

nity and a power which prove that it is divine."

It would indeed seem strange that God, who so carefully fixes down and limits the proportion of *time* that belongs to Him, should leave to man's wild and wanton will the proportion of *substance*. If it needs a barrier and boundary to guard our time from being devoted entirely to self, how much more is it necessary that some bounds be set to that overmastering passion of the human heart—love of money—which is the root of all evil.

When we turn, therefore, with unprejudiced hearts to the Word of God, we find clear evidence (as we endeavoured to show last month): 1st. That God has always, from the days of Eden, claimed a share of man's earthly possessions. This claim he can no more forego with safety to man's welfare and to his own authority, than he can forego his lordship over man. This is the *homage* which the vassal owes his Lord, the refusal of which (compare Gen. xli. 10, margin, and 1. Sam. x. 27, and Psalms ii. 12, lxxvi. 11) is a sign of rebellion involving forfeiture of lands, outlawry, and even death, but for God's great mercy. 2nd. That the proportion of substance has been fixed as definitely as the proportion of time. Just as the number *seven* is applied to time and acts of worship, so *ten* is applied to means and substance for the maintenance of the ministers of religion, and the edifices and forms of worship, as we endeavoured then to prove.

But to complete the rule for giving it is necessary that definite periods of payment be fixed. In the money affairs of men the precise time on which an obligation to pay matures is fixed in writing, and among business men it is considered of the greatest importance that payment be made on the day. This law is so vital to commercial transactions, that commercial men

view it as a calamity if they are hindered from meeting on time the recurring obligations of rents, salaries, notes, and bills. Failures to meet engagements depreciate the value of government debentures, or bank stock, or railroad shares. "The first thing," said a well-known financier talking to Mr. Speer about Christian finances, "the first thing to be secured is *periodicity*." *Periodicity* is a striking feature in God's movements in nature. The heavenly bodies have their periods, (so have the seasons, so have day and night) which they observe with un-failing regularity; in this they are an emblem of God's moral government, and a lesson to his church. We therefore find the *periods* for giving fixed in the Jewish economy (which was the Church under training for Christ's coming), like the grand and regular march of the forces of nature. The new-moon, the first fruits, the day of deliverance from Egypt, the seventh day and the seventh year, and the seventh year multiplied by seven, all this to train God's people to habits of *punctuality* and *periodicity* in the offering of their gifts to the Lord.

The same law of regularity and system is enjoined on the New Testament Church in the memorable words of Paul.

"UPON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK LET EVERY ONE OF YOU LAY BY HIM IN STORE, ACCORDING AS GOD HATH PROSPERED HIM, THAT THERE BE NO GATHERINGS WHEN I COME." 1 Cor. xvi. 2.

"The most consummate financier in modern ages," says Mr. Speers, commenting on these words, "can add nothing to, and take nothing from this brief rule. It contains every important principle necessary to the accomplishment of the great end in view. All that is needed is simple obedience to it, in order to fill the treasuries of the Christian Church, to secure for the church that favor of God, which follows