The Lunar Date of Christ's Death

§93   In the previous chapters it was shown that Christ died on the fourth day of the week, that is, Wednesday, according to the Planetary Week.[125.1] It follows automatically that the Biblical date of His death was the lunar 14th of Aviv, the first month of the Biblical calendar. Only the 14th of Aviv can fall on the day before a Sabbath (The Passover Sabbath) and be in the middle of the week (Wednesday). The 15th of Aviv is the Passover Sabbath. If Christ died on the 15th, on a Wednesday, then the 16th of Aviv would not be a Sabbath, hence that senario is disproven.[125.2]

§94   According to the Law the 15th of Aviv is the Passover Sabbath (Lev. 23:11), or rest day (see §612.1-616.3). Since the weekly Sabbath cannot fall on the fifth day of the week, the only way Christ can die before a Sabbath, is to die the day before the 15th of Aviv,

Figure 15: The 14th - 15th of Aviv
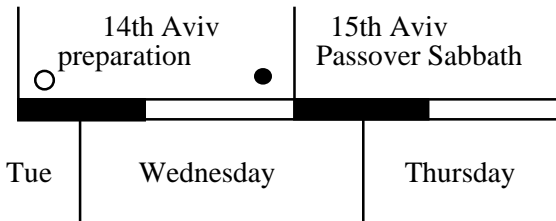
i.e. the 14th of Aviv (**see Fig. 15**)

§95   The black dot locates the time when Christ was killed. The Biblical date of Christ's death is the 14th of Aviv, the first month of the Biblical calendar.[118]

§96   The Last Supper was eaten Tuesday night, indicated by the open circle (**see Fig. 15**). Matthew, Mark, and Luke call the Last Supper, "the Passover," but by this they mean only the first Seder held at the beginning of Passover week. Both Seders were always celebrated in the dispersion, making the festival last eight days, but at Jerusalem, the double Seder was optional. Both meals, when eaten, were called, "the Passover." Not knowing this, many scholars have mistakenly thought that Matthew, Mark, and Luke meant the Seder with the sacrificed lamb on the evening of the 15th of Aviv.

§97   Since the first Seder fell on Tuesday night that year, Yeshua and

His disciples would have been joined by all the Jews who used the Jubilees calendar. According to the Jubilees calendar, there was one Seder, always on Tuesday night, after sunset on Tuesday.

§98   So, by "Passover," the first three gospels mean the first Seder, and not the Seder with the sacrifice. There are other reasons why Yeshua was killed before the second Seder; 1) Judas left the supper, and the disciples assumed he might buy something, but buying and selling were not permitted on the 15th of Aviv (John 13:29; Nehemiah 10:31; Lev. 23:6-7), 2) The Jews complained to Pilate about the bodies on the tree (John 19:31; Deut. 21:22-23). If it had already been the 15th of Aviv, then the holy day would already be desecrated, and the complaint would not have been made. For not only did they carry out the law to take a man off a tree at nightfall, but they did not traditionally put anyone to death on a tree on the holy days. 3) Simon of Cyrene came in from the field to carry Yeshua's *patibulum*, but field work was not done on the 15th of Aviv (Luke 23:26; Lev. 23:6-7). These reasons weigh heavily against any 15th of Aviv theory. And the evidence we presented in chapter one disproves it completely.

Figure 16: 14th of Aviv

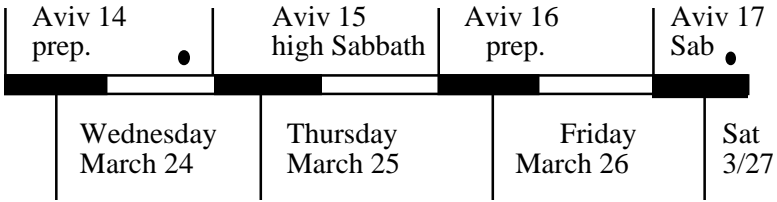| year	new moon (26-36 c.e.) date	14th of Aviv weekday	Equation of visibility
26	3/9	Friday	10.1>8.6
27	3/28	Thursday	11.4>7.9
28	3/17	Tuesday	17.4>6.0
29	4/4	Sunday	9.9>8.6
30	3/24	Thursday	9.9>8.7
31	3/14	Tuesday	19.7>5.3
32	3/31	Sunday	9.7>9.0
33	3/21	Friday	16.4>6.7
34	**3/11**	**Wednesday**	**20.2 > 7.2**
35	3/30	Tuesday	22.3>4.1
36	3/18	Sabbath	12.2>8.2

The Astronomical Confirmation

§99   Since we know the lunar date of Yeshua's death (the 14th of Aviv), and the day of the week also (Wednesday), it is a straightforward matter to locate astronomically those years in which the 14th day of the first moon matches up with the fourth day of the week.

The odds, given a random year, that such a synchronism will occur with a given date and a given weekday are one in seven. Therefore, if the number of years is very great, more than one synchronism will be found. Fortunately, biblical historians have

Figure 17: Passion Week

Aviv 14 prep.	Aviv 15 high Sabbath	Aviv 16 prep.	Aviv 17 Sab
Wednesday March 24	Thursday March 25	Friday March 26	Sat 3/27

already narrowed the date down: Harold Hoehner gives the absolute limits as 26 c.e. to 36 c.e.[§125] Actually, taking Roman history alone at face value allows us to limit the range to 32 c.e. to 36 c.e. (a period of five years - see §300-306).

Astronomically, the 14th of Aviv fell on the indicated days in these years (**see Fig. 16**). For the treatment of the Biblical calendar itself see §126-144. The "Equation of Visibility" is an expression of certainty that the new moon was seen. The first figure is the Arc of Vision, and the second is the Arc of Vision needed for visibility (see §130).

§100 From the chart, we can see that only 34. A.D. has the 14th of Aviv on a Wednesday. All the other years are ruled out.[§125.3] So we conclude that Christ died on March 24, 34 C.E. The matter is shown in the figure (**see Fig. 17 and §69-70**). Clearly, astronomy confirms the Sabbath Resurrection.

§101 Again, the black dots represent Christ's death and Resurrection respectively. The "high Sabbath" is the Passover holy day (Lev. 23:11), and the "Aviv 17 Sabbath" is the first of the Sabbaths (Lev. 23:15) between Passover and Pentecost.

Figure 18: One Sabbatic Period

one	two	three	four	five	six	seven
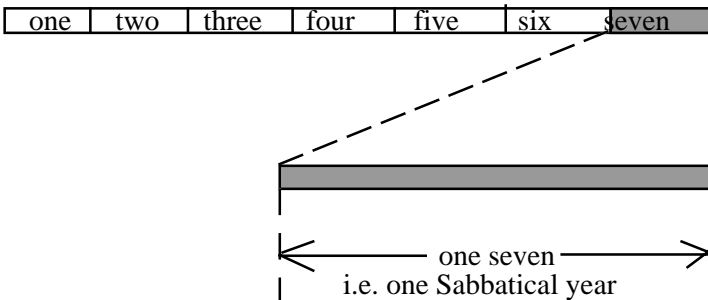
one seven
i.e. one Sabbatical year

§102   Another confirmation of the Sabbath Resurrection and Yeshua's Messiahship is found in Daniel's prophecy of the Sevens:

> "Know therefore and understand that <u>from the going forth of the word to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince shall be seven Sevens, and sixty two Sevens</u>: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And <u>after the sixty two Sevens</u>

```
     Figure 19: Sixty Nine Sevens


   [7]  [7]  [7]                  [7]  [7]

    1    2    3    • • • • • • •   68   69
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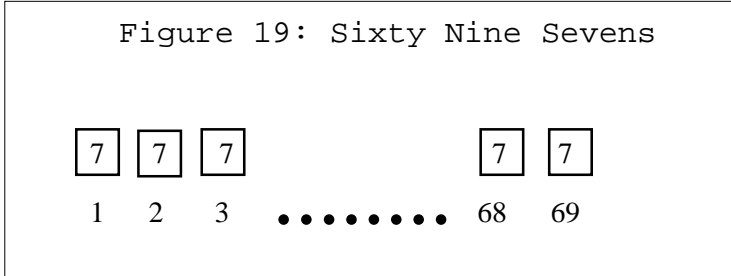
> <u>Messiah shall be cut off</u>, but not for himself" (Dan. 9:25-26a, my translation).

§103   The key to this propehcy is to know what a "Seven" is. A "Seven" is not a "week" as the KJV translates, and most scholars recognize that the KJV translation is misleading. Keil and Delitzsch state, "the Sabbath-years, might be called sevens"[§119] (pg. 339, vol. 9, *Commentary on the Old Testament*).   Sabbath years are numbered with the numeral "seven" at the end of a Sabbatic period, which explains how they can be called "Sevens." In fact, in Deut. 15:9, the Hebrew text literally calls the Sabbatical Year, "The year of the Seven."

§104   In **Figure 18** a Sabbatic period of seven years is drawn out, and the seventh year, which is the Sabbatical year, is designated by the numeral seven. It is called, "year seven," or simply "one Seven."

§105   From this we understand that "seven Sevens," in the prophecy, is seven Sabbatical years, and "sixty two Sevens" is sixty two Sabbatical years. The two figures are added together in the interval from the rebuilding of Jerusalem to the cutting off of the Messiah. The sum is sixty nine Sevens, or as we have shown, sixty nine Sabbatical years.

§106   Each box (**see Fig. 19**) in the figure represents "one Seven," i.e. one Sabbatical year. We count each "Seven" to arrive at the sum of sixty nine Sevens. The dots represent the missing Sevens, which we did not draw, because it would take too much space.

§107   The phrase, "cut off" in "Messiah shall be cut off" is a Hebrew idiom for being put to death. By this we understand that immedi-

ately "after" the sixty ninth Sabbatical year the Messiah would die. We have already shown that Christ was killed on Wednesday, March 24, 34 A.D., by other evidence. All that remains is to determine when the "word" went out to rebuild Jerusalem, and then to see if sixty nine Sabbatical years fit in the interval. If they fit, then we will have another confirmation of the day and year of Christ's death.

§108 In the prophecy, the rebuilding of Jerusalem is mentioned as the content of the "word" beginning the time interval. There is but one "word" concerning the building of the city in Scripture, and this is found in Nehemiah 2:5-6, "send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it. .... So it pleased the king to send me." There are other decrees having to do with the temple, but

Figure 20: Sabbatical Years
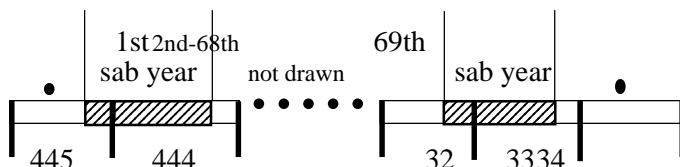
the building of the city is not included.

§109 The Scripture also gives the date of the word to rebuild, "In the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king." This year, according to Parker and Dubberstein, was 445-444 B.C.E. (*Babylonian Chronology 626 B.C. - A.D. 75*). Since Nisan (Aviv) is the first month of the year, it was March/April 445 B.C. The starting point for the prophecy, then, is March/April 445 B.C.E., and the ending point is March 34 C.E.. Can we count sixty nine Sabbatical years in this time interval?

§110 Indeed, sixty nine Sabbatical years do fit in the interval. Not only that, but the interval is so tight that a complete 69 Sevens will fit one, and only one way! (**See Fig. 20**).

§111 If you wish to make a project of diagramming out all the missing years, then remember that there is no year 0; chronologists enumerate ..., 2 B.C.E., 1 B.C.E., 1 C.E., 2 C.E.., ... And the Sabbatical year is every seven years, i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, Sabbatical year, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, Sabbatical year, and so on.

§112 The first solid dot represents the time of the word to rebuild the city of Jerusalem (**see Fig. 20**). The second solid dot represents the time of Christ's death. Note that the word to rebuild the city was preceeding the first Sabbatical year. Also, the Messiah is not killed in the 69th Sabbath year, but "after sixty two Sevens" following the "seven Sevens," i.e. "after" 69 Sabbatical years. "After" does not properly mean "in" or "on" the 69th Sabbath year, but only following it.

38

§113   If the time interval was from 1-6 years longer, we could still fit 69 Sabbath years in it, but we could not tell which year was the Sabbath year. However, the unique circumstance of a "tight" fit in the interval indicates which year must be the Sabbatical year. So, not only does a proper reading of the Scripture confirm the chronology of Christ's death and Resurrection, it also restores the knowledge of the Sabbatical year.

§114   The question arises, what other Biblical evidence is there that the correct Sabbatical year was used aside from the prophecy? From the above diagram, the first Sabbath year of the sequence falls in 445/444, the year Nehemiah built the wall, and in that same year Nehemiah stated, "Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, their lands, their vinyards, their oliveyards, and their houses, also the hundreth part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them" (Neh. 5:11). When the loans of many of the Jews went bad, their land was seized until they could pay off the loan. This was a legal procedure. However, in the seventh year all debts were forgiven, and it was illegal to keep the land any longer, since it was only collateral for a loan. It's owner had not sold it, but had only used the land to back up a loan. If he could not pay the loan, then his use of the land was forfeit until the Sabbath year, however, he still owned it. If he could not pay, then the land had to be returned in the Sabbath year. On the other hand, if the land was "sold," i.e. rented till the Jubilee, it only had to be returned in the Jubilee.

§115   Hence, Nehemiah's charge to the people was to return land used as collateral, and it was legal only in a Sabbatical year when all loans had to be forgiven.   All debts, and everything related to debt was to be put right or forgiven in the Sabbatical year. Land which was rented for lawful money, with no debt involved, only had to be returned in the Jubilee (see also §632).

Concluding Remarks

§116   In this chapter, we have subjected the Sabbath Resurrection to two confirmations. First, we found that a year does exist within the acceptable range of years that meets the criteria for the 14th of Aviv to fall on the 4th day of the week. Furthermore, we found that no other year meets that same criteria. Then the Sabbath Resurrection year, as determined by astronomy, was subjected to confirmation by Daniel's prophecy. It was found that it fit the parameters laid down by the prophecy perfectly.

§117   We may also state that the traditional years of 30, 31, and 33 c.e. all fail to meet the criteria laid down by Daniel's prophecy, having at the most 68 1/2 Sabbatic years in the interval.

END NOTES

§118   The Babylonian Talmud states, "On the eve of the Passover, Yeshu (ms. M: the Nazarean) was hanged" (Sanhedrin 43a). Note that the spelling "Yeshu" is an insult, and should not be used except to point out that it is an insult.

§119   K. & D. "might" is too tenative: a Sabbatical year is called a "seven" (cf. Deut. 15:9: *Year of the Seven,*[Sh'nat Ha-Shevah]). It is permissible to translate the words, "*seventy sevenths*" (cf. BDB) after the model of echad (one, first). Also note that the Hebrew word for *seven* in Dan. 9:27 is different than the preceeding usages. In that verse it means *period of seven*, not *seventh(s),* [i.e shavuah, not shevah or sheva'im].

§120   Many Evangelicals and Fundamentalists compute from 444 B.C. using a 360 day year, i.e. $360*69*7 = 173880$ days, and they find 173880 days until April 3rd, 33 C.E. However, there is no evidence that a 360 day year was used in the Scripture. The 12 month lunar year is 353-355 days, not 360. Furthermore, 42 months in Revelation 11:2 is 42 lunar months or 3 1/2 "times" (Dan. 7:25; A "time" is 12 lunar months), which equals about 1240 days, not 1260 days. Revelation does not say that 42 months equals 1260 days.

Robert Anderson, who wrote *The Coming Prince*, obtains a 360 day year on the basis of the year of Noah's flood. Noah entered the ark on 2/17/600, the water prevailed 150 days till 7/17/600 when it landed on Ararat. Hence 150 days divided by 5 months equals 30 days per month. Assuming 12 months per year (a wrong assumption) multiply $12 * 30$ to get 360.   Anderson's computation, however, is invalid. It is possible to have 4 lunar months of 30 days in a row followed by a 29 day month (see 6/8/2005 - 9/6/2005 in my *Astronomical Almanac of Biblical Feasts*), i.e. 30, 30, 30, 30, 29. This makes up 149 days. The extra day to make 150 comes from including 7/17/600 in the count (see §620.9-625).

§121   The data from Noah's flood year thus agree with the lunar calendar, and there is no need to resort to a solar calendar to explain it. The 360 day year was used by other pagan nations. Since this is the case, Daniel's prophecy should be computed in terms of the calendar God instituted. The necessary Astronomical synchronism for the year of the flood is obtained in the year 2481 b.c.e.

§122   Other groups begin the calculation in 457 B.C.E., and end it in 27 C.E. However, Daniel's prophecy cannot begin in 457 B.C.E. for several reasons. The chief reason is that Ezra was given no decree to build either the Temple or any part of the city, but only money for sacrifices and some possible interior decorating (Ezra 7:1-27). Besides, the Temple was already complete when Ezra arrived; the decree for this Temple was given "in the first year of Cyrus" (Ezra 6:3), and it was completed in the 6th year of Darius (Ezra 6:15). On the other hand Ezra went up in the 7th year of Artaxerxes (Ezra 7:1, 8), which is considered to be 457 by those who hold this view.

§123   The "word" of the prophecy, however, requires the city to be

rebuilt, something only Nehemiah did.

§125 Hoehner, Harold W. <u>Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ</u>. Zondervan.

§125.1 The Planetary week is none other than our standard English week named after the sun, moon, and five planets: sun, moon, mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn. The rest of the planets were not visible to the ancients.

§125.2 Many hold that Christ died on the 15th of Aviv, because they think He ate the Passover on the 15th (e.g. Alfred Edersheim). This would be upon the holy day itself. The Passover of the Pharisees, which was yet to come, they explain as the festive sacrifice, and not the lamb. The Sabbath Resurrection shows that this view is impossible. As for the Passover issue, there is another explanation (see §544-549).

§125.3 The search for 14th/Wednesday synchronisms can only be expanded by introducing human errors into the computation of the calendar, either by failure to observe a visible new moon due to unfavorable atmospheric conditions, in which case the real month was a day later, or by failure to observe the equinox, thereby placing the first month too late or too early. This allowance greatly increases the chance of finding a synchronism in a given year. Miscomputing the equinox increases it to three in seven, and postponing the first day of the month also increases the odds to 4½ in 7. Projecting the Modern Hebrew Calendar back before its inception (359 c.e.) yields yet more erroneous dates (see §142). So finding other synchronisms depends on how much askew of the norm one wants to go. Fortunately, there are other historical data that corroborate our case. Astronomy, merely makes it very probable. I have given dates which assume no atmospheric problems, and make sure that the first month is in correct relation to the spring equinox.

Additional 14th of Aviv dates (26-36 c.e.) are:

Wed	March 12, 27 c.e.	too early	Adar II
Wed	April 28, 28 c.e.	too late	Ziv
Wed	May 18, 29 c.e.	too late	Ziv (post 1)
Wed	March 8, 30 c.e.	too early	Adar
Wed	April 25, 31 c.e.	too late	Ziv
Wed	May 14, 32 c.e.	too late	Ziv (post 1)
Wed	May 11, 35 c.e.	too late	Ziv

Wed., April 25th, 31 c.e. is popular among many, but it is ruled out by Tiberius' 15th year and John's Passovers (see §300-306) along with every year before it. The May dates in 32 and 35 c.e. are ruled out as being way too late for Passover.

41