laws to direct obedience, and to which man was to con­form his conduct in every part oſ duty. Agreeably to this, we find that ſacrifices were offered, altars and places of worſhip conſecrated, and the *Sabbath* alſo mentioned as a well known ſolemnity, before the pro­mulgation of the law. It is expreſsly taken notice of at the fall of manna; and the incidental manner in which it is then mentioned, is a convincing proof that the lſraelites were no ſtrangers to the inſtitution: for had it been a *new* one, it must have been enjoined in a poſitive and particular manner, and the nature of it must have been laid open and explained, othferwiſe the term would have conveyed no meaning.

The diviſion of time into *weeks,* or periods of ſeven days, which obtained ſo early and almoſt universally, is a ſtrong indication that *one* day in ſeven was always diſtinguiſhed in a particular manner. @@*Week*\*, and *ſeven days,* are in ſcripture language ſynonymous terms. God commanded Noah, *ſeven days* before he entered the ark, to introduce into it all forts of living creatures. When the waters of the flood began to abate, Noah ſent forth a dove, which, finding no reft for the ſole of her foot, returned to him. After *ſeven days* he ſent forth the dove a ſecond time, and again ſhe returned to the ark. At the expiration of other *ſeven dαys* helet go the dove a third time: and a *week* is ſpoken of (Gen. xxix.) as a well known ſpace of time.

This ſeptenary diviſion of time has been, from the earlieſt ages, uniformly obſerved over all the eaſtern world. The Iſraelſtes, Aſſyrians, Lgyptians, Indians, Arabians, and Perſians, have always made uſe of a week, conſiſting of ſeven days. Many vain attempts have been made to account for this uniformity; but a practice ſo general and prevalent could never have taken place, had not the ſeptenary diſtribution of time been inſtituted from the beginning, and handed down by tradition.

From the same ſource alſo muſt the ancient heathens have derived their notions of the ſacredneſs of the seventh day. That they had ſuch notions of it is evident from ſeveral paſſages of the Greek poets quoted by Ariſtobulus, a learned Jew, by Clement of Alexan­dria, and Euſebius.

*ὲϐϛομη ίερον ήμαρ.* **Hefiod.**

The ſeventh, the *ſacred* day.

*F. ϐϛοματη* δ'ηπειτ χατηλυθεν, ίηετγ ήμαρ. Homer.

Afterwards came the ſeventh, the *facred* day. Again:

Εϐϛομον ήμαρ εην, χαι τω τετλεςο παντα.

On the *seventh* day all things were *completed.*

F*.*ϐδοματη δηοι τετλησμενα παντα τετυχται. Linus.

All things were made *perfect* on the *ſeventh* day.

That they likewiſe held the number *ſeven* in high eſtimation has been ſhown by a learned, though ſometimes fanciful, author@@\*, with ſuch evidence as to enforce con­viction. The Pythagoreans call it the *venerable* num­ber, *σεϐαμ αϗιος*, *worthy of veneration,* and held it to be *perfect* and *mοft proper* to religion. They denominated it *fortune,* and alſo ſtyled it *voice, ſound, muſe,* becauſe, no doubt, *ſeven* diſtinct notes comprehend the whole ſcaleof muſic, beyond which neither voice nor inſtrument can go, but muſt return from the ſeventh, and begin again anew. They likewiſe deſigned it τελεσϙορος, *leading to the end.*

*Seven,* in the Hebrew language, is expreſſed by **a** word that primarily ſignifies *fulneſs, completion, ſufficiency,* and is applied to a *week,* or *ſeven days,* because that was the *full* time employed in the work, of creation; to the *Sabbath,* becauſe on it all things were *completed;* and to an *οath,* becauſe it is *ſufficient* to put an end to all ſtrife. This opening oſ the Hebrew root will enable us to come at the meaning of thoſe expreſſions of the hea­thens, and alſo let us see whence theyderived their ideas and modes of speaking, and that the knowledge of the tranſactions at the creation, though much perverted, was never entirely loſt by them.

It has been ſuppoſed by ſome, that the heathens bor­rowed the notion of the *ſacredneſs* of the ſeventh day from the Jews. But this opinion will not readily be admitted, when it is conſidered that the Jews were held in the greateſt contempt by the ſurrounding nations, who derided them no leſs for their ſabbaths than for their circumciſion. All forts of writers ridiculed them on this account. Seneca charged them with ſpending the ſeventh part of their time in ſloth. Tacitus ſaid, that not only the ſeventh day, but alſo the ſeventh year, was unprofitably waited. Juvenal brings forward the same charge; and Perſius upbraided them with their *re­cutita ſabbata.* Plutarch ſaid that they kept it in honour of Bacchus. Tacitus affirmed, that it was in honour of Saturn; but the moſt abominable aſſertion of all is that of Apion, who ſaid that they obſerved the Sab­bath in memory of their being cured on that day of a

ſhameful diſeaſe, called by the Egyptians s*abbo.*

Some perceiving the force of this objection have con­tended, that time was divided into weeks of ſeven days, that each of the planetary gods, the Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, who were the *Dii majorum gentium,* might have a day appropriated to his ſervice. But if ſuch was the origin of weeks, how came the great and ancient goddeſs *Tellus* to be omitted ? She was worſhipped by the early idolaters as well as the other planets, and muſt ſurely have been deemed by them as worthy of a particular day ſet apart to her honour as the planet Saturn, who was long undiſcovered, afterwards ſeen but occaſionally, and at all times conſidered as of malign aſpect. (See Rem**PHAN )**

Others have ſuppoſed, that as the year was divided in­to lunar months of ſomething more than 28 days, it was natural to divide the month into quarters from the different phaſes of the moon, which would produce as many weeks of ſeven days. But this ſuppoſition is leſs tenable than the former. The phaſes of the moon are not ſo precilely marked at the quarters as to attract to them any particular notice, nor are the quarterly ap­pearances of one month commonly like thoſe of another. We cannot, therefore, conceive what ſhould have induced the earlieſt obſervers of the phaſes of the moon to divide the month into four parts rather than into three, or five, or ſeven. Had the ancient week conſiſted of 14 days, it might have been inferred, with ſome degree of plauſibility, that its length was regulated by the phaſes of the moon, becauſe the ſhape of that luminary, at the end of the ſecond quarter, is very preciſely marked 5 but there is nothing which, in the preſent hypotheſis, could have everywhere led mankind to make their weeks conſiſt of ſeven days. This diviſion of time, therefore, can be accounted for only by admitting the primeval institution

@@@ [m]\* שבע Seven.

@@@ [m] \* Holloway's Ori­ginals, vol. ii. p. 60.