

was always the first Wednesday after the equinox. And if it ever agreed with the new moon it was an accident. Eventually, they abandoned the 14<sup>th</sup> Passover and adopted a Friday Passover and Sunday Resurrection about A.D. 135.

Another sect in Cappadocia observed the Passover on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March, which they regarded as the equinox date in the Julian Calendar.

Many of the Quartodeciman sects celebrated the death and resurrection of Christ on the same day:

Eusebius says that it was decided on the basis of numerous conferences of bishops that the mystery of the resurrection of the Lord from the dead should be celebrated on no other day than the Lord's day, and on that day the Easter fast should be broken (*H.E. V. xxiii. 2*). Hence it is evident that the party who were opposed in the conferences, who were undoubtedly the Christians of Asia Minor, must have celebrated the mystery of the resurrection on the day on which the fast was broken, and that this day was not Sunday but the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan [or the 25<sup>th</sup> of March or the Wednesday after the spring equinox], around which the controversy revolved. This conclusion is justified by the account of Epiphanius concerning the Quartodecimans : : ... in which he relates that fasting and the celebration of the resurrection took place on the same day.<sup>331</sup>

This could have only occurred by conflating the two Sabbaths and using only the reverse "third day" type. The Passover Sabbath and the Weekly Sabbath became just the "Sabbath"; the three days were counted up to the crucifixion, and the resurrection was the next morning in the pre-dawn of the Sabbath. It would only be by sheer 1/7<sup>th</sup> coincidence that their one day death and resurrection celebration would coincide with Friday afternoon and the night leading the day part of the Sabbath.

The Church of Rome, on the other hand had abandoned any sort of Passover celebration whatsoever after A.D. 135, and chose to mark Passion week with a fast on Wednesday and "Good Friday", and then to celebrate Easter on Sunday Morning. The Great Sabbath of the Church of Rome was always the Sabbath between Good Friday and Easter Sunday. But the Great Sabbath of the Quartodecimans was always on the day they celebrated the Passover whether it be the Essene version, the Romanized equinox version, or the Jewish 15<sup>th</sup>.

There is an echo of controversy in the *Preaching of Peter*:

Neither worship ye him as do the Jews, for they, who suppose that they alone know God, do not know him, serving angels and archangels, the month and the moon: and if no moon be seen, they do not celebrate what is called the first Sabbath, nor keep the new moon, nor the days of unleavened bread, nor the feast, nor the great day.<sup>332</sup>

The *Preaching of Peter* is sympathetic to the proto-Catholic Essene faction, which won out in the West and opposed those Quartodecimans of the Eastern Church who did not celebrate the resurrection when they did. The proto-Catholics turned the Passover from a feast day into a fast day. Likewise, they fasted on Friday. It is not clear what the *Preaching's* attitude toward the "first of the Sabbaths" really is. All we can gain is that the moon had something to do with disagreeing reckoning. It is possible that by "first Sabbath"

the author means the "Great Sabbath", which the Catholics always placed on Saturday between Good Friday and Easter Sunday, but the Quartodecimans placed it on another day.

The justification for celebrating the death and resurrection on the same day (sunrise on Preparation to sunrise on the Passover Sabbath = 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan) is sought in Matthew 27:51-53 where the tombs of the saints are broken open by the earthquake. Now these did not really rise until the third day as I have pointed out based on Hosea 6:1-3, but it easy to make the mistake of thinking they rose that night. These Quartodecimans explained it as a spiritual resurrection whereby Jesus descended into Hades and delivered the souls. Doubtless they added Luke 23:43 to the argument "Today you will be with me in Paradise"<sup>333</sup>. This theology is parallel to the Gnostic view of the resurrection given in the *Odes of Solomon*, "I was not rejected though it appeared to be so ... Sheol saw me ... I went down ... those who died hastened to me, and cried out 'Bring us out!'"<sup>334</sup> Whether these Quartodecimans believed a physical body came forth three days later is unclear. The truly gnostic would have denied it.

The orthodox believers would have kept the Passover on the 14<sup>th</sup> and celebrated the resurrection on the first of the Sabbaths and would not have paid any attention to the Gnostic theology. Rome, however, adopted a version of the same theology as the Quartodecimans influenced by the Gnostics. They called the descent into Hell the "Harrowing of Hell" and placed it on their Great Sabbath, the day between good Friday and Sunday. The Saints in Matthew 27:51-53 actually were resurrected on the Sabbath of Passion week, which was the third day. So the Quartodecimans had the Great Sabbath correct in celebrating the death at midweek, but the Catholics had the resurrection of the Saints in Matthew 27:51-52 correct when they marked it on the Sabbath. What they had wrong was their ignorance of Hosea 6:3 which must place the resurrection of Messiah at the same time.

#### The Apocryphal Gospel of Peter:

The conflation of the Passover Sabbath with the Weekly Sabbath is hinted at the *Gospel of Peter*:<sup>335</sup> They crucify him quickly "because the Sabbath is dawning" (2.5). They fast "night and day until the Sabbath" (7.27). "When the Sabbath morning dawned, a crowd came from Jerusalem ... to see that the tomb had been sealed" (9.34). It is unclear whether "But during the night in which the Lord's day dawned" (9.35) refers to the preceding night and is equated with the Sabbath, or is supposed to be Sunday. It looks like it was equated to the Sabbath or tacked onto the end of the account as a reference to Sunday. The account itself argues against the original having a Sunday, because it says they fasted "night and day until the Sabbath" (7.27). The Greek puts night before day. In the Friday-Sunday scenario, there is no "night and day" until the Sabbath. However, in the correct scenario there is night, day, night, day before the Weekly Sabbath begins. It must be considered then that there is a trace of the longer chronology of two Sabbaths with Friday between them here.

Furthermore, the Gospel of Peter clearly placed the resurrection at night. If this was Saturday night, then it reflects the chronology of the *Didascalía*. However, there is

<sup>331</sup> E. Preuschen, *New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia* (Vol. IV, 1910), quoted by Benjamin Wisner Bacon, "The Resurrection in Primitive Tradition and Observance", *The American Journal of Theology*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (Jul., 1911), pp. 373-403, page 380.

<sup>332</sup> Montague Rhode James, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1924), pg. 16-19.

<sup>333</sup> Really, "I say to you this day, you will be with me in paradise".

<sup>334</sup> See note 331 Bacon, pg. 384-385.

<sup>335</sup> Written before A.D. 190.