

August 21, 2011 ©Homer Kizer

Commentary — From the Margins *Collections for the Saints*

Now concerning the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come. And when I arrive, I will send those whom you accredit by letter to carry your gift to Jerusalem. If it seems advisable that I should go also, they will accompany me. (1 Cor 16:1–4)

Κατὰ μίαν σαββάτου — *Every first [day after the] Sabbath* (1 Cor 16:2), the Greek form of the standard Hebrew expression for what Greeks identified as the “first day of the week,” day one, the day after the weekly Sabbath that is the seventh day of the week, with the seventh day still recognized as the Sabbath a quarter of a century after Calvary: in Paul’s use of σαββάτου [*Sabba^h tou*], the Sabbath possesses the days of the week, thereby giving to the Sabbath the ability to define the week and the weekly activities of the saints. In Paul’s linguistic construction, the activities of the Greek saints at Corinth revolved around Sabbath observance.

If Greek converts to Christianity were, in Corinth, reckoning the days of the week by the number of days before or after the Sabbath when they were laying aside staples for a food collection for the saints at Jerusalem, then these Greek converts had adopted the Sabbath as their day of rest. If these Greek converts were not keeping the Sabbath, they would have continued their Greek practice of identifying the first day of the week, Sunday, as day one, with Monday being day two, and so on through the weekly cycle. But Paul writing to mostly Greek Christians at Corinth used the same expression as Luke used in Acts 20:7 [Ἐν τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων — *On the one [day after] the Sabbath*] when writing to the Greek Θεόφιλε (Acts 1:1), a *Lover-of-God*, or writing to all Greek-speaking *Lovers-of-God*.

But Luke in writing τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων used the Sabbath [σαββάτων--*Sabba^h ton*] as the linguistic object that defined the weekly reckoning of time — and this is how he used the same expression in his gospel (see Luke 24:1) and how John used the same expression in his gospel written near the end of the 1st-Century (see John 20:1, 19).

The first day of the week was not recognized as the Sabbath by genuine saints in the 1st-Century; it should not be treated as if it were the Sabbath by 21st-

Century Christians. For the Sabbath was and is the seventh day of a seven day cycle, with that cycle being delineated through the giving and withholding of manna in the days of Moses. This cycle has not been broken since the days of Moses although anomalies have occurred as Sitka, Alaska, experiencing a week with two Fridays in 1867, a subject I have addressed before, and the evidence that worldwide Christendom needs an International Date Line to regularize the beginning of the day, and needs the Equator to normalize the annual High Sabbaths so that Passover occurs in both the Northern and the Southern Hemispheres in the spring of the year, not at the end of the harvest season.

When the Sabbath serves as the point of reference for ending a week and beginning the following week, then business isn't being done on the Sabbath when a collection is taken up on the following day. No collection was being taken up on the Sabbath. No collection should ever be made during worship services on the Sabbath. Rather, the collection for the saints at Jerusalem occurred on the day following the Sabbath, the first day of the work week.

Any argument that involves 1 Corinthians 16:2 or Acts 20:7 as *proof* that genuine 1st-Century Christians were holding worship services on Sunday is bogus; for on the daylight portion of the day after the Sabbath, the day portion of the night when Eutychus fell from the upper window (Acts 20:9), Paul walked from Troas to Assos, a distance, I believe, of about nineteen miles ... walking nineteen miles during the day portion of a 24-hour period cannot be considered as *resting*.

But it isn't the collection for the saints in Jerusalem occurring weekly on the day after the Sabbath that I want to address: it is the collection itself —

The collection was an issue that the saints at Corinth had brought up in their letter to Paul, the letter which Paul addresses in 1 Corinthians chapter 7, verses 1 and 25, and chapter 12, verse 1.

Why would a one-time collection for the saints at Jerusalem cause questions?

In his first saved epistle to the saints at Corinth, Paul references instructions he had given to the churches of Galatia, instructions absent from his epistle to the churches of Galatia, this absence suggesting that his epistle to the Galatians was written either prior to, or after the collection was delivered to the saints at Jerusalem. Hence, the collection that Paul addresses was not a long term practice of the Churches of God, but was remembering of the poor that Paul said was his desire in Galatians 2:10.

Plus, Paul wrote to the saints at Corinth:

I wish you would bear with me in a little foolishness. Do bear with me! For I feel a divine jealousy for you, since I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. But *I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or if you accept a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough.* Indeed, I consider that I am not in the least inferior to these super-apostles. Even if I am

unskilled in speaking, I am not so in knowledge; indeed, in every way we have made this plain to you in all things. / Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because *I preached God's gospel to you free of charge? I robbed other churches by accepting support from them in order to serve you. And when I was with you and was in need, I did not burden anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied my need.* So I refrained and will refrain from burdening you in any way. As the truth of Christ is in me, this boasting of mine will not be silenced in the regions of Achaia. And why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do! / *And what I do I will continue to do, in order to undermine the claim of those who would like to claim that in their boasted mission they work on the same terms as we do.* For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds. (2 Cor 11:1–15 emphasis added)

How does Satan deceive the saints? With his cunning (2 Cor 11:3) when he brings his servants, false apostles and deceitful workmen, all, into a fellowship to proclaim another gospel other than the one that the 1st-Century Churches of God in Judea accepted (*cf.* 1 Thess 2:14; 1 Cor 11:1; 1 John 2:6) ... the gospel of Christ proclaimed by 3rd, 4th, 5th Century Churches of God was a very different gospel than the one proclaimed in the 1st-Century by the Churches of God in Christ Jesus that were in Judea. The gospel of Christ proclaimed by the Latin Church and by the Greek Church is a false gospel that saints weak in the faith accepted in trying to just *get along* with other Christians. Hence, collections for the Church are taken up on the day after the Sabbath. These collections are taken up as part of the weekly Christian worship service conducted on this day after the Sabbath. And with too few exceptions, the only poor that are served by these collections are the physically wealthiest ideologies in this world, meaning the poor has again received short shrift.

Paul did not burden anyone when conducting his ministry ... if he did not have, he went without, not even complaining when he was hungry, thirsty, homeless, poorly dressed, considered the scum of this world, the refuse of all things (1 Cor 4:11–13). For Paul was not working for men: he did not receive his gospel from other men (Gal 1:11–12). He was not employed by an organization. And this is not the case when it comes to virtually all who teach today within great Christendom —

I have a nephew, Peter Johnson, a learned man, a person who sincerely seeks to serve God, but presently a minister of the Adversary in that he teaches parishioners the dogmas of 16th-Century rebels against God. It is my sincere desire that he repent, that he—like Paul himself—sees the *light* and turns from his lawless ways: in striving to keep the Law, Paul was a murderer, not something he

would have accepted about himself when he left Jerusalem for Damascus with letters to the synagogues there authorizing him to take as prisoners any disciples of Christ Jesus. But Paul had his eyes opened in a dramatic manner, the scales that prevented him from seeing Christ Jesus falling from his eyes when he, Paul, was filled with the divine breath of God (Acts 9:18).

Today, Peter sees darkly, his eyes blinded by generations of Christian ideology in a manner analogous to how the eyes of 1st-Century Pharisees were blind, unable to see that the man Jesus was the only Son of *Yah* ... but because these Pharisees claimed they could see, that they knew God, their guilt remained on them.

Peter's guilt remains on him: his lawlessness is not covered by Grace as he believes. Rather, he has made himself a teacher of iniquity, about whom Jesus said,

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’”
(Matt 7:21–23)

Today, a Sunday morning in August, in all probability Peter will deliver a message about Christ Jesus' love for His disciples. He will take up a collection so that he can continue to do mighty works in the name of Christ—and this week, like last week, he will be a worker of lawlessness, teaching parishioners that because Jesus kept the Law, they do not have to strive to keep the Law.

How is anyone to walk as Jesus walked when the person makes no effort to outwardly keep the Commandments?

And without walking as Jesus walked, no Christian will enter the kingdom of God.

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