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**North Road Chapel (Evangelical)  
BIDEFORD**

# THE LAW OF GOD

Man was created a responsible creature and as such he is accountable to his Creator. It follows that there must be a standard by which his responsibility can be assessed; this standard is the Law of God and is fully set out in the Scriptures.

There is much confusion and muddled thinking upon the part of many sections of the professing Church concerning this subject of the Law of God. Some teach that the Law pertained to Israel and is solely Jewish in character; others teach that the Law belongs to the old covenant, but now under the new covenant that Law has passed away and the believer is no longer under law but under grace; others believe that the Law, having been fulfilled by Christ, now has no place in the life of a Christian. Consequently scant attention is given to this matter in the pulpits of our day, hence *"truth is fallen in the street"* (Isaiah 59:14); therefore lawlessness abounds in both the world and the Church.

In order to come to a right understanding of this matter, it is essential that we have a Biblical knowledge of what constitutes the Law of God. The Law as given on Mount Sinai falls into three parts; the moral, ceremonial and judicial. It is of fundamental importance that we see these distinctions. The ceremonial law with its many offerings, sacrifices and special high days ended with the first advent of Christ, for He was the fulfilment of all that was typified by those ordinances and therefore of necessity they have ceased. The judicial law set out the manner in which Israel's society was to be governed and regulated; this also passed away in A.D.70 when the Jewish nation was scattered and therefore ceased to exist. The moral law, known as the Ten

Commandments, also referred to as the Decalogue, is the ongoing Law of God for all time and did not pass away at the first advent of Christ.

Usually reference to the Law of God in the New Testament refers to the Ten Commandments and never is there a hint given that this has been repealed. These Commandments, the Decalogue, have been described as the Transcript of Holiness, the Divine standard. This was written at the first upon the heart of Adam and later God inscribed it upon tables of stone at Sinai. This Law is binding upon all men for all time, the standard to which man is responsible and to which he will be held accountable.

To be faithful to God and to uphold this Law in our generation often causes a man to be branded as a legalist but it is most grievous for any man to dismiss the Law of God. It is quite clear in the New Testament that *"the Law is spiritual"* (Romans 7:14). *"The Law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good"* (Romans 7:12). It is said of the 'blessed man' to whom the Psalmist refers in Psalm 1, that *"his delight is in the Law of the Lord"*; the apostle Paul concurs when he says, *"I delight in the Law of God"* (Romans 7:22).

Some Christians appear to have the distorted view that the Law was given in wrath and that God does not act in this manner now, for we live in a day of grace; this is not so, the Law was given by God in love. *"The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; He shined forth from mount Paran, and He came with ten thousands of saints: from His right hand went a fiery law for them. Yea, He loved the people"* (Deuteronomy 33:2,3). True, it was a fiery Law, in that it was pure. How could it be otherwise, for it was God's Law, setting out His standards and requirements? Would it have been a kindness upon God's part if He had never told men of this? In love to His creatures the true standard of holiness has been made plain. The Law was for man's

blessing, it was implanted into and known by Adam, the head of the race, from the beginning. It is a fallacy to say that the Law originated at Sinai. Concerning the gathering of the manna we read, *"And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?"* (Exodus 16:27,28). This was **prior** to Sinai.

The Ten Commandments pertaining to our obedience and love to God, and love to our neighbour, to sabbath observance, to marriage and so on, go back to and indeed are part of creation. The Mosaic Law incorporated the moral law, but the Ten Commandments were always clearly distinguished from the ceremonial and judicial laws of Israel, which were not of permanent duration.. The very manner in which the Ten Commandments were given shows that this Law was unique and supreme as it was actually written by the finger of God (cf Exodus 31:18); not upon parchment but upon tables of stone (cf Deuteronomy 9:10). The finger of God denotes supreme authority, and tables of stone signify permanency. Never is **that** Law to perish.

The uniqueness of this Law, the Decalogue is also seen in that it was only the Ten Commandments which were deposited in the ark of the Covenant (cf Exodus 25:16,21), not the ceremonial and civil regulations. When the Lord took up His abode in Israel's midst, it was from the mercy seat immediately above the Law of God (cf Exodus 25:22). Although the Ten Commandments were incorporated into the law of Moses, yet that law preceded Moses and continues throughout all ages. To teach as many do that, with the advent of Christ all law is forever done away, is a travesty of the truth and a failure to appreciate the abiding nature of the Law of God. It is departure from this Law (which is binding upon all men) that lies at the very heart of the world's troubles. All lawlessness in whatever form, stems from a breach of God's commandments.

The believer is not freed from this Divine standard; he is not under its condemning power, but he is under its commanding power, as Watson the Puritan put it. The true Christian who will not accept the moral law of God as a rule of life is difficult to understand. The Scriptures abound with examples of great men of faith in both Old and New Testaments who delighted in this perfect Law, which is spiritual, holy, just and good (cf Romans 7:12,14). Teaching that the Law of God is invalid in the life of the Christian, has invariably led, over the years to Antinomianism. From this point let us proceed to the Decalogue, closely examining its detail. We shall see how vital is this fundamental tenet of Christianity.

The first seventeen verses of Exodus chapter twenty is one of the most important sections of Holy Scripture. Published here by plain terse statements is the Law of God. It commences, "*God spake all these words*". Who dare ignore these words? When Almighty God speaks it is incumbent upon all to listen, for mortal man must attend unto this with reverence and fear, as every word is an oracle from heaven. These words are to be received, believed, held in constant remembrance and taught. "*These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up*" (Deuteronomy 6:6,7).

Every generation is held accountable to God for the transmitting of the Law of God to the generation following. The Christian cannot impart God's grace to his children or to anyone else, but he can impart God's Law and this we are commanded to do. Concerning the commandments of the Lord, the Scripture says, "*Ye shall teach them your children*" (Deuteronomy 11:19). It might be argued that fallen man cannot keep these commandments; this is quite true, nevertheless we are to teach them. The Scriptures give the reason for this, "*By the Law is the*

*knowledge of sin*" (Romans 3:20). This is why parents are to teach their children the Law of God, this is why preachers are to preach that Law, for only in this way are people made aware of sin and their standing before a holy God.

There are many, many things in the world today which are common place, which people do not realize are grievous in the sight of a holy God. This is because it is believed the Law of God has no relevance in today's society. In the main, preachers have long since ceased to preach the Law, but not until that Law is thundered from the pulpits and it permeates society will there be any change, for only in this way are people instructed.

*"Wherefore the Law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith"* (Galatians 3:24). Schoolmaster - one who instructs, educates. The Holy Spirit here states that this is exactly what the Law does. When the knowledge of sin is brought home to a person by such instruction, then will they seek Christ. The crying need of this decadent age is the preaching of the Law, the faithful proclamation of **"All these words which God spake"**.

What then are these words? First the Almighty gives a 'preface', by that is meant 'an introduction with preliminary remarks'. This preface reads *"I am the Lord thy God which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage"* (Exodus 20:2). This quote is divided into three parts:

1. *"I am the Lord thy God"*.
2. *"Which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt"*.
3. *"Out of the house of bondage"*.

These three statements need to be examined.

1. "*I am the Lord thy God*". The word here is 'Jehovah'. This title sets forth the majesty of Israel's God which to this Old Testament people, was a name held in reverence above any other name; it signified to them the eternity and immutability of the Almighty God. "*That thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, **the Lord thy God***" (Deuteronomy 28:58). "*For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed*" (Malachi 3:6). 'Jehovah' is the name which underlies the word 'Lord' in these references; the eternal unchanging Jehovah.

As He is about to enunciate His Law, He says, "*I am the Lord - Jehovah*", and then adds, "*thy God*". How much is implied by that little word 'thy'. What more could Israel want than to be assured that the eternal, unchanging Jehovah was their God and how can anyone suggest that the Law was given in wrath? There was nothing unreasonable or legalistic in Jehovah emphasizing a right code of conduct for a people unto whom He condescended to be a God, even their God.

2. "*Which brought thee out of the land of Egypt*". As this Law is about to be announced, God reminds Israel of the wondrous deliverance which He effected for them; the mighty signs and wonders of the plagues, the killing of the first born of Egypt, the covering of blood and consequent sparing of all the first born of Israel, the spoiling of the Egyptians at the great exodus, the parting of the Red Sea until all the children of Israel had passed clean over. Then, when the Egyptian armies which were in hot pursuit were in the midst of the sea bed, those walls of water gave way and all Egypt's host perished. I am the One who wrought all this for you, said Jehovah; Israel's God in very truth.

3. "*Out of the house of bondage*". This may appear to be a repetition of the previous statement, but it is not, for it carries a deeper thought. Egypt speaks of the world of heathendom, idolatry and isolation from God. The house of bondage speaks of affliction and tyranny. God reminds

Israel of that furnace of misery and slavery; the bitter experience of having to make bricks without the necessary materials, the cruel lashings of the taskmasters. From this terrible affliction and bondage God effected emancipation and brought them out.

It is with these introductory remarks that God commences to give the Decalogue. Had He not dealt in wondrous grace with these people? Was there anything out of place in Him setting out His Law as a rule of life and practice for them, a people for whom He had done so much? Can any reasonable thinking man suggest that here is conflict between law and grace? The underlying spiritual truth of Exodus 20:2, clearly forbids that law can ever be pitted against grace.

Many professing Christians are averse to the Law of God and so bring forth theories showing that they are not inclined to give this Divine Law any recognition in their lives in this New Testament era. Some are resentful because of its prohibitions; the commandments are a series of "*Thou shalt not*" and they demand a positive rather than a negative gospel! Why did God, the unchanging Jehovah speak "*all these words*"? He is the sovereign, infallible God and gave this series of prohibitions for a reason. The negative form of the Decalogue is due solely to the fact of the shocking depravity of those to whom it is addressed, a prohibition presupposes a disposition to do that which is prohibited. If people were not inclined to worship other gods, then there would be no need of the first commandment. If there was no rebellious or disobedient spirit in a child, the fifth commandment would be pointless. If no spirit of revenge ever surged up within man, why state "*Thou shalt not kill*"? The reason for prohibiting adultery is because lust is in fallen man. Man is prone to lie and to bear false witness and so on. Because of this, the New Testament Scripture states, "*Wherefore then serveth the Law? It was added because of transgressions*" (Galatians 3:19).



God publishes His Law in writing to all men for all time because of man's depravity and consequent natural tendency to all manner of sin. It is negative in that it only instructs and restrains, but cannot implant positive virtue. The Law of itself can never transform a sinful heart; nevertheless it is a most vital part of Holy Scripture, spoken by God Himself and in His preliminary remarks, He makes it quite plain that it is not a separate issue, which is to be divorced from His grace. It is all a part of His wondrous revelation and counsel.

To be continued

W.H.Molland

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"What, we may well inquire, is the cause of this lawlessness which now so widely obtains? For every effect there is a cause .... nor is this hard to find. Do not the utterances of many Christian teachers over the years, go far to explain the situation which now confronts us? .... How many have denounced the Law as a 'yoke of bondage', a 'grievous burden', a 'remorseless enemy'. They have declared in trumpet tones that Christians should regard the Law as 'a strange thing'; that it was never designed for them; that it was given to Israel and then made an end of at the cross of Christ. They have warned God's people to have nothing to do with the Ten Commandments. They have denounced as 'legalists', Christians of the past who, like Paul, served the Law (cf Romans 7:25). They have affirmed that Grace rules the Law out of the Christian's life as absolutely as it did out of his salvation .... Having sown to the wind, is it any wonder that we are now reaping the whirlwind? (cf Hosea 8:7). The character of the cause determinates the character of the effect".

A.W.Pink

## Exposition Must Have Application

The Bible is among other things a book of revealed truth. That is, certain facts are revealed that could not be discovered by the most brilliant mind. These facts are of such a nature as to be past finding out. They were hidden behind a veil, and until certain men who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost took away that veil, no mortal man could know them. This lifting of the veil of unknowing from undiscoverable things, we call divine revelation.

The Bible however, is more than a volume of hitherto unknown facts about God, man and the universe. It is a book of exhortation based upon those facts. **By far the greater portion of the Book is devoted to an urgent effort to persuade people to alter their ways and bring their lives into harmony with the will of God as set forth in its pages.**

No man is better for knowing that God in the beginning created the heavens and the earth. The devil knows that, and so did Ahab and Judas Iscariot. No man is better for knowing that God so loved the world of men that He gave His only begotten Son to die for their redemption. In hell there are millions that know that. **Theological truth is useless until it is obeyed.** The purpose behind all doctrine is to secure moral action.

What is generally overlooked is that truth as set forth in the Christian Scriptures is a moral thing; it is not addressed to the intellect only, but to the will also. It addresses itself to the total man, **and its obligations cannot be discharged by grasping it mentally.** Truth engages the citadel of the human heart and is not satisfied until it has conquered everything there. The will must come forth and surrender its sword. It

must stand at attention to receive orders, and those orders it must joyfully obey. Short of this any knowledge of Christian truth is inadequate and unavailing.

Bible exposition without moral application raises no opposition. It is only when the hearer is made to understand that truth is in conflict with his heart that resistance sets in. **As long as people can bear orthodox truth divorced from life they will attend and support churches and institutions without objection.** The truth is a lovely song, become sweet by long and tender association; and since it asks nothing but a few dollars, and offers good music, pleasant friendships and a comfortable sense of well-being, it meets with no resistance. Much that passes for New Testament Christianity is little more than objective truth sweetened with song and made palatable by religious entertainment.

One reason for the divorce between truth and life may be the lack of the Spirit's illumination. Another surely is the teacher's unwillingness to get himself into trouble. **Any man with fair pulpit gifts can get on with the average congregation if he just "feeds" them and lets them alone. Give them plenty of objective truth and never hint that they are wrong and should be set right, and they will be content.**

On the other hand, the man who preaches truth and applies it to the lives of his hearers will feel the nails and the thorns. He will lead a hard life, but a glorious one. May God raise up many such prophets. The Church needs them badly.

A.W.Tozer

(Taken from the Free Grace Broadcaster, emphasis added by the Editor, Mr L.R.Shelton, Jr.)

# *The Myth of Good Friday*

The above title may cause revulsion in the minds of some who read this article, for Good Friday is generally regarded as a holy day, but has careful consideration been given to this subject? Many if questioned would immediately appeal to the Anglican Book of Common Prayer; here will be found saints days, holy days and festivals in profusion, but it must be said when these are Biblically examined, only one, the observance of the Lord's Day, the New Testament Christian Sabbath is valid. That which is known as the church calendar is solely the invention of man, carrying no Scriptural mandate whatsoever. To give credence to these observances and for them to be recognized and incorporated into Christian worship is adding to the Word of God, which the Holy Spirit has warned against in the Bible on three occasions. 1. *"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it"* (Deuteronomy 4:2). 2. *"Add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee"* (Proverbs 30:6). 3. *"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book"* (Revelation 22:18,19). To add or to diminish in any way from that which God has laid down in His infallible word is a matter of the utmost gravity.

It is not the purpose of this article to deal with the celebrations which are now so deeply embedded in Christendom, namely Christmas and Easter. The pagan origin and idolatrous connotations of these annual festivals

have been clearly set out from both the Scriptures and history in the book 'Festal Days and the Law of God', obtainable for the cost of postage from our bookroom. The question now to be considered is, did Christ die on a Friday? This is the common belief within the professing church and Christ's death is commemorated on this day. There is conclusive evidence from the Scriptures to the contrary, thus proving that this so-called holy day is a myth, a word defined in the dictionary as 'a fictitious legend or tradition, accepted as historical'. This once again shows how gullible man is to deception.

Writers, commentators and ministers have not faced this matter fairly and squarely, as invariably the most extraordinary mathematical gymnastics are engaged to try and establish that Christ died on a Friday. Why has such a point to be made and who said that the Saviour had to die on Friday? Nowhere is this to be found in the Scriptures.

From very early centuries A.D. when paganism invaded christianity, the church sought to accommodate Babylonish practices and gave recognition to their festal days, thus precipitating an unholy mixture of the true and the false. The origins of Easter and Good Friday go back to Tammuz, Baal and Ashtaroth. The fact that the State church continued these traditions after severance from Rome is no reason why non-conformists should perpetuate them. It is to the word and to the testimony that we must turn to establish the facts (cf Isaiah 8:20).

Our Lord Himself said, *"For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whales belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth"* (Matthew 12:40). This statement of the Lord is fundamental to the correct understanding of the matter; three days **and** three nights. However much theologians and preachers may juggle with figures, none can make Friday afternoon to early Sunday morning to be three days and three nights. Some will immediately retort by stating that

other Scriptures only speak of three days, quoting from Mark's gospel, *"And He began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again"* (Mark 8:31). To argue on the point of three days only, omitting the nights is foolish; what is more, it is making one part of God's word to contradict another, which is a serious matter.

It is essential in considering this subject that the length of a day be established from Scripture. Our Lord said, *"Are there not twelve hours in the day?"* (John 11:9). The twelve hours of the day are followed by twelve hours of night, a period of twenty four hours. This order was established at creation and governed by the sun; as long as the *"earth remaineth .... day and night shall not cease"* (Genesis 8:22). This cycle of twenty four hours is spoken of generally as 'a day'. This stems from creation, *"The evening and the morning were the first day"* (Genesis 1:5, see also v.'s 8,13,19,23 & 31). Time has and always will be calculated in this manner. When our calendar registers Sunday, 2 April, that date includes both the day and the night; it is a period of twenty four hours, this constitutes **one day**. This is how Christ spoke, and how He reckons time; could it be otherwise for is He not the One who established this order of creation?

Whatever the best of theologians may say to the contrary, or however plausible may be the theories put forward by commentators, the sentimental observances of Good Friday will never line up with that which God has clearly stated in His unerring Word. Christ lay dead in the grave for three days and three nights, that is three times twenty four, which is seventy two hours.

The Jewish reckoning of time began in the evening; whereas we speak of morning and evening, they would speak of evening and morning.

Their day began at what they termed sundown, which was about six o'clock in the evening and would continue until six o'clock the following evening. Having these details in our minds we now consider Matthew's account of the Lord's death. *"Now from the sixth there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias. And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave Him to drink. The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save Him. Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost"* (Matthew 27:45-50). This was a daylight scene which suddenly became dark, so obviously we must take the hours mentioned in this passage as within the twelve hours of the day as separate from the twelve hours of the night, in the same manner as Christ distinguished in that Scripture previously mentioned where He said, *"Are there not twelve hours in a day?"* (John 11:9). This being the case and bearing in mind that the Jewish day ran from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., the information given us in Matthew 27, that it was about the ninth hour that the Saviour yielded up the ghost, means that He died at approximately three o'clock in the afternoon.

Jewish law required that a criminal put to death after this manner (crucifixion) should be buried before sundown. The Romans would not be concerned about this but to the Jews it was of vital importance, and the Romans did not unduly interfere with their traditions. Jewish law stated, *"If a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance* (Deuteronomy 21:22,23).

In the gospel of Mark we are told that this ruling was adhered to. *"And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. And Pilate marvelled if He were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether He had been any while dead. And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. And he bought fine linen, and took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen, and laid Him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre. (Mark 15:42-46). This is further substantiated by the writer of the third gospel. "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 23:52-54).*

With these Scriptures fresh in the mind, the reader may well be thinking that this ties in perfectly with traditional belief, Christ died and was buried just before the Jewish sabbath commenced, their sabbath being the day known to us as Saturday, but it would have commenced at sundown on the Friday, therefore Christ must have died on that day (Friday). But if this be the case, what happens to those seventy two hours in the grave? If our Lord was buried just before sundown on the Friday, then He was in the grave that night which is twelve hours, all day on the Saturday and the Saturday night (twenty four hours), but early on the first day of the week the grave was empty. So we have twelve hours and twenty four hours, which makes a total of thirty six hours, only half of the time which the Lord had stated.

What a shambles has been made of Biblical truth and of the clear statements of Christ Himself, by the church giving credence to a



Babylonish based religious calendar and superimposing the death of Christ into it.

How then can these references to our Lord being buried on the eve of the sabbath be explained? If the tomb was empty very early on the first day of the week then it is impossible to get in seventy two hours. The fact that Christ had vacated the grave by the early hours of the first day of the week is substantiated by the Holy Scriptures (cf Mark 16:1,2; Luke 24:1-3; John 20:1,2). This therefore is the truth and to this we must adhere. The theory that He died on the Friday is nowhere to be found in the Bible; this is a fictitious legend, the root of which lies in Babylonish idolatry, therefore to be rejected. So rejecting legend and accepting facts, we further consider this matter.

The answer to the Lord dying and being buried on the eve of the sabbath, is not left to conjecture or to clever mathematicians, who can usually make figures produce the answer which they require; it is clearly found in the Word of God. The vital Scripture in this matter is in John's gospel, *"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 19:31).

***"That sabbath day was an high day"***. This is the key to a right understanding of the whole matter. The sabbath in question, relative to our Lord's death and burial was as the Scripture states, an high day sabbath. The circumstances governing this was the passover celebrations. It was this which was causing all the consternation and problems with the Jews; this crucifixion of Christ was clashing with their religious observances. In order to get the setting of this and to discover the particular regulation, we have to turn to the Pentateuch to the institution of the Passover. A lamb was to be taken for each household,

*"And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening .... and they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it"* (Exodus 12:6,8). This was on the fourteenth day (v.6). Then immediately following the passover for seven days they were to observe the feast of unleavened bread; this would commence on the fifteenth day and end on the twenty first day. *"Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel"* (Exodus 12:15). In later years these two feasts which run concurrently were spoken of as one and the same, as is seen in the New Testament. *"Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt Thou that we prepare for Thee to eat the passover?"* (Matthew 26:17); *"And the first day of unleavened bread, when they had killed the passover, His disciples said unto Him, Where wilt Thou that we go and prepare that Thou mayest eat the passover?"* (Mark 14:12). *"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"* (Luke 22:7,8). The passover was kept by the Lord and His disciples in the upper room on the evening of the fourteenth day, according to the law. His betrayal and arrest was on that same night following their observance of the Passover (cf Matthew 26:17-50; Mark 14:12-46; Luke 22:14-56). The crucifixion took place during the day of the passover. This was still the fourteenth day because it ran from evening to evening.

Now having the setting, we refer to John chapter nineteen, verse thirty one again. *"The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away". "It was the preparation" of*

the '**high day**' sabbath; so we must return to Exodus chapter twelve again for further information. *"Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel. And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you"* (Exodus 12:15,16). In these two verses there are two sabbaths termed as days of holy convocation, no manner of work was to be done in either. One was to be observed on the first day of the feast of unleavened bread which was the fifteenth day of the month, that was the day following the actual passover. The other day of holy convocation was on the seventh day of unleavened bread which marked the end of the observance, that is the twenty first day.

That which the Jews were preparing for in John chapter nineteen, verse thirty one was the **high day sabbath** of the fifteenth day of the month, the day which immediately followed the actual passover day which was on the fourteenth day of the month.

The Scriptures which speak of our Lord being buried before the sabbath do not refer to the weekly Jewish sabbath which was on the Saturday. The record of John in his gospel, makes it clear beyond all dispute that the sabbath day in question was the Jewish high day; this was the first day of unleavened bread, it was a special sabbath and nothing to do with the weekly one; it was an annual day of holy convocation which would fall on different days. Just as the first of April this year is on a Saturday, next year it will be a different day. As a matter of interest, the Jews used to style this high day sabbath as the **good day** and on this day they would greet one another with the salutation 'good day'. Whether or not that salutation which is sometimes used by us in a more general way,

originally came from Jewry one cannot say, but what can be said and that authoritatively, that the Jewish good day was nothing whatsoever to do with the good Friday of Tammuz which the church has adopted. It was this supposed true son of heathen deities, Tammuz, who is alleged to have died on a Friday and was raised two days later which would have been the heathen **Sun-Day**. What paganism and idolatry is in the churches!

It should now be abundantly clear that the day of our Lord's death cannot be calculated by reference to Good Friday which is not only a nonsense, but it is totally at variance with Holy Scripture. However what we are told and that in the plainest of language, is that on the first day of the week the tomb was empty. *"Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them"* (Luke 24:1). *"The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre"* (John 20:1). Matthew says that this visit was made by the two Mary's as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week (cf Matthew 28:1). Mark tersely says *"When the sabbath was past"* (Mark 16:1). This was the weekly sabbath because it immediately preceded the first day of the week.

From the many Scriptures referred to, it is quite obvious that there are two sabbaths to be accounted for in the Biblical account of our Lord's death and resurrection. The one was the annual high day sabbath, the other the weekly sabbath which precedes the first day of the week.

We are not told the exact hour that the Lord came out of the grave, but bearing in mind that it was on the first day of the week that it happened, and also by Jewish reckoning that day would have commenced at sundown on the Saturday, the weekly sabbath would have been past (cf

Mark 16:1). Very early the next morning whilst it was yet dark, the grave had been vacated. The resurrection of Christ therefore was sometime between sundown on the Saturday evening and the very early hours of the first day of the week.

If a person wants to work out the day of the Saviour's death, to be Biblically correct it can only be worked back seventy two hours from His resurrection, for three days and three nights have to be accounted for. This means that Christ was crucified on what we now call Wednesday. He was buried before the high day sabbath began which would have been on the Wednesday evening. So by reasoning out from the Scriptures, we see that He was in the grave Wednesday night, Thursday night and Friday night - **three nights**. All day on the Thursday, Friday and Saturday - **three days**. Three days and three nights. That is exactly what the Word of God states which shows the absolute fallacy of good Friday.

W.H.Molland

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**Visiting Preachers D.V.**

Lord's Day:	2 April 1995	Mr G.Thrussell (Truro)
	14 May 1995	Mr D.D.Jones (Nailsea)
Thursday:	4 May 1995	Mr F.Stanbury (Bow)
	1 June 1995	Mr F.Stanbury (Bow)

**Preliminary Announcement**

Annual Bible Convention      Saturday, 5 August 1995  
Speaker: Mr J Seaton (Inverness)

## *Editorial*

A very solemn word is found in the Old Testament, *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest unto me seeing thou hast forgotten the Law of thy God ...."* (Hosea 4:6). It was not that Israel had been deprived of knowledge; God had given them His Law but they had forgotten this although He had sent prophet after prophet to warn and instruct them. Israel was determined to go her own way rejecting the Divine Mandate and devising her own system. This resulted in progressive deterioration and ultimate judgment, despite the fact that she was proudly confident that her amendments and adjustments to the God ordained pattern were proving highly successful. Yet it was this very thing which brought about her ruin.

History repeats itself and today we see large sections of the professed people of God going the same way. It is not that they are in ignorance, it is that they have put out of mind many of the teachings of the Word of God, so that now they are oblivious to what God actually requires of them. The sacred reverent order of worship has been abandoned, as carnally minded men (and women) have given full rein to their own ideas. Now unlawful practices and strange conduct have invaded the courts of our God and despite the proud claims of very many churches of our generation, the inspired words of the Old Testament prophet are alas, only too true. The professed people of God are being destroyed through a lack of knowledge.

The funeral of our sister Miss B. Buckley took place on 6 - 1 - 95. She had lived to the age of 91 years and her association with N. Road Chapel went back further than any other member. Over recent years she had been in great affliction and we rejoice that she is now at home with the Lord.