

THE EXTRAORDINARY NUMBER SEVEN.

On the 7th of the 7th month, a holy observance was ordained to the children of Israel, who feasted 7 days, and remained 7 days in tents. The 7th year was directed to be a Sabbath of rest for all things; and at the end of 7 times 7 years commenced the grand jubilee. Every 7th year the land lay fallow; every 7th year there was a grand release from all debts, and bondsmen were set free. From this law may have originated the custom of binding young men to 7 years' apprenticeship, and of punishing incorrigible offenders by transportation for 7, twice 7, or three times 7 years. Every 7th year the law was directed to be read to the people. Jacob served 7 years for the possession of Rachel, and, also, another 7 years. Noah had 7 days' warning of the flood; and was commanded to take fowls of the air into the ark by sevens, and the clean beasts by sevens. The ark touched the ground on the 7th month, and in 7 days a dove was sent out, and again in 7 days after. The 7 years of plenty, and the 7 years of famine, were foretold in Pharaoh's dream, by the 7 fat and the 7 lean beasts; and by the 7 ears of full and the 7 ears of blasted corn. Miriam was shut up 7 days to be cleansed of her leprosy. The young animals were to remain with the dam 7 days, and at the close of the 7th to be taken away. By the old law, man was commanded to forgive his offending brother 7 times; but the meekness of the last revealed religion extended his humility and forbearance to 70 times 7. "If Cain shall be revenged 7 fold, truly Lamech 70 times 7." In the destruction of Jericho, 7 Priests bore 7 trumpets 7 days. On the 7th they surrounded the walls 7 times, and after the 7th time the walls fell. Balaam prepared 7 bullocks and 7 rams for a sacrifice. Laban pursued

Jacob 7 days' journey. Job's friends sat with him 7 days and 7 nights, and offered 7 bullocks and 7 rams as an atonement for their wickedness. David, in bringing up the ark, offered 7 bullocks and 7 rams. Elijah sent his servant 7 times to look for the cloud.—The ark of God remained with the Philistines 7 months. Saul was ordered by Samuel to tarry at Gilgal 7 days. Jesse made 7 of his sons to pass before Samuel. The men of Jabesh-Gilead fasted 7 days for Saul. The Shunamite's son, raised to life by Elijah, sneezed 7 times. Hezekiah, in cleansing the temple, offered 7 bullocks, and 7 rams, and 7 he-goats for a sin-offering. The children of Israel, when Hezekiah took away the strange altars, kept the feast of unleavened bread 7 days. King Ahasuerus had 7 chambermaids; 7 days' feast; sent for the Queen on the 7th day. Queen Esther had 7 maids to attend her.—Solomon was 7 years building the temple, at the dedication of which he feasted 7 days. In the tabernacle were 7 lamps. 7 days were appointed for an atonement upon the altar; and the Priest's son was ordained to wear his father's garments 7 days. The children of Israel ate unleavened bread 7 days. Abraham gave 7 ewe lambs to Abimelech as a memorial for a well. Joseph mourned 7 days for Jacob.—The Rabbins have some curious remarks on the greatness of Samuel, as though this were implied not only in his name, but in the language of Hannah, his mother, who in her thanks says, "that the barren had brought forth 7." Solomon mentions 7 things that God hates, and that the sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than 7 men that can render a reason. The house of Wisdom in Proverbs had 7 pillars. The vision of Daniel was 70 weeks. The fiery furnace was made 7 times hotter for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Nebuchadnezzar ate the