

DETERMINING HOLY DAYS

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The Seed of Abraham follows the biblical calendar, which means that the sighting (or mathematical determination) of the New Moon (the first crescent),¹ determines the first day for each biblical month. All the ancient peoples, including Israel, went by the sighting of the New Moons to begin their months. This is important because all the Feast dates of the Lord (Lev. 23) are determined from the first and the seventh New Moons/new months (the sighting of the first crescent/silver in the western sky after sundown) over Israel.²

The traditional Jewish community follows the rabbinic Hillel Calendar, which was accurate for about a thousand years, but today has wrong New Moon dates 78% of the time, either a day or two early, and therefore wrong Feast dates 78% of the time. That's why The Seed of Abraham doesn't follow the Rabbis, nor the so-called Messianic Community, which blindly follows the Rabbis in this and too many other things, and is more concerned with Jewish tradition than walking in God's Torah (Mosaic Law).³

For instance, on Sunday night, September 16th, 2012, the Jewish community began to celebrate their *Rosh HaShannah*,⁴ which should be the first New Moon of the seventh month, but the New Moon wasn't sighted until the next night. Therefore, *Yom HaKipurim* (the Day of Atonement) and *Sukote* (The Feast of Tabernacles) were also begun a day early by them and the Messianic community which follows them.⁵

Why don't the Rabbis just change/adjust their calculated calendar to reflect the actual sighting of the first crescent New Moons over Israel? The answer to this is because the calculated Hillel calendar of 300 AD was sanctioned by a Sanhedrin and it cannot be changed unless another Sanhedrin, with equal authority, authorizes the change. When another Sanhedrin like that will arise is anyone's guess and so, by their traditions the Rabbis truly nullify God's Word, as Yeshua Himself said (Matthew 15:1f.).

Understanding the biblical calendar is very simple. We need to know two things:

¹ The term New Moon used in this article speaks of the first crescent, without the aid of telescopes, etc., in the western sky after sunset. The modern term, New Moon or astronomical New Moon, is no New Moon at all, but the conjunction of the moon, which cannot be seen unaided because there is no sunlight on the moon at that time that can be reflected back to Earth. The astronomical 'New Moon' is directly centered in the path between the sun and the Earth at conjunction and so it can't be seen on Earth without opticals.

For more on biblical New Moons as opposed to modern New Moons, and how the ancients determined their months by the actual sighting of the New Moons, see Herb Solinsky's, [Treatise on the Biblical Calendar](#) (April 3, 2009), and its summarization, [A Concise Biblical Calendar](#).

² For why the New Moon sightings from Israel determine the biblical month for all believers in the world, ask for the PDF *New Moon Sightings from Israel or Anywhere?* It's because God brought Canaan to Israel to keep His Torah, which includes New Moons and Feasts obviously sighted from Israel.

³ For Jewish *things* that are anti-biblical see [G-d: The Missing 'o'](#), [Kosher—Biblical vs Jewish](#), [Talmud and Authority](#), [Tefillin—To Wear or Not to Wear?](#), [The Kipa](#) and [The Star of David](#).

⁴ See [The Feast of Trumpets](#) to understand why the first day of the biblical seventh month isn't *Rosh HaShanah*, a Talmudic tradition (that isn't mentioned in Scripture), but which overturns God's meaning and purpose for the day. One biblical name for the day is *Yom Teruah* ("the Feast of Trumpets" or the day of shouting unto God with unspeakable Joy!).

⁵ The biblical date for the Day of Atonement is the 10th day of the seventh biblical month (Lev. 23:26-27f.). The Jewish community, in 2012, kept it on the ninth day of the biblical month. The biblical date that begins The Feast of Tabernacles is the 15th day of the seventh biblical month (Lev. 23:33-34f.). In 2012 the Jewish community began it on the 14th day of the biblical month.

1. **When** does a New Moon begin a biblical month?
 - a. As explained above, the sighting in Israel of the first crescent of the moon in the western sky after sundown begins a new biblical month. We modern astronomy we can determine when this will occur before it actually happens, and so even if a New Moon isn't seen in Israel, say, due to cloud covering, the New Moon for that night is kept.
2. **Which** New Moon begins the biblical New Year?
 - a. Each month begins with a New Moon. Which one is the *first* New Moon that determines the biblical year? That's done by the New Moon *on or after* the Vernal (Spring) Equinox in late March. In other words, Moses, King David and the Sanhedrin in Yeshua's time waited for the New Moon that was either on or after the Vernal Equinox (about March 20th) to declare *that* New Moon as the first month of the biblical year.⁶
 - b. The Rabbis didn't do that in 2021 as they no longer follow the way King David, Isaiah, Peter and John understood which New Moon began the new year, and so the traditional (and Messianic) Passover was a month earlier than ours in 2021. The Rabbis were wrong as to when Passover was by a full month because they began their "first month" before the Vernal Equinox.
 - c. There are two other methods that vie for attention among Christians who keep the Feasts of Israel, and that is:
 1. the Karaite, "Barley in Abib," and
 2. the New Moon closest to the Vernal Equinox, irrespective of which side it's on. The problem with the New Moon closest to the Vernal Equinox, meaning that the biblical year can begin with the sighting of a New Moon on either side of the Vernal Equinox, is that if the New Moon appears say, 13-15 days before the Vernal Equinox, the ancients wouldn't have been able to know if the New Moon before or after the VE would be the closest and so this, even though it sounds nice, fails "the practical test."
 - d. One of several problems with the Karaite "Barley in Abib," which is a stage of growth in the barley maturing before harvest, is that no one knows how much barley "in the aviv/abib state"⁷ was needed to declare the New Moon *before* the Vernal Equinox to be the first New Moon of the biblical year. The Karaites teach that the sighting of any "barley in abib" anywhere in Israel, the day of the New Moon before the VE constitutes *that* New Moon to be the first, but this is a serious breach of God commanding Israel to bring their tithe and first sheaf of barley to Jerusalem for Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread.⁸

If you have any questions, let me know!⁹

⁶ These two points, that a new biblical month begins with the sighting of the New Moon over Israel, for that is the land which God gave to The Seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to celebrate His Feasts in and also which New Moon begins the New Year (the month of Aviv; Ex. 13:4; Dt. 16:1), are "givens." These two points were practiced by all the ancient peoples, especially in the Middle East, whether the Babylonians or the Egyptians, etc., and so God didn't have "to spell it out" for Moses, saying, "Sight the first crescents of the moon and that will be the beginning of your months," or "the New Moon on or after the VE will be the first New Moon of the year."

The basis for my understanding lies with Herb Solinsky. He's studied this for decades (when the New Moon for the new biblical year should be) and has written a number of pamphlets and/or books on the subject. He speaks of the different ways that Christian and Jewish people see that today, one of which is "barley in abib," and so if you want more understanding in this area, please read his papers and books two of which are, [Treatise on the Biblical Calendar](#) (April 3, 2009), and its summarization, [A Concise Biblical Calendar](#). His website is <http://www.biblicalcalendar.org> where he has a number of others teachings in this area.

⁷ Aviv is the Hebrew pronunciation for the first month of the biblical year.

⁸ See my paper, [Barley in Aviv and the Ten Plagues](#) to learn why the Karaite teaching is not biblical.

⁹ Revised on Wednesday, February 1, 2023.