of Jesus on that occasion, shows that even that was permitted in case of necessity (for the reason that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath); that in extreme cases it was not violating the spirit of the divine command in regard to the Sabbath, to *procure* food even, on the Sabbath day. Again, it was lawful, on the ordinary Sabbath, to perform the temple services, such as preparing the sacrifices (*see Num. xxviii.* 9, 10 ; *Matt. xii.* 5). It was lawful also to perform circumcision on that day (*John vii.* 23). Thus it will be seen that the ordinary Jewish Sabbath was not more sacred than the "high" Sabbath of the Passover.

Again (because there is a passage in the

“Mishna” (*Sanhedrim*, *x.* 4) in which it is commanded that an elder not submitting to the voice of the Sanhedrim should be kept at Jerusalem till one of the three great festivals, and then executed, in accordance with Deut. xvii. 12, 13), an attempt has been made to show that our Saviour may have been crucified on the 15th of Nisan, the “day of holy convocation.”

It will be noticed, that, in the passage referred to, no particular day of the feast is specified on which this execution should take place; and, because no particular day is mentioned, it has been claimed that it may have been on the “day of holy convocation.” This is the language of those who advance this argument: “Nothing is said to lead us to infer that the execution could not take place on one of the “days of holy convocation” (see *Smith's “Dictionary of the Bible,”* vol. iii. p. 2351; also “*Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Cyclopædia,*” *M'Clintock and Strong,* vol. vii.). The inference derived from this is simply negative, and is an exceedingly slender

foundation on which to base an argument. It is sufficient to say in answer to it, that there was no necessity for saying that the execution should not take place on the "high Sabbath" of the festival. That would be understood. From what we know of the sacredness with which the Jews regarded even the ordinary Sabbath, much more the "high" Sabbath of the festival, in which, by the divine command, "No servile work was to be done," it must have been understood necessarily, that the execution should take place, not on the "high" Sabbath, but on one of the ordinary week-days of the festival. It will be seen, therefore, that the attempted argument from the "Mishna" is fallacious.

But it is said again (*Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible,"* vol. iii. p. 2351), "We have better proof than either the 'Mishna' or the 'Gemara' can afford, that the Jews did not hesitate, in the time of the Roman domination, to carry arms and to apprehend a prisoner on a solemn feast-day. We find them at the Feast of Tabernacles on the 'great day of the

feast' sending out officers to take our Lord, and rebuking them for not bringing Him (*John vii. 32-45*). St. Peter also was seized during the Passover (*Acts xii. 3, 4*)." And yet again, "The reason alleged by the rulers for not apprehending Jesus was not the sanctity of the festival, but the fear of an uproar among the multitude which was assembled (*Matt. xxvi. 5*)." We have quoted the argument in full, that, in replying to it, the reader may see we are doing it no injustice.

It will be noticed that all that is claimed here is, that "the Jews did not hesitate to carry arms and to apprehend a prisoner on a solemn feast-day," which is a very different thing from trying a prisoner, condemning and crucifying him, on that day; and, if the former could be proved, it would by no means prove the latter. But it is not proved. The argument from *John vii. 32-48* is not conclusive. John does not say that they sent the officers to arrest him on the "great" day of the feast. That it was during the feast is evident, but the day is not specified. From *John vii. 30*

it would appear that they sought to take Him, and from John vii. 32 that they sent the officers for that purpose, some time (a day, or it may have been several days) before.

And in Acts xii. 3, 4, nothing is said about Peter's having been arrested on the feast-day. It reads, "Then were the days of unleavened bread," implying simply that he was arrested during the festival. From aught that appears, it may have been on any one of the days.

But, if we admit all that is claimed, it furnishes us with no evidence that our Saviour was crucified on the "high" Sabbath of the festival.

Probably (though we have no evidence of it) they did arrest criminals, if necessary, on the "high" Sabbaths of the festivals; and it is also probable that they apprehended criminals, if necessary, on the ordinary Sabbath. We infer this from what we know to be customary among other nations. And, if they arrested criminals, the officers must have carried arms; as arms would be necessary for their protection in dealing with such desper-

ate characters. It is customary, under all governments, if necessary, to apprehend those who are guilty of high crimes on the Sabbath day. Otherwise they might have opportunity to escape. But, because, in certain instances, men are arrested on the Sabbath, it by no means follows that the courts are held, and they are tried, condemned, and executed, on the Sabbath. Nor does it follow, because there is a possibility that the Jews may have apprehended criminals on the "high" Sabbaths of the festivals, that they spit upon Jesus, buffeted, scourged, and mocked Him, crowned Him with thorns, tried Him, condemned Him, bore His cross, and crucified Him, on that day. Knowing how strictly they observed it, we cannot conceive it possible.

5. As a certain writer has said, "Another passage (*Luke xviii.* 26) shows that the 15th of Nisan cannot have been the day on which our Saviour was crucified. We read there that Simon, a Cyrenian, was coming out of the field (*ἀπ' ἀγροῦ*), when he was forced to bear the cross. Now, a man returning from a walk is

not said to be coming ἀπ' ἀγροῦ. The expression means, rather, 'coming from his labor:' and no one ventured to perform field-labor on the 'high' Sabbath of the Passover; though he might do so on the 14th, the day of preparation."

6. The day on which our Saviour was crucified is called the "day of preparation." That it was not the day of preparation for Saturday, the ordinary Jewish Sabbath, is evident; because, while John speaks of it as the "day of preparation for the Sabbath," he also speaks of it (*John xix.* 14) as the "day of preparation for the Passover." ἡν δὲ παρασκευῆ τοῦ πάσχα, and the term "Passover," here must apply to the Passover Supper, which was eaten on the beginning of the 15th of Nisan, and not to the Jewish Sabbath that occurred during the Passover festival. The evangelists, then, in speaking of the day on which our Saviour was crucified as the "day of preparation for the Sabbath," did not mean the day of preparation for the ordinary Sabbath, but the day of preparation for the "high" Sab-

bath of the festival, the "day of holy convocation," the 15th. To quote the language of another ("*Bibliotheca Sacra*," July, 1871, p. 473), "There is no explaining away the fact that the rabbinical ערב הפסח, the 14th of Nisan, is here meant." Unless we are ready to charge the evangelist with using expressions which could not but lead his readers astray, we must assume that he placed the crucifixion on the 14th of Nisan." And the writer adds, "John xviii. 28, where we read, 'Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover,' ἵνα μὴ μαιθῶσιν ἀλλ' ἵνα φάγωσι τὸ πάσχα, leads to the same conclusion."

Again, he says, p. 474, "The Jews avoided the prætorium, in order that they might be able to eat the paschal lamb in the approaching night, which began the 15th of Nisan. Consequently the day on which they observed such precaution was the 14th, the day of the crucifixion of Christ." And he adds, "Ac-

ording to John, Jesus was condemned (*xviii.* 29), crucified (*xix.* 14), and buried (*xix.* 31, 42) on the 14th of Nisan."

The eating of the Passover, in John *xviii.* 28, was the eating of the paschal lamb, and not the feast of unleavened bread, which was to be observed on each of the seven days of the Passover festival. This is determined plainly by the use of the word *defiled* ("lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover"), as will be seen from the obvious fact that the feast of unleavened bread was to be observed by all the Jews, clean or unclean.

The partaking of it did not depend on Levitical purity; for the impure not only might, but must partake of unleavened bread during those days. To eat other bread was forbidden, on pain of being destroyed from among the people (*Exod. xii.* 15). The use of the word *defiled*, therefore, in this passage, makes it certain that the Passover referred to was a Passover meal which was allowed only to the pure, which can have been no

other than the eating of the paschal lamb ; and, as it was always eaten on the beginning of the 15th, and they had not eaten it on the day that our Saviour was crucified, it follows, necessarily, that He must have been crucified on the 14th, and that the day of His crucifixion was the preparation for the Passover, which was eaten the following evening, the 15th, and cannot have been the preparation for the ordinary Jewish Sabbath, or Saturday.

But here we are met with an objection. It was in the morning when they would not go into Pilate's judgment-hall, the prætorium, "lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover ;" and the defilement thus contracted would cease at evening (*Lev. xxii. 5, 6*). Therefore it is said, that the Passover referred to, which the defilement contracted by going into the house of a heathen would prevent them from eating, must have been a Passover which was to be eaten on that day ; and as the paschal lamb was not eaten until the even, and after the following day had commenced, this cannot

have been the Passover to eat which, they refrained from defiling themselves. This objection, to one who has given but little attention to the subject, would appear to be a strong one.

We have already shown that the defilement spoken of, cannot have had reference to the ordinary Passover meal, or the eating of unleavened bread ; for the reason, that, if a person during any of the seven days of the Passover should become unclean, he was, nevertheless, required to eat of it, and was forbidden to eat leavened bread during any of the days of the Passover, on the penalty of being cut off from his people. Causes of uncleanness occurred during the Passover festival, as at other times ; and there was not only a liability of it, but uncleanness must have actually occurred in many instances. The case, therefore, is not hypothetical ; and it follows necessarily, that, since even the unclean were to eat of the feast of unleavened bread, which was continued through the week of the Passover, the defilement which they feared to contract, “ but

that they might eat the Passover," cannot have had any reference to that, but must have referred in some sense to the Passover supper, or eating of the paschal lamb, which occurred on the evening of the 15th of Nisan. The sense in which it applies, is obvious.

The reader is to bear in mind that the paschal lamb was to be killed "between the two evenings;" that is, between three and five o'clock on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan, and that it was in the morning of that day, the 14th, when they would not go into the prætorium, "lest they should be defiled." As this was in the morning, and the lamb was to be slain in the afternoon, the reason why they would not defile themselves is apparent. They would have become unclean, and consequently could not have sacrificed it (*Lev. xxii. 3. See also Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible," vol. iv. p. 3350*). And, not being permitted to sacrifice it, they could not have eaten it in the evening, or on the beginning of the 15th of Nisan, but would have been required to wait until the "fifteenth day of the second month"

(*Num. ix.* 6–12). The argument, therefore, is conclusive, that the “day of preparation,” on which our Saviour was crucified, and on the morning of which they would not go into the judgment-hall, “lest they be defiled,” was not the day of preparation for the Jewish Sabbath, or Saturday, but, as it reads, “the day of preparation for the Passover;” that is, the fourteenth day of the month Nisan, when the paschal lamb was to be killed.

Further argument to show that the “day of preparation,” on which our Saviour was crucified, was the day of preparation for the Passover, and not the day of preparation for the Jewish Sabbath, is unnecessary; and yet I cannot forbear alluding in this connection to *Matt. xxvii.* 62–64, “Now the next day that followed the day of the preparation,” etc. It will be seen from the context, that the coming of the chief priests and Pharisees to Pilate, to request that the sepulchre be made sure, was after our Saviour had been laid in the sepulchre; and we have shown (*chap. iv. pp.* 126–137) that our Saviour was not laid in the

grave until after six o'clock, which was the beginning of the day after that on which He was crucified. So that the coming of the chief priests and Pharisees to Pilate, which, according to Matthew, was "the next day that followed the day of preparation," must have been on the day after that on which our Saviour was crucified.

Now, it will be admitted that the Sabbath was more important than the day of preparation for it; and if the day on which our Saviour was crucified had been the day of preparation for the Sabbath, the apostle, instead of saying, "the next day that followed the day of preparation," would, in all probability, have said, "the next day, the Sabbath," making the Sabbath the more prominent, because it would have been the more important; but it being the day of preparation for the Passover, the day on which the paschal lamb was killed, he naturally makes it emphatic, no doubt for this reason: that it might be clearly seen that Christ, as our Passover, died on the "day of preparation," the day that

the paschal lamb was killed; that the type was fulfilled in the Antitype.

7. There is yet another passage in evidence that our Saviour was crucified on the 14th of Nisan; viz., "After two days was the feast of the Passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take Him by craft, and put Him to death. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar of the people" (*Mark xiv.* 1, 2).

The writer in the "Bibliotheca Sacra," July, 1871, whom I have previously quoted, in commenting on this passage, says (*p.* 481), "If the wish of the chief priests, that it should not fall on the feast-day, had not been fulfilled, and Jesus had been taken prisoner on the 15th of Nisan, why should Mark mention it at all? In that case, he would surely either have passed it over altogether, or have stated that it was not fulfilled. If, on the contrary, it were fulfilled, as the evangelist plainly means us to understand, then Jesus was not taken prisoner, and therefore not

crucified on the 15th of Nisan; for, even according to Mark, He was crucified on the same day on which He was taken prisoner. This passage from Mark, therefore, is decidedly in the way of our regarding the 15th of Nisan as the day of the crucifixion."

Thus it will be seen, that the fact that our Saviour was crucified on the 14th of Nisan, not on the 15th, is established, our opponents being witnesses; for the foregoing, and several preceding quotations, are taken from an article written in the endeavor to prove that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, the writer assuming that Friday was not the 15th but the 14th day of the month Nisan, a position we have shown in the preceding chapter to be contrary to the fact, and in support of which (though reasoning so acutely on other points) he has given us no evidence.

We have now shown that Friday, in the year that our Saviour was crucified, was the fifteenth day of the Jewish month Nisan, and that our Saviour was crucified on the 14th. It follows, therefore, that, since Friday was

the 15th, and He was crucified on the 14th, He cannot have been crucified on Friday, but must have been crucified on Thursday, that being the 14th.



STATEMENT.

IF our Saviour had been crucified on Friday, He could have lain in the grave only on Saturday and but two nights, — Friday night and Saturday night, — and could not be said to have been three nights in the grave, and to have risen on the third day. He could have been in the grave but two nights instead of three, and must have risen on the second, and not on the third day. But, having been crucified on Thursday, He lay in the grave three nights, — Thursday night, Friday night, and Saturday night, — and all day Friday and Saturday, and a part of Sunday, and rose on the third day, according to the Scriptures.



IV.

OUR SAVIOUR'S CRUCIFIXION ON THURSDAY
MAKES HIM TO HAVE LAIN IN THE GRAVE
THREE NIGHTS, AND TO HAVE RISEN ON
THE THIRD DAY, ACCORDING TO THE SCRIP-
TURES.

IF our Saviour had been crucified on Friday, He could have lain in the grave only two nights and one day,¹ whereas it is said that He should be "three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (*Matt. xii. 40*).

The language is specific. The words, moreover, were uttered by the Saviour, who, by reason of His deity, was omniscient. He fore-

¹ When it is said, "If our Saviour had been crucified on Friday, He could have lain in the grave only two nights and one day," it will be understood, that, by the expression "one day" the daylight of Saturday is meant, and that this is consistent with the statement that "He must have risen on the second day," because, according to the Jewish reckoning, from evening to evening, Saturday night was a part of the second day, or Sunday.

knew the controversy that would arise in regard to the interval between His death and resurrection; that the term "three days and three nights" would be understood literally; and that, if the period between His death and resurrection did not correspond, it would produce scepticism and cavilling among the enemies of the truth. He was "God manifest in the flesh," the living embodiment of the truth, and therefore could not have used language (with reference to any event, and especially an event so important) which was evidently liable to mislead.

When He said "three days and three nights," the scribes and Pharisees must have understood Him literally. In the absence of any explanation (and no explanation is given), they must have understood Him to mean that precisely which the language was naturally intended to convey. The efforts, made by commentators, to explain it differently, have been to get over a difficulty, — square it to a particular theory. Their explanations are unnatural and forced.

If our Saviour had been crucified on Friday, He could have lain in the grave but two nights — Friday night and Saturday night — and but one day.

In no sense could His assertion that He should be “three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” be accounted for. This, on the false assumption that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, is a grave difficulty. It puts Him in the false position of uttering that which could not have been true; of making a false assertion, and of making it with a full knowledge of the fact, — a thought which is not to be entertained for a moment. Such an assertion would be impossible from the lips of Him of whom only, it can be said that He was sinless, and who Himself said, “I am the truth” (*John xiv.* 6), and again, “For this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth” (*John xviii.* 37). We say, therefore, with the apostle, “Let God be true, but every man a liar” (*Rom. iii.* 4).

The advocates of the false theory that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, involving, as

a necessary consequence, the fact that He could have been in the grave but two nights and one day, say, "This computation is, however, strictly in accordance with the Jewish mode of reckoning," and give as a reason, that, "if it had not been, the Jews would have understood it, and would have charged our Saviour with being a false prophet; for it was well known to them that He had spoken this prophecy," and that, as "such a charge was never made, it is plain that what was meant by the prediction, was accomplished." They make no attempt to prove that our Saviour was crucified on Friday. That which should have been proved, being taken for granted, they make the basis of the argument. Their inference is, that there must be some way of reconciling the assertion with the assumed fact; that it must have been understood, according to the Jewish reckoning, to mean, not, as it says, "three days and three nights," but two nights and a part of two days, or else "the Jews would have charged our Saviour with being a false prophet." A

theory is set up, and the argument founded upon it. But the premise is wrong, and it leads to a false conclusion.

It may be said here, by way of explanation, that our Saviour was not in the grave three full days. The assertion that "He should rise again on the third day" (*Matt. xvi. 21; xvii. 23; xx. 19; Mark x. 34; Luke ix. 22; xviii. 33; xxiv. 7*) determines this. The two expressions, that He should be "three days in the heart of the earth," and that He should "rise again the third day," are parallel. The one limits or explains the other. If He rose on "the third day," He must have risen before the third day was completed. There is no deception, and there can be no misunderstanding here, because the use of the expression "the third day" in all these passages explains fully what our Saviour meant by the expression "three days;" but by no possibility can two nights and a part of two days be made to mean three. If the assumption that Christ was crucified on Friday had been true, "the Jews would have known it:"

and as He had said that He should be "three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (which in that case could not have been true), they would have "charged Him with being a false prophet;" and the fact that they made no such charge, on account of that saying, goes most emphatically to show that His assertion was literally true, and that He was not crucified on Friday.

Or, to put it in another way, we have shown that our Saviour was crucified on the 14th of Nisan, which, in that year, fell on Thursday; and, therefore, His assertion that He should be "three days and three nights in the heart of the earth," and "rise again the third day," was literally true: and the Jews could have had no reason to charge Him with being a false prophet.

It is said, again, that "it was a maxim among the Jews, in computing time, that a part of a day was to be received as the whole;" and, in proof of this, we are referred to 2 Chron. x. 5, 12; Gen. xlii. 17, 18; Esth. iv. 16, compared with Esth. v. 1. In 2 Chron.

x. 5 Rehoboam said to the people of Israel, "Come again to me after *three days*;" and in the twelfth verse we read, that "Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the *third day*, as the king bade, saying, Come to me on the third day." In Gen. xlii. 17 Joseph is represented as putting his brethren in prison when they had come down to Egypt to buy corn. "And he put them all together into ward *three days*:" and in the eighteenth verse, "Joseph said unto them the *third day*, This do, and live;" and this, taken with the context, is proof that he then released them.

In Esth. iv. 16 Queen Esther desires that the Jews in Shushan should "neither eat nor drink *three days*, night or day," and declares that she and her maidens would fast likewise, and so would she go in unto the king. And in the fifth chapter and first verse we learn that she did this on the *third day*. These are all the passages; and what do they prove? Only that the expressions "after three days" and "on the third day" are equivalent. So that when our Saviour taught His disciples,

that "after three days He should rise again" (*Mark viii.* 31), and again, that "the third day He should rise again" (*Mark x.* 34), the passages are found to be in harmony; and, by His resurrection on the third day, His declaration was fulfilled. But it by no means proves that the expression "three nights," as used by our Saviour, is to be interpreted to mean but two.

It is said, again, that "the term 'three days and three nights' is a round number, according to the popular mode of Hebrew reckoning; although Christ lay only one day and two nights in the grave." It is claimed, that, if it be necessary to make good the "three days and three nights," it must be done by having recourse to the Jewish method of computing time; and that in the Jerusalem "Talmud" (cited by Lightfoot) it is said that a day and night together make a *vvχθίμερον*, and that any part of such period is counted as the whole. But, unfortunately for this argument, the expression is not *vvχθίμερον*, as in 2 Cor. xi. 25, where St. Paul says, "A night and a day have

I been in the deep," but *τρεις ἡμέρας* and *τρεις νύκτας*, three days and three nights. Instead of resorting to these expedients, how much better to take the passage literally as it reads; and the only reason for not doing this, is the vain endeavor to make it coincide with the falsely assumed theory that our Saviour was crucified on Friday.

But if we were to admit all that is claimed, that, "according to the Hebrew mode of reckoning, a day and night together make a *νυκθήμερον*, and that any part of such period is counted as the whole," and that the *τρεις ἡμέρας* and *τρεις νύκτας* in this instance were to be reckoned as though they were *νυκθήμερα*, it would not relieve us of the difficulty; for even then our Saviour must have lain in the grave some part of each one of the three days to have it counted as the whole: whereas, if he had been crucified on Friday, we should have no evidence that He lay in the grave more than parts of two; and, therefore, on the above assumption, it must be reckoned as two days, and not as three.

His death did not take place until after the ninth hour, or three o'clock in the afternoon (*Matt. xxvii.* 46-50). This will be seen also from Mark, who says (*Mark xv.* 34), "At the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and, after that, he says, in the thirty-seventh verse, "And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost." Here it will be seen, that, according to Mark, it was the ninth hour, or three o'clock, when our Saviour uttered the first cry. After that, as we learn from the thirty-sixth verse, "One ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave Him to drink," and after that "He cried, and gave up the ghost." He must, therefore, have died after the "ninth hour," or three o'clock. Probably not long after, but how long we have no means of determining. After that, the Jews besought Pilate that the legs of those who had been crucified, might be broken, and that they might be taken away (*John xix.* 31). Pilate's

permission was obtained, and word was brought to the soldiers. And, accordingly, we read, "Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs: but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water" (*John xix.* 33–35). All this, which occurred subsequently to our Saviour's death (the going of the Jews to Pilate, obtaining his permission, and carrying the information to the soldiers), must have occupied a considerable time. From which, we perceive, that our Saviour could not have been taken down from the cross, until very nearly the close of the day.

But, before He was taken down, Joseph went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus (*Matt. xxvii.* 57, 58; *Mark xv.* 42, 43; *Luke xxiii.* 50–52). In going to Pilate, he went probably to the prætorium, or governor's house; and (whether this was the palace of Herod, or, more probably, the fortress Antonia,

and whether the place of Christ's crucifixion was that assigned by Christian tradition, or not), since it was without the walls of the city, it must have been some distance between the two places. And as Pilate, before giving permission, "called to him," that is, sent for, the centurion, to ascertain if Christ was already dead, this distance must have been travelled over four times,—twice by Joseph in going and returning, once by the messenger sent by Pilate, and once by the centurion. The time thus occupied, and the time previously occupied by the Jews in obtaining Pilate's permission that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away, and in carrying the information to the soldiers, together with the time occupied in taking down the body of Jesus, wrapping it in linen with the spices, and laying it in the sepulchre, must have brought it (even if we had no other evidence) to six o'clock, or near it, which would have been the beginning of Saturday; for the Jews reckoned their day from evening to evening: and the legal day, in the time of

our Saviour, commenced at six o'clock in the afternoon.

The night, at that time, among the Jews, was divided into four watches, a fourth watch having been introduced by the Romans. All these watches are distinctly mentioned in Mark xiii. 35: "At even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning." Horne says, in his "Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures" (*vol. ii. chap. iv. p. 73*), "The first watch was at even, and continued from six till nine; the second commenced at nine, and ended at twelve, or midnight; the third watch lasted from twelve to three; and the morning watch closed at six." Now, as the first watch began at six, that was the beginning of their night; and, as the Jews reckoned their day from evening to evening, it was the beginning of their legal day. The same is manifest also from the Jews dividing their day into hours. Thus, seven o'clock was the first hour, eight the second, nine the third, and so on; and six was always the twelfth hour, showing that six

o'clock ended the legal day, and of course began the next (*see Horne's "Introduction," vol. ii. p. 72*).

The natural day of the Jews varied in length according to the season, but not the civil.

The earliest mention of hours in the sacred writings is in Daniel; hence it is believed that the Jews derived their method of dividing the time from the Babylonians during the captivity: and, as the Babylonians reckoned the natural day from sunrise to sunset, so probably did the Jews. But while the Jews, like the Babylonians, reckoned their natural day from sunrise to sunset, their civil or legal day, as we have seen, which we must follow in our reckoning, was from six o'clock in the afternoon of one day to six o'clock in the afternoon of the next, and ended sometimes before and sometimes after the natural day, according to the season.

We have now shown the *probability* that the body of our Saviour was not laid in the grave until after six o'clock, and that, consequently, if He had been crucified on Friday,

it could not have been laid in the grave until after the Sabbath, or Saturday, had commenced.

We now proceed to show that this was not only a probability, but a certainty; that the body of Jesus was not laid in the grave until after six o'clock; and we have the clearest evidence on this point. "When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple. He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus" (*Matt. xxvii. 57, 58*). "And now when the even was come," etc. (*Mark xv. 42*). In both instances, the original word translated "even" is *ὀψίας*. This, in its proper or literal sense, Robinson says (*"New Testament Greek Lexicon"*), signifies "late evening." The Jews reckoned two evenings, — the first when the sun began to go down, or twelve o'clock m., and the second at six o'clock, or sunset. The second, therefore, was the "late evening:" and even if it were to be claimed that *ὀψίας*, "late evening," may have been used to denote the former evening, it is certain, that

cannot have been its meaning here ; for Christ did not die until three hours or more after the first evening had commenced. It must, then, be taken in its customary sense of "late evening," or second evening, which began at six o'clock.

That the "late" or second evening began at six o'clock is beyond question. The only different opinion from this is that held by the Karaites and the Samaritans, that it began at sunset, and was the interval between sunset and dark ; and this weighs nothing against the authority of the Pharisees and the Rabbinists, that it began at six o'clock. But to adopt the opinion of the Karaites and the Samaritans would bring it still later, and show that Joseph did not go to Pilate to beg the body of Jesus until after sunset, which is manifestly incorrect ; as in that case they could not have complied with the requirement of the Jewish law, that the bodies should be taken down the same day (*Deut. xxi. 23*).

That the body of Jesus was laid in the grave after six o'clock is seen, if possible, yet

more clearly from the account as given by Luke: "This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on" (*Luke xxiii.* 52-54). The word here translated "drew on" is ἐπέφωσκε, "was beginning." The last sentence, therefore, in the original, reads, "And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning." That this is the correct rendering will be seen by referring to Robinson's "New Testament Greek Lexicon," where he refers directly to this passage, and says, "beginning at sunset," "to begin." The Revised New Testament also confirms this in its translation of this passage. After giving the translation according to the King James version, "and the Sabbath drew on," the marginal reading is "Gr. began to dawn." Now, the verb "dawn," according to Webster, has two meanings, — "to begin to grow light," and "to

begin to appear." That the Sabbath did not "begin to dawn," in the first sense of beginning to grow light, is apparent; for it does not begin to grow light at six o'clock in the evening. The only sense in which the Sabbath could "begin to dawn" at that time was in the sense of "began to appear," of Webster's second definition, which, as the Sabbath began at six o'clock, was its true meaning. The same distinctions appear also in the noun "dawn," *n.* 1. The break of day; the first appearance of light in the morning.

"2. First opening or expansion; first appearance; beginning; rise. 'The dawn of time.' — *Thomson*" (WEBSTER). The same verb is used also in Matt. xxviii. 1, and is thus translated: "As it began to dawn towards the first day of the week," from which we understand that the dawn of day, or the beginning of daylight, was apparent. This passage in Luke, therefore, shows that the time when the body of Jesus was laid in the sepulchre was when the Sabbath was beginning, which must have been after six o'clock, and confirms the pas-

sages in Matthew and Mark, that it was in the "late" or second evening, that is, after six o'clock, and consequently after the Sabbath had commenced. And ἐπέφωσκε (the word translated "drew on") signifies here the beginning, not of the natural, but of the legal Sabbath. It is clear, then, that the body of Jesus was not laid in the grave until after six o'clock, or the beginning of the day after that on which He was crucified, and hence, that, if He had been crucified on Friday, He could have lain in the grave only on Saturday and a part of Sunday, and must have risen on the second day, since He rose on the first day of the week. We do not get even the parts of three days, which have been claimed.

But it may be objected, that, according to the Jewish law, the person hanged was to be taken down the same day: "His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day" (*Deut. xxi. 23*). Again, it is said, "The Jews, therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on

the Sabbath day (for that Sabbath day was a high day), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away" (*John xix.* 31).

We answer that Josephus, who is good authority for the customs of the Jews in his day, and who lived but a few years after Christ, has taught us, by inference from the Jewish practice, that this had reference, not to the civil, but to the natural, day; that the bodies of those who were hanged were to be buried before sunset. For he says, "The Jews used to take so much care of the burial of men, that they took down the bodies of those that were condemned and crucified, and buried them before the going down of the sun (*"Wars of the Jews," book iv. chap. v. sect. 2*). Now, as our Saviour was crucified on the 14th of the month Nisan, answering to about the 1st of our April, the sun did not set in Palestine until a quarter-past six; hence, though not buried until after six o'clock, He may still have been buried before sunset, after the beginning of the legal day, and yet before the close of the natural.

We have now shown that our Saviour was not buried until after six o'clock on the day on which He was crucified, which was the beginning of the day after; and that, if He had been crucified on Friday, He could not have been laid in the grave until after the commencement of the legal Saturday; and, therefore, as He rose on the morning of the first day of the week, He could have been in the grave but two nights — Friday night and Saturday night — and one day, Saturday, and must have risen on the second, and not on the third, day.

We thus perceive the difficulties in the way of explaining the assertion of our Saviour in regard to the "three nights and three days" consistently with the falsely assumed theory, that He was crucified on Friday.

Whereas, on the theory that He was crucified on Thursday (which we have shown to be correct), He lay in the grave Thursday night, Friday night, and Saturday night, "three nights," and (as He was buried soon after six o'clock on the beginning of Friday) all day

Friday and Saturday and a part of Sunday (Saturday night being a part of Sunday according to the Jews' mode of reckoning), and rose literally on the third day, according to the Scriptures. It will be seen, therefore, that the Saviour's crucifixion on Thursday fulfils every condition.

STATEMENT.

IF our Saviour had been crucified on Friday, He could have lain in the grave only one Sabbath; and we have no satisfactory explanation of Matthew's use of the plural *Σαββάτων*, Ὅψι δὲ *Σαββάτων*, "the end of the Sabbaths" (*Matt. xxviii. 1*).



V.

OUR SAVIOUR'S CRUCIFIXION ON THURSDAY ACCOUNTS FOR MATTHEW'S USE OF THE PLURAL ΣΑΒΒΑΤΩΝ.

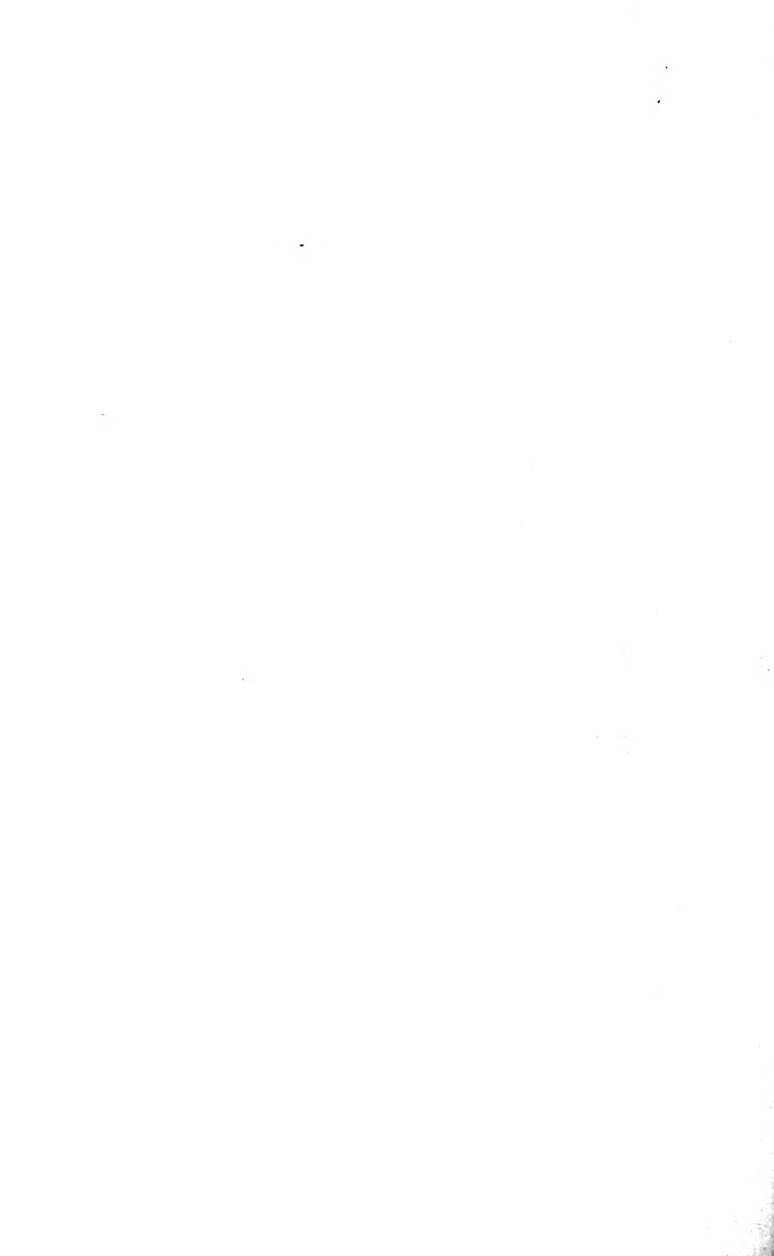
WE have shown in chap. ii. that Friday was the 15th of Nisan, and that, being the 15th, it was the "great" or "high" Sabbath of the festival. Now, as our Saviour was crucified, as we have shown in chap. iii., on the 14th of Nisan, which was Thursday, He lay in the grave on Friday, the 15th of Nisan, the "high" Sabbath of the festival, and on Saturday, the ordinary Jewish Sabbath, — two Sabbaths; and Matthew might appropriately say, Ὅψε δὲ Σαββάτων, "at the end of the Sabbaths," or, more correctly, "after the Sabbaths."

Whereas, if our Saviour had been crucified on Friday, only one Sabbath would have intervened (*see chap. ii. pp.38-45. Also chap. ix. pp.228-232*).



STATEMENT.

IF our Saviour had been crucified on Friday, the "six days" and the "two days before the Passover" could not have been explained consistently with the general belief of the church, and the generally expressed opinion of commentators in regard to them.



VI.

OUR SAVIOUR'S CRUCIFIXION ON THURSDAY EXPLAINS THE "SIX DAYS" AND THE "TWO DAYS BEFORE THE PASSOVER" CONSISTENTLY WITH THE GENERALLY EXPRESSED OPINION OF COMMENTATORS IN REGARD TO THEM.

WE have shown in chap. ii. that the "six days before the Passover" (*John xii. 1*) and the "two days before the Passover" (*Matt. xxvi. 2; Mark xiv. 1*) were "six days" and "two days" before the feast-day, or day on which the paschal lamb was eaten, which was the 15th of Nisan; and that, according to the general belief of the church, and the generally expressed opinion of commentators, the "six days before the Passover," when Jesus arrived at Bethany, fell on Saturday, and the "two days before the Passover" fell on Wednesday: the only difference being, that, in regard to the first, some have claimed that

He arrived at Bethany late on Friday evening, and others, that He arrived in the daylight of Saturday; and that, in regard to the second, some have asserted that Jesus uttered the saying, "two days before the Passover," late on Tuesday evening, and others, that He said it in the daylight of Wednesday, which, so far as the reckoning is concerned, makes no difference; for, as the Jews reckoned their days from evening to evening, it would have been Saturday and Wednesday in either case.

We showed also that Saturday was the ninth, Wednesday the thirteenth, and Friday the fifteenth, day of the month Nisan.

We have shown also, in chap. iii., that our Saviour was crucified on the 14th of the month Nisan, not on the feast-day, but on the day of preparation for it.

Now, if He had been crucified on Friday, Friday must have been the 14th of Nisan (which we have shown in chap. ii. to be contrary to the fact); and the next day, Saturday, must have been the "Passover," the feast-day, the 15th; and hence the "two days before the

Passover" must have been Thursday, and not Wednesday; and the "six days before the Passover," when Jesus arrived at Bethany, must have been Sunday, and not Saturday, according to the general belief of the church, and the generally expressed opinion of commentators in regard to them. Whereas, His being crucified on Thursday, the 14th of Nisan (Friday being the "feast day," the 15th), makes the "two days before the Passover" to have been Wednesday, and Wednesday to have been the 13th, and the "six days before the Passover" to have been Saturday, and Saturday to have been the ninth day of the month Nisan, which is according to the general belief.



STATEMENT.

If our Saviour had been crucified on Friday, His triumphal entry into Jerusalem could not have been on Sunday, called "Palm Sunday," as has been the general belief of the church, but must have been on Monday.



VII.

OUR SAVIOUR'S CRUCIFIXION ON THURSDAY MAKES HIS TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM TO HAVE BEEN ON SUNDAY, CALLED "PALM SUNDAY," ACCORDING TO THE GENERAL BELIEF OF THE CHURCH.

WE have shown in chap. ii., that "six days before the Passover," which marks the arrival of our Saviour at Bethany (*John xii. 1*), was six days before the "feast day;" that is, six days before the day on which the paschal lamb was eaten: and we have also shown that the paschal lamb was eaten on the fifteenth day of the month Nisan. A little repetition here, however, would seem to be necessary. In *Exod. xii. 6* the Jews were commanded to kill the lamb on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan, and in *Exod. xii. 8* to eat it that night, which would be after the beginning of the 15th. We have shown also, in chap. ii. (in an argument to prove that

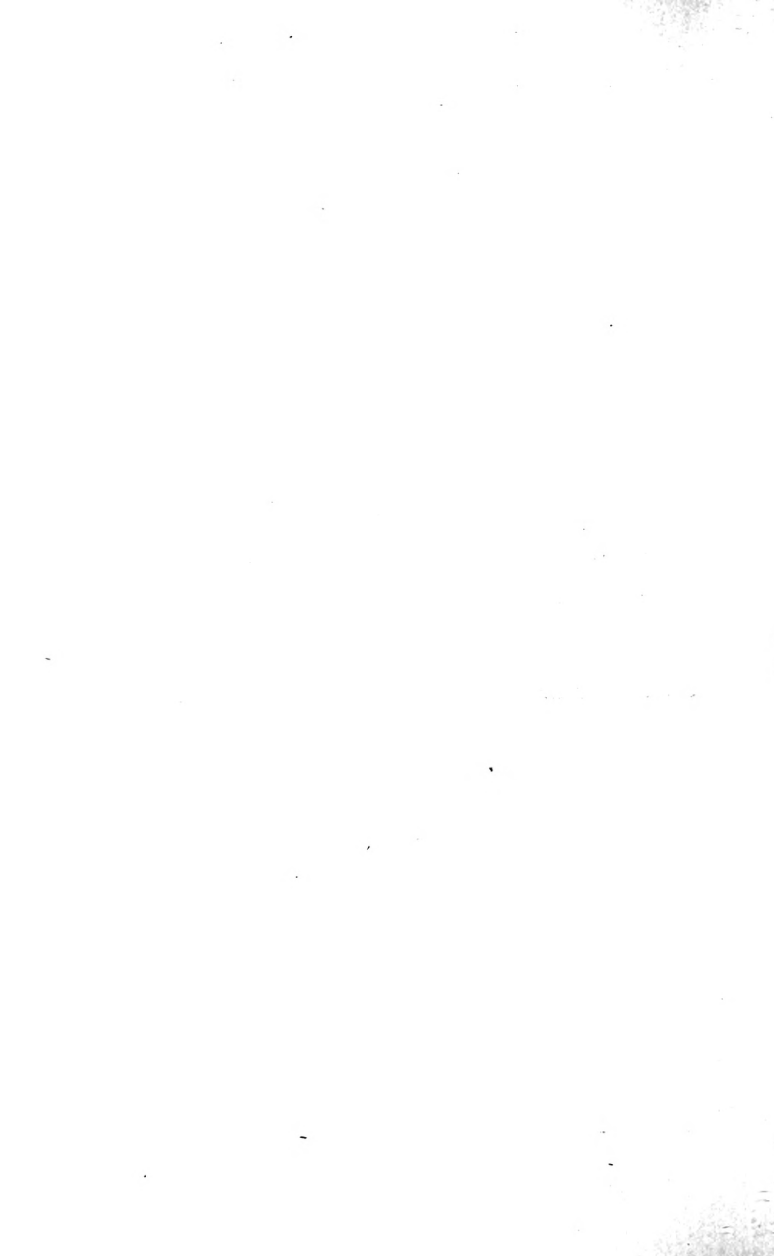
Friday was the 15th), that the arrival at Bethany was on the Jewish Sabbath, or Saturday, probably late on Friday evening, after the Sabbath had commenced. And it is plain (*John xii. 12*), that, on the next day, that is, the day after His arrival at Bethany (compare with *John xii. 1*), Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem; and, as He arrived at Bethany on Saturday, He must have made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Sunday. It is well known that this has been the general belief of the church; and, in confirmation of it, it may be well to repeat here the remark of Dr. Whedon (*“Commentary on Matthew,” pp. 238, 239*), “I see no good ground for adopting any other than the scheme of the ancient church, sanctioned by Olshausen, Tholuck, and others. It supposes the triumphal entry to have been on Sunday, hence, called ‘Palm Sunday.’”

Now, the false theory that our Saviour was crucified on Friday (since He was crucified, as we have shown in chap. iii., not on the day of the Passover, or “feast day,” but on the “day

of preparation of the Passover" (*John xix.* 14), the day on which the paschal lamb was killed, which was the 14th of Nisan) would make Friday to have been the 14th, and the following day, Saturday, to have been the day of the Passover, the 15th. Reckoning back, therefore, six days from Saturday would bring our Saviour's arrival at Bethany on Sunday instead of the previous Saturday; and consequently, as Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem the day after His arrival in Bethany, it would make that entry to have occurred on Monday, and not on "Palm Sunday," as has been generally believed. While His being crucified on Thursday, the 14th of the month Nisan (Friday being the day of the Passover, the 15th), makes His arrival at Bethany to have been six days before Friday, or on Saturday, and the triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Sunday, "the next day;" and "Palm Sunday" is still Sunday, according to the general belief.

STATEMENT.

ON the theory that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, we are unable to account for the occupation of the several days of Passion Week, and the concealment that hangs over Wednesday.



VIII.

THE CRUCIFIXION OF OUR SAVIOUR ON THURSDAY ACCOUNTS FOR THE OCCUPATION OF THE SEVERAL DAYS OF PASSION WEEK, AND REMOVES THE CONCEALMENT WHICH HANGS OVER WEDNESDAY.

THE theory that our Saviour was crucified on Friday fails to account for the occupation of the several days of Passion Week.

The failure is so evident that Keble speaks distinctly of the sacred concealment which hangs over Wednesday. Dr. Smith, recognizing this difficulty, and unable to account for it in any other way, in speaking of Wednesday, says (*“New Testament History,” Students’ Series, book ii. chap. xi. p. 313*), “Having, on the previous evening, told His disciples the time of His betrayal, our Lord remained at Bethany till the afternoon of Thursday; and a solemn silence rests on this period of His life.” Dr. Maclear, also in his *“Class-Book*

of New Testament History," *part vii. chap. iv. p. 277*, says, in speaking of Wednesday, "He" (Jesus) "retired in all probability to Bethany, and there, hidden in holy seclusion, spent the last day preceding His sufferings." And again, *p. 279*, "Thus, then, the day of seclusion at Bethany, the Wednesday of the Holy Week, passed away." Canon Farrar, in his "Life of Christ," says of Wednesday, "The day was spent by Him in deep seclusion, so far as we know, in perfect rest and silence." Similar quotations might be made from other authors, but it is unnecessary. This has been regarded as so great a difficulty, that Mr. Carpenter, to shorten the week, boldly transfers "Palm Sunday" to Monday. Dr. Robinson also asserts that our Saviour's triumphal entry into Jerusalem was on Monday (*see schedule of days, Robinson's "English Harmony of the Gospels," p. 192*).

On the theory that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, none of the evangelists have accounted for the occupation of Wednesday. Where Christ was, and what He was doing,

is left in obscurity. But having been crucified, as we have shown, on Thursday, the difficulty disappears. He was in Jerusalem on Wednesday, and ate the supper with His disciples on Wednesday evening. The necessity for shortening the week is removed, and, consequently, of transferring Palm Sunday to Monday.

STATEMENT.

ON the theory that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, there is a discrepancy between John and the other evangelists; and John is made to contradict himself.



IX.

THE CRUCIFIXION OF OUR SAVIOUR ON THURSDAY RECONCILES THE APPARENT DISCREPANCY BETWEEN JOHN AND THE OTHER EVANGELISTS, AND REMOVES THE APPARENT CONTRADICTION IN HIS OWN STATEMENTS; IN SHORT, REMOVES EVERY DIFFICULTY.

ON the theory that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, there is a discrepancy between John and the other evangelists, which cannot be explained away.

The Synoptists say, "Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, where wilt Thou that we prepare for Thee to eat the Passover?" (*Matt. xxvi. 17.*) "And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the Passover, His disciples said unto Him, Where wilt Thou that we go and prepare that Thou mayest eat the Passover?" (*Mark xiv. 12.*)

“Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the Passover must be killed. And He sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the Passover, that we may eat. And they said unto Him, Where wilt Thou that we prepare?” (*Luke xxii.* 7-9.)

It will be noticed here, that the day on which our Saviour sent His disciples to prepare for Him the Passover was “the first day of unleavened bread,” and the day on which the “Passover,” or paschal lamb, “was killed:” as Luke expresses it, “when the Passover must be killed;” that is, the first day of the Passover (which was called also the feast of unleavened bread), and the 14th of the month Nisan; for that was the day on which the Passover was killed (*Exod. xii.* 6): “And ye shall keep it up” (the lamb) “until the fourteenth day of the same month, and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening” (between the evenings, as is the marginal reading from the Hebrew); that is, at three o’clock: and the Jews’ practice, as we have shown, was to kill it between

three and five o'clock in the afternoon, or near the close of the 14th. There is no question in regard to this. "In the fourteenth day of the first month, at even, is the Lord's Passover" (*Lev. xxiii. 5*). "In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, ye shall keep it in his appointed season." "And they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, at even, in the wilderness of Sinai" (*Num. ix. 3, 5*). And we read in *Deut. xvi. 6*, "Thou shalt sacrifice the Passover at even, at the going down of the sun."

It must, therefore, have been killed near the close of the fourteenth day (as we have previously shown), between three and five o'clock in the afternoon. With this, commentators agree. Dr. Robinson says, "The true time of killing the Passover, in our Lord's day, was between the ninth and eleventh hour;" i.e., between three and five o'clock, or "towards sunset" (*"English Harmony," p. 196*). Horne says, "The paschal lamb was required to be sacrificed 'between the evenings,' which, Josephus tells us, 'The Jews, in his

time, did from the ninth hour until the eleventh'” (*Horne's “Introduction,” vol. ii. part ii. chap. iv. p. 73. See “Wars of Jews,” book vi. chap. ix. sect. 3).*

But while the Passover was to be killed “between the two evenings,” on the fourteenth day, it was to be eaten on the night of the 15th. Thus Exod. xii. 8, “And they shall eat the flesh in that night” (that is, the night after it had been killed), “roast with fire, and unleavened bread.” As they killed it “between the evenings” on the 14th, it could not have been prepared and roasted before six o'clock, which, as we have shown, was the commencement of their legal day; and hence it could not have been eaten until the 15th.

The Jews reckoned their day from evening to evening (*Lev. xxiii. 32*). But the proof is positive. The Jews left Egypt the same night (*Exod. xii. 29–37*), after midnight, evidently towards morning. But in Num. xxxiii. 3 it is said, that “they departed from Rameses on the fifteenth day of the first month;” and, as they ate the Passover on the

day that they departed, they must have eaten it on the 15th. Accordingly we read, "In the fourteenth day of the first month, at even, is the Lord's Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread" (*Lev. xxiii. 5, 6*). Also, "And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover of the Lord, and in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast" (*Num. xxviii. 16, 17*). Dr. Robinson says, "The paschal lamb was killed on the 14th of Nisan towards sunset, and was eaten the same evening, after the fifteenth day of Nisan had begun" (*Robinson's "Greek Harmony," p. 207*). This, as we have seen, accords with the Scripture narrative; and on this point also commentators are agreed.

Our Saviour, then, according to the Synop-
tists, must have sent His disciples to prepare for Him the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan; for that was the day "in which the Passover must be killed:" and this (if He had been crucified on Friday) would have been Thursday, for He sent His

disciples to prepare for Him the Passover the day before He was crucified. He ate the Passover with them the evening after, which, according to the Jewish law, as we have shown, must have been the beginning of the 15th, and would have been Thursday evening, as we reckon it, but with the Jews the beginning of Friday.

According to the Synoptists, our Saviour ate the Passover with His disciples at the proper time, on the day of the Passover, the night after the paschal lamb was to be killed, the beginning of the 15th of Nisan. But John (*xiii.* 1, 2, 4) speaks of our Saviour's supper with His disciples as being before the Passover: "Now *before* the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own, . . . He loved them unto the end. And supper being ended, . . . He riseth from supper," etc.

That it was before the Passover, is implied also in John *xviii.* 28, where he says, "Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas into the hall

of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover," implying that the Jews were expecting to eat the paschal supper the ensuing evening, and, consequently, that they had not then eaten it. (*For a full discussion of this, see argument in chap. iii. pp.105-109*).

But it has been shown in chap. ii. that Friday was the 15th of Nisan: and it has also been shown, that, according to the Synoptists, our Saviour ate the Passover with His disciples at the proper time, that is, on the evening of the 15th of Nisan; and, as He ate it on the beginning of the day, in the morning of which, the Jews "would not go into the judgment hall lest they should defile themselves, but that they might eat the Passover," the ensuing evening, when the Jews evidently were expecting to eat the Passover, would have been the 16th: and hence, on this supposition, the Jews, in our Saviour's time, must have broken the Mosaic law. But it is evi-

dent that they did not break it ; for, according to Josephus (“ *Antiquities*,” book *iii. chap. x. sect. 5*), in his time (and he was born only seven years after) “ the Jews sacrificed the Passover on the 14th, and observed the day of unleavened bread on the 15th.” Again, John (*xix. 14*) speaks of the day on which our Saviour was crucified as being the day of the preparation of the Passover: “ And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour.” The preparation of the Passover was the day on which the Passover was to be killed, and on which it was prepared to be eaten ; and this was the 14th. (We have shown this fully in our discussion on this part of our subject, in *chap. iii. pp. 103–111*, to which the reader is referred.) But Friday was the 15th ; and if our Saviour was crucified on that day, then this and not the 14th must have been the “ day of preparation,” which is manifestly absurd. On the assumption, therefore, that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, there is a plain discrepancy between John and the other evangelists.

Robinson, in common with other commentators, claims that our Saviour ate the Passover with His disciples on Thursday evening, according to our mode of reckoning, but on the beginning of Friday, the 15th, according to the reckoning of the Jews; whereas, if this theory were correct (since, according to John, our Saviour ate it with His disciples the "day before the Passover," that is, the day before the Jews ate it), the Jews could not have eaten the Passover until the 16th.

Dr. Scott believed this; for he says, "Christ was crucified on this day of holy convocation," that is, on the day in which they were commanded to eat the Passover, the 15th; for that was the "day of holy convocation." "In the first day ye shall have a holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein" (*Lev. xxiii. vii.*). This was not the day that is called elsewhere "the first day of unleavened bread," for that was "the day of preparation," the 14th, but the first of the seven that succeeded it; as the reader will see by taking the passage in its connection. "Seven days must

ye eat unleavened bread" (commencing with the 15th). "In the *first day* ye shall have a holy convocation."

That the 15th was the "day of holy convocation" is clearly shown in the discussion on this part of the subject in *chap. ii. pp. 38-45*, to which the reader is referred.

Dr. Scott says, "Christ was crucified on this day of holy convocation," and then adds, "yet, whether the Jews calculated the days in another manner or not, it seems not to have been thus observed; but the next, being the Sabbath, was a high day, and probably was kept as the day of holy convocation." Dr. Scott would not have said this if he had not been attempting to reconcile John's statement with that of the other evangelists; and to do this on the assumption that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, he saw apparently no other way. And hence he inferred, that, although Friday was the "day of holy convocation," yet, for some reason, the Jews that year did not observe it as such, but observed the day following, the 16th, as the "day of

holy convocation." It will be seen that he puts the Jews in the position of having disobeyed the commandment.

Tholuck says, "The difference" (between John and the other evangelists) "is one of the most litigated questions in the criticism of the Gospels." And again, he says, "John designates the day on which the Passover should have been eaten, as that on which Christ was crucified. The contrary date, fixed by the Synoptists, which would make the crucifixion fall on the 15th of Nisan, that is, on the first day of the feast, is encumbered with great difficulties. The larger portion of the modern critics have been led, by an examination of this subject, to the ultimate result that there must be a mistake on one or the other side, either on the part of John, or on that of the first three evangelists" ("*Tholuck on John*," pp. 302, 303). These assertions, with others that might be cited, especially when taken in connection with the facts, are sufficient to show, that, on the assumption that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, the 15th of the Jewish

month Nisan, there is not only an apparent, but a real discrepancy between John and the other evangelists, — a discrepancy which the ablest theologians and commentators, during more than eighteen centuries, have found it impossible to reconcile. In proof of this the reader is referred to the following: —

“It is not surprising that some modern critics should have given up as hopeless the task of reconciling this difficulty. Several have rejected the narrative of John (Bretschneider, Wiesse); but a greater number (especially De Wette, Usteri, Ewald, Meyer, and Thiele) have taken an opposite course, and have been content with the notion that the first three evangelists made a mistake, and confounded the meal with the Passover” (*see “Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Cyclopædia,” M. Clintock and Strong, vol. vii. p. 743. Also Smith’s “Dictionary of the Bible,” vol. iii. p. 2348*). From these quotations, the reader will perceive how grave the difficulty is acknowledged to be, some having been led by it to reject the narrative of John, and others to

claim that the first three evangelists made a mistake.

The genuineness and authenticity of John's Gospel is beyond question, and surely he is competent authority on the points at issue. Nor is it possible that the first three evangelists made a mistake. Setting aside their divine inspiration, three different writers would not have been likely to make the same mistake; and, being Jews, they had observed it from childhood, and must have known what the Passover was; and, as our Saviour ate it with them, they must have known whether he ate the Passover or not, and could not have made the mistake of confounding an ordinary meal with the Passover.

Moreover, their language is too explicit to admit of any mistake. "Where wilt Thou that we prepare for Thee to eat the Passover?" (*Matt. xxvi. 17.*) "Where wilt Thou that we go and prepare that Thou mayest eat the Passover?" (*Mark xiv. 12.*) "The Master saith, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples?" (*Mark xiv.*

14.) "The Master saith, My time is at hand ; I will keep the Passover at thy house with my disciples" (*Matt. xxvi. 18*). "And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them ; and they made ready the Passover" (*Matt. xxvi. 19*). "And they made ready the Passover" (*Mark xiv. 16*). "And He sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the Passover, that we may eat" (*Luke xxii. 8*). "Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples?" (*Luke xxii. 11*.) "And they made ready the Passover" (*Luke xxii. 13*). "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer" (*Luke xxii. 15*). Here are ten passages from the three evangelists which speak of it distinctly as a Passover. If it was not a Passover, it was not a mistake on their part, but a misrepresentation. And to say that it was not a Passover, is to place the evangelists in the position of putting a falsehood into the mouth of the Saviour ; for all three assert distinctly that the Saviour called it a Passover (*Matt. xxvi. 18 ; Mark xiv. 14 ; Luke xxii. 8, 11, 15*).

There could not have been more competent witnesses. A mistake was impossible, and to imply that they misrepresented, is blasphemous. In that event, their Gospels could not have been written by divine inspiration; and, if the Scriptures be not inspired, there is taken from us the foundation of our hope. The theory, then, that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, presenting an irreconcilable discrepancy between John and the other evangelists, which has led distinguished commentators to such erroneous and mischievous results, is most disastrous in its consequences.

Various attempts have been made, in accordance with this theory, to reconcile this discrepancy between John and the other evangelists, but with how little success is shown from the preceding quotations. It has been claimed, —

1. That our Saviour ate a supper, and not the Passover, with His disciples, the evening before His crucifixion;

2. That He ate the Passover with His disciples, and that the Jews ate the Passover the same evening;

3. That He ate a Passover of His own instituting, and not the legal Passover, and, consequently, different from that eaten by the Jews ;

4. That He ate the Passover, but anticipated the time, eating it the day before the Jews ate it.

The first assumption is, that our Saviour did not eat the Passover, but merely a supper, with His disciples. In the attempt to show this, it is said, " John does not call the supper which our Saviour ate with His disciples a Passover supper, but, on the contrary, says, ' it was before the feast of the Passover : ' he makes the next day to be the day of the Passover, when he says, in speaking of the morning of the next day, ' The Jews would not go into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled ; but that they might eat the Passover ' (*John xviii. 28*), implying that they had not then eaten it. And in *John xix. 14*, speaking of Friday noon, he says, ' It was the preparation of the Passover. ' " It is also said, that there is no mention of any lamb. This is the

strongest evidence that can be brought in support of the theory that our Saviour did not eat the Passover, but merely a supper, with His disciples; and it is by no means conclusive.

It will be perceived that the theory is based on certain expressions found in the Gospel of John, and would not have been thought of, if it had not been to get over a difficulty. This is evident from the weakness of the arguments supporting it, and the admission of those who advocate it. For instance, a writer in the "Bibliotheca Sacra," July, 1871, p. 478, from whom we have previously quoted, says, "That the words 'eating the Passover' may denote eating the paschal lamb, is unquestionable: this is clear from John xviii. 28." It will be seen here, that he quotes from the apostle John, to prove that the expression used by the evangelists with reference to the supper which our Saviour ate with His disciples, "Where wilt Thou that we go and prepare that Thou mayest eat the Passover?" (*Mark xiv.* 12) "And He sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare the Pass-

over, that we may eat" (*Luke xvii. 8*), "may unquestionably denote eating the paschal lamb." And then, he says, "Our business is to show that this is not exclusively their force." It will be seen, therefore, that, after admitting that the language "unquestionably may denote eating the paschal lamb," he attempts, if possible, to evade it. And here, he gives the reason.

"That the last supper, as reported by John, was not the eating of the paschal lamb, is obvious. If, as reported by Luke, it were the paschal lamb, we should have a glaring contradiction between the two evangelists." The reader cannot fail to perceive, that the reason that this writer claims that our Saviour ate a supper and not the Passover with His disciples, and the only reason, is because of the difficulty, as he believes, in reconciling it with the account as given in St. John's Gospel. That he would gain nothing if he could prove his position, is evident from his own admission. For he says, "If, *as reported by Luke*, it were the paschal lamb, we should

have a glaring contradiction between the two evangelists." It will be noticed that he states distinctly, that, *as reported by Luke*, it was the paschal lamb. It follows, therefore, that, if he could prove from John that it was only a supper, and not the paschal lamb, he would array John against Luke, according to his own testimony; and the "glaring contradiction between the two evangelists," which he speaks of, would still remain. His position, if proved, would not relieve us of an iota of the difficulty.

That the arguments against our Saviour's having eaten the Passover with His disciples, and in favor of His having eaten a supper, are evasive, and originated in the desire to find some way in which to reconcile the statements of the evangelists with the statement of John, will be seen also from the following, under the head of the Last Supper, in Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible," vol. iii. p. 2347.

"Whether, or not, the meal at which our Lord instituted the sacrament of the Eucharist was the paschal supper according to the

Law, is a question of great difficulty. No point in the Gospel History has been more disputed. If we had nothing to guide us but the first three Gospels, no doubt of the kind could well be raised; though the narratives may not be free from difficulties in themselves. We find them speaking, in accordance with Jewish usage, of the day of the supper, as that on which the 'Passover must be killed,' and, as 'the first day of unleavened bread' (*Matt. xxvi. 17; Mark xiv. 12; Luke xxii. 7*). Each relates that the use of the guest-chamber was secured in the manner usual with those who came from a distance to keep the festival. Each states that they made ready the Passover, and that, when the evening was come, our Lord, taking the place at the head of the family, sat down with the twelve. He Himself distinctly calls the meal 'this Passover' (*Luke xxii. 15, 16*). After a thanksgiving, He passes round the first cup of wine (*Luke xxii. 17*), and, when the supper is ended, the usual 'cup of blessing' (compare *Luke xxii. 20; 1 Cor. x. 16; xi. 25*). A

hymn is then sung (*Matt. xxvi. 30*; *Mark xiv. 26*), which, it is reasonable to suppose, was the last part of the Hallel. But, on the other hand, if we had no information but that which is to be gathered from St. John's Gospel, we could not hesitate to infer that the evening of the supper was that of the 13th of Nisan, the day preceding that of the paschal meal." The reader will perceive from this, that it is so plain from the statements of the evangelists that our Saviour ate the Passover, and not a mere supper, with His disciples, it would not have been questioned, if it had not been for the apparent difficulty of reconciling it with the account as given in the Gospel of John, which states that He ate it before the Passover, and implies that the evening of the supper, was the 13th of Nisan. The mistake has been in thinking that one or the other of these statements cannot be true. And it must be admitted, that, if our Saviour had been crucified on Friday, they could not have been reconciled. But, having been crucified on Thursday, He ate, not a supper,

but the Passover, as stated by the evangelists, and ate it on Wednesday evening, which was the beginning of Thursday, Wednesday being reckoned by the Jews that year as the 13th of Nisan, and Thursday as the 14th, which, as to the time of His eating it, is according to the statement of John; so that the statements of the other evangelists and that of John completely harmonize. This we shall show hereafter.

That our Saviour ate the Passover with His disciples, is evident.

1. He sent His disciples to make ready the Passover, not a supper, but the Passover ("And He sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the Passover, that we may eat." *Luke xxii.* 8).

2. It was the proper time. "The first day of unleavened bread, when the Passover must be killed" (*Matt. xxvi.* 17; *Mark xiv.* 12; *Luke xxii.* 7).

3. "They made ready," not a supper, but "the Passover" (*Matt. xxvi.* 19; *Mark xiv.* 16; *Luke xxii.* 13).

4. Our Saviour calls it "the Passover" (*Matt. xxvi. 18*; *Mark xiv. 14*; *Luke xxii. 8*). He calls it also, "this Passover." "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer" (*Luke xxii. 15*).

5. He ate it at that *hour* in the evening in which the Passover was to be eaten. "And when the *hour* was come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him" (*Luke xxii. 14*). As to there being no mention of a lamb, such mention was not necessary: the term Passover defined it. "The day on which the Passover must be killed" was the day on which the paschal lamb was killed. That was the Passover by synecdoche. When Peter and John had received their Lord's command to go and prepare the Passover, it is said, "They went, and found as He had said unto them: and they made ready the Passover" (*Luke xxii. 13*); that is, procured a lamb and prepared it for the purpose, according to the Law. That our Saviour ate the Passover with His disciples is as plain as language can make it.

The second theory set forth in the vain attempt to reconcile the apparent discrepancy between John and the other evangelists, on the false assumption that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, is, that He ate the Passover at the same time with the Jews. And, to show this, the attempt is made to explain away the passage in John.

Thus it is said that the expression "before the feast of the Passover" (*John xiii. 1*) has reference, not to the paschal supper, but to the entire festival of unleavened bread, which continued seven days. To this there is an insuperable objection. It will be noticed that the expression in *John xiii. 1*, "Before the feast of the "Passover," marks the time after the close of the supper; for we read in continuation (*John xiii. 2*), "And supper being ended." Now, the argument referred to, as it will be seen, is based on the assumed fact that our Saviour ate the Passover, or true paschal supper, at the same time that it was eaten by the Jews; and hence, those who advance it are met with the obvious difficulty in reconcil-

ing it with the expression in John, "before the Passover;" for this, as we have shown, was after the supper was ended: and if it was, as they assume, the Passover supper, and was eaten at the same time that the Jews ate it, it could not have been before the Passover. A thing cannot be before itself. Hence they say the expression "before the Passover" means, not, as it says, "before the Passover," or eating of the paschal lamb, but before the entire festival of unleavened bread, which continued seven days.

Now, the insuperable objection is this. The Passover meal was the beginning of the Passover festival, and the most prominent part of it; so prominent that it gave the name to the entire festival. And as the Passover meal was ended at the time to which the expression "before the Passover" refers, if the Jews had eaten it at the same time, it could not be said to be before the feast (or festival) of unleavened bread. That cannot be before a thing which takes place after it has commenced.

Again, the expression, "And they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover" (*John xviii.* 28), is interpreted to mean, not that they might eat the paschal, or Passover, supper, but that they might keep or celebrate the Passover festival, or eat the Passover sacrifices throughout the remaining days.

This interpretation of the passage is forced, and would not have been thought of, if it had not been to relieve them of a difficulty. That it is inadmissible will be seen by referring to our discussion on this passage in chap. iii. pp. 105-103, where we have shown conclusively, that the term Passover in this passage signifies, not the entire festival, but the eating of the paschal lamb, and that the defilement could not have reference to the entire festival, since the ordinary meals of the festival were to be eaten without regard to purity. All were to eat unleavened bread throughout the festival, the clean and the unclean; and any one not eating it was to be cut off from among

the people. That the word Passover in the passage under consideration does not refer to the entire festival, or to an ordinary meal of the festival, will be seen also from the remarks of Benson, which Dr. Townsend quotes and indorses (*Townsend's "Notes on the Harmony of the Gospels,"* p. 156). He says, "No critical distortion appears to me capable of giving to John xviii. 28 — καὶ αὐτοὶ οὐχ εἰσῆλθον εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον ἵνα μὴ μιανθῶσιν ἀλλ' ἵνα φάγωσι τὸ πάσχα — any other meaning or translation than this: 'And they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the paschal offering,' the sacrifice of the Passover. The word πάσχα, when *alone*, is not always used exclusively for the paschal lamb, but often in a more enlarged and extended sense for the whole feast of unleavened bread; but the phrase φαγεῖν τὸ πάσχα, though used by each of the first three evangelists, and more than once, is *never applied except to the eating of the paschal offering itself at the time appointed in remembrance of the Lord's Passover in Egypt.*"

The words of John, therefore, above quoted, show plainly, that our Saviour and His disciples did not eat the Passover at the same time with the rest of the Jews.

There is another passage: "And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour" (*John xix.* 14), referring to the day of His crucifixion, which would lead any unbiassed reader to suppose it was the preparation for the Passover festival, by the putting of the leaven out of their houses, the killing of the paschal lamb, etc., which occurred the day before the Passover was eaten. An attempt has been made, also, to explain this away, by saying that it was not the "preparation of the Passover," as it reads, but of the paschal Sabbath; that is, as it is claimed, of the Jewish Sabbath, or Saturday, that occurred in the Passover week. The insuperable objection against this is, that the Jewish Sabbath in the Passover week, in which our Saviour was crucified, was not the paschal Sabbath, but, as we have shown in chap. ii. pp. 38-45, the paschal Sabbath occurred the day previous,

on Friday, the fifteenth day of the month Nisan, for the reason that the paschal Sabbath was the day on which the paschal lamb was eaten, the "day of holy convocation," the first of the seven days of the feast succeeding the day of preparation, in which unleavened bread was eaten, the "great" or "high Sabbath" of the festival, which always occurred on the fifteenth day of the month Nisan; and the Jewish Sabbath, or Saturday, in that year fell on the 16th. Hence it will be perceived, that, as the Passover day was not only a Sabbath (as we have shown in the pages referred to) on whatever day of the week it might fall, but also a "high" Sabbath, the expression in John, "preparation of the Passover," and that of the other evangelists, "preparation for the Sabbath" (*Mark xv. 42*; *Luke xxiii. 54*), completely harmonize, and are in exact accordance with the literal interpretation.

The third theory is, that our Saviour ate a Passover with His disciples, but not the prescribed Passover.

We answer, *First*, There is no intimation

that this was not the regular Passover. *Second*, It is not consistent with the character of our Saviour to suppose that He would observe a Passover different from that which God had commanded. *Third*, But one Passover was appointed, and any thing different from that would not be the Passover. *Fourth*, No reason can be given why He should eat a different Passover. To claim that He ate a different Passover, is to claim that He ate a supper with His disciples without the paschal lamb (which we have shown to be untrue), and that He falsely called it the Passover. *Fifth*, And here we quote the argument of Dr. Newcomb, Archbishop of Armagh, on Luke xxii. 15: "And He said unto them, With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." Dr. Newcomb says, "It is to be noted that they had now sat down to eat that Passover which had been before prepared, and that every word which is spoken is peculiarly proper to the occasion. 'With desire,' says our Lord, 'have I desired (τοῦτο τὸ πάσχα φαγεῖν) to eat this very Passover;' not ἐσθίειν τὸ πάσχα,

‘to eat this Passover,’ or something commemorative of it, but *τοῦτο τὸ πάσχα*, ‘this very Passover:’ and it is no mean proof that they were then in the act of eating the flesh of the paschal lamb, from the use of the word *φαγεῖν*, which is the most proper to the eating of flesh; as *ἐσθίειν* signifies eating in general, or eating bread, pulse, etc. The same word in reference to the same act of eating the Passover (not to the bread and wine of the holy supper) is used in verse sixteenth: ‘For I say unto you, that I will not any more eat thereof’ (*οὐ μὴ φάγω ἐξ αὐτοῦ*). ‘I will not eat of him or it (viz., the paschal lamb) until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God;’ that is, this shall be the last Passover I shall celebrate on earth.” If some should think the argument of Archbishop Newcomb on the use of the words *φαγεῖν* and *ἐσθίειν* somewhat strained, they will perceive that it does not materially affect the question. That our Saviour did not eat a different Passover is proved conclusively by what has been said before. It is plain, therefore, that He did not eat a different Passover,

but the veritable Passover appointed under the Mosaic legislation.

The fourth theory, set forth in the attempt to reconcile the account as given by John with that of the other evangelists, is, that our Lord did eat the Passover that year, but not at the same time with the Jews. To this we assent. But on the false assumption that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, so far from clearing up the difficulty in reconciling the apparent discrepancies between John and the other evangelists, it only makes it the more complicated. To illustrate:—

Our Saviour ate the Passover with His disciples the evening before His crucifixion, which, on the assumption that He was crucified on Friday, must have been Thursday evening. This is the general belief. Our Saviour, then, must have sent the disciples Peter and John to prepare for Him the Passover some time in the day of Thursday. This, by general consent, is believed to have been the 14th of the month Nisan (*see Robinson's "English Harmony of the Gospels," Notes, p.*

191; *Lange*, "Notes on Matthew," *Am. Ed.*, p. 454; *Smith's "New Testament History," Students' Series*, book ii. chap. xi. p. 314; see, also, argument in chap. ii., showing that Friday was the 15th of Nisan, and, consequently, that Thursday must have been the 14th). Now, if the Jews did not kill the Passover until Friday, and ate it on Friday evening, then they killed it on the 15th, — not on the 14th, — and must have violated the Jewish law, which was that they should kill it on the 14th. And they must have broken the law, not only in killing it, but also in eating it; for, instead of eating it on the beginning of the 15th, the day of unleavened bread, the day in which (as we have shown) the Passover was to be eaten, they must, on this hypothesis, have eaten it on the beginning of the 16th. Now, we know that (in the time of Josephus, who lived but a few years after Christ) they killed the Passover on the 14th, as they were commanded ("*Antiquities*," book ii. chap. xiv. sect. 6; iii. x. 5; xi. iv. 8; "*Wars*," v. iii. 1). How, then, are we to account for such a violation as, on this theory,

must have taken place at the time of our Saviour's crucifixion?

Moreover, such a violation of the requirements of the law is not in keeping with the Jewish character. They were strict in keeping the very letter of the Law.

That our Saviour observed the Passover at the proper time is evident; for the time that He sent Peter and John to make preparation is said to have been "the first day of unleavened bread," "when the Passover must be killed." On the assumption that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, this opinion that our Saviour ate the Passover, but not at the same time with the Jews (though in itself correct), does not clear up the difficulty, because it makes our Saviour to have eaten it at the wrong time.

We are, however, presented with the undeniable fact, that our Saviour ate the Passover with His disciples before the time of its being eaten by the Jews; that they did not eat it until after His crucifixion: and we have seen, that, on the theory that our Saviour was cru-

cified on Friday, this difficulty cannot be reconciled.

Now, if we can show that our Saviour and the Jews, though keeping the Passover at different times, both observed it on what might be regarded as the proper day, and that every passage in John bearing on this subject is thus made to correspond with the assertions of the other evangelists, it will satisfy all the conditions of the problem, and, by reconciling this apparent discrepancy, will furnish a yet stronger proof that the Scriptures have been written by divine inspiration.

On the theory that He was crucified on Thursday, which we have shown to be the correct one, such an explanation can readily be given. As we have shown, He was crucified on Thursday, and, of course, ate the Passover with His disciples on Wednesday evening, the beginning of Thursday, the 15th, according to the true appearance of the moon; while the Jews ate it a day later, on Thursday evening, the beginning of Friday, which was observed by them that year as the 15th, ac-

ording to the announcement or decree of the Sanhedrim.

We know that objections are made to this, and these objections we will now consider.

Smith says, in his "Dictionary of the Bible," vol. iii. p. 2349, "It has been conjectured that the great body of the Jews had gone wrong in calculating the true Passover day, placing it a day too late, and that our Lord ate the Passover on what was really the 14th, but what commonly passed as the 13th. This was the opinion of Bezer, Bucer, Calovius, and Scaliger. It is favored by Stier. But it is utterly unsupported by historical testimony." It will be noticed, in the above quotation, that the theory advanced agrees with the one that we have presented, in making the time of the Passover, as observed by the Jews, "a day too late," but differs, in making our Saviour to have eaten the Passover "on what was really the 14th, but what commonly passed as the 13th." Whereas, our theory, which we believe to be correct, is, that He ate it on what was really the 15th, but on

the day that was observed that year by the Jews as the 14th.

Our purpose here, however, is particularly to call the attention of the reader to the objection raised against it, because, as it is claimed, it is unsupported by historical testimony.

We propose to show that the theory we have presented is not "conjecture," but fact, and that whether it is supported by historical testimony or not, has but little to do with the question. There are other circumstances connected with our Saviour's death of which it may be said that they are unsupported by historical testimony.

For instance, we read (*Matt. xvii. 45* ; *Mark xv. 33* ; *Luke xxiii. 44*) that "from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour ;" and (*Matt. xvii. 51* ; *Mark xv. 38* ; *Luke xxiii. 45*) that "the veil of the temple was rent in twain ;" and again (*Matt. xvii. 51-53*), that "the earth did quake, and the rocks rent ; and the graves were opened ; and many bodies of the saints

which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." All which is unsupported by historical testimony.

We know that the Christian Fathers of the first century appealed to a statement which is found in the works of Phlegon, a chronicler under the Emperor Hadrian, and that Eusebius quotes these words under the date of the 4th year of the 202d Olympiad. "There occurred the greatest darkening of the sun which had ever been known. It became night at midday, so that the stars shone in the heavens. There was a great earthquake in Bythinia which destroyed a part of Nicæa." It is evident that this cannot have been the darkness that occurred at our Saviour's crucifixion, for He was born in the fourth year of the 193d Olympiad; whereas this is alleged to have occurred in the fourth year of the 202d Olympiad, and would make Him to have been thirty-six years old at the time of His crucifixion, instead of thirty-three and a half: so that it will be perceived that the date is fixed

from two and a half to three years later. That the date does not agree with the time of the crucifixion of our Saviour, was the opinion of Wiesslerer, p. 388, and of Brinkmeyer (*"Chronologie,"* p. 208). Again, the darkness mentioned by Phlegon cannot have been the darkness that occurred at the time of our Saviour's crucifixion, because he speaks of it as an actual eclipse; says that this eclipse "surpassed all others ever seen." For this reason Hug and Wiesslerer (*"Chronologie Synopse,"* p. 388) rejected it. There could not have been an eclipse at the time of our Saviour's crucifixion, because it occurred at the time of the Passover full moon. An eclipse of the sun, being caused by the moon's coming between the earth and the sun, must necessarily take place when the dark side of the moon is turned towards us. The moon then being at the full, the darkness could not have been caused by an eclipse of the sun, but was caused, no doubt, miraculously. It may have been by a mysterious thickening of the atmosphere, a cause similar, perhaps, to

that of the "dark day" in 1780. Tertullian, Origen, Rufinus, also boldly appeal to the Roman archives for the proof of the eclipse of the sun at the time of the Saviour's death. But, as we have said, an eclipse of the sun was not possible at that time. The full moon being on the opposite side of the earth from the sun, the sun could not have been eclipsed by it. The darkness, then, in common with the other remarkable events which attended our Saviour's crucifixion, is unsupported by historical testimony. But we do not reject them on that account. There is nothing improbable in their occurrence, and the unanimous testimony of the Synoptical Gospels must silence all questions in regard to them.

Neither, because it may not be supported by historical testimony, should we reject the fact that our Saviour observed the Passover on Wednesday evening, the beginning of the 15th of Nisan, according to the true appearance of the moon, and that the Jews, that year, observed it a day later, on Thursday evening, the beginning of the day appointed

to be observed as the 15th, by the announcement or decree of the Sanhedrim. It is not to be expected that there would be any historical account of it. Except in its relation to the crucifixion of our Saviour and the Gospel narrative (in which the Jews who regarded Christ as an impostor could have felt no interest), it was a matter of but little importance, altogether too trivial to have been made a matter of history.

We have abundant proof, that, by a special decree of the Sanhedrim, the Jews sometimes observed, as the 15th of Nisan, a day later than the true appearance of the moon would indicate: and yet we have no historical testimony as to the particular years in which this was done; that is, we have historical testimony as to the fact, but not as to the precise year or years of its occurrence.

We now proceed to show that there was such a custom among the Jews, and that, without doubt, such an observance took place at the time of the crucifixion of our Saviour.

As He was crucified on Thursday, He ate

the Passover with His disciples on Wednesday evening, and must have sent Peter and John some time in the day of Wednesday to prepare it. But it is distinctly said that this was the "first day of unleavened bread" (that is, the first day of the feast of unleavened bread) "when the Passover must be killed," reckoned as one of the days of the festival, because it was "the day of preparation." (*Matt. xxvi. 17*; *Mark xiv. 12*; *Luke xxii. 7*). And as the Passover was to be killed "between the two evenings," on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan (*Exod. xii. 6*; *Lev. xxiii. 5*; *Num. ix. 3*), it (Wednesday) must have been the 14th.

Now it is believed that our Saviour was crucified in the thirty-fourth year of His age. Indeed, the proof of this is positive. And the Christian era, according to Archbishop Usher and the modern chronologers generally, commences four years after the birth of Christ (see "*Religious Encyclopædia*," p. 44).

This, then, would make the date of His crucifixion to have been A.D. 30, according to the generally received opinion. And it is a

remarkable fact that Roger Bacon, Mann, and Scaliger, Dodwell, and Ferguson, who have calculated the Passover full moons, which determine the 14th of Nisan from A.D. 26 to A.D. 36, a period of ten years, all agree that in A.D. 30 it fell on Wednesday, while in every year, with that exception, they differ, some claiming that it fell on one day of the week, and some on another.¹ This is strong presumptive evidence that the 14th of Nisan, in the year that our Saviour was crucified, was Wednesday. And hence, being "the first day of unleavened bread, when the Passover must be killed," it was the day when He sent Peter and John to prepare for Him the Passover. And, as He ate the Passover with His disciples that evening (Wednesday evening, according to our reckoning, but the beginning of Thurs-

¹ The calculation of the Passover full moons must necessarily be uncertain, for we know not what order the Jews followed; and, as some calculate by astronomical full moons, and others by cycles, the results differ. We are told that the manner of reckoning which prevailed in the time of Epiphanius was different from the Calippic, the Hyppolytan, and from that which the Jews now follow.

day, according to the reckoning of the Jews), He ate it, according to the commandment, on the beginning of the 15th, the day of unleavened bread (*Lev. xxiii. 6; Num. xxviii. 17*). This is seen from the fact, so often referred to, that the Jews reckoned their days from evening to evening (*Lev. xxiii. 32*).

That our Saviour ate the Passover the evening before the Jews ate it, not only coincides with the testimony of John, but was the general opinion of the ancients. Tertullian, Clement, Origen, Chrysostom, Apollinarius, Euthymius, and others; of various members also of the church of Rome, as Lamy, Calmet; and of the Protestant theologians, Cappellus, Lampe, Deyling, Gude, and indeed of about all theologians until the last century (see "*Tholuck on John*," p. 306), though they believed that our Saviour anticipated the Passover by eating it before the time.

The explanation which we have given agrees with the statement of the evangelists, — makes Him to have eaten it on the 15th of

the month Nisan, "the day of unleavened bread."

But the question arises, Why did not the Jews observe the Passover at the same time? In answer to this, we refer to Townsend's "Notes on the Gospels," p. 158, where he says, "The learned Cudworth, in his admirable treatise on the Jewish Passover, has proved from the 'Talmud,' 'Mishna,' and some of the most reputable of the Jewish rabbins, that the Jews in ancient times reckoned the new moons, not according to astronomical exactness, but according to the *φάσις*, or moon's appearance; and, as this appearance might happen a day later than the real time, consequently, there might be a whole day of difference in the time of celebrating one of these feasts, which depended on a particular day of the month, the days of the month being counted from the appearance of the new moon." Townsend says further, "As he describes the manner of doing this, both from the Babylonish 'Talmud' and from Maimonides, I shall give an extract from this part of

his work, that my readers may have the whole argument before them" (*Notes on the Gospels*, p. 158). And then follows this extract: "In the great, or outer court, there was a house called Beth Yazek, where the Senate sat all the thirtieth day of every month, to receive the witnesses of the moon's appearance, and to examine them. If there came approved witnesses on the thirtieth day who could state they had seen the new moon, the chief man of the Senate stood up, and cried, בַּקֶּדֶשׁ, 'mekuddash,' it is sanctified; and the people standing by, caught the word from him, and cried, 'mekuddash, mekuddash.' But if, when the consistory had sat all the day, there came no approved witnesses of the *φάσις*, or appearance of the new moon, then they made an intercalation of one day in the former month, and decreed the following one and thirtieth day to be the calends. But if, after the fourth or fifth day, or even before the end of the month, respectable witnesses came from far, and testified they had seen the new moon in its due time, the Senate were bound to

alter the beginning of the month, and reckon it a day sooner; viz., from the thirtieth day. As the Senate were very unwilling to be at the trouble of a second consecration when they had even fixed on a wrong day, and received very reluctantly the testimony of such witnesses as those last mentioned, they afterwards made a statute to this effect, that, whatever time the Senate should conclude on, for the calends of the month, though it were certain they were in the wrong, yet all were bound to order their feasts according to it" (*Ibid.* p. 158).

"This," says Townsend, "Dr. Cudworth supposes actually took place in the time of our Lord; and, as it is not likely that our Lord would submit to this perversion of the original custom, following the true *γᾶσις* or appearance of the new moon, confirmed by sufficient witnesses, He and His disciples ate the Passover on that day; but the Jews, following the pertinacious decree of the Sanhedrim, did not eat it till the day following." He adds, "Dr. Cudworth further shows from

Epiphanius, that there was contention (*θόρυβος*), a tumult, among the Jews about the Passover that very year." Hence we have reason to believe that the real paschal day observed by our Lord and His disciples, who adopted the true *γάσις*, was the antecedent evening to that observed by the Jews, who acted on the decree of the Sanhedrim.

That the Jews' method of determining the new moons, and consequently the feast-days, has been shown correctly by Dr. Cudworth, will be seen also from the following: —

John Allen, in his treatise entitled "Modern Judaism," p. 374, tells us that Dean Prideaux and others favor the hypothesis of the rabbins, which is, that the commencement and length of the month were determined from time to time by the decision of the Sanhedrim, and that they have favored us with a particular account of the way in which they say the business was managed. If we were asked why, instead of accepting it on the testimony of the rabbins, who surely ought to know the mode of reckoning that was prac-

tised by their own countrymen, he calls it a hypothesis, we should say it was probably because his mind was biassed in favor of the theory that our Saviour was crucified on Friday; that this led him to prejudge it, because such a practice at the time of the crucifixion of our Saviour would necessarily conflict with this theory. Prejudice often blinds the eye of the mind to evidence that otherwise would be convincing, or at the least distorts it, until it becomes, in a sense, like objects seen through irregularities in the window-pane. But to the testimony; and here we insert his quotation from the rabbins: "Our nation heretofore, not observing the rules of any fixed calculation, celebrated the feast of the new moon according to the *γάσις*, or first appearance of the moon, which was done in compliance with God's command, as our received traditions inform us. Hence it came to pass that the first appearance was not to be determined only by rules of art, but also by the testimony of such persons as deposed, before a select number of the Sanhedrim, or Great Senate,

that they had seen the moon. For a committee of three, being appointed by the said Sanhedrim to receive the depositions of the persons aforesaid, after having calculated what time the moon might possibly appear, despatched some persons into high and venturesome places to observe, and, accordingly, to give in their evidence concerning the first appearance of the moon. If these persons returned on the 30th and testified that they had seen the moon, and if, after a strict examination of their reports, the committee found that they agreed in their evidence, then they consecrated the thirtieth day, and that was observed as the day of the new moon; but if they did not return until the 31st, and then gave their evidence, that day was consecrated and observed as the day of the new moon. And, notwithstanding, if no evidence was given on the thirty-first day, yet was it appointed by the Senate and observed as the first day of the moon, though not consecrated; for the consecration depended so entirely upon the phasis of the moon that it could not be performed without it.

“ As soon as the new moon was either consecrated or appointed to be observed, notice was given by the Sanhedrim to the rest of the nation what day had been fixed for the new moon or *first day of the month*; because that was to be the rule and measure according to which they were obliged to keep their feasts and fasts in every month respectively. This notice was given, in time of peace, by firing beacons set up for that purpose, which was looked upon as the readiest way of communication; but in time of war, when all places were full of enemies who made use of beacons to amuse our nation with, it was thought fit to discontinue it, and to delegate some men on purpose to go and signify it to as many as they could possibly reach before the time commanded for the observance of the feast was expired.

“ But then, they that lived in places far distant from Jerusalem, whither timely notice could not be conveyed, were obliged to keep the feasts a day more than otherwise was to be kept, on account of not being certain whether

the new moon was consecrated on the 30th, or not observed till the 31st, which was the reason of their keeping the Passover eight days, the feast of Pentecost two days, and that of Tabernacles nine days; whereas, in Scripture we are commanded to keep the Passover seven, the feast of Pentecost one, and that of Tabernacles eight, days. And notwithstanding there is at present a certain calculation, yet we that live out of Jerusalem still retain the former practice."

The same account is given in Abendana's "Polity of the Jews," pp. 173-176. Also by David Levy, who has copied the above cited and other paragraphs from Abendana, with little alteration and no acknowledgment ("*Rites and Ceremonies*," pp. 23-30).

The same account may be found more at large in "Maimon de Consecrat. Calend. a de Veil," cap. i., ii., iii. (*see also Leo Mordena, "Rites and Customs," p. iii. chap. ii. sect. 2.*)

The following, also, confirming the above, is taken from the "Restoration of Paths to Dwell in," by the Rev. Benjamin Street, B.A.,

published in London, Eng., in 1872, p. 370. "By the civil reckoning, the moon was accounted new, fourteen days after full-moon day; but, in the temple reckoning, the moon could not be proclaimed new, until it had actually been seen eastward of the sun. Consequently, the canonical fourteenth day of the moon, the Passover day, would sometimes be the fifteenth day of the civil calendar month" (i.e., the day that was the fifteenth day of the month according to the true appearance of the moon), "the moon not having been seen on the very day of conjunction with the sun; and this would happen when the conjunction took place at sunset, for then the moon would not be perceptible till the second day. Hence our Lord could eat the Passover feast with His disciples lawfully on the fourteenth day, and could himself be the paschal lamb of sacrifice slain on the next day, expiring at the ninth hour, between the two evenings, at the time when the paschal sacrifice was being celebrated in the temple."

Adopting this view, which, it will be seen,

comes to us on high authority, and is thus shown to be the correct one, we can readily perceive, that the account given by John harmonizes with that of the other evangelists. Matthew, Mark, and Luke, following the true appearance of the moon, as did the Saviour and His disciples, speak of the day before the Saviour's crucifixion, the time of sending Peter and John to prepare for Him the Passover, as being "the first day of the feast," and "the day when the Passover should be killed." While John, speaking in accordance with the reckoning of the Sanhedrim, which had been adopted by the Jewish nation, calls the day on which our Saviour was crucified, "the day of the preparation of the Passover;" that is, the day on which they put the leaven out of their houses, and on which the Passover was killed: that, as we have seen, being the day that year which the Jews actually thus observed.

This also accounts for John's speaking of the time when our Saviour was eating the Passover with His disciples as being "before the feast of the Passover" (*John xiii.* 1), be-

cause it was before the time appointed that year by the Sanhedrim, when the Jews observed it.

It serves also, to explain his assertion, that, on the day on which our Saviour was crucified, the Jews would not go into the judgment hall, "lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover" (*John xviii.* 28).

Further, our Saviour's observing the Passover with His disciples on Wednesday evening, the beginning of the 15th of Nisan, according to the true appearance of the moon, not only allows of His strict compliance with the Law, but also fulfils the requirement in regard to the Passover sacrifice. The paschal lamb was a type of Christ. It pointed to Him as our Passover. That lamb, as has been shown, was to be sacrificed "between the evenings;" that is, between three and five o'clock on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan (*Exod. xii.* 6; *Lev. xxiii.* 5; *Num. ix.* 3, 5). As the paschal lamb, the type of Christ, was crucified on the 14th of the month Nisan, between three and five o'clock: so Christ, the great

Antitype, gave up His life at that time, which, as we have shown, was between three and five o'clock on Thursday afternoon, the day which was observed by the Jews that year as the 14th of Nisan, and hence regarded by them as the proper time for killing the paschal lamb. As confirmatory of this, we learn that our Saviour's death did not take place until after the ninth hour, or three o'clock in the afternoon (*Matt. xxvii. 46-50; Mark xv. 34-37*). As the hour coincides with the requirement, so also does the day. (*See argument in proof of our Saviour's crucifixion on Thursday, the 14th of the month Nisan, chap. iii.*)

The objection, that, according to the true appearance of the moon, it was not the day for killing the Passover, is without force; for, as has been shown, it was the day which the Jews, that year, by the appointment of the Sanhedrim, observed as the 14th of the month Nisan: and it was necessary that He should be crucified on that day, *the day recognized by the Jews*, in order to convince them, that, as the great Antitype of the Passover, the Law with respect to Him had been fulfilled.

Again, it was necessary that He should eat the Passover with His disciples before His death, that He might institute in place of it, the Lord's Supper; and yet, as a Jew made under the Law, it does not seem proper for Him to have violated the divine command by observing it before the appointed time.

One necessity appears to have been antagonistic to the other, and yet (upon the explanation that our Saviour observed the Passover on the 15th of the month Nisan, according to the true appearance of the moon; and that the Jews, according to the appointment of the Sanhedrim, observed it on the day following, as shown by Dr. Cudworth, Dean Prideaux, Mr. Street, and others) they are both accomplished; and it would seem as if Jehovah, that year, had instituted that particular arrangement to obviate this difficulty.

We see, also, why there should be an apparent discrepancy between John and the other evangelists, or why they should speak of the time of our Saviour's eating the Passover with His disciples, according to the true appearance

of the moon, while John speaks of it according to the then popular acceptance. The reason is furnished in the authors' design in writing their Gospels. Matthew's design was to write a genuine and authentic history of the Saviour's life. Mark's design was the same; but, from internal evidence, he appears to have written principally for the Gentiles. Luke also wrote his Gospel apparently for the Gentiles, and, as supplementary to the other two, to supply parts and circumstances omitted in the others: as he has himself expressed it, "To set forth in order from the beginning a declaration of those things believed among us" (*Luke i.* 1-14); that is, to deliver a true and genuine account of the life, doctrines, miracles, death, and resurrection of our Saviour. This being the design of the first three evangelists, it would be natural for them to use language inferring that the time of our Saviour's eating the Passover with His disciples was the time appointed for it, the time according to the true appearance of the moon; for so our Saviour and His disciples regarded it.

But John was writing for Jews ; and his design was, not merely to give an authentic account of the life of Christ (that had been done already), but, as he tells us, “ That they might believe that Jesus was the Christ, and that believing they might have life through His name ” (*John xx.* 31). And nothing would tend more to induce the Jews to “ believe that Jesus was the Christ,” than to convince them, that, as the great Antitype of the Passover, He had died on the 14th of Nisan, the day when the paschal lamb was killed ; and hence we can see the reason why he should speak of our Saviour’s crucifixion as having occurred on “ the day of preparation for the Passover,” Thursday in that year having been observed by the Jews as the day of preparation, according to the decree of the Sanhedrim. If John had spoken of our Saviour’s death as taking place according to the true appearance of the moon, and not according to the decree of the Sanhedrim, it would have made His death to have occurred on the 15th, which would not have been according to His purpose.

Bishop Bloomfield, speaking of the difference between John and the other evangelists, says, "The real difference between them is, that they wrote a history of our Saviour's life, but St. John, of His person and office." We repeat, therefore, John's design was to prove to the Jews that "Jesus was the Christ;" and, to do this, it was necessary that they should be made to see that Jesus was Himself their Passover: and hence he represents the crucifixion of Christ as taking place on the day observed by them that year as the day of preparation, that being the time when the Passover should be killed. This would be to the Jews a remarkable circumstance in proof that He was the Messiah; the fact, that, as the great Antitype of the Passover, He was slain at the appointed time. This would seem also to account for John's saying, on a previous occasion, "No man laid hands on Him, for His hour was not yet come" (*John viii. 20*).

We now pass to notice other objections. Both John and the other evangelists speak of the day on which our Saviour was crucified, as

being the preparation for the Sabbath: "And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath" (*Mark xv. 42*). "And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on" (*Luke xxiii. 54*). "The Jews, therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day (for that Sabbath day was an high day), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away" (*John xix. 31*). Now, it may be said that our Saviour cannot have been crucified on Thursday, because the Jewish Sabbath was not until Saturday; and hence, Thursday cannot have been the day before it, nor the day of preparation for it.

We answer, while John speaks of it as being the preparation for the Sabbath, he also speaks of it as "the preparation of the Passover" (*John xix. 14*); and the term "Passover" here must apply to the Passover supper, and not to the Jewish Sabbath that occurred during the Passover festival. When John

speaks of the same day as being "the preparation of the Passover," and "the preparation for the Sabbath," we are not to understand that he contradicts himself. The whole difficulty appears to lie in a misunderstanding of the term Sabbath. It has been thought to signify the Jewish Sabbath, or Saturday; and hence Friday has naturally been regarded as the day of preparation. The Sabbath referred to, however, was not the Jewish Sabbath, but "the day of holy convocation," "the day of unleavened bread." The first day of the feast was to be a "day of holy convocation." They were to "do no servile work therein" (*Lev. xxiii. 7*). That this was the 15th of Nisan, the "day of unleavened bread," is evident, by taking it in connection with the preceding verse. "On the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. In the first day ye shall have a holy convocation." Not the first day of the Passover, for that was the 14th, but the first day of the seven days, the

15th, "the day of unleavened bread," or, according to the passage just quoted, the day on which was "the feast of unleavened bread." That this day was regarded as a Sabbath is evident from the thirty-ninth verse of the same chapter, where, in speaking of the feast of Tabernacles, it is said, "On the first day shall be a Sabbath, and on the eighth" (the last day) "shall be a Sabbath;" that is, "days of holy convocation," as was the "day of unleavened bread." It is clear that the Sabbaths here mentioned were not the Jewish Sabbath; for the Jews reckoned their time by lunar months, which were determined by the moon's appearance: and therefore the first and eighth days did not always occur on the same day of the week; and hence the first and last days of the feast, called Sabbaths, could only at rare intervals fall on the Jewish Sabbath, or Saturday.

Moreover, John explains it, when he says, xix. 31, "For that Sabbath was a 'high day'" (*μεγάλη*, a great day). He uses the same term, *μεγάλη*, in speaking of the last day of the feast

of Tabernacles (to which we have already referred, and which we have shown could not have been the Jewish Sabbath, or Saturday, as it was liable to fall on any day of the week); though in itself it was not more sacred than the first day, and in Lev. xxiii. 39 is called, with the first day, a Sabbath.

Thus he says, "In the last day, that 'great day' of the feast" (*John vii.* 37). So the calling of assemblies (*Isa. i.* 13) is translated "a great day" by the Seventy, implying that, in their estimation, any day of solemn convocation was a great day (*see Robinson's "English Harmony of the Gospels," pp.* 203, 204). For a fuller discussion of this part of the subject, the reader is referred to chap. ii. pp. 38-45.

Thursday, therefore, the day on which our Saviour was crucified, was the day of preparation, not only of the Passover, but also of the Sabbath, "the day of holy convocation." So that both John's assertions completely harmonize, and are seen also to be in accordance, with the assertions of the other evangelists.

It will be seen from this, that, on the false theory that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, John is not only made to contradict the other evangelists, but he is made to contradict himself; for he says, as distinctly, that the day on which Christ was crucified was "the day of preparation of the Passover" (*John xix.* 14), as, that it was "the day of preparation for the Sabbath" (*John xix.* 31): and as Friday was the 15th of Nisan, the day on which the paschal lamb was eaten, it was the day of the Passover, and cannot have been "the day of preparation" for it.

Another seeming objection to our Saviour's having been crucified on Thursday is found in the following passages. After the women had beheld His sepulchre and how His body was laid, they "returned, and prepared spices and ointments, and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment" (*Luke xxiii.* 56). "And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had brought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint Him" (*Mark*

xvi. 1). Now, we know that they came for this purpose “very early in the morning on the first day of the week” (*Mark xvi.* 2). Our Saviour, as we have seen, having been crucified on Thursday, must have lain in the grave Friday and Saturday, two days, whereas it seems to be implied in these passages, that He lay in the grave only over the Sabbath. How shall we consistently explain it? We answer, Friday the 15th, as we have shown, was a “Sabbath,” “a day of holy convocation,” and not only a Sabbath, but the “great” or “high” Sabbath of the festival: and Saturday, the seventh day of the week, was the ordinary Jewish Sabbath; and hence, both being Sabbaths, the time throughout was as one continued Sabbath: and in the expressions referred to they seem to have been spoken of as one. But Matthew has removed the difficulty. “In the end of the Sabbath,” or, more correctly, “after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre” (*Matt. xxviii.* 1).

“In the end of the Sabbath.” The translation here is in the singular number, but the original is in the plural: Ὁψὲ δὲ Σαββάτων, “the end of the Sabbaths,” which, certainly, is consistent with the idea, that, between our Saviour’s crucifixion and the first day of^s the week, there were two Sabbaths.

We know it has been claimed that the translation is correct, that, in the original, the plural is here used for the singular. This is merely an assumption, suggested in the attempt to relieve the text of an apparent difficulty, and is manifestly incorrect. Evidently it would never have been thought of, if it had not been for the belief which was held by the translators, that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, and, therefore, that He could have lain in the grave only over one Sabbath. We admit that there are certain instances in the New Testament, where the circumstances recorded, are such as would seem to indicate that the Dative plural Σάββασι is used for the singular (*Matt. xii. 1; Mark i. 21: ii. 23, 24: iii. 2; Luke xiii. 10*), but these are ex-

ceptional; for, in most instances where the Dative plural is found in the original, the translation is in the plural. But there is no exception in the case of the Genitive plural *Σαββάτων*. It occurs in the New Testament only in four instances (*Matt. xxviii. 1; Luke iv. 16; Acts xviii. 14: xvi. 13*), except when it is used after numerals, as in *Matt. xxviii. 1; Mark xvi. 2; Luke xviii. 12; xxiv. 1; John xx. 1-19; Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2*; when it marks the days of the week; and, in every instance, it admits of a plural signification. As to the four instances above mentioned, the passage in *Matt. xxviii. 1* we have already explained. In the other passages in which the Genitive plural *Σαββάτων* occurs, the phrase is *τῆ ἡμέρα τῶν Σαββάτων*, "the day of the Sabbaths," meaning a definite or particular day, equivalent to "one of the Sabbaths." The article *τῆ* determines this, having the force of our definite article. 'Ο was originally a demonstrative pronoun; but as the prepositive article, having the demonstrative power gradually softened down, it simply marks an object

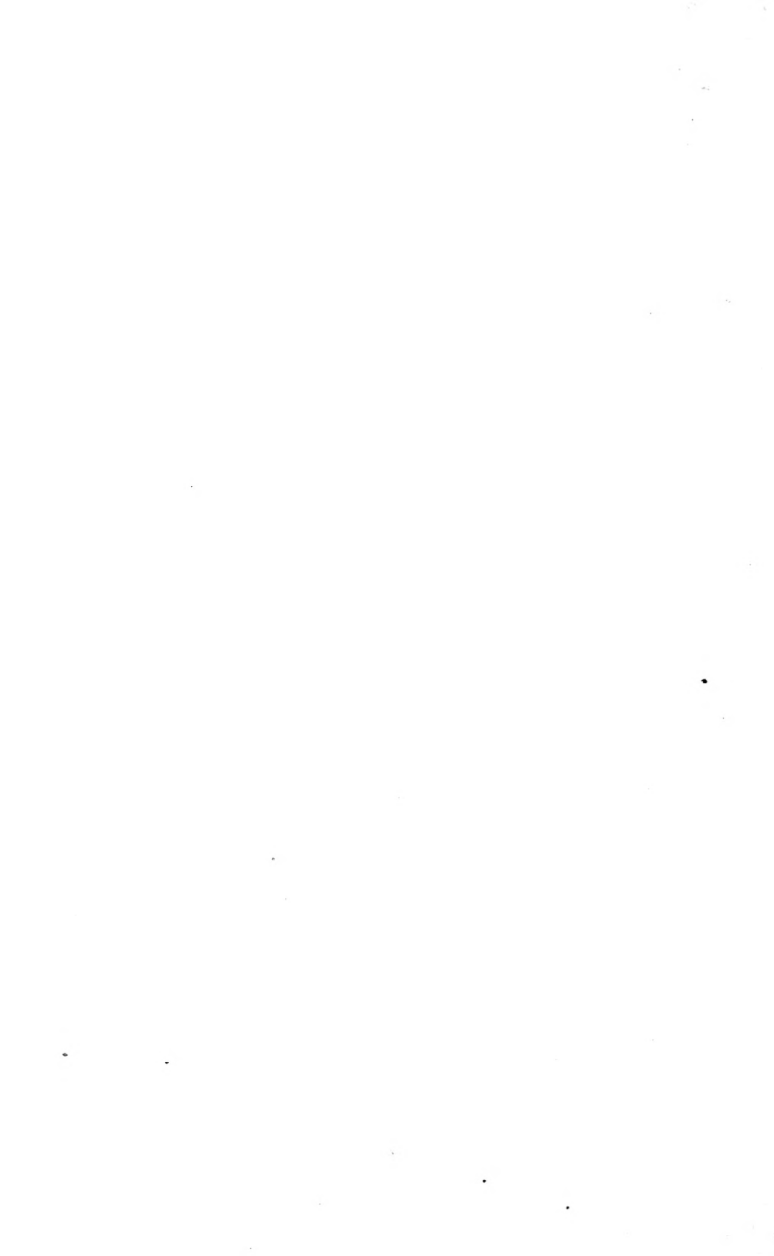
as definite (*see Robinson's "New Testament Greek Lexicon," also Liddell and Scott's "Greek-English Lexicon"*). The phrase Ὁψὲ δὲ Σαββάτων, in Matt. xxviii. 1, therefore, means exactly what it says, "the end of the Sabbaths," showing that a plurality of Sabbaths preceded it (*see argument on this phrase, Ὁψὲ δὲ Σαββάτων, chap. ii. pp. 38-45*).

But we are not strenuous on this point. Whether our position be accepted or not, does not affect the argument. If it could be proved that the Genitive plural Σαββάτων was sometimes used for the singular, such a use would be clearly exceptional. No one will deny that the Genitive plural has a plural signification; and therefore, if at any time it were to be translated in the singular, there would have to be an absolute necessity to warrant it. But it cannot fail to be seen that no such necessity exists in this instance. We have shown beyond question, that Friday, in the year that our Saviour was crucified, was the 15th of Nisan, the "great" or "high" Sabbath of the festival, and Saturday the 16th

was the ordinary Jewish Sabbath, and hence, that two Sabbaths preceded the first day of the week. The conclusion, therefore, follows inevitably, that Matthew uses the plural *Σαββάτων* intelligently, and that it has a plural signification.

We have now shown (*chap. ii.*) that Friday, in the year that our Saviour was crucified, was observed by the Jews as the fifteenth day of the month Nisan; and (*chap. iii.*) that our Saviour was crucified on the 14th, and therefore, as Friday was the 15th, that He must have been crucified on the preceding day, which was Thursday. We have also shown (*chap. iv.*), that, having been crucified on Thursday, He lay in the grave Thursday night, Friday night, and Saturday night, three nights, and all day Friday and Saturday, and a part of Sunday, and rose literally on the third day, according to the Scriptures; and (*chap. v.*) that His crucifixion on Thursday accounts for Matthew's use of the plural *Σαββάτων*; (*chap. vi.*), that it explains the "six days" and the "two days before the Passover" consist-

ently with the general belief of the church and the generally expressed opinion of commentators in regard to them; (*chap. vii.*), that it makes His triumphal entry into Jerusalem to have been on Sunday, called "Palm Sunday," according to the general belief of the church; (*chap. viii.*), that it accounts for the occupation of the several days of Passion Week, and removes the concealment which, on the false theory that our Saviour was crucified on Friday, necessarily hangs over Wednesday; and finally (*chap. ix.*), that His crucifixion on Thursday not only reconciles the apparent discrepancy between John and the other evangelists, but reconciles him with himself, removing an otherwise palpable contradiction, in short, removes every difficulty. These conclusions are based on the fact that He was crucified A.D. 30, according to the general belief. That He was crucified in that year is shown in the next chapter.



STATEMENT.

OUR Saviour was crucified A.D. 30.

X.

THE YEAR OF OUR SAVIOUR'S CRUCIFIXION.

That He was crucified A.D. 30 is evident.

1. It is the general opinion. That which is established by common consent is presumed to be correct until it is proved to the contrary.

2. It incidentally confirms the argument in regard to Thursday as having been the day of our Saviour's crucifixion, so essential in reconciling the Scripture narrative.

3. There is strong circumstantial evidence in its favor.

4. The most critical commentators confirm it.

That it is the general opinion that our Saviour was crucified A.D. 30 cannot be denied.

That it incidentally confirms the argument in regard to Thursday as having been the day of our Saviour's crucifixion, so essential in

reconciling the Scripture narrative, must be evident to those who have followed our argument.

That there is strong circumstantial evidence in its favor, will be seen from the following:—

1. Our Saviour was crucified when Pontius Pilate was governor; and it is known that he was governor ten years, from A.D. 25 to A.D. 35. Luke informs us (*iii.* 1–3), that, when John the Baptist began his ministry, Pontius Pilate was governor. Now, as Pilate was governor when John began his ministry, and did not become governor until A.D. 25, and we must allow at least four years for the preaching of John and the ministry of Jesus, the Saviour cannot have been crucified before A.D. 29. Therefore His crucifixion must have taken place between A.D. 29 and A.D. 35, for after that Pilate was not governor.

But A.D. 30 is the only year, as we have seen, between these dates, in which Roger Bacon, Mann, and Scaliger, Dodwell, and Ferguson, who have given their attention to a critical investigation of the subject, agree that

the Passover full moon, which determined the 14th of the month Nisan, fell on the same day of the week ; and that day they decide to have been Wednesday, which, as we have shown, answers fully all the conditions of the Scripture narrative, providing that our Saviour was crucified on Thursday.

We are aware that Sir Isaac Newton and some others have thought that our Saviour was crucified A.D. 33. But against this there lies the insuperable objection, that, if He had lived until A.D. 33, He would have been thirty-six years old ; and it would have given six years and a half as the time of His public ministry. He came to John to be baptized when He was about thirty years of age (*Luke iii. 23*), which was the beginning of His public ministry. As the great High Priest, He then entered upon His priestly office. And this accords with the Mosaic legislation, that the priests should minister in their office from thirty years old and upward (*Num. iv. 3*). (Though David afterwards changed the time of the Levites entering upon their Levitical

office from twenty-five to twenty years of age (1 *Chron. xxiii. 24*), he does not appear to have made any change in regard to the priests.)

The baptism of Jesus, by John, was His consecration to His priestly office. This is beyond question. In no other sense could He have been baptized. John's baptism was a baptism of repentance; but our Saviour was sinless, consequently He had nothing to repent of. Christian baptism is a sign and seal of inward and spiritual cleansing, of regeneration by the Holy Ghost. But Christian baptism was not then instituted: and further, our Saviour, being sinless, had received no spiritual cleansing; and hence in this sense the rite, as administered to Him by John, can have had no significance. And if it be said that He was baptized as an example for us, we answer, His baptism is no more an example for us than His crucifixion. He was baptized (*Matt. iii. 15*) "to fulfil all righteousness;" that is, the righteousness of the Jewish Law, which required that the priests should be consecrated, or set apart to their sacred office

by washing them with water; that is, baptizing them (*Exod. xxix. 4; xl. 12; Lev. viii. 6*). And, after they were baptized, they were to be anointed (*Exod. xl. 13*) with the "anointing oil" (*Exod. xl. 9*). And so Jesus, when He was about to enter upon His public ministry as our great High Priest (*Heb. iv. 14*), being of suitable age, came to John to be consecrated, or set apart by him to that office by the act of baptism, that He might thus "fulfil all righteousness." But, as He was to be a high priest not after the order of men, it was necessary that He should receive a higher unction; and, accordingly, after His baptism, the Holy Ghost descended upon Him in the form of a dove, and the voice of the Father was distinctly heard (*Matt. iii. 16, 17*): and, consequently, we find Him spoken of, as anointed with the Holy Ghost (*Acts x. 38. See also Acts iv. 27, and Luke iv. 18*). In the last passage, it will be noticed that our Saviour Himself says, referring evidently to His anointing after His baptism, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath

anointed me to preach the Gospel." His anointing, therefore, to preach the Gospel was His anointing to His public ministry. The time of His baptism by John, then, fixes clearly the time of His entering upon His public ministry. It is well known that our Saviour attended but three Passovers, at least there is no mention of more than three; and we have no reason to infer from the Scripture narrative that there were others: and hence He could have been but three years and a half in His public ministry. It is also known that the Christian era, fixed by Dionysius Exiguus in the sixth century, does not in reality date from the birth of Christ, but some years later. The general opinion is, that it is about four years; and this is correct: but some think it two years, and others, five. If, now, we take the least estimated difference in the date, two years, on the theory of Sir Isaac Newton and others, that our Lord was crucified A.D. 33, He would have been thirty-four and a half years of age, and His ministry must have continued four and a half years. And, if we

assume that He was crucified A.D. 33, according to the correct date, which allows a difference of four years, He would have been thirty-six and a half years old at the time of His death, and His ministry would have continued six and a half years. Such a theory as this, is not tenable. We see, therefore, that He cannot have been crucified in A.D. 33.

2. According to Dan. ix. 24, 25, seventy weeks were determined. From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto Messiah the Prince, should be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks." And (*Dan. ix. 27*) in the midst of the week the sacrifice and oblation should cease. The sacrifice ceased under the Law, when Christ, the great sacrifice, was offered. Seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks, are sixty-nine weeks, or four hundred and eighty-three days, which (a day in prophecy denoting a year) is four hundred and eighty-three years, which, according to Daniel, was to be the time from the "going forth of the

commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem," to the manifestation of Christ to Israel, or unto "Messiah the Prince." According to the Hebrew chronology, the commission of Artaxerxes Longimanus to Ezra was given four hundred and fifty-seven years before the commencement of the Christian era. Canon Baldwin says, "The time of the going forth is admitted by all to have been B.C. 457." That is what he calls the "terminus æquus," or starting-point of the seventy weeks. Four hundred and fifty-seven from four hundred and eighty-three leaves twenty-six, and this gives A.D. 26, the time of our Lord's "manifestation to Israel," or, when He began His public ministry; and, as He was born four years before the commencement of our era (twenty-six and four being thirty), it agrees in time with the Scripture narrative, that "He began to be about thirty years of age" (*Luke iii. 23*).

The "Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge" says (*p. 126*), "Dr. Prideaux, who discourses very copiously and with great learning on this prophecy, maintains that the decree

mentioned in it for the restoring and rebuilding of Jerusalem, cannot be understood of that granted to Nehemiah in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, but of that granted to Ezra by the same Artaxerxes in the seventh year of his reign."

We know that ancient chronology is not always reliable, but, in this instance, the evidence is positive. Artaxerxes Longimanus was the son of Xerxes, and succeeded him in the kingdom. Xerxes was assassinated 465 B.C. Adding to this the seven years of the reign of Artaxerxes before giving the commission, and we have 458 B.C., a difference of only one year from the time, according to the Hebrew chronology, of issuing the decree; and this difference is easily accounted for. The Jews began their civil year in the autumn with the month Tisri, answering to the 15th of our September, or, according to some authorities, to Sept. 22, and not in the spring. Hence, if Artaxerxes began his reign after the autumnal equinox, it would be 465 B.C., according to the common reckoning,

but 464 B.C. after the manner of the Hebrews. And this, with the seven years of the reign of Artaxerxes before issuing the decree (seven from 464 being 457), corresponds exactly with the statement according to the Hebrew chronology, that it was the year 457.

“The sacrifice was to cease in the midst of the week ;” that is, in the midst of the seventieth week, as “seventy weeks were determined.” Seven weeks and sixty-two weeks, making sixty-nine weeks, had passed before the beginning of Christ’s public ministry. A week in prophecy representing seven years, the midst of it would be three years a half, which was the time of Christ’s public ministry. Now, as He was crucified on the 14th of Nisan, answering to about the first of our April, or in the spring, He must have come to John to be baptized in the autumn of A.D. 26 ; and three years and a half added would bring His crucifixion in the spring of A.D. 30. So that His crucifixion at that time is seen to be the exact fulfilment of prophecy.

3. Dr. Robinson, in his “Notes to his Eng-

lish Harmony of the Gospels," part i. sect. 7, p. 167, says, "According to Matt. ii. 1-6, Jesus was born during the life-time of Herod the Great, and not long before his death. Herod died in the year Rome A.U. 750, just before the Passover (see *Josephus' "Antiquities," book xvii. chap. viii. sect. 1; ib. xvii. ix. 3*). This has been verified by calculating the eclipse of the moon, which happened just before his death (*Josephus's "Antiquities," xvii. vi. 4. Ideler, "Handbook of Chronology," ii. p. 391, sq.*). If, now, we make an allowance of time for the purification, the visit of the Magi, the flight into Egypt, and the remaining there until the death of Herod, for all which, not less than six months can well be required, it follows, that the birth of Christ cannot, in any case, be fixed later than the autumn of A.U. 749." If, now, we accept the conclusion of Dr. Robinson, fixing the date of our Saviour's birth in the autumn of A.U. 749, and allow the three years and a half, the time of His public ministry, making Him at the time of His death to have been thirty-three and a half years of

age, we perceive that He must have been crucified in the spring of A.U. 783, or A.D. 30.

Again, in order to make this as plain as possible, though at the risk of some repetition, according to President Woolsey (see "*Bibliotheca Sacra*," April, 1870, p. 332), "Herod the Great died the beginning of 750 U.C." ¹ This also, as we have seen (*Josephus*' "*Antiquities*," xvii. viii. 1, and xvii. ix. 3; also *Josephus*'s "*Wars*," ii. i. 1-3), was just before the Passover: and, since our Saviour was born but a short time before the death of Herod, in the autumn of A.U. 749, and He "began to be about thirty years of age" when He came to John to be baptized, thirty years added to A.U. 749 brings us to A.U. 779 as the date of His baptism; and three years and a half, the time of His public ministry, being added to this, brings us again to

¹ It will be understood that the letters A.U. and U.C., annexed to the dates in these quotations, are the different initials of Anno Urbis Condite, and signify the same thing, the year as reckoned from the founding of Rome.

the spring of A.U. 783, or A.D. 30, as the time of His crucifixion.

The following, also on the year of our Saviour's birth, agreeing substantially with that we have presented, is found in Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible," vol. ii. p. 1381. "It is certain that our Lord was born before the death of Herod the Great. Herod died, according to Josephus (*'Antiquities,' xvii. viii. 1*), having reigned thirty-four years from the time that he had procured Antigonus to be slain, but thirty-seven from the time that he had been declared king by the Romans (*see also 'B. J,' i. xxxiii. sect. 8*). His appointment as king, according to the same writer (*'Antiquities,' xiv. xiv. sect. 5*), coincides with the 184th Olympiad, and the consulship of C. Domitius Calvinus, and C. Asinius Pollio. It appears that he was made king by the joint influence of Antony and Octavius; and the reconciliation of these two men took place on the death of Fulvia, in the year 714.

"Again, the death of Antigonus and the siege of Jerusalem, which form the basis of

calculation for the thirty-four years, coincides (*Josephus' 'Antiquities,' xix. xvi. sect. 4*) with the consulship of M. Vipsanius Agrippa and L. Caninius Gallus; that is, with the year of Rome 717, and occurred in the month Sivan = June or July.

“ From these facts we are justified in placing the death of Herod in A.U.C. 750. Those, who place it one year later, overlook the mode in which Josephus reckons Jewish reigns.

“ Wieseler shows by several passages that he reckons the year from the month Nisan to Nisan, and that he counts the fragment of a year at either extreme, as one complete year.

“ In this mode, thirty-four years from June or July 717 would apply to any date between the 1st of Nisan 750, and the 1st of Nisan 751. And thirty-seven years from 714 would apply likewise to any date within the same termini. Wieseler finds facts confirmatory of this in the dates of the reign of Herod Antipas and Archelaus (*see his 'Chronologische Synopse,' p. 55*). Between these two dates

Josephus furnishes means for a more exact determination. Just after Herod's death the Passover occurred (Nisan 15th), and upon Herod's death Archelaus caused a seven days' mourning to be kept for him (*'Antiquities,' xvii. ix. sect. 3; xvii. viii. sect. 4*); so that it would appear that Herod died somewhat more than seven days before the Passover, in 750, and, therefore, in the first few days of the month Nisan, A.U.C. 750. Now, as Jesus was born before the death of Herod, it follows that the Dionysian era, which corresponds to A.U.C. 754, is at least four years too late."

It will be seen from the argument here given, that (as Herod died in the spring of A.U. 750, and our Saviour was born some time before his death) the birth of our Saviour must have occurred as early as the autumn of A.U. 749; which brings us to the same starting-point, and, consequently, to the same result.

Thirty years added to 749 brings it again to 779, the time of His entering on His public ministry; and three years and a half, the

duration of His public ministry, added to this, brings us to the spring of A.U.C. 783, or A.D. 30, the time of our Saviour's death.

The birth of our Saviour may also be determined approximately in another way.

Luke (*iii.* 1, 2) informs us that John the Baptist entered upon his public ministry in the fifteenth year of Tiberias, and (*iii.* 23) that Jesus was "about thirty years of age" at the time of His baptism by John.

Now, according to the Mosaic legislation, the priest was to enter upon his office when he was thirty years of age (*Num. iv.* 3); and, as that was the age of Jesus when He entered upon His public ministry, it is altogether probable that John also commenced his ministry at that age: and hence, if we reckon back thirty years, we shall ascertain the time of John's birth, and, consequently, that of our Saviour, who is known to have been six months younger (*Luke i.* 26).

Now, the Emperor Augustus died Aug. 29, A.U. 767, or A.D. 14 (see "*American Encyclopædia*," *Smith's "Classical Dictionary*," and

all standard works on Roman History); and that, as Tiberias succeeded him in the government, marks the date of his accession to the throne. Tiberias, then, having succeeded Augustus Aug. 29, A.U. 767, or A.D. 14, the fifteenth year of his reign commenced Aug. 29, A.U. 781, or A.D. 28; and going back thirty years would bring the birth of John not earlier than Aug. 29, A.U. 751, or 2 B.C.

This, it will be seen, is on the supposition, that John began his ministry when he was exactly, or on the very day that he was, thirty years of age. But the Law would appear to have been fulfilled if he had commenced his ministry at any time within a few months after his birthday, or even before he was thirty-one. That the time required was not exact, would appear from what is said of our Saviour, that He began to be, not thirty years of age, but "about thirty years of age." Now, if John, at the time of his entering on his ministry, had been a few months past his thirtieth birthday, he would still, after the ordinary manner of speaking, have been

thirty years of age (it being customary to call a person thirty until he is thirty-one); and hence, John may have been born some months earlier in the year A.U. 751, or 2 B.C., which, our Saviour being six months younger, would bring His birth in the autumn of A.U. 751, or 2 B.C. But we have obtained this result by reckoning the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberias from the death of Augustus, and his accession to the throne as sole ruler; and, ordinarily, this would be the proper way.

But Augustus associated Tiberias with him in the government, when he (Augustus) was in the seventy-fourth year of his age (*see Goodrich's "History of All Nations," vol. ii. p. 753, and works on Roman History*), and he died in the seventy-sixth year of his age (*see "American Encyclopædia"*).

Tiberias, then, was associated with Augustus in the government two years before his death. This, then, and not the time of Augustus's death, marks really the commencement of his reign: and if Luke reckoned from this, as we

believe he did, the date of John's birth, and consequently that of our Saviour, would be two years earlier; that is, A.U. 749, or 4 B.C., which exactly coincides with the result previously obtained by reckoning from the death of Herod, according to the account that is given us by Matthew. And, as we are again brought back to the same starting-point, we have thirty added to A.U. 749, making A.U. 779, the time of our Saviour's entering on His public ministry; and three years and a half, the length of His ministry, added to this, brings us, as before, to the spring of A.U. 783, or A.D. 30.

That A.D. 30 corresponds, or is synonymous, with A.U. 783, is seen from the following: —

The system of counting time from the birth of Christ, introduced by Dionysius Exiguus, and adopted about the middle of the sixth century, was to supersede the method of computing by Olympiads.

There were four years to each Olympiad; and it is known that he fixed Christ's birth in

the fourth year of the 194th Olympiad, making a mistake of one such period, a not unnatural blunder after such a lapse of time, and in a most unscientific and uncritical age.

Though some think him to have made a mistake of two years, and others five, this, making a difference of four years, is and has been the general opinion, and is, moreover, confirmed by all the historical facts relating to the time of the Saviour's life and crucifixion. Accordingly, a marginal note at the head of the second chapter of Matthew in our English New Testament (the King James version) informs us that Jesus was born in the "fourth year before the common account called Anno Domini."

It is said, also, that, when the error was discovered, so many events were on record in the new chronology, that it was thought best not to disturb it.

Now, as our Saviour was born in the autumn of A.U. 749, four years later would make our Christian era to commence in A.U. 753; and, consequently, A.D. 30 would be A.U. 783.

To recapitulate briefly, according to the preceding evidence, our Saviour was born in the autumn of A.U. 749, or 4 B.C.

He was baptized by John in Jordan, and entered on His public ministry in the autumn of A.U. 779, or A.D. 26, and was crucified on Thursday, the fourteenth day of the month Nisan, in A.U. 783, or A.D. 30.

From the evidence presented, it will, ²we think, be admitted, that our *fourth* and *last* statement is correct; viz., that most critical commentators confirm the statement we have made, that our Saviour was crucified A.D. 30. Indeed, there may be said to be in regard to this a unanimity of opinion.

We have already quoted in proof of it, Smith, Robinson, and others; but that there may be no question in regard to it, we cite also the following: Wieseler (*p.* 386, *sq.*) claims that our Saviour was crucified in the year 30 A.D., or 783 from the founding of Rome.

Canon Farrar asserts, in his "Life of Christ," that the crucifixion took place A.D.

30. This is the opinion also of Friedlieb, Tischendorf, Greswell, Andrew, Ellicott, Lange, and indeed of almost every noted commentator.

From the evidence presented, and the testimony adduced, we are forced to the conclusion that our Saviour was crucified A.D. 30, on *Thursday*, the day observed that year by the Jews as the fourteenth day of the month Nisan.

APPENDIX.

SEE pp. 16, 17.

THE early Christian churches in Asia observed the *fourteenth day of Nisan* as the day of the crucifixion, and celebrated Easter on the *third* day thereafter, without regard to what day of the week it might be. The early churches in the West, on the contrary, observed the nearest Sunday to the full moon of Nisan as Easter Day. In consequence of this, a severe dispute arose between them, and Victor of Rome broke communion with the Eastern Church for refusing to come to his date (*see Mosheim's and other Church Histories ; also Dowling's "History of Romanism," chap. ii. p. 32*).

Now, as our Saviour rose on Sunday, the first day of the week, and the Asiatic churches

observed the *third* day after the 14th as the anniversary of that resurrection, the evidence is conclusive that the Eastern churches believed that He was crucified on the 14th of Nisan, and that that day fell on Thursday; for if our Saviour had been crucified on Friday, Sunday, the day of His resurrection, would have been the *second* day after: and they would have observed the *second* day after the 14th, and not the *third*, as its anniversary.

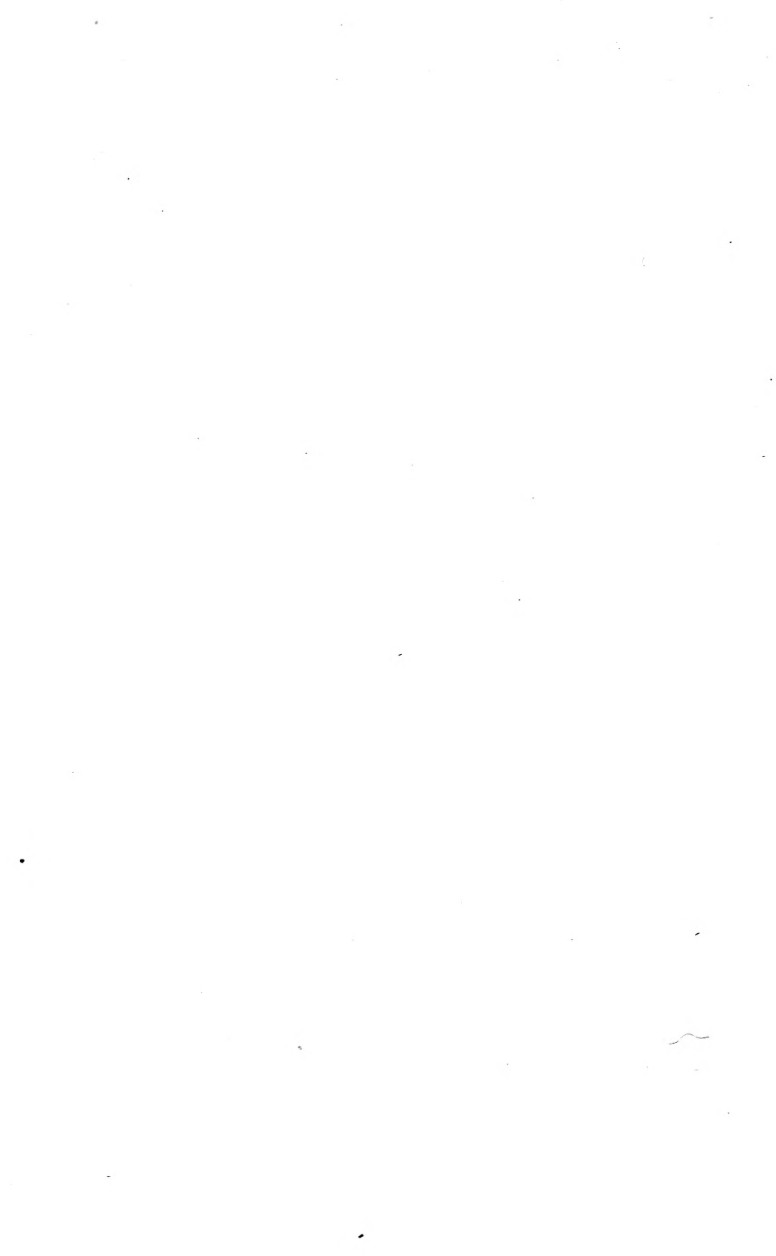
It is evident that the Eastern churches were correct in this belief, for the dispute in regard to the observance of Easter arose in the *second* century; and they affirmed that they derived the custom of observing the *third* day after the 14th as the anniversary of Christ's resurrection, from the practice of the apostles Philip and John; and, it being so near the time of the crucifixion, they could not have been mistaken. Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus, asserted, in his reply to Victor, bishop of Rome, that it was a custom which had been handed down to them by their ancestors. Eusebius informs us, "Hist. Eccles.," lib. iv. v., that

they based this observance on a tradition, which they claimed to have received from the apostle John. We must admit that this claim was sincere, and, as they believed, valid; for they were men eminent for their piety, and many of them received the crown of martyrdom. It is further evident that they had received this custom from the apostle John, from the indisputable fact that the venerable Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, a disciple of the apostle John, was prominent in the controversy, and went to Rome to confer with "Anicet, bishop of that see, upon the matter, with a view to terminate the warm disputes which it had occasioned."

He (Polycarp) followed the custom of the Eastern churches; and, having been a disciple of the apostle John, there can be no reasonable doubt that he observed it in accordance with the instructions which he had received from St. John, and with what he knew to have been the practice of that apostle. (This, in the absence of any other testimony, is sufficient to establish the fact that our Saviour was

crucified on the fourteenth day of Nisan, and that He was crucified on Thursday.)

It will be seen from the foregoing, that different opinions in regard to the time of the Saviour's crucifixion were held by the Eastern and Western churches, in the early part of the second century.



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