

the Holy Place (Ex. 25: 30; Lev. 24: 5-7, 9.)

The reply of Christ is substantially this:

"There are occasions on which it is not wrong to do work on the Sabbath day. My disciples were hungry and they are right to do whatever is necessary to satisfy their hunger. David ate the shew-bread, when no other could be procured, because he and his men were famished, and the high-priest himself gave it to him." To get this bread David told a lie, which our Lord, of course, does not commend. The point that he makes is: "The strictest Pharisee would not venture to condemn either David or the High Priest under the circumstances. If hunger justified them, I and my disciples are justified."

5.—The Sabbath was the priest's busiest day. The labor connected with preparing and offering sacrifices was very great. Yet it was clearly excusable. (1) It was commanded in the law; (2) The higher law of temple services set aside the law of Sabbath rest; (3) their labor was necessary to the proper Sabbath keeping of others; and (4) while working, they were, in the spirit of the day, engaged in sacred duties.

6.—Jesus is conscious of the fact that he is God and does not hesitate to place his ministering disciples above the priests, as engaged in his service. Yet he speaks mysteriously as if he could only hint at his own greatness before such men.

7.—This passage was quoted on another occasion (See Lesson VII.) "What God longs for on the part of men is not the outward observance, the sacrifice in the letter, but the inward outpouring of love—that which the sacrifice symbolized, the giving up of self in the self-devotion of love. This must underlie every outward sacrifice and service to give it value; and when the question arises between the form and the spirit, then the form must yield to the life, as the meaner to the more precious" (Trench.)

8.—Mark inserts here "The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath." That is, man was not created for the purpose of honoring the Sabbath, but, as soon as created, the Sabbath was made to promote the best welfare of man, and therefore, to his best welfare it must ever be held subordinate (Stoue.)

God instituted the Sabbath that man might have rest to his toiling body and careworn mind. That he might have leisure to draw near to Him in worship, and refresh his spiritual nature. That he might, at least one day in seven, try to do good and get good.

The Sabbath was meant to be man's servant, not his master. It is a blessing, not a burden, to every one who "sanctifies" it. "Let each of us lay this well to heart, that our Sabbaths are a gift from our kind Father of quite unspeakable value. Used in the best way, they deserve all the eloquent eulogiums which piety has pronounced upon them.

They do make stepping stones for our feet to walk to heaven by. They open to us by the wayside so many oratories and Bethel-like retreats where we may refresh our jaded spiritual nature, cultivate closer acquaintance with Christ, offer to God a less hurried praise, clear ourselves from the dust of time, re-examine the foundations of our confidence, scrutinize our motives, repair our faults, and revive our drooping ardor in the task of self-discipline for eternal bliss.

To make the best of such costly possibilities—fifty-two of them in the year's round—how infinitely is that to be desired for such Christians as we are, far behind in grace, and battling with conditions adverse to holiness! To lose our Sabbaths and all that they might bring to us. Can any thing replace a loss like that? (Dale.)

Yet many quote our Saviour's words as if he intended to sanction a "Continental Sunday."

Because the Sabbath was made for man; the Son of Man, the representative of normal humanity is its God. He interprets and administers its law. He does not claim a right to set aside the fourth commandment. As the Son of God, he might have done so by right of Supreme Law giver. But as Son of man he was the authorized interpreter and administrator of it, as well as the dispenser of all the other blessings bestowed upon mankind. He frankly asserts his right as Messiah to speak with authority on the subject.

9.—Luke says that this was upon another Sabbath. Jesus was not discouraged from church-going by the remarks his fellow-worshippers made about him.

10.—Luke tells us that his right hand was