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ORIGINS OF THE DAYS AND MONTHS NAMES IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Stud. N. V. Smorzhevskiyi, gr. BIT - 18
Language and scientific supervisor I. I. Borolis
Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design

The seven-day week originates from the calendar of the Babylon. Seven days correspond to the time it takes for the moon to *transite* to a new phase (full, waning half, new and waxing half). Since the moon cycle is 29.5 days long, the Babylonians would *insert* one or two days into the final week of each month. The Romans named the days of the week after their gods and corresponded to the five known planets plus the sun and moon (which Romans also considered planets). The English words for each day bear remnants of Roman tradition, but they have been filtered through centuries of Germanic and Norse myths. The Germanic people adapted the Roman system by identifying Roman gods with their own deities.

Sunday originates from the name of the Norse God Sol, who was the god of the sun. That's why Sunday comes from "sun's day". Monday comes from the name of Sol's brother Mani, the Norse *personification* of the Moon. That's why Monday comes from "moon's day". Tuesday takes its name from the one-handed Norse god of dueling Tyr. He was *equated* with Mars, the Roman god of war. Wednesday originates from "Woden's day", named after Woden, or Odin, the ruler of the Norse gods who was associated with wisdom, magic and victory. The Romans connected Woden to Mercury because they were both guides of souls after death. Thursday was named after Thor, ("Thor's day") Norse god of thunder. The Roman god Jupiter was also god of the sky and thunder. Friday originates from the name of the Odin's wife Freya. She was often associated with Venus. They are both goddesses of love, beauty and fertility. As for Saturday, Germanic and Norse traditions didn't assign any of their gods to this day of this day of the week. They retained the Roman name instead. The English word "Saturday" comes from "Saturn's day".

January is named after the Roman god Janus, who has two faces looking backwards and forwards. He symbolizes both an old year and a new one. February comes from the old-Italian god Februus. Since during this month in Rome were celebrated festivals of purification in honor of this god. March was named after the god of war Mars, because this month was the time of preparation for the campaigning season. April. In old English was also called Eastermonab, which means "Easter month". May. This month is connected with the goddess Maia who was considered as a nurturer and a god of earth, which may explain the connection with this springtime month. June is named after the ancient Roman goddess Juno, wife of Jupiter and goddess of marriage and childbirth. July is the first named after a real person. July was named in honour of Julius Caesar. This month is the month of his birth. August is named after the first Roman emperor Octavian Augustus. September comes from the Latin *septem* which means seven. September was originally the seventh month in an ancient Roman ten-month calendar which started with March. October originates from the Latin for 'eight', for that ten month calendar. November comes from *novem*, 'nine'. December comes from *decem*, 'ten'.

So we can see that only a few names of the month were actually derived from Roman deities; most simply came from the numbers of the months or — in two cases — in honor of Roman emperors.