

that the Sabbath had no existence from Moses to the prophet Amos, about 650 years, as during the whole of that period there is no mention made of the Sabbath. But though there is no direct mention of the Sabbath during the period under consideration, there are the most abundant traces and indications of the existence of this Institute both in sacred and profane writings, and to these we shall now advert.

And here the practice of family worship may first be noticed. That social worship existed under this dispensation sometimes in a more domesticated, and, at other times, in a more public character, is abundantly apparent. To this the worshippers of the one living and true God were guided alike by the dictates of our own common wants and necessities, and by the very nature of the religion they professed. Accordingly Moses, the historian informs us that, at the birth of Enos, which was 105 years after that of his father Seth; "Men began to call upon the name of the Lord". This cheering intelligence, doubtless, refers to the families in connexion with which it is spoken, and denotes not that there had been no calling upon the Lord till that time, but that thence true religion assumed a more visible form,—the seed of the woman afterwards called the sons of God assembling together for religious worship, whilst the seed of the serpent might very probably be employed in deriding them. And this practice was plainly continued amongst the descendants of that generation. Abraham, Job, Isaac, and Jacob, and all their contemporaries were all scrupulously observant of social worship. How ennobling, in connection with this very subject, the eulogium pronounced by Jehovah on Abraham, as the ground of his disclosing to the Patriarch the doom impending on the cities of the plain. "For I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him". And such being the universality of social worship among the people of God, there is the strongest probability that there were set times allotted for its observance, and that the chief of these times was the return of the weekly Sabbath.

And all this will appear still more manifest when we take into consideration the division of time into weeks, at this early period. Of this division of time we possess the most abundant and satisfactory traits and evidences. In the account given of the offering of Cain and Abel, it is plain that these two individuals presented their offering to God at one and the same time. They were, no doubt, animated by very different principles and dispositions, and, in token of this, they

presented very different offerings, the one unbloody and the other bloody, but they met together at one and the same time, at one and the same place; and it is altogether improbable that they would have done so, save by divine appointment.—And this, in our opinion, is placed beyond all doubt by what is stated regarding the time of their meeting: "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, an offering unto the Lord, and Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof". The expression, "in process of time", is rendered in the margin of the Bible as more in accordance with the original, "at the end of the days it came to pass", thus plainly pointing to that day, which was the end of days, *i. e.*, the seventh, on which God ended his work which he had made, and which he had blessed and sanctified. But the division of time into weeks will appear still more obvious if we look into the transactions connected with the flood. This event was next in importance to the creation, and, therefore, its transactions are recorded with the utmost minuteness and circumstantiality; and brings out in bold relief the point before us. And here we have a great variety of days distinctly specified,—days on which important events took place in connection with the flood,—days chosen not by hap-hazard but with the utmost appropriateness, and evidently for the purpose of subserving high and important ends. One of these days, however, stands forth with peculiar prominence, even the seventh. In the seventh chapter of Genesis and fourth verse, we are informed that Noah was allowed one week to prepare for embarkation. "For yet seven days and I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance which I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth". And in the tenth verse of the same chapter it is written, "And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth". And these words, "after seven days", seem to mean on the seventh day, for that was the day when Noah made his final entrance into the Ark, *viz.*, the seventeenth day of the second month, answering to our November, in the six hundredth year of his life. After eight months, Noah's Ark alights on the mountains of Ararat. Noah waited forty days and sent forth the raven on the seventh day which never returned.—Seven days after he sent forth a dove, and that dove, finding no rest for the sole of its feet, returned and was taken into the Ark. Seven days after, the dove was again sent forth, and it returned to him in the evening with an olive leaf plucked off. Waiting yet seven days longer, he sent forth the dove, which returned not again to him any more. The repeat-

ed mention of seven days seems to imply that, from the beginning, time had been divided into weeks, which can no otherwise be accounted for than by admitting that from the beginning, those who feared God remembered the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

But there are other circumstances that go far to prove the primitive institution of the Sabbath, and there is, perhaps, nothing so remarkable or instructive as the great importance attached to the number seven from the earliest period, the mystical and superstitious reverence with which this number was regarded both by those who were favoured with a revelation from heaven and those who were not.

The first intimation of this we have in the case of Cain. When that murderer was trembling for his fate, and conscience stood sentinel at the door with a drawn dagger in hand, ever and anon reminding him of his wickedness, the Lord said unto him.—"Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold". And this expression is confirmed and multiplied by the declaration of Lamech, "If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold". And when we descend the stream of history, we find the term occurring with still greater frequency and expressiveness. Seven ewe-lambs did Abraham present to Abimelech, in token of his forgiveness for the injury done to him regarding Bersheba. Seven times did Jacob bow before Esau, in proof of his submission to him. Seven years did Jacob serve Laban for Rachel, and seven more for Leah. And how, it may be asked, did this frequent use of the number seven originate? In no other way than in that Institution which commemorated the course and progress of God's great and glorious work,—the work of creation.

And if we leave the descendants of Shem and go to the page of profane history, to the descendants of the other two sons of Noah, *viz.*: Japheth and Ham, we shall find the same sacred and reverential use made of this number. The descendants of Japheth, as is well known, peopled Europe and a great portion of Asia, and in their writings, their rites and customs, there are innumerable traces of this division of time, derived plainly from early traditions, and not from their intercourse with the people of Israel. Herodotus, the celebrated Greek poet of Bœotia, who lived about nine hundred years before the coming of Christ, says, "The seventh day is holy". Homer, who flourished about the same period, and Callimachus, also a Greek poet, who flourished in the reign of Ptolemy Euergetis, about seven hundred years later, both speak of the seventh day as "holy". Lucian, also a Greek writer, born at Samosata, who flourished about four hundred years after Callimachus, says, "The