

They appointed the family heads to deal with the matter, and to conduct the necessary investigations. On the 1st day of the 10th month (Friday, 12/15/397) they met to present their initial findings. They finished on Tue 3/13/396 (Nisan 1).

If the year is misplaced in 457 BC, then the 12th of Nisan turns into the first day of the week, and their fast before departure lands on the Sabbath, April 6. Ezra certainly would not have approved of fasting on the Sabbath. In 457 the Jerusalem arrival date would be on a Wednesday, and the 4th day would be the Sabbath, July 27th, on which they weighed out the gold and silver, which appears to be fatal to the 457 theory.⁹ Ezra would not have conducted the business of the treasure on that day. Also, it does not seem likely that an assembly would be convened on the day after the Sabbath. Kislev 20, 457 was on a Sunday. It is likely that at least the 24 hours before the Assembly was allowed for travel. Likewise, the business would be finished in 457 on Sabbath, Nisan 1, which is not likely. In 398 the arrival date would be on the Sabbath.¹⁰ The case for 397 fits the details better than any of the other choices. (cf. Ezra 7:7,8, 9; 8:15, 31, 32; 10:9, 16, 17).

Below: Parker and Duberstein new moons. Note Israel intercalates the 15th of Nisan on or after the equinox at first opportunity. I've underlined the Judean Nisan 1. Babylon calculates always the first new moon after the equinox to be Nisanu. **458** 4/08 5/08 6/06 7/06 8/04 9/03 0 00 10/02 10/31 11/30 12/29 1/28 2/27 **457** 3/27 4/26 5/25 6/24 7/24 8/22 0 00 9/21 10/20 11/19 12/18 1/17 2/15 3/16 **444** 4/03 5/02 6/01 6/30 7/30 8/28 0 00 9/27 10/26 11/25 12/25 1/23 2/22 3/23 **398** 4/05 5/04 6/03 7/02 7/31 8/30 0 00 9/28 10/28 11/27 12/26 1/25 2/24 3/24 **397** 4/23 5/22 6/21 7/20 8/18 9/17 0 00 10/17 11/15 12/15 1/13 2/12 3/13 0 00

36. Wadi Murrabat 24

This Papyri set is reconstructed by scholars who agree that it details a contract to rent land for 5 years up to the start of the Sabbatical year. It is dated "year two of redemption" and "on the 20th of Shevat".¹¹

The charts show the explanation of Wadi Murrabat 24 according to the original explanation of J.T. Milik, with which the biblical sabbatical year agrees.¹² Zuckermann's and Wacholder's followers will be forced to resort to one of four solutions:

(1) date the first year of redemption spring 132/133.

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arrive, just enough time even with the Sabbath intervening. The physical facts, therefore, confirm the urgency of the matter. The three days were Friday, Sabbath, and Sunday. Monday was after the third day.

⁹ Abu/Av 1 = 7/24/457 B.C. (254.95, page 32) JD=1,554,708.75. Weekday = Wednesday. They rested three days, inclusive counting: Wed, Thur, and Friday. The 4th day, and the 4th day of the month was Sabbath, 7/27/457 (cf. Ezra 8:33).

¹⁰ This year must be rejected for the same reasons Siegfried H. Horn and Lynn H. Wood reject **458 B.C.**. See, *The Chronology of Ezra* 7 253.57, page 104-105, Review and Herald.

¹¹ Wacholder 255.136, pg 177.

¹² See 254.80: *Discoveries in the Judean Desert*, Vol. II, 125. The biblical sabbatical year has been determined on Biblical grounds, but the findings of Milik do confirm it.

This must be rejected because contracts were not reckoned on a spring basis (See footnote: 12 pg. 67). Years were counted on a fall basis simply because it was easier to conduct business this way with the Sabbath cycle. The spring year is a natural year, however, it did not see official use. The evidence of Nehemiah, Ezra, Josiah, and Solomon all contradict this idea as well, as well as the modern Jewish calendar and the Era of Contracts (fall-312 B.C. post Maccabean provenance) which all began the year in the fall.

(2) Date the first year of redemption fall 132/133. This contradicts the situation of the revolt. Bar Kochba minted coins for political and religious reasons as soon as possible. See "Bar Kochba Coins and Documents" (254.79). The object of the revolt was to declare the sovereignty of the Bar Kochba state, hence there was no delay in minting of coins. Furthermore, the relative quantities of coins show that the first year minting was relatively small which supports the first ½ year being "Year 1" (See Mildenberg, 254.79).

(3) Date it as Milik, but skip over a growing season before counting 5 years. It is doubtful that this has been tried by any scholar, but no one in his right mind would rent land to a tenant for five summers and give them six.

(4) Date it in spring 132/133 = yr 1 and postpone the start of the 5 years one growing season. Wacholder dates the first year of redemption as 132/133 on a spring basis, as with Zuckermann's option #1. See above critique. However, instead of dating the first growing season in the spring-summer after the contract, he skips over it entirely so that his first year for the contract begins in Tishri 134. He says the "contract 'five full years' in fact meant five years, six months and ten days" (255.136, page 179). Shevat 20, 134 is really Feb 2, 134 B.C., so the period is really seven months and 10 days, i.e., 10 days, Adar, Nisan, Iyar, Sivan, Shoshanna, Av, Elul. Which is a whole growing season.

37. The Two Seders

I leave this section as is, though additional information is probably better. See Note 38 below.

Our current English gospels say that it was the "first day of unleavened bread"¹³ when the disciples asked him where they should prepare the Passover. The first difficulty is that Mark and Luke tell us this was the day they "sacrificed the Passover" in the English texts. Now normally the first day of the feast began at sunrise on the 15th of Nisan. However, the lambs were sacrificed on the 14th of Nisan. Therefore, the 'first day' in question cannot be the 15th of Nisan.

Besides the mistranslation, the received text of the "first day" may also be explained by dispersion practice, also by a misunderstanding of Exodus 12:15, and perhaps finally by the alignment of the Essene 15th with the orthodox 14th in that year.

First I take up the dispersion usage. Outside of Judea they always observed two Passovers, and non-native pilgrims would also resort to the dispersion terminology.¹⁴ They observed two Passovers because they were not sure which day had been declared the correct calendar days. Therefore, if the dispersion Adar had 29 days they observed the 15th and the

¹³ Matthew 26:17; Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7. The original sense was "Pertaining to the beginning day of Passover they said to Yeshua ..."

¹⁴ Also, the synoptic gospels were first written for a dispersion audience, and not a Judean audience. We may expect them to use the terms loosely in the dispersion sense.