

ON THE DAY OF THE CRUCIFIXION.

DR. SANDAY deals with this question in the January number of the *EXPOSITOR*, and in the March number returns to it with extracts from a correspondence which he has held with Dr. Hort. With his admission in March that the explanation favoured in January has failed, I entirely agree. Perhaps your readers may like to see a suggestion which I made on the subject in December before this controversy had appeared. I copy the following from my manuscript.

That St. Peter or St. John could have made a mistake on such a question is surely almost impossible. But we must remember that we have not got St. Peter's Gospel but only St. Mark's edition of it. And St. Mark did not obtain it from St. Peter complete or in chronological order, but in scattered sections which he put together to the best of his ability, while the other two Evangelists simply accepted his arrangement.

One peculiarity in his arrangement is particularly patent. St. Mark never brings our Lord to Jerusalem, until a few days before the Passion. Whatever therefore St. Peter had recorded as happening in Jerusalem must either be omitted by St. Mark or crowded into the last few days or transferred to Galilee.

Now it is certain, even from St. Mark's incidental observations, that St. John is historically right in representing our Lord as making several visits to Jerusalem and doing much work there of which the other Evangelists take no account.

In particular St. John says that Christ spent *two* passovers at Jerusalem, one near the commencement of His ministry, as recorded in the second chapter, another at its close. These two passovers, I would suggest, have been blended into one by St. Mark, St. Peter's recollections about the former having been unwittingly transferred to the latter.

It was at the former that, as St. John rightly says, the cleansing of the temple took place, though St. Mark has transferred that cleansing to the latter. It was at the former, I hold, that He partook of the passover with His disciples, at the latter He instituted the Eucharist. St. Mark has unconsciously combined the two events.

If this be so, all discrepancies about the day of the month

vanish. St. John, as in every other instance where he traverses the synoptic chronology, is seen to be right. He probably was acquainted with St. Mark's record in oral or written form, and when St. Mark and the other witnesses were dead, took this means of correcting from his personal recollections the imperfections of their chronology.

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