

THE "JUDAIZERS" OF THE REDSTONE ASSOCIATION

Why did Alexander Campbell's "Sermon on the Law"

create such a furor among the Baptist of the Redstone

Association? Murch declares,

Had this sermon been preached before many

Baptist Associations in our day there would

have been little objection...but the Baptist

ministers at Cross Creek were very unhappy.

Today his "Sermon on the Law" would be accepted by

most all Protestant denominations. Why did it upset the

Redstone Association so much? Remember the Mahoning Asso-

ciation readily accepted the Reformers. They were not imbued

with such zeal for Old Testament strictness as was the Asso-

ciation at Redstone.

This paper presents a possible explanation as to why

those of Redstone were especially sensitive to Campbell's

Sermon. It must be kept in mind "The Sermon on the Law"

attempted to prove Christians are under the New Testament,

not the Old Testament. Campbell "...proceeded...to elim-

inate the whole Mosaic Code as binding upon Christians."

Richardson in his book on the writings of Campbell points out

For proof of this in volume I of Seventh Day Baptists in  
observers; whereas they had been practicing closed communion.  
taxed their practice and had begun to worship with first-day  
with the fourth commandment, but as of late they had re-  
Day Baptist had been strictly observing Saturday in harmony  
Seventh Day Baptists in this general area; These Seventh  
servance. At this precise time there was a group of former  
so violently to the Sermon ties in with this Sabbath ob-  
A possible explanation as to why they responded

they did observe Sunday "Jewishly".  
cipation did not observe the "Jewish" Sabbath--Saturday--  
Sabbath came under review". Although the Redstone Asso-  
Again from Murch we read, "The subject of the

The religious community looked upon  
the first day of the week as a sort of  
Jewish Sabbath moved up one day on the  
calendar, and they applied many of the  
old Sabbath laws in its observance. (p.61  
of Christians Only by J.D.Murch.)

out one of the major points Campbell attacked was that:  
to it than just that. Notice that Murch and others point  
this was an influencing factor, but there seems to be more  
be cut off from the mainstream of American life. Certainly  
due to its location. That part of the country tended to  
conservative in its approach to the Law and most matters  
the fact that the Redstone Association tended to be quite

not to receive a particular SDB church into full fellow-

ship because it was fellowshipping first-day observers.

Again we read from the minutes, this time in 1811 [five

years before Campbell gave his "Sermon" in 1816]:

The circular letter laments 'that a day of trial generally prevails in the churches of our order', '...regrets that many of the brethren, near and remote, were adopting the seventh-part-of-time theory [Sunday Observance], and condemns the practice of open communion as being an external fellowship with error.

Is it not quite possible that the Redstone Association

was influenced by these Seventh Day Baptists? This would

account for those of Redstone being so "Jewish" in their

viewpoint. For final evidence note the following revealing

quote from Henry Clarke, a SDB minister, in his book A History

of the Sabatarians in America, page 58 written about 1810:

But as they admitted communion with first-day members, they were not admitted into conference.... I learn there is a society of this sect, at Red Stone, in Virginia.

[This Red Stone appears to be the same as the Redstone area in Pennsylvania, it seems to overlap from Pennsylvania into Virginia (West Virginia today)].

Here is a strong indication some Seventh Day Baptists

were working with Sunday-observers around the area of the

Redstone Association; Is it not quite likely these Seventh

Day Baptists were exerting a strong influence and perhaps

even joined with the Redstone Association since they had

been denied membership in the SDB General Conference? The members of the

Redstone Association were liberal in their viewpoint of permitting

other churches into fellowship with them, witness Brush Run:

These SDB people were not as strict as those of their

General Conference, but they certainly were still convinced

of the importance of the Old Testament. No wonder Alexander

Campbell's "Sermon on the Law" produced such a violent reaction!

The influence of these few Seventh Day Baptist on the first-

day Baptist of the Redstone Association had been great.

Alexander Campbell felt forced to speak out against such emphasis

on the fourth commandment.

More research into the names of members of the Redstone

Association and the exact location of various churches belonging

to it may prove the contention presented by this paper to

be true.