

be completed (vs. 15) and so the first Sabbath is numbered on the sabbath (and not at some other point of the seven containing it).

A “complete” “Sabbath” signifies a regular Sabbath. Therefore, in relation to Passover the first Sabbath will be complete at the earliest on the 16<sup>th</sup> of Aviv<sup>432</sup> and at the latest on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of Aviv.<sup>433</sup> Since the seven Sabbaths cannot be counted “in the day after” the Sabbath so as to disregard the Hebrew sense of “day,” we must understand it as “in the time after the [annual] Sabbath” and as this is required in vs. 15, so it is the first suggestion for vs. 16, “yet in the time after the seventh Sabbath shall ye number a fiftieth day”.

The fact that the seven Sabbaths are to be complete (i.e. regular weekly ones) strongly suggests that the head Sabbath in the day after of which the wave offering takes place is the same as the first day of unleavened bread. This is confirmed by the definite article being used with Sabbath in vs. 11, which refers to the Sabbath previously mentioned namely the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month on which no work was to be done (vs. 7). The final day of the feast on the 21<sup>st</sup> (vs. 8) is not meant since it falls chronologically after ‘the Sabbath’ referred to in vs. 11, as may be ascertained by Joshua 5:10-11.

This first Sabbath of the feast is variously referred to. The LXX glosses with “first day of unleavened bread” in Lev. 23:11 to make it clear which Sabbath is meant. That the Jews of the first century called this Sabbath: **הַשַּׁבָּת הַגְּדוֹלָה** there can be no doubt. John 19:31 refers to the ‘great Sabbath’ falling on a common weekday, which was Thursday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, A.D. 34 (ἦν γὰρ μεγάλη ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνου τοῦ σαββάτου). Also in ancient Mesopotamia, the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month was called “the Sabbath” (see footnote 210).

Now the weekly Sabbath that followed the Great Sabbath was the regular Sabbath that perfected the first seven. On account of its being the first of the seven Sabbaths (and perfecting the first seven) it was called the “first of the sabbaths.” So there were two “first Sabbaths,” the first day of unleavened bread, and the one completing the first week.

By necessity a method of distinguishing between the two “first Sabbaths” was introduced into usage wherever the context of the reference would not disambiguate the situation. Clearly in literary contexts it was necessary. If the “first sab-  
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should be translated “And you shall count for yourself seven sabbath years, seven years, seven times. So they will be for you days of seven Sabbaths – forty nine years.” Note the translation of the phrase

**שִׁבְעַ שַׁבָּתֹת שָׁנִים**, *seven sabbath years*. The Hebrew plural on the end of *Shabbat* should not be taken as a construct. Rather it is plural to agree with the adjective *years*. Likewise, at the end of the verse, **הַשָּׁנִים** does not go with **שַׁבָּתֹת** in the construct. The later word is not construct. It is simply plural. **הַשָּׁנִים** goes with *forty and nine years*. One will see that this is the case after examining the double usage of **שָׁנִים...שָׁנָה** in Genesis 5:6, 7, 11. The plural *years* is regularly put with the first part of the compound number, and the singular *year* with the second part. **שַׁבָּתֹת** is no more than a defective spelling of **שַׁבָּתוֹת**. Therefore, there is no suggestion in this passage that “Sabbath” means “weeks”.

<sup>432</sup> Such was the case in the year of the Exodus.

<sup>433</sup> If the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month falls on the Sabbath, then the first week will be completed on the 22<sup>nd</sup> day.

bath” was orally referred to on the day in question, then there would be no ambiguity. If the “first Sabbath” was mentioned later in oral or written narration then it was necessary to disambiguate. The non ambiguous designations are as follows.

The 15<sup>th</sup> of Aviv:

1. The first day of unleavened bread
2. The Great Sabbath (John 19:31).
3. The former Sabbath.
4. The festival Sabbath
5. The Yom Tov day.

The Weekly Sabbath after the 15<sup>th</sup>:

1. The second-first Sabbath (Luke 6:1).
2. The “first of the Sabbaths” (John 20:1)<sup>434</sup>
3. The later of the Sabbaths (e.g. Matt. 28:1).

Of particular interest is the Luke 6:1 “second-first” Sabbath. This vexed problem has plagued scholars for many centuries. This has only been made all the more harder by sectarian differences, namely, the tangled history of the Karaites, the Samaritans, and Qumran sectarian confusion on the proper counting of the Sabbaths and Shavuot, which is beyond the scope of this book.

However, one important observation of the Luke 6:1 passage is that the disciples were eating the **חֲדָשׁ** grain on the weekly Sabbath after Passover, which was legally forbidden until the wave offering had been brought to the temple. The violation of the disciples was in the quibbling over the definition of *harvesting*, and not the eating of the new grain. If the new grain had been at issue then the Pharisees would have charged them with violating the wave offering law, and not just harvesting. They were not charged with violating the omer precept because the omer was already offered “in the day after” the great “Sabbath”.

The attraction of the Sunday Pentecost receives its impetus from the divisiveness of the Karaites, the Samaritans, and the Sadducees, which was a bias and sectarian bent that the Church garbed itself with in its polemic with the Jews. However, the Rabbinic Jews are also to blame in this matter. Having rejected Yeshua they quickly changed or suppressed matters that clearly supported the faithful Jews. Hence, they suppressed Daniel 9 and composed Seder Olam. They totally forgot about the counting of Sabbaths leaving the field to the sectarians and replaced their explanation of Lev. 23:11-16 with views akin to Rashi. If the Rabbinic Jews had kept the chronology and observed the Torah as Moses as God had given it, then they would have been able to keep neither their children nor multitudes of Gentiles from believing in Yeshua and observing the Torah with them.

Yet it is clear enough that the opinions of the Jews are hand-me-down lies just as much as the opinions of the Church on matters of chronology. The Talmud would have us believe that the Jubilee year is predicated on a non-inclusive 50 year count. This is perfectly ruinous to Daniel 9. Seder Olam would delete 165 years of Persian history, also ruinous to Daniel 9. They would then designate the Sabbath before Passover as the ‘Great Sabbath,’ and then conveniently fail to call the Passover holy day the Sabbath. And then they wonder why they themselves are confused, and why their battles with

<sup>434</sup> This is clear enough in the context since John already mentioned the great Sabbath in 19:31.