

and the peasant, who has been separated from his family during the week, on this day joins them around his homely fire. Such is the effect of association, that the very aspect of nature seems hallowed on this day; a sacred tinge seems to rest on every flower, on every leaf, on every blade of grass.

2. The sabbath may also be considered as a season of peculiar privileges.

"This is the day the Lord hath made;  
He calls the hours his own."

But with what different feelings do men hail the approach of this sacred day. To some it only presents a day of worldly pleasure; to others a day of business, who, though their shops or offices may be closed, devote the day to travelling or correspondence; and to many it is a day of weariness. They long for the tedious hours to be gone; but with what different feelings does the Christian hail the approach of this day. No sooner do its sacred hours dawn upon him, than he exclaims—

"Welcome, sweet day of rest,  
That saw the Lord arise;  
Welcome to this reviving breast,  
And these rejoicing eyes.

"The king himself comes near,  
And feasts his saints to-day;  
Here we may sit, and see him here,  
And love, and praise, and pray."

This day frees him from a vain world, and calls him to the house of prayer, the scene of his dearest associations, his highest enjoyments, and his holiest desires. The sanctuary is open; the word of life is expounded; Jehovah comes down, and communes with his people from off the mercy seat, and they are made glad. Here he spreads the banquet of his love, and says, "Eat, O friends! Drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved!" And they do eat and drink, and exclaim with the church of old, "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to his banquetting house, and his banner over me was love." And with the patriarch, "Surely this is none other than the house of God; it is the gate of heaven."

3. The sabbath may also be considered as a type and emblem of heaven.

"Day of all the seven the best;  
Emblem of eternal rest."

Yes, there remaineth a rest (or a sabbatism), the keeping of a sabbath to the people of God; but how different is the heavenly sabbath from the sabbath on earth! The heavenly sabbath is perfect in its nature, and eternal in its duration. It is perfect in its nature. What imperfections attend the believer in the performance of his most sacred duties here. Often when he enters the sanctuary, he exclaims,

"Far from my thoughts, vain world, begone;  
Let my religious hours alone."

But the world will not be gone; worldly thoughts intrude themselves into his mind. He may charge them to stay at the foot of the mount, while he ascends to hold communion with his heavenly Father, but they will not stay; so that he is compelled to exclaim, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." But no sin or imperfection shall ever tarnish the duties of the heavenly sabbath. "There shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts." "Nothing shall enter that defileth, or that worketh abomination, or that maketh a lie." There will be no body of sin there to clog, no world to allure, no enemy to annoy, no coldness, no barrenness, no spiritual desertion, no wandering thoughts, no doubts or fears. No, the Christian will have laid aside his armour, and have entered into the joy of his Lord.

"O glorious hour! O blest abode!  
I shall be near and like my God;  
And flesh and sin no more control  
The sacred pleasures of the soul!"

The heavenly sabbath is eternal in its duration; here the sabbath is soon over. The Christian may exclaim, with Peter, "Lord, it is good to be here;" but he must again descend the mount, and have to combat with the things of time and sense. But it will not be so there: there "they serve God day and night in his temple," there

"Congregations ne'er break up,  
And sabbaths never end."