tion of divine service, cannot be denied. Such is the con­stitution of man, that he must have particular times set apart for particular services. He is doomed to toil and la­bour, to earn his bread with the sweat of his brow ; and is capable of performing religious duties only in such a manner as is consistent with his situation in the world. If stated times for religious solemnities had not been enjoined, the consequence would have been, that such solemnities would have been altogether neglected ; for experience shows, that if mankind were left at liberty when and how often they should perform religious offices, these offices would not be performed at all. It is the observation of holy times that preserves the practice of holy services ; and without the frequent and regular returns of hallowed days, man would quickly forget the duty which he owes to God, and in a short time no vestige of religion would be found in the world.

Among the ordinances which God vouchsafed his ancient people, we find that the pious observation of holidays was particularly insisted upon ; and the Sabbath was enjoined to be kept holy, in the most solemn manner, and under the severest penalties. Can it then be supposed that He would suffer mankind, from the creation of the world to the era of Moses, to remain without an institution so expedient in itself, and as well fitted to answer the end proposed by it under the one dispensation, as ever it could be under the other ? No. We have every imaginable reason to con­clude, that when religious services were enjoined, religious times were appointed also ; for the one necessarily implies the other.

It is not an objection to the early institution of the Sabbath that there is no mention of it in the patriarchal age. It would have swelled the Bible to a most enormous size had the sacred historian given a particular account of all the transactions of those times ; and, besides, it would have answered no end. When Moses wrote the book of Genesis, it was unnecessary to relate minutely transactions and institutions already well known by tradition. Accord­ingly we see that his narrative is everywhere very concise, and calculated only to preserve the memory of the most im­portant facts. However, if we take a view of the church- service of the patriarchal age, we shall find that what is called the legal dispensation, at least the liturgie part of it, was no new system, but a collection of institutions observed from the beginning, and republished in form by Moses. The Scriptures inform us that Cain and Abel offered sacrifices ; and the account which is given of the acceptance of the one, and the rejection of the other, evidently shows that stated laws respecting the service had then taken place. “ In process of time,” at the end of the days, “ Abel brought an offering.” Here was priest, altar, matter of sacrifice, ap­pointed time, motive to sacrifice, and atonement made, and accepted. The distinction of animals into clean and un­clean before the Flood, and Noah’s sacrifice immediately after his deliverance, without any new direction, is an unanswer­able proof of the same truth. It is testified of Abraham, by God himself, that he kept his charge, his commandments, his statutes, and his laws. These expressions comprehend the various branches into which the law given at Sinai was divided. They contain the moral precepts, affirmative and negative, the matter of religious service, a body of laws to direct obedience, and to which man was to conform his con­duct in every part of 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 Israelites were no strangers to the insti­

tution. 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, otherwise 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 dags,* are in scrip­ture language synonymous terms. God commanded Noah, seven days before he entered the ark, to introduce into it all sorts of living creatures. When the waters of the Flood began to abate, Noah sent forth a dove, which, finding no rest 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 days he let go the dove a third time ; and a week is spoken of (Gen. xxix.) as a well-known period of time.

This septenary division of time has, from the earliest ages, been uniformly observed over all the eastern world. The Israelites, Assyrians, Egyptians, 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.

***iζi.μr∣, itς.. hμxζ,***

The seventh, the ***sacred*** day.

**'EC‰lusra 5' l<ι,ra *κxrtιλυrt., lιςt. t∣μx^,***

Afterwords came the seventh, the ***sacred*** day.

Again :

E\*3fliuo, ***hμxζ* lav, x«u *<ru rιrιλιr.*** xa,r<- On the ***seventh*** day all things were ***completed,***

'Eζi.μaτn S,oj esτlλneμtrx rx.ra <rteυnτaι,

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

That they likewise held the number *seven* in very high estimation, has been showm by a learned, though sometimes fanciful author,@@2 with such evidence as to enforce convic­tion. The Pythagoreans call it the venerable number, <rsCαcχκ)u *άξιο;,* worthy of veneration, and held it to be perfect and most proper to religion. They denominated it fortune, and also styled it voice, sound, muse, because, no doubt, seven distinct notes comprehend the whole scale of music, beyond which neither voice nor instrument can go, but must return from the seventh, and begin again anew. They likewise designed it reλt<rpojoς, 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 oath, because it is sufficient to put an end to all strife. This opening of the Hebrew root will enable us to come at the meaning of those expressions of the heathens, and also let us see whence they derived 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 con-

@@@1 שכע, *seven.*

@@@, Holloway’s Originals, vol. ii. p. 60.