

THE CRESCENT OR CONJUNCTION MOON?

By Elder Mike Abbaduska

This booklet is an important study of only one facet of Yahweh's Calendar. We thank the contributing publishers and those who assisted in the compilation of this material. The Assembly of Yah has an extensive library of tracts and studies that assists the believer in finding more of Yahweh's truth. The praise goes to Yahweh and Yahshua.

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INTRODUCTION

How do we find the first day of Yahweh's calendar? Is the biblical new moon of Yahweh's calendar year, Abib one, the first faint visible crescent moon, or the invisible astronomical lunar conjunction? Or we might state the question this way. This is one of the most important principles of the biblical year. We must be able to find the first day (Abib one) in order to count to Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread. Our ability to find the first day is paramount to determining the remaining months of the year and, consequently, each of the feasts Yahweh has ordained in His covenant that we should keep.

This is a critical question for us to answer. For if we use any incorrect way to find Abib one, we will be off the set apart times that Yahweh has given to His elect. In other words, if we are wrong in our understanding, it will be like keeping the weekly Sabbath on Friday or Sunday. Also, if Yahshua returns at an appointed time, which we know He will, we may not be there or be ready.

This seems to be a very complicated and divisive subject. Man makes things complicated, but Yahweh is clear and direct. There is already enough guidance in the scripture to find the truth of the calendar, but we have provided more information here for those who want it. The signs in the heavens given to the elect, called and faithful are simple and were easily seen by plain men, of old who only had to look up to see what was provided to them by the Creator. But, today there is a flood of information that overwhelms us and makes the considerations complicated. Yahweh is far above us, but He does provide clear instruction when He wants us to understand!

The Jewish or Nineteen Year Cyclic Calendar is not considered here for two reasons. First, it is a separate study. Second, the tribe of Judah departed from the true calendar of Yahweh in about 358 AD by leaving the command to visually see the new crescent. Also, the Jewish calendar, that WWCG (Worldwide Church of God) used, incorporates man-made postponements and inconsistencies that are not scriptural, therefore it is not considered.

The Elect shall know the truth so it behooves us to study this subject out and prove all things. Many credible expert sources have been gathered in this booklet. All the sources and bibliography are available for the individual's review.

BASIC SCRIPTURAL TRUTH

Here are a number of reasons why we should consider using the visible crescent rather than the invisible conjunction. Let us look at some facts about this major calendar issue. Remember, we need only two or three witnesses (II Cor. 13:1) to establish facts. There are many more here than three. We will look at scriptural, historical, archeological, and astronomical proof. This material has been condensed for easy reading. We suggest the reader do some original study and research.

In Genesis 1:14, we see that Yahweh made signs in the heavens for Set Apart Days. (Micra Kodesh)

Genesis 1:14: And Yahweh said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons (Kodesh Days), and for days, and years: {the day...: Hebrew between the day and between the night}

SIGN: (*Strong's Concordance* numbers) 0226 n1K'owth (oth)

Meaning: 1) sign, signal 1 a) a distinguishing mark 1 b) banner 1c) remembrance 1d) miraculous sign 1 e) omen 1f) warning 2) token, ensign, standard, miracle, proof.

Origin: probably from 0225 (in the sense of appearing); TWOT (*Theoretical Works of the Old Testament*)- 41 a; n f

Usage: AV (Authorized Version) usage- - sign(s) 60, token(s) 14, ensign(s) 2, miracles 2, mark 1; 79

The signs Yahweh intended are made for clear signals or markers. They are clear and observable to the most basic believer. These signs are for the establishment of kodesh days, the word in this passage is SEASON, OR *Strong's* number 4150, Moeds, or Kodesh Appointments. (See Yahweh's Festivals, Leviticus chapter 23.)

Here are some reasons and proofs that we should use the visible new crescent after the equinox for the establishment of Abib 1.

WITNESS # 1

To find out what sign Yahweh used to start our biblical calendar, let us study a few bible verses that use a sign, and see if it is a visible new moon or not. See these ten verses:

1 Sam. 20:5, 18, 24; 2 Ki. 4:23; Ps. 81:3; Isa. 66:23; Ezek. 46:1, 6; Amos 8:5; Col. 2:16

NEW MOON:

Chodesh VIM {kho'-desh) 2320 (*Strong's Concordance* numbers) Meaning: 1) the new moon, month, monthly 1 a) the first day of the month 1 b) the lunar month. From 2318 means to be new, or a polished sword, or scimitar or a curved sword. (*Hebrew Chaldees Lexicon* by Baker) Origin: from 02318; TWOT (*Theoretical Works of the Old Testament*)- 613b; n m Usage: AV new moon 20, monthly 1, another 1; 276

Every one of these verses deals with the use of the visible crescent in relation to a kodesh day.

WITNESS #2

Exodus 12:2 [KJV]: This month *shall be* unto you the beginning of months: it *shall be* the first month of the year to you.

2320 VIM chodesh {kho'-desh)

Meaning: 1) the new moon, month, monthly 1a) the first day of the month 1 b) the lunar month. From 2318, meaning to be new or a polished sword, or scimitar, or curved sword. (See *Hebrew Chaldees Lexicon* by Baker; also *Gesenius' Hebrew Chaldee Lexicon*)

Origin: from 02318; TWOT - 613b; n m

Usage: AV - month 254, new moon 20, monthly 1, another 1; 276

In this verse, the word month is used as the word moon (New moon) as seen in *Strong's*. Not to be confused, NEW MOON and MONTH are the same word used in verses dealing with Abib 1, the very start of the year. In these critical verses, they are the same. This is the very point we need to determine. Yes, there are over ten verses that use new moon. Also, in Ex. 12:2 and Lev. 23:24, month is used the same way to describe the same day, the first day of the month. But, are we sure it is a visible new moon? There are other words that are used for the word MONTH, but they are never used as a visible new moon. See the words YERACH, and LEBANAH in the *Hebrew Chaldee Lexicon*. Only the verses that describe Abib 1, are words used that mean new visible crescent (Hadash). There will be more on this later. This, in itself, is very definitive. Read the discussion below from the *Theoretical Works of the Old Testament*. (TWOT)

THE BIBLE MONTH

A cycle of the Moon Determines a Month

In the Bible the Hebrew word vahravach means "moon" as in Ps. 136:9; Isa. 13:10; Jer. 31:35; Ezek. 32:7; Joel 2:10 and 3:15. A different Hebrew word, e~_rach_ which consists of the same three consonants in the same order, means "month" as in Ex. 2:2; Deut 33:14; I Ki. 6:37-38; 8:2 and II Ki. 15:13. Before the addition of vowels to the Hebrew text, these words were written the same way; only a small difference in pronunciation, preserved by the Jews, distinguishes these two words. [Scholars accept this as valid evidence that a cycle of the moon around the earth determined a month in ancient Israel. *Salo Wittmayer Baron, M. D. Herr, Harold W. Hoehner, Jacob Katz, Leo Levi, Moses ben Maimon, John David Michaelis, Richard A. Parker, Waldo H. Dubberstein, Abraham J. Sachs*, write for complete bibliography]

Further evidence of this is seen by comparing Ps. 136:7-9 with Gen. 1:16, and then examining Gen. 1:14; the conclusions must be that Gen. 1:14 refers to the sun and moon and that both determine cylindrical matters (Luminaries). The cycle of the moon averages about 29.5 days, which is close to both modern and ancient peoples' values for the length of a month. The conclusion therefore seems inescapable that a cycle of the moon, which contains yahrayach (which means "moon"), determines cylindrical matters. The precise way in which a cycle of the moon relates to a month remains to be explained by other Scriptures.

TWOT LEXICON

EX. 12:2, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall 1612

0613.0 VIM (hadash) renew, repair. (ASV and RSV also restore.)

1613 (613a) Vj`IM (hadash) *new, new* thing, fresh.

1614 (613b) 7J-1n (hodesh) month, monthly, *new moon*.

H'dash is used in the sense of "repair" or "rebuild," referring to cities (Isa. 61:4), the temple (2Chr. 24:4, 12), and the altar (2Chr. 15:8). It is also used figuratively. Under Samuel, the kingdom was renewed at Gilgal (1 Sam. 11:14).

David wanted a right spirit, equivalent to a clean heart, renewed within him (Psa. 51:10 [H.12]).

The prophet asked for renewal as of old (Lam. 5:21). Yahweh renews the face of the ground, that is, gives it *new* life (Psa. 104:30), and he renews one's youth (Psa. 103:5). Job complained that Yahweh was bringing *new* witnesses against him (Job 10:17). The use of the verb as well as its derivatives is attested in Ugaritic (See UT 19:no. 843.) H'dash. *New, new* thing, fresh. This adjective, usually attributive, describes, as in English, a variety of physical objects (e.g., house, wife, cords, sword, garment, cruse, meal offering, king, gate, etc.). It is also used for non-material things, as name (Isa. 62:2), song (Psa. 149:1), covenant (Jer. 31:31), Yahweh's mercies (Lam. 3:23), heart, and spirit (Ezek. 36:26). While suffering, Job longed for the time when his honor was "fresh" in him (Job. 29:20).

Hcedesh. Month, monthly, *new moon*. Although this word properly means "*new moon*," it is commonly used as an equivalent to our word "month" because the month began when the thin crescent of the *new moon* was first visible at sunset. It was used along with the more rare yerah, from y'r^ah meaning "*moon*." (Note especially 1 Kings 6:1, 37, 38 and 1 Kings 8:2, where the terms are used interchangeably. Although yerap is never used as a numbered month, its use as a named month is attested in Ugaritic as well as the OT. (See UT 19: no. 1151.) The Hebrew calendar used a lunar month fitted into a solar year. This was done by adding an extra month approximately once every three years, because it was about eleven days less than the solar year. In early Israel the first

of each month, or *new moon*, was determined by observation and proclaimed officially by the blowing of trumpets. The month was considered to be thirty days (Note Gen. 7:11; cf. Gen. 8:3-4,) unless the *new moon* was observed earlier. (*Calendar Yahweh Gave to Moses, 1982, pp. 34-46 by Solinsky & Anderson*).

THE NEW TESTAMENT

COL. 2:16 New Testament Greek

MOON: 3561 voW.nvia noumenia {noo-may-nee'-ah} or vEoRrwlā neomenia {ne-o-may-nee'-a}

Meaning: 1) new moon 1 a) of the Jewish festival of the new moon

Origin: from a compound of 3501 and 3376 (as noun by implication of 2250); TDNT - 4:638,*; n f

Usage: AV - new moon 1; 1

HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS

WITNESS # 3

Only four of the names of the months used in Israel's earlier history are recorded in the Old Testament: Abib, the first month (Exo. 13:4), Ziv (Zin), the second month (1 Kings 6:1), Ethanim, the seventh month (1 Kings 8:2), and Bul, the eighth month (1 Kings 6:38). Most often the months were designated by number. (Note especially 1Chr. 27:1-15, where all twelve are listed by number.) Later the Babylonian names were incorporated into Hebrew. Of these, seven are used in the Old Testament: Nisan, the first month (Neh. 2:1), Sivan, the third (Est. 8:9), Elul, the sixth (Neh. 6:15), Kisleu, (Chisleu) the ninth (Zech. 7:1), Tebeth, the tenth (Est. 2:16), Shebat (Sebat), the eleventh (Zech. 1:7), and Adar, the twelfth (Est. 3:7).

Author's Note: The three tribes of Israel that went into the Babylon captivity assimilated the Babylonian names for the calendar, because their calendar was the same as the Hebrews at that time. This was the very time when they had the truth about finding the sign of the first month, Abib 1. In other words, the Babylonians used the first visible crescent after the equinox for Abib one, the start of their year. (See Study of Solinski and Atchison, *The Observed Calendar of the Second Temple*, Mar. 25, 2002, et al.) Not only that, but the calendar the Babylonians used pre-existed Israel and Babylon. The calendar that Yahweh established was and, is based on the visible new crescent and existed even before Abraham. It is not a new calendar made lately for Israel as some may think!

The first month, Abib/Nisan, began in the spring with the vernal equinox. This was commanded in Ex. 12:2, 18. But according to Ex. 23:16 and Ex. 34:22, the Feast of Ingathering (held in the seventh month, Lev 23:39) was held at the end of the year (perhaps the agricultural year). The Feast of Trumpets (Lev. 23:23-25; Num. 29:1-6) was held on the first day of the seventh month and is now celebrated as the Jewish New Year (Rosh Hashanah). This day is the 7th month, or seventh sighting of the new

visible crescent.

Thus, there is evidence of an older alternate calendar year starting in the fall. The use of Hcedesh "to devour those who sinned" (Hos. 5:7) may be that they will be swallowed up in another month.

When Hcedesh refers only to the beginning of the month, it is naturally translated "new moon." which was a feast day. It is one of the "appointed feasts" and is listed with the Sabbath and the pilgrim feasts as involving burnt offerings (2Chr. 8:13 et al.), and is also characterized by the blowing of trumpets (Psa. 81:3 [H. 4]; Num. 10:10). Since it was a feast, David's absence from Saul's table at the *new moon* was especially noticeable (1 Sam. 20:5ff).

Bibliography: Morgenstern, Julian, "The Three Calendars of Ancient Israel," HUCA 1: 13-78. "Supplementary Studies in the Calendars of Ancient Israel," HUCA 10:1-148. Wright, G. Ernest, "Israelite Daily Life," BA 18.50-79. THAT, I, pp. 524-29. C.P.W.

In this discussion and research on the moons, we see that the Bible is clear about what moon to look for to determine Abib1. This is just one study with multiple witnesses for the use of a visible crescent. There are many more.

WITNESS #4

From another source, the historical precedent is the visible crescent. As *Hastings Dictionary of the Bible*, art. "New Moon," P. 522 says, "There was no fixed calendar till the 4th century... and the New Moon was declared from actual observation. The eye witnesses were carefully examined on the 30th of the month. If no witnesses were available, then the following day was declared the New Moon." In *The Jewish Encyclopedia* article "New Moon", p. 243, it says, "The Sanhedrin was assembled in the court yard ("bet Ya' azek") of Jerusalem on the 30th of each month from morning till evening, waiting for the reports of those appointed to observe the new moon." (See also Mishnah R. H.1.7, ii. 5-7; Sanh. 102.) The article "Calendar, History of" p. 498 says: "The history of the Jewish calendar may be divided into three periods: the Biblical, Talmudic, and post-Talmudic. The first rested purely on the observation of the sun and the moon; the second on the observation and reckoning, the third entirely on reckoning." As *The Encyclopedia Judaica* art. "New Moon", p.1039 says, "Originally, the new moon was not fixed by astronomical calculations, but was solemnly proclaimed after witnesses had testified to the reappearance of the crescent of the moon. On the 30th of each month, members of the High Court (Sanhedrin) assembled in the court yard in Jerusalem, named Beit Ya'azek, where they waited to receive the testimony of two reliable witnesses; they then sanctified the new moon. If the moon's crescent was not seen on the 30th day, the new moon was automatically celebrated on the 31st day". [Author's Note: This reckoning by the new visible crescent seen on the 30th or 31st day of the moon's cycle is still done by the Karaites in Jerusalem. They are the remnant that never went to the Jewish Calendar.]

THE JEWISH LEADERS' OWN TESTIMONY

WITNESS #5

The Jewish Leaders Admit Error: In the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol five, subject: "Calendars," under heading: Tkufah, the editor states: "...the present system was expected to be replaced again by a system based on true values more akin to the earlier Jewish calendar in which the new moons (days of the phases) and intercalations were proclaimed on the basis of both observation and calculation." (editor's emphasis) (*Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 5 [1971] Jerusalem: Keter Publishing "Calendar", Ephraim Jehuda Wiesenberg pp. 43-50.)

WITNESS # 6

The ancient Hebrews had no almanacs or telescopes to figure out when the lunar conjunction would occur. The discoveries of Newton were millennia away. They had no choice but to use the visible crescent. 300 B C was the earliest knowledge of conjunction. B. L. VanderWaerden (*Journal of Hellenistic Studies*, vol. 80, 1960, pp 169.)

WITNESS #7

Psalms 81:3 says, "Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed [Heb. "keseh" meaning "new moon"], on our solemn feast day." (Feast of Trumpets). Since we know that the new moon and feast of the full moon must be the first and fifteenth days (Feast of Tabernacles) of the month, respectively, it naturally follows for us to ask whether or not there can be a full moon fifteen days after a crescent, or must we use the lunar conjunction in order to come out right? The truth is that "The necessary time for full moon varies from 13.73 to 15.80 days after conjunction" (over two days--depending on how the ellipse is oriented with respect to the sun and earth, since it is off center). (*The Calendar of Ancient Egypt* by Richard A. Parker). So from the crescent to full moon would have even greater variability than this. When 200 such months were fed into a computer at random, it was found that the full moon proper occurred the 12th day after the crescent only once; 13th day after, 44 times; 14th day after, 94 times; 15th day after, 60 times, and 16th day after, once. In other words, the full moon proper doesn't always fall on the 15th day. Therefore, Psalm 81:3 means just basically round--not hair splitting. (Solinski and Anderson, *The Calendar Yahweh Gave to Moses*, 1982).

WITNESS #8

Revelation 12:1-5 says that "there appeared a great wonder in heaven--a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet ... And she, being with child, cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered ... And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron." If an astronomer were to read this passage, he would automatically think of the constellation Virgo at the point in time when the

sun's path in the heavens crosses through her body. This event always occurs in mid-October, the exact time of the Feast of Trumpets in many years. Messiah's first coming was near this feast, as we think his second coming will be. We know it was a new moon that was visible to John. Trumpets can occur as many as 29 days after September 23^d (autumnal equinox), or as few as the same day, if the equinox and the crescent occur on the same day. Since John saw the moon under her feet, it couldn't have been an invisible lunar conjunction.

WITNESS #9

Each month contains 29 to 30 days. This is why Saul held a two-day festival (I Sam. 20:27, 34). David and Jonathan knew in advance that there would be a new moon festival the next day (I Sam. 20:5, 18), and the day after that, because of their mentioning waiting until the third day (I Sam. 20:5, 12, 19). But they didn't know in advance whether the crescent would appear the first day or the second. The very fact that two days were celebrated rather than just one is proof of their inability to predict with certainty the new moon day. The lunar conjunction would have been precise and unambiguous. The exact day is determined using that method. (If they had had the knowledge to calculate the lunar conjunction, which they did not, they would not have had to keep two days.)

WITNESS #10

In The Cairo Egypt Giza, (Archived Historical and Biblical Library) there are hundreds of letters from Jews "looking for the new visible crescent for Set Apart Days," prior to the time of Yahshua's Ministry. (*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, v. 14 (1955), pp. 271-274, "Some Consideration on the Nature of the Fifth Century Jewish Colony at Elephantine", Richard A. Parker.)

ASTRONOMICAL INFORMATION

WITNESS #11

Astronomers and Hebrew Bible students basically agree that Gen. 1:13-14 deals with visible lights. The conjunction does not deal with visible light. It is the dark of the moon that lasts from two to three days and nights. It may occur anytime during the day or night within a particular day. This conjunction, due to the ambiguity of 2-3 days of its cycle, is very difficult to use! as a sign for it is inconsistent and invisible. As we said also, one needs complicated astronomical tables or an almanac to find the timing of the occurrence. (*The Calendar Yahweh Gave to Moses*, Solinski and Anderson 1982, pg. 37.

WITNESS #12

Extent of a Biblical Month:

A month consists of a whole number of days rather than a smaller subdivision such as hours. A biblical reason for this is that Gen. 29:14 and Num. 11:29, 21 have the Hebrew expression chodesh yahmeem, and Deut. 21:13 and II Ki. 15:13 have the Hebrew expression verach yahmeem, both meaning "a month of days", but idiomatically "a whole month". An astronomical reason for a biblical month consisting of a whole number of days is that each new crescent first becomes visible close to sunset. Therefore, the extent of a month is from one sunset (the start of a legal day) to some later sunset.

A new crescent is theoretically visible 29 to 30 days after the previous theoretically visible new crescent. Cloudy weather can prevent a theoretically visible new crescent from being visible to human eyes. I Sam 20 helps to resolve questions that may arise due to a difference between actual visibility and theoretical visibility. (Calendar Yahweh Gave to Moses, Solinski and Anderson, 1982, pg 39)

The next section deals with the proof of when Yahshua died and when he was born. This is a critically important aspect of the calendar. For it is written "Messiah died according to the Scriptures." Yahshua used a visible crescent to set the timing of His Passover and death. He is our example.

THE YEAR OF YAHSHUA'S DEATH

WITNESS #13.

After limiting the possible years on the one side by 29 C. E., and on the other side by 33 C. E., there is only one year remaining in which the 14th of Nisan could have fallen on a Wednesday. This is the year 31 C. E. However according to *The Calendar Yahweh Gave to Moses*, Appendix 7, pg. 74 the 14th of the month could have fallen on a Wednesday in the years 28 and 34. Both of these years are only one year outside the possible range of years from 29 through 33. Therefore, they deserve additional comment.

Proof has already been presented showing that Yahshua's death did not occur later than 33 C. E., but there are two additional reasons why His death did not occur in 34 C. E. According to *The Calendar Yahweh Gave to Moses*, Appendix 8, pg. 75, if this were the year, then the wave sheaf would have occurred on Julian Calendar March 28, according to the Sadducee reckoning, or on Julian March 26, according to the Pharisee reckoning. Subtract two days for Gregorian dates. Based on the barley harvest dates, this is quite unlikely for the wave sheaf ceremony.

According to Mark 11:13, there were leaves on a fig tree about March 19-20 (Julian), 34 C. E. Page 378 of DALMAN states, as translated by the older author, "The fig tree (Ficus carica, kind tin) is with its leaves which unfold from the beginning of April after

long barrenness (page 100, 257), a significant visible witness of the arrival of summer and the passing conclusion of winter (Mt. 24:32; Mk. 13:28; Lk. 21:29f)... On March 25, 1908 in Hebron I found [the leaves of] the figs scarcely flattened out, only almond and white thorn". Thus it is even more highly improbable from the fig leaf evidence that this month could have been Nisan.

The three evidences together, namely, the 33 C. E. limit obtained from the life of Paul, the barley, and the fig leaves rule out 34 C. E. as a possibility.

The remaining two possibilities are 28 C. E. and 31 C. E., with the second of the two being much more probable. [In either case the first month of the year is the first one which does not precede the vernal equinox.]

And in either case the result disagrees with the Jewish calendar, which would have had the first month of the year be the previous month. Thus examining the date of Yahshua's death provides a strong proof that the intercalation method of the current Jewish calendar is significantly different from the intercalation method of the calendar in use among the Jews at the time Yahshua lived. 28 C. E. does not have 13 months, so it can not be this year. (Every three to four years Yahweh's Calendar adds a thirteenth month, because the orbits of the moon around the earth and the orbit of the earth around the sun do not equal the timing of each other concerning twelve months in one solar year.)

In addition to this instruction, we will add the research that the late Elder John Trescott compiled: "The Birth of Messiah-When" Pages one through twelve. Send for this booklet from the Assembly of Yah:

BIRTH OF MESSISH YAHSHUA – WHEN?

To begin to find the true date of the birth of the real Yahshua, we need to look at the Biblical record starting in the first chapter of Luke. For, if we can find out when John the Baptist was conceived and born, we can know of a certainty that Yahshua was born just 6 months later. Luke says of the pregnancy of Elizabeth with John the Baptist ... Luke 1:26..."And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from Yahweh unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth." Also verse 36..."And, behold your cousin Elizabeth, she has also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren."

A thorough reading of the message from Yahweh by the angel Gabriel reveals it was at this very time of the year that Mary conceived by the Kodesh Spirit. It was immediately after this that Joseph was also spoken to by the angel Gabriel. (Matthew 1:18-25) Mary went immediately to see her cousin Elizabeth.

COURSE OF ABIA

Now let us go back to Luke 1:5 ... "There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zachariah, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth." Then in verses 8-9, 11... "And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before Yahweh in the order of his course, according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to bum incense when he went into the Temple of Yahweh. And there appeared unto him an angel of Yahweh standing on the right side of the altar of incense."

In I Chronicles 24, we find that David had the number of priests divided into 24 divisions or courses. (There were 24,000 priests for the work of the house of Yahweh which was divided into 24 courses, I Chronicles 23:4). This shows in I Chronicles 24:10 that the eighth course was that of Abijah, of which Zechariah was one of the priests. Each division (called a course) had one chief priest who was chosen by lot to represent the whole division in the Temple for a period of one week. Abijah was the chief priest chosen for the eighth course. Zachariah was chosen by lot to be one of those who went into the Temple to bum incense before Yahweh.

The reason for David making this division is that there were far too many priests. All could not possibly serve in the Sanctuary at the same time. Each of these courses began their service at noon on one Sabbath and continued to noon on the following Sabbath. Josephus, Antiquities, Book 7.

The course served biannually. The first course would serve in the spring of the year, on the first week of the sacred year. The second course would serve in the second week, the third during the third week and so on for 24 weeks. Then they would start over again. Therefore, on each of the 48 weeks during the year, one particular course of the priests served in the Temple.

EXTRA SERVICE

Added to these 48 weeks were three extra weeks in the year during which ALL 24 courses served together. These weeks were the times of the three major Kodesh Day periods. Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the beginning of spring, Pentecost in late spring, and the Feast of Tabernacles in the early autumn or fall. Because thousands of people were always in Jerusalem at the three Kodesh Day seasons, all 24 courses of the priests stayed on in Jerusalem and served together in the Temple.

This valuable information makes it possible for us to know the specific week in which each of the 24 priestly courses served in the Temple. Remember that the first course began its service on the first weekly Sabbath of the first month (Abib) of the sacred year in very early spring.

In Luke 1:8-9, we find that Zachariah performed his service in the order of his course,

which was the eighth. This would mean he served in the 9th week. Why? Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread occurred during the 3rd week of Abib. Therefore, first week-first course. Second week-second course. Third week all 24 courses. Fourth week-third course. Fifth week-fourth course. Sixth week-fifth course. Seventh week-sixth course. Eighth week-seventh course. Ninth week-eighth course, the course of Abijah of which Zechariah was a priest. Zechariah served in the 9th week after the beginning of Abib, the first month in spring.

What days did Zechariah serve? We will try to approximate as closely as is possible without a computer. The ninth week in which Zechariah served was about Iyyar 27 to Sivan 5. That would correspond closely with the Roman dates of June 1 to June 8. He was told at this time his wife was going to conceive and bear a son. But Zechariah could not go home that next week Why? It was time for the week in which Pentecost occurred. All 24 courses were required to serve in that week, so Zechariah had to stay on one more week before he could go home to Elizabeth. That would be until about Sivan 12.

Luke 1:23 says, "And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house." In verse 24 we find that after he returned home, Elizabeth conceived. That was probably during the first week after he arrived at his home from Jerusalem. After all, Zechariah probably did not want to remain dumb any longer than necessary. Being a righteous man, he was anxious to see Yahweh's command fulfilled. It is reasonable that Elizabeth conceived in that first week after Zechariah came home.

SEASON OF JOHN'S BIRTH

The human gestation period is very near 280 days, or 9 months and 10 days. If we go forward from about Sivan 16 or mid-June, 5 B. C. E., we arrive at about the first of Abib, 4 B. C. E. [BCE=Before Common Era) It could not have been in a later year, for Herod was already dead before the spring of 3 B.C.E. The birth of John the Baptist was very near this time in the very early spring of 4 B.C.E.

Yahshua was just 6 months younger than John the Baptist. Luke 1:26-27. By adding 6 months to the time of John's birth (approximately Abib 1), we come to about the 1st of Tishri, or the first of the seventh month, which is the Feast of Trumpets. Approximately mid-September. We then have an early autumn birth for the Messiah Yahshua. The real Messiah was not born in the winter at all. Why do so many celebrate, supposedly, His birth in late December? We will come to that in a later chapter.

MORE PROOF--THE TAXING

Luke 2:1-5 shows that Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem to be taxed. This was not the only reason for them to go. If only for taxing, only Joseph, the head of the house, would, by law, be required to go. However, they both went, and Mary was about ready to deliver her baby, Yahshua.

The Law of Yahweh in Deuteronomy 14:22 commanded that the tithes of agricultural products be made at the end of the agricultural, or civil, year. This was at the end of the harvest in early autumn. The civil year for reckoning taxes and tithes was from early autumn to early autumn. In ancient Judea, the agricultural or civil year ended and began on the first of Tishri, the seventh month. This day was always the Feast of Trumpets.

At the time of this taxing, Judea was a mere "protectorate" of Rome. The Romans did not exact direct taxes from the people during this early period. Even though they were receiving tribute from Herod, the Romans allowed Herod to gather the taxes as he saw fit. It is known that Herod was endeavoring to follow the customary law of the Jews. This particular taxation was known to have occurred in 4 B. C. E. (*Encyclopedia Biblical*, cols. 3994-3996). Again, this taxation was very near the first of Tishri (early autumn), the ending of the civil year in Palestine, when such things were common.

While there, Mary gave birth. This is proof that Yahshua was born in very early autumn, close to, or perhaps on, the Feast of Trumpets.

NO ROOM IN THE INN

Have you ever wondered why there was no room in the inn? Since it was not required by Jewish or Roman law for Mary to even be there for the taxation, then why did she go? And why were there so many people there that there was no room in the inn? It was not customary for many people to crowd into a town for a period of time simply for taxation purposes. The reason these things are "difficulties" for many Bible scholars and others, and seem to be beyond explanation, is because most fail to comprehend the true time of year all these things took place.

Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem, not primarily for taxation, but to be there during the Hebrew seventh month of Tishri. During this particular month, Jerusalem and the immediate surrounding towns, including Bethlehem, were filled with people who had come to observe the Kodesh Days in this seventh month. The days are: The Feast of Trumpets, The Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles ending with the Last Great Day.

Bethlehem, about five miles south of Jerusalem, was considered in the "festival area" of Jerusalem. When people came to keep the appointed Kodesh Days of Almighty Yahweh, Bethlehem became filled with people. The Jewish historian, Josephus, mentions that it was common to see up to 2 million people go to Jerusalem during the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread. (See his writings... Wars, Book 6). Since Jerusalem was normally home to about 120,000, you can imagine what the housing situation would be like if 2 million people came to Jerusalem and the surrounding towns. No wonder there was no room in the inn in Bethlehem. The time Yahshua was born was at a season when Bethlehem was filled with people who were coming to observe the Kodesh Days of Almighty Yahweh at Jerusalem.

That is why we find Mary coming with Joseph. It was the custom of Joseph and Mary, and later their family, to obey their Creator in going to Jerusalem to observe Yahweh's

Kodesh festivals. (Luke 2:41; John 7:1-10) Since early autumn was the beginning of the civil year in Judea, a normal year-end taxation by Herod was also easily associated with this period of time. Joseph did not want to leave his wife, about to deliver a child, home alone, since he had to go to pay taxes and then observe the Feasts.

THE INN-WHAT WAS IT?

The "inn" where Mary and Joseph were to stay, had there been room, was not some ordinary caravan hotel. This word in Greek is used only two other places, Luke 22:11 and Mark 14:14. It means "guest chambers" and in both of these other two places is translated as such. These were temporary "guest chambers," temporary housing, if you will, for people in the Jerusalem area for the festival period. Since Bethlehem was one of the "overflow" towns which housed many of the people coming to Jerusalem for the Kodesh Days, it is readily understandable why such "guest chambers" would all be taken in Bethlehem as well.

These "guest chambers" were primarily in private homes of people who had opened up their rooms for the influx of people attending the Feasts. Since there was no room in the guest chamber, then Mary and Joseph had to reside in a stable. While there, Mary gave birth to Yahshua. Messiah was born and put in a manger.

ONLY SEASON POSSIBLE

There are many proofs that the only season possible for the birth of Yahshua was early autumn. Here is some more proof. If He had been born in any season preceding autumn, 4 B. C. E., He would have been far past 30 at the beginning of His ministry. The Scripture says He was about, or approaching, 30. See Luke 3:23.

Consider the season immediately after autumn, 4 B. C. E.--the winter. The plain and simple way to understand testimony of Scripture is that the flocks were still in the fields at night at the time Yahshua was born. (Luke 2:8) The flocks were never in the fields during the winter season. They were sheltered and kept in barns or in protected places during the winter season. From mid-October to mid-March was the cold rainy season. (See Clarke's Commentary on Luke 2:8.) The late autumn and winter seasons of Palestine were too severe for the flocks to remain in the open and unprotected from the rain, wind, and frost. Winter was so severe, Yahshua warned people that they should pray their fleeing should not be at that time. See Matthew 24:20.

Early autumn, 4 B. C. E., is the only possible period of time in which Yahshua Messiah could have been born.

SUMMARY

With all of the foregoing evidence, we can confidently place the birth of Messiah sometime in the early autumn, in the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. It could not possibly have been in any other season.

Messiah's ministry began in autumn, 27 C. E., right near His 30th birthday. This places His birth in early autumn 4 B. C. E. It places His death at year 31 C.E.

The time of the eighth course of Abiyah proves the birth of John the Baptist was about Abib I, 4 B. C. E., the early spring. Messiah was born six months after John. Again, in the early autumn. The civil or agricultural year ended at the time of the taxation in the early autumn. There was no room in the "guest chambers" because of the great number of people who had come to keep the Kodesh Day Feasts of the seventh month, as Yahweh has commanded forever. This supports an early autumn birth for Messiah during the Festival period of the seventh month, probably on or near the Feast of Trumpets.

The winter would have been far too severe for shepherds and their flocks to be in the fields, day or night.

Why have I constantly referred to the real Yahshua so far in this booklet? It is simply because in our world today another Messiah is being preached about, and has been, since the early apostles. (II Corinthians 11:4)

[Author's Note] The preceding study gives strong evidence that Yahshua died Wednesday, the 25th of April, 31 AD. This visible crescent moon that was used in Yahshua's sacrifice year, was on Wednesday, April 11th, just after sunset. This new moon was after the tkufah (equinox) [equinox is always the 20th or 21st of March].

SHOULD WE USE BARLEY AS SIGN?

The question is: Should we use barley (Green ears) as a sign to determine the proper moon for the beginning of the calendar year? Here are some reasons why it is not scriptural or historically right. Barley is a confirmation, not a sign, for the right timing of the month, or new visible crescent moon.

1. When we look at the calendar scriptures to find the first day of the month in Gen. 1:13-15, and Ex. 12:1-2, we see no mention of barley at all to define timing of the moon, or confirmation of the days or moon. It is not part of the instructions Yahweh gave to us to find the month of Abib

2. Israel could harvest the grain and wave it anytime. They could not eat of it till the wave sheaf was accomplished. (See also Joshua 5:11) The word *then* [they shall bring] (aze) in the Hebrew, the meaning is later. See following verses. The eight varieties of barley are ripe and ready to wave from the first week of April to the first week of May every year. (Request letter from agricultural Minister.)

Leviticus 23:10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then (Heb. aze) ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest:

Leviticus 23:14 And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your Elohim: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. (Israel could harvest barley any time, but could not eat it till it was waved. Therefore the harvest could even be early prior to U/B)

3. Israel did not have barley in the Exodus from Egypt after the destruction. They did not use barley for a sign for 40 years. They knew when the days of Unleavened Bread were in the wilderness.

4. It is also very probable that the tribes of Judah and Levi did not use barley when they were in captivity in Babylon for 70 years . But they knew when the feasts were.

5. Many people who came to feasts in Jerusalem for U/B, came from 500-800 miles away. (See Acts 2) They needed at least two months ahead of time to travel all that distance on foot. Barley could not have been used as a last minute confirmation of the moon or Kodesh Day timing.

6. On a new moon in the spring, barley can be in the head and green (green ears) and still not be ripe for a wave sheaf two weeks later. When barley is green, in that early stage, it is full of water and takes two to three weeks to ripen depending on sun and temperature. Barley may or may not ripen in two weeks for the days of UIB. (Request letter from the Minister of Agriculture of Israel sent to Richard Barvelle concerning barley growth.) The point is that seeing green ears of barley on an early new moon that is not Abib one, does not guarantee it will be ripe for the wave sheaf. (Ripening can be delayed.)

7. Because barley is available for the wave sheaf from the first week in April to the first week in May, using barley as a confirmation of the early moon before the equinox, or after the equinox is not a confirmation of what is the proper moon. It does not resolve the selection of a moon or calendar rational to find Abib one. (The new visible crescent must be after the equinox)

8. The waving of the barley omer is an event that occurs during the days of UIB. It is not a sign.

STUDY CONCLUSION

There is something deeply spiritual about the calendar that we should consider also. We are children of the light. And that light shines brighter as the day of His return grows close. (Prov. 4:18)

1 John 1: 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Yahshua Messiah his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

We feel we have provided more than adequate information to prove the visible new crescent was the sign that Yahweh gave to Moses for the initiation of the calendar year. We also have found that this calendar, established by Yahweh (Yahshua of the Old

Testament) was used by Abraham and other patriarchs to keep Yahweh's Kodesh Appointments (Statutes).

We hope this booklet has added some information for further consideration of the calendar timing of the Kodesh Days of Yahweh. The more facts we know about the truth, the more obvious our choice and direction should be. This material was compiled and presented for the body of Messiah for righteousness and unity's sake. The deception about the truth is growing today in every area of scripture study. We remind and challenge the faithful to study and prove all things. But, we also know that Yahweh has to reveal the truth to His people. Therefore it is imperative to pray and ask for wisdom and understanding in all spiritual things. The desire and need to walk in the light is a spiritual requirement of Yahweh's people. The new visible crescent, as it increases to a full moon, is a clear metaphor of Yahshua's return and our attending the wedding feast, when all things are restored. We say: Come quickly, Yahshua our King!

Elder Mike Abbaduska Assembly of Yah Marseilles, Il. 61341

Other Readings and Reference Studies

Birth of Messiah Yahshua--When? by John Trescott

A Calendar Discussion, by Herb Solinski and Wayne Atchison

The Calendar Made Simple, by John Trescott

The Calendar Yahweh Gave to Moses, by Herb Solinski and Rob Anderson

The Calendar of Yahweh Revealed, by David Kenders

The Chronology of the Exodus Passover, by John Trescott

The Encyclopedia Judaica vol 5., Section: "Calendar"

He Arose--But When? by Y.A.I.Y.

The Jerusalem Timing, by Mike Abbaduska (A one hour DVD)

Seminar on the Calendar, by Herb Solinski (A seven hour DVD)

The Sign of Jonah, by John Trescott