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*On the Scriptural foundation for celebrating the first day of the week, as the Christian Sabbath.*

**A**LTHOUGH Christians are generally agreed, in the belief of a divine warrant for the observation of the Christian sabbath, it is apprehended that a view of the leading evidences of this duty will be serviceable both to confirm their faith, and promote their edification.

The following brief statement of the arguments is, therefore, presented to their consideration.

The observation of every seventh day, as a season of religious and holy rest, to man, was instituted from the beginning, as a memorial of the completion of the work of creation, and the divine well-pleasèdness with it.

When the work of the sixth day was completed, "God saw every thing which he had made and behold it was very good. 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 created and made."\*

From the Mosaic relation respecting the manna, it appears that the holy rest of the sabbath was known to Israel before the promulgation of the Sinai law.—That it was known to other nations, is evident from several ancient writers.†

This divine institution was renewed in the Mosaic law, and the ground and reason of it again ascertained, in the following words :

"Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work.—For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day. Wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it."‡ In the sacred writings of the old testament we find frequent reference to the sabbath, as an institution of God, and the proper celebration of it, as an essential part

\* Genesis ii. 2, 3. † In particular Hesiod, Homer, and Linus, see Pol. Synop. on Genesis ii. 2, 3. ‡ Exod. xx. 8, 9, 10, 11.

of practical religion. It seems to be designed as a day of religious and devout rest from the labors and pursuits of the present world, and of thanksgiving to God for all his favors, especially for the work of creation; and as an expression of faith in the gracious intimations of God to his church, of a state of holy rest and joy, in his eternal kingdom, for all the redeemed, through the promised Messiah.

With a view to the same important object, was the institution of the rest of the seventh month, (which was almost wholly consecrated to religious solemnities) as also of the seventh year, and of the great year of jubilee after the completion of seven times seven years. This last was a season of abundant rest and joy, and was eminently typical of the gospel salvation, and that blessed rest, which remains for the people of God, in the heavenly state.

Indeed; the sabbath of the seventh day, and all the sabbatical institutions which have been mentioned, together with the possession of the land of Canaan, given to the seed of Abraham as the earthly, promised rest, were ultimately designed for the same end.

As it pleased God, through all ages after the apostacy of man, to intimate his designs of mercy to sinners through a divine Redeemer, foretold in prophecy, as "the seed of the woman, and as the seed of Abraham—of the tribe of Judah, and of the family of David;" so the old testament abounds with predictions and representations of a new and more glorious state of things, which should succeed his appearance in our nature and world. And the work of redemption, which he was to accomplish by his obedience and death, is represented as the greatest of the works of

God, manifested to man, to which all his other works are subordinate.

This new state of things was to consist especially in a new system of rules and ordinances, respecting the worship of God, from which (as also from other sources of argument) it appears that the institutions and ordinances of worship in the old testament, and especially in the Mosaic system, were not generally designed to be perpetual in the church of God on earth; but, to be typical of that new state of things just mentioned, and introductory to it. So that we are to view the whole Mosaic œconomy as a shadow of good things to come, of which the body is Christ and Christianity, or the institutions of the gospel.\*

This great and general change, in the ordinances of religion, by no means implies any alteration in the nature and object of divine worship or of religion in general, but only in the mode of exemplifying that religion. And as might be expected, the substance is more perfect than the shadow, or there is an advance from the imperfect state of things, under the old testament, before the incarnation of the Messiah, to a more perfect state under his reign, in the days of the gospel.

Thus, instead of the natural seed of Abraham, and the earthly Canaan, there are his spiritual seed, and the Jerusalem which is above. For the priesthood, and the blood of slain beasts offered in sacrifice, we have the Lord Jesus Christ, with his eternal priesthood, and the offering of himself unto God, in the shedding of his own blood, which alone is sufficient to take a-

\* See Coloss. ii. 17. Heb. viii. 5. and i. 1. *et passim.*

way sin. Similar observations will apply to all other ordinances of the ancient dispensation, when contrasted with the new.

From the analogy of divine dispensations, we should be led to look for a change of the day of sacred rest, that in future it might celebrate the work of redemption, by the consecration of the day in which God rested from that work, which was the great object of creation, and to which that, and all his other works are evidently subordinate. But we must not affect to be wise beyond what is written in the holy scriptures.

Let us then inquire whether there is any evidence from the prophecies of the old testament, that there should be a change of the Sabbath at the commencement of the gospel dispensation. In this examination—we shall attend to two scripture passages only.

In the first of them we find these words, "This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it."\* That a great part of the psalm from which these words are taken, respects the Messiah, appears not only from the subject-matter, but, from its application to him in various passages in the new testament.† This is particularly evident concerning the words quoted, and those which immediately precede and follow them. That the resurrection and exaltation of Christ is the subject, appears from the words, in their connection; that the day of his resurrection is referred to follows of course. So that these words are directly to the purpose of the present argument. For if the Lord hath made this day, in any sense different from that in which

he makes all days, it must undoubtedly mean that he has consecrated it for the use to which the inspired writer says it shall be applied; even to rejoice and be glad, or to keep it as a day of sacred rest and thanksgiving for the great work of redemption—from which Jesus rested on this day, by his resurrection; as God rested on the seventh day from the work of the first creation. The passage may therefore be justly considered as a direct prediction of the change of the sabbath; or that the first day of the week should be celebrated in the Christian church as a sabbath in grateful commemoration of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The other prophetic scripture, from the old testament, which invites our attention, is in the following words, viz.

"Behold I create new heavens and a new earth and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be you glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy.\* The new heavens and the new earth import the new creation, and are designed to represent the effects of the work of redemption, in the state of the redeemed church, from the incarnation of the Saviour to the final consummation in the heavenly rest.† That the old heavens and earth shall not be remembered or come into mind can mean nothing more than that they shall not be celebrated by the standing memorial of the seventh day sabbath, which was the only way in which the old creation ever had been stately celebrated. The religious rejoicing predicted in the latter clause of the text on account

\* Psalm cxviii. 24. † Matth. xxi. 42. Acts iv. 11. 1 Peter ii. 4.

\* Isaiah lxv. 17, 18. † See Isaiah lxvi. 22. 2 Peter iii. 13. Rev. xxi. 1.

of the new creation imports that it shall be celebrated in like manner, as was the old creation, previous to the introduction of the new. Therefore as that was celebrated by a holy rest and thanksgiving, on the day in which God rested from his work; even so the new creation or the work of redemption, shall be celebrated by a stated holy rest and thanksgiving, on the day in which he rested from this, or in which Jesus Christ rose from the dead.

We now proceed to make the following observations, viz.

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead, on the first day of the week. This is expressly asserted by the Evangelists, in their respective histories of their divine master; and is confirmed by the account of the precaution taken by the Jews to prevent any possible fraud or collusion in the case.

Jesus was crucified on the day preceding the Jewish sabbath. He expired about three o'clock in the afternoon, and was laid in the sepulchre, just before the setting of the sun, that the Jewish sabbath, which commenced at sun set, might not be infringed. This was therefore the sixth day of the week. Jesus had predicted his resurrection on the third day after his death which would be the first day of the week, the Jews therefore took no care of the body till the commencement of the third day, at which time they went to the Roman governor and, referring to this prediction of Jesus, requested a guard of soldiers to watch the sepulchre "till the third day should be past." This was obtained, the sepulchre was made sure, and the guard placed. But all that care was vain as to preventing the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Early in the morning of the third day, he was alive

from the dead. Thus by all this precaution of the Jews, we have the resurrection of our Lord still more confirmed, and the day of it fully ascertained.

We therefore infer, with abundant certainty, that this is the day predicted by the Psalmist, in which Christians should rejoice in their king and Saviour, and celebrate the praises of redeeming grace, by a stated observation of it, instead of the seventh day, as predicted by Isaiah.

It appears from the gospel history, that our Lord appeared to his disciples on the day of his resurrection, and afterward on the first day of the week,\*—that on this day the disciples met together to break bread,† that it was distinguished among them by the name of the Lord's day; and that on this day the Lord Jesus made his celebrated visit to his beloved disciple, suffering for his name in the isle of Patmos in which he revealed to him the great events relating to the redeemed church till the end of the world.‡

The general observation of the first day of the week as the Christian sabbath, in the primitive church, in the ages next succeeding that of the Apostles, is confirmed by the earliest writers, whose works have reached our time, and who had occasion to speak on this subject.

Now had it not been a usage divinely instituted and practised by the Apostles, and other inspired men, it is utterly inconceivable how it should have obtained so early in the Christian church, and with so few dissenting voices, considering the strong attachment of the Jewish converts to the ancient rites of their church. But it is

\* John xx. 1—19—26. † Acts xx. 7.  
‡ Rev. i. 10.

perfectly easy to account from the circumstances just named; for the remaining attachment of some professing Christians, to the Jewish sabbath.

The preceding statement of the arguments in favor of the celebration of the first day of the week, as the Christian sabbath, it is presumed will be satisfactory.

It deeply concerns us that we celebrate this blessed day, agreeably to its institution and design. Much has been written by the learned and pious on this subject; which we ought diligently to peruse and reduce to practice.

The writer would however earnestly recommend to his Christian readers, to remember that this blessed day is to be celebrated, as a thankful memorial of the resurrection of our divine Saviour; and consequently of his whole mediatorial work, for the salvation of sinners, and is it then possible that we should fail to celebrate it in the worship, and to the praises of him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood!

PHILANDER,

*An address to those who in the late revival of religion have been bro't into the kingdom of Christ, on the discouragements of Christians.*

IT is common that people, when first reconciled to God, have warm affections, and such joys as arise from their first espousals. Satan is so chained, that for a season, he can give them little disturbance. Their morning is a morning without clouds, and they promise themselves perpetual sunshine. Much of this extasy arises from the newness of their discoveries. I remember I once read of a man born blind. After he arrived to maturity, his films were taken off

by a surgeon. The beauties of creation rushed at once upon his sight, and tho' he was much less able to distinguish objects and take the benefit of his eyes than other men, yet his extasy for a season was above description: so when one has always been blind to the glory of God, and the beauties of the moral world, it is reasonable to expect, the first discoveries of them must produce that admiration and rapture, which is peculiar to such seasons tho' their views are less distinct, and their humility, dependence and other Christian exercises are more imperfect. In this situation they are sometimes ready to triumph, as if the victory was already compleat, and they had nothing to do, but rejoice thro' life. But these expectations will not be realized. The great apostle to the Gentiles had sharp conflicts; and all who will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution. And for the most part need requires, that they endure many tribulations. They hear more experienced Christians tell of darkness, but tho' they hardly expect it, it comes upon them. It is then discouragements begin.

One source of discouragement is their own inconstancy. This, tho' they are as confident as Peter, they will learn by painful experience, as soon as God, to teach them their weakness and dependence, leaves them a little to themselves. It is necessary that God should effectually teach you this lesson, and you will hardly be taught it, but by briars and thorns. You will then say, that you little expected to find yourselves so inconstant, that you had no idea there were such sad remains of unbelief and wickedness in your hearts, and especially that they had strength to produce such disorders and deplorable