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A treatise on the Sabbath

A TREATISE

ON

THE SABBATH.

A TREATISE

ON

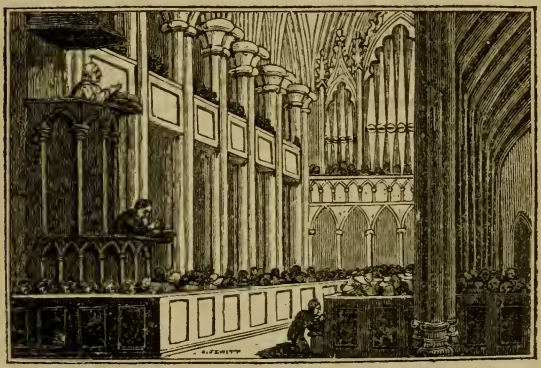
THE SABBATH;

IN WHICH

ITS ORIGIN, CAUSES, NATURE, AND OBLIGATION ARE CONSIDERED; OBJECTIONS REFUTED; AND PRACTICAL RULES FOR ITS OBSERVANCE ADDED.

BY J. OWEN, D.D.

Vice Chancellor of Oxford.



A NEW EDITION,

REVISED & EDITED

BY THE REV. J. W. BROOKS,

Vicar of Clareborough, Retford.

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THE EDITOR'S PREFACE.

An apology is hardly necessary to the Christian world for republishing a scarce and almost forgotten work of Dr. John Owen; but if one be required, it is found in the circumstance, that those arguments against the moral obligation to observe the Sabbath, so ably refuted in this book, are again publicly put forth, and prevail to no small extent in the practice of many, who are called Christians.

Persons unaccustomed to reflect are little aware of the foundation, on which their faith in this matter actually stands. They assume for granted, that the Sabbath is of divine institution, and perpetuated under the Gospel dispensation; without having taken the trouble to demonstrate this truth, and ignorant of the objections by which it may be assailed. They conclude it from the prejudice of education, or from the influence of pious feeling, rather than from the enjoyment of clear and luminous views on the subject; and hence they are often staggered by the sophistries of persons, disposed to dispute these things; and still more frequently a something superstitious or merely legal mixes itself up with their own observance of the day.

It ought previously to be understood, that in the reign of queen Elizabeth, it was openly maintained, that though there be *something* moral in the Sabbath, it is chiefly *ceremonial* in its nature, and of Mosaic institution; and consequently, that believers in the Lord Jesus are released from the obligation of observing it. So plausible were the arguments brought forward, that most of the bishops were drawn into the opinion, that the Christian Sab-

bath was only of *ecclesiastical* institution ; so that its hold upon the consciences of men began to be seriously loosened, and to be accompanied by a corresponding laxity of practice. This work, however, of Dr. Owen, and other similar treatises, had, through the divine blessing, a remarkable influence in bringing back the majority of the nation to their duty, and in averting for the time those serious evils, which a national profanation of the Sabbath has commonly produced.

Dr. Owen professes in the work, to set himself to notice every opinion of any importance, militating against the Christian Sabbath: not because these opinions all prevailed at that time, but because there was no knowing how soon, in the revolution of them, they might be revived. (Page 25.) For even error travels in a certain orbit; and those heresies, which seem novel to us, will mostly be found, upon exploring history, to have appeared at some previous period. Had our author lived to the present day, he would have found his sagacious and almost prophetic conjecture fulfilled, by the revival of some of those very errors, against which he contended in his time.

But not only is the book an answer to objections; it will be found eminent for that depth of research, critical acumen, and powerful argumentation, which so distinguished the writings of Dr. Owen ; whilst the nature of the Sabbath, with what is required for a due observation of it, are placed by him upon a clear and solid foundation. It is confidently anticipated, that the student of divinity will consider himself amply repaid by a perusal of the work; whilst the Christian will be gratified to perceive those truths confirmed, to which piety of spirit had previously inclined him.

A prejudice, and in some respects a just one, exists against *abridgements*, if undertaken by a different hand from that of the author. The reader cannot always divest himself of a suspicion, that many passages may be ex-

punged, which he would consider important to be retained; or that the sentiments preserved are heightened or extenuated, according to the principles of the editor. The present work however ought not, in the usual acceptation of the term, to be called *an abridgement*. It cannot be denied, that many of the most valuable theological works, written by the old divines, are rendered uninviting and distasteful by their style; more particularly to the unregenerate, who most need to peruse them. It is a desideratum, therefore, in the present day, when the press teems with feeble and imitative publications, that the sterling works of some of the older British writers were so revised in style, as to render thom more *readable*, and thus better adapted to the wants and taste of the times.

The style of Owen is particularly obnoxious to censure. It is harsh, intricate, prolix, and abounding with tedious repetitions. Though few writers are more worthy to be read, few are more difficult to read. The editor, therefore, has undertaken in the present work to cancel all the repetitions of sentences, and those phrases which so frequently only express the same thing in other words. This alone retrenches the work nearly one third. He has also disposed afresh many of the perplexing divisions and subdivisions of the subject; he has translated quotations, to enable the merely English reader to understand his author; and he has endeavoured to elucidate his meaning, where it has appeared ambiguous or unintelligible. But at the same time he claims to have presented the author *entire*, and, generally speaking, in his own phraseology; and though he is sensible, that this revision has its defects, he confidently challenges the reader to collate it with the original work, and to point out one sentiment or illustration in the latter, which does not occur *in some part or other* of the former, and with the same application of it.

J. W. B.

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PREFACE.

CHRISTIAN READER,

THERE are two great concerns of that religion, whose name you bear; viz. the profession of its truth, and the exercise of its power. And these mutually assist each other: for without the profession of faith in its truth, no man can express its power in obedience; and without obedience, profession is of little worth. Whatever, therefore, contributes help in *either* of these, according to the mind of God, is highly to be prized; especially in a season wherein the former is greatly questioned, and the latter greatly neglected: but if there be any thing which equally strengthens *both*, it is certainly of great necessity in religion; and will be so esteemed by those, who make these things their principal concern.

Such, then, is the solemn observance of A WEEKLY DAY OF REST, sacred unto God. For, among all the outward means of conveying to the present generation that religion which was at first taught and delivered to men by Jesus Christ and his Apostles, there has been none more effectual than the catholic, uninterrupted observance of such a day, for the celebration of the religious worship appointed in the Gospel; many material parts of which have unquestionably been preserved by the constant agreement of Christians in this practice.

Thus far, therefore, the *profession* of Christianity in the world at this day depends upon it: how much it tends to the exercise and expression of the *power* of

religion, must be evident to all; (unless they be such as hate it, which are not a few;) since no small part of its power consists in the constant payment of that homage of spiritual worship, which we owe to God in Jesus Christ; the duties of which worship are the means appointed by him, for the communication of grace and spiritual strength for the due performance of the remainder of our obedience. In these things consist the services of this day; and the end of its observance is their due performance, to the glory of God and the advantage of our own souls.

The Christian religion may be considered two ways: First, as it is publicly and solemnly professed in the world, whereon the honor of God and of Christ greatly depend: secondly, as it influences the lives of private men; in neither of which can it be maintained, without a due observance of a stated day of sacred rest. Take this away, neglect and confusion will quickly arise, and destroy all regard to solemn worship; which never did florish in the world, nor ever will, without a due religious attention to such a day. Any man may foresee the disorder and profaneness which would ensue, upon the taking away of that, whereby our solemn assemblies are guided and preserved: wherefore by God's own appointment it had its beginning, and will have its end with his public worship in the world. Take this from off the basis whereon God hath fixed it, and all human substitutions of the like kind, or for the same purposes, will quickly discover their own vanity. Nor will religion long prevail in the minds and lives of individuals, without the advantage of such an institution, which is the sacred repository of all sanctifying ordinances. And it would be just with God to leave to their own weakness and decays, (which are sufficient to ruin them,) those who despise the assistance, which he has provided and tenders to them. Thus, indeed,

we have known it to have fallen out with many in our days, whose apostasies from God have hence taken their rise and occasion.

This being the case, it must needs be our duty to inquire and discern aright, both what warrant we have for the religious observance of such a day; as also what day it is in the weekly revolution, that ought to be so observed. About these things there is an inquiry in the ensuing discourses, and some determinations on that inquiry. My design in them is, to discover the fundamental principles of this duty, and what ground conscience has to stand upon, in its attention thereto; for what is from God in these things is assuredly accepted with him. What I have attained to of light and truth herein, is submitted to the judgment of learned and judicious men: the censures of the proud and ignorant, "who speak evil of those things which they know not, and in what they know naturally corrupt themselves," I neither fear nor value. And if any part of these discourses appear somewhat dark or obscure to ordinary readers, I desire them to consider, that the foundations of the things discoursed of lie deep, and no expression will render them more obvious to all understandings than their nature will allow. Nor must we, in any case, quit the strengths of truths, because the minds of some cannot easily possess themselves of them. I hope, however, nothing will occur, but what an attentive reader, though otherwise but of ordinary capacity, may receive and digest; and those, to whom the *argument* seems hard, may still find such directions concerning the *duty* insisted on, as will render its practice easy and beneficial.

I only add, that I have here no design of contending with any, or of censuring those whose thoughts and judgments in these things differ from ours. Even those, by whom a holy day of rest under the Gospel,

together with its services, are laughed to scorn, are left by me to God and themselves. My whole endeavour is, to find out what is agreeable to truth, concerning the observance of such a day to the Lord; what is the mind and will of God concerning it; and on what foundation we may so attend to its services, as that God may be glorified in and by us, and the interest of religion, in purity, holiness, and righteousness, be promoted amongst men.

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EXERCITATION I.

INTRODUCTORY.

I. SOLOMON tells us, that in his inquiry after the nature and state of things in the world, this only he had found out, that was entirely to his satisfaction; viz. "that God made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions." Eccles. vii. 29.—This truth we also find by woful experience; not only in sundry particular instances, but in the whole course of men in this world, and in all their concerns with respect to God and themselves. There is nothing wherein and whereabout they have not found out many inventions, to the disturbing and perverting of that state of peace, in which all things were made of God. Yea, not only is the whole world, as it lies in wickedness, overwhelmed with the fruits of this perverse apostasy; but we have the remains of it to conflict with in that reparation of our condition, which through grace we are made partakers of in this life. In all our actions and duties, some of these inventions are ready to immix themselves, to our own disturbance, and to the perversion of the right ways of God.

We have an evident instance of this in the business of *a day of sacred rest*, and the worship of God therein

required. The Lord originally, out of his infinite goodness (when suitably thereto, by his own eternal power and wisdom he had made all things good) gave unto men a day of rest; thus to express to them his own rest, satisfaction, and complacency in the works of his hands,—to be a day of rest and composure to themselves,—and a means of their enjoying that rest with himself, here and for ever, which he had ordained for them. Hence it became a principle and pledge—a cause and means of quietness and rest, and that in and with God himself. And so it might still be to the sons of men, but for their continually finding out new inventions; whence the two general concerns of such a day,—viz. the doctrine and the practice, or the duties to be performed unto God thereon,—are both moved by such various questions, as have rendered this day of *rest* a matter of endless strife and disquiet. And whereas all doctrines of truth tend to practice, as their immediate use and end, (the whole of Scripture being "the truth which is after godliness," Titus i. 1,) the contentions, which have been raised about the holy day of rest, have greatly influenced the minds of men, and weakened in them that practice of godliness, which all confess to be needful in the observance of such a day; if such a day there be, on whatsoever foundation it is to be observed. For Christians in general agree, under one notion or another, that a day of rest ought to be observed; but many controversies having been raised about the grounds of this observance, and the nature of the obligation thereto, advantage has been taken thereof to introduce a great neglect of the duties themselves, for the sake of which the day is to be observed. And this has been no small

means of promoting that general profaneness, and apostasy from strict and holy walking before God, which at this day are every where so justly complained of.

It is far from my hope, that I shall be able to contribute much towards composing these differences. The known pertinacity of inveterate opinions; the prejudices, by which the minds of most are in this matter already possessed; and the particular engagements which many are under to defend the sentiments which they have published, will not allow of any great expectation of a change in the minds of many, from what I have to offer. Besides, there are almost innumerable controversial discourses on this subject, which are in the hands of many, to whom, perhaps, the report of our endeavours will not arrive. But these, and similar considerations, ought not to discourage any man from the discharge of that duty which he owes to the truths of God, nor cause him to cry with the sluggard—"There is a lion in the streets, I shall be slain in the way." If they did, no truth would evermore be taught or contended for; since the declaration of *any* truth is attended with the same difficulties, and liable to the same kind of opposition.

Wherefore an inquiry into this matter being unavoidably cast upon me, in the progress of the work in which I am engaged; viz. an exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews, I could not, on any such accounts, waive the pursuit of it. For this discourse (though now by the desire of many, published by itself,) is but a part of our remaining exercitations on that epistle. Nor am I altogether without hope, that what shall be declared and proved on this subject,

may be made useful to those, who would willingly learn or be established in the truth: whilst an attempt will also be made for the conviction of others, who have been seduced into opinions hurtful to the practice of godliness; and the whole left to the blessing of Him, who, when he hath supplied seed to the sower, doth himself also give the increase. These considerations have prevailed with me to cast my mite into the sanctuary, and to endeavour the right stating and confirmation of that doctrine, on which depends so important a part of our duty towards God.

II. The controversies which have been publicly agitated about the Sabbath, are universal as to all its concerns. Neither name nor thing is agreed upon by all; nor is any thing that relates to it admitted without dispute. And what is more, the different opinions concerning it have all been entertained and contended for by persons learned and godly; all equally pretending to a love of truth, and a care for the preservation and promotion of holiness among men. And it were to be wished, that this were the only instance whereby we might evince, that the best of men 'know but in part and prophesy in part;' but they are too numerous to be recounted; although most men act, as if they themselves were liable to no mistakes, and that it is an unpardonable crime in others to be mistaken. This consideration should make us jealous over ourselves, and our own apprehensions in this matter, and affect us with tenderness and forbearance towards those, who dissent from us, and whom we, therefore, judge to be mistaken. But chiefly we are to learn from it, with what care and diligence we ought to

inquire into the certain rule of truth; since, whatever we determine, we shall be sure to find learned and godly men otherwise minded: whilst on the other hand, the consciences of the disciples of Christ, (which ought not to be causelessly burdened, nor yet countenanced in the neglect of any required duty,) are greatly concerned in our determinations. Slight and perfunctory disquisitions will here be of little use; nor are men to conclude, that their opinions are firm and established, because they have obtained a seeming countenance from two or three doubtful texts of Scripture. The principles and foundations of truth in this matter lie deep, and require a diligent investigation.

Into this investigation, therefore, we enter: whether we shall contribute any thing to the declaration or vindication of the truth, depends wholly on the assistance which God is pleased to give or withhold. Our part is, to use what diligence we are able; and avoid nothing more than the assuming or ascribing any thing to ourselves. It is enough for us, if in any thing, or by any means, God will use us, not as lords over the faith of men, but as helpers of their joy.

III. I shall not insist upon all the particular controversies, for that were endless; but shall reduce them to those general heads, under which they may be comprehended, and by the right stating of which they will be determined. Nor shall I enter into any special contest; unless it be occasionally, with any particular persons, who of old or of late have controversially handled this subject. Some of them have, I confess, given very great provocation thereto; especially the Belgic divines, whose late writings are full

of reflections on the learned writers of this nation. Our only design is to advance the truth; in doing which, I shall lay down the general regulating principles of the doctrine of the Scriptures in this matter, confirming them with such arguments as occur to my mind, and vindicating them from such exceptions as they either seem liable to, or have met with; and throughout I shall have respect to the declaration given by the Apostle, of the doctrine and practice of the Sabbath in the different ages of the church. (Heb. iv.)

The rules that I shall be guided by are, 1st, Express testimonies of Scripture, which are not wanting in this cause. Where this light does not go before us, our best course is to sit still; where the word of God does not speak in the things of God, it is our wisdom to be silent. Nothing, I own, is more nauseous to me than magisterial dictates in sacred things, without an evident deduction and confirmation of assertions from Scripture testimonies. Some men write as if they were inspired, or dreamed that they had obtained to themselves a Pythagorean reverence. Their writings are full of strong authoritative assertions, arguing the good opinion they have of themselves; which I wish did not include an equal contempt of others. But any thing may be easily affirmed, and as easily rejected.

2dly, The analogy of faith in the interpretation, exposition, and application of such testimonies, as may be pleaded in this cause. *Hic labor, hoc opus*—this is a labor, this is a task;—herein the writer's diligence and the reader's judgment are to be chiefly exercised. I have of late been much surprised with the plea of

some for the use of reason in religion and sacred things: not at all that such a plea is insisted on; but that it is built by them upon a supposition, that it is denied by others, upon whom they reflect; whereas some, who are probably intended in those reflections, have pleaded for it against the Papists, with as much reason, and no less effectually, than any among themselves. I cannot but suppose their mistake to arise from what they have heard that some teach, about the darkness of the mind of man by nature with respect to spiritual things; with his disability, by the utmost use of his reasoning faculties as corrupted and unrenewed, spiritually and savingly to apprehend the things of God, without the special assistance of the Holy Ghost. Now, as no truth is more plainly confirmed in Scripture than this, so to suppose that those who assert it do, therefore, deny the use of reason in religion, is a most fond imagination. No doubt, whatever we do, or have to do, in the things of God, must be done as rational creatures, that is, in and by the use of our reason; and not to make use of it in such case, is to reject it, as regards the principal end for which it is bestowed on us.

But the utmost use of our reason is particularly required of us, in the pursuit of the rule now laid down. To understand the sense and importance of the words in Scripture testimonies, the nature of the propositions and assertions contained in them, and the lawful deduction of inferences from them; to judge and determine aright of what is proposed or deduced by just consequence from direct propositions; to compare what in one place seems to be affirmed, with what, in others, seems to be denied; with other innumerable

instances, are all of them acts of our reason, and as such are managed by us. But I must not here digress farther into the consideration of these things: only I fear that some men write books about them because they read none. This I know, that they miserably mistake what is in controversy, and setting up men of straw as their adversaries then cast stones at them.

3dly, The dictates of general and uncorrupted reason, agreeing with and explained by Scripture light, is another principle that we shall have a due regard to. For as it is confessed, that the separation of *some* portion of time for the worship of God, is a part of the law of our creation, the light of nature does, and must still on that supposition, continue to give testimony to our duty therein. And although this light is exceedingly weakened by sin; and as regards many things of first importance, originally belonging to it, so overwhelmed with prejudice and contrary usages, that of itself it owns them not at all; yet let it be excited and rectified by Scripture light, it will return to its office of testifying to that duty, a sense of, and a direction to, which were created together with it. We shall, therefore, inquire what intimations the light of nature has continued to give concerning a day of sacred rest; and what uncontrollable testimonies we may have of those intimations, from such as had no other way to come to an acquaintance with them. And where there is a common or prevailing suffrage given among mankind to any truth of Scripture, it must be acknowledged to proceed from that light of nature which is common to all, though its actings are stifled in many.

4thly, The custom and practice of the church of God in all ages is to be inquired into. I intend not merely the church of Christ under the Gospel; but the whole church from the beginning of the world, under all its various dispensations; for great weight may certainly be laid on its harmonious consent, in any practice relating to the worship of God. Nay, what may be thus confirmed, will thence appear to be an institution, not peculiar to any special mode of worship, that may belong to one season and not to another, but to have in it an everlasting obligation on all who worship God; and as such, never to be altered or dispensed with. For if every particular church be "the pillar and ground of the truth," whose testimony thereto is to be highly esteemed; how much more is the universal church in all ages to be so accounted. For it is a brutish notion to suppose, that God would suffer a persuasion to befal the church in all ages, with regard to his worship, which was not from himself, neither the expression of its practice accepted with him.

5thly, We must have a due consideration of the spirit and liberty of the Gospel, with the nature of its worship, the reasons of it, and the manner of its performance. No particular instance of worship is to be introduced or admitted, contrary to the nature, genius, and reason of the whole. If, therefore, such a sabbatical rest be urged, as is inconsistent with the principles and reasons of evangelical worship,—being built upon motives not taken from the Gospel, and interfering, in the manner of its observance, with the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free,—it discovers itself not to belong to the present state of the

worshipers of God in Christ. Nor must any thing commend itself to us under the mere notion of strictness, or preciseness, or the appearance of more than ordinary severity in religion: it is only walking according to rule, that will please God, justify us to others, and give us peace in ourselves. Other seeming duties, that may be recommended, because they have "a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body," are of no price with God, nor are they useful to men: and commonly those who are most ready to overdo in one thing, are prone to underdo in others.

6thly, We must inquire into the tendency of principles, doctrines, and practices towards the promotion or hinderance of piety and universal holy obedience unto God; for this is the end of all religious institutions and worship; and a due observance of the tendency of things towards this end, will greatly discover their nature and acceptance with God. Let things be urged with the most specious pretences, yet if they be found by experience not to promote gospel holiness in the hearts and lives of men, they betray themselves not to be of God: still less are they of God, when they shall be evidenced to obstruct and hinder holiness; to introduce profaneness, and countenance licentiousness of life; and to prejudice the due reverence of God and his worship.

These are the principal rules to which, in this disquisition respecting a sabbatical rest, we shall attend; and they are such as will not fail to direct us aright, unless through negligence or prejudice we omit paying a due regard to them. To these the reader is desired to have respect, in his perusal of the ensuing

discourses; and if what is proposed or concluded be not found suitable to them, let it be rejected. For I can assure him, that no self assuming, no contempt of others, no prejudiced adherence to any way or party, no pretence of certainty above evidence produced, have had any influence in those inquiries after the truth in this matter;—to which, under God, we now address ourselves.

EXERCITATION II.

On the Name of a day of rest.

In the first place it will be necessary to premise something about the *name* whereby this day may be called.

1. Under the Old Testament it had a double appellation; the one taken from the natural order of the day then separated with respect to other days, the other from its nature and use. On the first account it was called 'the *seventh* day,'—"and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it." (Gen. ii. 3; Exod. xx. 11.) But this is a mere description of the day from its relation to the six precedent days of the creation; absolutely it is not any where so called. Yet hence by the Hellenists, Philo, Josephus, and others, it was termed 'the seventh' and the 'sacred

seventh day ;' and our Apostle makes use of this name, as that which commonly denoted the Sabbath of the Jews; "For he spake in a certain place of the *seventh*"—*day* is not added, because *seventh* was used technically to denote that day. (Heb. iv. 4.) And he even fetches the reason of this name from Gen. ii. 3; that being, as was said, the day that ensued immediately after the six distinct days, in which the world was created; and putting, as it did, a period to a measure of time by a numeration of days, always to return in its cycle, it was called *the seventh day.*

And from that course of time completed in seven days, thence recurring to its beginning, is the Greek term *hebdomas,* a week, (called by the Hebrews only 'a seven,') which same word signifies either the seventh day or one day in seven. For ἀγειν την ἑβδομαδα *(hagein teen hebdomada)* is *septimum diem celebrare*—to celebrate *the* or *a* seven day, and is so used by the Latins.

But this appellation, as we shall see, the Apostle casts out of consideration, as regards the day to be observed under the New Testament. For that which was first so is passed away, and another instituted in its room; which, although it be also a seventh day absolutely, or one in the revolution of seven; yet not being the seventh in their natural order, that name is now of no use, but antiquated.

2. From its occasion, sanctification, and use, it was call '*the Sabbath,*' and '*the Sabbath day.*' The occasion of this name is expressed in Gen. ii. 3:—"God blessed the seventh day, &c. because that in it he had *rested,*"—שבת, *shabath.* In the decalogue it is also called 'the Sabbath day,' (or day of God's rest and

ours;) Exod. xx. 8 and 10; and in Isaiah lvi. 2—4, it is called absolutely 'the Sabbath;' where also God, because he instituted it, calls it '*my* Sabbath.'

This being a thing so evident, it were only loss of time to insist upon the feigned etymologies of this name: I shall only mention them. Appion the Alexandrian, would have it derived from the Egyptian word *Sabbo;* as Josephus informs us, Cont. App. lib. 2, in which place the reader may also see the signification of that word. Plutarch derives it from *Sabboi,* because the priests and devotees of Bacchus used, in their furious services, to cry out 'Evoi Sabboi.' Sympos. lib. iv. cap. 15. Lactantius, with others of the ancients, fell into a mistake equally great, though less offensive. "That (saith he) is the Sabbath day, which in the Hebrew tongue receives its name from the number; whence the septenary number signifies legitimate and full." Instit. lib. 7. cap. 14. Procopius Gazæus on the Pentateuch, has a singular conceit. Speaking of the tenth of the month Tizri, termed *Sabbaton Sabbat,* he calls it the day of the conception of the fore-runner, John the Baptist, when the remission and repentance which he preached began; and thence conjectures the etymology of the Sabbath to be from *Sabachta,* which in Syriac signifies *remission,* that day being remitted holy unto the Lord. The vanity of these conjectures must be apparent to all.

3. The word also has other forms in the Old Testament; as, שבתון, *Sabbaton,* Exod. xvi. 23; xxxv. 2, and, משבת, *Mishbat;* the same signification being still retained. Neither is this word peculiarly sacred as to what it denotes, but is used to express things

common or profane,—even any cessation, resting, or giving over. The first time it occurs, (Gen. ii. 3,) it is rendered in the Targum by, נח, *nah*, a common word signifying to rest; see also Isaiah xiv. 4; xxiv. 8, and many other places. It is also applied to signify a week, because every seven days had a Sabbath necessarily included in it:—"Ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, &c.—seven Sabbaths shall be complete," i. e. *weeks*, each having a Sabbath for its close; for the reckoning was to expire at the end of the seventh Sabbath. Lev. xxiii. 15, 16. And this place being expounded by Onkelos in his Targum of a week, Nachmanides says of it, that if it be so, (which he also grants and pleads,) then "there will be two tongues in one verse," or the same word used twice with different significations; viz. that the word *shabath* should denote both the holy day of rest, and also a week of days. And he gives another instance in Judges x. 4,—"And he had thirty sons that rode on thirty ass colts, and they had thirty cities;" where the same word signifies *colts of asses*, and also, *cities*.

The common number seven is also expressed by it; as in Lev. xxv. 8; "Thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee;" that is, as expounded in the next words, "seven times seven years;" seven years being called a Sabbath of years, because of the land's resting every seventh year, in answer to the rest of the church every seventh day. (See the Targum on Isaiah lviii. 3; Esther ii. 9.) Moreover, because of the rest that was common to the weekly Sabbath, with all other sacred feasts instituted by Moses, in their stated monthly or annual revolutions, these latter were also called Sabbaths, as shall hereafter be proved.

And as the Greeks and Latins made use of this word, borrowed from the Hebrew, so the Jews, observing that their Sabbath day had its name, *dies Saturni*, from Saturn, (as among us it is still called Saturday,) called that planet שבתי, *Shibti*, and שבתאי, *Shabbetai;* whence some of them even now take occasion to please themselves with vain imaginations. Thus Rabbi Isaac Caro, commending the excellency of the seventh day, says, "that Saturn is the planet of that day, the whole being denominated from the first hour;" and afterwards, "that he therefore hath power on that day to renew the strength of our bodies, as also to influence our minds to understand the spirit of God. He is the planet of Israel, as the astrologers acknowledge; and in his portion is the rational soul; and in the parts of the earth, the house of the sanctuary; and among tongues, the Hebrew tongue; and among laws, the law of Israel." So far he: whether he can make good his claim to the relation of the Jews unto Saturn, or their pretended advantage on supposition thereof, I leave to our astrologers to determine, since I know nothing of these things.

And because their rest fell on this day, many of the heathen in their turn thought, that the Jews dedicated the day and its religion to Saturn. Thus Tacitus says they did so, "either because the Idæans, whom we have stated were expelled with Saturn, and were the founders of the nation, delivered to them the principles of their religion; or because the star of Saturn, of the seven planets by which mortals are governed, moves in the highest orb, and with the greatest power; and most of the heavenly bodies perform their revolutions by septenary numbers." (Hist. lib. v.)

With such fables did the most diligent of the heathen suffer themselves to be deluded; whereby a prejudice was kept up in their minds against the only true God and his worship.

The word is also sometimes doubled, by a pure Hebraism; as in 1 Chron. ix. 32, שבת, שבת, *shabath shabath,* i. e. *every Sabbath.* And it is somewhat variously used in the conjunction of another form, as שבתון שבת, *sabbaton shabath,* Exod. xvi. 23, xxxv. 2; and שבת שבתון, *shabath sabbaton,* Exod. xxxi. 15, Lev. xxv. 4. We render שבתון, *sabbaton,* by *rest,* the 'rest of the Sabbath,' and 'a Sabbath of rest. Where *sabbaton* is prefixed, it seems to be equal to *Sabbatulum,* and to denote the entrance into the Sabbath or the preparation for it; particularly that more solemn preparation when 'a great Sabbath' or 'high day' ensued. Such was the Sabbath before the passover, the time between the two evenings being the *Sabbatulum.*

And this various use of the word was adopted among the Greeks and Latins also; for, as they borrowed the *word* from the Jews, so did they its *use.* The Greek σαββατον, *sabbaton,* is merely the Hebrew שבתון, *sabbaton,* or perhaps formed by the addition of their usual termination from שבת, *shabat;* whence also the Apostle frames his σαββατισμος, *Sabbatismos.* The Latin *Sabbatum* is the same. And they use this word, though rarely, to express the last day of the week; as Suetonius says, that Diogenes the grammarian used to dispute at Rhodes '*Sabbatis*'—on the Sabbaths, i. e. every Saturday. The Seventy always thus express the seventh day Sabbath, and frequently use it for a week also. In the New Testament, "I fast twice on the Sabbath" (σαββατου, Luke xviii. 12) means two days

in the *week;* and 'the day of the Sabbath' (ἡ ἡμερα των σαββατων, Acts xiii. 14) is that day of the week which was set apart for a sabbatical rest. Hence, μια σαββατων, *mia sabbatōn,* 'one day of the Sabbaths,' which frequently occurs, is the same with πρωτη ηβδομαδος, *prōtē hēbdomados,* 'the first day of the week;' the numeral being often put for the cardinal.

4. About the time when the books of the New Testament were written, both the Jews themselves and the Heathen that noticed them, called all their feasts and solemn assemblies, their Sabbaths, because they did no servile work in them; in which respect they partook of the nature of the weekly Sabbath. Thus the first day of the feast of trumpets (which was to be on the first day of the second month, what day soever of the week it happened to be on) was called a Sabbath. Lev. xxiii. 24. This Scaliger well observes and proves; (*Emend. Temp.* lib. iii.; *Canon. Isagog.* lib. iii. p. 213;) and it is further evident from the frequent mention of the sabbatical *fasts* of the Jews, since it was not lawful for them to fast on the weekly Sabbath. So Augustus to Tiberius in Suetonius, says, "Not even the Jew, my Tiberius, observes a fast on the Sabbaths so willingly, as I have observed it this day." Juvenal also has: "Where kings barefooted observe the solemn Sabbaths." And Martial: "And will not compel the Sabbath fasts by law;"—speaking, as he thought, in contradiction to them. Horace likewise mentions their *Tricesima Sabbata,* (or thirtieth day Sabbaths,) which were no other than their new moons. Maimonides, in his tract on the Sabbath, cap. 29, speaking of their 'good days or feasts' says expressly, "they are all Sabbaths to the

Lord." And finally the Apostle accommodates himself to this manner of speaking, usual in those days, when he says, "Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the *Sabbaths*;"—that is, any of the Jewish feasts whatever, then called Sabbaths.

From this usage some think to expound that vexed expression, σαββατον δευτεροπρωτον, *sabbaton deuteroprōton*, Luke vi. 1, which we render 'the second Sabbath after the first.' Thus Suidas says of it: "It was the second day of the passover, and the first of unleavened bread. And wonder not that it is called a Sabbath, for they called every feast day a Sabbath." Theophylact gives another day, but the same reason for it: "The Jews call every feast a Sabbath, for Sabbath is rest: ofttimes, therefore, there fell a feast on the day of preparation, and they called that preparation a Sabbath, because it was a feast. Wherefore, the proper Sabbath they called 'the second after the first, (deuteroprōton,) as being the second from the feast and Sabbath going before." Chrysostom allows the same reason, *Hom.* xxxix. Isidore Pelusiota fixes again on another day, but still for the same reason; "It was called deuteroprōton, because it was the second of the passover, the first of unleavened bread;" which he also shews was called a Sabbath, upon the general account of all the Jewish feasts being so called.

But this is expressly contrary to Scripture, which makes the day spoken of to be the *proper weekly* Sabbath, whereon depended the question that arose about its observance: see Matt. xii. 11. We are beholden to Scaliger for the true meaning of this expression, which so puzzled the ancients; and concerning which

Gregory Nazianzen turned away Jerome with a scoff, scarcely becoming his gravity, when he inquired of him what might be the meaning of it. Scaliger conjectures, that it was so called, "because it was the first Sabbath from the second day of unleavened bread." For on that day they offered the handful or sheaf of new fruits; and from that day they counted seven weeks unto Pentecost. And the Sabbaths of those weeks were reckoned from the second day of unleavened bread; and the first that followed was called *deuteroproton*. See his *Emendat. Tempor.* lib. 6, and *Isagog. Canon.* p. 218; to which testimony his mortal adversary, Dionysius Petavius (*Animad.* in Epiph. N. 31; p. 64) subscribes, who will not allow him ever to have spoken rightly, except in what the wit of man can find no tolerable objection against. But this calling of their feasts *Sabbaths*, with the reason of it, is noticed by all the principal authors of the Jews, as in *Lib. Tzeror. Hammor.* on Lev. p. 102, it is written, "Because all solemn days are called holy convocations, they are all so called from the Sabbath, which is holy; wherefore the Sabbath is the head of all solemn feasts, and they are all of them called *Sabbaths of rest.*"

5. Some of the ancient Christians, in their intercourse with the Heathen, called the day, which Christians then observed in the room of the Jewish seventh day, *Sun-day;* as those who deal with others must express things by the names current among them, unless they intend to be as barbarians unto them. Thus Justin Martyr says, "We all hold our meeting in common on *Sunday.*" (*Apol.* 2.) Had he said on the Sabbath, the Gentiles would have concluded it to have been the Judaical Sabbath. Had he called it *the*

Lord's day, they would not have known what day he meant; whilst the name of '*the first day of the week,*' taken up signally by Christians upon the resurrection of Christ, was not in use among them. Wherefore he was compelled to call that day, which he wished to distinguish, by the name used by those to whom he spake—*Sunday.* So Tertullian, treating with the same sort of men, calls it Sunday; (Apol. cap. 16;) and Eusebius, reporting the edicts of Constantine for the observance of the *Lord's day,* as it is termed in them, adds, "that it is the day which we call *Sunday.*"

Nevertheless, among Christians themselves this name was not in common use, but by some was rejected with the other names of days used by Pagans. Thus Augustin on Psalm xciii, speaks of the fourth day of the week; "which (says he) is called the day of Mercury by Pagans, and by many Christians. But we would have it otherwise, and wish they were reformed, so as not thus to call it." And Jerome (in *Epist. ad Algas.)* says, "that the first day of the week is the Lord's day, the week being divided into the first, second, third, &c. days of the week, which the Heathen call by the names of planets and idols." He, therefore, rejects the use of ordinary names; whilst Philastrius makes the use of them among Christians almost heretical. (Num. 3.)

All the eastern nations, among whom the planetary denomination of the days of the week first began, have, since their casting off that kind of idolatry, rejected the use of those names; being therein more religious, or more superstitious than most Christians. Thus the Arabians call Friday, which is the day of their

worship, *Giuma*, and the Persians, *Adina*. The rest of the days of the week they discriminate by their natural order in the weekly revolution—first, second, third, &c.; except that some of them have a special name occasionally imposed on them. The church of Rome, from a decree, as they suppose or pretend, of Pope Sylvester, reckon all the days of the week by *first, second,* &c.; only their writers for the most part retain the name *Sabbath,* and use *Lord's day* for the first day. The Rhemists, on *Rev.* i. 10, condemn the name of Sunday as heathenish; and Polydore Virgil indeed before them, says, "Certainly one ought to blush and grieve, that Christian names have not been given before this to those days: let not the gods of the Gentiles have so memorable a monument among us." *De Invent. Rev.* lib. vi. cap. 5.

Many severe expressions, against the use of the common planetary names, occur among sundry of the ancients; and at the first relinquishment of Gentilism, it had doubtless been well if those names of Baalim had been taken out of the mouths of men, especially as the retaining of them has been of no use or advantage. As they are now riveted into custom, and claim their station on such a prescription, as in some measure takes away the corruption of their use, I judge that they are not to be contended about; for they are become mere notes of distinction, the cause of their imposition being, amongst the many, utterly unknown. Only I must add, that the severe and contemptuous reflections, which I have heard poured out against those, who—it may be out of weakness, it may be out of a better judgment—abstain from using them, argue a want of that charity which becomes those who judge

themselves strong. They have, at least, a sufficient plea to vindicate them from the contempt of any; for there are places of Scripture which seem so far to countenance them, that if they mistake in their application, it is a mistake to which others are liable in things of greater importance. For it is given as the will of God,—"Make no mention of the names of other gods, neither let them be heard out of thy mouth;" (Exod. xxiii. 13;) and it cannot be denied, that the names of the days of the week were the names of heathen gods. The prohibition is renewed in Joshua ii. 7; and extended in Deut. xii. 3, to a command "to destroy and blot out the names of the gods of the people;" which nevertheless are retained by this means. Thus the children of Reuben, building the cities formerly called Nebo and Baal-Meon, changed their names, because these were the names of heathen idols. (Numb. xxxii. 38.) And David mentions it as a part of his integrity, "that he would not take up the names of idols in his lips." Psalm xvi. 4. Grant, then, that the objections arising thence, against the use of the names of the days of the week, may be answered, from a consideration of the change of times and circumstances; yet, certainly there is, as before observed, an appearance of warrant in them, sufficient to secure those from contempt and reproach, who are hence prevailed on to use other names.

6. But if there be a name given in the *Scriptures* to a day of rest, there is a peculiar reason why it should be called by that name, and by no other. Thus it unquestionably was under the Old Testament: God himself had assigned a name to the day of sacred rest, then enjoined to be observed by the church, and it

was not lawful for the Jews to call it by any other name in use among the heathen. It was to be called the *Sabbath day—the Sabbath of the Lord.*

In the New Testament there is, as we shall presently see, a signal mark put on the first day of the week; whence some thus call their day of rest, and contend that it ought so to be called. But this only respects the order and relation of such a day to the other days of the week, which is natural, and has no respect to any thing sacred; and the first use of it, upon the resurrection of our Lord, was only particularly to denote the time. But there is a day mentioned by John in the Revelation, (which we shall afterwards consider,) that he calls 'the Lord's day:' which appellation, whatsoever day be designed, is neither natural nor civil, nor does it relate to any thing in nature, or in the common usage of men. It must, therefore, be sacred; and may comprehend various considerations. It is the Lord's day—the day that he has taken to be his lot or special portion among the days of the week, taking possession of it, as it were, at his resurrection. In the same manner that his people are his lot and portion in the world, and, therefore, called *his people.* It is also, or may be, his day subjectively; or the day whereon his business and affairs are principally transacted. For, as the poet has it—'*Tydeos illa dies,*' (that was Tydeus' day,) because he was principally concerned in the affairs of it, so this is the day in which the person and mediation of the Lord Christ are made the principal objects of business and worship. And it may further be called the Lord's day, because appointed by him, or by his authority over the church,

to be observed; as the ordinance of the supper is called 'the supper of the Lord,' on the same account.

On supposition, therefore, that such a day of rest is to be observed under the New Testament, the name whereby it ought to be called is, THE LORD'S DAY; which is peculiarly expressive of its relation to our Lord Jesus Christ, the sole author and immediate object of all gospel worship. But whereas the general notion of a sabbatical rest is still included in such a day, a superaddition of its relation to the Lord Christ, will entitle it to the appellation of THE LORD'S DAY SABBATH; i. e. the day of sacred rest appointed by the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, most probably, in the continuation of the Old Testament phraseology, it is called the Sabbath day; (Matt. xxiv. 20;) and in Hebrews iv. 9, comes under the general notion of a Sabbatism.

EXERCITATION III.

On the Origin of the Sabbath.

HAVING fixed the name, the thing itself falls next under consideration; the order of pursuing which, shall be, to inquire first into its *origin*, and then into its *causes:* for the true stating of the former, will

throw great light on the latter, as also on its duration. If it began with the world, it probably had a cause cognate to the existence of the world, and so must in duration be commensurate with it; but if, on the contrary, it owe its rise to succeeding generations, amongst some peculiar sort of men, its cause was arbitrary and occasional, and its continuance uncertain: since every thing which had such a beginning in the worship of God, was limited to some seasons only, and had a time determined for its expiration. And, indeed, no concern of this day has fallen under more diligent, severe, and learned dissertations; very eminent men having entertained contrary opinions, and defended them with much learning and variety of reading. I shall only notice the principal topics in this matter, and briefly call the different apprehensions both of Jews and Christians to a just examination. Neither shall I omit the consideration of any opinion, the antiquity of which, or the authority of its defenders, ever gave it reputation, though now it may be generally exploded; as not knowing, in that revolution of opinions which we are under, how soon it may have a revival.

1. The Jews (that we may begin with those, with whom some think the Sabbath began) are divided among themselves about the origin of the Sabbath, no less than Christians: yea, to speak the truth, their divisions and different apprehensions about this matter of fact, have been the occasion of ours; and their authority is pleaded to countenance the mistakes of others. Many of many assign the origin, or first revelation of the Sabbath, to the wilderness station of the people in Marah; others of them make it coeval with

the world. The first opinion is countenanced by the Talmud; (Gemar. Babylon. Tit. Sab. cap. 9, and Tit. Sanedr. cap. 7.;) and the tradition of it is embraced by so many of their masters and commentators, that our learned Selden contends for it, as the common and prevailing opinion among them; and endeavours to answer all that is or may be urged to the contrary. And, indeed, there is scarce any thing of moment in antiquity, as to matter of fact about the Sabbath, whether it be Jewish, Christian, or Heathen, but what he has heaped together in the third book of his '*Jus Gentium apud Hebræos.*'

Marah was the first station that the children of Israel fixed in, after their coming up out of the Red Sea; having previously wandered in the wilderness without finding water, so that they were ready to faint. The report of this their thirst and wandering was famous among the heathen, and mixed by them with vain and monstrous fables. One of the wisest amongst them, Tacitus, puts as many lies together about it, as he well can in a few words; (Tacit. Histor. lib. v.;) feigning, 'that by following some wild asses, they were led to water, and so made an end of their thirst and wandering; on account of which they afterwards consecrated in their temple the image of an ass.' Others of them say, that they wandered six days, and found water on the seventh, which was the occasion of their perpetual observation of the seventh day rest.

Now, in their journey from the Red Sea to Marah, they were particularly pressed with wandering and thirst; (Exod. xv. 22;) but this was only for three days, not seven. The story of the ass's image, or head con-

secrated amongst them, was taken from what fell out afterwards about the golden calf; which made them vile among the nations, and exposed them to their obloquy. The waters which they then found being bitter, they called the name of the place Marah, i. e. *bitterness*. Hither, I repeat, they came on the third day; for although it is said, that they went three days in the wilderness and found no water, after which, mention is made of their coming to Marah; yet it was in the evening of the third day, for they pitched that night in Marah. (Compare Exodus xv. 22, 23, and Numb. xxxiii. 8.) Here after their murmuring for the bitterness of the waters, and the miraculous cure of them, it is added in the story, 'there the Lord made for them a *statute* and an *ordinance*, and there he proved them, &c.' (ver. 25.)

What this statute and ordinance were, is not declared; but they are suggested by the Talmudical masters. The one, say they, was the ordinance concerning the *Sabbath*: about the other they are not so well agreed; some referring it to the *fifth* commandment; others to the ceremonies of the red heifer, with whose ashes the water of sprinkling was to be mingled, and for which conjecture they want not such reasons, as are usual among them. The first two they confirm from the repetition of the law, in Deut. v. 14, 15; for there those words, 'as the Lord thy God commanded thee,' are distinctly added to those two precepts, the *fourth* and *fifth*, and to no other; and this, they say, could arise from no other cause, but because God had before given them unto the people in Marah. This is one of the principal ways whereby they confirm their imaginations; fully to establish the

truth of which, the Baal Hatturim, or small gematrical annotations on the Masoretic Bibles adds, that in the words before mentioned, the final numeral letters, make up the same number with *marah*, מרה, the name of the place where these laws were given.

This is the sum of what is pleaded in this case; but every one may see the vanity of these pretences, and how easy it is for any one to frame a thousand such, who knows not how to spend his time better. Aben Ezra and Abarbinel both confess, that the words used in the repetition of the law, (Deut. v,) refer to the giving of it on Mount Sinai. And if we must seek for especial reasons of the inserting of those words, besides the sovereign pleasure of God, there are not wanting such, as are far more probable than these of the masters. For instance, the one of these commandments closes up the *first* table, concerning the worship of God, and the other heads the *second* table, concerning our duties amongst ourselves; therefore, this memorial, 'as the Lord thy God commanded thee,' is expressly annexed to them, intended to be distinctly applied to all the rest. The fourth command is, as it were, *custos*, or keeper of the whole first table; since our owning of God to be our God, and our worship of him according to his mind, were to be solemnly expressed on the day of rest, commanded to be observed for that purpose: and if the latter be neglected, the former will certainly be neglected also; whence a remembrance to observe this day is so strictly enjoined. And the fifth commandment is apparently custos of the second table; as containing the means of exacting the observation of all its duties, or of punishing the neglect and disobedience of them.

There is another reason for the peculiar appropriation of these two precepts by that memorial to this people. They had now given them an especial typical concern in them, which did not at all belong to the rest of mankind, who were otherwise equally concerned in the Decalogue with themselves. For, whereas in the fourth commandment, no more was previously required, than that one day in seven should be observed as a sacred rest; they were now precisely confined to the seventh day, in order from the finishing of the creation, or the establishing of the law and covenant of works. And this was with respect to, and in confirmation of, that ordinance, which gave them the seventh day Sabbath in a peculiar manner; that is, the seventh day after six days raining of manna, Exod. xvi. In the other instance, the promise annexed of prolonging their days, had a peculiar respect to the land of Canaan. Either of these is a far more probable reason of the annexing those words, 'as the Lord thy God commanded thee,' to those two commandments, than that fixed on by the Talmudists. Herein only I agree with them, that both these commands were given alike in Marah; and I suppose none will deny one of them to be a principal dictate of the law of nature. As to the words mentioned, a statute and an ordinance, the meaning of them is plainly expounded in the same place: (Exod. xv. 26:) God then declared this unto them as his unchangeable ordinance and institution, and that he would bless them on their obedience, and punish them upon their unbelief and rebellion: and they had experience of his faithfulness to their cost.

Moreover this station of Marah, was on or about the twenty-fourth day of Nisan, or April; whilst the first solemn observation of the Sabbath in the wilderness was upon the twenty-second of Jiar, the month following; as may easily be evinced from Moses' journal. There were, therefore, twenty-seven days between this supposed institution of the Sabbath, and the first solemn observation of it. For they first began their journey out of Egypt on the fifteenth day of Nisan, or the first month. On the twenty-fourth of that month they pitched in Marah; and it was the fifteenth day of Jiar, or the second month, before they entered the wilderness of Sin; where is the first mention of their solemn observation of the Sabbath, upon the occasion of the gathering of manna. Between these two seasons three Sabbaths must needs intervene; and those immediately upon its first institution, if this fancy may be admitted: and yet the rulers of the congregation looked upon the people's preparation for observing it as an unusual thing; which could not have happened, had it received so fresh an institution. Compare Exod. xvi. 1, 22—24, and Numb. xxxiii. 3—11.

Besides, these masters themselves, and Raski in particular, (who in his comment on the place promotes this fancy,) grant that *Abraham* observed the Sabbath; but they say he received its law and ordinances by peculiar favor and special revelation. Be it so: yet it was the great commendation of Abraham, given him by God himself, 'that he would command his children and houshold after him, to keep the way of the Lord.' (Gen. xviii. 19.) Whatever ordinance, therefore, he received from God, concerning any thing to be observed

in his worship, it was a part of his fidelity to communicate that knowledge to his posterity, and to teach them its observance. His children and houshold, therefore, must of necessity, on these men's own principles, have been instructed in the doctrine and observation of the Sabbath, before this pretended institution of it.

Should we, then, allow what the generality of the Rabbins assert, that the law of the Sabbath was first given in Marah; yet the whole, being a merely curious and groundless conjecture, ought to be rejected. Not what these men *say*, but what they *prove*, is to be admitted: and he who with much diligence has collected testimonies out of them for this purpose, has only proved what they thought,—not what is the truth. Yet upon this fond imagination is built their general opinion, that the Sabbath was given only to Israel, is the *Spouse of the Synagogue*, and belongs not to the rest of mankind! They may be permitted to please themselves with such dreams; but that these things should be pleaded by Christians against the true origin and use of the Sabbath, is somewhat strange. If any, however, think their assertions in this matter to be of weight, they ought also to admit what the Jews add thereto; namely, 'that all the Gentiles shall once a week keep a Sabbath in hell.'

But this opinion is not universal among them; some of their most famous masters being otherwise minded. For they both judge that the Sabbath was instituted in Paradise, and that the law of it was equally obligatory upon all nations in the world. Of this mind are Maimonides, Aben-Ezra, Abarbinel, and others; who expressly refer the revelation of the Sab-

bath to the sanctifying and blessing of the first seventh day. The Targum, on the title of Psalm xcii, ascribes that Psalm to Adam, as spoken by him on the Sabbath day: whence Austin esteemed this to be the general opinion of the Jews. (Tractat. xx. in Johan.) And Manasse Ben Israel (Lib. de Creat. Problem viii.) proves from sundry of their own authors, that the Sabbath was given to, and observed by the patriarchs, before the coming of the people into the wilderness: particularly by Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph; which he confirms by testimonies of Scripture, not to be despised. Philo Judæus and Josephus, both of them more ancient and learned than any of the Talmudical doctors, expressly assign the origin of the Sabbath to that of the world. Philo calls it, 'the day of the world's nativity;' and 'a feast, not of one city or country, but of the whole world.' (De Opificio Mundi; et de Vita Mos. lib. ii. And see Josephus lib. ii. cont. Appion.) The words of Abarbinel are sufficiently express in this matter: 'He sanctified and separated the seventh day unto glory and honor, because on its approach the work of heaven and earth was perfected and finished: even as a man when he has performed an honorable work, and perfected it, makes a banquet and a day of feasting.' Maimonides is still plainer: he distinguishes their sacred feasts into the weekly Sabbath, and those that depended upon the appearing of the new moon. The first he calls *Sabbath Bereschith*, the Sabbath instituted at the creation; which he says, was given to every man, because there is no more required for its due observation in point of time, than that a man be able to reckon six days, and so rest on the seventh. But all

feasts, that depended on the variations of the moon, were peculiar to themselves, and the determination of them left to the Sanhedrim. For they trusted not to astronomical computations, as regarded the changes of the moon, but sent persons to sundry high places to watch and observe her first appearances; and if they answered the general established rules, then they proclaimed the beginning of the feast. (See his Tract Ridush, Hackodesh, cap. 1 and 2.) And Philippus Guadagnolus (Apol. pro Christiana Relig. Part 1, cap. 8) shews, that Ahmed Ben Zin, a Persian Mahometan, whom he confutes, affirmed, that the institution of the Sabbath was from the creation of the world. This indeed he reflects upon in his adversary, with a saying out of the Koran, where those that sabbatize are cursed; but this will not serve his purpose; for in the Koran respect is had to the Jewish Sabbath, or the seventh day of the week precisely; whereas one day of seven only is pleaded by Ahmed to have been appointed from the foundation of the world. I know some learned men have endeavoured to elude most of the testimonies, which are produced to manifest the opinion of the more ancient Jews in this matter; but I know also that their exceptions might be easily removed, would the nature of our present design admit of a contest for that purpose.

2. We come now to the consideration of those opinions concerning the origin of the Sabbath, which are embraced and contended for among learned—yea and *unlearned* men, of the present age and church. The first is, that the Sabbath had its institution, precept, or warrant for its observation, in Paradise before the fall of man, immediately upon the finishing of the

works of creation; which opinion is chiefly founded on a double testimony, one in the Old Testament, and the other in the New; and both seem to me of so uncontrollable evidence, that I have often wondered how any sober and learned persons undertook to evade their force.

I. The first is that of Gen. ii. 1—3; 'That the heavens and the earth were finished and all the host of them; and on the seventh day God ended his work, which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work, which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all his work, which God had created and made.'

There is, indeed, somewhat in this text, which has proved a difficulty to the Jews, and somewhat which the Heathen took offence at. That which troubles the Jews is, that God is said to have finished his work *on the seventh day*: for they feared that somewhat might be hence drawn to the prejudice of their absolute rest on the seventh day, whereon it seems God himself wrought in the finishing of his work. And Jerome judged, that they might be justly charged with this consideration. 'We will urge the Jews,' saith he, 'who boast of their sabbatical rest, with this; viz. that the Sabbath was broken or dissolved from the beginning, whilst God wrought in it, finishing his work, and blessed the day, because in it he finished all things.' Hence the Seventy read the words by an open corruption, ('on the sixth day;' ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἕκτῃ,) wherein they are followed by the Syriac and Samaritan versions. And the Rabbins grant that this

was done on purpose; that it might not be thought that God made any thing on the seventh day. But this scruple was every way needless: for do but suppose that (*yekal*, ויכל,) which expresses the time past, intends the preterpluperfect tense, (as the preterperfect in the Hebrew must do, when occasion requires,) and it is plain that God *had* perfected his work, before the beginning of the seventh day's rest. And so are the words well rendered by Junius; 'Quum autem *perfecisset* Deus die septimo opus suum quod fecerat;' When God had *perfected* on the seventh day his work which he had made, or we may say, *Compleverat* die septimo;—had completed, &c.

That which the Heathen took offence at, was the rest here ascribed unto God; as though he had been wearied with his work. The sense of this expression we shall explain afterwards. In the mean time it is certain, that the word here used often signifies only to *cease*, or *give over*, without respect either to weariness or rest; as in Job xxxii. 1; 1 Sam. xxv. 9. So that no cause of offence was given in the application of it to God himself. Philo, however, (Lib. de Opific. Mund.) refers God's rest to his contemplation of the works of his hands, and that not improperly, as we shall see.

Set aside prejudice, however, and pre-conceived opinions, and any man would think that the institution of the Sabbath is here as plainly expressed, as in the fourth commandment. The words are the continuation of a plain historical narration: for having finished the account of the creation of the world in the first chapter, and given a recapitulation of it in the first verse of this, Moses declares what imme-

diately ensued thereon; namely, the rest of God on the seventh day, and his blessing and sanctifying that day whereon he so rested;—even that *individual* day in the first place, and a day in the revolution of the same space of time for succeeding generations. This is plain in the words, or nothing can be plainly expressed. And if there be any appearance of difficulty in those words, 'he blessed and sanctified it,' it is wholly taken away in the explication given of them by himself afterwards in the fourth commandment, where they are plainly declared to intend its being set apart and consecrated to be a day of sacred rest.

1. Many exceptions, however, are made to this plain sense of the words. Thus it is lately pleaded by Heddiger, (Theol. Patriarch. Exercitat. 3, sect. 58,) that "God on the seventh day had ceased to perform his new work, for in six days all had been completed. He blessed that day on this account,—because when ceasing from his own work, he shewed, that man, in whose creation he rested, was made for the glorifying of his name; which work, since it was greater than the others hitherto created, is called a blessing. That same day which he thus blessed he sanctified, because both on that day and always he had purposed to sanctify himself in man, as the crown and glory of his work. For to sanctify, is to call and testify any person or thing to be holy. The day, therefore, and the occasion was holy, and avowed so to be,—not in itself, but through the holiness of man, who in due time sanctifies himself, as regards his thoughts, desires, and actions, unto God, &c." I understand not, how God can be said to bless the *seventh* day, because man, who was created the *sixth* day, was made for the glory of

his name. All things, as well as man, were made for the glory of God; (Prov. xvi. 4; Psalm xix;) nor is it said, that God rested on the seventh day from making man, but from '*all the works*' that he had made. Granting then, that man, who was last made, was the most eminent part of the visible creation, and most capable of giving immediate glory to God; yet it is twice said, that the rest of God respected all the works that he had made, and the works themselves are summed up into the making of the heavens and earth, and all the host of them. How does this include the blessing of the *seventh* day? it may be as well applied to the *first*, wherein light was made; for God no more made man on the *seventh*, than he did the sun and moon, which were made on the fourth.

Nor is there here any distinction supposed between God's *resting* on the seventh day, and his *blessing* of it, which are, nevertheless, plainly distinguished in the text. For to say he blessed and sanctified it, merely by resting on it, is to confound things, which are not only distinctly proposed in the text, but so distinguished as that one is laid down as the cause of the other; viz. because God rested on the seventh day, therefore he blessed it. For note, also, what he says on the *sanctification* of the day: "God had determined on that day and always to sanctify himself in man, as the crown and glory of his work." I wish this learned man had more clearly expressed himself: what act of God is it, that can be here intended? The sense of the passage is, that God sanctified the seventh day, that is, purposed from eternity 'to sanctify himself always in man, whom on the *sixth* day he would create for his glory:' which is so forced, as scarcely to make tolerable sense.

Neither is the explanation given by this author and some others, of that expression, *to sanctify*, (viz. to declare any person or thing to be holy,) being spoken *by* God, and not *of* him as the object, correct. In reference to God, our sanctifying him or his name, is indeed, to testify or declare his holiness, by giving honor and glory to him, in our holy obedience ; but as regards men and things, to sanctify them is, either to make them internally holy, or to separate and dedicate them to holy uses ;—the former peculiar to persons, the latter common to them with other things. Nor are the following words in our author, 'that the day is sanctified and made holy, not in itself, but by the holiness of man,' any more to the purpose: for man was no more created on that day, than the beasts of the field ; so that from his holiness no color can be taken to ascribe holiness to the day. Neither is it consistent with what was before asserted, that the sanctification intended is the holiness of God himself, as declared in his works. The sense of the words is plain, and is but darkened by these circumlocutions ; which sense the Jews well enough express when they said of the day, 'that it was divided or distinguished from the common nature of things in the world ;' namely, by having a new sacred relation added to it.

Further, that this is the sense, both expressions, used to declare the acts of God about it, declare ;— "he *blessed* and sanctified it." God's blessing, as the Jews well say, is an *addition of good :* for it relates to something that has a present existence, to which it makes an addition of some further good, than it was before partaker of. Some peculiar *good*, therefore, was added to this day, whereby it was preferred or exalted

above other days. The other word, '*sanctified*' is further instructive in the intention of God, and is also explanatory of the former. For suppose still, (and the text will not allow us to do otherwise,) that the day is the object of this sanctification, and it is not possible to assign any other sense of the words, than that God set apart by his institution that day to be the day of his worship, to be spent in a sacred rest unto himself; which is declared to be the meaning of the word in the decalogue. And this signification of that word is not only most common, but solely to be admitted in the Old Testament, if cogent reason be not given to the contrary; as where it denotes a dedication and separation to *civil* uses, and not to sacred, as it sometimes does, still retaining its general nature of separation. Therefore, I will not deny, that these two words may signify the same thing, the one being merely explanatory of the other;—he blessed it, by sanctifying it: as in Numbers vii. 1; "he anointed them and sanctified them," that is, he sanctified them by anointing them; or by anointing, set them apart for a holy use.

This, then, is that which is affirmed by Moses. On the seventh day, after he had finished his work, God rested or ceased from working, and thereon blessed and sanctified the seventh day. Not that he kept it holy himself, which in no sense is the divine nature capable of; nor that he purified it, and made it inherently holy, which the nature of the day is incapable of; nor that he celebrated that which in itself was holy, as we sanctify his name, which is the act of an inferior towards a superior: but he set it apart to sacred use authoritatively; requiring us to sanctify it

in that use obediently. If you allow not this original sanctification of the seventh day, the first instance of its solemn, joint, national observance is introduced with a strange abruptness. For it is said in Exod. xvi. 22, 23, where this instance is given, "that on the sixth day the people gathered twice as much bread as on any other day," which the rulers taking notice of, acquainted Moses with, and Moses in answer gives the reason of it—"To-morrow, is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord." Those by whom the fancy about the station in Marah is rejected, (as it is rejected by most Christians,) and who yet will not admit the original institution of the Sabbath from the beginning, can scarce give a tolerable account of this manner of expression: for without the least intimation of institution and command, it is only said, "to-morrow is the Sabbath holy to the Lord;" that is, for you to keep holy. But on the supposition contended for, the discourse in that place, with the reason of it, is plain and evident: for there being a previous institution of the seventh day's rest, (the observation of which was partly gone into disuse,) and the day itself being then to receive a new peculiar application to the church state of that people, the reason of the people's act, and the rulers' doubt, and Moses' explanation, is plain and obvious.

2. Granting, however, the sense of the words contended for, there is yet another objection, arising not from the signification of the words, but the connexion and disposition of them in the discourse of Moses. For say some learned men, the words "And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all his work which God

created and made," do not prove, that it was so sanctified immediately upon finishing the works of creation; but are inserted occasionally into the discourse of Moses, from what afterwards came to pass. They are not, therefore, as they suppose, a continued part of the historical narration, but a prolepsis or anticipation, and are to be read as it were in a parenthesis. For supposing that Moses wrote not the book of Genesis till after the giving of the law, (which I will not contend about, though it be assumed gratis in this discourse,) as there is a respect had in the institution of the Sabbath, to the rest of God when his works were finished, upon the historical relation of that rest he inserts what was done afterwards, and appointed on account thereof.

Thus, then, the sense of the words must be; "that God rested on the seventh day from all his works that he had made; (that is, the next day after the finishing of the works of creation;) wherefore, 2400 years after, God blessed and sanctified the seventh day;"—not that seventh day whereon he rested, and those that succeeded in the same revolution of time; but a seventh day that fell out so long afterwards, which was not blessed nor sanctified before! I know not well how learned and sober men can offer more hardship to a text, than is put upon this before us, by this interpretation. The connexion of the words is plain and equal:—"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them; and on the seventh day God ended his work that he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had made; and God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all

his work which God created and made." You may as well feign, that God finished his work on the seventh day, and afterwards *rested* another seventh day; as that he rested the seventh day, and afterwards *blessed* and *sanctified* another. It is true there may be instances in the Scriptures of things inserted in historical narrations by way of anticipation, which fell not out until after the time wherein mention is made of them: but of so monstrous and uncouth a prolepsis as this would be, no instance can be given in Scripture, or any sober author; especially without the least notice of its being such. Such modes of writing are not to be imagined, unless a necessity in the things themselves spoken of, compel us to admit them; much less where the matter treated of, and the coherence of the words necessarily *exclude* such an imagination, as it is in this place: for without the introduction of the words mentioned, neither is the discourse complete, nor the matter of fact absolved.

3. But let us see what further they advance, who plead that the command concerning the Sabbath was peculiar to the Jews alone, and that it was given to them in the wilderness, and not at all before. Some of the Belgic divines having specially of late supported this view, I shall take under consideration the arguments of one of them, who has last of all defended it, and consider of what importance they are. First, then, having repeated the words of the fourth commandment, he adds; "But who will dare to assert, that these words relate to man from the beginning of the creation? Was it necessary for him to do work, and that of a servile nature, for six days? had he men-servants and maid-servants? had he

cattle needing rest? were there strangers within his gates? Who does not perceive, that throughout this whole commandment, respect is had solely to the state of the Israelites? Thus Calvin, upon Genesis ii. says, 'Afterwards in the law a new precept was given concerning the Sabbath, which was peculiar to the Jews and the occasion; for it was ceremonial, shadowing forth a spiritual rest, which was fulfilled in Christ.' Nothing could have been said more to the purpose. Moreover, that this is the meaning of the precept, appears very plainly from other testimonies of Scripture, in which it is repeatedly taught, that the Sabbath was given only to the Jews. 'See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore, &c.' Exod. xvi. 29. 'Moreover also, I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, &c.' Ezek. xx. 12. 'And madest known unto them thy holy Sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant.' Neh. ix. 14. In which places it is uniformly and emphatically taught, that God through Moses gave the Sabbath to the Jews, and, therefore, it was not given to other nations; or even to them through their ancestors, previous to that time, from the beginning of the world." (Disquist. cap. ii. p. 50.)

In reply, it is by all confessed, that the command of the Sabbath, in the renewal of it in the wilderness, was accommodated to the disciplinary state of the church of the Israelites. I admit also, that there were such additions made to it, as to the manner of its observance, and the sanction of it, as might adapt it to their civil and political estate; and thus bear a part in that *ceremonial* instruction, which God in all his

dealings with them intended. To this end, also, the manner of the delivery of the whole law, and the preservation of its tables in the ark were designed; and divers expressions in the explicatory part of the decalogue have the same reason and foundation, such as the mention of fathers and children to the third and fourth generation, and of their sins; of the land given to the people of God; and of servants and handmaids. Shall we therefore say, that the moral law was not given to mankind before, because in its delivery it had a regard to special ends and purposes towards the Jews? It is no argument, therefore, that this command was not in substance given before to mankind in general, because it has some modifications added in the decalogue, to accommodate it to the existing state of the Hebrews.

And as to those expressions, 'work,' 'servile work for six days,' 'servants and handmaids,' and 'stranger within the gates,'—they were necessary explanations of the command in its application to that people; and yet such as had a just respect to what was enjoined at the first giving of this command, now altered by the outward change of the state of things amongst men, from what it was in innocency. For in that state God put the man into the garden *to work* in it; *(le-ovdah,* לעבדה, the same word whereby work is enjoined in the decalogue;) and as God had sanctified the seventh day to be a day of rest, he did virtually say to the man as in the command, "six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work."

Neither was this in the least inconsistent with the condition wherein he was created. For man being constituted partly of an immortal soul, of heavenly

original; and partly of a body made out of the earth; he was a middle creature between those which were purely spiritual, as the angels, and those which were purely terrestrial, as the beasts of the field. Hence, when God had made him "of the dust of the ground," as all the beasts of the field were made; and had given him also "a breath of life" in a *distinct substance* answerable to that of the angels above, (whose creation was not out of any pre-existing matter, but was the product of an immediate emanation of divine power, like the soul of man,) there was no *meet help* to be associated with him in the whole creation of God. The angels were not meet for his help and individual converse, on account of what was terrene and mortal in him; and the beasts were much more unsuitable, as having nothing in them to answer his divine and more noble part. His nature, therefore, being constituted, that he should thus converse, as it were *amphibiously*, between the upper and inferior sort of creatures; so he was divided in his work and operations suitably to the principles of his nature. For they were partly to be divine and spiritual, partly terrene and earthly, though under the government of the sovereign divine principle within him. Hence it was required, that in this condition, (not being absolutely fitted as the angels for constant contemplation, and his terrene part not refined or made spiritual and heavenly,) he should work and labor in the earth, whilst he continued in it; which also made a certain time of rest necessary. And that upon a double account: for his earthly constitution could not always persist in labor, with its own satisfaction, without rest; and his intellectual and divine part was not to

be always diverted by earthly things, but to be furthered in its own peculiar operations. And that addition of sweat and travail which befel him in his labor afterwards, was not a new course of life enjoined him, but a *curse* mixed with that, which was originally allotted to him. Thus, although there is a manner of working supposed, in the giving of the law, different from that at the first institution of a sabbatical rest; yet the change is not in the law or command, but in the state or condition of man himself.

The same may be said concerning the addition about servants and handmaids: for in the state of innocency there would have been a superiority of some over others, in that government which is economical or paternal. Hence, all duties of persons in subordination, are built on the law of nature; and what cannot be resolved into it, is force and violence. This, then, is the foundation of what is ordained with reference to servants and strangers, as expressed in the fourth commandment, with a special application to the state of the Jewish church and people; and, therefore, though there were no such servants or strangers, as are intended in the decalogue, in the state of man's innocency, yet this proves no more, than that this precept, in the renovation and repetition of it, was accommodated to the present state of things among the Jews.

The places adjoined (viz. Exod. xvi. 29, and xxxi. 17; also Ezek. xx. 12) prove unquestionably, that in the Mosaical discipline, when the observation of the seventh day was precisely enjoined, there were additions of signification given to it; and, therefore, we acknowledge, that the Sabbath was absolutely com-

mensurate to the church state of the Jews, beginning and ending with it. But the argument hence educed,—that God gave the Sabbath, (that is, the law of it,) in a peculiar manner to the Jews, therefore he had not given the same law in substance before, to all mankind,—is infirm. For God gave the *whole* law to the Jews in an especial manner, and enforced the observation of it with a reason or motive peculiar to them; namely, "I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt and out of the house of bondage;" and yet this law was given before to those who never were in Egypt, nor ever thence delivered. Yea, upon account of this peculiar appropriation of the law to the Jews, it is spoken of in Scripture, in many places, as if it had been given to them only, and to no others at all. So speaks the Psalmist, "He sheweth his words unto Jacob, his statutes and judgments unto Israel:" "he hath not dealt so with any nation;" namely, not in the same manner; for none will deny, that *nine* precepts at least were given to all mankind in Adam. See Psalm cxlvii. 19.

4. It is added by the same learned author; (p. 51;) "Besides, if the seventh days had been enjoined on all from the beginning of the world, and not to the Israelites only from the time of Moses, God would not only have reproved the Israelites for the neglect of that precept, but the Gentiles, once at the least, on the same account. But whereas he very frequently reproves the Israelites on this head, it is nowhere read that he reproves the Gentiles: who nevertheless, on account of their sins against the law of nature, are so frequently and sharply rebuked. There is a striking example of this in Nehemiah xiii. 16—21. There

were men of Tyre who sold all sorts of wares to the Jews on the Sabbath day, and that at Jerusalem. Nehemiah, however, does not accuse the Tyrians, but the Jews, of the sin of breaking the sabbath; but by shutting the gates of the city on the eve of the Sabbath, he excluded the Tyrians from the city, and thus restrained them, and finally drove them from the walls. If, then, the Tyrians had been bound to observe the Sabbath, as well as the Jews, by one common precept, would they not also have been specially rebuked by that holy man on account of this offence? And since the Scripture gravely reproves the impious feasts of the Gentiles, why does it wink, by its constant silence, at the neglect of the Sabbath, if that also should have been observed by them?"

The force of this argument consists in this;—that whatever we find God did not reprove in the Gentiles, therein they did not sin; nor had they any law given to them concerning it, no not in Adam. But in reply, the times are spoken of wherein "God suffered them to walk in their own ways, and winked at their ignorance."

Other instances may be given of sins against the *light of nature* among the Gentiles, as concubinage and fornication, which yet we do not find them rebuked for. And after the renovation, or giving of this command to the Jews, it was the duty of the nations, to whom the knowledge of it came, to observe it likewise. And the publication of God's commands must be dated from the time of his giving them; and not from the instances of men's transgressing them: nor is it any rule, that a law is then first given, when men's sins against it are first reproved. Therefore, the instance

insisted on, of Nehemiah and the Tyrians, with his different dealing with them and the Jews about the breach of the law of the Sabbath, is of no force. For when the Tyrians knew the command of the Sabbath among the Jews, which was a sufficient revelation of the will of God concerning his worship, I repeat it was their duty to observe it. I do not say, that it was their duty *immediately*, and abiding in their Gentilism, to observe the Sabbath according to the institution it had among the Jews; but it was their duty to know, own, and obey the true God, and to join themselves to his people; and their not doing so was their sin; which we are nevertheless told they were not reproved for: that is, in other words, God was not displeased with them on that account. If this was not their duty, then was it not their sin to abide in their Gentilism; which I suppose will not be asserted. It was, therefore, on one account or other, a sin in the Tyrians to profane the Sabbath.

It will be asked, Why, then, did not Nehemiah reprove them, as well as he did the Jews? The answer to which is easy. He was the head and governor of the Jews, to whom it belonged to see that things amongst them were observed and done according to God's appointment; and this he was to do with *authority*, having the warrant of God for it. With the Tyrians he had nothing to do: he had no care of them, no jurisdiction over them, no intercourse with them, but according to the law of nations. On these accounts he did not charge them with sin, or a moral evil, which they would not have regarded; (for having no regard to the true God, they would have still less to his worship;) but he threatened them with war

and punishment for disturbing his government of the people according to the law of God.

It is well observed, "that God reproved the impious feasts of the heathens;" for therein he unquestionably reproved the neglect of those of his own appointment. For it is the nature of negative precepts and condemnatory sentences, that they assert what is contrary to that which is forbidden, and recommend that which is opposite to what is condemned. Thus the worship of God, according to his own institution, is enjoined in the prohibition of "making to ourselves graven images," &c. or finding out ways of religious worship and honor of our own. For, although it is a prime dictate of the law of nature, that God is to be worshiped according to his own appointment, (which, from the light of nature, was acknowledged among the heathen themselves,) it is not any where asserted or intimated in the decalogue, unless it be in that prohibition. It sufficeth, then, that even among the Gentiles, God vindicated the authority of his own Sabbaths, by condemning their impious feasts and abominable practices in them.

5. The same writer pleads the testimony of the Jews in this case; but we have already considered and replied to their chief arguments, and shewn also, that their opinions are not uniform; but many (and those the most learned among them) oppose that very view, which we have refuted. To the opinions, already brought forward in support of this assertion, may be added that of R. Ephraim in Keli Jacar, who says; "that the first part of the precept, 'remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy,' has respect to the glorifying of God on account of his original work and

rest; and that this, therefore, belongs to all mankind. But as for that which follows about the six days' labor, and the seventh day's cessation or quiet; it had respect to the bondage of the Israelites in Egypt, and their deliverance thence; and was, therefore, peculiar to them." If this view be correct, the word, "remember," respects the command of the Sabbath from the foundation of the world; and, therefore, when the command is repeated again, with peculiar respect to the church of Israel, and the Egyptian bondage and deliverance are expressed, the caution of remembering is omitted, and transferred to this other occasion; "remember that thou wast a servant, &c." Deut. v. 12, 15.

As to what this writer further advances from them, that an uncircumcised stranger was liable to punishment, if he observed the Sabbath, it is a foolish imagination, not inferior to one already noticed, that all the Gentiles shall keep the Sabbath one day in seven in hell. And the distinction which they have invented, that a proselyte of the gate might work for himself, but not for his master, is one of the many, whereby they make void the law of God through their traditions. Those who of old amongst them feared God, knowing their duty to instruct their households or families (that is, their children and servants) in the ways and worship of God, walked by another rule.

6. It is also pleaded by the same author, "That the Gentiles knew nothing of this sabbatical feast, but that when it came to their knowledge, they derided and exploded it, as a particular superstition of the Jews. Now it could not be, if it had been originally

appointed unto all mankind, that they should have been such strangers to it. But this matter shall be treated of presently, when we shall shew, that sundry of the first writers of the Christian church were otherwise minded. For they judged and proved, that there was a notion at least of the seventh day's sacred rest, diffused throughout the world; and they lived nearer the times of the Gentiles, than those by whom their judgment and testimony are so peremptorily rejected. It is not unlikely, that they might be mistaken in some of the testimonies whereby they confirm their observation; yet this does not prevent the observation itself from being true and sufficiently confirmed by other instances which they bring forward.

7. But it is further pleaded "that the Gentiles could not be obliged to observe the fourth commandment; seeing they had no indication of it, nor any means to free them from their ignorance of the existence of any such law. That they formerly had it, and had lost the knowledge of it, is rejected, as not to the purpose." But I understand not the force of this pretended argument; for those who had absolutely lost the knowledge of the true God, which their progenitors formerly possessed, as the Gentiles had, might well also lose the knowledge of his worship: which, indeed, they did; excepting that they had corrupted some of his institutions to their own superstition, as sacrifices and the sabbath, the latter of which they perverted into their idolatrous feasts. But there is no proof, that they had no "indication of a sabbatical rest, nor any means to free them from their ignorance." Let it be remembered that the duty of man must both be learned and observed in order. It is in vain, there-

fore, to expect, that any should have indications of a holy rest unto God, before they are brought to the knowledge of God himself. The heathen were bound, first to know and own the true God, and him alone; then to worship him solemnly; and after that, in the order of nature, to have some solemn time separated for the observance of that worship. Without an admission of these, (all of which were neglected by them,) there is no place to inquire after the obligation of a weekly rest: and their non-observance of it was their *sin*,—not directly and immediately, but consequentially; as all others are that arise from ignorance or rejection of those greater principles whereon they depend.

8. There is another exception, scarcely worth notice, arising from the difference of the meridians. It is pretended to be impossible, that all men should precisely observe the same day; because if a man should sail round the world by the east, he will at his return home have gained a day by his continual approach towards the rising sun; and if he steer his course westward, he will lose a day in the same manner, by his departure from it, as the Dutch did in 1615. Hence, it is argued, that the posterity of Noah, spreading themselves over the world, must have gradually come to the observation of different seasons. But away with such trifling: if men could sail eastward or westward, and not continually have seven days succeeding one another, there would be some force in this nonsense. On our hypothesis, wherever men are, a *seventh part* of their time, or a *seventh day*, is to be separated to the remembrance of the rest of God, and the other ends of the Sabbath. That the

observance of this portion of time shall in all places begin and end at the same instant, the law and order of God's creation will not permit. It is enough that among all who can assemble for the worship of God, there is no difference in general, but that they observe the same proportion of time: and he who, by circumnavigating the world, gains or loses a day, may at his return, with a good conscience, give back what he has gained, or retrieve what he has lost, among those with whom he fixes. For all such accidents are to be reduced to the common standard. All the difficulty, therefore, in this objection relates to the precise observation of the seventh day from the creation; and not in the least to one day in seven. And although the seventh day was appointed principally for the land of Palestine, the seat of the church of old, wherein there was no such alteration of meridians; yet I doubt not, but a wandering Jew might have observed the foregoing rule, and reduced his time to order, upon his return home.

II. The testimony to the same purpose with the former, taken out of the New Testament, is that of the apostle; (Heb. iv. 3, 4;) "For we who have believed do enter into rest; as he said, As I sware in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest; although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day in this wise, And God rested on the seventh day from all his works." His design is to convince the Hebrews of their concern in the promise of entering into the rest of God; namely, that promise and rest which yet remained, and were prophesied of in Psalm xci. To

this end he manifests, that notwithstanding any other rest of God mentioned in Scripture, there yet remained a rest for them that did, or would believe in Christ through the Gospel; in proof and confirmation of which, he takes into consideration the several rests of God, under the several states of the church, which were now passed and gone. And first he fixes upon the sabbatical rest of the seventh day, as that which was the first in order, which he says, ensued upon the "finishing of the works of creation;" as the order and coherence of the words require. This first rest, then, he argues, cannot be that intended in the Psalm, because this began from the foundation of the world; but that mentioned by David is promised "so long a time after." And what was this rest? was it merely God's ceasing from his own works? This the apostle had no concern with: for he treats of no rest of God absolutely, but of such a rest as men by faith and obedience might enter into; such as was that afterwards in the land of Canaan; and that also which he now proposed to them in the promise of the Gospel; both of which God calls *his* rests, and invites others to enter into them. Such, therefore, must be the rest of God here intended; a rest appointed of God, from the foundation of the world, immediately upon the finishing of the works of creation; which fixes immovably the beginning of the sabbatical rest.*

1. That this divine original institution of the seventh day Sabbath was piously observed by the patriarchs,

* For a full vindication of this testimony, see the author's 'Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews.'

who retained a due remembrance of divine revelations, is beyond controversy among all that acknowledge the institution itself: by others it is denied, that they may not be forced to acknowledge such an institution. And, indeed, it happens, in regard to the two great ordinances of divine worship before the giving of the law, (viz. sacrifices and the Sabbath,) that they have contrary lots in this matter. Sacrifices we find constantly *observed* by holy men of old; and, therefore, conclude that they were instituted, although that institution be not expressly recorded: the Sabbath we find expressly *instituted*, and, therefore do, and may justly conclude, that it was constantly observed; although that observation be not directly noticed. But as there is such light in regard to the institution of sacrifices, as may enable us to conclude, that those, by whom they were used, acted therein according to the mind of God, and in obedience unto his will; so there want not such instances of the observation of the Sabbath, as may confirm the original divine institution of it pleaded for.

Some of the Jewish masters grant, as we have observed, the origin of the Sabbath from the creation, and assert the patriarchal observation of it upon that foundation. The instances, I confess, which they make use of, are not absolutely cogent; but yet, considered with other circumstances wherewith they are strengthened, are highly probable. Some of them are collected by Manasseh Ben Israel; (Lib. de Creat. Problem. 8;) "I say, that in the same manner, that the tradition of the creation of the world was only in possession of Abraham and his posterity, so also the law of the *Sabbath* was observed by them alone.

The holy Scripture says of Abraham, 'he kept my charge;' (משמרתי, *mishmarti*, Gen. xxvi. 5;) in which place the observation of the Sabbath is to be understood. The ancients also affirm the same of Jacob, from that passage in which it is said, 'he came to Shalem, and pitched his tent before the city,' (Genesis xxxiii. 18,) 'For because the Sabbath was at hand, (say they,) it was not lawful for him to proceed further, but he halted before the city.' Of Joseph also they assert, when it is written, that he commanded his servants to slay and make ready, that it was done on account of the Sabbath. Finally, to this event is referred the circumstance of Moses petitioning Pharaoh, to suffer his afflicted people to rest one day from their labours; and having obtained this request, according to tradition, he chose the Sabbath. From all which places it is concluded, that the Sabbath was observed before the law was given."

So far he. Of the observation of the Sabbath by the light of nature we shall treat afterwards; but of the instances mentioned by him, that saying concerning Abraham, "he kept my charge," seems to have peculiar respect to the Sabbath, called elsewhere, *the charge of God*. Hence some of those Christians, who contend for the wilderness original of the Sabbath, nevertheless grant, that probably there was a free observation of it among the patriarchs, from the tradition they had of the rest of God upon the creation of the world. (See Torniellus, Annal. Vet. Test. Suarez. de Religione, lib. ii. cap. 1, s. 3; Prideaux Orat. de Sabbat.) For as there is no doubt, but the creation of the world was one of the principal articles of their faith; (as the apostle asserts, Hebrews xi. 3;)

so it is foolish to imagine, that they had utterly lost the tradition of the rest of God upon the finishing of his works: and it may easily be conceived, what that would influence them to, should you even suppose, that they had lost the remembrance of its express institution; which will not be granted.

That all the ancient patriarchs, before the giving of the law, diligently observed the solemn worship of God with their families and dependants, their own piety forbids us to question; whilst the testimony given them, that they walked with God, and by faith therein obtained a good report, gives us the highest assurance of it. Now of all obedience unto God, faith is the principle and foundation, "without which it is impossible to please him;" (Heb. xi. 6;) and this faith must always respect the command and promise of God, which gives it its formal nature: for no other principle, though it may produce the like actions, is *divine* faith. Unto this solemn worship of God, then, which in faith they thus attended to, some stated time is indispensably necessary; and, therefore, that some portion of time should be set apart to that purpose, is acknowledged, almost by all, to be a dictate of the law of nature; and we shall presently prove it to be so. What ground have we, therefore, to imagine, that the holy men of old were left without divine direction in this matter? That a designation and limitation of this time would have been of great advantage to them, none can deny. Considering, therefore, the dealings of God with them, and how frequently he renewed to them the knowledge of his will by occasional revelation, it cannot be supposed that divine grace was wanting in this matter. Besides, in what they

did of this kind, they are expressly said "to keep the way of the Lord," (Gen. xviii. 19,) and in particular, "his charge, his commandments, his statutes, and his laws;" (chap. xxvi. 5;) which comprise all the institutions and ordinances of divine worship. That they did any thing of themselves, from their own wisdom and invention in the worship of God, is nowhere intimated; nor are they any where commended on that account: yea, to do a thing in faith, and that as a part of the worship of God, is to do it upon the command of God. And the institution mentioned, upon the reason of God's rest joined with it, is so express, that none can doubt a conformable practice, by all that truly feared the Lord, although the particulars of it be not recorded.

2. It was from no other origin, that the tradition of the sacred nature of the *septenary number* was so universal among nations in general, and particularly among individual persons, that were inquiring and contemplative. Not only that sort of philosophers, who expressed their apprehensions mystically by numbers, (as the Pythagoreans and some of the Platonics,) esteemed the septenary number sacred; but those also who resolved their observations into things natural or physical. For in all their notions and speculations about the Pleiades and Triones in heaven; lunar changes, sounds of instruments, variations in the age of man, critical days in bodily distempers, and transactions of affairs private and public, they had respect to it. It must, therefore, be granted, that there is a great impression left on the whole creation of a regard to this number, instances of which might be multiplied; and the ground of them was no other than an

emanation from the old tradition of the creation of the world, and the rest that ensued on the seventh day. When this notion was obscured or lost among them, (as the greatest and most important sacred truths, communicated to man in his creation, were lost,) many of them, still retaining the principle of the sacred number, invented other reasons for it; some of which were arithmetical, some harmonical or musical: and hence it was termed by them the virgin, and Pallas, and *Kairos*, (Καιρὸς,) which sacredly, saith Hesychius, is *the number seven*.

However weak their reasons, then, the thing itself was still retained; and it is hard to give any other account, whence all these conceptions should arise, besides that insisted on; viz. the original impression made on the minds of men by the instruction of the law of creation, which they were made under; and the tradition of the creation of the world in six days, closed with an additional day of sacred rest.

3. Neither was the *number* seven only sacred amongst them; but there are testimonies produced, out of the most ancient heathen writers, expressing a notion of a seventh day's *sacred feast and rest*. Many of these were of old collected by Clemens Alexandrinus, and by Eusebius, out of Aristobulus, a learned Jew. *

* The words of Aristobulus, with which he prefaces his allegation of them, are in Eusebius; (Præpar. Evangel. lib. xiii. cap. 12;) where he says, speaking of the seventh day, "Homer and Hesiod, taking it out of our books, do openly affirm that it is sacred." That what they affirm herein was taken from the Jewish books I much question; nor do I think that in their time, when the law only was written, the nations of the world had any acquaintance with their writings: and not much until after the Babylonish captivity, when they began to be taken notice of, being diffused

Out of Hesiod he cites the following testimonies: "The first, the fourth, and the *seventh* day is sacred." "The *seventh* again, which is the sacred light of the sun." Out of Homer: "Then came the *seventh day* that is sacred."—"It was the *seventh day* wherein all things were finished."—"We left the flood of Acheron on the *seventh day*."—To which he subjoins an ingenious exposition about the relinquishing of the oblivion of error, by virtue of the sacredness of the number seven. He adds, also, out of Linus: "The *seventh day* wherein all things were finished."—"The *seventh day* is among the best things, and the seventh is the nativity; the seventh is amongst the chief things, and the seventh is the perfect day."—"In seven all things were perfected in the starry heaven, which appear in their circles in the revolving years."

Testimonies to the same purpose may be taken out of the Roman writers. Thus Tibullus, giving an account of the excuses he made for his unwillingness to leave Rome, says; "Either I laid it on the birds; (he had no encouraging augury;) or bad omens detained me on the sacred day of Saturn." Lib. i. Eleg. 3.

I shall not from these testimonies contend, that the heathen did generally allow and observe one day sacred in the week; but I cannot grant, on the other hand, that those ancient assertions of Linus, Homer,

through the Persian empire, by their commerce with the Greeks, who inquired into all things that had an appearance of secret wisdom. But these apprehensions, whatever they were, seem rather to have been derived from the secret suggestions of the law of creation, and the tradition that was in the world of the matter of fact.

and Hesiod are to be interpreted by the later Roman writers, who ascribe the seventh day's sacred feast to the Jews in the way of reproach: as Ovid; "Stay not (thy journey) for foreign Sabbaths;" and again, "The seventh day feast observed by the Jew." Nor shall I plead the testimony of Lampridius, concerning the emperor Alexander Severus, who went to the capitol and the temples on the seventh day; for in those times he might learn that observance from the Jews, whose customs he had opportunity of being acquainted with. For all ancient traditions were before this time utterly worn out, or inextricably corrupted; and when the Jews, in their intercourse with the Romans, after the wars of Pompey, began to represent them again, the generality despised them all, from their hatred and contempt of that people.

I know that sundry learned men (especially two of late, Gomarus and Selden) have endeavoured to shew, that the testimonies, usually produced in this case, do not prove what they are advanced for. They have taken great pains to refer them all to the sacredness of the septenary number mentioned before; or to the seventh day of the month, sacred, as is pretended, on account of the birth of Apollo; to which, indeed, it is evident Hesiod has respect. But the authority of Aristobulus and Clemens is not to be despised. Something they knew undoubtedly of the state of things in the world in their own days, and those that went before; and they not only quote the testimonies already brought forward; but also assert, that the sacredness of one of the seven days was generally admitted by all. The testimonies of Philo and Josephus, also, are so express to the purpose, that their

force cannot be waived, without offering violence to their words. The words of Philo we expressed before; and Josephus, in his second book against Appion, says positively, "There is no city of the Greeks, nor Barbarians, nor any nation whatever, to whom our custom of resting on the seventh day is not come:" and this, in the words foregoing, he affirms to have been from a long time before. Further, Lucian, in his Pseudologista, tells us, that children at school were exempted from studying *on the seventh days*. And Tertullian in his Apology, (cap. 16,) tells the Gentiles of their Sabbaths or feasts on Saturday. But yet, as before stated, I shall grant, that the observation of a weekly sacred feast is not proved by the testimonies produced; which is all that those who oppose them labour to disprove. All I want to know is, from what origin these traditions were derived, and whether any can be assigned to them; except that of the original institution of the Sabbatical rest. It is known, that this was common amongst them; and that when they had a general notion or tradition of any thing, whose true cause they knew not, they would feign a reason for it, accommodated to their present apprehensions and practices; as I have elsewhere proved. Having, therefore, among them the tradition of a seventh day's sacred rest, which was originally universal; and having long lost the practice and observance of it, as well as its cause and reason; they laid hold on any thing to assign it to, which might have any resemblance to what was vulgarly received amongst them, or what they could divine in their more curious speculations.

4. The weekly revolution of time, generally ad-

mitted in the world, is also a great testimony to the original institution of the Sabbath. Of old it was universal, and is at present received among those nations, which had no acquaintance, until lately, with any of those parts of the world, where there is Scriptural light. All nations, I say, in all ages, have from time immemorial, made the revolution of seven days to be the first stated period of time. And this observation is still continued throughout the world, unless among those who in other things are openly degenerated from the law of nature; as those barbarous Indians who have no computation of times, but by sleeps, moons, and winters. The measure of time by a day and night, is evident to sense, by the diurnal course of the sun; and lunar months, and solar years, are also of unavoidable observation among all rational creatures. Whence, therefore, all men have reckoned time by days, months, and years, is obvious; but whence the weekly period of time should make its entrance, and obtain universal admittance, no man can give an account; but must refer it to some impressions on the minds of men, from the constitution and law of our natures, with the tradition of a sabbatical rest, instituted from the foundation of the world. Other origin, whether artificial and arbitrary, or occasional, it could not have: there are no traces of such a thing in the memorials of time past; neither is it likely that any thing of so low an origin or spring, should have been elevated to such a height, as to have diffused itself through the whole world. So fixed was this computation of time on the minds of the Chaldeans and Egyptians, who retained the deepest tincture of original traditions, that though they

knew not the reason of it, yet when they made a disposition of the days of the year into any other period, on accounts civil or sacred, they still retained this also. So the Romans, as appears by the fragments of their old Calendars, had their Nundinæ, which were days of vacation from labour, on the eighth, or as some think the ninth days recurring, but made use also of the stated weekly period.

It is of some consideration in this cause, and is usually urged to this purpose, that Noah observed the weekly revolution of days, in sending forth the dove out of the ark. (Gen. viii. 10—12.) That this was done accidentally, is not to be imagined ; nor can any reason be given, from the condition of the waters of the flood, why, notwithstanding the disappointment he met with the first and the second time, he should still abide *seven* days before he sent again. A revolution of days, and that upon a sacred account, was doubtless attended to by him ; and I should suppose, that he sent out the dove the next day after the Sabbath, to see, as it were, whether God had returned again to rest in the works of his hands. And in Genesis xxix. 27, a week is spoken of as a known account of days or time: "fulfil her week;" that is, not a week of *years*, as he had done for Rachel ; but a week of *days*, in the festivals of his marriage with Leah. For it was the custom, in those ancient times of the world, to continue the celebration of a marriage feast for seven days, or a week ; as Judges xiv. 12—17, "The seven days of the feast," is spoken of as a thing commonly known, and in vulgar use.

To weaken the force of this observation, it is pretended, that the ancient heathen, observing the

motions of the seven planetary luminaries, as they used and abused it to other ends, so they applied their number and names to so many days; which were thereby, as it were, dedicated to them, and shut up in that septenary number. But that the observation of the weekly revolution of time was from the philosophers, and not the common consent of the people, does not appear: for they observed, also, the twelve signs of the zodiac, and yet made that no rule to reckon time or days by. Besides, the observation of the site and position of the seven planets, as to their height or elevation with respect to one another, is as ancient as the observation of their peculiar and various motions; upon the first discovery of which, all granted this to be their order,—Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sol, Venus, Mercury, Luna. The modern hypothesis, which fixes the sun in the centre, is here of no consideration: for it is certain that all the world in former ages was otherwise minded; and our argument is not, what really was true, but what was universally apprehended so to be.

Whence, then, should it arise, if this limiting the first revolution of time to seven days proceeded from the planetary denominations, that the order among the planets should be so changed? For in assigning the names of the planets to the days of the week, the middle is taken out first, and so the fourth in order comes next, until the whole cycle be finished. Dion Cassius (in book xxxvii of his Histories, the third of them that remain) inquires into this, and gives two reasons, which he tells us he had heard. The first is, that it was taken from the harmony, or the musical note, *diatessaron:* for beginning, saith he, with Saturn

in the highest sphere, and passing to the fourth in order, it is the sun; and so throughout in the whole revolution. His other reason is; that taking the day and night, beginning with the first hour, and assigning the name of a planet to each hour, (still beginning with Saturn, and the other planets in their order,) and so reviewing the numerations to the end of the four and twenty hours; the first hour of the next day falls to the sun, of the day following to the moon, and the remainder to the other planets in the order commonly ascribed to them. Both these conjectures give the precedency of the first days, as they are fixed, to that, which, in the true and natural order of the days, is the last. There is a better account given us of this matter by Johannes Philiponus; (de Creation. Mund. lib. 7, cap. 14.) After pressing the arguments already brought forward, as to the signs of the zodiac, &c. he adds; "No reason can be assigned from the motions of the planets, why any one of the days is inscribed to any of them. It is most likely, therefore, that the Gentiles, as they without just reason or cause dedicate the planets by the names of dæmons and heroes, so when they observed, that there were seven days acknowledged by all, and that the planets were so many in number, did according to their pleasure in the two equal numbers, and assign one day to one planet, another to another, &c. Only the great Moses, being divinely inspired, hath delivered unto men the true reason of the septenary number of the days."

There seems to be some reason for assigning the conduct of time to the sun, or calling the first day by his name; as also for joining the moon to him in the next place: for though in regard to its succession, the

sun was created the fourth day; yet considering its use, as regards that *diffused* light, which was created the first day; its being the instrumental cause and measure of every day; the tradition of the appointment of sun and moon to rule and distinguish times and seasons; and their sensible effects and operations;—they might easily gain the pre-eminence by common consent, in giving names to the days of the week. The other names were added and applied according to some prevailing fictions concerning the planets, and their respect to men and their actions. But the weekly period of time was fixed long before the imposition of those names prevailed among the Greeks and Romans, which, perhaps, is not very ancient, as Dion thinks; though he says they derived them from the Chaldæans and Egyptians. And that the acknowledgement of seven days gave occasion to fix to them the names of the seven planets, (and not that the observation of the seven planets gave occasion to compute the days of the world by sevens,) is further manifest from hence; that many nations, admitting the weekly revolution of time, gave the days in it quite other names; as various reasons or occasions suggested. In the ancient Celtic or German tongue, and all languages derived thence, the sun and moon only, for the reasons before mentioned, give name to the leading days of the week; the rest being distinguished and signalized with the names of the conductors of their first great colonies, in the north-western parts of the world. For to fancy that Tuisco is the same with Mars, Woden with Mercury, Thor with Jupiter, and Frea with Venus, is to fancy what we please, without the least ground of probability.

Nor did the Celtæ ever call the planets by those names; so that if there be any allusion in them to those of the Greeks and Romans, it was not taken from their natural speculation about the planets, but from the pleasing fictions about deified heroes; wherein they were imitated by most nations in the world. The English and Dutch have taken in Saturday from Saturn; whilst other nations, of the same extraction, retain their own occasional names. The observation, therefore, of the seven planets, gave neither rise, reason, cause, nor occasion, to this original period of time in a weekly revolution of days. Hence Theophilus of Antioch (lib. ii. ad Antolychum) affirms, "that all mortal men agreed in the appellation of the seventh day;" whose testimony is of good force, though he mistakes the origin of that appellation. For by an error common to many of the ancients, who could not distinguish between שבת, *sabat*, and שבע, *sabao*, he tells us, "that among the Hebrews it was called *Sabbath*, which in Greek is, week." It is also to this purpose observed by Rivet and Selden, (from Salmasius, out of Georgius Syncallus, in his chronology,) that the patriarchs reckoned the times, or distinguished them by weeks only.

This, therefore, is to me no small evidence of the institution and observation of the Sabbath from the foundation of the world. For hence did this periodical revolution of time prevail amongst the nations; even among those who had not the least converse with or knowledge of the Jews or their customs, after the command and observation of the Sabbath was renewed amongst them. Not that this evidence is of itself sufficient testimony to its original institution; neither

that going before; but the piety of the patriarchs, and traditions of the apostate gentiles, certainly confirm the time of that institution, which is so expressly recorded.

On the cause of the hatred of the Romans and others towards the Jews.

Having, however, mentioned the hatred of the Romans and others towards the Jews, after the conquest of Jerusalem by Pompey, it may not be amiss to step aside, and briefly inquire into the reasons of it.

1. The principal cause, no doubt, was the God they worshiped, and the manner of his worship observed amongst them: for finding them to acknowledge and adore one only God, and that without the use of any kind of images, they perceived their own idolatry and superstition to be condemned thereby. And this had been the condition of that people under the former empires, of the Chaldæans, Persians, and Greeks. God had appointed them to be his witnesses in the world, that he was God, and that there was none other; (as in Isaiah xliv. 8—10; and xliii. 10—12;) and as this greatly provoked the nations of old, so at length it did the Romans; as bidding defiance to all their gods and their worship of them, wherein they greatly boasted. For they thought that it was merely by the help of their gods, and on account of their religion, that they conquered all other nations. So Cicero, (Orat. de Respon. Harusp.) "Let us love and please ourselves as we will, yet we outgo neither the Spaniards in number, nor the Gauls in strength, nor the Africans in craft, nor the Greeks in arts; but it is by our piety

and religion, and this only wisdom, that we refer all to the government of the immortal gods, that we have overcome all countries and nations." And Dionysius of Halicarnassus, (Antiq. Rom. lib. ii.) having given an account of their sacred rites and worship, adds, "that he did it, that those, who knew not before the piety or religion of the Romans, might not now think it strange, that they should have such success in all their wars." To be judged, therefore, and condemned in those things, by the contrary witness of the Jews, they could not bear. This made them reflect on God himself, as being the God which they worshiped; they calling him *incertum*, and *ignotum*, (the best they could say of him was, "whoever he be,") and affirming the rites of his worship to be absurd, and contrary to the common consent of mankind. (See Tacitus, Hist. lib. v.) Cicero will not allow, that it was any respect either to their God or religion, which caused Pompey to forbear spoiling the temple, when he took it by force; and adds, by way of reproach,—"Whilst Jerusalem stood, (that is, in its own power,) and the Jews were peaceable, their religion was nevertheless abhorrent from the splendor of this empire, the gravity of our name, and the ordinances of our ancestors; how much more now, when that nation has shewn by arms, what esteem it has for our empire! How dear that nation is to the immortal gods, is seen, in that it is conquered, portioned out, and put under tribute." (Orat. pro Flacc.) Similar reflections, yea worse, may be seen in Trogus, Tacitus, Plutarch, Strabo, Democritus, and others.

2. Another ground of their hatred was, that the Roman Jews, whilst the temple stood, gathered money

out of all the provinces, which they sent to the sacred treasury at Jerusalem; just as the European Jews now contribute to the maintenance of their synagogues in the same place: which is acknowledged by Philo, *(Legat. ad Caium,)* and Josephus, *(Antiquit. lib.* xiv. *cap.* 11,) to have been yearly a very great sum.

3. Cicero, in the place before mentioned, seems to intimate not only that the gold sent was in the name of the Jews, *(Judæorum nomine,)* but also that it was raised by others, who had taken on them the profession of their religion: which was a third and principal cause of their animosity; namely, that they drew over multitudes of all sorts of persons to the profession of the law of Moses. And a good work this was, though vitiated by the wickedness and corrupt ends of those who employed themselves in it; as our Saviour declares, Matt. xxiii. 15. This, however, greatly provoked the Romans, and on every occasion they severely complain of it. So Dion Cassius, speaking of men converted to the Jewish faith, says, "they are even to be found among the Romans, and though frequently punished, yet have for the most part increased, so as even to take the liberty of making laws." As regards their punishment, an account is given us in Suetonius and others, of the inquisition and search made after such as were circumcised; and their making laws, respects their feasts, sabbaths, abstinencies, and such like observances, as the Jews obliged their proselytes to. In like manner Juvenal complains, "that despising the Roman laws, they learn those of the Jews, observing and obeying whatsoever Moses delivered in the secret volume." Seneca is yet more severe: "The wicked custom of this nation has

prevailed to such a degree, that it is now received among all nations: the conquered have given laws to the conquerors." And Tacitus; "The worst of other nations, despising the religion of their own country, flocked with their tribute and offerings to Jerusalem." The like revengeful spirit appears in the verses of Rutilius, (lib. i. Itinerar.) where he wishes "that Judea never had been conquered; for the contagion of circumcision had thereby spread more widely, and the conquered oppressed the conquerors." But as he lived at a later period under the Christian emperors, it is not unlikely that he reflects on Christians also.

4. We may add, that for the most part, the conduct of the Jews among them, was wicked and provoking. They were a people that for many generations had been harassed and oppressed, by all the principal empires in the world; which caused them to hate them, and to have their minds always possessed with revengeful thoughts. When the apostle affirmed of them, "that they pleased not God, and were contrary to all men," (1 Thess. ii. 15,) he intends not their opposition to the Gospel, and the preachers of it, which he had before expressed; but their envious contrariety to mankind in general. And this evil frame the nations ascribed to their law itself: "Moses enacted laws which were novel and contrary to the interests of all other nations," says Tacitus; but this most falsely; for no law of man ever taught such benignity, kindness, and general usefulness in the world, as theirs did. It was the people themselves, who being grown wicked and corrupt, "pleased not God, and were contrary to all men." Hence they were looked on as a nation which did not so much as observe the

law of *nature* even, towards any but themselves; resolving "not to direct a thirsty person to a spring if uncircumcised." Whence was that censure of Tacitus; "Faithful and merciful among themselves, but towards all others inimical:" which well expresses what our Saviour charged them with, as a corrupt principle among them;—viz. "loving their neighbour, and hating their enemy;" (Matt. v. 43;) that is, in their sense, loving their own countrymen and hating strangers.

This their corrupt and wicked conversation, then, made them a reproach, and their religion to be contemned. Thus it was with them from their first dispersion; as declared in Ezekiel xxxvi. 20. "When they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name, when they said to them, These are the people of the Lord." And their wickedness increased with their age; for they still learned the corrupt and evil arts, and all the ways of deceit, used in the nations where they lived; until for the crimes of many, the whole nation became the common hatred of mankind. This, therefore, being the state of things then in the world, we ought not to wonder, if the writers of those days were either supinely negligent, or maliciously envious, in reporting their ways, customs, and religious observances. And it is acknowledged that before those times, the long course of idolatry and impiety wherein the whole world had been engaged, had utterly corrupted and lost the tradition of a sabbatical rest.

EXERCITATION IV.

On the Causes of the Sabbath.

We have fixed the origin of the Sabbatical rest, according to the best light we have received into these things, and confirmed the reasons of it with the consent of mankind; the next step in our progress must be an inquiry into its *causes:* wherein also we fall immediately into those difficulties, which the various apprehensions of learned men, promoted and defended with much diligence, have occasioned.

First, it is agreed by all, that God alone is the supreme, original, and absolute cause of the Sabbath. Whenever it began, whenever it ends; be it expired, or still in force; of whatsoever kind were its institution; the law of it was from God: "It was from heaven, and not of men;" and the will of God is the sole rule and measure of our observance of it. What may or may not be done, in reference to the observing of a day of holy rest by any inferior authority, comes not under consideration here. But whereas there are two sorts of laws whereby God requires the obedience of his rational creatures, which are commonly called moral and positive, it is greatly questioned to which of these sorts the command of a sabbatical rest belongs.

Positive laws are such, as have no reason for them in themselves, but depend entirely on the sovereign will and pleasure of God. Such were the laws and institutions of the sacrifices of old; and such are those which concern the sacraments and other things of the like nature under the New Testament. *Moral* laws are those, the reasons of which arise from the nature of the things themselves required in them: for they are good from their respect to the nature of God himself, and from that nature and order of all things, which he has placed in the creation. Positive laws, as they are given upon occasions, so they are esteemed alterable at pleasure; being fixed by mere will and prerogative, without respect to any thing that should make them necessary, antecedent to their being given. Such at least they are in their own nature: nevertheless, with respect to God's determination, positive divine laws may become, eventually, unalterable. And there is this difference between *legal* and *evangelical* institutions; viz. that the laws of both are positive, proceeding equally from sovereign will and pleasure, and therefore in their own natures equally alterable: but to the former, God fixed a determinate time and season, wherein they should expire, or be altered by his authority; whilst to the latter he fixed a perpetuity and unchangeableness, during the state and condition of his church in this world. Moral laws, on the contrary, are perpetual and unalterable in themselves; for although a law of that kind may have an especial *injunction*, with such *circumstances* as may be changed and varied, (such as the whole decalogue had in the commonwealth of Israel,) yet so far as it is moral,—that is, so far as its commands or prohibitions

are necessary emergencies, or expressions of the good or evil of the things it commands or forbids, it is invariable.

All divine laws may be reduced to these two heads. And it is pleaded by some, that these kinds of laws are so contradistinct, that a law of the one kind can in no sense be a law in the other. This is doubtless, true, so far as that, wherein any laws are positive, they are not moral; and as far as they are purely moral, they are not formally positive; but this is no reason that there may not be divine laws of a mixed nature: for there may be in a divine law a respect to somewhat moral, which yet may stand in need of the superaddition of a positive command, for its due observation towards its proper end. Yea, the *moral* reason of things commanded, may be so deep and hidden, as that God, who would make the way of his creatures plain and easy, gives out express *positive* commands for the observance of that, which is antecedently necessary by the law of our creation. Hence a law may partake of both these considerations, and both of them have an equal influence, as to its obligatory power. And thus also sundry duties,—some moral, some positive,—are, as it were, compounded in one observance; an instance of which is the great duty of *prayer*. The whole law, therefore, of such an observance, becomes of a mixed nature; which yet God can separate at his pleasure, and taking away that which is positive, leave only that which is absolutely moral in force. This kind of laws, which have their foundation in the nature of things themselves, and yet stand in need of further direction for their due observation, which is

added unto them by positive institution, some call *moral positive.*

According to these distinctions, as to the nature of the laws by which God expresses his will, are men's apprehensions different about the *immediate* and *instrumental* cause of the sabbatical rest. That God was the author of it, all are agreed; but, say some, the law whereby he appointed it was purely positive;—the matter of it being arbitrary, stated and determined only in the command itself; and so the whole nature of the law, and of that commanded in it, are changeable. And because positive laws always respect some other things besides and beyond themselves, it is pleaded that this law was ceremonial and typical; that is, it was an institution of an outward, present, religious observance, to signify and represent something not present, nor yet come; such as was the whole system of Mosaical worship, whereof this law of the Sabbath was a part. In brief, some say, that the whole law of the Sabbath was, as to its general nature, *positive* and *arbitrary,* therefore changeable; and in particular, *ceremonial* and *typical,* therefore actually changed and abolished.

It is so fallen out, however, that those who are most *positive* in these assertions, cannot but acknowledge, that this law is so mixed up with something that is moral and unalterable, that it is no easy thing to hit the joint aright, and make a separation of the one from the other. Yet, concerning any other law, confessedly ceremonial, no such thing can be observed: they were all evidently and entirely arbitrary institutions, without any such near relation to what is moral, as might trouble a man to make a distinction between

them. For instance, the law of sacrifices has a suitableness in it to a great principle of the law of nature, namely, that we must honour God with our substance, and the best of our increase; yet, that this might be done many other ways, and not by sacrifice, if God had pleased so to ordain, every one is able to apprehend. It is otherwise in this matter; for none will deny, but it is required of us by the law of nature, that some time be set apart and dedicated to God for the observation of his solemn worship; and it must be plain to every one, that this natural dictate is inseparably included in the law of the Sabbath: it will, therefore, surely be difficult to make it absolutely and universally positive. I know some begin to whisper things inconsistent with this concession; but we have, nevertheless, the consent of all divines, ancient and modern, fathers, schoolmen, and casuists; who all unanimously affirm, that the separation of some part of our time to sacred uses, and the solemn honouring of God, is required of us in the light, and by the law of nature. And to this fundamental notion of the law, now inquired after, may be further added, that whereas this natural dictate for the observation of some time in the solemn worship of God, has been accompanied with a declaration of his will from the foundation of the world, that this time should be one day in *seven*, it will be a matter of no small difficulty to find out what is purely positive therein.

Secondly, others (considering that the dedication of some part of our time to the worship of God, is a natural or moral duty, being required by the law of our creation) add, that the determination of one day in seven, to be that portion of time so to be dedicated,

is inseparable from the same foundation, and is of the same nature with it; that is, that the sabbatical observation of one day's holy rest in seven, has a moral precept for its warrant, or at least, that which has the nature of a moral precept in it: so that although the revolution of time in seven days, and the confining of the day to that determined season, depend on revelation and a positive command of God for its observance, yet on supposition thereof, the moral precept prevails in the whole, and is for ever obligatory. And there are divines of great piety and learning, who judge, that a command of God given to all men, and equally obligatory to all, respecting their manner of living unto God, is to be esteemed a moral command, and that indispensable and unchangeable; although we should not be able to discover the reason of it in the light and law of nature: and that such a command cannot be reckoned amongst those that are merely positive, arbitrary, and changeable, all which depend on sundry other things, and do not chiefly affect men, as men in general: and that it is probable, that God would not give out any such catholic command, unless it comprised somewhat naturally good and right in it.

Moreover, there are some who stay not here, but contend, that the precise observation of the seventh day in the weekly revolution, lies under a moral and indispensable command: for God, they say, who is the sovereign Lord of us and our times, has by an everlasting law taken this day to himself, for his own honour and service, and thereby obliged all men to a holy rest;—not on one day in seven, but on the seventh day *precisely;* to which the other considerations of some stated and fixed time, and of one day

in seven are consequential, and far from previous foundations. Great honour is hereby done to the seventh day, above all other ordinances of worship whatever, even of the Gospel itself; but whether with sufficient warrant we must afterwards inquire.

It is the *second* opinion, for the substance of it, which I shall endeavour to explain and confirm; to obtain a distinct light into the truth of which, we must consider *first*, the true notion of the sacred rest; *secondly*, of the law of our creation.

I. The general notion of the Sabbath is—a portion of time set apart by divine appointment, for the observance and performance of the solemn worship of God. The worship of God is that which we are made for, as regards our station in this world; and is the means and condition of our enjoyment of him in glory, which is the ultimate end of our creation. This worship, therefore, is required of us by the law of our creation; and is indeed all that is required of us, since it obliges us to do every thing to the glory of God. And the solemn expression of that worship is required of us in the same manner: for the end of it being our glorifying him as God, and the nature of it consisting in the profession of our universal subjection to and dependance on him, the solemn expression of it is as necessary, as the worship itself which we are to perform. No man, therefore, ever doubted, that by the law of nature we were bound to worship God, and solemnly to express that worship; for else, wherefore were we brought into this world? These things are inseparable from our natures, and where this order is disturbed by sin, we become obnoxious to punishment,

which the properties of God render no less necessary to his glory.

Moreover, in this worship it is required, by the same law of our beings, that we should serve God with all we receive from him. No man can think otherwise: for is there any thing that we have received from God, that should yield him no revenue of glory, or of which we ought to make no acknowledgment to him? Who dare once so to imagine? Among the things, then, thus given us of God, is our *time*, which falls under a double consideration in this matter; first, as it is an inseparable moral *circumstance* of the worship required of us, and thus necessarily included in the command of worship itself; secondly, as being in itself a part of our vouchsafements from God, for our own use and purposes in this world, wherefore, a separation of a part of it unto God and his solemn worship is required of us. It therefore only remains to inquire what portion of time it is, that is and will be accepted with God; which is declared and determined in the fourth commandment to be the seventh part, or one day in seven. And this is that which though *positive* in the command, is nevertheless, as to the foundation, formal reason, and main substance of it, *moral*. As these things however, though true, do not express the whole nature of the Sabbath, we must further inquire into it.

1. And first it must be observed, that wherever mention is made of a sabbatical rest, as enjoined to men for their observation, there is still respect to a rest of God that preceded it, and was its cause and foundation. In its first mention, God's rest is given as the reason of his sanctifying and blessing a day of rest for us; (Gen. ii. 2, 3;) the same reason is given

of it in the fourth commandment; (Exod. xx. 11;) and the same is observed in the new creation; as we shall presently see. (Heb. iv.) Now that God may be said to rest, it is necessary that some signal work of his precede; for rest, in the first notion of it, includes a respect to an antecedent work or labor. And so it is declared in all the places above-mentioned,—"he rested from all his work, which God created and made;"—"in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, &c. and rested the seventh;"—"he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." Both these, therefore, the work of God, and the rest of God, must in this matter be considered.

This work of God may also be considered two ways: first, *naturally* or *physically*, as it consisted in the production of the effects of his power, wisdom, and goodness; in which sense all things are the work of God: secondly, *morally*, as God designed and ordered all his works to be a means of glorifying himself, in and by the obedience of his rational creatures. This consideration, both the nature of it, with the order and end of the whole creation make necessary. For God first made all the inanimate, then animate and sensitive creatures in their glory, order, and beauty; in and on all of which he implanted a teaching and instructive power; for "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work," (Psalm xix. 1, 2,) and all creatures are frequently called on to give praise and glory to him. And after these was man made, to consider and use them all for the end for which they were made; and was a kind of mediator between God and the rest of his creatures,

by and through whom he would receive all his glory from them. So the apostle declares, Rom. i. 19, 20.

2. Secondly, the *rest* of God is that which completes the foundation of the sabbatical rest inquired after; for it is built on God's working and entering into his rest. Now this rest is not a mere cessation from working; nor is it absolutely so; for "God worketh hitherto." And the expression of God's rest is of a *moral*, and not a *natural* signification; for it consists in the satisfaction and complacency that he took in his works, as effects of his goodness, power, and wisdom, disposed in the order and unto the ends mentioned. Hence, as it is said, that upon the finishing of them, he "looked on every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good;" (Gen. i. 31;) that is, he was satisfied in his works and their disposal, and pronounced concerning them, that they became his infinite wisdom and power: even as it is added, that he not only rested on the seventh day, but also "that he was refreshed;" (Exod. xxxi. 17;) that is, he took great complacency in what he had done, as that which was suited to the end aimed at, namely, the expression of his greatness, goodness, and wisdom to his rational creatures, and his glory through their obedience thereon; as on the like occasion he is said "to rest in his love, and to rejoice with singing." (Zeph. iii. 17.)

In the work and rest of God thus stated did the whole rule of the obedience of man originally consist; and therein was he to seek his own rest, i. e. his own happiness and blessedness: for God had not declared any other way for his instruction in the end of his creation. This, then, is the first end of this holy rest;

and it must always be born in mind ; being that without which we can give no glory to God as rational creatures, made under a moral law in dependance on him. For this he indispensably requires of us, and this is the sum of what he requires of us ; namely, that we glorify him according to the revelation which he makes of himself, whether by his works of nature, or of grace.

To the solemnity hereof the day inquired after is necessary ; and to express these things is the general end of the sabbatical rest prescribed to us, and our observation of it. For so it is said, "God wrought and rested," and then requires us to do the same. But it has also sundry particular ends or reasons :

First, that we might learn the satisfaction and complacency that God has in his own works; (Gen. ii. 2, 3 ;) and consider the impressions of his excellence upon them ; and glorify him as God on that account. (Rom. i. 19—21.) For man was originally taught to fear, love, trust, obey and honor him absolutely, from the manifestation that he had made of himself in his works ; and had not God thus *rested* in them, and been refreshed upon their completing and finishing, they would not have been a sufficient means to instruct man in those duties.

Secondly, another end of the original sabbatical rest was, that it might be a pledge to man of his rest in and with God. Hence the ninety-second psalm, (the title of which is, *A Psalm, or Song for the Sabbath day*, and which some of the Jews ascribe to Adam,) as it principally consists in contemplations of the works of God, with holy admiration of his greatness and power manifested in them, together with praises to him on

their account; so it expresses the destruction of ungodly sinners, and the salvation of the righteous, of which in that day's rest they had a pledge. And considering the state in which man was created, neither his duty nor capacity could be answered or esteemed reasonable without such a pledge. For his duty, which was working in moral obedience, had a natural relation to a reward; and his capacity was such, as could not be satisfied, nor himself attain absolute rest, but in the enjoyment of God.

Thirdly, there was a consideration of the *way and means*, whereby man might enter into the rest of God; which were by that obedience and worship of God, which the covenant, wherein he was created, required of him. The solemn expression of this obedience, and the exercise of this worship, was indispensably required of him and his posterity, in all their societies and communion with one another. This cannot be denied, unless we shall say, that God, though he made man a social creature, and capable of sundry relations, did not require of him to honour him in the societies and relations whereof he was capable; which would certainly overthrow the whole law of his creation, with respect to the end for which he was made; and render all societies sinful and rebellious against God.

II. These being the proper ends and reasons of the original sabbatical rest, we may next inquire after the law by which it was prescribed and commanded; and to this purpose we must first consider the state wherein man was created, and then the law of his creation.

1. His state and condition falls under a threefold

consideration: for man may be considered first absolutely, as a rational creature; secondly, as made under a covenant of rewards and punishments; and thirdly, with respect to the especial nature of that covenant.

First, he was made a rational creature, and thereby necessarily in a moral dependance on God. For being endowed with intellectual faculties, in an immortal soul, capable of eternal blessedness or misery,—able to know God, and to regard him as the first cause and last end of all, as the author of his being and object of his blessedness,—it was naturally and necessarily incumbent on him, without any further considerations, to love, fear, and obey him, and to trust in him as a preserver and rewarder: and this the order of his nature, called the image of God, inclined and enabled him to do. Nor was it possible, that such a creature should be produced, and not lie under an obligation to all those duties, which the nature of God, his own nature, and the relation of one to the other, made necessary. Under this consideration alone it was required by the law of man's creation, that some time should be separated for the solemn expression of his obedience, and the due performance of the worship that God required of him; for in vain was he endued with intellectual faculties, and appointed for society, if he were not to honor God by them in all his relations, and openly express the homage which he owed him. And as this could not be done, but in a time appointed for that purpose, the neglect of it must be a deviation from the law of creation.

Secondly, man in his creation, with respect to the ends of God therein, was constituted under a covenant: that is, the law of his obedience was attended

with promises and threatenings, rewards and punishments, suited to the goodness and holiness of God; and every law with rewards and recompences annexed, has the nature of a covenant. And in this instance, although the promise, by which man was encouraged to obedience, (which was that of eternal life with God,) did in strict justice exceed the worth of the obedience required, and so was a superadded effect of goodness and grace; yet was it suited to the constitution of a covenant meet for man to serve God in to his glory: whilst on the other hand, the punishment threatened to disobedience, (viz. death, and an everlasting separation from God,) was such as the righteousness and holiness of God, as supreme governor, required. God might, indeed, have dealt with man in a way of absolute sovereignty, requiring obedience of him without a covenant of reward; yet having done so in his creation, it belongs to, and is inseparable from the law thereof. And under this consideration, the time required in general for a rest unto God, under the first general notion of the nature and being of man, is determined to one day in seven. For as we shall find, that in the various dispensations of the covenant with man, and the change of its nature, God has and does invariably require one day in seven to be set apart for the assigning of praise and glory to himself; so we shall see afterwards, that there are indications of his mind to this purpose in the covenant itself.

Thirdly, man is to be considered with especial respect to the covenant under which he was created; which was a covenant of works. For herein rest with God was proposed to him, as the end or reward of his own works, or of his personal obedience, by absolute

strict righteousness and holiness. And the peculiar form of this covenant, as relating to the way of God's entering into it upon the finishing of his own works, points out the seventh day from the beginning of the creation, to be the precise day for the observation of a holy rest.

2. Our next inquiry is after the law of man's creation, commonly called the *law of nature*, with what is required of us by virtue of it.

By the law of nature, most men understand the dictates of right reason; for we exclude wholly from this consideration the instinct of brute creatures, which has some appearance of a rule to them. So Hesiod of old, speaking of the brutes, says, "They devour one another, because they have no right or law amongst them." And hence the prophet, complaining of force and violence amongst men, with a neglect of right, justice, and equity, says,—"Men are as the fishes of the sea; as creeping things, that have no ruler over them;" (Hab. i. 14;) they devour one another without regard to rule or right. Most learned men therefore conclude, that there is no such thing as *a law of nature* among irrational creatures; and consequently, nothing of good or evil in their actions. But that the dictates of reason is the law of nature, obtains general consent. Thus Cicero, (Tusc. 1,) "The common consent of all nations in any thing, is to be thought the law of nature." And Aristotle also (Rhetoric. lib. 1, cap. 14) calls it, "*a common law*," unwritten, pertaining to all; and adds, "That which is common, is according to nature; for there is somewhat which all men think, and this is common right or injustice by nature, although there should be

neither society nor compact between them." And this he confirms out of Empedocles, who says, "that it is not that which is just to some, and unjust to others; but that which is right amongst all, spread out with immense light by the broad ruling sky." The like he affirms in his Ethics, (lib. v. cap. 10,) defining it to be "that which hath always or every where the same force or power, and doth not seem or not seem so to be;" and this his expositors affirm to be, "amongst the most of men, who live uncorrupted and according to the light of nature." What they call according to *nature*, is the same as 'according to the dictates of reason;' which Tully in his first book *de Legibus*, treats of; "There is (saith he) one common right, which is the bond of human society, and which depends on one law. And this law is the right reason of forbidding and commanding."

This, then, is generally received, namely, that the law of nature consists in the dictates of reason; but there are sundry considerations which will not allow us to acquiesce in this description of it.

First, the law of nature must be a constant and perfect law; being the fountain and rule of all other laws. To a complete law, then, is required, not only that it be instructive, but also that it have a coercive power: that is, it must not only teach and direct what is to be done, persuading by the reason of the things themselves which it requires; but it must also have authority to exact obedience, so far as that those, who are under the power of it, can give themselves no dispensation from its observance. But it is not thus with the dictates of reason, which go no further than direction and persuasion, and always have, and always

will have, a respect to occasions, emergencies, and circumstances. When these fall under any alterations, they will put reason on new considerations, as to what it ought to determine with respect to them; which the nature of a universal law will not admit.

I do not extend this observation to all instances of natural light, but to some only; which suffices to demonstrate, that the unalterable law of nature does not consist in these dictates of reason only. Suppose men, for instance, coalesce into any civil society, on the mere dictates of reason, that it is meet and best for them so to do; if this be the supreme reason thereof, no obligation arises from thence to preserve the society so entered into, but what is liable to a dissolution from contrary considerations. If it be said, that reason dictates and commands in the name of God, whence an indissoluble obligation attends it; it will be answered, that this introduces a new consideration, which is not formally included in the nature of reason itself. Let a man, indeed, use and improve his own reason without prejudice; let him collect whatsoever resolutions, determinations, instructions and laws have proceeded from the reason of other men;—it will both exceedingly advance his understanding, and enable him to judge of many things that are congruous to the light and law of nature; but to suppose the law of nature to consist in a system or collection of such instances and observations, is altogether unwarrantable.

Secondly, the event of things, in the disagreement of the wisest men about the dictates of reason, utterly subverts this opinion. The law of nature, whatever it be, must in itself be *one*,—uniform and unalterable,—the same in all and unto all; for by these properties

it differs from all other laws. But if it have no higher, nor more noble origin than mere human reason, it will be found, (if not in all things, yet in most,) fluctuating and uncertain. For there have been differences innumerable about what is and what is not agreeable to reason in things moral; and that among those who searched most diligently after them, and boasted themselves to be wise upon their self-pleasing discoveries. This was the chief cause of the 288 sects of philosophers, as Augustin reports them out of Varro. (Lib. xix. de Civit. Dei.) Yea, and some of the most learned and contemplative authors, not only mistook, in many instances, what natural light required, but also asserted things in direct opposition to what is judged so to be. The saying produced out of Empedocles by Aristotle, before mentioned, is to prove, that the killing of any living creature is openly against the universally prevailing law of nature. Some maintained things to be natural, which most abominate; as incest and sodomy; which were asserted to be lawful by the Magi, and some of the most learned Greeks, as Zeno and Chrysippus. It was the judgment of Theodorus, that neither theft, nor adultery, nor sacrilege, had any thing evil or filthy in them in their own nature; so that a wise man ought to have respect to them, according to circumstances and occasions. Plato's promiscuous use of wives, was confirmed by law at Sparta. And Archelaus at once determined, (as Diogenes tells us in his life, who likewise reports the same of Aristippus and Canreades,) that naturally nothing is just or unjust, good or evil, but by virtue of some arbitrary law. And there are yet those in the world, partakers of our common nature, who

know no other rule of their actions towards others but power; as the Cannibals, and those Indians, who suppose they may justly spoil all that are afraid of them. Yea some, who of late have pretended a severe inquisition into these things, seem to incline to an opinion, that power and self-advantage are the rule of men's conversation among themselves in this world. So it was the principle of Brennus, in his time the terror of Europe, that there was no other law of nature, than that the weaker should obey the stronger. And the commander of the Gauls, who besieged the Roman capitol, when he agreed to depart on their giving to him a certain weight of gold, threw his sword into the scale against it, giving no other reason for what he did but "wo to the conquered!"

Thirdly, neither will another rule which they had of assigning things to the law of nature hold firm; namely, a general usage of mankind from time immemorial; since all nations, from beyond the records of the origin of things, had fallen into practices directly contrary to the light of nature. Hence indeed arose all the disputes of old, about the nature and limits of good and evil, duty and vice, honest and filthy, just and unjust; which could never be determined. This Plato observing, says, "that if any one name either silver or iron, all men immediately understand what is intended; but if they speak of that which is just and good, presently we are at variance with others and among ourselves." So great uncertainty is there in human reason, under its best natural improvements, as to its judgment what does or does not belong to the principles and condition of our nature; and so far is it from being comprehensive of the whole law of it!

When, therefore, we plead any thing to belong to, or proceed from the law of nature, it is no impeachment of our assertion to say, that it does not appear so to the common reason of mankind, or that right reason has not discovered it; provided it contain nothing repugnant to reason. For it will never be universally agreed, what does so appear to the common reason of all, nor what is, has been, or may be discovered thereby. And although it should be true, as some say, that moral and natural duties depend on and have their formal reason from the nature of God and man, yet it does not thence follow, that we do or may, by the sole light of nature, know what arises thus, with the due bounds and just consequences of it: there is something yet further required in the law of nature, as the adequate rule of all such duties.

By the law of nature then I intend, not a law which our nature gives to all our actions; but a law given to our nature, as a rule and measure for our moral actions. It respects the efficient cause of nature, and not the effects of it; which alone can give it the nature of a law, viz. an obliging force and power. This must be always from the act of a superior, seeing that equals have no right one over another. This law, therefore, is that rule which God has given to human nature, in all the individual partakers of it, for all its moral actions; and is made known in them and to them by their inward constitution and outward condition, wherein they were by him created and placed. The very Heathens acknowledged, that the common law of mankind was God's prescription to them; as Tully, (ii. de Legibus,) "I perceive this to have been the opinion of the wisest of mankind, that the law of

nature was neither the fruit of man's wit, nor any thing universally acknowledged of nations; but a certain something which governed the universe by the wisdom of commanding and restraining." Take this law, therefore, *actively*, and it is the will of God commanding; take it *passively*, and it is the conscience of man complying with it; take it *instrumentally*, and it is the inbred notions of our minds, with other documents from the works of God proposed to us. The supreme original of it, as of all authority, law and obligation, is the will of God, constituting, appointing, and ordering the nature of things; the means of its revelation is the effect of the will, wisdom, and power of God, creating man and all other things wherein he is concerned in their order, place, and condition; and the observation of it, as far as individual persons are therein concerned, is committed to the care of the conscience of every man, which naturally is the action of the mind itself towards God, as the author of this law.

III. These things being premised, we shall consider what light is given to this sacred duty from the law of our creation.

The first end of any law is, to instruct and guide in their duty those to whom it is given. A law, which is not in its own nature instructive and directive, is no way fit to be prescribed to rational creatures; and whatsoever else influences the creature, if it be internal, is instinct, and not properly a law; if it be external, is force and compulsion. The law, therefore, of creation comprised every thing whereby God instructed man

in his obedience and his reward; and whatever tended to that end belonged to that law. It is then, as has been proved, unduly confined to the ingrafted notions of his mind concerning God, and his duty towards him; though they are a principal part of it: for whatever was designed to give improvement to those notions, and excite or direct them, (I mean in the works of nature, not superadded positive institutions,) belongs to it likewise. Wherefore, the whole instruction that God intended to give to man, by the works of creation, with their order and end, is, as was said, included herein; and what he might learn from them, or what God taught him by them, was no less his duty, than what his own inbred light directed him to. (Rom. i. 18—20.) Thus the framing of the world in six days of work, was intended to be instructive, as well as the consideration of the things themselves that were made. For God could have immediately produced all out of nothing, 'in the twinkling of an eye;' but he not only made all things for his own glory, but disposed also the order of their production for the same end. And herein consisted part of that covenant instruction, which he gave to man in that condition wherein he was made; that through him he might have glory ascribed to him, on account of his works themselves, as also on account of the order and manner of their creation. For it is vain to imagine, that the world was made in six days, and those closed with a day of rest, without an especial regard to the obedience of rational creatures; since with respect to God himself, neither of them was necessary: and what he intended to teach them thereby, it was their duty to inquire and know.

Hereby, then, man in general was taught obedience and working before he entered into rest; for being created in the image of God, he was to conform himself unto God. As God wrought before he rested, so was man to work before his rest; his condition rendering that working in him *obedience*, which was in God an effect of *sovereignty*. And by the rest of God, or his satisfaction and complacency in what he had made and done, he was instructed to seek rest with God, or to enter into that rest of God, by his compliance with the ends intended. And whereas the innate light and principles of his own mind informed him, that some time was to be set apart for the solemn worship of God, as he was a rational creature made to give glory to him; so the instruction he received by the works and rest of God, as made under a covenant, taught him, that one day in seven was required for that purpose, as also to be a pledge of his resting with God.

Perhaps it will be said, that man could not know that the world was made in six days, and that the rest of God ensued on the seventh, without some special revelation. I answer, He that knew the nature of all the creatures, and could give them suitable names, upon his first sight and view of them, might know more of the order of their creation, than we can well imagine. For we know no more in our fallen condition, what the light of nature directed man to, as walking before God in a covenant, than men, merely natural, know of the guidance of the light and law of grace in those, who are taken into a new covenant. For although we may have some apprehensions of the substance of it, from its remaining ruins and materials,

yet we have no acquaintance with that light and glorious lustre, that extent of its directive beams, with which it was accompanied, when it was in man, as he came immediately from the hand of God, created in his image. We have lost more by the fall, than the best and wisest in the world can apprehend, whilst they are in it; much more than most will acknowledge, whose principal design seems to be, to *extenuate* the sin and misery of man, and thus to undervalue the love and grace of Jesus Christ. Therefore, I repeat, that as an unregenerate man cannot discern how the spirit or grace of the new covenant, which succeeds into the room of our first innate light, directs and guides those, in whom it exists, to the observance of all the duties of it; let us not wonder if we cannot readily comprehend the brightness, and extent, and conduct of that light, which was suited to an estate of things which never was in the world since the fall; excepting in the man Christ Jesus, whose wisdom and knowledge thereby in the mind of God we may rather admire than think to understand.

What God, however, instructed him in, even by revelation, as to the due consideration and improvement of the things that belonged to the law of his creation, is to be esteemed a part of that law. Institutions of things by special revelation, that had no foundation in the law or light of nature, were merely *positive;* as the commandments concerning the tree of life and of the knowledge of good and evil: but such as were directive of natural light, and of the order of the creation, were moral, and belonged to the general law of obedience; as the special command given to man to till and keep the garden. Neither do

I know any one that questions, whether Adam and the patriarchs before Moses knew, that the world was created in six days; though some seem to speak doubtfully of it, and others indirectly deny it. Nor have they, who contend that the Sabbath was neither instituted, known, nor observed before the people of Israel were in the wilderness, once attempted to confirm their opinion with this supposition,—'That the patriarchs, from the foundation of the world, knew not that the world was made in six days;' which yet alone would be effectual to their purpose. Nor on the other side, can it be once rationally imagined, that if they had knowledge hereof, and also of the rest which ensued thereon, they had no regard to it in the worship of God.

And thus was the Sabbath, or the observation of one day in seven as a sacred rest, fixed on the same moral grounds with *Monogamy*, or the marriage of one man to one only woman at the same time; which, from the very fact and order of the creation, our Saviour proves to have been an unchangeable part of the law of it. For because God made them two single persons, male and female, fit for individual conjunction, he concludes, that this course of life they were everlastingly obliged not to alter nor transgress. As therefore men may dispute that polygamy is not against the law of nature, because it was allowed and practised by many, who of old observed and improved the light and rule thereof to the uttermost; when yet the very *factum* and order of the creation is sufficient to evince the contrary; so, although men should dispute, that the observation of one day's sacred rest in seven is not of the light nor law of nature, because its

rule is not easy of discovery, and prone to the observation of all men; yet the order of the creation, and the rest of God that ensued thereon, are sufficient to prove the contrary. And even in the renewing of the law upon Mount Sinai, God taught the people, not only by the words that he spake, but also by the works that he wrought. Yea, he instructed them in a moral duty, not only by what he *did*, but by what he did *not*. For he declares, that they ought to make no images of or unto him, because he made no representation of himself unto them: "they saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto them in Horeb, out of the midst of the fire." (Deut. iv. 15, 16.)

Thus, then, were the foundations of the old world laid, and the covenant of man's obedience established, when all the sons of God sang for joy, even in the first rest of God, and in the expression of it by the sanctification of a sacred rest. And on these grounds I do affirm, that the weekly observation of a day to God for Sabbath ends, is a duty natural and moral, which we are under a perpetual and indispensable obligation to, on account of that command of God, which, being a part of the law of our creation, is morally indispensable and perpetual.

EXERCITATION V.

The same subject continued.

(THE LAW OF THE SABBATH CONSIDERED.)

We now enter upon the consideration of the judgment and opinions of others concerning these things, with the confirmation of our own.

I. In the inquiry after the causes of the Sabbath, the first question usually insisted on is, the nature of the law, whereby its observation is commanded; which some affirm to be *moral*, some only *positive*. There have been many disputes about the true notion and distinction of these laws; but as the terms are invented to express the conceptions of men's minds, and that of *moral* at least includes not any determinate sense, those at variance about them cannot impose their sense and understanding of them upon one another. For seeing this denomination of moral, when applied to a law, is taken from the subject matter of it; (which is the manners or duties of those to whom the law is given;) if any one will assert that every command of God, which respects the manners of men, is moral, I know not how any one can compel him to speak or think otherwise, since he has a right to use the word in that sense which he judges most proper.

And if it can be proved, that there is, and always was a law, binding men universally to the observation of a weekly sacred rest, I shall not contend with any, how that law ought to be called; my way shall be plainly to inquire, what force there is in the *law of our creation* as regards the observation of a weekly Sabbath, and what is superadded to it by the verbal declaration of the will of God concerning it.

1. In the first place it is generally agreed, that by the light of nature, or the law of our creation, some time ought to be separated for the observance of the solemn worship of God. For be that worship what it will, merely natural, or any thing superadded by voluntary and arbitrary institutions, the law for its observance is *natural*, and requires that time be set apart for its celebration; seeing that in time it is to be performed. When there was but one man and woman, this was their duty; and so it continued to be the duty of their whole race and posterity, in all the societies, associations and assemblies whereof they were capable.

The first object of this law or command is the worship of God. In this instance time falls under it only consequentially; but the law of nature does also distinctly respect time itself, for we are bound thereby to serve God with all that is ours;—some portion of whatever God has given to us is to be set apart from our own use, and given up absolutely to him, as a homage due to him, and a necessary acknowledgement of him. To deny this, is to contradict one of the principal dictates of the law of nature. For God has given us nothing ultimately for ourselves, seeing that we, and all that we have, are wholly his; and to have

'any thing, of which no part is to be spent in his service, is to have it with his displeasure. Let any one endeavour to maintain this position; viz. 'That part of our time is *not* to be set apart to the worship of God and his service, in a holy and peculiar manner;' and he will quickly find himself in full contradiction to the law of nature, and the whole light of the knowledge of God in his mind and conscience. Those who have attempted any such thing have done it under this deceitful pretence, that *all* our time is to be spent unto God, and that *every* day is to be a Sabbath. And as they nevertheless spend most of their time immediately on themselves, it is evident that they rob God of that which is his due: for in regard to the holy separation of any thing unto God, it is required as well that it be taken from ourselves, as that it be given to him.

2. Moreover, men are to worship God in assemblies and societies, such as he appoints, or such as by his providence they are cast into. This cannot be denied, seeing it stands upon as good or better evidence, than the associations of mankind for political ends, which all men confess to be a direction of the law of nature. A part, then, of this worship is, that we honour God with our time, as being part of our substance; nor can the worship itself be performed and celebrated in a due manner, without the designation and separation of time for that purpose; whereby *again* this separation of time becomes a branch of the law of nature, by an immediate, natural, and unavoidable consequence, and therefore no less to be reckoned among its rules, than the very first notions or impressions that it communicates concerning the good or evil in the

nature of any thing. For whatever reason can educe from the principles of reason, is no less reason, than those principles themselves, from whence it is educed. And we aim at no more in this discourse, than to maintain, that the separation of some time to the worship of God, according to the ends before insisted on, is *reasonable;* and that the contrary, in its first conception, is *unreasonable and foolish.*

And this, I suppose, is evident to all; I am sure by most it is granted: and could men hereupon acquiesce in the authority and wisdom of God, marking and measuring out that portion of time in all seasons and ages of the church, there might be a natural rest from these contentions about a sacred and holy rest. I cannot, however, but admire the liberty, which some men take, positively to affirm and contend, that the command for the observation of the Sabbath, whenever or however given, was wholly typical and ceremonial: for there is that in it confessedly as its foundation, and from which all its concerns are educed, which is as direct an impression on the mind of man from the law of creation, as any other instance that can be given.

3. Upon this foundation, therefore, we may proceed. And I say in the next place, that the *stated time,* pointed out by the light and law of nature, is *one day in seven:* for the confirmation of which, what we have said concerning the law of creation, and the covenant ratified with man therein, is to be remembered. On this supposition, the appointing of any other portion of time in the stead, and to the exclusion of this, would appear a contradiction to it. God having finished his works in six days, and rested on the

seventh, giving man thereby the rule and law of his obedience; for man to assign any other measure or portion of time for rest or solemn worship, is to decline God's authority for the sake of his own inventions; whilst to assign no portion at all to that end, is openly to transgress a principal dictate of the law of nature, as we have proved.

I confess, that these things will not evidently manifest themselves in the mere light of nature, as it is now depraved and corrupted; nor will sundry other instances of its authority, unless its voice be diligently attended to, and its light cultivated and improved by following revelations, given to us for that purpose. For that by the assistance of Scripture light, and rational considerations thence arising, we may discover many things to be dictates of the law of nature, which those who are left to that law only could not discover, is proved already, from the open transgression of it in sundry instances, by those who seem most to have lived according to it, and professed themselves to be wise in following the light of reason in all things. The polytheism that prevailed amongst the best of the Heathens, their open profession of living *to* themselves, and seeking after happiness *in* themselves, with many other instances, make this further evident. And if Scripture light contributed no more to the discovery of the things required by the law of nature, than by a removal of those prejudices, which the manner and fashion of the world, and a corrupt conversation received by tradition from one generation to another, had possessed their minds with, yet were the advantages we have by it in this respect unspeakable. Let then this help be supposed, and let a judgment be

made of the injunctions of the law of nature, rather by its *condemning right and power*, than by its directive light, (for that in our fallen estate is a better criterion of its commands,) and we shall find it manifesting itself in this matter. For let those who admit the necessity of *some* time being separated for the worship of God, yet do not acknowledge, that one day in seven is to be thus separated, fix to themselves any other time in a certain revolution of days, and they will undoubtedly find themselves pressed with so many considerations from the law of their creation to the contrary, as will give them little rest or satisfaction in their minds in what they do.

II. To make this further manifest, we may inquire, what is necessary to any duty of obedience towards God, in order to evince it to be a requisite of the law of our creation. And here our diligence is required: for I again repeat, that it is a childish mistake to imagine, that whatever is required by the law of nature is easily discernible and known to all. Some of its directions may possibly be so, especially such as are inculcated on the minds of men by their common interest and advantage; but it is far from true, that all the dictates of the law of nature, and requisites of right reason, are as evident and incapable of controversy, as they would have been to man, had he continued in his integrity. The law of nations, for instance, is nothing but the law of nature, as it has been expressed by the customs and usages of those, who are supposed to have most diligently attended to its directions: yet how many differences there are, never to be determined by common consent, about

these things; notwithstanding all the helps and advantages which men have derived, by a continued observation of the course of the world to this day!

1. First, then, it is required, that it be congruous to the law of nature. To us it may be enjoined by a positive law, or otherwise made necessary for us to observe; but it must in itself correspond well with all the known principles of the law of our creation, and this must be manifested with satisfactory evidence. It is of natural right that we should obey God in all his commands; but this does not cause every command of God to belong to the law of nature. And when this congruity with the law of nature or right reason, in the matter of any law or command, is made evident, it will greatly direct the mind in its inquiry after its whole nature, and manifest what is superadded by *positive* command. And this will not be denied to the command and observation of the Sabbath. Let the ends of it before laid down be considered, and let them be compared with any other guide and direction which we have by natural light concerning our living to God, and there will not only a harmony appear amongst them, but also a mutual help and assistance towards the same ultimate end.

2. Secondly, it is required, that it have a general principle in the light of nature and dictates of right reason, from whence it may be educed, or which it will necessarily follow upon, supposing that principle rightly and duly improved. It is not enough that it agree, or no way interfere with other principles; it must also have a principle of its own, from whence it naturally arises. Thus the *second* commandment of the decalogue belongs to the law of nature; its principle

consisting in that acknowledgement of the being of God, which is required in the first. For therein is God manifested to be of that nature, that it must be an absurd, unreasonable, foolish, and impious thing in itself, implying a renunciation of the former acknowledgement, to make any images or limited representations of his being, or to adore him in any other way than he himself has appointed. So in this instance also, the separation of a stated time for the solemn worship of God, is so fixed on the mind of man by its own inbred light, that it cannot be omitted, without open sin against it, in those who have not utterly sinned away all the efficacy of that light itself. Hence, whatever positive law may be superadded about the limitation of this time so to be separated, as it is only the application of this natural and moral principle in some of its circumstances, it hinders not the law itself concerning it from being of the law of nature and moral: for the original power and obligation of such a superadded law lies in the natural principle before mentioned.

3. Thirdly, that which all men are taught by the works of creation, in their order, harmony, and mutual respect to each other, is of the law of nature; although there be no distinct innate notion of it discoverable: it is enough that the mind of man is so disposed, as to be ready and fitted to receive the revelation of it. God, then, has not only so ordered all the works of creation, as that they should be meet to instruct us; but it was the will of God that we should learn our duty thereby, which gives it its complement, as a law obliging to obedience. And it is not only thus with respect to the work of creation in general, but the ordering and

disposal of its parts is alike instructive to the nature of man, and has the force of a moral and everlastingly obligatory law. Thus the pre-eminence of the man above the woman, which is moral, ensues upon the order of the creation; in that man was first made, and the woman for the man; as the apostle argues, 1 Tim. ii. 12, 13. And all nations ought to obey it; indeed the secret original impression of this law influenced the minds and practice of most nations; though many of them, through their apostasy from natural light, knew not that either man or woman was created, but perhaps supposed them to have grown out of the earth like mushrooms. So the creation of one man and one woman gave the natural law of marriage; whence polygamy and fornication became transgressions of the law of nature. It will be hard to prove, that about these and the like things there is a clear and undoubted principle of directive light in the mind of man, separate from the consideration of the order of creation: it is in that order, that a law, and that a moral one, is given us, not to be referred to any other source than that of nature. And here therefore, as has been before pleaded, the creation of the world in six days, with the rest of God on the seventh, gives to all men an everlasting law of separating one day in seven to a sacred rest. For he, that was made in the image of God, was made to imitate him, and conform himself unto him; God, in this order of things, saying, as it were unto him, What I have done do ye in your station likewise.

4. Lastly, in this state of things a direction by a revelation, in the way of a precept, for the due and just exercise of the principles, rules, and documents

before mentioned, is so far from impeaching the morality of any command or duty, that it completes the law of it, with the addition of a formal obligatory power and efficacy. The light and law of creation, so far as it was innate, or concreated with the faculties of our souls, and completing our state of dependance on God, has only the general nature of a principle, inclining to actions suitable to it, and directing us therein. The documents also, that were originally given to that light from without, by the other works and order of the creation, had only in their own nature the force of an instruction: the will of God, and an act of sovereignty therein formally constituted them a law. But now man being made to live unto God, and to be under his guidance in all things, no prejudice arises to the dictates of the law of creation, by the superadding any *positive* commands for the performance of the duties it requires; and for the regulating of them, as to the especial manner and ends of their performance. And where such a positive law is interposed or superadded, it is the highest folly to imagine, that the whole obligation to the duty depends on that command, as though the authority of the law of nature were superseded thereby, or the whole command about it were now grown positive and arbitrary. For although the same law cannot be moral and positive in the same respect; yet the same duty may be required by a law moral and a law positive. It is thus with many observances of the Gospel: for instance, *excommunication*, for the exercise of which sentence in the churches of Christ, there is a positive command in the Gospel; but this does not prevent its being natural for all societies of men to exclude from

their society those, who refuse to observe its laws and orders. And according to the rule of this natural equity have all rational societies amongst men, that knew nothing of the Gospel, proceeded for their own good and preservation. Neither does the superadded institution in the Gospel derogate from the general reason of it, or change the nature of the duty; but only direct its practice, and make application of it to the uses and ends of the Gospel itself.

I do not plead, that every law which God prescribes to me is moral, because my obedience to it is a moral duty. For the morality of this obedience does not arise from, nor depend upon the especial command of it, which it may be, is positive and arbitrary; but from the respect which it has to our dependance in all things upon God: for to obey God in all things, is unquestionably our moral duty. But I say, that, when the substance of a command itself (that is, the duty required) is moral, the addition of a positive command does not in any way impeach its morality, nor suspend the influence of that law, on which its morality depends. It is, therefore, unduly pretended by some, that, because there is a positive command for the observation of the Sabbath, (supposing there should be such a command for the whole of it, which is nothing but an explanation and enforcement of the original moral precept of it,) therefore the law of it is not moral. It is not moral in that respect in which it is positive; but it is so from itself, for the substance of it, and antecedently to that positive command.

The whole law, therefore, of the Sabbath, and its observation, may be said to be *moral positive*, which

expression has been used by some learned divines in this case, and not unduly. For a law may be said to be so on a double account: first, when the positive part of the law is declarative, and accumulative with respect to a precedent law of nature; (as when some additions are made to the duties therein required, as to the manner of their performance;) secondly, when the foundation of a duty only is laid in the law of nature, but its entire practice is regulated by a positive law. From all the instances brought forward it is manifest, that the law of the sabbatical observation is moral, and a branch of the law of nature, however it be enforced and directed, and the especial day in seven limited and determined by positive commands.

These things are denied by many, who will not grant, that there is any rule or direction in the law of creation in regard to this matter, because it does not appear with that evidence, which the common anticipations of the minds of men, are accompanied with: but this objection has now been sufficiently obviated, by a due stating of the law of nature, which is not to be confined to inbred natural anticipations only. And it is certain also, that some say the very same concerning the being of God himself, and of the difference between good and evil; namely, that there are no manifest and stedfast presumptions of them in the mind of man: but this does not prove, that the acknowledgement of a divine Being, as also the difference between good and evil, is not natural and inseparable from the faculties of our souls. Hence Julian (in Cyril, lib. v. con. Jul.) joins the first and fourth precept together, and says, or rather swears, "that all nations judged that the commandments [of

the decalogue] ought to be kept, excepting the first forbidding other gods, and the other of remembering the Sabbath to keep it:" so that the one may be rejected as well as the other.

III. Having given evidence of the morality of the Sabbath, (from the indications of and directions to it in the light and law of nature, which will be found such as not to be despised by any modest or sober man,) we proceed to add those other consequential confirmations of the same truth, which God has given us in subsequent revelations of his will.

And first, it gives no small countenance to the apprehension of an unchangeable morality in the law of the Sabbath, that in all estates of the church, from the foundation of the world, under the several covenants wherein it has walked with God, and the various dispensations of them, there is a full evidence, that in them all God has still required of his people the observation of a sacred rest to himself, in a weekly revolution of days. That any religious observance has been required through all estates of the church, having a foundation only in an arbitrary institution, cannot be proved by any one single instance. The institutions of the state of innocency, (in the matter of the garden, with the trees of life and of the knowledge of good and evil,) ceased, as all men confess, with that estate. And although God did not immediately upon the sin of man destroy that garden, nor perhaps until the flood; leaving it as a testimony against the wickedness of that apostate generation, for whose sin the world was destroyed; yet neither it nor its trees were of any use, or lawful to be used, as to any significancy,

in the worship of God. And the reason is, because all institutions are mere appendices on things annexed to a covenant, and when that covenant ceases or is broken, they are of no use or signification at all.

Again, there was a new state of the church erected presently after the fall, and this also attended with sundry new institutions, especially that of sacrifices. In this church state some alterations were made, and sundry additional institutions given to it, upon the erection of the peculiar church state of the Israelites in the wilderness; but yet it was in general the same church state, and the same dispensation of the covenant as before. Hence, sundry institutions of worship were equally in force both before and after the giving of the law on Mount Sinai; as is evident in sacrifices, and some other instances which may be given. But now when the state of the church, and the dispensation of the covenant, came to be wholly altered by the Gospel, not any one of the old institutions was continued, or to be continued, but they were all abolished and taken away. Nothing at all was passed over from the old church states, (neither from that in innocency, nor from that which ensued on the fall in all its variations,) with any obligatory power, but what was founded in the law of nature, and had its force from thence. We may then confidently assert, that what God requires equally in all estates of the church is moral, and of everlasting obligation to us, and all men.

Now with regard to the pretence of *obscurity* in the command of the Sabbath in the state of innocency, it will be easily removed, by the consideration of another instance of the same antiquity. All men ac-

knowledge, that a promise of Christ, for the object and guide of the faith of the ancient patriarchs, was given in those words of God, immediately spoken to the serpent, (Gen. iii. 15,) "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise its heel." The words in themselves seem obscure as regards any such end; but yet there is such light thrown on them from the circumstances of time, place, persons, and occasions; from the nature of the things treated of; and from the whole ensuing economy, or dealing of God with men, revealed in Scripture; that no sober man doubts of the promissory nature of those words, nor of the intention of them in general, nor of the proper subject of the promise, nor of the grace intended in it. This promise, therefore, was the immediate object of the faith of the patriarchs of old, and the great motive of their obedience. It will be hard to prove, from the records of Scripture, that any particular patriarch did believe in, trust, or plead that promise: yet we know that they all did; nor was there any need, for our instruction, that any such practice of theirs should be recorded; seeing it is a general rule, that those holy men of God did observe and do whatever he commanded them. Wherefore, from the record of a command, we may conclude there was a suitable practice, though it be not recorded; and from a recorded approved practice on the other side, we may conclude there was a command or institution of the thing practised, though no where plainly recorded. Let unprejudiced men consider the words of Genesis ii. 2, 3, and they will find the command and institution of the Sabbath as clear and conspicuous

in them, as the promise of grace in Christ is in those just considered; especially as they are attended with the interpretation given of them, in God's following dealings with his church. And, therefore, though particular instances of the obedience of the old patriarchs in the observation of the Sabbath, could not be given and evinced; yet we ought no more on that account to deny, that they did observe it, than we ought to deny their faith in the promised seed, because it is no where expressly recorded in the story of their lives.

Under the law, (that is, after the giving of it in the wilderness,) it is granted, that the portion of time insisted on was required to be dedicated unto God. And although it will be hard to meet with a recorded instance of its observation for some ages; yet no one dares to question, on that account, whether or not it were so observed. All, therefore, is secure up to the great alteration, that was made in the instituted worship under the Gospel; and at that season there is no practice in any part of God's public worship, which appears earlier in the records of the New Testament, than the observation of one day in seven for the celebration of it. Some say, indeed, that the appointment of one day in seven, and more particularly of the first day of the week, for the worship of God, was only a voluntary agreement, consented to by the first churches, merely to keep good order and decorum, without respect to any moral command of God to that purpose. And I could incline to this apprehension, if, besides sundry other invincible reasons against it, I did not find, that God had always before, in all states of the church from the foundation of the world, in-

variably required the observation of one day in seven; and I know no reason why he would have that, which had hitherto been observed on his authority, still observed, but on the invention and consent of men, instead of on his command. Had the religious observance of one day in seven been utterly laid aside and abolished, it would and ought to have been concluded, that the law of it was expired in the cross of Christ; as were those of circumcision, the sacrifices, and the whole temple worship. But to have this observance continued, with God's approbation, (which none ever doubted,) by a re-assumption of it through the authority of the church, after God had taken off his own from it, is a most vain imagination.

I dispute not concerning what the church may appoint, for good order's sake, to be observed in religious assemblies; but this I dare say confidently, that no church, nor churches, nor all the churches in the world, have power by common consent to ordain any thing as a part of the worship of God, which God had once ordained, but now under the Gospel ceases so to do,—as circumcision and sacrifices. Neither do the traces of the occasion of any such ecclesiastical institution appear any where on record in the Scripture, where all things of an absolutely new and arbitrary institution, whether occasional or durable, are taken notice of. There is, indeed, mention made, and that frequently, of the *first day of the week*, to be set apart for the assembling of believers for the worship of God; and a solid reason is insinuated, why that especial day in particular ought so to be: but why *one day in seven* should be constantly observed for the purpose mentioned, no reason or account is

given in the New Testament, other than why men should not lie nor steal.

Nor has any man ground to imagine, that there was an intercision of a sabbatical observance, by the interposition of any time, between the observation of the seventh day, and of the first of the week. If there be any indications, that the first churches continued without the observation of one day in seven, after they desisted from having a religious respect to the seventh day, and before they had the same regard to the first of the week, I wish they might be produced; for they would be of good weight in this matter. For if the obligation of the precept for observing one day in seven, as a sacred rest to God, may be suspended in any change of the outward state and condition of the church, it cannot be esteemed a *moral* obligation. I speak not of the *actual* observance of the thing commanded, which for many causes may occasionally and temporarily be superseded; but of the obliging force and power in the command itself, which, if it be moral, is perpetual, and not capable of interruption. Now we have testimonies that sundry persons, not sufficiently instructed in the liberty of the Gospel, observed both the seventh day and the first day; yea, perhaps for awhile some observed the one day and some the other; but that any Christians of old thought themselves actually set at liberty from the religious observation of one day in seven, neither is nor can be proved.

What, therefore, can any man conceive to be the ground of this unvariableness in the commanded and approved observation of one day in seven, in all states, conditions, and alterations of the church; except that

the command for it is part of the moral unchangeable law? Hereby, therefore, it is confirmed unto us so to be. And indeed, if every state of the church be founded in an especial work of God, and his rest thereon, and complacency therein, as a pledge or testimony of giving his church rest in himself; (as elsewhere shall be fully confirmed;) a sabbatical rest must be necessary for the church in every state and condition. And although absolutely another day might have been fixed on under the New Testament, and not one in a weekly revolution; because its peculiar works were not precisely finished in six days; yet that season being before fixed and determined by the law of creation, no innovation nor alteration would be allowed therein.

EXERCITATION VI.

The same subject continued.

(ON THE DECALOGUE.)

THERE is yet remaining that, which is chiefly to be pleaded in this cause, and which of itself is sufficient to bear the weight of the whole; viz. the situation which the command for the observation of a Sabbath holds in the decalogue. Concerning this we have only to inquire, whether it have obtained a station there in its own right, or were on some other occasion advanced to that privilege. For if it be free of that society in its own right, or on account of its origin

and birth, the morality of it can never be impeached; if it had only an occasional interest therein, and held it by a lease of time, it may long since have been disseized of it. We do not yet dispute, whether the seventh day precisely be ordained in the fourth commandment; only I take it for granted, that the observation of one day in seven is required in the command; and that, because the seventh day in a septenary revolution is expressly commanded.

It is, indeed, pretended by some, that the command chiefly and directly respects the seventh day precisely; and one day in seven no otherwise, than as it necessarily follows thereon; because where the seventh day is required, one in seven is so consequentially. And they who thus pretend have a double design, the one absolutely contradictory of the other. For those do so, who from thence conclude, that, as the seventh day precisely comprises the whole nature of the Sabbath, that day is indispensably and everlastingly to be observed: and those do so, who, with equal confidence, draw their conclusion to the utter abolition of the whole Sabbath and its law, in the taking away of the seventh day itself. Such different apprehensions have men of the use and improvement, that may be made of the same principles and concessions.

But the very order of nature itself confutes this; for it is natural and necessary, that time be indefinitely considered and required, antecedently to the designation and limitation of the portion of time that is required. For if it be time indefinitely that is limited in the command for the seventh day, time indefinitely is the first object of that limitation; and also with reference to one day in seven, time must have a

natural priority to the seventh day; for the seventh day is one day of the seven. And again, some part of time may be separated for religious worship, and yet not one day in seven; and one day in seven may be so separated, and yet the seventh day precisely have no interest. Whatever morality, therefore, or obligation to a perpetual observance can be fancied by any to be in the command as to the seventh day, it is but consequential and dependant on the command and duty for the observance of one day in seven.

Further, all men, as we have often observed, allow, that there is *something* moral in the fourth commandment; namely, that either some part of it, or the general nature of it, is so. I do not, therefore, well understand those who have pleaded, that the seventh day only is required in that command, and yet that this seventh day, being absolutely ceremonial and typical, was accordingly abolished: for if the whole matter of the command be ceremonial, the command itself must needs be so likewise.

For a relief, therefore, against this apparent contradiction, it is said, that the *morality* of the command consists in this,—that we should look after and take up our spiritual rest in God. But this is not peculiar to this commandment only; for the primitive end of all the commandments was, to direct and bring us unto rest with God: of the first table immediately, and of the second in and by the performance of the duties of it among ourselves. This, indeed, is the sum of the first precept; so that it is unduly assigned to be the peculiar morality of the fourth, instead of the solemn expression of that rest as our end and happiness. Neither

is there any way possible to manifest an especial intention in any law, that is not found in this. The words and letter of it, in their proper and only sense, require a day, or an especial season to be appointed for a sacred rest; the nature of religious worship, which undoubtedly is directed therein, does the same; the rest of God proposed in the command as the reason of it, which was on the seventh day after six of working, implies this intention in the words; and so, finally, does the exact limitation of time mentioned in it: all in compliance with the order and place that it holds in the decalogue; wherein nothing in general is left unrequired in the natural and instituted worship of God: unless you except this very thing; viz. the setting some time apart for the solemn observation of that worship. Few, therefore, have ever denied, that the morality of this command, if it be moral, extends itself to the separation of some part of our time to the solemn recognizing of God, and our subjection to him; and this in the letter of the law is limited, for the reasons before insisted on, to one day in seven in their perpetual revolution. The sole inquiry therefore remaining is, whether this precept be moral or not, and thus possessed of a power perpetually obligatory to all the sons of men.

To proceed therefore, we must here have respect to what has been already said concerning the *subject matter* of the precept itself. For if it be not only congruous to the law of nature, but that also which, by the creation of ourselves and all other things, we are taught and obliged to the observation of, the law whereby it is required must be moral. For the term, *moral*, first belongs to the things themselves required

by any law, and thence to the law whereby they are commanded; and if, therefore, we have proved, that the thing itself, required in the fourth commandment, is natural and moral, from the relation it has to the law of creation, then there can be no question of the morality of that command. What has been performed therein is left to the judgment of the sober and judicious reader: for however we may please ourselves in our light, knowledge, learning, and sincerity; yet, when we have done all, they are not constituted of God to be the rule of other men's faith and practice; and others, whom for some imagined defects we may be apt to despise, may yet be taught the truth of God, in things wherein we may be out of the way. That which we have to do in these cases is, first to endeavour after a full persuasion in our own minds, and then to communicate the principles of reason and Scripture testimony, on which we ground our persuasion, to others; labouring with meekness and gentleness to instruct those, whom we apprehend to be out of the way, and submitting the whole to the judgment of all that fear the Lord, and take notice of such things. And these rules I have and shall attend to, abhorring nothing more than a proud magisterial imposing of our own apprehensions on the minds of other men; which I judge far more intolerable in particular persons, than in churches and societies; and in both contrary to that royal law of love and liberty, which all believers ought to walk by. And therefore, as we said, what has been spoken on this subject, or shall yet farther be added, I humbly submit to the judgment of sober and impartial readers; only assuring them, that I teach as I have

learned, speak because I believe, and declare nothing but that, of which I am fully persuaded in my own mind.

I. The nature of the decalogue, and the distinction of its precepts from all commands ceremonial or political, comes now under consideration. I acknowledge that the whole decalogue, given on Mount Sinai to the Israelites, had a political use; being made the principal instrument or rule of the polity and government of their nation, as peculiarly under the rule of God. It had a place also in that economy or dispensation of the covenant, which that church was then brought under; and in which, by God's dealing with and instructing them, they were taught to look for a further and greater good in the promise, than they were yet come to the enjoyment of. Hence the decalogue, in that dispensation of it, was 'a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ;' but in itself, and materially considered, it was holy, and in all the preceptive parts of it absolutely moral. Some, indeed, of its precepts, (as the first, fourth and fifth,) have either prefaces, enlargements, or additions, which belonged peculiarly to the then existing and future state of that church in the land of Canaan; but these special applications of it to them do not change the nature of its commands or precepts, which, I say, are all moral, and as far as they are esteemed to belong to the decalogue, are unquestionably acknowledged to be so. As therefore the giving, writing, use, and disposal of the decalogue or ten commandments, were peculiar and distinct from the rest of the laws and statutes given to the church of Israel, which were either ceremonial or

judicial; so the precept concerning the Sabbath in the fourth commandment, has an equal share with the other nine, in all the privileges of the whole.

1. For, first, it was spoken immediately by the voice of God, in the hearing of all the people; whereas all the other laws, whether ceremonial or judicial, were given peculiarly to Moses, and by him declared to the rest of the people. Note what weight is laid on this circumstance in Exodus xix. 10—18.; Deut. iv. 36, and xxxiii. 2. In the first passage the work itself is declared; in the latter a distinguishing greatness and glory, above all other legislations, is ascribed to it. It is worth the inquiry what might be the cause of this difference; which appears to me to be, that God thereby declared, that the law of the decalogue belonged immediately and personally to them all, upon the original right of the law of nature, which it represented and expressed: whereas all the other laws and statutes, given them by the mediation of Moses, belonged to that peculiar church state and economy of the covenant, which they were then initiated into; and which was to abide till the time of the reformation of all things by Jesus Christ.

2. Secondly, this command, as all the rest of the decalogue, was written twice by the finger of God in tables of stone: for which there was a twofold reason. *First,* it was a stable revocation of that law, which being implanted on the heart of man, and communicated to him in his creation, was variously defaced; partly by the corruption and loss of that light, through the entrance of sin, which should have guided us in the right apprehension of its dictates, and the obedience it required; and partly through a long course of

corrupt conversation, which the world, after the first apostasy, had plunged itself into. God thus again fixed that law objectively, in a way of durable preservation, which in its primitive seat and subject was so impaired and defaced. And the additions mentioned, with peculiar respect to the application of the whole, or any part of it, to that people, were no impeachment of it; as is acknowledged in the preface given to them all, containing a motive to their dutiful observance of the whole. And hence this law must necessarily be esteemed a part of the antecedent law of nature; neither can any other reason be given, why God wrote it himself, with those, and only those, that are so, in tables of stone.

Secondly, This was done as an emblem, that the whole decalogue was a representation of that law, which by his spirit he would write in the fleshly tables of the hearts of his elect. And this is well observed by the Church of England, which, after the reading of the whole decalogue, (the fourth command amongst the rest,) directs the people to pray, "That God would write all these laws in their hearts." Now this concerns only the moral law: for although obedience to God's ceremonial and typical institutions, whilst they were in force, was moral, and a part of the law required in general in the precepts of the first table of the decalogue; yet those laws *themselves* had no place in the promise of the covenant, that they should be written in our hearts. If it were so, especial grace would be yet administered for the observation of those laws now they are abolished; which would not only be vain and useless, but contradictory to the whole design of the grace bestowed upon us, which is to be

improved in a due and genuine exercise of it. Neither does God bestow any grace upon men, without requiring at the same time the exercise of it at their hands. If, then, this law was written in tables of stone, together with the other nine, that we might pray and endeavour to have it written in our hearts, according to the promise of the covenant, it is and must be of the nature of the rest; that is, *moral* and everlastingly obligatory.

3. Thirdly, like all the rest of the moral precepts, it was reserved in the ark; whereas the law of ceremonial ordinances was placed in a book written by Moses on the side of the ark, from whence it might be removed. The ark on many accounts was called the ark of the covenant; but one reason was, because it contained in it nothing but that moral law, which was the rule of the covenant. And this was placed therein to manifest, that it was to have its accomplishment in him, who was 'the end of the law;' (for the ark with the propitiatory was a type of Jesus Christ; Rom. iii. 25;) and the reason of the different disposal of the moral law in the ark, and of the ceremonial in a book on the side of it, was to manifest the inseparableness of the law from the covenant; and the establishing, accomplishing, and answering of the one law in Christ, with the removing and abolishing of the other by him. For he was to fulfil the law kept in the ark by obedience, by answering its curse, and by restoring it to its proper use in the new covenant: not that which it had originally, when it was itself the whole of the covenant; but that which the nature of it requires in the moral obedience of rational creatures, of which it is a complete and adequate rule. And if the law of the

Sabbath had been absolutely capable of abolition in this world, it had not been safeguarded in the ark with the other nine, which are inseparable from man's covenant obedience unto God; but had been left with other ceremonial ordinances at the side of the ark, in readiness to be removed, when the appointed time should come.

4. Next, God himself separates this command from those, which were ceremonial in their principal intention and subject matter, when he calls the whole system of precepts in the two tables by the name of the ten commandments or *words*;—"The ten commandments, which the Lord spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire, in the day of the assembly." Deut. x. 4. No considering person can read these words, but he will find a most signal emphasis in the several parts of them. The day of the assembly is that, which the Jews so celebrate, under the name of *the station in Sinai;* the day that was the foundation of their church state, when they solemnly covenanted with God about the observation of the law. Deut. v. 24—27. And the Lord *himself* spake these words, i. e. in an immediate and special manner; (which is still observed where any mention is made of them, as in Exodus xx., Deut. v. and x.) "And," saith Moses, "he spake them unto you;" that is, immediately to all the assembly; (Deut. v. 22;) where it is added, that he spake them "out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice, (that every individual person might hear it,) and he added no more." He spake not one word more, i. e. gave not one precept more at this time to the people; but the whole solemnity of fire,

thunder, lightning, earthquake, and sound of trumpet immediately ceased and disappeared. Whereupon God entered his treaty with Moses, in which he revealed to and instructed him in the ceremonial and judicial law, for the use of the people, who had now taken upon themselves the religious observance of whatever he should so reveal and appoint. Now as the whole decalogue was hereby signalized, and sufficiently distinguished from the laws and institutions of another nature; so in particular, this precept, concerning the Sabbath, is distinguished from all those, in the declaration of which Moses was the mediator between God and the people. And this was only upon account of its participation in the same nature with the rest of the commands; although it may and does contain something in it, that was peculiar to that people.

5. Finally, although there is a frequent opposition made, in the Old Testament, between moral obedience and the outward observance of ordinances of a merely arbitrary institution, there is no mention made of the weekly Sabbath in that case, though all ceremonial institutions are in one place or other enumerated. It is true that in Isaiah i. 13, the Sabbath is joined with the new moons, and its mere observation rejected, when put in the place of holiness and righteousness; but as this is expounded, in the next verse, to regard principally the appointed annual feasts or Sabbaths, so we grant, that the Sabbath, as relating to the temple worship there intended, had that accompanying it, which was peculiar to the Jews and their ceremonial. Absolutely, however, the observation of the Sabbath is not opposed to, nor rejected in comparison

of any other moral duties. Indeed, its observation is finally pressed on the church, on the same grounds, and with the same promises, as the greatest and most indispensable moral duties; and together with them opposed to those fasts, which belonged to ceremonial institutions. See Isaiah, lviii 6—14.

6. Now it is assuredly worth our inquiry, what are the just reasons of the preference of the Sabbath above all positive institutions, both by the place given to it in the decalogue, as also on account of the other special circumstances insisted on. Suppose the command of it to be ceremonial, and this exaltation of it must then arise, either from the excellency of it in itself and service, or from the excellency of its signification, or from both of them jointly. But these things cannot consistently be pleaded: for the *service* of the Sabbath, as observed among the Jews, (it is now urged,) consisted in mere bodily rest, which is scarcely to be reckoned as any part of divine service at all. Any thing beyond this in it, is said to be only a mere circumstance of time; not in any thing better than that of place, and had an arbitrary determination also for a season. It cannot, therefore, be thus exalted and preferred above all other ordinances of worship on account of its service, seeing it is apprehended to be only an adjunct of *other* services; which services were more worthy than it, in as much as that every thing which is for itself, is more worthy than that which is only for another. And *place,* considered absolutely, is a more noble circumstance than *time* in this case; for place, being determined by an arbitrary institution in the building of the temple, became the most

glorious and significant part of divine worship; and yet had it no place in the decalogue.

It must, therefore, be upon account of its *signification*, that it was thus peculiarly exalted and honored. But the dignity, worth, and use of all ceremonial institutions depend on their fitness to represent the things, of which they are types; and also on the worth of that, which they peculiarly typify. And herein the Sabbath, even with the applications it had to the Judaical church state, came short of many other divine services; especially of the solemn sacrifices, wherein the Lord Christ, with all the benefits of his death, was, as it were, evidently "set forth crucified before their eyes."

Neither, therefore, of these reasons, nor both of them in conjunction can be pleaded, as the cause of the manifold preference of the Sabbath above all ceremonial institutions. It follows, therefore, that it is solely upon account of its *morality*, and the invariable obligation thence arising for its observation, that it is so joined with the precepts of the same nature; and such we have now, as I suppose, sufficiently confirmed it to be.

7. I cannot but judge yet farther, that in the caution given by our Saviour to his disciples, about praying that their flight should not be on the Sabbath day, (Matt. xxiv. 20,) he declares the continued obligation of the law of the Sabbath, as a moral precept. It is answered by some, that it is the Jewish Sabbath intended here; which he knew that some of his own disciples would be kept for a season in bondage to; and for the ease, therefore, of their consciences in that matter, he gives them this direction.

But many things on the other side are certain and indubitable, which render this conjecture altogether improbable. For, *first*, all *real* obligation to Jewish institutions was then absolutely taken away; and it is not to be supposed, that our Lord Jesus Christ would before hand make provision for the edification of any of his disciples in error. *Secondly*, before that time came, they were sufficiently instructed *doctrinally* in the dissolution of all obligation in ceremonial institutions; as we may see in the Epistles of St. Paul; especially in that to the Hebrews themselves at Jerusalem. *Thirdly*, those who may be supposed to have continued a conscientious respect to the Jewish Sabbath, could be no otherwise persuaded of it, than the Jews themselves were in those days: and they all accounted themselves absolved in conscience from the law of the Sabbath upon imminent danger in time of war, so that they might lawfully either fight or fly, as their safety required; as is evident from the decree made by them under the Asmonæans. And such imminent danger is now supposed by our Saviour; for he instructs them to forego all consideration of their enjoyments, and to shift solely for their lives. There was not therefore any danger in point of conscience, with respect to the Judaical Sabbath, to be then feared or prevented. But in general those, in whose hearts are the ways of God, know what an addition it is to the greatest of their earthly troubles, if they befal them in such seasons, as to deprive them of the opportunity of the sacred ordinances of God's worship; and then, when they stand in most need of them, engage them in ways and works quite of another nature.

There is, therefore, another answer invented; namely, that our Lord Jesus in these words respected not the consciences of his disciples, but their trouble; and therefore joins the Sabbath day and the *winter* together, in directing them to pray for an ease and accommodation of that flight, which was inevitable. For as the winter is unseasonable for such an occasion, so was the law concerning the Sabbath, 'that if any one travelled on that day above a commonly allowed Sabbath day's journey, he was to be put to death.' But there is not any more appearance of truth in this pretence. For *first*, the power of capital punishment was before this time utterly taken away from the Jews, and all their remaining courts interdicted from proceeding in any cause, wherein the lives of men were concerned. *Secondly*, in the times referred to, there was no course of law, justice, or equity amongst them; but all things were filled with rapine, confusion, and hostility; so that no cognizance was taken about such cases as journeying on the Sabbath. *Lastly*, the dangers they were in had made it free to them, as to legal punishments, upon their own principles; as already declared. As these, therefore, cannot be the reasons of the caution here given, it is at least most probable, that our Saviour speaks to his disciples upon a supposition of the perpetual obligation of the law of the Sabbath; that they should pray to be delivered from the necessity of a flight on that day whereon the duties of it were to be observed; lest, falling out otherwise, it should prove a great aggravation of their distress.

From these particular instances we may return to the consideration of the law of the decalogue in general, and the perpetual power of exacting obedi-

ence with which it is accompanied. That in the Old Testament it is frequently declared to be universally obligatory,—without exception to any of its commands, or limitation of its number,—I suppose will be granted. Its authority is no less fully asserted in the New Testament, and that also without distinction, or the least intimation of excepting the fourth command from what is affirmed concerning the whole. It is of the law of the decalogue that our Saviour treats in Matthew v. 17—19; and affirms, that he came not to dissolve it, (as he did the ceremonial law,) but to fulfil it; and then declares, that not one jot or tittle of it shall pass away. And afterwards, making a distribution of the whole into its several commands, he declares his disapprobation of those who shall break, or teach men to break, any one of them: and men therefore make bold with him, when they so confidently assert, that they *may* break one of them, and teach others so to do, without offence. In like manner St. James treats concerning the whole law and all the commands of it, chap. ii. 10, 11. And the argument he insists on for the observance of the whole, (namely, the giving of it by the same authority,) is confined to the decalogue, and the way of God's giving the law thereof; else it may be extended to all Mosaical institutions, expressly contrary to his intention.

II. Many things are usually objected against the truth we have been pleading for; which objections have been solidly answered by others: but because those objections, or arguments, have been lately renewed by a person of good learning and reputation, and a new force is endeavoured to be added to them,

I shall give them a fresh examination, and remove them out of our way.

1. It is then objected in the first place, (Disquisit. de Moralitate Sabbati, p. 7,) "That the command for the observation of the Sabbath, is a command of *time*, or concerning time only; namely, that some certain and determinate time be assigned to the worship of God; and that this may be granted to be moral. But that time is no part of moral worship; only a circumstance of it, even as place is also. That therefore the command, that requires them in particular, cannot be moral; for these and the like circumstances must necessarily be of a positive determination."

The whole force of this argument consists in this, that time is but a help, instrument, or circumstance of worship, and therefore is neither moral worship itself, nor a part of it. But this argument is not valid; for whatever God requires by his command to be religiously observed, with immediate respect to himself, is a part of his worship; and this worship, as to the kind of it, follows the nature of the law whereby it is commanded. If that law be merely positive, so is the worship commanded; although it be a duty, required by the law of nature, that we duly observe it, when it is commanded: if that law be moral, so is the duty required by it, and so is our obedience to it. The only way then to prove, that the observation of time is no part of moral worship, is to manifest, that the law whereby it is required is positive and not moral: for it does not follow, because the thing in itself is naturally an adjunct or circumstance of other things, that the law whereby it is required partakes of the nature of those things.

Moreover, time *abstractedly,* or one day in seven absolutely, is not the adequate object of the fourth commandment; but a holy rest to be observed unto God: not unto God in general, as the tendency and end of all our obedience and living unto him; but as an especial remembrance and representation of the rest of God himself, with his complacency and satisfaction in his works, as establishing a covenant between himself and us. This is the principal subject of the command; (or a stated day of holy rest unto God in such a revolution of days;) and which we have already proved to be moral from various considerations. Now though place be an inseparable circumstance of all actions, and so capable of being made a circumstance of divine worship, by divine positive command; (as it was of old in the instance of the temple;) yet no special or particular place had the least tendency to it in the law of nature, and therefore all places were alike free by nature; and every place wherein the worship of God was celebrated, was a natural circumstance of the actions performed, and not a religious circumstance of worship, until a particular place was assigned and determined by positive command for that purpose. It is otherwise with time, as hath been shewn at large; and therefore, though any *place,* notwithstanding the law of nature, might have been separated by positive institution for the worship of God, it does not thence follow, as is pretended, that any *time* (a day in a year, e. g.) might have been separated for the like purpose; seeing that God had given us indication of another limitation of it in the law of creation.

2. It is farther objected, (Disquisit. p. 8,) "That, in the fourth commandment, not one day in seven,

but the seventh day precisely is enjoined. The day was made known before to the Israelites in the station at Marah, or afterwards at Alesh; namely, the seventh day from the foundation of the world; which in the command they are required to observe. Hence the words of it are, that they should remember *that same* Sabbath day, or that day of the Sabbath, which was newly revealed to them. This command, therefore, cannot be moral, as to the limitation of time specified therein; seeing it only confirms the observation of the seventh day Sabbath, which was before given to the Hebrews in a temporary institution."

In reply, various instances have been given by all writers on the Hebrew tongue, in which the prefixed letters, sometimes answering the Greek prepositive articles, are redundant; and if at all emphatical, yet do they not limit or determine. (See Psalm i. 4; Eccles. ii. 14; Lev. xviii. 5.) The prefixing, therefore, of ה (*he*) to שבת, (*sabat,*) though it may possibly denote an excellency in the thing itself; yet, as it tends nothing to the determination of a certain day, except as it is afterwards declared to be one of seven, is too weak to bear the weight of the inference intended.

Further, the rest of a seventh day was known and observed from the foundation of the world, as has been proved; and therefore if, from the prefix, we are to conclude, that a limitation is intended in the words, "Remember the Sabbath day;" still it only respects the original Sabbath, and not any new institution of it. For supposing the observation of the Sabbath to have been before in use, the command concerning it may well be expressed by "*Remember the Sabbath day;*" whether that use were only of late, or from the

beginning of the world. Or suppose, that the Sabbath *had* received a limitation to the seventh day precisely, in the ordinance given to that people in the first raining of manna; then the observation of that day precisely necessarily arises. And yet the command, which is but the revival of what is required from the foundation of the world, cannot be said chiefly to intend that day precisely; for the reason of the original command for a sabbatical rest was, God's making the world in six days, and resting on the seventh; which requires no more than that, in the continual revolution of seven days, one should be observed as a sacred rest to God: and these words, therefore, "Remember the Sabbath day," refer to the primitive command and reason of the Sabbath, as is afterwards declared in the body of the law. The reason for this command, (viz. the works of God, and their order,) is repeated in the decalogue, because the instruction given us by them, is a part of the law of our creation more subject to neglect, than those other parts of it, which were wholly innate in the principles of our own nature.

The emphatic expression insisted on; "Remember the Sabbath day," has respect to the singular necessity, use, and benefit of this holy rest; and also to that neglect of its observance, which (partly through their own sin, partly through the hardships that it met with in the world) the church of former ages had fallen into. And what it had lately received of a new institution, with reference to the Israelites, falls also under this command, as a ceremonial branch under its proper moral head, to which it is annexed. And the plea, 'that the command of the seventh day precisely, is

not the command of one day in seven; and that what God has *determined* in this matter, ought not to be considered *indefinitely* by us,' may be granted without the least prejudice to our cause. For although the institution of the seventh day *precisely*, be somewhat distinct from *one day in seven;* as containing a determinate limitation of that, which in the other notion is left indefinite: yet this hinders not, but God may appoint the one and the other; the one in the moral reason of the law, the other by a special determination and institution. And this special institution is to continue, unless it be abrogated or changed by his own authority; which it may be, without the least impeachment of the moral reason of the whole law, and a new day be limited by the same authority.

3. It is yet farther observed, (Disquisit. p. 9—12,) "That no distinction can be made between a weekly Sabbath, and the seventh day precisely. And if any such difference be asserted, then, if one of them be appointed in the fourth commandment, the other is not; for there are not two Sabbaths enjoined in it. And it is evident, that there never was of old but one Sabbath. The Sabbath observed under the Old Testament was that required and prescribed in the fourth commandment; and so, on the other side, that Sabbath required in the decalogue, was that which was observed under the Old Testament, and that only. Two Sabbaths, (one of one day in seven, and the other of the seventh day precisely,) are not to be fancied. The seventh day, and that only, was the Sabbath of the Old Testament, and of the decalogue."

These objections are framed against a distinction used by another learned person; but neither he, nor

any other sober man, ever fancied, that there were two Sabbaths of old; one enjoined to the church of the Israelites, the other required in the decalogue: though any one may and ought to distinguish between the Sabbath, as enjoined absolutely, in words expressive of the law of our creation and rule of our moral dependance on God, and the same Sabbath, as it had a temporary determination to the seventh day in the church of the Jews, by virtue of a special intimation of the will of God, suited to that administration of the covenant, which that church and people were then admitted into. The fourth commandment not only contains the moral equity, that some time should always be set apart to the celebration of the worship of God; and the original instruction given us by the law of creation, and the covenant obedience required of us in it; but it expresses moreover, the peculiar application of this command, by the will of God, to the state of the church then erected by him, with respect to the seventh day precisely, as before instituted and commanded.

That one day in seven only, and not the seventh day precisely, is directly and immediately enjoined in the decalogue; and the seventh only with respect to an antecedent Mosaical institution, together with the nature of that administration of the covenant, which the people of Israel were then taken into; has been shewn in our preceding investigation of the causes and ends of the Sabbath. And it seems evident to impartial consideration: for the observation of one day in seven belongs to every covenant of God with man; and the decalogue is the invariable rule of man's walking before God; of whatsoever nature the *cove-*

nant be between them, whether that of works, or that of grace by Jesus Christ. As therefore the seventh day precisely belongs to the covenant of works, it cannot be chiefly, but only occasionally intended in the decalogue: nor can it invariably belong to our absolute obedience to God; because it is not of the substance of it, but only an occasional determination of a duty, such as all other positive laws give us. And hence there is in the command itself a difference put between a Sabbath day, and the arbitrary limitation of the seventh day to be that day. For we are commanded to remember the *Sabbath* day, not the *seventh* day; and the reason given (as is elsewhere observed) is, because God blessed and sanctified the *Sabbath* day. Nor, indeed, is the joint observation of the seventh day precisely possible to all, who take the Lord to be their God; though it were to the Jews in the land of Palestine, who were obliged to keep that day: for the difference of the climate in the world will not allow it. Nor did the Jews ever know, whether the day they observed was the seventh from the creation; (they only knew it was so from the day in which manna was first given to them;) and the whole revolution and computation of time by days was sufficiently interrupted, in the days of Joshua and Hezekiah, to allow us to think the observation of the seventh day moral. Further, it is a rule, in judging of the intention of all laws divine and human, that the meaning of the preceptive part of them is to be collected from the reasons annexed or inserted therein: and the reasons for a sacred rest, that are intimated and stated in this command, do no more respect the seventh day, than any other in seven. Six days in the sep-

tenary revolution are granted for labor; nor does the command say any thing, whether these six days shall be the first or the last in the order of them; and any day is as fit for the performance of the duties of the Sabbath, as the seventh, if in like manner designed for it: which things are pleaded at large by others.

4. It has hitherto been generally allowed, that the fourth commandment does at least include *something* moral in it; or, indeed, no color can be given for its association with them that are absolutely so in the decalogue: and this something is commonly said to be, that some part of our time be dedicated to the public worship of God. But as this would overthrow the pretension before mentioned, (viz. that there can be no moral command about time, &c.) to avoid this difficulty, it is now affirmed, (Disquisit. p. 14,) "That this is that, which is moral in the fourth commandment; namely, that not one day, but, as much as may be, our whole lives be spent in the worship of God; in seeking his kingdom and the righteousness thereof, and furthering the edification of our neighbour. To which it belongs, that we should serve God, acknowledge and celebrate his benefits, pray to him in spirit, and testify our faith by our confession."

It is hard to discover, how any of these things have the least respect to the fourth commandment; much more, how the morality of it should consist in them. For all the instances mentioned are required in the *first* precept of the decalogue; that only excepted of taking care to promote the edification of our neighbour, which, as declared by our Saviour, is the sum and substance of the second table. There-

fore, if there be nothing else moral in it, there is certainly nothing moral in it at all; seeing that these and the like things are claimed from it, and taken out of its possession, by the first precept. And the *general* consideration of time, with respect to these duties, belongs also to the first precept; namely, that we should live unto God, whilst we live in this world; for we live in time, and that is the measure of our duration and continuance.

5. Again it is said, "That the Sabbath was a type of our spiritual rest in Christ; both of that which we have in him at present by grace, and of that which remains for us in heaven. Hence it was a shadow of good things to come, as were all other ceremonial institutions. But that the same thing should be moral and a shadow is a contradiction. That which is a shadow can in no sense be said to be moral, nor that which is moral a shadow. The Sabbath, therefore, was merely ceremonial."

Now it cannot be proved, that the Sabbath, either as to its first original, or as to the substance of the command of it in the decalogue, was *typical*, or instituted to prefigure any thing that was future: yea, the contrary is evident. For the law of it was given before the first promise of Christ, as we have proved; and that in the state of innocency, and under the covenant of works, wherein there was no respect to the mediation of Christ. I acknowledge, that God did so order all his works in the first creation, and under the law of nature, as that they might be morally suitable to represent his works under the new creation; (which is so called from the analogy of our redemption to the creation of all things;) and hence, accord-

ing to the eternal counsel of God, were all things meet to be gathered into a head in Christ Jesus: but that the Sabbath originally, and in its whole nature, should be a free institution to prefigure, and, as in a shadow, represent any thing spiritual or mystical, afterwards to be introduced, neither is nor can be proved. It was, indeed, originally a moral *pledge* of God's rest, and of our interest therein, according to the tenor of the covenant of works; which things belong to our relation to God, by virtue of the law of our creation; and it continues to retain the same nature, with respect to the covenant of grace.

6. But it is yet pleaded, from an enumeration of the *parts* of the fourth commandment, that there can be nothing moral, as to our purpose in it. And these parts are said to be three: "First, the determination of the seventh day to be a day of rest. Secondly, the rest itself commanded on that day. Thirdly, the sanctification of that rest to holy worship. None of these (it is urged) can be said to be moral: not the first, for it is confessedly ceremonial; not the second, because it is a thing in its own nature indifferent, having nothing of morality in it, antecedent to a positive command; neither is it the third, since it is only the means or manner of performing that worship which is moral."

In reply, *First* this is not a sufficient analysis or distribution of the parts of this command; the principal subject matter of it being omitted, namely, the observation of one day in seven for the ends of a sacred rest. Supply this in the first place, in the room of the determination of the seventh day to be that day, and this argument vanishes. *Secondly*, rest, absolutely con-

sidered, is no part of divine worship, antecedently to a divine positive command: but a rest, such as we have already proved to be intended in this commandment, is a part of the worship of God. This is the rest which we are directed to by the law of our creation; and which, by the moral reason of this command, is enjoined to us on one day in seven: And in these things consists the morality of this precept.

Granting, therefore, that the dedication of some portion of time for the solemn worship of God is required in this command, let a position be practically advanced against the one we insist on; namely, that one day in seven is the time determined and limited for that purpose; and we shall quickly perceive the mischievous consequence of it. For when men have taken out of the hand of God the division between the time, that is allowed us for our own occasions, and that which is to be spent in his service, they will find themselves at no small loss what to fix upon, or wherein to acquiesce in this matter. It must either be left to every individual to do as seems good in his own eyes; or its decision must be committed either to the church or the magistrate. Hence we may expect as many different determinations and limitations of time, as there are distinct ecclesiastical or political powers among Christians: and what changeableness and confusion would ensue, according to the prevalence of superstition or profaneness in the minds of those, who claim this power of determining and limiting the time of public worship, is evident to all.

The instance of *holidays*, as they are commonly called, will further manifest, what of itself lies naked under every rational eye: the institution and obser-

vation of them was always resolved into the moral part of this command, for the dedicating of some part of our time to God; but their determination not being of God, but left to the church, one church multiplies them without end, until they have become an unsupportable yoke to the people; another reduces this number into a narrower compass; a third rejects them all; and no two churches that are independent, ecclesiastically and politically, one on the other, agree about them.

And so must the matter fall out as to the special day, concerning which we discourse, when once the determination of it by divine authority is practically rejected. As yet men deceive themselves in this matter, and pretend that they believe otherwise than indeed they do. Let them come once soberly to join their *opinion* of their liberty and their *practice* together, actually rejecting the divine limitation of one day in seven, and they will find their own consciences under more disorder than they are yet aware of.

Again, if there be no day determined in the fourth command, but only the seventh precisely, which is ceremonial; with a general rule that some time is to be dedicated to the service of God; there is no more of morality in this command, than in any of those for the observation of new moons and annual feasts, with jubilees and the like; in all which the same general equity is supposed, and a ceremonial day limited and determined. And if it be so, as far as I can understand, we may as lawfully observe new moons and jubilees, as a weekly day of rest, according to the custom of all churches.

EXERCITATION VII.

On the Judaical Sabbath.

We have proved, that the moral law, as a covenant between God and man, required a sacred rest; we must now inquire what place it had in the Mosaic economy, on which depends the true reason and notion of the Sabbath as peculiarly Judaical. For the Sabbath being originally annexed to the covenant between God and man, the renovation of the covenant necessarily requires an especial renovation of the Sabbath; and the change of the covenant, as to the nature of it, must in like manner introduce a change of the Sabbath.

I. And we shall find, that the covenant of the law, or of works, had a twofold renovation in the church of Israel, in the framing and constitution of it; which rendered it their *especial* covenant, although it was not absolutely a *new* covenant; and hence the Sabbath became peculiarly theirs.

1. First, it was renewed to them *materially*. It was originally written in the heart of man, and was sufficient to direct him to all the duties, which God in the first covenant required at our hands; but by the entrance of sin, with the consequent corruption and debasing of the faculties of our souls, the alteration in our natures was so great, that we lost this light, or

image of God; and thus the inward law became but a lame and imperfect guide to the ends of the covenant. Besides, the visible creation, the outward medium of instructing man in the knowledge of the goodness, power, and wisdom of God, being for our sin brought under the curse, and the creature into bondage, the contemplation of it would not so clearly and perfectly represent him to us as formerly.

Let men fancy what they please, and please themselves, whilst they will, with their fancies; all things nevertheless, both within and without, in the whole creation, were brought into such disorder and confusion by the entrance of sin, that the law of nature was utterly insufficient to enable us to live to God, or to guide us according to the tenor of the first covenant. There are indeed general notions of good and evil, indelibly planted on the faculties of our souls; with a power of judging concerning our actions and moral practices, whether they are conformable to those notions; but besides the impairing of the principles of these notions before mentioned, they were of old variously obscured, perverted, and stifled by customs, prejudices, and the power of sin in the world; so that they were of little use towards a due performance of covenant duties,—indeed, of none at all, in reference to any acceptance with God.

Wherefore God, when erecting his church, and renewing the knowledge of himself and of man's duty towards him in the posterity of Abraham, gave them afresh the precepts of the law and covenant of nature, for the guide and rule of their obedience. And that this might now be permanent, he reduced the substance of the whole law into ten commands, writing

them in tables of stone, which he appointed to be sacredly kept amongst them. The law thus declared and written by him was the same, I repeat, materially, and for the substance of it, with the law of our creation; although there was an innovation both in its form and principle of obligation. For as to its form, or directive power, it was now made external and objective to the mind of man; whereas before it was principally internal and subjective: and the immediate obligation to its observance among that people, was now from the promulgation of it on Mount Sinai. Hence it was prefaced with motives peculiar to their state and condition; and its observation continually pressed on them afterwards, with arguments taken from their peculiar relation to God, and his love and benefits towards *them*. This gave it a new respect; because there was nothing originally in or belonging to it, but what was equally common to all mankind.

Now this alteration in the law and covenant of creation, as applied to the church of the Israelites, affected also the law of the Sabbath, which was a part of it. It was now no more a merely moral command, equally regarding all mankind; but had a temporary respect given to it, which was afterwards to be abolished and taken away. It was thus with the whole law, and it was thus with the Sabbath in particular. To take up therefore the observation of it, as appointed in the decalogue, not as a material transcript of the law of nature merely, but as under its renovation to the church of Israel, is a groundless and unwarrantable going over into a part of abolished Judaism.

2. Secondly, the law was renewed as an ingredient in that economy, under which God was pleased to bring his church at that time, before the exhibition or accomplishment of the promise.

It was proposed in the *manner* and *form* of a covenant; which is evident from the promises and threatenings with which it was attended: e. g. "Do this and live;" "the man that doeth these things shall live in them;" "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the law to do them." And thus was begotten in the minds of that people such a respect to the rigor of its commands, and such a dread of its curse, awfully denounced amongst them, as brought a servile and bondage frame of spirit upon them, in all their transactions with God. This frame of spirit is much insisted on by the apostle Paul, in his epistles to the Romans and Galatians, as that which stands in direct opposition to the freedom and liberty purchased for us by Jesus Christ, "to serve God in righteousness and holiness without fear all our days." But particularly in their observation of the Sabbath they were under this bondage; which filled them with many scrupulous anxieties,—not arising from the law of the Sabbath itself, as originally given to man in the state of innocency, but from the accommodation of its law to them, after the entrance of sin. And hereby their Sabbath rest became a great part of their wearying burthensome yoke, which is taken off in Christ.

Nevertheless, God did not bring that people under the covenant of works in all its rigor; for although the law contained the whole rule of the covenant, and is often called *the covenant of God*, yet were they not

absolutely to stand or fall by it. This arose from the interposition of the promise of grace in Christ; which being given, upon the first entrance of sin, for the relief and salvation of the elect, and being solemnly renewed to Abraham and his seed four hundred and thirty years before the giving of the law, there was a blessed provision against the curse and threatenings annexed to the first covenant, for all those that made use of it.

To which was added also, at this renovation of the covenant a *typical* church state, with a great number of religious laws and ordinances; in themselves carnal and weak, but mystically significant of spiritual and heavenly things; and instructive, as regarded the use of the promise before given. The law also being attended with various explanations and many ordinances of judgment, deduced from the principles of moral equity contained in it, was made the rule of the polity and government of that people, as a holy nation under the rule of God himself, who was their king. For their polity was a theocracy; and hence God affirms, when they would choose another king over them after the manner of the nations, that they rejected him from reigning over them; although they resolved to adhere to his laws, and the manner of government prescribed to them. And this was peculiar to that people; whence the Sabbath among them came to have an absolute necessity of an outward carnal observance, the neglect or transgression of which was to be punished with death.

In all these things, then, did the covenant of God made with that people in the wilderness consist. The foundation, matter, manner of administration, pro-

mises and threatenings of it were the same with the covenant of works; but they were all accommodated to their ecclesiastical and political estate, with especial respect to their approaching condition in the land of Canaan: only there were new ends and a new use given in the promise, with a relief against its rigor and curse.

On account of the accessions thus made to the law, and especially to the observation of the Sabbath, it is often mentioned in Scripture, as that which God had in a peculiar manner given to the *Israelites*, in whose worship it had so great a place. Many of their principal ordinances had a great respect to it; and it was the only means of keeping up the solemnity of natural worship in their synagogues. Acts xv. 21. Thus God says concerning them, "that he gave them his Sabbaths in the wilderness, to be a sign between him and them;" (Ezek. xx. 10—12; Neh. ix. 14.) Nor is there any need why we should say, that "he *gave* them," means no more than that he restored the knowledge of the Sabbath, the memory of which they had almost lost; though that interpretation of the expression might be justified: for he no where says, that he *then* gave his *Sabbaths;* but that he then peculiarly gave them *to that people,* and for the ends mentioned. The Sabbath was appointed to be a sign of the special administration of the covenant, which was then enacted; whence it is said, that he gave it them "for a perpetual covenant," "that they might know him to be the Lord that sanctified them," Exod. xxxi. 13, 16.

So far, then, as it was a sign of their covenant, as it was then first given, it is now abolished; since the renovation and change of the covenant must and did

introduce a change in the rest annexed to it. For a Sabbath, or holy rest, belongs to every covenant between God and man; but in regard to its kind or nature, it follows the special nature of that covenant, in which we at any season walk before God; and therefore, as the original covenant of works was not, in this representation of it on Sinai, absolutely abolished, but afresh represented to the people, it follows, that the day of the sabbatical rest could not be changed; but when that covenant was absolutely, and in all respects as a covenant, disannulled, and that not only as to its formal efficacy, but also as to the manner of the administration of God's covenant with men, there was a necessity, that the day of rest should also be changed. I say then, that the precise observation of the seventh day, enjoined to the Israelites, had respect to the covenant of works: and the whole controversy about what *day* is to be observed now, as a day of holy rest to the Lord, is resolved fully into the inquiry,—what covenant we walk in before God.

And that we may understand the whole nature of the Jewish Sabbath, it must further be considered, that the law in general was the instrument of the polity of that people under the government of God, as before observed; and all the judgments relating to civil things, were but an application of the moral law to their state and condition. Hence were the transgressions of it to be punished with death; (which was particularly the case with respect to the Sabbath; Num. xv. 35;) partly, that it might represent to them the original sanction of the whole law as a covenant of works, and partly to keep that stubborn people, by this severity, within due bounds of government. The

hand of *heaven* is threatened against their presumptuous transgressions of the ceremonial law, where no sacrifice was allowed; ("*I, the Lord,* will set my face against that man, and cut him off;") but nothing was punished by death *judicially,* except the transgression of some moral command. This also made the Sabbath a yoke and burden, wherein their consciences could never find perfect rest; and in this sense also it is abolished and taken away.

Again, it was made a part of their law for religious worship, in their typical church state; and thus had the nature of a *shadow,* representing the good things to come, whereby the people were to be relieved from the rigor and curse of the whole law, as a covenant. And for these reasons new commands were given for the observation of the Sabbath; and new motives, ends, and uses were added thereto, every way to accommodate it to the dispensation of the covenant then in force, which was afterwards to be removed and taken away; and with it the Sabbath itself, so far as it had relation to it.

II. These things will the more clearly appear, if we consider the dealing of God with that people about the Sabbath from first to last.

1. His first peculiar dealing with them was evidently in their first station at Alush; the occasion of which is laid down in Exodus xvi. 4, 5: "Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my laws or no. And it shall come to pass, that in the sixth day they shall

prepare that which they bring in, and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily." As there is here no mention of the Sabbath, nor any reason given why they should gather a double portion on the sixth day, this command must have appeared somewhat strange, if they had previously no notion of a seventh day's sacred rest. It is apparent however, either that they had lost the true day, which they were to observe through that long bondage in Egypt, or knew not what belonged to the due sanctification of it: for when the people had gathered a double portion of manna, the rulers of the congregation, fearing some mistake in the matter, (because they had experience, that, if it were kept above one day, at any other season, it would putrify and stink,) go and acquaint Moses with what was done; upon which he replies, "This is that which the Lord hath said, to-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord; bake that which you will bake," &c. (Exod. xvi. 22, 23.)

This is the first express mention of the Sabbath among that people; and it sufficiently declares, that this was not the absolute original of a sabbatical rest, but only an appropriation of the old command to them. For the words do not institute any thing anew; but direct as to the practice of what existed before. Hence it is affirmed in ver. 29, that "God gave *them* the Sabbath;" namely, this new confirmation and accommodation of it to their present condition. For this new confirmation of it, by withholding of manna on that day, belonged solely to them, and was the special limitation of the seventh day precisely; wherein we are not concerned, who live on the true bread, that came down from heaven. In

those words, therefore, "to-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord," there is a certain limitation of the day, and a direction for its sanctification, as confirmed by the new sign of withholding manna; all which belonged to them peculiarly. And this, indeed, was the first time that, as a people, they observed the Sabbath; for in Egypt they could not do it. And into this institution, and the authority of it, must they resolve their practice, who adhere to the observation of the seventh day precisely; since that day is no otherwise confirmed in the decalogue, but as it had relation to this.

The Jews in this place fall into a double mistake about the practical observation of their Sabbath. For from the 23d verse, "Bake that which ye will bake, and seethe that ye will seethe, and that which remaineth over, lay up for you, to be kept until the morning,"—they conclude it to be unlawful to bake or seethe any thing on the Sabbath day; whereas the words only have respect to the manna, which was to be preserved. And from verse 29,—"See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day,"—they have made many rules concerning what motions or removals are lawful on the Sabbath day, and what not. And hence they have bound themselves with many anxious and scrupulous observances; though the injunction itself solely respects the people in the wilderness, that they should not go out into the fields to look for manna on that day. (verse 27.)

2. Not long after ensued the giving of the law on

Sinai. (Exodus xx.) That the decalogue is a summary of the law of nature, or the moral law, is acknowledged by all Christians, nor could the heathens of old deny it. And it is so perfectly: for nothing belongs to that law, which is not comprised therein; nor is there any thing directly, and immediately in it, but what does belong to that law. But God now made in it an especial accommodation of the law of their creation to that people, whom he was in a second work now forming for himself. (See Isaiah xliii. 19—21. and li. 15, 16.) To this purpose he prefaces the whole with an intimation of his particular covenant with them; ("I am the Lord thy God;") and adds the remembrance of a special benefit, which they, and they alone, were made partakers of; ("that brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage;") and which benefit was in consequence of his special covenant with Abraham and his seed. This made the obligation to obey the law, as promulgated on Mount Sinai, belong to them peculiarly; and sundry things were then and there mixed with it, that belonged to them alone. And whereas the mercy, which he proposes as the great motive to obedience, (viz. his bringing them out of Egypt, with reference to his planting them in the land of Canaan,) was a *typical* mercy, it gave the whole law a station in the typical church state, into which they were now being brought. It altered not the nature of the things commanded, which for the substance of them were all moral; but gave their obedience a new and typical respect; even as it was the tenor of the covenant made with them in Sinai, with regard to the promised land of Canaan, and their typical state therein.

And this was particularly the condition of the fourth commandment, in which three things are distinctly proposed. *First*, the command for an observance of a Sabbath day; which is, indeed, the whole substance of the command. And in consequence of the neglect of the Sabbath in former generations, with a prospect of the many difficulties that would arise among the people in the observation of it for the future; also because its foundation in the law of creation, being principally external in the works and rest of God that ensued thereon, was not so absolutely ingrafted in the minds of men, as continually to evidence itself, as the foundation of the other precepts does; there is a special note put upon it,—*Remember*. Moreover being a *positive* precept, it stood more in need than the rest of a particular charge and special motives; one of which nature is added also to the next command, which is likewise a positive enunciation. *Secondly*, there is an express determination of this Sabbath to be one day in seven; ("Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.") And herein the day originally fixed in the covenant of works is again limited to this people, to continue to the time of the full introduction and establishment of the new covenant. *Thirdly*, there is a prescription for the manner of its observance, accommodated to the condition of that people. First, in comprehending things spiritual under things carnal; (when yet the carnal are of no consideration in the worship of God, but as they necessarily attend upon things spiritual;) whence that part of the command which concerns the manner of the observation of the Sabbath to be kept holy, is

given in a prohibition of bodily labor, or a command of bodily rest. But it is the expression of the rest of God, and his complacency in his works and covenant, &c. that are principally intended; which he farther intimates afterwards by his institution of a *double sacrifice,* to be offered morning and evening on that day. And secondly in the distribution of the people into the capital persons with their relations, servants, and strangers, whom God would have to live among them, and join themselves to them.

These following things, therefore, in the law of the Sabbath are *Mosaical;* namely, the obligation that arose for its observation, from the promulgation of the law to that people on Sinai;—the limitation of the day to the seventh or last of the week, which was necessary in that administration of the covenant, which God then made use of, having respect to a previous institution;—the manner of its observance, suited to that bondage frame of mind, which the giving the law on Mount Sinai engendered in them, as being designed of God so to do;—the ingrafting it into the system and series of religious worship then in force, by the double sacrifice annexed to it, with the various uses in, and accommodations it had to, the rule of government in the commonwealth of Israel: in all which respects it is abolished and taken away.

3. God having disposed and settled the Sabbath, as to the seventh day and the manner of its observation, as a part of the covenant then made with that people, he next makes use of it in the same manner, and for the same ends, with the residue of the institutions and ordinances, which he had then prescribed to them. Thus in Exodus xxxi. 12—17; "And the

Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily, my Sabbaths ye shall keep, for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy unto you. Every one that defileth it, shall surely be put to death; for whosoever doth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done, but in the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord; whosoever doeth any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed." This is the next mention of the Sabbath among that people, wherein all that we have before laid down is fully confirmed. God had now by Moses appointed other Sabbaths, (that is *monthly* and *annual* sacred rests,) with which he now joins the *weekly* Sabbath, from whence they already had their name. He had sufficiently manifested a difference between them before: for the one he pronounced himself on Mount Sinai, as part of his universal and eternal law; the other he instituted by revelation to Moses, as that which peculiarly belonged to them. The one was grounded on a reason wherein they had no more concern than all the rest of mankind; (namely, God's rest from his works, and being refreshed thereon, upon the creation of the world, and the establishment of his covenant with

man;) the other was entirely built on reasons peculiar to themselves, and to that church state into which they were admitted. But here the Sabbaths of both these kinds are brought under the same command, and designed for the same ends and purposes; the sole reason of which lies in those temporary and ceremonial additions, which we have manifested to have been made to the original law of the Sabbath, in its accommodation to their church state; &c. as we shall see farther presently.

The occasion of this renovation of the command, was the building of the tabernacle, which was now designed, and forthwith to be undertaken; and with respect to which, there was a double reason for the repetition of this command. First, because that work, being for a holy end, was so far a holy work; and as it was the one on which the people were very intent, they might hence have supposed, that it would have been lawful for them to have attended to it on the Sabbath days. This, therefore, God expressly forbids, that they might have no pretence for the transgression of his command; and, therefore, is the penalty so expressly appointed and mentioned here. Secondly, as the tabernacle now to be built, was the only seat of that solemn instituted worship, which God was now setting up among them; so the Sabbath, being the great means of its continuance and performance, they were now to be severely reminded of it; lest by their neglect of it, they might come to a contempt of all that worship, which was, as it were, built upon it. And, as we have observed before, the weekly Sabbath, being inserted into the economy of their laws, as to the matter of works and rest, is now comprised in

general with other feasts, called *Sabbaths* also; ("Verily, my Sabbaths ye shall keep;") in which view they are all cast together by the Apostle in Col. ii. 16. And they, who by virtue of this and the like commands would bind us up to the Judaical Sabbath, do certainly lose both that, and all other ground for the observance of any Sabbath at all; since in whatsoever respects it is joined with the other Sabbaths by Moses, in the same it is taken away with them by the Apostle.

Further, there is a treble appropriation made of the weekly Sabbath in this place to the church of the Israelites. *First*, in that the observation of it is required of them *in their generations;* that is, during the continuance of that church state, which was to abide to the coming of Christ. *Secondly*, that they were to observe it, as a *perpetual* covenant, or as a part of that covenant which God then made with them; and which is called everlasting, because it was to be so to them, seeing God would never make any other peculiar covenant with them. And whereas all the statutes and ordinances, which God then gave them, belonged to and made up that covenant, some of these (as this special command for the Sabbath, and that of circumcision) are distinctly called *the covenant*, and ceased with it. *Thirdly*, it was given them as a special pledge of the covenant that God then made with them, wherein he rested in his worship, and brought them to rest therein in the land of Canaan, whereby they entered into God's rest. Hence it is called a *sign* between them, (v. 13,) which is repeated and explained in Ezekiel xx. 12. And a sign it was, or an evident expression of the present covenant of God between him and them: not a sacramental or

typical sign of future grace in particular; any otherwise than as their whole church constitution, and their worship in general were so.

And it was a present sign between God and them on a double account. *First*, on the part of the people, who assembled on that day for the celebration of the worship of God, and avowed him alone therein to be their God; thus making an evident and express acknowledgement, that they were the people of the Lord. Nor does this in the least impeach its original morality; since there is no moral duty, but in its exercise or actual performance may be so made a sign. *Secondly*, on the part of God; for by this observance, they had a visible pledge that God had separated them to himself, and, therefore, had given them his word and ordinances, as the outward means of their further sanctification to be peculiarly attended to on that day. And it is on these grounds, that God is elsewhere said to give them his Sabbaths, as their peculiar privilege and advantage. For although, in comparison of the substance and glory of things to be brought in by Christ, with the liberty and spirituality of Gospel worship, all their ordinances and institutions were a yoke of bondage; yet, considering their use, with their end and tendency, compared with the rest of the world at that time, they were an unspeakable privilege. (Psalm cxlvii. 19, 20.)

Lastly, here is added a peculiar sanction under the penalty of death. "He that transgresseth it shall surely be put to death." (ver. 14.) God sometimes threatens cutting off and extermination to persons, against whom the people nevertheless had no warrant to proceed capitally; but he took it on him-

self, as the supreme legislator and rector of that people, to destroy them and cut them off by the hand of heaven, as they say. But wherever this expression is used,—"he shall surely be put to death," there the people, or the judges among them, are not only warranted, but commanded, to proceed judicially against such an offender. And in this respect it belonged to that severe government, which that people stood in need of, to remind them of the sanction of the whole law of creation as a covenant of works, with the same commination of death to all transgressors. In all these respects again, the Sabbath was Judaical, and is absolutely abolished and taken away.

4. The command is renewed again in Exodus xxxiv. 21. "Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest, in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest." Earing time and harvest are the seasons wherein those, who till the ground, are most intent upon their business, and do not readily suffer interruptions, because they may be greatly to their damage. Wherefore they are specified, to manifest, that no avocation nor pretence can justify men in working or labour on that day. For by expressing *earing* and *harvest*, all those intervenings are likewise intended in those seasons, in which damage and loss might arise, by omitting the gathering in of the corn. And it would seem on this ground, that on that day they might not labour, either to take it away before a flood, or remove it from an approaching fire. So, at least, some of the masters think; although our Saviour convinces them from their own practice, in relieving cattle fallen into pits on that day, and by loosing them that were tied, to lead them to watering, that they did not universally

conceive the intention of that law to be, that in no case work was to be done. (Luke xiii. 15; xiv. 5.) And it seems they were wiser for their asses in those days, than the poor wretch was for himself in latter ages, who falling into the jakes at Tewkesbury on that day, would not suffer himself to be drawn out; if the story be truly reported in our chronicles. In general I doubt not but this additional explanation is in its proper sense purely Judaical, and contains something more of rigidness, than is required by the law of the Sabbath as purely moral.

5. It is mentioned again with a new addition, in Exodus, xxxv. 2, 3, "Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you a holy day, a Sabbath of rest to the Lord: whosoever doth work therein shall be put to death. Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the Sabbath day." The prohibition here added, about kindling of fire in their habitations, has been the occasion of many anxious observances among the Jews. They all agree that the kindling of fire for profit and advantage, in kilns for the making of brick, or drying of corn, or for founding or melting metals, is here forbidden; but what need was there to forbid it, when all these things are expressly forbidden in the general command, "Thou shalt do no manner of work"? Somewhat more is intended; and they say therefore, that it is the kindling of fire for the dressing of victuals: which indeed seems to be the intention of this special law; as the manna, that was to be eaten on the Sabbath, was to be prepared on the day previous. Nevertheless, this is a new *additional* law, and purely *Mosaical*; the original law of the Sabbath making no entrenchment

on the ordinary duties of human life, as we shall see afterwards. Whether it forbad the kindling of fire for light and heat, I much question. The present Jews in most places employ Christian servants about such works; for the poor wretches care not what is done to their advantage, so they do it not themselves. But these and the like precepts belonged unquestionably to their discipline, and were separable from the original law of the Sabbath.

6. Lastly, the whole matter is stated in Deuteronomy, v. 15; where, after the repetition of the commandment, it is added; "And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm; therefore, the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day." The mercy and benefit they had received in their deliverance from Egypt is given as the reason—not why they should keep the Sabbath, for it was proposed, in the preface to the decalogue, as a motive for the observation of the whole law; but wherefore God gave them the law of it to keep and observe: "Therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath." The reason of the command of a Sabbatical rest absolutely, God had every where declared to be, his making the world in six days, and resting on the seventh; the mention of which in this place is wholly omitted, because an especial application of the law to that people is intended. So that it is evident, that the Mosaical Sabbath was on many accounts, and in many things, distinguished from that of the decalogue, which is a moral duty. For the deliverance of the people out of Egypt, which was a benefit peculiar to them-

selves, and typical of spiritual mercies unto others, was the reason of the institution of the Sabbath, so far as it was Mosaical; which it could not be of the Sabbath absolutely; although it might be pressed on that people as a considerable motive, why they ought to endeavour the keeping of the whole law.

The ancient Jews have a saying, which by the later masters is abused; but a truth is contained in it: "the Sabbath gives firmness and strength to all the affairs of this world." For it may be understood of the blessing of God, on the due observation of his worship on that day. Hence it was, they say, that any young clean beast that was to be offered in sacrifice, must continue seven days with the dam, and not be offered until the eighth; (Levit. xxii. 27;) and that a child was not to be circumcised until the eighth day, that there might be an interposition of a Sabbath for their benediction.

EXERCITATION VIII.

On the Lord's Day.

THE rest of God and man, which ensued on the creation, has been declared; and also in part, (i. e. sufficiently for our present purpose,) how the great ends of all these things were for a season defeated and disappointed by the entrance of sin, which brake the covenant that was founded in the law of creation, and rendered it useless. For the law became weak through

sin and the flesh, or the corruption of our nature that followed, and hence could no more bring man to rest in God. But yet a continuation of the obligatory force of that law and covenant, with the direction of it to *other* ends and purposes, than at first given to them, was under the Old Testament designed of God, and has been declared also. Hence was the continuation of the original Sabbatical rest, in the church of Israel, with the special application of its command to that people, as insisted on in the preceding discourse. In this state of things, God had of old determined the renovation of all by a *new creation;* a *new law* of that creation, a *new covenant*, and a new *Sabbatical rest*, unto his own glory by Jesus Christ.

This was prophesied of as a new creation of *all*—even of the heavens and the earth, and all things contained in them; (Isaiah lxv. 17, 18.; lxvi. 22.; 2 Peter, iii. 13;) hence the state of things to be introduced thereby was under the Old Testament called "the world to come," (Hebrews ii. 5,) and is still so called by the Jewish masters. Thus Kimchi, amongst other expositions of the title of Psalm xcii,—"a psalm or song for the Sabbath day,"—adds, "that the most ancient rabbins interpreted it of the world to come, which shall be wholly Sabbath and rest; and that these are the days of the Messiah." It is a spiritual rest which they intend, and not a cessation of a Sabbath day in particular; since in the prophecy concerning the new temple, or church state in those days, there is special direction given for the service of the Sabbath day. (Ezekiel xlvi. 4.)

And this renovation of all things is accordingly said to be accomplished in Christ; (2 Cor. v. 17, 18;) "Old

things are past away, behold all things are become new;" the old law, old covenant, old worship, old Sabbath,—all that was peculiar to the covenant of works as such, in the first institution of it, and in its renewed declaration on Mount Sinai, are gone and antiquated. What now remains of them, so far as regards any assistance in our living to God, does not abide on the old foundation; but on a new disposition of them, by the renovation of all things in Christ: "for in the dispensation of the fulness of times, God gathered together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him." (Ephes. i. 10.)

But this renovation of all, which is the foundation of our acceptable obedience to God, and of his present worship, consists principally in the *regeneration of the elect*, (making them new creatures,) and the erection of a new church state thereby to the glory of God; and this new creation of all must answer to all the ends of the old, in reference to the glory of God, and the good of those who are partakers of it; otherwise it would not be rightly so called, nor answer the declared ends of it, which was "to gather all things to a head in Christ Jesus." For what was lost by sin, as to the glory of God, in the old creation, in this was to be repaired and recovered; and we may, therefore, as the foundation of our present discourse, consider how these things answer to one another.

I. First, the old creation comprises in it the law of the obedience of all creatures to God, which was implanted on their natures, with natural or moral inclinations towards the observance of it; and this law,

in the state of creation, contained a *rule* and a *principle.* As a rule, the light that was in the mind of man, which was a principal part of the image of God created in him, acquainted him with his whole duty, and directed him in the right performance of it. As a principle, it respected the ability, which the whole man was endowed with, to live to God according to his duty. But this law, being much impaired, and in a great measure rendered useless by sin, God was pleased to restore in the vocal revelation of his will; especially in the decalogue, which with his own finger he wrote in tables of stone.

A new law of obedience, corresponding with this, is introduced by the new creation in Christ Jesus; which principally consists in the renovation of the image of God, which was lost by sin: for believers "are renewed in the spirit of their minds, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (Ephes. iv. 23, 24.) And this fully answers the first law, as a *principle* of light and power unto obedience: and, in a great measure, it supplies the loss of it as a *rule* also; for there is a great renovation of it by God's writing it in our hearts, which is not here to be insisted on. And as in this new creation God designed to gather up all that was past in the old, "unto one head in Christ," he brings over into this state the use of the decalogue, for a *directive rule* of obedience to the new creature; whereby the first original law is wholly supplied; and to this he makes an addition of what *positive* laws he thinks fit, (as he did also under the old law of creation,) for the trial of our obedience, and our furtherance in it. Thus the moral law of our obedience is in each con-

dition materially the same; nor is possible that it should be otherwise: and yet this old law, as brought over into this new estate, is *new* also; for "all things are become new;" and it is now the *rule* of our obedience,—not absolutely unto God, as the creator, the first cause and last end of all; but as unto God in Christ, bringing us into a *new relation* to himself.

2. Secondly, the law of creation had a *covenant* annexed to it; as we have before fully declared. Thus, therefore, must it be also in the new creation and its law: and because the covenant is that which, as it were, "gathereth all things together," both in the works and law of God, and our obedience, disposing them into that order which tends to the glory of God, and the blessedness of the creatures in him; this is that which in both creations is principally to be considered. Without this, no end of God in his works or law could be attained, nor man be made blessed in a way of righteousness and goodness unto his glory; and the law of creation only failed through sin, in that the covenant of it was thereby broken and rendered useless, as to the bringing of man to the enjoyment of God. The making, confirming, and ratifying of a new covenant was, therefore, principally regarded in the new creation. This was the great promise under the Old Testament, whereby the believers who then lived were made partakers of the benefits of it; and the confirming of this covenant in and by Christ is expressed, as a part of the new creation, and, indeed, comprehensive of the whole work of it. (Jer. xxxi. 32.; Heb. viii. 2.)

3. Thirdly, the immediate end of the old covenant was to bring man by due obedience to the rest of

God; as also has been before declared, as the true original and end of the first Sabbatical rest. This again must have a place in the new covenant, belonging to the new creation; the immediate end of which is our entering into the rest of God. (Heb. iv.) But herein we are not absolutely to enter into God's rest, as a creator and rewarder; but into the rest of God in Christ, the nature of which will presently be fully explained in an exposition of that chapter. For obedience is now to be yielded to God, not absolutely, but to God in Christ; and with that respect, therefore, are we to enter into rest. The foundation of this must lie in in the works of God in the new creation, and the complacency and rest which he had in them; for all our rest in God is founded in his own rest in his works. For a pledge of this, a day of rest must be given and observed, which, as we have shewn, was originally the seventh day of the week; but, as the Apostle tells us in another case, "the priesthood being changed, there must also of necessity a change of the law ensue;" so the covenant being changed, and the rest which was the end of it being changed, and the way of entering into the rest of God being changed, a change of the day of rest must of necessity follow. And no man can assert, that the same day of rest abides as of old, but he must likewise assert that the same law, the same covenant, the same rest of God, the same way of entering into it, continue; which all, nevertheless, acknowledge to be changed.

We must here again repeat, that there was a day of holy rest to God, necessary to be observed by the law and covenant of nature, or of works; and that this was to be one day in seven. God, therefore, renews the law of this holy rest in the deca-

logue, among those other laws, which being of the same nature and original, (namely, branches of the law of our creation,) were to be unto us moral and eternal. For God would no longer entrust his mind and will in that law to the *depraved* nature of man; but committed it by vocal revelation to the minds of the people, as the doctrinal object of their consideration, and recorded it in tables of stone. Moreover, the first covenant had limited this holy day to the *seventh* day; the observation of which was to be commensurate to that covenant, and its administration; however the outward forms thereof might be varied.

On these suppositions we lay the observation of the Lord's day under the New Testament, according to the institution of it, or declaration concerning it, of the mind of Christ, who is our Lord and lawgiver. First, a new work of creation, or a work of a new creation, is undertaken and completed. (See Isaiah lxv. 17, and lxvi. 22, 23; 2 Peter iii. 13; Rev. xxi. 1; Romans viii. 19, 20; 2 Cor. v. 17; and Gal. vi. 15.) Secondly, this new creation is accompanied by a new law, and a new covenant; or the law of faith, and the covenant of grace. (See Romans iii. 27, and viii. 2—4; Jer. xxxi. 32—34; Hebrews viii. 8—13.) And thirdly, unto this law and covenant a day of holy rest to the Lord belongs; which cannot be the same day with the former, any more than it is the same law, or the same covenant, which were originally given to us. (See Hebrews iv. 9; Rev. i. 10.)

II. That this day was limited and determined to the first day of the week by our Lord Jesus Christ, is that which shall now further be confirmed; only I must desire the reader to consider, that whereas the topical

arguments whereby this truth is confirmed, have been pleaded of late by many, I shall but briefly mention them, and insist principally on the declaration of the *proper grounds* and foundations of it.

As our Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son and Wisdom of the Father, was the immediate cause and author of the old creation; so, as mediator, he was the author of this new creation, "and built the house of God." (John i. 3; Col. i. 16; Heb. i. 2, 10; iii. 3, 4.) Herein he wrought, and in the accomplishment of it "saw of the travail of his soul, and was satisfied," (Isaiah liii. 11,) that is, "he rested and was refreshed." Herein he gave a new law of life, faith, and obedience; (Isaiah xlii. 4;) not by an addition of new precepts to the moral law of God, which were not virtually comprised in it before; but in his revelation of that new way of obedience to God in and by himself, with the special causes, means, and ends of it, which supplies the use and end for which the moral law was at first designed, (Romans viii. 2, 3; x. 3, 4,) and whereby he becomes "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Hebrews v. 9.) This law of life and obedience, he writes by his Spirit in the hearts of his people, that they may be "willing in the day of his power;" (Psalm cx. 3; 2 Cor. iii. 3, 6; Hebrews viii. 10;) for as the law of nature should have been implanted in the hearts of men in their conception, and natural nativity, had that dispensation of righteousness continued; so in the new birth of them that believe in him is this law written in their hearts in all generations. (John iii. 6.) Hereon was the covenant established, and all its promises, of which he was the mediator: (Hebrews viii. 6:) and for a

holy day of rest, he determined the observation of the *first* day of the week.

1. For first, on this day he rested from his works by his resurrection; for then had he laid the foundation of the new heavens and new earth, and finished the works of the new creation, when all the "stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." On this day he rested from his works, and was refreshed, as God did and was from his; for he saw that it was "very good." And although he "worketh hitherto," in the communication of his Spirit and graces, (as the Father continued to do in his works of providence, after the finishing of the works of the old creation,) yet he ceases absolutely from that kind of work, whereby he laid the foundation of the new creation: "henceforth he dieth no more." Therefore as God's rest on the *seventh* day of old, was a sufficient indication of the precise day of rest, which he would have observed under the administration of that original law and covenant; so the rest of our Lord Jesus Christ on the *first* day, is a sufficient indication of the precise day of rest, to be observed under the dispensation of the new covenant now confirmed and established.

Nor could the church of Christ pass one week under the New Testament, or in a Gospel state of worship, without this indication. For the Judaical Sabbath, as sure as it was so, and as sure as it was annexed to the Mosaical administration of the covenant, was so far abolished, as not really to oblige the disciples of Christ in conscience to its observation, whatever any of them might for a season apprehend. And if a new day was not now determined, there was no day or

season appointed; nor any pledge given of our entering into the rest of Christ. And those who say, that some time is required to be set apart for the ends of a sabbatical rest, but that there is no divine indication when or what that time is, must allow us to expect firmer proofs of their uncouth assertion, than any which we have yet met with.

2. This indication of the *Gospel* day of rest and worship was accordingly embraced by the apostles, who were to be as the chief corner-stones, the foundation of the Christian church; for they immediately assembled themselves on that day, and were confirmed in their obedience by the grace of our Lord, in meeting with them on it. (John xx. 19, 26.) And it seems that on this day *only* he appeared to them, when they were *assembled together;* although he occasionally shewed himself to them *separately* at other seasons. Hence he left Thomas under his doubts a whole week, before he gave him his gracious conviction; to the end that he might do it in the assembly of his disciples on the first day of the week: from which time forward this day was never without its solemn assemblies.

Hebrews iv. 3—11, *considered.*

III. Now because I am persuaded that the substance of all we have laid down and pleaded for in the preceding discourses, especially in what we have proposed concerning the foundation and causes of the Lord's day, is taught by the apostle Paul in chap. iv. of his epistle to the Hebrews, I shall present the reader with the scope and sum of his design from

ver. 3 to ver. 11 of that chapter, with an application of it to our present purpose: for this place is touched on by all, who have contended about the origin and duration of the Sabbatical rest; but not yet, that I know of, diligently examined by any.

The words of the Apostle are: "For we which have "believed do enter into rest, as he said, 'As I have "sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest:' "although the works were finished from the foundation "of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the "seventh day on this wise, 'And God did rest the "seventh day from all his works.' And in this place "again, 'If they shall enter into my rest.' Seeing, "therefore, it remaineth, that some must enter therein; "and they, to whom it was first preached, entered not "in because of unbelief; (again, he limiteth a certain "day, saying, in David, '*To day*,' after so long a time; "as it is said, 'To day if you will hear his voice, harden "not your hearts.' For if Jesus [Joshua] had given "them rest, then would he not afterwards have spoken "of another day;) there remaineth, therefore, a rest "to the people of God. For he that is entered into his "rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God "did from his."

1. The design of the Apostle in this passage, is to confirm what he had laid down and positively asserted in the beginning of the chapter; viz. that there is yet under the Gospel a promise left to believers of entering into the rest of God; and that they do enter into that rest, by mixing the promise of it with faith. This declaration was useful and necessary to the Hebrews: for he lets them know, that, notwithstanding their present and ancient enjoyment of the land of

Canaan, with the worship and rest of God therein, which their forefathers fell short of through unbelief, they were under a new trial,—a new rest being proposed to them in the promise. And this he proves by a testimony out of Psalm xcv.; the words of which he had already insisted on in chap. iii.

But the application of that testimony to his purpose is obnoxious to a great objection; for the rest mentioned in that psalm seems to be a rest long since past and enjoyed, either by themselves or others; and, therefore, they could have no new or fresh concern in it, nor be in danger of coming short of it. And if this were so, all the arguments and exhortations of the Apostle in this place must needs be weak and incogent, as drawn from a mistaken and misapplied testimony. To remove this objection, therefore, he proceeds to the exposition and vindication of the testimony itself, and shews (from the proper signification of the words, from the time when they were spoken, and the persons to whom) that no other rest was intended in them, but what was now by him proposed to them, as the rest of God and his people in the Gospel.

His general argument consists in an enumeration of all the several rests of God and his people, mentioned in the Scriptures; from the consideration of which he proves, that no other rest could be intended in the words of David, except the rest of the Gospel, into which they enter who believe. And from the respect which the words of the Psalmist have to the other foregoing rests of God and his people, he manifests, that they also were appointed of God, to be representations of that spiritual rest, which was now brought in and established.

Thus he declares, that the rest mentioned in the psalm, is not that, which ensued immediately on the creation of all things; because it was spoken of a long time after, and that for another purpose. (ver. 4, 5.) Secondly, that it was not the rest of the land of Canaan, because that was not entered into by them to whom it was first proposed and promised; for they came short of it through unbelief, and perished in the wilderness: but this rest which is now afresh proposed is such, as the people of God must and will enter into. (ver. 6, 7.) And whereas it may be objected, that although the wilderness generation entered not in, yet their posterity did under the conduct of Joshua; (ver. 8;) he answers, that this rest in the psalm being proposed and promised in David so long a time (above 400 hundred years) after the people had quietly possessed the land into which they were conducted by Joshua, it must needs be, that another rest, yet to come, was intended in those words of the Psalmist. (ver. 9.) And to conclude his argument he declares, that this new rest had a new peculiar foundation, which the other had no interest or concern in; namely, *his* ceasing from his works, and entering into his rest, who is the author of it. (ver. 10.) This is his way and manner of arguing for the proof of what he had before laid down, and which he ends in that conclusion, "There remaineth, therefore, a rest for the people of God."

2. But we must yet further consider the nature of the several rests here noticed by the Apostle; keeping in remembrance what we have before proved, and his words confirm: viz. that the rest of God is the foundation and principal cause of our rest; being on some

account or other God's rest before it is ours: and that it refers to an appointed rest for the church, which follows it; and which is also a pledge of our participating in the rest of God.

The Apostle then proposes a three-fold state of the church for consideration: viz. its state under the law of nature or creation; under the law of institutions and carnal ordinances; and under the Gospel. To each of these he assigns a distinct rest of God; a rest of the church, entering into God's rest; and a day of rest, as the means and pledge thereof. And further, he manifests, that the two former were ordered to be previous representations of the latter, though not equally, nor on the same account.

First, he considers the church under the law of nature, before the entrance of sin; in which he shews, that there was a rest of God; for saith he, "the works were finished from the foundation of the world, and God did rest from all his works." (ver. 3, 4.) Observe, as the foundation of all he lays down first the works of God; for the church and every peculiar state of it is founded on some special work of God, and not merely on a law or command; and "the foundation of the world" is only a periphrasis of the six original days, wherein time, and all things measured by it and existent with it, had their beginning.

But this alone does not confirm, nor, indeed, come near the purpose or argument of the Apostle; for he is to speak of such a rest of God, as *men* might enter into, and, therefore, a foundation of rest to them; otherwise his discourse was not concerned in it. Wherefore, by a citation of the words of Moses, from

Genesis ii. 2, he tells us, that this rest of God was on the *seventh* day, which God accordingly blessed and sanctified, to be a day of rest unto man. Thus in this state of the church there were the rest of God himself on his works; a rest proposed to man to enter into with God; and a day of rest, as a remembrance of the one, and a means and pledge of the other.

And hereby we principally confirm our opinion, that the Sabbath began with the world; since without this supposition, the mention of God's work and his rest, no way belonged to the purpose of our Apostle. For he discourses only of such rests as men might enter into, and have a pledge of; and there was no such thing from "the foundation of the world," unless the Sabbath were then revealed.

Secondly, the Apostle considers the church under the law of institutions; wherein he represents the rest of the land of Canaan. In this there was a rest of God, which gives denomination to the whole: He still calls it his rest; "if they shall enter into *my rest*." And the prayer about it was, "Arise, O Lord, into *thy rest*, thou and the ark of thy strength;" i. e. the pledge of his presence and rest. And this rest also ensued upon his work; for God wrought about it works great and mighty, and ceased from them when they were finished. And this work of his answered in its greatness to the work of creation, to which it is compared: "I am the Lord thy God that divided the sea, whose waves roared, the Lord of Hosts is his name; and have put my words in thy mouth, and have covered thee in the shadow of my hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundation of the earth, and say unto Zion, thou art my people." The

dividing of the sea, whose waves roared, is put by a synecdoche for the whole work of God, preparing a way for the church state of that people in the land of Canaan; and which he compares to the work of creation, in "planting the heavens, and laying the foundation of the earth." For although those words are but a figurative expression of the political and church state of that people, yet there is an evident allusion in them to the original creation of all things. And upon the finishing of this work he had a satisfaction and complacency; for after the erection of his worship in the land of Canaan, he says of it, "This is my rest, and here will I dwell."

God being thus entered into his rest, the same two things follow; viz. the people are invited and encouraged to enter into it; and a day of rest is appointed. The Apostle treats, in this and the foregoing chapter, of this their entrance into rest, and shews that it was their coming by faith and obedience to a participation of the worship of God wherein he rested; and that although some of them came short of it, by reason of their unbelief, yet that others entered in under the conduct of Joshua. The nature of the day appointed, with its accommodation to their peculiar state, has been already treated of, in our discourse on the Jewish Sabbath.

Thirdly, the Apostle proves from the words of the Psalmist, that there was yet to be a third and special state of the church under the Messiah, which he now proposed to the Hebrews, and exhorted them to enter into. In this church state, there is also to be a peculiar state of rest, distinct from those which went before; to the constitution of which we must again

remember, that there is required some signal work of God completed, whereon he enters into his rest; a rest arising thence, for them that believe to enter into; and a renewed day of rest, to express that rest of God, and to be a pledge of our entering into it. If any, or either of these be wanting, the whole structure of the Apostle's discourse will be dissolved; neither will there be any color remaining for his mentioning the *seventh* day, and the rest thereof.

The Apostle then first shews, that there was a great work of God, and that finished, for the foundation of the whole. This he had made way for in the third chapter, (verses 4, 5,) where he both expressly asserts the Son to be God, and shews the analogy between the creation of all things, and the building of the church; that is, the works of the old and new creation. As then God wrought in the creation of all, so Christ, who is God, wrought in the setting up of this new church state. And upon finishing it, he entered into his rest, as God did into his; whereby he "limited" a certain day of rest to his people. Thus he says, "There remaineth, therefore, a *Sabbatism* for the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his works, as God did from his own."—That is, a new day of rest, accommodated to this new church state, arises from the rest that the Lord Christ entered into, upon his ceasing from his works.

And of this day we may observe, that, in common with the former days, it is a *sabbatism*, or one day in seven, which that name throughout the Scripture, is limited to;—that although both the former states of

the church had one and the same day, though varied in some ends of it, the day itself is now changed, as belonging to another covenant, and having its foundation in a work of another nature;—and that the observation of it is suited to the spiritual state of the church under the Gospel, delivered from the bondage frame of spirit, wherewith it was observed under the law.

The foundation of the whole is laid down in the *tenth* verse, "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his works, as God from his own."* Expositors generally apply these words to believers, and their entering into the rest of God; whether satisfactorily to themselves and others, as to their design, coherence, scope, and signification of particular expressions, I know not; the contrary appears with good evidence to me. For what are the works that believers are here said to rest from? Their *sins*, say some; their labors, sorrows, and sufferings, say others. But how can they be said to rest from these works, as God rested from his? for God so rested from his, as to take the greatest delight and satisfaction in them,—to be refreshed by them. (Exodus xxxi. 17.) He so rested from them, as that he rested in them, and blessed them, and blessed and sanctified the time wherein they were finished; as we have shewn before. But now if those mentioned be the works here intended, men cannot so rest from them, as God did from his; but they cease from them with a detestation of them, so far as they are sinful; and with

* There appears a negligence in our version, in regard to the placing of the word *own*. The passage as quoted by Dr. Owen strictly accords with the original.—Ed.

joy for their deliverance from them, so far as they are sorrowful. Surely this is not to rest, as God rested!

Secondly, when and *where* are believers supposed to rest from these works? It cannot be in this world; for here we rest not at all from temptations, sufferings and sorrows; and even in that mortification of sin which we attain to, the conflict is still continued, and that with severity unto death. (Rom. vii. 24.) It must, therefore, be in heaven that they thus rest; which some accordingly affirm. But this excludes the rest in and of the Gospel, from the Apostle's discourse; which renders it altogether unsuitable to his purpose. This I have so fully demonstrated in the exposition of the chapter, that I hope it will not be gainsayed. *Thirdly,* there is no comparison in the whole discourse between the works of God, and the works of men, but between the works of God in the creation, and under the law on the one side, and those in and under the Gospel on the other; of which the whole comparison is summed up and closed in this verse.

3. It appears, therefore, that the subject of the Apostle's proposition in this place has been mistaken. It is another who is intended, even *Christ* himself, the Son of God, and it is *his* rest from his works, which is here compared with the rest of God from his at the foundation of the world; for which purpose alone the mention of them was introduced: for, *first,* the conjunction *for,* (γαρ) whereby he introduces his assertion, manifests, that the Apostle in these words gives an account, whence it is that there is a new sabbatism remaining for the people of God. "There remains a Sabbath-keeping for the people of God; *for* he that

is entered into his rest, is ceased from his works." * Had there not been a work laying the foundation of the Gospel church state, and a rest of God in it, and ensuing thereon, there could have been no such sabbatism for believers; since those things are required for a Sabbath. He had proved before, that there could be no such rest but what was founded in the works of God, and his rest that ensued thereon; such a foundation, therefore, (he saith,) this *new* rest must have and has. This must be in the works and rest of him by whom the church was built; that is Christ, who is also God, as is expressly argued, chap. iii. 3, 4; and as that rest, which all the world was to observe, was founded in his works and rest who made the world, and all things in it; so the rest of the church under the Gospel is to be founded in his works and rest, by whom the *church* was built; who, on account of his works and rest, is also "Lord of the Sabbath," having authority to abrogate one day of rest, and to institute another.

Secondly, the Apostle here changes the manner of his expression from the plural, "*We* who believe," into the singular "*He* that is entered." A single person is here expressed, with respect to whom the things mentioned are asserted; and the rest, which this person is said to enter into, is called "*His* rest" absolutely, as God speaking of the former rest, calls it "*My* rest;" whereas when the entering of believers into rest is spoken of, it is either called *God's* rest,

* But the conjunction *gar* (γαρ) very frequently signifies *now*, which is not deductive. This is particularly the case in the writings of St. Paul.—Ed.

"They shall enter into *my* rest;" or *rest* absolutely, "We that believe do enter into rest," never *their* rest, or *our* rest, for it is not our own absolutely, but God's, into which we enter.

Thirdly, there is a direct *parallel* in the words, between the works of the old creation, and those of the new, which are compared by the Apostle. For there are the *authors* of them, which on the one side is said to be God; "as God did from his"—that is, God as creator; and on the other side we have "*He*," (ἀυτὸς, the same with ἕ̃τος, chap. iii. 3,) that is, *He* of whom we speak, as the Apostle himself declares, in the 13th verse. There are also *works* of each expressed; e. g. the works of the Creator, called *idia erga*, (ἴδια ἔργα,) "his *own proper* works," viz. the works of the old creation; and the works of him of whom he speaks, called *ta erga autou*, (τὰ ἔργα ἀὐτῦ,) *his* works, viz. those which he wrought in building the church. For these works must answer each other, and have the same respect to their authors; they must be good and complete in their kind, and such as rest and refreshment may be taken in on account of them. To compare the sins and sufferings of men with the works of God, our Apostle certainly did not intend. And the rest of each also have their mutual proportion. For God rested from his own works of creation, by ceasing from creating, only continuing all things by his power in their order, and propagating them to his glory; and by his respect to them, and refreshment in them, as those which expressed his excellencies, set forth his praise, and so satisfied his glorious design: and he also, who is spoken of, must cease from working in the same kind of works; he must suffer and die no more;

but only continue the work of his grace and power in the preservation of the new creature, and the orderly increase and propagation of it by his Spirit. And he takes delight and satisfaction in the works which he has wrought; for "he sees of the travail of his soul, and is satisfied," and is in the possession of that glory which was set before him, whilst he was engaged in this work.

4. Having thus cleared the subject, and shewn, that it is Jesus, the Mediator, who is spoken of, it remains only, that we inquire into his entrance into his rest, how and when he did so; for this must limit and determine the day of rest to the Gospel church.

Now, this was not his lying down in the grave: for though his body indeed rested there for awhile, it was no part of his mediatory rest, as the founder and builder of the church; but after the human nature was personally united to the Son of God, to have it brought into a state of dissolution was a great humiliation. Every thing of this nature belonged to his works, and not to his rest. This separation, indeed, of body and soul under the power of death, was a part of the sentence of the law which he underwent; wherefore Peter declares, that the pains of death were not loosed but in his resurrection: "Whom God (saith he) hath raised up, loosing the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." (Acts ii. 24.)

Neither did he first enter into his rest at his *ascension:* then, indeed, he took actual possession of his glory, as to the full and public manifestation of it; but to enter into rest is one thing, and to take possession of glory another. And it is placed by our

Apostle as a consequence of his being justified in the Spirit, when he entered into rest. (1 Tim. iii. 16.)

His entrance into rest was at his resurrection from the dead. Then was he freed from the sentence, power, and stroke of the law; being discharged of all the debts of our sins, which he had undertaken to make satisfaction for;—then were all types, all predictions and prophecies, which concern the work of our redemption, fulfilled;—then was the law fulfilled and satisfied, Satan subdued, peace made with God, the price of our redemption paid, the promise of the Spirit received, and the whole foundation of the church of God gloriously laid on his person, in his works and rest;—and then was he "declared to be the Son of God with power;" God manifesting to all, that this was he concerning, and to whom he said, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." (Rom. i. 4.; Acts xiii. 33.)

Thus did the author of the new creation, the Son of God, the builder of the church, having finished his works, enter into his rest. And this was, as all know, on the morning of the first day of the week; whereby he limited and determined that day for a sacred sabbatical rest under the New Testament. For now the old covenant was utterly abolished; and therefore the day, which was the pledge of the rest of God and man therein, was taken away, as we have shewn. And hereby the Apostle completes the due analogy between the several rests of God and his people, which he has discoursed of in this chapter.

The Apostle therefore affirms, as the substance of all which he has proved, that there is a *sabbatism* (σαββατισμὸς) for the people of God. (ver. 9.) He frames

the word from a Hebrew original, with a Greek termination; and uses it as comprehensive of his whole sense, which no other word would be. For he would shew, that there is a sabbatical rest founded in the rest of God, remaining for the church; and, therefore, makes use of that word, whereby God expressed his own rest when he sanctified the seventh day for that purpose.

And this is a further evidence, that our Apostle asserts an evangelical Sabbath, or day of rest, to be constantly observed for the worship of God under the Gospel. For when he speaks of our rest in general, he still does it by *katapausis*, (κατάπαυσις,) adding, that there was a special day for its enjoyment; but here he introduces *sabbatismos*, (σαββατισμὸς,) which his way of arguing would not have allowed, had he not designed to express the Christian Sabbath.

IV. Having fixed the foundation of the observation of the *Lord's Day*, on the supposition of what has been proved concerning our duty from the law of our creation, as renewed in the decalogue; the remaining arguments, shewing the change of the day from the seventh to the first by divine authority, shall be but briefly touched on by me, because they have been copiously handled, and fully vindicated by others.

1. Wherefore, when the Lord Christ intended conspicuously to build his church upon the foundation of his works and rest, by sending the Holy Ghost with his miraculous gifts upon the apostles, he did it on the first day; which was then among the Jews the feast of pentecost, or of weeks. Then were the disciples

gathered together with one accord, in the observance of the day signalized to them by his resurrection; (Acts ii. 1;) and their obedience receives a blessed confirmation, as well as their persons a glorious endowment of abilities for the work, which they were immediately to apply themselves to.

2. The practice of the apostles and of the apostolical churches, owned the authority of Christ in this change of the day of sacred rest. For henceforward, whatever apprehensions any of them might have of the continuance of the Judaical Sabbath, (as some of them judged, that the whole service of it was still to be continued,) yet they observed this *day of the Lord*, as the time of their assemblies and solemn worship. One or two instances may be cited: "We came to Troas in five days, where we abode seven days. And upon *the first day of the week*, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech until midnight." (Acts xx. 6, 7.) I doubt not but in the seven days that the Apostle abode there, he taught and preached as he had occasion, in the houses of the believers; but it was the *first* day of the week, when they used, according to their duty, to assemble the whole body of them, for the celebration of the solemn ordinances of the church, here expressed by breaking of bread. This they did without any extraordinary warning or calling together; for in answer to their duty they were accustomed so to do. Such is the account that Justin Martyr gives of the practice of all churches in the next age:—"On the day called Sunday, there is an assembly of all Christians, whether

living in city or the country." Augustin says, "That because of their constant breaking of bread on that day, it was called *dies panis,* the day of bread." (Epist. 118.) And Athanasius observes, "That he brake not a chalice at such a time, because it was not the first day of the week when it was to be used." (Socrat. lib. v. cap. 22.) And whosoever reads this passage without prejudice will grant, that it is a marvellous abrupt, and uncouth expression, if it do not signify that, which was in common observance among all the disciples of Christ, and which could have no other foundation but the authority of the Lord Christ. "Further, I doubt not but Paul preached his farewell sermon, which continued till midnight, after all the ordinary service of the church was performed; and all the objections, which I have met with, against this passage, amount only to this, that although the Scripture says, that the disciples met for their worship on the *first day of the week,* yet indeed they did *not* so."

In 1 Corinthians xvi. 2, the same practice is exemplified; "Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." The constant day of the churches' solemn assemblies being fixed, he here takes it for granted, and directs them to the observance of a special duty on that day. What some except,—that here is no mention of any such assembly, but only that every one on that day should lay by what he would give, which every one might do at home, or where they pleased,—is exceeding weak, and unsuitable to the mind of the Apostle. For to what end should they be limited to a

day, and that the first day of the week, for the doing of that, which might be as well performed on any other day of the week? Besides, it was to be such a laying aside, such a treasuring of it in a common stock, as that there should be no need of any *collection* when the Apostle came; whereas if this were only done privately, it would have to be collected at his coming.

3. That from these times downwards the first day of the week had a solemn observation in all the churches of Christ, in the room of the seventh day, has also been demonstrated. And that this was owned from the authority of the Lord, is declared by John in the Revelation, who calls it the 'Lord's day'; (chap. i. 10;) whereby he did not surprise the churches with a new name, but denoted to them the time of his visions, by the name of the day well known to them. And there is no solid reason why it should be so called, except that it owes its pre-eminence and observation to its institution and authority; nor can any man, who denies these things, give any tolerable account, when, or from whence this day came to be so observed and called. It is *hemera kuriake*, (ἡμέρα κυριακὴ,) the Lord's day, as the holy supper is *deipnon kuriakon*, (δεῖπνον κυριακὸν,) the Lord's supper, by reason of his institution. (1 Cor. xi. 20.) *Yehovah yom*, (יום יהוה,) the day of the Lord, in the Old Testament, which the Seventy render *hemera kuriou*, (ἡμέρα κυρίου,) no where *hemera kuriake*, (ἡμέρα κυριακὴ,) signifies some illustrious appearance of God in a way of judgment or mercy; and so also in the person of Christ, this was the day of his appear-

ance; (Mark xvi. 9;) and was so called by the ancient writers of the church.*

It weakens not the divine origin of this day, that some falsely assign the institution of it to the apostles. For as an obligation lies on all believers to observe a Sabbath to the Lord, and the day observed under the law of Moses is removed, it is not to be imagined that the apostles fixed on another day, without the immediate direction from the Lord Christ; since they delivered nothing to be constantly observed in the worship of God, but what they had his authority for. (1 Cor. xi. 23.) In all things of this nature, as they had the infallible guidance of the Holy Ghost, so they acted immediately in the name and authority of Christ; wherefore, what they ordained was no less of divine institution, than if it had been appointed by Christ in his own person. It is true, they themselves did for a season, whilst their ministry was to have a peculiar regard to the Jews, for the calling and conversion of the remnant that was amongst them according to the election of grace, go frequently into their synagogues on the *seventh* day to preach the Gospel; (Acts xiii. 14; xvi. 13; xvii. 2; and xviii. 4;) but it is evident they did so, only to take the opportunity of their assemblies, that they might preach to the greater numbers of them, and at a season when they were prepared to attend to sacred things. But we do not read, that they at any time assembled the disciples of Christ on that day for the worship of God.

* Ignatius in Epist. ad Trall. ad Magnes. &c.; Dionysius of Corinth.; Epist. ad Rom. in Euseb. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 21.; Theophilus Antioch. lib. i. in 4 Evangel.; Clemens Alex. Stromat. lib. vii. cap. 7.; Origen, lib. viii. con. Cels.; Tertul. de Coron. Milit. cap. 3.

EXERCITATION IX.

The seventh day precisely, as a Sabbath under the Gospel, further disproved.

THESE foundations being laid, I shall yet by some important considerations, if I mistake not, give further evidence of the necessity of the religious observation of the first day of the week, in opposition to the day of the law, which is contended for by some.

1. First, then, it is acknowledged, that the observation of some *certain* day, for the solemn public worship of God, is of indispensable necessity. They are beneath our consideration, by whom this is denied. Most acknowledge it to be a dictate of the law of nature, and the nature of these things requires it. We have proved also, that there is such a determination of this time to one day in seven, that it must needs be the highest impudence in any person, persons or churches, to attempt any alteration; and notwithstanding the pretences of some about their liberty, none yet have been so hardy from the foundation of the world, as practically to determine a day for the worship of God, in any other revolution of days or times, to the neglect and exclusion of one day in seven.* Yea, the light hereof is such, and the use of it so great, that those, who have taken up with the

* The impious experiment has since been tried in a neighbouring country, and the awful fruits are too well known.—ED.

worst of superstitions instead of religion, as the Mahometans, yet complying in general with the performance of a solemn worship to God, have found it necessary to fix on one certain day in the weekly revolution for that purpose. And indeed partly from the appointment of God, and partly from the nature of the thing itself, the religious observation of such a day, is the great preservative of all solemn profession of religion in the world. This the law of nature, and the written word point out, and experience makes it manifest to all. Take away from amongst men, a conscience of observing a fixed stated day of sacred rest to God, and for the celebration of his worship in assemblies, and all religion will quickly decay, if not come to nothing in this world. And it may be observed, that wheresoever religion flourishes in its power, there conscience is the most exercised, and the most diligence used in the observation of such a day. I will not say absolutely, that it is religion, which teaches men exactness in the observation of this day; nor on the other hand, that a conscience made of this observation, procures a universal strictness in other duties of religion: but this is evident, that they mutually help one another; and, therefore, though some have laboured to divest this observation of any immediate *divine* authority, yet they are forced to admit, that none can neglect its observation, in ordinary cases, without sin. Whether they have done well to remove from it the command of *God*, and to substitute their *own* in the room of it, they may do well to consider.

Secondly, it is manifest to all unprejudiced persons, that the apostles, and apostolical churches, did reli-

giously observe this day; and no man can with any modesty question the celebration of the worship of God on the same day, in the next succeeding generations: all the disciples of Christ, at this day in the world, are in possession of this practice; some very few only excepted, who sabbatize with the Jews, or please themselves with a vain pretence, that *every* day is to them a Sabbath. Nor is it simply the catholicism of this practice which I insist upon; though it has such weight in things of this nature, that for my part I shall not dissent from any practice that is so attested; but it is the *blessing of God* upon this day and its worship, which is pleaded as that, which ought to be of high esteem with all humble Christians. On this day, throughout all ages, has the edification of the churches been carried on, and that public revenue of glory been rendered to God, which is his due. On this day has God given his presence to all his solemn ordinances, for all the ends for which he has appointed them. Nor has he given any, the least intimation of his displeasure against his churches, for their continuance in the observation of it: on the contrary, not only have the wisest and holiest men, who have complained of the sins of the several times and ages wherein they lived, which procured the pouring out of the judgments of God upon them, constantly reckoned the neglect and profanation of the Lord's day among them; but such instances have been given of particular severities against those who have openly profaned this day, as may well affect the minds and consciences of those, who profess a reverence of God, in the holy dispensations of his providence.

Nor can any of these things be pleaded to give

countenance to any *other* day, that may be set up in competition with the Lord's day. What can be said of this nature concerning the seventh day? which is now contended for by some, and (which is grievous) by persons holy and learned. Of what use has it ever been to the church of God, setting aside the occasional advantages taken from it by the apostles, of preaching the Gospel in the synagogues of the Jews? What testimonies have we of the presence of God with any churches, in the administration of Gospel ordinances and worship on that day? and if any lesser assemblies do at present pretend to give such a testimony, wherein is it to be compared with that of all the holy churches of Christ throughout the world, in all ages, especially in those last past?

Let men, in whose hearts are the ways of God, seriously consider the use that has been made, under the blessing of God, of the conscientious observation of the Lord's day, in the past and present age, for the promotion of holiness, righteousness, and religion universally in the power of it; and, if they are not under invincible prejudices, it will be very difficult for them to judge, that it is a plant, which our heavenly Father hath not planted. For my part, I must not only say, but plead whilst I live in this world, and leave this testimony to the present and future ages, (if these papers survive and see the light,) that if I have ever seen any thing in the ways and worship of God, wherein the power of religion or godliness has been expressed,—any thing that has represented the holiness of the Gospel, and the author of it,—any thing that has looked like a *præludium* to the everlasting Sabbath and rest with God, which we aim through grace to come

to, it has been with those, amongst whom the Lord's day has been had in highest esteem, and a strict observation of it attended to, as an ordinance of our Lord Jesus Christ. The remembrance of the ministry, the walk and conversation, the faith and love of those, who in this nation have most zealously pleaded for, and have been in their persons, families, and churches or parishes, the most strict observers of this day, will be precious with them that fear the Lord, whilst the sun and moon endure. Their doctrine, also, in this matter, with the blessing that attended it, was that for which multitudes now at rest bless God, and many that are yet alive do greatly rejoice in. Let these things be despised by those, who are otherwise minded; to me they are of great weight and importance.

2. Let us now a little consider the day that by some is set up, not only in competition with this, but to its utter exclusion. This is the *seventh* day of the week, or the old Judaical Sabbath, which some contend that we are perpetually obliged to the observation of, by virtue of the fourth commandment. The grounds whereon they proceed in their assertion, have been already disproved, so far as the nature of our present undertaking will admit; and such evidence given for the change of the day, as will not easily be everted nor removed. The *consequences* of the observation of the seventh day, should the practice of it be reassumed among Christians, is that which at present I shall a little inquire into.

I know not how it is come to pass, but so it is fallen out, that the nearer Judaism is to an absolute abolition and disappearance, the more some seem inclined to its revival and continuance, or at least to fall back them-

selves into its antiquated observances. It had an end put to it morally and legally long ago, in the coming, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; and we may say of it, what the Apostle said of idols when the world was full of idolatry, "we know that *Judaism* is nothing in the world." The actual abolition of it in the profession of the present Jews, by the removing of the vail from their hearts and eyes, and their turning to God, we hope is in its approach.

It is apparent in the Acts and Epistles of the apostles, especially that to the Hebrews, that at the first preaching of the Gospel, there were very many Jews who came over to the faith and profession of it. Many of these continued zealous of the law, and would bring along with them all their Mosaical institutions, which they thought were to abide in force for ever. In this weakness and misapprehension they were borne with, in the patience of God and wisdom of the Holy Ghost. In this state things continued to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, when the chief cause of their contests was taken away. In the mean time they carried themselves variously, according to the various tempers of their minds. For it is apparent that some of them were not content to be indulged in their opinions and practices themselves, but they endeavoured by every means to impose the observance of the whole Mosaical law on the churches of the Gentiles, contending about their circumcision, their Sabbaths, their feasts and fasts, their abstinences from this or that kind of meats, and thereby perverting the minds of the disciples. Some stop was put to the evil consequences of this in the synod at Jerusalem, (Acts xv,) which yet determined nothing concerning

he Jews' own practice, but only concerning the liberty of the Gentile believers.

After the destruction of Jerusalem these professing Jews fell into several distinct ways. Some of them, who had probably despised the heavenly warning of leaving the place, took up their lot amongst their unbelieving brethren, relinquishing the profession of the Gospel which they had made: not it may be with any express renunciation of Christ; but with a disregard of the Gospel, which brought them not those good things they looked for: of which mind Josephus the historian seems to be one. These in time became a part of that apostate brood, which have since continued in their enmity to the Gospel, and into whose new and old superstitions they introduced sundry customs, which they had learned among the Christians. Some absolutely relinquished their old Judaism, and completely incorporated with the new Gentile churches, to whom the promise and covenant of Abraham was transferred and made over; and these were the genuine disciples of our great Apostle. Others continued their profession of the Gospel, but still thought themselves obliged to observe the law of Moses, and all its institutions; and, therefore, continued in a distinct and separate state from the believers and churches of the Gentiles; and that for some ages,—as some say to the days of Adrian. These were probably the same as Eusebius out of Hegesippus calls *Masbothai*, whom he reckons as a sect of the Jews. (Hist. lib. iv. 21.) The Jews call them *Sabbatarians*, which must be from some observation of the Sabbath in a manner or for reasons different from themselves. Buxtorf, and our late learned lexicographer render

masbothai (משבותאי) by *Sabbatarii,* adding this explanation, "*Qui secundum Christi Doctrinam Sabbatum observabant,*" (who observed the Sabbath according to the doctrine of Christ,) by a mistake; for as they are reckoned Jews by Hegesippus, so those, who followed the doctrine of Christ, did not sabbatize with the Jews, nor were ever called Sabbatarians by them. There was, indeed, a sort of persons among the Samaritans who are called *Sabuæi,* whom Epiphanius makes the third sect of them; but these were so called without any respect to a Sabbatical observation; and Epiphanius says no more of them, than that they observed the feast of pentecost in autumn, and the feast of tabernacles in the spring, at the time of the Jews' passover; but gives no account, why they should be so called. But they got this appellation from their observation of every day in the week, between the passover and the pentecost; that is for seven weeks, which was the same with the second day in the week of unleavened bread, whereon the omer or sheaf of first fruits was to be offered.

But to return; after this many of them coalesced, and we hear no more of them. In the mean time, as there were great disputes between the differing parties, whilst the occasion of their difference continued, the Gentile believers either condescended in many things to those of the circumcision, or fell in love with their observances and received them into practice. Hence it was, that they embraced the paschal solemnity, with some other festivals; and also in many places admitted the sacredness of the seventh day Sabbath; though still observing, according to the institution of Christ and his apostles, the Lord's day also. And it is not

improbable, that they might be induced the rather to continue these observations, in order thereby to give a public testimony of their faith against the Marcionites, who began early to blaspheme the Old Testament and the God thereof; which blasphemy they thought to condemn by this practice. And hence in those writings which are falsely ascribed to the apostles, but suited to those times, (Can. 66, and Constitut. lib. vii. cap. 24,) the observation both of the Saturday and the Lord's day are enjoined.

Others of the Jews about the same season constituted a sect by themselves, compounding a religion out of the Law and Gospel, with additions and interpretations of their own. These the ancients call *Ebionites*. Circumcision, with all the Sabbaths, feasts and rites of Moses, they retained from the law; that the Messiah was come, and that Jesus Christ was he, they admitted from the Gospel; that he was only a mere man, not God and man in one person, they added of their own. This is the sect, which in a long tract of time has brought forth Mahometanism in the East; which is nothing but the religion of the Ebionites, with a superaddition of the interests and fananatical brain-sick notions of the imposter himself. And yet some begin now to plead, that these Ebionites were the only true and genuine believers of the circumcision in those days! These, they say, and these alone, retained the doctrine preached by the apostles to the Jews, being the same as the *Nazarenes*. Thus the Socinians plead expressly, and have contended for it in sundry treatises; hoping to obtain from thence some countenance of their impious doctrine about the person of Christ, wherein they agree with the Ebionites: but they will

have nothing to do with their sabbatizing with the Jews, and the rest of their ceremonial observances, not finding these things suited to their interest and design.

But now they begin to be followed by some among ourselves, who apparently fall in with them in sundry things condemned by our Apostle, and on account of which they rejected his authority: as others seem almost prepared to do. In particular some begin to sabbatize with them; yea, to outgo them: for Ebion and his followers, although they observed the seventh day Sabbath with the Jews, yet observed also the Lord's day with the Christians in honor of Jesus Christ; as both Eusebius and Epiphanius testify. How great a scandal these things are to the Christian religion, and how evidently tending to harden the Jews in their infidelity, must be apparent to all: for the introduction of any part of the old Mosaical system of ordinances, is a tacit denial of Christ's being come in the flesh,—at least of his being the King, Lord, and Lawgiver of his church. And to lay the foundation of all religious solemn Gospel-worship in the observation of a day, which has no relation to any natural or moral precept,—which is neither instituted nor approved by Jesus Christ, cannot but be unpleasing to those who desire to have their consciences immediately influenced by his authority, in all their approaches to God. Yet Christ is herein supposed to have built the whole fabric of his worship on the foundation of Moses, and to have grafted all his institutions into a stock, that was not of his own planting.

3. Moreover it is evident that this opinion, concerning the necessary observation of the seventh day Sabbath, tends to increase and perpetuate schisms and dif-

ferences among the disciples of Christ; things in their own nature evil, and to be avoided by all lawful ways and means. It is known how many different opinions and practices there are among professors of the Gospel: that they should all be perfectly healed in this world, is not to be expected; for the best "know but in part, and prophesy but in part;" but none will deny that every good man and genuine disciple of Christ ought to endeavour his utmost for their removal. For if it be our duty, "as much as in us lieth to live peaceably with all men," in that peace which is the life of civil society; doubtless it is much more so to live thus with all believers, in a peaceable agreement in the worship of God: and, therefore, of all differences in judgment, which lead to practice, those are the most pernicious, which hinder men from joining together in the same public solemn worship, whereby they yield to God that revenue of his glory, which is due to him in this world. That many such are found at this day, is not so much from the nature of the things themselves, about which men differ, as from the weakness, prejudice, and corrupt affections of those, who are possessed with different apprehensions about them.

But now upon a supposition of an adherence by any to the seventh day Sabbath, all communion amongst professors in solemn Gospel ordinances is rendered impossible. For if those of that persuasion expect, that others will be brought to relinquish an evangelical observance of the Lord's day Sabbath, they will find themselves mistaken. The evidence which they have of its appointment, and the experience they have had of the presence of God with them in its religious

observation, will secure their faith and practice in this matter. On the other hand, supposing that they themselves are obliged to meet for all solemn worship on the *seventh* day, (which the others account unwarrantable for them to do, on the presence of any binding law to that effect,) and esteem it unlawful to assemble religiously with others on the first day, on the plea of an evangelical warranty, they absolutely cut themselves off from all possibility of communion, in the administration of Gospel ordinances, with all other churches of Christ. And whereas most other breaches, as to such communion, are in their own nature capable of healing, without a renunciation of those principles, which seem to give countenance to them; the distance is here made absolutely irreparable, whilst the opinion mentioned is owned by any. I will press this no farther, except by affirming, that persons truly fearing the Lord, ought to be very careful and jealous over their own understandings, before they embrace an opinion and practice, which will shut them up from all visible communion, with the generality of the saints of God in this world.

4. We have seen the least part of the inconveniences that attend this persuasion; nor do I intend to mention all which readily offer themselves to consideration; one or two more only shall be touched on. Those by whom it is owned, do not only affirm, that the law of the seventh day Sabbath is absolutely and universally in force, but also that the sanction of it, in its penalty against transgressors, is yet continued. This was, as is known, the death of the offender by stoning. (Numbers xv. 35.) Now the consideration of this penalty, as expressive of the curse of the law,

influenced the minds of the Jews to that bondage frame wherein they observed the Sabbath; and this put them upon many anxious arguings, how they might satisfy the law in keeping the day, so as not to incur the penalty of its transgression. Hence their questions, (no less endless than those about their genealogies of old,) as to what work may be done, and what not; and how far they might journey on that day: when they had with some indifferent consent reduced it to 2000 cubits, which they called a Sabbath day's journey, they were still not agreed where to begin their measure,—from what part of the city in which a man dwelt,—from his own house, or the synagogue, or the walls, or the suburbs. And the dread of this was so great of old, from the rigorous justice with which such penalties were imposed, that until they had, by common consent, in the beginning of the rule of the Asmonæans, agreed to defend themselves from their enemies on that day, they sat still in a neglect of the law of nature, and suffered themselves to be slain by those who chose to assault them on it. After all they lost their city by some influence from this superstition: and certainly it is the greatest madness in the world, for a people to engage in war, who do not at least think it at all times lawful to defend themselves.

And are men aware what they do, when they endeavour to introduce such a bondage into the observance of Gospel worship,—a yoke upon the persons and spirits of men, which those before us were not able to bear? Is it according to the mind of Christ, that the worship of God under the Gospel, should be enforced on men by capital penalties? If, then, the

seventh day precisely is to be kept, and the transgression of this Sabbath, by journeying, or other bodily labor, is to be avenged with death; undoubtedly in the practice of these principles, besides that open contradiction which men will fall into, as regards the spirit, rule, and word of the Gospel, they will find themselves in the same entanglements as the Jews were in. And as the cases that may occur, as to what may be done and what not, are not to be determined by private persons, according to their own light and understanding, but by those to whom power is committed to judge upon it, and to execute its penalty; so there will so many cases arise, and those almost inexplicable, as will render the whole law an intolerable burden to Christians. And what then is become of 'the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free?' and wherein is the pre-eminence of the spiritual worship of the Gospel, above the carnal ordinances of the law?

5. And this introduces an evil of no less importance, than any of those before enumerated. The precise observation of the seventh day, as such, is undoubtedly no part of that law which is naturally moral; as we have sufficiently proved. Nor is it an institution of the Gospel; none ever pretended it so to be: if there be not much *against* it in the New Testament, yet surely there is nothing *for* it. In the things that are so, we have ground to expect the assistance of the Spirit of Christ, to enable us rightly to observe them to the glory of God, and to our own edification, or increase in grace. But this is a mere precept of the old law as such; and what the law speaks, it speaks unto them that are under the

law. In all its precepts it exercises a "*severe dominion*" (*katakurieuoi*, κατακυριευοι) over the souls and consciences of those that are under it. And we have no way to extricate ourselves from under that dominion, but by our being dead to its power and authority as such, by faith in the benefits, which through Christ's fulfilling and satisfying the law, redound to the church. But what is required of any one, under the notion of the formal and absolute power of the law, is to be performed in and by that spirit, which is administered by the law, and by the strength which the law affords: which indeed is great, as to conviction of sin; but nothing at all, as to obedience and righteousness. Do men, then, in these things appeal to the law? to the law they must go. For I know nothing in which we can expect assistance of Gospel grace, except only those things which are originally moral, or superadded to them in the Gospel itself; to neither of which heads can this observation of the seventh day be referred. It is, therefore, merely a *legal* duty, properly so called; and must be performed in a bondage frame of spirit, without any special assistance of grace. And how little we are beholden to those, who would in any one instance reduce us from the liberty of the Gospel, to bondage under the law, our Apostle has so fully declared, that it is altogether needless further to attempt the manifestation of it.

EXERCITATION X.

Practical rules for a due observation of the Lord's day Sabbath.

(PRINCIPLES TO BE BORNE IN MIND.)

IT remains that something be briefly offered, concerning a *practice* suitable to the principles here laid down; for this is the end of all sacred truth, and all instruction therein. This our blessed Saviour teaches us in those words, "If you know these things, happy are ye if you do them;" (John xiii. 17;) words so filled with his wisdom, that happy are they in whose hearts they are always abiding. Knowledge without practice but "*puffeth* up," not "*buildeth* up;" (1 Cor. viii. 1;) and as Austin says, in reference to those words; 'Many things are hurtful to some, which are not evil in themselves.' (*Con. Faust. Man.* lib. xv. cap. 8.)

My endeavours in this respect may seem less necessary than in the foregoing discourses, because there are many treatises on this part of our subject, in our own language, and in the hands of those, who esteem themselves concerned in these things. With some, indeed, they meet with no other entertainment, than the *posts* did that were sent by Hezekiah through Ephraim, Manasseh, and Zebulun, to invite them to the passover;—they are laughed to scorn and mocked at. (2 Chron. xxx. 10.) "But wisdom is justified of her children;"—to some they are of great use, and in

great esteem. Still, I cannot take myself to be discharged from the consideration of this concern; more particularly as there are yet important directions for the right sanctifying of the name of God, in and by the due observance of a day of sacred rest, which I am not aware have been insisted on by others.

Besides, there are not a few complaints, (and some of them by persons of sobriety and learning, pretending also a real care for the preservation and due observance of all duties of piety and religion,) that there has been some excess in the directions of many, about the due sanctification of the Lord's day. Of this nature many judge some rigorous prescriptions to be; to the great disadvantage of religion, as they say. For it is pretended, that they are such as are beyond the constitution of human nature to comply with; whence men, finding themselves unable to obtain satisfaction in the performance of these duties, have sought relief by rejecting the whole command; which they would have adhered to, had it been interpreted in such a condescension as they were capable of obeying. And many by degrees have declined from that strictness, which they could not delight in, until they have utterly lost all sense of duty towards God in this matter.

In things of this nature those, who are called to the instruction of others, are carefully to avoid extremes; "For he that condemns the righteous, and he that justifieth the wicked, are both of them an abomination to the Lord." There are several instances of the miscarriages of men in either respect; on the one hand lay the sin of the Pharisees of old, who, when they

had the pretence of a command, would burden it with so many rigid observances, as made it an intolerable yoke to their disciples. By these means they obtained the reputation of strict observers of the law; but they were not really so wanting to their own ease and interest, as not to provide a secret dispensation for themselves;—they would scarce put a finger to the burdens which they bound and laid on the shoulders of others. And this is the condition of almost all, that has an appearance of religion or devotion in the papacy. And a fault of the same nature, though not of so signal a provocation, others may fall into unadvisedly, who are free from their hypocrisy: they may charge and press both their own consciences, and other men's, beyond what God has appointed; and this with a sincere intention to promote religion and holiness amongst men. But in the direction of the consciences of men, about their duties to God, this is carefully to be avoided; for peace is only to be obtained in keeping steady and even to the rule. To transgress on the right-hand, whatever the pretence may be, is to lie for God; which will not be accepted with him.

But on the other hand there is a rock of far greater danger; which consists in the *accommodation* of the laws, precepts, and institutions of God, to the lusts and present habits of men. This evil we have had exemplified in some of late, no less conspicuously than the fore-mentioned was in them of old; a mystery of iniquity having been discovered, tending to the utter debauchery of the consciences and lives of men. And in it lies the great contrivance, by which the famous sect of the Jesuits has prevailed on the minds of many,

especially of potentates and great men in the earth, so as to get into their hands the conduct of the most important affairs of Europe.

Their main design, as is now manifest, has been so to interpret Scripture laws, rules, and precepts, as to accommodate them to that course of corrupt conversation, which prevails generally in the world, even among those who are called Christians: a work acceptable to all sorts of men, who, if not given up to open atheism, would rejoice in nothing more, than in a reconciliation between the rule of their consciences and their lusts, that they might sin freely without trouble or remorse.

And there is nothing in their whole course, which faithful interpreters of the mind of God ought more carefully to avoid, than a falling, in any instance, into that evil, which these men have promoted. The world, indeed, seems to be weary of the righteous and holy ways of God, and of that exactness in walking according to his institutions and commands, which it will be one day known he requires: but it is not the way to put a stop to this declension, to accommodate the commands of God to the corrupt courses and ways of men. The truths of God, and the holiness of his precepts, must be pleaded and defended, though the world dislike them here, and perish hereafter. His law must not be made to lackey after the wills of men, nor be dissolved by vain interpretations, because they complain they *cannot*, or rather *will not* comply with it. Our Lord Jesus Christ came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil them, and to supply men with spiritual strength to fulfil them also. It is evil to break the least commandment,

but there is a great aggravation of that evil in them that shall "*teach* men so to do." And this can only be done by giving such expositions of them, as may lead men to think themselves freed from the obligation to that obedience, which they nevertheless require. Wherefore, though some should say now, as they did of old, concerning any command of God, "Behold, what a weariness it is; and what profit is it to keep his ordinances?" yet the law of God is not to be changed to give them relief. We are, therefore, in this matter to have no consideration of the present course of the world, nor of the weariness of professors in the ways of strict obedience; but singly and sincerely inquire after the sacred truth and will of God in all his commands.

And yet I will not deny, that there have been and are in this matter mistakes, leaning towards the other extreme. Directions have been given, and by many, for the observation of a day of holy rest, which have had no sufficient warrant or foundation in Scripture. For whereas some have made no distinction between the Sabbath as moral and as Mosaical, unless it be merely in the change of the day; and have endeavoured to introduce the whole practice required on the latter into the Lord's day; others again have collected whatever they could think of, that is good, pious, and useful in the practice of religion, and prescribed it all as necessary to the sanctification of this day; so that a man can scarcely in six days read over all the duties, that are proposed to be observed on the seventh. And it has been no small mistake also, that men have labored more to multiply directions about external duties, (giving them out, as it were, by number

or tale,) than to direct the *mind* to a due performance of the whole duty of the sanctification of the day, according to the spirit and genius of Gospel obedience. And lastly, it cannot be denied that some (it may be measuring others by themselves, and their own abilities) have been ready to tie them up to such long and tiresome duties, and rigid abstinence from refreshments, as have clogged their minds, and turned the whole service of the day into a wearisome bodily exercise, that profiteth little.

It is not my design to insist upon any thing that is controverted amongst learned and sober persons; nor will I now extend this discourse to a particular consideration of the special duties, required in the sanctification or services of this day: but as all men, who wish to promote piety in the world, however they may differ as to the reasons for observing this day to the Lord, do nevertheless agree, that there is a great and sinful neglect of the due observation of it; I shall give such rules and general directions, as will give sufficient guidance in the whole of our duty therein.

I. It may seem necessary, that something should be premised, concerning the measure or continuance of the day to be set apart to a holy rest unto the Lord. But as it is a matter of controversy, and to me of no great importance, I shall not insist upon the examination of it, but only give my judgment in a word concerning it.

Some contend that it is a natural day, consisting of twenty-four hours, beginning with the evening of the preceding day, and ending with its own evening.

The church of Israel was thus directed, "From even unto even shall you celebrate your Sabbath;" (Lev. xxiii. 32.;) although that does not seem to be a general direction for the observation of the weekly Sabbath, but to regard only that particular Sabbath, which was thus instituted; namely, the day of atonement. However, suppose it to belong also to the weekly Sabbath; it is evidently an addition to the command particularly suited to the Mosaic discipline, that the day might comprise the sacrifice of the preceding evening in the services of it, from an obedience to which we are freed by the Gospel.

Further, I cannot subscribe to this opinion; *first*, because, in the description and limitation of the original seven days, it is said of each of the six, that it was constituted of an "evening and a morning;" but of the day of rest there is no such description; it is only called the seventh day, without any assignation of the preceding evening to it. *Secondly*, a day of rest according to rules of natural equity, ought to be proportioned to the day of labor, which God has granted to us for our own use. And this is to be reckoned from morning to evening. (Psalm civ. 20—23.) The day of labor is from the removal of darkness and the night, by the light of the sun, until the return of them again; which, allowing for the alterations of the day in the several seasons of the year, seems to be the just measure of our day of rest. *Thirdly*, our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his resurrection gave beginning and being to the special day of holy rest under the Gospel, rose not until the *morning* of the first day of the week, when the beamings of the light of the sun began to dispel the darkness of the night; or when it dawned

towards day, as it is variously expressed by the Evangelists. This with me, determines this whole matter. *Fourthly,* mere cessation from labor in the night seems to have no place in the spiritual rest of the Gospel to be expressed on this day; nor to be by any thing distinguished from the night of other days of the week. *Fifthly,* suppose Christians under the obligation of the direction given by Moses before-mentioned, and it may entangle them in the anxious discussions which the Jews are subject to, about the beginning of the evening itself; concerning which their greatest masters are at variance. But these things belong not to the economy of the Gospel.

Upon the whole, I am inclined to judge, that the observation of the day is to be commensurate to the use of our natural strength on any other day, from morning to night. And nothing is hereby lost that is needful to the due sanctification of the day: for what is by some required as a *part* of its sanctification, is rather to be required as a due *preparation* thereto.

This, therefore, is our first rule or direction: the first-day of the week, or the Lord's day, is to be set apart for the purpose of a holy rest to God, by every one, according as his natural strength will enable him to employ himself in his lawful occasions on any other day of the week. There is no such certain standard for the observance of the duties of this day, as that every one who exceeds it ought to be restrained; or that those, who for important reasons come short, should be stretched out to it. As God provided in his services of old, that he who was not able to offer a bullock might offer a dove, with respect to their outward condition; so in this instance

there is an allowance also for the natural temperament and abilities of men. Only as persons of old, if they had pretended poverty, to save their charge in the procuring an offering, would not have been acceptable,—yea, they would have fallen under the curse of the deceiver; so neither will a *pretence* of weakness or natural inability be any excuse now for neglect or profaneness. In all other respects God requires of us, and accepts from us, "according to what we have, and not according to what we have not." And we see by experience, that some men's natural spirits will carry them out to a continuance in the outward observance of duties, far beyond what others are able to perform, who nevertheless may observe a holy Sabbath to the Lord with acceptance. And herein lies the principle of the accommodation of these duties to the sick, the aged, the young, the weak, or persons any way distempered. "God knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust;" as also, that this dust is more discomposed and weakly compacted in some than in others. As then the people gathered manna of old, some more, some less, "every man according to his appetite, yet he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack;" (Exod. xvi. 18.;) so is every one in sincerity, according to his own ability, to endeavour the sanctifying of the name of God in the duties of this day; not being obliged by the examples or prescriptions of others.

II. Secondly, labor to observe this day, and to perform the duties required in it, with a frame of mind becoming and answering the spirit and liberty of the

Gospel. We are now to serve God in all things in the newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter; (Rom. vii. 6.;) with a spirit of peace, delight, joy, liberty, and a sound mind.

1. There were three reasons of the bondage frame of spirit, which was in the Judaical church, in their observance of the duties of the law, and consequently of the Sabbath. *First,* the dreadful giving and promulgation of it on Mount Sinai; which was not intended merely to strike a terror into that generation in the wilderness, but to influence and awe the hearts of the people through all ages of that dispensation. Hence the Apostle tells us that "Mount Sinai gendered to bondage;" (Gal. iv. 24.;) that is, the law given on it brought the people into a spiritually servile state, wherein, although on account of the ends of the covenant they were children and heirs, yet they differed nothing from servants. (chap. iv. 1, 3.) *Secondly,* the renovation of the old covenant, with the promises and threatenings of it, which was to be upon them during the continuance of that state. And although the law had a new use and end now given to it, yet they were so in the dark, and the proposal of them attended with so great obscurity, that they could not clearly look into the comfort and liberty finally intended therein. "For the law made nothing perfect;" and what was of grace in the administration of it was so veiled with types, ceremonies, and shadows, that "they could not see to the end of the things that were to be done away." (2 Cor. iii. 13.) *Thirdly,* the sanction of the law by death increased their bondage. For as this in itself was a terror to them in their services, so it expressed and represented

the original curse. (Gal. iii. 13.) In these three things was administered a "spirit of bondage unto fear," which by the Apostle is opposed to the "spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father;" and where that is, there is liberty, and there only. (Rom. viii. 15.; 2 Cor. iii. 17.) And, therefore, although the Jews boasted, that they were the children of Abraham, and therefore never in bondage; yet our Saviour lets them know, that whatever they pretended, they were not free until the Son should make them so.

2. Now we are freed from these things under the Gospel. For, *first*, we are not now brought to receive the law from Mount Sinai, but are come unto Mount Sion; that is, we receive the law of our obedience from Jesus Christ, who speaks from heaven, to be observed with a spirit of liberty. (See Heb. xii. 18—24.) *Secondly*, the old covenant is now absolutely abolished, nor is the remembrance of it any way revived; (Heb. viii. 13;) but believers are taken into a covenant full of grace, joy, and peace; "for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John i. 17.) In this covenant they receive the Spirit of Christ, or of *adoption*, to serve God without legal fear; (Luke i. 74.; Rom. viii. 15.; Gal. iv. 6.;) nor is there any thing more insisted on in the Gospel, than this principal privilege of it. It is, indeed, nothing to have liberty in the word and rule, unless we have it in the spirit and principle.

And hereby are we delivered from that anxious solicitude about particular instances in outward duties, which was a great part of the yoke of the people of

old. For now we may in our duties look on God as a father parent; and by the spirit of his Son, cry, in all of them, *Abba Father.* For through Christ "we have an access *by* one Spirit unto the Father;" (Ephesians ii. 18.;)—to God, as a Father;—as one "that will not always chide;" that does not watch our steps for our hurt, but remembereth that we are but dust; who does not tie us up to rigid exactness in outward things, if only we act in a holy spirit of filial obedience as his sons or children. There is a great difference between the duties of servants and children; nor does a father measure them in the same manner: the consideration of which, regulated by the general rules of the Scripture, will resolve a thousand such scruples as the Jews of old, whilst servants, were perplexed with. Now also we are called to "worship God in spirit and in truth:" therefore he minds the inward frame of our hearts, wherewith we serve him, more than the mere performance of outward duties; which are only accepted, so far as they are expressions and demonstrations thereof. If then, in the observation of this day, our hearts are single and sincere in our aim at his glory, it is of more price with him, than the most rigid observation of outward duties by number and measure.

Therefore the minds of believers are not to be influenced to this duty by the curse of the law, and the terror thereof, as represented in the threatened penalty of death. The authority and love of Jesus Christ are the principal causes of our obedience. Hence our main duty consists in an endeavour to get spiritual joy and delight in the services of this day; which is the special effect of spiritual liberty. Thus as the prophet requires, that we should "call the Sab-

bath our delight, holy and honourable of the Lord;" as also, on the other side, "that we should not do our own pleasure, nor our own ways, nor find our own pleasure, nor speak our own words." (Isaiah lviii. 13.) These cautions seem to regard the Sabbath absolutely, and not as Judaical. But I much question whether they have not, by the interpretation of some, been extended beyond their original intention. For the true meaning of them is no more, than that we should so delight ourselves in the Lord on his holy day, as not to desire to turn aside to our own pleasures and vain ways, in order to pass over the Sabbath: a thing complained of by many; and by which sin and Satan have been more served on this day, than on all the days of the week beside. But I by no means think, that there is a restraint laid on us from such words, ways, and works, as do not hinder the performance of religious duties, belonging to the due celebration of God's worship, and which are not apt in themselves to unframe our spirits, or divert our affections from them. And those, whose minds are fixed in a spirit of liberty to glorify God in this day of rest, and who seek communion with him in the ways of his worship, will be to themselves a better rule for their words and actions, than those who may aim to reckon over all they do or say; which may be done in such a manner, as to become the Judaical Sabbath, more than the Lord's day.

III. *Thirdly*, be sure to bring good and right principles to the performance of this duty. 1. Remember that there is a holy rest of one day in the week, due to the solemn work of glorifying God as God. "Re-

member the Sabbath to keep it holy." We have had a week to our own occasions, or we have the prospect of a week in the patience of God for them: let us remember, that God puts in his claim for some time with us; that all is not our own; that we are not our own lords; that God will have some time to himself from all that own him. He does not esteem himself acknowledged, nor his sovereignty owned in the world, without it; and therefore he required this day of rest, the first day, as it were, that the world stood upon its legs; he has required it all along, and will continue so to do till the last day of its duration.

2. Secondly, remember, that God appointed this day, to teach us, that as he rested therein, so we should seek after rest in him here, and look on this day as a pledge of eternal rest with him hereafter. Now our rest in God generally consists in two things: First, in our approbation of his works, his law, and his covenant; which things are expressive of the goodness, righteousness, holiness, faithfulness, and power of God. What God therefore rests in, he requires that we should seek to rest in likewise; and if this was the duty of man in innocency, and under the law, it is much more so now; for God has now more eminently and gloriously, by Jesus Christ, displayed the excellencies of his nature and the counsels of his wisdom. This should work us to a greater and more holy admiration of them: for if we are to acknowledge, "that the law is holy, just, and good," although it is now useless, as regards the bringing us to rest in God; how much more ought we to own and subscribe to the Gospel, and the declaration that God has made of himself therein. Secondly, our rest consists in an

actual and solemn compliance with his will, expressed in his works, law, and covenant. This brings us to *present* satisfaction in him, and leads us to the full enjoyment of him *hereafter*. This is a day of rest: but we cannot rest in a day, nor any thing that a day can afford; it is only a help and means of bringing us to rest in God. Without this design, our observation of a Sabbath is neither of use nor advantage; nothing will thence redound to the glory of God, nor the benefit of our own souls.

And they may do well to consider this, who plead for the observation of the seventh day precisely. For they profess thereby, that they seek for rest in God, according to the tenor of the *first* covenant. That they approve of, and to that they look (by such profession) to be brought to rest by; though really, and on other principles, they do otherwise. Whatever then, be the covenant wherein we walk with God, the great principle which is to guide us in the holy observation of this day is, that we celebrate the rest of God in that covenant, approve of it, rejoice in it, and labor to be partakers of it: of which the day itself is given to us as a pledge.

3. We must therefore remember, thirdly, that we have lost our original rest in God, by sin. God made us upright, in his own image, meet to take our rest, satisfaction, and reward in himself, according to the tenor of the law of our creation, and the covenant of works, of which the seventh day was a token and pledge. All this we must consider, that we have lost by sin. God might justly have left us in a wandering condition, without rest or any pledge of it. Our reparation, indeed, is excellent and glorious; yet the loss

of our former estate was shameful, and the remembrance of it ought ever to humble us. And hence we may know, that it is in vain for us ever to lay hold of the *seventh* day again; which is but an attempt to return into the garden, when we are kept out by a flaming sword. For although it was made use of as a type and *shadow* under the law; yet to us who must live on the *substance* of things, or nor at all, it is not to be possessed by robbery, and were of no use to us were it so attained.

4. For, we are to remember, fourthly, that the rest in God, which we now seek after, and celebrate the pledge of, in the observation of this day, is a rest by a recovery in Jesus Christ. There is now a new rest of God, and a new rest for us in God. God now rests, and is refreshed in Christ, in his person, in his works, in his law, and in the covenant of grace in him; in all which things his soul is well pleased. He is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person; making a far more glorious representation of him, than the works of the old creation did. And if he nevertheless rested in these and was refreshed; how much more is he so, with respect to this glorious image of the invisible God! This is what he now regards in his dealings with us; for as of old, he "commanded light to shine out of darkness," whereby we might see and behold his glory, which he was implanting on the work of his hands; so now "he shines into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of his glory, in the face of Jesus Christ;" that is, he enables us to behold all the excellencies of his nature, made manifest in the person and works of Jesus Christ. The way also of bringing those to him, through Christ, who had by

sin, come short of his glory, is what he approves of, is delighted with, and rests in. Herein lies the principal duty of this day's observances; namely, to admire this recovery of a rest with God, and of a rest for God in us. This is the fruit of eternal wisdom, grace, goodness, love, and bounty. This, I say, belongs to the sanctification of this day; and it ought to be our principal design in it, to give glory to God, for the wonderful recovery of a rest for us with himself, and to make an endeavour to enter by faith and obedience into that rest.

5. Fifthly, remember, that in the observation of the Lord's day, which is the first day of the week, we subject our consciences immediately to the authority of Jesus Christ, the mediator, whose day of rest originally it was, and which thereby, and for that reason, is made ours. And hereby, in the observation of this day, have we "fellowship with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ." Whilst the seventh day was in force, there was nothing appeared in the day, but the rest of God the Creator; but now the immediate foundation of our rest is the rest of Christ, when upon his resurrection he ceased from his works, as God did from his own. Faith truly exercised in bringing the soul into actual subjection to the authority of Christ in the observance of this day, and directing the thoughts to a contemplation of the rest that he entered into after his works, with the rest that he has procured for us to enter into with him, does more towards the true sanctification of this day, than all outward duties can do, performed with a legal spirit, when men are in bondage to the command as taught to them, and dare not do otherwise. God in several

places instructs the Israelites, what account they shall give to their children concerning their observation of sundry rites and ceremonies; which were a token and representation of the works of God among them. (Exod. xiii. 14.) We have here, then, a special observance in the worship of God: what account can we give to ourselves, and our children, concerning our observation of this day to the Lord? May we not say with joy and rejoicing, that whereas we were undone by sin, and excluded out of the rest of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, undertook a great work to make peace for us, and to redeem and save us; and when he had so done, and finished his work, he entered in his rest, and thereby made known to us, that we should keep this day as a day of holy rest to him, and as a pledge that we have an entrance into rest with God given to us again.

6. Finally then, we are to remember, that this day is a pledge of our eternal rest with God. This is that to which these things tend, and at which we ultimately aim. We do at best in this world but *enter* into the rest of God; the full enjoyment of it is reserved for eternity. Hence it is usually called our *everlasting* Sabbath; as being that state in which we shall always rest with God, and give glory to him.

And the Sabbath day is a pledge of this on sundry accounts: *First,* because on this day, God, as it were, calls us aside out of the world, to an immediate converse with himself. Israel never had a more dreadful day, than when they were called out of their tents, from their worldly concerns, to a meeting with the Lord. (Exod. xix.) But it was to Mount Sinai that he called them, which was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord

descended in fire; and, therefore, although they had been preparing themselves for it sundry days, they were not able to bear the terror of God's approach. But under the Gospel, we are called on this day out of the world, and from our occasions, to converse with God on Mount Sion, where he does not give us a fiery law, but a gracious Gospel; and converses not by thunder and lightning, but by the sweet still voice of mercy in Jesus Christ. And as this requires due thoughts of heart to prepare us for it; so it is in itself a great and unspeakable privilege, purchased for us by Christ; in which we have a pledge of rest with God above; when he shall call us off from all relations, all occasions of life, all our interests and concerns in this world, and eternally set us apart to himself.

And undoubtedly, in order that it may be such a pledge to us, it is our duty to take off our minds and souls, as far as we are able, from all occasions of life and business of this world, that we may walk with God alone on this day. Some, indeed, think this is a great bondage; but so far as they do so, and so far as they find it so, they have no interest in this matter. We acknowledge that there are weaknesses attending the outward man, through the frailty and imbecility of our natures; and therefore we have rejected all rigid and tiresome services. And I acknowledge, that there will be repining and rebelling in the flesh against this duty. But he who really judges in his mind, and whose practice is influenced and regulated by that judgment, that the separation of a day from the world, and a secession of communion with God in it, is grievous, and useless, and what God does not require, must be looked on as a stranger to these things. He

to whom the worship of God in Christ is a burden; who says, "behold, what a weariness it is;" that thinks a day in a week to be too much and too long to be with God in his special service, has little knowledge of his duty. Alas! what would such persons do if they should ever come to heaven, and be taken aside to all *eternity* to be with God alone, if they think it a great bondage to be diverted to him here for a *day*? They will say, perhaps, 'that heaven is one thing, and the observation of the Lord's day is another; that were they in heaven, they doubt not but they should do well enough; but for this observation of the Lord's day, they know not what to say to it.' I confess they are distinct things, or one could not be the pledge of the other; but yet they both agree in this, that they are a separation and secession from all other things to God. And if men have not a principle to like that in the Lord's day, neither would they like it in heaven, should they ever come there. Let us then be ready to attend in this matter to the call of God, and go out to meet him: for where he places his name, (as he does on all his solemn ordinances,) there he has promised to meet us.

Secondly, it is a pledge in respect of the duties of the day, wherein the sanctification of the name of God in it consists. All duties proper and peculiar to this day are duties of communion with God. Everlasting, uninterrupted, immediate communion with God, is *heaven*. Carnal persons had rather have Mahomet's paradise, than Christ's heaven; but believers aim at eternal communion with God. Of this the duties of the day, in a right holy performance, are an assured pledge: for we hear him speak to us, in his word;

and we speak to him in prayers, supplications, praises and thanksgivings, in and by Jesus Christ. Our aim throughout is to give glory to him, which is the *end* of heaven; and to be brought nearer to him, which is its *enjoyment*. In what God is pleased hereby to communicate to our souls, and in what by the secret and invisible supplies of his spirit he carries out our hearts to, consist those *first fruits* of glory, which we may be made partakers of in this world; and the first fruits are a pledge of a full harvest. This, then, are we principally to seek after in the ordinances of this day; without this, bodily labor in the outward performance of a multitude of duties, will profit little; men may rise early, and go to bed late, and eat the bread of care and diligence all the day long; yet if they are not thus in the spirit, and carried out to spiritual communion with God, it will not avail them; and whatever there be either in the service performed, or in the manner of its performance, or the duration of it, which is calculated to divert or take off the mind from being intent on this, tends to the profanation rather than the sanctification of this day.

These are some of the rules which we are to have respect to, in our observation of this day. A due application of them to particular occasions and emergencies, will guide us through their difficulties. Therefore I chose rather to lay them down thus in general, than to insist on the determination of particular cases; which, when we have done all, must be resolved into them, according to the light and understanding of those who are particularly concerned.

EXERCITATION XI.

The same subject continued.

(DUTIES TO BE OBSERVED.)

It remains that we offer some directions, as to the duties, wherein the sanctification of this day consists. This has been done already at large by others; so as that from thence they have taken occasion to handle the nature of all the religious duties, with the whole manner of their performance, which belong to the service of this day. But this does not properly appertain to this place; and I shall, therefore, only name those duties, which have a respect to the sanctification of the day; presuming the nature of them, and the due manner of their performance, to be otherwise known.

I. *First*, then, there are duties *preparatory* for the day. For although, as I have declared, I do not judge, that the preceding evening is to be reckoned to this holy rest, as a part of it; yet doubtless it ought to be improved, by way of preparation for the day ensuing. And hereby the opinion of the beginning of the Sabbatical rest with the *morning* is put into as good a condition for the furtherance of the duties of piety and religion, as the other about its beginning in the evening preceding.

Now, preparation in general is necessary on account of the greatness and holiness of God, with whom in a special manner we have to do. The day is his, the duties of the day are his prescription, the privileges of the day are his gracious concessions,—he is the beginning and end of it. And as on this day he calls us aside to a converse with himself, surely some special preparation of our hearts and minds is necessary. It belongs to the "keeping of our foot when we go to the house of God," to consider what we are to do, whither we are going, and to whom we make our approaches. (Eccles. v. 1.) The rule which he gives in Leviticus x. 3, is moral and perpetual; "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified." He loves not a rude, careless rushing of poor sinners upon him, without a sense of his greatness, and a due reverence of his holiness. Hence is that advice of our Apostle, (Heb. xii. 28, 29,) "Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire." And this will not be answered by mere bodily postures of veneration.

Secondly, preparation is necessary on account of our own distractions and entanglements in the business and occasions of life. I speak not of such, as spend the whole week in the pursuit of their lusts and pleasures; whose Sabbath rest has an equal share of profaneness with all other parts of their lives; but of those, who in general make it their design to live to God. The greatest part of these I suppose to be industriously engaged in some calling or course of life; and these things are apt to fill their minds, as well as

take up their time, and to conform them greatly to their own likeness. Much converse with the world is apt to beget a worldly frame; and earthly things will taint the mind with earthliness. And although it be our duty, in all our *secular* occasions also, to live to God, and "whether we eat or drink to do all things unto his glory;" yet are they apt to unframe the mind, so as to make it indisposed to spiritual things, and heavenly contemplations. There is a command indeed that we should pray *always;* which at least requires of us a *readiness of mind* to lay hold of all occasions and opportunities for prayer: yet none will deny, but there is great advantage in a due preparation for that, and all other duties of religion. To empty, therefore, and purge our minds of secular, earthly business, designs, projects, accounts, dependencies of things one on another, with reasonings about them, is, as far as in us lies, a duty required of us, in all our solemn approaches to God. And if this be not done, but men go full of their affairs into religious services, they will by one means or other return upon them, and prevail to their disturbance. Great care is to be taken in this matter; and those who constantly exercise themselves, to have a good conscience herein, will find themselves best fitted for the duties of the day.

I shall now refer these preparatory duties to three heads, viz. meditation, supplication, and instruction; only I request the reader to notice, that I am not binding burdens on men's consciences, but simply desire to give such directions, as may assist them in faith and obedience; which if they can obtain more to their own edification by other methods, all is done that I aim at. And, therefore, if we are prevented from

attending to these directions by necessary occasions, we may conclude, that we have lost an opportunity or advantage; not that we have contracted the guilt of sin: unless, indeed, it be from the occasion itself, or some of its circumstances.

1. First, then, of *meditation*. By this means the minds of believers are to exercise themselves in such thoughts of the majesty, holiness, and greatness of God, as may prepare them to serve him with reverence and godly fear. The nature of the duty requires, that this meditation should first respect God himself; yet not absolutely, but as the cause and author of our sabbatical rest. His rest, therefore, in Jesus Christ; his satisfaction and complacency in the way and covenant of rest for us through him; and especially the person of the Son, whose works and rest thereon, is the foundation of our evangelical rest on this holy day, should be considered. It were easy to supply the reader with proper meditations on these blessed subjects, for him to exercise himself in as he finds occasion; but I only intend directions in general, leaving others to make application of them according to their ability.

Again, the day itself and its sacred services are to be thought upon. The privileges that we are made partakers of thereby; the advantages, that are in the duties of it; and the duties themselves required of us, should be well digested in our minds. And even if we have an habitual apprehension of them, it will need to be called over and excited. To this end those, who think fit to make use of these directions, may do well to acquaint themselves with the true nature of a sabbatical rest, from what has been before discoursed. It will afford them other ground for faith and thankful-

ness, than they enjoy, who entertain no other notion of it, than that it is merely a portion of time set apart for the solemn worship of God. By these means the object of preparatory duties will be obtained; the mind will be filled with due and reverential apprehensions of God on the one hand, and disentangled on the other from those cares of the world, and other cumbersome thoughts, wherewith the occasions of life may have possessed it.

2. Secondly, *supplication;* that is, prayer with especial respect to the duties of the day. This is the life of all preparation for *every* duty. It is the principal means whereby we express our universal dependence on God in Christ, and affect our own hearts with a sense of our indigent estate in this world, with all our special wants, and the means whereby we obtain that supply of grace, mercy, and spiritual strength, of which we stand in need. Special directions need not be given about the performance of this known duty; only I say, some *season* for it, by way of preparation, will be an eminent means to further us in the due sanctification of the name of God on this day; and that it must be founded on thanksgiving for the day itself, with the ends of it, as an advantage for our converse with God in this world.

And in the supplicatory part of our prayer, two things are principally to be regarded. *First,* a supply of grace from God, the fountain of it; having respect to those graces, which in our own nature are more immediately serviceable towards the sanctification of the name of God in this ordinance; such as reverence of his authority, and delight in his worship;—such graces in particular, as we have found advantage from in the

exercise of holy duties; as, perhaps, contriteness of spirit, love, joy, peace;—and such as we have experienced the want of, or have been defective in the exercise of on such occasions; as probably diligence, stedfastness, and evenness of mind. *Secondly*, a removal of evils, or that God would not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil: wherein regard is to be had to the temptations of Satan; who will be casting his fiery darts at such seasons, and is seldom busier than upon our engaging in solemn duties;—to the inconstancy, wavering, and distraction of our own minds, which are indeed a matter of unspeakable abasement, when we consider aright the majesty of God, with whom we have to do;—to undue, and unjust offences against persons and things, that we may "lift up pure hands to God without wrath and without doubting." Sundry things of the like nature might be mentioned, but I leave all to the great Director named in Romans viii. 26, 27.

3. Thirdly, *instruction;* viz. to instruct our children and our families in the nature of the ordinances, whereby they worship God. This is what God so commended in Abraham: "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." (Gen. xviii. 19.) In this expression, the nature and observance of all ordinances are required; wherefore, it is incumbent on those who have others under their charge, to instruct them in the nature of this service which we observe to the Lord. Perhaps this is not, nor will not be necessary upon every return of this day; but that it should be so done at some appointed season, no man that endeavours to

walk uprightly before God can deny. The omission of it has probably caused the whole service, among many, to be built on custom and example only; whence has ensued, in a great measure, that neglect of it which we now see; for the influence of mere custom and example does not continue long.

II. Having noticed the preparatory duties, I now come to the day itself; the duties of which I shall pass through with equal brevity. These are of two sorts, public and private; but as the former are the principal, I shall only notice them.

By public duties, I mean a due attention to, and a due performance of, all those parts of solemn worship, which God has appointed to be observed in the assemblies of his people. One end of this day, as frequently observed, is to give glory to God in the celebration of his worship; for which purpose he himself has appointed the ways and means, or the ordinances and duties in which it consists. Without this we had been at an utter loss, how we might sanctify his name, or ascribe glory to him; and most probably should have set up the calves of our own imaginations, to his greater provocation. But he has relieved us, by himself appointing the worship which he will accept. To give a full and particular direction, therefore, for the right sanctifying of the name of God on this day, we ought to go over all the ordinances of worship, which the church is bound to attend to in its assemblies: but this is not my present purpose; which is merely to give some *general* rules for the guidance of men in the whole.

1. First then, the public worship of God is to be preferred before that which is private. They may be

so prudently managed, as not to interfere nor ordinarily to entrench on one another; but wherever on any occasion they appear to do so, the private are to give place to the public; for it is a marvellous undue custom, on the pretence of private duties, whether personal or domestic, to abate any part of the duties of solemn assemblies. This is to set up our own choice and inclinations against the wisdom and authority of God. The object of the day is the solemn and public acknowledgment of God in his worship; from which object we must not be diverted even by the most specious helps and means.

2. Secondly, choice is to be made of those assemblies, for the celebration of public worship, in which we may be most benefited, as regards the sanctification of this day; so far as it may be done *without breach of any order appointed of God.* For in our joining in any concurrent acts of religious worship, we are to have regard to helps suited to the furtherance of our own faith and obedience. And also because God has appointed some parts of his worship, which in their own nature, and by virtue of his appointment, are means of conveying light, knowledge, and grace, in spiritual supplies to our souls, it is certainly our duty to make choice of those, which are most likely so to do.

3. As regards the manner of our attendance on the public worship of God; viz. with reverence, gravity, order, diligence, attention, &c.; though it be a matter of great use and moment, yet it belongs not to this place to treat of it; nor to insist on those methods whereby we may excite particular graces into action, according as the nature of the duties wherein we are engaged requires. But I must finally observe that,

although the day is to be wholly dedicated to the objects of a sacred rest; yet, if the duties of it, in their performance, are drawn out to such a length as to beget weariness and satiety, they do not tend to edification, nor do they in any way promote the sanctification of the name of God in the worship itself.

First, therefore, regard must be had to the weakness of the natural constitution of some, and the infirmities and ailments of others, who are not able to continue in the outward part of duties, as healthy persons can. And every wise shepherd will rather suffer the stronger sheep of his flock, to lose something of what they might obtain in his guidance of them, than compel the weaker to keep pace with them, to their hurt, and probable ruin. Better that a great number should complain of the shortness of some duties, who have strength and desires for a longer continuance in them; than that a few, who are sincere, should really be discouraged by being overburdened, and have the service thereby made useless to them. I always loved in sacred duties, that observation of Seneca, concerning the orations of Cassius Severus when they heard him; "We were kept fearing lest he should end." The spiritual edge of the affections of men ought to be whetted, and not, through tediousness in duties, abated and taken off.

Secondly, refreshments helpful to nature, so as really to refresh it, that it may have a supply of spirits to go on cheerfully in the duties of holy worship, are lawful and useful. To macerate the body with abstinences on this day, is required of none; and to turn it into a fast, or to fast upon it, is generally condemned by the ancients. Wherefore, to forbear provision of ne-

cessary food for families on this day, is Mosaical; and the enforcement of the particular precepts, about not kindling fire in our houses on this day, and baking and preparing food for it the day before, cannot be *insisted on* without a re-introduction of the seventh day precisely, (to whose observation they were annexed,) and thereby of the law and spirit of the old covenant. Provided always that these refreshments be seasonable, and not interfering with the hours for public duties; and accompanied by a singular regard to the rules of temperance,—that there be no appearance of evil,—that nature be not charged with any kind of excess, so as to be hindered, rather than assisted in the duties of the day; and also with gravity, sobriety, and purity of conversation. For whereas these things are, in the substance of them, required of us in the whole course of our lives, if we intend to please God, and to come to the enjoyment of him; none ought to think a special regard to them on this day to be a bondage or troublesome.

Thirdly, labor, in order to enjoy the benefit and advantage of the solemn assemblies of the church, is so far from entrenching on the rest of this day, that it belongs to its due observation. A mere bodily rest is no part of religious worship in itself, nor does it belong to the sanctification of this day, any farther than as it is a means for the due performance of the other duties belonging to it. We have no bounds under the Gospel for a Sabbath day's journey, provided it be for Sabbath ends. In short, all pains or labor, which our station and condition in this world, or our incidental troubles, or any thing else may make necessary, as that without which we cannot enjoy the

solemn ends and uses of this holy rest, are no way inconsistent with the due observation of it. It may be the lot of one man to be obliged to travel far, for the due celebration of the Lord's day; whereas, if another should do the like, without his occasions and circumstances, it would be a profanation of it. Labor also in works of charity,—such as to visit the sick, to relieve the poor, to help the distressed, to relieve or assist creatures ready to perish, and to supply cattle with necessary food,—is allowed by all.

Lastly, as regards *sports* and such like recreations on this day, I refer the reader to the laws of sundry emperors and nations concerning them. (See of Constant. leg. omnes cap. de Feriis. Theodosius and Arcadius ibid. and of Leo and Authemius, in the same place of the Codex of Charles the Great, capitular. lib. i. cap. 81, lib. v. cap. 188.) The sum of them all is contained in that exhortation which Ephraim the Syrian expresses in his Sermon on *Holy-days.* "Let us endeavour carefully to honour the Sabbaths and holidays, celebrating them not with mere panegyricks, but divinely; not in a worldly, but spiritual manner; not after the manner of heathens, but of Christians. Wherefore, let us not crown our temples, neither lead nor commend the dance; let us not effeminate our ears with soft music, nor be clothed with soft vestments, nor be girded with golden and sparkling zones; neither let us be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, but leave these things to those, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame."

As for private duties, both personal and domestic, they are either antecedent or subsequent to solemn

public worship, as usually celebrated amongst us. And as these consist in the known religious exercises of prayer, reading the Scriptures, meditation, and family instructions, they are to be recommended to every one's conscience, ability, and opportunity, as they shall find strength and assistance for them.

Glory be to God alone.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

Page 25, line 31, for 'many of *many*', read 'many of *them*.'
Page 55, line 27, for 'immovably', read 'immovcably.'

*** The reader is also requested to pardon several instances of false punctuation, which have crept into the first two sheets of this work.

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