

their worship, from Sunday to Saturday. The first reason of which might be, that as Sunday was the day of worship among the idolators, the Israelites would be more likely to join with them, if they rested on the same day, than if they were to work on that day, and serve their God upon another. But a second reason certainly was—in order to perpetuate the memory of their deliverance on that day from Egyptian slavery. For Moses, when he applies the fourth commandment to the particular case of his own people, (Deut. v. 15.) does not enforce it (as in Exod. xx. 11.) by the consideration of God's resting on the seventh day, which was the Sabbath of the patriarchs; but binds it upon them by saying—"Remember that thou wast a servant in 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 hath commanded thee to keep this Sabbath day."—*Kennicott's Dissertation on Cain and Abel*, p. 184.

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Grace in the Pardon of Sinners.

THIS forgiveness is worthy of God and suitable to the chief of sinners. Proceeding from sovereign grace, it reaches the foulest crimes and the most abominable transgressions. By this gracious pardon, scarlet and crimson sins are made *white as wool*, yea, *whiter than snow*. The bloody sons of Manasseh; the madness of rage in a persecuting Saul; the bitter taunts of the thief against the Son of God, when both were in their expiring moments; and the sin of crucifying the Lord of Glory;—these, all these, with their various and horrid aggravations, have been pardoned. These, though inconceivably heinous, and some of them such as were never committed either before or since, have been forgiven by a gracious God. The blood of Christ is possessed of infinite excellence arising from the superlative dignity of Him who shed it; and it is able to cleanse from all sin:—from each sin, be it ever so heinous; from all sins, be they ever so numerous. Thus Grace, like a mighty and compassionate monarch, passes an act of oblivion on millions and millions of the most aggravated offences and complicated crimes.

Did the most abandoned profligates know what forgiveness there is with God, they would no longer be held by the devil under that fatal snare, "There is no hope." Nor would they form the rash conclusion, We have loved strangers, and after them will we go, (Jer. ii. 25). Jehovah is a God of pardon. This is His name, and this is His glory. For thus saith the Lord, I will pardon all their iniquities; and it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise, and an honor before all the nations of the earth, and all the angels in heaven, which shall hear of all the superlative good that I do unto them. (Jer. xxxiii. 8-9). Astonishing words! The Sovereign of all worlds seems to glory in pardoning mercy as one of the brightest jewels in his own eternal crown. Well,

therefore, might the Church cry out, in a transport of joy, Who is a God like unto thee? that pardoneth iniquity (of the most complicated and shocking kind), and passeth by (with the utmost readiness) the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger for ever; and the glorious reason is—a reason which ought never to be forgotten—because He delighteth in mercy.

Come, then, poor trembling sinner, though conscious that the number and magnitude of your sins are inexpressibly great: come, let us reason together, and contemplate the riches of Grace. What though you are by nature an ungodly creature and a child of wrath—though you have, by innumerable transgressions, violated the law of God, and incurred its everlasting curse—though you are grown hoary in rebellion against your Divine Sovereign, and look upon yourself as a monster of iniquity—though your sins of heart, of lip, of life; sins of omission, and sins of commission; sins of ignorance, and sins against knowledge, like an armed host in terrible array, besiege you on every side, and call aloud for vengeance on your guilty head—though, to heighten your misery, the enemy of mankind should come in like a flood and load you with horrid accusations; should tell you, that, by your offences, you have dared God's vengeance to His face, and solemnly mocked Him in your duties; and so set a keener edge on all your sensations of guilt; and, to complete your distress, though your own conscience turn evidence against you, ratify the dreadful verdict and pronounce the deserved sentence, so that you are ready to conclude you are almost a damned soul, and that your case is absolutely desperate;—yet still there is relief to be had. Notwithstanding all these deplorable circumstances, there is no reason to sink in despair. For, behold, there is forgiveness with God; and such is His mercy, *He waits to be gracious* in bestowing the invaluable blessing. As He never confers the favor on account of anything amiable in the object, so He never withholds it on account of any peculiar aggravations in the sinner's conduct or character. To dispute this, is to deny that salvation is by grace. Divine mercy is not conditional, narrow, or limited—not like that which is exercised by men, backward to interpose till something inviting appear in its object. No; it is divinely sovereign and absolutely free.

Consider, O disconsolate soul! how many millions now inhabit the regions of immortal purity, and exult in bliss, that were once loathsome with sin, and laden with guilt, pressed with fears, and ready to sink in despair—in a word, altogether as abominable and wretched as you can possibly be. Reflect a moment, and see whether you cannot find, among those spirits of the just made perfect, such as were by nature the same, and, before mercy was shewed, no better by