

proportion of time which is requisite for the secular business of life, and that which is necessary for the Sabbath; he, whose wisdom appears conspicuous in every part of his works, and he only is able to make an arrangement suitable to the circumstances of man and worthy of his own perfections. That his will on this subject must be the law of the Sabbath, will further appear from the consideration that He is the supreme object of the services performed. His name is adored, his perfections and his works are celebrated; and therefore the right of appointing the time of the Sabbath must be His. Hence the Sabbath is not a human invention, but a Divine institution; and mankind may not either amend or alter it, to suit their taste or convenience. God's appointment alone can fix the time, the particular day, and the frequency of its recurrence.

How then shall we ascertain his appointment on this subject? Is there any express and formal institution of the Sabbath? There is none. To learn the Divine appointment, we must peruse the history of the institution itself.

The first intimation of the Sabbath is in Genesis ii. 2, 3, where we are informed, that God rested on the seventh day from all his works, and that he blessed and sanctified that day. Some suppose, that the sacred historian adds this notice of the Sabbath to the account given of the Creation, merely from its connection with the works of Creation; and by way of anticipating a law that was to be given 2500 years afterwards. This view, however, is more specious than solid. No one reading the narrative of Moses would suppose that he had mentioned the Sabbath by way of anticipation. The idea which the passage naturally suggests is, that the employment of the seventh day is related after the account given of the works of the other days; each day was distinguished by its particular display of Divine power, and the seventh day is distinguished from them as a day of rest, of blessing and of consecration; it is called the seventh day, because its employment was the celebration of the finished work of Creation: and it is called Sabbath, because it was a day of cessation from work: it is a day set apart for rest and praise. The sacred historian does not relate the precise form in which the consecration was made; but his language evidently implies that the Sabbath was then instituted: had he related the manner or form in which the consideration of the day took place, there could have been no dispute about the origin of the Sabbath: he simply tells us that the day was consecrated as a day of rest and blessing; this then must be the origin of the Sabbath: to put any other sense upon the passage, will require laboured and ingenious thoughts, which none will bestow, unless there is a favourite hypothesis to maintain.

The Sabbath, instituted immediately after the Creation, continued to be observed as such. An indication of this appears in Gen. iv. 3, 4, "And it came to pass in process of time:" literally *at the end of days*, that is, at the termination of a period of time; at the end of the week, when men met to worship and to present their offerings; that Cain brought an offering, &c. In Gen. viii. 6, 10, 12, there seems to be an allusion to the division of time into weeks, "*Noah waited yet seven days*;" if so, it implies that the Sabbath was known and observed as the last day of the week during the whole time before the flood. That the Sabbath was observed from this time onward until the time of Abraham is evident from the continual practice of Job whose religious opinions, property and manners seem to place him as contemporary with Abraham; Job had seven sons who visited each others houses and feasted alternately: Scripture says that when the days of their feasting were gone about, that is, when the cycle of their feasts was completed; he called them together and sanctified them; this he did continually; every seventh day or Sabbath there was a family sacrifice offered up. Thus it appears that from the Creation to the flood,