

creatures the worship of the heart in its "intents and thoughts"; and it man, His creature, either from his busy occupation in many unavoidable cares, or from an evil tendency of his mind towards the love and service of the creature rather than the Creator, is exposed to the danger of omitting that higher and nobler worship; nothing seems more supposable than that there would be made, on the part of the Supreme Governor, a provision by which the employment of a portion of the time of man's busy and distracted life should have all the authority of command, should be found standing on the same foundation as every other moral requirement;—and accordingly, we think, a candid examination of scriptural testimony will shew, that no point of the moral law is announced with greater clearness or explicitness than this, perhaps none so clearly or explicitly.

The same care which has announced the wondrous action of creation, the six days work of completing the visible earth and heavens in their present aspect, has equally marked the Divine rest that ensued. The curtain falls on the animated scenes of a peopled earth and dazzling sky, to rise on the still sublimer scene of God reposing, and thereby revealing to us the "rest that remains" for His people.

In Genesis ii. 2, 3, we read, "and on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had made. And God *blessed* the seventh day and *SANCTIFIED* IT: BECAUSE THAT IN IT HE HAD RESTED from all His work that God created and made." To sanctify, every one knows, is to make holy; and to make holy when spoken in relation to things, is to set apart to a sacred purpose. This passage, therefore, informs us, that God set apart to a sacred purpose the seventh day; that is, every seventh day; for it would be altogether too trivial to suppose that only the first seventh day is here intended; especially, as there was, then, no man on the earth to keep that first day; and it must be for man's observance that the day was made holy. Not for angels, for days and times belong not to them. Not for God Himself, for He cannot be the object of His own laws.

Here, then, we think, is unequivocally the announcement of a series of Sabbaths, or holy seventh days, commencing immediately after the completion of the work of creation; to be observed by the only beings who could, in the nature of the case, observe them—the race of man.—What moral law is more explicitly announced than this? We know of none. Even the shedding of blood has, in the earlier scriptures, no clearer mark set on it as the breach of God's law, than the Institution of the Sabbath is thus set forth

as a Divine command. And until the clearer announcement of the Decalogue on Sinai, other moral actions seem to have been left chiefly to inference, or the natural impulses of conscience, for their evidence; while the authority of the Sabbath blazed forth from the first with all the distinctness and magnificence of Sovereign enactment.

With light so distinct bearing on this question, we scarcely know how to meet with any gravity or calmness, those, however weighty their names, who propose to reduce this solemn appointment of moral obligation to the level of those enactments of Mosaic ritual, that of necessity passed away with the dispensation to which they belonged. How, we may reasonably ask, with what shew of reason or evidence is a law made immediately on the completion of the work of creation, and then announced as law to be regarded as a part of that ceremonial system which was not instituted until so many centuries afterwards, and for a purpose limited and specific? We know not in what terms a moral law of universal obligation could be promulgated more clear and conclusive than those now cited from Genesis.

But the passage cited gives out further light than that as yet noticed in our comment. It not only states the fact that the series of seventh days was consecrated, but it gives also the reason of that consecration—"God sanctified" the day, we read, "because" He then "rested from his work." Nothing is plainer than that His resting from His work, is, in these words, stated as the reason why the seventh day, or series of seven days, is sanctified. But why is that rest a reason for the consecration that ensued? A most pregnant inquiry. How, we ask, is it to be satisfactorily answered? Does any reply appear more simple and natural than this:—that as the rest from labor, which seemed to a human eye to ensue when the work of creation ceased, happily symbolized the spiritual rest of heaven, therefore the seventh day, that is the day when that symbol occurred, was set apart to be itself a symbol of the same rest, as well as an appropriate occasion to prepare for it, and to enjoy its foretaste? It would, then, according to this view be, to every right-minded person, a very happy day, a day of holy enjoyment. But is not this also expressly asserted in the passage? We read there, not only that God "sanctified" the day, or made it holy, but also that he "blessed" it or made it happy, which seems to complete the view now taken of the entire passage as a harmonious whole; for it must, we conceive, be admitted, by all who allow that the worship of God is a delightful employment, that, if the seventh day was consecrated to that service, this was indeed to make it blessed; and, by all who admit

that the rest from the work of creation is a symbol of heaven, that there could be no fitter reason for its consecration.

With this plain declaration of the will of God that a seventh day, a Sabbath, should from the first, and always, record the creation, symbolize Heaven, and be above all other days a happy day, we cannot doubt that holy Patriarchs, previous to the Mosaic dispensation, must have observed gladly the Divine appointment.—It must have been, we conceive, well and commonly known and acknowledged by all sincere worshippers of Jehovah throughout the Patriarchal ages; and when, therefore, we read in Exodus xvi. 23,—"And he said unto them, 'This is that which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord,'" we feel that the balance of evidence is far more in favour of regarding the passage as referring to a usage already in existence as derived from the Patriarchs, than as designed to intimate the commencement of a Mosaic appointment.

Passing this, however, we come to the announcement of the Decalogue. Distinct as has appeared the evidence already cited from Genesis, still, if the law of the Sabbath had not taken its place with other moral laws of acknowledged perpetuity, we should be compelled to confess a deficiency for which it would be difficult to account consistently with that earliest record. A Divine law of Sabbatical rest announced for purposes and reasons in their nature, evidently co-extensive with time, demanded the sanction of Sinai. We turn, however, to the record of that wonderful renewal of the moral law, and are not disappointed. Side by side with the first and great commandment, the law of Divine love, the prohibition of idolatry, and of the abuse of oaths, and the law of filial piety, in the first and loftiest table of perpetual moral law is found the law of Sabbatical observance. To us it seems to throw inexplicable confusion, where otherwise everything seems symmetrical and explicit, to suppose that into such high place should be raised a mere rite of Mosaic appointment; a shadow that was to pass away; a type merely of the new covenant in Christ. Why not exalt to the same position, other positions of that typical ritual? the law of the Passover for instance? As a portion of typical service, the passover would appear as important as any other portion, if not more so from its not only recording the protection of the Israelites in the destruction of Egypt, but shadowing forth the great sacrifice to come, on whom hinges all the hopes of mankind, the salvation of the world and the glory of the Mediatorial Kingdom.

But the law of the Passover is not there; no other rite of the dispensation of types and shadows is there; there only, besides the Sabbath, are the laws that