

# **Sunday Sacredness In Roman Paganism**

**A history of the planetary week and its “day of the Sun” in the paganism of  
the Roman world during the early centuries of the Christian Era**

**By**

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## THE WEEK

THE Sun still rules the week's initial day, The Moon o'er Monday yet retains the sway; But Tuesday, which to Mars was whilom given, Is Tuesco's subject in the northern heaven; And Wotlen hath the charge of Wednesday, Which did belong of old to Mercury. And Jove himself surrenders his own day To Thor, a barbarous god of Saxon day. Friday, who under Venus once did wield Love's balmy spells, must now to Frea yield. While Saturn still holds fast his day, but loses The Sabbath, which the central Sun abuses.\*

\* By a quaint poet of the last century, quoted by R. Chambers in The Book of Days, Volume 1, page 6.

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## Foreword

DURING the past hundred years there have been published in divers languages several learned discussions about the week in use among ancient pagan peoples. These discourses have appeared in print mostly in the form of periodical articles, and occasionally as chapters in books treating principally on the subject of the calendar, the Sabbath, and kindred topics. Frequently they have been nothing more than a few paragraphs of passing remarks made in connection with other matters of history. Little has been done thus far to compile such historical material into one volume and make it easy of access for the general public.

The week that was so popular in ancient paganism was an astrological institution, which we shall designate as “the planetary week,” because its days were named after a hebdomad of heavenly bodies called “planets,” which were worshiped as gods by the heathen.

Modern archaeological research has added a vast amount of data to the world’s knowledge of the distant past, with the result that a more comprehensive study of our topic is now possible. Indeed, it is time for the appearance of a book on the subject chosen as the theme of this treatise - “Sunday Sacredness in Roman Paganism.” The reasons why such a work is timely are these:

1. A clearer understanding of the social and religious life of paganism during the early years of the Christian religion helps to solve some of the problems encountered in the study of church history.

2. The new historical data now available afford a more complete story than we hitherto have had of the week of seven days that is in our calendar today, and explain more clearly why the days have the heathen names of Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

3. A better knowledge of the religious customs of the pagan world of the Roman period gives a sharper perspective to the study of the Sabbath-Sunday question, which is commanding more and more attention and investigation.

4. The agitation on the part of some for governmental laws imposing Sunday observance upon the people calls for a more careful study of the rise of Sunday legislation among the nations.

5. A definite answer is needed to this question: “Was Sunday the day esteemed by the Sun worshipers of Roman paganism as sacred to the Sun?”

The question here raised is one that has been debated long in modern times. Seventh-day Adventists and many others have affirmed that in the Roman Empire Sunday was the day which the heathen regarded as sacred to the Sun-god. For example, Mrs. E. G. White, a writer of authority among Seventh-day Adventists, speaks of Sunday as “the pagan festival,” [1] and declares that it is “a day handed down by the heathen and papists.” [2] She also says that it was “the festival observed by the heathen as ‘the venerable day of the Sun.’” [3] And in explaining how Constantine (306-337 AD) came to issue his famous Sunday law of 321 AD, she says: “The day of the Sun was revered by his pagan subjects.” [4]

Are such statements about Sunday true? The main objective of this book is to give a clear answer to this question.

For many years the author has done special research on the history of the Sabbath-Sunday question in, the first four centuries of the Christian Era. In this investigation he has endeavored to collect the available historical data bearing on the subject and pertaining to the period mentioned, in order that he might write a history of the rise of the Sabbath-Sunday controversy. In order to do this he has consulted many, thousands of musty tomes in various languages, ancient and modern, in libraries of the United States, Europe, and Latin America. The material has been gathered from pagan, Jewish, and Christian sources.

A survey of his findings has convinced the writer that the subject chosen ought to be studied from two different angles, and it is his plan to present his material in two sections. This first volume, entitled Sunday in Roman Paganism, does not attempt to give the story of Sunday as a church festival. The author’s principal aim is to present the history of the planetary week as it was known and used in the pagan world during the early centuries of the Christian Era, and to show whether or not its “day of the Sun” was then regarded by pagans as being sacred to their Sun-god.

Because Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and other ecclesiastical writers of that period have mentioned the “day of the Sun” in their replies to attacks made by pagan authors, and because Constantine imposed

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Sunday observance on all the people of the Roman Empire by means of imperial edicts, it has been necessary to discuss to a certain extent the relation of the pagan Sunday to Christianity. This is done briefly and where needed in order to present a clear and true story of the historical facts.

The writer hopes to present later, if God permits, a second treatise, entitled Sunday in Early Christianity, which will be a comprehensive study of the Sabbath-Sunday question from the time of Christ to the Council of Laodicea (in the fourth century). This second work will be a strong array of historical data showing how Sunday came to eclipse the Sabbath in the faith and practice of the majority of the Christian people.

The material set forth in this first volume has been drawn from many sources, and the author has faithfully tried to give due credit to those whose laborious investigation of the ancient past has made possible the writing of this book. It is his hope that others will extend the scope of this investigation, for there will doubtless come to light more data on the subject as further exploration is made in this field.

The reader will see that in the light of the evidence we have now, certain theories concerning the origin of the week and its universality in ancient times must be modified or discarded. Too frequently writers have failed to make the proper distinction between the true Biblical week in use among the Jews and the Christians in the first century AD, and the popular planetary week that was in vogue in the pagan world at that time. Too often has been ignored the fact that in some quarters a certain amount of syncretism was effected between the belief and practices of Christianity and those of paganism during the early centuries of the Christian church.

For example, the calendar bequeathed to us has come down with the imprint of paganism clearly stamped upon it. It is universally admitted today that the names of the months and those of the days of the week in our present calendar are a legacy from paganism.

Let us, therefore, in our study of this subject endeavor to get and to give the truth about it. To this end is this little volume issued at this time.

1. The Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 4, Page 391.
2. Early Writings, Pages 255, 256.
3. The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan, Page 52.
4. Ibid., Page 53.

## 1. The Pagan Planetary Week

A SURVEY reveals that in at least sixty-five languages the days of the week are named after the seven planetary gods of ancient paganism-Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn. And the practice of calling the days after those pagan deities is now most general in those lands where the profession of the Christian religion is dominant.

It would be absurd, however, to suppose that the dedication of the days of the week to the heavenly bodies is of Hebrew or Christian origin. The Holy Scriptures reveal that the ancient Jews and the early Christians designated the days by numbers, the sixth and the seventh being called also 'the Preparation' and "the Sabbath' respectively. [1] The dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other general sources of information are practically unanimous in attributing the calendar names of the days to a pagan source.

### A Hybrid Institution

The week as it appears in our modern calendar is a hybrid institution. The numerical order of the days is that of the original Biblical week, but the nomenclature is that of the pagan planetary week of long ago. By the term "planetary week" we shall refer hereafter to the astrological week of seven days named after the hebdomad of heavenly bodies which the pagans anciently called planets and worshiped as gods. In this pagan week the days came in this order: (1) the day of Saturn, (2) the day of the Sun, (3) the day of the Moon, (4) the day of Mars, (5) the day, of Mercury, (6) the day of Jupiter, and (7) the day of Venus. Their correspondence to the days of the Biblical week was as follows:

Biblical

Planetary

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- |                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| 1. First day   | 2. Day of the Suit |
| 2. Second day  | 3. Day of the Moon |
| 3. Third day   | 4. Day of Mars     |
| 4. Fourth day  | 5. Day of Mercury  |
| 5. Fifth day   | 6. Day of Jupiter  |
| 6. Sixth day   | 7. Day of Venus    |
| 7. Seventh day | 1. Day of Saturn   |

When the Sunday of the pagan planetary week, which corresponded to the first day of the Biblical week, was made the official weekly rest day of the Roman Empire by Constantine 1 (306-337 AD), the cycle of seven days was officially adopted into the Roman civil calendar. By his famous legislation of 321 AD the emperor confirmed and sanctioned the pagan name dies Solis (the day of the Sun), and made it the legal title of the day now called Sunday. When the Christian religion was adopted as the official cult of the Roman state, and its influence became dominant over that of paganism, the numerical order of the days of the Biblical week came to be adopted in the calendar. Nevertheless, the pagan nomenclature had already become so rooted by usage that it has remained in the calendar until this day, although in sonic languages the ecclesiastical name of “the Lord’s day” and the Biblical title of “the Sabbath” have prevailed for designating the first and the seventh days respectively. [2]

Behind the planetary week there lies an ancient pagan philosophy—a pseudo science—which deified and adored the heavenly bodies. The Sun, the Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn were religiously observed and adored as gods by the heathen. Therefore, in order to understand aright the place and use of the planetary week in the paganism of long ago, one must first know what was the general pagan philosophy which formed its basis. The facts presented in the following paragraphs will find ample confirmation by numerous quotations from ancient writers as the subject of this book is more fully discussed later on.

## The World-Machine

In the thinking of the majority of the pagan philosophers of the ancient East the “world” (cosmos) embraced far more than this earth upon which we live. It included all the visible universe. The starry firmament seemed to them to be nothing more than a vast, spherical shell studded with motionless points of glittering light, which were designated as the fixed stars. This great celestial sphere was supposed to contain within itself the marvelous mechanism of the world-machine. The earth was believed to be the immobile pivot around which the mighty cosmos turned like a gigantic Ferris wheel. In the immensity of space between the encasing sphere of fixed stars and the motionless terrestrial center there appeared to revolve about—above and beneath [3] the earth seven luminous, wandering orbs. Although the relative positions of these celestial bodies varied at times in pagan thought, the most generally accepted order was this: Saturn (highest), Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon (lowest). Because these luminaries apparently moved to and fro with a certain degree of individual liberty, they were called planets (wanderers).

Thus the Sun and the Moon were both included in the list of the planetary bodies, and the seven of them were supposed to be the governing gods of the universe. Each of them was said to have a sphere or heaven of his own. [4] Together they formed what was called the hebdomad of planetary gods and heavens. By adding to this number the heaven of the fixed stars and its divine ruler—the Demiurge (World Creator)—the ogdoad of gods and abodes was formed. [5]

*This diagram illustrates simply the ancient pagan conception of the universe. The earth was supposed to be the center of the great world machine. The celestial sphere of fixed stars and the seven planetary bodies (Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, and Moon) appeared to revolve around the earth in a diurnal motion from east to west.*

## The Movements of the World-Machine

The outer sphere of the fixed stars appeared to revolve from east to west around the earth, one complete revolution of it marking off a day of time. Although the seven planetary bodies seemed to move westward in the diurnal revolution of the encasing firmament, they also appeared to have a contrary movement of their own, which carried them from west to east.

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*This diagram illustrates the ancient pagan conception of a geocentric universe, the view being from one of the celestial poles. While the planetary bodies appeared to revolve with the celestial sphere of fixed stars in a diurnal motion from east to west, they also seemed to have a contrary (west to east) motion of their own.*

The position of the Moon, for example, was seen to shift from night to night in an easterly direction, in relation to the sidereal heaven, and a period of approximately 28 days [6] elapsed before she returned to her original place. The Sun, too, seemed to move gradually eastward in relation to the starry expanse, and spent about 360 days in returning to his original position in the sky. [7] These supposed movements of the heavenly bodies around the earth were called revolutions. While the westward movement of the fixed stars measured off the day, the eastward movements of the Sun and the Moon marked off the year and the month respectively.

Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, and Mercury also appeared to move in a direction opposite to that of the fixed stars, and the most intriguing thing about them was that sometimes some of them were in front of the Sun, and at other times they were behind him. This behavior was more pronounced in Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars than in Venus and Mercury, which stayed closer to the Sun. [8] For this reason those five planets were supposed to be the special attendants of King Sol, about whom they were said to dance. 'The Moon was often regarded as the Sun's wife-the queen of heaven.

### The Zodiac

It was also observed that the planetary orbs, in their revolutions around the earth, varied their courses from time to time, so that their paths ascended to the north or descended to the south of the celestial equator. Nevertheless, they kept their route within certain limits in their ascending and descending, and traced a definite path through the sky. This course passed by twelve groups of fixed stars, which formed an encircling band around the firmament, passing over and beneath the earth.

The constellations forming those twelve groups of fixed stars were supposed to represent living beings', and collectively they were known as the zodiac (living creatures). Their Roman names were Aries (Lion), Taurus (Bull), Gemini (Twins), Cancer (Crab), Leo (Lion), Virgo (Virgin), Libra (Balance), Scorpio (Scorpion), Sagittarius (Archer), Capricorn (Goat), Aquarius (Water Carrier), and Pisces (Fish).

The twelve constellations of the zodiac were often referred to as "the houses of the Sun," because he appeared to spend about thirty days in each one of them in his yearly revolution. Thus were marked off the twelve months of the solar year.

This is, in brief, a general outline of the fundamentals of ancient pagan astronomy, upon which the religious philosophy of astrology (star worship) was built. This was also the basis of the planetary week.

### The Planetary Week

Upon this system of heathen astronomy was based the astrological theory of chronocrateries (Time Ruler ships), in which each planet was assigned dominion over an hour, a day, and even longer Periods of time. Taking the planetary gods in their supposedly astronomical order-Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon-the pagan system assigned them by turn to the twenty-four hours of the day. The astrological day began at sunrise.

To each planet was assigned his respective hour, and the god having dominion over the first hour of the day was also lord of the day. Therefore the day was named after the planetary god having lordship over it. For example, let us begin with the planets in their supposedly astronomical order and assign the first hour of the day to Saturn, for he comes first in the hebdomad of the pagan gods. It will be the day of Saturn, because he is lord of its first hour. The distribution of the twenty-four hours of Saturn's day would be as follows: (1) Saturn, (2) Jupiter, (3) Mars, (4) Sun, (5) Venus, (6) Mercury, (7) Moon, (8) Saturn, (9) Jupiter, (10) Mars, (11) Sun, (12) Venus, (13) Mercury, (14) Moon, (15) Saturn, (16) Jupiter, (17) Mars, (18) Sun, (19) Venus, (20) Mercury, (21) Moon, (22) Saturn, (23) Jupiter, (24) Mars. The Sun, being the next planetary deity in turn, will take the lordship of the first hour of the following day, which will make it the day of the Sun. By continuing the same procedure of assigning the planets in turn to the twenty-four hours of the day of the Sun, it will be found that the first hour of the next day will belong to the Moon, which will be the day of the Moon. Thus can the system be run in an endless cycle of hours, days, weeks, and years. [9]



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## For Making Horoscopes

The principal reason for keeping a tabulation of the hours and the days according to the plan outlined above was that the astrologers held that it was important to know what planetary god had dominion over the hour and the day when a person was born or when some other event happened, and what time would be most propitious for any undertaking.

As will be shown in the succeeding chapters of this book, astrological calendars were devised whereby the hours and the days were tabulated for ready reference.

## 2. Is the Planetary Week of Babylonian Origin?

ALTHOUGH many authorities on matters of antiquity have expressed their firm belief that the planetary week is of Babylonian origin, no definite and conclusive evidence has been presented thus far to show when and where it first sprang into use. It appears certain that its original basis was the Chaldean astrology, and there are good reasons for supposing that it is a legacy bequeathed to us by the Babylonians.

Franz Cumont, who has made a wide study of the subject, says: "It was probably first introduced into the sidereal cults of Mesopotamia and of Syria, thence passed to Alexandria, and it is about the age of Augustus that it began to supplant in Latin countries the old Roman nundinum of eight days, and it ended by replacing all local calendars." [1] This is the opinion of many.

### Chaldean Planet Worship

Because the planetary week is an astrological institution, it is fitting to note the pagan astronomy of the Chaldeans as it relates to the subject in hand. Planet worship has been traced far back into Babylonian history, even to the distant days of the Sumerians. [2] At an early date the inhabitants of lower Mesopotamia were noted for their study of the stars. They were able to compute the eclipses of the Sun and the Moon by means of the saros. They used the signs of the zodiac as we have them today, and divided the circle of the heaven into 360 degrees. Herodotus says that the Greeks learned from the Babylonians the use of the sundial, the sun clock, and the division of the day into 12 hours. [3]

### The Babylonian Ziggurats

A striking example of the influence of astrology on Babylonian religious thought is seen in the plan followed in building some of their most famous temple towers known as ziggurats. That of Birs-Nimrud (the temple of Nebo at Borsippa) was disclosed by Sir H. C. Rawlinson, who carefully examined the ruins.

The great tower was erected upon a platform made of crude brick and raised a few feet above the level of the surrounding plain. The first stage, erected upon the platform, was an exact square of 272 feet each way and about 26 feet high. Upon this was built the second stage, which was of the same height as the first, and was a square of only 230 feet each way. It was not placed exactly in the center of the stage below it, but was farther from its northeastern than its southwestern edge, so that it was 12 feet from the one and 30 feet from the other. The third story, built upon the second, was also 26 feet high, although it was a square of only 188 feet each way.

The uniformity in the plan of the building was altered at this point, for the height of the fourth stage was about 15 feet instead of 26. It was otherwise diminished proportionately with the lower stages, being a square of 146 feet each way. The fifth stage was a square of 104 feet each way, the sixth was one of 62, and the seventh was one of 20, all three of them being 15 feet high. On top of the seventh stage was built a shrine. The entire structure is estimated to have had a height of about 156 feet, allowing three feet for the height of the crude-brick platform at the base.

This temple was patterned after the pagan conception of the planetary arrangement of the universe. The following description by G. Rawlinson is typical:

### Dedicated to the Planets

"The ornamentation of the edifice was chiefly by means of color. The seven stages represented the Seven Spheres, in which moved (according to ancient Chaldean astronomy) the seven planets. To each planet fancy, partly grounding itself upon fact, had from of old assigned a peculiar tint or line. The Sun was

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golden; the Moon silver; the distant Saturn, almost beyond the region of light, was black; Jupiter was orange; the fiery Mars was red; Venus was a pale Naples yellow, Mercury a deep blue. The seven stages of the tower, like the seven walls of Ecbatana, gave a visible embodiment to these fancies.

*This is the plan of the famous Babylonian Ziggurat of Borsippa. With the shrine at the top representing the terrestrial center, the plan of the tower, as viewed from above, is laid out in accordance with the ancient pagan conception of a geocentric universe.*

“The basement stage, assigned to Saturn, was blackened by means of a coating of bitumen spread over the face of the masonry; the second stage, assigned to Jupiter, obtained the appropriate orange color by means of a facing of burnt bricks of that bite. The third stage, that of Mars, was made blood-red by the use of half-burnt bricks formed of a bright red clay. The fourth stage, assigned to the Sun, appears to have been actually covered with thin plates of gold. The fifth, the stage of Venus, received a pale yellow tint. from the employment of bricks of that hue; the sixth, the sphere of Mercury, was given an azure tint by vitrification, the whole stage having been subjected to an intense heat after it was erected, whereby the bricks coin posing it were converted into a mass of blue slag; the seventh stage, that of the Moon, was, probably, like the fourth, coated with actual plates of metal. Thus the building rose up in stripes of varied color, arranged almost as nature’s cunning arranges lines in the rainbow. Above this the glowing silvery summit melted into the bright sheen of the sky.” [4]

### Nebuchadnezzar’s Inscriptions

Note particularly that the planetary order followed in the building of the ziggurat was thus: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon. The planet Saturn, whose orbit was supposed to be the longest, had the lowest and largest stage. The Moon, whose orbit was the shortest, was given the seventh and smallest stage.

In the corners of the third stage of this tower were found cylinders and inscriptions written by order of the great Nebuchadnezzar of Biblical fame. He spoke of the edifice as being “the Temple of the Planet, which is the Tower of Babylon.” [5] He called it “the Temple of the Seven Planets, which is the Tower of Borsippa which former kings had built and raised it to the height of forty-two cubits, but had not finished its upper part.” [6] He also said: “To astonish mankind, I reconstructed and renewed the wonder of Borsippa, the Temple of the Seven Spheres of the World [Universe].” [7] And in the India House Inscription this monarch calls it “the Temple of the Seven Spheres.” [8]

### The Temple of Belus

In the city of Babylon itself was situated the Temple of Belus, which was about one third the size of the ziggurat of Borsippa. Herodotus describes it thus: “In the midmost of the other [wall] is still to this day the sacred enclosure of Zerts Belus, a square of two furlongs each way, with gates of bronze. In the center of this enclosure a solid tower has been built, of one furlong’s length and breadth; a second tower rises from this, and from it yet another, till at Tacitus, P. C. last there are eight.” [9] The eighth was a shrine or astronomical observatory.

### The Ziggurat of Khorsabad

The system of planet worship among the Assyrians was similar to that of the Babylonians. At Khorsabad, a suburb of Nineveh, there was a ziggurat in the sumptuous palace of the Assyrian kings. “The fourth quarter of the palace enclosure,” says A. T. Olmstead, “was devoted to the priesthood. Here was the ziggurat, a solid mass of brick nearly 150 feet high. Around it ran a ramp with easy ascent and on its top were two altars on which sacrifice was offered to the gods. With its varied colors,-each of the seven stories bore the color of the planet to which it was dedicated,-and its lofty height, it must have been a most imposing spectacle.” [10]

### The Chaldean School of Astrology

In the book of Daniel particular mention is made of a body of Babylonian wise men known as “the Chaldeans.” They were consulted by the kings of Babylon concerning mysterious matters that might have some religious significance. [11] Diodorus Siculus (the Sicilian), who lived in the days of Julius and Augustus Caesar, has left in Greek an interesting account of the Chaldean astrologers and the profession



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they made. It runs thus:

“Now the Chaldeans, belonging as they do to the most ancient inhabitants of Babylonia, have about the same position among the divisions of the state as that occupied by the priests of Egypt; for being assigned to the service of the gods they spend their entire life in study, their greatest renown being in the field of astrology. But they occupy themselves largely with soothsaying as well, making predictions about future events, and in some cases by purifications, in others by sacrifices, and in others by some other charms they attempt to effect the averting of evil things and the fulfillment of the good. They are also skilled in soothsaying by the flight of birds, and they give out interpretations of both dreams and portents. [12] They also show marked ability in making divinations from the observation of the entrails of animals, deeming that in this branch they are eminently successful.

“The training which they receive in all these matters is not the same as that of the Greeks who follow such practices. For among the Chaldeans the scientific study of these subjects is passed down in the family, and son takes it over from father, being relieved of all other services in the state. Since, therefore, they have their parents for teachers, they not only are taught everything ungrudgingly but also at the same time they give heed to the precepts of their teachers with a more unwavering trust. Furthermore, since they are bred in these teachings from childhood up, they attain a great skill in them, both because of the ease with which youth is taught and because of the great amount of time which is devoted to this study.

“Now, as the Chaldeans say, the world [universe] is by its nature eternal, and neither had a first beginning [13] nor will at a later time suffer destruction; furthermore, both the disposition and the orderly arrangement of the universe have come about by virtue of a divine providence, and today whatever takes place in the heavens is in every instance brought to pass, not at haphazard nor by virtue of any spontaneous action, but by some fixed and firmly determined divine decision.

“And since they have observed the stars over a long period of time and have noted both the movements and the influences of each of them with greater precision than any other men, they foretell to mankind many things that will take place in the future. But above all in importance, they say, is the study of the influence of the five stars known as planets, which they call ‘Interpreters’ when speaking of them as a group, but if referring to them singly, the one named Cronos [Saturn] by the Greeks, which is the most conspicuous and presages more events and such as are of greater importance than the others, they call the star [14] of Helios [Sun], whereas the other four they designate as the stars of Ares [Mars], Aphrodite [Venus], Hermes [Mercury], and Zeus [Jupiter], as do our astrologers.

“The reason why they call them ‘Interpreters’ is that whereas all the other stars are fixed and follow a single circuit in a regular course, these alone, by virtue of following each its own course, point out future events, thus interpreting to mankind the design of the gods. For sometimes by their risings, sometimes by their settings, and again by their color, the Chaldeans say, they give signs of coming events to such as are willing to observe them closely, for at one time they show forth mighty storms of winds, at another excessive rains or heat, at times the appearance of comets, also eclipses of both Sun and Moon, and earthquakes, and in a word all the conditions which owe their origin to the atmosphere and work both benefits and harm, not only to whole peoples or regions, but also to kings and to persons of private station.

“Under the course in which these planets move are situated, according to them, thirty [15] stars, which they designate as ‘counseling gods;’ of these one half oversee the regions above the earth and the other half those beneath the earth, having under their purview the affairs of mankind and likewise those of the heavens; and every ten days one of the stars above is sent as a messenger, so to speak, to the stars below, and again in like manner, of the stars below the earth to those above, and this movement of theirs is fixed and determined by means of an orbit which is unchanging forever. [16] Twelve of these gods, they say, hold chief authority, and to each of these the Chaldeans assign a month [17] and one of the signs of the zodiac, as they are called. And through the midst of these signs, they say, both the Sun and Moon and the five planets make their course, the Sun completing his cycle in a year and the Moon traversing her circuit in a month.

“Each of the planets, according to them, has its own particular course, and its velocities and periods of time are subject to change and variation. These stars it is which exert the greatest influence for both good and evil upon the nativity of men; and it is chiefly from the nature of these planets and the study of them that they know what is in store for mankind. And they have made predictions, they say, not only to numerous other kings, but also to Alexander [the Great], who defeated Darius, and to Antigonus and Seleucus Nicator who afterwards became kings. . . . Moreover, they also foretell to men in private station what will befall them.” [18]

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## Oppert's Find

Jules Oppert, a noted Assyriologist, reported [19] the discovery of a list of Babylonian planetary gods in the order of the days of the week, and this find has been cited by some writers to support the belief that the planetary week is of Chaldean origin.

## Sayce's Letter

In a letter written at Queen's College, in England, on November 22, 1875, A. H. Sayce, another Orientalist of repute, said:

"It is now some time since first M. Oppert, and then more fully Dr. Schrader (in *und Studien Kritiken*, 1873), pointed out the Babylonian origin of the week. Seven was a sacred number among the Accadians, and their lunar months were at an early epoch divided into periods of seven days each. The days were dedicated to the sun and moon and five planets, and to the deities who presided over these. In one of the newly found fragments which recount the Chaldean version of the Creation, the appointment of the stars called 'leaders of the week' is expressly mentioned." [20]

## Divergent Opinions

Other authorities disagree with Sayce's interpretation of the text in question, and there are diverse versions of it extant. R. W. Rogers, who presents an excellent picture of the tablet, gives the following translation:

"He [Marduk] made the stations for the great gods; the stars, like them, as the lumashi he fixed." [21]

Thus he left the debated term un-translated. In a footnote he offers the following comment on it: "The word lumashi in the astronomical texts designates a series of seven stars. There is a very pretty controversy as to the meaning and identification of these stars. Oppert translates spheres; Sayce, 'twin stars, literally, twin oxen,' and explains that 'seven of them were reckoned.' Zimmern says that they were not identical with the signs of the zodiac. Delitzsch does not commit himself, and King translates 'zodiac.' Jeremias in *Das Alte Testament im Lichte des alten Orients*, Page 27, translates it *Tierkreisbilder* [circle of the zodiac], while in his later brochure (*Das Alter der Babylonischen Astronomie*, Page 28) he renders *Mashigesterne* [Mashi Stars]. This illustrates the doubtfulness of the word itself, and shows how uncertain is the whole astrological scheme of Winckler and Jeremias. It is a small point, indeed, but an instructive one." [22] Thus the matter stands in a state of uncertainty.

## Brown's Summary

Francis Brown, in an article entitled "The Sabbath in the Cuneiform Records," sums up the results of the work of Jules Oppert and Eberhard Schrader, in these words:

"Oppert found in an astronomical tablet a connection between the Sun, Moon, and five planets, and the days of the week; and Schrader argued at length for the week of seven days as original with the Babylonians....

"Oppert was the first to call attention to a cuneiform tablet containing a list of stars, seven in number, connected each with a deity, the whole list corresponding to the deities whose names our days bear; the list concludes, according to him, with the words: 'These are the seven chiefs of the days of the week (masi).' But this translation for masi was not accompanied by any proof of its correctness, and Schrader, who took up the general idea of Oppert, wisely sought to lay a firmer foundation. He starts from the position that the Arabians owed the seven-day week to the Jews, and that among these and their ancestors, the old Hebrews, it had been known from time immemorial. . . .

"Thus we are pointed back to the early home of the Canaanites (Hebrews and Phoenicians) in Babylonia. After thus noticing the historical probability, Schrader then brings in the inscription which Oppert had translated, laying stress upon the order and names of the gods to whom the stars were said to belong: Shamash, Sun; Shin, Moon; Vergal, Mars, Zivis (Tiv); Nebo, Mercury, Wodan; Merodach, Jupiter, Thor; Ishtar, Venus, Freia; Adar, Saturn. The inference is that the names of the seven week days originated in Babylonia." [23]

From a Byzantine Writer

Johannes Laurentius, a Byzantine writer (490-565 AD) born in Lydia (and frequently referred to as

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Lydus, “the Lydian”), not only held for a time a high office in the government under Justinian 1, but also wrote on antiquarian subjects. It is said that “the chief value of these books consists in the fact that the author made use of the works (now lost) of old Roman writers on similar subjects.” [24] In his treatise *De Mensibus*, in which he gave an account of the festivals of the months of the year, he said “that with Zoroaster and Hystaspes the Chaldeans and the Egyptians received the days in a hebdomad from the number of the planets.” [25]

Zoroaster and Hystaspes were Persians. Thus this old writer declares that the planetary week was anciently in use among the peoples of those three great nations—the Persians, the Chaldeans, and the Egyptians. Unfortunately, he does not give its the source of information on which he bases that assertion.

### Observations

Our knowledge of the usages of the Babylonians through the many centuries before Christ is still meager. It may be that archaeological research will yet turn up something more definite and certain concerning the relation of the planetary week to Chaldean astrology. Such reasons as have been given in this chapter for believing that it is of Babylonian origin will be corroborated by other indirect and circumstantial evidence as we proceed in our study.

## 3. The Planetary Week in Mesopotamia

In Mesopotamia we find two striking examples of the use of the planetary week, and both of them strongly support the belief that it is of Babylonian origin. In each instance Chaldean names of the planets are used to designate the days. In the one case it is the use of such a week by a people wholly pagan. In the other such a week is employed by a Gnostic sect that adheres to a hodgepodge of pagan, Jewish, and Christian beliefs. The one example is that of the pagan Harranians, and the other is that of the Mandaeans.

### The Pagan Harranians

The first example is that of the heathen of Harran. Among the Romans this city was known as Carrac or Charrae. “It is said to be in Mesopotamia (Genesis 24:10), or, more definitely, in Padan-aram (Genesis 25:20), the cultivated district at the foot of the hills, a name well applying to the beautiful stretch of country which lies below Mount Masius, between Khabour and the Euphrates. Here, about midway in this district, is a town still called Harran, which really seems never to have changed its appellation, and beyond any reasonable doubt ... is the Haran or Charran of Scripture. Harran lies upon the Belilk (ancient Bilichus), a small affluent of the Euphrates, which falls into it nearly in longitude 390. It is now a small village, inhabited by a few families of Arabs.” [1]

### Were Not True Sabians

It was in connection with the Harramans that the term Sabaism was coined many years ago to designate that worship which was principally given to the Sun, the Moon, and the five visible planets, or rather to the planetary spirits believed to have their abode in these heavenly bodies. Because the Harranians were especially given to this kind of star worship, and were at first believed to be true Sabians, the term Sabaism came to be used particularly for reference to their cult.

Alm Yusuf Absha'a al Qathi'i, a Christian writer of the ninth century, tells how the Harranians came to be called Sabians. He says that when the Moslems overran that territory in 830 A. D., the people of Harran were told that they must give up either their paganism or their lives. They might embrace either Mohammedanism or one of the creeds tolerated in the Koran. Seeking counsel from an astute Mohammedan jurist, they learned that there existed in Mesopotamia at that time a Gnostic sect which was tolerated by the Koran. These Gnostics were called Sabians. The lawyer advised the Harranians to profess to be followers of this Gnostic sect and thus be spared from the Moslem sword. Notice was sent at once to the Caliph Ma'mum, the leader of the Mohammedan army that was then marching against the Byzantines, telling him that they were not pagans but Sabians. From that time forward the Harramans were generally referred to as Sabians, although they were and continued to be heathen, practicing their pagan rites until the Middle Ages. [2]

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## The Founding of Harran

The story of Harran begins far back in the past. It starts with Ur of ancient Chaldea, for it was there that “Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.... And Haran died before his father . . . in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees.” [3] Archaeologists have thoroughly explored the ruins of the old city of Ur, and their excavations show that it was a very popular seat of Chaldean Moon worship. [4] This revelation that Ur was a pagan city harmonizes with the statement of Joshua that the original ancestors of the Hebrew people “dwelt on the other side of the flood [the Euphrates] in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.” [5]

Thus Ur of Chaldea was a pagan city at that early date (about 2000 BC), and it was doubtless for this reason that Abrahah was directed to leave there. [6] Josephus says that the Chaldeans became hostile toward Abraham because he steadfastly refused to believe in their heathen notions. [7]

From Ur of Chaldea went Abraham, accompanied by his father, Terah, and by his surviving brother, Nahor, and settled in the place afterward known as Harran. Lot, the son of Haran, came with them, for his father had died in Ur. It is probable that this new settlement was named after Haran, Abraham’s deceased brother.

After the death of Terah, Abraham and Lot moved from Harran to Canaan. [8] Nahor remained in Harran and became the progenitor of the Syrian branch of the Semites. [9] Hence Harran was also called “the city of Nahor.” Although they professed belief in the true God, Nahor and his family still clung to their idolatry. [10] It was by Jacob’s marriage with the daughters of Laban, grandson of Nahor, that idolatry first got a foothold in the family of Israel. [11] Jacob finally purged his household of its heathen practices, [12] but Harran went from bad to worse and finally became a city wholly given over to paganism. [13]

It is an interesting fact that Harran, like Ur of Chaldea, became a notorious seat of the worship of Sin, the Chaldean Moon-god. This form of worship may have been brought from Ur with the household of Terah and Nahor. [14]

## Used the Planetary Week

According to Mohammedan writers, the Harranians had temples dedicated to the planetary gods, in which they offered even human sacrifices as late as the ninth century. Their worship was accompanied by the most revolting ceremonies. [15]

It is not surprising, therefore, that “the Harranians are said to sacrifice to the gods of the seven weekdays, whose names are partly Babylonian, partly Greek.” [16]

The Orientalist Eberhard Schrader points out that “the Sabaeans in Mesopotamian Harran were acquainted with the seven planetary deities of the weekdays in the order with which we are familiar: Sun, Moon, Nergal (Mars), Nebo (Mercury), Jupiter (Bel), Venus (Beltis), Saturn (Kronos).” [17]

‘The observation of S. H. Langdon is a very apt one: “The adherents of the cult of Sin at Harran were known as Harranians or Sabaeans among Arabic and Syriac writers, and their doctrines, were transformed by Greek philosophy and Gnosticism. Their week of seven days is certainly not of Christian origin, but probably a direct inheritance from Babylonia. The first day was sacred to Ilios, the Greek Helios, the second to Sin, the third to Ares, the fourth to Mercury, called Nabug (Nebo), the fifth to Baal (Bel-Marduk) or Jupiter, the sixth to Balthi (Belit) or Venus, and the seventh to Cronos (Ninurta) or Saturn. The remnants of Babylonian deities in these planetary names of the Harranian week prove that Babylonian mythology was the basis of this remarkable cult.” [18]

## The Mandaeans-the True Sabians.

In the Koran, the sacred book of Islam, mention is made several times of a sect called Sabians, which the Moslems tolerated and considered as a body separate and distinct from the Christians. [19] This group has been designated by various names, such as Sabians, Sabeans, Tsabians, Ssabeans, Subjas, Subhas, Sabeists, Sabaists, Sabbi, St. John’s Christians, Nasoraean, Mandaeans, Mandaeans, and so forth. They are not the Sabeans mentioned in the Old Testament as dwelling in Arabia.

According to J. P. Arendzen, they are “pagan Gnostics who shortly before the rise of Christianity, formed a sect which flourished in Mesopotamia and Babylonia, and which was one of the foremost religions in Western Asia in the early years of Mohammedanism.” [20]

These Mandaeans are a distinct people from the inhabitants of Harran. They have flourished in Mesopotamia, especially around Basra and Klitizistan. A Jesuit missionary reported that in 1652 there were about twenty thousand families of them, but their numbers today appear to be less than five thousand. [21]

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They are the only truly Gnostic sect of today that dates back to the early days of Christianity, when Gnosticism became manifest in numerous groups in the second and third centuries. The people call themselves Mandaye, an Aramaic term meaning “Gnostics,” or literally “those who have knowledge.” They are also known as Tsabians or Tsabaists (baptizers), because they baptize themselves often. The more enlightened of the sect are called Nasoraean. When they were first discovered by Roman Catholic missionaries after the Middle Ages, they were called the Christians of St. John, because of their emphasis on baptism.

While today the Mandaeans speak Arabic or Persian, their old religious works are written in an Aramaic tongue somewhat similar to that in which the Babylonian Talmud was composed.

### An Astral Cult

It is not surprising that the Mandaeans obtained favor with the Mohammedans, because Gnosticism, like the chameleon, could manifest the color most convenient to its needs. This particular sect has borrowed some elements from the Hebrew and the Christian religions. This is not to be wondered at, because the Gnostics looked upon all religions as having some truth in them, and from them they chose whatever most suited their fancy. The more prominent Christian aspects of their religion were acquired in more modern times. The religion of the Mandaeans, according to all reports, is more pagan than anything else. “In the Gnostic basis itself,” says one source of information, it is not difficult to recognize the general features of the religion of ancient Babylonia, and thus we are brought nearer a solution of the problem as to the origin of Gnosticism in general. It is certain that Babylonia, the seat of the present Mandaeans, must be regarded also as the cradle in which their system was reared; it is impossible to think of them as coming from Palestine, or to attribute to their doctrines a Jewish or Christian origin.” [22]

Indeed, the Mandaeans manifest a hostile attitude toward Christ, and in their writings He is spoken of as an evil sorcerer. Sometimes He is regarded as Mercury.

In their astrological beliefs there are seven planets, one for each heaven of the Chaldean system. There are also 360 aeons (‘Uthre) which correspond to the 360 days of the calendar year, which contains 12 months of 30 days each. Five intercalary days are added between the eighth and the ninth months every year to make up the total of 365. The names of the seven planetary gods are Ill (Sun), Sin (Moon), Nirig (Nirgal or Mars), Enba (Nebo or Mercury), Bil (Jupiter), Estera (Ishtar or Venus), and Kewan (Saturn). The Sun is also referred to as Adunay (Adonai), which means “lord.” [23] “As lord of the planetary spirits his place is in the midst of them.” [24] “The Sun, as the greatest, stands in the central or fourth heaven.” [25] They also speak of a Demiurge (World Creator). In all these things they appear to have a system that is basically of Babylonian origin.

### Their Planetary Week

Kay Kessler says of them: “These planets were set in the seven heavens; the Sun is the ruler and is in the middle (fourth) heaven. They were intended by the creator to be helpers of man, but instead sought to do him harm.” [26]

Speaking of their planetary week, J. P. ArencIzen declares: “Not the Mohammedan Friday, or the Jewish Sabbath, but the Christian Sunday is their weekly holyday. This, however, is not a conscious imitation of the Christians, whose ‘Carpenter-God’ they hate as a son of the devil.” [27] And Kessler says that they observe Sunday by abstaining from work and by attending at divine service, in which the priest reads the Scriptures. [28] “The most pious among them are baptized every Sunday,” says another writer. “The Lord’s Supper is always connected by them with baptism; for it they use paste, prepared in the church by the priest, instead of bread, and water in the place of wine.” [29]

Thus we see an admixture of Christian practices with their paganism. Since the Mandaeans hold Christ in such low esteem, what is the real basis of their Sunday observance. Does it seem reasonable to suppose, in the light of the facts, that they have always celebrated Sunday after the fashion of Sunday-keeping Christians?

The explanation is that this Sunday keeping after the modern fashion is a thing of late practice among the Mandaeans. Jesuit missionaries went into the region about Bosra in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the Portuguese extended their power in that direction, and attempted to convert the Mandaeans to the Roman Catholic faith. Their tactics were very similar to those employed by the Jesuits who went into Ethiopia in those days to bring the Coptic Church under the control of the Vatican. Their preaching failed to persuade the Mandaeans. In order to achieve their ends, the missionaries resorted



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to other means. Note these words by W. Branch:

“Thereupon the missionaries, bent upon gaining their end, induced the pasha to order the Sabbi, under threat of fines or bodily penalties, to attend the Roman Catholic place of worship and observe Sunday according to the Christian practice of resting from servile work on that day. In this way the work of conversion was set on foot, supported, however, by doles of food and clothing to the children of the poorer Manclaeans.” [30]

Thus the Mandaeans outwardly began to observe Sunday after the practice of Sunday-keeping Christians in order to avoid persecution, but in reality they were still pagan Gnostics at heart.

### More About Their Planetary Week

J. H. Hottinger quotes an old Arabic writer, Muhammed ben Isaac, as saying that the Mandaeans called the Sun “the Great Lord.” And he quotes another writer, Ali Said Vaheb, as saying that the days of the week in the Mandaean system were dedicated to the Sun, the Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn. The title he gives to the first day of the week is thus: YWM ‘L’CHD LLSHMS (day the first to Shamash). [31] Shamash is “Sun” in the Babylonian tongue. In a similar way the second day of the week is called after the Moon. The sixth day contains the planetary name of BLTHY (Balthi), which refers to the Babylonian Beltis (Ventis).

A French writer says that the Mandaeans’ religion teaches that “a heptad of gods presided over the seven days of the week. In the Fehrist-el-Ouloum of Mohammed ibn Ishaq-en-Nedin they bear the names partly Hellenic and Greek of Ilios (Helios), Sin, Ares, Nabuq, Bal, Balthi, Kronds.” [32]

The best testimony on this point is that of E. S. Drower, a modern writer who has personally and thoroughly investigated the Mandaean social life at first hand in their native country. Her statement concerning the Mandaean planetary week clearly sets forth its Chaldean aspects. She says:

“Each day is governed by a planet. The day is divided into two parts of twelve, twelve day-hours and twelve night-hours. Certain melki [rulers] also govern the days, and hence have a planetary character; for instance, Sunday, which is governed by Shamish, is also associated with the personified Habshaba, First-Day-of-the-Week, a malka who is sometimes identified with other savior-spirits. He ‘takes purified souls in his ship to Awathur and to the World of Light. The gate of the World of Light is ajar on this day and Hoshaba (Habshaba) takes the souls by means of electricity into the midst of the world of light.’

“I was told that ‘Hoshaba’ descends into Mataratha (Purgatories) on Sunday, returning with seven Mandaean souls to the world of light....

“Writings preserved by the priests enumerate the planetary aspects not day by day but hour by hour, so that life may be conducted successfully. To quote from one:

‘The Day of Habshaba. The First Hour is of Shamish. Favorable (shapir) for building a new house, going on the road, putting on a new garment, eating bread, approaching kings and governors, drinking wine, buying and selling. The Second Hour is of Libat (Venus). Sit in thy own city. Favorable for being with thy wife, eating new bread, riding horses, visiting physicians,’ etc.

“Not every hour of Sunday is good; for instance, on the sixth hour of Sunday night a traveler is likely to fall among thieves; for Nirigh (Mars) governs this hour, although the general aspect of the day is sunny.

“Monday (Trin Habshaba) is governed by Sin; Tuesday (Thlatha Habshaba) by Nirigh; Wednesday (Arba Habshaba) by ‘Nbu; and Thursday (Hamsha Habshaba) by Bil (Bel), also by Melka Ziwa ‘from the morning of Thursday till Friday noon, when Liwet has power.’ Friday (Yuma d Rahatia) is the day of Libat, and Yuma d Shafta or Saturday is the day of Kiwan. Friday afternoon and night are supposed to be unlucky and tinder the general influence of the King of Darkness.” [33]

### The Day Begins at Sunrise

In a letter to the author, written from Baghdad, Iraq, on November 31, 1943, Lady Drower says that “the Mandaean day, unlike the Semitic day, begins at sunrise, not at sunset on the previous day. The hours are simply called the first, second, and so on. The days are assigned stars: Shamish (the Sun), Sunday; Sin (the Moon), Monday; Nirigh (Mars), Tuesday; ‘Nbu (Mercury), Wednesday; Bel (Jupiter), Thursday; Libat (Venus), Friday; and Kiwan (Saturn), Saturday. The first hour of a day is under its planet, that is, the first hour of Sunday is under Shamish, the second under Sin, and so on.”

The planetary week in use among the Harranians and the Mandacans of Mesopotamia strongly supports the belief that it is of Chaldean origin, as suggested by the Babylonian names used to designate the



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days.

## 4. Diffusion Of Chaldean Astrology

### The Diffusion of Chaldean Astrology

CHALDEAN astrology was diffused far and wide before the fall of Babylon in the sixth century iii. c., and it long survived that historic event. Before the beginning of the Christian Era, Babylonian astrological notions had spread into Egypt, Greece, and Rome. W. F. Albright, in the following statement, gives a very brief and comprehensive summary of the facts about it:

“The scientific importance of the Chaldaean astronomical records was well known to Aristotle, who commissioned his pupil Callisthenes to investigate them, which he did in the year 331 BC. In the following decades the Babylonian scholar Berossus, who founded a Greek astrological school at Cos about 280 B. C., made the first translations of Babylonian astronomical texts into Greek, followed probably by others, since it has been lately shown by Schnabel and Schaumberger that Gemimis (of Tyre?), the pupil of Posidonius, published Greek versions of Babylonian astronomical tables in the early first century BC. About 250 BC a distinguished Chaldaean astrologist and writer, named Sudines (Shum-iddin), was active at Ieriganitim. Apparently Chalclacan astrology was favorably received from the outset in most Greek philosophical circles, and even Hipparchus became an adept.

“The first Greek to popularize it in Egypt may have been Critodemus, and it was embraced there with such extraordinary ardor that Egypt became the classical land of astrological research, in the second century B. c. (Cunont, *L’Egypte des Astrologues*, Brussels, 1937), thanks to the activity of two native Egyptians, Nechepso and Petosiris (c. 150 BC). It is quite possible that these Egyptian astrologers simply took advantage of the situation to popularize an Egyptian-Chaldaean astrology dating back to the Persian period, to which the legendary Ostanus must have belonged.” [1]

### In the Roman Empire

Though astrology was known far back in the time of the Roman Republic, it is in the Empire that it became very popular among the Latins. Cato, in his treatise *De Agricultura* (written between 234 and 149 BC), refers to the Chaldean astrologers as active in his country then. [2] In 139 BC they were expelled from Rome by Cneius Cornelius Nepos. But in time they returned. There is evidence that Julius Caesar was inclined to astrology. Cicero, his contemporary, denounced it as charlatanism. The emperor Augustus Caesar believed in it, and Marcus Manilius, a Roman astrologer, compiled a treatise on the subject, entitled *Astronomica*, which he dedicated to this Roman ruler. Propertius (30-15 BC) lamented the fact that exploitation by astrology was common. [3] Juvenal mentions that the women of his time were greatly interested in it. [4] Suetonius reveals that many of the emperors of the first century AD esteemed astrology very highly. [5] Horoscopes were made of the sons of leading families as soon as the babes were born. Tiberius and Nero favored it to the extent that they had in their employ the two Thrasylli, father and son, who were noted astrologers. In the works of Tacitus, Juvenal, and Aulus Gellius frequent mention is made of the Chaldaean or mathematical. Because astrology often became involved in politics and unfavorable prognostications were made concerning those in power, some of the emperors most devoted to this superstition expelled the astrologers from Rome. [6]

Other noted astrologers of the Roman Empire were Vettius Valens [7] (in the second century AD), Ptolemy [8] (in the second century), and Julius Firmicus Maternus (in the time of Constantine the Great). [9] A coin minted in Egypt in the reign of Antoninus Pius (138-161 AD) clearly shows the twelve signs of the zodiac in a circle and within this the seven planets. [10] It is frequently referred to as a monument of the planetary week in the Roman Empire. Both Sextus Empiricus [11] and Clement of Alexandria [12] especially mention (about 200 AD) the activities of the Chaldaeans; while Hippolytus [13] (about 230 AD) devoted much of his *Refutation of All Heresies* to the Chaldean astrology, and he attributed to its influence some of the Gnostic heresies that plagued the church in the second and third centuries.

Tertullian, in denouncing pagan superstitions of the Romans, makes reference to astrology, and asks: “What schoolmaster, without a table of the seven idols, will yet frequent the Quinquatria?” [14] The Quinquatria was a festival that began on March 19, when the students were allowed a holiday. It was sacred to Minerva, and appropriate services were held on that day for the pupils and teachers. The “seven idols”

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are believed to be the seven planetary gods that were so popular in Rome in Tertullian's day.

### Greek Astronomy

The ancient Greeks had more or less the same conception of the universe as did the Chaldeans, although there was some variation among the philosophers as to the relative positions of the planets. Plato (427-347 BC), for example, places them thus: (1) the "spangled" firmament, (2) Saturn, (3) Jupiter, (4) - reddish- Mars, (5) Mercury, (6) Venus, (7) the Sun ("brightest"), and (8) the Moon (having "reflected light"). [15]

Here is Plato's description of the world-machine as it was supposed to revolve around the stationary earth:

He speaks of the extremities of its fastenings stretched from heaven; for this light was the girdle of the heavens like the under-girders of triremes, holding together in like manner the entire revolving vault. And from the extremities was stretched the spindle of Necessity, through which all the orbits turned. Its staff and its hook were made of adamant, and the whorl of these and other kinds was commingled. And the nature of the whorl was this: Its shape was that of those in our world, but from his description we must conceive it to be as if in one great whorl, hollow and scooped out, there lay enclosed, right through, another like it but smaller, fitting into it as boxes that fit into one another, and in like manner another, a third, and a fourth, and four others, for there were eight of the whorls in all, lying within one another, showing their rims as circles from above and forming the continuous back of a single whorl about the shaft, which was driven home through the middle of the eighth. [16] Now the first and outmost whorl had the broadest circular rim, and that of the sixth was second, and third was that of the fourth, and fourth was that of the eighth, fifth that of the seventh, sixth that of the fifth, seventh that of the third, eighth that of the second; and that of the greatest [the starry firmament] was spangled, that of the seventh [the Sun] brightest, that of the eighth [the Moon] took its color from the seventh, which shone upon it. The colors of the second [Saturn] and fifth [Mercury] were like one another and more yellow than the two former. The third [Jupiter] had the whitest color, and that fourth [Mars] was of a slightly ruddy fine; the sixth [Venus] was second in whiteness. The staff turned as a whole in a circle with the same movement, but within the whole as it revolved the seven inner circles revolved gently lit the opposite direction to the whole, and of these seven the eighth moved most swiftly, and next and together with one another the seventh, sixth and fifth; and third in swiftness, as it appeared to them, moved the fourth with returns upon itself, and fourth the third and fifth the second. And the spindle turned on the knees of Necessity, and up above on each of the rims of the circles a Siren stood, borne around in its revolution and tittering one sound, one note, and from all the eight there was the concord of a single harmony." [17]

The harmony of the celestial spheres, forming a musical octave, was a popular astronomical notion among the ancients. [18]

### The Stoic Philosophy

It appears that not long after the time of Plato the Chaldean order of the planetary bodies found acceptance among the philosophers of Greece, for Aratus (c. 315-245 BC) refers to the planetary positions thus: "Cronos [Saturn] indeed has the first, and Zeus [Jupiter] has the second, and Ares [Mars] the third, and Helios [Sun] the fourth, and Aphrodite [Venus] the fifth, and Hermes [Mercury] the sixth, and Selene [Moon] the seventh." [19]

The Stoic philosophers are generally said to have established the Babylonian planetary theory among the Greeks and Romans. F. R. Johnson says of this: "The Stoics placed the Sun in the middle of the seven planets, so that three were above it (Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars) and three below it (Venus, Mercury, and the Moon). Although this order had prevailed among the Babylonians from early times, the Stoics were the first to adopt it and give it currency in the Mediterranean world, and they did so because it happened to fall in with their notion that the Sun was the ruling power in the universe." [20]

Another writer, J. L. E. Dreyer, gives a succinct historical sketch of the matter, saying: "Cicero (De Divinatione, 11. 43, 91; compare *ibid.*, 42, 81) says that the Stoic philosopher Diogenes of Babylon (about 160 BC) taught this arrangement, and it is not unlikely that it was he who first introduced it (as well as many numerical data used by Hipparchus) into the Greek world from Babylonia, where the planets had been grouped in this order from very early times, as the flames of the days of the week testify. Ptolemy attributes this order to 'ancient mathematicians.' It had probably already been adopted by Hipparchus, it was accepted by all subsequent writers, Geniinus, Kleomedes, Pliny, Pseudo-Vitruvius, the emperor Julian

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(Oratio, iv. 146d), as well as by Ptolemy, and up to the time of Copernicus this arrangement was in fact universally adopted.” [21]

Herodotus (in the fifth century BC) said: “The sun clock and the sundial, and the twelve divisions of the day, came to Hellas [Greece] not from Egypt but from Babylonia.” [22]

### Cicero

To show what cultured men of the Roman Empire thought along this line, it is fitting to quote here from Cicero, Pliny the Elder, and others of that time. Cicero (106-43 BC) clearly shows that the Babylonian order of the planetary bodies was generally accepted among the Romans before the birth of Christ. In narrating a dream which he ascribes to one Scipio, he says:

“These are the nine circles, or rather spheres, by which the whole is joined. One of them, the outermost, is that of heaven; it contains all the rest, and is itself the supreme god, holding and embracing within itself all the oilier spheres; in it are fixed the eternal revolving courses of the stars. Beneath it are seven oilier spheres which revolve in the opposite direction to that of heaven. One of these globes is that light which on earth is called Saturn’s. Next comes the star called Jupiter’s, which brings fortune and health to mankind. Beneath it is that star, red and terrible to the dwellings of man, which you assign to Mars. Below it and almost midway of the distance [between heaven and earth] is the Sun, the lord, chief, and ruler of the oilier lights, the mind and guiding principle of the universe, of such magnitude that he reveals and fills all things with his light. He is accompanied by his companions, as it were-Venus and Mercury in their orbits, and in the lowest sphere revolves the Moon, set on fire by the rays of the Sun. . . . The ninth and central sphere, which is the earth, is immovable and the lowest of all.” [23]

### Pliny the Elder

Pliny the Elder, the Roman naturalist (23-79 AD) has left us in his Natural History a detailed description of the universe as the Roman’s understood it, and in it the order of the planets is that of the Babylonians. He says:

“As regards the elements [24] also I observe that they are accepted as being four in number: topmost the element of fire, source of yonder eyes of all those blazing stars; next the vapor which the Greeks and our own nation call by the same name, air-this is the principle of life and penetrates all the universe and is intertwined with the whole; suspended by its force in the center of space is poised the earth, and with it the fourth element, that of the waters. . . . Upheld by the same vapor between earth and heaven, at definite spaces apart, hang the seven stars which owing to their motion we call planets. . . .

“In the midst of these [planets] moves the Sun, whose magnitude and power are the greatest, and who is the ruler not only of the seasons and of the lands, but even of the stars themselves and of the heaven. Taking into account all that he effects, we must believe him to be the soul, or more precisely the mind, of the whole world, the supreme ruling principle and divinity of nature. He furnishes the world with light and removes darkness, he obscures and he illumines the rest of the stars, he regulates in accord with nature’s precedent the changes of the seasons and the continuous rebirth of the year, he dissipates the gloom of heaven and even calms the storm-clouds of the mind of man, he lends his light to the rest of the stars also; he is glorious and pre-eminent, all-seeing and even all-hearing.” [25]

“Let us now leave the frame of the world itself and treat the remaining, bodies situated between the sky and the earth. The following points are certain: (1) The star called Saturn’s is the highest and consequently looks the smallest and revolves in the largest orbit, returning in thirty years at the shortest to its initial station. (2) The motions of all the planets, and among them the Sun and Moon, follow a course contrary to that of the world, namely to the left, the world always running to the right. (3) Although they are borne on by it and carried westward with an unceasing revolution of immeasurable velocity, nevertheless they travel with an opposite motion along their respective tracks.

“(5) Saturn is of a cold and frozen nature. The orbit of Jupiter is much below it and therefore revolves much faster, completing one rotation every twelve years. The third star is Mars. (6) Next, the Sun’s course is divided into 360 parts, but in order that an observation taken of the shadows that it casts may come round to the starting point, five and a quarter days Per annum are added; consequently to every fourth year an intercalary day is added to make our chronology tally with the course of the Sun. Below the Sun revolves a very large star named Venus. The star next to Venus is Mercury.

“But the wonder of everyone is vanquished by the last star, the one most familiar to the earth, and devised by nature to serve as a remedy for the shadows of darkness-the Moon.” [26]

# SUNDAY SACREDNESS IN ROMAN PAGANISM

## **Philo, the Jewish Philosopher**

Philo, the Jewish philosopher and a contemporary of Christ and the apostles, says: “Nature takes delight in the number seven. Thus there are seven planets, the counterpoise to the uniform movement of the fixed stars.” [27] His references to the candlestick of the temple shows that he accepted the Babylonian belief that the Sun field the central position among the planets. On this he says:

“The holy candlestick and the seven candle-bearers on it are a copy of the march of the choir of the seven planets. How so? perhaps we shall be asked. Because, we shall reply, each of the planets is a light-bringer, as the candle-bearers are. For they are supremely bright and transmit the great luster of their rays to the earth, especially the central among the seven, the Sun. I call it central, not merely because it holds the central position, which some give as the reason, but because apart from this it has the right to be served and attended by its squires on either side, in virtue of its dignity and magnitude and the benefits which it provides for all that are on the earth.

“Now the order of the planets is a matter of which men have no sure apprehension-indeed is there any other celestial phenomenon which can be known with real certainty?-and therefore they fall back on probabilities. But the best conjecture, in my opinion, is that of those who assign the middle place to the Sun and hold that there are three above him and the same number below him. The three above are Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars, and the three below are Mercury, Venus, and the Moon, which borders on the lower region of the air. So the Master-craftsman, wishing that we should possess a copy of the archetypal celestial sphere with its seven lights, commanded this splendid work, the candlestick, to be wrought.” [28]

In this arrangement Venus and Mercury are transposed. It is interesting to note the influence which Philo says the planets exercise upon the earth. He remarks:

“Moreover, the planets, the heavenly host that moves counter to the fixed stars, are marshaled in seven ranks, and manifest large sympathy with air and earth. The one [the air] they turn and shift for the so-called annual seasons, producing in each of these seasons a thousand changes by times of calm, or fair weather, of cloudy skies, of unusually violent storms: they flood rivers and shrink them; they turn plains into marshes, and dry them up again: they produce tides in the sea, as it ebbs and flows: for at times broad gulfs, through the sea’s being withdrawn by ebbing, suddenly become a far reaching stretch of sand, and a little later, as it is poured back, they become deep seas navigable not merely by small barges but by ships of many tons burden. Yes, the planets cause all things on earth, living creatures and fruit-yielding plants, to grow and come to perfection, enabling, as they do, the natural power in each of them to run its full round, new fruits blossoming and ripening on old trees, to supply abundantly those who need them.” [29]

## **Clement of Alexandria**

Josephus, a contemporary of the apostle John, had a similar notion about the candlestick of the temple and the seven planets. [30] Ptolemy (in the first half of the second century AD) held that the order of the planets was thus: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon. [31] This was the Babylonian arrangement. Clement of Alexandria (about 200 AD) Evidently did the same, for he placed the Sun in the central position. Speaking of the candlestick in the temple, he said that “by it were shown the motions of the seven planets, that perform their revolutions towards the south. For three branches rose on either side of the lamp, and lights on them; since also the Sun, like the lamp, set in the midst of all the planets, dispenses with a kind of divine music the light to those above and to those below.” [32]

Thus the Babylonian astronomical science of the planetary bodies prevailed among the Greeks and Romans at the beginning of the Christian Era.

## **Cherished by Emperors and Popes**

It was many centuries after Christ before a clear distinction was made in Europe between astronomy and astrology. Astrology was very popular there until the Renaissance of learning and the Reformation of religion in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries dealt it a mortal blow. The work of Nicholas Copernicus, the Polish astronomer (in 1530), by proving that the Sun, and not the earth, is the center of our planetary system, was a terrific blow to astrology. The discovery of other planets later also had a telling effect upon it, permitting the people at large to see the foolishness of it. However, before the Renaissance and the Reformation could break its spell, astrology claimed some notable votaries. Says Max Jacobi:

“Emperors and popes became votaries of astrology-the Emperors Charles IV and V, and Popes

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Sixtus IV, Julius II, Leo X, and Paul III. When these rulers lived astrology was, so to say, the regulator of official life; it is a fact characteristic of the age, that at the papal and imperial courts ambassadors were not received in audience until a court astrologer had been consulted.” [33]

Other prominent names connected with astrology are those of Kepler, Thomas Aquinas, Tycho Brahe, and Cardinal Pierre d’Ailly. People still thank their “lucky stars.” The words saturnie, mercurial, jovial, sunny, martial, venereal, moonstruck, lunatic, etc., in reference to the nature and disposition of persons, perhaps once had some astrological significance. Even our familiar verb consider (cum, “with,” and sidus, “star”) is thought to have been originally a word belonging to stargazers’ terminology.

### 5. The Planetary Week In Rome

#### The Planetary Week in Home

THE monuments of the planetary week in the Roman Empire are many, and it is from them that we get most of our information concerning it. By the dated records we know that the planetary week was in use among the Romans before the Christian church was established, as will be especially noted in the following chapter. Here we shall note some of the most interesting undated monuments of the Roman Empire, among which are calendar fragments and astrological tables.

#### A Marble Piece From Potenza

Theo. Moninisen, in his treatise on the Roman calendars, presents a drawing of a stone fragment of a Roman astrological table that was used for tabulating the planetary hours of the day. [1] It is a piece of marble found in 1830 in the ruins of an old town at the mouth of the river of Potenza, in the Apennines, about one hundred miles east by south from Naples. To the left of each name of the planetary gods is a hole into which a peg was inserted for marking the hour belonging to him. To the right of each name appears one of the three letters B (bonus), C (communis), and N (nefastus), which served to indicate, in planetary calendars, whether a day or an hour was good, ordinary, or bad for events and undertakings. Saturn’s hour and his day were invariably regarded by the heathen as unlucky (nefastus), and this contributed much to their dislike of the Sabbath, the seventh day, which the Holy Scriptures declare to be sacred. The hours and the days of Mars were generally regarded by the heathen as unlucky, too, because this god was the lord of war and bloodshed.

#### Peiresc’s Puzzle

An object illustrating the astrological plan of the planetary gods ruling over the hours of the day, may be seen in a fragment collected by Nicolas Claude F. de Peiresc. This celebrated numismatist and scholar of the seventeenth century was the abbot of the Abbey of Notre Daine at Guitres (France) between 1624 and 1637.

The object alluded to has long been a puzzle to many, although it generally has been recognized as having some relation to the planetary week. It is described by Bernard de Montfaucon (1655-1741), who found it. depicted in a manuscript that belonged to Peiresc, in ‘which were described numerous objects of antiquity that he had collected. Montfaucon says that the manuscript “is now in the Library of St. Victor.” He describes the fragment by saying:

“It was a fragment of stone on the four corners of which were engraved the Four Winds; there is only one corner of the fragment remaining. The Wind is represented by a head with the ears of a satyr, and wings over its forehead: the cheeks are puffed up, and it blows upon the head of Venus. In this square table was a great circle, in which were contained the twelve signs of the zodiac, of which Gemini [Twins] and the head of Taurus [Bull] now only remain. It cannot be so much as guessed at what was contained in the great circle, on the border of which the signs of the zodiac were represented. On the upper part of this circle four busts are seen of four gods, which denote four days of the week: they are not placed here in order, but alternately; Saturn, Luna, Mercury, and Venus, i.e., Saturday, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. It is most difficult to guess why those four days of the week are here placed alternately. The table, if it had been entire, would have informed us thereof.” [2]

#### The Puzzle Explained

Montfaucon was presenting data which he had gathered on the origin of the week of days



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dedicated to the planetary gods, and for this reason he discussed this particular object. In the light of the abundant archaeological data at hand now on the subject, we can offer an explanation of this puzzling object found by Peiresc.

The error of Montfaucon lies chiefly in the fact that he did not know that the planetary deities depicted on this astrological table represent their lordship over the twenty-four hours of the day. Therefore it must not be expected that the planets would occur in the same order as they do in the names of the seven days of the weekly cycle. In listing the planets according to the hours of the day, their order is the same as that they were supposed to have in their revolutions in the heavens: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, and Moon.

The celestial sphere of the fixed stars and the seven planetary gods were supposed to revolve around the earth once each day. The path of the planets lies along the circle in the celestial equator that is marked out by the twelve constellations or signs of the zodiac. These zodiacal signs divide the path of the planetary gods into twelve sections, which played a large part in the astrology of the ancients.

It should be noted that on this particular astrological table there are two planetary stations allotted to each sign of the zodiac. For Taurus we see the gods Venus and Mercury; for Gemini appear the Moon and Saturn. Allowing two planetary stations for each of the twelve signs of the zodiac, we have a total of twenty-four. These twenty-four planetary stations correspond to the twenty-four hours of the day, which hours were assigned to the seven planets in the order of their revolutions in the heavens. Had Montfaucon read off the planets from left to right in this fragment, he might have seen at once their significance.

They fit into the picture thus: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, VENUS, MERCURY, MOON, SATURN, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon, etc.

The Chaldeans anciently divided the day into twelve hours, one for each sign of the zodiac. [3] Herodotus tells us that the Greeks anciently borrowed the same system from them, saying: "The sun clock and the sundial, and the twelve divisions of the day, came to Hellas not from Egypt but from Babylonia." [4] By watching the rising and setting of the constellations during the night, the ancients could tell the hours fairly well when the sky was cloudless, and in the daytime the sundial marked off the hours.

It may be that here we have an explanation of the origin of the twenty-four-hour division of the day. The assignment of planetary stations, two to each sign, over the twelve constellations of the zodiac may have given rise to the substitution of the twenty-four-hour day for the twelve-hour one.

### A Golden Bracelet

Another item is a golden bracelet found in Syria, and said to be preserved in the British Museum. In this case we have the names of the planetary gods in Greek, together with their likenesses, in the exact order as they occur in the pagan week. Victor Durtly describes it:

"This little bracelet is only two and a third inches in diameter, and the engraved figures are but two fifth's of an inch. The careless workmanship marks the period as near the close of the third or the beginning of the fourth century. On the eight faces of the octagon are engraved the seven gods or goddesses of the week, and Fortune, TYXH [TUCHE], which opens the series. She holds in the right hand a cornucopia, and rests the left hand upon a rudder. Saturn, KRONOS. [KRONOS], comes next in order. He is clad in a long garment, and with the left hand holds a scarf which is floating above his head. The third place is occupied by the Sun, HALOY. [HELIOS], radiate, and standing in a chariot with two horses. He holds in the right hand a whip, and in the left a globe. The Moon, ZAHNH [SELENE], is the fourth figure. She wears a double tunic, a double crescent is on her head, and a veil, puffed out by the wind; she holds a lighted torch in her right hand. After the Moon comes Mars, APHI [ARES], naked helmeted, carrying his buckler. The sixth figure is Mercury, [HERMES], also naked, with wings on his feet and on his cap, and holding a money-bag and the caduceus. The seventh is Jupiter, MYY, [ZEUS], bearded, armed with the thunderbolt, and leaning on a long scepter. The series ends with Venus, a nude figure in the pose of the Venus de' Medici." [5]

The date suggested by Duruy is not certain, for which reason we include it here among the undated monuments.

### The Planetary Gods in a Boat

A small bronze boat of the Roman period was discovered in Montpellier, France, and it is shown carrying the busts of the seven gods of the planetary week in their correct order. Bernard de Montfaucon, already mentioned, gives the following description of this object:



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“An antique brass monument in M. Bon’s cabinet, is the only curiosity I have yet seen, where the week is represented in emblem. The gods, which preside over the seven days of the week, and from whom they derived their names, are there arranged in order, as in a boat. There Saturn has the first place, agreeable to what Macrobius says in Scipio’s dream, that Saturn’s is the first of the seven spheres.... His visage looks old, and he is, as Cicero observes, sated with years. Next to him is Sol or the Sun, which passed in later ages for Apollo. He wears such a radiant crown, as we frequently meet in his figures. It was the Sun’s day, which we have since, in respect of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the true Sun of righteousness, called the Lord’s day. Monday is exhibited by Diana Luna, who has a crescent upon her head, the usual ornament of Diana, for whom the ancients mistook Luna, as Apollo for Sol.... Mars is placed in the middle of the group, and would scarce be known without difficulty, if he were elsewhere met with, so habited. His helmet you would suppose a cap, the summit of which terminates in a twisted point, instead of a tuft. Mercury with his winged petasus [hat] is distinguished at first sight. After him comes Jupiter, and Venus closes the company.” [6]

### A Vessel or Vase

There is said to be in the Museum of Lyon, France, a vase or vessel with incrustations of silver, which belongs to the Roman epoch, and on it appear engraved the figures of the seven planetary gods in the order of the days of the week. [7]

### Several Altars

In the Museum of Metz, Germany, there is preserved an octagonal altar of the Roman period, on which are sculptured the figures of the gods of the planetary week. [8] And one authority [9] says that on the banks of the Rhine there have been found eight altars of Roman times, on which appear in bas-relief the figures of the entire bodies of the gods of the days of the week, and that they may be easily recognized by their distinguishing attributes.

“Joseph Fuchs, *Gesch. von Mainz* 2, 27 seq. (Kupfert 4, Number 7),” says Jacob Grimm, “describes a Roman round altar, probably of the third or fourth century, on which are carved the seven gods of the week (1 Saturn, 2 Apollo, 3 Diana, 4 Mars, 5 Mercury, 6 Jupiter, 7 Venus), and in the eighth place a genius.” [10] This altar was found in Swabia, Germany.

### Another Object

In the British Museum, in London, there is said to be a small figure of silver with the busts of the seven planetary gods of the week between its wings. [11]

### A Curious Disk

In the Museum of Dijon, France, there is preserved a curious brass disk of the Roman period. It was found in the province of Lyon. On it appear twice the series of the Latin names of the planetary gods according to the order of the days of the week. It is said that “the names of the seven planets are twice engraved opposite each tooth . . . . That kind of week indicator was probably arranged in a way that only one name was visible at a time, and could be replaced by another by making the disk turn upon its axis.” [12]

### A Stick Calendar

At Pausilypuni, near Puteoli (in Italy), there was found in 1891 a tomb which was partly covered by a large flat stone of marble that once was part of a nundinal calendar on which the days of the week, after the pagan style, played a part. [13] The top line of the fragment gives the Latin of the planetary names of the days in their genitive forms: “Saturni, Solis, Lunae, Martis.” The names Mercury, Jupiter, and Venus were broken off. Below the line of the names of the days of the week appear the names of Roman cities where the markets were held in turn, three of which are broken off.

Above the name of each day of the week there is a hole drilled into the marble slab, for the insertion of a brass peg for marking the days. Also a hole appears above each city where the market was held, for distinguishing them by the use of a peg. The archaeologists report that in these holes they have discovered stains of oxidized brass, and that these vestiges indicate that pegs of this material were used for insertion in the holes. Therefore this type of register is known as a “stick calendar.”

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## Another Stick Calendar

Another interesting fragment of a Roman stick calendar which served to indicate the days of the week after the pagan mode, is that found a long time ago by Fulvius Ursinus, and is now said to be preserved in the Museum of Naples (Italy). The very name of Rome is listed among the cities where the markets were held. At the top may be seen the names of the last three days of the pagan week, which were inscribed thus: (SATURN, SOLAR, LUNAR, MARS, MERCURY, JOVIS, VENUS). The first four and part of the fifth are broken off.

The four seasons of the year (spring, summer, autumn, and winter) are indicated, and also the length of each. Summer is given as from April 21 to July 23, having ninety-four days. Winter is shown to be from October 23 to January 19, having eighty-nine days. Knowing this, it is easy to compute the rest; autumn being from July 24 to October 22, lasting ninety-one days; and spring being from January 20 to April 20, lasting ninety-one days. [14]

The curious arrangement of the circles is for indicating the days of the lunar month. This also can be reconstructed from data now in hand, and the numbers of the days appear in seven lines, which are read from left to right as follows:

	1	2	3	4	
		5	6	7	
8	9	10	11	12	13
	14	15	16	17	
18	19	20	21	22	23
		24	25	26	
	27	28	29	30	

By each day of the week, by each city where the markets were held, and by each day of the month there appears a hole wherein a peg could be inserted for marking the days.

## An Engraved Stone

Victor Duruy, the French historian, has described an engraved stone of the Roman period, which shows the seven planetary gods in the exact order as they appear in the pagan week. Each of them is designated by the initial letter of his name in Latin. Duruy speaks of it as an “engraved stone in the collection of Mr. Maxwell Sommerville. The gods which preside over the days of the week, walking to the right, have over their heads inscribed the initial letters of each one’s name (Saturn, Helios, Luna or Diana, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus). Saturn is veiled like a priest, the Sun has the radiate crown, Diana has the curved veil above her head, Mars is armed and helmeted, Mercury wears the winged cap, Jupiter holds the scepter, and Venus the apple.” [15]

## Miscellaneous Items

Many other objects of a similar nature have been found, belonging to the Roman period, on which the planetary gods, in the order of the days of the pagan week, are depicted or listed by names.16 Mention is made of giant pillars, buildings, wall drawings, mosaic decorations, coins, bas-reliefs, a ladle, a drinking dipper, sonic bronze tongs, an earthen lamp, small bronze boxes, a silver can, a brass pitcher, and other things. A people living under the astrological superstition of paganism doubtless held in great awe those planetary gods who were supposed to determine all the good and bad fortune which it is the lot of men to have.

## 6. The Planetary Week in the First Century BC

THERE has not yet appeared any evidence to indicate that the pagan week of days named after the seven planetary deities was in use among the Romans during the period of the Republic. ‘The testimony of both the classical writers and the archaeological discoveries points to the first century before Christ as the time when it was adopted by the Roman people. Not a few 1 are the scholars who think that it came to Rome about the time when Julius Caesar was Pontifex Maximus (63-44 BC)

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## Caesar's Other Calendar

It was in the first century before Christ that Rome began to play a big military role in the affairs of Egypt and Asia. The relations between the Romans and the peoples beyond the waters of the Mediterranean Sea then became more intimate.

The tide of foreign philosophy, magic, astrology, mysteries, and cults, already rolling westward into Italy and the rest of Europe, increased in volume.

Foreign astronomical science at this time won the respect of the Romans in a special manner. As Pontifex Maximus, it was Julius Caesar's lot to regulate the civil calendar. When he assumed that office, the calendar was found in great disorder and confusion because of the neglect and abuse it had suffered in the hands of his predecessors. [2] The following account of this reform, as described by Theo. Mommsen, is excellent:

"Caesar finally removed this evil, and with the help of the Greek mathematician Sosigenes introduced the Italian farmer's year regulated according to the Egyptian calendar of Eudoxus, [3] as well as a rational system of intercalation, into religions and official use; while at the same time the beginning of the year on the 1st March of the old calendar was abolished, and the date of the 1st January-fixed at first as the official term for changing the supreme magistrates and, in consequence of this, long since prevailing in civil life-was assumed also as the calendar period for commencing the year. Both changes came into effect on the 1st January 709 [A. U. C.], and along with them the use of the Julian calendar so named after its author, which long after the fall of the monarchy of Caesar remained the regulative standard of the civilized world and in the main is so still. By way of explanation there was added in a detailed edict a star calendar derived from the Egyptian astronomical observations and transferred-not indeed very skillfully-to Italy, which fixed the rising and setting of the .stars according to the days of the calendar." [4]

Caesar's edict about the stars was not liked by some, for Plutarch says: "However, even this furnished occasion for blame to those who envied Caesar and disliked his power. At any rate, Cicero the orator, we are told, when some one remarked that Lyra would rise on the morrow, said: 'Yes, by decree,' implying that men were compelled to accept even this dispensation." [5]

Little is known about that other 'star calendar derived from the Egyptian astronomical observations," which Caesar "added in a detailed edict" to the Roman people. It may be that the pagan week of days tinder the regency of the wandering stars or planets figured as a part of it. We shall see in a later chapter how Dio Cassius expressly declares that the planetary week came to Rome from Egypt.

While the exact date of the adoption of the planetary week by the Romans is not known, it was in use among them in the first century before the birth of Christ. And now we shall note the evidence which shows that this is a historical fact.

## Pompey in 63 BC

After Queen Salonic Alexandra, ruler of the Jews, died in 70 BC, there arose a dispute about which of her two sons should succeed her. The Pharisees supported the cause of Aristobulus 11, while the Sadducees were on the side of Hyrcanus 11. Aristobulus appealed by letter to Pompey, the great Roman consul, to arbitrate in the matter. Pompey was at that time occupied in a military campaign in Asia, but when he came to Damascus he received the envoys of the rival brothers. However, he delayed in making a decision, and Aristobulus, becoming impatient, assumed the power at Jerusalem. This act of disrespect angered the Roman general and brought him to a decision at once. He proceeded immediately to the Jewish capital and besieged the city for three months.

Dio Cassius, a Roman historian who wrote in Greek (about 230 AD), explains the strategy employed by Pompey in taking Jerusalem. He says:

"If they [the Jews] had continued defending it [the temple] on all days alike, he could not have got possession of it. As it was, they made an exception of what are called the days of Saturn, and by doing no work at all on those days afforded the Romans an opportunity in this interval to batter down the wall. The latter, on learning of this superstitious awe of theirs, made no serious attempts the rest of the time, but on those days, when they came around in succession, assaulted most vigorously. Thus the defenders were captured on the day of Saturn without making any defense, and all the wealth was plundered. The kingdom was given to Hyrcanus, and Aristobulus was carried away." [6]

In passing, the Roman historian also made the following comment upon the Jewish custom of observing the Sabbath: "They are distinguished from the rest of mankind in practically every detail of life and especially by the fact that they do not honor any of the usual gods, but show extreme reverence for one

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particular divinity. They never had any statue of him even in Jerusalem itself, but believing him to be Linnamable and invisible, they worship him in the most extravagant fashion on earth. They built to him a temple that was extremely large and beautiful except in so far as it was open and roofless, [7] and likewise dedicated to him the day called the day of Saturn, on which, among many other most peculiar observances, they undertake no serious occupation.” [8]

### Dio Cassius’ Testimony Confirmed

The important fact for us to note in this story of the capture of Jerusalem by Pompey in 63 BC is that the day of Saturn in the planetary week of the pagans then corresponded to the Sabbath or seventh day of the Biblical week of the Jews. The testimony of Dio Cassius is confirmed by that of Josephus, the Hebrew historian, who was a contemporary of the apostles. Josephus’s account of the siege runs thus:

“Nor had the Romans succeeded in their endeavors, had not Pompey taken notice of the seventh days, on which the Jews abstain from all sorts of work on a religious account, and raised his bank, but restrained [9] his soldiers from fighting on those days; for the Jews only acted defensively on Sabbath days.” [10]

“Had it not been for our practice, from the days of our forefathers, to rest on the seventh day, this bank [thrown up by Pompey] could never have been perfected, by reason of the opposition the Jews would have made; for though our law gives us leave then to defend ourselves against those that begin to fight us and assault us, yet does it not permit its to meddle with our enemies while they do anything else. Which thing when the Romans understood, on those days which we call Sabbaths they threw nothing at the Jews, nor came to any pitched battle with them; [11] but raised up their earthen banks, and brought their engines into such forwardness, that they might do execution the next day. The city was taken on the third month, on the day of the fast, upon the hundred and seventy-ninth olympiad, when Caius Antonius and Marcus Tullius Cicero were consuls.” [12]

Josephus adds, in the same account, that his testimony was confirmed by the writings of Strabo, Nicolaus of Damascus, and Titus Livius (Livy).

Strabo, the Greek geographer who was born perhaps in the year that Pompey captured Jerusalem, wrote thus: “Pompey seized the city, it is said, after watching for the day of fasting, when the Judaeans were abstaining from all work; he filled up the trench and threw ladders across it.” [13]

In his History of the Romans, Livy wrote an account of the capture of Jerusalem by Pompey, but unfortunately this part (Book 102) has not survived the ravages of time. Herod Agrippa (mentioned in Acts 25 and 26), when urging the Jewish leaders not to rebel against the Roman power in 66 AD, referred to the capture of Jerusalem by Pompey in 63 BC, saying: “And if you do observe the custom of the Sabbath-days. . . . you will easily be taken, as were your forefathers by Pompey, who was the busiest in his siege on those days on which the besieged rested.” [14]

### Gaius Sosius in 37 BC

In 37 BC the state of political affairs at Jerusalem was similar to that existing at the time of Pompey’s intervention. Antigonus, son of Aristobulus II, had been taken with his father to Rome, but later succeeded in escaping and returning to Palestine. He then attempted to make himself ruler over the Jews. The Romans, in the meantime, had lent their support to Herod, their Idumean collector in chief of taxes there. This Herod was the one who later slew the babes of Bethlehem (Matthew 2) in an attempt to destroy the Messiah. With the help of the Parthians, Antigonus seated himself in Jerusalem and tenaciously opposed the ambitious Herod. The latter obtained the help of Antony, the Roman consul, who ordered Gaius Sosius, the governor of Syria, to use the army to support Herod. Sosius, in command of the Roman troops, proceeded to depose Antigonus and establish Herod in Jerusalem. Dio Cassius wrote thus about it:

“This officer . . . conquered in battle Antigonus, who had put to death the Roman guards that were with him, and reduced him by siege when he took refuge in Jerusalem. The Jews, indeed, had done much injury to the Romans, for the race is very bitter when aroused to anger, but they suffered far more themselves. The first of them to be captured were those who were fighting for the precinct of their god, and then the rest on the day even then called the day of Saturn. And so excessive were they in their devotion to religion that the first set of prisoners, those who had been captured along with the temple, obtained leave from Sosius, when the day of Saturn came round again, and went up into the temple and there performed all the customary rites, together with the rest of the people.” [15]

While Josephus does not mention the day of the week, he does say that this siege of Jerusalem was

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begun in “summer time- and in “a sabbatic year,” and gives the date in these words: “This destruction befell the city of Jerusalem when Marcus Agrippa and Caninius Gallus were consuls of Rome, on the hundred eighty and fifth olympiad, on the third month, on the solemnity of the fast, as if a periodical revolution of calamities had returned since that which befell the Jews under Pompey; for the Jews were taken by him on the same day, and this was after twenty-seven years’ time.” [16]

It should be especially noted that the pagan Roman historian, in referring to the Sabbath, declared that in 37 BC it was “the day even then called the day of Saturn.” [17] This unmistakably shows that the practice of calling the days after the names of the planetary gods was in some vogue among the Romans before the birth of Christ.

### On the Day of Jupiter

Horace (Q. Horatius Flaccus), the distinguished Roman poet who “was born on December 8, 65 BC, two years before the birth of Augustus Caesar, and ten years before the first invasion of Britain by Julius, in the consulship of L. Aurelills Cotta and L. Manlitis Torquatus,” [18] is our next witness for the antiquity of the pagan week. He is said to have died in November, 8 BC. “But more remarkable is the fact that Horace (Sat. 11, iii. 290), writing about 35 BC, could represent an ordinary superstitious mother as making a vow for next Thursday (Jovis dies).” [19]

Horace wrote in Latin, and here is the passage referred to above: “O Jupiter, who gives and takes away sore afflictions,’ cries the mother of a child that for five long months has been in abed, ‘if the quartan chills leave my child, then on the morning of the day on which thou appointed a fast, he shall stand naked in the Tiber.” [20]

The translator, H. R. Fairclough, says in a footnote: “This would be dies Jovis [The day of Jupiter], corresponding to our Thursday.” [21] This interpretation agrees with that of Poniponius Porphyrio, a Latin grammarian of the second century AD, who wrote a commentary on the works of Horace. On this particular point, this Roman commentator said: “On the morning of the day on which thou appointed: die Jovis [On the day of Jupiter].” [22]

### “The Sacred Day of Saturn”

Albius Tibullus is another Latin poet who is often quoted to show that the pagan week of days dedicated to the planetary gods was in use among the Romans in the first century BC. He lived between 54 and 19 BC, and was a Latin elegiac poet, a contemporary of Horace. In one of his poems he explains why he delayed leaving his beloved Delia, saying: “Either I blamed the birds, or words of bad omen; or that the sacred day of Saturn had held rite back.” [23]

The day of Saturn in the pagan astrological week was invariably regarded as an Lihicky day (dies nefastus) for undertaking matters of importance. This was merely a superstitious notion, and was not based on ally regard for Saturday as the sacred Sabbath of the Holy Scriptures. Sextus Propertius (who flourished from 30 to 15 BC), also a Latin elegiac poet and a contemporary of Tibullus, shows that this superstitious notion concerning Saturn was current in the astrology of that time. He said:

“Now have men turned the gods to profit and Jupiter is fooled by their gold; to profit have they turned the often-scanned constellations of the slanting zodiac, the blessed star of Jove, the greedy star of Mars, the sign of Saturn that brings woe to one and all, the purport of [the constellation of] the Fish and the fierce constellation of the Lion and [that of] Capricorn, bathed in the waters of the West.” [24] (Italics mine.)

### The Sabine Calendar

In 1795 were found the marble fragments of what is known as the Sabine Calendar (Fasti Sabini), in a place in central Italy. These portions represent the months of September and October in the Julian calendar. [25] The experts in this type of archaeological finds have declared them to belong to the reign of Augustus Caesar, and that they were in use between 19 BC and 4 AD (that is, between the years 735 and 757 of the foundation of the city of Rome). The first column, of figures, indicates the days of the month in their numerical order. The second column, of capital letters, shows the seven days of the week in their order, as follows: A, B, C, D, E, F, G. The third column lists in order, by the letters A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and H the recurrence of the market days, which were called *nundinae*. These are thus called because according to common Roman reckoning the market day came around every ninth (*nonus*) day, but according to our common mode of complication they fell every eight days.



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The following statement by Herbert Thurston, a well known Roman Catholic authority, makes a very enlightening reference to this Sabine Calendar: “When the Oriental seven day period, or week, was introduced, in the time of Augustus, the first seven letters of the alphabet were employed in the same way [as done for the *nundinae*], to indicate the days of this new division of time. In fact, fragmentary calendars on marble still survive in which both a cycle of eight letters-A to H-indicating *mindinae*, and a cycle of seven letters-A to G -indicating weeks, are used side by side (see ‘*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*,’ 2d ed., I, 220. The same peculiarity occurs in the Philocalian Calendar of AD 356 [354], *ibid.*, p. 256). This device was imitated by the Christians, and in their calendars the days of the year from 1 January to 31 December were marked with a continuous recurring cycle of seven letters: A, B, C, D, E, F, G” [26]

While there is nothing in these fragments of the Sabine Calendar to show that its weekly cycle, which began with the letter A, did start with the day of Saturn, yet we may well suppose that it did, because the natural order in other early calendars and lists places *dies Saturni* foremost in the pagan series of the seven days.

The chief significance of this Sabine Calendar, in so far as our study is concerned, is that it shows that by the time Christ was born, the cycle of the seven days had already begun to figure as a calendar feature in the reign of Augustus Caesar.

### 7. The Planetary Week in the First Century AD

THE study of the pagan planetary week in the Roman Empire during the first century of the Christian Era is especially interesting because that is the period in which our Lord and His apostles lived and labored. We have conclusive proof that such a week was then in use among the Romans.

#### A Calendar Fragment From Puteoli

There has been preserved in the museum at Naples, Italy, a fragment of a stone calendar which is said to belong to the first century. It was found in the region of Puteoli, the Roman seaport at which the apostle Paul disembarked when he was taken in chains to be tried before Nero the first time.

Portions of three lines of the calendar inscription have been preserved upon the piece. In the first line there appears only the Latin word *DIES* (day). In the second there may be seen the numerals XVI, XVII, XVIII, and X (IX), which represent the 16th, 17th, 18th, and 19th of the 30 days of the lunar month. In the third we have in their genitive form the planetary names (*MERCURI* (of Mercury), *JOVIS* (of Jupiter, and *VENERIS* (of Venus). These represent the last three days of the planetary week, and appear in their natural order as given above. [1]

#### A Septizonium Before 40 AD

In his sketch of the life of the Roman emperor Titus, the biographer Suetonius Tranquillus, who wrote in Latin during the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian (98-138 AD), mentions an interesting public building, to which he refers as “the Septizonium.” He mentions it in the following statement about the birth of Titus:

“He was born on the third day before the Kalends of January [December 30], in the year memorable for the death of Gains, in a mean house near the Septizonium and in a very small dark room besides.” [2]

Titus was born about 40 AD, which means that the Septizonium mentioned by his biographer was built and in use before that date. The name of its builder and the date of its erection are not known. It is not likely that it was built before the reign of Augustus Caesar (31 BC to 14 AD), who not only was much interested in astrology but also did considerable building to beautify the city of Rome. It cannot be the one built by the emperor Septimius Severus in 203 AD, for that one was erected long after Suetonius wrote. The inscriptions make mention of a Septizonium at *Lanibasis* in Numidia, and state that there was another in a town in the Roman province of Africa. Commodianus, [3] an ecclesiastical writer of the third century, denounced the Septizonium as an astrological institution. Thus it appears that edifices of this type were somewhat popular.

Most of the scholars who express an opinion on the matter hold that the Septizonium was “The House of the Seven Planets.” In at least one instance the name is given as *Septizodium*. In his commentary on the statement of Suetonius, the remarks by G. W. Mooney on this point are very good. He says:



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“Various views have been held on the original meaning of ‘septizonium.’ Some suggest that it was a structure consisting of seven colonnades rising in tiers, each narrower than the one supporting it, and semicircular in form; others think it rose in steps, or that it had seven circular walls of different heights and colors like Ecbatana in Media as described in Herod. i, 98. According to Dombart (Pauly-Wissowa, ii, A, 1578 sqq.) ‘septizonium’ corresponded to the Greek, which was used primarily in a spatial sense of the seven zones into which the heavens and also the earth were divided, and then in a temporal sense of the order of rotation of the seven planets which marked the seven days of the week; ‘Septizonium,’ as the name of a building, denoted an ornamental structure serving in the main as a great public calendar, displaying on its front (1) figures of the seven planets (Saturnus, Sol, Luna, Mars, Mercurius, Jupiter, Venus), (2) the 12 signs of the zodiac marking the months, (3) the numbers of the days in the month. There were holes to receive a peg (moved daily) opposite the various planets, signs of the zodiac, and numbers of the days, so that the day of the week, the day of the month, and the month of the year were visible at a glance; see illustrations of Dombart in the article cited. He regards ‘septizodium’ as a corruption of ‘septizonium,’ while Jordan-Huelsen (Topogr. Rom. i, 3, 100) favor the view of Maas (Die Tagesgotter 106 sqq.) that ‘Septizodium,’ meaning ‘The House of the Seven Planets’ (Greek) is the correct form, and that ‘Septizonium’ was the vulgar distortion of this.” [4]

### Apollonius of Tyana

Apollonius of Tyana, in Cappadocia, was a contemporary of Christ and His apostles. He died in the reign of the Roman emperor Nerva (96-98 AD), having lived almost 100 years. This philosopher belonged to the school of the Neo-Pythagoreans’ and delved into almost every system of magic, sorcery, and astrology in use in his day. He harbored a strong hatred for the Jews, and congratulated Titus upon his capture of Jerusalem. After his death, Apollonius was held up by the pagans as a greater teacher and miracle worker than Christ.

Anthon says of him: “The inhabitants of Tyana dedicated his name; the Ephesians erected a statue to him under the name of Hercules Alexicacus, for delivering them from the plague; Hadrian, an collected his letters; the emperor Severus honored him a, already described [regarding him as divinely inspired]; Caracalla erected a temple to him; Aurelian, out of regard to his memory, refrained from sacking Tyana; lastly, Ammianus Marcellinus ranks him among the eminent men, who, like Socrates and Numa, were visited by a demon. All these prove nothing of the supernatural attributes of Apollonius, but they are decisive of the opinion entertained of him.” [5]

About the middle of the first century, Apollonius, accompanied by Damis, a native of Nineveh, made a tour of the Orient as far as India to study other systems of magic. His biographer, Philostratus, who wrote in Greek before 245 AD, says that Apollonius visited “the magi, who live in Babylon and Susa,- and that “he had interviews with the wizards of Babylonia.” From there he went on, and spent about four months in India, where he visited with Iarchas, the “oldest of the sages” there. “And Damis says that Iarchas gave seven rings to Apollonius named after the seven stars, and that Apollonius wore each of these in turn on the day of the week which bore its name.” [6]

If this statement is true, it indicates that the planetary week was widely known in the first century after the birth of Christ.

Some modern scholars are inclined to believe that Philostratus’ story of the life of Apollonius was wholly fictitious, but this is not the general opinion of the learned. It is apparent, however, that in his zeal to set forth Apollonius as the prince of philosophers, his biographer did freely exaggerate. The work was written not long before 217 AD. It is said to have been read by Origen.

Hierocles, a persecutor and a literary adversary of the Christians, was first a governor of Bithynia, and later prefect over Egypt, near the beginning of the fourth century. One of many things he did to oppose Christianity was to set forth Apollonius of Tyana as a teacher and wonder worker far superior to Jesus Christ. Eusebius of Caesarea took up his pen in defense of the Christian religion, and in his treatise against Hierocles he said this about Apollonius of Tyana:

“How could he have disclaimed any wish to imitate them [the Oriental sages] when he accepted the seven rings named after the stars, and held it needful to wear these all through the rest of his life upon the days severally named after them, and that although, as you say yourself, they had a secret power in them?” [7]

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## From a Contemporary of the Apostle Paul

Petronius, the Roman satirist and voluptuary, who was once proconsul in Bithynia, and later consul there, was for some time an intimate associate of the Roman emperor Nero. Later seeing himself fallen into disfavor and doomed to destruction by his imperial master, he slit his veins and bled to death about 66 AD). Thus he died about the time that Nero had the apostle Paul beheaded.

One of the notable works composed by Petronius was a novel entitled *The Banquet of Trimalchio*, in which he pictures the luxury of the wealthy class of his time. This Trimalchio is represented as being a rich freedman who lived in southern Italy, probably at Puteoli or Cumae. In his description of the dining room, the writer said:

“Two calendars were fixed on either doorpost, one having this entry, if I remember right: ‘Our master C. is out to supper on December the 30th and 31st,’ the other being painted with the Moon in her course, and the likenesses of the seven stars. Lucky and unlucky days were marked too with distinctive knobs.” [8]

This passage has been cited by many writers to show that the planetary week was in use in Roman calendars of the first century. The description of the calendar, as given by Petronius, agrees in the minutest details with the facts as revealed by archaeology. The course of the Moon through the lunar month of thirty days was indicated from day to day by the knob (*bullae*) or stud fastened on a peg. By the side of each number of the days of the month there was a hole into which the peg could be inserted. The seven days of the planetary week, from that of Saturn to that of Venus, were represented by likenesses (*imagines*) or images of these astrological deities. In stone calendars only their names appear, as a rule, but upon the household calendar tablets their images or pictures were painted. By the side of each planetary figure or name of the day there was a hole into which the peg with the knob could be inserted. This peg, which was often of brass, was moved from hole to hole each day, just as now we daily turn over a new leaf of our desk calendars in order to keep up to date with the weekly cycle. The astrological nature of the calendar scheme is seen by the reference to lucky and unlucky days. By a distinctive knob, lucky and unlucky days were indicated, so that serious matters might be undertaken at a favorable time, and unlucky times avoided.

## Jerusalem Fell on the Day of Saturn

It was in 66 AD that the Jews of Palestine revolted against the government of Rome, and Nero, the emperor, sent his general, Vespasian, to put down the rebellion. The armies of Vespasian, led to ultimate victory by his son Titus, captured the city of Jerusalem in 70 AD. The Roman author Sextus Julius Frontinus, who wrote in Latin about the time that the apostle John penned the book of the Revelation (near the close of the first century), referred to the conquest of Jerusalem by the armies of Vespasian, saying:

“The divine Augustus Vespasian attacked the Jews on the day of Saturn, on which it is forbidden for them to do anything serious, and prevailed.” [9]

Dio Cassius says this in his account of this war between the Romans and the Jews:

“Thus was Jerusalem destroyed on the very day of Saturn, the day which even now the Jews reverence most. From that time forth it was ordered that the Jews who continued to observe their ancestral customs should pay an annual tribute of two denarii to Jupiter Capitolinus.” [10]

The Jewish historian, Josephus, does not record what day of the week it was that Jerusalem fell, but he does give in detail the date. His statement reads thus:

“And thus was Jerusalem taken, in the second year of the reign of Vespasian, on the eighth day of the month of Gorpaeus [Elul].” [11]

The date of the fall of Jerusalem, according to several authorities, [12] was Saturday, September 8, 70 AD.

## Treasures From Pompeii and Herculaneum

On August 24, 79 AD, just nine years after the fall of Jerusalem, Mount Vesuvius, located about seven miles southeast of Naples, Italy, suddenly erupted and buried three towns under a heavy rain of lava and ashes. These towns were Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Stabiae. In this calamity perished Drusilla, [13] the wife of Felix, the governor who trembled as he heard the apostle Paul reason at the bar of the court in Caesarea. The son of Felix and Drusilla lost his life also in this catastrophe.

The burial of those ancient towns under a blanket of volcanic ash has been the means of preserving for our day much information about the Roman ways of living in the first century, knowledge which otherwise might have perished under the ravages of time and man’s barbarities. Pompeii and

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Herculaneum have been among the most fruitful sources of data about the planetary week in Roman times.

### “Days of the Gods”

In Herculaneum, for example, there was found inscribed in Greek upon a wall a list which was entitled “Days of the Gods, in capital letters. Underneath this title there appears in the same language, and in capital letters also, the names of the seven planetary deities in the genitive form and in the exact order of the days in the astrological week, as follows: Kronou (of Saturn), Heliou (of Sun), Selenes (of Moon), Areos (of Mars), Hermou (of Mercury), Dios (of Jupiter), and Aphrodeites (of Venus). The letter r of Hermes, and the letters Aphro of Aphrodite, were damaged so as to be illegible, but all the rest of the inscription was so plainly visible as to leave no room for doubt about the spelling of the words. [14]

Another inscription, found in Pompeii and written in Latin, contains a list of the planetary gods in the order of the days of the pagan week, as follows: Saturni (of Saturn), Solis (of the Sun), Lunae (of the Moon), Martis (of Mars), the name of Mercury is missing, Jovis (of Jupiter), and Veneris (of Venus). These names were inscribed in capital letters, but no title is given to the list as in the preceding case. [15]

### “It Was the Day of the Sun”

On the plastered wall of another building in Pompeii there was found the following Latin inscription, which appears to be broken and incomplete and in two lines as follows:

IX K(al) Lunias imperator dies fuit Solis

The writing appears to be that of a person with little education, which shows that the custom of calling the days by their planetary names was a matter of common usage before 79 AD. The first line appears to mean this: “the 9th day before the Kalends of June [May 24], the emperor.” The second line is unmistakably clear, and reads: “It was the day of the Sun.” [16]

In another Latin inscription from Pompeii the day of Saturn is believed to be indicated by the word Saturni (of Saturn) which appears on a fragment of stone, but evidence for this is not conclusive. [17]

### “The Day of the Moon”

Another Latin inscription from the same place, written in capital letters, mentions “the day of the Moon.” The fragment plainly appears to be part of a well-dated record, but there is not enough of it preserved to make out the exact date. [18]

### A Pompeiian Painting of the Planetary Gods

Furthermore, there have been preserved for its at least two sets of Roman pictures depicting the seven planetary gods of the days of the pagan week in their calendar order. They were painted before the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 AD.

One set of these, in the form of medallions, was found by excavators in Pompeii in 1760, on the wall of a room and by good fortune completely intact. This set [19] is preserved in the museum at Naples. In their original setting, the gods of the days of the pagan week appear in the following order: Saturn, Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, and Venus. Saturn appears as an old man with a cap on his head and a scythe in his right arm. The Sun is depicted as a youth with a halo of light about his head, and carries a whip in his hand. (Other monuments represent him as driving a chariot, “the chariot of the Sun,” pulled by four steeds which symbolize the four seasons of the year.) The Moon is shown as a beautiful young woman with a lunar halo about her head, holding in her hand the scepter by which she was supposed to reign as queen of heaven. Mars comes next, as the god of war, with his helmet, shield, and lance. Mercury is youthful in appearance. He was often imagined to be the messenger of the gods, as is indicated by the wings on his hat. Jupiter, who was believed to be a fatherly person, carries a scepter denoting kingly power. Venus, the goddess of love, is youthful, too, and upon her right shoulder she carries little Cupid.

### Paintings From Herculaneum

The other set of paintings, which were also in the form of medallions, were discovered in Herculaneum, on the walls of a house. In these the deities of the planetary week also appear in the usual order, beginning with Saturn and ending with Venus. They are described thus:

“The middle band, which is all complete, contains seven circles, in which are depicted the seven

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planets according to the order of the days of the week. The first is Saturn with a sickle of the color of iron, with a yellow cap on his head, and wearing a garment of the same flue. The second is Apollo, or the Sun, with a radiant nimbus, wearing a red mantle, and carrying a rod or whip. The third is Diana, or the Moon, with a halo about her head, wearing a white dress, and carrying a scepter. The fourth is Mars with a breastplate of the color of iron, bearing a shield, and wearing a helmet with a crest, and with the spear, all in the color of brass, and with the lance. The fifth is Mercury with the winged hat, which is made fast to his chin by a strap. The sixth is Jupiter wearing a dark red garment. The last is Venus in a bluish white gown, wearing a necklace and a flowered crown of gold, and with a Winged Cupid.” [20]

### A Dated Inscription From Pompeii

Another interesting archaeological find that throws light on the subject of our study is also from the ruins of Pompeii. It is a Latin inscription crudely scratched into the stucco of a pillar of a house. It was first published by A. Mau in the following form:

NERONE CAESARE AUGUSTO  
COSSO LENTULO COSSI FIL COS VIII IDUS FEBRARIAS  
DIES SOLIS LUNA XIII NUN CUMIS V NUN POMPEIS

The first three of the four lines of the inscription have lent themselves easily to an interpretation of their meaning.

Here are the words as read by experts: “Nerone Caesare Augusto-Cosso Lentulo Cossi Fil. Cos-VIII Idus Febr (u)arias.” [21] The thought is as follows: “In the consulate of Augustus Caesar Nero and Cossus Lentulus the son of Cossus, and on the 8th day before the Ides of February.” All authorities agree that the date given is February 6, 60 AD, which fell on Wednesday.

The last line has not yet been satisfactorily explained, although several learned men have attempted to do so. The words dies Solis clearly mean “the day of the Sun” of the planetary week. Luna is “moon” or “lunar month.” Nun, which appears twice in the inscription, is the abbreviation for *nundina* (market day), and the words Cumis and Pompeis are the names of the towns where the markets were held.

The only difficulty lies in the numeral XHIS, which is intended to denote the day of the lunar month. In his first report of the find, Mau states that what resembles an S in this part of the inscription is not a true S. Later he examined the inscription again, and reported that the rains had worn away some of the coloring matter so that it was more visible than before. He was convinced that it was not an S. However, there was indication of a lesion in the material and the exact form of the original letter could not be ascertained with certainty. He and others made conjectures about it, but these did not satisfy their minds. Therefore, because the exact number of the day of the lunar month in this inscription cannot be ascertained under the present circumstances, it is impossible to tell which Sunday early in 60 AD is the one to which reference is made.

However, the inscription does clearly show that in the first century the planetary weekdays were in use for the purpose of recording dates. Because the date of this inscription is 60 AD, it is evident that this practice of dating was in vogue before the death of the apostle Paul.

### In the Baths of Titus

The baths built by the emperor Titus (79-81 AD) were among the most renowned of Roman history. The ruins have long stood as a memorial to his name. He was the Roman general who captured Jerusalem in 70 AD, after one of the most difficult sieges recorded in military annals. Theo. Mommsen, the celebrated authority on Roman manners and customs, gives the following description of an extraordinary calendar found in the ruins of the baths of Titus:

“On the walls of the Roman baths of Titus has been found the astronomical public calendar which envisions this [the use of the planetary week] more thoroughly (Guattani, *Memorie Enciclopediche sulle Antichita e Belle Arti di Roma* Vol. 6 (1816), Roma, 1817, p. 160ff; *Le Antiche Camere Esquiline dethe Comunemente delle Terme di Tito* dis. ed in. da Ant. de Romanus, Roma 1822, fol., p. 12, 21, 59). In a square frame there appears in the upper row the seven planets, one beside the other: Saturn (damaged), Sol, Luna, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter (damaged), Venus. Beneath them are the twelve signs of the zodiac in a circle, beginning with the characters Aries (Ram), Taurus (Bull), Gemini (Twins), Cancer (Crab), Leo (Lion), Virgo (Virgin), Libra (Balance), Scorpius (Scorpion), Sagittarius (Archer), Capricornus (Goat),

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Aquarius (Watercarrier), Pisces (Fish). Beside these there appear to the right the days I to XV; and to the left, the days XVI to XXX. Beside each week day, monthly constellation, and day of the month, is a hole, in which a small knob was found. By the transposition of these knobs, the months, the days of the month, and days of the week were indicated.” [22]

G. A. Guattani describes the calendar in detail, saying: “It was formed by a quadrangle 13.50 inches high by 16.50 inches wide, in which were engraved in the upper part of the plaster the heads of the seven gods which give the names to the days of the week. Commencing from the left of the calendar are seen standing Saturn, the Sun (or Apollo), the Moon (or Diana), Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, and Venus, although it was found that all of Saturn had perished and a large portion of Jupiter was broken. By and beneath each god is seen a small hole.

“On the extreme left and beneath Saturn is seen a column of Roman numbers, from I to XV; and another column, from XVI to XXX, occupies an equal place on the right beneath Venus. There is also seen a hole by each of the numbers.

“Between the columns of numbers and beneath the other gods is seen depicted a circle containing another smaller, concentric circle, which form a zone around a third circle of about one third the diameter of the larger one. This zone is divided into 12 equal parts, although not exactly; and each section encloses one of the 12 signs of the zodiac, which are engraved and barbarously designed. In the two highest sections are Aries and Taurus, which are followed by Gemini and the others in a circle, going from the right to the left of the spectator in accordance with Oriental usage. Under each sign is marked the initial letter of its proper name. Not only is the sketching of the letters seen to be different from that of the niche, but also by the sign of Virgo is seen a small b instead of a V, for to say Virgo, and for Cancer and Capricorn we have a K for the initial letter instead of a C. This variety shows a little Graecizing, an example of which is not seen in any other word of the niche, which also must be considered as of a later date than the calendar, and was made by the true Romans after they had freed themselves from the pedantism of the Greeks.

“In the periphery of the larger circle of the zone are seen not only twelve holes similar to each other, that is, one in each division of the signs, but also that another divides in two the space of each sign. A fragment of bone that was found in the middle hole of the sign of Gemini certainly shows that each day of the week was indicated by a peg passed from one hole to another under the gods, and that by the same operation made with the 30 numbers the day of the month was indicated (a hole placed outside of the line and between the numbers XXIX and XXX received the peg for the last day in the case of the months having 31 days). A similar transfer of the bone from one hole to another of the circle [of the zodiac] in the retrograde order [from right to left], made on the day when the peg was put, in the first hole of each column of the numbers, showed the month by means of the [zodiac] signs of Sun, whether the Sun was at the beginning or in the middle of the Sign.” [23]

Several writers have referred to this early type of Roman stick calendar- (so called because of the use of the knobbed pegs or pins inserted in the holes to indicate the months and the days). With the exception of the twelve signs of the zodiac representing the months of the year in this calendar from the baths of Titus, its layout agrees in many details with the calendar described by Petronius in his work, *The Banquet of Trimalchio*.

### “On the Day of Saturn”

In reference to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD, mention has already been made of the statement of the Roman author Sextus Julius Frontinus. He was born about 40 AD, about the time of the birth of the emperor Titus, and died about 103 AD. Thus he belonged to the age of the apostles of Christ. In 70 AD he was praetor of the city of Rome, and later became governor of Britain. He was appointed superintendent of the aqueducts at Rome in 97 AD. Being a very practical man, he wrote, in Latin, on many worth-while subjects. In his work on military strategy he mentions that the armies of Vespasian prevailed over the rebellious Jews in the war of 66-70 AD, saying:

“The divine Augustus Vespasian attacked the Jews on the day of Saturn, on which it is forbidden for them to do anything serious, and prevailed.” [24]

Frontinus wrote about 97 AD, and the fact that he designated one of the seven days by the name of Saturn reveals that his readers were already familiar with the use of the planetary week.

### Observations

The calendar fragment from Puteoli, the Septizonium near which Titus was born, the seven rings



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given to Apollonius of Tyana, the statement by Petronitis, the statements of Frontinus and Josephus about the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD, the numerous paintings and inscriptions found in the ruins of Herculaneum and Pompeii, and the calendar found in the baths of Titus, clearly show that the planetary week was a well-known astrological institution among the Romans when Christ and the apostles lived.

### 8. The Planetary Week in the Second Century AD

HAVING traced the use of the pagan planetary week among the Romans from the middle of the first century before Christ, we naturally expect to find it a well-established institution in the heathen world at the beginning of the second century of the Christian Era. Such is the case, and the monuments of this period shed considerable light upon the subject.

#### “Named After the Different Days”

The first item of interest in the second century is a reference to the Roman baths of the emperor Trajan (98-117 AD). Aelius Lampridius, a Latin writer who lived at the beginning of the fourth century, wrote an account of the life of the emperor Alexander Severus (222-235 AD), in which he said: “He restored the public works of former emperors and built many new ones himself, among them the bath which was called by his own name, adjacent to what had been the Neronian and also the aqueduct which still has the name Alexandriana. Next to this bath he planted a grove of trees on the site of some private dwelling which he purchased and then tore down. One bathtub he called ‘the Ocean’—and he was the first of the emperors to do this, for Trajan had not done this but had merely called his tubs after the different days.” [1]

In this reference to Trajan’s bathtubs having been named after “the different days,” no specific mention is made concerning their number or their individual names. But it is believed to refer to the planetary names of the seven days of the pagan week, because the days of the months were numbered instead of named, and were also too numerous for this purpose.

#### Plutarch Wrote an Explanation

Plutarch, the celebrated Greek writer whose *Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans* is a well-known classic of ancient times, also composed a treatise entitled *Symposiacs*, most of which has been preserved unto this day. In this work the author presented a great deal of useful information, using the question-and-answer method so popular in his time. It may properly be regarded as a sort of encyclopedia of information about established customs and practices of that age. Plutarch wrote between 100 and 125 AD, and doubtless lived for many years a contemporary of the apostle John.

Question 7 in Book IV of his *Symposiacs* is stated thus: “Why the Days Which Have the Names of the Planets Are Not Arranged According to the Order of the Planets, but the Contrary. There Is Added a Discourse on the Position of the Sun.” [2] Unfortunately, the text of this particular part of the work is lost, and consequently Plutarch’s explanation of the question has not been preserved to us. Nevertheless, the statement of the question itself suffices to show that the practice of calling the days after the names of the planets was in vogue in the world at the beginning of the second century after Christ. We have noted the order of the planets in the geocentric system of astronomy of that period: Saturn (farthest), Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, and Moon (nearest). In the cycle of the pagan week the days were named after the planets in the following order: Saturn, Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, and Venus. Information explaining the reason why the order of the planets in the cycle of the week was different from that in the current astronomical concept of the universe, might reasonably be regarded as useful and entertaining for the common people.

#### Tacitus and Saturn’s Day

Tacitus, the annalist whose historical treatises, compiled in Latin, cover the reigns of the Roman emperors of the first century of the Christian Era, apparently wrote during the rule of Trajan (98-117 AD). He died early in the reign of Hadrian. He, too, was for a time a contemporary of the apostle John. In relating the story of the capture of Jerusalem in 70 AD by the armies of Vespasian and Titus, this historian gives the following absurd explanation of the origin of the Hebrew people:

“It is said that the Jews were originally exiles from the island of Crete who settled in the farthest



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parts of Libya at the time when Saturn had been deposed and expelled by Jove [Jupiter]. An argument in favor of this is derived from the name: there is a famous mountain in Crete called Ida, and hence the inhabitants were called the Idaei [Idacans], which was later lengthened into the barbarous form Judaei [Judeans].” [3]

This supposition that the Jews came from Crete is connected with the popular myth of that time that the island of Crete was the birthplace of most of the gods. It was believed that Caelus (Ouranos, Heaven) and his wife Terra (Gala, Earth) brought forth a mighty progeny of Titans-six males and six females. The youngest of the male children was Saturn (Chronos, Time). Their father hated his offspring, and soon after they were born he thrust them out of his sight by placing them in a cave, apparently in Crete itself. Terra was grieved at her husband’s conduct, and she produced “the substance of hoary steel” from which she made them a sickle. Then she aroused her children to rebel against their father. All were afraid, except Saturn. He took the sickle and, waylaying Caelus, mutilated him with it. Thereupon Saturn seized his father’s kingdom and ruled with the consent of his brethren, who made him promise that he should bring forth no male children. Therefore Saturn always devoured his sons as soon as they were born. His wife, Rhea, who was also his sister, concealed three of their sons-Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto-in order that their father might not destroy them. When the other Titans, the brothers and sisters of Saturn, heard that he had male children living, they dethroned him and imprisoned his wife. Jupiter, however, was secretly reared in Crete and later attempted to deliver his father. Saturn, in turn, became unmindful of this kindness on the part of his son and conspired against him. Jupiter then banished Saturn from Crete. [4]

The pagan notion that the Hebrew people were devotees of Saturn was based on the fact that the Jews observed the Sabbath as a very holy day, which day in the heathen week was regarded as sacred to Saturn. Thus some of the pagans supposed that the Jews kept the Sabbath out of regard for the planetary god Saturn, and that the Jewish people originally came from Crete. Tacitus, indeed, offered such an explanation concerning the rest which the Israelites observed on the seventh day, saying:

“They were pleased to have a rest on the seventh day, because it brought a release from work. Later, because they became softened by inactivity, the seventh year was also given to idleness. Some hold it to be an honor to Saturn, or perhaps the Idacans gave them this part of their religion, who the Idaeansi, as we have said before, were expelled together with Saturn, and who, as we have been informed, were the founders of this [Jewish] nation; or else it was because the star [Saturn] moves in the highest sphere, and of the seven planets exerts the principal part of that energy whereby mankind are governed; and indeed most of the heavenly bodies exert their power and fulfill their courses according to the number seven.” [5]

The association of the Sabbath day with the planet Saturn, as done by Tacitus, can be explained only by the fact that the seventh day of the Biblical week, which the Jews observed, corresponded to the day of the pagan week that the heathen called “the day of Saturn.”

### Vettius Valens Used the Planetary Week

“The most extensive of the astrological treatises which have come down to its,” says a modern authority, “is the work of a writer from Antioch in the second century AD, Vettius Valens.” [6]

F. H. Colson, in his interesting work, says this about the astrologer: “His importance lies in the fact that he may most probably be dated as early as the middle of the second century AD. This is to be inferred from the period within which he sets the dates which he takes as examples for astrological calculation. For instance in his chapter on the week (p. 26, Kroll’s edition), he gives directions by which a person knowing the year and month and day of his birth may calculate on what day of the week it fell. The example he gives is what would be in our calendar 7th February AD 119, and no date used in this way is later than 158.” [7]

The astrologer gave directions for finding the day of the week on which the given day of the month of any year fell. He used the Egyptian calendar reckoning, and takes as a starting point the beginning of the Era of Augustus, assuming that it started on Sunday, 1st of Thoth. In one instance he calculates that the 18th of Phamenoth in the 13th year of the reign of Trajan (98-117 AD) fell on the day of Saturn. In another example he reckons that the 13th of Mechir in the 4th year of the reign of Hadrian (117-138 AD) fell on the day of Venus. [8] Some have attempted to compute these (fates according to the Julian calendar, but the results have been divergent, because there is a variation of opinion about the day of the month of August on which the Era of Augustus began, and about intercalations made in the Egyptian calendar to make up for the leap years. The astrologer wrote in Greek, and although his method of computation may not be fully explained, there still remains the unquestioned fact, that he did use the planetary week of the pagans and called the days by the names of their corresponding planets.

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## The List of Lucius Ampelius

Lucius Ampelius, who was probably a schoolteacher and lived in the first half of the second century after Christ, wrote in Latin a treatise entitled *Liber Memorialis* in which he presents a sketch of world history up to the time of the reign of Trajan (98-117 AD). In this work he says:

“The most powerful stars in the sky are seven: Saturn, Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, which by the Greeks are called planets, but by us are called wandering stars, because of their own volition they wander about and by their movement the doings of men are regulated: and likewise they are borne in a course contrary to that of the heaven.” [9]

While it is true that Ampelius does not specifically mention the week, it is believed that he had in mind the astrological order of the planets according to the days over which they were supposed to preside. No other explanation can be given for his listing the planets as he did, except that he did it according to the order of the days of the pagan week.

## Comment by Pomponius Porphyrio

Another Latin writer who lived about this time was Pomponius Porphyrio, who wrote a commentary on the Satires of the Roman poet Horace. As already mentioned, Horace said in one passage that the mother of a sick child made a vow to Jupiter that if he would heal her little one of the fever, she would have the boy stand naked in the river Tiber in the morning on the day of the fast appointed by that planetary god.

In his comment on this particular point, Pomponius Porphyrio says: “On the morning of the day on which thou appointed: die Jovis [on the day of Jupiter].” [10] Hence this grammarian explains to the readers of Horace’s Satires that the day on which the fast referred to was appointed is the one currently called *dies Jovis*. Otherwise his explanation would have been unintelligible.

## Justin Martyr and the Pagan Week

Thus far our principal ancient witnesses to the early use of the planetary week in the Roman Empire have been pagans. Now we have the first testimony from a professed Christian writer. Justin Martyr, the philosopher, wrote during the latter part of the reign of Antoninus Pius (138-161 AD) an apology for the Christian religion, which he addressed to this emperor, to his son, and to the Roman people in general. It was written in the Greek tongue. Telling how Sunday keepers among Christians then celebrated the Lord’s supper, Justin said:

“On that called the day of the Sun an assembly is had of all those dwelling in the cities and rural districts.... And the day of the Sun we make an assembling of all together, because it is the first day, on which God, having changed the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Savior rose from the dead on the same day. For on the [day] before that of Saturn they crucified Him; and on the [day] after the [day] of Saturn, which is the day of the Sun, having appeared to His apostles and disciples, He taught these things just as we have submitted to you for consideration.” [11]

Although Justin referred twice to Mithraism—the cult of the Invincible Sun so popular in the Roman Empire at that time in his *Dialogue With Trypho the Jew* (chaps. 70, 78), he never mentioned the days of the week by their planetary names. There he used the Biblical nomenclature, repeatedly referring to the seventh day as “the Sabbath.” Of the first day of the week he wrote: “For the first day of the week, having continued the first of all the days of the cycle, is called the eighth, and remains being the first.” [12]

What are we to gather from this? It must be that in each case Justin adapted his language to the class of readers whom he addressed, and that to the pagans the terms “the day of the Sun” and “the day of Saturn” were familiar designations of the days which were first and seventh in the Jewish and Christian week.

## Avidius Cassius and the Week

In the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD), Vulcatius Gallicanus, a Roman senator, wrote in Latin a story of the life of Avidius Cassius, the tyrannical general of the armies of the emperor Marcus Aurelius (161-180 AD). In the following statement there is what many believe to be a reference to the week:

“On the seventh day he inspected the arms of the soldiers, also the clothing, shoes and leggings. He banished all dissipations from the camp, and he commanded them to spend the winter under the tents, unless they should mend their ways; and they would have done it had they not lived more decently. The

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exercise of the seventh day was of all the soldiers, that they should shoot arrows and exercise with arms.” [13]

### “On the Day of Mercury”

Among the Roman sepulchral inscriptions preserved from the second century, there appears one in Latin which states that a certain L. Caecilius was “born in the month of May, at the sixth hour of the night, on the day of Mercury; he lived six years and 33 days, and died on the third day before the Kalends of July.” [14] In the marginal note the collector states that Joseph Scaliger, the noted chronologist, has computed the date to be May 27, 179 AD, which fell on Wednesday (the day of Mercury).

### Clement of Alexandria

We see an allusion to the planetary gods and their respective days in the pagan week in the following passage from Clement, another witness professing the Christian faith. He became a teacher of the Christian school in Alexandria, Egypt, where the influence of Gnosticism was great, and wrote extensively in Greek until about 200 AD He said:

“He [the Gnostic] understands also the meaning of the fourth [day] and of the preparation [day]. For they are called, the one, of Mercury, and the other, of Venus. Wherefore, he fasts [or abstains] throughout his lifetime from the love of silver and from the love of pleasure, from which all evils flow.” [15]

Wednesdays and Fridays (the days of Mercury and Venus) were then (and Fridays still are) fast days in the Roman Catholic Church. J. N. Andrews comments thus upon Clement’s statement:

“As in heathen mythology Mercury is the god of commerce and Venus the goddess of beauty and love, playing upon this. Clement justifies the position of the Gnostic, who repudiates literal fasting, and, instead, abstains ‘from avarice and from lust.’” [16]

In another passage Clement also refers to “the seven days and the seven planets,” as follows: “And the Lord’s day is understood by these [words] in the tenth [book] of The Republic by Plato: ‘But after seven days have passed to each one of them in the meadow, having risen up, they are to set out from there on the eighth, and to arrive in four [days].’ By the meadow is understood the fixed sphere, as a tranquil and quiet region, a place of the pious; but by the seven days [is meant] each movement of the seven planets, and all the busy mechanism speeding on to the end of rest. But after the wandering orbs, the journey leads to heaven, that is, to the eighth movement and day. And in four days the souls are gone, he says, showing the journey through the four elements. Not only the Hebrews, but also the Greeks, know the sacred hebdomad, according to which revolves the whole world of all the animal and plant life.” [17]

Here Clement had in mind the current notion of a geocentric universe, in which the hebdomad of planets revolved around the central earth. Beyond these moved the firmament of fixed stars-the outer sphere. In their journey to heaven, the eighth, or fixed, sphere-the souls of the righteous were supposed to traverse the four elements-earth, water, air, and fire-and the seven heavens of the planets which presided over the days of the week. Thus Clement concluded that the heathen Greeks had received a divine revelation of the plan of the universe and a knowledge of the week.

In another passage Clement alluded to the planetary week, saying: “The robe of the high priest is a symbol of the world of sense. The five stones and the two carbuncles [symbolize] the seven planets, from Saturn to the Moon. The former is southern, and moist, and earthy, and heavy; the latter aerial, whence Artemis [Moon] is spoken of by some as being aeroc-tonos [cutting the air], and gloomy [is] the air. And working together in this creation of things, those that by Divine Providence are set over the planets are rightly represented as placed on the breast and shoulders; through whom [was effected] the work of the creation, the first week.” [18]

The Gnostics generally regarded the planets as being the abodes of seven supernatural beings (aeons), who were inferior in nature to the great World Creator (Demiurge), who resided in the eighth heaven (the sphere of the fixed stars). The hebdomad of planetary aeons were believed to be the rulers of the material universe. Gnosticism in the early church was but an attempt to accommodate the Christian religion to the popular science, falsely so called, of that epoch. [19]

## 9. The Planetary Week in the Third Century AD.

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IN the study of the planetary week in the third century, we shall see considerable light thrown on the subject by the records of that time. In this period the Romans looked upon the use of a week of days devoted to the planetary deities as a venerable custom handed down to them from their ancestors.

### Mistaken for Sun Worshipers

Tertullian, the lawyer-apologist for Sunday-keeping Christianity, died about 222 AD. Although born in Carthage, in North Africa, he became a Christian at Rome between the years 190 and 195, and returned to his native city about 197 AD. One of his most notable works was an apology which he addressed in Latin to the heathen in defense of his faith. The pagans were reproaching the Sunday-keeping Christians as being worshipers of the Sun-god. In reply to this, Tertullian said:

“Others, indeed, with more culture and truthfulness, believe that the Sun is our god. We shall be taken for Persians, perhaps, although it is not permitted that we worship the Sun depicted on the linen, having him everywhere in his disk. The reason for this, I suppose, is that it is known that we pray towards the east. But also most of you at times, in affectation of worshiping the heavenly bodies, move your lips toward the sun rising. Likewise, if we devote the day of the Sun to festivity (from a far different reason from Sun worship), we are in a second place from those who devote the day of Saturn to rest and eating, themselves also deviating by way of a Jewish custom of which they are ignorant.” [1]

### Sunday in the Pagan Calendar

In another apology Tertullian makes a similar defense of Sunday keeping, and in it he charges the pagans with being the ones who put the day of the Sun into the calendar week of the seven days. He said:

“Others, certainly more cultured, think that the Sun is the god of the Christians, because it is known that we pray toward the east and make a festivity on the day of the Sun. Do you do less? Do not most of you, in affectation of worshiping the heavenly bodies, at times move your lips toward the sun rising? You certainly are the ones who also received the Sun into the register of the seven days, and from among the days preferred it, on which day you leave off the bath, or you may defer it until the evening, or you may devote it [the day] to idleness and eating. And you certainly make a deviation from your own to other religions. For the feasts of the Jews, the Sabbaths, and clean foods, and the Jewish rite of lighting lamps, and fasts with unleavened bread, and seaside (or riverside) prayers, are certainly foreign to your gods. Wherefore, as I turn by digression, ye who make the Sun and his day a reproach to us, know ye that we are in a neighborhood not far from Saturn and your Sabbaths.” [2]

The word *laterculum*, which is translated above as “register” (which is its usual meaning), is rendered “calendar” in the standard English translations of this work. [3] Indeed, it is employed by Moninsen and others to mean “calendar” in their memorable collection of Roman calendar inscriptions. [4] Here Tertullian points out not only that the pagans of his day were worshipers of the heavenly bodies, and that they prayed toward the sun rising, but also that they had a calendar by which the seven days devoted to the planetary gods were registered in their proper septenary order.

### Another Septizonium

In our study of the planetary week in the first century AD, mention was made of the fact that the emperor Titus was born (about 40 AD) near the Septizonium, “The House ‘of the Seven Planets,’” which is said to have contained a public calendar in which the seven days devoted to the planetary gods were registered. According to Aelcius Spartianus, [5] a Latin writer of the reign of Diocletian (284-305 AD), the emperor Septimius Severus (193-211 AD) erected another building of this type in the year 203. He is said to have made his tomb after the pattern of it also. H. S. Jones, who presents an excellent drawing of the ruins of this monument, says:

“As the traveler from Africa approached it [the palace of Severus] by the Appian Way, he beheld at its entrance the most striking monument of the superstition and vanity of his fellow countrymen—the Septizonium, or ‘House of the Seven Planets.’ We know that Severus was a firm believer in astrology—it was said that he had married his Syrian wife because she possessed a ‘royal horoscope’ and this fact must in some way account for the building of the Septizonium, whose form, it has been said, was that of a ‘triple Trevi fountain.’ The last of its stately remains were destroyed by Sixtus V in 1586.” [6]

The following comment about the building erected by this Roman emperor is very interesting: “The Septizonium was in reality a fountain or nymphaeum, rising in three tiers each with its screen of columns, behind which were niches adorned with statuary. The name comes, it is said, from the statues of

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the seven planetary divinities of the week disposed in these niches.” [7]

It is possible that the Septizonium of the time of Titus’ birth was destroyed either by the fire of the reign of Nero or by some other calamity. Pope Sixtus V used the remains of the Septizonium of Septimius Severus to build the church of St. Peter in Rome. [8] Anintlanus Marcellinus says that in the reign of Alexander Severus (222-235 AD) the place of the Septizonium was “a lunch frequented spot.” [9]

### “On the Day of Jupiter”

In Apulum of Dacia, now the modern Karlsburg in Rumania, there has been found an old Roman inscription in Latin which is dated as composed “in the consulate of Autoninus and Geta, on the 10th day before the Kalends of June, on the 18th day of the lunar month, and on the day of Jupiter.” [10] The date in the modern style of calendar reckoning was Thursday, May 23, 205 AD.

### In a Greek and Latin Grammar

In 207 AD there was composed a bilingual grammar-in the Greek and Latin tongues-which has been ascribed to the grammarian Dositheus. The preamble of the work says that it was composed when Maximinus and Aper were consuls, which reveals the date given. In this grammar is given a list of the names of the days of the planetary week in each of the languages mentioned, as follows:

#### HEPTAZODION HEMERAI

(Days of the Septizodium)

Kronou (of Kronos)

Heluou (of Helios)

Selenes (of Selene)

Areos (of Ares)

Hermou (of Hermes)

Dios (of Dis or Zeus)

Aphroditis (of Aphrodite)

#### SEPTE ZODIDIES

(Days of the Septizodium)

Saturni (of Saturn)

Solis (of the Sun)

Lun(a)e (of the Moon)

Martis (of Mars)

Mercuris (of Mercury)

Jovis (of Jupiter)

Veneris (of Venus)

This passage from Dositheus’ grammar is one of the arguments supporting the opinion that the Septizonium, or “House of the Seven Planets,” contained a public calendar in which the days of the pagan week were shown in their planetary order. [11]

### A Jewish Astrological Calendar

This particular item refers to a calendar which is supposed to have been composed by the Jewish rabbi Samuel Yarhira’ali, who is said to have died about 257 AD. The well-known Jewish Encyclopedia, under the article “Sun, Blessing of the,” says this:

“Formula of benediction recited on the day when the Sun enters upon a new cycle, which occurs on the first Wednesday of Nisan every 28 years. The present cycle commenced on the 5th of Nisan, 5657=April 7, 1897. According to Abaye, the cycle commences with the vernal equinox at the expiration of -Tuesday (sunset) and the beginning of Wednesday eve when the planet Saturn is in the ascendancy (Berakot 59b). This is calculated by the calendar of Samuel Yarhina’ah, which allots to the solar year 365 1/4 days, and asserts that each of the seven planets rules over one hour of the day in the following sequence: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, the Sun, Venus, Mercury, and the Moon.

“Consequently the first planet, Saturn, is 7.5 hours advanced at the beginning of the summer



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solstice, and 30 hours (1.25 days) at the turn of the year, or 5 days in 4 years, at the end of which this planet again takes its place at the beginning of the eve of the vernal (Nisan) equinox. This period is called ‘mahzor katan’ (short cycle). A space of five days follows every such cycle, so that the second cycle begins on Monday, the third on Saturday, the fourth on Thursday, the fifth on Tuesday, the sixth on Sunday, and the seventh on Friday. Seven short cycles complete a ‘mahzor gadol,’ or long cycle, of 28 years; then Saturn returns to its original position at the first hour of Wednesday eve, and a new cycle begins (ib. Rashi ad loc.).

“The ceremony of blessing the Sun is held to commemorate the birth of that luminary on Wednesday eve of the creation, which it is claimed was the exact time when the planets, including the Sun and the Moon and beginning with Saturn, were for the first time set in motion in the firmament by the Almighty.” [12]

The notion about the planets ruling over the hours of the day in the astrological order-Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, and Moon-clearly shows that the calendar of Samuel Yal-hina’ah was an adaptation of pagan astrology and its planetary week to Jewish religious thought.

### More Jewish and Pagan Astrology

In reference to the infiltration of the heathen influence of astrology into Jewish thought in the third century A. D., the Jewish Encyclopedia, says:

“In consequence of religious anti-Biblical influences, some of these pagan views gradually acquired a Hebraic tinge. Of two horoscopes which have been preserved, however, only the earlier bears a Jewish stamp. On Joshua b. Levi’s ‘tablets’ (third century) it is stated that men born on Sunday will be distinguished, on Monday wrathful, on Tuesday wealthy and sensual, on Wednesday intelligent and enlightened, on Thursday benevolent, and on Friday pious; while those born on Saturday are destined to die on that day.” [13]

Mention is made of this in the Babylonian Talmud, in reference to the diary of Rabbi Jehoshua ben Levi, as follows:

“Said R. Hanina to the men who related what was written in the diary above: ‘Go and tell the son of Levi, that the fortune of a man does not depend upon the day, but upon the hour he was born in. One who is born in the hour of sunrise will be a bright man; he will eat and drink of his own, but he will not be able to keep secrets and will not be successful in stealing. One who is born under Venus will be a rich man, but he will be lascivious, because fire is generated under Venus. One who is born under Mercury will be bright and wise, because that star is the scribe of the Sun. One who is born under the Moon will be sickly or troubled. He will build and demolish, will not eat and drink of his own, but will keep secrets, and will be successful in stealing. One who is born under Saturn will have all his thoughts and all his aims come to naught; and others say the contrary, all aims against him will come to naught. One who is born under Jupiter will be a righteous man, and R. Nahman bar Itzhak said he will be very devout. One who is born under Mars will be a man who will shed blood. He will either be a surgeon or a robber, a butcher or a circumcizer, said R. Ashi.” [14]

### Dio Cassius Explains the Planetary Week

Dio Cassius (c. 155-238 AD), a man who held several high government offices under four different emperors, was well informed about Roman customs. He wrote a history of Rome in the Greek language, and it is to him and this work that the world is chiefly indebted for its most authoritative classical explanation of the planetary week in use among the heathen.

First we have, as was pointed out in the study of the pagan week in the first century before Christ, his statement about the capture of Jerusalem by Pompey in 63 BC. Of this he said:

“If they [the Jews] had continued defending it [the temple] on all days alike, he could not have gotten possession of it. As it was, they made an exception of what are called the days of Saturn, and by doing no work at all on those days afforded the Romans an opportunity in this interval to batter down the wall. The latter, on learning of this superstitious awe of theirs, made no serious attempts the rest of the time, but on those days, when they came round in succession, assaulted most vigorously. Thus the defenders were captured on the day of Saturn without making any defense, and all the wealth was plundered.” [15]

In reference to the worship which the Jews rendered to their God, Dio Cassius said: “They ... dedicated to him the day called the day of Saturn, on which, among many other most peculiar observances,

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they undertake no serious occupation.” [16]

The same Roman historian narrates the story of the capture of Jerusalem by Gains Sosius and Herod the Great in 37 B. C. Of this victory over the Jews, he said:

“The first of them to be captured were those who were fighting for the precinct of their god, and then the rest on the day even then called the day of Saturn. And so excessive were they in their devotion to religion that the first set of prisoners, those who had been captured along with the temple, obtained leave from Sosius, when the day of Saturn came round again, and went up into the temple and there performed all the customary rites, together with the rest of the people.” [17]

In view of what will follow now, it should especially be noted that in speaking of the capture of Jerusalem by Sosius in 37 BC, the historian refers to “the day even then called the day of Saturn.” Here we see that the practice of calling the days after the names of the planetary deities was already an established custom among the Romans before the birth of Christ. And having made such a statement, Dio Cassius proceeded to explain the pagan week as follows:

“The dedication of the days to the seven stars which are called planets was established by Egyptians, [18] and it spread also to all men not so very long ago, [19] to state briefly how it began. At any rate the ancient Greeks knew it in no way, as it appears to me at least. But since it also prevails everywhere among all the others and the Romans themselves, and now this is also already to them an ancestral custom [20]. I wish to say a little concerning it, both how and in what manner it has been thus established. I have heard two explanations, which are not difficult to understand, and [are] theories held of some.

*The diagram illustrates Dio Cassius’ first explanation of the astrological week in use among the Romans, the assignment of the days to the planetary gods according to the musical harmony “by fours” (or the tetra-chord). The celestial order of the planets follows the circle: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, and Moon. The daily order follows the arrow in the star pattern, and the musical theory works thus by intervals of fours: (1) Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, (2) Sun, Venus, Mercury, (3) Moon, Saturn, Jupiter, (4) Mars, Sun, Venus, (5) Mercury, Moon, Saturn, (6) Jupiter, Mars, Sun, (7) Venus, Mercury, Moon, etc.*

*This diagram shows the planetary gods of the days of the week in accordance with Dio Cassius’ first explanation. The planetary deities are listed in their supposedly celestial order. Taking them according to the musical theory of the tetra-chord, every fourth god is given his day.*

“For if you start the harmony that is designated ‘by fours,’ wherein it has been believed the supreme power of music to consist, [21] and over the stars by which the whole cosmos of the heaven has been divided into regular intervals, according to the order by which each of them revolves, and commencing from the outer orbit which has been assigned to Saturn; then skipping two, you name the lord of the fourth; and after him passing over two others, you will come to the seventh; and in this same manner going back, and again you assign the presiding gods of the orbits to the days, you will find all the days musically tuned indeed to the cosmic arrangement of the heaven. This is said to be one explanation, and the other is this:

“Having begun to count the hours of the day and of the night from the first [hour] and that [hour] you give to Saturn, and the next to Jupiter, and the third to Mars, and the fourth to the Sun, the fifth to Venus, the sixth to Mercury, and the seventh to the Moon, according to the order of the orbits, by which the Egyptians are wont to do it, and this also in turn doing again, for all the four and twenty hours thus going around, you will find the first hour of the following day comes to the Sun. And going through this procedure over these four and twenty hours in the same manner as with the others, forward, you will find the first hour of the third day comes to the Moon. And if you will go thus also through the rest, the god coming to each selfsame day will be received.” [22]

The significance of this explanation by Dio Cassius has already been pointed out in our study, and we need not dwell further upon it here.

### The Days of the Seven Planets

In his Life of Apollonius of Tyana, Philostratus (c. 170-245 AD) tells how that philosopher visited the wise men of Babylon and India. In the latter country, where he spent about four months, Apollonius became acquainted with Iarchas, the oldest of the Brahman sages. We quote again:

“And Damis says that Iarchas gave seven rings to Apollonius named after the seven stars, and that

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Apollonius wore each of these in turn on the day of the week which bore its name.” [23]  
Philostratus probably composed his work before 217 A. D.

### “On the Day of the Moon”

A Latin inscription found in Rhactia, in what is now known as Kelheim in Bavaria (Germany), is dated as “on the day of the Moon, on the 10th day before the Kalends of June, and on the 5th day of the lunar month.” 24 ‘The date given is for Monday, May 23, 231 AD.

F. H. Colson also says that “representations of the seven [planetary gods] in week-order, some of which at least are ascribed by experts to this period, have been found in the Rhineland.” [25]

### “On the Day of Venus”

A Christian sepulchral inscription, one of the earliest dated ones to be found in the city of Rome, mentions the day of Venus. The curious thing about this inscription is that the words are Latin, but it is written with the letters of the Greek alphabet. The text reads as follows:

“In the consul ship of Claudius and Paternus, on the Nones of November, on the day of Venus, and on the 24th day of the lunar month, Leuces placed [this memorial] to her very dear daughter Severa, and to Thy Holy Spirit. She died [at the age] of 55 years, and 11 months, [and] 10 days.” [26]

The date of this inscription is Friday, November 5, 269 AD.

### From an Oracle of Apollo

It appears that spiritualism also played a hand in establishing the planetary week among the Greeks and Romans. Eusebius, the church historian of the early part of the fourth century, quotes a passage from Porphyry, the Greek scholar and Neoplatonist (born at Tyre about 233, and died about 304 AD), which in turn quotes an oracular message of Apollo. During the period of the Roman Empire, Apollo was identified with the Sun even as early as the days of Pliny the Elder (who perished in the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 AD). In this oracle the spirit prescribed the worship of the planetary gods on their respective days. The message itself is written in a Greek dialect and in verse form. While we do not know which of the oracles of Apollo delivered it, undoubtedly it was composed much earlier than the time of Porphyry himself.

Porphyry is quoted as saying: “The gods frequently make it manifest by fore showing their decrees, that knowing the conditions under which each individual is born they are, if one may so say, consummate diviners and casters of nativities. Apollo also, in an oracular response, has said: ‘Invoke Mercury, and the Sun in like manner on the day of the Sun, and the Moon when her day comes, and Saturn also, and Venus in succession, with unuttered prayers, which the best by far of the Magi devised, the king of the seven-toned [harp], whom all [men] know.’ But when the hearers said, ‘You mean Ostanes,’ he added: ‘And also according to each enduring god strongly to make the sound seven times.’” [27]

### “On the Day of Mercury”

Another old Christian sepulchral inscription, in Latin also gives “the day of Mercury” in its text. The date of the epitaph is believed to be either 291 or 302 AD. [28]

### A Schoolbook

We are informed that “in the third century A. D. students in Egypt dated their written work after the days of the planetary week, as shown by a wooden tablet in the Museum of Marseille [France], whose text has been deciphered by Frohner.” [29] Then follows in the Greek the portion of the work in which the date is plainly given thus: “Aurell its Theodortis Anubionus wrote on the 28th, on the day of the Sun, in the consul ship of the prefects Flavius Constantitis and Valeritis Maximianus, Caesars.” [30]

We are also told: “The concise story is repeated three times, being apparently the working exercise of a student. The date is 294 AD.” [31] The Flavius Constantius mentioned was the father of Constantine the Great, whose famous civil Sunday law will be noted later.

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### 10. “The Sun, the Lord of the Roman Empire”

THERE is hardly a land that has not been at one time or another under the seductive spell of Sun worship. The ancient peoples of both the Old and the New World were charmed by it, as is abundantly revealed by the literature and archaeological remains preserved from the civilizations of the past.

Far back in antiquity the Sun was adored under the name of Shamash, among the people of Babylonia and Assyria. [1] The cult of the Sun had notable centers at Senkereh, Sippara, and Larsa. [2] Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian monarch of Biblical fame, referred to himself as the “chief worshiper of the Sun-god. [3] The famous ruins of Palmyra, designated by the name of Tadmor [4] in the Old Testament, bear witness to the magnificence of the solar cult of Baal in Mesopotamia and Syria. [5] Dominant among the Canaanite nations was the worship of “Baal, the Sun-god of Phoenicia.” [6] The notable piles of stones that once formed the temple of the Sun at Baalbek (The City of Baal), about forty miles northwest of Damascus, Syria, show that Sun worship was very popular in the Near East in the early centuries of the Christian Era. [7]

Sun worship was popular far back in Egyptian history. [8] The kings of Egypt were regarded as the offspring, and even the incarnation, of the Sun. The city of On (Heliopolis) was the celebrated seat of Sun worship in the land of the Nile. The Obelisks and the Sphinx are declared to be relics of Egyptian Sun worship. [9]

According to Sir James G. Frazer, when Sun worship in the form of Mithraism became prevalent in Persia, “every layman over eight years old was bound to recite a prayer to the Sun thrice a day, namely at sunrise, at noon, and at three o’clock in the afternoon.” [10] The Sun was anciently worshiped among the Chinese. [11] According to Japanese tradition, Hirohito, who was enthroned as emperor of Japan in 1926, is the 124th ruler of a dynasty beginning with Jimmu, the first human sovereign of the nation. Jimmu is supposed to have been a descendant of the Goddess of the Sun. [12] The rising Sun is the national emblem of the Nipponese.

In ancient India it was a common practice to worship toward the rising Sun. [13] Missionaries who have lived in India state that it is the practice of many Brahmans today, when they are about to take their morning bath, to turn their faces toward the Sun and, with hands clasped, address a salutation to Surya-Narayan, the solar orb.

#### Sun Worship in America

The Inca rulers of the Indians of Peru claimed to be descendants of the Sun, and this heavenly orb was the chief object of adoration among them. Inca tradition holds that four brothers and their four sisters, all procreated by the Sun, founded their race. The great temple of the Sun at Cuzco, Peru, was perhaps the most noted building in America when the Spaniards came. One of the great Indian pyramids built near the present site of Mexico City is named after the Sun. The famous Aztec Calendar, the real name of which is “Stone of the Sun,” is a relic of American Indian Sun worship. [14] In the center of it is pictured the Sun-god, who wears a necklace of seven beads, which probably symbolize the seven planetary deities—Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn.

#### Sun Worship Among the Teutons,

When Julius Caesar was made the Roman military commander in Gaul in 58 BC, and invaded the British Isles in 54, he became acquainted with many of the religious customs of those peoples. In his memoirs of his wars with the Germanic tribes, Caesar said of them: “They reckon among the gods only those whom they see and by whose offices they are openly assisted—to wit, the Sun, the Fire-god, and the Moon; of the rest they have learnt not even by report.” [15]

The cult of the Druids was then widely diffused among the Gauls, and Caesar said of it: “They have many discussions as touching the stars and their movement, the size of the universe and of the earth, the order of nature, the strength and powers of the immortal gods, and hand down their lore to the young men.” [16] The famous stone monuments of Stonehenge in the plain of Salisbury, England, are believed by scholars to be relics of Sun worship in connection with the ancient Druidic cult in the British Isles.

#### Sun Worship Among the Greeks

Plato (c. 427-347 BC), the Greek philosopher, said of men of his day, that “at the rising and setting of the Sun and Moon they heard and saw the prostrations and devotions of all the Greeks and barbarians under all conditions of adversity and prosperity.” [17]

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## Roman Sun Worship

Among the Romans the Sun was early worshiped as Sol, later as Apollo, and lastly as Mithras, the Invincible Sun. Here is how poetic fancy pictured the glory of King Sol in the age when Christ was born. Ovid, the Latin poet, says:

“The palace of the Sun stood high on lofty columns, bright with glittering gold and bronze that shone like fire. Gleaming ivory crowned the gables above; the double folding doors were radiant with burnished silver. And the workmanship was more beautiful than the material. For upon the doors Mulciber had carved in relief the waters that enfold the central earth, the circle of the lands and the sky that overhangs the lands. The sea holds the dark-hued gods: tuneful Triton, changeful Proteus, and Aegaeon, his strong arms thrown over a pair of huge whales; Doris and her daughters, some of whom are shown swimming through the water, some sitting on a rock drying their green hair, and some riding on fishes. They have not all the same appearance, and yet not altogether different; as it should be with sisters.

“The land has men and cities, woods and beasts, rivers, nymphs and other rural deities. Above these scenes was placed a representation of the shining sky, six signs of the zodiac on the right-hand doors, and six on the left.”

“Clad in a purple robe, Phoebus sat on his throne gleaming with brilliant emeralds. To the right and left stood Day and Month and Year and Century, and the Hours set at equal distances. Young Spring was there, wreathed with a floral crown; Summer, all unclad with a garland of ripe grain; Autumn was there, stained with the trodden grape, and icy Winter with white and bristly locks.

“Seated in the midst of these, the Sun, with the eyes which behold all things, looked on.” [18] Reference is also made to the solar chariot and “the Sun’s swift horses, Pyrols, Eoils, Aethon, and the fourth, Phlegon, fill all the air with their fiery whinnings, and paw impatiently against their bars.” [19] While the worship of Sol, the ancient solar deity of the Romans, may be traced far back into the history of that people, it does not appear to have been dominant among them prior to the time of Julius Caesar, who was assassinated in 44 BC. From that time forward the cult of the Sun waxed greater in prestige until it became the official and supreme religion of the Roman Empire.

## The Adoration of the Rising Sun

The veneration of the Romans for the Sun influenced the building of their temples. Vitruvius, an architect whom Augustus Caesar (31 BC to 14 AD) employed in restoring the city of Rome, wrote a treatise in Latin on architecture, in which he said:

“The aspects which the sacred temples of the immortal gods ought to regard are so to be appointed (if no reason hinders, and the opportunity is presented) that the temple and the statue which is in the shrine look towards the western quarter of the sky, so that those who come to the altar to sacrifice or make offerings may look towards the eastern heaven and the image in the temple. In like fashion persons undertaking vows may look upon the temple and the eastern heaven.” [20]

The reason for this was that the Sun rose in the east, and it was in that direction that the people turned to worship and pray. Tertullian said to the pagans of his day, as already quoted: “But most of you at times, in affectation of worshipping the heavenly bodies, move your lips toward the sunrise.” [21] And in another treatise he asked them, “Do not most of you, in affectation of worshipping the heavenly bodies, at times move your lips toward the sun rising?” [22]

Clement of Alexandria speaks of the practice thus: “In correspondence with the manner of the Sun’s rising, prayers are made looking towards the sunrise in the east. Whence also the most ancient temples looked towards the west, that the people might be taught to turn to the east when facing the images.” [23]

Some of the pagan temples were built so as to face the east, instead of toward the west, and in this case the worshiper, in his religious devotions, made a turn toward the east and bowed toward the rising Sun. Plutarch attempted to explain the origin of this custom, saying:

“And the worshipers’ turning round is said to be an imitation of the rotary motion of the universe. [24] But I would rather think that the worshiper who enters a temple, since temples face the east and the Sun, has his back towards the sunrise, and therefore turns himself half round in that direction, and then wheels fully round to face the god of the temple, thus making a complete circle, and linking the fulfillment of his prayer with both deities.” [25]



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## Among the Cultured Romans

Cicero, the great Roman orator and statesman (106-43 BC), shows the corresponding names for the Sun in the Greek and Latin languages. He says: "The name Apollo again is Greek; they say that he is the Sun, and Diana they identify with Moon." [26]

Also, his regard for the Sun as a god shows the esteem that cultured Romans then had for Sun worship, for he refers to it as "the Sun, the lord, chief, and ruler of the other lights, the mind and guiding principle of the universe, of such magnitude that he reveals and fills all things with his light." [27]

Pliny the Elder, the Roman naturalist, furnishes us with an example of the veneration of the Sun among Roman men of letters in the time of Christ and His apostles. Speaking of the planetary gods, he says:

"In the midst of these moves the Sun, whose magnitude and power are the greatest, and who is the ruler not only of the seasons and of the, lands, but even of the stars themselves and of the heaven. Taking into account all that he effects, we must believe him to be the soul, or more precisely the mind, of the whole world, the supreme ruling principle and divinity of nature. He furnishes the world with light and removes darkness, he obscures and he illumines the rest of the stars, he regulates in accord with nature's precedent the changes of the seasons and the continuous rebirth of the year, he dissipates the gloom of heaven and even calms the storm clouds of the mind of man, he lends his light to the rest of the stars also; he is glorious and pre-eminent, all-seeing and even all-hearing." [28]

## The Circus Maximus

The Circus Maximus, where the great games-especially the chariot races-were celebrated in the city of Rome, was connected with Sun worship. This institution originated in or before the fourth century B. C. Tertullian says of it:

"The Circus is chiefly consecrated to the Sun, whose temple stands in the middle of it, and whose image shines forth from its temple summit; for they have not thought it proper to pay sacred honors underneath a roof to an object they have itself in open space. Those who assert that the first spectacle was exhibited by Circus, and in honor of the Sun her father, as they will have it, maintain also the name of circus was derived from her." [29]

Among the planetary gods of the seven days of the pagan week, the Sun is represented as a charioteer carrying a whip in his hand. It is no marvel therefore that he should be venerated as the presiding deity at the chariot races. Solar was imagined as a being of youthful form, having his head surrounded with rays, and riding in a chariot drawn by four horses, which represent the four seasons: Ver, the spring; Aestas, the summer; Autumnus, the autumn; and Hiems, the winter.

## Foreign Sun Cults

As the Romans extended their dominion over the nations beyond the Mediterranean, they came into contact with the more highly developed systems of Sun worship in Egypt and Western Asia. When Antony, for example, conspired with Cleopatra to establish a world empire, with Alexandria, Egypt, as its capital, they apparently intended to make the worship of the Sun the supreme religion of mankind.

"Cleopatra had brought her twins to Antioch, and when Antony married her," says W. W. Tarn, "he acknowledged them as his and renamed them Alexander Helios and Cleopatra Selene, the Sun and the Moon. The names of all Cleopatra's children are significant, but especially that of Alexander Helios. Helios and Selene in conjunction possibly had a political meaning; the Parthian king was 'Brother of the Sun and Moon,' and if the Sun and Moon really typified the Iranian fravashi and livareno, Antony, by annexing these luminaries to his own family, was perhaps symbolically depriving Phraates of the supernatural adjuncts of his royalty. As to the name Helios, Antony's coin type after Philippi had been the Sun radiate, and his momentary revival of that type late in 37 shows that he was passing on to the boy whatever the Sun meant to himself. Probably it meant to him the supreme deity of Asia, but it had other connotations also. An Egyptian oracle had derived prosperity from the Sun, in the prophecy of the Cumaean Sibyl the rule of the Sun was to precede the Golden Age, and for Greeks lambulus, in the story of his Sun state, had definitely connected the age of gold with the Sun. As, in addition, it was Cleopatra's privilege, as a New Isis, to bear the Sun, and as she herself was the Sun-god's daughter, the boy could not really be called anything else; he was the Sun child who should inaugurate the Golden Age." [30]

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## The Sun and the Caesars

It is probable that the political importance of Sun worship as a means of gaining favor with the people of Egypt and the Near East influenced the policies of Octavian, better known as Augustus (31 BC to 14 AD). It must be recalled that the victory over Antony and Cleopatra was essential to the aims of Augustus, for it assured him dominion over the world. He undoubtedly sought the favor of the Sun, and vowed to him his devotion if he should win the battle with Antony and Cleopatra. He got the victory at Actium in 31 BC. And his subsequent acts concerning the Sun-god Apollo, who was identified with the Roman Sol, and his setting up the Egyptian obelisks in the Circus Maximus, indicate that the Sun-god was a favorite deity in the devotions of Augustus.

The historian Eugenie Strong remarks: "With the accession to power of the Julian house, the cult of Apollo, protector of the ancestral Trojans in their struggle against the Greeks, and Lord of the Sibylline books, continued in the ascendant, and the god himself was soon chosen as religions center of the Augustan program. As early as 36 BC Octavian had vowed to Apollo-till then kept as a foreign divinity outside the Pomerium-a temple on the Palatine, which was dedicated in 29 AD, the year of the threefold triumph, in thanksgiving for the victory of Actium won by the grace of the god. Above the pediment Apollo as Sol rode in his chariot illuminating the Orllis Romanus with his rays. Within the temple the divine Triad-Apollo between Latona and Diana, with the Sibyl at their feet-stood for the new spiritual forces of the Empire, the logical counterpart of that older Triad that field sway on the Capitoline hill opposite." [31]

There was a temple of Apollo on the promontory in Acarnania, hard by which the naval battle of Actium was fought. "Octavian set tip many monuments of Actium. He ascribed his success to Apollo of Actium, whose temple he enlarged." [32]

"He [Apollo] was made one of the chief gods of Rome by Augustus, who believed himself to be under his peculiar protection, and ascribed the victory of Actium to his aid. Hence he enlarged the old temple of Apollo on that promontory, and decorated it with a portion of the spoils. At Rome he [Augustus] reared a splendid new temple to him [Apollo] near his own house on the Palatine, and transferred the Ludi Saeculares to him and Diana." [33]

It was about 10 BC that Augustus brought two obelisks from Egypt, and set one of them up in the Circus Maximus and the other in the Campus Martius. [34] The obelisks were relics of Egyptian Sun worship. Tertullian, in describing the Circus Maximus, says of the obelisk set up there: "The huge obelisk, as Hermeteles affirms, is set up in public to the Sun. Its inscription, like its origin, belongs to Egyptian superstition." [35] Augustus also placed the radiant crown of the Sun on some of his coins. [36]

## Mithraism

Roman Sun worship received special impetus when it came into contact with Mithraism. Mithra (or Mithras) figured in ancient Iranian religious beliefs as an angel of light or a genius which attended the Sun. [37]

In time this fine distinction between Mithra and the Sun disappeared to the extent that for the people in general they were one and the same god. Strabo, who wrote in the reign of Augustus, says of the Persians: "They also worship Helius [the Sun], whom they call Mithras." [38] The cult of Mithra became very popular in the East before the birth of Christ. One evidence of its popularity in Asia is seen in the name Mithridates (Gift of Mithra), which was borne by several kings of the Near East. It was Mithridates VI who so powerfully opposed the claims of Rome in Asia, and was finally defeated by Pompey the Great between 66 and 64 BC. Mithraism easily identified itself with the local Sun worship of every country it invaded.

Among the Cicilian pirates taken as captives to Rome by Pompey in 67 BC, there were devotees of Mithra. [39] And P. Papinius Statius, who long resided at Rome and died about 96 AD, speaks of "Mithras, that beneath the rocky Persean cave strains at the reluctant-following horns." [40] This is a poetical reference to the Persian Sun worship of Mithraism, in which the bull is represented as being dragged to the place of sacrifice. This shows that the Romans of the time of Christ and the apostles were familiar with the ceremonies of the cult of Mithraism.

And Clement Huart declares: "In Roman times Chaldea was the holy land of the Mithraists; Mithra had a temple in Babylon, and Antiochus of Commagene (69-34 BC) raised a statue to him at Nirmud-Dagh." [41]

In the collection of Roman inscriptions compiled by J. Gruter, there appears one of an altar dedicated by Julius Caesar to Mithra. [42] For a time its genuineness was questioned, because the date was

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supposed to be too early for Mithraism among the Romans. But the archaeological evidence now published rather favors it. Many modern writers say that the worship of Mithra came into the Roman Empire about the time of Pompey the Great, and began to spread over Europe. [43]

### In the Reign of Augustus

In reporting recent archaeological discoveries, Camden M. Cobern writes: "As the Mithras worship was such a rival of the early Christian worship, it may be added that in 1915 there was opened under the church of St. Clement at Rome, and made accessible to visitors, the foundations of a temple of Mithras built during the reign of Augustus. The sacred font was found, also a part of the altar and the remains of ancient sacrifices which proved to be wild boars. (See C. R. Academy Inscription, 1915, pages 203-211.)" [44]

Another authority says: "In the first Christian century there were organized at Rome associations of the followers of Mithra." [45] Among the Romans the Sun-god Mithra was more popularly known as Sol Invictus." "The Invincible Sun." An inscription belonging to the reign of Tiberius (14-37 AD) says: "Claudius Suffecius Sacer (dos) Sol (is) Inv (icti) M (ithrae)." [46] "There are traces of his worship at Rome under Tiberius, says another. [47]

It is said of Mithra that "much worship was given to him in the time of Claudius, Nero, and Commodus." [48] Claudius (41-54 AD) and Nero (54-68 AD) governed Rome in the days of the apostle Paul. It is recorded that Nero wished to be initiated into the mysteries of Mithraism. [49] This emperor "erected a 'Colossus Neronis' at the highest point of the Velia, representing the Sun, with the features of Nero and with seven long rays around his head." [50] In the words of another, we have it thus: "Nero ended by going beyond precedent in the erection of a colossus of the Sun with his own features in front of the Golden House, and his representation with a radiate crown on coins, and in the depicting of himself driving a chariot among the stars on the hangings over the theatre in 66 AD." [51]

Sun worship was prominent in Rome at that time. In describing a plot to assassinate Nero, the Roman historian Tacitus shows that special worship was paid then to the Sun, saying: "Offerings and thanks were then voted to heaven, the Sun, who has an old temple in the Circus, where the crime was to be staged, receiving special horror for revealing by his divine power the secrets of the conspiracy." [52]

The same historian, in describing a battle between the Roman troops under Vespasian and those under Vitellius, says that "the soldiers of the Third Legion, according to the Syrian custom, hailed the rising Sun." [53] "It is at least certain that the Fifteenth [Legion], which served in the Parthian Wars of Nero and was transferred by Vespasian to the Danube, brought the cult of Mithras to its camp at Carnuntum in AD. 71." [54]

### Early in the Second Century

F. Cumont, the noted authority on Mithraism, tells of certain marbles discovered at Rome and at Ostia, which unquestionably go back to the beginning of the second century." [55] They are fine bas-reliefs in white marble, which show Mithra stabbing the bull. One Inscription connected with the Mithraic cult at Ostia is said to be dated as of 107 AD. [56] Therefore, it is very evident that when the early Christian church went forth into the pagan world to win the hearts of men, she found in Mithraism a powerful rival already established and prepared to contest her efforts.

In Rome there has been found a bilingual inscription set in by a freedman of the Flavians (Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian) as a dedication "to the Sun-god, Mithra." [57] It is supposed to belong to the third consul ship of Trajan, who reigned from 98 to 117 AD. At the same time the worship of the Sun, under the name of Baal, was flourishing in Syria. "Baalbek had an oracle held in such high esteem that in the second century AD. it was consulted by the emperor Trajan prior to his entrance on his second Parthian campaign." [58]

The emperor Hadrian (117-138 AD) "forbade human sacrifices to Mithra and Baal." [59] And Porphyry says: "Pallas declares that under the emperor Hadrian human sacrifices were almost entirely abolished; and he is the best exponent of the mysteries of Mithra." [60]

Hadrian "consecrated to the Sun" the Colossus Neronis after "removing the features of Nero." [61] And Lily R. Taylor writes: "Probably the earliest Mithreum known is the one near Aletroum at Ostia, which seems to date from the time of Hadrian." [62] It is known that Ostia had at least four temples to Mithra in the second century. [63]

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## In the Days of the Antonines

The writings known as The Clementine Homilies are believed to have been composed in the second century, and they speak of “Apollo as the wandering Suit, a son of Zetts, who was also called Mithras, as completing the period of a year.” [64]

The laurobolium, or bull-stabbing ceremony was a prominent feature in the Mithraic mysteries, and was popular in the reign of Antoninus Pius (138-161 AD). [65] According to S. Dill, “The mithracuem, found under the church of St. Clement of Rome, has yielded an inscription of the last year of Antoninus Pins. That emperor erected a temple to Mithra at Ostia. (See Reville, Page 81.)” [66]

The same writer observes also: “It is significant that the earliest inscription to Mithra yet found in Germany, of the year AD 148, is that of a centurion of the 8th Legion, which was quartered in Moesia from 47 till 69 AD, and which during that time had frequent communications with the East.” [67] This inscription was dedicated “to the Invincible Sun-god Mithra.” [68]

In his First Apology to Antoninus Pins and the Roman people, Justin Martyr referred to the mysteries of Mithra as things which his readers either knew by personal experience or might learn by inquiry. [69] In his Dialogue With Trypho the same writer refers to Mithraism twice. [70] This emperor took a deep interest in the worship of the Suit at Baalbek, in Syria. “Its Greek name, Heliopolis, ‘City of the Sun,’ is merely a translation of the native term Baalbek, which appellation the ruins at the present day retain. Heliopolis was famed for its temple of the Sun, erected by Antoninus Pius (Malala, Chronicle 11, page 119), and the ruins of this celebrated pile still attest its former magnificence.” [71] The name of Antoninus Pins is still seen on the temple bases. [72]

Marcus Aurelitis (161-180 AD), the son of Antoninus Pius, appears to have been a devotee of Suit worship. According to H. A. L. Fisher, “Marcus Aurelius instituted a temple to Mithras on the Vatican hill.” [73] Memorials of Mithra worship have been found in the very place where the Vatican now stands. [74] An inscription found in Great Britain and dedicated “to the God the Invincible Sun,” is attributed to this period. [75] At Nersae, in the Aequian territory, the treasurer of the town restored in 172 AD a chapel which had fallen into ruins. This shows that the cult was already long established there. [76] The inscription states that it was dedicated “to the Invincible Mithra,” and it speaks of him as “the Invincible Sun.” [77] An inscription connected with the Mithraic cult at Ostia is dated as of 162 AD. [78]

It was in this reign that Celstis, the Roman eclectic philosopher, so bitterly crusaded against Christianity. [79] He drew parallels between the practices of the Sunday-keeping Christians and the followers of Mithra. Gnosticism was then in its heyday and played great havoc in the church by attempting to reconcile Christian theology with pagan philosophy.

## Commodus and Heliogabalus

Commodus (180-192 AD), the son of Marcus Aurelius, “desecrated the rites of Mithra with actual murder, although it was customary in them to merely say or pretend something that would produce an impression of terror.” [80] Thus it appears that he revived the sacrifice of human beings in the Mithraic mysteries, which had been prohibited by Hadrian. Commodus even assumed the title of Invictus, [81] and placed the image of the Sun on his coinage. [82]

Septimius Severus (193-211 AD) was married to Julia Domna, the daughter of the high priest of the Sun, at Emesa, in Syria. [83] The coins of this emperor are decidedly stamped with the impress of Sun worship. [84] The name of Julia Domna also appears on the bases of the Temple of the Sun at Baalbek, in Syria. [85]

About the year 200 AD Tertullian attempted to answer charges of Sun worship brought against Sunday-keeping Christians by their pagan opponents. This writer also describes many of the practices of Mithraism. [86]

The elaborate baths of Caracalla (211-217 AD) were equipped “with even a Mithracum in the basement.” [87] The Sun-god figured prominently on the coinage of this Roman ruler. [88]

When Varius Avitus was a child, his mother took him to Eniesia, in Syria. When he was five his education to be a priest of the Sun was begun; and while he was still a youth, he became high priest of the Sun. [89] As soon as he became emperor of Rome (218-222 AD), he assumed the title of Heliogabalus. According to Julius Capitolinus, “the Phoenicians give the name Elagabalus [Heliogabalus] to the Sun.” [90] This emperor built a temple to the Sun on the Palatine hill, where Augustus had erected one long before. “He wore his pontifical vest as high priest of the Sun, with a rich tiara on his head.” [91] On his coins he had such legends as these: “Priest of the Sun-god Elagabalus,” “Sacred to the Sun-God

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Elagabalus,” and “To the Defender of the Sun.” [92]

His successor, Alexander Severus (222-235 AD), was dedicated to the Sun at his birth. His coinage was also stamped with markings of a solar type. [93] It was in this period that Origen attempted to answer pagan charges of Sun worship brought against Sunday-keeping Christians. [94] Valerianus (253-260 AD) had the image of the Sun on his coins. And his son Gallienus (260-268 AD) placed the phrase “To the Invincible Sun” on his coinage. [95]

### “The Sun, the Lord of the Roman Empire”

The emperor Aurelian (270-275 AD), whose mother was a priestess of the Sun, was especially devoted to Sun worship. His biographer says: “He set the priest hoods in order, he constructed the Temple of the Sun, and he founded its college of pontiffs; and he also allotted funds for making repairs and paying attendants.” [95] This emperor officially proclaimed the solar deity as “Sol Dominus Imperii Romani” (the Sun, the Lord of the Roman Empire). This Solar title repeatedly appears on his coinage. [97]

From this time until the reign of Constantine I (306-337 AD) the Cult Of the Invincible Sun was the supreme and official religion of the Roman Empire. After 323 AD, its prestige declined, because the emperors from that time forward favored Roman Christianity. Julian the Apostate (361-363 AD), who was initiated into the mysteries of Mithraism about 355 AD, displayed great zeal in trying to restore this Sun cult to its former prestige in the empire, but he failed. [98] It gradually waned until it practically disappeared about two hundred years later.

### Mithraism a Mystery Religion

There were seven degrees of initiation into the Mithraic mysteries: (1) Raven, (2) Griffin, (3) Soldier, (4) Lion, (5) Persian, (6) Courier of the Sun, and (7) Father. [99] The Catholic Encyclopedia says: “The chief of the fathers, a sort of pope, who always lived at Rome, was called ‘Pater Patrum’ or ‘Pater Patratus.’” [100]

Referring to the initiation ceremony into the degree of Soldier, Tertullian writes: “If my memory still serves me, Mithra there (in the kingdom of Satan), sets his marks on the foreheads of his soldiers. Celebrates also the oblation of bread, and introduces an image of a resurrection, and before a sword wreathes a crown. What also must we say to (Satan’s) limiting his chief priest to a single marriage He, too, has his virgins; he, too, has his proficients in continence.” [101]

Thus Mithraism had its male and female celibates. The same writer also says: “We find him, too, practicing baptism in his subjects.” [102] And C. H. Toy states that there were also “processions, striking dramatic performances, and brilliant effects of light and music.” [103]

Tertullian, as already shown, says that those initiated into the Mithraic degree of Soldier were marked on the forehead. F. Cumont explains this thus: “It appears, however, that the sign or seal impressed was not, as in the Christian liturgy, all unction, but a mark burned with a red-hot iron like that applied in the army to recruits before they were admitted to the oath. This indelible imprint perpetuated the memory of the solemn engagement by which the person under vow contracted to serve in that order of chivalry which Mithraism constituted.” [104]

Speaking of the Mithraic communion service Justin Martyr said in his apology to the emperor Antoninus Pius and the Roman people:

“Which the wicked devils have imitated in the mysteries of Mithras, commanding the same thing to be done. For, that bread and a cup of water are placed with certain incantations in the mystic rites of one who is being initiated, you either know or can learn.” [105]

### Chaldean Astrology in Mithraism

The elements of Chaldean astrology were incorporated into Mithraism. The contact of the Persian religion with that of the Chaldeans, after the conquest of Babylon by Persia, apparently brought this about. [106] From this source Mithraism adopted the pagan week of seven days dedicated to the planetary gods, [107] among which the day of the Sun was considered the most sacred. Julian the Apostate, in a discourse on the grandeur of Sun worship, said: “And if I should also touch on the secret teaching of the mysteries in which the Chaldean, divinely frenzied, celebrated the God of the Seven Rays, that god through whom he lifts up the souls of men, I should be saying what is unintelligible.” [108]

The same emperor speaks of “the seven spheres, from the highest vault of the heavens [and down] as far as Selene the Moon: for Selene is the last of the heavenly spheres.” He declared that the Sun



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“assigned as his own station the mid heavens, in order that from all sides he may bestow equal blessing on the gods who came forth by his agency and in company with him. And that he may guide the seven spheres [of the planets] in the heavens and the eighth sphere [the fixed stars] also, yes and as I believe the ninth creation too, namely our world which revolves forever in a continuous cycle of birth and death. For it is evident that the planets, as they dance in a circle about him, preserve as the measure of their motion a harmony between this god and their own movements.” [109]

### The Seven Planetary Spheres

The following Mithraic doctrine of the planetary spheres undoubtedly molded to a large extent the teachings of many of the Gnostic sects concerning the organization of the universe into various heavens. A modern authority, speaking of Mithraic belief, gives this excellent statement on this point:

“The psychology of man is as follows: An infinite multitude of souls pre-existed in the ethereal heavens, and these descend to inhabit the bodies of men. As they descend, they pass through the realms governed by the planets and receive from them certain qualities, the proportion of which determines the character of the man. Thus from Saturn was received the determining dispositions, from Jupiter ambition, from Venus sensual appetite, from Mercury other desires, from Mars combativeness, from the Moon vital energy, and from the Sun intellectual powers. At death judgment by Mithra decided the soul’s fate. If it was to return to heaven, it was enabled by the savior Mithra to satisfy the guardian of the gate to each sphere, where it gave up the qualities received off its descent, and so passed to the eighth sphere to enjoy life with Mithra.” [110]

### Widely Diffused

Soldiers, traders, and slaves propagated Mithraism to the remotest parts of the Roman Empire. The interest of the Roman government in it as the state religion naturally gave the cult of the Invincible Sun wide publicity. Remains of this form of Sun worship have been found in Germany, France, Spain, North Africa, and Great Britain. S. Dill says: “More than 100 inscriptions, more than 75 pieces of Mithraic sculpture, with the ruins of many chapels of the god, attest his powerful influence at Rome.” [111] At Ostia, the seaport a few miles down the river from Rome, no less than seven Mithraic chapels have been uncovered. [112] The cult of the Invincible Sun was too complex and elaborate for us to discuss it in detail here, but the general features and scope of it, as we have outlined, show that it was undoubtedly the most powerful pagan rival that Christianity had to meet.

## 11. “On the Lord’s Day of the Sun”

IN the New Testament the Greek word generally translated as “lord” is kurios. There is also an adjectival form of this word, which is kuriakos and means “lord’s.” Thus we have it in the phrases “Lord’s supper” [1] and “Lord’s day,” [2] the only instances of its use in the writings of the apostles. The Latin words corresponding to the Greek terms are dominus and dominicus.

Fortunately, the apostolic literature does not leave us in the dark as to what day of the Biblical week was “the Lord’s day” in the primitive Christian church. Three of the Gospel writers were careful to note what the Lord Jesus Himself had said on this point. His statements were made publicly and in the hearing of both His friends and His enemies. “He said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.” [3] “The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day.” [4] “Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.” [5] Thus the Master’s teaching rang trite to the ancient precept of the Ten Commandments, which says that “the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.” [6] It was not until the second century A. D. that the first day of the week was called “Lord’s Day.”

### Sunday Called “the Lord’s Day”

After the death of the last of the apostles litany of the Gentile Christians, who had been converted from paganism, began to observe the pagan Sunday, which corresponded to the first day of the Biblical week. This practice took its rise about the middle of the second century after Christ, and the argument invented for it was that it was a fitting way to commemorate the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, although no commandment from Christ or His apostles was adduced in support of the idea. These Sunday-keeping

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Christians, in need of a name for this new festival, hit upon the idea of calling it "the Lord's day." Thus we find in both the Greek and the Latin ecclesiastical literature of the latter part of the second century and the centuries following, frequent references to Sunday by this name. None of these writings cite Revelation 1:10 as Biblical authority for calling Sunday "the Lord's day." Indeed, no ecclesiastical writer prior to Eusebius of Caesarea in the fourth century alleged that either Christ or his apostles instituted the observance of the first day of the week.

### **The Lord of the Heathen Sunday**

Because there is no New Testament precedent for the designation of Sunday as "the Lord's day," much has been written and said about how it got this title. Some writers have been rather bold in stating their convictions on the matter. For example, A. Paiva, a Portuguese writer on the subject of Mithraism, says:

"The first day of each week, Sunday, was consecrated to Mithra since times remote, as several authors affirm. Because the Sun was god, the Lord par excellence, Sunday came to be called the Lord's day, as later was done by Christianity." [7]

Also he compares Mithraism and Sunday-keeping Christianity thus: "The one and the other hallowed Sunday, as the Lord's day, and the one and the other celebrated the birth of its god on the 25th of December. And it is beyond doubt that Mithraism preceded Christianity in this and in other points." [8]

Arthur Weigall, a historian who is well known, says too: "As a solar festival, Sunday was the sacred day, of Mithra; and it is interesting to notice that since Mithra was addressed as Dominus 'Lord,' Sunday must have been the Lord's day long before Christian times." [9]

And not a few other authors take the same position as that field by Gilbert, Murray, who says: "It [Mithraism] had so much acceptance that it was able to impose on the Christian world its own Sun-Day in place of the Sabbath, its Sun's birthday, 25th December, as the birthday of Jesus." [10]

Thus Sunday observance, having no "Thus said the Lord" in Holy Writ to support it, is still said to be a child of Sun worship, just as it was affirmed to be in the days of Tertullian and Origen.

### **"Lords Many"**

Writing to the Greek Christians of Corinth, the apostle Paul said: "There be gods litany, and lords many." [11] And Jesus Himself pointed out that no particular good might be derived by using the name "Lord" if the professed servant of God does contrary to His expressed will. "Not everyone that said unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name and in Thy name have cast out devils and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, you that work iniquity." [12]

Thus it is apparent that sacred labels can be put on many religious things that do not meet divine approval. God has never called Sunday "My holy day."

### **Pagan Lords**

It is a fact, as Paul said, that the term "lord" was used to designate many heathen deities. This has been so from times immemorial, especially of the Sun. For example, in the ancient Chaldean hymns to the Sun there abound such words as these: "Lord," "Great Lord," "Lord, Light of the legions of the heavens, Sun, O judge!" "The Lord of living beings," and "Lord, illuminator of darkness." [13] Tablets which tell of an invasion by the Medes show that the Assyrians addressed the Sun with such phrases as: "O Sun-god, Lord great, whom will I call to thee," and "O Sun-god, Great Lord, I have asked thee." [14]

Nebuchadnezzar, of Biblical fame, in an inscription refers thus to the solar deity he worshiped: "O Sun, great Lord!", "the Sun my Lord," "the Great Lord, my Lord." [15]

In the Tel-el-Amarna letters abound such phrases as these: "The King my Lord, the Sun from heaven," "my Lord the Sun," "the Sun-god my Lord." [16]

### **The Phoenician Baal**

In the Bible much is said about the worship of Baal, "the Sun-god of Phoenicia." [17] This name means "lord." In Numbers 21:28 and Isaiah 16:8 the Hebrew word baal is rendered "lord." It is frequently translated as "master" and "owner" in the Old Testament.

On this point a statement by A. H. Sayce, the noted Orientalist, is enlightening: "The Semite

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addressed his god as Baal or Bel, 'the Lord.' It was the same title as that which was given to the head of the family, by the wife to the husband, and by the servant to his master. There were as many Baalim or Baals as there were groups of worshipers. Each family, each clan, and each tribe had its own Baal, and when families and clans developed into cities and states the Baalim developed along with them. The visible form of Baal was the Sun; the Sun was lord of heaven and therewith of the earth also and all that was upon it.” [18]

### **The Sun as the Lord of the Roman Empire**

Joseph Scaliger and others say that in the Persian tongue the name “Mithra” used to designate the Sun, really means “Lord.” [19] If this be true, the “day of Mih,” once widely used in Chinese almanacs to designate Sunday, and which has been shown to have come to China from Central Asia (most probably from Persia), means “the Lord’s day.” [20] The word Milt is the Chinese transliteration of the Persian name Milir (Mithra).

Among the many Roman inscriptions related to Mithraism, the cult of the Invincible Sun, this Sun-god is frequently referred to as “Lord.” Here are some examples of phrases found in them: “Sancto Domino Invicto Mithrae” [21] (to the Holy Lord, the Invincible Mithra), “Domino Invicto” [22] (to the Lord, the Invincible One), “Domino Soli” [23] (to the Lord, the Sun), “Domino Soli Sacrum” [24] (sacred to the Lord, the Sun), and “Domino Soli’ Sacro” [25] (to the Lord, the sacred Sun). In an inscription made by order of the emperor Commodus (180-192 AD) “to Mithra, the Invincible Sun,” [26] this solar deity is expressly referred to as “the Lord.” [27]

A. Dieterich presents a Mithraic prayer, composed in Greek, in which the Sun-god is addressed thus: “Lord, hail, King of great power, far ruling, greatest of the gods, Helios, the Lord of the heaven and the earth, god of gods.” [28]

The emperor Aurelian (270-275 AD) not only officially proclaimed the Invincible Sun of Romanized Mithraism as Sol Dominus Imperii Romani (The Sun, the Lord of the Roman Empire), but also placed the full title and the image of the Sun on his coinage. On others of his coins the title is abbreviated as Sol Dom. Imp. Romani and Sol Dom. Imperial Rome. [29]

The emperor Julian (361-363 AD), who attempted to restore Sun worship to the place it had formerly occupied in the Roman Empire before Constantine abandoned it, wrote in Greek “that among the gods whom we can perceive, who revolve eternally in their most blessed path, he [the Sun] is leader and Lord.” [30]

### **“On the Lord’s Day of the Sun”**

An ancient sepulchral inscription found in Catina (now Catania, at the foot of Mount Actna, on the east coast of Sicily), although written in Greek, is clearly Roman, for it uses the Latin mode of calendar dating. It is the sepulchral epitaph of a child, and the particular part which bears on our subject says:

“He was born, O Lord of good things, on the 15th day before the Kalends of November, on the day of Saturn; he lived 10 months; (and) he died on the 10th day before the Kalends of September, on the Lord’s day of the Sun.” [31]

The dates thus given are (for the birth) Saturday, October 18, and (for the death) Sunday, August 23. The year date of the inscription is not known, but the script indicates that it is of an early date. The death did not occur on a leap year, because when October 18 falls on Saturday, the following August 23 cannot fall on Sunday if the intervening February has 29 days. The phrase “Lord’s day of the Sun” appears as hemera Helion Kuriaki.

## **12. The Sunday of Sun Worship**

IT has been shown in this treatise that since the middle of the first century before Christ there was in use among the Romans an astrological week of seven days named after the planetary gods. In that week there was one day over which the Sun was supposed to preside as lord, and which was regarded as sacred to the Sun-god. It was called dies Solis, “the day of the Sun.” Moreover, because Sun worship was so popular throughout the Roman Empire in the first centuries of the Christian Era, it is only reasonable to suppose that Sun worshipers would regard the day of the Sun as the most sacred of the seven days of the planetary week.

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## Modern Authorities Concur

That Sunday was the sacred day of Mithra, the Invincible Sun, is a fact known and taught by many outstanding authorities of modern times. [1] For example, a well-known Roman Catholic work, The Catholic Encyclopedia, not only states that in Mithraism “the seven days of the week were dedicated to the planets,” but also declares, “Sunday was kept holy in honor of Mithra.” [2]

And the Encyclopaedia Britannica mentions that “the sanctification of Sunday and of the 25th of December” was a special feature of Mithraism, and says: “Each day of the week was marked by the adoration of a special planet, the Sun being the most sacred of all.” [3]

Comparing Mithraism and Christianity, The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge affirms, “Both regarded Sunday as sacred.” It also remarks: “So too, the Sun, Moon, and planets were objects of regard. Babylonian influence wove into Mithraism its theories of the control by each of the planets of one day in the week.” [4]

And Chambers’s Encyclopaedia notes: “Parallels to Christianity in Mithraic legend, in Mithraic ceremony, and in Mithraic belief will have been apparent, and other resemblances, as the sanctification of Sunday and of the 25th of December, the birthday of Mithra, might be cited.” [5]

## The Testimony of Franz Cumont

Franz Cumont is considered by scholars a great authority on the subject of Mithraism. He has repeatedly declared that in this cult Sunday was the sacred day of the worship of the Sun. Speaking of the Mithraic religion, he says: “Each day of the week, the planet to which the day was sacred was invoked in a fixed spot in the crypt. And Sunday, over which the Sun presided, was especially holy.” [6]

He goes as far as to declare: “The pre-eminence assigned to the dies Solis [the day of the Sun] also certainly contributed to the general recognition of Sunday as a holiday. This is connected with a more important fact, namely, the adoption of the week by all the European nations. We have seen that in the astrological system each day was sacred to a Planet. It is probable that the worshiper prayed to the presiding star of each day. We still possess the text of these prayers addressed to the planets in the East as in the West. We have some in Greek, but of a late date, and the most curious are those of the pagans of Harran, near Edessa, which an Arabic writer has transmitted to us.” [7]

He says, too, that “the dies Solis was evidently the most sacred of the week for the faithful of Mithra and, like the Christians, they had to keep the Sunday holy and not the Sabbath.” [8]

Certainly our study of the pagan planetary week confirms the following opinion by Doctor Cumont: “It is not to be doubted that the diffusion of the Iranian mysteries has had a considerable part in the general adoption, by the pagans, of the week with the Sunday as a holy day. The names which we employ, unawares, for the other six days, came into use at the same time that Mithraism won its followers in the provinces in the West, and one is not rash in establishing a relation of coincidence between its triumph and that concomitant phenomenon.” [9]

It seems as if some spiritual genius having control over the pagan world had so ordered things that the heathen planetary week should be introduced just at the right time for the most popular Sun cult of all ages to come along and exalt the day of the Sun as a day above and more sacred than all the rest. Surely this was not accidental.

Doctor Cumont says again: “Each of the planetary bodies presided over a day of the week.” [10] Also: “Like the latter [the Christians], they [the Mithraists] also held Sunday sacred, and celebrated the birth of the Sun on the 25th of December.” [11]

He tells us that the crypt in which the Mithraists worshiped was regarded as a symbol of the universe, and mentions, in connection with their ceremonies, “the seven planets, which presided over the days of the week, and which were the object of a very special worship.” [12] And again: “He [the worshiper] should also recite the traditional prayers, for example, in honor of the planets on their sacred days, and carry out the sacrifices, of which the character seems to have been very variable.” [13]

All of this agrees very well with the spiritualist message given by the oracle of Apollo, which said: “Invoke Mercury, and the Sun in like manner on the day of the Suit, and the Moon when her day comes, and Saturn also, and Venus in succession, with unuttered Prayers.” [14] Apollo not only was a Sun-god, but was esteemed as the god of prophecy by the pagans.

Prayer to the planets on their respective days was a part of the worship of the heavenly bodies. It may seem somewhat contradictory to say that they should be invoked with unuttered prayers. However,

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Tertullian has explained, as we shall note, that in Praying to the heavenly bodies the heathen did not titter their prayers aloud, but merely moved their lips in silent supplication In the direction of the deity addressed. Those who have traveled widely have observed that a similar practice in the recitation of prayers is followed by the devotees of the images venerated in Roman Catholic churches.

### Mithraism and Planet Worship

It was probably after the Persian conquest of Babylon in the sixth century that the Mithraic cult assimilated the astrological elements of the Chaldean star worship, and the Still was assigned the place of Pre-eminence among the planetary gods.

In a note of comment on the worship of Mithra, M. Guizot, the French scholar, says that in the Persian religion “Mithra is the first of the genii, or jzeds, created by Ormuzd. It is he who watches over all nature. The Chaldeans appear to have assigned him a higher rank than the Persians. It is he who bestows upon the earth the light of the Sun. The Sun, named Khor (brightness), is thus an inferior genius, who, with litany other genii, bears a part in the functions of Mithra. These assistant genii to another genius are called his kainhars; but in the Zendavesta they are never confounded. On the days sacred to a particular genius, the Persian ought to recite, not only the prayers addressed to him, but those also which are addressed to his kamkars; thus the hymn or iescht of Mithra is recited on the day of the Sun (Khor), and vice versa.” [15]

### A Mithraic Chapel in Ostia

It has already been stated that the Mithraist stood in a fixed or determined spot to worship a given planet on its day. A notable example of this is seen in the mosaic pavement of a mithraeum uncovered in Ostia, near Rome. In the floor may be seen the seven semicircles, one for each god, indicating the spots where the worshiper should stand to render his devotions. Guido Calza, the Italian archaeologist in charge of the excavations at Ostia, is the author of this description:

“In the mosaic pavement are seen seven semi circles corresponding to the seven celestial spheres, and a sacrificial knife [is seen] lying beside a hole which was perhaps used for the blood of the victim or for a strange ceremony of initiation. The mosaic of the vertical walls of the podium [elevated platforms] opposite the entrance has two torchbearers with flaming torches and in Oriental costume; and on the sides, along the corridor [there appear], on the left: the Moon, Mercury, and Jupiter. And on the right: Mars, Venus and Saturn-representing the six planets from which have been taken the names of the days of the week. The last day, the dies doinini Mithrae [the day of the Lord Mithra], was represented by a bas-relief at the end [of the corridor] with Mithra stabbing the bull. In its place there stands a plaster paris copy of the relief which is now in the Vatican, and which was Perhaps taken from here. On the thick front of the podium, almost above the middle, are carved two small, square, vaulted niches. On the projecting ledge of the mosaic beneath the podium are depicted the signs of the zodiac. At the right are those of the winter: the Balance, the Scorpion, the Archer, the Goat and the Water-Carrier [the Fishes]; at the left are those of the summer: the Rain, the Bull, the ‘Twins, the Crab, the Lion, and the Virgin.” [16]

L. Paschetto, who has made drawings of the planetary gods of this Mithraic chapel, describes them thus: “The planets are represented on the two sides of the central corridor, under the vertical walls of the podium. Each of the deities is standing upright with a black background representing a niche or tiny chapel. There are seen in order at the left: The Moon with her brow adorned with a lunar crescent, and holding in her right hand an arrow, and in the other an oval object which may be an offering cup. Next is Mercury with a short staff (the rod mentioned by Homer), a primitive form of wand, which in our drawing is added to that. Then follows Jupiter with the scepter and the lightning. To the right and in front of the other figures, are found in order: Mars with his helmet and breastplate, staying himself upon a lance and holding a shield. Venus is naked down to the waist, and has a veil fluttering about her head. And the sixth personage is bearded and has a cape pulled over his mantle. His attributes are lacking because the mosaic is in bad condition, but it cannot be doubted that it is Saturn.” [17]

Considerable speculation has been made concerning the peculiar arrangement of the planets in this chapel, for they do not appear in either the order of their supposed revolutions in the heaven or that of the days of the pagan week. However, the Sun (Mithra) holds in this instance the traditional central position, which is the dominant one.

### A Mithraic Bas-Relief

Among the various photographic illustrations presented by Franz Cumont, there appears one



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which very clearly shows a Mithraic arrangement of the planetary gods in the order of the days of the week. It is a bas-relief of white marble from Boulogne, France, in which Mithra, the Sun-god, is shown stabbing the bull. Above him are seen in a row the seven planetary gods. Here is Doctor Cumont's description of them:

“Thus upon a marble stone from Boulogne (Mon. 106) the upper border of the grotto is decorated with the busts of the radiant Sun, of bearded Saturn doubtless wearing a veil, of Venus wearing a diadem, of Jupiter Serapis holding a basket, of Mercury with a winged hat on his head, of Mars wearing a helmet, and finally the Moon with a crescent mounted above her brow. The order in which those gods are placed is that of the days of the week over which they presided, but in order to establish the concordance, you must read that symbolic line, not from left to right, but from right to left. That arrangement, which is contrary to what you would expect, perhaps makes allusion to the retrograde movement of the wandering stars, which provoked so much comment in ancient times.” [18] Read from right to left they are: Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, and Sun.

### The Mithraic Sunday in China

A. Wylie, who did considerable research on the antiquity of the week in China, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, became much interested in some Chinese almanacs published at the time of his residence in that country, in which Sunday was designated by the words *mih jih*. When his attention was first called to this matter, he did some research on it. He says: “When at Amoy I procured a copy of the almanac in question, where the *mih Jih* was certainly recorded throughout under every Sunday.” [19]

Thereupon he relates in detail his findings in the study of the matter, and here is the information he gives:

“Turning then to the imperially authorized manual of astrology, *Kin ting ke he peen fang shoo*, I find the passage in question is a verbatim copy of one of a long series of articles, which were presented in a memorial to the throne in 1740, praying for a thorough revision of the contents of the national almanac. It reads thus:

“In the *she heen shoo*, “Imperial Almanac,” the *Fuh-twan*, “suppressed” days, the *Mih* days, and the *Tsae e* “cutting-out clothes” days, are all calculated according to the occurrence of the constellations. We find on investigation, that the method of selecting times by the twenty-eight constellations of the zodiac, came from Central Asia. The suppressions depend upon the pairing of the days with the constellations, theoretically similar to the *Seun hung*, “decade blanks,” and *Loo kung*, “road blanks,” and are consistent with principle. As to the *mih* days, they are marked by the four constellations *Fang*, *Heu*, *Maou*, and *Sing*, which correspond among the seven planets with *Jih*, “the Sun,” called in the language of the West, *mih*, the ruler of joyful events; so that in China interments and the opening of mortuary sheds are avoided on those days. Now we find by examination that in Central Asia, the twenty-eight constellations are apportioned in rotation among the seven planets, for registering the days; each day being suitable for certain things and unsuitable for others; entirely different from the customs of China. Merely to adopt the *Mih* day from among these is utterly indefensible. Finally, to say that the thirteen days marked by the constellations *Keo*, *Kang*, *Fang*, *Tow*, *Neu*, *Heu*, *Peih*, *Kwei*, *Low*, *Kwei*, *Chwig*, *Yih*, and *Chin*, are suitable for cutting out clothes, has no reason in it; so that both these ought to be rejected.”

“From this passage we see that the ‘*Mih* day’ is actually and literally ‘Sun-day,’ and we learn also that it was formerly marked in the almanacs issued by the Supreme Board at Peking. Probably the *Chin-chew* publication is the only almanac that still retains it, and it is remarkable that it should continue to publish its condemnation also.” [20]

### An Explanation

While Mr. Wylie could clearly see that the name *Mih jih* literally meant “Sunday,” and that it came into China from Central Asia, he did not discern its particular place of origin and significance. When he published his report, others saw at once the solution to the mystery. Hence, J. D Dudgeon, in an editorial note, remarks:

“It is somewhat strange that the natural origin of the word [*Mih*] should have escaped him [Mr. Wylie], viz., the Persian word *Mitra*, *Mithra*, *Mithras*, for the Sun, as suggested by our ‘facile princeps’ in philology, the Chinese having evidently caught hold of the first syllable of the word, a practice not uncommon in transferring foreign words into the Chinese language. This derivation is so self-evident that it does not require proof. It is evidently the same as ‘*mitra*,’ one of the names of the Sun in Sanscrit. The

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same root appears in many Persian words.” [21]

Joseph Edkins, who was associated with Mr. Wylie in other research work in China, also says:

“Some Chinese almanacs call Sunday the day of Mit, the Persian ‘Mithras,’ a name for the Sun. Mit is spoken of as a Hwei-hwei word. This term Hwei-hwei is one of the names for the Persian language among the Chinese. It is the word ouighour.” [22]

The term Mih is merely a Chinese transliteration of the Persian name Mihr (Mithra). Thus the Planetary week, particularly the name of the day of the Sun, spread from Central Asia, perhaps from Persia itself, into China and was used there to the extent that it figured in the Imperial Almanac until the Chinese government in 1740 was asked to purge the calendar of all foreign titles and holy days.

### Celsus Versus Sunday-keeping Christians

About 170 AD a Roman philosopher named Celsus, a Stoic, wrote a powerful treatise against Christianity, which he entitled *The True Discourse*. The result of his work was to place the Christian in a very unfavorable light in the eyes of the Romans and their rulers. It probably had much to do with influencing the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (161-180 AD), also a Stoic philosopher, to act against Christianity. One of the things that Celsus delighted in doing was to charge the semi pagan Christians with aping the heathen.

Celsus’ work is not extant, but many passages from it are quoted in the reply which Origen wrote (about 230 AD) to it. One particular quotation from that pagan treatise, as given by Origen, is significant because it refers to Mithraism and the planetary gods:

“After this, Celsus, desiring to exhibit his learning in his treatise against us, quotes also certain Persian mysteries, where he says:

“These things are obscurely hinted at in the accounts of the Persians, and especially in the mysteries of Mithras, which are celebrated amongst them. For in the latter [the Mithraic mysteries] there is a representation of the two heavenly revolutions, of the movement, viz., of the fixed stars, and of that which takes place among the planets, and of the passage of the soul through these. The representation is of the following nature:

“There is a ladder with lofty gates, and on the top of it an eighth gate. The first gate consists of lead, the second of tin, the third of copper, the fourth of iron, the fifth of a mixture of metals, the sixth of silver, and the seventh of gold. The first gate they assign to Saturn, indicating by the “lead” the slowness of this star; the second to Venus, comparing her to the splendor and softness of tin. The third to Jupiter, being firm and solid; the fourth to Mercury, for both Mercury and iron are fit to endure all things, and are money-making and laborious. The fifth to Mars, because, being composed of a mixture of metals, it is varied and unequal; the sixth, of silver, to the Moon; the seventh, of gold, to the Sun, thus imitating the different colors of the two latter.”

“He next proceeds to examine the reason of the stars being arranged in this order, which is symbolized by the names of the rest of the matter. [23] Musical reasons, moreover, are added or quoted by the Persian theology; and to these, again, he strives to add a second explanation, connected also with musical consideration.” [24]

### Mithraic Planetary Theology

Celsus Plainly shows that Mithraism incorporated into its teachings the doctrines of planetary theology. The two celestial revolutions mentioned are (1) the apparent movement of the Planets and the celestial sphere of fixed stars from east to west, and (2) the seeming retrograde movement of the planetary bodies from west to east. There was supposed to be a gate for entrance into each planetary sphere; and the top gate, the eighth, was thought to open into the heaven of the fixed stars. This latter heaven was believed to be the abode of the just.

In his remarks Celsus does not list the planetary gods in the order of their supposed revolutions in the heavens, i. e., Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, and Moon. He names them in the inverse order of the Christian week. He probably did this because Saturn was the outermost planet. He lists them thus: Saturn, Venus, Jupiter, Mercury, Mars, Moon, Sun. But reading Celsus’ list in the reverse order, you have: Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn! This is the order of the planetary names of the days of the week.

Origen says that Celsus explained “the reason of the stars being arranged in this order.” Unfortunately, he did not preserve Celsus’ statements on this point. He does mention, nevertheless, that the

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pagan writer did adduce “musical reasons” for it, and that he set forth “a second explanation” too. It should be recalled that Dio Cassius also gave two explanations for the order of the planetary names of the days of the week, and that one of them was based on a theory of music. We may well suspect that Celsus was drawing parallels between Mithraism and Sunday-keeping Christianity, comparing the practices of the one with the other. Indeed, he says of Celsus: “He compares inconsiderate believers to Metragyrtae, arid soothsayers, and Mithrae, and Sabbadians, and to anything else that one may fall in with.” [25]

It is striking, too, that Origen did not attempt to answer charges on this point, whatever they were, but merely sought to evade them, saying:

“But it seems to me, that to quote the language of Celsus upon these matters would be absurd, and similar to what he himself has done, when, in his accusations against, Christians and Jews, he quoted, most inappropriately, not only the words of Plato. But, dissatisfied even with these, he adduced in addition the mysteries of the Persian Mithras, and the explanation of them. Now, whatever be the case with regard to these, whether the Persians and those who conduct the mysteries of Mithras give false or true accounts regarding them, why did he select these for quotation, rather than sonic of the other mysteries, with the explanation of them? For the mysteries of Mithras do not appear to be more famous among the Greeks than those of Eleusis, or than those in Aegina, where individuals are initiated into the rites of Hecate. But if he must introduce barbarian mysteries with their explanation, why not rather those of the Egyptians, which are highly regarded by many, or those of the Cappadocians regarding the Comanian Diana, or those of the Thracians, or even those of the Romans themselves, who initiate the noblest members of their senate? But if he deemed it inappropriate to institute a comparison with any of these, because they furnished no aid in the way of accusing Jews or Christians, why did it not also appear to him inappropriate to adduce the instance of the mysteries of Mithras.” [26]

### Sunday Keepers Mistaken for Mithraists

A plausible suggestion can be given to explain why Celsus, the pagan philosopher, should choose to compare Sunday keeping Christianity with Mithraism instead of with some of the other heathen cults of that day. Tertullian, it must be remembered, wrote his apologies in reply to pagan charges against Sunday-keeping Christians about 200 AD, not long before Origen’s defense was made, and not long after Celsus published his accusations. Although Tertullian does not specifically mention Celsus by name, it is probable that he had this pagan’s True Discourse in mind when he wrote. It is very clear, from Tertullian’s own statements, that somebody had been mistaking Christian Sunday keepers for Mithraists.

For example, Tertullian said: “Others, indeed, with more culture and truthfulness, believe that the Sun is our god. We shall be taken for Persians, perhaps, although it is not permitted that we worship the Sun depicted on the linen, having him everywhere in his disk. The reason for this, I suppose, is that it is known that we pray towards the east. But also most of you at times, in affectation of worshipping the heavenly bodies, move your lips toward the sun rising. Likewise, if we devote the day of the Sun to festivity (from a far different reason from Sun worship), we are in a second place from those who devote the day of Saturn to rest and eating, themselves also deviating by way of a Jewish custom of which they are ignorant.” [27]

In another treatise he answers the pagan critics in a similar manner. He speaks thus: “Others, certainly more cultured, think the Sun is the god of the Christians, because it is known that we pray toward the east and make a festivity on the day of the Sun. Do you do less? Do not most of you, in affectation of worshipping the heavenly bodies, at times move your lips toward the sun rising. You certainly are the ones who also received the Sun into the register of the seven days, and from among the days preferred it, on which day you leave off the bath, or you may defer it until the evening, or you may devote it [the day] to idleness and eating.” [28]

### Tertullian’s Statements Analyzed

Let us analyze these statements by Tertullian. Note, first, what is said of the Sunday-keeping Christians of that time. (1) The cultured and sincere among the heathen thought them to be Sun worshipers too, devotees of the Persian cult of Mithra. (2) These professed Christians had “the Sun depicted on the linen, having him everywhere in his disk,” in collection with their worship. (3) They, too, prayed “toward the east,” the sun rising. (4) And they devoted “the day of the Sun to festivity.” Ill these things the Sunday keepers whom Tertullian represented were like the pagan Sun worshipers.

In the New Testament we find nothing said about such practices being a part of the Christian

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religion, and for this reason we must regard them as heathen usage adopted by Gentile Christians without the sanction of Christ or His apostles.

Let us note, also, what he says about the pagans. (1) The reference to Persians clearly indicates that Mithraism is the form of Sun worship particularly referred to. (2) The pagans worshiped “the heavenly bodies.” (3) In their worship they moved their lips in silent prayer. (4) Their prayers were directed toward the east, the sun rising. (5) They had a week of “seven days.” (6) They had a calendar [29] or “register of the seven days.” (7) Of all the seven days of the pagan week, the heathen “preferred” Sunday. This shows that they esteemed Sunday as a day sacred above all others.

The testimony of Tertullian throws light on the question of how Sunday was observed by the heathen. (1) They made “a festivity on the day of the Sun” observing it as a joyous festival. (2) On this day they “leave off the bath, or defer it until the evening.” It is not known why they did this. The fact that the bath could be taken in the evening (vesperam), that is, after sunset, seems to indicate it was deemed improper to bathe on Sunday while the Sun, the lord of the day, was visibly present and looking down upon his devotees. (3) Some of the heathen devoted the day of the Sun “to idleness” (otium), that is, by abstinence from labor deemed improper. (4) The day might also be devoted to “eating” (prandium). Because people eat every day of the week, there is no significance to Tertullian’s remarks unless he means that on Sunday the heathen made eating a special part of the festivity. (5) In the light of the facts found in our study of Sun worship, it appears that the principal religious devotions of the heathen were performed in the early morning, at the sunrise hour. The heathen observance of Sunday in Tertullian’s time apparently differed little from the way the day is now observed in parts of Europe. After the early morning masses and devotions in the churches, the people pass the rest of the day in festivity (dances, visits, games, excursions), fairs, trading, political meetings, elections, and various kinds of work (usually until about noon) not looked upon as unlawful. The Anglo-American notion of Sunday observance after the Biblical order of the Sabbath rest began with the Puritanism in England in the sixteenth century.

### Melchiades, Bishop of Rome

In his work *The Lives of the Popes*, Platina says that “Melchiades ordained, that no Christian should keep a fast upon a Sunday or a Thursday, because those days were so observed and kept by the pagans.” [30]

Melchiades was bishop of Rome between 311 and 314 AD. It was in his time that Constantine triumphed over Maxentius at the battle of Milvian Bridge, and decreed freedom for the Christian religion in the Roman Empire.

In the *Liber Pontificalis* we read concerning Melchiades: “He decreed that no one of the faithful should in any wise keep fast upon the Lord’s day or upon the fifth day of the week, because the pagans celebrated those days as a sacred fast.” [31]

The Latin text for the last clause reads, “quin eos dies pagani quasi sacrum Jejunium celebrant.” The word quasi means, in comparisons, “as if.” It has already been noted that on Sunday the heathen abstained from bathing. It is probable that there was abstinence from the use of wine on Sunday by certain groups. Justin Martyr says that water instead of wine was used in the celebration of the Mithraic communion service, and it was doubtless this practice that was borrowed by the Gnostic sects which substituted water for wine in the celebration of the Lord’s supper.

Writing early in the second century AD, Plutarch says: “As for wine, those who serve the god in Heliopolis bring none at all into the shrine, since they feel that it is not seemly to drink in the daytime while their Lord and King is looking upon them. The others use wine, but in great moderation. They have many periods of holy living when wine is prohibited, and in these they spend their time exclusively in studying, learning, and teaching religious matters.” [32]

In an “Epistle to the Bishops of Spain,” that is ascribed to Melchiades, we also read: “But the fast of the Lord’s day and of the fifth day no one ought to observe, in order that between the fast of the Christians and [that] of the Gentiles [heathen], indeed of the believers and of the unbelievers and heretics, a true and not a false distinction may be had.” [33]

The fifth day of the week (Thursday) was the day of Jupiter and was really a fast day among the pagans since the time of the poet Horace, in the first century BC. This we have noted already in Chapter 5. We also see that among the heathen Sunday was a day of abstinence from bathing, from work, and perhaps from wine.

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## 13. The First Civil Sunday Laws

THE first public Sunday laws were promulgated by the Roman emperor Constantine 1 (306-337 AD). These legal enactments form the precedents in civil law which mark the beginning of the long story of religious legislation by which secular governments and ecclesiastical organizations in collaboration have tried to compel men to keep Sunday as a sacred day. Therefore, the story of Constantine's Sunday edicts in behalf of this religious festival constitutes one of the most important chapters in the history of the observance of the day of the Sun.

### The Political Situation

When Diocletian became emperor of Rome in 284 AD, political rivalry, assassinations, and civil wars had long kept the empire in a state of constant turmoil that at times amounted to anarchy. Subject nations in the meantime seized every opportunity to revolt, and formidable barbarian enemies threatened the empire from without.

The emperor found the job of governing so vast and turbulent a domain too great for one man. Wherefore in 286 he appointed Maximian as his colleague in the government. The official title of each of these co-emperors was Augustus. To each of them was assigned an assistant whose official designation was that of Caesar. One of them was Galerius and the other Constantius Chlorus, the father of Constantine 1.

Nevertheless, the problems of governing the empire increased. Weary of his task, Diocletian abdicated in 305 AD and compelled Maximian to do the same. Thereupon the two Caesars, Galerius and Constantius Chlorus, were elevated to the rank of Augusti, and Severus and Maximian were appointed as their assistants.

Less than a year later, Constantius Chlorus died, and his army proclaimed Constantine, his son, Augustus to succeed him. Galerius refused to consent to this, and decreed that Severus should be his colleague. Constantine soon saw himself embroiled in a bloody political struggle that lasted eighteen years. At one time he had as many as five rivals for the coveted purple and power, but his genius as a politician and soldier enabled him to triumph over them all and become at last the sole ruler of the Roman world.

### The Religious Situation

At the same time the internal condition of the Christian church was deplorable. The seeds of corrupt doctrine sown by apostates were bearing a bountiful harvest of discord, confusion, and schism. The growing power of the bishops, who had become monarchical in their control of the church, and particularly the persistent arrogant claims of the Roman bishops, added to the increase. And this was the situation when Diocletian loosed against the Christians one of the most terrible pagan persecutions they ever suffered. The religious situation is thus described by Eusebius of Caesarea:

“But when on account of the abundant freedom, we fell into laxity and sloth, and envied and reviled each other, and were almost, as it were, taking tip arms against one another, rulers assailing rulers with words like spears, and people forming parties against people, and monstrous hypocrisy and dissimulation rising to the greatest height of wickedness, the divine judgment with forbearance, as is its pleasure, while the multitudes yet continued to assemble, gently and moderately harassed the episcopacy. This persecution began with the brethren in the army. But as if without sensibility, we were not eager to make the Deity favorable and propitious; and some, like atheists, thought that our affairs were unheeded and ungoverned; and thus we added one wickedness to another.” [1]

This state of things was erroneously ascribed by Eusebius to too much liberty rather than to an abuse of it. The bishops of Rome had been particularly bold in the endeavors to rule arbitrarily the Christian church. As early as the latter part of the second century, Victor 1, bishop of Rome, had sought to excommunicate other bishops who did not conform to his demands concerning the day for celebrating Easter, and succeeding bishops had followed his example. They had been powerless, however, as officers of a religious system lacking the recognition of the state, to compel obedience to their behests and so to have a universal church under a spiritual dictator. By the time of Constantine, apostasy in the church was ready for the aid of a friendly civil ruler to supply the wanting force of coercion. M. Rostovtzeff has well summed up the matter thus:

“The time was ripe for a reconciliation of state and church, each of which needed the other. It was a stroke of genius in Constantine to realize this and act upon it. He offered peace to the church, provided that she would recognize the state and support the imperial power.” [2]



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## The Battle With Maxentius

The inhabitants of Italy, galled by the tyranny of the government of Maxentius, sent a secret mission to Constantine beyond the Alps and urged him to come and liberate them. [3] He also had personal feelings of enmity against Maxentius, and the invitation was readily accepted. It must have been intimated that he would find an ally in the Roman Christians if he would proceed properly toward them. Ere he met the enemy in battle, he professed an interest in Christianity. The circumstances, as he afterward told them, were these:

As he was praying to the declining Sun one evening, he saw a fiery cross above the solar disk, and an inscription which said: "In this [sign] conquer." On the following night, it is said, a celestial visitor appeared to him and repeated the command of the daylight vision. Word was sent to the clergy, who explained that Christ Himself was the heavenly being who had visited him, and they interpreted for him other features of the visions. [4] Constantine immediately put himself under their spiritual direction and "made the priests of God his counselors." [5]

Maxentius lost the day at the Milvian Bridge (312 AD), and his life in the waters of the Tiber. The Roman clergy hailed Constantine as a second Moses and compared the defeat of Maxentius, and his subsequent drowning, to the destruction of Pharaoh's hosts in the Red Sea. [6]

## Constantine's Pagan Background

Little is known of the early religious training of Constantine. During the persecution of the Christians by Diocletian, mildness was shown by his father, Constantius Chlorus, in his dealings with them in Britain.

The family god of Constantine was Apollo, the solar deity identified with the old Roman Sol since the time of the Caesars. After he had quelled an uprising of the Franks in 308, he repaired to the temple of Apollo at Autun, in Gaul, with an offering of gratitude to this god for the victory. In 310, when the Franks had revolted again, Constantine visited this same temple, and Eumenius, the celebrated pagan orator of the city, delivered on the solemn occasion a panegyric in which he extolled the virtues of Constantine as being divine. By the words "your Apollo" and references to Sol (the Sun), the orator reminded the emperor of his family god and at the same time delicately suggested the appropriateness of repairing the public buildings of the city, especially the temple of Apollo. The next year the same Eumenius presented, in the form of a panegyric, the formal thanks of the city to Constantine for its restoration and for the grant of the imperial name Augustodunum. This indicates that the suggestions made the year before were not disregarded by the imperial devotee of the Sun-god. [7]

The fact that Constantine was praying toward the Still when the alleged vision of the cross was seen by him shows that he was a Sun worshiper in practice. [8]

Edward Gibbon, the historian, declares: "The devotion of Constantine was more peculiarly directed to the genius of the Sun, the Apollo of Greek and Roman mythology; and he was pleased to be represented with the symbols of the god of light and poetry. The unerring shafts of that deity, the brightness of his eyes, his laurel wreath, immortal beauty, and elegant accomplishments seem to point him out as the patron of a young hero. The altars of Apollo were crowned with the votive offerings of Constantine; and the credulous multitude were taught to believe that the emperor was permitted to behold with mortal eyes the visible majesty of their tutelar deity. And that, either waking or in a vision, he was blessed with the auspicious omens of a long and victorious reign. The Sun was universally celebrated as the invincible guide and protector of Constantine." [9]

This is supported by a statement of Julian the Apostate in a discourse to the Sun, in which he said to this god: "Why has thou not struck with thy sharp darts that daring mortal, deserter of thy worship?" [10] Thus he charged Constantine with deserting the cult of the Sun to espouse the Christian religion.

## A Nominal Conversion

The facts of the case show that Constantine was still a pagan after he met Maxentius in battle, and continued so for a long time to come. It was not until 323 AD, when his pagan brother-in-law Licinius, the last of his rivals for the power, was defeated, that Constantine openly professed the Christian religion and showed any hostility to paganism. He postponed his baptism into the faith of Christ until shortly before his death in 337 AD.

As soon as he arrived at Rome after the defeat of Maxentius in 312, he assumed the insignia and office of Pontifex Maximus as head of the official religion of the state, which was the cult of the Invincible

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Sun. He retained this position as the head of paganism throughout the rest of his life. [11] The same procedure was followed by succeeding Roman emperors, in spite of their profession of the Christian religion, until Gratian (375-383 AD) laid aside the title and insignia of Supreme Pontiff as being unbecoming to a follower of Christ. [12]

Another evidence of his paganism is seen in his coinage. Prior to his victory over Licinius in 323, the coins of Constantine abound with the imprint of paganism, particularly that of Sun worship. The names of Apollo, Mithra, and the Invincible Sun appear on his coins. For example, on one may be found the phrase “Soli Invicto Mithrae” (To the Invincible Sun, Mithra). On another, “Soli Invicto Comiti” (To the Invincible Sun, Colleague). [13] Constantine’s coinage plainly shows that he considered the Invincible Sun his divine colleague, or companion, in the government of the Roman world.

Commenting on the use of the phrase “Sol Invict Comiti” on the coins of this emperor, numismatologists say: “This legend, with the usual type of the Sun standing with right hand uplifted, and a globe in the left, occurs on brass coins of Constantine the Great—one of the relics of the old solar worship, which, like other symbols of paganism, appears on the mint of this professed convert to Christianity. The words SOLI INVICTO COMITI are found on two other medals of the same emperor. One (third brass) with the radiated head of the Sun. And the other (gold and silver) wherein this god is represented standing with his crown of rays, a globe which he holds in his left hand. Whilst with his right he places a crown on the head of Constantine, who holds the labarum, or imperial standard. Both these coins have the name and portrait of Constantine on them. We see on his medals the Sun represented as the Guide, Protector, and even Colleague of this emperor, with the inscription SOLI INVICTO and SOLI INVICTO COMITI.” [14]

### A Matter of Policy

It seems certain that Constantine really did have a mental conception or dream of the reconciliation of the interests of paganism and Christianity—represented symbolically by the union of the solar disk and the cross—with himself representing the interests of both religions. While pagans regarded their as their Supreme Pontiff, Christians considered him “the blessed Prince” and “the servant of God.” This double position he endeavored to maintain until 323, when Licinius was overthrown. Up to that time Constantine leg, slated against none of the essentially fundamental institutions of paganism.

### His Interest in Christianity

The insignia Constantine adopted for his standard and painted on the shields of his troops was new and ambiguous and well served his Policy. It resembled the letter X with a P written on it. While it may have been used perhaps by some Christian groups as symbolical of Christ, it was probably borrowed from paganism. It had been used on banners in the East before the birth of Christ, and seems to have been a symbol of the Sun. It was used on heathen coinage at least 200 years before Christ. [15]

Constantine was undoubtedly Interested in Christianity from the time of his professed vision in 312 AD. The popular clergy looked upon his interest in the Christian religion as a godsend, and hailed his favor with joy. Soon after the victory over Maxemius, he and Licinius published in 313 AD the famous Edict of Milan, in which they said: “We resolved, that is, to grant both to the Christians and to all men freedom to follow the religion which they choose, that whatever heavenly divinity exists may be propitious to its and to all that live under our government.” [16]

For the first time Christianity was placed on a legal footing with the other religions and with them enjoyed the protection of the civil law. Licinius was a pagan, and this law grants no privilege to the Christians that is not allowed to the heathen. It is another evidence of Constantine’s policy of maintaining peace in the religious world.

Eusebius says that Constantine made “the priests of God his counselors,” and that he appointed Christian ministers and deacons as custodians of his house. [17] At the same time the emperor also employed many pagan advisers and assistants.

“Christian bishops,” says C. B. Coleman, “were continually present at Constantine’s court after 312. Hosius, bishop of Cordova in Spain, may have been with him in his campaign against Maxentius; he certainly accompanied him on an expedition later, and seems to have been very influential at court.” [18]

It was between 313 and 315 that Hosius was employed to communicate the will of Constantine to Caecilian, bishop of Carthage, relative to the distribution of a grant of money. At the same time the churches were exempted from the payment of certain taxes, a privilege doubtless long enjoyed by the pagan temples. He exempted clergymen from the payment of state taxes, and this occasioned such a rush on the

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part of persons to claim the status of clergymen that in 320 AD he issued another edict limiting entrance into the clergy to such men as he deemed desirable. A law of 321 AD was addressed by Constantine to Hosius, and this bishop promulgated it, sanctioning the freedom of slaves emancipated in the presence of clergymen. These were all privileges that the pagan priests undoubtedly had long enjoyed. [19]

It was not long after Constantine began to manifest an interest in Christianity that he discovered that Christendom was then divided into various sects and that there was wide disagreement between many of them. Playing politics with religion meant that he must favor one group and discriminate against others. Thirteen of his epistles relative to church matters appear to have been written prior to 321. He was called upon to intervene in the church affairs in Africa and corresponded with Melchades, bishop of Rome (311-314 AD) about the Donatist schism. In 313 AD he convened a synod to deal with it, and Melchades presided over the meeting. This shows that the bishop of Rome was playing politics with the emperor. The synod of Arles (314) and the Council of Nicaea (325) were convoked by the emperor to settle disagreements among the clergy, and Constantine always espoused the cause of the most popular party on the grounds that the majority should rule regardless of what the Word of God said about the matter in dispute.

### The Sunday Laws

It was on March 7, 321 AD, that the first civil Sunday law was promulgated. On that date Constantine decreed:

“Let all judges and townspeople and all occupations of trade rest on the venerable day of the Sun. Nevertheless, let, those who are situated in the rural districts freely and with full liberty attend to the cultivation of the fields, because it frequently happens that no other day may be so fitting for the planting of grain and setting out of vineyards, lest at the time the commodities conceded by the provision of Heaven be lost. Given on the Nones [the 7th] of March, Crispus and Constantine being consuls, each of them for the second time.” [20]

His paganism is further seen by a law which he issued on the very next day-March 8-to require the consultation of the haruspices, the soothsayers whose official ditties entailed divination by examining the entrails of animals offered for sacrifice to the pagan gods. In this edict Constantine said:

“That whenever the lightning should strike the imperial palace or any other public building, the haruspices, according to ancient usage, should be consulted as to what it might signify, and a careful report of the answer should be drawn up for our use.” [21]

Edward Gibbon has sarcastically remarked: “His ministers were permitted to signify the intentions of their master in the various language which was best adapted to their respective principles. And he artfully balanced the hopes and fears of his subjects by publishing in the same year two edicts, the first of which enjoined the solemn observance of Sunday, and the second directed the regular consultation of the Aruspices.” [22]

The Sunday law of March 7 was interpreted by some to mean that emancipation promised to slaves could not be effected on Sunday, because it was an act of a legal nature. Therefore in June of the same year, Constantine, by another law, declared that while he did not favor holding courts for lawsuits on Sunday, he never intended that his edict should prevent such acts as the abuse of slaves. In this second law he urged that Sunday be used for religious purposes also, saying:

“As it should seem most improper that the day of the Sun, noted for its veneration, be occupied in wrangling discussions and obnoxious contentions of parties, so it is agreeable and pleasing to be performed on that day what is principally vowed. And also all may have liberty on this festive day for emancipation and manumission [of slaves], and acts concerning these matters may not be prohibited.” [23]

### Comments by Historians

Various comments have been made by noted writers on the Sunday laws of Constantine, and some of them are worthy of consideration.

Philip Schaff, a church historian, has this to say: “The Sunday law of Constantine must not be overrated. He enjoined the observance, or rather forbade the public desecration of Sunday, not under the name of Sabbatum [Sabbath] or dies Domini [Lord’s day], but under its old astrological and heathen title, dies Solis [Sunday], familiar to all his subjects, so that the law was as applicable to the worshipers of Hercules, Apollo, and Mithras, as to the Christians. There is no reference whatever in his law either to the fourth commandment or to the resurrection of Christ.” [24]

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J. Westbury-Jones, an English writer, speaks thus: “How such a law would further the designs of Constantine it, is not difficult to discover. It would confer a special honor upon the festival of the Christian church, and it would grant a slight boon to the pagans themselves. In fact there is nothing in this edict which might not have been written by a pagan. The law does honor to the pagan deity whom Constantine had adopted as his special patron god, Apollo or the Sun [Constantine retained the motto “Soli Invicto” to the end of his life]. The very name of the day lent itself to this ambiguity. The term Sunday (dies Solis) was in use among Christians as well as pagan.” [25]

A. P. Stanley, another church historian, says: “The retention of the old pagan name of ‘dies Solis’ or ‘Sunday,’ for the weekly Christian festival, is in great measure owing to the union of pagan and Christian sentiment with which the first day of the week was recommended by Constantine to his subjects, Pagan and Christian alike, as the ‘venerable day of the Sun.’ His decree regulating its observance has been justly called a new era in the history of the Lord’s day. It was his mode of harmonizing the discordant religions of the empire under one common institution.” [26]

### Sunday Worship

Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea, personal friend, flatterer, biographer, and adviser of the emperor, praised Constantine highly because “he commanded also that one suitable day for prayers be regarded, the truly chief, and first, and really Lord’s and salutary [day], and also that of light, and of life, and of immortality, and of every good thing named.” [27]

And he asks: “Who else has commanded those inhabiting the great globe of earth, and those throughout land and sea, that they should regard the Lord’s day in every week, and upon it should celebrate a festivity, and build up their bodies, and furnished an incentive to their souls for divinely inspired instructions?” [28]

In another treatise Eusebius describes Constantine’s Sunday legislation more at length, saying:

“And also he ordained a suitable day for prayers, the truly chief, and first, and really Lord’s and salutary [day]. And deacons and ministers consecrated to God, men both sober of life and adorned with every virtue, he appointed custodians of all his house. The faithful spear men and bodyguards, equipped with the arms of virtue and faith, had for a teacher of piety none other than the emperor himself; and they failed not to honor the Lord’s and salutary day, offering up among themselves gracious prayers, for the emperor. And the Blessed Prince labored to make all men do this, as it were making a vow itself, to make all men little by little religious. Wherefore, to all those governed under the Roman Empire he commanded to be made a rest on the days named for the Savior. And likewise also those of the Sabbath to honor; it appears to me, with respect to a memorial of the things remembered to have been done on these days by the common Savior.

“And the salutary day, which also happens to be named in honor of the light and of the Sun, he, earnestly teaching all the army to honor, gave to those partaking of the faith in God leisure to attend the church of God unhindered, in honor of whom to devote to prayers without any one being an impediment to them.

“And for those not as yet partaking of the Divine Word, he commanded in a second law that they be marched on the Lord’s days to the open field before the camp, and there, at a given signal, offer up together with one accord a prayer to God. For neither in spears, nor in full armor, nor in strength of bodies should they fix their hope, but above all in knowing God, the Giver of all good things, even of victory itself, to whom it is fitting to offer prayers while the hands are raised aloft toward heaven, and the eyes of the mind pass on beyond to the heavenly King, and in prayer calling upon the Savior, Giver of victory, the Guardian and Helper. And he was a teacher of prayer to all the soldiers, exhorting them all to say together in the Latin tongue thus:

“You alone we acknowledge as God; and Thee we reverence as King. We invoke thee as our Helper; and to Thee we owe our victories. By Thee we have put down our enemies. We thank Thee for the good things of the past; and in Thee we hope for the future. We are all become Thy supplicants; and we earnestly beseech Thee to preserve to us our emperor Constantine and his divinely beloved sons in long life of health and victory.” [29]

### Observations

It will be observed that the language of the prayer was so adapted that it might be offered to any one of the many gods in vogue at that time, although it was evidently framed by some clergymen, and

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intended, as Eusebius implies, to be addressed to the true God. The following remark by Victor Duruy is an appropriate one:

“He sent to the legions, to be recited upon that day [of the Sun], a form of prayer which could have been employed by the worshiper of Mithra, of Serapis, or of Apollo, quite as well as by a Christian believer. This was the official sanction of the old custom of addressing a prayer to the rising Sun. In determining what days should be regarded as holy, and in the composition of a prayer for national use, Constantine exercised one of the rights belonging to him as Pontifex Maximus; and it caused no surprise that he should do this.” [30]

Note, too, that Eusebius affirms that the emperor labored to make all men do this, as it were making a vow itself, to make all men little by little religious. Here is seen the objective of the first Sunday legislation by a civil government.

Eusebius also tells us: “And to the governors of the empire likewise was issued a law to honor the Lord’s day; and by command of the emperor they honored the days of the martyrs and the ecclesiastical seasons and festivals.” [31]

E. G. White, a modern writer, has rightly said: “In the early part of the fourth century, the emperor Constantine issued a decree making Sunday a public festival throughout the Roman Empire. The day of the Sun was revered by his pagan subjects, and was honored by Christians; it was the emperor’s policy to unite the conflicting interests of paganism and Christianity. He was urged to do this by the bishops of the church, who, inspired by ambition and thirst for power, perceived that if the same day was observed by both Christians and heathen, it would promote the nominal acceptance of Christianity by pagans, and thus advance the power and glory of the church.” [32]

Besides allowing agricultural pursuits on Sunday, Constantine also made it a market day, as had been the custom in some places. An inscription found on a Slavonian bath rebuilt by this emperor, says: “Also by the provision of his piety, he ordained that markets be held on the day of the Sun perpetually throughout the year.” [33]

Sunday marketing continued uninterrupted throughout the centuries in Europe until Charlemagne (768-814 AD), at the instigation of the clergy, forbade it to be done. [34] The practice of holding markets and fairs on Sunday is still observed in some parts of Europe today.

### The Easter Question

In another manner Constantine legislated in behalf of Sunday observance. Since the second century AD there had been a divergence of opinion about the date for celebrating the paschal (Easter) anniversary of the Lord’s passion (death, burial, and resurrection). The most ancient practice appears to have been to observe the fourteenth (the Passover date), fifteenth, and sixteenth days of the lunar month regardless of the day of the week these dates might fall on from year to year. The bishops of Rome, desirous of enhancing the observance of Sunday as a church festival, ruled that the annual celebration should always be held on the Friday, Saturday, and Sunday following the fourteenth day of the lunar month. In Rome, Friday and Saturday of Easter were fast days, and on Sunday the fast was broken by partaking of the communion. This controversy lasted almost two centuries, [35] until Constantine intervened in behalf of the Roman bishops and outlawed the other group. On this point Eusebius says:

“Accordingly, the people being thus every place divided in respect of this, and the sacred observances of religion confounded for a long period (in so much that the diversity of judgment in regard to the time for celebrating one and the same feast caused the greatest disagreement between those who kept it, some afflicting themselves with fasting and austerities, while others devoted their time to festive relaxation), no one appeared who was capable of devising a remedy for the evil, because the controversy continued equally balanced between both parties. To God alone, the Almighty, was the healing of these differences an easy task; and Constantine appeared to be the only one on earth capable of being His minister for this good end. For as soon as he was made acquainted with the facts which I have described, and perceived that his letter to the Alexandrian Christians had failed to produce its due effect, he at once aroused the energies of his mind, and declared that he must prosecute to the utmost this war also against the secret adversary who was disturbing the peace of the church.

“Then as if to bring a divine array against this enemy, he convoked a general council, and invited the speedy attendance of bishops from all quarters, in letters expressive of the honorable estimation in which he held them. Nor was this merely the issuing of a bare command, but the emperor’s good will contributed much to its being carried into effect: for he allowed some the use of the public means of conveyance, while he afforded to others an ample supply of horses for their transport. The place, too,



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selected for the synod, the city of Nicaea in Bithynia (named from 'Victory'), was appropriate to the occasion." [36]

Constantine himself attended the council, held in 325, and appears to have been its honorary president. "It was a strange spectacle," says J. B. Carter, "this vision of the successor of the deified emperors, himself still Pontifex Maximus of the old state religion, presiding over the bishops who were composing that historic statement, the Nicæan Creed." [37]

The council decreed in favor of the Roman church and Sunday observance in the matter of the paschal controversy, and Constantine issued a decree in the form of a letter whereby all Christians were ordered to celebrate the festival on Sunday. [38]

### Six Decrees Issued

Constantine issued at least six decrees relative to Sunday observance: (1) the law of March 7, 321 AD, commanding courts, trades, and townspeople to rest on the day of the Sun. (2) In June of the same year the law referring to emancipation and manumission of slaves on that day. (3) A law granting Christian soldiers permission to attend church services on Sunday. (4) Another law requiring the pagan troops to recite a prayer in the drill field on that day. (5) A decree making Sunday a market day throughout the year; and (6) an edict sanctioning the decision of the Council of Nicaea to the effect that the Easter service in commemoration of the resurrection of Christ should be celebrated on Sunday every year, and thereby assured the triumph of the Roman church and the pretensions so arrogantly asserted by the Roman bishops in a controversy raging since the time of Anicetus and Victor 1 in the second century.

If a man's religion is known by its fruits, it may safely be asserted that Constantine's conversion was only nominal. After the defeat of Licinius in 323, he openly professed the Christian religion, but he postponed his baptism until shortly before his death in 337. He remained the Pontifex Maximus of Roman paganism until he died. Arthur E. R. Boak says that Constantine "until 330 issued coins with the image of the Sun-god, with whom the emperor was often identified." [39] And Victor Duruy says of his coins after his profession of Christianity:

"There remain so many of them with the effigy of Jupiter, Mars, Victory, and especially of the Sun, even with the legend, 'To the Genius of the Roman people' or 'of the Emperor,' that the great numismatologist Eckhel regards the monetary history of this reign as altogether that of a pagan emperor (Volume 8, page 88). This opinion, however, is no longer tenable, since a certain number of Constantine's coins have been found with devices, Christian and others, in which, on the same piece, the two cults are associated, the legend Marti Patri Conservatori [to Father Mars, Protector], for instance, with the cross (see W. Madden, The Numismatic Chronicle, Volume 22, page 242 ff). The writers who certify to the Christian zeal of the emperor from the year 312, refuse to acknowledge this confusion, so disastrous to their theory; impartial history sees in it a demonstration of that policy which was, fortunately, guided by circumstances rather than by principle or by religious conviction." [40]

The mingling of heathen and Christian rites in the founding of Constantinople, and in the celebration of the anniversary of it, is too lengthy to describe here. This pagan conduct on the part of Constantine after his profession of Christ suffices to show that he was not a real Christian.

Gibbon erred only by confusing truth with apostasy when he said: "As he [Constantine] gradually advanced in the knowledge of the truth, he proportionately declined in the practice of virtue. And the same year of his reign in which he convened the Council of Nice, was polluted by the execution, or rather murder, of his eldest son." [41]

Besides the murder of his son Crispus, he is said to have had his wife, the boy's mother, suffocated by steam in a bath. It is certain that, against his plighted word to his own sister, he caused his seventy-year-old brother-in-law, Licinius, to be put to death in 324 AD, and a little later had the younger Licinius, his nephew, murdered. These crimes were committed after the promulgation of the Sunday laws in 321.

The whole life of Constantine was bent toward one end-to become the sole lord of the Roman world. He put off openly professing Christ until he had satisfied every earthly ambition. This was doubtless done in order not to offend too much his pagan subjects. But when his last day drew near, he called for the ministers of the church to baptize him, and said: "Let there be no more uncertainty." [42]

Such was Constantine, the father of civil Sunday legislation, the man who steered the world and the church into the abyss of politico-ecclesiastical despotism that was the curse and nightmare of civilization for more than a thousand years thereafter.

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## 14. Sylvester and the Days of the Week

BESIDES the Sunday legislation of the emperor Constantine's reign, there are some other items of interest of that period, which throw light on the pagan planetary week and the observance of Sunday among the heathen.

### “The Day of the Sun”

An old sepulchral inscription in Latin, which is classed as Christian, speaks of “the day of the Sun.” [1] The date is believed to be 323 AD.

### A Roman Calendar

J. P. Migne presents a Roman calendar [2] which is said to have been “compiled in the time of Constantine the Great, in 325 A. D., the same year in which the Council of Nicaea was held.” The portion corresponding to the month of December is missing, while the other months appear complete. The month of January begins thus:

A a Kal  
B b iv Non. Jan.  
C c iii  
D d Prid.  
E c Non.  
F I viii Id. Jan.  
G g vii  
A h vi  
B a v  
C b iv  
  
etc.

The months were arranged after the usual order of the Roman calendars. In this case the days of the week are indicated in the first column by the letters A to G. In the second column appear the market days of the nundinal period marked from a to h. In the third column are the clays of the month in their usual numerical order.

Writers on this subject seldom refer to this calendar. Migne says it was compiled in 325 AD. If it was composed then, it doubtless was for use in the following year (326), which began on Saturday. And if this is true, the letter A in the weekly cycle of this Roman calendar stood for the day of Saturn, which conforms perfectly to the order of the days in the pagan planetary week.

### The Usage of Eusebius of Caesarea

In connection with Constantine's Sunday legislation, Eusebius of Caesarea, as the church historian of that time, is frequently quoted. It is worthy of note that he employed a peculiar mode of referring to Sunday, one in which he endeavored to synchronize the meaning of the names given that day by both the Christians and the pagans who observed it. Eusebius lived from 260 to 340 AD, and wrote (in Greek) most of his works in the reign of Constantine.

This writer, for example, refers in one place to Sunday as the saving and Lord's and first day of light.” [3] Again he speaks of it as “the first [day] of light and of the true Sun.” [4] In another place he calls it “the salutary day, which also happens to be named in honor of the light and of the Sun.” [5]

In his praise of the emperor, he mentions Constantine's regard for “the truly first and chief and really Lord's and saving [day], and also that of light, of life, and of immortality, and of every good thing named.” [6]

He appears to be the first ecclesiastical writer to spiritualize and accommodate to Christian thought the very pagan name of the day, saying that “on it to our souls the Sun of Righteousness rose.” [7] And he speaks of seeing “the face of the glory of Christ, and to behold the day of His light.” [8] Indeed, he is the first Christian writer to maintain that Christ Himself transferred Sabbath observance from the seventh to the first day of the week. On this point he said: “Wherefore, being rejected of them [the Jews], the Word

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[Christ] by the new covenant translated and transferred the feast of the Sabbath to the dawn of light, and handed down to us a likeness of the true rest. The saving and Lord's and first day of light." [9]

It is interesting to note, also, that in the very same discourse he unwittingly reveals who the real authors of the change were, saying: "All things whatsoever it was duty to do on the Sabbath, these we have transferred to the Lord's day, as being more appropriate, and chief, and first, and more honorable than the Jewish Sabbath." [10]

By the word "we" he meant the bishops of the church, who were aided by Constantine the emperor. This may be seen further in what history has said about the Roman bishop Sylvester 1 and the pagan week.

### Sylvester 1, Bishop of Rome

Have you ever compared the names, of the days of the week in the Latin countries with those we use in English-speaking lands? There is a notable difference. In Spanish, for example, the names of the days are thus:

Domingo	(from dominicus, "Lord's").
Lunes	(from Lunae dies, "Moon's day").
Martes	(from Martis dies, "Mars' day").
Miercoles	(from Mercurii dies, "Mercury's day").
Jueves	(from Jovis dies, "Jupiter's day").
Viernes	(from Veneris dies, "Venus' day").
Sabado	(from Sabbatum, "Sabbath").

All the days of the week, excepting the first and the last, carry the old planetary names of Roman times. A great many writers attribute this exception to an effort of Sylvester, bishop of Rome (314-335 A. D.), to abolish, through the papal clergy, the use of the pagan nomenclature among Roman Catholic people. It was only natural that Constantine's Sunday legislation, by officially giving to the first day of the Christian week the heathen title of "day of the Sun- as a legal title, tended rather to paganize the day instead of Christianize it. For this reason the legal names of the days of the week are still quite generally the same as they were in pagan Roman usage. Custom is hard to uproot, once it is well established, and Sylvester's plan succeeded in only one country, that is, Portugal. In other lands it succeeded only in the case of the first and last days of the week.

Rabanus Maurus, all archbishop of Mainz, Germany, who lived from 776 to 856 AD. Is said to have been "probably the most cultured man of his time, and exceptionally learned in patristics." A perusal of his works will convince anyone that he was a learned man. He says:

"Likewise also feriae is derived from fando, for which reason Pope Sylvester 1 ordained among the Romans that [concerning] the names of the days, which they previously called after the names of their gods, that is, Solis [of the Sun], Lunae [of the Moon], Martis [of Mars], Mercurii [of Mercury], Jovis [of Jupiter], Veneris [of Venus], [and] Saturni [of Saturn], that they should therefore call [them] feriae, that is, first feria, second feria, third feria, fourth feria, fifth feria, sixth feria, because in the beginning of Genesis it is written that God said on each day. On the first, Let there be light; on the second, Let there be a firmament; on the third, Let the earth bring forth green herbs, etc. But he [Sylvester] commanded to call the Sabbath by the ancient term of the law, and [to call] the first feria 'Lord's day,' because that on it the Lord rose [from the dead]. Moreover the same pope decreed that the Sabbath rest should be transferred to the Lord's day, in order that on that day we should rest from earthly works to the praising of God." [11]

The same writer repeats this concerning Sylvester in another of his works.

### Bede's Testimony About Sylvester

Bede, the noted English monk and ecclesiastical writer (672-735 AD), repeatedly declares that Sylvester attempted to change the pagan names of the days of the week. He says: "But the holy Sylvester ordered them to be called feriae, calling the first day the 'Lord's [day]'; imitating the Hebrews, who named [them] the first of the week, the second of the week, and so on the others." [12]

Bede says also in another work: "Question: Who first taught to observe feriae? Answer: Pope Sylvester instructed the clergy to observe feriae, to whom, resting only to God, it was allowed to engage in no military service or worldly business. And indeed because light in the beginning was made on the first.

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day, and the resurrection of Christ [being] celebrated [on it], he called [it] the ‘Lord’s [day].’ [13]

Sicard, bishop of Cremona, Italy, about 1221 AD, also says: “Besides, he [Sylvester] changed the names of the days into *feriae*, and he decreed [that] the fast [be observed] on the fourth [Wednesday], on the sixth [Friday], and on the Sabbath on account of the Lord’s burial. But on the Lord’s day [he decreed that there be observed] a solemnity on account of the resurrection, and on the fifth *feria* [Thursday] on account of [His] ascension.” [14]

In an ecclesiastical manual written in Anglo-Saxon in 1011 AD, Byrhtferth said: “The reverend Bishop Sylvester altered the names of these days into *feria* (holiday). And said that Sunday was God’s day and called it *feria prima*; and Monday (he called) *feria secunda*, that is the second holiday; and all the others he named as we call them in Latin.” [15]

In the ecclesiastical terminology of the Roman Catholic Church, the nomenclature recommended by Sylvester is still in use. “The ecclesiastical style of naming the week days was adopted by no nation except the Portuguese, who alone use the terms *segunda Feira*, etc.” [16]

Sylvester did not institute Sunday observance among Christians. Rabanus Maurus, already quoted in this chapter, says that “Pope Sylvester instructed the clergy to observe *feriae*. And indeed from an old custom he called the first day ‘the Lord’s [day],’ on which light was made in the beginning, and [on which] the resurrection of Christ has been celebrated.” [17]

The Roman Breviary (lecture 6 in *festis S. Sylvestri*) remarks: “Retaining the names Sabbath and the Lord’s day, and distinguishing the remaining days of the week by the term *feriae*, he [Sylvester] wished them to be called what the [Roman] Church had already previously commenced to name them.” [18]

### The Sabbath Kept by Many Churches

Since about the latter half of the second century AD, the Roman and Alexandrian Christians had been observing Sunday as a merry religious festival in honor of the Lord’s resurrection. Nevertheless, the majority of Christians still observed also the Sabbath, the seventh day, as the sacred rest ordained by God. This fact is attested by two church historians.

Socrates, a Greek writer (died not long after 440 AD), wrote a continuation of Eusebius’ ecclesiastical history, covering the period from 306 to 439 AD. He says: “For whereas everywhere in the world the churches on the Sabbath day, throughout every weekly cycle, celebrate the mysteries, those in Alexandria and those in Rome on account of some old tradition have refused to do this.” [19]

Sozomen, also a Greek ecclesiastical historian (died about the middle of the fifth century AD), confirms the statement by Socrates, saying: “Of course, they indeed also on the Sabbath, likewise on the first day of the week, assemble at church, as in Constantinople and nearly everywhere. But in Rome and Alexandria [this is done] no longer.” [20]

Marcion and some others in the second century had observed the Sabbath by fasting on it out of contempt for the Jews and their God. [21] The Gnostics had affirmed that the Father of Jesus Christ was not the Jehovah of the Old Testament. Now Sylvester and his associates attempted to make Sunday, which hitherto had been a merry ecclesiastical festival, a day of solemn rest superior to the Sabbath. Hence, not only Sunday was decreed to be a day of general rest throughout the Roman Empire, by the laws of Constantine, but also the Sabbath was decreed to be a day of fasting, the bishop of Rome [22] making it one of gloom and unpleasantness, in order that the people might be all the more glad to see the next day arrive.

Constantine’s Sunday laws, by officially conferring on the first day of the Biblical week the legal title of “the day of the Sun,” a purely heathen denomination, undoubtedly enhanced its pagan significance and tended all the more to paganize it as a religious festival among the followers of Sylvester. Were this not so, there would be no reason for this bishop’s measures concerning the names of the days of the week. Hence he instructed the Roman clergy to educate the people to speak of the days as *feriae*, instead of referring to them as the days of the Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn. He adopted at the same time the name “Lord’s day,” which had been used by ecclesiastical writers since the latter part of the second century AD, as the official Roman Catholic designation of the first day of the week. The Sabbath being still observed as a sacred day, even when kept by fasting, its Biblical name was retained by the Roman bishop.

### Imperial and Ecclesiastical Objectives

Ellen G. White has well stated what the objectives of Constantine, Sylvester, and their associates were, saying:

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“Constantine, while still a heathen, issued a decree enjoining the general observance of Sunday as a public festival throughout the Roman Empire. After his conversion, he remained a staunch advocate of Sunday, and his pagan edict was then enforced by him in the interests of his new faith. But the honor shown this day was not as yet sufficient to prevent Christians from regarding the true Sabbath as the holy of the Lord. Another step must be taken. The false Sabbath must be exalted to an equality with the true. A few years after the issue of Constantine’s decree, the bishop of Rome conferred on the Sunday the title of Lord’s day. Thus the people were gradually led to regard it as possessing a degree of sacredness. Still the original Sabbath was kept.” [23]

And the same author also says: “The first public measure enforcing Sunday observance was the law enacted (AD 321) by Constantine, two years before his profession of Christianity. This edict required townspeople to rest on the venerable day of the Sun, but permitted countrymen to continue their agricultural pursuits. Though originally a pagan statute, it was enforced by the emperor after his nominal acceptance of the Christian religion.

“The royal mandate not proving a sufficient substitute for divine authority, the bishop of Rome soon after conferred upon the Sunday the title of Lord’s day. Another bishop, who also sought the favor of princes, and who was the special friend and flatterer of Constantine, advanced the claim that Christ had transferred the Sabbath to Sunday. Not a single testimony of the Scriptures was produced in proof of the new doctrine. The sacred garments in which the spurious Sabbath was arrayed were of man’s own manufacture; but they served to embolden men in trampling upon the law of God. All who desired to be honored by the world accepted the popular festival.” [24]

That other bishop who came to the support of Constantine and Sylvester in their effort to make the heathen religious festival of the day of the Sun popular among Christians, was none other than Eusebius of Caesarea. “The royal mandate not proving a sufficient substitute for divine authority, Eusebius’ a bishop who sought the favor of princes, and who was the special friend and flatterer of Constantine, advanced the claim that Christ had transferred the Sabbath to Sunday. Not a single testimony of the Scriptures was produced in proof of the new doctrine. Eusebius himself unwittingly acknowledges its falsity, and points to the real authors of the change. ‘All things,’ he says, ‘whatever that it was duty to do on the Sabbath, these we have transferred to the Lord’s day’ (R. Cox, Sabbath Laws and Sabbath Duties, page 538, edition of 1853). But the Sunday argument, groundless as it was, served to embolden men in trampling upon the Sabbath of the Lord. All who desired to be honored by the world accepted the popular festival.” [25]

### Sunday Made Popular

From that time forward the collaboration of the Roman civil authorities with the Roman ecclesiastics, especially with the bishops of the Roman church, enforced the observance of Sunday upon the peoples of the world. Civil governments as well as church councils continued to legislate in favor of Sunday keeping and to suppress Sabbath observance until they succeeded in instilling in the minds of Christians in general the notion that Sunday, and not the Sabbath, is the day that God has ordained to be kept holy.

And with all this the pagan names of the days of the planetary week have been perpetuated in the calendar in use among the so-called Christian nations. Every time we look at the calendar we have before us a constant reminder of the amalgamation of paganism and Christianity that took place as a result of the great religious apostasy—that “falling away” foretold by the apostle Paul, [26] which occurred in the early centuries of the Christian church and made the modern Babel of conflicting sects and creeds which profess the name of Christ.

### Testimonies of Later Ecclesiastics

A few testimonies of leading ecclesiastics of the latter part of the fourth and the early part of the fifth century clearly show that the matter of the pagan names of the days of the week resulted in confusion for Sunday keepers among Christians at that time.

Philaster, bishop of Brescia (who died in the latter part of the fourth century), denounced as heretics “those who say that the flames of the days—Sois [of the Sun], Lunne [of the Moon], Martis [of Mars], Mercurii [of Mercury], Jovis [of Jupiter], of Veneris [of Venus], Saturni [of Saturn]—were thus given at the creation of the world by God, and not by the vain presumption of men bestowed.” [27]

Jerome (340-420 AD), who translated the Holy Scriptures into Latin for the Roman Catholic Church, was a widely traveled and very learned man. He refers to the days of the week as those “which the



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Gentiles call by the names of the idols and of the elements.” [28]

Augustine, who was bishop of Hippo in Africa (396-430 AD), says: “The Gentiles, of whom the apostle says that they ‘worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator,’ gave the names of their gods to the days of the week.” [29]

Maximus of Turin (380-465 AD), speaking of the first day of the week, says that the “same day by the men of the world is called the day of the Sun.” [30]

Ausonius (309-394 AD) was a teacher (of grammar and rhetoric) and poet whom the emperor Valentinian I employed to tutor his son Gratian. He was greatly favored by these two rulers, and in 379 AD was made a consul. Some say he was a Christian; others hold that he was a pagan. The best opinion is, that, he was a semi pagan Christian. “An orthodox Christian in his prayers, he was a pagan in the classroom,” [31] is a Roman Catholic estimation of him. In one of his poems, translated here into prose, he speaks of the planetary week:

“The names which the year has for the seven recurring days are given by the wandering planets, which the universe, revolving giddily, commands to go to and fro and aslant in the station of the signs of the zodiac. Radiant Sun has the first and [32] supreme day [primus supreme diem]. The Moon next succeeds to her brother’s crown. The third to follow these Titan lights is Mars. Mercury claims the stars of the fourth day. The golden star of Jupiter illumines the fifth zone; and in the sixth place kindly Venus follows the health-bringing father [of the gods]. The seventh day is Saturn’s, and comes last of all. The eighth [day] of the circling orbit restores the Sun once more.” [33]

### 15. The Planetary Week in the Philocalian Almanac

ONE of the most interesting pagan civil calendars of the Roman Empire is that which was included in a collection of chronological data compiled by a certain Philocalus of the fourth century. The original manuscript, which was “acquired by Peirese, has disappeared,” it is said, “but the copies at Brussels, Vienna and the Barberini Library evidence a work of a purity thoroughly antique.” [1] The same authority says: “It is, in fact, no more than the commonplace book of a certain Furius Dionysius Philocalus, who seems to have been a Christian interested in all kinds of chronological information and to have compiled this book in AD 354. There is indeed a calendar in his volume, but this is a table of purely secular and pagan celebrations containing no Christian references of any kind.” [2]

Nevertheless, this Philocalus was not an obscure and ignorant person. He was a Roman Catholic and an able servant of the Roman bishop. We are told that in the sepulchral chapel of Eusebius, bishop of Rome (309 or 310 AD), “may still be seen the epitaph put lip by Daniasus, and from which monument alone we learn of an unhappy schism that then devastated the Roman Church. On either side are sculptured perpendicularly the words: “Furius Dionysius Philocolus, Damasis pappae cutltor atque amator,” i. e., the name of the pope’s famous calligrapher, also his friend and admirer.” [3]

#### The Date of the Original

Although Philocalus is believed to have compiled his work in 354 AD, it is generally affirmed that the heathen calendar which he incorporated into his book was of the year 336. [4] The evidence for this conclusion is ably set forth in the following statement from a well-known religions encyclopedia:

“In the chronological collections of Filocalus (Th. Mominsen, ‘Ueber dem Chronographen vom Jahr 354,’ ASG for 1850, and also published separately) there is a list of bishops of Rome, ending with Liberius (of whom only the date of accession is given, so that he was still alive), followed by a Deposito Martyrum, [5] arranged according to their place in the calendar. As Liberius is mentioned, but nothing is said of his banishment, it is clear that this list belongs to the year 354 AD. But it is also plain that there is behind this an earlier list ending with Sylvester (died 335 AD), because all the bishops down to him are given according to their place in the calendar, but the next three-Marcus (died 7th Oct. 336), Julius (died 352), and Liberius-are added at the end of the list.” [6]

#### Includes the Pagan Week

While the Deposito Martyrum is a compilation of data relative to the (fates of the deaths of various noted. martyrs, the civil calendar proper is purely pagan, probably being a copy of the official

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calendar in use in Rome at that time. Sylvester died on December 31, 335 A. D., and this civil calendar was compiled, it is said, during the following year.

One interesting feature of this complete Roman civil calendar is that it includes the planetary week from January 1 to December 31. The weekly cycle of the seven days is indicated by the letters A to G, while the nundinal period is denoted by the letters A to H. It should be noted that January 1 fell on the first day of the pagan week, which is indicated by the letter A. The first day of the heathen week is the day of Saturn. Although the calendar of Philocalus may have been compiled in 336 AD, it was not for use in that year, because January of that year began on Thursday and the month of February had 29 days. February in the Philocalian Calendar had only 28 days. Moreover, because Sylvester died on December 31, 335 AD, it is not to be expected that his death would be noted in a calendar compiled for use beginning the very next day, January 1. Doubtless it was compiled in 336 for use in 337, which was not a leap year, and which began on Saturday, the first day of the pagan week. The year 354 also began on Saturday. [7] Thus the calendar served for both years (337 and 354).

### A List of Roman Consuls

Included in the work of Philocalus is a list of the Roman consuls (Fasti Consulares) from 509 BC to 354 AD. [8] The consuls of Rome generally took their office on January 1. In this list the author gives the names of the two consuls for each year, and also tells what day of the lunar month, and what day of the week it was on which January 1 fell in each case. The names of the days given are those of the Planetary gods after which the days were called by the pagans. For example, the last entry is for 354 AD, and reads thus: "Constantio VII et Constantio III Sat. XXII." This indicates that the two Roman consuls took their office on January 1, 354 AD, which fell on the day of Saturn and on the 22d day of the lunar month.

### The Gods of the Days

Of further interest is the fact that Philocalus has preserved some astrological tables with very useful information about the popular mode of reckoning the days according to the pagan planetary week. These five tables show the gods of the first five days of the heathen week-Saturn, Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury. Those of Jupiter and Venus-the last two-have perished, but the data relative to the order of their hours are preserved. [9]

The planets are distributed over the 24 hours after the following order: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon. The letters N(efastus), B (onus) and C (ommunis) indicate whether the day or the hour was considered astrologically unlucky, good, or common.

The day and the hours corresponding to Saturn are invariably marked with the letter N. Those of Mars were generally marked the same, because he was the god of war and bloodshed. In this we have another evidence of the Chaldean origin of the pagan week. Plutarch, writing in the first half of the second century AD, says: "The Chaldeans declare that of the planets, which they call tutelary gods, two are beneficent, two maleficent, and the other three are median and partake of both qualities." [10]

Venus and Jupiter were generally regarded as being astrologically beneficent; Saturn and Mars, as malefic; and the Sun, Moon, and Mercury, as common and ordinary in matters of luck.

### The Beginning of the Day

The most curious fact presented by these tables of Philocalus is perhaps the mode of beginning the day. Take for example the day of Saturn, and it will be seen that in the Philocalian tables the planet does not have lordship over the first hour of the dark part of the day, but over the first hour of the light part of it. The same is true in the case of the other days shown. The Roman civil day began at midnight, [11] but in no case do we find in these Philocalian astrological tables that the planetary god ruling the day is shown to preside over the first hour after midnight. Why is this?

Dio Cassius, in his explanation of the distribution of the hours of the day according to the order of the planetary gods, did not state just what hour of the day or night was the one taken for a starting point. But he does specifically say that the god presiding over the first hour of the day is also lord of that day. [12]

Now in the case of the Philocalian astrological tables, three facts are apparent: (1) that the day is reckoned from sunset to sunset, for the tables show that the first hour starts with the beginning of the night. (2) The first hour after midnight, which begins the civil day, does not correspond to the planetary lord of the day. (3) But the planetary deity ruling over the day is the one presiding over the first hour of the light part of the day, the one corresponding nearly to sunrise. How can this be explained?

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The solution is this: The Philocalian book is really an almanac compiled by a Roman Catholic, a scribe of Liberius and Damasus 1, bishops of Rome from 352 to 384 AD, for the use of those who belonged to that faith. This is shown by the following statement from a Roman Catholic authority which mentions this “ancient Roman Calendar, published between the years 334 and 356 AD, written out and illustrated by a certain Furius Dionysius Philocalus. This calendar contains a list of the popes, known formerly as the ‘Bucherian Catalogue,’ from the name of its first editor, and the Liberian, from the pope (Liberius, 352-356 AD) with whom it ends. The whole book is now usually known as the ‘Chronographer Of AD 354.’ Besides this ancient papal catalogue, the book contains an official calendar, civil and astronomical, lunar cycles, and a Paschal table calculated to 412, a list of the prefects of Rome from 253 to 354 (the only continuous one known), a chronicle of Roman history, the ‘Natalitia Caesarum,’ and other useful contents, which have caused it to be styled ‘the oldest Christian Almanac.’ It contains numerous traces of having been drawn up for the use of the Roman Church, and hence the value of two of its documents for the cemeteries. They are, respectively, a list of the entombments of Roman bishops from Lucius to Sylvester (253-335 AD), with the place of their burial, and a Depositio Martyrum, or list of the more solemn fixed feasts of the Roman Church, with indications of several famous martyrs and their cemeteries.” [13]

In those days the ecclesiastical day began at sunset, just as it did in Biblical times. [14] It was not until a later period that Christians adopted the Roman civil mode of reckoning the day from midnight to midnight. [15] In this almanac we find used the Biblical day (which begins at sunset), but the hours of the day show heathen astrological notions accommodated to Roman Catholic belief.

### Of Babylonian Origin

Paganism in the form of astrology was practiced at the Vatican until the sixteenth century. “Emperors and popes became votaries of astrology—the Emperors Charles IV and V, and Popes Sixtus IV, Julius II, Leo X, and Paul III. When these rulers lived astrology was, so to say, the regulator of official life. It is a fact characteristic of the age, that at the papal and imperial courts ambassadors were not received in audience until the court astrologer had been consulted.” [16]

The fact that the planetary god having lordship over the day was the one presiding over the first flour of the light part of the day—the sunrise hour—is another evidence that the pagan planetary week was born of Chaldean astrology. Pliny the Elder, specifically stated in the first century that the Babylonians reckoned their day from sunrise to sunrise. He says: “The actual period of the day has been differently kept by different people. The Babylonians count the period between two sunrises, the Athenians that between two sunsets, the Umbrians from midday to midday, the common people everywhere from dawn to dark, the Roman priests and the authorities who fixed the official day, and also the Egyptians and Hipparchus, the period from midnight to midnight.” [17]

“The Babylonians began the day with sunrise,” declares a modern authority, who goes on to say that “in the horoscope of the hours, the planets became lords of the ascendant at sunrise.” [18] This doubtless explains also why the heathen prayed to the heavenly bodies at the rising of the Sun and with their faces toward the east. At the beginning of the astrological day—at sunrise—they sought the favor of the gods for good luck in all undertakings of the day.

It should be recalled also that in reference to the pagan astrological notions anciently adopted by the Jews in the matter of the Blessing of the Sun, mention was made of—the beginning of Wednesday eve when the planet Saturn is in the ascendance.” [19] After an interval of twenty-eight years, “then Saturn returns to its original position at the first hour of Wednesday eve, and a new cycle begins.” [20] As in the Philocalian astrological tables, the first (beginning with the night) of the twenty-four hours of the day of Mercury (Wednesday) belongs to Saturn. Hence we see that among the Jews addicted to heathen practices, astrological notions were accommodated to the Biblical mode of reckoning the day from sunset to sunset, just as it was in the case of the Roman Catholics of Philocalus’ time. The day in both cases began at sunset according to Biblical reckoning, but the hours of the day were placed under the lordship of the seven heathen planetary deities. This is another proof of the syncretism that took place between Jewish, Christian, and pagan practices in the early centuries.

### The Birthday of the Invincible Sun

In the Philocalian calendar the twenty-fifth of December (the eighth day before the Kalends of January) is shown to be the Natalis Invicti – “The Birthday of the Invincible One” - which is the Nativity of the Invincible Sun. Because so much has been said already about the coincidence of the ecclesiastical

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Christmas and the pagan birthday of Mithra being on the twenty-fifth of December, it is fitting that we consider this matter here.

First, it should be noted that in the Philocalian Calendar the Saturnalia, a popular Roman feast, began on the sixteenth day before the Kalends of January, which is the 17th of December. Plutarch says of December: "This month has been consecrated to Saturn by the Romans." [21] The Saturnalia was a feast of thanksgiving for the fruits and blessings of the year, and was dedicated to Saturn, who was also among the Romans the god of the harvest. For this reason he carried a sickle. This feast was fixed so that it would terminate with the arrival of the winter solstice-the shortest day of the year. [22]

Pliny the Elder said: "The winter solstice begins at the eighth degree of Capricorn, the eighth day before the Kalends [23] of January in general." [24] As may be seen in the month of December in the Philocalian Calendar, the eighth day before the Kalends of January is December 25. The ancient method of reckoning was inclusive. What they here called the eighth day we would call the seventh.

On December 25 the Sun turned north, and the days began to lengthen, which made it appear that the Sun was experiencing a rebirth. As a result of this, all nature seemed to be reborn as spring approached. For this reason that day was known in the Roman Empire as the Birthday of the Invincible Sun.

The Roman emperor known as Julian the Apostate, a nephew of Constantine the Great, was a devotee of Mithra, the Sun-god. While he was away from Rome on an expedition, the New Year festival drew nigh, and he wrote in Greek thus:

"Before the beginning of the year, at the end of the month which is called after Kronos [Saturn], we celebrate in honor of Helios [the Sun] the most splendid games, and we dedicate the festival to the Invincible Sun. And after this it is not lawful to perform any of the shows that belong to the last month, gloomy as they are, though necessary. But, in the cycle, immediately after the end of the Kronia [Saturnalia] follow the Heliaria [Festival of the Sun]. That festival may the ruling gods grant me to praise and to celebrate with sacrifice! And above all the others may Helios [the Sun] himself, the King of the All, grant rite this." [25]

### **Its Adoption by the Roman Bishop**

It is generally held now that the celebration of the twenty fifth of December as the birthday of Christ was instituted by the bishop of Rome about 354 AD. A well-known Roman Catholic authority, Charles Poulet, says: "The first trace of the celebration of Christmas at Rome takes us back to the year 354. The Nativity of Christ was commemorated on the twenty-fifth of December, with a view, perhaps, of counteracting the popular feast of the Sun-God Mithra." [26]

Another learned scholar, L. Duchesne, Roman Catholic also, says: "A better explanation is, that based on the festival of Natalis Invicti, which appears in the pagan calendar of the Philocalian collection under the 25th of December. The Invictus is the Sun, whose birth coincides with the winter solstice, that is, with the 25th day of December, according to the Roman calendar. The worship of Mithras, or, speaking more generally, of the Sun, was widespread and popular in the third and fourth centuries. One is inclined to believe that the Roman Catholic Church made choice of the 25th of December in order to enter into rivalry with Mithraism (see texts quoted by Mommsen, Corpus Inscriptum Latina, volume 1, page 140)." [27]

Indeed, the Roman church teaches that she can take over and assimilate from paganism whatever she may deem fitting: "Even pagan feasts may be 'baptized': certainly our processions of 25 April are the Robigalia. The Rogation days may replace the Anibarualia; the date of Christmas Day may be due to the same instinct which placed on 25 December, the Natalis Invicti of the solar cult." [28]

Many other modern writers [29] hold that Christmas celebration on December 25 is an institution borrowed from Roman Sun worship, being the old birthday of the Invincible Sun. However, Ellen G. White has fittingly remarked:

"The twenty-fifth of December is supposed to be the day of the birth of Jesus Christ, and its observance has become customary and popular. But yet there is no certainty that we are keeping the veritable day of our Savior's birth. History gives us no certain assurance of this. The Bible does not give us the precise time. Had the Lord deemed this knowledge essential to our salvation, He would have spoken through His prophets and apostles that we might know all about the matter. But the silence of the Scriptures upon this point evidences to us that it is hidden from us for the wisest purposes." [30]

### **Instituted About 354 AD**

Early in this chapter it was shown that the Philocalian Calendar was originally composed about

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336 AD. With it there appeared a list of the Roman bishops compiled up to and including Sylvester, whose death was shown to be in 335 AD. There was also a recension with the addition of three more popes, which brought the list up to 354. Commenting further on this matter to show how December 25 was made the festival of the birth of Christ, a modern authority says:

“Thus the original list of bishops was made in 336, and the recension of 354 is secondary (see Duchesne, *Bulletin Critique*, xi. 41ff). The *Depositio Martyrum* begins: ‘VIII Kal. Jan. natus est Christus in Betleem Judeae.’ The question then arises, whether this statement belongs to the ground document of 336 or to the recension of 354. It is also curious that the *Depositio* is arranged in months, each being headed ‘mense Januario,’ ‘mense Februario,’ and so on. But the Nativity, instead of coming under December, is inserted at the beginning. This cannot be because the writer of 336 regarded the ecclesiastical year as beginning with December 25, for in the list of bishops he begins with January and goes on to Dec. 31, the date of Sylvester’s death in 335. These facts raise a suspicion that the reference to the Nativity belongs to 354 rather than to 336.

“This suspicion is confirmed by evidence contained in Ambrosius, *De Virginibus*, iii, 1 f., in which he quotes a sermon preached by Liberius (who became pope on 22nd May or 21st June, 352 [see Lipsius, *Chronol. der rom. Bisch.*, 1869, p. 262]), on the occasion of Marcellina, Ambrose’s elder sister, becoming a nun. . . .

“The date of this sermon of Liberius is not certain; but from references in it to the tender youth of Marcellina it must have been early in his career as pope. The earliest possible date is 353, and the latest possible date for the entry in the chronology of Filocaltis is 354. Therefore, as the sermon implies that the Nativity was celebrated on January 6, and the chronology (taken from the papal diptychon [?]) implies that it was, in 354, celebrated on December 25, it follows that Marcellina must have become a nun on 6th January 353, when the Nativity was celebrated, and that between this and 354 the date of the feast was changed by Pope Liberius to December 25. If this be so, there remains uncertain only the minor point whether 25th December of 353 or of 354 was the first Christmas in Rome.” [31]

Several ecclesiastics of the fourth and fifth centuries mention that the day celebrated as the nativity of Christ was popularly known as the birthday of the Sun. [32] It was difficult to wean Roman Catholics away from the idea of worshipping the Sun on December 25 in those times. We find Leo the Great, bishop of Rome (440-461 AD), chiding some of his church members for that very thing, saying:

“Abide firm in the faith in which you are built; lest the same tempter whose tyranny over you Christ has already destroyed, win you back again with any of his wiles, and mar even the joys of the present festival by his deceitful art, misleading simpler souls with the pestilential notion of some to whom this our solemn feast day seems to derive its honor, not so much from the nativity of Christ as, according to them, from the rising of the new Sun. Such men’s hearts are wrapped in total darkness, and have no growing perception of the true Light. For they are still drawn away by the foolish errors of heathen doctrine, and because they cannot lift the eyes of their mind above that which their carnal sight beholds, they pay divine honor to the luminaries that minister to the world.” [33]

He likewise denounces “the ungodly practice of certain foolish folk who worship the Sun as it rises at the beginning of daylight from elevated positions. Even some Christians think it is so proper to do this that, before entering the blessed apostle Peter’s basilica, which is dedicated to the one living and true God, when they have mounted the steps which lead to the raised platform, they turn around and bow themselves towards the rising Sun, and with bent neck do homage to its brilliant orb.” [34]

### 16. The Power Behind the Planetary Week

WHEN the cosmogonies of the pagan peoples of antiquity are compared, the parallels seen in them are too striking to be ignored. They suggest a common origin and appear to be but variations of an original erroneous conception of the natural universe, one that time and fancy adapted to the trends of religious and philosophic thought of the heathen nations.

Speaking of the cosmogony of the Phoenicians, F. Lenormant has made this impressive statement: “In comparing it with the Babylonian cosmogony of Berosus, and that of the different Aryan nations quoted in the first chapter of the history of the Persians, the analogy is striking between the teaching of all pagan religions as to the origin of the world. From a desire to escape from the acknowledgment of the creative act, by which the Almighty formed the universe from nothing, all these religious systems without exception fell



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into the same serious errors.” [1]

### **An Inspired Explanation**

The sentiments of the French historian and archaeologist seem to be an echo of those expressed by the inspired and learned scholar of Tarsus of Cilicia, who declared, in the first century A. D., that paganism was born out of man’s desire to have a natural philosophy that would exclude belief in the Creator. He explains the rise of paganism in these words:

“For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful. But became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they become fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever.” [2]

### **Nature Deified**

The foundation of the natural science taught in the Holy Scriptures is this: “in the beginning God.” [3] When this doctrine was rejected, the only alternative was to adopt the following false premise: “In the beginning nature.” This was the basis of the philosophy underlying the religions of paganism. It exalted nature to the place of God, gave to created things the adoration due to the Creator, and ascribed to creation the attributes of the Deity as being self-existent, eternal, omnipotent, and omniscient. Hence the ancient Chaldeans taught that “the world [universe] is by its nature eternal, and neither had a first beginning nor will at a later time suffer destruction.” [4]

### **The Pseudo Science of Astrology**

Such philosophy naturally led to a perversion of the study of astronomy. Once the stars—particularly the Sun, the Moon, and the five visible planets—came to be regarded as gods, astronomy became for star worshippers a sacred science, and the study of it became a holy profession.

Because the astral deities were supposed to govern and direct the universe, and were believed to play a decisive and determining role in the affairs of men, both public and private, the priest-astrologers, who professed to be the ministers of the divine rulers, sought to interpret to men the will and purposes of the planetary gods by carefully studying their movements in order to make prognostications from them. The study of natural phenomena affords a real basis for a certain amount of accurate forecasting. This is readily seen in the predictions our astronomers commonly make concerning the eclipses of the Sun and the Moon, the transits of Venus and Mercury, the time of rising and setting of the stars from day to day, the movements of the tides, and the state of the weather.

Among a people steeped in paganism such astronomical knowledge, used together with trickery and deceit, afforded the stargazing pagan priests opportunity for exploiting their profession for personal profit and prestige, even to the extent of wielding a powerful influence in the public life of the nation and over private affairs of their countrymen. In a word, when pagan philosophy deified nature, the proper study of astronomy was converted into the pseudo science of astrology, and the true worship of the Creator was perverted into the false religion of astrology.

E. W. Maunder has rightly called astrology “the bastard science which has always tried—parasite like—to stick its life from astronomy.” [5] And he properly remarks: “Astrology is, inevitably linked with paganism, and both shut up spirit and mind against the knowledge of God Himself, which is religion; and against the knowledge of His works, which is science. And though a man may be religious without being scientific, or scientific without being religious, religion and science alike both rest on one and the same basis—the belief in ‘One God, Maker of heaven and earth.’” [6]

### **Paganism Is Devil Worship**

The study of the history of the nations impresses one with the fact that the pseudo science of astrology was inseparably linked with, and served the interests of, the false religion of astrology. This leads us to this important question: What is the power behind paganism?

The Holy Scriptures explicitly designate the rites of paganism as devil worship. “But I say,” says

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the apostle Paul, “that the things which the Gentiles [the heathen] sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that you should have fellowship with devils.” [7]

The barbarities and abominations of pagan worship are attributed by God to the influence of demons. It is written of the apostasies of Israel: “They provoked Him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations they provoked Him to anger. They sacrificed unto devils, not to God.” [8] “They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the Lord commanded them: but were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them. Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan.” [9]

### The Devil Deified Himself

What was the devil’s objective in paganism? To the prophet Isaiah were revealed his motives: “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which did weaken the nations! For thou has said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High.” [10]

Lucifer coveted divine honors and wished to be worshiped as a god. “I will be like the Most High,” he said within himself. He intended to establish a government of his own over the beings created by God. “I will exalt my throne above the stars of God,” he proposed. When he later tempted Christ, he showed Him “all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them. And said unto Him, All these things will I give You, if You wilt fall down and worship me.” [11] The audacity of this request is seen in the fact that Christ was the divine Son of God, and was the One who had created angels and men in the beginning. [12]

Lucifer never revealed to his fellow creatures his real motives in rebellion. The Lord declared of him: “Thou has said in your heart.” Concealing the true object he had in mind, the devil subtly insinuated disaffection into the minds of his fellow creatures against the character and government of the Creator. His insinuation to man was that God’s law was unjust, that His restriction concerning the forbidden fruit was unreasonable, that He had evil designs in keeping back from the human family the knowledge of evil, and that the human race would become wiser and more exalted by ignoring than by acknowledging the claims of our Maker. [13] Satan did not reveal to man that his objective was to lead him to rebel against the Lord. But God has exposed him.

“Know you not, that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness.” [14] By obeying Satan, the human race exalts a created being [15] to the place of its Maker, and obeys and adores the creature instead of the Creator. For this reason the evil one claims dominion over all mankind. When he showed to Christ “all the kingdoms of the world,” He said: “That is delivered unto me. And to whomsoever I will I give it.” [16] Christ Himself spoke of him as “the prince of this world.” [17] And Paul called him “the god of this world.” [18] This indicates that mankind at large renders to this rebellious angel the loyalty and worship which it owes to the Creator.

### The Plan of Redemption Perverted

When Satan succeeded in persuading the human family to join him in the great rebellion against the Creator, he faced the problem of holding men and women subject to his sway. God knew that “the way of transgressors is hard,” [19] and He foreknew that some sinners would repent and turn to Him if they should be given an opportunity. Being a God of love and mercy, He could not leave His precious creatures to perish in sin and do nothing to save them from it. [20] Therefore, immediately after man sinned it was revealed that a Savior would come. There would be born among men One who would defeat the purposes of the evil one and save repentant sinners from their transgressions and the consequences. [21] That promised Seed was Christ, the Son of God. [22]

Until the appearance of “the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world,” [23] believers in God’s Word were to show their faith in His plan of salvation by the offering of certain animals, the sacrifice of which typified and prefigured the death of God’s Son. Satan decided to pervert the sacrificial system pointing forward to the death of the Lamb of God for man’s deliverance, and to cause this plan of worship to lose its true significance. The story of Cain and Abel reveals that Satan did this very thing. Abel showed his faith, his dependence, and his hope in God’s plan of redemption by bringing of the firstlings of

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his flock a sacrifice when he came to worship. Cain brought only “of the fruit of the ground.” [24] “The wages of sin is death” [25] and “without shedding of blood is no remission.” [26] The following comment upon Cain’s conduct is excellent:

“The class of worshipers who follow the example of Cain includes by far the greater portion of the world; for nearly every false religion has been based on the same principle, that man can depend upon his own efforts for salvation. It is claimed by some that the human race is in need, not of redemption, but of development, that it can refine, elevate, and regenerate itself. As Cain thought to secure the divine favor by an offering that lacked the blood of a sacrifice, so do these expect to exalt humanity to the divine standard, independent of the atonement. The history of Cain shows what must be the result. It shows what man will become apart from Christ. Humanity has no power to regenerate itself. It does not tend upward, toward the divine, but downward, toward the satanic. Christ is our only hope.” [27]

### Heathen Systems a Perversion

Indeed, it has been said in truth: “The sacrificial systems of sacrifice were a perversion of the system that God had appointed.” [28] Not long after the world had been destroyed because of the corrupting influence of Cain’s defiant paganism, the same rebellious spirit possessed the hearts of men again. Although Noah had taught his sons the true plan of the sacrificial System [29] pointing forward to the death of the Lamb of God, apostasy crept in and men sought to establish at Babel, in the plain of Shinar a government and a religion apart from the true God. [30] Thus it was on the banks of the Euphrates that paganism [31] again raised its head. And it is appalling to think what the world at large lost as a result of this ancient adventure into science falsely so called. Generation after generation of pagan peoples, in the millenniums between Babel and Copernicus, lived and died steeped in astrological folly and the religions superstition of paganism.

### Sun Worship

The devil’s name before his fall is said to be Lucifer, which means “Light bearer.” The Hebrew term is Helel, which literally means “-shining one.” In the margin of the Authorized and the American Revised Versions it is rendered “daystar.” [32] Webster’s New International Dictionary defines daystar as meaning poetically “the Sun, as the orb of day.” [33] It is not to be wondered at that Satan should choose the shining solar orb—the most glorious object in the sky—to be the supreme symbol of paganism.

Sun worship appears to have been in vogue as far back as Job’s day, at least 3,500 years ago, for he said: “If I beheld the Sun when it shined, or the Moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand. This also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge: for I should have denied the God that is above.” [34] It was a common practice for Oriental pagans, and still is, to greet the rising Sun by throwing a kiss at him with the hand.

Many authorities affirm that Ra was one of the many Egyptian names of the Sun, which was worshiped in Egypt; and that Pharaoh, the official title of Egypt’s rulers, signifies “the son of Ra.” Franz Cumont, the celebrated authority on ancient Sun worship, says of the Egyptians:

“Not only did the royal race derive its origin from the Sun god Ra, but the soul of each sovereign was a double detached from the Sun god Horns. All the Pharaohs were thus successive incarnations of the great daystar. They were not only the representatives of divinities, but living gods worshiped on the same footing with those that traversed the skies, and their insignia resembled those of this divinity.” [35]

The Egyptian city of On [36] was a famous center of Sun worship, being known to the Greeks as Heliopolis (City of the Sun) and to the Hebrews as Beth-shemesh (House of the Sun). [37] At this place the Egyptians worshiped a sacred bull called Mene, which symbolized the Sun. It is said that “in the only figure of him hitherto discovered, [Mene] is colored bright yellow, evidently with the intention of representing a golden image. This fact, though not a conclusive proof, affords a strong presumption that the golden calf [made by the Israelites] was made according to the usual form and color of the images of Menevis. The annexed engraving represents this symbolical city of Heliopolis as he is painted on the coffin of a mummy at Turin, the name being distinctly written in hieroglyphic characters, MENE, without the Greek termination.” [38]

The worship of the golden calf by the Israelites at Mount Sinai, as recorded in Exodus 32, was doubtless a form of Egyptian Sun worship.

The same writer says of the image of Mene that “it differs in color only, and not in form, from another painting on the same coffin, which bears the name of Apis. Both have the same trappings—the Suit’s

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disk between the horns, surmounted by the plume of ostrich feathers, signifying justice, and the whip, the emblem of power. And both are accompanied by the serpent, representing the spirit of the gods.” [39] Apis was worshiped at Memphis and was depicted as being black. It is possible that Mene represented the shining Sun of the daytime, while Apis symbolized the hidden Sun of nighttime.

The worship of the two calves among the ten tribes of Israel after the division of the Hebrew kingdom in the days of Rehoboam was probably borrowed from Egypt. [40] Jeroboam, who set up the shrines, one at Bethel and the other at Dan, had spent some time in Egypt during the reign of Solomon. [41]

### Sun Worship Forbidden

God solemnly warned His people against the worship of the heavenly bodies, making it a capital offense punishable by death. “Take you therefore good heed unto yourselves lest thou lift up your eyes unto heaven, and when you see the Sun, and the Moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, should be driven to worship them, and serve them.” [42] “If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which the Lord thy God gives you, man or woman, that has gone and served other gods, and worshiped them, either the Sun, or Moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded. And it be told thee, and thou has heard of it, and inquired diligently, and, behold that such abomination is wrought in Israel. Then thou shalt bring forth that man or that woman, which have committed that wicked thing, unto thy gates, even that man or that woman, and shall stone them with stones, till they die.” [43]

Nevertheless, the Hebrews had not been long at the borders of the Promised Land when they were seduced by the strategy of Balaam, an apostate prophet, to join in the licentious worship of Baal, the Sun-god of the Phoenicians and the Canaanites. Some 24,000 Israelites paid the penalty with their lives, and the leaders of the apostasy were hanged up “before the Lord against the Sun.” [44]

### The Sun Worship of Baal

The old, old story of Israel’s apostasies usually runs thus: “They forsook the Lord and followed Baal.” [45] “According to Sanchoniathon, the proper title of Baal was Beelsemin, Lord of the Heavens, or Sun,” says one writer. “He was the principal Phoenician divinity, and thus his name came to be equivalent to Supreme God, and is more frequently used in this sense than with reference to his original character of Sun-god.” [46] Ashtoreth was the Moon goddess, who had a notorious seat of worship at Jericho. [47] She was adored as the wife of Baal and as the queen of heaven.

“The worshipers of Baal claimed that the treasures of heaven, the dew and the rain, came not from Jehovah, but from the ruling forces of nature, and that it was through the creative energy of the Sun that the earth was enriched and made to bring forth abundantly.” [48]

The name Baal “is the name of the Sun god, the chief of Syrophenician nations, as Ashtoreth was the principal female deity. Baal signifies ‘lord’ or ‘master,’ and personifies the productive power of the Sun. Originally, a personification of the Sun, his sovereignty in the moral world was a later conception.” [49] Baal is depicted on a stele preserved in the Louvre Museum in Paris, France, as a Sun-god with rays of light streaming from his head. [50]

The marriage of King Ahab with Jezebel, daughter of the king and high priest of the pagan Sidonians, led to the official establishment of the cult of Baal among the ten tribes of Israel. Jezebel herself was a zealous propagator of the religion of Baal among the Israelites, and maintained 850 of its prophets and priests at her table. A sumptuous temple was dedicated to Baal in Samaria. [51]

It seemed for a time that the cult of the Phoenician Sun god would entirely supplant that of Jehovah. It spread over into Judah until its groves, high places, altars and “the Sun images that were high above them, [52] were found everywhere. Its abominations entered into the very precincts of the temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem, and a monstrous idol was set up there. [53] They “burned incense unto Baal, to the Sun, and to the Moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven.” [54] God-fearing prophets and kings from time to time called the people to repentance, and partial reforms were effected. But the apostasy became so great that God permitted the heathen Assyrians and Babylonians to take His people into captivity. However, in all this there was a faithful remnant that did not bow the knee to Baal.

### The Climax

The climax of these pagan abominations came shortly before the fall of Jerusalem under the onslaughts of Nebuchadnezzar in the sixth century BC. Concluding a description of the heathen practices there, Ezekiel says: “He brought me into the inner court of the Lord’s house, and, behold, at the door of the

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temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshiped the Sun toward the east.” [55]

### Two Unpopular Precepts

The two commandments of the Ten Commandments which least recommended themselves to the Gentile world were the second and the fourth. The application of the second commandment was to lay the ax to the prevailing forms of idolatry in pagan worship. This caused no small riot in Ephesus, because the silversmiths lost their business of manufacturing miniature images and shrines of Diana when the people turned from paganism to the worship of the Creator. [56] The fourth commandment bears a very close relationship to the second, because Sabbath observance was designed to be a mark of separation from idolatry, a sign of allegiance to the living God, the Creator of heaven and earth. [57]

The Roman emperor Julian (known as “the Apostate”), who was not only a devotee of Mithras, but also Pontifex Maximus of the pagan religion of the Roman Empire, made this statement about the Ten Commandments: “Now except for the command ‘Thou shall not worship other gods,’ and ‘Remember the Sabbath day,’ what nation is there, I ask in the name of the gods, which does not think it ought to keep the other commandments?” [58]

### A Hated Institution

It is not surprising that Satan should hate especially the Sabbath institution. The record of creation, the Ten Commandments, the Mosaic law, and the New Testament, all point to the creation of this world as the time when the Sabbath was instituted. [59] At that time God not only rested on the seventh day, but He also sanctified it-set it apart as hallowed for holy use-and blessed it. “The Sabbath was made for man.” [60] It was not a ceremonial institution pointing forward to the first advent of Christ, but a memorial of the creation of the world. It was ordained before sin had ever blighted the fair earth with its curse.

Because the Sabbath was designed to remind man of his Creator, that the world was created by the true and living God, and that we are ever dependent upon Him, it is no wonder that the devil has hated it. Every Sabbath day is a call to men to come and worship the Creator of the heavens and the earth. “The Sabbath, as a memorial of God’s creative power, points to Him as the Maker of the heavens and the earth. Hence it is a constant witness to His existence and a reminder of His greatness, His wisdom, and His love. Had the Sabbath always been sacredly observed, there could never have been an atheist or an idolater.” [61]

It is worthy of note that when Israel went off into idolatry, the violation of the second commandment of the Ten Commandments was almost always accompanied by the transgression of the fourth. [62] A revival of godliness among God’s people invariably called for a more loyal spirit of Sabbath observance among them. [63]

The seventy years’ Babylonian captivity effectively cured the Hebrew people of heathen idolatry. They never lapsed into it again. ‘They went to the other extreme and attempted to make numerous improvements upon the religion which God had taught their fathers. Among these man-made innovations were numerous regulations for the observance of the Sabbath, which made the keeping of the Lord’s day burdensome and gloomy. [64]

### The True Lord’s Day

Christ rescued the Sabbath from the abuses which the man made regulations of Pharisaism had heaped upon it. [65] Three of the Gospel writers were careful to note that He had declared in the presence of both His friends and His enemies that the Sabbath is the Lord’s day. “The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day.” [66] And, “as His custom was,” He attended divine worship on the Sabbath day. [67] When He was forced to leave Nazareth, He did not give up that custom, but “came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the Sabbath days.” [68] There He was joined by His fishermen disciples-Peter, Andrew, James, and John-and they accompanied Him on the Sabbath days to the place of worship. [69]

Shortly before His death He foretold to the apostles the destruction that would overtake Jerusalem nearly forty years later, and in speaking of it He said: “Pray you that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day.” [70] Here is a definite New Testament commandment concerning Sabbath observance. ‘The apostles were to remember that sacred institution which Christ, as Creator, had sanctified and blessed in the beginning. They were to make the observance of that holy day a matter of prayer in that



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time of peril and hardship. The sacred seventh day was to remind them that God is their Creator and that the universe is under His control and not man's, even when the most powerful of pagans, the Romans, should destroy the city long regarded as the dwelling place of God on earth. In fulfillment of the Lord's prophecy, Jerusalem was destroyed by the armies of Rome in 70 AD.

### The Apostolic Church

As the Master lay dead, resting in the tomb on that Sabbath following His crucifixion, His devout followers were resting too. After the burial of their Lord on Friday eve, "they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment." [71]

Following the example and instructions given them by Christ before His ascension, the apostles regularly observed the Sabbath. At Antioch in Pisidia they met with their countrymen on the Sabbath, and Paul preached. The interest was so great that "the Gentiles [not merely those of Jewish blood] besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath." "And the next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the Word of God." [72]

At Philippi, in Macedonia-in Europe-Paul and his companions spent several days. "And on the Sabbath we went," says Luke, "out of the city by a riverside, where prayer was wont to be made." There they taught the gospel of Christ to the women who came there. [73] At Thessalonica Paul spoke, "as his manner was," to the people on three successive Sabbaths. There were not only many Jews present, but "of the devout Greeks a great multitude." 74

In the great European city of Corinth, Paul labored at tent making during the working days of the week, but "he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks." He spent one year and six months teaching there. [75] The great apostle left on record this outstanding truth: "There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God." [76] Thus Christianity spread the Biblical week and the true day of rest among the Gentile people of Europe.

The repeated reference in these texts to the observance of the Sabbath by the Gentiles reminds us that it was God's plan that long before the first advent of Christ the Gentiles should join with the Hebrews in the keeping of the Sabbath day. "Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants, everyone that keeps the Sabbath from polluting it, and takes hold of My covenant. Even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon Mine altar; for Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people." [77]

### Calendars

The Holy Scriptures tell us that in the creation of the world the Creator ordained that the Sun and Moon should "be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years." [78] By careful observation of the movements of the heavenly bodies in relation to the earth, men could prepare calendars by which the days, the months, the seasons, and the year could be recorded with sufficient accuracy for practical knowledge and useful purposes. In the book of Genesis there is abundant evidence to show that from the beginning men did keep a faithful record of the passing days, months, and years, which are natural divisions of time. By these a system of dating events was also employed. [79]

The week of seven days is not a natural division of time, and is not related to the movements of any of the heavenly bodies. The creation record of Genesis, the Ten Commandments, and the Mosaic law clearly show that it was originally a divinely established institution and is a twin sister of the Sabbath. [80] It was in use among the Syrians and the Hebrews before the proclamation of the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai. [81] The only reason for the existence of the week, according to the Holy Scriptures, is that it serves as a septenary cycle of the days in order that man may conveniently keep track of the Sabbath, for "the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." [82] God not only "blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it," but also expressly says that "the Sabbath was made for man." [83] And not only through the centuries before the birth of Christ, but through those that have passed since then, the sacred day of rest has been observed among His faithful children. [84]

### Two Rival Systems

The antipathy of paganism toward the worship of the Creator is striking. Of that pious man called from pagan Ur of the Chaldees to serve God in Canaan, the Lord could say: "Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws." [85] About four centuries later the

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descendants of Abraham were made slaves by the heathen in Egypt. By that time idolatry had spread over the earth like a plague. The Sun-worshipping Egyptians persecuted God's people without mercy.

The Sabbath was a special object of Egyptian hatred. 'They intended that the Israelites should not have freedom to worship the Creator. And when the leaders of God's people requested it, the king of Egypt defiantly refused to acknowledge Jehovah's claims to their obedience and adoration. The Hebrews had been taught by men of God that they should not be at work when they ought to be at worship. Pharaoh complained of this, saying:

"Wherefore do you, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works? Get you unto your burdens. And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now are many, and you make them rest from their burdens." [86]

The Hebrew verb of the phrase "you make them rest" in this scripture is the same as the one translated "rested" in Genesis 2:2, 3. It is shabath, which literally means "to sabbatize, to rest, to cease." In Genesis 2:2, 3, we are told that God shabath (sabbatized) on the seventh day. In Exodus 5:5 we have the causative (Hiphil) form of the same Hebrew verb, meaning 'I cause to sabbatize.'" The people ceased work because it was the Sabbath, on which day they should worship Jehovah. Pharaoh became angry because of this, and he determined to compel them to labor on God's holy day. When they complained of the unjust treatment given them, the king replied: "You are idle, you are idle: therefore you say, Let us go and do sacrifice to the Lord." [87]

Forty years later Moses reminded the Israelites of the hard experience they had in keeping the Sabbath while they were slaves of Pharaoh. Therefore he urged the Hebrews to deal justly with their servants and leave them free to keep the Lord's day as He had commanded in the Ten Commandments. [88]

### A Counterfeit Week

In this book it has been shown that there was devised and put into use among the pagan peoples of ancient times an astrological institution known as the planetary week. It probably began among the Babylonians as an invention of Chaldean astrology, and certainly became widespread in the world by the time Christ was born at Bethlehem in Palestine. We know of a certainty that it was in use in the Roman Empire in the first century BC. We have noted the abundant evidence of its use among the Romans, as seen in the testimonies of ancient and modern writers, in the Latin and Greek inscriptions, monuments, and calendars. This planetary week was paganism's counterfeit of the true, Biblical week instituted by the Creator in the beginning of Earth's history.

### A Counterfeit Sabbath

In the counterfeit week employed in ancient paganism "the venerable day of the Sun" was esteemed by the heathen above the other six days because it was regarded as sacred to the Sun, the chief of the planetary deities. Tertullian, as we have already pointed out, said to the Roman pagans: "You certainly are the ones who also received the Sun into the register of the seven days, and from among the days preferred it, on which day you leave off the bath, or you may defer it until the evening, or you may devote it [the day] to idleness and eating." [89] On this day-the day of the Sun-prayers were said to the Sun-god. Because "the things which the Gentiles [the heathen] sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God," [90] we may rightly conclude that the observance of Sunday by the pagan Romans was nothing else than homage paid to Satan.

Just as the true Sabbath is inseparably linked with the Biblical week, so the false Sabbath of pagan origin needed a Weekly cycle. Thus we have found that the planetary week of paganism is Sunday's twin sister, and that the two counterfeit institutions were linked together.

In 321 AD, Constantine, emperor of Rome, as we have pointed out already, by civil enactments made "the venerable day of the Sun," which day was then "notable for its veneration," [91] the weekly rest day of the empire. The Sunday laws of Constantine are the legal precedents for the Sunday legislation enacted by the lawmakers who followed him. The enforcement of the weekly observance of Sunday gave official recognition to the week of seven days and resulted in the introduction of it into the official civil calendar of Rome. The Romans passed that calendar down to us, and in it we have still the ancient planetary titles of the days of the week. And just as it was in the pagan world of Tertullian's time, the day of the Sun is by the majority of people still preferred above the other days of the week.

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## Foisted Upon Christendom

While it is true that Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week, the Holy Scriptures do not record that He ever made mention of the day at any time. It is equally certain that His apostles never left on record in Holy Writ any command for Sunday observance. They never speak of the first day of the week as being holy, blessed, a day of rest, the Sabbath, or the Lord's day. They did not prohibit labor on it and never taught that the Sabbath rest was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week.

Sunday observance among Christians began about the middle of the second century A. D. Justin Martyr, writing in those days, said to the pagan Romans: "On that called the day of the Sun an assembly is had of all those dwelling in the cities and rural districts." [92] He was not writing as representative of all the Christian church, but as spokesman of Roman Christianity. We find traces of Sunday keeping among Christians at Alexandria, Egypt, near the close of the same century.

Tertullian, speaking for Roman Christianity in an apology to the heathen, said: "Others, indeed, with more culture and truthfulness, believe that the Sun is our god. We shall be taken for Persians, perhaps, although it is not permitted that we worship the Sun depicted on the linen, having him everywhere in his disk. The reason for this is, I suppose, because it is known that we pray towards the east." [93] In another treatise addressed to the pagans, he said: "Others, certainly more cultured, think that the Sun is the god of the Christians, because it is known that we pray toward the east and make a festivity on the day of the Sun." [94]

Sunday as a religious festival is not a Biblical institution. It originated in paganism, in which it was venerated as the day sacred to the Sun. It was adopted from paganism as a weekly religious festival among Gentile Christians, and was exalted gradually, particularly by the Roman church, until it became the ecclesiastical festival of the first rank in Latin Christianity. In the fourth century Constantine, influenced by the popular clergymen of his day, made Sunday the weekly rest day for the Roman Empire. Regard for the true Sabbath, the seventh day of the week, gradually waned until it became eclipsed entirely by the pagan Sunday in the practice of the majority of Christians. [95]

Hutton Webster, who has made a special study of the subject, remarks: "The early Christians had at first adopted the Jewish seven-day week, with its numbered weekdays, but by the close of the third century AD this began to give way to the planetary week. And in the fourth and fifth centuries the pagan designations became generally accepted in the western half of Christendom. The use of the planetary names by Christians attests the growing influence of astrological speculations introduced by converts from paganism. During these same centuries the spread of Oriental solar worships, especially that of Mithra, in the Roman world, had already led to the substitution by the pagans of dies Solar for dies Saturn, as the first day of the planetary week. Thus gradually a pagan institution was engrafted on Christianity." [96]

## Roman Catholic Testimony

Outstanding authorities of the Roman Catholic Church not only have declared that the Holy Scriptures do not authorize the observance of Sunday, but loudly boast that the Papacy changed the day of rest from the seventh to the first day of the week. For example, Cardinal Gibbons' book, which has gone through 110 editions since it was first published in 1876, declares that "you may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never sanctify." [97]

Another popular work, which received the "apostolic blessing" of Pius X on January 25, 1910, discusses the change of the Sabbath thus:

"Question. Which is the Sabbath day?

"Answer. Saturday is the Sabbath day.

"Question. Why do we observe Saturday instead of Saturday?

"Answer. We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church, in the Council of Laodicea (A. D. 336), transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday." [98]

When the leaders of the great Protestant Reformation came to grips with the Papacy in the sixteenth century, they declared that the Holy Scriptures alone constitute the basis of faith and doctrine for the Christian. Doctor Eck, the papal champion, presented to the Reformers the following problem:

"If, however, the [Roman] Church has had power to change the Sabbath of the Bible into Sunday and to command Sunday keeping, why should it not have also this power concerning other days, many of which are based on the Scriptures-such as Christmas, circumcision of the heart, three kings, etc.? If you omit the latter, and turn from the Church to the Scriptures alone, then you must keep the Sabbath with the

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Jews, which has been kept from the beginning of the world.” [99]

The Council of Trent was convened in March, 1545, with the avowed purpose of arresting the progress of Protestantism. Its proceedings went on, with interruptions, until 1564. The council tried to find a good argument for condemning the Protestant principle of the Bible only as the rule of faith and doctrine. A large group of influential men stood for the abandonment of the papal doctrine of the “Scripture and tradition” together, affirming that the Roman Catholic Church ought to take its stand on the Holy Scriptures alone. This view was maintained so tenaciously in the council that the pope’s legates wrote to him saying that there was a strong tendency to set aside ecclesiastical tradition and stand for the Bible only. After sixteen sessions of the council had been held, and while the contending factions were still at loggerheads on this question, Gaspar del Fosso, archbishop of Rheggio, turned the tide in favor of church tradition, in the opening speech of the seventeenth session, held on January 18, 1562. He said:

“Such is the condition of the heretics today that they appeal to no other matter more than that they, under the pretense of the word of God, overthrow the Roman Church. As though the Church, which is the body of Christ, could be opposed to his Word, or the head to the body. Yea, the authority of the Church is most gloriously set forth by the Scriptures; for while on the one hand she recommends them, declares them divine, offers them to us to read, explains them faithfully in doubtful [passages], and condemns [whatever is] contrary to them. On the other hand, the legal precepts of the Lord contained in them have ceased by virtue of the same authority. The Sabbath, the most glorious day in the law, has been changed into the Lord’s [day]. This and other similar matters have not ceased by virtue of Christ’s teaching (for He says He came to fulfill the law, not to destroy it), but they have been changed by virtue of the authority of the Church. Should this authority cease (which would surely please the heretics), who would then witness for truth, and confound the obstinacy of the heretics?” [100]

Thus the Papacy clung to such traditional doctrines and practices as were well known to be openly contrary to teachings of the Sacred Scriptures. Protestants at large have followed a similar course, although it is well known that Sunday observance is not commanded by God in Holy Writ.

### A Revival of the Primitive Faith

Christ foretold that there would be a revival of primitive Christianity shortly before His second advent. Speaking to the apostles about the sign of His coming and of the end of the world, He said: “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations. And then shall the end come.” [101] In vision the apostle John was shown the Second Advent. [102] He also saw that before this sublime event would take place, the everlasting gospel would be “preached unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.” [103] In that message would go forth the call: “Worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” [104] Thus the entire world is to be called back to the worship of the true and living God, the Creator of heaven and earth.

Will this world-wide call result in a revival of primitive Sabbath observance, of the keeping of the day which Christ set up as a memorial of the work of the creation of this earth by Him in the beginning? Yes, for this is indicated by the class of people whom John saw in this vision of last-day evangelization of the world. The angel said to him: “Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” [105] One of God’s commandments says: “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall thou labor, and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.” [106]

In harmony with and in fulfillment of prophecy, the missionary movement of Seventh-day Adventists has risen in these last days to proclaim the everlasting gospel “unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.” [107] Of them it can truly be said that they stand for “the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” [108] They are calling men back to the observance of the trite Sabbath, the seventh day. Their message is being proclaimed in more than eight hundred languages and in practically every nation on earth today. Like the early Christians, Seventh-day Adventists also rest on “the Sabbath day according to the commandment.” [109]

### In the World to Come

Some day the Lord will come, and to His faithful ones He will say: “Come, you blessed of My

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Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” [110] And Peter assures its that “we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness.” [111] John was shown a vision of that new earth in all its glory. And as it was in the earth pure and undefiled by sin in the beginning that “the Sabbath was made for man,” so it shall be in the better world to come-in the new earth that “it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, said the Lord.” [112] Thus the true Biblical week and God’s holy Sabbath, the seventh day, will remain perpetual institutions throughout the endless ages of eternity.

“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.” [113]

## APPENDIX

### The Teutonic Pagan Week

IT is not known when the Teutonic peoples began to use the planetary cycle of seven days, but many historians agree with the opinion of Ernst Richard, who says: “The week as a time unit was taken over from the Romans, and their names of the days were Germanized.” [1]

By the end of the first century A. D. the Romans regarded several of the Teutonic gods as corresponding to those planetary deities to whom the days were devoted by the Latins. It is very possible that the usage of the Roman planetary week had been adopted already by that time among some of the Germanic tribes. Caesar said of the Gauls: “Among the gods, they most worship Mercury. There are numerous images of him; they declare him the inventor of all arts, the guide for every road and journey, and they deem him to have the greatest influence for all money-making and traffic. After him they set Apollo, Mars, Jupiter, and Minerva. Of these deities they have almost the same idea as all other nations: Apollo drives away diseases, Minerva supplies the first principles of arts and crafts, Jupiter holds the empire of heaven, Mars controls wars.” [2]

Tacitus remarks, for example: “Of the gods, they give special worship to Mercury, to whom on certain days they count even the sacrifice of human life lawful.” [3] This is a possible allusion to Woden’s day (Wednesday), which corresponds to the Roman Mercury dies (Mercury’s day).

### The Day Began With the Night

The same writer tells us that the German people kept a calendar record of the year, the months, and the days. One observation is worthy of special notice: “They count not by days as we do, but by nights: their decisions and proclamations are subject to this principle: the night, that is, seems to take precedence of the day.” [4]

The Latins began their days at midnight, but the Germanic peoples probably reckoned their days from sunset to sunset. We still have Christmas Eve and Halloween as reminders of that ancient practice. Verstegan, who made a specialty of investigating the antiquities of our forefathers, says: “They did count time by the nights whereof we yet retain our saying of sennight and fortnight, for seven nights and fourteen nights, more usually yet so speaking, than saying seven days or fourteen days.” [5]

Caesar said: “The Gaul’s affirm that they are all descended from a common father, Dis, and say that this is the tradition of the Druids. For that reason they determine all periods of time by the number, not of days, but of nights, and in their observance of birthdays and the beginnings of months and years day follows night.” [6]

### It Preceded Christianity

Mention has already been made of monuments of the Roman planetary week in the first centuries, and that some of them were found in regions occupied by the Teutonic peoples in the days of the empire. This seems to indicate that the planetary week was introduced into northern Europe before Christian missions made much impression upon the heathen population there. J. Grimm, in commenting on the fact that the Teutonic peoples gave to the days names equivalent to the corresponding gods of the Roman nomenclature, says: “But these names, together with the institution of the week, had passed on from Rome to Gaul and Germany, sooner than the Christian religion did.” [7]



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W. Smith and S. Cheetham also are of the same opinion, saying: "Hence the days of the week received names which were thought equivalent to their classical planetary denominations. This fact renders it highly probable that the week was adopted by the northern tribes in pre-Christian times; for if it had been received from Christian missionaries, they would scarcely have adopted a nomenclature which tended to perpetuate the names of the very deities whose worship they sought to abolish." [8]

A more recent authority on religious usages, the Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, edited by James Hastings, remarks also: "The fact that the days of the week in Teutonic mythology are heathen names suggests that the seven-day week was received before Christianity." [9]

### The Planetary Week in Old England

English history and traditions trace the Teutonic planetary week back to pagan times. "Our own names for the days of the week," says J. R. Green, "still recall to us the gods whom our fathers worshiped in their German homeland. Wednesday is Woden's-day, as Thursday is the day of Thunder, the god of air and storm and rain; Friday is Frea's-day, the deity of peace and joy and fruitfulness, whose emblems, borne aloft by dancing maidens, brought increase to every field and stall they visited. Saturday commemorates an obscure god, Saetere; Tuesday the dark god, Tiw, to meet whom was death. Eostre, the god of the dawn or of the spring, lends his name to the Christian festival of the Resurrection." [10]

Bede, the English monk and historian who lived from 672 to 735 AD, says of the heathen in general: "But when the Gentiles learned from the people of Israel the observance of the week, they turned this custom into the praise of their gods. Indeed, they named the first day for the Sun, the second for the Moon, the third for Mars, the fourth for Mercury, the fifth for Jupiter, the sixth for Venus, the seventh for Saturn, especially dedicating their days to the same strange things to whom also dedicating the wandering stars, although reckoning them in a different order. For they thought the spirit came from the Sun, the body from the Moon, fervor from Mars, wisdom and eloquence from Mercury, moderation from Jupiter, sensual pleasure from Venus, and slowness [or laziness] from Saturn." [11]

### The Saxons Brought It

It was about the middle of the fifth century AD that the Saxons came from the Cimbric Peninsula and islands of the region now known as the province of Schleswig, where Germany and Denmark join together, and landed in the British Isles. They came under the leadership of Hengist and Horsa, two brothers, at the invitation of the British king Wyrhtgeorn (Vortigern) to assist him in repelling the assaults of the Picts and Scots.

William of Malmesbury, an English monk and historian who wrote between 1080 and 1143 AD, says this about the arrival of the Saxons on the British Isles:

"These were under the conduct of Hengist and Horsa, two brothers of suitable disposition, and of noble race in their own country. They were great-grandsons of the celebrated Woden, from whom almost all the royal families of these barbarians nations deduce their origin; and to whom the nations of the Angles, fondly deifying him, have consecrated by immemorial superstition the fourth day of the week, as they have the sixth to his wife Frea." [12]

Geoffrey of Monmouth, an English writer of the twelfth century, relates the following interview between Vortigern and Hengist, upon the latter's arrival in Britain: "At the name of Mercury the king [Vortigerii] lifted up his countenance and asked of what manner of religion they were. Unto whom Hengist [said]: 'We do worship our country gods, Saturn, Jove [Jupiter], and the rest of them that do govern the world, but most of all Mercury, whom in our tongue we do call Woden. Unto him have our forefathers dedicated the fourth day of the week that even unto this day hath borne the name of' Wednesday after his name. Next unto him we do worship the goddess that is most powerful above all other goddesses, Frea by name, unto whom they dedicated the sixth day, which we call Friday after her name." [13]

Matthew of Westminster (or Paris), writing in the thirteenth century AD, gives the following account:

"Their leaders are reported to have been two brothers Herigist and Horsa, who were sons of Withgisius, whose father was Witha, whose father was Wetlia, whose father was Woden, from whose blood the royal families of' litany provinces derive their origin. And when at last they were brought into the presence of the king [Vortigern], he asked of them what faith and what religion their fathers had espoused. And Hengist replied: 'We worship their national gods, that is to say, Saturn and Jupiter, and the rest of those deities who govern the world, and most especially Mercury, whom we call Woden. To him our

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ancestors dedicated the fourth day of the week, which to this day is called Wednesday. Next to him we worship that goddess who is the most powerful of all the goddesses, named Frea, after whose name we call the day Friday.” [14]

### Verstegan’s Researches

Early in the year 1605, R. Verstegan, in his study of the antiquities of the Teutonic peoples, wrote a very instructive treatise on the customs of our forefathers. His remarks on the gods of the planetary week are so apt that it is fitting to present them here:

#### The Sun

“First then, unto the day dedicated unto the especial adoration of the idol of the Sun, they gave the name of Sunday, as much as to say the Sun’s day or the day of the Sun. This idol was placed in a temple, and there adored and sacrificed unto, for that they believed that the Sun in the firmament did with or in this idol correspond and cooperate. The manner and form whereof, was according unto this ensuing picture.

“It was made as here appears, like half a naked man set upon a pillar, his face as it were, brightened with gleams of fire, and holding with both his arms stretched out, a burning wheel before his breast: the wheel being to signify the course which he runs round about the world; and the fiery gleams and brightness, the light and heat wherewith he warms and comforts the things that live and grow.

#### The Moon

“The next according to the course of the days of the week, was the idol of the Moon, whereof we yet retain the name of Monday, instead of Moon-day, and it was made according to the picture here following.

“The form of this idol seems very strange and ridiculous, for being made for a woman she has a short coat like a man: but more strange it is to see her hood with such two long ears. The holding of a moon before her breast may seem to have been to express what she is, but the reason of her chapron with long ears, as also of her short coat and piked shoes, I do not find.

#### Tiw (the Teutonic Mars)

“The next unto the idols of the two most apparent planets was the idol of Tuysco, the most ancient and peculiar god of all the Germans, here described in his garment of a skin, according to the most ancient manner of the Germans’ clothing. Of this Tuysco, the first and chief man of name among the Germans, and after whom they do call themselves Tuytshen, that is, duytsches or duysh people, I have already spoken in the first chapter: as also shown, how the day which yet among us retains the name of Tuesday, was especially dedicated unto the adoration and service of this idol.

#### Woden (the Teutonic Mercury)

“The next was the idol Woden, who as by his picture here set down appears was made armed, and among our Saxon ancestors esteemed and honored for their god of battle, according as the Romans reputed and honored their god Mars.

“He was while sometimes he lived among them, a most valiant and victorious prince and captain, and his idol was after his death honored, prayed and sacrificed unto, that by his aid and furtherance they might obtain victory over their enemies: which when they had obtained, they sacrificed unto him such prisoners as in battle they had taken. The name Woden signifies fierce or furious, and in like sense we yet retain it, saying when one is in a great rage that he is wood, or takes on as if he were wood. And after this idol we do yet call that day of the week Wednesday, in stead of Wodensday, upon which he was chiefly honored. . . .

#### Thor (the Teutonic Jupiter)

“The next in order as aforesaid was the idol Thor, who was not only served and sacrificed unto of the ancient pagan Saxons, but of all the Teutonic people of the septentrional regions, yea, even of the people that dwelt beyond Thule or Iceland, for in Greenland was he known and adored; in memory whereof a promontory or high point of land lying out into the sea, as also a river which falls into the sea at the said promontory, does yet bear his name; and the manner how he was made, his picture does here declare.

“This great reputed god, being of more estimation than many of the rest of like sort, though of as

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little worth as any of the meanest of that rabble, was majestically placed in a very large and spacious hall, and there set, as if he had reposed himself upon a covered bed.

“On his head he wore a crown of gold, and round in compass above and about the same, were set or fixed, twelve bright burnished golden stars. And in his right hand he held a kingly scepter.

“He was of the seduced pagans believed to be of most marvelous power and might, yea, and that there were no people throughout the whole world, that were not subjected unto him; and did not owe him divine honor and service.

“That there was no puissance comparable to his: his domination of all others most farthest extending itself, both in heaven and earth.

“That in the air he governed the winds and the clouds, and being displeased did cause lightning, thunder, and tempests, with excessive rain, hail, and all ill weather. But being well pleased, by the adoration, sacrifice, and service of his suppliants, he then bestowed upon them most fair and seasonable weather: and caused corn abundantly to grow, as also all sorts of fruits, etc., and kept away from them the plague, and all other evil and infectious diseases.

“Of the weekly day which was dedicated unto his peculiar service, we yet retain the name of Thursday, the which the Danes and the Swedes do yet call Thursday. In the Netherlands, it is called Dunders-dagh, which being written according to our English orthography, is Thunders-day, whereby it may yet appear that they anciently therein intended, the day of the god of Thunder; and in some of our old Saxon books I find it to have been written Thunres-deag. So as it seems that the name of Thor or Thur, was abbreviated of Thunre, which we now write Thunder.

### **Friga (the Teutonic Venus)**

“The next following in rank and reputation, was the goddess Friga, who was made according as this picture here does demonstrate.

“This idol represented both sexes, as well man as woman, and as an hermaphrodite is said to have had both the members of a man, and the members of a woman. In her right hand she held a drawn sword, and in her left a bow; signifying thereby that women as well as men should in time of need be ready to fight. Some honored her for a god and some for a goddess, but she was ordinarily taken rather for a goddess than a god, and was reputed the giver of peace and plenty, as also the causer and maker of love and amity, and of the day of her especial adoration we yet retain the name of Friday; and as in the order of the days of the week Thursday comes between Wednesday and Friday, so (as Olaus Magnus notes) in the septentrional regions, where they made the idol Thor sitting or lying in a great hall upon a covered bed, they also placed on the one side of him the idol Woden, and on the other side the idol Friga. Some do call her Frea and not Frigal and say she was the wife of Woden, but she was called Friga, and her day our Saxon ancestors called Frig-deag, from whence our name now of Friday indeed conies....

### **Seater (the Teutonic Saturn)**

“The last to make up here the number of seven, was the idol Seater, fondly of some supposed to be Saturnus, for he was otherwise called Crodo; this goodly god stood to be adored in such manner as here his picture does show him.

“First on a pillar was placed a perch, on the sharp, prickled back whereof stood this idol. He was lean of visage, having long hair and a long beard: and was bareheaded and barefooted. In his left hand he held tip a wheel; and in his right he carried a pail of water, wherein were flowers and fruits. His long coat was girded unto him with a towel of white linen. His standing on the sharp fins of this fish, was to signify that the Saxons for their serving him, should pass steadfastly and without harm in dangerous and difficult places. By the wheel was betokened the knit unity and conjoined concord of the Saxons, and their concurring together in the running one course. By the girdle which the wind streamed from him, was signified the Saxons’ freedom. By the pail with flowers and fruits was declared, that with kindly rain he would nourish the earth, to bring forth such fruits and flowers. And the day and her day our Saxon ancestors called Frig-deag, from whence by being unto him dedicated, the same appellation.” [15]

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## 17. Doctor James Kennedy's Sermon

"The Gift of Rest"

Leading the way to the Mark of the Beast

**www.biblelight.net**

There is an increasing tendency by Christians in America to defend the public display of the Ten Commandments in the courtrooms and other state or federal governmental buildings, in an effort to publicize the foundational nature of God's Law in the fabric of the nation's legal system, and promote their enduring value to the general welfare and safety of the public at large. This puts the majority of Christian pastors in a very awkward position when it comes to preaching the value of observing the Ten Commandments, because when it comes to the Sabbath commandment (third by Catholic count, and fourth by some Protestants), the Sunday keeping preacher needs to explain, somehow to his congregation, just why it is that God's eternal law commands the keeping of the *seventh* day (Saturday), but that is no longer valid—that God's Law has been changed, and it is now the *first* day of the week (Sunday) that should be kept holy today by Christians.

A diligent search of the New Testament will discover no command from Jesus or the Apostles to cease keeping the Sabbath, or that it has been replaced by the first day of the week, yet the Sunday keeping Protestant pastor finds himself in the predicament of exhorting his congregation to keep Sunday, in striking contradiction to God's clear command to keep the seventh day Saturday Sabbath. On November 4th, 2001, Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church, Fort Lauderdale Florida, broadcast on television a remarkable sermon by Dr. D. James Kennedy, where this dilemma of Sunday sacredness, and the change of God's Law, was addressed. Excerpts from his full length televised sermon have been transcribed and are presented in the blue boxes. These excerpts are copyright 2001 by [Coral Ridge Ministries](#).

Exodus 20:8 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Exodus 20:9 Six days shall thou labor, and do all thy work:

Exodus 20:10 But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shall not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

Exodus 20:11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Isa 58:13 If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honorable; and shall honor him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words:

Isa 58:14 Then shall thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

May God speak to our hearts through his holy word and may His name ever be praised.  
Amen.

God so loved the human race that he gave us - the Sabbath. When you think about that, you will realize how remarkable that is. He is, why He is the boss. He is the

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ultimate authority, and what have we heard all of our lives from such folks as that. Get up off your duff and get to work! What are you doing there lazy? Get going! Move! Push! Lift! Work! WORK! WORK! God says, rest. Sabbath from the Hebrew *shabbat* means, very simply, rest. He gave us a day of rest. When everybody else, from the task masters of the Pharaoh with their whips, down to the slave owners of the South in this country, where saying work, lift, push, haul, God says *rest*, my Son, *rest* my daughter. The amazing thing is that there are some people who are so thick-headed that they won't do it.

...

Up to this point, at least, Dr. Kennedy is absolutely correct on all points.

A recent study of 100,000 people revealed, that if a person *merely* goes to church on Sunday, he cuts his chances of heart attacks, fatal heart attacks, in half. And that's regardless of what he does with the rest of day. If he kept the Sabbath holy, he might cut those chances by one, by nine tenths.

Now here Dr. Kennedy departs from biblical truth and mixes in the traditions of men. Sunday, the first day of the week, is *never* designated in scripture to be a Sabbath day.

God so loved the human race that He gave us the Sabbath. In fact, before the state, before the church, before even the family, the first institution that God gave to mankind was the Sabbath. Having created the heavens and the earth and all things therein, he rested on the seventh day and blessed the seventh day and hallowed it. And He commands us to keep it as such, because He loves us. And if we love Him we will love His Sabbath.

...

The Sabbath, the first institution given to man, is one that is vitally important. It is the longest commandment of the ten, more words dedicated to that throughout the rest of the scripture, mentioned more than virtually any other, and it was a very *serious* matter. God intended us to *keep* it. There is an old saying that goes, 'As goes the Sabbath, so goes the nation', because when the Sabbath becomes profaned and desecrated, church attendance is ignored, the teaching of God's holy word and His morality and spiritual life is forgotten, and the nation sinks deeper and deeper into the mire of sin. And that has a profound negative impact upon any country.

What Dr. Kennedy says here about the Sabbath is indeed true, but God *never* refers to the first day of the week, Sunday, as a day to be kept holy and to rest. [RealPlayer video clip](#)

There are those today that, that don't think anything about the Sabbath. You know your great grandfather called it the holy Sabbath. Did you know that? Your grandfather called it the Sabbath. Your father probably called it Sunday. We call it the weekend. Would you think that the Sabbath is being demeaned in the eyes of the American public. I'm afraid that it is, even though it is very important.

As bible believing Christians can see for themselves, Sunday was never proclaimed in scripture to be the new Sabbath to replace the seventh day Sabbath. There are no biblical exhortations to rest on the first day of the week, and no biblical penalties decreed for profaning Sunday by working that day. Now Protestantism was founded largely on the principle of Sola Scriptura, the Bible only for doctrine, and there is no Bible decree that declares the keeping of Sunday holy. The keeping of Sunday is, in fact, a tradition of men.

It [the Sunday Sabbath] is attacked by those who would say that we are not even supposed to be worshipping on the first day of the week. There are those that say we are supposed to be worshipping on the seventh day of the week. And the commandment is "Six days shall thou labor and the *seventh* is the Sabbath of the Lord our God". How did we go, they will ask, from being, Saturday being the Sabbath, to Sunday being the Sabbath. Who changed the Law? Well, seventh day celebrators, Seventh-day Adventists



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who celebrate Sabbath on the seventh day, will usually tell you that it was Constantine, in the early 300's, 325 A.D. that had the temerity to take upon himself, the authority, simply because he was the Caesar of Rome, to change the Sabbath day from Saturday to Sunday. Do you buy that? Think about it. Like for example, the Romans had no Sabbath at all. Saturday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Sunday, none! They had no Sabbath to change. What Constantine simply did, was, make Sunday a legal holiday so that they wouldn't have to worship in the catacombs before light on early Sunday morning and then go to work. He would not certainly have wanted to jeopardize the support of all of the millions of Christians that had grown up in those three centuries, that had allowed him to take over the Roman empire, by changing their day. Can you imagine what would happen if some Presidential candidate had said, while running for this presidency in this election, that he was going to change the Sabbath day to Tuesday? Why he wouldn't have had a chance of being elected. Neither would Constantine have had a chance of ruling Rome. But *it was changed by Christ, and by His Apostles by their example.*

In the above part of his sermon, Dr. Kennedy now introduces what is called by apologists a "straw man". A straw man is a misrepresentation of an opponents argument in order to make it easy to refute. He asserts that Seventh-day Adventists teach that Constantine is responsible for changing the seventh day Saturday Sabbath over to Sunday. That is his straw man, and he then proceeds to demolish this notion. However, Dr. Kennedy provided no authoritative Seventh-day Adventist sources as documentation of his claim. Adventists have long acknowledged that Sunday keeping got its start long before Constantine, and we do *not* attribute the change to Sunday to Constantine. Here is what Adventists have actually said about Constantine:

... Himself a worshiper of the sun in the form of Apollo, Constantine was willing to recognize Jesus Christ—"the Sun of Righteousness"—as another manifestation of the sun deity. In certain similarities between the church and paganism that had resulted from reciprocal borrowing, he at first thought he saw an opportunity for forging a unified imperial sun cult, uniting Christians and sun worshipers. His nominal conversion to Christianity did not take place until 323 or 325. ... When Constantine legalized the church in 313 it was forced to review its opinion of the state, and it hailed a benevolent government as its friend. Constantine followed his decree of liberation with other decrees favoring the church in its various operations, with grants of funds, of privileges, and of powers, both judicial and executive.

Since many Christians had been using Sunday as a day of worship for more than a century and a half, and since many sun worshipers had come to regard the first day of the week as the special astrological "day of the sun," he issued the world's first Sunday law (321), calling for rest from labor on that day.

Constantine did not make Christianity the state religion, but in some respects a bureau of the state. The church accepted these seeming benefits with gratification, not realizing the inherent danger in them until the question arose as to whether the state should dominate the church.

Source: Nichol, Francis D., *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association) 1978., Volume 7, page 19.

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In the early part of the fourth century the emperor Constantine issued a decree making Sunday a public festival throughout the Roman Empire. The day of the sun was revered by his pagan subjects and was honored by Christians; it was the emperor's policy to unite the conflicting interests of heathenism and Christianity. He was urged to do this by the bishops of the church, who, inspired by ambition and thirst for power, perceived that if the same day was observed by both Christians and heathen, it would

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promote the nominal acceptance of Christianity by pagans and thus advance the power and glory of the church. But while many God-fearing Christians were gradually led to regard Sunday as possessing a degree of sacredness, they still held the true Sabbath as the holy of the Lord and observed it in obedience to the fourth commandment.

Source: *Great Controversy*, by Ellen White, 1911 edition, page 53.

Note that Seventh-day Adventists agree with Dr. Kennedy that Sunday keeping *predates* Constantine. What the pagan emperor Constantine did, was officially establish Sunday as a legal civil holiday for the Roman Empire:

### **First Sunday Law Decreed by Constantine**

On the venerable Day of the Sun let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country, however, persons engaged in agriculture may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits; because it often happens that another day is not so suitable for grain-sowing or for vine-planting; lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of heaven should be lost. (Given the 7th day of March, Crispus and Constantine being consuls each of them for the second time [a.d. 321].)

Source: Δρεφυκῶτις ποτ, lib. 3, tit. 12, 3; trans. in Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. 3 (5th ed.; New York: Scribner, 1902), p. 380, note 1, quoted in the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Volume 9, Bible Student's Source Book*, page 999.

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### **The First Sunday Law (March, 321) was Civil, Not Christian**

[p. 379] So long as Christianity was not recognized and protected by the state, the observance of Sunday was purely religious, a strictly voluntary service, but exposed to continual interruption from the bustle of the world and a hostile community...

Constantine is the founder, in part at least, of the *civil* observance of Sunday, by which alone the religious observance of it in the church could be made universal and could be properly secured... [p. 380] But the Sunday law of Constantine must not be overrated... There is no reference whatever in his law either to the fourth commandment or to the resurrection of Christ. Besides he expressly exempted the country districts, where paganism still prevailed, from the prohibition of labor... Christians and pagans had been accustomed to festival rests; Constantine made these rests to synchronize, and gave the preference to Sunday.

Source: Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. 3 (5th ed.; New York: Scribner, 1902), pp. 379, 380, quoted in the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Volume 9, Bible Student's Source Book*, page 999.

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Now, had Constantine made the change from Saturday to Sunday, as Dr. Kennedy asserts that Adventists say, there would have to be some statement from the emperor transferring the Saturday Sabbath rest to Sunday, but this is *not* in his decree, cited above. So if Constantine did *not* make this change, who did?

But notwithstanding all the efforts to establish Sunday sacredness, papists themselves publicly confessed the divine authority of the Sabbath, and the human origin of the institution by which it had been supplanted. In the sixteenth century a papal council plainly declared: "Let all Christians remember that the seventh day was consecrated by God, and hath been received and observed, not only by the Jews, but by all others who

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pretend to worship God; though we Christians have changed their Sabbath into the Lord's day." [Thomas Morer, *Discourse in Six Dialogues on the Name, Notion, and Observation of the Lord's Day*, pages 281, 282] Those who were tampering with the divine law were not ignorant of the character of their work. They were deliberately setting themselves above God.

Source: *Great Controversy*, by Ellen White (a prominent Adventist), published in 1888, page 577.

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Satan's chief agent in bringing about the rejection of the fourth commandment, and the institution of the first day of the week as a day of rest, has been the Roman Catholic Church. The Roman Catholic Church does not deny the part she has acted in this change, but makes a boast of her power as shown in the change which she has brought about in the world. Papists acknowledge that the Bible gives no sanction to this change, and that Protestants have no Scriptural authority for Sunday worship. The Catholic Church changed the day of rest from the seventh to the first day, and without the shadow of divine sanction it has been accepted by almost all the Protestant churches, and Rome, pointing to the adherents of her doctrines, claims the supremacy. In changing the fourth precept of God's law, the papal power has thought itself able to exalt itself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped. This was the very work that the prophesy foretold would be done by this power.

Source: *Signs of the Times*, published by Adventists, Nov. 19th, 1894.

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### **Pope Sylvester I (314-335 A.D.) Decrees the Transfer of Sabbath Rest to Sunday:**

[Rabanus Maurus](#) (776-856), abbot of Fulda and later archbishop of Mainz, Germany, was rated one of the greatest theologians of his age and probably the most cultured man of his time, and exceptionally learned in patristics. Besides, he was a zealous defender of the papacy and its teachings. In one of his works, he says,

Pope Sylvester instructed the clergy to keep the *feriae*. And, indeed, from an old custom he called the first day [of the week] the "Lord's [day]," on which the light was made in the beginning and also the resurrection of Christ is celebrated.<sup>6</sup>

Rabanus Maurus does not mean to say that Sylvester was the first man who referred to the days of the week as *feriae* or who first started the observance of Sunday among Christians. He means that, according to the testimony of Roman Catholic writers, Sylvester confirmed those practices and made them official insofar as his church was concerned. Hence Rabanus says elsewhere in his writings:

Pope Sylvester first among the Romans ordered that the names of the days [of the week], which they previously called after the name of their gods, that is, [the day] of the Sun, [the day] of the Moon, [the day] of Mars, [the day] of Mercury, [the day] of Jupiter, [the day] of Venus, [the day] of Saturn, they should call *feriae* thereafter, that is the first *feria*, the second *feria*, the third *feria*, the fourth *feria*, the fifth *feria*, the sixth *feria*, because that in the beginning of Genesis it is written that God said concerning each day: on the first, "Let there be light; on the second, "Let there be a firmament"; on the third, "Let the earth bring forth verdure"; etc. But he [Sylvester] ordered [them] to call the Sabbath by the ancient term of the law, [to call] the first *feria* the "Lord's day," because on it the Lord rose [from the dead], Moreover, the same pope decreed that the rest of the Sabbath should be transferred rather to the Lord's day [Sunday], in order that on that day we should rest from worldly works for the praise of God.<sup>7</sup>

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Note particularly, he says that "the same pope [Sylvester I] decreed that the rest of the Sabbath should be transferred rather to the Lord's day [Sunday]."<sup>8</sup> According to this statement, he was the first bishop to introduce the idea that the divinely appointed rest of the Sabbath day should be transferred to the first day of the week. This is significant, especially in view of the fact that it was during Sylvester's pontificate that the emperor of Rome [Constantine] issued the first civil laws compelling men to rest from secular labor on Sunday, and that Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea, was the first theologian on record to present arguments, allegedly from the Scriptures, that Christ did transfer the rest of the Sabbath day to Sunday.

<sup>6</sup> Rabanus Maurus, *Liber de Computo* (A book Concerning Computation), Chap. XXVII ("Concerning Festivals"), as translated by the writer from the Latin text in Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, Vol. CVII, col. 682.

<sup>7</sup> -----, *De Clericorum Institutione* (Concerning the Instruction of the Clergymen), Book II, Chap. XLVI, as translated by the writer from the Latin text in Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, Vol. CVII, col. 361.

<sup>8</sup> The wording in the Latin text reads: "*Statuit autem idem papa ut otium Sabbati magis in diem Dominicam transferretur, ut ea die a terrenis operibus ad laudandum Deum vacaremus.*"

Source: *Sabbath and Sunday in Early Christianity*, by Robert L. Odom, © 1977 by the Review and Herald Publishing Association (An Adventist publishing house), pages 247-248.

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### **The Catholic Church Claims She Changed the Day of Rest**

The Church, on the other hand, after changing the day of rest from the Jewish Sabbath, or seventh day of the week, to the first, made the Third Commandment refer to Sunday as the day to be kept holy as the Lord's Day. The Council of Trent (Sess. VI, can. xix) condemns those who deny that the Ten Commandments are binding on Christians.

Source: [The Catholic Encyclopedia, Commandments of God](#), Volume IV, © 1908 by Robert Appleton Company, Online Edition © 1999 by Kevin Knight, Nihil Obstat - Remy Lafort, Censor Imprimatur - +John M. Farley, Archbishop of New York, page 153.

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Besides the Sabbath, the Jews observed other festivals which were instituted by the divine law, and the end and aim of which was to awaken in the people the recollection of the principal favours conferred on them by the Almighty. On these festivals the pastor will see Leviticus, (28) Numbers, (29) and Deuteronomy; (30) and on the moral objects contemplated in the institution of such festivals, he may also consult S. Cyril, (31) and S. Thomas. (32)

But the Church of God has in her wisdom ordained that the celebration of the Sabbath should be transferred to "the Lord's day:" as on that day light first shown on the world, so by the resurrection of our Lord on the same day, by whom was thrown open to us the gate to eternal life, we were called out of darkness into light; and hence the Apostle would have it called "the Lord's day."

Source: [The Catechism of the Council of Trent](#), Issued by order of Pope Pius V, first published by W. Folds and Son, Great Strand-Street. Published by Richard Coyne, Capel-street, Dublin; and by Keating and Browne, London, 1829, Copyright 1975 and Reprinted 1985 by The Christian Book Club of America, Hawthorne, California, 90251, page 387.

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### A Catholic Catechism for Converts

Q. *Which is the Sabbath day?*

A. Saturday is the Sabbath day.

Q. *Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?*

A. We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church, in the Council of Laodicea (A.D. 336), transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.

Q. *Why did the Catholic Church substitute Sunday for Saturday?*

A. The Church substituted Sunday for Saturday by the plenitude of that divine power which Jesus Christ bestowed upon her.

Q. *What does the Third Commandment command?*

A. The Third Commandment commands us to sanctify Sunday as the Lord's Day.

Source: [The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine](#), by Reverend Peter Geiermann, C.S.R., Copyright 1910 by Joseph Gummersbach, blessed by Pope Pius X on the 25th of January 1910 via Cardinal Merry Del Val, published by B. Herder Book Co, 15 and 17 South Broadway, St. Louis, Mo., and London, W. C. 33 Queen Square, in 1937, Twelfth Edition, page 50.

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The Roman Catholic church, as demonstrated above, stands up and says they have made the change, in the 4th century. They claim to have transferred the rest of the Saturday Sabbath to Sunday, and can show the historical proof in the canons of the Council of Laodicea in the 4th century. The [Council of Laodicea](#) in Phrygia Pacatiana, (343-381) was a local, Eastern, Greek-speaking synod, and the canons referring to the Sabbath or Sunday/Lord's day are listed here:

LAODICEA, CANON 16. - The Gospels are to be read on Sabbath, with the other Scriptures [apparently at Communion services; see canon 49, below].

LAODICEA, CANON 29. - Christians must not judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day, rather honoring the Lord's Day; and, if they can, resting then as Christians. But if any shall be found to be judaizers, let them be anathema from Christ.

LAODICEA, CANON 49. - During Lent, the Bread must not be offered except on the Sabbath Day and on the Lord's Day only.

LAODICEA, CANON 51. - The nativities of Martyrs [actually, the death days, on which martyrs were considered to have been born to eternal life] are not to be celebrated in Lent, but commemorations of the holy Martyrs are to be made on the Sabbaths and Lord's days.

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Constantine, while still a heathen, issued a decree enjoining the general observance of Sunday as a public festival throughout the Roman empire. After his conversion, he remained a staunch advocate of Sunday, and his pagan edict was then enforced by him in the interests of his new faith. But the honor shown this day was not as yet sufficient to prevent Christians from regarding the true Sabbath as the holy of the Lord. Another step must be taken; the false Sabbath must be exalted to an equality with the true. A few years after the issue of Constantine's decree, the bishop of Rome [Sylvester] conferred on the Sunday the title of Lord's day. Thus the people were gradually led to regard it as possessing a degree of sacredness. Still the original Sabbath was kept.

The arch-deceiver had not completed his work. He was resolved to gather the Christian world under his banner, and to exercise his power through his vicegerent, the proud pontiff who claimed to be the representative of Christ. Through half-converted pagans, ambitious prelates, and world-loving churchmen, he accomplished his purpose. Vast councils were held, from time to time, in which the dignitaries of the church were



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convened from all the world. In nearly every council the Sabbath which God had instituted was pressed down a little lower, while the Sunday was correspondingly exalted. Thus the pagan festival came finally to be honored as a divine institution, while the Bible Sabbath was pronounced a relic of Judaism, and its observers were declared to be accursed.

The great apostate had succeeded in exalting himself "above all that is called God, or that is worshiped." [2 Thess. 2:4.] He had dared to change the only precept of the divine law that unmistakably points all mankind to the true and living God. In the fourth commandment, God is revealed as the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and is thereby distinguished from all false gods. It was as a memorial of the work of creation that the seventh day was sanctified as a rest-day for man. It was designed to keep the living God ever before the minds of men as the source of being and the object of reverence and worship. Satan strives to turn men from their allegiance to God, and from rendering obedience to his law; therefore he directs his efforts especially against that commandment which points to God as the Creator.

**Protestants now urge that the resurrection of Christ on Sunday, made it the Christian Sabbath. But Scripture evidence is lacking. No such honor was given to the day by Christ or his apostles. The observance of Sunday as a Christian institution has its origin in that "mystery of lawlessness" which, even in Paul's day, had begun its work. Where and when did the Lord adopt this child of the papacy? What valid reason can be given for a change concerning which the Scriptures are silent?**

Source: *Spirit of Prophecy*, by Ellen G. White, Volume 4, published in 1884, pages 56, 57.

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This attempted change of a commandment of God is actually prophesied in scripture:

Dan 7:25 And he [the little horn] shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and ***think to change times and laws*** [of the most High ]; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

Daniel was speaking about the antichrist power, who would think to change the times and laws of God, and only one of the Ten Commandments of the Law of God deals with time, the commandment to keep holy *the* seventh day. For over one hundred years Seventh-day Adventists have clearly taught that this change from Sabbath to Sunday, an act of papal Rome, is in fact the mark of authority of the beast, spoken of in the book of Revelation.

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... "He shall think to change times and laws." The change in the fourth commandment exactly fulfills the prophecy. For this change the only authority claimed is that of the church. Here the papal power openly sets itself above God. The claim so often put forth, that Christ changed the Sabbath, is disproved by his own words. In his sermon on the mount he declared: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of Heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of Heaven." [Matt 5:17-19.]

Roman Catholics acknowledge that the change of the Sabbath was made by their church; and they cite this change as evidence of the authority of the church to legislate in divine

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things, and declare that Protestants, by observing the Sabbath as thus changed, are recognizing her power. The Roman Church has not relinquished her claim to supremacy; and when the world and the Protestant churches accept a Sabbath of her creating, while they reject the Bible Sabbath, they virtually admit this assumption. They may claim the authority of apostles and Fathers for the change; but in so doing they ignore the very principle which separates them from Rome,—that "the Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants." The papist can see that they are deceiving themselves, willingly closing their eyes to the facts in the case. As the Sunday institution gains favor, he rejoices, feeling assured that it will eventually bring the whole Protestant world under the banner of Rome.

The fourth commandment, which Rome has endeavored to set aside, is the only precept of the decalogue that points to God as the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and thus distinguishes the true God from all false gods. The Sabbath was instituted to commemorate the work of creation, and thus to direct the minds of men to the true and living God. The fact of his creative power is cited throughout the Scriptures as proof that the God of Israel is superior to heathen deities. Had the Sabbath always been kept, man's thoughts and affections would have been led to his Maker as the object of reverence and worship, and there would never have been an idolater, an atheist, or an infidel.

That institution which points to God as the Creator is a sign of his rightful authority over the beings he has made. The change of the Sabbath is the sign, or mark, of the authority of the Romish Church. Those who, understanding the claims of the fourth commandment, choose to observe the false in place of the true Sabbath, are thereby paying homage to that power by which alone it is commanded. The change in the fourth commandment is the change pointed out in the prophecy, and the keeping of the counterfeit Sabbath is the reception of the mark. But Christians of past generations observed the first day, supposing that they were keeping the Bible Sabbath, and there are in the churches of to-day many who honestly believe that Sunday is the Sabbath of divine appointment. None of these have received the mark of the beast. There are true Christians in every church, not excepting the Roman Catholic communion. The test upon this question does not come until Sunday observance is enforced by law, and the world is enlightened concerning the obligation of the true Sabbath. Not until the issue is thus plainly set before the people, and they are brought to choose between the commandments of God and the commandments of men, will those who continue in transgression receive the mark of the beast.

Source: *Spirit of Prophecy*, by Ellen G. White, volume 4, published in 1884, pages 280, 281.

You see, that on the seventh day we remembered the creation of the world, for in six days the Lord created the heavens and the earth, and rested on the seventh. And so the Jews celebrated the creation, the old creation of the physical heavens and earth. We celebrate the resurrection of Christ and the creation of the new heavens and the new earth, and that everlasting kingdom that is brought in by His resurrection and glorious victory over death.

Dr. Kennedy, papal Rome agrees with you:

### Faerber's Catechism

#### THIRD COMMANDMENT OF GOD

*Thou shall keep holy the Lord's day.*

209. Which is the Lord's day?  
Sunday, the first day of the week, is the Lord's day.  
On Sunday, God the Father began creation, God the Son arose from the dead, and the

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Holy Ghost descended from Heaven.—The Jews observed the last day of the week, the Sabbath, and the Apostles, commissioned by our Lord Jesus Christ, substituted for it the first day, the Sunday.

Source: [\*Catechism for the Catholic Parochial Schools of the United States\*](#), by Rev. W. Faerber, 36th edition, Revised, published by B. Herder Book Co., 17 South Broadway, St. Louis, Mo., and 33 Queen Square, London, W. C., copyright 1935, page 41.

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### **Sunday - fulfillment of the Sabbath**

2175 Sunday is expressly distinguished from the Sabbath which it follows chronologically every week; for Christians its ceremonial observance replaces that of the Sabbath.

Source: [\*Catechism of the Catholic Church\*](#), published by Liguori Publications, English translation copyright 1994 by the United States Catholic Conference, Inc.--Libreria Editrice Vaticana, bearing the Imprimi Potest of Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, page 524.

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However, the Roman Catholic Church has for many years rightly maintained that Sunday keeping is *not* something the Bible requires of Christians:

### **Keenan's Catechism**

[pg. 53]

Q. *When Protestants do profane work upon Saturday, or the seventh day of the week, do they follow the Scripture as their only rule of faith?*

A. On the contrary, they have only the authority of tradition for this practice. In profaning Saturday, they violate one of God's commandments, which he has never clearly abrogated; "Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day."

Q. *Is the observance of Sunday, as the day of rest, a matter clearly laid down in Scripture?*

A. It certainly is not; and yet all Protestants consider the observance of this particular day as essentially necessary to salvation. To say, we observe the Sunday, because Christ rose from the dead on that day, is to say, that we should rest on Thursday, because Christ ascended to heaven on that day, and rested in reality from the work of redemption.

[pg. 54]

Q. *What do you conclude from all this?*

A. That Protestants have no Scripture for the measure of their day of rest; that they abolish the observance of Saturday without warrant of Scripture; that they substitute Sunday in its place without scriptural authority; consequently, that for all this, they have only traditional authority. Yet Protestants would look upon a man who would do profane work after five o'clock on Sunday, or keep the Saturday, and profane the first day, as a victim of perdition. Hence we must conclude, that the Scripture, which does not teach these things clearly, does not contain all necessary truths; and, consequently, cannot be the only rule of faith.

[pg. 108]

Q. *Have you any other way of proving that the church has power to institute festivals of precept?*

A. Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her - she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority.

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Source: *Controversial Catechism*, by the Rev. Stephen Keenan, Second Edition, published in 1851 in Edinburgh; by C. Dolman, 13 South Hanover Street, and 61, New Bond Street, London, pages [53](#), [54](#), and [108](#).  
[A Doctrinal Catechism](#), by Rev. Stephen Keenan, Imprimatur by John Cardinal McCloskey, Archbishop of New York, Third American Edition, Copyright 1876 by T. W. Strong, published by P. J. Kenedy, pages 352-355, 174.

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### Cardinal Gibbons on Sunday

"... is not every Christian obliged to sanctify Sunday and to abstain on that day from unnecessary servile work? Is not the observance of this law among the most prominent of our sacred duties? But, you may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never sanctify."

Source: [The Faith of Our Fathers](#), by James Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore, 88th edition, page 89. Originally published in 1876, republished and Copyright 1980 by TAN Books and Publishers, Inc., pages 72-73.

So Sunday sacredness, which the Roman Catholic Church has long denied as being taught in Scripture, Dr. Kennedy will now attempt to prove:

And so we see that Christ rose from the dead, on the first day of the week.

(cf. Matt 16:21; Luke 24:1).

Yes, Christ did rise from the dead on the first day of the week, but that was mere coincidence. You see, the crucifixion day (Passover) was to be celebrated every year on 14th day of the first month (Nisan), by God's direction:

Leviticus 23:5 In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's passover.

Now Passover has been celebrated every year, since Israel was freed from bondage in Egypt, on the 14th day of the first month, by God's calendar. This feast day, as it was set for a day of the month, varied from one year to another as to the day of the week it fell on (just as your birthday can be a different day from one year to the next). Now it is true that on the year of the crucifixion, Passover happened on a Friday, placing the resurrection day, the 3rd day, on Sunday. However, if Christians were going to celebrate the dates *set by God*, it would be the 14th of Nisan for the crucifixion, and 16 Nisan for the resurrection.

It is also worth noting that neither Passover (14 Nisan), nor resurrection day (16 Nisan) were to be observed as convocation/Sabbath days, but the day *between* them, the first day of the feast of Unleaven Bread, *was* a Sabbath day:

Leviticus 23:6 And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.  
Leviticus 23:7 In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.

So what warrant is there for keeping Sunday as a Sabbath, when there is simply no "thus saith the Lord" in the Bible for Sunday sacredness to honor the resurrection? Dr. Kennedy suggests the following:

We see that He appeared unto the women on the first day of the week.

Luke 24:1

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Yes, Jesus was first seen by Mary Magdalene that Sunday morning (John 20:1), but where did Jesus tell anyone that Sunday should now be observed as a new Sabbath day?

**That He appeared unto the disciples, all except Thomas, on the first day of the week.**

John 20:19-28

Late on the day of the resurrection Jesus did appear to the eleven Apostles, but were they then told by Jesus to begin keeping that day instead of the seventh day Sabbath? The scriptures are quite silent on that point.

**That a week later on Sunday He appeared to them all, including Thomas.**

John 20:24-30

Yes, the following Sunday all the Apostles were again gathered together, and Christ again appeared to them, but where in the scriptural accounts were they instructed that the new Sabbath day was the first day of the week?

**We see furthermore, that the church began on the first day of the week, that Pentecost was the first day of the week, and the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the church on the first day of the week. And the first Christian sermon was preached on the first day of the week.**

Acts 2:1; 20:16, 1 Corinthians 16:8

Yes, since 16 Nisan was on a Sunday the year of the crucifixion, Pentecost, fifty days later, also fell on a Sunday. But why were the Apostles gathered together on that day?

Acts 2:1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

You see, it was because it was Pentecost that they were gathered together. Like Passover, Pentecost varies as to the day of the week it falls on, that is if you follow God's calendar. That Passover was on a Sunday was coincidence. Where in scripture does it indicate that the Christians began keeping Pentecost always on Sunday from that year forward? There is no such record in scripture, because the apostolic church knew nothing of a change to Sunday sacredness.

**And on the first day of the week they celebrated the Lord's Supper.**

Acts 20:7

The presumption being presented here is that the "breaking of bread" indicated the Lord's Supper.

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.

Then what of the following verse:

Acts 2:46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

It seems clear that "breaking of bread" indicates simply eating a meal together, but does not necessarily mean the celebration of the Lord's Supper. But let's assume for a moment that in Acts 20:7 the Apostles did in fact have communion, after all, Paul did preach until midnight. Why were they gathered together? Scripture tells us, because Paul was departing the next morning, there is *nothing* in the text that tells us they were gathered together because it was the new Sunday Sabbath. This is a remarkable omission, if the Apostles were indeed keeping Sundays.



## SUNDAY SACREDNESS IN ROMAN PAGANISM

And on the first day of the week they laid aside their money as offerings, and that came to be known, as John described it, as 'the Lord's day.'

1 Corinthians 16:2

Here Paul encourages the Corinthians, at the beginning of each week, to set aside a portion of their income, so that when he arrives the offerings for the Jerusalem church will have already been allocated. However, there is not even the slightest hint here of a church service, or the keeping of Sundays by the Corinthian church. Note the following:

Acts 18:1 After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth;  
Acts 18:4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.  
Acts 18:11 And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

That's 72 Sabbaths that Paul preached in Corinth, preaching to Jews and Gentiles. There can be no question that Paul raised up a Sabbath keeping church in Corinth, a church that knew nothing of observing Sunday as a holy day. So there is simply no reason to suggest that 1 Corinthians 16:2 demonstrates the keeping of Sunday by Paul or the Corinthian church.

Rev 1:10

That John means Sunday here is pure speculation. While Sunday has become known through Tradition as the Lord's day, scripture does not designate it as such, but we can find the following, referring to the Saturday Sabbath:

Mat 12:8 **For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day.**

Mark 2:28 **Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.**

Luke 6:5 And he said unto them, **That the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.**

In the above verses it is quite clear that Jesus Christ is the Lord of the Sabbath day, referring to the biblical Sabbath, the Sabbath instituted at creation and written on tables of stone by the finger of God (Exodus. 20:8-11). The only day of the week John would have considered to be "the Lord's day" was not Sunday, but the biblical seventh day Saturday Sabbath spoken of by Jesus Himself.

And it happened long before Constantine ever came to power. ...

As the Bible does not provide a "thus saith the Lord" for Sunday, Dr. Kennedy then, almost predictably, proceeds to the testimony of the following early church fathers for support of Sunday keeping:

- Barnabas - keeping the eighth day (120 A.D.)

... And so, the "*eighth day*" is always, throughout the Old and New Testaments, talking about the first day. ...

There are 18 instances in which the phrase "eighth day" occurs in the Old Testament:

### EIGHTH DAY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

1. **Exodus 22:30** Likewise shall thou do with your oxen, and with thy sheep: seven days it shall be with his dam; on the eighth day thou shall give it me. (Newborn animals fit for sacrifice only after eight days old)
2. **Leviticus 9:1** And it came to pass on the eighth day, that Moses called Aaron and his sons, and the elders of Israel; (Eighth day of consecration of Aaron and his sons)

## SUNDAY SACREDNESS IN ROMAN PAGANISM

3. **Leviticus 12:3** And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. (Eighth day after birth, Gen. 17:12)
4. **Leviticus 14:10** And on the eighth day he shall take two he lambs without blemish, and one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish, and three tenth deals of fine flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, and one log of oil. (Cleansing of the leper, v. 2)
5. **Leviticus 14:23** And he shall bring them on the eighth day for his cleansing unto the priest, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, before the LORD. (Cleansing of the leper, v. 2)
6. **Leviticus 15:14** And on the eighth day he shall take to him two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, and come before the LORD unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and give them unto the priest: (Uncleanness, issue of men, v. 13)
7. **Leviticus 15:29** And on the eighth day she shall take unto her two turtles, or two young pigeons, and bring them unto the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. (Uncleanness, issue of women, v. 28)
8. **Leviticus 22:27** When a bullock, or a sheep, or a goat, is brought forth, then it shall be seven days under the dam; and from the eighth day and thenceforth it shall be accepted for an offering made by fire unto the LORD. (Newborn animals fit for sacrifice only after eight days old)
9. **Leviticus 23:36** Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein. (Eighth day of feast of Tabernacles - 22 Tishri)
10. **Leviticus 23:39** Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day shall be a Sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a Sabbath. (Eighth day of feast of Tabernacles - 22 Tishri)
11. **Numbers 6:10** And on the eighth day he shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons, to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: (Law of Nazarites, eighth day after a sudden death)
12. **Numbers 7:54** On the eighth day offered Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur, prince of the children of Manasseh: (Eighth day of dedication of the tabernacle, 8 Nisan)
13. **Numbers 29:35** On the eighth day ye shall have a solemn assembly: ye shall do no servile work therein: (Eighth day of feast of Tabernacles - 22 Tishri)
14. **1 Kings 8:66** On the eighth day he sent the people away: and they blessed the king, and went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the LORD had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people. (Eighth day of feast of Tabernacles - 22 Tishri)
15. **2 Chronicles 7:9** And in the eighth day they made a solemn assembly: for they kept the dedication of the altar seven days, and the feast seven days. (Eighth day of feast of Tabernacles - 22 Tishri)
16. **2 Chronicles 29:17** Now they began on the first day of the first month to sanctify, and on the eighth day of the month came they to the porch of the LORD: so they sanctified the house of the LORD in eight days; and in the sixteenth day of the first month they made an end. (8 Nisan)

## SUNDAY SACREDNESS IN ROMAN PAGANISM

17. **Nehemiah 8:18** Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, according unto the manner. (Eighth day of feast of Tabernacles - 22 Tishri)
18. **Ezekiel 43:27** And when these days are expired, it shall be, that upon the eighth day, and so forward, the priests shall make your burnt offerings upon the altar, and your peace offerings; and I will accept you, saith the Lord GOD. (Eighth day of dedicating the altar, v. 18)

Note that *none* of the above verses says the "eighth day of the week". I maintain that when studied in context, not one of these verses refers to the first day of the week. It is incumbent upon Dr. Kennedy to provide the proof that *even one* of the above Old Testament verses is intended to indicate the first day of the week. This he will not be able to do.

In the New Testament, the phrase "eighth day" appears in three verses:

### EIGHTH DAY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

1. **Luke 1:59** And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.
2. **Acts 7:8** And he gave him the covenant of circumcision: and so Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat the twelve patriarchs.
3. **Philippians 3:5** Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

In each case the New Testament is referring to circumcision on the eighth day after birth (Gen. 17:12), which has *no connection what-so-ever to the first day of the week*.

So I would submit, that Dr. Kennedy's claim that the "eighth day", in every instance in scripture refers to Sunday, is *without merit*. On the contrary, scripture *never* designates the first day of the week as the "eighth day."

Dr. Kennedy continues with these early fathers of the Church:

- Justin Martyr - Sunday communion (150 A.D.)
- Clement of Alexandria - keeping the Lord's day, Sunday (194 A.D.)
- Tertullian - solemnized the day *after* Saturday (200 A.D.)

However, for the Protestant, appeals to early church fathers is a violation of the Sola Scriptura principle, and so has no standing or validity in the establishment of doctrine. If the case cannot be made from the Bible, then no amount of testimony from early church fathers has any standing.

So did Constantine the Great change the Sabbath? Not at all. He simply recognized the day which, for 300 years, Christians had been celebrating. So, it is the first day of the week, it is the Lord's day, it is the Christian Sabbath, it is our day of rest, our day of joy and gladness.

...

Yes, Sunday keeping began long before Constantine, but Adventists have *not* taught that Constantine made the change from Sabbath to Sunday. Rather, Adventists do teach that papal Rome made this change, and that it is a tradition *not taught in scripture*, to which the Roman Catholic has long agreed:

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### Not one scintilla of scriptural proof that Sunday is divinely appointed:

And now we would ask upon what religious grounds these earnest advocates for a more strict observance of Sunday [Protestants] base their claims to make Sunday a day of worship. If all the new law is contained in the Scripture, there is not one scintilla of proof that it is the divinely appointed day. Their citadel is not built upon sand—its condition is worse, it has no foundation at all. It is said in Holy Writ that "on the first day of the week the disciples were gathered for prayer and the breaking of bread." It is also said that on "another occasion, they were gathered for the same purpose on the first day of the week to hear St. Paul, who preached until midnight." St. John, it is said, was in the spirit on "the Lord's day." But this is a mere recital of facts, it is not the promulgation of a law. It is not the language, nor does it carry the sanction of a law. Who then, made Sunday, the first day of the week, the newly appointed day of worship? The divine organism that traces its history through the centuries back to Christ, that received the commission, "Go and teach all nations," that received from the hands of Christ, the divine founder of the new covenant, the new law of worship, in whose hands was placed the gift of infallible truth. To that divine organization, the Catholic Church, was given the law of worship, and she alone decreed and she alone had the right to decree that Sunday, the first day of the week, should be the future day of religious worship. The substance remained as St. Paul says and the victim of her altars was to be worshipped. So the substance was preserved; she, therefore, decreed the law, the day of worship and all the ordinances of that worship. All outside of her [Protestants] are fighting from a religious point view for a cause which does not belong to them. The Christian Sunday rests solely upon the teachings of tradition, which they reject.

Source: [Western Watchman](#), a Catholic journal devoted to the interests of the Catholic Church in the West, published in St. Louis, Mo., September 19, 1895, front page article: "Christian Sunday", synopsis of a sermon presented at St. Andrews Cathedral by Dr. Callaghan, on Sunday Sept. 1st., 1895.

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Now Dr. Kennedy, the Roman Catholic Church says you have no biblical authorization for keeping Sunday, that by promoting the Sunday Sabbath, you are a squatter on the Catholic ground of Tradition, which you as a Protestant reject in principle. Dr. Kennedy, which will it be, the seventh day Saturday Sabbath and Sola Scriptura, or the keeping of the papal Sunday and a recognition of the authority of Catholic Tradition? Catholics have been quite correct in pointing out, for several hundred years, that the two positions are mutually exclusive, and cannot be reconciled.

Following his sermon, the Coral Ridge Hour program presented a brief story on Chick-fil-A restaurants, which are closed on Sundays as a matter of policy, to observe the "Christian Sabbath". This was offered as a demonstration that even in this hectic modern culture, the "Lord's day" *can* be kept holy by Christians. During his sermon, Dr. Kennedy also advocated that Christians should not even patronize businesses on Sunday, much less open their own businesses that day. Dr. Kennedy is openly asserting that on the Christian Sabbath of Sunday, Christians should refrain from buying or selling. Adventists have known for many years, from scripture, where this will ultimately lead:

Rev 13:16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:  
Rev 13:17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

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Dr. Kennedy Responds

## SUNDAY SACREDNESS IN ROMAN PAGANISM

I invited Dr. Kennedy to publicly respond to my criticism of his "Gift of Rest" sermon, and this was his reply of 19 December 2001, sent via Mary Ann Bunker.

Dear Mr. Scheifler:

Your belabored treatise taking issue with my recent sermon broadcast over the Coral Ridge Hour and entitled "The Gift of Rest," was - as far as I am concerned - scarcely worth the effort that went into writing it, or that would have required my reading it.

Vintage Ellen White, your attack on the Christian Sabbath contains no new information or opinions other than those which have been promulgated since the late Nineteenth Century.

But I have no intention of engaging in a debate with you over what are patently denominational distinctives. The First Amendment grants to each of us the right to proclaim our convictions, as I did in my sermon, and as you have chosen to do via other channels of communication. So be it.

Sincerely in Christ,

D. James Kennedy, Ph.D.  
Senior Minister

Yes, Seventh-day Adventists have a distinctive message about the Sabbath—the seal of God, and Sunday—the Mark of the Beast. It is present truth, and I would suggest that Dr. Kennedy chose to avoid a substantive reply because the points I have raised about errors in his sermon regarding a Sunday Sabbath are valid, and he is simply not able to refute them. Dr. Kennedy should renounce his nominal Protestantism, and declare his allegiance to Rome, because when it comes to Sunday, he is teaching the Traditions of papal Rome, and *not* the doctrinal authority of scripture, Sola Scriptura, and to this the Catholics agree.

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### Update - January 2002

On Dr. Kennedy's "*Truths That Transform*" radio programs of January 7th, 8th, 2002, edited versions of his "*Gift of Rest*" sermon were broadcast, and were available for listening online for at least 3 months. In these programs Dr. Kennedy continued to present the substantial errors regarding the keeping of Sunday, even after having them pointed out to him weeks before in the above rebuttal, which he has acknowledged reading, but refuses to respond to in any detail. I submit that Dr. Kennedy is not presenting truths that transform when it comes to Sunday keeping, but rather he continues to advocate the keeping of the Traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, in stark contrast to the explicit command of God to keep holy *the* seventh day, which is Saturday. To quote Dr. Kennedy:

"The amazing thing is that there are some people who are so thick-headed that they won't do it [rest on God's Saturday Sabbath]."

Dr. Kennedy, YOU are the man you speak of so eloquently there.

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### Update - July 2004

Note the following statement by Dr. Kennedy in his recent abbreviated series on the Ten Commandments:

"I hope that today's study in the Ten Commandments has both awakened you and whetted your appetite for more. These perfect ten, if you will, were inscribed by our Creator



## SUNDAY SACREDNESS IN ROMAN PAGANISM

Himself upon tables of stone. They are eternal, unchangeable, and we ignore them at great risk". — Dr. D. James Kennedy, from the final word at the end of the [Truths That Transform](#) radio program titled [Why the Law of God \(Part 1\)](#) (Real Player), dated July 12th, 2004.

Dr. Kennedy's assertion there is quite correct. The Ten Commandments *are* eternal, and unchangeable, and that includes the Sabbath commandment, which commands rest on the seventh day of the week, and the seventh day of the week is Saturday, not Sunday. As he says, the Sabbath commandment *is* unchangeable, therefore he indeed keeps the Tradition of the papal Sunday, and ignores God's seventh day Saturday Sabbath commandment at his own risk, *and so, dear reader, do you!*

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### 1. The Pagan Planetary Week

1. Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31; 2:2, 3; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54, 56.
2. This is especially true in the Latin language; In Spanish, for example, the days of the week are named thus: Domingo (from the Latin dies Dominicus "Lord's day"), Lunes (from Lunae dies, "the day of the Moon"), Martes (from 'Martis dies' "the day of Mars"), Miercoles (from Mercurii dies, "the day of Mercury"), Jueves (from Jovis dies, "the day of Jupiter"), Viernes (from Veneris dies, "the day of Venus"), and Sabado (from Sabbatum, "the Sabbath").
3. The Roman poet Lueretius (c. 99-55 B.C.) said that the Sun "is compelled to turn round his course beneath the earth by the same force which carried his orb above the earth." - *On the Nature of Things*, book 5, lines 654, 655, in Loeb Classical Library, Lucretius, Page 387.
4. Sometimes the orb itself was regarded as the abode of the planetary deity.
5. The hebdomad and the ogdoad of pagan philosophy became the subject of much study on the part of the Gnostic sects which plagued the early Christian church.
6. The exact length of the sidereal lunar month is 27 days, 7 hours, 43 minutes, and 11.5 seconds. This must not be confused with the synodic lunar month of 29 days, 12 hours, 44 minutes, and 2.8 seconds.
7. It must be kept in mind that the ancient pagans believed that the earth was the center of the universe and that the Sun revolved around it. The year of seine of the ancient calendars contained 12 months of 30 days each-a total of 360 days. This is believed to be the original basis for the division of the circle into 360

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degrees-the zodiacal circle of the heaven being marked off into 360 day-spaces for the Sun. Pliny the Elder, who was a contemporary of Christ and His apostles, said that “the Sun’s course is divided into 360 parts, but in order that an observation taken of the shadows that it casts may come round to the starting point, five and a quarter days per annum are added. “-Natural History, book 2, chapter 6, in Loch Classical Library, Pliny, Natural History, Volume 1, Page 191. In those days the Egyptian calendar year consisted of 12 months of 30 days each. Five extra days, which were independent of the months, were added to the calendar year and celebrated as special religious holy days.

8. Because the planets really revolve around the Sun, and not around the earth, their orbits take them from one side of the solar orb to the other. Ignorant of this fact, the ancient pagan philosophers supposed that the planetary bodies alternately advanced and retroceded with varying speeds as they accompanied the Sun on his journey around the earth.

9. See Franz Cumont, *Astrology and Religion Among the Greeks and Romans*, Pages 162-166; Plutarch, *Isis and Osiris*, in Loeb Classical Library, Plutarch’s *Moralia*, Volume 5. A 365 day year-12 months of 30 days plus five religious holy days-lends itself to this scheme. For example, the year 1945 has 365 days, beginning on Monday (January 1) and ending on Monday (December 31), so that the following year begins on Tuesday. It is the insertion of the extra day (February 29) in our calendar every four years that breaks the continuity of the planetary cycle for the years. We have a notable case in the Gnostic sect of the Mandaeans of Iraq and Iran, whose system of religion is based on the ancient Chaldean astrology. Their year is divided into 12 months of 30 days each, with five special days added to make up a total of 365. They do not follow the practice of adding an extra day every four years, for which reason their calendar now starts the year in midsummer, whereas it ought to begin in the spring. Each year of the Mandaean calendar is named for the day of the planetary week with which it begins. See E. S. Drower, *The Mandaeans of Iraq and Iran*, Pages 83-85.

### 2. Is the Planetary Week of Babylonian Origin?

1. F. Cumont, *Astrology and Religion Among the Greeks and Romans*, Page 165.
2. *Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania (Series A, Cuneiform Texts)*, Volume 29, part 1, Pages 33-38.
3. Herodotus, *History*, book 2, Chapter 109, in Loeb Classical Library, Herodotus, Volume 1, Page 399. See also C. J. S. Thompson, *The Mystery and Romance of Astrology*, chapters 1-4.
4. G. Rawlinson, *The Five Great Monarchies*, Volume 2, Pages 546, 548.
5. *Society of Biblical Archaeology, Records of the Past*, Volume 7, Page 75.
6. *Ibid.*, Page 76.
7. F. Lenormant, *A Manual of the Ancient History of the East*, Volume 1, Page 483.
8. *Society of Biblical Archaeology, Records of the Past*, Volume 5, Page 121. See also Eberhard Schrader, *The Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament*, Volume 1, Pages 109, 110.
9. Herodotus, *History*, book 1, chapter 181, in Loeb Classical Library, Herodotus, Volume 1 Pages 225, 227
10. A. T. Olmstead, *Western Asia in the Days of Sargon of Assyria*, Page 184. See also P. S. P. Hancock, *Mesopotamian Archeology*, Pages 138, 139.
11. Daniel 2:2, 4, 5, 10; 3:8; 4:7; 5:7, 11.
12. Note that this statement agrees with what the book of Daniel says about their profession.



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13. Note that the doctrine of the eternity of matter is a pagan tenet that is very old. It is diametrically opposed to the Biblical doctrine of the creation of matter by God.

14. Saturn was often regarded by the ancients as being the star spokesman for the Sun.

15. A. H. Sayce makes the following comment on this point: "Diodorus (ii. 30) states that the 'counselor gods' were only thirty in number; but the list of planetary stations discovered by Hommel in WAL v. 46, shows that the text must be corrected to thirty-six. Indeed, Diodorus himself adds that every ten days there was a change of constellations, so that in a year of 360 days there must have been thirty-six constellations in all." - *The Religions of Ancient Egypt and Babylonia*, Page 237.

T. G. Pinches points out that the Babylonian account of creation says that Merodach "caused three stars to be assigned to each of 12 months." That would make a total of 36. See J. Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, Volume 1, Page 191, article "Astronomy and Astrology."

16. There was one counselor god for every 10 days, or degrees, of the circle of the year of 360. The 36 counselor gods were distributed three to a sign around the equatorial belt of the heavens, which is known as the zodiac. Half of them are always above the horizon while the other half are below it. In the course of the year all 36 of them would be seen overhead, for while one was rising in the east another was setting in the west.

17. The solar months were determined by the time that the Sun appeared to spend in each of the 12 constellations of the zodiac, which was 30 days.

18. Diodorus Siculus, *The Library of History*, book 2, chapters 29-31, in *Loeb Classical Library*, Diodorus Siculus, Volume 1, Pages 449-453.

19. Jules Oppert, *Expedition Scientifique en Misopotamie*, Volume 1, Page 206 ff.

20. A. H. Sayce "The Chaldean Origin of the Sabbath," in *The Academy*, London, November 27, 1875, Page 544.

21. R. W. Rogers, *The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, Page 128.

22. *Ibid.*, Pages 128, 129.

23. Francis Brown "The Sabbath in the Cuneiform Records," in *The Presbyterian Review*, October, 1882, Pages 689-691. See also Eberhard Schrader, "The Babylonian Origin of the Week of Seven Days," in *Theologische Studien and Kritiken*, 1874, Pages 343 ff.

24. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 14th ed., Volume 14, Page 516, article "Lydus."

25. Johannes Laurentius Lydus, *De Mensibus*, book 2, chapter 3, in *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae*, Volume 30, Page 14.

### 3. The Planetary Week in Mesopotamia

1. W. Smith, *Dictionary of the Bible*, Page 362, Article "Haran."

2. *The New International Encyclopedia*, Volume 20, Page 283, Article "Sabians"; *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 14th ed., Volume 19, Page 790, Article "Sabians."

3. Genesis 11:27, 28.

4. R. W. Rogers, *The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, Pages 83, 84; C. Leonard Woolley, *Ur of the Chaldees*.

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5. Joshua 24:2.

6. “After the dispersion from Babel, idolatry again became well-nigh universal. . . . Abraham had grown up in the midst of superstition and heathenism. Even his father’s household, by whom the knowledge of God had been preserved, were yielding to the seductive influences surrounding them, and they ‘served other gods’ (Joshua 24:2) than Jehovah’s.” - E. G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, Page 125. Hence Abraham “was directed to leave his idolatrous nation.” - E. G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Volume 1, Page 93.

7. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, book 1, chapter 7, section 1, in *The Works of Flavius Josephus*, Page 42.

8. Genesis 11:27-32; 12:1-5.

9. Genesis 24:10, 15; 25:20; 27:43; 28:5.

10. Genesis 31:19, 30-35. It may be rightly said of the family of Terah, Abraham’s father, that “with their idolatry they united the worship of the true God,” and that Abraham’s brother, Nahor, “with his household clung to their home and their idols.” - E. G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, Page 127.

11. Genesis 31:19, 30-35; 35:2, 4. There were false gods in the camp, and idolatry had to some extent gained a foothold even in his household.” - E. G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, Page 205.

12. Genesis 35:23.

13. Kings 19:12; Isaiah 37:12.

14. The Sin-cult had a strong hold at an early date also at Harran in Mesopotamia. For even as early as the sources derived from Boghazkoi (middle of the second millennium BC), Sin of Harran is mentioned. Here also a name readily applied to him is Bel-Harran, ‘lord of Harran.’ - J. Hastings, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Volume 2, Page 311, Article “Babylonians and Assyrians.”

15. W. Smith and H. Wace, *A Dictionary of Christian Biography, Literature, Sects and Doctrines*, Volume 4, Page 573, Article “Sabians.”

16. J. Hastings, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Volume 6, Page 520, Article “Harranians.” See also G. Rawlinson, *The Five Great Monarchies*, Volume 1, Pages 124 (footnote), 138 (footnote); T. K. Cheyne and J. S. Black, *Encyclopedia Biblica*, Volume 4, Article “Week”; D. Chwolsohn, *Die Ssabier und der Ssabismus*, Volume 2, Pages 2, 611.

17. Eberhard Schrader, *The Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament*, Volume 1, Pages 20, 21.

18. S. H. Langdon, *The Mythology of All Races*, Volume 5, Pages 154, 155.

19. Koran 2:59; 5:73; 22:17; 27:24.

20. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume 10, Page 705, article “Nasoraean.”

21. *The New International Encyclopedia*, Volume 14, Page 778, Article “Mandaeans”; *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, Volume 7, Page 315, Article “Mandaeans.”

22. *Encyclopedia Britannica* 11th Edition, Volume 17, Page 5571 Article “Mandaeans.” See also *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Volume 7, Page 146, Article “Mandaeans.”

23. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th ed., Volume 17, Page 555, 557, article “Mandaeans.”

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24. Ibid., Page 556.
25. J. Mc-Clintock and J. Strong, Encyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature, Volume 6, Page 821, article "Mendaeans."
26. The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Volume 7, Page 148, article 'Mandaeans.'
27. The Catholic Encyclopedia. Volume 10, Page 707, Article "Nasoraean."
28. The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Volume 7, Pages 148, 149, Article "Mandaeans."
29. J. Mc-Clintock and J. Strong, Encyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature, Volume 7, Page 83, Article "Mendaeans."
30. J. Hastings, Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Volume 8, Page 391, Article "Mandaeans."
31. H. Hottinger, Historia Orientalis, Book 1, Chapter 8, Page 177. See also A. Barnes, Notes on the Book of Job, Volume 2, Pages 119, 120, comment on Job 31:26, 27.
32. La Grande Encyclopidie, Volume 29, Page 6, Article "Sabbeisme."
33. E. S. Drower, The Mandaeans of Iraq and Iran, Pages 74, 75.

### 4. The Diffusion of Chaldean Astrology

1. W. F. Albright, From Stone Age to Christianity, Pages 262, 263.
2. Cato, De Agricultura, chapter 5, section 4, in Loeb Classical Library, Cato and Varro, P. 15.  
"The word Chaldaios [Greek], Chaldeus [Latin]," says Franz Curnont, an authority on the subject of ancient astrology, bore amongst the ancients very different meanings from time to time. These terms designated first of all the inhabitants of Chaldea, that is lower Mesopotamia, and next the members of the Babylonian priesthood. Thus at the period of the Achaemenid kings [of Persia], in the official processions of Babylon, there walked first the magi, as Quintus Curtius states (v. 1, 22), that is to say the Persian priests established in the conquered capital, then the Chaldaei, that is the native sacerdotal body. Later the epithet Chaldaios was applied as a title of honor to the Greeks who had studied in the Babylonian schools and proclaimed themselves disciples of the Babylonians; finally it served to denote all those charlatans who professed to foretell the future according to the stars." - Astrology and Religion Among the Greeks and Romans, Page 27.
3. "Propertius, Elegies, book 4, Elegy 1, lines 81-86, in Loeb Classical Library, Propertius, Pages 269, 271.
4. Juvenal, Satires, book 6, lines 553-568, in Loeb Classical Library, Juvenal, Page 129.
5. Suetonius, The Lives of the Caesars, in Loeb Classical Library, Suetonius.
6. Tacitus, Annals, book 2, Chapter 32; book 12, Chapter 52; The Histories, book 2, Chapter 78, in Loeb Classical Library, Tacitus, Volume 2, Pages 431, 433; Volume 3, Page 391; Volume 1, pp; 285, 287. Suetonius, The Lives of the Caesars, "Tiberius," Chapter 36; "Vitellius," chapter 14, in Loeb Classical Library, Suetonius, Volume 1, Pages 345, 347; Volume 2, Pages 269, 271. Dio Cassius, Roman History, book 49, Chapter 43; book 56, Chapter 25, in Loeb Classical Library, Dio's Roman History, Volume 5, Page 429; Volume 7, Page 57.
7. Vettius Valens will be discussed in chapter 9.

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8. Claudius Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos*, in *Loch Classical Library*, Manetho, Ptolemy.
9. Julius Firmicus Maternus, *Matheseos*, in *Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum*, Firmicus Maternus.
10. J. Eckhel, *Doctrina Numorum*, Volume 4, Pages 70, 71. In the article “Remarques sur Quelques Medailles de l’Empereur Antonin, frappees en Egypte,” by M. l’Abbe, Barthelemy, in *Memoires a l’Academie Royale des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, Series 1, Volume 41, Pages 501-522 (Paris, 1870), there is a detailed description and drawing (plate following Page 522, Fig. 11) of this coin.
11. Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus Astrologos*, in *Sexti Empirici Opera*, Pages 337-355.
12. Clement of Alexandria, *Miscellanies*, book 6, Chapter 16, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 2, Page 513.
13. Hippolytus, *Refutation of All Heresies*, book 4, chapters 2-8, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 5, Pages 24-29.
14. Tertullian, *On Idolatry*, Chapter 10, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 3, Page 60. See footnote.
15. An extensive and detailed discussion of the seven planetary bodies is found in Plato’s *Timaeus*, Chapters 34-37, in *Loch, Classical Library*, Plato, Volume 7, Pages 63-77.
16. The ends of the spindle correspond to the north and south celestial poles.
17. Plato, *The Republic*, book 10, Chapter 14, in *Loeb Classical Library*, Plato’s *Republic*, Volume 2, Pages 501-505.
18. See Cicero, *The Republic*, book 6, Chapter 18, in *Loeb Classical Library*, Cicero, *De Republica*, *De Legibus*, Pages 271, 273; Lucian, *An Astrology*, Chapter 10, in *Loeb Classical Library*, Lucian, Volume 5, Pages 355, 357; Philo Judaeus, *Who Is the Heir*, Chapter 45; *On the Creation*, Chapter 38, in *Loeb Classical Library*, Philo, Volume 4, Pages 393, 395; Volume 1, Pages 91, 93.  
The theory of the musical harmony of the planetary spheres is said to have been taught by Pythagoras, a Greek philosopher of the sixth century BC, who is supposed to have borrowed much of his astronomical knowledge from the Babylonians. See Pliny, *Natural History*, book 2, Chapter 20, in *Loeb Classical Library*, Pliny, *Natural History*, Volume 1, Pages 227, 229; Censorinus, *De Die Natali*, book 13, in *Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum*, Censorinus, *De Die Natali*, Pages 22, 23. Hippolytus, *Refutation of All Heresies*, book 1, Chapter 2, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 5, Page 11. Plutarch (*The Procreation of the Soul*, in *Plutarch’s Complete Works*) says that there was a notion of some correspondence between the intervals of space between the planetary bodies and the notes which make up the musical tetra-chord. The Gnostics also made a play on this in their theories concerning the first day of the week as being also the eighth day, thus completing the octo-chord.
19. Ernest Maass, *Commentariorum in Aratum Reliquiae* (Aratus, *Scholia*, chapter 455), Page 427.
20. F. R. Johnson, *Astronomical Thought in Renaissance England*, Page 52.
21. J. L. E. Dreyer, *History of the Planetary Systems*, Page 169. See also W. T. Sedgwick and H. W. Tyler, *A Short History of Science*, Revised Edition, Page 136.
22. Herodotus, *History*, book 2, chapter 109, in *Loeb Classical Library*, Herodotus, Volume 1, Page 399.
23. Cicero, *The Republic*, book 6, Chapter 17, in *Loch Classical Library*, Cicero, *De Republica*, *De Legibus*, Pages 269, 271. See also his *On the Nature of the Gods*, book 2, chaps. 19-21, in *Loch Classical Library*, Cicero, *De Natura Deorum Academica*, Pages 195-201.

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24. The ancient philosophers believed that the universe was composed of only four prime elements-fire, air, earth, and water.
25. Pliny, *Natural History*, book 2, Chapter 4, in *Loeb Classical Library*, Pliny, *Natural History*, Volume 1, Pages 177, 179.
26. *Ibid.*, Chapter 6, in *Loeb Classical Library*, Pliny, *Natural History*, Volume 1, Pages 189-195.
27. Philo Judaeus, *Allegorical Interpretation*, book 1, Chapter 4, in *Loeb Classical Library*, Philo, Volume 1, pages 151, 153. He also says: "We are told that there [in heaven] the outermost sphere of fixed stars is kept un-severed, while the inner sphere by a six fold division produces the seven circles of what we call the wandering stars." - *Who Is the Heir*, Chapter 48, in *Loeb Classical Library*, Philo, Volume 4, Page 399. See also his *The Decalogue*, Chapter 21, in *Loeb's Classical Library*, Philo, Volume 7, Pages 59, 61.
28. Philo Judaeus, *Who Is the Heir*, Chapter 45, in *Loeb Classical Library*, Philo, Volume 4, Pages 393, 395. In another discourse he says: "For the Sun, like the candlestick, has the fourth place in the middle of the six and gives light to the three above and the three below it." - *On the Life of Moses*, book 2, Chapter 21, in *Loeb Classical Library*, Philo, Volume 6, Page 499.
29. Philo Judaeus, *On the Creation*, Chapter 38, in *Loeb Classical Library*, Philo, Volume 1, Pages 91, 93.
30. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, book 3, Chapter 6, sec. 7; Chapter 7, sec. 7, in *The Works of Flavius Josephus*, Pages 98, 99, 101. "The seven lights may be said to represent the seven planets, which, regarded as the eyes of God, behold everything, The light in the center, which is especially distinguished, would signify the Sun, as the chief of the planets." - *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, Volume 3, Pages 531, 533, Article "Candlestick."
31. Ptolemy *Tetrabiblos*, book 4, chap, 10, in *Loeb Classical Library*, Manetho, Ptolemy, Pages 443-447.
32. Clement Of Alexandria, *The Miscellanies*, book 5, Chapter 6, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 2, Page 452.
33. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume 2, Page 22, Article "Astrology."

### 5. The Planetary Week in Rome

1. Theo. Mommsen, in *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, 1863 ed., Volume 1, part 2, Page 293.
2. Bernard de Montfaucon, *Antiquity Explained*, Volume 6 (Supplement, Volume 1), Page 27.
3. *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Volume 3, Page 239, footnote; *The Historians' History of the World*, Volume 1, Page 570.
4. Herodotus, *History*, Book 2, Chapter 109, in *Loeb's Classical Library*, Herodotus, Volume 1, Page 399.
5. Victor Duruy, *History of Rome*, Volume 7, Section 2, Page 488, 489.
6. Bernard de Montfaucon, *Antiquity Explained*, Volume 6 (Supplement, Volume 1), Pages 22, 23.
7. J. de Witte has described in detail nineteen different Roman monuments of the planetary week, among which are those mentioned here. See *Gazette Archiologique* (Paris, 1877), Volume 3, Pages 50-57, 77-85; (Paris, 1879) Volume 5, Pages 1-6; and *Encyclopedia Universal Illustrada*, Volume 18, Page 781, Article "Dia."
8. *Ibid.*



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9. Ibid.
10. Jacob Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, Volume 1, Page 127, footnote. See also Lersch in *Jahrbucher des Vereines von Altertumsfreunden im Rheinlande*, Band 4, Page 183; Band 5, Pages 299-314.
11. See footnote 7.
12. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, 1863 ed., Volume 13, part 1 (1), Page 438, No. 2869.
13. Ibid., 1893 ed., Volume 1, part 1, Page 218; L. Fulvio, in *Notizie degli Scavi di Antichita Communicate alla Real Accademia dei Lincei* (Rome, 1891), Page 238.
14. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, 1893 ed., Volume 1, Page 218; J. G. Graevius, *Thesaurus Antiquitalum Romanarum*, Volume 8, cols. 682-685.
15. Victor Duruy, *History of Rome*, Volume 7, Section 2, Page 488
16. See L. Lersch "Der Planetarische Gotterkreis" in *Jahrbucher des Vereines von Alurlumsfreunden int Rheinlande* (1844), Band 4, Pages 147-176; Paulys *Real-Encycloedie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, Band 2, column 2776, Article "Hebdomas". and E. Schurer, "Die Siebentagige Woche im Gebrauche der Christlichen Kirche der ersten Jahrhunderte," in *Zeitschrifte fur die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 1905.

### 6. The Planetary Week in the First Century BC

1. Here is a partial list of authorities who hold that the astrological or planetary week was introduced into Rome during the first century BC, or about the beginning of the Christian Era: J. Hastings, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Volume 3, Page 63, Article "Calendar" (Introductory, Section 8); E. W. Maunder in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Volume 1, Page 299, Article "Astrology". *The New International Encyclopedia*, Volume 23, Page 436, Article "Week". *Harper's Dictionary of Classical Literature and Antiquities*, Page 1669, Article "Week". *Larousse du XXe Siecle* (1933), Volume 6, Page 287, Column 1, Article "Semaine"; J. de Witte in the *Gazette Archiologique* 877), Volumes 2, 3 (Paris). *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume 5, Page 109, Article "Dominical Letter"; *The World Book Encyclopedia*, Volume 18, Page 7700, Article "Week"; F. G. Moore, *The Roman's World*, Page 282.
2. The regulation of the Roman civil calendar was the duty of the Pontifex Maximus and his associates, and they were charged with having confused it for political reasons by abuse of their privilege of making the intercalations necessary to keep it in order. See Cicero, *Pro Murena*, Chapter 11, in *Loeb Classical Library*, Cicero, *In Catilinam I-IV, Pro Murena, Pro Sulla, Pro Flacco*, Pages 175, 177; Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, book 40, Chapter 62, in *Loeb Classical Library*, *Dio's Roman History*, Volume 3, Pages 501, 503; Plutarch, *Lives*, "Caesar," Chapter 59, in *Loeb Classical Library*, *Plutarch's Lives*, Volume 7, Page 581; *Harper's Dictionary of Classical Literature and Antiquities*, Pages 1299, 1300, Article "Pontifex."
3. The Egyptian year consisted of 12 months of 30 days each. Five extra days, which were regarded as religious feasts, were added at the end of the twelfth month to make up the total of 365 days. See M. Brodrick, *Egypt Under the Pharaohs*, Page 455. Julius Caesar adapted the Roman calendar to the Egyptian plan of the year, except that he distributed the five extra days throughout the year by adding an extra day to some months.
4. Theo. Mommsen, *The History of Rome*, Volume 5, Pages 438, 439.
5. Plutarch, *Lives*, "Caesar," Chapter 59, in *Loeb Classical Library*, *Plutarch's Lives*, Volume 7, Page 581.
6. Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, book 37, Chapter 16, in *Loeb Classical Library*, *Dio's Roman History*, Volume 3, Pages 125, 127.

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7. Dio Cassius apparently mistook the open court of the temple for the building proper, for which reason he spoke of it as being rootless.
8. *Ibid.*, Chapter 17, in Loeb Classical Library, Dio's Roman History, Volume 3, Pages 127, 129.
9. There may seem to be an apparent contradiction between the account of Josephus and that of Dio Cassius about the Roman soldiers and their activities on the Sabbath days. It should be noted, however, that Josephus is speaking of the preparation the Romans made for the final assault. Hence it appears that while the Romans were raising their bank of earth they did not engage in battle with the Jews on the Sabbath days, but when the time for the big attack came round, they chose to make it on the Sabbath day.
10. Josephus, Wars of the Yews, Book 1, Chapter 7, Section 3, in The Works of Flavius Josephus, Page 618.
11. See footnote 9.
12. Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, Book 14, Chapter 4, Sections 2, 3, in The Works of Flavius Josephus, Page 413.
13. Strabo, Geography, book 16, Chapter 2, Section 40, in Loeb Classical Library, The Geography of Strabo, Volume 7, Page 291.
14. Josephus, Wars of the Yews, book 2, chapter 16, section 4, in The Works of Flavius Josephus, Page 692.
15. Dio Cassius, Roman History, book 49, Chapter 22, in Loeb Classical Library, Dio's Roman History, Volume 5, Page 387.
16. Josephus, Antiquities of the Yews, book 14, Chapter 16, Section 4, in The Works of Flavius Josephus, Page 443.
17. "Even the day of Saturn."
18. Encyclopedia Britannica, 14th ed., Volume 11, Page 739 Article "Horace."
19. J. Hastings, Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Volume 12, Page 104, Article "Sunday."
20. Horace, Satires, book 2, Satire 3, lines 288-290, in Loeb Classical Library, Horace, Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica, Page 177.
21. *Ibid.*
22. Pomponius Porphyrio, Commentaries on Q. Horace Flaccus, discourse 2, chapter 3, line 290, in Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum, Pomponii Porphyronis Commentarii in Q. Horatium Flaccum, Page 259, author's translation.
23. Tibullus, Elegies, book 1, Elegy 3, lines 17, 18, in Loeb Classical Library. Catullus, Tibullus, Pervigilium Veneris, Page 206, author's translation.
24. Propertius, Elegies, book 4, Elegy 1, lines 81-86, in Loeb Classical Library, Propertius, Pages 269, 271.
25. The Sabine Calendar is shown in Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, 1863 ed., Volume 1, part 2, Page 302.
26. Herbert Thurston, in The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume 5, Page 109, Article "Dominical Letter."

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### 7. The Planetary Week in the First Century AD

1. Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, 1863 ed., Volume 10, part 1, Page 199, Number 1605; Paulys Real Encyclopadie der classischen Alterumswissenschaft, Band 2, col. 2575, Article "Hebdomas."
2. Suetonius, The Lives of the Caesars, "Deified Titus," Chapter 1, in Loeb's Classical Library, Suetonius, Volume 2, Pages 321, 323.
3. Commodianus, In Favor of Christian Discipline, Chapter 7, in Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 4, Page 204.
4. Suetonius Tranquillus, De Vita Caesarum, Pages 467, 468, commentary by G. W. Mooney.
5. C. Anthon, A Classical Dictionary, Page 165, Article "Apollonius."
6. See Philostratus, Life of Apollonius of Tyana, book 1, chapters 18, 2; book 2, Chapter 40; book 3, Chapter 41, in Loeb Classical Library, Philostratus, Life of Apollonius of Tyana, Volume 1, Pages 49, 71, 225, 321, 323.
7. Eusebius, Treatise Against the Life of Apollonius of Tyana Written by Philostratus and Occasioned by the Parallel Drawn by Hierocles Between Him and Christ, Chapter 22, in Loeb Classical Library, Philostratus, Life of Apollonius of Tyana, Volume 2, Pages 539, 541.
8. Isetronius, Satyricon, Chapter 30, in Loeb Classical Library, Petronius, Page 45.
9. Frontinus, The Stratagems, book 2, Chapter 1, Section 17, in Loeb Classical Library, Frontinus, Page 98, author's translation.
10. Dio Cassius, Roman History, book 65, Chapter 7, in Loeb Classical Library, Dio's Roman History, Volume 8, Page 271.
11. Josephus, Wars of the Jews, book 6, Chapter 10, in The Works of Flavius Josephus, Pages 832, 833.
12. See The New International Encyclopedia, Volume 22, Page 309, Article "Titus."
13. Acts 24:24, 25; Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, book 20, Chapter 7, Section 2, in The Works of Flavius Josephus, Page 594.
14. Bullettino dell' Instituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica (1881), Page 30; Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, 1863 Edition, Volume 4, Supplement, part 2, Page 582, Number 5202.
15. Atti della Real Accademia dei Lincei (Anno CCXCVIII) 1 1901, Serie V, Classe di Scienze Morali, Storiche e Filologiche, Volume 9, Part 1, Page 330; Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, 1863 Edition, Volume 4, Supplement, part 2, Page 712, Number 6779.
16. Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, 1863 ed., Volume 4, Supplement, part 2, Page 717, Number 6338.
17. Ibid., Page 713, Number 6802.
18. Ibid., Page 83, Number 1306.
19. Erasmo Pistolesi, Real Museo Borbonico, Volume 7, Pages 116-130; Domenico Monaco, A Complete Handbook to the Naples Museum, 8th Edition, Page 14, Numbers 9519-9521; Encyclopedia Universal Illustrata, Volume 18, Page 781, Article "Dia."
20. Le Pitture Antiche d' Ercolano, Volume 3, Pages 257-263. See also H. Roux Aine, and M. L Barre,

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Herculanum et Pompeii, Volume 5, Pages 106-109; J. Hastings, Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Volume 12, Page 104, Article "Sunday."

21. A. Mau, in *Bullettino dell'Imperiale Instituto Archeologico Germanico (Sezione Romana)*, Volume 8, Pages 30, 31, 19; *Mittheilungen des Kaiserlich deutschen archaeologischen Instituts (Roemische Abtheilung)*, Band 8, Pages 30, 31, 97; *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, 1893 ed., Volume 1, part 1, Page 342; 1863 ed., Volume 4, Supplement, part 2, Page 515, No. 4182.

22. Theo. Mommsen, "Über den Chronographen vom Jahre 354," in *Abhandlungen, Philologisch-Historischen Classe der Koniglich Sachsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften*, Band 1, Page 569; E. Schurer "Die siebentligige Woche im Gebrauche der Christlichen Kirche der ersten Jahrhunderte," in *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 1905.

23. G. A. Guattani, *Memorie Enciclopediche sulle Antichita e Belle Arti di Roma*, Volume 6, Pages 160-162.

24. Frontinus, *The Stratagems*, Book 2, Chapter 1, Section 17, in *Loeb Classical Library*, Frontinus, Page 98, author's translation.

### 8. The Planetary Week in the Second Century AD

1. Aelius Larnpridius, Severus Alexander, Chapter 25, in *Loeb Classical Library*, *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, Volume 2, Page 225.

2. Plutarch's *Complete Works*, Volume 3, Page 230.

3. Tacitus, *The Histories*, Book 5, Chapter 2, in *Loeb Classical Library*, Tacitus, *Histories, Annals*, Volume 2, Page 177.

4. See W. S. Fox, *The Mythology of All Races*, Volume 1, Pages 4-10.

5. Tacitus, *The Histories*, Book 5, Chapter 2, in *Loeb Classical Library*. Tacitus, *Histories, Annals*, Volume 2, Page 180, author's translation.

6. *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Volume 11, Page 643. See also F. Cumont *Astrology Religions in Roman Among The Greeks and Romans*, p. 62; *The Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism*, p. 171.

7. F. H. Colson, *The Week*, p. 47.

8. G. Kroll and A. Olivieri, *Catalogus Codicum Astrologorum Graecorum*, Volume 2, Pages 103-105.

9. Lucius Arpelius, *Liber Memorialis*, chap. 3. in *Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum*, Lucius Arpelius, *Liber Memorialis*, p. 7, author's translation.

10. Pomponius Porphyrio, *Commentaries Q. Horace Flaccus*, discourse 2, chap. 3, line 290, in *Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum*, Pomponii Porphyrii, *Commentarii in Q. Horatium Flaccum*, p. 259, author's translation.

11. Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, Chapter 67, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Volume 6, Column 429, 432, author's translation; standard English translation in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 1, Page 186.

12. Justin Martyr, *Dialogue With Trypho*, Chapter 41, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Volume 6, Column 565, author's translation; standard English translation in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 1, Page 215.

13. Vulcatius Gallicanus, Avidius Cassius, Chapter 6, in *Loeb's Classical Library*, *Scriptores Historiae*

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Augustae, Volume 1, Page 244, author's translation.

14. J. Gruterus, *Inscriptiones Antiquae Tolius Orbis Romani*, Volume 2, Page 965, Number 1.

15. Clement of Alexandria, *Miscellanies*, book 7, Chapter 12, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Volume 9, Column 504, author's translation; standard English translation in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 2, Page 544.

16. J. N. Andrews, *History of the Sabbath*, Page 352.

17. Clement of Alexandria, *Miscellanies*, book 5, Chapter 14, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Volume 9, Column 161, author's translation; standard English translation in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 2, Page 469.

18. *Ibid.*, chapter 6 in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Volume 9, Column 64, author's translation; Standard English translation in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 2, Page 453.

19. 1 Timothy 6:20.

### 9. The Planetary Week in the Third Century AD

1. Tertullian, *Apology*, chap. 16, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Volume 1, columns 369-372, author's translation; standard English translation in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 3, Page 31.

2. Tertullian, *Ad Nationes*, book 1, Chapter 13, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Volume 1, Column 579, author's translation; standard English translation in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 3, Page 123.

3. It is you, at all events, who have even admitted the Son into the calendar of the week. - *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 3, p. 123.

4. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, 1893 ed., Volume 1, Part 1, Pages 218, 293.

5. Aelius Spartianus, *Antoninus Geta*, Chapter 7; and *Severus*, Chapters 19, 24, in *Loeb Classical Library*, *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, Volume 2, Page 45; Volume 1, Pages 417, 429.

6. H. S. Jones, *The Roman Empire*, Pages 250, 252.

7. Eugenie Strong, *Art in Ancient Rome*, Volume 2, Page 140.

8. See Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Volume 6, Chapter 71, Page 528.

9. Ammianus Marcellinus, *History*, Book 15, Chapter 7, Section 3, in *Loeb Classical Library*, *Ammianus Marcellinus*, Volume 1, Page 161.

10. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, 1963 ed., Volume 3, Part 1, Page 191, Number 1051. See also J. B. de Rossi, *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae*, Volume 1, *Prolegomena*, Page LXXIV.

11. G. Goetz, *Corpus Glossariorum Latinorum*, Volume 3, Page 58.

12. *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, Volume 11, Pages 590, 591, art. "Sun, Blessing of the."

13. *Ibid.*, Volume 2, Page 243, Article "Astrology."

14. *Babylonian Talmud*, Tract "Sabbath," chap. 24, gemara on mishnah 3, Volume 1, p. 373.

Alexander von Humboldt, in the notes of his *Cosmos* (Volume 4, p. 413), quotes an interesting letter from L. F. K. von Tischendorf, written in answer to a query about the planets in the Talmud, as



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saying: “The Talmud, which certainly extends from the second to the third century, has descriptive Hebrew names for a few planets, for the brilliant Venus and the red-colored Mars. Among these the name of Sabbatai (literally Sabbath-star), for Saturn, is especially remarkable; as among the Pharisaic names of the stars which Epiphanius enumerates, the name Hochab Sabbath is employed for Saturn.”

A note from Dr. Alexander Guttman, professor of Talmud at the Hebrew Union College, which has been passed on to me with a letter from Dr. Abraham Cronbach, secretary of the board of editors of The Hebre. Union College Annual, under the date of September 7, 1943, says: “The Talmudic word for ‘Saturn’ is Shabbathai. See, for instance, Babylonian Talmud, Tractate ‘Sabbath,’ p. 156a. Scholars have accepted the view that the true meaning of Sabbathai was ‘star of the Sabbath.’ (Cf. Strack-Billerbeck, Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch, II, p. 404; Hamburger, Real-Encyclopedie des Judentums, II, p. 77. The Talmud itself (ibid.) indicates another etymology, but this is certainly a later interpretation.”

15. Dio Cassius, Roman History, book 37, chapter 16, in Loeb Classical Library, Dio’s Roman History, Volume 3, Pages 125, 127.

16. Ibid., chapter 17, in Loeb Classical Library, Dio’s Roman History, Volume 3, Pages 127, 129.

17. Ibid., book 49, chapter 22, in Loeb Classical Library, Dio’s Roman History, Volume 5, Page 387.

18. It is believed that the planetary week was introduced into the science of the Greeks of Alexandria, Egypt, in the second century before Christ, and that it was borrowed from the Babylonian school. While Herodotus does not speak particularly of the week of seven days, he does show that the Egyptians, as early as the fifth century BC, dedicated the days to the gods, for he says: “They assign each month and each day to some god; they can tell what fortune and what end and what disposition a man shall have according to the day of his birth.” History, book 2, chapter 82, in Loeb Classical Library, Herodotus, Volume 1, Pages 367, 369.

19. At least as long ago as 37 BC, because in reference to the capture of Jerusalem by Sosius and Herod the Great at that date Dio Cassius speaks of the Jews as resting “on the day even then called the day of Saturn.” - Roman History, book 49, Chapter 22, in Loeb Classical Library, Dio’s Roman History, Volume 5, Page 387.

20. Notice that Dio Cassius says that in his day the practice of calling the days of the week by the names of the planetary gods was regarded by the Romans as “an ancestral custom.” This fact shows that this usage had been in vogue among them for a considerable time, and that it was no longer regarded as a foreign institution. According to the historical data we have studied on this subject, the planetary week had been in use among the Romans at least three hundred years when Dio Cassius wrote.

21. Dio Cassius refers here to the tetra-chord, which was used in ancient Greek music. It is a scale series of half an octave. The term was also used in reference to a lyre of four strings. Two tetra-chords were the equivalent of an octave, wherein the first and the eighth tones are the same. Spiritualizing this idea ‘ the Gnostics in the early church gave prominence to Sunday as being both the first and the eighth day.

22. Dio Cassius, Roman History, book 37, chapters 18, 19, in Loeb Classical Library, Dio’s Roman History, Volume 3, Page 128, 130, author’s translation.

23. Philostratus, Life of Apollonius of Tyana, book 3, chapter 41, in Loeb Classical Library, Philostratus, Life of Apollonius of Tyana, Volume 1, Pages 321, 323.

24. Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, 1863 edition, Volume 3, page 730, Number 5938. Volume 3, Supplement, page 1859, Number 11943.

25. F. H. Colson, The Week, page 25.

26. E. Diehl, Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres, Volume 2, page 193, Number 3391; J. B. de Rossi, Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae, Volume 1, part 1, page 18, Number 11.

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27. Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica*, book 5, chap. 14, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Volume 21, columns 347, 348, author's translation. See also J. C Hare "On the Names of the Days of the Week," in *The Philological Museum*, Volume 1, page 9; W. Hales, *A New Analysis of Chronology and Biography, History and Prophecy*, 2d edition, Volume 1, page 19; Paul Cotton, *From Sabbath to Sunday*, page 128.

28. E. Dichl, *Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres*, Volume 2, page 118, Number 3033.

29. E. Schurer, "Die siebentagige Woche im Gebrauche der Christlichen Kirche der ersten Jahrhunderte" in *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 1905.

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*

### 10. The Sun, the Lord of the Roman Empire

1. The Sumerians worshiped the seven Planetary gods, including the Sun. See *The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania (Series A, Cuneiform Texts)*, Volume 29, part 1, pages 33-38.

2. The Society of Biblical Archaeology, *Records of the Past*, Volume 7, pages 69-72; F. Lenormant, *A Manual of the Ancient History of the East*, Volume 1, page 485; J. Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Volume 2, pages 309-311, art. "Babylonians and Assyrians."

3. The Society of Biblical Archaeology, *Records of the Past*, Volume 7, pages 71, 72.

4. 1 Kings 9:18; Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, book 8, chapter 6, in *The Works of Flavius Yosephus*, page 251; Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Volume 1, Chapter 11, page 354.

5. *The New International Encyclopaedia*, Volume 17, page 778, article "Palmyra"; W. Wright, *An Account of Palmyra and Zenobia*, pages 63-73.

6. E. G. White, *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan*, p. 583. In later chapters Baal will be discussed more fully.

7. *The New International Encyclopaedia*, Volume 2, pages 472, 473, article "Baalbek."

8. J. H. Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, pages 8-48.

9. J. Mitchell and H. R. Holland say that "according to inscriptions of the XVIII th Dynasty in the shrine between the paws [of the Sphinx], it represented the Sun-god Harmachis." - *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 14th ed., Volume 21, page 214, art. "Sphinx." See also Volume 16, page 667, article "Obelisk."

10. Sir James G. Frazer, *The Worship of Nature*, Volume 1, page 460.

11. Sun worship does not appear to have become so prominent in China as it did in Japan.

12. J. Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Volume 12, page 88, article "Sun, Moon, and Stars (Japanese)."

13. *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Volume 11, page 143, article "Sun and Sun Worship" (Section 6); J. Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Volume 12, page 83, article "Sun, Moon, and Stars (Hindu)."

14. E. J. Palacios, *The Stone of the Sun and the First Chapter of the History of Mexico*, Page 8.

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15. Julius Caesar, *The Gallic War*, book 6, chapter 21, in Loeb Classical Library, Caesar, *The Gallic War*, pages 345, 347.
16. *Ibid.*, chapter 14, in Loeb Classical Library, Caesar, *The Gallic War*, page 339.
17. Plato, *Laws*, book 10, in Loeb Classical Library, Plato, *Laws*, Volume 2, page 307.
18. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, book 2, lines 1-32, in Loeb Classical Library, Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Volume 1, pages 61, 63.
19. *Ibid.*, lines 153-155, in Loeb Classical Library, Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Volume 1, page 71.
20. Vitruvius, *On Architecture*, book 4, chapter 5, section 1, in Loeb Classical Library, Vitruvius, *De Architectura*, Volume 1, page 231.
21. Tertullian, *Apology*, chapter 16, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Volume 1, column 371, author's translation; standard English translation in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 3, page 31.
22. Tertullian, *Ad Nationes*, chapter 13, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Volume 1, column 579, author's translation; standard English translation in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 3, page 123.
23. Clement of Alexandria, *Miscellanies*, book 7, chapter 7, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 2, page 535.
24. In referring to "the rotary motion of the universe," Plutarch does not make allusion to the rotation of the earth upon its axis; but he speaks of the pagan belief that the universe revolved from east to west around the terrestrial center.
25. Plutarch, *Lives*, "Numa," chapter 14, in Loeb Classical Library, Plutarch's *Lives*, Volume 1, page 357.
26. Cicero, *On the Nature of the Gods*, book 2, chapter 27, in Loeb Classical Library, Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, *Academica*, page 189.
27. Cicero, *The Republic*, book 6, chapter 17, in Loeb Classical Library, Cicero, *De Republica*, *De Legibus*, p. 271.
28. Pliny, *Natural History*, book 2, chapter 4, in Loeb Classical Library, Pliny, *Natural History*, Volume 1, pages 177, 179.
29. Tertullian, *De Spectaculis*, chapter 8, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 3, pages 82, 83.
30. ***W. W. Tarn, in The Cambridge Ancient History, Volume 10, page 68. See also Dio Cassius, Roman History, book 49, chapter 41; book 50, chapters 2, 5, 25, in Loeb Classical Library, Dio's Roman History, Volume 5, pages 425, 437, 44,5, 489.***
31. Eugenie Strong, in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Volume 10, page 574.
32. W. W. Tarn, in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Volume 10, page 113.
33. Harper's *Dictionary of Classical Literature and Antiquities*, page 100, article "Apollo." See also Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, book 51, chapter 1; book 53, chapter 1, in Loeb Classical Library, Dio's *Roman History*, Volume 6, pages 5, 195; O. Seyffert, *A Dictionary of Classical Antiquities*, page 397, article "Mithras."
34. H. Mattingly, *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum*, Volume 1, Introduction, page CXXXIV; J. Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Volume 8, page 59, article "Light and Darkness (Greek and Roman)."

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35. Tertullian, *De Spectaculis*, chapter 8, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 3, page 83.
36. H. Mattingly, *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum*, Volume 1, Introduction, page CXXXIV; J. Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Volume 8, page 59, article "Light and Darkness (Greek and Roman)."
37. *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Volume 7, pages 419, 420, article "Mithra, Mithraism."
38. Strabo, *Geography*, book 15, chapter 3, in *Loeb Classical Library*, *The Geography of Strabo*, Volume 7, page 175.
39. Plutarch, *Lives*, "Pompey," chapter 24, in *Loeb Classical Library*, *Plutarch's Lives*, Volume 5 page 175.
40. P. Papinius Statius, *Thebaid*; book 1, lines 718-720, in *Loeb Classical Library*, *Papinius Statius*, Volume 1, page 393.
41. Clement Huart, *Ancient Persia and Iranian Civilization*, page 112. Huart presents an illustration showing a reproduction of this Mithraic monument.
42. J. Gruterus, *Inscriptiones Antiquae Totius Orbis Romani*, Volume 1, page 34, figures 9, 10.
43. F. Cumont, *The Mysteries of Mithra*, page 37.
44. C. M. Cobern, *The New Archeological Discoveries*, 9th edition, page 506.
45. *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Volume 7, page 421, article "Mithra, Mithraism."
46. Theo. Mommsen, *Inscriptiones Regni Neapolitani*, No. 6864. Some authorities question the genuineness of this inscription.
47. *Harper's Dictionary of Classical Literature and Antiquities*, page 1047, article "Mithras"; see also O. Seyffert, *A Dictionary of Classical Antiquities*, page 397, article "Mithras."
48. *Diccionario Encyclopedico Hispano-Americano*, Volume 13, page 196, article "Mithra."
49. *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Volume 7, page 421, article "Mithra, Mithraism."
50. H. Mattingly, *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum*, Volume 1, Introduction, page CXXXIV; see also page CLXXI.
51. A. D. Nock in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Volume 10, page 501.
52. Tacitus, *Annals*, book 15, chapter 74, in *Loeb Classical Library*, *Tacitus, Annals, Histories*, Volume 4, page 333.
53. Tacitus, *The Histories*, book 3, chapter 24, in *Loeb Classical Library*, *Tacitus, Annals, Histories*, Volume 1, page 371.
54. J. Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Volume 8, page 755, article "Mithra."
55. F. Cumont, *The Mysteries of Mithra*, page 210; see also his illustrations, figures 4, 5, 6, 10, on pages

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21, 22, 23, 39.

56. Lily Ross Taylor, *The Cults of Ostia*, Page 91,

57. H. S. Jones, *Companion to Roman History*, p. 300; Edward B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, 7th edition, Volume 2, page 293; J. G. R. Forlong, *Faiths of Man*, Volume 2, page 546, article "Mithra."

58. *The New International Encyclopaedia*, Volume 2, page 473, article. "Baalbek."

59. J. B. Bury, *A History of the Roman Empire*, page 514.

60. Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica*, book 4, chapter 16, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Volume 21, column 272, author's translation. See also Porphyry, *De Abstinencia*, book 2, chapter 56, in *Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum*, Porphyrius, *Opuscula*, pages 180, 181.

61. Aelius Spartianus, *Hadrian*, chapter 19, in *Loeb Classical Library, Scriptores Historia Augustae*, Volume 1, page 61.

62. Lily Ross Taylor, *The Cults of Ostia*, pages 83, 84.

63. S. Dill, *Roman Society From Nero to Marcus Aurelius*, page 591.

64. *The Clementine Homilies*, Homily 6, chapter 10, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 8, page 264.

65. W. R. Halliday, *The Pagan Background of Early Christianity*, page 307.

66. S. Dill, *Roman Society From Nero to Marcus Aurelius*, page 591.

67. *Ibid.*, page 596.

68. F. Cumont, *The Mysteries of Mithra*, page 50.

69. Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, chapter 66, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 1, page 185. Justin Martyr, *Dialogue With Trypho*, chapters 70, 78, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 1, pages 233, 234, 237.

71. C. Anthon, *A Classical Dictionary*, page 586, article "Heliopolis (11)."

72. *The New International Encyclopaedia*, Volume 2, page 472, article "Baalbek."

73. H. A. L. Fisher, *A History of Europe*, page 90.

74. J. Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Volume 8, page 60, article "Light and Darkness (Greek and Roman)"; G. Boissier, *La Fin du Paganisme*, book 6, chapter 1, section 1, Volume 2, page 236.

75. Alexander Tille, *Yule and Christmas*, page 87.

76. S. Dill, *Roman Society From Nero to Marcus Aurelius*, Page 593.

77. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, 1863 ed., Volume 9, page 389, Numbers 4109, 4110.

78. Lily Ross Taylor, *The Cults of Ostia*, page 84.

79. Origen, *Against Celsus*, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 4, pages 395-669.

80. Aelius Lampridius, *Coramodus Anioninus*, chapter 9, in *Loeb Classical Library, Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, Volume 1, page 289.

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81. Dio Cassius, Roman History, book 73, chapter 15 in Loeb Classical Library, Dio's Roman History, Volume 9, page 103; The Cambridge Ancient History, Volume 12, page 358.
82. H. Mattingly, Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum, Volume 4, page 723.
83. The Cambridge Ancient History, Volume 12, page 613.
84. Ibid., pages 356-358, 416.
85. The New International Encyclopaedia, Volume 2, page 472, article "Baalbek."
86. Tertullian, De Corona, chapter 15; On Prescription Against Heretics, chapter 40, in Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 3, pages 103, 262, 263.
87. Grant Showerman, Eternal Rome, page 245.
88. The Cambridge Ancient History, Volume 12, pages 359, 416.
89. Aelius Lampridius, Antoninus Heliogabalus, book 1, in Loeb Classical Library, Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Volume 2, pages 104 (footnote), 106 (footnote 2), 105. Dio Cassius, Roman History, book 79, chapter 30, in Loeb Classical Library, Dio's Roman History, Volume 9, page 409; Herodianus, History of the Kingdom After Marcus, book 5, chapter 3, section 4, in Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum, Herodianus, page 129.
90. Julius Capitolinus, Opellius Macrinus, chapter 9, in Loeb Classical Library, Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Volume 2, page 67.
91. Harper's Dictionary of Classical Literature, and Antiquities, page 576, article "Elagabalus."
92. H. Mattingly, Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum, Volume 4, part 2; The Cambridge Ancient History, Volume 12, page 417.
93. The Cambridge Ancient History, Volume 12, pages 57, 417.
94. Origen, Against Celsus, in Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 4, pages 395-669.
95. H. Mattingly, Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum, Volume 5 (part 1), pages 140-190.
96. Flavius Vopiscus, The Deified Aurelian, chapter 35, in Loeb Classical Library, Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Volume 3, pages 263, 265.
97. H. Mattingly and E. A. Sydenham, Roman Imperial Coinage, Volume 5, part 1, pages 264, 312; S. W. Stevenson, C. R. Smith, and F. W. Madden, A Dictionary of Roman Coins, page 753 article "Sol"; The Cambridge Ancient History, Volume 12, pages 193, 309, 719. In The Cambridge Ancient History, Volume 5 of Plates, pages 238, 239, there is shown a photographic reproduction of coins minted by the emperor Aurelian. The Latin inscription on the coins clearly shows the titles Sol Dominus Imperii Romani and Soli Invicto.
98. Encyclopaedia Britannica, 14th ed., Volume 13, page 178.
99. The New International Encyclopaedia, Volume 16 pages 40-41 article "Mithras". Almeida Paiva, Agostinho de O Mitraismo, page 56. The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume 10, pages 402, 404, article "Mithraism."
100. The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume 10, pages 402, 404, article "Mithraism."



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101. Tertullian, On Prescription Against Heretics, chapter 40, in Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 3, pages 262, 263. See also his De Corona, chapter 15, in Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 3, pages 102, 103.
102. Tertullian, On Baptism, chapter 5, in Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 3, page 671.
103. C. H. Toy, Introduction to the History of Religions, page 511.
104. F. Cumont, The Mysteries of Mithra, page 157.
105. Justin Martyr, First Apology, chapter 66, in Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 1, page 185. Paul, in speaking of the paganism of his day, mentions that it also had a communion service – “the cup of devils” and “the table of devils.” 1 Corinthians 10:21.
106. G. von Wesendonk, “Asia Minor and the Introduction of the Worship of Kybele, Ma, and Mithra Into Rome,” in the Royal Asiatic Journal, January 1932, page 23. See F. Cumont, “La Theologie Solaire du Paganisme Rostrain “ in Memoires a l’Academic des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, Volume 12, part 2, pages 447-479. The New International Encyclopaedia, Volume 16, pages 40, 41, article “Mithras”. G. C. Ring, S. J., The God of the Gentiles, pages 322, 323. Encyclopaedia Britannica, 14th ed., Volume 15, pages 619-621, article “Mithras.” The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Volume 7, pages 419-421, article “Mithra, Mithraism”. Arthur E. R. Boak, A History of Rome to 565 AD, page 332. E. D. Soper, The Religions of Mankind, pages 132, 133; F. Cumont, The Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism, page 171. Astrology and Religion Among the Greeks and Romans, page 120. S. Dill, Roman Society From Nero to Marcus Aurelius, page 602. Felix Lajard, Introduction a l’Etude du Culte Public et des Mysteres de Mithra.
107. This is the general opinion of authorities on this point.
108. Julian, Hymn to the Mother of the Gods, in Loeb Classical Library, Julian, Volume 1, page 483.
109. Julian, Hymn to Helios, in Loeb Classical Library, Julian, Volume 1, pages 399, 401.
110. The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Volume 7, page 422, article “Mithraism.”
111. S. Dill, Roman Society From Nero to Marcus Aurelius, page 591.
112. Guida Calza, Historical Guide to the Monuments, page 20.

### 11. On the Lord’s Day of the Sun

1. 1 Corinthians 11:20.
2. Revelation 1: 10.
3. Luke 6:5.
4. Matthew 12:8.
5. Mark 2:28.
6. Exodus 20:8-11; Isaiah 58:13; Luke 23:55, 56.
7. Agostinho de Almeida Paiva, O Mitraismo, Page 3.

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8. Ibid., page 60.
9. A. Weigall, *The Paganism in Our Christianity*, p. 145.
10. G. Murray, "Religion and Philosophy," in *Christianity in the Light of Modern Knowledge*, pages 73, 74.
11. 1 Corinthians 8:5.
12. Matthew 7:21-23.
13. Society of Biblical Archaeology, *Records of the Past*, Volume 11, pages 123-128.
14. A. H. Sayce, *Babylonian Literature*, pages 79, 80.
15. Society of Biblical Archaeology, *Records of the Past*, Volume 7, pages 69-72.
16. "The Tel-el-Amarna Letters," in *The Sacred Books and Early Literature of the East*, Volume 1, pages 263-354.
17. E. G. White, *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan*, page 583.
18. A. H. Sayce, *Babylonians and Assyrians*, pages 233, 234.
19. Joseph Scaliger, *De Emendatione Temporum*, book 6, p. 551.
20. The matter of the Mithraic Sunday in China is considered more fully in the next chapter.
21. F. Cumont, *Textes et Monuments Figures Relatifs aux Mysteres de Mithra*, Volume 2, p. 104, No. 60.
22. Ibid., page 152, Number 417; page 167, Number 519.
23. Ibid., page 112, Number 111.
24. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, 1863 ed., Volume 5, part 2, page 1096, Number 8970.
25. Marquardo Gudion, *Inscriptiones Antiquae quum Graecae tum Latinae*, page 23, Number 1.
26. A. Goriuss, *Inscriptiones Antiquae*, Volume 1, page 112, Number 93; J. Gruterus, *Inscriptiones Antiquae Totius Orbis Romani*, Volume 2, page 35, Number 1.
27. See also Philippus A. Turre (R. C. bishop), *Monumenta Veteris Antii*, chapter 1, see. "De Mithra," pages 166, 167.
28. A. Dieterich, *Eine Mithrasliturgie*, page 10, line 31.
29. H. Mattingly and E. A. Sydenham, *Roman Imperial Coinage*, Volume 5, part 1, pages 264-312; S. W. Stevenson, C. R. Smith, and F. W. Madden, *A Dictionary of Roman Coins*, page 753.
30. Julian, "Hymn to King Helios" in *Loeb Classical Library*, Julian, Volume 1, pages 413, 415.
31. G. Kaibel, *Inscriptiones Graecae*, Volume 14, *Inscriptiones Italiae et Siciliae*, page 129, Number 525; A. Kirchhoff, *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*, Volume 4, page 506, Number 9475.

### 12. The Sunday of Sun Worship

1. See C. P. Bollman, *Sunday-Origin of Its Observance in the Christian Church*.

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2. The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume 10, pages 403-404 article "Mithraism."
3. Encyclopaedia Britannica, 14th ed., Volume 15, pages 620, 621, article "Mithras."
4. The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Volume 7, pages 419, 421, article "Mithra, Mithraism."
5. Chambers's Encyclopaedia, 1926 edition, Volume 7, page 241, article "Mithra."
6. F. Cumont, *Mysteries of Mithra*, page 167.
7. F. Cumont, *Astrology and Religion Among the Greeks and Romans*, page 163.
8. F. Cumont, *Textes et Monuments Figures Relatifs aux Mysteres de Mithra*, Volume 1, Page 119.
9. *Ibid.*, page 112.
10. F. Cumont, *Mysteries of Mithra*, page 120.
11. *Ibid.*, page 191.
12. F. Cumont, *Dictionnaire ds Antiquites Grecques et Romaines*, Volume 3, part 2, p. 1952, art. "Mithra."
13. *Ibid.*
14. Eusebius *Praeparatio Evangelica*, book 5, chapter 14, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Volume 21, column 348, author's translation.
15. M. Guizot in a footnote to Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Volume 1, chapter 8, pages 233, 234.
16. Guido, *CaIza, Ostia-Guida Storico-Monumentale*, pages 117, 118. See also Karl Baedeker, *Central Italy and Rome*, 15th edition, page 492; *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 14th edition, Volume 16, page 958, article "Ostia". *The Journal of Roman Studies*, Volume 2, page 181.
17. L. Paschetto, "Ostia: Colonia Romana," in *Dissertazioni della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia*, Series 2, Volume 10, part 2. See also F. Cumont, *Textes et Monuments Figuris Relatifs aux Mysteres de Mithra*, Volume 2, pages 244, 245, Number 84.
18. F. Cumont, *Textes et Monurnents Figuris Relatifs aux Mysteres de Mithra*, Volume 1, page 114. See also *Mysteries of Mithra*, page 151, figure 37.
19. A. Wylie "On the Knowledge of a Weekly Sabbath in China," in *The Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal*, June, 1871, Volume 4, Number 1, page 5.
20. *Ibid.*, pages 5, 6.
21. Editorial, *The Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal*, December, 1871, Volume 4, No. 7, page 195.
22. Joseph Edkins, *Chinese, Buddhism*, 2d edition, pages 211, 212.
23. What the original Greek word translated "matter" may be is not known for certain, because the manuscripts do not concur.
24. Origen, *Against Celsus*, book 6, chapter 22, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 4, page 583. Celsus (*ibid.*,

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chapters 24-33 devoted arguments to the Ophites and their belief in the seven planetary heavens, showing that the heretical Gnostic Christians borrowed from paganism.

25. *Ibid.*, book 1, chapter 9, in Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 4, pages 401, 402.

26. *Ibid.*, book 6, chapter 22, in Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 4, page 583.

27. Tertullian, Apology, chapter 16, in J. P. Migne, Patrologia Latina, Volume 1, columns 369-372, author's translation. Standard English translation in Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 3, page 31.

28. Tertullian Ad Nationes, book 1, chapter 13, in J. P. Migne, Patrologia Latina, Volume 1, column 579, author's translation; standard English translation in Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 3, page 123.

29. "It is you, at all events, who have even admitted the Sun into the calendar of the week." - Ante Nicene Fathers, Volume 3, page 123.

30. B. de S. Platina, The Lives of the Popes, Volume 1, page 68.

31. L. R. Loomis, Book of the Popes (Liber Pontificalis), page 40.

32. Plutarch, Isis and Osiris, chapter 6, in Loeb Classical Library, Plutarch's Moralia, Volume 5, page 17.

33. P. Labbe and G. Cossart, Sacrosancta Concilia, 1617 ed., Volume 1, column 1398.

### 13. The First Civil Sunday Laws

1. Eusebius, Church History, book 8, chapter 1, in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Volume 1, page 323.

2. M. Rostovtzeff, The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire, page 456.

3. See Zonaras, Annals, book 13, in J. P. Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Volume 134, column 1097. Cedrenus, Compendium of Histories, in J. P. Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Volume 121, column 517.

4. See Eusebius, Life of Constantine, book 1, chapter 28, in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Volume 1, page 490.

5. *Ibid.*, chapter 32, in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Volume 1, page 491.

6. *Ibid.*, chapter 38; Church History, book 9, chapter 9, in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Volume 1, pages 492, 493, 363, 364.

7. Joannes Livicius, Panegyrici Veteres, Pages 204, 205; C. B. Coleman, Constantine the Great and Christianity, pages 74-76; The Cambridge Ancient History, Volume 12, page 680, 681.

8. Eusebius, Life of Constantine, book 1, chapter 28, in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Volume 1, page 490.

9. Edward Gibbon, The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Volume 2, chapter 20, page 251.

10. Julian, To the Cynic Heracleios, chapter 17, in Loeb Classical Library, Julian, Volume 2, page 135.

11. See inscriptions recorded in Baronius, Annals (Ad anno 312), Volume 3, columns 106, 107; Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, 1863 edition, Volume 2, page 58, Number 481 (date 315 AD); New Standard Encyclopedia, Volume 5, page 792, article "Constantine I"; C. B. Coleman, Constantine the Great and

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Christianity, page 46. Charles Poulet, *A History of the Catholic Church for the Use of Colleges, Seminaries, and Universities*, Volume 1, page 120.

12. Zosimus, *The New History*, book 4, chap. 36, in *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae*, Volume 51, page 217.

13. See M. Felix Lajard, *Introduction a l'Etude du Culte Public et des Mysteres de Mithra en Orient et en Occident*, plate No. CII, figure 21; F. Cumont, *Textes et Monuments Figures Relatifs aux Mysteres de Mithra*, Volume 2, page 149, No. 386; Jules Maurice, *Numismatique Constantinienne*, Volume 1. H. Cohen, *Description Historique des Monnaies frappee sous l'Empire Romain*, Volume 6, page 108, Number 100; Volume 7, page 74; Volume 8, page 88; Victor Puruy, *History of Rome*, Volume 7, part 2, page 486. W. Smith and S. Cheetham, *A Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, Volume 2, article "Money," pp. 1276, column 1; 1279, columns 1, 2; 1302, Plate II, Figure 9.

14. S. W. Stevenson, C. R. Smith, and F. W. Madden, *A Dictionary of Roman Coins*, p. 775, article "Soli Invicto Comiti." Victor Duruy (*History of Rome*, Volume 7, part 2, page 512) says that of this type of Constantinian coins "the Cabinet de France alone contains 138 small bronzes with the legend Soli Invicto Comiti."

15. C. B. Coleman, *Constantine the Great and Christianity*, pages 78-80; Victor Duruy, *History of Rome*, Volume 7, part 2, pages 475-480.

16. Eusebius, *Church History*, book 10, chapter 5, in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, Volume 1, page 379. See also *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Volume 12, pages 689, 690.

17. See Eusebius, *Church History*, book 10, chapters 6, 7, in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, Volume 1, page 544.

18. C. B. Coleman, *Constantine the Great and Christianity*, page 62.

19. See Eusebius, *Church History*, book 10, chapters 6, 7, in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, Volume 1, pages 382, 383; see also page 437.

20. Code of Justinian, book 3, title 12, law 3, in *Corpus Juris Civilis*, Volume 2, page 108.

21 Code of Theodosius, book 16, title 10, law 1, in *Codex Theodosianus*, column 1611.

22. Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Volume 2, chapter 20, page 250.

23. Code of Theodosius, book 2, title 8, law 1, in *Codex Theodosianus*, columns 207, 208

24. Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Volume 3, chapter 7, page 380.

25. J. Westbury-Jones, *Roman and Christian Imperialism*, page 210.

26. A. P. Stanley, *History of the Eastern Church*, page 184.

27. Eusebius, *In Praise of Constantine*, chapter 9, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Volume 20, columns 1365, 1368, author's translation; standard English translation in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, Volume 1, page 593.

28. *Ibid.*, chapter 17, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Volume 20, column 1437, author's translation; standard English translation in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, Volume 1, page 609.

29. Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, book 4, chaps. 18-20, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*. Volume 20, columns 1165-1168, author's translation. Standard English translation in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*,

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Second Series, Volume 1, pages 544, 545.

The Greek text of Eusebius plainly states “the Sabbath”: (Life of Constantine, book 4, chapter 18). And we know positively that the Sabbath was still honored among the churches at that time. Many commentators, however, think that there has been some error in the transcription of the original text and that it may have meant originally “the day before the Sabbath,” that is Friday: which was then, and still is, an ecclesiastical fast day. This supposition of a corrupted text is based on the following statement from Sozomen, a historian of the fifth century: “And that the Lord’s day, which the Hebrews call the first of the week, and which the Greeks devote to the Sun, and the (day) before the seventh, he [Constantine] commanded all the judges and others to make a rest, and in prayers and supplications to worship the Deity.” - Ecclesiastical History, book 1, chapter 8, in J. P. Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Volume 67, columns 880, 881, author’s translation; standard English translation in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Volume 2, page 245.

30. Victor Duruy, History of Rome, Volume 7, part 2, page 489.

31. Eusebius, Life of Constantine, book 4, chapter 23 in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Volume 1, page 545.

32. E. G. White, The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan, p. 53. Constantine himself, in a letter addressed to Alexander, bishop of Alexandria (313-325 AD), and to Arius, the notorious heretic, tells what his religious policy for the Roman Empire was from the beginning. He said. “My design then was, first, to bring the diverse judgments formed by all nations respecting the Deity to a condition, as it were, of settled uniformity; and, secondly, to restore to health the system of the world, then suffering under the malignant power of a grievous distemper. Keeping these objects in view, I sought to accomplish the one by the secret eye of thought, while the other I tried to rectify by the power of military authority. For I was aware that, if I should succeed in establishing, according to my hopes, a common harmony of sentiment among all the servants of God, the general course of affairs would also experience a change correspondent to the pious desires of them all.” - Eusebius The Life of Constantine, book 2, chap. 65, in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Volume 1, page 516.

33. J. Gruterus, Inscriptiones Antiquae Totius Orbis Romani, Volume 1, page 164, Number 2; Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, 1863 edition, Volume 3, part 1, page 523, Number 4121: Jo. Casp. Orellius, Inscriptionum Latinarum Selectarum Amplissimo Collectio ad Illustrandum Romanae Antiquitatis, Volume 1, page 141, Number 508.

34. P. Labbe and G. Cossart, Sacrosancta Concilia, 1671 edition, Volume 7, column 1177.

35. It rose in the second century during the pontificates of Pius I and Anicetus, and raged with fury during that of Victor 1 (about 198 AD).

36. Eusebius, Life of Constantine, book 3, chapters 5, 6, in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Volume 1, page 521.

37. J. B. Carter, The Religious Life of Ancient Rome, page 118.

38. See the epistle of Constantine in Eusebius, Life of Constantine, book 3, chapters 17-20, in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Volume 1, pages 524, 525.

39. Arthur E. R. Boak, A History of Rome to 565 AD, page 350.

40. Victor Duruy, History of Rome, Volume 7, part 2, page 512.

41. Edward Gibbon, The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Volume 2, chapter 20, page 272.

42. Eusebius Life of Constantine, book 4, chapter 62, in J. P. Migne, Patrologia Graeca. Volume 20, column 1216, author’s translation.



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### 14. Sylvester and the Days of the Week

1. E. Diehl, *Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veleres*, Volume 1, page 225, Number 1148.
2. J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Volume 19, columns 927-934.
3. Eusebius, *Commentary on the Psalms*, Psalm 91 (Psalm 92 in A. V.), in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Volume 23, column 1169, author's translation.
4. *Ibid.*
5. Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, book 4, chapter 18, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Volume 20, column 1165, author's translation. Standard English translation in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series*, Volume 1, page 544.
6. Eusebius, *In Praise of Constantine*, chap. 9, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Volume 20, columns 1365, 1368, author's translation; standard English translation in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series*, Volume 1, page 593.
7. Eusebius, *Commentary on the Psalms*, Psalm 91 (Psalm 92 in A. V.), in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Volume 23, column 1172, author's translation.
8. Eusebius, *The Proof of the Gospel*, book 4, chapter 16 (comment on Psalm 84:9, 10), translation by W. J. Ferrar, Volume 1, page 207.
9. Eusebius, *Commentary on the Psalms*, Psalm 91 (Psalm 92 in A. V.), in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Volume 23, column 1169, author's translation.
10. *Ibid.*, column 1172, author's translation.
11. Rabanus Maurus, *De Clericorum Institatione*, book 2, chap. 46, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Volume 107, column 361, author's translation. See also Rabanus Maurus, *Liber de Ccomputo*, chapter 27, "De Feriis," in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Volume 107, column 682.
12. Bede, *De Temporibus*, chapter 4, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Volume 90, column 2811 author's translation. See also Bede, *De Divisionibus Temporum*, chapter 10; *De Temporum Ratione*, chapter 8, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Volume 90, columns 657, 658, 326-332.
13. Bede, *De Ratione Computi*, chapter 5, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Volume 90, column 584, author's translation.
14. Sicard, *Chronicon*, ad anno 310, "De Constantio et Galerio," in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Volume 213, column 467, author's translation.
15. *Byrfterth's Manual*, page 131.
16. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume 6, page 43, article "Feria."
17. Rabanus Maurus, *Liber de Coinputo*, chapter 27, "De Feriis," in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Volume 107, column 682, author's translation.
18. J. N. Andrews, *History of the Sabbath*, page 474. See *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume 6, page 43, article "Feria."
19. Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, book 5, chapter 22, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Volume 67,

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column 636, author's translation; standard English translation in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Volume 2, page 132.

20. Sozomen, Ecclesiastical History, book 7, chapter 19, in J. P. Migne, Patrologia Graeca, Volume 67, column 1477, author's translation; standard English translation in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Volume 2, page 390.

21. See Irenaeus, Against Heresies, in Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 1; Tertullian, Against Marcion, in Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 3.

22. See the statement of Cardinal Humbert, legate of Leo IX, in J. P. Migne, Patrologia Latina, Volume 143, column 937. Also that of Cardinal Peter Damian, Opusculum LV, "De Celebrandis Vigiliis," chapter 3, in J. P. Migne, Patrologia Latina, Volume 145, column 803.

23. E. G. White, The Spirit of Prophecy, Volume 4, page 55.

24. Ibid., pages 391, 392.

25. E. G. White, The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan, page 574.

26. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-7.

27. Philaster of Brescia, De Haeresibus, chapter 113, in J. P. Migne, Patrologia Latina, Volume 12, column 1237, author's translation.

28. Jerome, Epistle 120, chapter 4, in J. P. Migne, Patrologia Latina, Volume 22, column 987, author's translation.

29. Augustine, Reply to Faustus the Manichaean, book 18, chap, 5, in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series, Volume 4, page 238.

30. Maximus of Turin, Homily LXII, in J. P. Migne, Patrologia Latina, Volume 57, column 371, author's translation.

31. The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume 2, page 113, article "Ausonius."

32. Ausonius apparently uses supremos here to mean "supreme" rather than "last," Since he definitely calls Saturn's day last.

33. Ausonius, The Eclogues, chapter 8. "On the Names of the Seven Days," in Loeb Classical Library, Ausonius, Volume 1, page 182, author's translation.

### 15. The Planetary Week in the Philocalian Almanac

1. The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume 9, page 621, article "Manuscripts,"

2. Ibid., Volume 3, page 161, article "Calendar."

3. Ibid., page 514, article "Cemetery."

4. See Ibid., Volume 8, page 561, article "Julius I."

The Philocalian Calendar is said to be "a compilation of chronological documents of the date AD 354-itself a republication of an edition of 336. The title page is inscribed 'Furius Dionysius Filocalus titulavit.' The name of this calligrapher is found in two inscriptions in Rome, in, one of which he describes

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himself as ‘Damasi Papae cultor atque amator.’ J. Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Volume 3, page 84, article “Calendar (Christian).”

5. A list of the feast days in honor of various famous martyrs.

6. J. Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Volume 3, pages 601, 602, article “Christmas.”

7. This Roman civil calendar preserved by Philocalus may be seen reproduced in *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, 1863 ed., Volume 1, part 2, pages 334-337; and in J. G. Graevius, *Thesaurus Antiquitatum Romanarum*, Volume 8, columns 95-124. J. Baptiste de Rossi, a noted authority on Roman inscriptions also holds that the letter A indicating the first day of the pagan week in the Philocalian civil calendar, represents the day of Saturn. *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae*, Volume 1, Prolegomena, page LXXVI.

8. The tables are published as the *Fasti Consulares* by Theo. Mommsen, *Chronica Minora Saec. IV, V, VI, VII*, Volume 1, pages. 50-61, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica I, Auctores Antiquissimi*, Volume 9.

9. Joseph Strzygowski, *Die Calenderbilder des Chronographen vom Jahre 354*, in *Jahrbuch des Kaiserlich Deutschen Archaeologischen Instituts, Ergänzungsheft 1*, 1888, plates 10-14; Theo Mommsen, *Chronica Minora Saec. IV, V, VI, VII* Volume 1, pages 4246, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica I, Auctores Antiquissimi*, Volume 9.

10. Plutarch, *Isis and Osiris*, chapter 48, in *Loeb Classical Library, Plutarch’s Moralia*, Volume 5, page 117.

11. Pliny, *Natural History*, book 2, chapter 79, in *Loeb Classical Library, Pliny’s Natural History*, Volume 1, pages 319, 321.

12. Dio Cassius’ full statement has already been presented in chapter 9 of this work.

13. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume 3, page 511, article “Cemetery.”

14. *Genesis* 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23; *Leviticus* 23: 32; *Mark* 1:322.

15. See *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume 14, page 336, art. “Sunday”. J. M’Clintock and J. Strong, *Encyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, Volume 10, page 18 art. “Sunday.”

The practice of beginning the religious day at sunset was in vogue not only in England but also in America in colonial times. Christmas Eve and Halloween (Hallowed Evening) are relics of this usage. K. A. H. Kellner makes the following observation: “In conclusion, it is to be noticed that, in the Middle Ages, the rest from labor commenced, contrary to our present custom, with the vespers of Saturday. Pope Alexander III, however, decreed that local custom should retain its prescriptive right, and so it came to pass that the practice of reckoning the feast day from midnight to midnight became general.” - *Heortology*, pages 12, 13.

16. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume 2, page 22, article “Astrology.” Paul III died in 1549.

17. Pliny, *Natural History*, book 2, chapter 79, in *Loeb Classical Library, Pliny’s Natural History*, Volume 1, pages 319, 321. See *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edition, Volume 4, page 988, art. “Calendar,” sec. “Day”; Volume 7, page 876, article “Day”; J. M’Clintock and J. Strong, *Encyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, Volume 2, page 702, article “Day.”

18. J. Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Volume 12, pages 50, 51, article “Sun, Moon, and Stars (Introductory).”

The following statement contains useful information on this point: “The canon law followed the lines of Roman law. The decrees of ecclesiastical councils on the subject have been numerous. Much of the law is contained in the *Decretals of Gregory*, book ii, title 9 (*De Feriis*), c. I of which (translated) runs thus: “We decree that all Sundays be observed from vespers to vespers (a vespera ad vesperam).” -

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Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed., Volume 26, page 95, art. "Sunday."

Plutarch states that the day was measured from midnight to midnight in his time (The Roman Questions, Ques. 84, in Loeb Classical Library, Plutarch's Moralia, Volume 4, page 129). Aulus Gellius says "Marcus Varro, in that book of his Human Antiquities which he wrote On Days, says: 'Persons who are born during the twenty-four hours between one midnight and the next midnight are considered to have been born on one and the same day.'" - Attic Nights, book 3 chapter 2, in Loeb Classical Library, The Attic Nights of Antics Gellius, Volume 1, pages 239, 241.

Aulus Gellius also remarks: "However, Varro also wrote in that same book that the Athenians reckon differently, and that they regard all the intervening time from one sunset to the next as one single day. That the Babylonians counted still differently: for they called by the name of one day the whole space of time between sunrise and the beginning of the next sunrise. But that in the land of Umbria many said that from midday to the following midday was one and the same day. But it is shown by abundant evidence that the Roman people, as Varro said, reckoned each day from midnight to the next midnight." - Ibid., page 241.

The Roman jurist Paulus, in a work On Sabinus (book XIII), makes this statement: "In accordance with the Roman custom, the day begins at midnight, and ends in the middle of the following night." - Digests [Pandectae] of Justinian, book 2, title 12, chapter 8, in Corpus Juris Civilis, Volume 1, page 78. Marcus Varro lived between 116 and 27 BC; Plutarch, between 46 and 125 AD. Aulus Gellius was born about 130 AD, but the date of his death is not known. Paulus lived in the latter part of the second and in the first part of the third century.

19. The Jewish Encyclopedia, Volume 11, page 590, article "Sun, Blessing of the."

20. Ibid., page 591.

21. Plutarch, The Roman Questions, Ques. 34, in Loeb Classical Library, Plutarch's Maralia, Vol. 4, p. 59.

22. At present the winter solstice falls about December 22. The reason for this difference in time, as may be easily verified by computation, is that the Gregorian calendar reform did not correct the Julian calendar for the whole period since the time Julius Caesar adopted it, but only as far back as 325 AD, the year in which the Council of Nicaea and the emperor Constantine made their famous decrees respecting the date for the observance of Easter. The error from 45 BC to 325 AD amounts to about three days in the uncorrected portion of the Julian calendar. See Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume 3, page 168, art. "Calendar, Reform of the"; and J. Hastings, Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Volume 3, page 63, article "Calendar."

23. The Latin designation for the first day of a month.

24. Pliny, Natural History, book 18, chapter 59, in Bohn Library, Pliny, Natural History, Volume 4, p. 76.

25. Julian, Hymn to King Helios, in Loeb Classical Library, Julian, Volume 1, page 429.

26. Charles Poulet, A History of the Catholic Church for the Use of Colleges, Seminaries, and Universities, Volume 1, page 266.

27. L. Duchesne, Christian Worship, page 261.

28. The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume 11, page 390, article "Paganism."

29. See W. R. Halliday, The Pagan Background of Early Christianity, page 301.

30. E. G. White, in The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, December 9, 1884; and December 4, 1941.

31. J. Hastings, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Volume 3, page 602, article "Christmas.",

32. See the quotations from Augustine, Chrysostom, and Ambrose as given by Theo. Mommsen. in Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, 1863 edition, Volume 1, part 2, pages 409, 410, "December 25."

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33. Leo 1 (the Great), Sermon 22, chapter 6, in Nicene, and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Volume 12, pages 131, 132.

34. Leo 1, Sermon 27, chap. 4, in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Volume 12, page 140.

### 16. The Power Behind the Planetary Week

1. F. Lenormant, A Manual of the Ancient History of the East, Volume 2, pages 224, 225.

2. Romans 1:20-25.

3. Genesis 1:1.

4. Diodorus Siculus, The Library of History, book 2, chapter 30, in Loeb Classical Library, Diodorus Siculus, Volume 1, page 449.

5. E. W. Matineler, The Astronomy of the Bible, page 5.

6. Ibid., pages 145, 146.

7. 1 Corinthians 10:20.

8. Deuteronomy 32:16, 17.

9. Psalms 106:34-38. See also Leviticus 17:7.

10. Isaiah 14:12-14.

11. Matthew 4:8, 9.

12. See John 1: 1-3, 10, 14; Colossians 1: 13-17; John 5:17, 24; Micah 5:2; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:35; Philippians 2:6; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:1, 2.

13. Genesis 3:1-5.

14. Romans 6:16.

15. Ezekiel 28:13, 15.

16. Luke 4:5, 6.

17. John 12:31; 14:30.

18. 2 Corinthians 4:4.

19. Proverbs 13:15.

20. John 3:16.

21. Genesis 3:15.

22. Galatians 3:16; 4:4, 5; Romans 16:20.

23. John 1:29, 36; 1 Peter 1:18-20.

24. Genesis 4:1-4.

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25. Romans 6:23; Ezekiel 18:4, 20.
26. Hebrews 9:22.
27. E. G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, page 73.
28. E. G. White, The Desire of Ages, page 28.
29. Genesis 8:20.
30. Genesis 11:1-9.
31. Joshua 24:2.
32. Isaiah 14:12-14.
33. Edition of 1941, page 673.
34. Job 31:26-28.
35. F. Cumont, The Mysteries of Mithra, pp. 91, 92.
36. Mentioned in Genesis 41:45, 50; 46:20.
37. Jeremiah 43:13.
38. J. M'Clintock and J. Strong, Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature, Volume 2, page 27, article "Calf." See also E. A. T. Wallis Budge, From Fetish to God in Ancient Egypt, Page 74.
39. Ibid.
40. "So strong was Jeroboam's desire to keep the ten tribes away from Jerusalem, that he lost sight of the fundamental weakness of his plan. He failed to take into consideration the great peril to which he was exposing the Israelites by setting before them the idolatrous symbol of the Deity with which their ancestors had been so familiar during the centuries of Egyptian bondage. Jeroboam's recent residence in Egypt should have taught him the folly of placing before the people such heathen representations." - E. G. White, Prophets and Kings, p. 100.  
Furthermore, this calf worship instituted by Jeroboam was in reality homage paid to the devil. The Holy Scriptures say that this apostate king "ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made." 2 Chronicles 11:15.
41. 1 Kings 11:40; 12:26-33.
42. Deuteronomy 4:15-19.
43. Deuteronomy 17:2-5.
44. Numbers 25:4. See also Revelation 2:14; 2 Peter 2: 15.
45. Judges 2:13; 10:10; 1 Samuel 12:10.
46. The, Historians' History of the World, Volume 2, page 350.
47. E. G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, page 487. Jericho was one of the principal seats of idol worship,



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being especially devoted to Ashtoreth, the goddess of the moon.

48. E. G. White, Prophets and Kings, page 120.

49. New Standard Encyclopedia, Volume 2, page 303, 304.

50. See The Jewish Encyclopedia, Volume 2, page 379, article "Baal and Baal Worship."

51. 1 Kings 16:30-33; 18:19.

52. 2 Chronicles 34:4, margin.

53. 2 Kings 21:24; Jeremiah 7:30.

54. 2 Kings 23:5.

55. Ezekiel 8: 16.

56. Acts 19:26-29.

57. Ezekiel 20:12, 20; Jeremiah 10: 10- 12.

58. Julian, Against the Galileans, in Loeb Classical Library, Julian, Volume 3, page 361.

59. Genesis 2:2, 3; Exodus 20:8-11; 31:17; Hebrews 4:4.

60. Mark 2:27.

61. E. G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, page 336.

62. Jeremiah 17:1, 2, 19-27; Ezekiel 20.

63. Isaiah 58:12-14; Nehemiah 13:15-22.

64. See the Babylonian Talmud, Tract "Sabbath," for the much-discussed 31 regulations covering Sabbath observance.

65. See Matthew 12:1-12; Mark 2:23-28; 3:24; Luke 6:1-9; 13:10-17; 14:1-6; John 5:1-18; 7:21-23; 9:1-16.

66. Matthew 12:8; Mark 2:28; Luke 6:5. See also Revelation 1:10.

67. Luke 4:16.

68. Luke 4:31.

69. Mark 1: 16-22.

70. Matthew 24:20.

71. Luke 23:56.

72. Acts 13:14, 42, 44.

73. Acts 16:12, 13.

74. Acts 17:14.

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75. Acts 18:1-4, 11.

76. Hebrews 4:9, A. R. V. The Greek term sabbatismos, according to Liddell and Scott, means “a keeping of the Sabbath, rest on the Sabbath.”

77. Isaiah 56:6, 7.

78. Genesis 1: 14.

79. See Genesis 5:3-32; 6:3; 7:4, 6, 10-12, 24; 8: 1-6 10, 12-14; 11:1-32.

80. Genesis 1:5, 31; 2:2, 3; Exodus 20:11; 31:17. “Like the Sabbath, the week originated at creation, and it has been preserved and brought down to us through Bible history. God Himself measured off the first week as a sample for successive weeks to the close of time. Like every other, it consisted of seven literal days.” - E. G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, page 111.

81. Genesis 29:27, 28; Exodus 16:1,5, 22-29. The wedding festivities in olden times lasted a week. (See Judges 14:17.) Hence Laban required Jacob to go through a week of marriage festivity for each woman. In the matter of the manna, note that it was given a month before the Israelites arrived at Mount Sinai. (Compare Exodus 16:1 and 19:1.)

82. Exodus 20: 10.

83. Genesis 2:3; Mark 2:27.

84. See J. N. Andrews’ History of the Sabbath; Carlyle B. Haynes, The Christian Sabbath and From Sabbath to Sunday. Historical records show that among the Celtic Christians of Britain and Ireland among the Waldenses, the Ethiopians and Abyssinians, the Armenians, the Spanish, and others, the true Sabbath was observed even in the Dark Ages.

85. Genesis 26:5.

86. Exodus 5:4, 6. “In their bondage the Israelites had to some extent lost the knowledge of God’s law, and they had departed from its precepts. The Sabbath had been generally disregarded, and the exactions of their taskmasters made its observance apparently impossible. But Moses had shown his people that obedience to God was the first condition of deliverance; and the efforts made to restore the observance of the Sabbath had come to the notice of their oppressors.” - E. G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 258.

87. Exodus 5:17. “At the time of the exodus from Egypt, the Sabbath institution was brought prominently before the people of God. While they were still in bondage, their taskmasters had attempted to force them to labor on the Sabbath, by increasing the amount of work required each week.” - E. G. White, Prophets and Kings, p. 180.

88. Deuteronomy 5:12-15.

89. See chapter 9 of this book.

90. 1 Corinthians 10:20.

91. See chapter 13 of this book.

92. See chapter 8 of this book.

93. See chapter 9 of this book.

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94. See chapter 9 of this book.

95. In nearly every council the Sabbath which God had instituted was pressed down a little lower, while the Sunday was correspondingly exalted. Thus the pagan festival came finally to be honored as a divine institution, while the Bible Sabbath was pronounced a relic of Judaism, and its observers were declared to be accursed.” E. G. White, *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan*, page 53.

96. Hutton Webster, *Rest Days*, pages 220, 221.

97. James Cardinal Gibbons, *The Faith of Our Fathers*, 1893 edition, page 111.

98. Peter Geiermann (C.S.S.R.), *The Convert’s Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*, second edition, page 50.

99. Dr. Eck, *Enchiridion*, pages 78, 79.

100. See the text given in J. D. Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum*, Volume 33, columns 529, 530, author’s translation.

101. Matthew 24:14.

102. Revelation 14:14-16.

103. Revelation 14:6.

104. Revelation 14:7.

105. Revelation 14:12.

106. Exodus 20:8-11.

107. Revelation 14:6.

108. Revelation 14: 12.

109. Luke 23:56.

110. Matthew 25:34.

111. 2 Peter 3:13.

112. Isaiah 66:23.

113. Revelation 22:14.

### Appendix

1. E. Richard, *History of German Civilization*, Page 70.

2. Julius Caesar, *The Gallic War*, book 6, Chapter 17, in Loeb Classical Library, Caesar, *The Gallic War*, Page 341.

3. Tacitus, *De Germania*, Chapter 9, in Loeb Classical Library, Tacitus, *Dialogues, Agricola, Germania*, Page 277.

4. *Ibid.*, Chapter 1 in Loeb Classical Library, Tacitus, *Dialogues, Agricola, Germania*, Page 281.

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5. R. Verstegan, Restitution of Decayed Intelligence: in Antiquities, Page 58.
6. Julius Caesar, The Gallic War, book 6, Chapter 18, in Loeb Classical Library, Caesar, The Gallic War, Page 343.
7. J. Grimm, Teutonic Mythology, Volume 1, Page 123.
8. W. Smith and S. Cheetham, A Dictionary of Christian Antiquities, Volume 2, Page 2032, Article “Week.”
9. J. Hastings, Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Volume 9, Page 413, Article “Numbers (Aryan).”
10. J. R. Green, A History of the English People, Volume 1, Pages 26, 27.
11. Bede, De Teporum Ratione, Chapter 8, in J. P. Migne, Patrologia Latina, Volume 90, Columns 327, 328, author’s translation.
12. William of Mahmesbury, Chronicle, translation by J. A. Giles, Page 8. See also The Historians’ History of the World, Volume 18, Pages 43, 44
13. Geoffrey of Monmouth, Histories of the Kings of Britain, book 6, Chapter 10. See also Olaus Magnus, Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus, book 3, Chapter 3, Pages 93-95.
14. Matthew of Westminster, The Flowers of History, Pages 216, 217.
15. R. Verstegan, Restitution of Decayed Intelligence: in Antiquities, Pages 68-80.

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