

[1] Introduction to the Lunar Sabbath Theory

There are various proponents for the lunar Sabbath theory, and they do not all agree with one another. I will explain what I have read and heard from what appears to be the majority viewpoint. They do believe that a cycle of the moon determines a biblical month, and that the days numbered 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29 of every month are the biblical Sabbath. The primary goal of this study is to refute the belief that the biblical Sabbath always falls on the days numbered 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29 of every month.

The foundation for the correct evidence is the Bible itself, and this will require the use of Strong's numbers for certain Hebrew words. Typical English translations are not consistent in translating the word Sabbath for the specific Hebrew word that means Sabbath.

[2] The Sabbath Day in contrast to the First Day of the Seventh Month

In Gen 2:2-3 we read, “And on the seventh day [the] Almighty ended His work which He had done, and He rested [7673 *shabat* (verb)] on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then [the] Almighty blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it [He] rested [7673 *shabat* (verb)] from all His work that [the] Almighty created for preparing.”

This passage does not mention the law for human rest, nor the noun “Sabbath” from the Hebrew word *shabat* (Strong's number 7676), yet it does contain the verb *shabat* twice, which has the same three consonants as the noun. Thus it is an obvious indirect reference to the noun Sabbath, and indicates that the meaning of the noun includes the concept of rest.

The significant Hebrew word *shabaton* (Strong's number 7677) is often not translated consistently, but “solemn-rest” will always be used in this study. This word occurs eleven times in the Bible: Ex 16:23; 31:15; 35:2; Lev 16:31; 23:3, 24, 32, 39, 39; 25:4, 5. Notice that this word occurs five times in Lev 23; some translations in these five places incorrectly use the English word Sabbath instead of “solemn-rest”.

Lev 23:24-25 “Speak to the children of Israel, saying: In the seventh month on [the] first [day] of the month, you shall have a solemn-rest [7677], a memorial of acclamation, a holy convocation. You shall do no laborious work and you shall present an offering by fire to YHWH.”

Many translations substitute “blowing of trumpets” for the word “acclamation” above. Verse 25 says “no laborious work”. This is a contrast to the law of the Sabbath [7676] as stated next.

Ex 31:15 “Work shall be done [for] six days, but on the seventh day [is] a Sabbath [7676] of solemn-rest [7677], holy to YHWH. Whoever does work on the Sabbath [7676] day, he shall surely be put to death.”

The above avoids the word “laborious” that is used in Lev 23:25. Concerning “work”, that is the distinction between the first day of the seventh month and the Sabbath. Thus the first day of the seventh month is not a Sabbath [7676], but the word is *shabaton* [7677] is applied.

The word *shabaton* is not applied to the first day of any other month in the Bible – only to the seventh month.

What we have seen here is that in general, the first day of every month is never called Sabbath [7676 *shabat*]. Only for the seventh month a lesser description of abstaining from work, “no laborious work” is used with the word *shabaton* [7677]. For the **other months**, the first day has no prohibition from work in the law of Moses, and neither the word *shabat* nor the word is *shabaton* is applied in Scripture.

This is a refutation of the Lunar Sabbath Theory because it shows the lack of use of Sabbath [7676 *shabat*] for the first day of any specific month. This includes the seventh month.

It is remarkable that it is so easy to refute the Lunar Sabbath Theory! There is no general evidence in favor of the Lunar Sabbath Theory in the Bible. The various appointed times mentioned in Lev 23 (other than the seventh-day Sabbath in Lev 23:3 and the Day of Atonements in Lev 23:32) are never called a Sabbath [7676]. In fact the Day of Atonements in Lev 23:32 is called Sabbath [7676 *shabat*] in that verse, and in verse 27 it is the tenth day of the month. The tenth day is not among the days numbered 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29 which the Lunar Sabbath Theory claims to be the Sabbath!

Comparing Ex 31:15 with Gen 2:2-3 it is clear that the seventh day that was blessed and sanctified is named the Sabbath day and is a day of abstaining from work. Within the proclamation of the ten commandments Ex 20:8-11 and Deut 5:12-15 corroborates this.

Since the Sabbath is called the seventh day and is a contrast to the other six days for work (Ex 20:9-10; 31:15; Deut 5:13-14), **the Sabbath is a periodic cycle with six days between each consecutive pair of Sabbaths, except for the Day of Atonements which decreases the count of in-between non-Sabbath days to five during its week of appearance.**

A separate and more direct corroboration of this periodic cycle of seven days is available from the Bible in the count to the Feast of Weeks, which is also called Pentecost. In order to present this evidence in a clear manner, it is important to first establish some other technical terms from the Bible. This is the reason for some of the next several chapters.

There are some exceptional days mentioned in Lev 23 on which no laborious work is to be done (not called *shabat* [7676]), and such exceptional days may occur on the six days between two consecutive seventh day Sabbaths. As already mentioned above, the Day of Atonements is also an exception to the general rule that between two Sabbath days there are six days on which work is to be done.

[3] Psalm 104:19 and Lev 23:3

Here a primary focus is on the use of the word appointed-times [4150 *moed*], especially as it pertains to the role of the moon.

Ps 104:19 “He made [the] moon for appointed-times [4150 *moed*], [the] sun knows its going away.”

Lev 23:1 “And YHWH spoke to Moses saying,”

Lev 23:2 “Speak to [the] children of Israel and say to them, [the] appointed-times [4150 *moed*] of YHWH which you shall proclaim [to be] holy convocations, My appointed-times [4150 *moed*] are these:”

Lev 23:3 “Six days work shall be done and on the seventh day [is] a Sabbath [7676 *shabat*] of solemn-rest [7677 *shabaton*], a holy convocation. You shall not do any work; it is a Sabbath [7676] to YHWH in all your dwellings.”

The plural of *moed* occurs twice in Lev 23:2, and then the first appointed-time that is mentioned is the Sabbath in verse 3. In Ps 104:19 we note that the moon has a purpose of helping to show when appointed-times occur. Without examining the other Scriptures that relate to the Sabbath, one might wonder whether the moon might have any role in knowing when the Sabbath occurs. Here we must use careful logic and note that Ps 104:19 does **not** have the Hebrew word that means **all**. Thus Ps 104:19 does **not** require that all appointed-times involve the moon.

Promoters of the Lunar Sabbath Theory insist that Ps 104:19 requires that the moon must govern the time of the Sabbath. Without the appearance of “**all**”, this claim is empty.

The following partially repeats what was already stated in the last chapter, but it needs to be emphasized in terms of the meaning of *shabat*.

It is important to note that Lev 23:3 mentions that no work is permitted on the Sabbath. In contrast to this, in the remaining appointed-times mentioned in Lev 23 (except the Day of Atonements which is explicitly called Sabbath [7676 *shabat*]), it states that “no laborious work” is to be done. This is a clear separation between the use of Sabbath [7676 *shabat*] and the non-use of Sabbath. That is a primary distinction of the use of “Sabbath”.

[4] A 24-Hour Day

As in the English language, Hebrew often has multiple meanings for one word, and it will now become quite clear that this is true for the Hebrew word *yom* (Strong's number 3117), that is generally translated “day”. Gen 1:5 shows that *yom* means daytime, but one goal is to show that some contexts with *yom* show it to mean the 24-hour day.

Before giving a translation of Lev 8:35, note that it contains the Hebrew word *yomam* (Strong's number 3119), which is to be translated “daytime”. This word is a form of *yom* used in a different Hebrew grammatical senses from *yom*. It may be argued that this word should also be translated day, as it usually is, but in order to

distinguish between these words in translation, *yomam* will be translated “daytime”. Lev 8:35 states, “Therefore you shall abide [at the] door of the tent of meeting daytime [3119 *yomam* (adverb)] and night [for] seven days, and keeping [the] charge of YHWH, so that you may not die; for so I have been commanded.” Here “seven days” refers to seven periods, each of which is a day and a night, so that “day” (used in the plural) here, is a daytime followed by a nighttime, a natural 24-hour period.

Est 4:16 states, “Go gather all the Jews present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink [for] three days, night and day. Also I and my maids will fast likewise. And then I will go to the king, which is against [the] law; and if I perish, I perish!” Here “day” (used in the plural) is a nighttime followed by a daytime, a natural 24-hour period. These two examples differ in which comes first; one example has the daytime first in the 24-hour day, while the other has the nighttime first. But neither of these examples involves the Sabbath or a numbered day of the month.

Ps 32:3-4 states, “When I kept silent my bones grew old through my groaning all the day. For daytime and night Your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was turned into the drought of summer.” Here one day is shown to be a daytime followed by a nighttime, combined to be a natural 24-hour day.

Neh 1:6 states, “please let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open, that You may hear the prayer of Your servant which I pray before You this day, daytime and night, for the children of Israel Your servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel which we have sinned against You.” Here one day is shown to be a daytime (Hebrew *yomam*) followed by a nighttime, combined to be a natural 24-hour day.

[5] Evening

Ps 104:23 “Man goes out to his work and to his labor until evening [6153 *erev*].” In an agricultural society where outdoor light is needed for earning a living by most people, this particular context would imply that “until evening” has the approximate sense of “until daylight fades”. **Thus “evening” generally refers to the time that begins with the fading of daylight.** Although some exceptional contexts that have the Hebrew word for evening (*erev*) may arguably be shown to have a slightly different meaning, the typical meaning of evening is the time period of the 24-hour day that begins with the fading of light and extends into the night.

[6] On-the-Morrow = *me macharat*

Ex 18:13-14 “And it came to pass on-the-morrow, Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood about Moses from morning until the evening. When Moses’ father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, ‘What is this you are doing for the people? Why do you sit alone, and all the people stand about you from morning until evening?’”

In Ex 18:13 immediately above, the phrase “on-the-morrow” is a translation of the Hebrew phrase *me macharat* where the flexible preposition *me* is Strong's number 4480 and *macharat* is Strong's number 4283 which means “morrow” and refers to the period of time following the normal sleep pattern. The stem within this word is the Hebrew word *achar* [310] which means “after”, so that it implies that there is a progression of time, and “after” is implied. These verses supply the context that indicates that “morrow” refers to the daytime that follows the past reference.

Another example with the Hebrew phrase *me marharat* is Gen 19:33-34 where we read, “And they made their father drink wine that night. And the first-born went in, and lay with her father; and he knew not when she lay down, nor when she arose. And it came to pass on-the-morrow, that the first-born said to the younger: ‘Behold, I lay yesternight [with] my father. Let us make him drink wine this night also. Then you go in and lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.’”

The translation “yesternight” is from the Hebrew word *emesh* (Strong's number 570) which also occurs in Gen 31:29, 42. (In the Hebrew, the two words *me macharat* have no space between them, as is typical with many prepositions.) Unfortunately, most translations use the word “day” instead of “morrow” here, which could give the reader the false impression that the Hebrew word *yom* may occur. For the sake of consistency for the reader, the Hebrew phrase *me macharat* will always be translated “on-the-morrow” in this study. **Note that in Gen 19:34 above, the conversation that occurred “on-the-morrow” followed an event that occurred in the night, so that both the event and the conversation took place within the same sundown to sundown 24-hour period.**

[7] A Numbered Day of the Month and the extent of the Sabbath

Ex 12:18-19 “In [the] first [month], on [the] fourteenth day of [the] month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of [the] month at evening. Seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses, for whoever eats what is leavened, that same person shall be cut off from [the] congregation of Israel, whether he is a resident-alien or a native of the land.”

The unbroken time interval for eating only unleavened bread is here given a beginning time and an ending time. This whole period is stated to be seven days in length. Here “day” (used in the plural) is a 24-hour day, each of which begins “at evening” and ends “at evening”. This context involves a numbered day of the month which begins and ends when the light of daytime fades (evening begins).

Lev 23:27 “Indeed on tenth [day] of this seventh month [is] the Day of Atonements. It shall be a holy convocation for you, and you shall afflict your souls, and present an offering [made by] fire to YHWH.”

This tenth day of the seventh month continues to be discussed down through to Lev 23:32 which states, “It shall be to you a Sabbath [7676] of solemn-rest [7677], and you shall afflict your souls; on [the] ninth [day] of [the] month at evening, from evening until evening, you shall keep your Sabbath [7676].”

The Sabbath (Hebrew *shabat*) mentioned here twice, is the Day of Atonements rather than the Sabbath of the seventh day. (*shabat* is also used this way in Lev 16:31.) As in Ex 12:18 above, this verse mentions a numbered day of the month beginning “at evening”. Since an “evening” is mentioned in Lev 23:32 as both the beginning and ending of this day, this is surely a 24-hour day rather than a daytime. Each of the seven days in Ex 12:18 is a 24-hour day also. Thus, as numbered days of the month, we have consistency of Ex 12:18 with Lev 23:32. This also makes the beginning and ending of *shabat* in agreement with the beginning and ending of a numbered day of the month.

[8] Manna and the Context of Ex 16:22-23

The manna was available for gathering only on six mornings because:

Ex 16:8 “... in the morning bread to the full...”

Ex 16:12 “... in the morning you shall be filled with bread...”

Ex 16:13-14 “... in the morning the dew lay all around the camp. And when the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, fine as frost on the ground.”

Ex 16:19 “... let no one leave any of it till morning.”

Ex 16:21 “So they gathered it every morning...”

On the Sabbath the Israelites were not to go out to gather the manna “in the morning” as they did on the other six mornings. The emphasis is on “morning” because that is

the only time of the day that the new manna was first available for gathering. Physical labor in relation to the Sabbath and the gathering of the manna was only in the morning according to the nature of the context. The morning lies within the concept of “tomorrow” in the sense of the coming daytime.

Ex 16:22 “And it came about on the sixth day they gathered twice [the] bread, two omers to each [person]. Then all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses.”

Ex 16:23 “Then he said to them, this is what YHWH commanded. Tomorrow [4279 *machar*] [is] a solemn-rest [7677], a holy Sabbath [7676] to YHWH. What you will bake, bake, and what you will boil, boil. And all that remains, store for yourselves to be kept until the morning.”

In the Brown-Driver-Briggs lexicon, the single word *machar* is discussed on pp. 563-564. It is given two meanings: “tomorrow” and “in time to come”. The latter meaning is more nebulous and variable. The former meaning refers to the daytime.

Note the contrast between Ex 16:19 above and Ex 16:23 especially at the end concerning leaving the previous mornings’ manna “until the morning”. Ex 16:23 is *not* saying that the Sabbath *begins* in the morning (which does relate to *machar* = tomorrow), but it refers to the fact that on the Sabbath in the morning, which would otherwise be the normal time for gathering manna, they were not to go and gather it, but instead (contrary to the other six mornings) they were to leave it over and keep it until the morning. When understood in the context relating to activity that takes place in the morning, Ex 16:23 does not say that the Sabbath begins in the morning (*machar* = tomorrow). The manna was provided at the most convenient time of the day for gathering, cooking, and then eating, all within the same daylight, but the eating may continue into the night. In this way the work of gathering would occur in the early morning when it was still cool.

[9] The End of the Month and Gathering Manna

It is significant that Ex 16:22 mentions that on the sixth day they were to gather twice as much manna to provide for two successive days of food. Consider how this affects the Lunar Sabbath Theory at the end of the month. This theory includes the belief that day 29 of the month is always a Sabbath. If the month has only 29 days, then the very next day is the first day of the next month, which is also a Sabbath in this theory. This forces day 28 to be a day for gathering three omers so that food would be provided for day 28, day 29, and day 1. But if instead, the month has 30 days, then

only two omers would have to be gathered on day 28. Therefore, on day 28 they would have to know in advance how many days the current month would have in order to know how many omers of manna to gather. Moses gave all the necessary instructions to the people for the gathering of manna, and he never mentioned anything special for the end of the month and day 28. Furthermore, only **the sixth day** is mentioned as a special day for gathering manna in preparation for the Sabbath, which is repeatedly called the seventh day. If the month has 30 days, then on day 30, two omers of manna would have to be gathered, and this would be on day 1 in the count of a cycle for the Sabbath, and this Sabbath would be on the second day instead of the seventh day. **These are serious problems for the Lunar Sabbath Theory at the end of the month. Nothing in Scripture accounts for answering these problems. The proponents of the Lunar Sabbath Theory would have to invent assumptions to avoid all such problems.**

Here is an attempt to answer such problems. One proponent of the Lunar Sabbath Theory stated in my hearing that at the end of a month, a day will have 48 hours or 72 hours. The result of this concept is that day 29 of the month gets blended into the first day of the next month, so that the Sabbath at the end of the month will have 48 or 72 hours. This involves multiple assumptions that are absent from Scripture. But this theory is false because of the following from the Bible. Gen 7:4, 12 mentions that the rain would continue for 40 days and 40 nights, which runs through the end of a month. Then Gen 7:17 mentions that the flood was on the earth 40 days, requiring passage through the end of a month. Those last mentioned 40 days would have to be 24-hour days because Gen 7:4, 12 refers to both days and nights totaling 40. In other words, a “day” at the end of the month must be a 24-hour day.

[10] The Count to the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost)

The Greek word that is translated Pentecost in Acts 2:1; 20:16; I Cor 16:8 means “count 50” and is another name for the festival that is called the Feast of Weeks. The detail of the count occurs in Lev 23:15-16.

Lev 23:15 “And you shall count for yourselves [beginning] on-the-morrow [*mee macharat*] after the Sabbath [7676], from the day that you brought the wave sheaf offering, there shall be seven complete Sabbaths [7676]”

Lev 23:16 “until on-the-morrow [*mee macharat*] after the seventh Sabbath [7676], counting 50 days. Then you shall present a new cereal-offering to YHWH.”

Lev 23:21 “And on this same day you shall proclaim a holy convocation [that] you shall do for yourselves. You shall not do any laborious work. It is a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.”

In this translation the word “after” occurs twice. In both cases this word is implied from the Hebrew word *achar* [310 *achar* = after] that is within the word *macharat*. The goal of correctly showing the word “after” is to indicate that the count begins after the Sabbath and the count ends after the seventh Sabbath, so that the total number of days in the count is 50.

Seven is a number of completion. The Sabbath is the seventh day that completes a week using the number seven. In this sense a “complete Sabbath” is a Sabbath that is the completion of a seven day count. Seven complete Sabbaths would then total 49 days ending with a Sabbath. The beginning of verse 16 shows that the ending day is beyond day 49, thus yielding a total of 50 days. That the count is 50 days is corroborated by the meaning of the alternate name Pentecost.

Ex 34:22 “And you shall keep [the] Feast of Weeks, [the] firstfruits of [the] harvest of wheat...”

The harvest of wheat does occur in May and June in Israel, which is in harmony with the count of 50 days and the meaning of the name Pentecost. Deut 16:9-10 is less detailed and less precise in the Hebrew, but it does mention counting seven weeks and the name Feast of Weeks. All of this does corroborate the count of seven weeks to attain Pentecost.

The count to Pentecost passes through the end of the first month and also through the end of the second month. A lunar month must have 29 or 30 days. The count to Pentecost also utilizes a count that includes seven complete Sabbaths, and ends with the fiftieth day on the morrow after the seventh Sabbath. The only way that this count can occur with seven cycles, each of seven days (each ending in a Sabbath) plus one day added with a total of 50 days is for the unending cycle for each Sabbath to be exactly seven days. **The Lunar Sabbath Theory shows a violation of the 50 day count because of the extra one or two days after the 28 days in the first and second months. Its count would be from 52 to 54 days when arriving at the morrow after the seventh Sabbath. This is a clear biblical refutation of the Lunar Sabbath Theory.**

The above mention of “52 to 54 days” was written with the thought in mind of the claim that some proponents of the Lunar Sabbath Theory have, that day 29 is

mysteriously combined into day 1 of the following month so that they are somehow thought of as the same Sabbath. This was already alluded to by mentioning the perplexing claim that some proponents have that day 29 is a 48-hour or a 72-hour day, shown to be false above. If both day 29 and day 1 are considered to be totally separate Sabbath days, then the “morrow after the seventh Sabbath” in the count to Pentecost will have much less than 50 days in the Lunar Sabbath Theory. Of course this makes the Lunar Sabbath Theory falsify the count to Pentecost.

[11] History and the Weekly Cycle

This biblical seven day cycle of the Sabbath shows that the Jews have not misled future society into a false concept of the cycle of the Sabbath. Luke 23:56 states, “Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.” Here the New Testament shows that the Sabbath cycle was not lost in the first century.

The Babylonians took the Jewish leaders, priests, and skilled artisans into captivity between 605 and 586 BCE. Most of them settled between the Tigris River and the Euphrates River in Babylonia. After the Persians defeated the Babylonians, the Persian leaders favored the building and establishment of the Second Temple in Jerusalem, and the Aaronic priesthood returned to Jerusalem under the civil leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah. The Jews in the Persian Empire were loyal to Persia, and they were rewarded with the establishment of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. When the Persian Empire expanded westward into Asia Minor (today's western Turkey), they chose the loyal Jews to plant communities in the major cities of Asia Minor so that the Persian leaders would know what the general population thought about the Persian Empire. The Jews were used as unofficial spies for the Persian Empire in Asia Minor. This led to the establishment of Jewish synagogues in the major cities of Asia Minor. The apostle Paul preached the Gospel in these synagogues until he was expelled from them. The Jews that remained between the Tigris River and the Euphrates River were still called Jews of Babylonia despite the fact that the Babylonian Empire no longer existed. The Babylonian Talmud was published by these “Babylonian” Jews between 500 and 600 CE, which was more than 1000 years after the Babylonian captivity.

The Jews in Asia Minor, in Babylonia, in Galilee, in Judea, in Rome, in Alexandria, and elsewhere show no historical signs of disagreement on which day is the Sabbath. Even the very diverse writings among the Dead Sea Scrolls do not show disagreement on the day of the Sabbath. The Samaritans also agree on the day of the

Sabbath. It is not credible that all these separate “Jewish” communities could have simultaneously changed the day of the Sabbath without any historical record of it. Furthermore, the Christians also preserved the seven day cycle since the first century. The Roman Empire persecuted both Jews and Christians and did not support the seven day cycle until Constantine became the emperor and supposedly converted to Christianity in 312 CE.

Meanwhile, pagan people within the Roman Empire gave names to the days of the seven day week. These names originated with pagan deities. The collection of these pagan names for the days of the week is historically called the planetary week because many of the names are derived from names of the planets. The attachment of pagan names to the days of the week does not invalidate the seven day cycle of the week.

I have heard some supporters of the false Lunar Sabbath Theory speak about the planetary week and quote from the writings of others in such a manner that they misinterpret what those authors wrote. They have falsely claimed that the Roman Empire enforced the planetary week upon Jews and Christians. The pagan names did historically stick upon society. But the Roman Empire did not exercise political control over the Jews in Babylonia, nor did it control the religious practice among the Jews within the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire did not change the weekly cycle and the Sabbath.

[12] Ancient Babylonian Religious Practice and the Sabbath

The ancient common language of the Babylonian Empire was Akkadian, but it gradually changed to Aramaic. By the time of the Babylonian captivity of ancient Israel (605-586 BCE), the common language of Babylon was Aramaic, although the Akkadian language did not fully become extinct yet. A modern understanding of ancient Babylonian religious practice was not known until the knowledge of Akkadian was gradually deciphered between 1840 and 1870. This language had about 500 different symbols and was a great challenge to understand. It took additional time for scholars to build up a sufficient Akkadian vocabulary to write brief commentaries about ancient Babylonian religion (c. 1890-1898). At that time scholars began to speculate about possible relationships between Babylonian religion and Israelite religion. The nature of such speculation varied significantly according to the religious convictions of those scholars. Some editors of commentaries have given certain scholars much liberty to speculate about the relationship between the Babylonian religion and the Israelite religion. Scholars differ quite a bit in how

strongly they assert their views, sometimes expressing speculation as if it is fact. A scholar who accepts the inspiration of the Bible is likely to dismiss any such relationship, but a scholar who is agnostic may choose to assert that Israel adopted certain aspects of its religion from Babylon, thus appearing to trash certain parts of the Bible.

The early period of this speculation from c. 1895 and continuing for the next few decades was a volatile period where commentaries wasted written space for this speculation. The phrase “Babylonian Sabattu” was a favorite topic for speculation during this period. The question was whether this was historically related to the Jewish Sabbath. My desire to acquire historical information that validly relates to the Bible did not give much space for this subject. I do recall that one of the worst places for bad speculation claiming that the Jewish Sabbath was originally the author's concept of what the Babylonian Sabattu was, is *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* (c. 1940) under the article “Sabbath”. Perhaps the author of this article was a Jew in lineage, but in my opinion he did not believe in the inspiration of the Bible and I know he did not give any reference sources to check on his assertions.

One encyclopedic commentary on the Bible from 1901, *The Century Bible* under the general editorship of Walter Frederic Adeney states (p.234), “It is quite clear that the Israelitish Sabbath is not a replica of the Babylonian Sabattu, if even the two had at all any genitic [sic] connection.”

Some proponents of the Lunar Sabbath Theory quote from some speculative sources that promote the idea that the modern Jewish Sabbath was originally the Babylonian Sabattu, and that this was their concept of the lunar Sabbath.

[13] Ezekiel 46

Within the statement of the ten commandments, the law of the Sabbath is given in Ex 20:8-11; Deut 5:12-15. Concerning the days between two consecutive Sabbath days, we note the following.

Ex 20:9 “Six days you shall labor and do all your work.”

Deut 5:13 “Six days you shall labor and do all your work.”

These verses omit all discussion of exceptions concerning days of “no laborious work” mentioned in Lev 23 and also the Day of Atonements. Thus Ex 20:8-11; Deut 5:12-15 were purposely designed to omit the exceptions. This pattern should be expected to continue elsewhere when the six working days are mentioned.

In Ezekiel chapters 40-48 we have a vision given to that prophet of the construction of a future Temple and practices associated with that Temple.

Ezek 46:1 “Thus says the Master YHWH: [The] gate of the inner court that faces east shall be shut [on] the six working days, but on the Sabbath [7676] day it shall be opened and on [the] day of the new-moon it shall be opened.

First it must be noted that in Num 28:11-15 there are special ceremonies that the Aaronic priesthood must perform on the new-moon days. The priesthood should be expected to have musicians and singers perform on these days, and there would have to have been an audience. Hence, after Solomon's Temple was built, the gates of the Temple would have to be open to allow an audience to be present. Anciently in the Temple there would be worship. This does not imply that it was forbidden to work on the new-moon days. II Ki 4:23 and Amos 8:5 indicates that the national government of ancient Israel wanted to promote a national holiday (not holy day) at the beginning of each month. But nothing in the law of Moses prohibited people from working on the day of the new-moon.

The opening of the gate of the Temple in Ezek 46:1 only indicates that people would be free to enter the Temple to worship. It does not imply that it would be a sin to work on the new-moon day.

If every new-moon day was also a Sabbath [7676], there would no point of mentioning new moons in Isa 66:23.

[14] Painful Change from the Julian Calendar to the Gregorian Calendar

Within the ancient Roman Empire it was widely recognized that the most advanced mathematicians and astronomers lived in the city of Alexandria, Egypt. When Julius Caesar visited Alexandria in 46 BCE he desired to take advantage of this opportunity to meet with the highly respected mathematical astronomer Sosigenes to learn how to stabilize the calendar that was used in the Roman Empire so that the seasons would not drift from year to year in the calendar. Caesar learned that a year should have 365.25 days to prevent the seasons from drifting, and he commanded that the calendar should be reformed accordingly. The actual reform was begun with Julius Caesar at that time, but the details were not completed until about 50 years later using the *average* year length of 365.25 days. The name given to the revised calendar was the Julian Calendar in honor of Julius Caesar. The revision was based upon

fixing the length of the months, and that only February would be adjusted by one day every four years, thus making that year have 366 days instead of the usual 365 days.

This reform to the Julian Calendar did not affect the Jewish practice of the cycle of the seventh day Sabbath or the Jewish calendar because the Roman Empire did not require that all other calendars in the empire be abolished. Official dating of events were based on the Julian Calendar, but people were allowed to continue to use other calendars as they chose.

But a tropical year contains about 365.2422 days instead of 365.25 days, so that the Julian Calendar was a little too long in its average year. This caused the date of Easter for the Roman Catholic Church to shift later with respect to the vernal equinox, and it troubled the Roman Catholic Church that Easter was shifting. Over a period of several years mathematicians and astronomers met to discuss how to correct the situation *without disrupting the Jewish cycle of the seventh day Sabbath*. The result was that Pope Gregory XIII, in October 1582, shortened that month by 10 days (cutting day numbers in the middle of the month), but the weekly cycle was not changed. Also, the rules for when February was to have 29 days was changed to bring the length of the average year very close to 365.2422 days. The resulting calendar was called the Gregorian Calendar after Pope Gregory.

When the German monk Martin Luther, a professor of theology, rebelled against the Roman Catholic Church in 1517, he began what became known as the Protestant Reformation. Afterward in Great Britain, the Anglican Church was established in opposition to the Roman Catholic Church. Those nations that were part of the Protestant Reformation refused to accept the Gregorian Calendar in opposition to Pope Gregory, and they continued to use the Julian Calendar. This opposition to Pope Gregory was continued in the beginnings of the 13 Colonies established by Great Britain, and the Julian Calendar continued to be used there as well. The cycle of the week was not affected so that it did not affect the Jews.

The opposition to Pope Gregory concerning the calendar was painful for historians, for correlating dates of international events, and especially for international trade. The opposition served to highlight the rebellion that began with Martin Luther in 1517. Eventually it became widely recognized as too confusing to have conflicting official dates, and nation after nation, spread out over many years, began to accept the dating system of the Gregorian Calendar. By about 1750 most nations decided to accept the Gregorian Calendar for dating purposes, yet without accepting the

authority of Pope Gregory. In 1923 the last nation to accept the Gregorian Calendar was Greece.

It is important to note that the weekly cycle was not affected by the transition to the Gregorian Calendar.

]15] Conclusion

Summary of the evidence against the Lunar Sabbath Theory:

(1) The first day of the seventh month is a day of no *laborious* work and is not called Sabbath [7676 *shabat*], the latter being a day of no work. This is the only first day of a month that has this restriction. This refutes the claim of the Lunar Sabbath Theory that every first day of the month is the Sabbath.

(2) The restrictions related to the gathering and use of manna in Exodus 16 only refers to the sixth day as a preparation for the Sabbath, called the seventh day. Twice as much manna is to be gathered on the sixth day. If day 29 is the last day of the month so that day 1 that follows is a Sabbath, then day 28 would require gathering three omers instead of two. If day 30 is the last day of the month, then day 30 would also require gathering twice as much, but day 30 is not the sixth day. Scripture is silent on such matters indicating the falsity of the Lunar Sabbath Theory.

(3) The count to Pentecost that ends on day 50, called the morrow after the seventh Sabbath refutes the count to Pentecost.