

The SABBATH:

AUTHORITY FOR THE CHANGE OF THE DAY.

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IT being clear from the Scriptures, that the seventh day was instituted by divine authority for a weekly Sabbath, and religiously regarded throughout the times of the Old Testament, those who now relinquish its observance, and keep the first day of the week, take the ground that the Sabbath was either abrogated and a new institution introduced in its room, or that the time of its observance was changed from the seventh to the first day of the week, in commemoration of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. To be consistent with themselves, therefore, they are bound to evince one or the other of these positions. The burden of proof evidently lies on their part. For unless it can be shown, that the fourth commandment, which requires the sanctification of the seventh day, has been abolished, or amended by the substitution of the first for the seventh day of the week, it is clear that the original appointment remains obligatory and is now binding on the entire human family. And to substantiate either of these points, the proof must be clear and decisive. It will not do to rest upon doubtful deductions. We have an unquestionable right to demand that divine warrant, in either case, which pertained to the institution as originally delivered.

We will therefore first examine the proofs adduced in favor of the abrogation of the former weekly Sabbath and the introduction of a new institution.

To sustain this position, the broad ground is taken by some, that the Decalogue itself, in which the law of the Sabbath is contained, was abrogated; and that, under the new dispensation, no part of it is binding but what is newly enjoined or expressly recognized, either by Christ or his Apostles.

The perpetual obligation of the Decalogue of course, the perpetual obligation of the Sabbath as enjoined in the fourth commandment. But if that was abrogated, the Sabbath which it enjoined was also abrogated; and, consequently, it ceases to be binding, unless renewed under the new economy. What, then, is the proof here relied upon? One of the principal passages in which this proof is supposed to be contained is 2 Corinthians 3:7, 8, 13. "But if the ministration of death, written and engraved in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away, how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious. And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that, which is abolished." It is argued from this passage, that the clauses "which glory was to be done away," and "to the end of that which is abolished," refer to the whole law, moral as well as ritual, because mention is made of "that which was written and engraved in stones," which is an evident allusion to the Decalogue. But, on careful examination, it will be found that "that which was to be done away," was not the Decalogue itself, but "the ministration of it," which was then appointed—the same being emblematically illustrated by the glory of Moses' countenance, which was merely temporary. This clause refers expressly to the glory of his countenance, and not to the glory of the law itself. So also the clause "that which is abolished," does not refer to the Decalogue, but to the ministration of Moses, including the appended rites and usages, the priesthood and its sacrifices, which were useful merely for the time being. It cannot be supposed that the Decalogue was abolished, without expressly contradicting Christ's testimony, Matt. 5:17-19, as well as many other representations of the Scriptures. The abolishment spoken of, therefore, evidently respected no other than what the Apostle calls in another place "the law of commandments contained in ordinances," inclusive of the entire ministration of Moses. There is unquestionably a reference in this chapter to the Decalogue, but not as abolished. It was merely the ministration of it, or the then instituted manner of teaching, illustrating, and enforcing it, which was abolished, to be succeeded by a new ministration of the same law by the Spirit. For it is written, "I will put my law" —(the very law of the ten commandments)—"in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." Again, "We are not without law to God, but under the law to Christ." What law but the Decalogue is here referred to? Evidently none. For surely we are not under the Mosaic ritual. Again, "Do we make void the law through faith? . . . Yea, we establish the law." The same, no doubt, which was contained in the Decalogue. Hence, the Apostle James says, "If ye fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye shall do well." Here the title "the royal law" is given by way of eminence to the Decalogue; and its permanent obligation is manifestly recognized; for the precept alluded to is a summary of the last six commandments of this code, and the allusion is so made as to imply the continued obligation of the first four, which are summed up in supreme love to God. Again, the Apostle John testifies, "Hereby do we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." And again, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." In both these passages reference is evidently had to the precepts of the Decalogue, as the essential and permanent rule of obedience for Christians. The doing away or abolishment, therefore, spoken of in the above passage, cannot refer to the Decalogue or the moral law itself, but to the Mosaic dispensation or ritual.

Another of the proofs alleged for the abrogation of the Decalogue, and consequently of the Sabbath, is Colossians 2:14-17. "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and, having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."

By " the hand-writing of ordinances," is most evidently meant the ceremonial law—not the Decalogue, or the moral law. This is never characterized as " the hand-writing of ordinances." Therefore, the " blotting out," " taking away," and " nailing to the cross," spoken of, have no reference to this law, but to the Mosaic ritual. This is particularly distinguished from the Decalogue, and fitly described as " the law of commandments contained in ordinances." It was this, and this only, which was "blotted out" and "nailed to the cross." As, therefore, the reference made by the Apostle is expressly to this law, it follows, by a fair inference, that " the sabbath days" alluded to, or, strictly rendered, " sabbaths," are those which were contained in this law, or among these "ordinances," and do not include the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. There were, besides the weekly Sabbath, various other sabbaths appointed, which belonged to that ritual, and not to the Decalogue. Accordingly, these were expressly included in "the hand-writing of ordinances," and like the rest were "a shadow of things to come," and ceased to be obligatory at the death of Christ. There is evidently no authority in this passage for including any sabbaths but what properly belonged to the Mosaic ritual. This view of the matter is corroborated by a more literal rendering of the 17th verse, viz: "Let no one therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in a part or division of a festival, or of a new moon, or of sab-baths." The sabbaths alluded to are obviously those which are found in the same place with meats and drinks, festivals and new moons, and which were of the same general character. The weekly Sabbath, therefore, is not affected at all by their abrogation, but remains in full force, as does every other precept of the Decalogue.

We find the same distinction as to the law which was abolished, in Ephesians 2:14, 15. " For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace." Here the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, called " the enmity," is expressly defined, as before, to be " the law of commandments contained in ordinances." This, and this only, therefore, was abolished, leaving the Decalogue, or the moral law, in its original character and obligation. This is the language of the whole Bible. There is no proof in any of these passages, that the law of the ten commandments was abolished, or that the Sabbath enjoined therein was done away.

Nor is there such proof in Romans 14: 5, 6. "One man esteemed one day above another; another esteemed every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regraded the day, regarded it to the Lord; and he that regraded not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eats, eats to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks: and he that eats not, to the Lord he eats not, and giveth God thanks." This passage is frequently adduced as proof that the obligation to keep the ancient Sabbath has ceased, and that under the Gospel dispensation there is no divinely authorized distinction in the days of the week; that there is no one constituted holy in distinction from the rest; and consequently that everyone is left at his own liberty to keep a Sabbath or not. It will be easily perceived, that if this argument has any weight in reference to the seventh day as the Sabbath, it operates equally against the obligation to keep the first day, either as a substitute for the seventh, or as a memorial of the resurrection, seeing it places all distinctions whatever as to days on the same ground with the confessedly obsolete rites of the Mosaic ritual. According to this view of the passage, we have under the Gospel dispensation no Sabbath at all—not so much as an authorized memorial of the resurrection. He who claims the least authority for the observance of the first day of the week for any purpose, takes a course which completely overthrows the argument based upon this passage. But, in reality, this text has nothing more to do with the subject before us, than either of those which have been examined. It respects merely the distinctions which formerly existed in regard to the six working days of the week—some of them being appointed in the Mosaic ritual as sab-baths, others as days of atonement and purification, and others as festivals. Some of the early Christians thought these distinctions still binding, as also the distinctions in regard to meats and drinks; others thought they were not. Hence the exhortation which is sub joined to mutual forbearance. That the distinctions referred to as to days, were those noted in the Mosaic ritual, and did not include the one contained in the fourth commandment, is manifest from the whole scope of the chapter. There is particular reference made to one's freely eating all things, while another would eat only herbs; and accordingly the following rule, to be respectively observed, is laid down:" Let not him that eats, despise him that eats not; and let not him that eats not, judge him that eats; for God hath received him." This quotation clearly evinces that the Apostle was treating of ritual distinctions, and not of that distinction of days which was constituted by the ancient law of the Sabbath.

Again, the abrogation of the Decalogue is supposed to be taught in Romans 7:4, 5, 6. " Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin which were by the law, did work in our members, to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." But if the term law here includes the moral as well as the ceremonial law, it is manifest that believers are not said to be delivered from it, considered in any other light than as a covenant of works. Certainly they are not delivered from it as a rule of obedience. To suppose this, is inconsistent with Christ's sermon on the mount, before alluded to, and many other decisive proofs of the perpetual obligation of the Decalogue. It is probable the Apostle had special reference to the deliverance of believers from the curse of the moral law. This is reasonably inferred from the clause, " that being dead wherein we were held." If anything more pertaining to this law be intended, it must be its original character when given to Adam as a covenant of works or of life. For surely we are not and cannot be delivered from it as a rule of obedience, so long as God is what he is, and we are what we are. Seeing that as long as the relation constituted by his character as Supreme Ruler, and by ours as moral subjects, exists, we shall be bound to love him supremely, and our neighbor as ourselves, which is the fulfilling of this law. And to suppose that this law, as a rule of obedience, was actually annulled, and that those precepts only are now to be considered obligatory, which are enacted or published anew under the Gospel, is to suppose that God, at a certain time, actually rescinded the rule requiring supreme love to him, and to our neighbor as ourselves, which is palpably inconsistent, and contrary both to the current of Scripture and the nature of

things. It would be maintaining that to be changed which is manifestly unchangeable. It would imply that, for the time being, the obligation recognized by the law did not exist; that the tie by which God and moral beings are united, was sundered, not by rebellion on the part of his subjects, but by his own act of abrogation. Can this be admitted?

But if it were admissible, and if no part of this law is binding on Christians but what is newly enacted or particularly recognized under the Gospel dispensation, the Sabbath of the fourth commandment could not in this way be set aside; because its continued obligation is plainly taught in the New Testament. It is altogether a mistake, that we have no express recognition of this precept under the Christian dispensation. It is plainly recognized by the Savior in Matthew 5:17-19, where he says, that he "came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill; " that "one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled;" and that "whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." If any commandment of this law is binding, the fourth is binding of course, even if it should be called the least. It is also recognized in the following declaration of Christ, Mark 2: 27—"The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." The word man is here obviously used for the entire race—not for a part—not for the Jews in distinction from the Gentiles—not for those who lived under the Old Testament dispensation, or till the time of Christ's death; but for man in his protracted existence during all future periods of time, i.e. for mankind in general. This is the plain import of the declaration. And if we render the original with the article, it is still more evident that the entire race is included. "The Sabbath was made for the man," i.e. for Adam, the original parent of man, including, of course, his posterity. But, according to either rendering, the entire human race is manifestly included in the term. The Sabbath, then, was as truly made for the Gentiles as for the Jews; and for those who should live after the crucifixion, as for those who lived before; which is an explicit recognition of its perpetual obligation.

The same recognition also appears from its continued observance under the ministry of the Apostles, and there being not the least hint or stir in reference to its abrogation, or to the substitution of another day in its room. The weekly Sabbath is frequently mentioned in the Apostolic records, as a part of practical duty, and it was unquestionably the seventh day. Thus we have the continued obligation of the Sabbath sanctioned by Apostolic example. If, therefore, a new edition, or an express recognition of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment be considered necessary, to bind the consciences of men under the new dispensation, the foregoing considerations will show that we have such an edition or recognition, as truly as we have of the other precepts of the Decalogue. So that nothing is gained in regard to setting aside the seventh day of the week, by attempting to show the abrogation of the Decalogue. If those precepts of that law which require that we should have no other gods before the Lord—that we should not kill, nor commit adultery, nor steal—are newly enjoined or expressly recognized under the present dispensation, and, consequently, universally binding, the same is true of the fourth commandment, which requires the keeping of the seventh day.

Again, an attempt is made to prove the abrogation of the original Sabbath, by showing that the entire Decalogue was peculiar to the Jewish nation, constituting a national covenant, which, at the coming of Christ, was annulled, and a new covenant introduced. But admitting that it was delivered immediately to them, in the form of a national covenant, this does not in the least imply that it was not equally binding, as a rule of obedience, upon other portions of the human family. We might as well argue that the New Testament belonged merely to the primitive Christians, because it was delivered directly to them, and constituted the rule of their conduct and the basis of their hopes. Yea, we might as well suppose that no nation except the Jews were bound not to have any other gods before the Lord, not to kill, not to commit adultery, not to steal, not to bear false witness, as to suppose that the Decalogue was purely of a national character, and binding merely on that people during their continuance as a national church. And, as the Decalogue was not merely national as a whole, so there was nothing national in the fourth commandment. It belonged, equally with the other nine, to the entire family of man, inasmuch as the essential reasons of all and of either of the commandments, were of universal obligation.

Again, that the original Sabbath was peculiar to the Jews, and consequently abrogated by the introduction of the new dispensation, is argued from its being specially urged upon them by the consideration of their deliverance from Egypt. But this argument is of no force, because the same reason is urged in the preface to the entire Decalogue.

For the same purpose, also, an argument is founded upon the fact that the fourth commandment was enforced with a deadly penalty. But this argument also fails; because a similar penalty was annexed to the breach of the other precepts of this law. The truth of the case is, that these penalties belonged not to the Decalogue itself as first promulgated, any more than they belong to it now under the milder dispensation of the Gospel. They were added in the Mosaic ritual, and constituted a part of the political arrangements for the time being. Their abrogation, therefore, affects not the original law. Though there be no civil power now given to the church to enforce obedience to this precept by temporal punishments, as formerly, the sacredness and obligation of the institution are not thereby at all affected. The sin of disobedience will be visited in God's own time.

Again, some have inferred the abrogation of the former Sabbath, or at least its change, from our Lord's vindication of the act of the disciples, in plucking the ears of corn, and rubbing them in their hands, as they passed through the corn-fields on the Sabbath day, and from his saying, that "the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath day," Mark 2: 23-28. But there is evidently nothing in this narrative, or in this declaration, to justify such an inference. It must be admitted on all hands, that the fourth commandment was obligatory, as originally given, till the death of Christ, if no further; and therefore Christ, who "was made under the law," was bound to obey it in its original strictness. Admitting that he possessed the right, in a given instance, to intermit its obligation, it is not consistent to maintain that he did it; because he came to render perfect and universal obedience. Hence he affirmed, that one jot or one tittle should in no wise pass from the law "till all be fulfilled." His whole life was a perfect comment on the requirements of the law. Had he failed in the

least particular, he would have been inadequate to the great purposes of our salvation. It is obvious, therefore, that the transaction alluded to was not, under the circumstances, a breach of the fourth commandment, but in perfect accordance with its prescriptions—the labor implied by the act of the disciples being a matter of urgent necessity. "It is lawful," said he, "to do well on the Sabbath day." Neither does the declaration, that "the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath day," imply that he abrogated or changed it, but rather that he was bound and engaged to protect it as a divine institution, and to enforce an enlightened and strict obedience to its requirements.

The foregoing being the principal proofs adduced for the abrogation of the Decalogue, and the original Sabbath, it is evident that this view of the subject cannot be sustained. It is not sanctioned by any plain scriptural evidence. It is, therefore, palpably absurd to rest so important a matter upon so slender a basis. It is laying violent hands on a code of moral and immutable precepts, given by God, and promulgated under peculiar and terrible signs of purity and majesty, to vindicate a practice which was introduced long after the commencement of the Christian era.

Another portion of the observers of the first day, seeing the absurdity of holding to the abrogation of the Decalogue, and, consequently, of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, readily admit its perpetual obligation, but allege that the Sabbath is changed, under the new dispensation, from the seventh to the first day of the week—thus transferring the authority for keeping the seventh day to the first. It is not pretended that we have an explicit warrant from God, pointing out and authorizing the change in question, but that we have what is tantamount to such a warrant. We will examine the principal arguments for this supposed change.

In the first place, this change is inferred from the resurrection of Christ on the first day of the week, which is supposed to be an event of such magnitude as to constitute an equal and even greater reason for observing the first day of the week as the weekly Sabbath under the new dispensation, than that which existed for observing the seventh under the old. But what does this argument amount to? It is not perfectly clear that the resurrection occurred on the first day of the week. Very plausible reasons may be assigned for the opinion, that it occurred on the evening of the seventh day, although it was not publicly declared till the morning of the first. But admitting that it occurred on the morning of the first day, How does this prove that it was substituted for the seventh day as the Sabbath? Is the inference absolutely necessary? Is there any designation of the first day for a sabbatical purpose? If another than the seventh day was in any wise admissible, as according better with the Christian dispensation and the work of redemption, why should we fix upon the day of Christ's resurrection, rather than the day of his birth, or of his crucifixion, or of his ascension? Will it be alleged, as a reason for the preference, that he finished the work of redemption on the day of his resurrection? This reason might be offered with equal if not superior propriety, for commemorating the day of his crucifixion; because, when he bowed his head and gave up the ghost, he said, "It is finished," which is more than is said in reference to the day of his resurrection. If a day were to be selected as a weekly Sabbath, which was "validly the day of redemption," it seems most proper to select the day of his death, which was the end of his temptation and conflict with the powers of darkness, and the severest test of his obedience; or the day of his final ascension, when he emphatically entered into his rest, and was crowned King in Zion. If, therefore, a day were to be selected, under the new economy, for the appropriate commemoration of the work of redemption, as the seventh day was for the commemoration of the work of creation, it is by no means clear that it should be the day of the resurrection. It might with equal, perhaps greater propriety, be some other day of the week. And hence, the different preferences of Christians might clash, and by that means counteract in a great measure the design of a Sabbath. But, in truth, the argument from the resurrection in favor of the first day of the week, rests upon the wisdom of man and not upon the appointment of God. It seems to men befitting the ends of a weekly Sabbath, under the Christian dispensation, to observe the first rather than the seventh day, and hence a change is inferred, without any express authority from God to that effect; as though it were lawful to change a divine institution when it appears to us that greater reasons exist for a change, than for its unamended continuance—a principle which would justify all the innovations and extravagancies of Popery. But no such power is given unto men. However many and important the reasons which exist in human view for the change in the Sabbath contended for, it is invading God's prerogative to make a change without his express warrant. So long, therefore, as there is no divine enactment which goes to authorize this change, but the permanent and unvaried nature of the entire Decalogue expressly forbids it, as does the continued practice of the primitive church, it is grossly erroneous and presumptuous to make it. This argument for the supposed change is surely without any validity.

In the next place, it is alleged that Christ's appearance to the disciples, after his resurrection, on the first day of the week, marks this as the Christian Sabbath. This argument is adopted both by those who hold to the abrogation of the former institution, and those who contend for its change. But, in reality, it is as devoid of solid weight as the one previously examined. It is easy to account for his appearing in the course of the day of his resurrection, or of the first declaration of it, because the earliest information of this great event was of the utmost importance to the afflicted and desponding disciples. It was important, also, as a testimony to the truth of the Savior's prediction that he would rise on the third day. There is nothing in his several appearances during that day, which seems intended for any other purpose than giving the necessary proof of his resurrection, and the light and consolation which the circumstances of the disciples required. There is nothing in either of them which favors the idea of a new Sabbath. But the circumstance of his appearing to the two disciples who were on a journey to Emmaus, and traveling a while with them, which was a distance much too long for a Sabbath day's journey, expressly forbids it, as it shows that it was regarded as a day for labor. And as to his appearance the following evening, there is nothing in that circumstance which savors of a newly appointed Sabbath. The disciples were not assembled together to keep a Sabbath, but "for fear of the Jews." Besides, according to the Jewish method of reckoning time, this evening actually belonged to the second day of the week. So that all which is said concerning his appearances on this day and evening, is perfectly devoid of proof of a change of the Sabbath.

As to the next appearance recorded, there is no evidence that it occurred on the first day of the week. The record states, that " After eight days, again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you." Surely the phrase, "and after eight days," cannot be fairly construed to mean a week. Who can tell but that he appeared on the ninth day after his first appearance? But even if it could be so interpreted as to mean precisely a week, and hence to show that his second appearance took place on the first day, as before, it would be no proof of the point in question, because the subject of the Sabbath was not introduced in any form.

The next instance of his appearing is very far from corroborating the opinion that he sanctioned the first day as the New Testament Sabbath by appearing on it; for the disciples, or some of them, were fishing at the sea of Tiberias, and consequently were not observing the first day as a Sabbath. Indeed, this appearance must have taken place as late as the second day of week, if not later; for they had been engaged in fishing, as the record will show, the day before he appeared to them. And they could not have been so engaged on the seventh day, because it would have been contrary to the universal and unbroken practice of their nation. Hence it could not have been on the first day of the week that Christ appeared to them. It must have been on the second or some later day of the week. The argument, therefore, from the several appearances of Christ, amounts to nothing.

The next, and the principal argument for the change of the Sabbath, is the supposed Apostolic practice of meeting on the first day of the week for public worship and the breaking of bread. It is often confidently affirmed, that the keeping of the first day instead of the seventh is sanctioned by Apostolic usage. The proof of this position rests mainly on two passages. Let us examine them.

The first is Acts 20:7. " And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech until midnight." But is there anything in this transaction, or the attendant circumstances, which clearly and undeniably proves an Apostolic example in favor of a new Sabbath, or of keeping the first day of the week, in any manner, as a substitute for the former institution? Surely there is not. The passage does not so much as prove that the practice of meeting for worship on the first day of the week was then common and general. But if it did, it would not determine the change contended for. There is nothing said in the narrative, which characterizes it as a Sabbath. Assembling for public worship is proper on any day of the week; and so is the breaking of bread. The Supper was first administered on one of the six working days; and there is nothing in the Scriptures which restricts its subsequent administration to a particular day—not even to the authorized Sabbath. Besides, in this case, the breaking of bread was deferred till after midnight. Of course, according to the Jewish reckoning of time, it was attended actually on the second day; and this must have been the case, also, according to the prevailing custom among observers of the first day, of commencing the day at midnight. It seems, therefore, that the Apostle and his brethren were not very precise in regard to its being done on the first day. Let the most be made of this passage, and it lacks a divine designation of the first day as the Christian Sabbath; and hence it is entirely wanting as to the requisite evidence of a change in the sabbatical law. Surely, if there had been such a change, and this, with one more instance of meeting on the first day of the week, were to contain the evidence for all after generations, we should have been informed of the fact. Something would have been said to determine that the first day of the week was regarded as a Sabbath, and that it had taken the place of the seventh. But there is nothing of this. The record is perfectly silent in regard to either point. Besides, it is evident that the original Sabbath continued to be observed, as already noticed, throughout the entire period of New Testament history. This is so plain a fact, that no one who gives the subject a candid examination will deny it. This shows the opinion of a new Sabbath—observed, as it must have been, in connection with the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and without a word being said on the subject, or the least objection, stir, query, or excitement whatever being raised—to be perfectly preposterous. Such is the result of this reasoning from a supposed Apostolic example, giving the passage its widest possible scope, as implying a common practice of meeting for public worship on the first day of the week. But in reality there is nothing in this text which proves or implies that such a practice was common at that period. For aught appears, it might have been an occasional meeting, appointed merely in consequence of Paul's being about to depart on the morrow. Therefore, to adopt a practice so important so the one in question, upon such vague, uncertain, and inadequate testimony—especially when, in order thereto, we must dispose of a plain and positive command of God respecting the observance of the seventh day, and of a usage as old as the completion of the creation—is unreasonable in the extreme.

Another passage quoted in proof of an Apostolic example of keeping the first day of the week, and, consequently, in support of the opinion that the Sabbath is changed, is 1 Corinthians 16:2. " Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." This passage, like the others, does not imply that the first day was then commonly and generally regarded as a day for public worship. Indeed, it does not necessarily imply a public meeting of any kind. The direction for " every one to lay by him in store," for the benefit of the poor saints at Jerusalem, 44 on the first day of the week," necessarily amounts to no more than an appointment of this day to make up their bounty at home, so that it might be sure to be ready when the Apostle should come—a very judicious arrangement, as the time of his coming for it was uncertain, and he would not know how to wait. But if it be understood to imply anything more, it is simply that they should bring their donations together publicly on the first day of the week, so as to be prepared in the fullest sense for the Apostle's visit. Therefore, according to this view of the case, it proves no more than an occasional meeting on this day for the purpose of a public contribution for an important object of benevolence.

But even if it could be so construed as clearly to imply that it was then a common and general practice to meet for public worship and instruction on this day, it would not thereby be pointed out to us as the Christian Sabbath, and a substitute for the seventh day, seeing that it contains no information to that effect, and that no divine warrant appears on any part of the New Testament records for the

supposed change. Meetings for public worship, taking up of collections, and even breaking of bread, do not constitute a Sabbath, though they are proper exercises for such a day. To sabbatize is. to rest from our own secular labors, and keep a season holy to God. These proofs for a change of the Sabbath, therefore, which are unquestionably the best that can be produced, are utterly deficient, and the argument therefrom, as generally presented, is deceptive, and unworthy of confidence.

Another of the proofs adduced for the supposed change of the Sabbath, is the following prediction. Psalm 118:22-24. "The stone which the builders refused has become the head stone of the corner This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." But this, like all the previous quotations, wants solidity. The main points in the argument are assumed. First, it is assumed, that Christ's becoming the head of the corner refers to the day of his resurrection; whereas there is no conclusive evidence that it refers to this rather than to the day of his birth, or of his entrance on his public ministry, or of his final ascension into heaven. Next, it is assumed that the day spoken of is a natural day of twenty-four hours; whereas this word is often used to designate an indefinite period of time--particularly the Gospel era (John 8:56)--and may very probably be so used here. Again, it is assumed that the day mentioned is the first day of the week; whereas there is nothing which designates this rather than some other in the course of his mediatorial work, allowing a natural day to be referred to. And even if the resurrection day be intended, it is not certain that this occurred on the first day of the week. It is further assumed, that the emphasis which is laid on the day alluded to as "the day which the Lord hath made," and in which the church would "rejoice and be glad," determines it to be the New Testament Sabbath in distinction from the Sabbath of the fourth commandment; whereas there is nothing in these circumstances which necessarily intimates any such change, while there are various important considerations by which this opinion is absolutely precluded. The entire argument, therefore, fails.

Another argument for the change of the Sabbath is based upon the supposition that the day of Pentecost occurred on the first day of the week, which was a remarkable season of the outpouring of the Spirit, and of Christ's triumph as the risen and exalted Savior. But this will appear, on a very little examination, to be wholly inconclusive. In the first place, it is far from being conclusively proved that this event occurred on the first day of the week. It is much more likely to have occurred either on the fifth or the seventh. Indeed, it is quite manifest from the best calculations that can be made, from the time of eating the Passover supper, the first paschal sabbath, the crucifixion and the resurrection, that it occurred on one or the other of these days. Secondly, if the feast of Pentecost had actually occurred on the first day of the week, this would furnish no proof of its being the New Testament Sabbath, in the absence of a divine warrant to that effect.

There is one other argument for the change in question, founded on the supposed application of the title "the Lord's Day," to the first day of the week. The only passage referred to for the purpose of sustaining it, is Revelations 1:10. "I was in the spirit on the Lord's Day." But that the day here called the Lord's Day, is the first day of the week, is merely assumed, and hence is not to be considered as proved. It is not, in fact, probable that this is the day referred to. It is much more likely that the expression here used refers to the day of Christ's reign; and that St. John meant to declare that in spirit he had a view of the scenes of that period. This use of the term day is sanctioned by the Savior's declaration, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day," (John 8:56,) as well as by the Psalmist's, who, when speaking of the glories of Christ's kingdom, says, "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it," (Psalm 118: 23.) The nature of the visions afterwards described also corroborates this view of the passage, and warrants the opinion that the expression "Lord's day," (or, as some translate it, lordly day,) here used, does not refer to a natural day, but to a longer period of time. If, however, these words be understood to refer to a natural day, it is more likely to be the seventh day, which God had blessed and sanctified for his special service, than the first day. The seventh day is called by Him "my holy day," and "the holy of the Lord"—phrases very similar to the one in this passage. This was also the Sabbath which was made for man, and of which Christ says he is Lord. And since it was observed up to the close of New Testament history, it would be perfectly natural for John to speak of it as "the Lord's Day." Further, there is no evidence that the first day of the week was denominated the Lord's Day, at so early a period. Only one writer mentions the expression till towards the close of the second century; and the reputed author of this passage, when speaking, in his Gospel, (which was written some years later than the Apocalypse,) of the resurrection of Christ, and the first day of the week, never intimates that the day should be called by any other name. The learned Morer, though an advocate for the first day, in mentioning the different days to which this phrase may be applied, acknowledges the entire uncertainty as to what day is intended, and says, "It is very likely that the more solemn and public use of the words was not observed until about the time of Sylvester II., when, by Constantine's command, it became an injunction." It is evident, therefore, that this passage cannot justly be used as proof that the Sabbath had been transferred to the first day of the week.

We have now examined the proofs commonly adduced for the abrogation or change of the original Sabbath, and have found them utterly insufficient and deceptive. Hence the claims of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, without alteration, are fully sustained. The advocates for the first day are aware that if an abrogation or change of the original Sabbath law cannot be made out, the seventh day is still the true Sabbath. Dr. Dwight, for instance, makes 'the following admission:" If we cannot find in the Scriptures plain and ample proof of the abrogation of the original day, or the substitution of a new one, the seventh day undoubtedly remains in full force and obligation, and is now to be celebrated by all the race of Adam." Here, then, the laboring oar is confessedly put into the hands of the advocates of the first day; and with what success they have used it, the foregoing examination will show. We ask, is it not a total failure? Has such "plain and ample proof" been produced from the Scriptures for the supposed abrogation or change? Indeed, it is evident that neither one nor the other of these things is practicable. An abrogation is not practicable; for the Decalogue, in which the law of the Sabbath is contained, is unchangeable. "Not one jot or one tittle shall in any wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled;" which implies its continued obligation, as long as moral beings exist. And the change contended for is not practicable; because the

substitution of another day for the seventh would annul the institution. It contains no warrant to keep the first day of the week as a Sabbath, but the seventh only. Its authority is limited to the seventh day, and cannot be transferred. The reason given for its institution, likewise, is limited to this day. It is obvious that it will not apply to another. The Sabbath law, therefore, contains no warrant whatever for the observance of the first day of the week. If the day is changed, the institution is annulled; and another institution, in some respects similar, but not in all, is introduced, in the total absence of divine authority, and hence rests altogether upon that which is human. This consideration, of itself, shows the absurdity of holding to the change of the original day, while the validity of the entire Decalogue is admitted.

From what has been here presented, it is evident that the Scriptures do not authorize the abrogation or change of the original Sabbath, but enforce its observance by precept and example. The opposite view is supported wholly by tradition and human authority, as an impartial examination of the history of the change will show. Have we not a right to expect, then, that when the great body of professing Christians shall become enlightened on this subject, and have sufficient grace and fortitude to act up to their convictions, the result will be, a general return to the faithful keeping of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment?

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