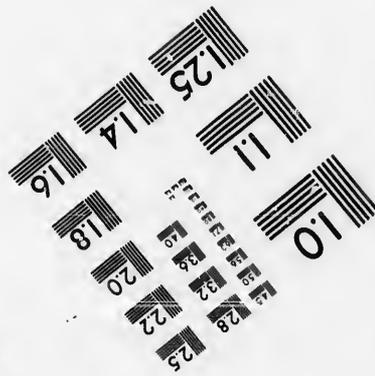
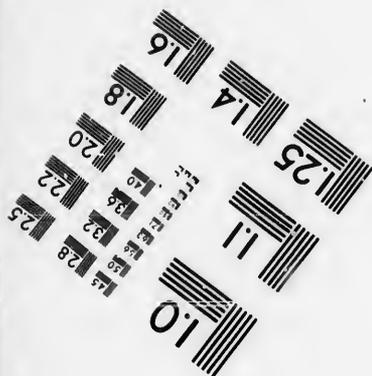
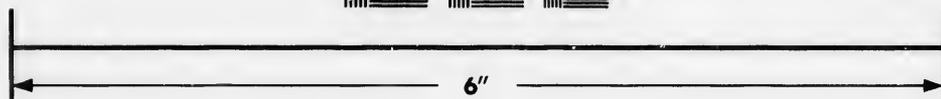
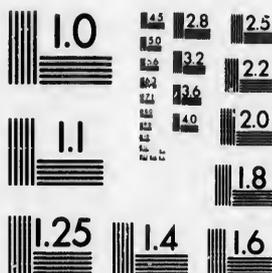


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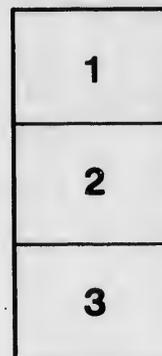
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THE
CHRISTIAN SABBATH
explained and vindicated,

IN A
DISCOURSE
ON

Exod. xx, 8.

Delivered, Jan. 14: 1759.

Upon a particular Occasion;

By MATHER BYLES, A. M.

Pastor of the First Church of CHRIST in *New-London.*



Published at the Request of his Hearers.



Job xxxii. 1, 3, 10. *So they ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own Eyes, — they found no Answer, and yet had condemned Job. — Therefore I said, Hearken to me, I also will shew mine Opinion.*

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The Christian Sabbath explained
and vindicated.



EXOD. xx. 8.

Remember the Sabbath-Day to keep it Holy.

It is a very melancholy Remark that I am obliged to make, as an Introduction to the present Discourse; that there is no one Article of Religion, either in Doctrine or Practice, but what has been the Subject of warm Debate. There ever has been, and ever will be, in the present Constitution of Things, those who give heed to seducing Spirits; and depart from the Purity of that Faith, which was once delivered to the Saints. And as, upon these Occasions, it is the Duty of every Christian to vindicate the Religion he professes; so it is peculiarly incumbent upon those who call themselves the Ministers of Jesus Christ. This is their proper Office. — *Knowing*, says the Apostle, *that I am set for the Defence of the Gospel.*

You are all, by this Time, sufficiently apprised of my Design, in selecting these Words, for your Entertainment this Day. You are sensible that the *Christian Sabbath* has, of late, been publickly attacked; and those who observe it have been challenged to produce any Scripture-Warrant for the Practice: I am not about to enter the Lists, with a Party of deluded Visionaries;
A 2 blinded

blinded by Prejudice, and obstinate in their Errors; wiser in their own Conceit than seven Men that can render a Reason. These we may pity and pray for; and this is all that we can do: for it is the Divine Spirit alone who can bring them to the Knowledge of the Truth. A Man might argue with a Whirlwind, with as great Propriety, and with equal Prospect of Success. But I would hope, my Brethren, that I am now dealing with reasonable Creatures: I would take it for granted that your Ears are open to Conviction; and that, to you, it will not be an unwelcome Discovery, if, upon the whole, you should find, that the *Christian-Sabbath* is a Divine Institution.

I propose, therefore;

- I. *Briefly to explain the Nature and Design of the Sabbath.*
- II. *To enquire how far this Command is moral, and of perpetual Obligation.*
- III. *What Reason we have to suppose, that the particular Day, appointed for this End, was altered, at the Resurrection of our LORD.*
and,
- IV. *Why Passages, to this Purpose, are not still more frequent, in the New-Testament; more positive and express, than at present we find them:*

Under these Four Heads, I think, I shall be able to comprehend the whole of the Controversy.

- I. *I shall endeavor briefly to explain the Nature and Design of the Sabbath.*

As the Word is originally *Hebrew*, it is to this Language that we must apply, for its proper Signification; and we shall then find that the *English Word*
Rest

Rest exactly answers to it; and may be substituted in the Room of it, upon any Occasion. Accordingly we read, *Gen. ii. 3.* that the *First Sabbath* was instituted, because that, on that Day, *God rested* from all his Works, which he had made. It is evident then, that the Sabbath was designed to be a Day of *Rest*, from all worldly Employment: for, where there is no *Rest*, there can be no Sabbath; and to suppose a Sabbath without a *Rest*, is a Contradiction in Terms. This Sense of Things is also plainly intimated in the Fourth Commandment; where we are told, *The Seventh Day is the Sabbath or Rest, of the LORD thy GOD: in it therefore thou shalt not do any Work.* If then, we can prove that there is such a Thing as a Sabbath under the Gospel, there certainly needs no additional Proof, that this is a Day on which we are not to labour. If one is made evident; the other must, of Necessity, be equally so: or else, we must suppose a Sabbath to be no Sabbath, or a Day of Rest and a Day of Labour to be one and the same Thing; which would be considerably absurd: but I confess not more so than many Things, which our Adversaries have frequently asserted. Thus far then seems to be pretty clear, that, if there is a Sabbath, it must be a Day of *Rest*.

But though this be a literal Translation of the Word, we must not imagine from hence, that the Sabbath is a Season in which we may indulge a Disposition to Sloth and Idleness. We have enough to do upon the Sabbath, though we should not entangle ourselves with secular Affairs. It is a Day in which God challenges a special Propriety, *The Sabbath of the LORD thy GOD*; and it should therefore be, in a special Manner, devoted to his Glory. It should be considered, not only as a Day of *Rest*, but also of *publick Worship*; in which we are under peculiar Obligations to assemble for that Purpose: for in *Lev. xxiii. 3.* we find it stiled, by God himself, not only a Sabbath of Rest; but also,

3 *The CHRISTIAN SABBATH*

a holy Convocation. In Numb. xxviii. 9. we meet with additional Sacrifices appointed for the Sabbath. The Ninety Second Psalm; which is entituled, *a Psalm or Song for the Sabbath-Day*, begins with recommending *Divine Worship*, as a noble Employment. And it is the Language of the Prophet, Isa. lxvi. 23. *From one Sabbath to another, shall all Flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD.* This Practice was also countenanced by our LORD JESUS CHRIST himself. We frequently see him, while he was upon Earth; and his Apostles, after his Ascension, preaching in the Synagogues, upon the Sabbath-Day. It affects not the present Argument, whither this was the First or Seventh Day of the Week. All that I now insist upon is, that if there is a Sabbath, under the Gospel, it is a Day appropriated to *publick Worship*. Whether there is or not, we shall see presently. Only, take Notice, that as far as one is demonstrated, the other follows of Course; the original Idea of a Sabbath as necessarily including *publick Worship*, as it does a *Rest* from secular Labour. If either of these is wanting, the Sabbath is not compleat. From whence, by the Way, we may gather the following useful Corollary; a Truth which, perhaps, is seldom thought on: and that is, that where there is no *publick Worship*, the Sabbath is not properly celebrated; and those who separate themselves from this Divine Institution, whatever they may think of it, and how devoutly soever they may spend their Time in their Closets, they cannot be said to keep a Sabbath. A Person that absents himself from the *Worship of God* in his Sanctuary, as effectually breaks the Sabbath, as if he laboured in his worldly Business. It is a common Observation indeed, that Necessity has no Law; and in Cases of Necessity, we may be absent. True; and in Cases of Necessity, we may also *labour* upon the Sabbath; but neither in one Instance, nor the other, can we properly be said to *keep* the Sabbath; and Nothing therefore, but Necessity

city can ever justify either the one or the other. Would we keep a Sabbath then, we must not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the Manner of Jews is. Heb. x. 25.

I might add, under this Head, that besides these two, which appear to be the principal Ends of a Sabbath; there is another, which seems to be secondary and subordinate. It serves as a Memorial of some extraordinary Event, and a standing Testimony that such an Event in Fact happened; or at least that it is no modern Invention, but was generally credited at the very Time when it was said to happen. Thus the *Paradisaical* Sabbath was designed as a Memorial of God's creating the World, in six Days; and resting upon the seventh. The *Mosaick* was intended, more particularly, to commemorate the miraculous Deliverance of *Israel*, from the Land of *Egypt*. And in like Manner, the *Christian*, as we suppose, has a Reference to the Resurrection of *CHRIST*. And I look upon it to be the best Evidence that we have, or that it is possible we should have; the best Evidence that can be conceived, of the Certainty of that Fact. If the Resurrection of *CHRIST*, as recorded in the Gospel, had not been a Divine Reality; it appears to me impossible that the Christian Sabbath should ever have been introduced: and I am persuaded it will appear equally so to any impartial Person, that seriously considers the Matter, in all it's Circumstances. From whence also we may gather the Importance of this Institution. *If CHRIST be not risen, says the Apostle, your Faith is vain.* And as the Resurrection of *CHRIST* is the turning Point, upon which the whole System of Revelation depends; so the Christian Sabbath is, by much, the most incontestible Evidence of that Resurrection. Those, therefore, who endeavor to overthrow the Sabbath; they may, as far as I know, be ignorant of what they are about, ('tis probable they are,) and think they are doing God Service: but this is certain, they are sapping the very Foundations, and undermining the principal Bul-

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work

wark of the Gospel. Having given this general Account of the Nature & Design of the Sabbath, I proceed now,

II. *To examine how far this Command is moral, and of perpetual Obligation.*

That there is a Morality in it, appears highly probable, from it's being enjoyned, upon our First Parents, in Paradise; and from it's being afterwards inserted in the Decalogue, which seems to be entirely a Collection of moral Precepts. Some, indeed, have denied the Sabbath to be of so early an Institution; and supposed that *Moses*, in the second Chapter of *Genesis*, speaks, by Way of Anticipation, of a Sabbath that was *hereafter* to be instituted, among the *Jews*: But, as this Opinion has Nothing to support it, in the sacred Text; being advanced with no other View, than to serve a favourite Scheme; I do not think myself obliged to take any further Notice of it. I shall only make these general Observations; that the most obvious and literal Sense of Scripture is usually the rightest; that when this will any Way bear, we have no Authority to perplex it with Expositions of our own; that when we attempt to explain it, we must be very careful lest we be in any Degree influenced by Prejudice and a Party-Spirit; and when in Opposition to the literal Sense, Things which ought to be proved, are taken for granted, as in the Case before us, we have great Reason to suspect this; and ought to look upon it as no better than begging the Question. I proceed therefore to examine, wherein the Morality of the Sabbath consists, and how far it is extended.

That the Infinite Creator is to be adored, by every rational Being; that Creatures formed for Society, as we are, should worship him in a publick and social Manner; and that, in Order to this, particular Times should be set apart for the sacred Employment, either by the express Appointment of Heaven, or by mutual Agreement among Men; seem to be Propositions necessarily

cessarily connected, founded upon the Nature & Reason of Things. They are of, Consequence, moral Duties, and of perpetual Obligation. The universal Practice of Mankind, even in the most barbarous & uncivilised Nations, where they have Nothing but the Light of Nature to direct them, is a sufficient Evidence of what I have now asserted. They have all, as far as our Discoveries extend, their particular Seasons for Divine Worship ; their solemn Assemblies, and sacred Festivals.

The Matter in Debate then, is not whether particular Seasons should be appropriated to publick Worship ; *this* Nature teaches, and *this* even the illiterate Savage confesses : But the Question is this ; What is the proper Proportion for Man in his present State ? I say, for Man in his present State : for other Creatures, as far as we know, may have different Proportions assigned them ; as their Obligations, Circumstances & Necessities, may differ from our's. The elect Angels, & the Spirits of just Men made perfect, are capable of solemnising a perpetual Sabbath ; and their *Hallelujahs* ascend, incessant. This certainly cannot be expected of us ; for it is a Service which, upon many Accounts, we are not able to perform. The whole Difficulty then lies, in assigning a proper Proportion for Man in his present State. And this is a Point concerning which, if there was no Revelation to determine it, it is impossible that the Generality of Mankind should ever agree. The Consequence of this would have been, that the Proportions assigned would have been every whit as various as the Tempers of Men ; and it is highly probable, that in a little Time, there would have been no Proportion at all. Those of a superstitious Turn would have been for multiplying these Seasons, and devoting the bigger Part of their Time ; while others of a gayer Disposition, and looser Principles, (which are generally the most numerous) would have thought once in a Month, once in a Year, or perhaps once in their Lives, sufficient. In such a Case as this, it is reasonable to imagine, that the God of

Peace, who is intimately acquainted with the humane Constitution ; and who could not but foresee the endless Disputes, which would otherwise necessarily arise among his Creatures ; would interpose his own Authority, and ascertain the important Point. Accordingly, we find him in Fact doing so, from the Beginning of the World, creating it in six Days, which he could as easily have done in an Instant, and resting upon the seventh ; by this Act, appointing one Day in seven, as *the proper Proportion for Man in his present State*. And as this was originally a Divine Institution, we have Reason to think that this is the exact *Medium* ; that, as to us, there is a moral Fitness in this particular Proportion, beyond any other that could have been invented by humane Wit. And if the Precept is moral, it follows of Consequence, that it must be of perpetual Obligation. There could be no Alteration in it, unless there were a correspondent Alteration in the Nature of Man.— Which leads me to mention the only plausible Objection to this Scheme, that at present I readily think of : And that is, that there *was* such an Alteration at the Fall of *Adam* ; and the Sabbath was instituted for Man in a State of Innocence. But as we see no other Precept of the moral Law, conforming itself to the present Corruption of humane Nature ; I know of no special Reason, why we should expect it in this. *The Law of the LORD is perfect* ; and must therefore consider Man, as a Creature perfect in his Kind. This Objection, I think, vanishes of Course ; and upon the whole, the Proportion of one Day in Seven, appears to be strictly moral, and of perpetual Obligation.

Having gradually proceeded in our Enquiries, thus far ; we are naturally led to examine, in the next Place, *which Day of the seven is most proper for the Purpose ?* And here, it is evident at first Sight, that there can be no moral Fitness in one Day, more than in another. Let us observe which we will, the same Proportion is preserved, the same Duties performed. One Day of the
Week

Week is as long as the other ; it returns with equal Frequency ; and is in itself, equally suitable for *Rest*, or *Worship*. Here we have opened a new Source of everlasting Discord. Mankind, if left to themselves, would be as unlikely to agree in this, as in fixing the exact Proportion. As a *Memorial*, indeed, one Day might be esteemed preferable to another : but then, it is natural to suppose, that in Process of Time, every Day in the Week would be accidentally distinguished, by some extraordinary Events, which different Parties would be zealous to commemorate. Here then, it appears probable, that a Being of Infinite Goodness, a God of Order and not of Confusion would again interpose. We must have Recourse to Revelation ; and the positive Appointment of Heaven must determine the Matter. Under the Old-Testament Dispensation, we may hear God himself pronouncing, from Mount Sinai ; *Six Days shalt thou labor, and do all thy Work, but the seventh is the Sabbath of the LORD thy GOD.* The seventh Day was then distinguished as a Sabbath, and appropriated to the immediate Exercise of Divine Worship. However, as there is no moral Fitness in this Day, beyond any of the others ; as its peculiar Sanctity depended entirely upon a positive Institution ; there is no Absurdity in supposing, that the particular Day may be altered, by Divine Authority : nor, if it should be, would it in the least affect the Morality and Perpetuity of the Sabbath ; which, as we have already seen, is founded upon different Principles. Some have conjectured, and not wholly without Foundation, that the particular Day was actually changed, at the Deliverance of *Israel* from the Land of *Egypt* ; that the *Patriarchal Sabbath*, & the *Mosaick*, were really two different Days of the Week. Be that as it will, it certainly may be changed, without any Impropriety, or Inconvenience ; and this is all that I am, at present, contending for.

Upon the whole ; and to sum up all that I have advanced, under this Head. That particular Seasons should

should be set apart for publick Worship, appears to be a moral Precept, of perpetual Obligation, a discoverable by the Light of Nature. That one Day in seven should be the exact Proportion, is also a moral Duty, and perpetually obliges : but is discoverable only by Revelation. But when we find this or that particular Day of the Week, appropriated to the sacred Purpose ; this is merely a positive & temporary Institution, which may be altered, by Divine Appointment, without affecting the Morality of the Sabbath. Having premised these Things, I have now cleared the Way to the Grand Point which we have before us ; and proceed,

III. *To enquire, what Reason we have to suppose, that the particular Day, appointed for this End, was altered, at the Resurrection of our LORD.* And as we have seen, that in this Part of our Search, it is impossible we should have any Light, but that of Revelation, to direct us ; I shall now point You at some of those Passages, in sacred Writ, which appear, most plainly, to intimate such a Change.

The First Passage, that I shall mention, is in the Hundred and Eighteenth Psalm, at the twenty second Verse and on ; where we read, *The Stone which the Builders refused, is become the Head of the Corner. This is the LORD's Doing, it is marvellous in our Eyes.* This Psalm, the Rabbinical Writers themselves acknowledge, has a Reference to the MESSIAH : but we have no Need of their Testimony, in the Case before us. Christians must confess, that Scripture is the best Interpreter of Scripture ; the New Testament the most infallible Expofitor of the Old ; and we find it expressly applied to our blessed LORD, Act iv. 10. where *Peter*, after the Cure of a Cripple, publickly declares, in the Face of the *Jewish Sanhedrim* ; *Be it known unto you all, and to all the People of Israel, that by the Name of JESUS CHRIST of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom GOD raised from the Dead, even by Him doth this Man stand here before You*

You whole. *This is the Stone which was set at Nought of You Builders, which is become the Head of the Corner.* From whence we may gather, not only, that our LORD JESUS CHRIST is the Stone here spoken of : but also, when it was that this Prophecy was fulfilled. At his Crucifixion, he was despised, or set at Nought of the Builders ; at his Resurrection, he became the Head of the Corner. --- *Whom ye crucified, whom GOD raised from the Dead.*--- Now, let us mark the Words, which immediately follow, in the Psalmist. *This is the Day which the LORD hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it.*--- What Day ?--- the Day in which the Stone that the Builders refused, became the Head of the Corner ; or, in other Words, the Day on which our LORD JESUS CHRIST arose from the Dead. *This is the Day which the LORD has made,* which he has chosen for himself, and in which he challenges a special Propriety. *We will rejoice and be glad in it,* worship the dear Benefactor, and commemorate his redeeming Love. A considerable Evidence this, that the Day of our LORD'S Resurrection, should be celebrated as a Sabbath, under the Gospel.

The next Place that I shall point You to, You may find in the Eleventh Chapter of *Isaiab*, at the Tenth Verse. *And in that Day, there shall be a Root of Jesse, which shall stand for an Ensign of the People ; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his Rest shall be glorious.* We are here taught, that the MESSIAH, when he appeared, would introduce a glorious Rest or Sabbath : for tho' the Word here used, in the Original, is not Sabbath ; it is the same which is used in the Fourth Commandment, when we are told, that God rested upon the seventh Day.

The Apostle seems to have this Passage in View, *Heb.* iv. 9. where he argues, *There remaineth therefore a Rest or Sabbatism,* as the Greek Word is, *for the People of GOD : for He that entered into His Rest, He also hath ceased from His own Works, as GOD did from His.* Here the Apostle appears to me, evidently to run a Parallel, between

tween the Father and the Son ; the Creator resting from *His Works*, and the Redeemer from *His*. And since the Creator, when he rested from *His Works*, by that Act, sanctified a Sabbath, in the Old Testament ; we may suppose, from Parity of Reason, that the Redeemer, when he rested from *His*, would also sanctify a Sabbath, under the New : From whence, the Apostle himself infers, that there is another Sabbath, appointed for the People of God, under the Gospel ; different from that which was instituted under the Law. In this, I think, consists the Force of his Argument. And *when* was it that our blessed Saviour *ceased from his Work*, and *entred into his Rest* ; but when he arose from the Dead, having finished his Great Undertaking, and first appeared in his exalted State ? This then is the Christian Sabbath ; and we, who observe *this* Sabbath, commemorate *both* these Rests ; the Rest of the Father, and the Rest of the Son. We keep one Day in seven, in Memory of our Creator, and the Obligations we are under to Him ; which is the Foundation of all natural Religion : and we keep the first Day of the Week, in Memory of our Redeemer, and the Salvation that He has accomplished ; which is the Grand Subject of Revelation.

As a further Confirmation of this Change, we ought now to consider, the Example of our LORD JESUS CHRIST himself, and his Apostles. On the very Day of our LORD's Resurrection, we meet with a worshipping Assembly ; and we behold CHRIST appearing in the Midst of them, and pronouncing his gracious Blessing. Joh. xx. 19. *The same Day at Evening, being the First Day of the Week, when the Doors were shut, where the Disciples were assembled for Fear of the Jews, came JESUS, and stood in the Midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto You.* The Particulars of this memorable Interview are but briefly recorded : but then it was, in all Probability, that our LORD JESUS CHRIST, having rested from his Work, first instituted the Christian Sabbath. Accordingly, at the twenty sixth Verse of the same Chapter, after eight Days

Days *inclusively*, (agreeable to the *Jewish Method of Computation*) which brings us to the next *First Day of the Week*; we see the Disciples again assembled, and our LORD again appearing, with his Benediction. And as the Evangelist informs us, at the thirtieth Verse, that he performed *many Signs, in the Presence of his Disciples*, which are not there particularly specified; 'tis probable he might then also deliver *other Instructions*, and inform them, among the rest, of the Alteration he had made in the Sabbath. Thus, as we read Acts i. 3. He was *seen of them Forty Days, speaking of the Things pertaining to the Kingdom of GOD*. In the second Chapter of the Acts; at the Feast of *Pentecost*, which, a small Acquaintance with *Jewish Antiquity* will convince us, was upon the *First Day of the Week*; we again view the Disciples met together, *with one Accord, and in one Place*; the Holy Spirit further honouring the Day, by making a visible Descent, and communicating his miraculous Gifts; and a Discourse of *Peter's*, consequent upon it, succeeded, to the Conversion of Three Thousand Souls. It is remarkable, and worthy our Notice; that it was upon the *First Day of the Week*, the First Sermon was preached, after the Ascension of our LORD, and the First Converts added to the Christian Church. After this, the Custom seems universally to have obtained among the *Gentile Professors*; and we find *Paul*, Acts xx. 7. preaching at *Troas*, upon the *First Day of the Week, when* (as it should seem was usual upon that Day,) *the Disciples came together to break Bread*. We find him afterwards, directing the Church at *Corinth*, in the last Chapter of his First Epistle, to make their Collections, upon the *First Day of the Week*; from whence we may conclude, that this was the most convenient Day, for the Purpose; and what other Reason can be assigned, why it should be so, only, because that on this Day, they were constantly assembled for Divine Worship? Giving of Alms was customary

ary among the *Jews*, upon *their* Sabbath; and the Apostle, by transferring this Duty to the *First Day of the Week*, seems to hint, that *this* was to be looked upon as the Sabbath, among Christians. In short, unless this were the Case, it is difficult to say, why the *First Day of the Week* should be so frequently distinguished, beyond any other, in so many Places of the New-Testament.

At the Time when *John* wrote his *Revelation*, this Day appears, not only appropriated to Divine Worship: but also, to have obtained that new, and more honourable Title, which it now wears. This, those that understand the original Language, will allow to be the literal Interpretation of that Passage, Rev. i. 10. *I was in the Spirit upon the † LORD'S DAY.*

All these Evidences taken together, I think, amount, if not to an absolute Demonstration; yet, at least, to a very high Probability, that the *First Day of the Week*, the Day on which our LORD JESUS CHRIST arose from the Dead, should be observed as the Christian Sabbath.

I hasten now,

IV. and lastly. *To assign a Reason why there is no express Command for this Sabbath in the New-Testament.*

This is the most formidable Objection of our Adversaries, upon which they seem to rest the whole of their Cause. It has been frequently urged, with great Confidence, and to little Purpose: and, if *this* is answered, their whole Scheme vanishes of Course.

† The Words are *Kuriaks Hemera*; essentially different from *Hemera Kurion*: the former being, evidently, an appropriate Phrase; the latter not.—Thus also, in the Latin Language, *Dies Dominica* differs from *Dies Dominus*—

And

And I think the Silence of the New-Testament, as to this, sufficiently accounted for, from the particular Circumstances of that Day. The Gospel was first published to the *Jews*, a People, vastly tenacious of their ancient Customs; notoriously obstinate and superstitious. It was necessary, therefore, that the new Dispensation should be gradually introduced among them, by slow Degrees, and as they were able to bear it: The Apostles were very careful, lest they should drive too fast; and give Offence, by the Innovations they were making. They were extremely cautious, how far they opposed the ceremonial Law; nay, in many Instances, they actually complied with it: and in their grand Council at *Jerusalem*, Acts xv. 29. they determined, that this occasional Conformity was advisable, while the Church continued in its Infant State; commanding the *Gentile Converts*, to *abstain from Things strangled, and from Blood*; lest they should offend their *Jewish Brethren*. In the next Chapter, we find *Paul* circumcising *Timosby*, because of the *Jews*, that were in those Quarters: and 1 Cor. ix. 20. He gives us a Reason for this Conduct; *Unto the Jews, I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the Law, as under the Law, that I might gain them that are under the Law.* *Peter* and *Barnabas* seem to have carried the Matter still further, upon the same Principles; and to have been guilty of unjustifiable Dissimulation; an Artifice, that was inconsistent with the Simplicity of the Gospel; as we may learn from Gal. ii. 11. Now, there was no Part of their Law, that the *Jews* were more fond of, than they were of their Sabbath; none, that they more rigorously observed; or that they would, with more Difficulty, have been perswaded to part with. It no longer, therefore, remains a Mystery, why the Apostles did not think proper to insist, at once, upon an Alteration here. They left it to After-Discoveries, lest it should prejudice their young Disciples. They themselves,

Jews, indeed, as we have seen, and their *Gentile Converts*, constantly met, when they had Opportunity, upon the *First Day of the Week*: but 'tis probable that, for a considerable Time, they indulged the *Jews* in their ancient Sabbath; and did not directly oppose it. 'Tis probable that they frequently preached to them, in their Synagogues, upon that Day; as there was then a Concourse of People.—Nor was the *Mosaic* Economy entirely abolished, till the final Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the Temple. This, I look upon, as a sufficient Answer to that Question, why there is no *express Command*, in the New-Testament, appointing a Sabbath, upon the *First Day of the Week*. I have now finished my Design, and shall conclude, with a brief Reflection.

Consider, my Brethren, and realise, the *Importance of the Christian Sabbath*. You have seen, that this is the Grand Proof of the Resurrection of CHRIST; upon which, the whole Fabrick of the Gospel depends. Suffer me to add, that, as this is the main Prop of *Revelation*, it is also the principal Support of *Practical Religion*. Take away the Sabbath, and what would be the Consequence? Errors in Doctrine, and Corruption in Practice, would break in upon us, like a Flood; Immorality would triumph, without Controul; and Ignorance spread an unbounded Dominion. This Land would then be a *Land of Darknes*, as *Darknes itself*, and of the *Shadow of Death*, without any Order, and where the *Light is as Darknes*. May God, of his infinite Mercy, preserve us from this, and every Error of the Wicked; establish us in that Faith, which was once delivered to the Saints; and fit us, by Sabbaths here below, for the Enjoyment of an everlasting Sabbath.

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