

quarters of the day, viz. either at the beginning of the day or the beginning of the night or at midday or at midnight. The *t'quphab* of Tammuz ¹⁾ only occurs at the end of $1\frac{1}{2}$ or at the end of $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours of the day or night. The *t'quphab* of Tishri ²⁾ only occurs at the end of 3 or 9 hours of the day or night, and the *t'quphab* of the Tebheth only occurs at the end of $4\frac{1}{2}$ or $10\frac{1}{2}$ hours of the day or night. The duration of a season of the year is no longer than 91 days and $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours and the beginning of one season is removed from that of the next by no more than one half of an (planetary) hour. ³⁾

We have evidence, however, that this method of computation was employed in the 1st century A.D. In the Bible the date of Passover is never given by its relation to the spring equinox—although the festival is intimately connected with that point in the seasonal year—because it was not possible in those days to fix the equinox with sufficient precision. ⁴⁾ Rabbi Huna, on the other hand, declared, as we have seen, that Passover always falls after the date of the spring equinox. And already in the latter half of the 1st century A.D. Josephus writes:

In the month . . . which is called by us Nisan, and is the beginning of our year, on the 14th day of the lunar month, when the sun is in Aries ⁵⁾ . . . the law ordained that we should every year slay that sacrifice . . . called Passover. ⁶⁾

Half a century earlier, while the Temple still stood, Philo states that this month (of Passover) comes seventh in order and number as judged by the cycle of the sun, but in importance it is first. . . In the spring equinox we have a kind of likeness and portraiture of that first epoch in which the world was created. ⁷⁾

He speaks, too, of

the sun, the great lord of the day, bringing about two equinoxes each year, in spring and autumn, the spring equinox in the constellation of Aries and the autumn equinox in that of Libra. . . During them there is enjoined by law the keeping of the greatest festivals. ⁸⁾

¹⁾ That is, the period between the summer solstice and the autumn equinox.

²⁾ That is, the period between the autumn equinox and the winter solstice.

³⁾ *BT 'Erubin* 56a; *JT 'Erubin* v. 1 (fol. 22a). On the "planetary" hours, see above p. 294 n. 9.

⁴⁾ Cf. Dt. xvi 1 ff., Ex. xiii 3-4, xxiii 15, xxxiv 18.

⁵⁾ That is, at the spring equinox.

⁶⁾ *Antiquities* III. x. 5.

⁷⁾ *De spec. legg.* II. 28 (*De septenario* 19); cf. *De vita Mosis* 29.

⁸⁾ *De opificio mundi* 39. Cf. *De decalog.* 30 on Passover and Sukkoth, "two feasts . . . for the two equinoxes, each lasting seven days", and *De spec. legg.*, *loc. cit.*, which refers to Tishri as the "month of the autumn equinox". Eusebius quotes Aristoboulos of Paneas, the Jewish philosopher of Alexandria, as writing: "In celebrating Passover it is necessary not only for the sun but also for the moon to