

**THE PERPETUITY OF
A SEVENTH DAY
ORDINANCE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649434046

The Perpetuity of a Seventh Day Ordinance by Richard Ball

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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RICHARD BALL

**THE PERPETUITY OF
A SEVENTH DAY
ORDINANCE**

THE PERPETUITY
OF A
SEVENTH-DAY ORDINANCE

ACCORDANT WITH SCRIPTURE TESTIMONY AND THE
COURSE AND CONSTITUTION OF NATURE.

BY RICHARD BALL,

Author of "Holy Scripture the Test of Truth," "The Millenarian Inquirer,"
"The Hand Book of China," &c., &c.

"The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath."—Mark ii. 28.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

JUDD AND GLASS, NEW BRIDGE STREET, AND
GRAY'S INN ROAD.

EDINBURGH: JOHNSTONE AND HUNTER; OLIPHANT AND SON;
A. C. MOODIE.

GLASGOW: DAVID BRYCE; GEORGE GALLIE; J. R. M'NAIR.

BRISTOL: OLAND; WHEBBAT.

1857.

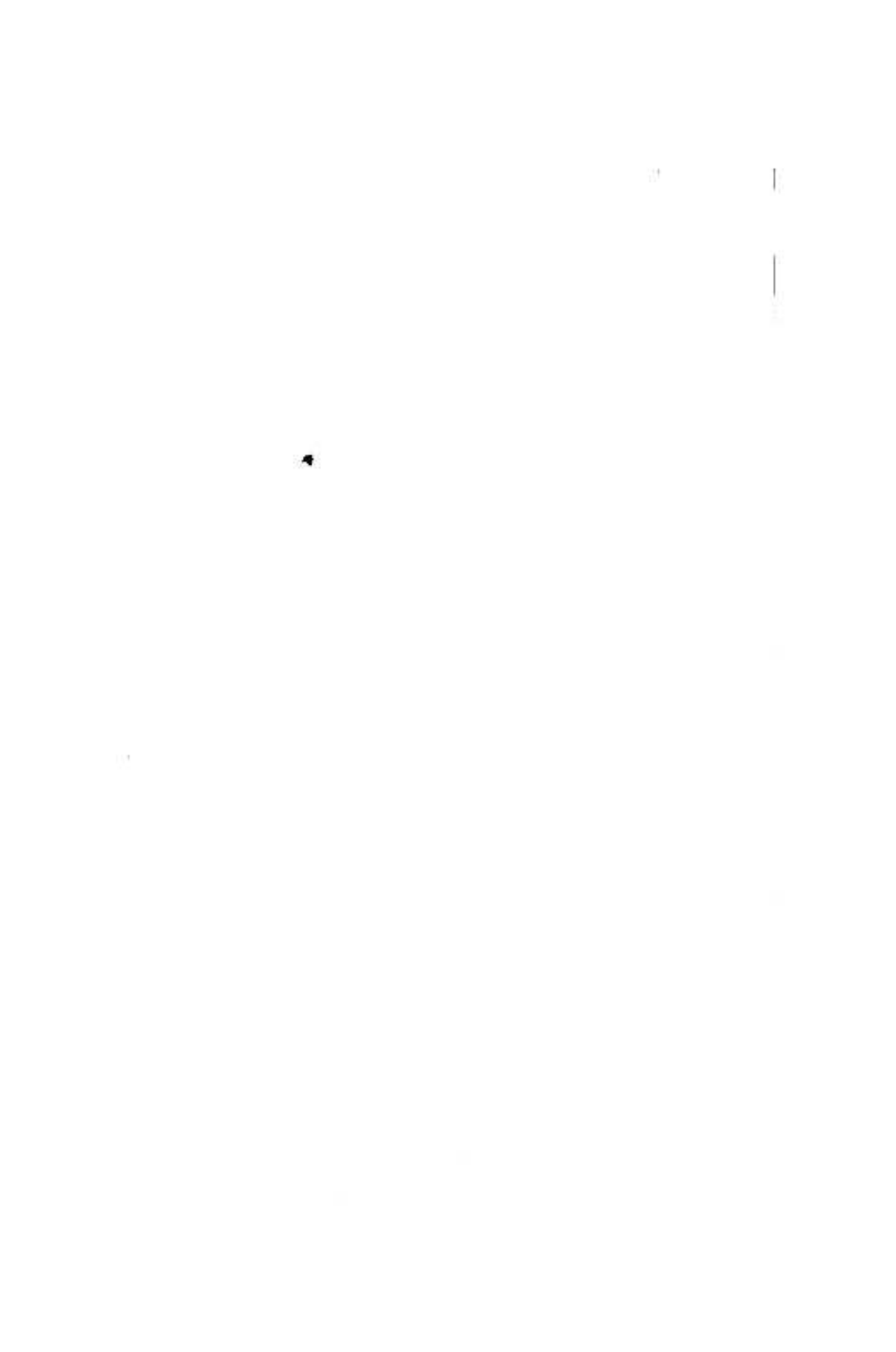
101. cl. 18.



PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

IN publishing a second edition of this little work, its title has been exchanged for one more simple, and at the same time more expressive. The one object in view has been to prove from Scripture the perpetuity of a seventh-day ordinance, originating in the divine appointment in Eden, incorporated into the Mosaic polity, and continued under the gospel dispensation as the combined commemoration of God's glory in creation, and as the weekly memorial of Christ's resurrection, on the first day of the week, as the Head of the New Creation of God; and therefore most fitly thenceforth designated *The Lord's Day*.

It is a cause for thankfulness that this little effort has been the means, under the divine blessing, of settling the minds of many who before stood in doubt as to the Scripture authority for the perpetuity of the septimal ordinance.



PREFACE.

"Non est interpretatio, sed divinitio que recedit a litera: cum receditura litera, iudex transit in legislatorem."—*Bacon*.

"What saith the Scripture?"

"As knowledges are now delivered, there is a kind of contrast of error between the deliverer and the receiver: for he that delivereth knowledge desireth to deliver it in such form as may be best believed, and not as may be best examined; and he that receiveth knowledge, desireth rather present satisfaction than expectant inquiry: and so rather not to doubt than not to err; glory making the author not to lay open his weakness, and sloth making the author not to know his strength."—*Lord Bacon's Adv. of Learning*, p. 63.

We live in an age when the mind of man is putting forth unwonted energy, when nothing in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth, escapes its inquiring scrutiny. Accumulated facts have exploded time-honoured theories. The object kept steadily in view in the pursuit of science and philosophy is not what it once was, to reestablish some new hypothesis, but to develop provable truth for application to practical uses: and as nothing material has escaped this keen scrutiny, so the abstract and spiritual have been equally subjected to the same searching processes.

The oracles of God have, in like manner, passed through ordeals to an extent before unattempted and unimagined. The crumbling memorials of antiquity—the dim, mysterious records of the earliest ages—the frame-work, and the very bowels of the inorganic earth, have been explored and ransacked by friendly and unfriendly hands; the acutest philologists the world ever saw have taxed their powers to the uttermost in the investigation of the sacred text; and all, willingly or unwillingly, have conspired to confirm the faith of the intelligent Christian, and to confute the cavils of the keenest sceptic; so that the more we come to know of

the works of God and of the ways of man, the more are we confirmed in the truthful exactness of God's records of the one and of the other. The overwhelming discoveries of modern astronomy which have opened up in illimitable space the myriad suns of other systems, each, perhaps, more glorious than our own, and these, it may be, clustering on the more outworks of creation; the equally wonderful revelations of organized life in the minutest discoverable atoms of matter; the bold application of known principles of science to the examples, by which we send our messages on the lightning's wing, and compel the sun-beam to delect our portraits; these wonder-working appliances of modern science have only whetted the intellectual appetite, till it should seem as "though nothing will be restrained from them which men have imagined to do."* Inquiring minds are consequently not disposed to take anything upon trust—great names will not give currency to unproved opinions, and he who desires to influence the public mind must be prepared, by calm inquiry, to set forth the steps by which he has arrived at his conclusions, and to show that those conclusions can be maintained by clear argument and fair analogy.

Looking, then, at the long-debated question of the Sabbath Institute in connexion with this acknowledged condition of the popular feeling, is it not of deep importance that it should be gravely and carefully argued from the one only authoritative source of knowledge, not from the mode or period of its observance in any one of the successive dispensations, but from a comprehensive view of the entire circle of Divine testimony—from its Edenic original to its grand and ultimate consummation (*as to earth*) in the glories of the "day of the Lord"? Will it be thought presumptuous to question† whether this has yet been accomplished—to assert that we yet require an exposition of the coherent testi-

* Gen. xl. 6.

† The flood of publications on the Sabbath which have lately appeared, some of them eminently useful, and including many admirable productions from the pens of working men, all more or less proceed on the assumption of the all-important point still remaining to be proved, namely, the perpetuity of the ordinance, and the grounds whereon the perpetuity thereof rests. It is stated in that beautiful book, "The Pearl of Days," that in three months from the announcement of the prizes being offered, more than 960 Essays on the Sabbath were sent in, *all written by working men!*

mony of Scripture to this perpetual memorial, which I venture to designate as the Divine chronometer?*" The objection to the multiplication of books may be fairly met by the inquiry, whether books have multiplied in proportion to the multiplication of readers. And surely it were far better that books should be too abundant—provided only they be for good ends—than that thoughts which tend to man's blessing and happiness should perish with their possessor; "for books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a progeny of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve, as in a vial, the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them."†

In the midst of the heartlessness of polemical strife, and the chilling effects of abounding iniquity, there is a peculiar delight in an inquiry into one article of our common Christianity which will be sure to enlist the sympathies of all who love the Lord Jesus Christ—one which all would rejoice to see lifted up from the debatable ground of inference and custom, and established on the proved testimony of Holy Writ. Each loyal heart will rejoice to trace the successive golden links which, let down from the Edenic temple, reach even to the Paradise of God, connecting the end with the beginning, and completing the mysterious circle of the Divine revelation. And it may here be profitable to notice, that the unity and the manifoldness of the lively oracles is a truth, the evidence whereof grows upon every

* The title of this treatise is simply significant of the Sabbath as the standard by which God measures time. The period of creation is a Sabbath-cycle wound up with the day of rest: the period of the earth's duration, of which the Sabbath-cycle was a figure, is supposed to be an equally complete Sabbath-cycle of seven thousands of years (literally a Sabbath of years), the last of them being the millennial day of glorious rest to a redeemed creation; "for a day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." In truth, all the most noted periods and epochs of the Old Testament history are resolvable into periods of "sevens," literally "Sabbaths." Take, as one example, the year of Jubilee, "Thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years, and the space of seven Sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years, and thou shalt cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound."—*Lev. xxv. 8.*

The Chinese divide the months into the three decades called "Sevens;" their days are also named after the twenty-eight constellations, four of which mark the weekly Sabbath.

† Milton's speech for the liberty of unlicensed printing, p. 104.