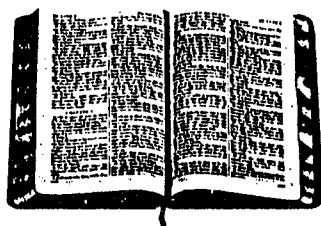


THE INSTRUCTOR



"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." (2 Timothy 3:16)

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A COMMON TREASURY

In the Old Testament we learn that God's people had a *treasury*. In Joshua 6:19 we read of **"the treasury of the Lord"** and in verse 24 we find the expression, **"the treasury of the house of the Lord."** In Luke 21:1-4 **"the treasury"** which contained **"the offerings of God"** is mentioned. *Money* was cast into the treasury! (Also see Mark 12:41-44 and Mt. 27:6).

We learn from John 12:6 that Judas **"had the bag, and bare what was put therein"**. (Also see John 13:29). NOTE: It is thought by some that this **"bag"** contained *"a common fund"* for the Lord and His disciples as they labored as servants of God.

Disciples of Christ in the first century (after the church began in Acts 2) brought money and *laid it down at the apostles' feet*". (See Acts 4:34-37; 2:44-45; 5:1-11). NOTE: This indicates the existence of *a common treasury or fund* among the early Christians!

Churches were **"given order"** concerning **"the collection for the saints."** (See 1 Cor. 16:1). NOTE: This indicates that churches were to have a **"collection"** or a *fund* or *treasury*.

In Cor. 16:2 Paul said: **"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."** OBSERVATIONS: (1) This was an *order*, not merely a suggestion! It required *giving* according to one's prosperity! (2) The giving was to be done **"upon the first day of the week!"** (3) The purpose of the order was to eliminate the necessity of *gatherings* when Paul arrived. NOTE: Unless the *collection* was made in advance of Paul's coming, *gatherings* would need to be made when he arrived. The fact that *collections* were to be made **"on the first day of every week"** (NASV) is *proof of a common fund or treasury!*

(Continued On page 4)

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Editorial---

MUST WE KEEP THE SABBATH TODAY? (No. 10)

In our past studies we have shown that the law that required the Israelites to keep the sabbath day holy was *provisional* and *temporary*. There is no Scriptural *proof* that God ever intended for *Christians* to keep the law that He gave to the children of Israel after they came out of Egypt. The sabbath law was given to a *specific* people for *specified* reasons. When it had fulfilled its purpose *it ceased to be binding*. When the law that required sabbath keeping was fulfilled, *it was no longer in force*. (Cf. Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:6-13; 7:11-19; 9:16-17; 10:9-10; Rom. 7:1-7; 2 Cor. 3:6-17; Col. 2:14-17; etc.)

In our study three months ago we began a consideration of some arguments made by sabbath keepers in an effort to show that sabbath keeping is binding on Christians today. A very interesting study! Let us now continue our examination of arguments made.

SOME ARGUMENTS FOR SABBATH KEEPING CONSIDERED

17. "JESUS SAID: 'NOT ONE JOT OR TITTLE WILL PASS FROM THE LAW TILL HEAVEN AND EARTH PASS AWAY.'"

REPLY:

(1) Jesus did *not* say what is stated in the above argument! Jesus *did* say: "**Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil...Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.**" (Mt. 5:17-18) NOTE: Jesus did *not* say that no part of the law would pass as long as heaven and earth remain, but he declared that as long as heaven and earth remain no part of the law would pass "**till all be fulfilled!**" *A big difference!*

(2) Compare the statement in Mt. 1:24-25 that "**...Joseph...took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name Jesus.**" NOTE: It is necessarily implied that Joseph *did* know her after Jesus was born. Likewise, no part of the law passed "**till all was fulfilled!**" However, when all was fulfilled *the law passed away!* Christ fulfilled the law! FURTHER NOTE: Since no *part* of the law (including animal sacrifices) would pass "**till all be fulfilled**", we must conclude that no part of the law (including animal sacrifices) has passed away or that *all* the law (including the ten commandments) has passed away! If the law has been fulfilled (and it has), then *all* the law (including the ten commandments) passed away! (Cf. John 19:30; Luke

24:44-48; Col. 2:14-17; Rom. 10:4; 7:4-7).

18. "IN MT. 24:20 JESUS TOLD THE DISCIPLES TO PRAY THAT THEIR FLIGHT BE NOT ON THE SABBATH DAY. THE EVENT THAT CAUSED THEM TO FLEE OCCURRED IN ABOUT AD 70, WHICH WAS ABOUT FORTY YEARS AFTER THE CRUCIFIXION. THIS PROVES THAT CHRISTIANS WOULD BE KEEPING THE SABBATH AT THAT TIME."

REPLY

(1) Yes, Jesus told His disciples to **"pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day"** in Mt. 24:20. However, this does *not prove* that the sabbath day is *holy* nor that Christians should *observe* the sabbath! NOTE: If this passage *proves* that the sabbath day is *holy* and that Christians should *observe* the *sabbath* in some special way, *it would also prove* that *winter* is a *holy* season and that *Christians should observe winter in some special way!*" If not, why not?

(2) Jesus did *not* instruct his disciples to pray that their flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day *because* they should be keeping the sabbath. That is wishful thinking on the part of sabbatarians! Jesus told the disciples *why* they should pray that their flight not be in the winter nor on the sabbath day in the very next verse. He said: **"For then shall be great tribulation, ..."**

It would be more difficult to flee on the sabbath since the *gates of Jerusalem would be shut on the sabbath day!* (See Nehemiah 13:19).

Jesus had the *safety* of the disciples in mind and *not* the sacredness of the sabbath day when he made the above statement.

The statement of Jesus in Mt. 24:20 *does not prove at all that Christians would or should keep the sabbath day!*

19. "PAUL OBSERVED THE SABBATH DAY. HE PREACHED ON AT LEAST 76 SABBATH DAYS."

REPLY:

(1) It is an assumption and an assertion that Paul *observed* the sabbath day *after* his conversion! *Evidence* that proves this is *lacking!*

(2) There is no Scriptural *proof* that the apostle Paul (as a Christian) ever *kept* the sabbath day *holy!* It is certainly true that Paul often went into the synagogues on the sabbath day and preached. Immediately after his conversion, Paul **"preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God"**. (Acts 9:20). In fact, he **"confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ"** according to Acts 9:21. In Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews, **"Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures..."** Acts 17:12). In Berea Paul likewise went into the synagogue of the Jews and preached the Word of God. (See Acts 17:10-13). In Corinth Paul **"reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks."** (Acts 18:4). However, the fact that Paul went into the Jewish synagogues and preached God's Word does *not* prove that Paul *kept the sabbath day holy.*

(3) The fact I go into a Jewish synagogue on the sabbath and preach the Word of God is certainly no evidence that I am keeping the sabbath holy as it was observed by the children of Israel! (To be continued)

(Continued from page 1)

A COMMON TREASURY

(4) The context suggests the idea of a *common fund* that would be available for saints in Jerusalem (who were needy) when the apostle Paul arrived. (5) This particular collection was to relieve poor saints in Jerusalem.

Paul stated that when he came to Corinth that he would bring whomever the church at Corinth had approved by their letters to bring their "**liberality**" (or *gift, bounty, contribution, benevolence*) unto Jerusalem.

The fact that Paul received wages from *churches* indicates that *churches had funds* out of which those wages were paid! (See 2 Cor. 11:8; Phil. 4:15-16).

If there is no common treasury the *churches* (as collectivities) cannot

function in the paying of wages to preachers (as they did to Paul in 2 Cor. 11:8)! Neither can they function *as collectivities* in the field of edification or in the relief of saints when money is required! (Cf. Eph. 4:11-12, 16; 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8:1-24; 9:1-15; Acts 6:1-6; 1 Tim. 5:16; etc.).

1 Cor. 16:1-4 is the only passage that tells us *when* Christians are to "**lay by him in store**" for a work of the churches as collectivities. We learn from this and other passages how churches are to use their funds. In the absence of other instructions, let us be content with laying by in store on the first day of the week into a common fund that churches may fulfill their responsibilities! (CRS)

GOSPEL MEETINGS

Westside in Gadsden, AL--March 27-29, 1998
Wise, Virginia--April 5-10, 1998.
Pisgah, West Chester, Ohio--June 7-12, 1998.

SENTENCE SERMONS

We see more obstacles when we take our eyes off the goal.

* * * * *

The longer you carry a grudge, the heavier it becomes.

* * * * *

When you do not have things you want, learn to appreciate things you do have.

* * * * *

Always put off what you shouldn't do at all!

* * * * *

All the honey a bee gathers in its lifetime doesn't sweeten its sting.

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