

From the Mishna it appears, then, that during the existence of the Sanhedric court, the number of days of the month was decided by them;* that this number was made to be dependent by them on the period of the moon's phasis; that if it was seen on the 30th day, the 29th was declared the last day of the month; but if it was not seen until the 31st day, this was appointed the first day of another month. Independently of availing themselves of actual observation, the Sanhedrin, as we learn historically, were possessed of great astronomical knowledge, being obliged by their office to apply themselves to the study; and having occasion also to refer, in consecrating the months, to astronomical calculations of a complicated character.† When the practice of sending messengers to communicate

מבדריא ויחווין עינא ובעיניכון בבנינא דמקדשא ובשכלוליה
דהיכלא ובמלכות משיח בר דוד ובנחמתא דקרתא דירושלם
חשתא בעגלא חברים כל ישראל ואמרו אמן;

* Attend and listen, ye priests and Levites! The rabbies have instituted and fixed the new moon of the month N. N. (the next following), on the first day of the next week, which day shall be the first day of the month. This shall be a good omen for us and all Israel, now and speedily. May those who rest in the dust rise speedily from their dust; may the dispersed (of Israel) be gathered; may our eyes and your eyes behold the rebuilding of the sanctuary, the re-establishment of the temple, and the kingdom of Messiah, Son of David, and the consolation of the city of Jerusalem. Now and speedily may all Israel be gathered. Amen. Then follows a form for the days of the week, in Syriac; then the names of the months (the same as among other Jews), beginning with Adar, the last month of the Jewish year; then, next, the second Adar, (in an interlunary year), and closing with Shebat, the eleventh month of the year."

The above, which is extracted from the "Jewish Intelligence," for January, 1853, may with confidence be referred to, as proof of the antiquity of the present system of Hebrew intercalation, &c.

* Parkhurst, under the head *chodesh*, shows "from scripture, that the Jewish months are not synodical months; and secondly, that in the passage where *chodesh* is supposed to denote the visible new moon, it hath another meaning."

† These facts are sufficient reply to the author of "Modern Judaism," who with his usual blind prejudice, attacks this account of the consecration and appointment of the months among the Hebrews, by an argument with which any assertion in sacred and profane history might be overruled. It does not appear to him satisfactory, and hence, cannot be true. The case of cloudy weather he puts in support of his objections, is weak enough, and sufficiently exposes his prejudice or ignorance. It has been answered by our quotations from the Mishna above, and by the Abbé Fleury, in his (*Moeurs des Israelites*, IV, 3.) who justly remarks, "The air is so serene in Judea, that it seldom happened that the clouds hid the moon; but when it did so happen, the error it occasioned was immediately rectified, and not suffered to pass into the next month." And indeed, Mr. Allan seems to be himself quite aware of the weakness of his plea; at least he stands self-condemned when he says, (*Modern Judaism*, p. 365. Lon. E.J., 1816.) "All irregularities indeed might be adjusted by an earlier or later intercalation of a 13th month. But this is a ludicrous tradition of the Rabbies." (ib. p. 366.) It must become amusing, however, even to those who are not followers or admirers of the Rabbinical Institutions, to perceive how this writer, in horror of one ludicrous tradition of the Rabbies, actually recommends