appeal, has bethought him of his neighbour's sins rather than his own, and deems that it has no message for him, let him assuredly know and understand that *he* most of all needs to take home its warning, and to yield to its tender but weighty reproach.

S. Cox.

THE JEWISH SABBATH AND THE LORD'S DAY.

NOT a few earnest Christians who have received in their own spiritual life manifold and infinite benefit from the rest and leisure of the Lord's Day, and have found in this benefit an indisputable proof of its Divine origin and authority, have yet been perplexed by the scanty references to the Lord's Day in the New Testament, by the somewhat unfavourable tone of nearly all the references there to the Sabbath, and especially by three passages bearing on the subject in the Epistles of St. Paul. The New Testament proofs of the permanent and universal design of the Day of Rest are few, and at first sight doubtful. On the other hand, in Romans xiv. 5 St. Paul treats it as matter of indifference whether we esteem one day above another or all days of equal value. In Colossians ii. 16 he forbids any one to pronounce sentence on his readers in the matter of the Sabbath, which he classes with distinctions of food, and calls a shadow of coming things. And that the Galatian Christians observed "days," a term which must include the weekly Sabbath and probably refers to it specially, aroused in the Apostle a dark fear lest his labours for them be in vain.[1] All this affords matter for investigation. I shall therefore discuss in this paper the

[1] See Galatians iv. 11.

meaning and purpose of the Lord's Day, and its relation to the Jewish Sabbath.

The word *Sabbath* is an English form of a Hebrew word denoting always a sacred rest. The corresponding verb denotes sometimes simply to cease or rest, as in Genesis viii. 22, "while the earth remaineth . . . day and night shall not *cease*," and Joshua v. 12, Jeremiah xxxi. 36, Proverbs xxii. 10, Job xxxii. 1, Nehemiah vi. 3; and sometimes to keep a sacred rest, as in Genesis ii. 2, "and he *kept Sabbath* on the seventh day from all his work which he did," and Exodus xvi. 30, xxiii. 12, xxxiv. 21, Leviticus xxiii. 32, xxv. 2.

Although there are several festal days in which "servile work" was forbidden, *e.g.* Leviticus xxiii. 7, 8, and in a few places, *e.g.* verses 11, 15, these seem to be called Sabbaths or are indisputably called (so ver. 24) by the cognate name Shabbathon, yet the weekly Sabbath and the Day of Atonement are raised above all other days as (vv. 3, 32) a cessation from all work and are designated by a special superlative name, "Sabbath of Sabbath-keeping," or "Rest of Resting," in A. V. "Sabbath of Rest." When not otherwise defined, the word *Sabbath* is a sufficient and frequent designation of the weekly rest. Thus the usage of words gives to the seventh day a unique place of honour among the many sacred days of the Law of Moses.

Amid various other ordinances, the weekly Sabbath is very conspicuous as being specially the sign of the Mosaic Covenant: so Exodus xxxi. 13, 16, 17, "to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever"; compare Ezekiel xx. 12. It thus takes in some sense the place of circumcision (Gen. xvii. 10–14) in the covenant with Abraham. The frequent and regular recurrence of the weekly rest made it a very appropriate test and visible expression of loyalty to the covenant with God.

Still further is the weekly Sabbath raised above all other ritual prescriptions by its place in the Decalogue among commandments valid every one for all time and all men; and by being based in the Decalogue and in Genesis ii. 3 and Exodus xxxi. 17 upon God's work in creation. Of the close relation of the Sabbath to moral precepts, we have remarkable proof in Isaiah lvi. 1–6: "Blessed is the man . . . that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil"; and much in the same strain.

That the weekly rest was ordained before Moses, is not proved by Genesis ii. 3; for even after a lapse of time an institution may have been ordained to commemorate a by-gone event. Nor is it disproved by Ezekiel xx. 10–12, "I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt and . . . gave them my Sabbaths to be a sign between me and them:" for an already existing institution might at the Exodus have been made by God a sign of the new covenant then given to Israel. That the princes of Israel in the wilderness (Exod. xvi. 22) did not understand the double supply of manna, suggests perhaps that the Sabbath was not then known to them. On the other hand, Genesis viii. 10, 12, "he stayed yet other seven days," and xxix. 27, "fulfil her week (or space of seven) . . . thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years," suggest that a period of seven days was already used as a division of time: and, although this does not imply a weekly day of sacred rest, the division of time into weeks is much more easy to understand if the weeks were separated by a sacred day. The word *remember* in Exodus xx. 8, if it is anything more than an emphatic form of the parallel phrase "keep the Sabbath day" in Deuteronomy iv. 12, refers doubtless to the institution of the Sabbath in Exodus xvi. 29, 30. Certainly it is no proof or suggestion that the Sabbath was ordained earlier than the departure from Egypt. Indeed,

taken together the above casual and uncertain notes have little weight as evidence either that the Sabbath was not, or was, ordained earlier than the Exodus. But the double supply of manna on the sixth day with no manna on the seventh, and the solemn ordinance of the Sabbath in Exodus xvi. 25–30 before the giving of the Decalogue, are additional marks of honour to the weekly Day of Rest.

The week itself was unknown to the early Greeks and Romans, and apparently to the heathen world generally. But that something like it was known to the Babylonians and Assyrians, is proved by a Babylonian calendar for a sacred month written in the Assyrian language, in which, amid sacrifices for other days, the 7th, 14th, 19th, 21st, and 28th days have a uniform description as "days unlawful to work on," and the king is forbidden to eat his ordinary food or change his dress or do his ordinary royal duties on them.[1] Since these were days of a lunar month, which contains 29½ days, they would not coincide with the Jewish Sabbath which is each seventh day all the year round, independently of the moon. But the similarity is worthy of notice. An Assyrian form of the word *Sabbath* has been found;[2] and is explained as "day of rest of heart." But it is not used in the calendar mentioned above. Other Babylonian inscriptions reveal the sacredness of the number seven.

Dion Cassius, who was born about A.D. 155, in Bithynia, states[3] that in his day the division of time into weeks was universal, though not of early date among the Greeks and Romans, and that they received it from the Egyptians. But we have not, so far as I know, any reliable traces of a weekly day of rest among the Egyptians. And indeed the evidence of a weekly division of time earlier than the

[1] See Smith's *Chaldean Account of Genesis*, p. 89; *Records of the Past*, published by Bagster, vol. vii. p. 159; Schrader, *Keilschriften und A. T.*, 2nd ed., p. 18 ff.

[2] See *Records of the Past*, vol. vii. p. 157.

[3] *Roman History*, bk. xxxvii. 16–18.

Christian era and outside Israel is at present very scanty and somewhat uncertain.

The early Christian writers assumed that the Sabbath did not exist before Moses. So, in the middle of the second century, Justin,[1] in argument with a Jew, says, referring to Adam, Abel, Enoch, and Melchizedec: "All these were just men and righteous in the sight of God without even keeping the Sabbath." And in the latter part of the same century, Irenæus, in his work *Against Heresies*,[2] writes: "Without circumcision, and without observance of the Sabbath, Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him for righteousness." Probably these quotations represent the opinion of the Apostolic Church. But the distance of time and absence of independent sources of information deprive this opinion of any critical value.

The above fragmentary evidence leaves us unable to determine with confidence whether the Sabbath was earlier than the Mosaic Covenant. But the matter is unimportant. For, that the Jewish Sabbath rested on a basis broader than the Mosaic Covenant, is proved by its connexion with God's work at the Creation.

The importance of the Sabbath in the Old Covenant is attested by Jeremiah xvii. 21–27, *e.g.* "If ye diligently hearken unto me . . . to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the Sabbath Day, to do no work therein; then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes . . . and this city shall remain for ever." So also Ezekiel xx. 12; Nehemiah x. 31; xiii. 15. Its worth in the eyes of the more pious of the later Jews is seen in 1 Maccabees ii. 34: "They said, We will not go forth or perform the word of the king to defile the Sabbath day." Compare chapters i. 39; ii. 38, 41.

Yet that which to Israel of the Old Covenant was an obligatory mark of loyalty to God, was in the Gentile

[1] *Dialogue with Trypho*, chap. xix. [2] Book iv. 2.

Christians of Galatia called by St. Paul (in Gal. iv. 9) a return to spiritual bondage. Indeed, the conspicuous position of the word "days," at the beginning of verse 10 suggests that their observance of the weekly Sabbath was a chief mark of the incipient apostasy which moved the Apostle to fear[1] that his labours among them would be in vain.

This fear is explained by St. Paul's foregoing argument Doubtless the Galatian Christians were keeping the Jewish Sabbath as an essential condition of salvation. Now this was an acknowledgment that the Mosaic Law is still binding as a condition of the favour of God; so Galatians v. 3, "I protest again to every man receiving circumcision that he is a debtor to perform the whole Law." For the entire Law, including ritual and moral commands, was given by the same authority. And St. Paul has proved that the Law pronounces a universal curse, and, by commanding what none can perform, virtually excludes from the blessings promised to Abraham all those under its domain. Consequently, to assert the continued validity of the Law, was to close to all men the way of salvation. And this assertion was involved, as we have seen, in the observance by the Galatian Christians of the Jewish Sabbath. This observance of it was therefore utterly subversive of the Gospel proclaimed by Christ. Hence St. Paul's fear lest his labours in Galatia be in vain.

All this implies that, like the distinction of food,[2] so marked a feature of the Mosaic Covenant also, the command to keep sacred the seventh day was in some sense annulled by Christ, and that the great principle of Romans vi. 14, 1 Corinthians ix. 20, that we "are not under law but under grace," includes the Sabbath Law. This inference compels us to consider the relation of the Lord's Day to the Jewish Sabbath.

[1] Verse 11.

[2] Mark vii. 15, 19; Acts x. 15.

In marked contrast to the comparative disregard of the day so highly honoured in the Old Covenant, we find in the New Testament special honour paid to another day. On the day following the Jewish Sabbath Christ rose from the dead, and on the evening of the same day[1] appeared to the assembled disciples. On the same day of the next week[2] He appeared to them again; and on the same day six weeks later He founded his Church by pouring upon the assembled disciples the Holy Spirit. The infinite importance of these events gives to the first day of the week a glory never conferred on the seventh day.

Accordingly we find in Acts xx. 7 a Christian meeting on the first day of the week; and in 1 Corinthians xvi. 2, St. Paul prescribes it as the day for laying by money for a charitable purpose. In Revelation i. 10 we read of the Lord's Day, which is honoured by a special revelation to John. And the distinction already given to the first day of the week makes us quite certain that this was the Lord's Day.

All this is confirmed by early Christian writers. The lately discovered *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, written probably early in the second century, says in chapter 14: "Each Lord's Day come together and break bread and give thanks," *i.e.* celebrate the eucharist. So the Epistle of Barnabas, probably a few years later (chapter 15), "We keep the eighth day for gladness, in which Jesus rose from the dead." Justin writes in the middle of the same century (*First Apology*, chapter 67): "On what is called Sunday there is a coming together to one place of all who dwell in town or country, and the memoirs of the Apostles and the writings of the Prophets are read"; and says that this is followed by exhortation and the Lord's Supper, adding: "On Sunday we all make our common gathering since it is the first day in which God changed darkness and crude

[1] xx. 19. [2] Verse 26.

matter and made the world; and Jesus Christ our Saviour on the same day rose from the dead." A succession of later writers removes all doubt that the first day of the week was called the Lord's Day, and was a special day of worship in the early Church.

We have already seen that unique honour to one day of the week was a marked feature of the Old Covenant; and that, by its reference to the work of Creation, and by its place in the Decalogue, the Jewish Sabbath rested on a basis broader than the Mosaic Law. We now find in the New Covenant still more conspicuous honour paid to one day of the week; but not to the same day. The change of day marks a transition from the Old Covenant to the New. And the honour paid in each Covenant to one day in seven suggests that a common element underlies both days, and that the Lord's Day bears to the Jewish Sabbath a relation similar to that of the one Covenant to the other. That this is actually the case, is, I think, fully proved by the following considerations.

We find by experience that the weekly day of rest is of incalculable and many-sided benefit. The gain to the body of regular intervals of rest from the monotonous toil of daily life can never be estimated. Still more valuable is the leisure thus obtained, amid the imperious demands of the present life, for contemplation of the eternal realities of the life to come. Moreover the observance of this sacred rest in spite of these pressing cares is an acknowledgment, in view of many who through forgetfulness of God are slaves of the world around, of the greater importance of the world above us. Thus, like the Lord's Supper, the Lord's Day gives visible form to the service of God. Moreover, the observance by all Christians of the same day of rest renders united worship possible; and makes the outward aspect of society a recognition of God. For these reasons (and they might be multiplied indefinitely, and they have much more

force than appears on the surface), were there no Divine obligation, it would be expedient for our highest interests to keep a frequent and regularly recurring day of rest, and that all Christians should keep the same day. This reveals the gain actually derived from the prevalent belief, whatever be its grounds, that the Day of Rest was ordained by God. Indeed, it is not easy to conceive how otherwise all Christians would agree to keep the same day. Consequently, either this belief is correct, or an error has been to the world an immense and manifold benefit. This benefit is an element of good in the Jewish Sabbath suitable to all nations and all ages.

These spiritual gains go a long way to prove the Divine origin of the Mosaic Covenant. Certainly, the teacher who gave to his nation an institution so rich in blessing for all mankind was indeed taught by God.

Admitting now the Divine origin of the Jewish Sabbath, and observing the immense gain to all men of a weekly day of sacred rest, we are irresistibly driven to infer that the rest ordained at Sinai was designed for all mankind; or, in other words, that this gain is by Divine purpose. While enjoying the benefits of the Lord's Day we feel that these benefits are God's gift. And this wider purpose of the Day of Rest given to Israel is the easiest explanation of its place in the Decalogue and of its reference there to the Creation of the World. Indeed, we can well conceive that the great benefit it was designed to confer on Israel and on the world moved God to select the Sabbath, whether previously existing or not, as the special sign of the Mosaic Covenant. For, by thus selecting it He gave it a sure place in the national life.

If the above inference and explanation be correct, by keeping the Lord's Day we are doing the will of God and are receiving benefits designed by Him for us. To neglect it, is to trample under foot a precious and Divine gift. We

therefore keep the Lord's Day, not as a condition or means of the favour of God or under fear of penalty, but with gratitude for so great a gift, and desirous to obtain all the blessings it is designed to convey. And this desire will determine our mode of spending the sacred day.

In the above discussion we have left out of sight the symbolic significance which belongs to the Sabbath in common with the entire Mosaic ritual. This significance is embodied in the words "holy" and "sanctify," which are everywhere given to every part of that ritual. God claimed from Israel for Himself one tribe of twelve, one day of seven, and one tenth of all produce, in order to assert his universal ownership. He claims now, in the New Covenant, that every man be his servant and priest, that all our possessions be consecrated to Him, and every day and hour be spent for Him. To us, therefore, in the highest conceivable sense every day is Holy to the Lord. But this by no means lessens the benefit of separating, from the secular toil which forms so large a part of the work allotted to most of us by God, a portion of time for meditation and evangelical work. This separation of a part greatly aids us to spend our whole time for God.

We now understand in some measure the relation to Christianity of the Jewish Sabbath. Whenever instituted, it was commanded in the Law of Moses: and was made a sign, and a conspicuous feature, of the Old Covenant of works. Consequently, as commanded by God, it was binding on every Israelite under pain of God's displeasure. And they who sought salvation by law sought it in part by strict observance of the Sacred Day. This is the legal aspect of the Jewish Sabbath. Again, like the entire Mosaic ritual, the Sabbath was a symbol of the Christian life. In these two aspects, the legal and the symbolic, the Jewish Sabbath has passed away; or rather has attained its goal in the fuller revelation of the New Covenant. The "shadow of

the coming things,"[1] *i.e.* a figure of them in mere outline, has given place to "the body." Instead of one day sanctified for Jehovah, every day is now spent for Christ. The Law has led us to Christ.[2] And the Voice which once condemned us for past disobedience, and made the favour of God impossible by reason of our powerlessness to obey in the future, has been silenced by the Voice from the Cross. In these two senses the Law, even the Law of the Sabbath, is to us as completely a thing of the past as the schooling of our childhood.

But underneath the legal and symbolic aspects of the Sabbath, which pertained only to the Old Covenant, lay an element of universal and abiding value, viz. the manifold benefit of the weekly rest. To secure this benefit for Israel and through Israel for the world, God embodied the Sabbath in the Law and Ritual of the Old Covenant. And when the Old Covenant was superseded by the New, Christ secured for his Church the same advantage by paying special honour to the first day of the week. And the silent intimation thus given by the Master, his servants in all ages have followed. But, like everything in the Gospel, the Lord's Day is not so much a law as a free gift of God. While keeping it we think, not of the penalty of disobedience, but of the great benefits received thereby in the kind providence of God; and we spend the day, not according to a written prescription, but in such way as seems to us most conducive to our spiritual growth. Thus the Lord's Day is a Christian counterpart of the Jewish Sabbath, and differs from it only as the Gospel differs from the Law.

Similarly, as a visible embodiment of the truth that our salvation comes through the shed blood of the innocent, the Jewish sacrifices have in some sense a Christian counterpart in the Lord's Supper. And the rite of Infant Baptism, which is not enjoined expressly in the New Testament,

[1] Colossians ii. 17. [2] Galatians iii. 4.

reproduces in the Christian Church, by recognizing the relation of little ones to the God of their fathers, a part of the spiritual significance of Circumcision.

We understand now St. Paul's indifference in Romans xiv. 5, whether we esteem one day above another or look upon all days as equal. Seen in the full light of the Gospel, all days are equal; for all are spent for Christ. And the service we render Him in the common duties of daily life is as precious in his sight as the meditation and evangelical activity of the Lord's Day. This is quite consistent with the consecration of one day in a week for the latter, and the equal consecration of six days for secular duties.

Nor is the absence from the New Testament of any express teaching about the relation of the Lord's Day to the Jewish Sabbath and the Fourth Commandment difficult to understand. Any such teaching in the Epistles of St. Paul would have blunted, by inevitable misinterpretation, his resistance to the advocates of the Mosaic Law as still binding on Christians. Abundant proofs of this relation were stored in the sacred Volume. The inference from these proofs was left to be observed, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in the later ages of the Church. And in the meantime, by Christ and by the Apostolic Church, a unique honour was paid to the first day of the week, which marked it out unmistakably as the Day of Days.

In exact accord with the above exposition is the usage of early Christian writers. The first day of the week is constantly called the Lord's Day, and spoken of as specially honoured and as the chosen day of Christian worship. But, so far as I know, not until the Council of Macon, A.D. 585, have we any hint of a transfer of the sacred rest from the seventh to the first day, or of obligation to keep the Lord's Day on the ground of the Fourth Commandment. Very interesting is Augustine's note on Psalm xci. 1, where he contrasts the Jews' Sabbath, which he says they waste in

bodily idleness, with the Christians' inward rest, which he calls the Sabbath of the heart. The whole note makes us almost certain that he did not look upon the Lord's Day as a Christian counterpart of the Jewish Sabbath. Equally interesting is a treatise of doubtful authorship and date on *The Sabbath and Circumcision* attributed to Athanasius, in which, although the Lord's Day is not called a Sabbath or placed in any relation to the Fourth Commandment, it is nevertheless shewn to stand in close relation to the Jewish Sabbath. The first Christian Emperor, Constantine, decreed, in A.D. 321, that all judges and people residing in cities rest from work, permitting on Sunday only agriculture. He thus recognized publicly the Day of Rest as a Christian institution.

But neither imperial decrees, nor a commandment of the ancient Law of God, nor tradition of the early Church, are needed by those who have experienced the great and various benefit of the rest and leisure of the Lord's Day. The greatness of the benefit is to them abundant and irresistible proof of the Divine origin and authority of the Christian Day of Rest.

JOSEPH AGAR BEET.

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH: CHAPTERS XL.-LXVI.

VI. THE SERVANT OF THE LORD.

THE passages cited in a former paper shew unmistakeably that the Prophet calls the "people" Israel the Servant of the Lord. He is not alone in this, for other prophets, presumably his predecessors, make use of the same phraseology. For example Jeremiah (Chap. xxx. 10), in language which might have found a place in this Prophet, writes: "Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the