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# NOTES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE JEWISH WEEK\*

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One of the institutions most taken for granted in our lives is the seven-day week which runs from the end of one Sabbath through the next in an uninterrupted cycle. We schedule appointments and often date important events with reference to the week and weekdays, e.g., 'I'll see you next week,' or 'Sunday, December 7, 1941.' As F. H. Colson noted, 'We measure our time in cycles of seven days primarily because the Jews, by the time of our era, had come to attach vast importance to the religious observance of one day in seven.' For Colson, 'when the recurrence of one day in seven is observed we have, of course, the week'.<sup>1</sup>

The following notes have emerged from the observation that this implicit equation was barely realized in practical terms during the biblical period.<sup>2</sup> Although Sabbath observance was well established in many spheres of life,<sup>3</sup> implicitly establishing the concept of the sabbatical week, there is little evidence in our sources for popular consciousness of the week as a basic unit of time, or for the terminology which we commonly associate with it. Certain aspects of the concept developed only in Second Temple times, while others did not reach their current form until the Middle Ages.

\* To my teacher, Prof. H. L. Ginsberg. מידך נתנו לך.

In the preparation of this study I was privileged to draw upon the expertise of several scholars whose contributions could be only incompletely indicated in the footnotes. I am particularly indebted to Prof. Saul Lieberman and to my colleague, Prof. Judah Goldin, for the discussion of several issues and to Prof. Menahem Haran, who was kind enough to read the manuscript and offer a number of helpful suggestions. Final responsibility remains, of course, my own.

<sup>1</sup> F. H. Colson, *The Week* (Cambridge, 1926), 9.

<sup>2</sup> The evidence for the biblical period is reviewed in the recently published seventh volume of *Encyclopaedia Miqra'it*, s.v. שבוע.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Lev. 24:8; 2 Kgs. 4:23, 11:5-9; Hos. 2:13; Amos 8:5.

The development of the Jewish sabbatical week coincided with the spread of the seven-day planetary week in the Roman empire. The original relationship between these two superficially similar institutions is unclear, but it appears that they had some impact upon each other and that both contributed to the western week as it is known today (see Colson). In what follows we seek to trace the development of the sabbatical week as it is reflected in Jewish sources.

## 1. TERMINOLOGY

### a. *Terms for the week*

One index of the existence of a concept and of the attention it received is a name for it and the frequency with which that name is mentioned. In medieval and modern Hebrew the word שבוע refers both to the seven-day period from one Sabbath through the next and to any other seven-day period. We shall term these periods, respectively, the sabbatical week and the non-sabbatical week.

(1) In rabbinic Hebrew the sabbatical week is known as שבת(ה),<sup>4</sup> a name based on the distinctive day with which it culminates. In popular usage שבת(ה) could also refer to a non-sabbatical week (*Mishnah Nedarim* VIII. 1 end; *Mishnah Ketubot* V. 5; *TB Mo'ed Kaṭan* 23a), although this was usually expressed by שבוע.<sup>5</sup> That שבת refers to a week at least once in the Bible is clear from the adjective תמימות, 'full,' which modifies שבתות in Lev. 23: 15b, but whether this passage refers to sabbatical or non-

<sup>4</sup> *Mishnah Megillah* III. 4; *Nedarim* VIII. 1 beginning; *Tosefta Ta'anit* III. 3; *TB Menahot* 65b; *Pesahim* 106a; Aramaic used שבתא/שבתא, *Targum to Esther* 2:9; etc. This word is reflected in σαββατον, Luke 18:12; Mark 16:9, and, as Prof. Chaim Rabin was kind enough to confirm for me, in *sanbatāt, sanbatūta mawa'el*, *Ethiopic Jubilees* 6:29-30.

<sup>5</sup> As in laws about the confinement of the suspected leper and in the phrase שבוע הבן, on which see J. Bergmann, in *MGWJ* 76 (1932), 465-70 and S. Lieberman, *Tosefta Ki-Fshuṭah, Order Mo'ed* (New York, 1962), 1186 f.

sabbatical weeks depends upon the meaning of *ממחרת השבת*, 'the day after the Sabbath,' in vv. 11 and 15a. If *שבת* has its usual meaning of the Sabbath day in these verses, as the sectarian interpretation held, then the *שבע שבתות*, 'seven Sabbaths' of v. 15b, and perhaps *השבת השביעית*, 'the seventh Sabbath' in v. 16 are sabbatical weeks.<sup>6</sup> Prof. Ginsberg has argued that 'the day after the Sabbath' indeed refers to Sunday, but that the phrase is an interpolation in these verses by a 'Sunday Pentecostalist'.<sup>7</sup> The Pharisaic understanding of 'the day after the Sabbath' as the day following the first holy day of *Pesah* — which can fall on other days of the week — implies that the 'seven Sabbaths' in vv. 15b and 16 are non-sabbatical weeks, like *שבעה שבועות*, 'seven weeks' in Deut. 16:9. Even if the Pharisaic interpretation should be correct, it probably implies an underlying meaning of sabbatical week (just as *חדש* probably referred originally to the month from one new moon to the next and only secondarily to any other thirty-day period<sup>8</sup>). But since this use of *שבת* for the week is at best attested<sup>9</sup> in only one or two biblical passages, in a priestly and perhaps in a royal context, one cannot infer that it reflects popular consciousness of the sabbatical week in the biblical period.

(2) Another way of describing the sabbatical week is found in biblical texts which distinguish the Sabbath from the rest of the week. They express this by the contrast *ששה ימים ... וביום השביעי*, 'six days... but on the seventh day', or *ששת ימי המ' עשה וביום השבת*, 'the six days of labor, but on the the Sabbath day'.<sup>10</sup> Since this bifurcation of the

week is necessitated by the contrast these passages seek to draw, it does not in itself imply non-consciousness of the week as a unity. But it is noteworthy that similar contrasts in rabbinic and medieval texts are sometimes expressed by *כל ימות השבת / השבוע*, 'all the (rest of the) days of the week, but on the Sabbath...'<sup>11</sup> This phrasing does imply a more explicit awareness of the week as a chronological unit, and nothing like it is found in biblical texts.

(3) The word *שבוע* in biblical texts adds nothing to the evidence for the sabbatical week, since it refers only to non-sabbatical weeks and to septennia. The word describes the seven weeks between *Pesah* and *Shavu'ot* only where there is no hint of the weeks coinciding with sabbatical weeks (Deut. 16:9). Nor does *שבוע* refer to the sabbatical week in rabbinic Hebrew. The Kassovsky concordances to the Tannaitic *Midrashim*, the *Mishnah*, *Tosefta*, and Babylonian Talmud list only one passage where *שבוע* refers to a sabbatical week, and that passage is a late interpolation in the *Mishnah*:<sup>12</sup> *ואנשי המעמד היו מתעבין ארבעה ימים בשבוע*, 'The men of the lay division used to fast four days a week' (*Mishnah Ta'anit* IV. 3). The corresponding *Gemara* (*TB Ta'anit* 27b) quotes a Tannaitic source on the subject which uses the word *shabbat*: *ארבעה תעניות בשבת*, 'four fasts during the week',<sup>13</sup> and the related *Tosefta* passage also terms the week *שבת* (*Tosefta Ta'anit* III. 3). *שבת* is also used in an authentic passage of *Mishnah Ta'anit*: *שבת שחל תשעה באב להיות בתוכה*, 'the week in which the Ninth of Av falls' (*Mishnah Ta'anit* IV. 7).

Apparent cases of *שבוע* referring to the sabbatical week in other texts of the Talmudic period are

<sup>6</sup> Given the adjective *תמימות* even the sectarian interpretation must reckon with weeks in v. 15b. I am unpersuaded by the objections of E. Vogt, in *Biblica* 40 (1959), 1008-11. Nachmanides, in his commentary on Lev. 23:11, holds that *שבת* in 2 Kgs. 11:5 and 9 refers to a sabbatical week (less plausibly, he also mentions Amos 8:5). The use of *שבתות* for septennia (Lev. 25:8) also implies the meaning week; in later times this was expressed by *שבוע (קצות)* (Dan. 9:24-7; Zadokite Document, 16:3 f.; Jubilees 46:1 (DJD III. 79, No. 20, frag. 1:1)).

<sup>7</sup> In a lecture delivered to the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in New York, December 1966.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Gen. 29:14; Lev. 27:6; Num. 9:22, 11:20-1; note *ירח (ים)* in Exod. 2:2; Deut. 21:13 (contrast Num. 20:29; Deut. 34:8); 2 Kgs. 15:13.

<sup>9</sup> See above, note 6.

<sup>10</sup> Exod. 20:9 f., 23:12, 34:21; Ezek. 46:1.

<sup>11</sup> For a convenient selection of examples see *Bereshit Rabba* (eds. J. Theodor and H. Albeck (Jerusalem, 1965), Ch. 11, including variants. For other locutions, cf. D. H. Müller, *Die Recensionen und Verstehen des Eldad Hadani: Denkschriften der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien, Philosophische-Historische Klasse, XLI* (1892), Versions B, D, G; or *Kitvei R. Avraham Epstein I*, ed. A. M. Habermann (Jerusalem, 1950), Stories ב, ד, ג.

<sup>12</sup> See H. Albeck's note in his edition of the *Mishnah* (Jerusalem and Tel-Aviv, 1957), *Ta'anit* IV. 3 and H. Malter, *The Treatise Ta'anit* (New York, 1930), 121, note on l. 2.

<sup>13</sup> Malter's edition (op. cit.), 128, ll. 8-9. The printed editions and parallels cited by Malter have different wording, but none uses *שבוע*.

contradicted by variant readings in manuscripts. I *Avot deR. Nathan*, ed. Schechter (New York, 1967), Ch. 11, p. 44, l. 9 reads *ישב אדם כל השבוע*.<sup>14</sup> Schechter cites no variants, but a manuscript in the library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America reads *שבת*.<sup>15</sup> The same situation obtains in a number of passages in *Bereshit Rabba*, Ch. 11. In commenting on the distinctiveness of the Sabbath this chapter quotes several statements contrasting it to the rest of the week.<sup>16</sup> In the twelfth century London MS used as the base text in the Theodor-Albeck edition, only one of these statements — the legend about the river Sambation — uses *השבוע*;<sup>17</sup> the rest use *שבת*,<sup>18</sup> or no equivalent expression.<sup>19</sup> For the passage using *שבוע* the apparatus quotes a reading *שבת* only from the Venice edition of 1545. However, the old MS. Vat. Ebr. 60,<sup>19</sup> which was not utilized for the Theodor-Albeck edition, reads *שבת* throughout the chapter, and so, apparently, did the manuscript from which R. David Qimhi quoted the Sambation passage around the end of the twelfth century.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Kindly called to my attention by my colleague, Prof. Judah Goldin, from whose *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan* (New Haven, 1955), 60, the translation is taken.

<sup>15</sup> MISC # 5848, kindly collated at my request by Prof. Louis Finkelstein. In a similar context a few lines below, Schechter's text has *ישב כל ימות השבת* (l. 16). Another similar passage reads *חול* (II *Avot deR. Nathan*, Ch. 21, p. 44, l. 29). In the story of R. Eliezer b. Hyrcanus, II *Avot deR. Nathan*, Ch. 13, p. 30 has *כל ימות השבת*; Schechter cites a variant *כל ימי השבוע*, which is close to the reading of the later parallel in *Pirquet R. Eliezer*, Ch. 1, *לימי השבוע*.

<sup>16</sup> In the Theodor-Albeck edition these passages are found on p. 87, l. 1-2; 88, 2; 91, 6; 93, 3; 93, 4 middle; 93, 4 end-94, 1; 94, 2; 94, 3. My attention was drawn to a number of these passages by Prof. Lieberman (letter of 13 Nisan, 5735).

<sup>17</sup> Ed. Theodor-Albeck, p. 93, l. 3.

<sup>18</sup> For a few of the passages not reading *שבוע* the apparatus lists variants which do; all passages not reading *שבת* have variants which do.

<sup>19</sup> *Midrash Bereshit Rabba Codex Vatican 60* (photographic reproduction of MS. Vat. Ebr. 60) [Jerusalem, 1972]. This MS has been studied by Michael Sokoloff, 'The Geniza Fragments of Genesis Rabba and Ms. Vat. Ebr. 60 of Genesis Rabba', Ph.D. thesis, The Hebrew University, 1971.

<sup>20</sup> In his commentary to Gen. 2:3 s.v. *ויברך*, Qimhi first paraphrases the midrash in his own language (cf. his commentary to Ps. 92:2, 3), using *שבוע*, and then quotes the midrash from the source, which uses *שבת*. (This is the reading in the edition of Qimhi to Genesis published by

R. David Luria (1798-1855) observed that the use of *שבוע* for the (sabbatical) week is post-Talmudic, characteristic of the language of the *posqim* as against the *Mishnah*.<sup>21</sup> The evidence bears this out. The earliest indisputable cases of *שבוע* for the sabbatical week known to me are from the Geonic period (ca. seventh through eleventh centuries). For example, *Mishnah Ta'anit* IV. 7 states: *שבת שחל חשעה באב להיות בתוכה אסורין*, 'During the week (שבת) in which the Ninth of Av falls, it is forbidden to cut the hair or launder clothing.' The discussion of this *Mishnah* in the *Gemara* (*TB Ta'anit* 29b) continues to refer to that week as *שבת*.<sup>22</sup> In a Geonic manuscript the *Mishnah* and *Gemara* are both rephrased to read *שבוע*.<sup>23</sup> *שבוע* also appears in the date section of legal documents and formularies from the Geonic period on,<sup>24</sup> with Karaite documents apparently showing a greater<sup>25</sup> but still not exclusive preference for the word.<sup>26</sup>

A simple juxtaposition of texts illustrates the increasing frequency of *שבוע* in Rabbinite sources. For example, the *Mishnah* rules: *קונם יין שאני*

A. Ginzburg (Pressburg, 1842), based on a Paris manuscript. The recent edition by M. Kamelhar (Jerusalem, 1970) reads *כל ימות השנה*, but since this edition is based on Ginzburg's, the reading must be a modern error (identical to an older one in the *Yalqut* passage cited below, n. 31).

<sup>21</sup> In his commentary to *Pirquet R. Eliezer* (Warsaw, 1852), Ch. 1, p. 2a n. 20 (cf. above, n. 15, and *Pirquet R. Eliezer*, Ch. 6, p. 13b, as cited from manuscript by S. Gandz, in *PAAJR* 18 [1948-9], 230); Luria also regards this usage as biblical.

<sup>22</sup> Malter (*The Treatise Taanit*, p. 139, l. 12, p. 140, l. 14) lists variants with *שבוע* twice, both from MS. Munich 95.

<sup>23</sup> *Ozar HaGeonim* V, ed. B. M. Lewin (Jerusalem, 1933), Pt. 2 (*Ta'anit*), p. 64; the text uses *שבוע* frequently. In the letter of the Jews of Kairuwan to R. Šemah Gaon (fl. ca. 884-915) about Eldad the Danite, and in his responsum, the Sambation legend is cited with the phrase *כל ימי השבוע*. However, both texts are known only from later printings, see *Kitvei R. Avraham Epstein*, 39, 77.

<sup>24</sup> See I. Lévi, in *REJ* 47 (1903), 301 (date 1049 C.E.); J. Mann, *Texts and Studies in Jewish History and Literature* (New York, 1972), i. 54 (date 1265). See also the following note.

<sup>25</sup> For examples from the eleventh century on, see A. Gulak, *Ozar HaShetarot* (Jerusalem, 1926), Nos. 53, 54 (Karaite prayerbook), 93; Mann, *Texts and Studies*, ii. 174, No. IV, l. 7; No. V, l. 6; 181, l. 15; 193, ll. 174, 190.

<sup>26</sup> For *שבת* in Karaite documents of the eleventh century, see Mann, ii. 168, 191 l. 140.

quoted continued to use שבת at times,<sup>28</sup> and in legal documents the term predominates even today, as in marriage contracts and divorce certificates.

The substitution of שבוּע for שבת undoubtedly made for greater clarity. The confusion which could result from the use of שבת for both Sabbath and week is reflected in the comment of the *Tosafot* on *TB Nedarim* 60b, just quoted, and even earlier in the statement of the *Gemara* to which the *Tosafot* referred. To the *Mishnah's* inclusion of the following Sabbath in the vow בכל השבת the *Gemara* comments: פשיטא. מהו דתימא יומי דשבתא קאמר. קמ"ל: 'This is obvious! — You might think that (by שבת) he meant (only) the weekdays (יומי דשבתא); we are therefore taught otherwise' (*TB Nedarim* 60b).<sup>29</sup> Similarly open to misunderstanding were such phrases as נהר סבטיינוס... מושך אבנים כל השבת כל השבת מניח 'The river Sa(m)bation... carries stones the whole week (שבת) but on the Sabbath (שבת) it allows them to rest.'<sup>30</sup> In *Yalqut Shim'oni* the contrast שבת... ובשבת... כל ימות השנה... but on the Sabbath,' and it may be the superficially apparent contradiction in a contrast between שבת and שבוּע (usually ימות השבת) which induced this corruption. Much clearer are readings such as כל השבוּע, ובשבת and others which use some term other than שבת for the week-(days) (e.g., כל הימים, כל ימות החול, etc.). This may have been a factor in the substitution, but the problem of ambiguity had existed throughout the

קונם יין שאני טועם שבת זה אסור עד תשלום כל השבוּע ויום שבת הבא אסור ג"כ ואם אמר אחד וכו' (N.B.), '(If one vows,) "Qonam if I taste wine this week (שבוּע)", he is forbidden until the entire week (שבוּע) is over, and the following Sabbath day is also forbidden. And if he said "one (fem!) week (שבוּע)" or just "a week (שבוּע)", he is forbidden from time to time' (i.e., from the time he swore until the same time one week later) (*Tur Yoreh De'ah* 220). In this reformulation only the wording of the vow itself has retained שבת for the sabbatical week. By the time of the *Shulhan 'Arukh* (16th century) even this exception was eliminated: קונם יין שאני טועם שבוּע זה אסור עד תשלום כל השבוּע ויום שבת הבא אסור ג"כ ואם אמר אחד וכו' (N.B.), '(If one vows,) "Qonam if I taste wine this week (שבוּע)", he is forbidden until the entire week (שבוּע) is over, and the following Sabbath day is also forbidden. And if he said "one (masc.) week (שבוּע)", etc.' (*Yoreh De'ah* 220: 3).<sup>27</sup>

The use of שבת for the sabbatical week was never entirely displaced by שבוּע. Some of the sources just

<sup>27</sup> Note how the final sentence in the *Arba'ah Turim* retains the feminine אהת of the *Mishnah* even though it has replaced the feminine שבת with the masculine שבוּע; the *Shulhan 'Arukh* corrects the oversight.

Maimonides (1135–1204), intentionally pursuing a Mishnaic style, retained שבת in his formulation of the law ('*Hilkhot Nedarim*' 10:2), although he used שבוּע for the sabbatical week elsewhere ('*Hilkhot Tefillah*' 12:2).

<sup>28</sup> E.g. *Osar HaGeonim*, V (above, n. 23), pp. 37, 42; Rashi on *TB Sanhedrin* 65b, s.v. נהר סבטינון ירכיח and s.v. קברו של אביו; *Tur Oraḥ Hayyim* 551 uses both terms, but first points out their equivalence; *Shulhan 'Arukh Oraḥ Hayyim* 551 uses both terms. In legal documents, which tend to be conservative in formulation, שבת predominates; see, for example, Gulak, op. cit. (above, n. 25), pp. 71 bis, 89, etc.

<sup>29</sup> According to the text in *Osar HaGeonim*, XI (Jerusalem, 1942), p. 97, the correct reading is יומי דקמי דשבתא 'the days preceding the Sabbath' (the printed text reads יומא, which must be a misprint for יומי, as in all the parallels cited in n. 11 there).

<sup>30</sup> *Bereshit Rabba* 11:5, p. 93, l. 3, var. from ד (= ed. Venice, 1545).

<sup>31</sup> *Yalqut Shim'oni*, Gen. 17 (to Gen. 2:3), (Salonika, 1526; Venice, 1566): כל ימות השנה את גידתים (cf. above, n. 20). Perhaps the corruption goes back to an abbreviation כל ימות הש'.

<sup>32</sup> *Bereshit Rabba* 11:5, p. 93, l. 3.

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Talmudic period; why this solution was not found until the Geonic period remains an unanswered question.<sup>33</sup>

b. *The designations of the weekdays and identification of weeks*

(1) The numerical designations of the weekdays are partly reflected in the Greek translation of Psalms and in the New Testament (μία σαββάτου, πρώτη σαββάτου = בשבת / ראשון / אחד)<sup>34</sup> and fully attested in Tannaitic sources (יום ראשון / בשבת / אחד, etc.).<sup>35</sup> It is sometimes assumed that the numeration of days in Gen. 1 and Exod. 16: 5, 22-30 is an early attestation of the same system.<sup>36</sup> Given the centrality of Sabbath observance in biblical times, people

<sup>33</sup> Profs. Chaim Rabin and Stephen A. Kaufman have both suggested to me that since in Aramaic, too, which the Jews spoke through the Talmudic period, the word for sabbatical week was שבתא/שבטא (= שבת), Hebrew continued to express this meaning by שבת. With the change to Arabic in the Geonic period this 'protection' was lost. Since the use of biblicisms is characteristic of late rabbinic Hebrew, one might consider the new use of שבוע as a false biblicism based on the greater frequency of the word as a term for week in the Bible while overlooking the distinction between the sabbatical and non-sabbatical week (cf. n. 21). Whether Arabic الجمعة (the Muslim equivalent of the sabbatical week, named for the Friday day of public prayer) or الأسبوع contributed to the Hebrew development must be investigated by an Arabist. By the eleventh century one finds الأسبوع used for both the sabbatical and non-sabbatical week in a diary from Baghdad (G. Makdisi, 'Autograph Diary of an Eleventh Century Historian of Baghdad', *BSOAS* 18 (1956), 243 §22 and 19 (1957), 429 §§170-1, kindly called to my attention by my colleague Prof. George Makdisi) and אלאסבוע used for the sabbatical week in *The Kuzari* I. 57-8; II. 20; III. 5; see the Arabic text published by H. Hirschfeld, *Das Buch Al-Chazari* (Leipzig, 1887). However, in both cases this usage may be due to the Hebrew development rather than vice versa (the Arabic week, which counts the days starting with Sunday, is certainly based on the Jewish week). The later Arabic version of *Eldad HaDani*, in the Sambation passage, uses الجمعة for the sabbatical week. Prof. J. Blau informs me that the antiquity of these two words in Arabic has not been established.

<sup>34</sup> Superscriptions to Pss. 24; 38; 48; 93; 94 (also Ps. 81 in the Old Latin); Mark 16:2, 9, etc. See E. Schürer, in *ZNW* 6 (1905), 2 f.

<sup>35</sup> *Mekhilta* to Exod. 20:8, s.v. וזכור ושמו; for later sources see *Midrash Hagadol* on the same verse and *Pesiqta Rabbati* 23:1. Cf. Schürer, op. cit., 1 ff.

<sup>36</sup> Schürer, op. cit., 3; J. Morgenstern, in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, IV. 826a; cf. E. G. Hirsch in *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, xii. 482.

certainly knew how many days distant the Sabbath was, but it is far from certain that the weekdays were referred to numerically in normal discourse.

Although the numeration of days in Gen. 1 and Exod. 16 coincides with that of the sabbatical week, it differs from the latter considerably. The numeration of the weekdays begins anew after each Sabbath and the cycle repeats itself endlessly. The numeration in Gen. 1 begins with the first act of creation, a non-repeatable event. There is no indication in the text that the creation week is part of a continuing cycle, that another week began the day after the first Sabbath. In Exod. 16 the numeration begins with the first fall of manna. The first day of this week is inferrably the day after a Sabbath, though Israel was not aware of this. The seven-day manna period is part of a continuing cycle, and the designations in vv. 26, 29, and 30 refer to future sixth and seventh days. But 'the seventh day' is not the 'name' of that day, which the text calls 'Sabbath', and therefore 'the sixth day' is presumably not a 'name' either. These phrases simply count the days on which the manna falls or ceases.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, the cycle of manna weeks lasted only until Israel entered the promised land (Josh. 5: 12); the numeration would have had no meaning after that time. For these reasons it is questionable whether these chapters were thought to explain or reflect a numerical designation of weekdays. Certainly some later authorities rejected this possibility. The Talmuds record a discussion in the course of which it is suggested that בשני in 1 Chr. 3: 2 refers to שני בשבת. This is rejected on the ground that לא מצאנו זה מן התורה, 'we do not find this numeration in the Torah'. When this is challenged with יום שני in Gen. 1:8, the Palestinian Talmud responds: אין למידין מברייתו של עולם, 'we derive no lesson from the creation of the world'.<sup>38</sup>

(2) Prior to the period of the Qumran scrolls the only other evidence for names of weekdays comes from the Persian and Hellenistic periods and applies to the days immediately before and after the

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Ibn Ezra on Exod. 16:16.

<sup>38</sup> *TP Rosh HaShanah* I. 1, 56a; *TB Rosh HaShanah* 3a (called to my attention by Prof. Lieberman). Note that one side in this discussion does presume that the Bible referred to the weekdays by number. Cf. also the debate in *TB Shabbat* 87a and b.

Sabbath. At Elephantine the day preceding the Sabbath is called ערובה, an early version of rabbinic terms for the day (ערובהא, ערב שבת).<sup>39</sup> In Neh. 13:19 we read: ויהי כאשר צללו שערי ירושלים לפני השבת ואמרה ויסגרו הדלתות ואמרה אשר לא יפתחום עד אחר השבת 'As the gates of Jerusalem grew dark (?) before the Sabbath, I commanded that the doors be shut, and I gave orders that they should not be opened until after the Sabbath'. The phrases לפני השבת and אחר השבת are usually understood as simply before and after the Sabbath. A number of considerations suggest that they are actually standard designations for what we term Friday and Sunday. Since Nehemiah had earlier commanded that the gates of Jerusalem not be opened until the sun was hot (Neh. 7:3), his command in 13:19 must refer to the following day and not the night after the Sabbath. Indeed, sources from the Second Temple and rabbinic periods designate the day after the Sabbath אחר (ה)שבת. For example, *Mishnah Shabbat* XIX. 4 discusses מי שהיו לו שני תינוקות אחד למול אחר השבת ואחד למול בשבת, 'he who had two infants, one to circumcise after the Sabbath and one to circumcise on the Sabbath'. The phrase אחר השבת cannot refer to Saturday night here since circumcision normally takes place in daytime.<sup>40</sup>

Later usage also supports understanding לפני השבת as a term for all of Friday, not only late Friday afternoon, for its Greek equivalent (προσαββάτον/πρὸ τοῦ σαββάτου) is a standard term for Friday in Hellenistic Jewish literature. For example, *Judith* 8:6 states that Judith used to fast 'all the days of her widowhood except (the day) before the

<sup>39</sup> See B. Porten, *Archives from Elephantine* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1968), 127. For an apparent attestation of حذوية in a Qur'an variant, see S. D. Goitein, 'Djum'a', *Encyclopedia of Islam*, New Edition, ii. 592.

<sup>40</sup> *Sifra* to Lev. 12:2; *Mishnah Megillah* II. 5-6; *Tosefta Shabbat* XV (XVI), 9. For other examples see 2 Macc. 8:28; DJD II, No. 44:9-10; *Mishnah Shabbat* XIX. 5; *Tosefta Shabbat* XV. 10; *Mishnah Hagigah* II. 4; *TB Menahot* 65a. In light of this designation for the day after the Sabbath, it is not impossible that the Boethusians and others took ממחרת השבת as a standard rather than unique designation of Sunday.

מוצאי שבת, too, came to designate Sunday. Compare *Mishnah Ta'anit* IV. 3 to *TP Ta'anit* IV. 4, 68b (see *Penei Mosheh*, ad loc.); cf. *Ekhah Rabba* 1:16 (ed. Buber, p. 88; see n. 446 there); *Soferim* XVII. 7 (בראשית = בראשית שבת = בראשית). Prof. J. Goldin also calls my attention to *Mishnah Soṭah* VII. 8.

Sabbath (προσαββάτον), etc'. In Hebrew sources, Palestinian MSS of *Mishnah Shabbat* XXII. 2 read מערב שבת (מ) לפני השבת in place of the more common מערב שבת used in Babylonian MSS.<sup>41</sup> This may also be the meaning of the problematic לפני שבת in the seventh century Hebrew letter from Meṣad Hašhaviahu.<sup>42</sup>

One of the *mishmarot* texts from Qumran appears to include the numerical designations of the weekdays.<sup>43</sup> This text dates the holy days according to the day of the priestly *mishmar* on which each falls, e.g. במעוזה יום הזכרון, 'On the fourth (day of the *mishmar*) of Ma'uziah: the Day of Remembrance.' Since each *mishmar* served seven days, with Sunday its first full day,<sup>44</sup> these numbers coincide with the numerical designations of the weekdays. Unlike Gen. 1 and Exod. 16, the *mishmarot* texts demonstrably refer to an ongoing cycle of weeks in historical times.

(3) The Qumran text implies a practice of designating the week by the name of its priestly *mishmar*. Such a practice is also mentioned in the Palestinian Talmud. The *Mishnah* (*Sheqalim* V. 5) specifies that vouchers for the purchase of sacrificial materials at the temple were to be dated (ושם היום כחבר עליהן) 'the "name of the day" was written on them') to prevent their fraudulent use at a later date.<sup>45</sup> In the Bible שם היום is a general term for date (*Ezek.* 24:2),<sup>46</sup> but in *Tosefta Baba Batra* XI. 2

<sup>41</sup> See A. Goldberg, *Perush La-Mishnah — Massekhet Shabbat* (Jerusalem, 5736), 51, 367. For the Greek equivalents see Josephus, *Antiquities*, III. x. 7 (255); 2 Macc. 8:26; Mark 15:42. In the same verse quoted above Judith also does not fast on the day before the new moon (προνοσηνῆν).

<sup>42</sup> H. Donner-W. Röllig, *Kanaanäische und Aramäische Inschriften* (1962), No. 200: 5 f. See the interpretation of the text by W. F. Albright in *ANET*, 568, and earlier *apud* F. M. Cross, *BASOR* 165 (1962), 44 f. and n. 45. For other views, see J. Naveh in *IEJ* 10 (1960), 133; S. Talmon in *BASOR* 176 (1964), 32.

<sup>43</sup> J. T. Milik, in *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum* 4 (1957), 24 f.; cf. E. Vogt in *Biblica* 39 (1958), 72; 40 (1959), 1009 n. (3).

<sup>44</sup> *Mishnah Tamid* V. 1; *Tosefta Sukkah* IV. 24; *Tosefta Ta'anit* III. 3; Josephus, *Antiquities*, VII. xiv. 7 (365).

<sup>45</sup> For the meaning of fraudulent use, Prof. Lieberman refers me to the interpretation of R. Abraham ben David of Posquères (Rabad) cited in *Tosafot Hadashim to Mishnah Sheqalim* V. 5 (printed in *Mishnayot* [Wilna: Rom, 1912], p. 259).

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Y. Aharoni, *Ketobot 'Arad* (Jerusalem, 1975), No. 1:4, and compare No. 7:6-8.



(quoted in the next paragraph) it is used for the day of the week within a fuller date. The Palestinian Talmud (*Sheqalim* V. 3, 49a) discusses the precise content of the date intended by the *Mishnah* and, after rejecting the possibility that it consisted of the weekday alone, suggests that it included the weekday plus the name of the *mishmar* on duty during the week of the transaction. It is objected that this information is too equivocal to prevent fraudulent use of a voucher half a year later since the *mishmarot* serve twice annually. The *Gemara* then concludes: שם היום שם שבח שם חודש היה כתוב: עליהן אסילו רוצה לדייג אין מצוי לדייג. 'The name of the day, the name of the week (שבח), and the name of the month were written on them, so that even if one wished to find a matching date (and use the voucher fraudulently on that date), it is rarely matched'.<sup>47</sup>

The *Gemara's* final formula שם היום שם שבח שם חודש has called forth varying interpretations. The same phrase is part of the dating formula for documents according to *Tosefta Baba Batra* XI. 2: גומו של שטר ביום פלוני בשבח פלוני בחודש פלוני בשנה פלונית ובמלכות פלונית. 'The essential formula of a document: "on day x of week x of month x of year x of kingdom x".' In commenting on the latter passage, R. David Pardo (1718-90) noted that the formula omits the date within the month and argued that the week was to be identified by its *Torah* portion, 'for there is no other designation or name for weeks'.<sup>48</sup> Identification of the week by the *Torah* portion is known in medieval and modern responsa, letters, and other literary genres,<sup>49</sup> but so

far as I have been able to discover, it is not used in legal documents.<sup>50</sup> Nor is such a procedure plausible for Tannaitic times. Even if the weekly *sedarim* of the Palestinian triennial cycle were established by that period,<sup>51</sup> they were not everywhere identical<sup>52</sup> and could not have served as an intelligible means of identification throughout 'Eretz Yisrael.

Another suggestion is found in the commentary of R. Meshullam on *TP Sheqalim* V. 3, 49a,<sup>53</sup> namely that שם שבח in the final formula of the *Gemara* refers to the *mishmar* of that week; in other words, the week is identified by the name of the *mishmar* serving during that week. That such a system existed is confirmed by the *mishmarot* text and related calendrical texts from Qumran. The Qumran calendar, with its months of fixed length, was able to predict the dates of its *mishmarot* (which numbered twenty-six at Qumran, due to its solar calendar and fixed fifty-two week year)<sup>54</sup> and consequently to date festivals by the day of the priestly *mishmar* on which they fell, as in the text cited above. However, Jews who followed the lunar calendar could not date festivals *in advance* this way, since the day on which the new moon would be proclaimed was not known in advance. But the public at large was aware of the sequence of

*Letters of Jews Through the Ages* (London, 1952), i. 297; ii. 347, 413, 455 bis, 481, 482, 484; Avraham Yaari, *Iggerot Eretz Yisrael* (Ramat Gan, 1971), 165, 193, 227; *Iggerot Chaim Nachman Bialik*, I, ed. P. Lachover (Tel Aviv, 1937), 1, 28; S. Y. Agnon, 'Atem Re'item' (Tel Aviv, 1962), 16. This is by no means the consistent practice of the writers.

<sup>50</sup> Unless I am mistaken, there is no instance of the identification of weeks by *Torah* readings in the date sections of the documents in A. Gulak, *Oṣar HaShetarot* or in the *ketubot* published in D. Davidovitch, *The Ketuba...* (Tel Aviv, 1968).

<sup>51</sup> So J. Mann, *The Bible as Read and Preached in the Old Synagogue*, I (1940), 5, and H. Albeck's note in his edition of the *Mishnah* (Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, 1957), Megillah III. 4, 6, s.v. לסדרן. Contrast *HaHilluqim sheben Anshei Mizrah ubenei Eretz Yisrael*, ed. M. Margulies (Jerusalem, 1938), 170.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. *Midrash Wayyikra Rabba* 3:6, ed. M. Margulies (Jerusalem, 1953-60), 69, and the note ad. loc.; *HaHilluqim*, 170; *Mishnah*, ed. Albeck, op. cit., 351; Mann, op. cit., 6-9. M. Avi-Yonah in *EI* 7 (1964) also doubts the antiquity of dating by the weekly *parashah*.

<sup>53</sup> Published in *Treatise Sheqalim*, ed. A. Schreiber, p. 62, s.v. 'משמר שבו: שבת'.

<sup>54</sup> E. Vogt in *Biblica* 39 (1958), 76.

<sup>47</sup> The passage is beset with textual problems; cf. *Treatise Sheqalim* (Hebrew), ed. A. Schreiber (Sofer), (New York, 1954), 61 f., including the comments of the student of R. Samuel. The reading of the passage quoted is essentially supported by the *genizah* fragment published by L. Ginzberg, *Yerushalmi Fragments from the Genizah* (Hebrew), (New York, 1909), 132, ll. 4-5.

<sup>48</sup> *Hasdei David to Tosefta Baba Batra* XI. 2, kindly called to my attention by Prof. Lieberman. Some of the conclusions reached in the ensuing discussion bear out explanations tentatively suggested to me by Prof. Lieberman; any distortions or errors which may remain are my own.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem, 1971), xi. 62. s.v. 'Letters and Letter Writers'. For examples, see *Indices to the Responsa of Jewish Law. Historical Index*, ed. M. Elon (Jerusalem, 1973), Pt. II, pp. 163 f., Nos. 1-4, 7, 8; F. Kobler,

*mishmarot*<sup>55</sup> and could have used it for dating documents as the need arose. The sequence was still remembered in the Tannaitic period,<sup>56</sup> and indeed for centuries thereafter. E. E. Urbach has called attention to early *genizah* fragments which include chapters of *Mishnah Shabbat*, with the name of a *mishmar* accompanying the number heading each chapter (e.g., 'Chapter twenty Abiah', or 'Petahiah Chapter nineteen'). There is evidence elsewhere for the study of this tractate on the Sabbath. Since the number of chapters it contains equals the number of priestly *mishmarot*, Urbach concludes that these notations reflect a semi-annual cycle of studying one chapter each Sabbath, with the name of the week's *mishmar* being mentioned at the beginning of each lesson.<sup>57</sup> Another *genizah* text, published by M. Zulay, shows that the name of the weekly *mishmar* was still announced on the Sabbath in some congregations as late as the eleventh century.<sup>58</sup> The identity of the priestly *mishmarot* of the weeks was therefore a matter of common knowledge.

The discussion in *TP Sheqalim* V. 3, 49a actually mentions the *mishmar* as one of the items in the date, but against R. Meshullam's explanation it may be urged that in mentioning שם משמר and שם שבת in separate sentences the *Gemara* indicates that they are different. Indeed, R. David Fränkel, in his commentary *Qorban Ha'Edah* on this passage, understands שם שבת differently, explaining it as the number of the week within a given month.<sup>59</sup> As a solution to the problem of recurrent identical dates this explanation is insufficient, since most dates of the form 'Wednesday of the second week in Tammuz'

occur every year. R. David Fränkel is aware of this problem, for after explaining each item in the formula שם היום שם שבת שם חודש he adds 'and also the name of the *mishmar*' (רובם שם המשמר). Since a *mishmar* would not serve in the *same week* of the same month more than once in several years, this adds the required element of uniqueness to each date. However, such a reading of the *Gemara* is forced, since the final statement of the *Gemara* specifies three items, not four. The structure of the *Gemara* seems to be that after each *datum* is pronounced insufficient one more is added, so that the final statement consists of those previously mentioned plus one new *datum*. By this reasoning the name of the week equals the previously mentioned name of the *mishmar*, as R. Meshullam stated. Against the objection that the two terms שם משמר and שם שבת indicate different things, it may be argued that they are indeed synonymous, with the *Gemara* switching to the latter term since it is part of a fixed formula<sup>60</sup> found in *Tosefta Baba Bata* XI. 2. Since the final answer was identical to part of the practice mentioned in the latter source, the *Gemara* chose to express that solution (and perhaps thereby lend greater credibility to it) with the standard terminology.

It might further be argued against R. Meshullam's explanation that the weekday, *mishmar*, and month by themselves were not always sufficient to prevent fraud after a year, since a *mishmar* could serve in the same month two years in a row. A *mishmar* could not serve in the *same week* of the same month more than once every several years, and, forced as such an interpretation seems, a separate identification of the week by number in addition to the *mishmar* would better serve the *Mishnah's* avowed aim of preventing fraud. However, I know of no evidence from the Talmudic period for a practice of numbering the weeks of a month,<sup>61</sup> and in any case the *Gemara* apparently did not think the *Mishnah* referred to a system which was foolproof for more than a year. Had it thought so it could have included the year in its final formulation. This question requires further investigation.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. *Mishnah Ta'anit* IV. 2; *Tosefta Ta'anit* IV. 3; and see below, § 2.

<sup>56</sup> *Tosefta Ta'anit* II. 2-3 (see Avi-Yonah in *EI* 7 [1964], 27); *Soferim* XVII. 4 (see E. E. Urbach in *Tarbiz* 42 [1972-3], 313 [Hebrew]). For fragments of *mishmarot* lists, see S. Talmon in *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 4 (1958), 171; Avi-Yonah, *op. cit.*, 24-8; R. Degen in *Tarbiz* 42 (1972-3), 302 f. (Hebrew); Urbach, *op. cit.*, 304-7 (cf. *Tarbiz* 43 [1973-4], 224); Z. Ilan, *Tarbiz* 43 (1973-4), 225 f.

<sup>57</sup> *Tarbiz* 42 (1972-3), 309.

<sup>58</sup> *Yedi'ot HaMaknon LeHeqer HaShirah Ha'Ivrit Bi-Yerushalayim*, V (1939), 111.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Maimonides, 'Hilkhot Gerushin' 1:26; *Tur Even Ha'Ezer*, 127 and *Shulhan 'Arukh Even Ha'Ezer* 127:7. Cf. *Tosefot RID to TB Gittin* 17b, s.v. כתיב בו שבוע. אילן טיריש באיזה שבוע בחודש.

<sup>60</sup> This was pointed out to me by Prof. Shamma Friedman.

<sup>61</sup> For the consecutive numbering of Sabbaths throughout the year see J. M. Baumgarten in *VT* 16 (1966), 277-86.

## 2. INCREASING CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE SABBATICAL WEEK AND THE REJECTION OF THE PLANETARY WEEK

a. We have seen that the concept of the sabbatical week was implicitly established by the observance of the Sabbath. But a search for some practical impact of the concept in the biblical period seems practically in vain. No biblical date mentions the weekday.<sup>62</sup> While rabbinic sources often list the divisions of time which were significant in contemporary life and include the week and weekday,<sup>63</sup> the few comparable biblical passages do not.<sup>64</sup> Above we have noted the infrequent use of the word for sabbatical week and the absence of names or designations for most of the weekdays in the Bible.

Indications that the sabbatical week had become an object of widespread consciousness appear only in later Second Temple and Tannaitic times. In the earlier part of the Second Temple period the evidence is still limited to the temple and its procedures.<sup>65</sup> But in later Second Temple times the Qumran/Jubilees calendar reflects the special significance of the week by establishing a year of exactly fifty-two weeks.<sup>66</sup> Tannaitic sources imply that Jewry at large was kept aware of the cycle of weeks by the lay groups associated with the priestly *mishmarot*. When the latter traveled to Jerusalem for their semiannual week of duty, members of their lay counterparts abstained from work for the entire week, some accompanying the *mishmarot* to Jerusalem and the rest remaining in their local communities, fasting on some days and reading

<sup>62</sup> Cf. above, nn. 38, 46.

<sup>63</sup> *Mishnah Baba Meši'a* IX. 11; *Ketubot* V. 6; *Sanhedrin* V. 1; *Tosefta Baba Batra* XI. 2; *TP Nedarim* IV. 10, 38d; *TB Gitin* 17b.

<sup>64</sup> Num. 9:22; Esther 3:7. Contrast the addition in Targum Esther 2:9.

<sup>65</sup> 1 Chr. 9:25 and 2 Chr. 23:8 refer to the weekly divisions serving in the temple; 1 Chr. 9:32 to the weekly replacement of the showbread, a practice taken over from the First Temple period (Lev. 24:8; cf. 1 Sam. 21:7 and M. Haran in *Encyclopaedia Miqra'it* iv. 494). Cf. also R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel* (New York, 1961), 188.

<sup>66</sup> M. Jaubert, in *VT* 3 (1953), 250-64; J. T. Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judaea* (London, 1959), 107-13; S. Talmon, *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 4 (1958), 162-99; *Encyclopaedia Miqra'it* iii. 587-90, s.v. *יבולות*.

sections of Gen. 1:1-2:3 for each day the week.<sup>67</sup> As noted above, the tradition of these groups was kept alive following the destruction of the temple.<sup>68</sup>

It is around the same period that we first hear (in Tannaitic sources) of institutions and customs pegged to a weekly cycle, recurring on particular days of the week: the special Levitical psalms for each day,<sup>69</sup> the court sessions, Torah reading,<sup>70</sup> and proclamation of fasts on Mondays and Thursdays,<sup>71</sup> the marriage of virgins on Wednesdays and widows on Thursdays,<sup>72</sup> and laundering on Thursdays.<sup>73</sup> The time of origin of these practices is unknown, but one of the daily Levitical psalms is already attested in the Masoretic text and most of the others in the Greek translation of Psalms,<sup>74</sup> while the court sessions, Torah reading and laundering days seemed sufficiently ancient in Tannaitic times to be credited to Ezra.<sup>75</sup>

b. The earliest evidence of a calendar dating holidays by week and day comes from Qumran, as we have seen. But we have also seen that this sectarian practice could not have been shared by Jewry at large. Furthermore, the date clauses of documents continued to ignore the weekday in the time of Bar Kochba.<sup>76</sup> The earliest reference to the

<sup>67</sup> *Mishnah Ta'anit* IV. 2-3; *Tosefta Ta'anit* III (IV). 3.

<sup>68</sup> See nn. 56-58.

<sup>69</sup> Ps. 92:1; LXX and/or Vulgate titles of Pss. 24; 48; 38; 94; 93; 92; Old Latin title of Ps. 81 (see E. Schrürer, in *ZNW* 6 (1905), 3); *Mishnah Tamid*, end.

<sup>70</sup> *Mishnah Megillah* III. 6; IV. 1; *Ketubot* I. 1; *TP Megillah* IV. 1, 75a; *TB Baba Qama* 82a.

<sup>71</sup> *Mishnah Ta'anit* II. 9; cf. Luke 18:12.

<sup>72</sup> *Mishnah Ketubot* I. 1.

<sup>73</sup> *TB Baba Qama* 82a; cf. *Mishnah Baba Batra* V. 10.

<sup>74</sup> See n. 69.

<sup>75</sup> See the last two passages cited in n. 70.

<sup>76</sup> See for example the documents published in DJD II (1961) and by Y. Yadin and H. J. Polotsky in *Yedi'ot* 26 (1962), 204-41 (Hebrew). A number of narrative passages in biblical and postbiblical sources mention that certain events took place on, before, or after the Sabbath, but this is never done as a matter of routine but because the character of the day affected the course of events (Exod. 16:24-30; Num. 15:32-6; Neh. 13:15-22 (cf. also 2 Kgs. 11:5-9)/2 Chr. 23:1-8); cf. the various reports involving the Jews' refusal to defend themselves on the Sabbath (such as 1 Macc. 2:32-8); the events surrounding the crucifixion of Jesus and its aftermath (Mark 15:42; 16:1, 2, 9; etc.; Sunday is mentioned for etiological reasons).

week and weekday in the dating of documents is the formulary of *Tosefta Baba Batra* XI. 2 (see above). Evidence for the actual use of this formulary during the Talmudic period is meager. There is no comparable prescription in the *Mishnah*. The discussion in *TP Sheqalim* V. 3, 49a is academic. It may be inferred from a case heard by R. Joseph (*TB Ketubot* 94b) that the documents in question did not state in which week they were written, since that *datum* would have affected the decision and would therefore have been mentioned if it had been stated. On the other hand, the divorce documents discussed in *TB Gittin* 17b did identify the week. Apart from this case, I have found no example of a legal document between the Talmudic period and modern times which actually mentions the week in which it was written.

The earliest Hebrew inscription known to me which dates an event by the *day* of the week is a tombstone from Zoar which states — exceptionally — that the deceased 'died on Tuesday, the eleventh of Elul, the [...] year of the septennium, in the four hundred and thirty-fifth year of the destruction of the temple'.<sup>77</sup> By the time of the *genizah* documents and the later Middle Ages, the weekday has become a standard item in most legal documents.<sup>78</sup>

c. Coincident with the growing prominence of the sabbatical week in Jewish life was the spread of the seven-day planetary week in the Roman empire.<sup>79</sup> Ancient Rome had followed an eight-day market week, in which each town held a market on one of the eight days. Since each town's turn recurred every ninth day the days were known as *nundinae*. On calendars they were designated by the letters A through H, which served as numbers (one, two, etc.).<sup>80</sup> Around the turn of the era the seven-

day planetary week began to spread through the empire. At Pompeii (destroyed 79 C.E.) a wall inscription, with the heading 'days of the gods', lists the planets in the order Saturn, Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus (i.e., Saturday through Friday). The system at first received no official support, though it gained currency among the population at large. But by the beginning of the third century C.E. the planetary day began to appear in dates. The earliest known instance is from 205 C.E., in an inscription from Karlsburg, Transylvania, while the earliest case from the eastern empire is a school lesson from Egypt, dated 294 C.E.<sup>81</sup>

This is not the place to discuss the possible Jewish stimulus behind the spread of the seven-day planetary week in the Roman empire.<sup>82</sup> What interests us is the coincidence between this development and certain Tannaitic prescriptions regarding dating. While known Palestinian legal documents through the early second century C.E. omit the weekday from dates, around the beginning of the next century the *Tosefta* stipulates its inclusion (*Tosefta Baba Batra* XI. 2), at just about the time the weekday is first attested as part of the date in inscriptions from the Roman empire. Another Tannaitic prescription shows resistance to contemporary practice in the empire: **לא תהא מונה כדרך שאחרים מונים אלא: תהא מונה לשם שבת**. 'Do not count (the days) as others do (i.e., with planetary names), but count with reference to the Sabbath', i.e., **אחד בשבת**, etc.<sup>83</sup> If the Jewish practice owes anything to the Roman, then what was borrowed was characteristically modified to suit Jewish beliefs.

When Christianity inherited the sabbatical week from Judaism, at first it modified only the name of the first day and preserved the Greek forms of the old Jewish names for the rest of the days. This is still reflected in the modern Greek names of the days: **κυριακή** (the 'Lord's Day'),<sup>84</sup> **δευτέρα**, **τρίτη**,

(Princeton, 1967), 114 (reference courtesy of my colleague, Prof. Robert E. A. Palmer).

<sup>81</sup> Schürer, in *ZNW* 6 (1905), 23 f., 33; Colson, *The Week*, 25.

<sup>82</sup> See Colson, *The Week*, Ch. 5.

<sup>83</sup> *Mekhiltas* to Exod. 20:8, s.v. **זכור ושמו**; cf. Ibn Ezra (short commentary) and Nachmanides to the same verse, and *Pesiqta Rabbati* 23:1.

<sup>84</sup> The Talmud knows the Christian 'Lord's Day' as **יום**

<sup>77</sup> דמיתת ביום תלתא בחודש יומין בירח אלול בשנת [ ] דשמיטת דהא שנת ארבע מאה וחלחין וחמש שני לחרבין בית מקדשה. See E. L. Sukenik, in *Kedem* II (1945), 87 (Hebrew); B. Z. Wacholder in *HUCA* 44 (1973), 181. (This inscription was kindly called to my attention by Prof. Jonas Greenfield.) The two older tomb inscriptions from the same site published in the same articles do not mention the weekday.

<sup>78</sup> See the documents cited above in nn. 24–26.

<sup>79</sup> For the following, see Colson, *The Week*, Ch. 3, and Schürer in *ZNW* 6 (1905), 13–34.

<sup>80</sup> A. K. Michels, *The Calendar of the Roman Republic*

επταημέρη, πέμπτη παρασκευή,<sup>85</sup> σάββατον. Likewise Arabic adopted, perhaps via Christianity, the standard Jewish names for all days but the Islamic day of assembly, Friday (يوم الجمعة).<sup>86</sup> Like the rabbis, the leaders of the Church objected to the use of the planetary names,<sup>87</sup> but only the Eastern Church succeeded in excluding them, as reflected in the modern Greek names. In western Europe the planetary names were for the most part accepted, either in a form based on the Roman names (e.g., Saturday, Lundi, Mardi, Mercredi, Jeudi, Vendredi) or local European counterparts (e.g., Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, etc.). The astrological basis of the planetary names (the influence of the planets on the days of the week) penetrated Jewish sources in late Talmudic times and after-

wards,<sup>88</sup> but the names themselves were never accepted in Judaism.

## ADDENDA

To p. 116, nn. 40-41: For further discussion of לטמי השבת and אחר השבת see my forthcoming note in *Vetus Testamentum*.

To p. 120: "The earliest Hebrew inscription..." This may be due to the paucity of the evidence or to my ignorance. Note that the use of the weekday is already specified in *Tosefta Baba Batra* XI. 2. In Christian inscriptions (in Latin and Greek) the weekday appears in the date as early as 269 C.E. and becomes frequent in the fourth century. See H. Leclercq, art. 'Jours de la semaine,' in *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie* (Paris, 1907-53), Vol. 7(2), 2738-42; Anastasius C. Bandy, *The Greek Christian Inscriptions of Crete* (Athens: Christian Archaeological Society, 1970), 21 f. and passim. For the weekday in third century Roman inscriptions see the end of the next paragraph in the body of the article.

To p. 121, n. 84: MS Jewish Theological Seminary of America 44830 reads simply נוצרי (S. Abramson, *Tractate 'Avodah Zarah* [New York, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1957], *ad. loc.*).

<sup>88</sup> Cf. *TB Berakhot* 59b; *Shabbat* 129b, 156a; *'Eruvin* 56a; *Pirquei R. Eliezer*, Ch. 6. See S. Gandz, in *PAAJR* 18 (1948-9), 213-54.

נוצרי. *TB 'Avodah Zarah* 7b, Munich MS; the printed text reads יום א'; cf. *TB 'Avodah Zarah* 6a. See W. Bacher in *ZNW* 6 (1905), 202; and in *JQR* 17 (1905), 181.

<sup>85</sup> The Syriac version of Mark 15:42 preserves ערובתא.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. Ibn Ezra to Exod. 16:1. For يوم الجمعة as a pre-Islamic name, see Goitein (above, n. 39).

<sup>87</sup> Colson, *The Week*, 26 f.