

Seven sabbaths, or seven weeks?

In the book of Leviticus we read about יהוה's feast days including instructions regarding observation and their timing. One of the most controversial topics within the sabbath keeping community is the day of the wave offering and omer count to Pentecost that follows. *Was it on the day after the weekly sabbath or after the first Passover sabbath?* Here we offer an explanation of the origins of the two methods establishing the day of the wave offering.

The morrow after the Sabbath

The controversy over this topic stems from the Pharisees and the Sadducees, the two political factions of the 2nd Temple era priesthood. While some may argue that the Sadducees ruled over the Temple, it was the Pharisees whom the general public, including the Messiah, recognized as the authority of Torah – the law of the land. Regarding the Sadducees, Yeshua once reproved them saying, “Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God” (Mat 22:29). Yeshua was further quoted saying, “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do...” (Mat 23:2-3). Note that He repeats Himself regarding the last part to emphasize that we are to “observe and do” what the Pharisees taught [Torah], not what the Sadducees taught.

The *Unger's Bible Dictionary* (1988) tells us further about the political-religious amalgamation called the Sadducees:

“Their political supremacy was, however, of no long duration. Greatly as the spiritual power of the Pharisees had increased, the Sadducean aristocracy was able to keep at the helm in politics. The price at which the Sadducees had to secure themselves power at this later period was indeed a high one, for they were IN THEIR OFFICIAL ACTIONS TO ACCOMMODATE THEMSELVES TO PHARISAIC VIEWS. With the fall of the Jewish state the Sadducees altogether disappear from history. Their strong point was politics.

Counting from a Sun-day was simply a political attempt on behalf of the affluent Boethusians and Sadducees to assert authority, a typical ploy that failed and created division. Sadly, and due to numerous errant bible translations and teachers, many still subscribe to this false doctrine today.

Seven sabbaths, or weeks?

Highly regarded as one of the best Old and New covenant study resources, Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament offers this explanation,

That שָׁבֻעוֹת (Lev 23:15) signifies weeks, like שָׁבֻעוֹת in Deu 16:9, and τὰ ἑβδόμεθα in the Gospels (e.g., Mat 28:1), is evident from the predicate תְּמִימָה, “complete,” which would be quite unsuitable if Sabbath-days were intended, as a long period might be reckoned by half weeks instead of whole, but certainly not by half Sabbath-days. Consequently “the morrow after the seventh Sabbath” (Lev 23:16) is the day after the seventh week, not after the seventh Sabbath (K&D, 1807).

The prophet Jeremiah once wrote, “Beholde, the disceatfull penne of the scribes, setteth forth lies:” (Jer 8:8, Coverdale). Despite the adversary’s influences upon scribes and translators, our

Creator reveals to His chosen the truth through the many other writings found in the ancient languages of the Second Temple era. Such can be found in the original writings of Coverdale, Tyndale, and Eastern Peshitta



ארבעה עשר יום שבם שני שבועות

Translated: “Fourteen days in which there are six weeks”

Illustration: An Omer board in a rectangular glass fronted frame, written and illustrated by R. Aaron Levy (c1795-1876), who served as scribe and dayan (religious judge) at the London Rabbinical Court for 45 years.

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authors among others that have since been translated into English and other languages from these more reliable resources.

For clarification of how the scriptures define themselves, we now turn to the topic of the Jubilee. Back in the book of Leviticus we read the phrase ‘seven sabbaths’, whereas the original Hebrew intended its readers to understand ‘weeks’. As an example, the word *sabbath* is translated in proper Hebrew context in: [Matt 28:1](#); [Mark 16:2](#); [Mark 16:9](#); [Luke 24:1](#); [John 20:1](#); [John 20:19](#); [Acts 20:7](#); [1Cor 16:2](#) as week. Sadly, the KJV translators in charge of Leviticus and related chapters were duty bound to include the bias of their Calvinist influenced King and Bancroft, the final editor, and changed Tyndale's proper Hebrew application obscuring the intended meaning. Weeks or sabbaths can be clearly differentiated in the following verses wherein the timing is reliant upon the start day, the day of Atonement, which can occur on any day within the week – so long as it is always upon the 10th day of the seventh chodesh [sacred calendar month]. Note the definition at the end of [verse 8](#).

The jubilee in the fiftieth year

[Lev 25:8](#) And thou shalt number **seven sabbaths of years** unto thee, **seven times seven** years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.

⁹ Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth *day* of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land.

¹⁰ And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout *all* the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you....

Final Comments

We offer this insight that we hope will enrich those who are seeking **יהוה**'s truth.

Leviticus also lays down the commandment that from the time of the offering “you shall count” seven weeks until Shavuot [the Festival of First Fruits] on the 50th day (Gr. Pentecost). So from the Second Seder till the eve of Shavuot, each day of the 49 days of the Omer are counted at nightfall with a special blessing.

<https://www.thejc.com/judaism/features/what-is-the-counting-of-the-omer-1.436102>

What is the second Seder?

A Passover Seder is a service held at home as part of the Passover celebration. It is always observed on the first night of Passover [14 Abib at even – at even, when the sun did set ([Mar 1:32](#))] and in many homes, it is observed on the second night as well.

Modern day sabbath keepers mistakenly call this night the ‘Night Much Observed’ instead of the Passover Memorial night as described in [Exodus 12:3-10](#). Presumably, the title ‘night much observed’ was introduced by the insertion of a phrase found in [Exodus 12:42](#) and used to describe this night in place of the night of the ‘Passover’. Centuries of teaching this perhaps well-intentioned but errant application of scripture has misled many from the establishment and chronological importance of this night.

Also see: <https://wulfstein.org/2020/04/28/a-critique-of-fred-coulters-pentecost/>