One of the remarkable, though disconcerting, aspects of the pentateuchal provisions concerning the religious calendar is the absence of any explicit description of the nature of the calendar and the point of its commencement. Thus, the inceptive proclamation in Exod. xii 2, "This month shall be to you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you", is accompanied neither by the name of the month in question, nor by the identification of the year as lunar or solar. For founders of religious reform movements this absence is not completely unwelcome; for it allows them to present their radical revisions of the calendar not as innovations but as a return to its pristine purity.

We are, moreover, not overly surprised to find that the innovative author or authors of the compilation now known as the Temple Scroll (11QT) in this respect faithfully followed his pentateuchal model. He elaborated freely on the proper manner of celebrating the entire cycle of annual festivals, even adding by extrapolation a new sequence of harvest holidays, but did not deign it indispensable, at least in the portions of the scroll which have survived, to inform us whether the year was to be reckoned by the prevailing lunisolar calendar or the schematic solar calendar so strenuously advocated in the book of Jubilees.

This has led Baruch Levine to raise the interesting question whether the pentecostal sequence of harvest festivals found in 11QT necessarily presupposes the Qumran-Jubilees calendar, or whether it is also compatible with the Pharisaic lunisolar system. The question is sharpened by the omission in 11QT of the key phrase *mmhrt ḫšt* "on the morrow of the Sabbath", used in Lev. xxiii 15 to date the Omer offering and the start of the first pentecontad sequence. Could this indicate that the author of 11QT may have countenanced the Pharisaic mode of commencing the fifty-day Omer count on the 16th of Nisan? Yadin's denial of such a possibility and his affirmation of the sectarian character of the Temple Scroll was based on the specific date for the oil festival, the

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22nd of the sixth month, in a Cave 4 fragment. This date necessarily involves the start of the Omer count on the 26th of the first month. Yet, it could technically be argued that the date for the oil festival is not explicitly found in the Temple Scroll, and in view of the variant date, the 20th of Elul, attributed by Saadia to ‘‘Judah the Alexandrian’’, can one not suppose that the Omer offering in 11QT was intended not for Sunday, but for the morrow of the first day of Maṣṣōt as claimed by the Rabbis?

There are, in my view, several considerations which make this supposition unlikely:

1. The description of the Omer offering, ḥōp ḫwmr, in 11QT 11 and 18 is clearly placed after the seventh day of Passover, not after the first day, as rabbinic practice would require. Although this is also the case in Lev. xxiii, a Pharisaic exegete would not likely have missed the opportunity to underline the connection between the Omer and Passover. Thus, we have in Josh. v 11 a distinctly Pharisaic interpretation of Lev. xxiii 11,15: ‘‘And they ate of the corn of the land mmḥrt ḥpsh, ‘on the morrow after the passover’, unleavened cakes and parched corn, that very day.’’ The phrase mmḥrt ḥpsh is clearly an explication of mmḥrt ḥšḥ in Lev. xxiii.

2. The extrapolation of the fifty-day harvest sequence from Pentecost (15/III) to the festival of new wine (3/V) and thence to the festival of oil (22/VI) is but one of the manifestations of the pentecontad calendar, aspects of which were also used by the Therapeutae, the Nestorian Christians, and the fallahin in Southern Palestine. The Christian adaptations of this calendar invariably reckon each seven-week period (šābīā) as ending on Sunday, which at the same time serves as the first day of the following šābīā. This is precisely the method followed at Qumran, and there is no warrant for assuming the existence of any pentecontad sequence which did not begin and end on Sundays.

As for the variant date for the festival of oil attributed to Judah the Alexandrian, that is the 20th of Elul, R. T. Beckwith has recently suggested that it may derive from an adaptation of the Jubilees calendar in which the year begins with Friday rather than Wednesday. The sequence of harvest festivals would thus begin with Sunday, the 24th of Nisan, and end with Sunday, the 20th of Elul. However this may be, it is clear that the latter date for the feast of oil, although not identical with that employed at Qumran,