

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php

revelation in redemption is closed to our vision, leaving us in sight of the manifestation of that same blended and correlated holy love and holy justice of God with the manifestation of which the first act began. The divine self-revelation in —

- a. The future state of redeemed and holy souls.
- b. The future state of unredeemed and unholy souls.

Chap. Sixth. The eternal self-revelation of God to the holy in the perfected kingdom of God. The vision of God with the eternal fellowship, eternal service, eternal blessedness. Amen.

ARTICLE VII.

THE SABBATH UNDER THE OLD DISPENSATION.

BY REV. WILLIAM DELOSS LOVE, D.D., SOUTH HADLEY, MASS.

No great and beneficent reform was ever accomplished, no institution of value and power ever existed, without a firm basis of truth, of doctrine. Whenever the doctrine has become uncertain in the minds of the people, then the institution has languished, the revolution has faltered. This has been illustrated in the history of the Sabbath, and is now illustrated in its wide desecration. The lax continental Sabbath, now so much imported to America, comes from erroneous doctrine. First, it proceeds from deficient faith as well as evil practice long existing in the Romish church. Secondly, from the untrue position taken by the Reformers of the sixteenth century, in holding that the "external observance" of the fourth commandment was merely Jewish and ceremonial, and therefore is now void;¹ and, thirdly, from a wide-spread misrepresentation of the Reformers' actual views, which misrepresentation has been caused by ignoring their

¹ Calvin's Institutes, Book ii. c. 8, Fourth Com.; Luther on Gal. ii. 19.

belief that the Sabbath was given to man at the beginning, and is moral and perpetual.¹

Without a divine command for the Sabbath men will but illy keep it. They require more basis of doctrine than doubt or example or expediency can afford. Nicholas Bownd's new doctrine of the Sabbath, whether strictly correct or not, resulted, in his day, in a revival of religion as well as of Sabbath observance. The Puritan revival of Sabbath doctrine, whether excessive or not, was both the fruit and the source of religious revival. But, on the other hand, every successful effort in the past to undermine or weaken the doctrine of the Sabbath has been attended or followed by bad morals and irreligion.

Probably the Sabbath, or Lord's day, was never more observed than now as a holiday, but is less observed than sometimes in the past as a holy day. The present increasing loss in respect to its sacred character has its chief cause in the wide-spread uncertainty in respect to its basis. Besides the imported defect in doctrine and practice, there exist serious errors among ourselves. The disciples of the seventh-day Sabbath have been increasing; and this has brought diesteem of the Christian Sabbath, or Lord's day, even among some who do not embrace their sabbatarian views. Much has been said against the Puritan Sabbath to the detriment of the real Sabbath. A growing number of scholars, and even ministers, have been teaching that we cannot found the observance of the Lord's day upon the fourth commandment; that that part of the decalogue, though not ceremonial, was positive, and not moral in its nature, and is annulled in the new dispensation. Some have said that the whole decalogue, as it stands in Exodus, has been abolished, because given to the Jews; and many have said that there was no Sabbath at all till the time of Moses, and after the exodus from Egypt.

Two opinions divide Christendom respecting the basis of

¹ Calvin's Com., Gen. ii. 3; Ex. xx. 11; Luther on Larger Catechism; Augsburg Confession.

the Lord's day; some holding that its authority is simply ecclesiastical, derived from the example and teaching of the church since the apostles, and others that its authority is from the apostles, or directly from Christ himself. The Roman Catholic church teaches that "Sundays and holy days all stand upon the same foundation, viz. the ordinance of the church"; and that Protestants inconsistently have to acknowledge the infallibility of the church, by depending on her authority to establish the observance of Sunday.¹ Thus, instead of standing on a firm foundation of doctrine, we are floating on a sea of uncertainty. Such diverse opinions tend to distraction of the public mind, to neglect and desecration of the weekly day of rest, and to even disbelief and unbelief in religion itself. Without salutary change we shall not have better but worse Sabbath observance. It will be the object of this and subsequent Articles to awaken more interest in both the doctrine and sacredness of the Christian Sabbath, or Lord's day.

I. THE SABBATH IN THE OLD DISPENSATION.

1. Its basis for appointment was the fact that 'God rested.' The record of the appointment is conspicuously given in the first three verses of the second chapter of the Bible, really belonging to the first chapter. Drs. Paley, Hessey, R. W. Dale, and others tell us that the early reference to the Sabbath in Genesis is no proof of its early institution.² We reply, it belongs to them to prove their objection. The record of the appointment being given along with that of the creation, the *prima facie* evidence is that the Sabbath was very early instituted and given to man. It does violence to the record to suppose that the appointment was delayed twenty-five centuries — until the Israelites were approaching Sinai.

But was the seventh day given to man that of twenty-four

¹ Catholic Christian Instructed, p. 211. The Shortest Way to end Disputes in Religion, by Rev. Robert Manning, approved by Rev. Bishop Fitzpatrick, p. 19.

² Paley's Works, Bk. v. c. 7; Hessey on Sunday, p. 102; Dale on the Ten Commandments, p. 88.

hours, or that of God's rest from the close of the six days' creation to the beginning of some other? In the chief sense, *man's* day; for its characteristics are those of the natural day in the fourth commandment. Both are blessed and sanctified. God blessed the day by making it a blessing — a blessing chiefly to man, not to himself; hence it was man's day. Yet God's rest was, in some sense, the prototype for that of man.

Though in the early record the seventh day is not called the Sabbath, the characteristics of the two days being the same, there can be no reasonable doubt of their identity. In the commandment not only the first seventh day, but each succeeding seventh, was consecrated; and probably at the close of creation each seventh day, as well as the first seventh, was devoted to religion and rest. The reason that induced the appointment of the day — "because that in it he had rested" — appeals to intelligence, and suggests that man was to know and regard the sacred time. And since he could know it in the beginning, it is presumable that it was then given him. He early could enjoy it, and by it commemorate his own origin as the last of God's earthly creation. God's delight in the day must have been much in having his creatures enjoy it; hence it is improbable that he withheld it all the way from Eden to Sinai. The day not being an ordinance of nature, and not causing any break or mark in physical events, man could not learn the specific hebdomadal time from nature. He needed its positive appointment, and it having in itself a blessing for him, evidence of its early appointment may be expected.

2. It appears probable that the primitive pair, with their immediate descendants, early began to observe the seventh day. Cain made an offering to the Lord "in process of time" — at the end of days — end of some number of days. That number, in this instance, was probably *seven*; for that was evidently the more common multitude of days employed by Jehovah in his appointments with men, and by man in his reckoning of periods. The *first* length of time which,

according to the record, we are *certain* God used in his communications with men, was the *seven days'* notice he gave Noah before causing it to rain upon the earth (Gen. vii. 4, 10); and in the first account we have of *man's* first reckoning of time, Noah stayed seven days before sending forth the dove from the ark the second time, and other seven before sending it the third time (Gen. viii. 10, 12). If he had waited seven days only once, it would have been less noticeable; doing it twice indicates that he often or constantly observed the specific weekly time. It is improbable that he kept weekly time without a knowledge of the Sabbath that marked off for him the weeks. We know of no day or event that ever designated weekly time as the Sabbath or Lord's day has done. We cannot suppose that God gave primitive man the week without a sacred day; he would sooner give it for the sake of that day than for any other reason.

"God remembered Noah" (Gen. viii. 1). He did not let the flood continue too long; he stopped the fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven; he sent a wind to assuage the waters. And Noah remembered God; he doubtless consulted him about opening the ark, about sending forth the raven and the dove, about waiting other *seven days twice over*; naturally connecting the waiting with religious services appropriate to the seventh day; and when upon dry ground again he built an altar and sacrificed. "There is certainly indicated here a sevenfold division of days, whatever may be its reasons. Of these, no one seems more easy and natural than that which refers it to the traditionary remembrance of the creation and its seventh day of rest."¹

3. Coming to the age of the early patriarchs, we find Jacob and Laban speaking so familiarly of the "week" (Gen. xxix. 27, 28) — a *seven of days* — that we infer the common acquaintance of their own families, and of their fathers, with that method of reckoning time. When Jacob died, Joseph "made a mourning for his father seven days"

¹ Tayler Lewis, — Lange on Genesis, p. 311.

(Gen. i. 10), many Egyptians being with him. Here, in all, we find people of Haran, — a part of ancient Syria, — and of Canaan, and of Egypt, observing weeks. Measuring *some* time in that way, probably most of them so measured *all*, as we know was subsequently the case with the Jews. Seven days elapsed in Egypt between the smiting of the river and the Lord's next appeal to Pharaoh through his servant Moses (Ex. vii. 25).

That the number seven became representative and symbolical after the giving of the fourth commandment is not surprising; but what gave it such significance before the Mosaic period, except that God in the beginning made the seventh day conspicuous and sacred to man? The Lord protected Cain by a threatening of sevenfold vengeance upon any that should slay him (Gen. iv. 15); and Lamech boasted that he would be protected by a threatening of seventy and sevenfold vengeance (Gen. iv. 24). Jacob would serve seven years for Rachel (Gen. xxix. 18, 20), and he bowed before Esau seven times (Gen. xxxiii. 3). In Pharaoh's dream seven kine appeared, and seven other kine ate them up; seven ears of corn came up, and seven thin ears devoured them (Gen. xli. 2-7). Then Joseph showed Pharaoh that seven years of plenty were to be followed by seven years of famine; and the two series of seven years came (Gen. xli. 25-30; xlvii. 53, 54). It is highly probable that this early symbolic use of the number seven had some connection with a sacred seventh day. Keil and Delitzsch affirm that the week was established at the creation.¹ But since nature did not mark off the weeks as it does the days, what did divide them from each other, save ceremonies or services, and those of a religious character? Times and seasons, or their limits, — their first and last days, — were customarily attended with religious services. What more natural than that their weeks were marked off to them by sacred or religious days? How did they know weekly time? By the mere approximate of the fourth of a lunar month?

¹ Com. on Pent., Vol. i. p. 149.

or, by the seven notes of the diatonic scale? or, through the astronomical seven planets, then so awkwardly numbered as to embrace the sun and moon? Or was there the clear and dignified reason that God in the beginning, after the six days of creation, set apart, blessed, and sanctified the seventh day? Did the prominence of the number seven make the week, or did the sacred day make both? History ascribes the earliest knowledge of astronomical science to the Babylonians and Egyptians.¹ But Noah observed septenary time four hundred years before Egypt is even heard of, and near a thousand years before Babylon appears. The celestial bodies, once named the seven planets, and numbered in the following order,—Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon,²—how much tendency have they to cause the observance of weekly time? But weekly time first observed, then how much tendency in men to name the seven days after the seven planets. Besides, no evidence appears that these seven heavenly bodies were early selected and named. Plato and authors contemporary with him discourse of the seven planets; but Homer and Hesiod were apparently ignorant of them, though speaking often of the stars.³ Tayler Lewis says truly of those who claim to be “the higher school of criticism,” had they found in some Hindoo or Persian book a reference to some sevenfold division of time, and in a similar writing closely connected with it an account of a hexameral creation with its succeeding day of rest, they would have discovered a connection between the two ideas. But they violate their own canon, that “the Bible is to be interpreted like any other ancient writings,”⁴ and are unreasonably sceptical as to the connection between the week made up of God’s creative work and his rest, and the week subsequently observed by man.

The hebdomadal division of time seems as well known to the Hebrews before the giving of the law, and previous to their leaving Egypt, as afterward; the passover, given before

¹ Lewis’s *Astronomy of Ancients*, p. 256.

² *Ibid.*, p. 246.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 62, 144, 290.

⁴ Lange on *Genesis*, p. 311.

the exodus, being prolonged seven days, as well as the feast of tabernacles, given in the wilderness. God's rest began at man's origin; and apparently man's knowledge of that rest and his observance of weekly time, also then commenced. Men, knowing the week and the reason, would even naturally have a special regard for the limit day, the seventh of the week.

4. When the Israelites journeyed in the wilderness, they were directed of God to gather twice as much manna on the sixth as on any other day, that the seventh might not be desecrated by gathering during its hours (Ex. xvi. 22, 23, 29). As this occurred before the decalogue was given on Sinai, it shows that the Sabbath existed previous to the latter event, and favors the view that the weekly day of rest was made known to man at the beginning. Dr. Heylin,¹ and Dr. Paley² a century and a half afterwards, with others following them, gave their opinion that this transaction in the wilderness was the first institution of the Sabbath.³ But the first mention of the day in this passage, which is the first by the name "Sabbath" in the Scriptures, refers to what God had said of it: "The Lord hath said" (Ex. xvi. 23). If that was just previous, and the Sabbath was originated on this occasion, then it was appointed in a private way, and first announced to Moses alone, which does not comport with its importance. We naturally should expect a fuller record, and more said of it, like that in the second of Genesis or the twentieth of Exodus.

The Lord, in his rebuke of some for going out on the Sabbath to gather manna, says: "How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws" (ver. 28)? This, with the strong language of the next verse, seems to imply

¹ Works, fol. p. 348, Part. i. c. 4.

² Moral and Political Philosophy, Bk. v. c. 7.

³ Dr. Paley's, or the Paley-Heylin views, evidently bore fruit after their kind. Rev. J. Willison of Dundee, Scotland, in a work on the "Sanctification of the Sabbath," published in 1819, refers to the same sentiments as advocated by Philip Limborch. Then, as now, they seem to have been inimical to the most sacred observance of the Sabbath.

a more familiar acquaintance with the command than the offenders had, if they heard it first only the day previous. They were evidently familiar with the *sixth* day, and therefore, doubtless, with the *seventh*, and the *week*. The Sabbath, in this instance, seems to have come on the sixteenth of the month, and — it not being on the fourteenth — this fact is against the theory of the quarterly division of the month to constitute the week, and favors the independent and divinely appointed date of the Sabbath. The original — “Let to-morrow be rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord” (ver. 23) — defines and emphasizes the *rest* by a phrase used here first, and only six times in the Bible; and this earliest use may have been to produce a new and strong impression on the multitude that had just issued from idolatrous Egypt, and needed more instruction and a more vigorous memory concerning that day.

Objection: The surprise of the Hebrews in finding a double quantity of manna on the sixth day shows that the Sabbath was not before known to them.¹ *Reply*: It was the miracle of a double supply on one day that astonished them; a miraculous provision for the observance of the seventh day they had not before seen.

Objection second: The original is “*a*,” and not “*the*, holy Sabbath,” and therefore the people were not familiar with the day, and it had just been appointed. *Reply*: The repetition of the word “rest” in the phrase “rest, the holy Sabbath,” — Sabbath meaning rest, — to define and emphasize the nature of the day to those who in Egypt may have partially forgotten it, because as bondmen not permitted to observe it, or to those who may have been only proselytes from the Egyptians, might naturally cause the expression “rest,” instead of “the rest.” *Reply second*: The sabbatical year, each seventh year, and day of atonement, are also designated by the word “Sabbath,” and therefore the definite article may have been omitted in reference to the seventh-day Sabbath. Some claim — probably with insuf-

¹ Hengstenberg, Hesse, Sunday, p. 111; Garden, Smith's Bible Dict., p. 2764.

ficient reason — that the passover, appointed previous to this occasion in the wilderness, was also sometimes called a Sabbath.¹ *Reply third*: Preceding this time the seventh day, though sacredly observed, may not have been known as the Sabbath, — rest, — and therefore now, when first called such, the definite article would naturally be omitted. We too readily suppose the day must have been called Sabbath, or nothing. One measuring rule of time then was seven days; and the seventh, being the concluding one, was a marked day, and, independent of the divine appointment, might easily have become a sacred day. Previous to this, the seventh day of the passover feast had been made religious and devoted to “a holy convocation” (Ex. xii. 16). The early generations, especially, needed the appointment of convocation and worship. After the bondage of Egypt rest was more required and prized, and the usual name of the sacred day may then have been changed from seventh to Sabbath.

Objection third: In Ezekiel (Ezek. xx. 10-12) God is represented as *giving* his Sabbaths to Israel in the wilderness, as though they were then first instituted.² *Reply*: He did not merely give them; he gave them “to be a sign”; he *appointed* them then to be a sign of his covenant with Israel. That does not denote recent origin, any more than God’s appointment of the bow in the cloud as a “token of a covenant” (Gen. ix. 13) denotes that it then first existed. All the commandments were to be the sign of a covenant (Deut. v. 3; vi. 8), but some, at least, were given long before their engraving at Sinai.

Objection fourth: In Nehemiah (ix. 14) God is represented as *making known* his Sabbath upon Mount Sinai, as though then he first made it known.³ *Reply*: He did there *emphatically* make it known to those who had in Egypt partially forgotten it, and not been allowed to observe it; but not then *first*, because he at least made it known in the wilderness before Israel arrived at Sinai. *Reply second*: God is elsewhere represented as making known his “mighty acts”

¹ Caspari, Bib. Sac., Vol. xxviii. p. 471.

² Paley.

³ Paley.

and "glorious majesty" (Ps. cxlv. 12; 1 Chron. xvi. 8); yet that does not imply the *first* proclamation of them, but a more *full* one. Though this record concerning the manna does not prove the previous knowledge of the seventh day as sacred, it does not prove the lack of such knowledge. It adds to other strong probabilities that the seventh was at the beginning made known to man as religious.

Objection: "If the Sabbath had been instituted at the time of the creation, . . . and if it had been observed all along from that time to the departure of the Jews out of Egypt, . . . it appears unaccountable that no mention of it, no occasion of even the obscurest allusion to it, should occur."¹

Reply: "To object that the Bible, in its few brief memoranda of their [the patriarchs] lives, says nothing about their Sabbath-keeping, any more than it tells us of their forms of prayer and modes of worship, is a worthless argument."² The sacred seventh day may have been given in Eden, and yet not "observed all along." We have shown that there is probably repeated allusion to it in the septenary division of time. Notwithstanding the impressive promulgation of the fourth command through Moses on Sinai, the Scriptures do not mention the Sabbath between the death of Moses and near that of David, — about four hundred and thirty-six years, — and yet it was generally observed. We go through the histories of Joshua, of the Judges, of Samuel, and of Saul without its mention. It is the general belief that the institution of sacrifice was observed from the time of the fall; but no mention is made of it between Abel's offering and Noah's building an altar after he left the ark, — by the usual chronology, about sixteen hundred and fifty years. There is no record respecting circumcision — boasted rite of the Jews — between Israel's renewal of it by Joshua on entering Canaan and the circumcision of John the Baptist, — about fourteen hundred and fifty years, — save Jeremiah's allusion once to the literal, and once to the figurative, observance

¹ Paley's Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy, Bk. 5, c. 7.

² Tayler Lewis, — Lange on Genesis, p. 197.

(ix. 25, 26 ; iv. 4). Scripture history is given so much in outline and isolated sections, that the lack of any distinct mention of the seventh day as sacred between the creation and Moses is no approach to proof that it was not observed. The words "seven," "seventh," and "sevenfold" occur three hundred and eighty-three times in the Old and New Testaments, and not without some special cause. The cause and origin of so frequent use certainly preceded the giving of the fourth commandment ; though that event amplified the cause and increased the use. What cause so probable as that God rested the seventh day, and blessed and hallowed it ?

5. The Jewish weekly measurement of time had a striking similarity in a like reckoning among other nations—the Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, Assyrians, Chaldees, Persians, Hindoos, Chinese, Peruvians. The claim that the Greeks and Romans obtained their weekly divisions of time from the Egyptians,¹ and not until about the beginning of the Christian era, is not warranted. Some noted ancient Greek and Roman authors speak of the seventh day as sacred. Clement of Alexandria, writing in the second century, says : "The seventh day is recognized as sacred, not by the Hebrews only, but also by the Greeks."² He then quotes from ancient authors—Hesiod : "The first, fourth, and seventh day is holy" ; Homer : "And on the seventh there came the sacred day" ; "The seventh was sacred" ; "Callimachus : "Among good days is the seventh day" ; "The seventh is among the prime, and the seventh is perfect." Further, Clement says : "The elegies of Solon, too, intensely deify the seventh day." "Among the Greeks," says a modern writer, "seven was sacred to Apollo and to Dionysos, . . . particularly sacred in Euboea, where the number was found to pervade, as it were, almost every sacred, private, or domestic relation."³ Professor James Hadley enumerates nearly a score of instances where the number seven is significantly used in Homer, and four cases in *Odyssey* of noted

¹ Smith's Bible Dict., p. 2764.

² Ant. Nic. Lib., Vol. xii. pp. 284, 285.

³ Chambers' Encyclopaedia, Vol. viii. pp. 364, 365.

action continuing six days, and terminating on the seventh in some critical event—“a curious circumstance,” he says, “in which we might almost be tempted to trace either a dawning or a vanishing of the week.”¹ He states, as other authors do, that the Pythagoreans had a special regard for the number seven, and that Philolaus, in an exposition of Pythagorean doctrine, says concerning God, the author and governor of all things, that “he is without variation, even like himself, and like no other, even as the number seven.” Among the Persians, in the religion of Zoroaster, who was nearly or quite contemporary with Moses, the number seven was sacred; and Persian modern literature “abounds in sevens.”² Far back in Brahminism the number seven was especially noted and frequent, and that without being traceable to Egypt or any other nation. Porphyry says: “The Phoenicians consecrated one day in seven as holy.”³ The Slavonians, while yet in their ancient paganism, held a weekly festival.⁴ Lucian speaks of boys as having the seventh day for play.⁵ Theophilus of Antioch has this phrase: “Concerning the seventh day, which all men acknowledge.”⁶ Former inhabitants of the coast of Guinea observed a weekly day in social and religious services.⁷ An ancient Chinese writer says: “Every seven days comes the revolution”—of the heavenly bodies, as Chinese scholars explain,—indicating some former septenary division of time; and Gillespie⁸ says that by the Chinese calendar now there are four names in each lunar month, answering to our four Sundays of the month. Of Grecian wise men seven were singled out six centuries before Christ, and Plato gives the first list.⁹ There were also the seven wonders of the world, and the seven ages of human life. The Book of Job shows

¹ Essays, p. 326.

² Hadley's Essays, p. 329.

³ Cited by President Dwight, Works, Vol. iii. p. 255.

⁴ Helmsdalus, cited by Ussher, Works, Vol. xi. p. 578.

⁵ Ibid., p. 580.

⁶ Ant. Nic. Lib., Vol. iii. p. 79.

⁷ Hurd's Rites and Ceremonies (1799), p. 456.

⁸ Land of Sinim, p. 161; cited by Gilfillan, p. 360.

⁹ Hadley's Essays, p. 326.

the observance of septennial time in some land other than that of Israel, and in an age probably before the time of Moses (Job ii. 13).

Philo, contemporary of Christ, wrote a dissertation on the number seven, and said: "That day is the festival not of one city or one country, but of all the earth"¹; meaning, doubtless, that it was designed for all, though not observed by all. The Saracens had a weekly sacred day before the time of Mohammed²; and he made the number seven conspicuous in the Koran, though unable to read the Bible, by which he may, however, have been indirectly influenced.³ The importance and dignity of the number seven is shown by Shakespeare's use of it. LaPlace said: "The week is perhaps the most ancient and incontestable monument of human knowledge."

Even if in some cases in the far past, as that of Hesiod, the reference be to the day of the month, and not of the week, still, the question is, How came the seventh to be a noted and sacred day in so many nations, and generally without known copying from each other? The weekly division might be forgotten during the long ages, and yet the number seven remain sacred. That other days than the seventh have been sacred or noted among Gentile nations does not weaken the argument. There were other sacred days and numbers in the Jewish economy; though scarcely any number in any nation has been so conspicuous as "seven."

Notwithstanding the Egyptians and others named the seven days after the seven planets, that does not prove that there was an astronomical cause for the septenary division; for there are no phenomena of the heavens sufficient to suggest it. After that division was made and observed, and its cause and authority forgotten, the astronomical reason may have been originated in human fancy.⁴ The fact that the seventh

¹ Yonge's Translation, Bohn's Ecclesiastical Library, Vol. i. p. 26.

² Furchas' Pilgrimage, cited by Gilfillan, p. 359.

³ Hadley's Essays, p. 337.

⁴ Tayler Lewis, — Lange on Gen. p. 311.

is so generally a marked or sacred day, with no satisfactory reason for it external to the Scriptures, favors the view that it was appointed as a religious day in the beginning. If so, it was indeed for man, and it may be expected to continue while the race endures.

Objection: "It is no safe foundation for our thinking ourselves bound to keep it [the Sabbath], that the patriarchs kept it before the law was given, and that the commandment had existed before the time of Moses, and was only confirmed by him and repeated. . . . For if the law itself be done away in Christ, much more the things before the law."¹ "And if Moses has vanished in the diviner glory of Christ, all that preceded Moses must have vanished too."² *Reply:* Ceremonial and some other laws given expressly to the Jews were in force only while Judaism lasted. But moral commands,—as, to worship God, and not to kill or steal,—given to Adam, or Noah, or any other representative not of a nation, but of mankind, most certainly hold their binding force upon all men. Therefore the Sabbath or any sacred day, having moral elements, if given to the race once, must, in respect to those elements, hold still, wherever known. Besides, moral elements, principles, laws, are not done away in Christ, even if their application and use be changed. The things done away, or vanished, in Christ are only such as have their fulfilment, completion, or enlargement in him.

The fact of a septenary division of time in the early ages being established, the associated fact that public worship was in early time appointed and observed, gives a high degree of probability that the seventh day was sacred. "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord" (Gen. iv. 26). Professor Stuart regarded this as teaching that social and public worship then commenced.³ It cannot mean that there was previously no private worship; that Seth did not pray before his son Enos was born, nor any others prior to

¹ Dr. Thomas Arnold, Sermons, Vol. iii. No. xxii. pp. 256, 257.

² Dr. R. W. Dale, Ten Commandments, p. 94.

³ Phelps's Perpetuity of the Sabbath, p. 34.

that date. Lange, and Keil and Delitzsch also hold that this passage announces the inauguration of public religious services. We know, further, that in that primitive era there were consecrated places of worship. Noah built an altar unto the Lord (Gen. viii. 20). So did Abraham at both his first and second stopping-place in Canaan (Gen. xii. 7, 8); and to the latter he came again for worship after returning from Egypt (Gen. xiii. 3, 4). He built another altar after separating from Lot (Gen. xiii. 18), and still another at Beersheba (Gen. xxi. 33). Isaac built an altar when he dwelt in Gerar (Gen. xxvi. 6, 25). Jacob built one at Shalem (Gen. xxxiii. 18, 20), and one at Bethel (Gen. xxxv. 7), and offered sacrifices at Beersheba. It must have been the custom to prepare and consecrate places of worship. Here are three positive factors, existing long before the time of Moses: septenary division of time, public worship, and places for public worship. When did they worship? On some particular day, at a stated time, doubtless, as we know their posterity soon did. When was that time, unless on the seventh day, the weekly limit in the hebdomadal period, which, at least, was the time a few centuries afterwards? Daily worship of equal length would have been unnatural. Daily sacrifices would have required too much time of each small community, and too much expenditure of the life of animals. The later Jews were required to offer at Jerusalem, on the Sabbath, double the number of sacrifices they offered on other days; the earlier Jews were therefore more likely to offer weekly sacrifice on the seventh day than on any other.

But we have other important ancient evidence, in the Chaldean account of the creation, as given by the cuneiform inscriptions found in the ruins of ancient Babylon. The lamented George Smith, noted in Assyrian researches, says: "In the year 1869 I discovered, among other things, a curious religious calendar of the Assyrians, in which every month is divided into four weeks, and the seventh days, or 'sabbaths,' are marked out as days on which no work should be under-

taken.”¹ H. Fox Talbot, F.R.S., in his translation of these Creation Tablets, renders two lines thus :

“ On the seventh day he appointed a holy day,
And to cease from all business he commanded.”

He also says : “ This fifth tablet is very important, because it affirms, clearly in my opinion, that the origin of the Sabbath was coeval with creation. . . . It has been known for some time that the Babylonians observed the Sabbath with considerable strictness. On that day the king was not allowed to take a drive in his chariot; various meats were forbidden to be eaten, and there were a number of other minute restrictions. . . . But it was not known that they believed the Sabbath to have been ordained at the creation. I have found, however, since this translation of the fifth tablet was completed, that Mr. Sayce has recently published a similar opinion.”²

Rev. A. H. Sayce, M.A., so far as appears, has translated more of this “ Babylonian Saint’s Calendar ” than any other person. Both he and Mr. Smith have translated a Babylonian list of the thirteen months of the year and their patron deities. Mr. Sayce has translated in full the memorandum of each of the thirty days of the month in this calendar. That for the seventh day reads thus :

“ The seventh day. A feast of *Merodach* (and) *Zir-Panitu*.
A festival.

A sabbath. The prince of many nations the flesh of *birds* (and) cooked fruit eats not.

The garments of his body he changes not. White robes he puts not on. Sacrifice he offers not. The king (in) his chariot rides not.

In royal fashion he legislates not. A place of garrison the general (by word of) mouth appoints not. Medicine for his sickness of body he applies not.

To make a *sacred spot* it is suitable. In the night in the

¹ Assyrian Discoveries, p. 12.

² Transactions of the Society of Biblical Archaeology, Vol. v. Part ii. pp. 427, 428.

presence of *Merodach* and *Istar*, the king his offering makes. Sacrifices he offers.

Raising his hand, the high place of the god he worships." ¹

That this is not merely for the seventh day of the month, without any weekly significance, is manifest from the fact that nearly the same language is used in these memoranda for the fourteenth, the twenty-first, and the twenty-eighth days. And nothing like it is used for any other of the thirty days except the nineteenth which seems to have been another sacred day, like the day of atonement in the Hebrew Calendar. Mr. Sayce says the month was divided into two lunations, each of "three periods of five days, the nineteenth ending the first period of the second lunation." ² Being thus a limit day, it was sacred. Mr. Sayce further says of this calendar: "But the chief interest attaching to it is due to the fact that it bears evidence to the existence of a seventh-day Sabbath, on which certain works were forbidden to be done, among the Babylonians and Assyrians. It will be observed that several of the regulations laid down are closely analagous to the sabbatical injunctions of the Levitical law and the practice of the Rabbinical Jews. What I have rendered "sabbath" is expressed by two Accadian words, which literally signify "dies nefastus," and a bilingual syllabary makes them equivalent to the Assyrian *yum sulumi* or "day of completion (of labors), or a day unlawful (to work upon)." The word Sabbath itself was not unknown to the Assyrians, and occurs under the form *sabattu* in W. A. I., II. 32, 16, where it is explained as a day of rest for the heart." *Sabatu* is also explained to mean "complete" in W. A. I., II. 25, 14. The calendar is written in Assyrian. The occurrence, however, of numerous Accadian expressions and technical terms shows that it was of Accadian, and therefore non-Semitic origin, though borrowed by the Semites, along with the rest of the old Turanian theology and science. The original text must accordingly have been inscribed at some period anterior to the seventeenth century B.C., when the

¹ Records of the Past, Vol. vii. pp. 160, 161. ² Ibid., Vol. i. pp. 164, 165.

“ Accadian language seems to have become extinct.”¹ An American Assyrian scholar, Rev. Selah Merrill, D.D., also affirms that the Accadian language became extinct at least seventeen centuries before Christ, except as some of its words were brought into the Assyrian. These cuneiform inscriptions, therefore, seem to give positive evidence, that the “ Sabbath ” existed at least two centuries prior to the giving of the decalogue on Sinai, and that, as Talbot says, “ the origin of the Sabbath was coeval with creation.” Therefore, having the whole evidence in view, the modern, frequent statement, that it ‘ is unwarrantable to infer that the Sabbath was instituted at the beginning,’² we claim is unfounded.

6. The fourth commandment in itself indicates the probability that God had made the seventh day sacred, and given it to man as such, long before he gave the decalogue. The injunction to “ remember ” the day naturally implies that it was previously known. Remembrance ordinarily signifies retrospection as well as prospection. It here implies retrospection ; for the Sabbath was known at the giving of manna, even if not at creation. The command to remember is based on three reasons : God rested from his work, he blessed the seventh day, and he hallowed it. The past tense of the verb is used ; each reason was an act of the past. The first one, ‘ God rested, we know dates at the close of creation. Were there two thousand and five hundred years between that and the date of the other two reasons ? Improbable. If they all dated at the beginning of God’s rest, then the seventh day was made sacred at that time ; whether or not then made known to man. Yet was it not made known when made sacred ?

If God’s act of blessing and hallowing the seventh day occurred on the Mount while he wrote the decalogue, we should not have the Hebrew perfect tense, but the imperfect, or participle, which in this case would be nearly equivalent

¹ Records of the Past, Vol. vii. pp. 157, 158, and 2d note p. 160.

² The Social Law of God, Sermons on the Ten Commandments, by E. A. Washburn, D.D., p. 73.

to the English present: remember the Sabbath-day, for God rested on it, and *blesse*s and *hallow*s it.

The three reasons in the commandment for observing the Sabbath-day being the same as the three for the appointment of the seventh day, as stated in the narrative of the creation, is another fact that apparently dates the sacred day at the beginning of God's rest. The language in Malachi, "Remember the law of Moses" (Mal. iv. 4), naturally means not merely bear that law in mind in the future, but remember the law given through Moses heretofore; and, in like manner, the fourth commandment rationally means, remember the Sabbath-day given heretofore.

The command to remember has especial significance because at that age so much of history and of knowledge of God's works and commands depended upon human memory. The book of Genesis did not exist to preserve the sacred narratives until Moses' hand could write it; though he doubtless embraced in it some accounts previously written by inspired men. By the usual chronology Adam could tell Methuselah of the sacred seventh day; Methuselah, Shem; Shem, Abraham; Abraham, Isaac; Isaac, Joseph; Joseph, Amram; Amram, his sons, Aaron and Moses. Memory had a high office.

It being a legal axiom that a law continues while its reason continues, it follows that under a wise ruler the law is in force as soon as the reasons for it exist. One of the three reasons, and doubtless all, for the appointment of the Sabbath, began at the close of the creation. Should not this increase the probabilities nearly into assurance, that the seventh was given to man as a sacred day at his origin?

7. The decalogue had an ascendancy over the other enactments of the Mosaic law, and was confirmed without repeal by Christ, in his own person and through his apostles. Its original superiority is evident from its having been written by Jehovah himself on the two tables of the covenant, and preserved in the ark of the covenant, made especially for them, and kept in the holy of holies. No part of that law can be abolished, except by the enacting authority.

But some claim that this decalogue was abolished by Christ, through himself and his apostles. Dr. Thomas Arnold speaks cautiously: "If the law itself be done away in Christ."¹ Dr. R. W. Dale says: "The Jewish revelation has become obsolete."² Dr. George B. Bacon says: "When I say that Christianity superseded the Jewish law, I mean, just as Paul meant, that it superseded the whole of the Jewish law."³ And many suppose that Christ himself began to disregard and violate the Sabbath. Dr. Heylin, in the seventeenth century, said that Christ abated the estimation which the people had of the Sabbath, preparatory for the abrogation of the day.⁴ Theodore Parker said, on this question, "Paul rejects the authority of the Old Testament."⁵

Reply: When Christ was requested to tell the greatest commandment of the law, he gave a summary of the first four as our duty to God, and of the last six as our duty to man. He added: "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matt. xxii. 35-40). He made no exception of the fourth commandment; he therefore sustained that and the whole ten. In that day no question had been raised about the abrogation of the fourth commandment or the Sabbath. He said to another: "Keep the commandments." When asked, "Which?" he specified the last six; the direction to the inquirer to sell his possessions having pertained to the tenth (Matt. xix. 16-22). By not naming the first three he did not reject them, nor the fourth by not naming it. He convicted the young man by the second table of the law; much more was he a sinner by the first. Christ testified that he came not to destroy the law; therefore the Sabbatic part of it he did not abolish. He said: "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt. v. 18). The sacrificial and otherwise ceremonial law was fulfilled when Christ's propitiatory work was complete; but

¹ Works, Vol. iii. p. 257, Sermon xxii. The Lord's Day.

² Ten Commandments (Fourth), p. 93.

³ Sabbath Question, p. 101.

⁴ Hist. Sab., fol. p. 401, Part ii. c. 1. § 2. ⁵ Christian Use of Sunday, p. 18.

the chief elements of the sacred day did not pertain to that law, and no proof exists that their office has been fulfilled.

Jesus, instead of annulling the Sabbath, explained and enforced its observance, and purified it from rabbinical abuses. His justification of his disciples in plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath for their present need was on the ground of special necessity, like that of saving life or relieving suffering (Matt. xii. 1-13; Mark ii. 23-28; iii. 2-6; Luke vi. 1-10; xiii. 11-17; xiv. 1-6). Thus was David justified in relieving his hunger by means not otherwise allowable (1 Sam. xxi. 1-6). But F. W. Robertson repeatedly implies that the fourth commandment — "In it thou shalt not do any work" (Ex. xx. 10) forbids doing even religious or necessary work.¹ *Reply*: Such cannot have been the meaning; for God required Joshua, with priests and armed men, to march around Jericho on the Sabbath (Josh. vi.); and the double sacrifices (Num. xxviii. 9, 10) and new-baked shew-bread (Lev. xxiv. 5-8; 1 Chron. ix. 32), which the Lord appointed for the Sabbath, required a large amount of labor, yet was it not profanation of the day. The Sabbatic law forbade the ordinary secular work in order to promote rest and worship. Pharisaic dogmas added the prohibition of works of necessity and mercy; but Christ allowed them, and, by the case of David eating shew-bread, and that of the priests performing labor in the Temple on the Sabbath (Matt. xii. 5, 6), he showed that his course was not inconsonant with the law of the Sabbath. And it is not shown that Christ ever allowed anything which the law denied.

Jesus taught the application and adaptation of the Sabbath to the race, by saying that it was "made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (Mark ii. 27). Dr. R. W. Dale and others object that he did not mean that the Sabbath was made for *man*, in distinction from the Jews, but for the *Jewish man*.² We reply: The first truth in this language of Christ is, *man* was not made for institutions and ordinances, but these —

¹ Sermons (First Series), Shad. and Sub. Sab. Law, pp. 116, 118, 120.

² Ten Commandments, by Dale, p. 92.

including the Sabbath — for man. An implied truth is, the Sabbath was made for mankind. “The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath” (Mark ii. 28). As Son of *Man*, he belonged to the *race*, though he came first to the house of Israel. So the Sabbath made for man was designed for the race of men, though for the Jews it was especially the seal of the covenant. The elements of the Sabbath are chiefly of a moral nature, such as rest, physical and spiritual, worship, and time to be kept holy. It cannot be found that God has ever laid moral duties upon one nation or portion of mankind, without making the same binding upon all others where they were known and could be practised. Moral duties are universal and permanent. Therefore, when Christ said the Sabbath was “made for man,” he did not mean it was for *Jews* merely, but for *all* men. He gave no indication that he was defining the manner in which Jews only should keep the Sabbath, nor that he intended to have it abolished under the new dispensation.¹

Dr. Dale gives no definite reason for his opinion that Christ referred merely to the Jews, as having the Sabbath made for them. But Dr. S. M. Hopkins says specifically: “What Jesus said was not that the Sabbath was made for man or humanity at large, but for the man (*ton anthropon*); the Jewish Sabbath for Jewish man; just as we should say that the constitution was made for the people (the American people), and not the people for the constitution. The failure of our translators to appreciate the force of the Greek article in this passage has largely contributed to mistaken views as to the universal and permanent obligations of the fourth commandment—an error which will undoubtedly be rectified in the new revision.”² Alford, one of the revision committee until his death, translates it, “For the sake of man,” without the article, meaning the *generic* man. Winer says: “To be particularly noticed, further, is the use of a singular with the article to express in the person of a definite indi-

¹ Dr. J. S. Stone, in *The Eclectic*, Vol. iv. p. 554.

² Address at Pittsburgh, before the Evangelical Alliance.

vidual a whole class; as when we say, "The soldier must be trained to arms." He gives as an example Matt. xii. 35: ὁ ἀγαθὸς ἄνθρωπος . . . ἐκβάλλει ἀγαθά, "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things."¹ As we understand Professor Hopkins's rule, this must be a Jewish good man; according to Winer, and to reason, we think, it is any good man; the "definite individual" is taken for a "whole class." In this instance, and in the case of the Sabbath made for man (Mark ii. 27), the Saviour is addressing unbelieving Pharisees; yet in neither case does he say anything limiting his application to the Jews, nor anything more appropriate or needful to them than to other men. Dr. Robinson says the article is also used "in the singular when the noun expresses a generic idea, or stands as the representative of a class, where in English, also, we commonly put *the*."² He cites, as one example, the passage Winer does (Matt. xii. 35), where he would translate, as Alford does, "*the* good man," representing a class, the generic good man. Dr. Robinson speaks again of the Greek usage, "where the singular, ὁ ἄνθρωπος, *the man*, is used in a collective or generic sense, either for all mankind or for a particular class of men,"³ and cites Matt. iv. 4: "Man shall not live by bread alone," ὁ ἄνθρωπος, *the man*, *man* used generically, though preceded by the definite singular. But as we understand the rule of Dr. Hopkins and others, it must be merely the Jewish man. Pray, then, what is there in Scripture that is applicable to us Gentiles? Professor Hadley gives a class where the noun, though preceded by the definite article, is used generically, and gives as his example, ὁ ἄνθρωπος θνητός ἐστι, *man is mortal; the man*; yet he says: "Man as such, comprehending every one of the species,"⁴ not merely all of one nationality, or a definite individual. Professor A. C. Kendrick, on the particular passage in question (Mark ii. 27), says, "Had it been ἄνθρωπος, it must have

¹ New Testament Grammar (Am. ed.), p. 106.

² Lexicon of the New Testament, p. 490, col. 2.

³ Ibid., p. 56, col. 2.

⁴ Greek Grammar, § 526, b.

been for a man, spoken of indefinitely, whoever he might be, where *ἄνθρωπος* was used loosely for *τῷ ἄνθρωπῳ*. The latter, *τῷ ἄνθρωπῳ*, may mean equally well 'the man,' i.e. the man referred to in the particular case, or 'for man' collectively and generically, the *genus homo*, which the Greek language has no other way of properly designating. That the latter is meant here, I should not think there is a moment's ground for doubting. Otherwise, it can here (Mark ii. 27) have no proper reference whatever." Professor Hopkins illustrates: "The Jewish Sabbath for the Jewish man, just as we should say that the constitution was made for the people (the American people)." *Reply*: 1. If Christ had said "the Jewish man," as Dr. Hopkins says "the American people," it would have been a parallel case; but as the fact is, it is not. The simple phrase, "The constitution was made for the people," unexplained by word, allusion, or implication, would mean for all people; as God's "constitution" of natural rights, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness is for all people. 2. If Christ intended the truths of his gospel to be only for the Jews, then it might be that the Sabbath was made merely for them. But he says: "Preach the gospel to every creature." And under the old dispensation he desired to have the whole world made proselytes to the Jewish faith, as the Rechabites were — to that of the Sabbath with the rest. He made special promises to the strangers that should come and keep his "Sabbaths" (Isa. lvi. 3-8). 3. If Gentiles were not *men*, then the Sabbaths were not for them.

Finally, a class of writers have for a long time been saying that Christ did not teach that the Sabbath was for mankind in general, but that in saying that it "was made for man," he said only that it was made for the Jews. The only reason we have found for such doctrine is that so clearly stated by Dr. Hopkins, which we have now considered, and which we conclude has no real foundation.

Returning to Christ's instructions, when he inquired of the Pharisees: "Is it *lawful* to do good on the Sabbath-days,

or to do evil" (Mark iii. 4)? "Is it *lawful* to heal on the Sabbath-day" (Luke xiv. 3)? and when he affirmed, "It is *lawful* to do well on the Sabbath-days" (Matt. xii. 12), he each time implied, and intended to be understood, that he fully regarded the Scripture laws pertaining to the Sabbath, though he disregarded the rabbinical perversions of them. The Great Teacher corrected the abuses of both the Sabbath and marriage, but never those concerning circumcision, or any other institution not designed for all men and all time.

Objection: Christ attended a feast on the Sabbath, thus putting dishonor upon it, which apparently set it aside (Luke xiv. 1-25). *Reply*: This is not in Scripture called "a feast," but "eating bread" (ver. 1). Probably it was only the cold lunch, or meal at noon; for it is not called "supper." That it was the mid-day meal is apparent from the fact that great multitudes (ver. 25) attended Christ as he seems to have been going from the Pharisee's house; this occurrence, *after* the evening meal, it being so late, would be improbable. The synagogue services closed about noon, the sixth hour. Josephus speaks of an assembly being dissolved then, "at which hour," he says, "our laws require us to go to dinner on Sabbath-days."¹ Then, probably, one of Christ's hearers, living near by, invited him and his company and some of his own Pharisee friends, to his house for refreshment. Jesus and his apostles numbered thirteen, and at such a time the number at the meal was naturally doubled or quadrupled. They must all eat somewhere, and eating together did not make it a secular occasion, which is what is generally meant by our term "feast." The Pharisees were 'watching him,' especially to see if he would heal on the Sabbath the man present who had the "dropsy" (ver. 1, 2). All this gives a religious, rather than a secular aspect to the scene. Bengel says: "There was no wedding on this occasion." What Christ says of a wedding was in a parable uttered then, and out of courtesy he would make the occasion in the parable different from that at the house of his host. So far as

¹ Life, § 54.

appears, the Saviour's conversation there was wholly religious, and nothing of hilarity is witnessed among the guests. It was probably not an expensive meal; for no fire was allowed for the cooking of food on the Sabbath (Ex. xxxv. 3).¹ The chief rooms that some selected were simply the more conspicuous places for reclining at the table. No evidence appears that Christ disregarded the sacred day on this occasion, even though many were assembled together. In a day without printing, and with few manuscript books, there was more need of social religious communion, even on the Sabbath, than now.

The "supper" made for Jesus at Bethany (John xii. 2) was evidently not on the Jewish Sabbath. He seems to have come from Jericho on Friday, to have rested during the Jewish legal Sabbath, and at evening, after its close, to have had a meal with his usual company, and the few friends at the house of their host. Even if it were the Sabbath, nothing appears which was improper for that day, nothing like a secular feast.

The "great feast" given the Saviour by his disciple Levi—his apostle Matthew—(Luke v. 29), cannot be claimed to have been on the Sabbath. It was probably on Friday, as the next day seems to have been the seventh.

Many say that when Jesus ate bread with the Pharisee on the Sabbath (Luke xiv. 1) "the meal must have been a costly and ceremonious one," a "splendid entertainment."²

¹ Professor Fairbairn argues that the prohibition of fires was only temporary, designed for wilderness experience, and quotes Josephus as implying that in his day only the Essenes refused to build fires on the Sabbath (Typology, Vol. ii. p. 143). The quotation is: "They are stricter than any other of the Jews in resting from their labors on the seventh day; for they not only get their food ready the day before, that they may not be obliged to kindle a fire on that day, but they will not remove any vessel out of its place," etc. (Wars, Bk. ii. c. 8). Contrary to Fairbairn's inference, the passage implies, we think, that other Jews *did* refuse to build fires on the Sabbath; otherwise, the phrase "not only" would not have been inserted. In respect to removing vessels, etc., the Essenes went beyond other Jews. Philo says: "Moses, in many places, forbids any one to handle a fire on the Sabbath-day" (Yonge's Translation, Vol. iii. p. 120), which shows that he understood the prohibition to be of universal application.

² See Alford and Trench, *in loc.*

Much against it is the fact that no cooking could be done, or fire built, on the Sabbath. Against it is one reason for no cooking, "that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou" (Deut. v. 14). Yet, closing their day at six o'clock in the evening, they could have one warm meal before daylight passed by, which, on other days at least, was their chief meal; though we, with the same rule against fires on Sunday, could not have a warm meal between midnight and midnight—commencing and closing the day, as we do, at that hour.

Objection second: It was a feast that Christ attended on this occasion, because "the Jews used to give entertainments on the Sabbath. See Nehemiah viii. 9-12; Tobit ii. 1."¹

Reply: The day in this passage in Nehemiah is not called the Sabbath, but "holy unto the Lord" (ver. 9). It was on the first day of the seventh month (ver. 2). That was the time of the feast of trumpets. And though in Lev. xxiii. 24, 25 the day is called a Sabbath, it was not the weekly one; it was not *shabbath*, but *shabbathon*, merely a day for sabbatizing, a sabbatical day—one on which "no servile work should be done," but not one on which "no work" should be performed, as was the case with the weekly Sabbath and the day of atonement. It were useless to hold that the feast of trumpets always came on the Sabbath. The varying nature of the Jewish month forbids it. The Mishna implies that the Sabbath and that feast were not identical; stating, as it does, that when the feast of trumpets came on the Sabbath the trumpets were to be blown only in the Temple, and not outside of it.²

The passage in Tobit (ii. 1) to which Alford refers does contain the phrase, "There was a good dinner prepared for me"; but the same verse shows that the occasion was not on the Sabbath, but "day of Pentecost." Alford cites also Augustine; but the passages,³ though indicating luxurious

¹ Alford on Luke xiv. 1.

² Surenhusius's *Mischna*, Parz ii. p. 344, Roch Hash. Caput iv. [§ 1]. Amsterdam, 1699.

³ On Ps. xxxii. 2; Ps. xci. 2, Latin numbering.

ease and idleness, do not prove expensive feasts, and, besides, they pertain to customs in Augustine's time, and not in that of Christ. In another passage, not referred to by Alford, Augustine¹ speaks of revelling and drunkenness as practised by the Jews "of old"; but he doubtless refers to the prophets' day, when the desecrated Sabbaths were an abomination to God (Isa. i. 13). Alford's citations utterly fail to show that Christ attended a feast on the Sabbath.

Other writers, perhaps by following Alford, have fallen into his error. "Christ attended a feast made on that day in his honor. . . . Jewish usage, in that age, justified social gatherings on the Sabbath, and Christ by his practice sanctioned this usage, while by his words he never rebuked it."² "It was usual for the rich to give a feast on that day; and our Lord's attendance at such a feast," etc.³ "It was customary to give feasts on that day, and our Saviour is expressly said to have been a guest at one."⁴ "Nehemiah, a Jewish reformer of the strictest principle, gave directions for eating the fat, and drinking the sweet, and sending portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared, on the Sabbath, after the sermon" (see Neh. viii. 8, 10).⁵ *Reply*: This passage in Nehemiah has nothing to do with the observance of the Sabbath; but the writer here citing it, and writing the sentence which he hopes is proved by it, does cite this good sentence from Paulus on Luke xiv. 1-24: "We are not here to understand a public banquet." To sustain the charge against the Jews of holding social gatherings and giving feasts, — by which is meant those of a secular character, — we find adduced such passages as these: 2 Chron. xxix., which does not speak of the Sabbath at all, but of

¹ Commentary on Matt. xxiv. 20.

² Dic. Religious Knowledge, by Lyman Abbott and Prof. T. J. Conant, p. 824. Art. "Sabbath."

³ Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, p. 2759.

⁴ Kitto's Bib. Cyc. (Alexander's ed., third and enlarged), p. 713.

⁵ Questions of the Day, by John Hall, D.D., p. 201. See also Cox on "Sabbath Laws and Sabbath Duties," pp. 137, 436, 439; and George B. Bacon, D.D., on "The Sabbath Question," p. 74.

special services consequent on the revival of religion in the beginning of Hezekiah's reign, and subsequent to the cleansing of the Temple; and Neh. viii. 9-13, which refers to the feast of the trumpets (Lev. xxiii. 24, 25), and to memorial services at the completion of the rebuilding of the wall around Jerusalem; and Hosea ii. 11, which threatens divine judgments by taking away the Sabbath. But all these fail to sustain the foregoing charge.

The error is frequent of ascribing the celebrations of mere feast-days to the sacred Sabbath, probably because they are sometimes called "holy unto the Lord" (Neh. viii. 9). And even the mirth (Neh. viii. 12) of feast-days was religious, rather than secular. Josephus approvingly quotes Nicolaus' plea for the Jews before Agrippa, in which he says of their observance of the seventh day: "It is dedicated to the learning of our customs and laws; we thinking it proper to reflect on them, as well as on any [good] thing else, in order to our avoiding of sin. If any one, therefore, examine into our observances, he will find that they are good in themselves."¹ Whiston, learned in such things, corroborates Josephus; and both give a historic impression utterly inconsistent with secular feasts, or even secular visiting on the Sabbath among the Jews in our Saviour's time. The fact that the Pharisees and Essenes, and perhaps the Sadducees, of that age, were very scrupulous and superstitious in observing the Sabbath, and put much merit in the outward acts of life, is irreconcilable with the theory that they attended secular feasts or even social gatherings on that sacred day. Philo, contemporary of Josephus, treating of Jewish laws and customs, says: "But the seventh day had an especial honor; for it is not permitted to do anything whatever on that day"; and, "It was invariably the custom, . . . especially on the seventh day, . . . to discuss matters of philosophy, . . . in accordance with which custom, even to this day, the Jews hold philosophical discussions on the seventh day, disputing about their national

¹ Antiq., Bk. xvi. c. 2. § 4; see also *ibid.*, c. vi. § 12; against Apion, Bk. i. § 22; Wars, Bk. iv. c. 9, § 12.

philosophy.”¹ The learned Selden, after quoting various Jewish authorities, says: “The Jews, therefore, by no means count the Sabbath a burden, but a great blessing; they have it in high veneration, and affect to call it their spouse.”² Buxtorf gives similar testimony.³ Philo describes the “feasts” of “Barbarians and Grecians,” with the apparent implication that Jewish feasts were free from all excesses and perversions.⁴ We therefore conclude, though the Jews had their chief meal on the Sabbath near mid-day, instead of at evening, as on other days, and though they endeavored to make the occasion cheerful, and set their best food cold upon the table, and gave time to conversation, and frequently to short discourses, yet that they did not in our Saviour’s time indulge in mere social visiting, carnal festivities, or secular amusements during the Sabbath hours. We also conclude that the frequent statement in modern times that Christ was on the Sabbath a guest at a feast made in his honor, has done much to secularize the Lord’s day. Professor Barrows, D.D., of Oberlin, whose studies have led him to some special examination of this subject, states that he knows of no evidence that Christ attended a feast, in the ordinary sense of the term, on the Sabbath, or that the Jews of that age were accustomed to hold sumptuous entertainments on that day.

¹ *Life of Moses*, Bk. i. c. 36, Yonge’s Translation, Vol. iii. pp. 46, 119.

² Selden, *de Jure nat. et gent. lib. iii. c. 10*; *Oper.* Vol. i. pp. 326, 327.

³ Buxtorf, *Synag. Judaic. c. xv. pp. 299, 300*; Edit. Basil, 1661.

⁴ Vol. i. p. 198, Cain and his birth.

(To be continued).