

creasing obligations of gratitude, it is evident that they must meet frequently for the simultaneous performance of the duties of religion: hence the necessity of stated times being set apart for this purpose. The Sabbath is then just a stated allotment of time intended to give mankind an opportunity of worshipping their common Benefactor together.

3. Mankind are naturally disposed to set apart days for commemorating important events.

In proportion to the importance of an event is the interest felt in the day commemorative of it, and the joy which the return of it calls forth. The birth day of a Sovereign is celebrated throughout all his dominions: anniversaries are appointed to keep up the remembrance of important national events. In this respect the Sabbath becomes one of the most solemn and universally interesting of commemorative institutions. It is the day on which God rested from the works of creation; it is also the day on which the Saviour rose victorious from the grave—and gave assurance to all men that the work of redemption was consummated. This view of the nature of the Sabbath points out the appropriate employment of the day, viz. meditation and conversation upon the events commemorated—the works of creation and especially the work of redemption: and the worship of God, which consists in the expression of those emotions and desires which the contemplation of these works is fitted to excite in the soul of man.

4. If the sabbath were observed as it ought to be, much happiness would be derived from its appropriate exercises.

From the exercise of religious emotions man derives a high degree of pure satisfaction. The pleasure is in proportion to the interest felt in them. Now the Sabbath affords better opportunities for indulging in these *in private* than any other day of the week; and viewed in this light it must be indispensably necessary to mankind. But from the *social* exercises of religion a much greater degree of enjoyment will be realized. The Sabbath therefore commends itself as an institution eminently fitted to bring to those who observe it aright the holiest pleasures which can be enjoyed in time, and besides, it presents the best resemblance to the exercises and the bless of heaven. Take away the Sabbath and you deprive man of the means of obtaining the purest and most elevated delight, viz. that which results from social religious exercises.

Wherever intelligent and moral beings are, institutions similar to the Sabbath must exist. There is nothing inconsistent in the supposition, that holy angels in heaven observe stated times of assembling together, to declare God's perfections and celebrate his worship.

In conclusion—the Sabbath was given to man before he fell. If it was necessary in a state of innocence, it must be much more so now that he has become a sinner, ignorant, apt to forget God, and either to neglect worshipping him, or to give that worship to another which is due to him alone: hence the imperative necessity of times being set apart for purposes purely religious.

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