

THE LAST WEEK OF CHRIST'S EARTHLY LIFE
AND THE FIRST IN RESURRECTION.

Outline:-

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4. The Last Supper and the First.
5. That Night.

6. The Day and Time of Crucifixion.
7. How Long was our Lord Jesus in the grave?
8. The Events of the Resurrection Morning.
9. The Preciousness of God's Silence.

Our subject this evening, dear friends, is headed "The last week of Christ's earthly life and the first in Resurrection", and it is intended that we should have a preparatory study today, seeking God's guidance with a view to the removal of misconceptions and difficulties, that He may be glorified.

Our first point concerns the authority of the Gospels. By the gospels I mean those four precious narratives that bring before us the earthly life of our beloved Lord. These Gospels, I take it we recognize as equally authoritative, and as absolutely authoritative. It is not that Matthew and Mark and Luke and John each contributed what they knew, but that the Holy Spirit brought various things to the remembrance of those who had been present, and in some way directed the knowledge of those who had not been present, with a view to the record of just SUCH PORTIONS of the life of our beloved Lord as it was God's good pleasure to hand down to us, for our guidance and encouragement and reproof. The four Gospels are alike needed, alike precious, alike authoritative. There are no contradictions to be found, though there are seeming contradictions in great number. The seeming contradictions are often such as no MAN contriving to produce a narrative of his own would have caused. Difficulties and problems which are found throughout the four Gospels are even found within the covers of a SINGLE gospel, and thus plainly 'intentional' in God's wisdom, but no contradictions can be discovered. There is every evidence, to an unprejudiced disciple, from the very difficulties, that God is behind these four narratives; and so we pass to our second point.

"The blessings of Difficulties". First the blessings of difficulties in THEMSELVES, that is, they are very humbling, and it is well to be humbled, to learn that we know not everything as we ought to know, that our ignorance is very real, and God's wisdom very great. Again, the blessings are vast in connection with the accompaniments, because through difficulties we SEARCH where we should otherwise perhaps hold back from such earnest labour. We are thankful to our God for every difficulty in that it urges us to work more hard, and to expect blessings will accompany the comparing Scripture with Scripture. There are blessings, moreover, in the results, for when a

difficulty is solved, we find more deeply felt confidence in the God-breathed words. Furthermore, when we find a fulness of teaching that we might otherwise have overlooked, we expect yet more; and we shall not be disappointed. The difficulty leads to the pondering, the pondering to the unveiling, the unveiling to the praising and the results are thus to the glory of our God. Incidentally we may notice an evidential value in difficulties. If the writers had been under a collusion to produce books to agree, there would not be the difficulties which we find. Hence we have the striking evidence that these books are not produced by man, made to fit in with one another, but are God's own testimony, unlike all human biographies. Undoubtedly we shall meet certain passages that at first sight SEEM to contradict one another, but if we love the Lord we are surely learning that first sight is oftentimes defective, and, let us remember, the difficulties of seeming contradictions can be solved, if there is only one POSSIBLE interpretation. I would mention this because believers are oftentimes inclined to play into the hands of infidels by an almost cowardly manner. It is often cowardly to argue. We have the terra-firma of God's truth, and the mountain-top of fellowship with Him is often a sounder argument than descending to argue, because in connection with argument in words, the believer sometimes surrenders that which he cannot rightly surrender. I fear that is so in times innumerable - he surrenders the unique character of the Scripture, for all common arguments bring it down to a common level. This is an absurdity and an impossibility. In other words he sheaths his sword, and then offers to fight (See Matthew 4.) May I point out in this connection that if there is one POSSIBLE interpretation even the infidel can demand no more. We need not prove that a certain order of events is the right one. I think we shall find with respect to some of the actions of our beloved Lord on the resurrection morning, it is still difficult to know the exact order of events, but there is no contradiction, if there is one POSSIBLE arrangement of the narrative; and I am not sure that we are expected to be able to arrange it all, and say "This is the only possible order". I believe that God would have us, and this has already been suggested, confess our ignorance and feel our littleness, but if there is one possible interpretation, ALL the objections of men are laid low.

And now, dear friends, we come to our third point, the events leading up to the crisis, which, INDEED, was a crisis, for as the Lord Jesus said, "Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out". You remember how that for over

thirty years He Who was the Lord of glory had sinlessly walked this earth, and for three years before He died in the place of guilty sinners, He had walked this earth as the MANIFEST Servant of the LORD, the One ever doing those things which pleased Him, characterised by obedience, obedience not merely as duty, but out of a heart of overflowing love. In Galilee, in Judea, aye and in Samaria too, He had witnessed and worked. Man had despised Him, though oftentimes the common people heard Him gladly. He had been marked out as the song of the drunkards. The Pharisees refused Him since He was the Light and showed up their darkness. But just before the period of His glorious death in the place of guilty sinners, there were certain events which led more rapidly up to the crisis, and showed that His hour was nearly come. You remember how each Gospel brings before us certain things as introductory to the rejection and suffering of our Lord Jesus. We know that all these things were appointed by the Father. We know that man's arrangement was only secondary, and part of an overruled purpose. Nevertheless it is interesting to notice the way in which history is brought before us to show how Satan works, and how men scheme. In all Gospels we have the wondrous entrance into Jerusalem, fulfilling part of Zechariah 9 and of Daniel 9 also, where the sixty nine sevens lead up to Messiah the PRINCE. Messiah the Prince enters riding upon a colt, and, having entered, He is yet rejected by the Pharisees. The people it is true, honour Him and speak of the prophet of Galilee, but He is refused in the temple area itself. The words sound forth, "Hearest Thou what these say?" "And He left them and went out of the city into Bethany and He lodged there". Why Bethany? We find in John 11 that Bethany was the residence of Martha, Mary and Lazarus. A little before this last week our Lord had gone away beyond Jordan when men sought to take Him (John 10.39,40). but God in infinite wisdom arranged that Lazarus should fall sick, and so to Bethany the Lord Jesus went, having waited certain days, that the miracle might be more manifest, and that the appointed times and seasons might be reached. On arrival at Bethany He enquired, and not only enquired, but acted concerning Lazarus, and Lazarus was raised up, but soon after 'a council' against Him was called. The resurrection of Lazarus is clearly marked by John as the stepping stone to the death of the Lord Jesus, for we read "Much people of the Jews therefore knew that He was there, and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also whom He had raised from the dead; but the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death, because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away and believed on Jesus". Indeed the council of which we have been reading, the council which is in John 11, partic-

ularly contain those striking words of Caiaphas, where He prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation, and the words are added, - "From that day forth they took counsel together for to put Him to death". We do not know how long was the period between the raising of Lazarus and the Passover at which our beloved Lord died. John puts a brief time mark in between, - "Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews, but went thence into a country near the wilderness unto a city called Ephraim, and there continued with His disciples". Then we are quickly told about the coming up to Bethany six days before the Passover. John 11 is used by the Holy Spirit as the preface to John 12. The going to Bethany there, was some little time before, but it was the preface to His death; and the people had not forgotten the raising of Lazarus. Those who went up to Jerusalem at the three feasts had evidently not been up to Jerusalem since Lazarus had been raised, and, doubtless, many knew him, or had heard of him, and desired to see him, hence in John 12 we have the reference to the Lord's triumphal entry which as I have said, is found in the whole of the FOUR Gospels. Next we have brought before us that our beloved Lord in those days was in the TEMPLE teaching. He knew that His last week of earthly life upon this earth had arrived. "I was daily with you in the temple teaching". Luke brings this before us, where we read that our beloved Lord was at all times so zealous for His Father's business; and yet the chief priests and the scribes, and the chief of the people sought to destroy Him, and could not find what they might do for all the people were very attentive to hear Him. Chapter 20.1 adds "It came to pass in one of those days as He taught the people in the temple and preached the Gospel, the chief priests came upon Him with the elders, and said to Him, "Tell us by what authority Thou doest these things, and who is he that gave Thee this authority?" But, dear friends, we must take one other passage which will help to show how Satan worked. I have specially called attention to the marching into Jerusalem, but will you notice in Matthew 26 at the end of that wondrous address which was still later, how the Lord Jesus remarked, "Ye know that after two days is the feast of the Passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified". Then suddenly the passage goes to Bethany. In verse 6, "Now when Jesus was in Bethany in the house of SIMON the leper". This, we know, is recorded in Matthew, Mark and John, and John's Gospel plainly associated Christ's presence in the house of Simon the leper very definitely with the raising of Lazarus as a stepping stone to the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is remarkable that Judas Iscariot was the son of another Simon, and that in the house of the feast when, in gratitude to

the Lord, Mary took a pound of spikenard, doubtless remembering His work upon her brother Lazarus, - then it was that Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, led off others in complaint saying, "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor"? That was, as John says, six days before the Passover, and the fact that we read first in Matthew 26.1,2. that it was then only two days before the Passover, makes very clear how the Holy Spirit goes back in Matthew to show how Mary's act of devotion led up to the crisis. Now perhaps we can gather together the different things which, from the human standpoint, led up to the putting to death of the Lord Jesus. First, His raising up of Lazarus embittered the Pharisees beyond all measure. Secondly, the loving care for Him which was manifested by Mary, in connection with that miracle, exasperated Judas, who wanted to have all the gifts entrusted to his care, that he might steal accordingly. Thirdly, the prophecied and apparently triumphany entry of the Lord Jesus into Jerusalem annoyed the Pharisees for they saw the Galileans were apparently going AFTER Him, as they characterised it. Hence they determined they must act quickly, yet they desired not to act on the feast day, lest there should be an uproar among the crowds of people. Judas formed his plans several days before they were carried out. He formed his plans at one feast, he carried them out in connection with another, for we read how that Judas was present at the Passover feast, and so still with the Lord, and indeed the Lord gave unto Him some of that Passover feast, treating him still as a Jew, though he did not remain to share the Lord's Supper. Judas brings before us the power of sin growing and developing. The power of self-seeking, the danger of education and business ability in themselves, for doubtless this JUDEAN Jew ("Iscariot" - "man of Kerioth" probably) was more educated than some of the others, and as such it may be, carried the bag and superintended the finances of the fellowship.

Next we come to consider the fourth point "The last Supper and the First". By the last supper I mean that last Passover Supper, the last of a series which began in Egypt, for after the Lord of glory had died there were no passovers acceptable to God. It is true there will be a further passover, as the Lord Jesus Christ showed, and as the prophecies make clear, that there will be the feast in the first month, but at the present time Israel's passover is an imitation - solemn to us, - a solemnising mockery. There is no lamb, there is no realization of the teaching, there is nothing but an empty form. That last supper is brought before us in Luke's gospel very definitely. Shall we turn to the 22nd chapter? Says the first verse, "Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh which is called the Passover, and the

chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill Him for they feared the people. Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot being of the number of the twelve, and he went his way and communed with the chief priests and the scribes how he might betray Him unto them. And they were glad and covenanted to give him money. And he promised and sought opportunity to betray Him unto them in the absence of the multitude. Then came the day of unleavened bread when the Passover must be killed". I suppose everything is perfectly clear. This was not an ordinary feast, it was the Passover. Verse 8 adds, "Go and prepare us the Passover", verse 11, "Where is the guestchamber where I shall eat the Passover with My disciples"? Verse 13, "They made ready the Passover". Verse 15 "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer". I would lay a stress upon this, because some have implied and even stated that the Lord Jesus may have used leavened bread at the Lord's Supper, and said there is no proof of a Passover first. "Might not that meal have been another"? - it has been said. The only seeming 'argument' which can be brought forward in this connection is John 18.28, "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". This appears at the first a difficulty, but need to realize that the Lord Jesus, Who made haste and delayed not, partook of the Passover quickly in the appointed time. Luke is clear, "The Passover MUST be killed". But the Jews who evidently had, and still have, different ways of reckoning, apparently so contrived it even as they have contrived with respect to certain Sabbath laws, that their leaders could put off the observance a little longer. Oh how sad is the contrast between the leaders of Israel, and the Precious Obedient Saviour! Of Him we particularly read "When the hour was come, He sat down with the twelve". That last supper is marked before us in the various Gospels as the stepping-stone to Judas' climax of guilt. The Lord said at the supper, "One of you shall betray Me", and Judas asks, "Rabbi, is it I?" The others say, "Lord, is it I"? Yet a little later they are engaged in a strife as to who should be the greatest. Indeed, though the Passover supper brings before us the Lord's people being led out from Judaism to Christ, it is very sad to see the failure of MEN, even on so solemn an occasion. Christ looked for those who could enter into His rejected position, in some measure of loving sympathy, and He found none. The behaviour at the last supper is indicative of MAN'S mistake, which always exalts himself and forgets Christ, and we are not

surprised it led up to the failure in the garden, crowned by the failure in the palace. As to the first supper, I mean the FIRST occurrence of the Lord's Supper, I need say very little. You know how the Lord Jesus selected a PORTION of the passover, and distinctly said "THIS do with a view to My memorial", suggesting at once a limitation, and a continuance, with a different object. At THIS first supper Judas was not present. The other eleven partook:- a number suggestive in that it is one beyond the ten which made a fellowship in the nation of Israel. Eleven partook from one cup as from one loaf, having in common that which typified Him whose glory and work they did not fully realize. And so we have, beloved friends, brought before us that first supper, toward the end of which the Lord Jesus arranged for the journeying forth, and they went forth across Kedron to the Mount of Olives, and into Gethsamane's garden. Ere they had left that upper room, Peter had offered, evidently more than once, that he would die with the Lord. I say "evidently more than once" because of the passage in John's Gospel as well as that which we have in the other Gospels. We have plainly a different context there, though at the same supper. May I point out in passing that in John 13.2 we have the striking statement "Supper having become", not "supper finished". Then we have the passover, down to the sop of verse 27, and the going out of Judas. WHEN Judas has gone forth, the Lord Jesus at once said, "Now is the Son of man glorified". Before then He had taken the towel and girded Himself, with garments laid aside, but now He would manifest His glorifying, and He speaks to His disciples in a different way. "Little children, yet a little while I am with you...a new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another as I have loved you". Peter at least twice over promised to die with the Lord, but the Lord knew what would befall Him. He is the contrast with Judas in one sense, and yet a parallel in another, "Simon, Simon", says Luke 22, "Satan hath desired YOU that he may sift as wheat, but I have prayed for THEE, that thy faith fail not, and, when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren". Here we have brought before us that Satan's object was to secure the whole twelve. He particularly desired Peter as well as Judas, but the Lord's plan and prayer were not defeated, the Lord's purpose was not altered. The first supper having been passed through, and the hymn having been sung, the going forth into the mount of Olives is before us, and there is a stress once more on the fact that IT WAS NIGHT. Several times are we reminded of this, "It was NIGHT when Judas went out" says John 13. "The Lord Jesus, in the NIGHT in which He was betrayed" says 1 Corinthians 11.23. Morally, as well as literally, it was night. We know how the Passover feast was associated with night in Exodus. Again the

Lord Jesus said, "Today, in this NIGHT, thou shalt deny Me". There is a stress throughout on the NIGHT. We would consider in passing, Gethsemane, where our beloved Lord spent part of that night, though it was disturbed by those who came from the high priest. We think of Gethsemane with respect to Satan, for there he came as in the wilderness to attack our beloved Lord, and thrice over the Lord gained the victory, as in the wilderness, though thrice over Peter failed, and there was soon his entering into temptation against which the Lord had warned, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation". Thus the hour of temptation for Christ became an hour of temptation for Peter. Again we think of Gethsemane with respect to the power of prayer. We see the intensity, and the conflict and agony of real prayer, and feel ashamed of our faulty contrasts with Him Who prayed most earnestly, ashamed of our faulty contrasts with that groaning which cannot be uttered, the groaning of the Holy Spirit whereof Romans 8 tells us.

Next we can consider the Day and Time of Crucifixion. We are dependent upon what Scripture says in this connection. We have to discover the day, first with respect to the feast, secondly with respect to the week. We have to discover the time, first with respect to the Jewish sacrifices, secondly with regard to the hour of the day. The day with respect to the types is fairly clear. God graciously arranged that though the Lord Jesus partook of the Passover at the right time, nevertheless the people's confusion and delay apparently made it possible that our beloved Lord was slain at the usual Passover killing time, that He was hanging upon the cross at the time when the nation of Israel were thinking of their paschal lamb. This is deeply important, for it brings before us two things. First, God's overruling of man's sin. Secondly, the intense iniquity of the Pharisees and priests, who at so solemn a time in their Jewish ritual could spend their hours in getting rid of Him Who ever did those things which pleased the Father. May I point out that the Jews at the present time always repeat their Passover service, and have it two succeeding nights. There seems a little anticipation of this, or rather an anticipation of the underlying cause of this, in the fact that the Jews seem to have kept their Passover a day after the Lord Jesus. Then, furthermore, we have to consider the day of the week. Wednesday has found its advocates, Thursday its defenders, Friday is the usually regarded day. I hope, before we leave today, to know something more of YOUR difficulties in that connection. The Lord enabling, they will be considered next week.

As to the HOUR of the day He was crucified, we read at the third hour in Mark, which was 9 o'clock in the morning, and there was darkness over all the land from the sixth hour, until the ninth hour, for three hours, and at the ninth hour (3 o'clock in the afternoon), the Lord Jesus cried with a loud voice, and then He died. Thus we have it brought before us that He was put on the cross at the time of the morning sacrifice and died at the period of the evening sacrifice. He was hanging on the cross six hours, - (the number 'six' being deeply important) and these six hours are divided into two threes, - the first three specially (not exclusively) bringing before us man's opposition, and Satan's opposition, and the last three - GOD'S WRATH. Thus with the three temptations in Gethsemane we have several 'threes' in connection with the death of the Lord Jesus. John's gospel, however, tells us that early in the morning was the sixth hour. At first there looks like a contrast, but it is not so, for Pilate led the Lord Jesus forth and sat down at the Judgment seat about six o'clock in the morning. This is ROMAN reckoning, hence that which was the first hour with the Jews would be regarded as the sixth hour in the day with the Romans. There is no contradiction. He died for Jew and Gentile, and both hours are appropriately mentioned in connection with His death.

We have now to consider how long our beloved Lord was in the grave. He Himself declares that as Jonah was three days and three nights, so would He be in the heart of the earth. But I need hardly say that the word 'day' and the word 'night' have alike to be interpreted in regard to Eastern meaning. Do not misunderstand me, the letters 'nux', night, mean nothing as bare letters. You cannot know a word except by usage. It is therefore important that we should come to this part of our study with prayerful determination to have no opinions of our own, simply to accept what God has revealed. Were it not for that Divinely made statement as to three days and three nights, I suppose we should have little hesitation in believing that our Lord Jesus was only in the grave a little beyond the one day and night of twenty four hours, for it seems fairly clear at first sight, (I will not say whether it is right or not) - it seems fairly clear at first sight in Matthew's Gospel that one day intervenes between the death and resurrection. Likewise in Luke's Gospel the women rest the Sabbath according to the commandment, and the first day of the week comes up next before us. John's Gospel is equally clear that the Sabbath was very near when the Lord Jesus died, for they would not allow His body to hang upon the cross during the Sabbath. I take it therefore that we have here a problem which will bring us to our knees, and which

the Lord will solve if it be His good pleasure and time, that we may learn more of Himself, and the fulness of His work. There is one of our problems for prayerful consideration next time. I will only add now that in Matthew 17.1 that which is said to be "After six days" is in Luke 9.28 said to be about eight days after; that in John 20 we read about the eighth day, concerning the following Lord's day I presume, and when various ones went to Pilate saying that the Lord Jesus declared that after three days He would rise again, they also said, "Command that the sepulchre be made sure UNTIL THE THIRD DAY". "AFTER three days", and "UNTIL the third day" in the same breath. A somewhat similar passage has been before us recently in the book of Esther. Moreover in the latter part of the Lord's Day on the journeying to Emmaus, we are clearly told in Luke 24 that it was the third day since various things there mentioned had happened. "After three days", signifies till after the beginning of the third day, so in a tenancy five minutes is a legal period for the whole. This clears up much for God's dear people.

The events of the resurrection morning will occupy us more fully on a subsequent occasion. I will only remind you once more that any possible interpretation is sufficient. It seems fairly clear that one Gospel speaks as though the disciples knew something, when another Gospel says they did not know anything. But that is only the conclusion of a superficial study. If we look through each Gospel by itself we shall find that the disciples were continually in suspense. Let us give the most striking illustration, or at least, one of the most striking illustrations in Luke 24. The two journeying to Emmaus have come to the eleven and those that are with them, and the words are sounding forth, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to SION", and as they speak Jesus stands in the midst, and at once they are terrified and affrighted (an amazing fact), they suppose they have seen a spirit. You remember in Acts we read that when Peter arrived at the door those who were praying to see him, were surprised to see him. On the resurrection morning there was confusion among the disciples, in the resurrection evening there was confusion. When one moment they believed, the next moment they doubted, and this is the key to some of the seeming contradictions. Moreover, in the resurrection day there was ample opportunity for several journeyings and running backwards and forwards in connection with the tomb close by. This will account for the fact that on one occasion Mary Magdalene is by herself, on another is accompanied by other women; that on one occasion Peter is with John, on another occasion by himself, and

on a third with the other gathered disciples. We need not to assume, but to accept, not to reason criticizingly yet ignorantly, but to be thankful for the preciousness of God's silence which not only makes us search, but makes us praise. This silence in the order of events makes us feel, - Oh how little can we dictate to God, - rather we dare not dictate at all - how He should give us His instruction. He knows what is best and we thank Him as dutiful children should. There is a further silence with regard to what happened in the interval between the first Lord's Day and the second Lord's Day. We know little of the arrangements during the forty days, ere our Lord more manifestly and definitely ascended. We know little of what happened during those days, but He was often assembled with His disciples and spake to them of the things concerning the kingdom of God. What we know is precious what we do not know is precious. God worked out, and works out His purpose and we thank Him, and are willing for Him to tell us what He shall tell us, and to be silent as to whatever He will keep from us.

Now dear friends, your suggestions, questions and difficulties

Q. The day of preparation would be before the Sabbath, would it not?

A. Yes, in the east, till the present day, Friday is called the "Parascave".

Q. That was the day on which the Lord was crucified?

A. Yes.

Q. What does it mean, "the end of the Sabbath" in Matt. 28 ?

A. I do not want this RECORD OF SUGGESTIONS to be viewed as anything more than 'suggestive'. We could translate "WITH A VIEW to the first day of the week". The word there used only occurs elsewhere in Luke 23. 54. In that day was the preparation and the Sabbath DREW ON. That word 'drew on' is the same as in Matt. 28, "As it began to dawn toward the first day of the week". It is really the word for 'lighting upon', evidently the Jews of old had the lighting up for their Sabbath as we see when we go round the streets of East London today, but DOES it mean in Matthew 28 that they had a further lighting up, a 'religious' act as they do now? That thought has been suggested. Or have we brought before us here the dawning toward the first day of the week on the Lord's Day morning itself? Here is one of the real difficulties. The word "The end of the Sabbath" means late in the Sabbath, OR late in the week, and there have been suggested certain reasons

for wondering whether it may not mean that on Saturday evening Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the sepulchre, though their plans were not fully carried out. There is a bare possibility that we could read the words with the 66th verse of the chapter before, "They went and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch, BUT it was the end of the Sabbath as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week", that is, the time was fast going by, and the Pharisees were late. But this would at once suggest another problem, not only would it begin the 28th chapter rather abruptly, but it would seem to bring before us the idea that the first day of the week still began on Saturday evening, which though it was doubtless true BEFORE Christ's death, seems to us hardly an expression that we should anticipate JUST BEFORE His resurrection and after His death, inasmuch as that period though transitional was nevertheless getting very close to the new dispensation when the first day starts as we know from Acts 20 at midnight, (Roman time, the times of the Gentiles). It seems to me therefore that the words of Matthew 28. 1 can be best understood as designedly obscure to bring before us that there was an 'awkward' period of six hours; - to which week could you say it belonged? Do you follow the difficulty? The old week would close at 6 o'clock Saturday afternoon, the new week starts at 12 o'clock or midnight, and this may account for the fact that the word 'Sabbath' is here used in the plural, a name that is sometimes given to the week or the weeks. Have we here brought before us the end of the weeks, late in the weeks, that is to say the transition period which united the two weeks even as we have a transition period in connection with dispensations (see Hebrews 9.26 Greek). I hope to go further into this more fully another time, but I trust I have made the difficulty clear as a difficulty. We must ever own that there are some things in Scripture we cannot understand.

Q. What time did the morrow after the Sabbath commence among Israel?

A. Six o'clock, but nothing was arranged as an offering until the next morning, nothing specially.

Q. With regard to the difficulty of unleavened bread, Deuteronomy 16.4 definitely states that there should be no leaven in all their coats during that week. Even if the Jews in general were not carrying out that command, our Lord would not approve the existence of leaven during that week, would He?

A. No.

Q. This not only excludes it from their feasts but from their presence during the week, does it not?

A. Undoubtedly.

Q. It would be impossible for them to have leaven under any circumstances?

A. Morally impossible, and of course the first day of the week when the Lord made Himself known to the two going to Emmaus, it must have been unleavened bread again.

Q. And "as oft as ye eat this bread". Do you think 'this' as demonstrative means the particular kind of bread being directed?

A. I think it includes the thought, although includes ~~much~~ more

Q. In the ordinary way the bread might be mentioned?

A. Simply "broke bread" without any 'the' or 'this' at all. It is not an accident that the very word for 'bread' also means a loaf in Greek, "This bread" therefore indicating "this loaf". Israel were used to two loaves when leavened at Pentecost, but this one loaf was unleavened.

Q. Luke 22.21. The reference to Judas being at the table presents a little difficulty.

A. First of all you notice the word 'is' in italics. Then secondly when the servant of God says that he set the things in order, it does not mean that he never once deviated from historical arrangement to put a little clue or something in a special order for a special purpose. "To set forth in order" may contain the general thought of chronological arrangement, but it does not say everything is chronological. There are other 'orders' as well. People were making confused arrangements, and the Holy Spirit corrected through Luke.

Q. It is quite clear from another Gospel that after taking the sop he went out?

A. Yes.

Q. But Luke 22.21 is following after the Lord took bread, and it comes in with the word "But the hand of him that betrayeth Me".

A. It is unusual language I grant, but is not this what

we are learning throughout Scripture? God is pleased to give us unusual language to make us think. It is all arranged in a different way from what we should have arranged it.

Q. It says they are enquiring among themselves who should be the betrayer, and the Lord says to Judas "That which thou doest do quickly". Would that be after they had been enquiring, or when the Lord gave the sop?

A. When the Lord said His definite words no man knew what He meant. It is quite possible that the Lord said more than once that He would be betrayed, because you recollect how that we have it brought before us in Matthew 26, "They began every one of them to say unto Him, Lord, is it I?" and this passage puts the concern before the taking of the bread. That may be helpful in connection with Luke's Gospel. In Mark's Gospel we have it arranged thus. "They began to be sorrowful, and to say unto Him one by one". May it not therefore be that the Lord Jesus said it a second time, that Luke records a second time, "Behold the hand of him that betrayeth Me(is) with Me on the table", not necessarily at that time, but "has been with Me on the table" may be the thought, and then they begin to enquire among themselves, and a strife among THEM which should be the greatest. I merely suggest it, in accord with the general idea that one possible interpretation is enough to meet the difficulty. If you cannot receive one CERTAIN interpretation you can often get two blessings from two 'uncertain' interpretations. Uncertainty is often fuller of blessing than certainty, especially because we do not feel proud of it.

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