

Unveiling God's Calendar



By Ron C. Harmon

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Introduction

Theological wars are being fought daily and skirmishes on the battlefield of truth. Calendars have been the media for marking time for millennia and it's one battle with seemingly distorted front lines. Creative minds throughout the centuries have bent, twisted, and stretched the time it takes the earth to travel around the sun. As a result, we see predictable charts of days, months, and years formatted by those that win the day. Emperors have commissioned works bearing their names tracking time for various reasons and in various formats.

Since the advent of ancient man, he has continually sought ways to track this elusive thing called time, never ceasing to develop methods ranging from sundials to the modern clock. In the very beginning, they looked to the stars and considered the changing seasons...much for survival reasons.

Understanding the seasons meant they knew when to plant their crops, when to go to war, and when to worship. Their lives were consumed with knowing the seasons, and all revolved around the sun and the phases of the moon. This art of astronomical observation has been discarded in modern times for man-made charts believing them to be better than the Creator's system.

Since God's ways have made a serious comeback within the last century, God's people are beginning to awaken to divine truths, including God's Holy Calendar. If there is a genuine desire to understand God, then consider the visible heavens because they tell the story of creation; they tell the story of God.

The Calendar

Words in the Bible have become the primary influence in my life. I look to the Messiah and Father in heaven through these special words to guide my way in most matters. Because of these heavenly influences, I have chosen to look deeper into how we determine God's time in hopes of clarification.

I can imagine your initial response inadvertently looking down and seeing the title of this book. "Oh No, another Joe schmo with a complex calculation on how to determine God's calendar." Considering all the hand-wringing over aspects of the Hebrew calendar, I can appreciate that knee-jerk response. Especially with all the past animosity concerning calendar issues within God's church, I have also questioned these issues with most of the same concerns.

For this very reason, I have asked whether I should even be the one writing this book. I have concluded with moral support and battling through my apprehensions while immersed in prayer that if not me, then I ask, who? When Isaiah said, "*Woe to me!*" *I cried. "I am ruined"* in **Isaiah 6:10**; God sent him anyway because He had a task for Isaiah to fulfill. Despite my insecurities and minimal abilities God has given me, pen and ink, with those tools, I'll try my best to accomplish my task as well.

Let me begin by pointing out the obvious, if you're reading this paragraph, your interest must have peaked, and you also desire clarification, perhaps equal to my own. Let me put your mind at ease just a little. This attempt at clarification will be found in scripture when available and simple reasoning when not. I could write a 70-word dissertation on every aspect of determining God's calendar in one particular way, but I'm not going to go down that complex path. For me, that path amounts to battling against God's way of doing things, and as the Pharisee named Gamaliel once said, *38 And so in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men and leave them alone, for if the source of this plan or movement is men, it will be overthrown; 39 but if the source is God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found fighting against God.*" (**Acts 5:38-39**). NASV

In the same chapter of Acts, the apostle Peter told the men responsible for correctly keeping God's calendar, But Peter and the

apostles answered, “*We must obey God rather than men.*” (Acts 5:29)
NASV

As I said earlier, the emphasis on investigating this matter falls under God’s will, not man’s ideas.

We read testimonies from at least two groups but remember that God should always have the last words. Can anyone argue that the God in our Bibles is unique in every conceivable aspect? Despite the efforts of the demonic world, God can not be viewed as inconsequential, no matter how intense the attacks upon His word. This is especially true when God’s most simple observational methods are stacked against man’s crowning achievements in marking time.

God’s instructions will always lead to the perfect solution while man’s best efforts fade into oblivion. This is an undeniable fact of nature and has been proven over and over. So, why do we treat the personage of God and His instructions like any other common worldly source when beginning a search for God’s knowledge? His word is clearly seen by His people as bringing enlightenment to humankind?

If God is truly unique, then what He asks of His people should also be considered unique by association. And indeed, God’s commandments are extraordinary by any standards, biblical or otherwise. Those scriptural instructions were specially designed to create goodness in man and guide God-fearing folks through a tumultuous world.

The fog of confusion brought about by Satan's desire to obstruct God at every opportunity has caused some of the most essential truths of the Bible to become obscured. One writer commented, “Satan stole truths from God.” He was right, but Satan went even further by regifting a perverted version of what he stole back to mankind.

This booklet is a modest effort to bring understanding back to one of those lost truths. If possible, this booklet’s notable legacy will be how it simplified God’s holy calendar in a way not considered for millennia.

God’s calendar, for sure, has been one item immersed in Satan's chaotic atmosphere, and I understand you must be dunking your head in a vat of Louisiana hot sauce right now, trying to avoid another discussion about it. I get the hesitation. As I’ve already said, I tried for twenty-five years or more to make sense of counting days or figuring out when to even begin counting.

It all begins in **Exodus chapter 12**, where God instructs the people of Israel to begin counting the days leading up to the first Passover. What's missing in these instructions, and why have we forgotten them? Why have these verses' lost their appeal for God's holy people? Why has getting it right, as they say, become less important than following traditions?

Those are just a few questions in our quest to find answers to God's calendar. Before we can start, we must begin with supplications to the Father for enlightenment in these matters. Let Him be our guide and our inspiration.

The Beginning

The first question needing an answer for proper calculation is, “When did God’s calendar begin?” Unless someone is Biblically illiterate, living in a basement all their lives, or just plain dishonest, you know God’s calendars began at creation. What’s not well understood, God’s calendar was designed to be an observable phenomenon. What does that mean “observable phenomenon?”

With simple astronomical observations, we can determine seasons and times, and days with nothing else at our disposal. The creator God gave us the tools for rightly determining correct calculations based solely upon observations of the sun, the moon, and the stars. In Genesis 1, we are told God created visible celestial bodies to determine days, months, and years. Then God said, *“Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and they shall serve as signs and for seasons, and for days and years; 15 and they shall serve as lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth”*; and it was so. *16 God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the Day, and the lesser light to govern the night; He made the stars also. 17 God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, 18 and to govern the Day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good. 19 And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day. (Genesis 1:14-19)*

Calculating time is a creation of God, not man, and God knows time better than any man has or ever will. Only man’s arrogance allows him to believe he is the master of time and space. God made the Day or should I say the 24-hour period we call Day. He also made the 7-day week, the month guided by the moon cycle, and the year determined by the earth’s journey around the sun. The heavens tell of the glory of God; *And their expanse declares the work of His hands. 2 Day to Day pours forth speech, And night to night reveals knowledge. (Psalms 19:1-2).*

With the creation of calendars, modern technological advances, and the invention of clocks, man has decided he could supersede God and do a better job at managing these elements of time.

We can never discount Satan's meddling in God’s ways, especially during the last few millennia. His confusion tool has come from using modern instruments capable of calculating minutes and hours at an atomic

level. This is where the preverbal train left the tracks for reckoning God's time, separating God's ways of observing time from Satan's chaotic mess.

Here's a truth to consider, no intricately planned calendar can possibly be as precise as God's without direct astronomical observations. This isn't supposition; it's an indisputable fact of direct observations. Like the monthly moon phases, its direct observations determine the monthly cycle.

Modern instruments marking time aren't evil within themselves; it's their application that causes issues with God's calendar. So, if one uses direct observations in conjunction with modern instruments to measure time, then why not use the biblical narrative to help guide us to the correct holy days we mark on man's calendars? Direct observation is precisely how we will begin our calculations.

Also, considering man-made calendars with Emperors' names can be a source of distraction and confusion, I'll do my best going forward to not mention them unless absolutely necessary. Our blockade of words includes the name of pagan days and months because God used numbers when names became necessary. This purposeful disregard primarily emphasizes how God labels observable increments of time.

For instance, God named only one Day, the 7th. Day, and He called it the "Sabbath." He named only one month, the 1st month, and called it "Abib, or Aviv." All other days and months, both in Hebrew or gentile calendars, carry the names of pagan deities with some creative satanic nomenclature. God simply numbered the other six days of the week and months of the year; for God, this was all deemed necessary.

Why? Why would God pick just one single day and one single month, which He considered important enough to label with names?

God placed in the hands of Adam the responsibility of naming His creations outside His special times and places. *And out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. 20 The man gave names to all the livestock, and to the birds of the sky, and to every animal of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. (Genesis 2:18-20).*

Did that responsibility also include the names of the rest of the days and months? The simplest answer is almost always the correct

answer. For God, this Day and this month are Holy and require specific identification undeniable to man. God wanted those names burned within man's psyche and not simply identified by a number but a name directly from heaven. It's true, there are other names of months listed in scriptures like (**Esther 8:9 Sivan, 1 King 6:1 Zif or Ziv, Neh.6 Neh.7 Elul**) however, these are names created by man, not God, and have pagan origins.

Considering Satan's guidance, man will almost always corrupt God's ways. The less man knows about the Father and Messiah and the heavenly kingdom, the less confusion there is in determining God's will. It's for that exact reason God kept it simple.

Keeping it simple is my motto and should also be a common practice for the casual Bible scholar and the beginner learning about the Messiah's ways. Simplicity states that God determines the year, months, and days with simple observations by looking into the heavens. As we move forward, we'll define God's own movements of time in His observable way.

The first time cycle created needs exploring is the Day and night in **Genesis 1:4-5**, *God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light "day," and the darkness He called "night." And there was evening and there was morning, one Day.*

Unless you are dishonest or one who loves to twist words in the Bible to fit a particular narrative, this is what the scriptures identify as "one day." It's a 24-hour period, the original Hebrew wording for this period is "Yōm." In contrast, the Arabic equivalent is "yawm." Also, we can see how this is used to describe certain Holy Days within the Hebrew calendar, such as "Yom Kippur" (Day of Atonement). To be equally fair, this term is used in other ways marking notable dates, like Father's Day, Mother's Day, or back in the Day. My least favorite is the morbid Day of the dead celebrated in countries like Mexico.

The Hebrew Strong's #3117) means "day," but the meaning doesn't connote specifically a twenty-four-hour period, but instead, in general terms, "a day when something occurs." Here are a few examples: "a day of the month" (**Genesis 8:4**), "*on that day Yahweh made a covenant*" (**Genesis 15:18**), and "*until the day*" (**Genesis 19:37**).

The Hebrew “Yom” can also refer to the light part of the Day in contrast to darkness (see **Genesis 1:5 and Exodus 13:21**). In similar wording יוֹמָם (*yomam*, Strong’s #3119) means “daytime” as in **Job 5:14**.

Also, in **Revelation 1:10**, *I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day*. “Lord’s day” is misquoted in much of the christian world, as they see it as the transition to Sunday worship. But, believing this is a transition and not a day according to the meaning, one’s IQ must dip below acceptable academic levels.

The truth concerning the statement by John, it’s a period when the Messiah returns to this earth to retrieve His bride, “church.” Please read my book, “The Bride,” for more in-depth information.

The entire context of the first chapter of John sets up the coming of the Messiah, which occurs in one 24-hour Day. If someone disagrees, it’s 24 hours, we can have that argument, but one cannot deny it happens in “one day” within the entire span of humanity’s time here on earth. However, it’s impossible for me to accept the assumption God allowed His 24-hour Day of rest to change from the 7th to the 1st Day of the week. That’s a heuristic assumption not to mention blasphemous and deserves no more mention than has already been given.

The entirety of humanity hasn’t the power to change God, nor can they give counsel to the creator who holds life and death in the palm of His Holy hand. So, when His words are spoken through the prophet Malachi *“For I, the Lord, do not change; therefore you, the sons of Jacob, have not come to an end. (Malachi 3:6)*

Any mention concerning a normal day, unless otherwise indicated, is sunset to sunset; that’s the way God created it, no matter how it’s used or described by any man. God’s complete 24-hour day is observable and undeniable with no modern instruments necessary. We can see an example of this in Leviticus, where the “Day of Atonement” is discussed. Let’s look at the wording, **Leviticus 23:26-32**, *Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 27 “On exactly the tenth Day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement; it shall be a holy convocation for you, and you shall humble yourselves and present an offering by fire to the Lord. 28 You shall not do any work on this very Day, for it is a Day of Atonement, to make atonement on your behalf before the Lord your God. 29 If there is any person who does not humble himself on this very Day, he shall be cut off from his people. 30 As for any person who does any work on this very*

*Day, that person I will eliminate from among his people. 31 You shall not do any work. It is to be a permanent statute throughout your generations in all your dwelling places. 32 It is to be a Sabbath of complete rest for you, and you shall humble yourselves; on the ninth of the month at evening, **from evening until evening, you shall keep your Sabbath.**”*

One’s own visual acuity is all that’s necessary to obey God in this instance. It seems a shame we have to go through the scriptures to determine what an observable day is, but some will object to anything outside their own interpretations. Even many with an IQ lower than a shoe size understand what a day consists of in the context of hours. So, it’s amazing we must first establish simple acts as opposed to fiction concerning Day and night. And if you think determining a day can be difficult, just wait till we get into weeks, months, years, and seasons...first; we should finish with the definition of a day.

So, if you are one of those that claim Day means only the part of the Day where there is light, then you missed the wording in **Genesis 1:5**, *God called the light “day,” and the darkness He called “night.” And there was evening and there was morning, one Day.*

Clearly, God considers darkness as part of the period called Day. Other scriptures confirm “yom” in Genesis 1 as an ordinary 24-hour day. Context requires all the definitions, not simply those sections that bolster one’s argument.

Another example can be shown in **Exodus 20:11, and 31:12-17**, showing six ordinary days as 24-hour periods. In **Exodus 20:11**, six days of work and the 7th Day Sabbath culminate a complete week. The wording is unambiguously and clarifies earth cycles in a 24-hour rotation called Day or (Yom).

The beginning of a day is an equally significant event because knowing when God’s day begins determines when someone begins counting. If one counts according to the Gregorian or Julian’s calendar, you could be off as much as a day. Why? Because in keeping with man-made calendars since Roman times, the day began at midnight.

This practice began with the Egyptians when they were neck deep in trying to outdo God. They developed a time system accounting for the time when there was no shadow. They reckoned the day’s highest point was noon, so midnight being the opposite, was when the day began. Of

course, this makes perfect sense to those outside God's way of doing things, so many other cultures adopted midnight as the day's beginning.

So, if you are waiting to see the crescent moon after sunset on the Gregorian day of the 14th and you think the day doesn't end until midnight, you probably won't realize after sunset on the 14th; you are witnessing the crescent moon on the Hebrew calendar day 15th.

To be correct in viewing the Hebrew day of the 14th, you have to wait until the sun sets on the 13th; that's when the 14th, the new day begins. We will revisit this when we get into the wave sheaf offering, because it becomes very important.

One more point I would like to make; Adam was created on the 6th Day, and was present on the 7th Day when God rested. He moved from one Day to another, showing a distinct period. For those that believe each Day of the week represents a thousand years based upon wording found in **2 Peter 3:8**, *But forget not this one thing, beloved, that one Day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one Day.*

Scriptures teach us Adam died at the ripe old age of 930 years. Taking that into account, he never would have made it to the 7th Day if the thousand-year theory were a true and accurate definition. When taking a literal approach to Genesis 1, "yom" can't be anything but ordinary 24-hour days without violating the text's clear meaning.

The Week of Creation

Now that the 24-hour Day is clearly outlined according to the creator. Let's now focus on the 7-day week as it was designed by the creator. In conjunction, let's be cognizant of periods of time designated according to biblical terms. I believe I can make this section brief, but one never knows where our studies may take us.

Let me begin with a personal observation, ever since I was a young lad and capable of reasoning out simple things in my own mind, I had a fair grasp on what a 7th-day week looked like. Even an ordinary calendar of the year hanging on the wall in our home showed 7-days in a week.

That's not all my experiences; Saturday was always at the end of a 7-day weekly lineup; it was part and parcel of the week's end. I went to school for 5 days and was free to pursue any other endeavors in my heart during the 2-day weekend. It didn't take a proverbial genius to understand this simple concept of a week. If I ever was confused, all I had to do was look up at the calendar for clarification.

What was eventually confusing was the issue of the 7th-day Sabbath. Preachers of all stripes and persuasions said Sunday was the 7th-day when one could visibly see that wasn't true according to the average calendar. I later found out that those in the protestant denominations insist the 1st Day of the week can be referred to as the Sabbath, which is clearly false according to scriptures. I want to say this with all the sincerity I can muster. Stealing from God is a horrific offense. God named the 7th Day Sabbath, not the 1st Day of the week. If your overwhelming desire is to worship another deity on the 1st Day of the week, do it honestly. Protestants could learn a few lessons on honesty from the Catholics; they, at the least, will admit Saturday is the 7th Day and rightly call it the Sabbath.

8-Day Calendars

Adding to the confusion, there have been cultures going all the way back to the 7th century BC attempting to use an 8-day calendar. At times in history, different cultures, including Burmese, Nundinum, and Celts, have tried to change the week from 7 days to 8 days. Even the Julian calendar at one time hosted an 8-day week from 63 BC to AD 37. The aspects of man's conventions of days and times are sad attempts to fit square pegs into round holes. In other words, you can fit God's observable calendar into man's fixed ways of marking time.

Even today, one doesn't have to look very hard to find an 8-day calendar somewhere in the world. Several countries worldwide use their own version of counting days and weeks for different purposes outside biblical considerations.

Sorting days into various lengths of weeks might be confusing, like an 8-day week, especially if you are biblically conscious of scripture. That was a problem in rural southern America where I grew up; a 7-day week wasn't ever in doubt. The Bible's veracity at one time or another may have forced you to choose between a man or God, but that's how God works. His way forces us to choose right from wrong, and our witnesses for or against us are the Old and New testaments.

Most nations today, including the USA, have adopted the Gregorian calendar as their standard guide for navigating the 365-day year. It works minimally for one simple reason, the Gregorian calendar is based upon a 7-day week with a 52-weeks culminating into a year. With all the faults of the Gregorian calendar, which are many, it does at least get the weekly structure correct. It even shows Sunday correctly as the first Day of the week and the Sabbath as the 7th. As a side note, the 1st Day (Sunday, and the 7th Day the "Sabbath" are farther apart than any other two days within a week.) That said, it's still not an observable calendar described by the creator in Genesis 1 and 2; therefore, it falls short.

The moon phase is considered another reason to believe in a 7-day week. Yes, I said the moon phase; many see the moon dictating the weekly structure from an astronomical point of view. Notably, it's an observable phenomenon, but the question is, "do the moon phases actually give us a 7-day calculation in any fashion?" After the total dark phase, the first notable crescent moon is the beginning of a month. We'll spend time

identifying the crescent as the 1st Day later in the booklet, but for now, play along. Fourteen days later, by many accounts, there should be a nearly full or total full moon. The full moon cycle will place a full moon either on the 14th or 15th Day of the month; afterward, the moon wanders gingerly back through the rest of its monthly cycle. Some folks calculate from the full moon backward to find the first day of the monthly cycle. I'm not saying this is right or wrong, but one must be extremely careful because observance is key to God's calendar. Depending on when the crescent occurs, a person could be off a day or two depending on the moon's cycle.

Several historians believe the ancient Babylonians had adopted a seven-day week to approximate cycles of the moon throughout the month; only after adding a day or two at the end of a month's cycle could a 30-day month be fulfilled. So, one might ask the question, "If they saw the month as 30 days, why did the ancient Babylonians adopt a seven-day week?" The belief is, that ancient Babylonians, who believed the number seven, had a mystical significance, saw a 7-day cycle for a week. Certain folks believe the Babylonians were the progenitors of numeric mysticism under the teaching of Zoroaster and finding its way into the Jewish culture called Kabbalah, meaning "*received tradition*." This belief may also include their focus on the seven heavenly bodies they knew of at that time: the Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn. Whether historians say the Babylonians are the progenitors of the 7-day week, God was the creator of time.

God's observable calendar works well as a 7-day week because it's a heavenly system designed by God. An 8-day weekly calendar can't work simply because it's not how God designed the week. Whatever the reason the 7-day week is so universally observed, it simply works when other configurations of the week fall short. One can conclude the 7-day week is a holy design and shouldn't be messed with by man. Without trying to be repetitive, it's an observable way of marking time.

The Monthly Cycle

The month determined by man is marked according to calendars men painstakingly created to predict time and events. But God's month is clearly observable and delineated by the moon phases, as I have already pointed out.

For clarification, let's begin with God's monthly cycle and reject everything man-made, lessening the confusion. An entire month is a cyclical rotation of the moon orbiting the earth every 29.53 days. This would appear to be an awkward amount of days for the perfect calendar God would create. It gives one pause and wonder, "Was the moon's orbit originally created by God to be 29.53 days, or did something occur that somehow affected the length of a month and year?"

I can speculate, and I must emphasize this is merely speculation, but in my humble opinion, the earth's original orbit around the sun was 360 days with a moon cycle of exactly 30 days. The earth was knocked off course affecting the moon cycle when the worldwide flood occurred during the days of Noah. I say that because God is not the author of confusion and would have created something a lot more precise, in my opinion.

At the time of the flood, more than just rain fell upon the earth. Rain began and lasted 40 days and 40 nights; this we all know. In addition, springs burst forth under the oceans, pouring more water onto an already flooded land. The water was so deep it covered the tops of the current mountains by more than 20 feet. This was a violent event, and I believe (my belief) it was at this time the continents were pushed apart from one another. For this reason, we see fossilized sea creatures at 9 and 10 thousand feet elevations around certain parts of the world.

The ark continued to drift for an additional 150 days. God sent a strong wind, and the water steadily receded for another 150 days. Afterward, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat, but it still wasn't safe to go out. It's estimated that Noah and his family spent 370 days total in the ark.

Here's something to chew on. Could this have been the very first year in God's creation that a thirteenth month was added? Did they leave the ark on or about the 1st Day of spring that year? Fun to think about, but not necessary for our study.

We have what we have, this day and time, a moon cycle of 29.53 days. If God's time is observable, "How do we determine a moon's complete cycle?" I'm glad you asked that question because that indicates you're not asleep, not yet anyway.

The month is based upon the first sighting of the crescent moon, then every night growing in fullness until it reaches its peak at mid-month, then waning back into the darkness toward the last days of the moon's cycle. It's a celestial observation of 29.53 days, where the moon's complete cycle goes from the first crescent graduating through the phases back to total darkness. God made it easy to keep track of a month without all the confusion of man's calendars.

This is verified by the TARGUM OF ONKELOS AND JONATHAN BEN UZZIEL ON THE PENTATEUCH. *Some, too, think they discern in the festival of the seventh month's new moon a type of the future renovation of Israel. The moon is the scriptural emblem of the Church; the darkened moon, of a Church in apostasy. The new moon, as she turns again to the sun, brightens once more under his beams. (Isai. lx. 1, 20.)*

It gets somewhat more difficult because we are NOT told exactly what a new moon looks like by the biblical narrative, as I have already noted. But, the verse I just quoted in the Targum alludes heavily to the 1st crescent sighting. But, nowhere in the scriptures do we have a description of a new moon. Some interpret it as the conjunction of the earth, sun, and moon, waning or waxing crescents. Some even believe the full moon is the new moon, but scripture doesn't tend to back that up either.

Philo's works dispel this thought SpecLaws2.XXVI

XXVI. (140) *Following the order which we have adopted, we proceed to speak of the third festival, that of the new moon. First of all, because it is the beginning of the month, and the beginning, whether of number or of time, is honorable. Secondly, because at this time there is nothing in the whole of heaven destitute of light. (141) Thirdly, because at that period the more powerful and important body gives a portion of necessary assistance to the less important and weaker body; for, at the time of the new moon, the sun begins to illuminate the moon with a light which is visible to the outward senses, and then she displays her own beauty to the beholders.*

This very issue can give much pause concerning God's calendar that I threw up my hands in defeat long ago. I found myself completely satisfied following a laid-out system from the Jewish culture that admittedly had its own flaws. It's called the Hillel calendar, something we'll look closer at shortly. We'll also take a hard stare at the man and his methodology further on in this booklet.

As I was saying, I was faced with a dilemma determining what a biblical new moon was and how to identify it scripturally. Since I couldn't use my Bible for confirmation, it occurred to me that the only source available was historical accounts of the time around the life of the Messiah. Here are some historical quotes from well-known figures in ancient history around this specific period.

I first went to my personal library and found this description from the pages of *Brewers Myth and Legends* by J. C. Cooper on page 189 adds to our conversation, "*The Moon is called triform, because it presents itself to us either round, or waxing with the horns towards the east, or waning with the horn towards the west.*"

Admittedly, this is a layman's definition, and I can't cite his sources for the information, but I find it odd that sources outside prescribed references can identify the waxing crescent moon as one of three important phases.

The Mishnah which by definition is an authoritative collection of exegetical material embodying the oral tradition of Jewish law and forming the first part of the Talmud.

Date 20 BC to 220 AD, Ordinances about the witnesses concerning the new moon, the hoisting of the flags and how it was consecrated by the Beth Din.

Definition of a beth din is a rabbinical court of Judaism. In ancient times, and in modern times today it was the building block of the legal system in the World for Jews.

Rosh Chodesh means the "head of the new [moon]," It is a day, sometimes two—of celebration marking the start of a new lunar month. In ancient times Rosh Chodesh was declared by the beit din (Jewish court) only after two credible witnesses testified that they had seen the new moon.

What was considered a credible witness? A Jewish man named Alfred Edersheim, born in Vienna in 1825 and converted to Christianity

before he died in 1889 wrote the book labeled “The Temple, It’s Ministry and Services,” Alfred Edershaiem was considered one of the leading authorities regarding the doctrines and practices of Judaism concerning the times before the Christian era and the Temple Ministry.

On pages 289-290, of his book he says this, “*We have already shown of what importance the right determination of the new moon was in fixing the various festivals of the year, and with what care and anxiety its appearance was **ascertained from witnesses who had actually seen it** ; also how the tidings were afterwards communicated to those at a distance. For the new moon was reckoned by actual personal observation, not by astronomical calculation, with which, however, as we know, many of the Rabbis must have been familiar, since we read of astronomical pictures, by which they were wont to test the veracity of witnesses. So important was it deemed to have faithful witnesses, **that they were even allowed, in order to reach Jerusalem in time, to travel on the Sabbath, and, if necessary, to make use of horse or mule. While strict rules determined who were not to be admitted as witnesses, every encouragement was given to trustworthy persons, and the Sanhedrim provided for them a banquet in a large building specially destined for that purpose, and known as Beth Yaazek?**”*

What caught my eye was the statement, “who had actually seen it.” One can’t actually see a fully dark moon; something has to be visible, according to our calculations to be made.

In addition, these couldn’t be just any two men off the street; they had an enormous responsibility so that they were allowed to travel even on the Sabbath in this circumstance.

The Beit Din could calculate at what time the new moon should appear, where it would be located in the sky, and **which way the crescent would be facing**. By asking each witness basic questions about the moon’s appearance and location, the Beit Din could establish the witness's veracity and testimony.

Here are some of those questions to two witnesses from the Mishna or Mishnah?

“Tell us in what form thou sawest the moon; was it before or behind the sun? Was it north or south (of the sun)? What was the elevation on the horizon? Towards which to side was its inclination? What was the width of the disk? If he answered before the sun, his evidence was worthless.”

Making a couple of observations; how would these witnesses measure the disk if the new moon is in the conjunction (dark of the moon)? Also, how could they know if a total dark moon was before or behind the sun? These witnesses were making observations on a celestial object they could see, not one hidden.

On that particular note, here is a comment made by the Gamera, a rabbinical analysis or commentary on the Mishnah in oral form.

Do not the questions (asked by the Mishna), “was it before or behind the sun?” and “was it to the north or to the south?” mean the same thing?

Answered Abayi, a third-century AD Rabbi, (the Mishna asks) whether the concave of the crescent was before or behind the sun, and if (the witness said) it was before the sun, his evidence was worthless.

The Jewish Mishnah also reports that Rabbi Gamaliel had on a tablet, and on a wall of his upper room, illustrations of the various phases of the moon, which he used to show to the common people saying: “*Did you see the moon like this figure or like this?*” Why ask the question if you can’t see any part of the moon? There is more in the Mishna, but I feel I have illustrated the more obvious sections for consideration.

This quote is from a well-known Jewish scholar, Authur Spier. *“The beginning of the months were determined by **direct observation of the new moon**. Then those beginning of months (Rosh Chodesh) were sanctified and announced by the Sanhedrin, the supreme court in Jerusalem, after the two witnesses testified that they had seen the new crescent and after their testimony had been thoroughly examined, confirmed by calculation and duly accepted. (Authur Spier, *The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar*, p 227).*

These were the recorded ways of historically determining a new moon from 516 BC to 70 AD and continuing forward for approximately the next three centuries until the Sanhedrin eventually languished into a mere shadow of itself.

I would add it was the Hebrew method prior to 516 BC going back to Moses and the Torah, but I would only have the scriptures to back that up since no documents go back that far.

I could add other references, but it would be pointless to add more if you don’t accept what I have already given.

I feel confident I have demonstrated that the new moon is the first crescent by Jewish historical accounts.
Below is an illustration of what to look for.



The Equinox

I've spent years in the church hearing why the New moons should be determined one way or another. To the extent that anytime anyone brought up the subject of New Moons or calendars, I wanted to pull my hair out. If you saw me today, you might conclude that I've already had way too many conversations about the calendar, visible by my lack of curly brown hair.

There's no denying that the description of a crescent moon or new moon was knowledge kept by the Levitical priest or Sanhedrin, not by scriptural references. "So, how can the average Joe on the street be sure they are looking at a new moon?" Because knowing that bit of information seems vital in our attempts to honor God properly? We just read some accounts that answer the question, but I feel there might be more evidence out there.

So, once again, we must go to the historians for answers, not the perfect solution granted but it's the only one we have.

The Sanhedrin in Christ's day considered several factors in their deliberations on whether to declare a leap year and add an extra month to the year. This process was known as Adar Beit. One more month is added to twelve months and means one more, second additional month of Adar. But how did they determine when another month was to be added?

Once more, I would like to pull a quote from the book "The Temple, It's Ministry and Services," By Alfred Edersheim, Pages 199-200, *Hitherto we have not adverted to the difficulties which those who intended to appear in Jerusalem at the feasts would experience from the want of any fixed calendar. As the year of the Hebrews was lunar, not solar, it consisted of only 354 days 8 hours 48' 38". This, distributed among twelve months, would in the course of years have completely disordered the months, so that the first month, or Abib (corresponding to the end of March or the beginning of April), in the middle of which the first ripe barley was to be presented to the Lord, might have fallen in the middle of winter. Accordingly, the Sanhedrin appointed a Committee of three, of which the chief of the Sanhedrim was always president, and which, if not unanimous, might be increased to seven, when a majority of voices would suffice, to determine which year was to be made a leap-year by the insertion of a thirteenth month.*

An addendum at the bottom of page 200 reads, *“Tradition has it, that neither high priest nor king ever took part in these deliberations, the former because he might object to a leap year as throwing the Day of Atonement later into the cold season; the king, because he might wish for thirteen months, in order to get thirteen months’ revenue in one year”*

Ever heard of the spring equinox? This is also a term you won’t find in scriptures, but God made the heavens with observable astronomical events to guide us. The spring equinox is a key component in counting God’s Holy Days. “The Temple, Its Ministry and Services,” By Alfred, Edersheim adds this in regard to the equinox. Page 203, *The division of the year into ecclesiastical, which commenced with the month Nisan (the end of March or beginning of April), or about the spring equinox, and civil, which commenced with the seventh month, or Tishri, corresponding to the autumn equinox, has by many likewise been supposed to have only originated after the return from Babylon.*

Alfred Edersheim made a point to mention both the spring and autumn equinox in association with the Hebrew calendar. If this distinguished man who studied theology in Edinburgh and Berlin and once was considered one of the leading authorities on Judaism felt they were important, how are we to say they aren’t? Also consider we observe the spring equinox in casual ways like hearing it announced on the radio while driving. He or some radio celebrity announces the spring equinox because it’s an observable event where day and night become briefly equal, usually around the 19th or 20th of March.

If Alfred Edersheim isn’t your cup of tea as an authority on this issue, perhaps you might listen to a more traditional view. Catholic Customs & Traditions, A Popular Guide By Greg Dues says this on behalf of the Catholic church. On Page 39, *The influence of seasons on religious traditions increased when the Jewish Lunar calendar gave way to the secular solar calendar. This happened after 70 CE. When Jerusalem was destroyed, and the Jewish people scattered. Christianity became increasingly gentile in membership, no longer bound to traditions from which, as a religious group, Christians had originally risen. The Jewish lunar calendar lost its influence among them, and the church soon traded it for the Julian calendar popular throughout the gentile Greco-Roman world. This calendar was based on the solar year rather than the lunar*

month. As a result, the summer and winter solstices and spring and fall equinoxes, along with the seasons they introduced, became more evident in the religious life of Christians.

That was the first quote, but I have another from the same book that benefits the discussion. This has to do with when the Catholics were trying to decide when to set a date for their Easter celebrations. Page 98, *Early in Christianity, a controversy arose over setting the date of the annual Pascha. Some called the Quartodeciman's (Latin, "fourteenth"), claimed that it should be celebrated annually on the precise date of Jesus' historical Passover: the 14th of Nisan, (first Day of the full moon that followed the spring equinox), usually on a Wednesday. Others insisted that it always be a Sunday because Christ was raised from the dead on the first Day of the week.*

There are several points of interest in these quotes; one can hardly believe what they are reading. We have admissions from a guide to Catholic living; they admit Sunday is on the 1st Day of the week. Wednesday was on the 14th Day of Nisan, on the year the Messiah died, and there was a full moon (which there would be if you began counting from the first crescent moon). According to this writer, it also began after the spring equinox, who is a Catholic religious educator and minister in the Diocese of Saginaw, Michigan. He has authored several books on the Catholic organization.

I'm reasonably confident that no one can deny the Spring equinox marks the beginning of spring; even pagans understand this point. The beginning of spring was so important to those living thousands of years ago; we find stone structures around the world aligned to the sun to show the first Day of spring all by the sun's alignment.

Structures like Stonehenge in (England), Machu Picchu (Peru), Chichen Itza (Mexico), Chaco Canyon (New Mexico, USA), and New Grange (Ireland), just to name a few. Even the Great Sphinx and Pyramid of Khafre (Egypt).

However, the Sanhedrin calculated that if the spring equinox would fall later than the first half of Nissan (i.e., on the 16th or later), the year was automatically declared a leap year. As mentioned earlier, the verse states: "Guard the month of spring, and make [then] the Passover offering."

If the barley had not yet ripened and the trees were not yet blossoming with seasonal fruit — that, too, was sufficient reason to delay the new year by adding a second month of Adar. For the Israelites, it was imperative spring be an observable event.

The problem with the Sanhedrin's methods was that there were also several non-biblical, non-seasonal-related factors they considered. The Sanhedrin would make exemptions if the roads or bridges were in disrepair due to the winter rainy season, impeding the ability of the pilgrims to travel to Jerusalem for Passover. My guess is they didn't want to miss out on any offerings heading their way, as we read in the addendum by Alfred Edersheim.

But other reasons also existed why the Sanhedrin moved or delayed the start of the months. Once again, I'll turn to the expert Alfred Edersheim in his book, "The Temple, Its Ministry and Services." *A Sabbatical year could not be a leap-year, but that preceding it was always such. Sometimes two, but never three, leap-years succeeded each other. Commonly, every third year required the addition of a month. The mean duration of the Jewish month being 29 days 12 hours 44' 31/3 ", it required, during a period of nineteen years, the insertion of seven months to bring the lunar era in accordance with the Julian calendar.*

As we have seen, observing God's Holy Days listed in Leviticus 23 isn't as simple as looking at the current Gregorian calendar. It's considered one of the more challenging subjects within God's Holy church for those that fully desire to obey God.

History of Change

How did such a simple way of calculating the change of days and months cause all this confusion? That question probably has more tentacles than the average octopus, but we'll try and unravel some of the distortions for you.

Let me begin by saying, I get it when someone says, "I use my little blue or green card to know for certain when God's feasts are." I made many of those cards myself, so I'm responsible for those folks at that time to following those particular dates. That's another reason I feel driven to get the calendar correct. People feel their minister should know correctly when those times occur and when plans need to be made, even if the minister hasn't a clue why.

I also understand when some people say the Jews were given the oracles of God's time, and we should defer to them, based upon 1600 years of precedence and verses found in **Romans 3:1-2**, *Then what advantage does the Jew have? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? 2 Great in every respect. First, that they were entrusted with the actual words of God.* NASV.

The KJV reads this way, *What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?*

2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

No doubt Paul's declaration concerning the Jewish authority over the oracles of God (including the calendar) was a true statement...**at that time**. The question becomes, is it still a true statement today? Can statements in the Bible like this one change under certain circumstances made by mere men?

It's my humble observation while taking this verse into account that the calendar underwent changes over the centuries. This was done by men and NOT commanded by God...one should take note.

The Jews were once fully in charge of the word of God by all accounts, especially when Paul spoke these words to the Romans. The Sanhedrin and Temple still stood as the principal guides to God's word...at that moment in time. The Messiah even defaulted to the authority of Pharisees and Sadducees as the leaders of the people. *1 Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to His disciples: 2 "The scribes and*

Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. 3 So practice and observe everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach, (Matthew 23:1-3).

But a lot of that authority was taken away when in 70AD, the Temple was destroyed, and the Levitical system came to an abrupt halt. The fact is, Moses' seat of authority defaulted back to the Melchizedek system at that moment, and the Messiah became the High Priest over God's word. *19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, 20 where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. (Hebrews 6:19-20).*

Coming back into the calendar fray, and being dragged kicking and screaming, I realized there are many aspects of the calendar we have yet to consider. My fingernails are bloody from grasping onto anything that will keep me out of the discussions.

All that aside, here we are, and the arguments are not fading away no matter how hard we try to push them aside. I also have to add, "I DON'T LIKE CHANGE." The greater the change, the greater the resistance. Maybe that's why I'm so resistant to the calendar argument, I can't say for sure, but change comes hard-earned for most.

History defaulted to the de facto narrator of God's word, not the Messiah's as one might hope. After the Temple fell, Jews began searching for new homes while slowly drifting away from some of their old traditions. For the next 65 years after the Temple fell to the Romans, there was turmoil in Israel, with different minor uprisings. Different factions of Jews attempted to re-establish the Hebrew faith and begin the rebuilding of the third Temple.

This all came to a bloody crescendo with a final revolt of Bar Kokhba. The Second Jewish revolt (132–135 AD) is the Great Jewish rebellion against Roman rule encompassing much of Judaea. The clashes between Jews and Romans came to their devastating finality beginning in 135 AD, in correlation to the misrule of Tinnitus Rufus, the Roman governor of Judaea, and the emperor Hadrian's intent upon founding a Roman colony at the site of Jerusalem. They began a campaign of restrictions on Jewish religious freedoms and observances (which included a ban on the practice of male circumcision).

For the previous 300 years, Jewish children had drilled into their minds the history of the Maccabean revolt to the point they were not about to bow to another Tyrant attempting to push their Hellenistic religions upon them.

A Jewish leader named Bar Kokhba became the de facto leader of this second great Jewish revolt which had some successes in the beginning. But, the Roman legions with their ruthless tactics under the Roman general Julius Severus proved a more formidable force for the Jews. Bar Kokhba was eventually slain, the rebellion was crushed in 135 AD, and afterward, Jews were henceforth forbidden to enter Jerusalem proper. The Romans had had enough of the Jews, causing them headaches so they scattered the nation into the winds (diaspora). The Jews became a people without a home, leaders, and significant guidance.

If not for outlying Jewish synagogues in cities around other provinces, including the Mediterranean, where the gospel was being spread, the Jewish religion might have vanished from the face of the earth.

History again steps in filling gaps, telling us the Sanhedrin survived as a functioning court of law for a while, but it too disappeared a few short centuries later from the historical landscape but not before it made a significant change to the calendar.

There were two classes of Rabbinic Jewish courts called Sanhedrin... while they existed. There was the great and powerful Sanhedrin and a Lesser Sanhedrin of 23 judges appointed as a tribunal in each city with an established Jewish population.

The Supreme Court of Jewish laws, consisting of 71 judges, was supposed to be the final arbitrator of disputes, much like the supreme court in our nation today. They took cases on appeals decided by lesser courts on a range of issues. In the 2nd Temple in Jerusalem, the Sanhedrin met in the Temple in a building called the Hall of Hewn Stones.

According to Wikipedia, *In the late 200s CE, to avoid persecution, the name Sanhedrin was dropped and its decisions were issued under the name of Beit HaMidrash (house of learning). The last universally binding decision of the Great Sanhedrin appeared in 358 CE, when the Hebrew calendar was established. The Great Sanhedrin was finally disbanded in 425 CE after continued persecution by the Eastern Roman Empire.*

One might also argue that it was God's intention all along for the dispersion of the Jews for a simple reason... they, too, were resistant to

change. Their adopted ways of doing God's work had become distorted and corrupt by men with agendas. The Messiah had come; they were slow to acknowledge that fact and paid dearly for their shortsightedness. Some of the old Jewish ways were forgotten in the process, like how to determine God's seasons and years.

Oh, Yea, Constantine

From the time around the Bar Kokhba revolt, we jump a couple of hundred years into the future to a man called Constantine. This was a real humdinger of a Roman Emperor in many unfortunate ways. He isn't talked about in most Christian circles because he was a really bad boy who called himself the 1st Christian Emperor of Rome. Beneath his self-made facade of greatness was a scheming, calculation narcissist who was consolidating his power all under the name of religion. To be more precise, Christianity. Controlling what people believed and worshiped was his sole source of power. It meant combining all the beliefs, including pagan worship, but he was a man with a plan. Getting rid of pagan worship might seem like a wonderful thing today, but that's not what really occurred when you dig deep.

Before Constantine gained control, Rome was a polytheistic (many religions) society. Constantine shrewdly took the peoples' favorite elements of each religion, both pagan and Christian alike, and combined them into one (monotheistic religion). He molded the "made in Christian" label and then slapped it on the side, calling it his own.

This resulted in a crackdown on the Jewish belief and their ways of worship because they had their own way of doing things. The post reign of Constantine and under his son Constantius (337-361 AD), included persecution of the Jewish way of life and saw the forbidding of making computations to the calendar. There was already much confusion among different provinces that the Jews were calling home by this time, and adding this layer of confusion just added to their frustrations.

Constantine drew his last breath in 337 AD accompanied with a deathbed confession and baptism while leaving his son to carry on the family business. Constantine had done such a good job of consolidation that the engine of change took on a life of its own. Bishops from around the known world met in a series of councils over the next few hundred years, establishing what we now know as the Catholic church replacing as many of the Jewish influences as they possibly could, like the weekly Sabbath. Edicts that were made and enforced by the state-run church of Rome made Sunday worship the state-recognized Day of rest while outlawing the Sabbath worship, Holy Days, and even circumcision in some instances.

During the apex of the councils of bishops, a Jewish man named Hillel II became headline news within Jewish communities in 358 AD. During the most trying times of the Jewish Diaspora, there became a more defined separation between the Jewish beliefs and Christianity centered around the Roman empire.

Under the umbrella of one belief, two different roads of thought emerged. There were the traditional Jewish beliefs and Rabbis over synagogues, but another mixed group called Christians also looked into the future for answers.

Since Rome was the more powerful of the two, Rome succeeded in its efforts to dictate what the Jews could believe or where they could worship...in public anyway. In this culture of confusion, the reason Jews were not celebrating God's times correctly or holding onto their ancient traditions.

Neither were Jews receiving the guidance they would typically have had to determine things like "new moons" or when to begin counting months and days. As a result, Hillel II created a universal guide for God's people to follow.

The Hillel You say

The real creatures of change aren't always the most notable suspects. In fact, they might be the most benign in history's lineup of criminals. For us today, the question is, who did the most damage concerning understanding God's calendar? Was it the disappearance of the Levitical priest, Constantine, or was this fellow called Hillel II? One might argue it was all three, but who the Hillel was Hillel II? You need to know the answer because most of God's people carry a little blue card in their wallets or purses because of this fellow.

So, what's his story? It's important to note, while the Sanhedrin (Rabbinical Supreme Court) was the governing authority in Israel and abided by no set calendar similar to the Gregorian calendar, that they could hang on their walls from year to year. Each year and month was determined by when spring began, and then the count was on. Each month under the Sanhedrin's authority was begun by sighting the new moon. The typical cycle of the moon was, as already noted, 29.53 days.

Many felt the absence of the entity that made these observations and chaos could and would surely ensure. During the period called the Talmudic period under the governance of Rabbi Judah I, surnamed "the Holy" (163-193 AD), the Samaritans went about sabotaging the Jewish attempts to dispense news of the new moon. We yield back to our old pal Alfred Edersheim and his book "The Temple, Its Ministry and Services. He says this, *But these early fire-signals opened the way for serious inconvenience. The enemies of the Jews lit beacons to deceive those at a distance,*

This subterfuge of signals had a deleterious effect on many Jews, causing some to celebrate God's holy feasts at the wrong times. Because of this, the hierarchy of Jewish beliefs began sending out foot messengers or messengers on horseback. It was during the years between 70 AD to 405 AD, many attempts to determine the correct calendar being strewn with obstacles.

It culminated with our friend Hillel II who was the de facto arbitrator of the perpetual calendar in anticipation of the disbandment of the Sanhedrin in 425 AD that landed the coup de grâce. Of course, he didn't know the Sanhedrin would completely fall out of influence around that time, but because of the Diaspora of the Jews, he felt a need to create

a universal calendar in anticipation. In his mind and others like-minded, his perpetual calendar was a replacement for the old system **until the return of the Messiah**. The 3rd Temple will be built at that time, and God's levitical systems will default back to the old ways of doing things.

Going forward, the handwriting was on the preverbal wall and was an attempt to be prepared for the dissolution of the Sanhedrin .

No doubt, Hillel II had a heartfelt need for cohesion among God's chosen; he saw the Holy days as a unifying force among the Jews. I can't say I disagree with that sentiment, but where I have a problem is what he did in moving away from God's system of determining time. His heart may have been in the right place, but his meddling in God's ways inadvertently gave Satan a tool to further confuse the world.

Hillel's II solution inadvertently has become the emphasis of confusion in our modern times. He created a nineteen-year cycle, where each cycle contains seven leap years: the 3rd, 6th, 8th, 11th, 14th, 17th, and 19th years. The length of the standard leap year is 384 days, though it could also be 383 or 385.

He established precisely fourteen different patterns that the Hebrew calendar years may take. These years are determined by the length of the year and the Day of the week on which Rosh Hashanah falls. Here's a problem he may have or may have not considered; calculating God's years in this way doesn't align with the biblical narrative. If you begin counting in the fall of a year, you start 6 months out of phase. Perhaps he did this because, in the finest of Jewish traditions, their estimations, Rosh Hashanah (Feast of Trumpets) commemorates the world's creation, marking the beginning of the year.

The rules and complexity of Hillel's system can be mind-boggling, to say the least. In calculating years, a pattern may repeat itself several times, then not again for a long while afterward. In addition, adding to Hillel's calendar system in the eleventh century were days of postponement. Here is a brief example, *Tishre: From Aramaic shera or sherei, "to begin "... Seventh month in the religious or festival cycle; first in chronological or civil cycle... The 1st never falls on Sunday, Wednesday, or Friday. In the twentieth century, its earliest beginning is September 6th and its latest beginning is October 5th (The Jewish Almanac, Bantam, 1980, p. 241).*

This postponement ensures that the Feast of Trumpets (1 Tishri, Rosh HaShanah), and the Day of Atonement (10 Tishri, Yom Kippur) do not have a Sabbath immediately before or after these Holidays.

“Why would they do this?” The answer might surprise you, it had to do with the Catholic calendar not agreeing with the original Judaic calendar, and the Jewish calendar avoids agreement with the generally universal Christian calendar.

These fixes or workarounds made a perplexing issue out of God’s simple way of determining the correct calendar. The so-called arbiters of God’s word landed upon solutions outside biblical guidance in the name of unity and conformity, even with pagan considerations, and that was that, as is said. Now, it’s simply good enough for most of God’s people today to follow a system created by man and NOT God.

It might surprise you that some tout the accuracy of the Hillel II calendar as opposed to others like the Gregorian or Julian calendars, but it’s only further evidence; that they have drunk the kool-aid.

Today’s Holy day calendar put out by the Jews is often close or even correct on some Holy Days, but it’s also based upon manipulation and often incorrect concerning God’s Holy days. The arbiters of God’s oracles have now obfuscated their responsibility to a mathematical system and NOT according to God’s will. Once again, God’s ways of determining the calendar are through observable astronomical events.

The Recipe

Without a doubt, establishing a correct calendar has been a problem among God's people for the last two thousand years. The veracity of Hillel's system is in question, not because it isn't an honest effort to bring conformity to understanding God's time, but because its founding formula isn't prescribed by scriptures. I hear ministers pound the podium saying read your Bibles and let the Bible be your guide. Yet, today they default to a man-made system over God's observable calendar. By default, only one way is more desirable than another. If one is going to cave to a default system, then why not default to the better of the two choices? Hillel's calendar isn't perfect because of the lack of information, but it's far better than simply doing nothing...by default. It would seem with a Godly mindset, default would be to God every time.

We have also established that people hate changing from what they already know or are comfortable with. For 99% of the people in this world, any old calendar will do.

“How can you say, ‘We are wise, And the Law of the Lord is with us’? But behold, the lying pen of the scribes Has made it into a lie. (Jeremiah 8:8)

Has this found its way down to us today? Are we following another scribe who has a lying pen? Following a way that seems right rather than being told that way may be in error shouldn't sit well with God's people. Add these two issues together, and you get a recipe for resentment and defensiveness toward change that frankly is amazing. It seems, even if the correct answer falls in someone's lap, reluctance to change won't allow the hesitation to pass... that's how ingrained not changing is in our thinking.

Setting those concerns briefly aside for the moment, the overriding question among God's people is, “how can we know for certain what is right and wrong? I wish I had an answer that would immediately put those concerns to rest. I can give you what I've learned and leave the rest up to you.

Let's look at God's recipe for determining God's calendar.

1. It must be an observable astronomical event.
2. God's calendar always begins in spring.

3. It must include agriculture observations.
4. The sighting of the new moon marks the beginning of months.
5. Sighting of the New Moon (1st Crescent Moon) must be viewed after sunset marks the beginning of a day.
6. There can be 12 or 13 months in a Hebrew year, depending on when spring begins.
7. The number of days in a month can vary slightly.

These ingredients, with their perspective requirements, must be present to determine God's correct calendar. Take any one of them away, and you are likely to make errors in your calculations.

The first astronomical observation we need is a way to determine spring. The spring equinox is our bedrock event, even though the word "equinox" is not in scripture. God does say this about the heavens vs. the Jewish authority. **Job 38:33**, "*Do you know the ordinances of the heavens, Or fix their rule over the earth?*"

Spring is universally recognized when the sun is on or past the equator amounting to a 24-hour day divided by 12 hours of light and 12 hours of darkness. Where is that in scripture exactly? "Abib," the word Abib/Aviv everyone knows, means "green ears," but the term can also mean "spring." Wikipedia says this: *Aviv (Hebrew: אביב) means "barley ripening", and by extension, "spring season" in Hebrew.* Israel365 commentary: *'Abib' in Hebrew is Aviv (אביב), meaning 'springtime.'* *The Shoken Bible's commentary on Exodus 12 and 13 acknowledges the word Abib/Aviv means God's calendar begins in spring. Also, in the Shokens version of **Deuteronomy 16:1** Keep the New Moon of Aviv/Ripe Grain. You are to observe Passover to YAHWEH your God, for the New Moon of Aviv.*

Also, "green ears" is a suspect term in our modern translations. Look at this from Academia.edu quote: *Take the ancient Hebrew word ABIB. They put the modern English word "green" as one of the root meanings of the word Abib. But there are variations of opinions and interpretations from there. Please look at what BDB and Strong's are saying and look at the variations.*-H24 Original: אביב 0 3 0 2 *Transliteration: 'âbyb Phonetic: aw-beeb' BDB Definition: fresh, young barley ears, barley month of ear-forming, of greening of crop, of growing green Abib, month of exodus and passover (March or April) Origin: from an unused root (meaning to be tender) TWOT entry:*

Not one, but many sources tell us Abib/Aviv indicates spring.

Deuteronomy 16:1 unambiguously says, “celebrate the New Moon in the spring” as the beginning of months.

This was important for the Hebrews because of the wave sheaf offering mentioned in **Leviticus 23:9-14**, which wouldn’t be possible without that newly ripened crop and a correct identification when spring began.

Here’s what it says, *9 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 10 “Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘When you enter the land which I am going to give to you and you gather its harvest, then you shall bring in the sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest. 11 He shall wave the sheaf before the Lord for you to be accepted; on the Day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. 12 Now on the Day when you wave the sheaf, you shall offer a male lamb one year old without defect as a burnt offering to the Lord. 13 Its grain offering shall then be two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering by fire to the Lord for a soothing aroma, with its drink offering, a fourth of a hin of wine. 14 Until this very Day, until you have brought in the offering of your God, you shall eat neither bread nor roasted grain nor new produce. It is to be a permanent statute throughout your generations in all your dwelling places. (Leviticus 23:9-14) NASV.*

Jerusalem Sighting

There are those that advocate the New Moon sighting must be observed from the ancient city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem was the city where God's Temples were located and the Sanhedrin sat in authority for hundreds of years. Prior to Solomon's temple being built on Mount Moriah, the Temple was in several sanctuaries, especially those of Shechem and Shiloh, and was a tent. It wasn't until around 957 BC that Solomon's temple was constructed that the ark found a permanent home in Jerusalem.

One wonders, did they do the New Moon sightings from Shilo, or did they seek out the future home of the Temple for that sole purpose? I'm being a bit facetious, but I wanted to make the point that sightings were done in other locations hundreds of years prior to the Temple being located in Jerusalem.

Advocates of sightings from Jerusalem say those in other parts of the world can't see when the first crescent moon is actually occurring. It's because of this, that we must take the lead from those sightings in Jerusalem because those in Canada can't see the same crescent moon and make their own determinations.

My friend, Billy found an excellent free astronomical program called Stellarium 0.22.1. With this program he plugged in different locations around the world for the same date to see what the New moon would look like from their perspective, below are the results of what he found. Stellarium is simply a tool; direct observation is critical for the correct verification of the New crescent moon.

CRESCENT MOON SIGHTING AROUND THE GLOBE

The Crescent Moons are **VISIBLE** at the **SAME TIME** around the Globe, Here's the **PROOF!**

Remember, the MESSIAH reckons HIS days from SUNSET to SUNSET

NORTHERN HEMISPHERE

SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE

SPRING

April 2, 2022

FALL

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| Canada 3.3% 1.8 days old. | — | Australia 2.4% 1.5 days old |
| California 2.8% 1.6 days old | — | Fiji 2.4% 1.5 days old |
| South Carolina 3.3% 1.8 days old | — | Tonga 2.4% 1.5 days old |
| Florida 3.3% 1.8 days old | — | New Zealand 2.4% 1.5 days old |
| Texas 3.3% 1.8 days old | — | South Africa 2.4% 1.5 days old |
| Alaska 2.8% 1.6 days old | — | Solomon Island 2.4% 1.5 days old |
| California 2.8% 1.6 days old | — | Capetown Africa 2.4% 1.5 days |

NORTHERN HEMISPHERE

SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE

Fall

Sept. 27, 2022

Spring

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Canada 4.1% 1.9 days old. | — | Australia 4.5% 2.0 days old |
| California 4.5% 2.0 days old | — | Fiji 3.9% 1.9 days old |
| South Carolina 5.2% 2.2 days old | — | Tonga 3.9% 1.9 days old |
| Florida 4.4% 2.0 days old | — | New Zealand 3.9% 1.9 days old |
| Texas 5.2% 2.2 days old | — | South Africa 3.8% 1.9 days old |
| Alaska 4.5% 2.0 days old | — | Solomon Island 3.9% 1.9 old |
| California 4.5% 2.0 days old | — | Capetown Africa 3.9% 1.9 days |

NOTE: THE CRESCENT NEW MOON SIGHTINGS MARKING BEGINNING OF MONTHS occurs around the GLOBE as it rotates and completes an entire 24-hour cycle.

Billy's conclusion (and I agree) is the Sun's position in accordance with earth determines the SEASONS (SPRING, SUMMER, FALL, WINTER).

Northern Hemisphere; SPRING is in MARCH, FALL is in SEPTEMBER using the Gregorian Calendar

Southern Hemisphere; FALL is in MARCH, SPRING is in SEPTEMBER using the Gregorian Calendar

Both Hemispheres have EQUINOXES, one in SPRING and one in FALL; they are just opposite of one another. But as we can see, based on the astronomical program Stellarium 0.22.1, God's Holy Days are perpetual worldwide. Also, the crescent moon is equally visible with Jerusalem from any part of the world.

I get this probably won't squelch many voices who have invested their entire beliefs into any of these issues, but perhaps it can begin a dialog of sorts.

Some may not recognize the importance of determining God's days visually. Because of that less than enthusiastic response, we have missed some critical observances of God's Holy days. Our next chapter will cover one of those Holy days that is incorrectly determined according to the application of God's word.

Also, the following scriptures are often used as proof text claiming we should defer to Jerusalem as the official sighting. Jeremiah 3:17, Zechariah 8:22; 14:8-21, Isaiah 2: 3 and 2 Chronicles 33: 4. Taking a closer look at these verses, one can see they refer to a time when the 3rd Temple is built, and the Messiah is the ruler of this earth. It's my opinion, that folks wrongly apply the verses to God's people today, especially when we can make the new moon sighting relatively quickly. When the Messiah returns, all things will occur according to His will; until then, we can discern the times on our own.

Feast of Weeks

Is observing the Wave sheaf offering important? The requirements of Wave sheaf were rarely regulated by the people, instead primarily by the Temple Priest. But, the commandment to the people was they count 50 days on the morrow after the Sabbath. *15 And ye shall count from the morning after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave-offering, seven weeks; they shall be complete; 16 even unto the morning after the seventh sabbath shall ye count fifty days; and ye shall present a new oblation to Jehovah. (Leviticus 23:15-16).* Darby

There are other events registered in scriptures having a similar tone. The first event can be found in **Joshua 5:10-12**, Darby, *And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and held the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month, at even, in the plains of Jericho. 11 And they ate of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the Passover, unleavened loaves, and roasted [corn] on that same day. 12 And the manna ceased on the morrow, when they had eaten of the old corn of the land; and there was no more manna for the children of Israel; and they ate of the produce of the land of Canaan that year.*

This could only occur after a new generation of males were circumcised; the men of Israel had to become acceptable before they could partake of the Passover meal. Afterward, the children of Israel kept Passover "on the fourteenth day of the month," which obviously is in the same month.

The following day, the fifteenth day (Aviv/Abib) of the first month, was the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Here is what Joshua recorded concerning the day following the Passover: *11 And they ate of the old corn of the land on the **morrow after the Passover**, unleavened loaves, and roasted [corn] on that same day. 12 And the manna ceased on the morrow, when they had eaten of the old corn of the land; and there was no more manna for the children of Israel; (Josh. 5:11-12)* Darby.

These are particular words directing the children of Israel to observe the first day of Unleavened Bread by eating "unleavened cakes" made from the "old corn of the land." On the

2nd day of Passover, the 16th of (Aviv/Abib) they were to begin reaping the new harvest in the land that God had given them. This was the time appointed by God for the offering of the wave sheaf. It is the exact commandment God gave to Israel in **Leviticus 23:10**, *Speak unto the children of Israel and say unto them, When ye come into the land that I give unto you, and ye reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest unto the priest.*

What occurred afterward was even more remarkable when considering the entire wave sheaf and Pentecost meanings. *13 And it came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, there stood a man before him with his sword drawn in his hand. And Joshua went to him, and said to him: Art thou for us, or for our enemies? 14 And he said, No; for captain of the army of Jehovah am I now come. Then Joshua fell upon his face to the earth, and worshipped, and said to him, What saith my lord unto his servant? (Joshua 5:13-14) darby.*

The Messiah makes Himself known sometime later to Joshua and the children of Israel once they had entered the promised land. This encounter is eerily familiar with the Messiah making Himself known to the disciples after His ascension...many parallels accentuate the importance of observing the Wave sheaf at the acceptable time.

Also, Alfred Edersheim adds another element to the importance of the New grain offering done on the 2nd day of Passover. *“On account of the number of such sacrifices, the feast of weeks was generally protracted for the greater part of a week; and this the more readily that the offering of First Fruits also began at this time. Lastly, the **bringing of the new omer at the Passover** marked the period when new corn might be used in the land, so the presentation of the wave loaves that when new flour might be brought for the meat-offering in the Sanctuary.”*

This passage reflects back to **Joshua 5:12**, where the Israelites were instructed to discard the old corn and *eat of the new corn on the morrow after the Passover.*

The Rabbins Solomon and Menachem, on the morrow after the first day of the Passover (1st-day UNLB).

II. But now, from that **second day of the Passover-solemnity**, wherein the sheaf was offered, were numbered seven weeks to Pentecost. For the day of the sheaf and the day of Pentecost did mutually respect each other. For on this **second day of the Passover**, the offering of the sheaf was supplicatory, and by way of prayer, beseeching a blessing upon the new corn, and leave to eat it, and to put in the sickle into the standing corn. Now the offering of the first fruit loaves on the day of Pentecost (**Lev 23:15-17**) did respect the giving of thanks for the finishing of barley harvest. Therefore, in regard to this relation, these two solemnities were linked together, that both might respect the harvest: that, the harvest beginning; this, the harvest ended: this depended on that, and was numbered seven weeks after it. Therefore, the computation of the time coming between could not but carry with it the memory of that second day of the Passover week; and hence Pentecost is called the 'Feast of weeks' (**Deut 16:10**).

One of God's people's common assumptions on the Sabbath mentioned in **Verse 11 of Leviticus 23**, is that it is the weekly Sabbath. But further investigation dispels that idea thereby affecting the day we celebrate The Feast of Weeks.

Unger's Bible Commentary makes the point that the Wave sheaf was presented on the 2nd day of the feast which is the day after the 1st Day of Unleavened Bread. The following were the offerings to be waved before the Lord—the breast of a private thank-offering (**Lev. 7:30**); the fat, breast, and shoulder of the thank offerings at the consecration of the priests, the so-called consecration of offerings (**Ex. 9:22–26; Lev. 8:25–29**); the firstling sheaf offered on the second day of the Passover (**Lev. 23:11**);

This comment by itself might leave questions as to whether it was actually the weekly or yearly Sabbath, but **Leviticus 23:11** in The Lexham English Septuligent supports a yearly Sabbath. Look at how it describes the wave sheaf. *Verse 11, And he will offer up the sheaf in the presence of the Lord, acceptable on your behalf. On the next day after the first, the priest will offer it up.*

This version is supported by the Targum's version. What are the Targum you ask? Let me quote the **Encyclopedia Britannica**:

“Some of the first translations of the Torah began during the Babylonian exile when Aramaic became the main language of the Jews. With most people speaking only Aramaic and not understanding Hebrew, the Targum were created to allow the common person to understand the Torah as it was read in ancient synagogues.”

Here is **Leviticus 23:10-16**, *And the Lord spake with Mosheh, saying : Speak with the sons of Israel, and say to them : When you have entered into the land which I give you, and you reap the harvest, you shall bring the sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest unto the priest; and he shall uplift the sheaf before the Lord to be accepted for you. After the first festal day of Pascha (or, the day after the feast-day of Pascha) on the day on which you elevate the sheaf, you shall make (the sacrifice of) a lamb of the year, unblemished, a burnt offering unto the Name of the Lord : and its mincha, two tenths of flour, mingled with olive oil, for an oblation to the Name of the Lord, to be received with acceptance; and its libation, wine of grapes, the fourth of a bin. But neither bread nor parched corn (of the ripe harvest) nor new ears may you eat until this day, until the time of your bringing the oblation of your God : an everlasting statute unto your generations in all your dwellings. And number to you after the first feast day of Pascha, from the day when you brought the sheaf for the elevation, seven weeks; complete they shall be. Until the day after the seventh week you shall number fifty days, and shall offer a mincha of the new bread unto the Name of the Lord.*

Some make the point that Sabbath mentioned in other translations means the weekly sabbath, not a High Holy day. I won't argue that point because, as we just read, the sabbath wasn't the original wording used; Passover was.

Who changed the wording? Your guess is as good as mine, but I suspect the Sadducees may have had a hand in changing it to Sabbath because they advocated counting from the weekly sabbath all along.

We have seen two other places in the Bible where unscrupulous men have changed the wording to fit an agenda concerning the Sabbath and Passover.

1st. the word Passover in Acts 12:4 was changed to Easter.

2nd. Christian believe Friday was the crucifixion day because the scriptures plainly state it was a preparation day. John 19:31 clears up the confusion, *Now then, since it was the day of preparation, to prevent the bodies from remaining on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews requested of Pilate that their legs be broken, and the bodies be taken away.*

This was the 1st day of Unleavened bread, spoken of in the same scriptures of Leviticus 23.

There may still be lingering doubts concerning this but let me give one more reference regarding this issue.

Alfred Edersheim, considered one of the leading authorities regarding the doctrines and practices of Judaism, offers this view, *The Expression, "the morrow after the Sabbath" (lev. 23:11), has sometimes been misunderstood as implying that the presentation of the so-called "First sheaf," was to be always made on the day following the weekly Sabbath of the Passover week. This view was adopted by the "Boethusians" and the Sadducees in the time of Christ and by the Karaite Jews and certain modern interpreters rest on a misunderstanding of the word "sabbath" (Lev. 23:24, 32, 39). As in analogous allusions to other feasts in the same chapter, it means not the weekly Sabbath, but the day of the festival. The testimony of Josephus (antiq. 3.248-249), of (Philo (Op. ii. 294), and Jewish tradition leaves no room to doubt that in this instance, we are to understand by the "Sabbath" the 15th of Nisan, on whatever day of the week it might fall.*

Symbolic Meanings

I must admit that the question of the symbolism regarding the Messiah and His miraculous meeting with Mary in the garden the morning after His resurrection is puzzling. At this meeting, He informed Mary not to touch Him because He had not yet ascended to the Father in heaven. This is assumed by churches of God is a symbol that the Messiah was the wave sheaf and being offered up as the sacrifice of a sinless life.

There are procedural issues with this supposition that doesn't allow for this. Had that been the case, as we have been taught, why wasn't the wave sheaf offered the prior morning when the wave sheaf would have been presented at the Temple....if this occurred on the Sabbath?

Here is the accounting of the exact cutting of the wave sheaf in Israel while the systems were still in place.

The accounting is from Alfred Edershims, *The Temple*.

Already on the 14th of Nisan, the spot whence the first sheaf was to be reaped had been marked out by delegates from the Sanhedrin by tying together in bundles, while still standing, the barley that was to be cut down. Though, for obvious reasons, it was customary to choose for this purpose the sheltered Ashes-valley across Kedron, there was no restriction on that point, provided the barley had grown in an ordinary field—of course in Palestine itself—and not in garden or orchard land, and that the soil had not been manured nor yet artificially watered. When the time for cutting the sheaf had arrived, that is, on the evening of the 15th of Nisan (even though it were the Sabbath), just as the sun went down, three men, each with a sickle and basket, formally set to work. But in order clearly, to bring out all that was distinctive in the ceremony, they first asked the bystanders three times each of these questions: Has the sun gone down? With this sickle? Into this basket? On this Sabbath (or the First Pass-over day)? And lastly, Shall I reap? Having each time been answered in the affirmative, they cut down barley to the amount of one ephah, or ten omers, or three seahs, which is equal to about three pecks and three pints of our English measure. The ears were brought into the court of the Temple, and

thrashed out with canes or stalks so as not to injure the corn; then parched on a pan perforated with holes so that each grain might be touched by the fire, and finally exposed to the wind.

Unger's Bible Dictionary describes the exact same events as Alfred Edershime but is more in sync with the New Testament in my opinion.

Let me try and break this down for you because if it's symbolism you want, then symbolism you'll get. The wave sheaf was more important than we ever realized, and the story needs to be told, so God's people have all the information possible.

On the morning of the 14th of Nisan or Aviv, delegates from the Sanhedrin made a short journey over the Kedron valley to select the field where the wave sheaf would be cut. Once selected, they marked out a spot bundling together three groups of stalks with the desired amount of grain while still standing. These three bundles were calculated to reap three omers of grain.

As stated by Edershime, this was barley grown in the sheltered Ashes Valley across the Kedron, where there was no restriction except the barley had to be grown in Palestine without being fertilized by manure or artificially watered. This was an essential element because one bundle did represent the Messiah.

Ironically, this was most likely occurring around the same time the Messiah was being examined by the priest and then by Pilate prior to His lifting up on the stake.

We know this because of what John reported about the Priest. **John 18:28**, *Then they brought Jesus from Caiaphas into the Praetorium, and it was early; and they themselves did not enter the Praetorium, so that they would not be defiled, but might eat the Passover.*

Being the ever so righteous Priest, they do not want to dirty their hands or be seen being defiled before such a momentous annual event. This occurred before the 9 o'clock hour, the first offering of morning Temple sacrifices, and the time the Messiah was hoisted up as reported in scriptures. It's also interesting that the Messiah was executed with two other men, making the count three.

Without getting into details about the event of the Messiah's death, we know the timeline of that 14th of Aviv/Abib because it was the preparation day before the 1st day of Unleavened Bread. The Torah restricted that bodies could not remain upon the cross past sundown and into the High Sabbath day” **John 19:31**, *Now then, since it was the day of preparation, to prevent the bodies from remaining on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews requested of Pilate that their legs be broken, and the bodies be taken away*

The Messiah must die and be placed in the tomb before sunset—before the beginning of the High day celebrations, the 1st day of UNLB.

(Sanhedrin, Mishnah IV.1; cf. Deuteronomy 21:23 ref. “His body shall not remain all night upon the tree”).

It's commonly believed the Messiah took his last breath around 3 PM when the Temple priest slew the Passover Lamb.

According to Josephus, this could have been “from the ninth hour till the eleventh” (3 PM to 5 PM) (*The Jewish War*, VI.9.3).

Whether it was 3 PM or 5 PM, there was this rush to remove the Messiah's body from His execution pole and prepare a hasty burial.

We also know that this probably took some time to claim the body and hastily prepare it with available ointments and herbs.

Here is where it gets interesting because, according to Ungers and Edershime, both at the same time, they are carrying the body of the Messiah to the tomb.

There was another procession of people and an unspecified number of Priest heading out across the Kedron valley to the prepared spot where the first fruit offering was bundled together earlier that morning in preparation for the celebration. Several events were taking place and happening all at once all around Jerusalem at this time. Slaughtered lambs were being roasted in preparation for the Passover meal on the evening of the 15th.

As the sun was going down on the 14th, three men stood ready with sickles to harvest the first fruits of the barley. As a side note, it didn't dawn on me that the evening of the 15th was the

beginning of the 15th and not the end of the day. We in this western world have been programmed to think the day ends at midnight, but that isn't how God looks at a day. The day ends and begins at the sun's setting in God's calculations.

The darkness is always before light (**Genesis 1:2-3**).

Afterward, God brings "light" to the world as the morning sun and defines it as a day: "*And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.*" This is repeated over several times in the following passages of **Genesis (1:8; 1:13; 1:19; 1:23; 1:31)**. This is the basic pattern as God created the first 7 days and is from sundown to sundown.

It's also repeated in Yom Kippur—the "day" of atonement—from evening to evening (**Lev 23:32**).

Now, back to the incredible events of that 14th and 15th as they unfolded. As the 14th came to a close, the Messiah was already or in the process of being laid in the tomb, and the stone door being sealed shut.

At the same time the sun was dipping under the horizon, the first fruit harvest began. A small contingent of folks stood around as the reapers took their positions

The reapers then began asking the crowd a series of questions garnering a response for each one.

Has the sun gone down? Their reply, Yes!

With this sickle? Yes!

Into this basket? Yes!

On this Sabbath Yes! *Emphasis Edersheim and Ungers the (or the First Pass-over day)?*

And lastly, Shall I reap? *A resounding yes! rang out from the crowd.*

With a swift and accurate thrust, the sickles cut the bundles down. These were the first of the first fruits to be harvested. Before this evening, no prior harvesting could occur. Once the First fruits were taken, the next 49 days, all wheat and barley harvest had to be completed before the feast of Weeks or (Shavuot.)

Perhaps when the grain was cut at that exact moment, the stone sealing the tomb slammed shut, echoing across the valley. This is all ironic, considering many of the same people who earlier

condemned the Messiah were perhaps the voices mixed in with those in the harvest procession.

Once the sheaves were cut, the preparation of the barley was to begin.

Passover had already begun, the 15th of Nisan or Aviv/Abib, and the Passover meal was important for everyone there. Did the Priest take the time to enjoy the Passover being such an important event? I can't say, but it would be reasonable because the Passover meal was essential to all of Israel.

Stop and think about this for a moment; the Messiah's physical life had come to a ghastly and abrupt end and lifted up as an offering to the Father. Some 1400 years earlier, the manna feeding the children of Israel also came to an abrupt end. They were then commanded to begin eating the New grain being harvested across the Jordan.

Once the Messiah became the first fruits of mankind, He also became the New creation spoken of in **2 Corinthians 5:17**, *Therefore if anyone is in Christ, this person is a new creation; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.*

In Joshua 5 is an account where Israel was about to cross the Jordan and God halted the manna. **Joshua 5:10-12**, *Darby, And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and held the passover on the fourteenth day of the month, at even, in the plains of Jericho. 11 And they ate of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened loaves, and roasted [corn] on that same day. 12 And the manna ceased on the morrow, when they had eaten of the old corn of the land; and there was no more manna for the children of Israel; and they ate of the produce of the land of Canaan that year.*

The manna the children of Israel had eaten for 40 years in the wilderness ceased, and they then were to eat of the new corn or grain being harvested.

John 6:35, *Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; the one who comes to Me will not be hungry, and the one who believes in Me will never be thirsty. 36 But I said to you that you have indeed seen Me, and yet you do not believe.*

The Messiah taught His disciples just as the manna had taught the children of Israel about the Sabbath. He also became the test figure, just as manna became the test for the children of Israel.

And, on the beginning of the 15th, Aviv/Abib or Nisan, if you like the Babylonia word, new corn or harvest of the land was put into place.

Since it was a new harvest, there was to be no leaven to be found, hence the 1st day of UNLB. It represented living in the kingdom with the Messiah in an unleavened state — a sinless form. For 7 days, the number of “fullness” or “completeness.”

But the story didn't end there. The grains of the first fruit were then brought to the Temple court. They then separated the grain from the stalks with canes so as not to damage the grain...it was essential they stayed whole.

Was this not a reminder of the Messiah's body being beaten? The whole grain was then parched by fire within a perforated bowl so every grain would be individually touched by fire. Every part of the Messiah's body suffered the torment of pain and death.

The grain kernels were then ground and sifted to a required fineness which was ascertained by a (Gizbarim) or treasurer of the Temple. To determine the fineness of the flour, the treasurer plunged his hand into the ground flour, and if any of the flour attached itself to his hand, they would continue the sifting process until his hand would come away clean.

Perhaps this foreshadowed the meeting with Mary in the garden where she wasn't to cling to the Messiah. Those are my speculations; disregard them if you wish.

After the tedious process where the three omers of the parched and sifted barley flour that had been roasted, and sifted, one omer was then separated from the rest.

Any excess remaining flour was redeemed and then could be used for any purpose outside the offering. The omer (approx. 14 cups) was mixed with a log (slightly more than 0.5 liter (0.14 U.S. gallon), of oil and a handful of frankincense.

Also, another year-old lamb was sacrificed, along with one quart of wine. Along with the omer of barley, a lamb and a quart of wine were also offered, all the symbols representing the Messiah.

Once prepared, the wave sheaf is offered on the morning of the 15th, with the morning sacrifices at the 3rd hour or 9AM.

The story doesn't end there; it's only the beginning because, from the 16th of Nisan or Aviv, the count of 50 days begins. The day the wave sheaf was offered was on the 15th of Aviv/Abib, and would have been on a Thursday, the high day of the 1st day of UNLB, because it says, on the morrow after the 1st day.

Fifty days later would land you on a Friday for the Shavuot or (feast of weeks), the next harvest festival.

Law of Sacrifice

Going back to where I started, there is one more point to make that is important to consider.

Reading again **Leviticus 23: 9-12**, “ *Moreover the Lord Spoke to Moses, saying, 10. “Speak to the children of Israel, and thou shalt say unto them, When you are come into the land which I give you, and are about to reap the harvest thereof, you shall bring a sheaf, as the first fruits of your harvest, to the priest, 11. and he shall offer up the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you. On the morrow after the first day, the priest shall offer this up.” 12. And on the day when you bring the sheaf, you shall prepare a lamb without blemish, of the first year, for a whole burnt offering for the Lord,”* (Thomson, Septuagint Old Testament)

The sacrifice of the wave sheaf of the first fruits of the harvest like all sacrifices is a sacrifice of dead things to the Lord. The wave sheaf of barley has been plucked and killed and is burned on the altar. The unblemished lamb has been slaughtered and is dead when burned on the altar.

God doesn't ask for a live sacrifice; He commands against such a thing.

The Bible's instructions to the children of Israel are very clear on the way sacrifices are to be offered to God.

Lev. 1:5 “ *And they shall kill the young bull before the Lord;”*

Lev. 1:11 “ *and they shall kill it on the north side of the altar before the lord.”*

Lev. 1:15 “*and the priest shall carry it to the altar and wring off the head.”* (birds head)

Every sacrifice must be a dead thing before it is placed on the altar as a sacrifice. The Messiah, when crucified, was lifted up on the North side of Jerusalem and the temple, no coincidence.

Lev. 18:21 “*And you shall not let any of your descendants pass through the fire to Molech”* which did require living sacrifices, usually that of young children. (NKJ)

The Bible expressly condemns sacrificing live children to Moloch.

In this context, when we consider the first fruits' wave sheaf offerings, they are dead offerings.

Those who believe the first fruits are a Sunday offering of the Messiah and Him being our living wave sheaf offering have not considered the law of the Torah.

I gathered this information from a website,” The Laodicean Times,” an article written by John H. Dugan making very critical points about the wave sheaf.

The sacrifice of the wave sheaf of the first fruits of the harvest, like all sacrifices, are of dead things, not living and growing things.

The wave sheaf of barley has been plucked, and the lamb accompanying the wave sheaf was killed and burned on the altar. Scriptures expressly dictate nothing living can pass through the fire to God.

Believing the Messiah rose on that Sunday morning around 31AD, after His evening resurrection, ascended to Heaven as our wave sheaf offering is a clear violation of that statute in the Torah. Why? Because the Messiah was alive. If He wasn't alive, then He wasn't our savior.

The Messiah specially told Mary Magdalene not to touch Him because He had not yet ascended to His Father. [See **John 20:17.**]

It's crystal clear by the Messiah's own words, He thought He was alive enough to tell Mary not to touch or cling to Him, depending on the translation.

Clearly, the living Messiah would not have been an acceptable wave sheaf offering after His resurrection as He was living, and no living thing may be offered as a sacrifice.

Once something is dead, it must immediately be sacrificed to the Father because if you wait, it becomes tainted and defiles those things around it.

Leviticus 2:11-12, *'No grain offering, which you bring to the Lord, shall be made with leaven, for you shall not offer up in smoke any leaven or any honey as an offering by fire to the Lord. 12 As an offering of first fruits you shall bring them to the Lord, but they shall not ascend as a soothing aroma on the altar.'*

Therefore the wave sheaf cut just as the 15th began had to be the offering for the Messiah. The wave sheaf was freshly cut,

and the Messiah had just died and been laid within the tomb around the same span of time.

Since Christ must have been a dead, slaughtered sacrifice to be an acceptable wave sheaf offering then He must have been our wave sheaf offering while He was in His grave. He could not have been our wave sheaf offering when they carried Him to His grave because the wave sheaf offering is in the morning. Joseph of Arimathea hurried to place Jesus in His grave before the first Sabbath began.

Let this run through your skull or bounce around in your brain matter for consideration. A dead corpse smells, stinks and begins to rot and ferment away into a leavening of a sort after a very short time. As God's people most certainly understand, the Messiah was in the tomb from Wednesday evening to the Sabbath evening (3 days and 3 nights), and he rose on the evening of the weekly Sabbath. No other sacrifice would ever be accepted for any reason after being dead for three days and nights.

If, as so many believe today, the wave sheaf was on the Sabbath day, the actual cutting and preparing the barley would have taken place at the beginning of that weekly Sabbath.

Back to my original question, why did the Messiah wait until the next day to ascend to the Father when clearly the narrative says the cutting and presentation should have occurred the evening before had it been the weekly Sabbath?

The Messiah is clearly the wave sheaf according to **1 Corinthians 15:20**, *But the fact is, Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.*

The symbolic meaning of the wave sheaf has always been one of harvest; my observation leads me to believe we in God's church have overemphasized the meeting in the garden on the next day (Sunday) after the weekly Sabbath. Yes, the Messiah had not ascended to the Father at that time, He said as much, but what difference then would it make if the wave sheaf was on Thursday (annual Sabbath) or Saturday (weekly Sabbath), He still was past the time of the actual wave sheaf being presented. If He had not yet presented Himself before the Father until mid-morning on Sunday, then my question is, why did He wait? What purpose did it serve

for Him or the Father to remain in whatever form here on earth another 12 – 24 hours after His rising from the dead?

Both ways of counting the wave sheaf are misaligned with the actual presentation of the wave sheaf. I feel a better explanation lies in the encounter in the desert before Israel crossed over into the promised land. **Joshua 5:13-14, Darby** *And it came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, there stood a man before him with his sword drawn in his hand. And Joshua went to him, and said to him: Art thou for us, or for our enemies? 14 And he said, No; for captain of the army of Jehovah am I now come. Then Joshua fell upon his face to the earth, and worshipped, and said to him, What saith my lord unto his servant?*

It wasn't until after the Passover and wave sheaf that Israel had entered the promised land that Joshua encountered the Messiah. Much like what we saw with the disciples in the garden event. It's my opinion, this event foreshadows the Greek Pentecost or Hebrew Feast of Weeks, in the New Testament, where the Messiah was making Himself known to His disciples as the captain of the armies of the heavens and leading us into the promised land.

Many other translations say count seven weeks after the Sabbath, but we in God's church have been told, "it was seven Sabbaths," a misquote, obviously.

References

Here are some of the other sources stating in one fashion or another the information I just presented, but keep in mind, there are many more references available.

Keyword search: (Pentecost, Shavuot, Feast of Weeks, Wave Sheaf, Lev 23:11-22)

Lexham Septuagint English Translation

Targum Onkelos

The Names of God Bible

Adam Clarke Commentary

The Temple, It's Ministry and Services by (Alfred Edershem)

Unger's Bible Dictionary.

John Lightfoot D.D.

Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers

The Wycliffe Bible Commentary

Benson Commentary

Barnes' Notes on the Bible

Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary

Matthew Poole's Commentary

The Layman's Bible Encyclopedia

The Schocken Bible

Insight on the Scriptures Vol. 2 Jehovah – Zuzim and index

Josephus (Antiq. 3.248-249), of (Philo (Op. ii. 294)

Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, Bk.III, X, 5-6).

The Encyclopedia Britannica 11th Edition vol. 21

Wikipedia, internet search (shavuot).

Josephus, a Pharisee, was quoted by Alfred Edersheim in the previous statement he wrote.

“But on the second day of unleavened bread, which is the sixteenth day of the month, they first partake of the fruits of the earth, for before that they do not touch them. . . They also at this participation of the first fruits of the earth, sacrifice a lamb, as a burnt-offering to God.

“When a WEEK OF WEEKS has passed over after this sacrifice (which week contains forty and nine days), ON THE FIFTIETH DAY, WHICH IS PENTE-COST . . . they bring to God a loaf, made of wheat flour . . .” Antiquities of the Jews, Bk.III, X, 5-6).

Were the Pharisees right in reckoning Pentecost by counting from the day after the First High Holy Day, or could there be a different motivation for counting after the first weekly Sabbath?

After the apostles' death, pagan substitutions began to filter in and eventually became codified and strictly enforced by the Roman Emperor Constantine at the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D. Under the tutelage of Constantine, who sought “unity” of the Christian Church, the Biblical Passover was rejected in favor of Easter Sunday. The pseudo-Christian church also fixed the date for Pentecost 50 days after Easter Sunday, in place of the pagan Floralia festival!

We in God’s church have been led to believe that the wave sheaf was done on the day after the weekly Sabbath that fell within the days of unleavened bread. But according to these sources, that’s NOT CORRECT. From what we just read, the wave sheaf was presented on the day following the 1st Day of UNLB (Unleavened Bread)

On the **2nd day of the festival**, you begin counting 7 weeks after the presentation of the wave sheaf.

As we have seen, many of God’s ways have been obscured from the eyes of God’s people for way too long. It’s time to remove the leavening of Satan's deceit from our lives and return to the Messiah’s ways.

Abstaining from leavening was commanded and was observed solely during the days of Unleavened Bread. Obviously, the Wave sheaf offering has more significance or symbolic meaning other than simply making an offering for the new crops.

Part of that meaning lies in **John 20:17** Jesus said to her, “Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.’” NASV

This, in my opinion, the Messiah ascending to the Father occurred at the same exact moment the wave sheaf offering in the Temple was being performed. I know for certain it happened on the same day as the wave sheaf offering, but the hour is more ambiguous. Why is this so important to our story? Because we are also told in **1 Corinthians 15:20**, *But the fact is, Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.*

The Messiah was the first of all deceased humanity to be raised from the dead to immortality. He was the first offering to the Father in heaven, the first of the first fruits. That is the basic meaning of the Wave sheaf and its foretold purpose. There had to be a newly formed grain to perform this very significant ritual; without the new grain, there was no ritual.

What type of grain was it? I offer the question because there are those claiming

In **Leviticus 23:9-14**, God instructs Moses to inform the Israelites... “bring the priest a sheaf of the first grain you harvest”. This was typically barley because it is the first grain to mature at the beginning of spring. Barley is most often planted during the Gregorian month of December, but that could alter somewhat depending on when the rainy season starts, which can vary. The unique properties of barley allow it to be planted in soil without plowing. It also can be planted in small sections of land inaccessible to animals used for plowing. Barley also can be grown in areas subject to less water and too dry for wheat. The Wilderness of Judaea east of Bethlehem is an area of minimal rain averaging 59 inches of rainfall days during the year. The grain matures as much as a month before the wheat and we have an example of this in scripture, **Exodus 9:31-32**, *Now the flax and the barley were ruined, for the barley was in the ear and the flax was in bud. 32 But the wheat and the spelt were not ruined, for they ripen late.* This happens about the end of April or the beginning of May, corresponding with the Hebrew month Abib/Aviv.

Would wheat be an acceptable offering to God for the Wave sheaf ritual? Honestly, I’m not sure, I can’t answer that question, but obviously, it’s a grain God created. My only thought would be why offer wheat when the Barley ripens before Wheat;

therefore, it would be the grain on hand for the wave sheaf offering.

One last observation, which comes from commentary out of the pages of the Schocken Bible on **Lev. 23:11-16**, says, “**The morrow of the Sabbath:** *The precise meaning of this phrase was the subject of lengthy debate among the ancient Rabbis. Traditionally in Judaism, seven weeks are counted until the Festival of Weeks (Shavuot), beginning on the day after the start of Passover. Another old interpretation understands the phrase to mean the Sunday after Passover. Fishbane (1988) proposes that an older meaning of the Shabbat, namely “Full Moon,” may be operative here, and that it solves the problems inherent in this passage.*”

The emphasis is that the moon is critical in determining when we begin counting the 50 days to Shavuot. Most believe the 1st day of Unleavened bread always has a full moon.

This introduces another consideration when determining when counting for Pentecost. According to ancient records, the 1st Day of unleavened bread will have a full moon; that can only happen if one begins counting from the 1st sighting of the crescent moon.

Concerning the new moons, there are over 300 references to the new moon in scriptures. The first new moon of God's year occurs when the sun is on or crosses over the equator, which also is the beginning of Spring. Spring must occur on or before the new moon to identify the beginning of the first month of God's Year.

It's misleading for someone to advocate the idea that the START of God's year does NOT need to be in spring. The new moon NEAREST THE EQUINOX, whether before or after, is only half right when used to start the first month of the year.

The problem, this thinking breaks the scriptures because, as we have already seen, spring is the cue for God's calendar to begin. The Equinox must occur, then the sighting of the New Moon, in that order.

Let's look at one of those scriptures to settle your concern and see if it's the way described in the Bible.

In **Exodus 13:2-10**, *And Moses said to the people, “Remember this Day in which you departed from Egypt, from the house of slavery; for by a powerful hand the Lord brought you out from this place. And nothing with yeast shall be eaten. 4 On this Day in the month of Abib, you are about to leave.*

This was the beginning of months, according to the previous chapter. **Exodus 12:2**, *“This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year for you.*

We also read in **Deuteronomy 16:1** *“Observe the month of Abib and celebrate the Passover to the LORD your God, for in the month of Abib the LORD your God brought you out of Egypt by night.*

Lastly, there is one more thing to mention in full disclosure. A thirteenth month is not referred to anywhere in the Bible; you can't find it; I know, I searched. The name Adar in Hebrew: אָדָר Adar; from Akkadian adaru; is the twelfth month of the year on the Hebrew calendar, roughly corresponding to the months of mid-February to mid-March in the Gregorian calendar. The 13-month or Adar Bet is based upon a line in the Mishnah (Jewish oral traditions).

Scripture does not give an exact number of months in a year, but one is forced to add a 30-day cycle every few years to correct the calendar. Once more, so the wave sheaf offering will have NEWLY harvested crops for an offering to the Father.

Establishing the 12th month in scriptures is relatively simple, but a 13th month is more elusive. There are a couple of clues to the Hebrews, adding 30 days within a couple of scriptures. I'll reference them and leave the digging up to you, the individual. **1 King 4:1-7** Ezekiel laying on his side 40 days at a time.

Two Witnesses

In Jewish law, it's the testimony of two witnesses that must convict criminals or legitimize many legal affairs. We had already seen an instance of this when the Sanhedrin required two witnesses to determine when a new month began by sighting the first crescent moon.

This law is based upon direct commands out of the Torah from God. **Deuteronomy 19:15**, *“A single witness shall not rise up against a person regarding any wrongdoing or any sin that he commits; on the testimony of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed.*

Here's why this is so important for the purpose of this book. In my estimation, the requirement of two witnesses also extends to God's directions. ***I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you today, that you will certainly perish quickly from the land where you are going over the Jordan to take possession of it. You will not live long on it, but will be utterly destroyed. (Deuteronomy 4:26).***

In accordance with these scriptures, I have concluded God put into action two ways to determine spring, the spring equinox, and the young barley ears. You cannot have one without the other; they work in unison to fulfill two parts of our recipe, direct observation of astronomical and agricultural events.

I've heard the question, “what if the barley doesn't ripen because of drought, war, or something else that directly affects the crops?” If one witness fails, then there is another one they can rely upon. “But, that's only one witness, not two as scriptures require,” you might reply.

God's seasons in action are more dynamic than we give Him credit for.

Ask yourself, when do birds and wildebeests know when to migrate? Wildebeests migrate every year about the time of the spring equinox; how do they know? How do geese know when spring and fall occur? These are just two examples; there are literally thousands of instances where nature signals to the world to come alive or move to greener lands.

These are also witnesses to God's creation and when spring begins. All one has to do is look at nature as a witness, and you may see God in action perhaps for the first time in your life.

Celebrating the New Moons

Now what? Do we celebrate the dawning of a New Moon by holding a church service? Do we perform a burnt offering as commanded in **Numbers 28:11-15 and 1 Chronicles 23:30-31**? Do we meticulously await the sighting of the crescent moon and then blow a shofar? If we blow the shofar on the New Moon, should we also blow it on the full moon as commanded in **Psalms 81:3**?

What is the proper way to proceed if we decide to honor God by direct observation according to His calendar?

Rosh Chodesh, or New Moon, was a day of festive meals and refraining from doing business in biblical times. The question we must ask is, did God command an all-out celebration of the New Moons, or was that something added?

In Jewish synagogues today, it's traditional on the weekly Sabbath to announce the coming of the new moon. It's considered a time to wish for a month of joy and vitality. This is done by chanting those wishes in a melody that hints at the holiday arriving in the new Jewish month (a Hanukkah tune to announce the month of Kislev, a Purim tune to announce the month of Adar, etc.).

There are also special readings from the Torah scroll to mark the coming of Rosh Chodesh and special prayers and blessings reserved for Rosh Chodesh itself, according to the website PJ Library.

That's in accord with what the Jews did and continue to do today, but how are we to observe Rosh Chodesh or New Moons? *Hear this, you who swallow up the needy, And make the poor of the land fail, 5 Saying: "When will the New Moon be past, as we may sell grain? And the Sabbath, that we may trade wheat? Making the ephah small and the shekel large, falsifying the scales by deceit, (Amos 8:4-5).*

The sentiment is also expressed like this: *"Why are you going to him today? It is neither New Moon nor Sabbath." And she said, "It is well." (2 Kings 4:23)*

These verses appear to define the New Moon days as a celebration, or at least the people were celebrating in ancient times.

There are other examples where celebrations around the time of New Moons are spoken of in scripture.

Here's the problem when considering what to celebrate according to the holy convocations God gave His people.

Leviticus 23 outlines commanded days of observance and are listed below. Except for the wave sheaf day, these are defined as times of 'holy convocation' (Holy Gatherings).

Those days are listed below in order.

- (weekly Sabbath) a commanded gathering.
- 14th of Aviv/Abib-Passover
- (7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread, 15th of Aviv/Abib) and Last Day (21st of Aviv/Abib) a commanded gathering.
- wave sheaf day (16th day of Aviv/Abib) No commanded gathering.
- (Feast of Weeks or Shavuot), a commanded gathering.
- (Day of Trumpets 1st day of 7th month) a commanded gathering.
- (Day of Atonement 10th day of 7th month) a commanded gathering.
- (7-day Feast of Tabernacles, 15th day of 7th month) - 1st a day commanded gathering; celebration through the 21st day of the 7th month, not a commanded gathering
- the 8th day (22nd day of the 7th month, Last Great Day), a commanded gathering.

What is suspiciously absent is a command to gather on Rosh Chodesh (the New Moons) or do any other functions. One has to ask, "If these are God's commanded Holy gatherings, why isn't the celebration of the New Moons present? My thinking, it was not a commanded gathering, only a commanded time of observation.

This is outlined in **Numbers 10:10**, *Also on the Day of your joy and at your appointed feasts, and on the first days of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be as a reminder of you before your God. I am the Lord your God.*"

Also, in **Numbers 28:11-15**, we see more directions in the same parameters as Numbers 10. What's not obvious in the Torah is a command to hold a sacred assembly for the New moons. The verses we do see concerning a sacred assembly on the New Moons

are similar to the following, “*Do not go on bringing your worthless offerings, Incense is an abomination to Me. New moon and Sabbath, the proclamation of an assembly— I cannot endure wrongdoing and the festive assembly. (Isaiah 1:13).*”

We know when the month begins by observing the New Moon, plain and simple. If one desires to have a meal or blow a shofar, knock your socks off, but it’s not a commanded assembly.

The second problem we have today is the absence of the Sanhedrin and Levitical priesthood, who were instrumental in these celebrations and observations. Like so many of God’s commands, this has now become personal observation and not governed by national leaders.

Is Action Required

Every aspect of our recipe is now ready to put into action; we're ready to proceed to the next level of our obedience to the Father and Messiah. As I began this booklet, some had given up concerning the calendar and felt the little blue card was sufficient. Okay, but you either have to totally reject what you have read or at least mull it over in your mind.

Personally, I can't ignore what I heard, read, and studied in the form of evidence. I can't unlearn what I've learned, and I can't unknow what I now know or unsee what I've seen. This plays heavily daily upon my mind and I feel like I'm pushing folks away.

According to my accounting of the calendar, we must adhere to God's recipe for setting Feast Days correctly. I can't make any declarations for anyone else but myself, but I desire all God's people to consider the evidence as I have.

Here is something to consider. In **Hebrews 9:23**, it states, *"Therefore it was necessary that the copies (the earthly tabernacle) of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, (the blood of animals and grain offerings) but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices (Christ) than these."*

If the calendar God created and wave sheaf are copies of heavenly things, should we simply be satisfied with the status quo? God's people don't think about the Sabbath day; we know it's the 7th Day. We observe that Day even to the point of death. God's people don't throw up their hands concerning what they should or shouldn't eat. **Leviticus 11** is clear on that. In fact, God's people scrutinize labels on cans and packages at the grocery store obsessively.

Yet, getting God's Holy days correct seems less essential; why is that? If everything else God commands is extremely important, wouldn't His Holy Days be equally so? I'm not speaking about whether God's people are keeping them, but my concern is— are they being observed in the correct time frame.

In addition, I hear folks say, "why change what we have always done?" If that's our response, then why keep the sabbath?

Why change from what the world does to what God commands in the weekly sabbath, Holy days, and food laws? Why rock the boat of the world in these matters? Can't we all just get along?

Concerning counting the Feast of Weeks, it's obvious that many Christian sources and historians understand the Hebrews counted from the 2nd day or Passover to the day of Shavuot before 70 A.D. After that date and the Christian church grew across the known world, it changed to fit a new narrative of counting from the sabbath with the days of UNLB.

God's Festivals in Scripture and History by Samuele Bacchiocchi makes this observation, *The problems outlined above regarding the date of Pentecost should caution anyone about the risk of being dogmatic on the date for observing the feast today. From a historical perspective, two methods could be legitimately used today to establish the date of Pentecost. The first is to **reckon the fifty days of Pentecost from the day after Passover (Nisan 16)**, which means that Pentecost could fall on any day of the week. This dating is supported by the traditional Jewish interpretation of Leviticus 23:15, which understood the phrase "**the morrow after the sabbath–Shabbat**" as referring to the annual Passover Sabbath. This method is still used by Jews today to date their Pentecost.*

The second dating method that could be used today is to reckon the fifty days of Pentecost from the first Sunday after Passover, which means that Pentecost always would fall on a Sunday. This dating is supported by the sectarian Jewish interpretation (Sadducees, Boethusians, Karaites, Samaritans) of Leviticus 23:15, which took the word "Sabbath" to mean literally the first Sabbath after Passover. Consequently, they counted the fifty days from the first Sunday after Passover. This method of dating Pentecost was widely accepted in the early Church, apparently even by those who observed Passover by the fixed date of Nisan 14.

My question to God's people, and I don't mean to sound facetious, but if there is ambiguity in scripture, are we supposed to automatically default to the Christian view? This change was widely accepted by the early Christian church but not authorized

by God in any fashion or form. They also changed Sabbath observance to Sunday and did away with God's other Holy days and food laws. Are we to accept those changes as well? According to the modern Christian world, yes, we are supposed to accept those changes.

We're not to be dogmatic over scriptures, since when? I see only dogmatic statements being made throughout scriptures regarding following God and not Satan.

God's ways are observable, if one was on a desert island with no means of counting time, all they needed to know is when the spring equinox occurred then sight the first crescent moon facing the east. You would then begin the count to the 14th of Abib/Aviv for Passover, the next day a full moon would mark the 1st day of UNLB and at sunset that day you would perform the wave sheaf offering, accomplished by observing the lunar cycle.

I also began by saying I was writing this booklet because I was influenced by the Bible and had a deep desire to follow its edicts. My fear is saying what's in my heart and soul, but that my actions would dictate to the world something different. I have fallen short in the past in not following God properly, but I yearn not to make those mistakes again. People can ridicule me all they want but not God and His ways because of me.

One more thing to cover, there are modern astronomical computer programs that give us the precise time of the crescent moons and full moons. In our little group, we have begun the task of verifying the program's accuracy by observing the New Moon compared to the date and time indicated on the program. The name of the program is called, "Stellarium" and is free to download.

With this program, one can track and forecast future dates for the Holy Day celebrations. I hear the voices ringing out, "aren't you practicing the same violations Hillel II had done? There are differences like no calculations are being made, and no postponements are considered. The predicted dates are still in accordance with the sighting of the New moon; the only difference is astronomical events dictate those perceived sightings. Not only that, even though they are predicted by the computer program, they still will be verified by direct observation. I cannot undo what I

have read nor can I remove it from my mind. God's ways are always with me, and I can't, no, I won't deny my creator, the question now is, "can you?"

At the end of this booklet, you will find a Holy day calendar with all the dates for holy convocations listed for the next few years.

The ball is in your court; what are you going to do?

Credits: I would like to give credit and thanks to Billy and Julie Stefek for their work in putting much of this information together.

Theodore Hawkins for his time creating Audio CDs.

Seasonal Calendar

Spring Feast

| Year | Passover * | Unleavened Bread | Feast of Weeks |
|------|------------|---------------------|----------------|
| 2023 | April 5 | April 6 – April 12 | May 26 |
| 2024 | April 23 | April 24 – April 30 | June 13 |
| 2025 | April 13 | April 14 – April 20 | June 3 |
| 2026 | April 3 | April 4 – April 10 | May 24 |
| 2027 | April 22 | April 23 – April 29 | June 12 |
| 2028 | April 10 | April 11 – April 17 | May 31 |
| 2029 | April 29 | April 30 – May 6 | June 19 |
| 2030 | April 18 | April 19 – April 25 | June 8 |

Fall Feast

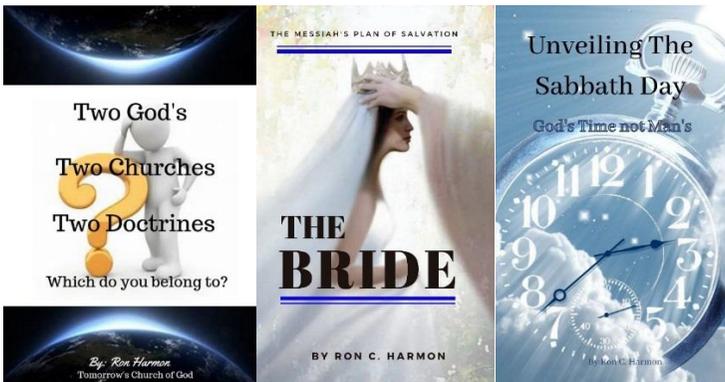
| Year | Trumpets | Atonement | FOT | LGD |
|------|----------|-----------|-----------------|--------|
| 2023 | Sept 17 | Sept 26 | Oct 1 - Oct 7 | Oct 8 |
| 2024 | Oct 5 | Oct 14 | Oct 19 – Oct 25 | Oct 26 |
| 2025 | Sept 24 | Oct 3 | Oct 8 – Oct 14 | Oct 15 |
| 2026 | Sept 13 | Sept 22 | Sept 27 – Oct 3 | Oct 4 |
| 2027 | Oct 2 | Oct 11 | Oct 16 – Oct 22 | Oct 23 |
| 2028 | Sept 20 | Sept 29 | Oct 4 – Oct 10 | Oct 11 |
| 2029 | Oct 9 | Oct 18 | Oct 23 – Oct 29 | Oct 30 |
| 2030 | Sept 29 | Oct 8 | Oct 13 – Oct 19 | Oct 20 |

Acronyms: FOT (Feast of Tabernacles, LGD (last Great Day).

- * means PASSOVER BEGINS AT SUNSET the evening before
- NEW MOONS are BIBLICAL (First Light) CRESCENT MOONS
- Stellarium Astronomy Software Program

Acronyms: FOT (Feast of Tabernacles), LGD (Last Great Day).

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