

the careful remembrance of the Sabbath, which, as the Israelites knew, already existed. Now the use to make of this illustration in connection with the text and the particular point at present before us is just this: The commandment enjoining the observance of the Sabbath is part of the moral law of God. The fundamental reason of its promulgation is the possession of a moral nature by those to whom it is addressed. But this nature is common to all men. It was the nature of Adam and it is the nature of all his posterity. Therefore this particular commandment must be intended to preserve and promote the design which God had in view in the institution of the Sabbath the very next day after the first man was made, namely, the establishing of an ordinance adapted to the nature and necessities of man as a moral being.

With regard to the fact that a number of ceremonial appointments peculiar to the Mosaic dispensation were associated with the observance of the Sabbath, and that this day served a variety of temporary purposes in the Hebrew commonwealth, this is to be admitted; but surely it ought not to form any difficulty in the discussion of the question or in the adoption of the views we have been propounding. The truth is that these appointments were of a typical character easily distinguishable from whatever pertains essentially and permanently to the Sabbath. They are abrogated because they are no longer of any use. The better things which they foreshadowed have been revealed. The rest, which they pre-figured, both as to the substance of it in the blessings of the new covenant, and as to the sign of it in the Sabbath, remaineth for the people of God. But divested of these, as of an old worn out dress, the day itself upon which they were grafted for a season, a sabbatical seventh day, survives according to the original design, to bless and benefit mankind, by furnishing them with means and opportunities for moral improvement, by affording enjoyments and privileges peculiar to itself, by reviving the associations of the past and strengthening the anticipation of a glorious future of endless sabbatism—evermore God's witness as at the first that it was made for man, because of man, for the good of man.

But finally, as illustrating the doctrine of our Lord respecting the design of this ordinance, the manner in which God constituted the seventh day a Sabbath is most significant and pertinent. That day dawned upon the work of creation all finished according to the Almighty Maker's perfect plan, and it is recorded that he rested thereon from all his work which he had made. This is true in point of fact; for the obvious interpretation is that this particular kind and part of his work being completed, he ceased from doing any more. Absolutely, however, it is not true; for as God is never weary and needs to rest, it would be wrong to say he did no work of any kind. The new-made world as well as the whole boundless universe, in which it is but a little speck, required the constant exercise of his superintending wisdom and preserving power, and from this work he did not desist. The meaning therefore is, he discontinued one description of work, no longer necessary, but stopped not any of those ceaseless operations, by which he manifests himself a presiding Deity every day and every moment. This is an essential part of the constitution of the Sabbath, and it is a proof that it was made for man. Unlike God, man needs rest, and the Sabbath is the divinely-appointed provision for this necessity. But it is a provision, the true use and enjoyment of which are as much dependent upon the nature as upon the existence of the accommodation granted. Man is a complex creature. The constitution of his being consists of several parts, and is subject to a variety of wants. In a properly apportioned attention to these, his duty and happiness chiefly lie. His bodily appetites demand satisfaction, and cannot be neglected with impunity. To satisfy their cravings, he must engage more or less in secular employments. But his spiritual necessities are even more urgent and certainly far more worthy of regard. Now the Creator's example in resting upon the first made Sabbath is our safest guide in respect to these matters. God rested by ceasing one kind of work and continuing another. So ought we to rest from all worldly pursuits, but only that we may engage more vigorously with our whole soul, in those religious duties and services by which our spiritual nature is developed and matured. What we need, and what is ever found to be the best thing for us, is not an entire cessation but a change of work. The great first work of glorifying God, our Maker, is one which we should never cease from day to day; but forasmuch as we are in constant danger of being carried away, oppressed, and ruined by the coarse cares of life and an excessive attachment to material objects, we have been graciously furnished with a Sabbath whose regular return arrests our bodily toil, and affords most precious and salutary opportunities for directing our minds