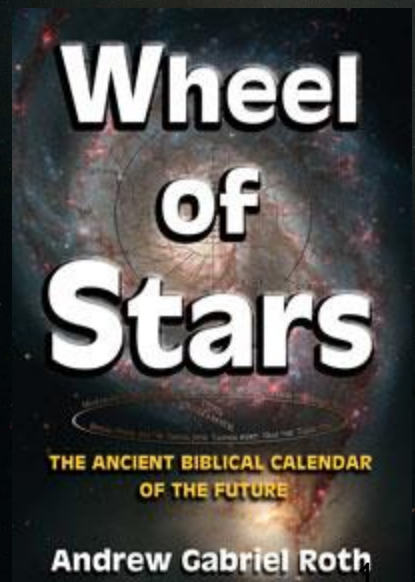


# Wheel of Stars: The Four Calendar Laws



## The Four Laws Are...

(to be proven later...)

- 1) The New Moon nearest the start of spring (time of Vernal Equinox) is always Abib.
- 2) The New Moon is defined as a Dark Moon, starting from the sunset that follows lunar conjunction.
- 3) Keep Shabbat where you live but Feasts on Jerusalem Standard Time.
- 4) The omer count begins on the 16<sup>th</sup> of Abib, ends on Shavuot 50 days later and can hit any day of the week.

# Introduction

- Since the publication of my calendar book *Wheel of Stars* in 2010, advocates from all schools of thought on the matter have united in one idea at long last—“Man, that’s a long, deep book!”
- **To be sure, the material is challenging because it cuts across at least half a dozen intricate and painstaking disciplines** such as astronomy, archaeology, history, mathematics, etc.

## Introduction

- **Another issue of course is the extreme calendar division and debate that exists in the Hebrew Roots movement.** It seems everyone—including me—has the proverbial “skin in the game” and we fight hard for what we believe.
- For myself however, this was not always true. I saw where the evidence led without preconceived ideas, and then only to help friends who asked. ***Still, we need to know: How did we get here?***

## Introduction

- **At this moment, I have counted nearly two dozen “calendar flavors” in Hebrew Roots today**, each one having passionate advocates and claims of ancient originality.
- Some folks think the Hebrew day begins at sunrise. Others think you can't have Shabbat without the moon. Still others put all their faith in the sun and don't use the moon at all for their feasts.

## Introduction

- **Just with reckoning the Hebrew month**—what one would think would be a simple matter—**there are about 10 different theories that will result in an “argument zone” of up to 4 days** for either Pesach or Sukkot, and many other feasts as well.
- **And yet, if ancient Israel argued over a 4 day period for their feasts, they couldn't function as a nation!** What did they know that many don't know now?

# Introduction

- And during the years since *Wheel of Stars* was published, I have had many opportunities to tell and refine re-telling the great calendar story in response to terrific questions and feedback from others.
- Gradually, **it became easier and easier to distill the vast intricacies of the original Biblical calendar down into four basic laws**, but before I could do that, I needed to learn a valuable lesson...

## Introduction

- **Like so many before me, I was confronted with a dizzying array of Biblical, historical and scientific data,** and I suffered from what I called “calendar overload”, as I struggled to put all that I saw into one overarching system.
- What was needed instead **was to think of the whole Biblical calendar as having separate mechanisms,** like organs in the body, each with their own function.



## Introduction

- For example, I used to try to see how the 360 math in Daniel and Revelation related to harvest cycles, only to find it didn't. The 360 math was about prophecy, not planting and harvesting, or what we call a “practical calendar”.
- I realized this because you can't plan your seeding time when your calendar is out of date for 2 weeks and it won't be balanced for another 2,000 years.

## Introduction

- Instead, the 360 day/year component was a ***mechanism*** that worked on its own within the larger system.
- The same was true of the Shabbat, which is a 7 day “hard count” from Creation week on forwards, having nothing to do with the sun, moon and stars that were made during that time. **Abba YHWH didn't count to the Shabbat by the sun and the moon which were made on day 4!**

# Introduction

- After a ton of research, **an overall pattern of mechanisms, gears and systems emerged**, kind of like a very intricate pocket watch, and I came to the conclusion that the stars, sun, moon and earth worked together in symmetrical and mathematically precise manner.
- **There had to be at least four major calendars**, each for a different purpose, given in Scripture and mechanisms also.

# Introduction

- **This presentation is only about one of these calendars**—the one everyone wants to argue about!
- How did this calendar work? Did barley rule? Was it solar? Based on fixed stars? Or something else totally exotic?
- In order to find out, I had to follow the “Sherlock Holmes Rule”: Once you eliminate the impossible, whatever left, however improbable, must be the truth!

# Introduction

- **But before we can show this calendar, we need to first work our way backwards in time**, starting from what is most familiar to us believers right now.
- The documentation for what I am about to say is well-addressed in *Wheel of Stars* and many other related presentations.
- But I am trying for the sake of clarity to keep this part as short and efficient as I possibly can. ***Let's start with...***

# The Rabbinic Calendar

- **The Rabbinic Calendar has served the Jewish people very well for more than 1,600 years.**
- It times of great tribulation, exile and persecution, the Rabbinic Calendar allowed Jews scattered all over the world to independently calculate and agree on the timing of the Feasts without the need for a central priesthood, Temple, or Sanhedrin, since all of these were gone.

# The Rabbinic Calendar

- It is probably a direct result of the Rabbinic Calendar that Jews have survived intact as a culture, to live to see the day when Israel became a state and the Sanhedrin was re-established in Jerusalem.
- These are wonderful things to be sure—and **I grew up on this calendar that my family still uses—but ultimately the Rabbinic Calendar is a product of the exile.** It is not what they used anciently.

# The Rabbinic Calendar

- Most Jewish historians agree the Rabbinic Calendar was made public for all Jews in 359 CE, by Rabbi Hillel the Second.
- **The Talmud then records intensive calendar debates until Maimonides' time in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, when he published the final procedures.** But even if we assume the 359 CE calendar was not changed (it was—a lot)—there are other powerful reasons we can't make it much older than this.



# The Rabbinic Calendar

- One of the most telling proofs is the fact that **Rabbi Akiva attempted to lay down intercalation laws in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century which erupted into controversy.**  
<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/8063-iggul-of-rabbi-nahshon-gaon>
- This proves the Rabbinic system as we know it today could not have been used a century earlier; **it could not be the calendar of the 1<sup>st</sup> century and Y'shua!**

# The Rabbinic Calendar

- As if that isn't devastating enough, even **the most ancient component of the Rabbinic Calendar—the 19 year Metonic Lunar Cycle—only goes back to 432 BCE.**
- It was named after a Greek astronomer (Meton) who was living in Babylon at that time. Others think Meton reviewed the research of the astronomer Kidnu, which was from about 500 BCE, **but no serious scholar puts the cycle much earlier.**

# The Rabbinic Calendar

- The problem of course was that **Moshe died about 900 years before this time**, so whatever calendar he used to keep spring and fall feasts on time it could not be even the most ancient form of what we call the Rabbinic Calendar now!
- And of course there was an even more ancient calendar than Moshe's, kept by Abraham and others, that the Rabbis can't speak to at all. But others think they can...

# The Karaite Calendar

- I will deal with the specific problems of the Karaite system when talking about the actual laws later.
- However, we need to understand that **the Karaites themselves are not ancient either—they come from 9<sup>th</sup> century CE Iraq and their calendar was heavily influenced by Muslims** living with them. The veneration of the crescent moon is derived from Midianites and other pagans.

# The Karaite Calendar

- **It was Gideon himself who removed crescent moon ornaments off of the Midianites and their camels**, made a fire, and destroyed them in Judges 8.
- And from Midian (Arabia) comes Islam many centuries later, essentially following the same system.
- To be fair to the Karaites though, some of their positions date back many centuries prior to their formation in medieval Iraq.

# The Karaite Calendar

- The problem though is **those positions were held by a group known as the Sadducees, whose traditions were cast aside and never dominated in Israel.**
- The 1<sup>st</sup> century Jewish historian Josephus tells us that for a time Sadducees and Pharisees competed for power with various pagan and Jewish rulers in Israel. **This created confusion in the calendar as it toggled between systems.**

# The Karaite Calendar

- I should also point out that the Sadducees, or *Tzadakim* as they were originally called, **are not the same people as the Zadokite priests that served from the time of David to the end of the Maccabean Revolt.**
- However, the original Zadokites did probably go into desert places like Qumran after protesting a corrupt Temple system, like the Essenes did.

# The Karaite Calendar

- The Talmud then tells us that 300 high priests—1 every Yom Kippur—died that day, over a 300 year period.
- **The number is probably an exaggeration, but I have traced a period from about 135 to 10 BCE when Israel stopped counting the 50<sup>th</sup> year as a Jubilee**, throwing off other systems in the process. Then in 10 BCE, the Talmud tells us Rabbi Hillel the Elder intervened.



# The Karaite Calendar

- Hillel the First (his other name) called a meeting of the elders and persuaded them to get back on the right calendar.
- We know this also because **Josephus** **gives us Land Sabbaths that first were keyed to a 50 year cycle, then only a 49 year cycle and then back to 50 again after 10 BCE.** This is the calendar Y'shua said went back to Moshe, because the Pharisees sat on his throne (Matt. 23:1-2)!

# The Karaite Calendar

- As a result, the earliest form of what we now call the Karaite calendar was rejected by the historians of the first century, Josephus and Philo, and also rejected by Y'shua the Messiah himself!
- **What is now Rabbinic Judaism grew up out of the Pharisaic Calendar Y'shua knew, kept and endorsed. It's a shame the Rabbinics changed it also! Both sides are wrong! Karaites and Rabbis!**

# The Karaite Calendar

- So if neither the Karaite nor the Rabbinic systems can lay claim to even being proper in Y'shua's time, how can anyone imagine they were 14-15 centuries earlier than this, as the calendar of Moshe?
- But the fact is, **the real calendar has been with us all along. It's details go even further back than Moshe, to Genesis, to "signs, seasons, days and years"**! Let me show you how it really worked and still works even now!

## Previewing the laws

- The best way to describe the real calendar is to talk about **2 major and 2 minor laws.**
- The major laws deal with regulating the “big pieces” of calendar, such as **the Hebrew year and month respectively.**
- The 2 minor laws come into play once the overall structure of the major laws are in place and well understood. This calendar’s official name is “Equinox Pre-Metonic”.

## Previewing the laws

- I will also mention purely in passing that **the pre-Moshe calendars were solar in nature and that the moon was not used to count towards Feasts** until after the Exodus (Exodus 12:1-2).
- The systems before this time counted fall to fall, on a solar schedule, and this enabled the most ancient Biblical peoples to seed and harvest on time, but that's a story for another time.

## Previewing the laws

- My point is only to show that Moshe had to use another system, one not purely solar yet not Rabbinic or Karaite either, to help him tell Israel when to seed and harvest.
- That system most likely was inspired by Moshe's time in Egypt. **The Egyptians kept a solar calendar, a 360 day calendar, a star calendar and a lunar calendar all at the same time!** Abba YHWH then commanded it all into place.

## Previewing the laws

- With this foundation laid, we can now move on to the first of the four steps.
- Remembering Revelation 12:1-2, the calendar hierarchy is given in the image of the woman: **Crown (or wheel) of 12 stars on her head, clothed in the sun, moon at her feet, and of course the earth must be below the moon!**
- So we must begin with the stars and their critical role at calling the Hebrew year...

Next in Part 2...  
The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!





Intermission...



# The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!



# The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!

- We will get to our first rule in a moment, but first a little more background is needed. **The fact is, the stars have been commanded by Abba YHWH as being part of His original calendar from Genesis 1:14-19.**
- The role of the stars (or *mazzaroth*) was further defined in the book of Job which is also very ancient. Let's see this up close!

## The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!

Elohim said, 'Let there be lights in the vault of heaven to divide day from night, and let them indicate signs, seasons, days and years. Let them be lights in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth.' And so it was.

**Elohim made the two great lights: the greater light to govern the day, the smaller light to govern the night, and the stars. Elohim set them in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth, to govern**<sup>36</sup>

# The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!

**the day and the night and to divide light from darkness.** Elohim saw that it was good. Evening came and morning came: the fourth day. (Genesis 1:14-19)

- So the sun, moon and the stars “govern the day and the night, divide light from darkness”. **Where then is this role for the stars utilized in the calendar schools of today? *Now look at this...***

## The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!

As long as earth endures: **seed-time and harvest**, cold and heat, **summer and winter, day and night will never cease.**

(Genesis 8:22)

- These terms “seed-time and harvest and summer and winter” are known as **equinoxes and solstices today.** In order to track them properly, the role of the stars must be taken into account! ***Let's now see what the book of Job says...***

## The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!

Can you bind the chains of the **Pleiades**, or loose the cords of Orion? **Can you lead forth the constellations in their season,** and guide the Bear constellation with her satellites? Do you know the ordinances of the heavens, or fix their rule over the earth?

(Job 38:31-33- Matara)

- The Pleiades was anciently used to help determine the time of spring.

## The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!

- Therefore, whether it's "constellation in its season" as some render it or "constellations in their season" as I have it, **the point is the stars were being used to determine the start of spring, the start of the Hebrew calendar!**
- Other words in Tanakh, such as ***tekuwfa*** and ***teshuvah*** mean "equinox" or "turns of the year" as Scripture defines it. ***For instance...***



## The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!

The heavens are telling of the glory of Elohim; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their utterances to the end of the world. **In them He has placed a tent for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out**

## The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!

**of his chamber; it rejoices as a strong man to run his course. Its rising is from one end of the heavens, and its circuit (*tekuwfa*) to the other end of them;** and there is nothing hidden from its heat.

(Psalm 19:1-6 NAU)

- It is very interesting that the next line after this, the perfect solar year, is “the law of YHWH is perfect, converting the soul”!

## The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!

- This strongly suggests that part of Abba YHWH's "perfect Torah" is keeping His feasts on time! ***And then there's this...***

[Samuel] used to go annually on circuit (***shana b'shana ve'saviv***/שָׁנָה בְּשָׁנָה וְסָבִיב) to Bethel and Gilgal and Mizpah, and he judged Israel in all these places.

(1 Samuel 7:16 NAU)

## The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!

- The word *saviv* literally means “to go around in a circle”, and the fact that Samuel is said to do “a yearly circle” strongly proves he knew that same “yearly circle” was driven by the sun, because he always returned to where he started from, which does not happen in a lunar year!
- And then there’s “the turns of the year”...

# The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!

You shall celebrate the Feast of Weeks, that is, the first fruits of the wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering **at the turn of the year** (*tekuwfa ha shana*/ תְּקוּפַת הַשָּׁנָה)-  
Exodus 34:22 NAU

- There were two “turns of the year”, which again relates to the equinoxes, in this case, the one in fall, for Sukkot. Here is the other one, in spring...

## The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!

Then the prophet came near to the king of Israel and said to him, "Go, strengthen yourself and observe and see what you have to do; **for at the turn of the year** (*teshuvah ha shana*/תשובת השנה) **the king of Aram will come up against you.**"

(1 Kings 20:22 NAU; see also: 1 Kings 20:26, 2 Chronicles 24:23; 36:10)

➤ And finally, I'd like to return to Job 38...

# The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!

Can you bind the chains of the Pleiades, or loose the cords of Orion? Can you lead forth the constellations in their **season** (**בְּעֵתוֹ**), and guide the Bear constellation with her satellites? Do you know the ordinances of the heavens, or fix their rule over the earth?

(Job 38:31-33- Matara)

## The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!

- **This word *eth* (עַת) means “season”** and is often a synonym for *moedim* or appointed times/feasts that must coincide with those seasons, such as here...

Therefore, I will take back My grain at harvest time **and My new wine in its season** ( **בְּעֵתוֹ וְתִירוֹשֵׁי בְּמוֹעֲדוֹ וְהַצִּלְתִּי** ). I will also take away My wool and My flax given to cover her nakedness. And then I will



## The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!

uncover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and no one will rescue her out of My hand. (Hosea 2:9-10 NAU)

- In addition, ***eth*** actually refers to the seasons themselves—directly—which the moedim technically must be attached to in order to be relevant. **In other words, you cannot have Pesach without barley, Sukkot without grapes, etc. Let's see...**

## The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!

If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments so as to carry them out, then I shall give you rains in their **season** ( **בְּעֵתָם** ), so that the land will yield its produce and the trees of the field will bear their fruit. (Leviticus 26:3-4 NAU)

- ***Eth*** clearly means the agricultural year, and this is far from the only example I have to share with you...

## The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!

He will give the rain for your land in its season ( **מִטַּר-אַרְצְכֶם בְּעֵתוֹ** ), the early and late rain, that you may gather in your grain and your new wine and your oil.

(Deuteronomy 11:14 NAU)

They all wait for You To give them their food in due season ( **לִיתֵת אֲכָלָם בְּעֵתוֹ** ).

(Psalm 104:27 NAU)

## The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!

- Therefore, since the stars bring in the ***eth*** per Job 38:32...
- ...and the ***eth*** are either synonyms for the moedim or the structure to which the moedim are inextricably attached to the ***eth*** in which they occur (i.e. you can't have Pesach in summer, etc.)...
- ...it must be the case then that the stars bring in the ***eth*** and the ***moedim!***

## The Lost Role of the Stars...Restored!

- The question then is: Since **we know the Scripture commands the stars to bring in the Hebrew year**, how exactly is this done?
- Well, with the right foundation now laid, you are going to see that complete answer with your own eyes.
- The fact is, the star's role in the calendar has survived, and it is coming up next!

Next in Part 3...

Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!



Intermission...



# Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!





## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

- Recalling our discussion on barley and the Karaites, **this group of Jews believes that the year is literally “held hostage” until the barley is ripe enough.**
- At the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> month, **these people check to see if the barley is in “green ears” or Aviv.** If it is, they declare that new moon Abib. If not they add a leap month and call it 2<sup>nd</sup> Adar.

## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

- Because the word “aviv” is linked to both barley and the actual name of the first Hebrew month, Karaites believe this was the original system for determining when a leap month happened in ancient Israel.
- The problem is though, **there is no Biblical record of either going on a barley hunt or using barley to set the year.**

## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

- The fact is, the barley had nothing to do with the timing of Exodus **because the entire crop was ruined and couldn't be inspected** (Exodus 9:31)!
- **And the barley isn't mentioned for 42 years as spring and Pesach come and go.** It was never mentioned as part of their calendar, even when Joshua is keeping Pesach in Gilgal (Joshua 4 & 5)!

# Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

- But perhaps the most important fact is this: The barley ripens when the sun returns to a particular point in space and shines down on the earth at a particular angle! If you can predict spring, you can predict barley without looking at it!
- There also has to be a standard timing linked to vernal equinox, because the barley ripens over 3 weeks in different areas in Israel.

## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

- **The Karaites don't even have Biblical precedence to prove where to look for the barley or what percentage of greenness equals "aviv".** This process comes only out of their traditions, not the Torah!
- This is highly ironic, given the fact that their sect arose in criticizing the Rabbis for adding oral traditions to the Torah, but it must be okay for them to do just that!

## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

- But there is a way to calculate the timing of the ripening of barley through most of Israel, and it has to do with finding the right New Moon to count the year from...

### **Observe and guard the month of Abib**

and celebrate the Passover for Yahweh your Elohim, because it was in the month of Abib that Yahweh your Elohim brought you out of Egypt by night. (Deut. 16:1 Matara)

## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

- Again we must remember that **Moshe was a prince of Egypt with advanced astronomical training that goes far beyond merely looking at a slivery moon near a barley field!**
- Egypt used the stars to tell them when to plant and harvest, as did every other culture around Israel, **so if Israel didn't know, they are stupidest people in the Middle East.**

## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

- But the fact is, **Israel did know how to seed and harvest by the stars, as the advanced astronomical language in the Tanakh proves.**
- Also there is the testimony of two historians descended from Hebrew priests and kings—Josephus and Philo—who were eyewitnesses to the calendar that both Y'shua and the Pharisees used. ***Let's hear their testimony now...***



## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

In the month of Nisan...the beginning of our year, on the **14<sup>th</sup> day of the lunar month,** **when the sun is in Aries,** (for in this month it was that we were delivered from bondage under the Egyptians,) the law ordained that we should every year slay that sacrifice which I before told you we slew when we came out of Egypt, and which was called the Passover. (Josephus, Antiquities, 3:248)

## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

- At first glance, “the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the lunar month of Nisan, when the sun is in Aries” seems a very precise astronomical convergence of star, sun and moon data.
- **But Josephus is relating his astronomy as it existed at the time of the Exodus** some 1500 years before his time and 3400+ years from our time, **not how the stars are positioned today!**

# Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

- In 128 BCE, the Greek astronomer Hipparchus discovered what we now call “precession of the equinoxes”.
- **Hipparchus figured out that every 72 years, a so-called “fixed” star’s position in the sky will shift a degree backwards from where it started.**
- So, after 2,160 years ( $72 \times 30$ ), that star has “precessed” 30 degrees.

## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

- **That is why Aries the Ram is no longer the first constellation of spring**—the fixed stars precessed so that the previous sign from the previous month—Pisces—is now the first constellation of spring.
- But the key time marker has nothing to do with constellations. **It has to do with the Vernal Equinox, which remains a fixed moment each year.**

## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

- In Moses' time, **the beginning of the sign of Aries and the beginning of the Vernal Equinox were one and the same timing.**
- That is why the historian Philo decided to not use the short hand "in Aries" when explaining the same secrets that Josephus just did about 50 years later. **Instead, he uses terms that prove the Exodus sky was frozen in Hebrew memory...**

## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

Moses puts down **the beginning of the vernal equinox as the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the year**...for it is through the bounty of nature that the seeds which are sown to produce the necessary food of mankind are brought to perfection. (Philo, On Moses, 2:222)

- This phrase “beginning of the vernal equinox” is a huge and critical clue for piecing the system together.

## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

- Philo recognizes the importance of dating the start of the Hebrew Solar Year at the “beginning” of spring, **because this will give a fixed point in time completely independent of the stars precessing backwards over time.** It will never go out of date! Therefore “beginning of vernal equinox” is understood as being the same as the when the sun begins to be in Aries.

## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

- Then, going back to Josephus, we see the importance of the 14<sup>th</sup> day of that lunar month, which is the time of the full moon.
- Putting it all together it means this: The New Moon nearest VE is Abib and the first full moon of Aries is Passover!
- This proves, stars, sun and moon cycles are all part of the Hebrew calendar.



## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

- But an important question and this point might be: **How do we know the ancient Hebrews were keeping these kinds of detailed records?**
- To answer this question, what follows are quotes from across the spectrum of Jewish tradition, from Scripture, Dead Sea Scrolls, Talmud and important modern commentaries on their calendar...

## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

Then taking [Abraham] outside, [YHWH] said, 'Look up at the sky and **count** (*saphar*) the stars if you can. Just so will your descendants be,' he told him.

(Genesis 15:5 NJB)

- **Saphar/sefer** is the same word/root for “writing, scroll, or book”, so Abraham is literally commanded to record the stars for prophecy understanding!

## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

Yahweh, Builder of Jerusalem! He gathers together the exiles of Israel, healing the broken-hearted and binding up their wounds; **He counts out the number of the stars, and gives each one of them a name.** Our Lord is great, all-powerful, his wisdom beyond all telling.

(Psalm 147:2-5 NJB)

➤ There's way more where these came from!

## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

The chief of the Beth Din then said: "It (the new moon) is consecrated," and all the people repeated after him: "It is consecrated; it is consecrated." **Whether the new moon was seen at its proper time (after twenty-nine days) or not, they used to consecrate it.** R. Elazar b. Zadok said: If it had not been seen at its proper time it was not consecrated, because it had

## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

already been consecrated in heaven (*i.e.*, of itself). R. 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?"

Rodkinson Mishnah,  
Rosh Hashanna, 2:4-5

## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

On the 4<sup>th</sup> day of the week of the sons of Gamul in the first month of the first year. On the 5<sup>th</sup> day in the week of Jedaiah corresponding to the 29<sup>th</sup> day of the lunar month, which falls on the 30<sup>th</sup> day of the solar month.-Mishmarot A (4Q320), as translated by Geza Vermes, The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English, p. 336

# Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

**IV...and on 13 and 14 Pisces; and on 15 and 16 Aries; on 17 and 18 Taurus; on 19 and 20 and 21 Gemini; on 22 and 23 Cancer; on 24 and 25 Leo; on 26, 27 and 28 Virgo; on 29 and 30 Libra...Tishri. On 1 and 2 Scorpio...4Q318, The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English, p. 361**

## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

On the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the (solar) month, 12 fourteenths of the moon's surface was covered and thus it enters the day. On the 6<sup>th</sup> day, 13 fourteenths of the moon are covered and thus it enters the day. On the 7<sup>th</sup> day of it, 14 fourteenths of its surface is covered and thus it enters the day.- 4Q317, The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English, p. 360.



## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

- This is just a very tiny sampling showing the extent of which ancient Hebrews recorded stellar, solar and lunar data while also tracking the Moedim. Not only would the idea of Hebrews not keeping these lists be un-historical, **it would also make them, as I said before, the most primitive civilization in the history of the Middle East! So here's our rule again, officially speaking...**

**Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!**

**Rule #1: The New Moon  
nearest the start of spring  
(Vernal Equinox) is always Abib!**

## Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

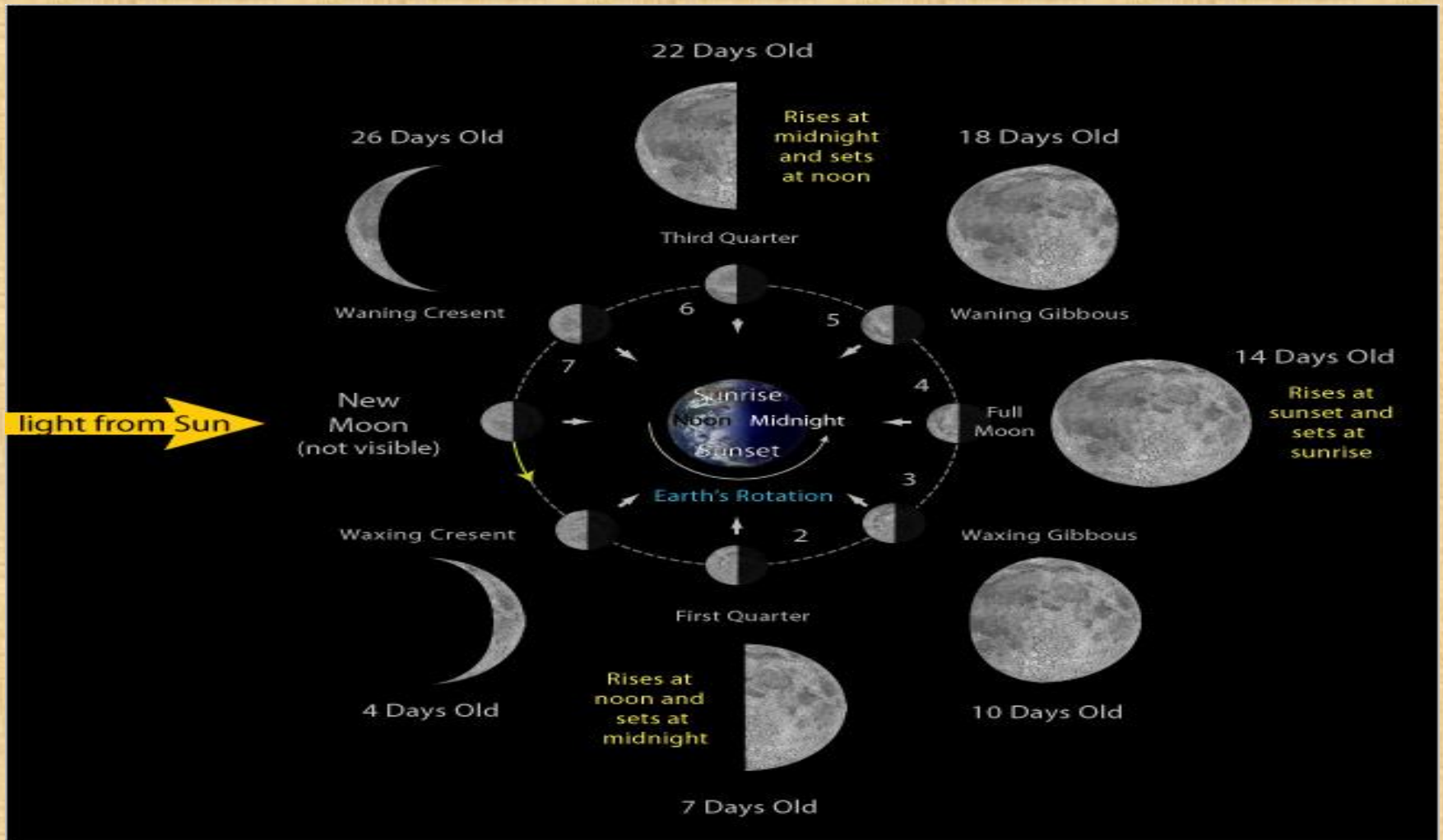
- Another way to put the same rule is: **The Full Moon that happens first, within 30 days on or after Vernal Equinox, must be Passover.**
- **This is because Passover can never take place prior to VE day or the start of spring,** but my research has shown that even if the full moon precedes VE by a few hours on the same day, it's still Passover.

# Rule #1: How the Stars Set the Year!

- Relating these facts to Josephus' description, the first constellation of spring (then Aries, now Pisces), anchors for us a time roughly between March 21<sup>st</sup> and April 19<sup>th</sup> in our current calendar.
- The first full moon that happens during this time—even on VE day itself—is Pesach.
- Josephus again is thinking about Exodus, when 0 degree Aries and VE were one and the same timing! ***Next rule is...***

# Next in Part 3...

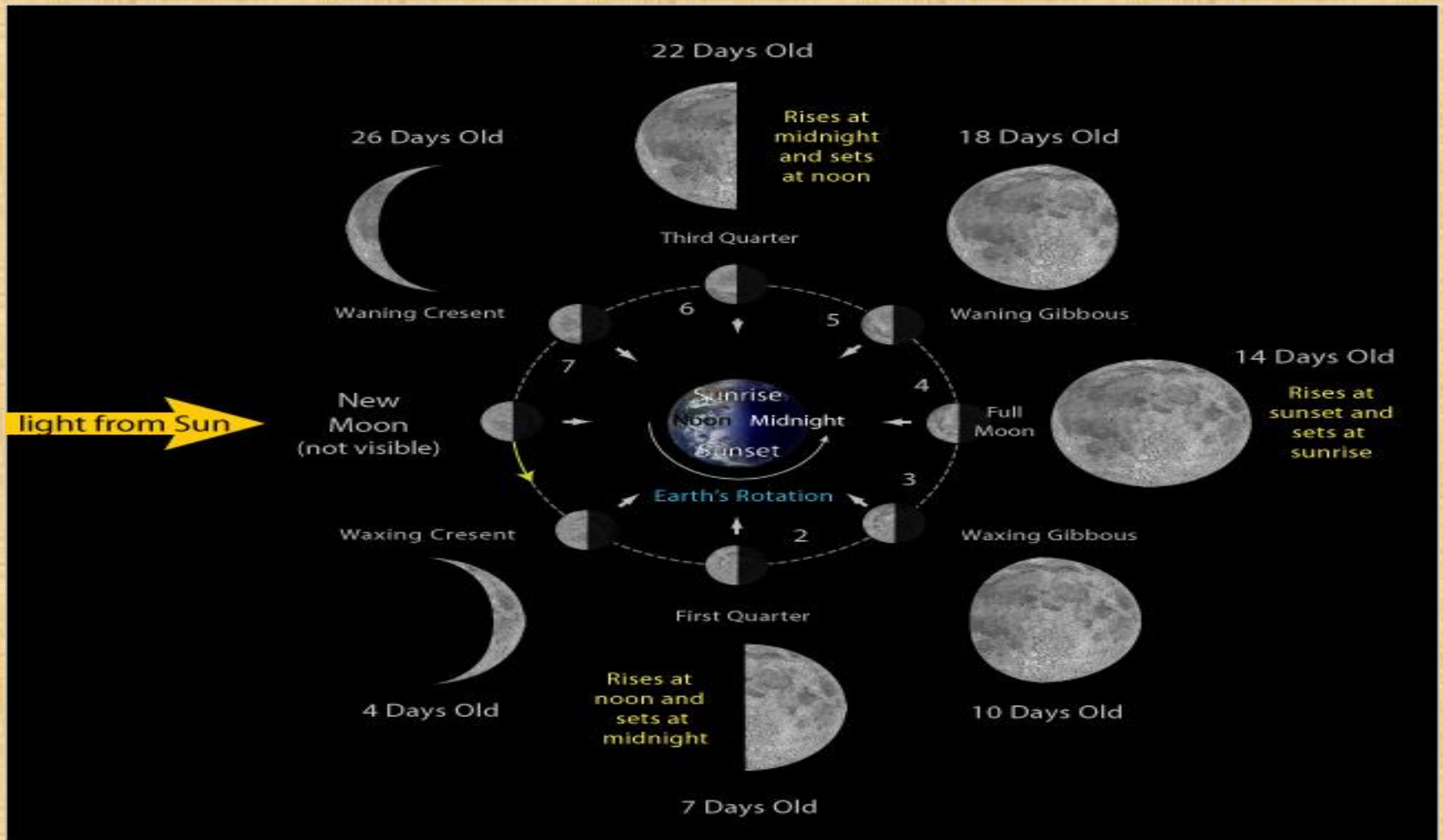
## The REAL Hebrew Month!



Intermission...



# The REAL Hebrew Month!

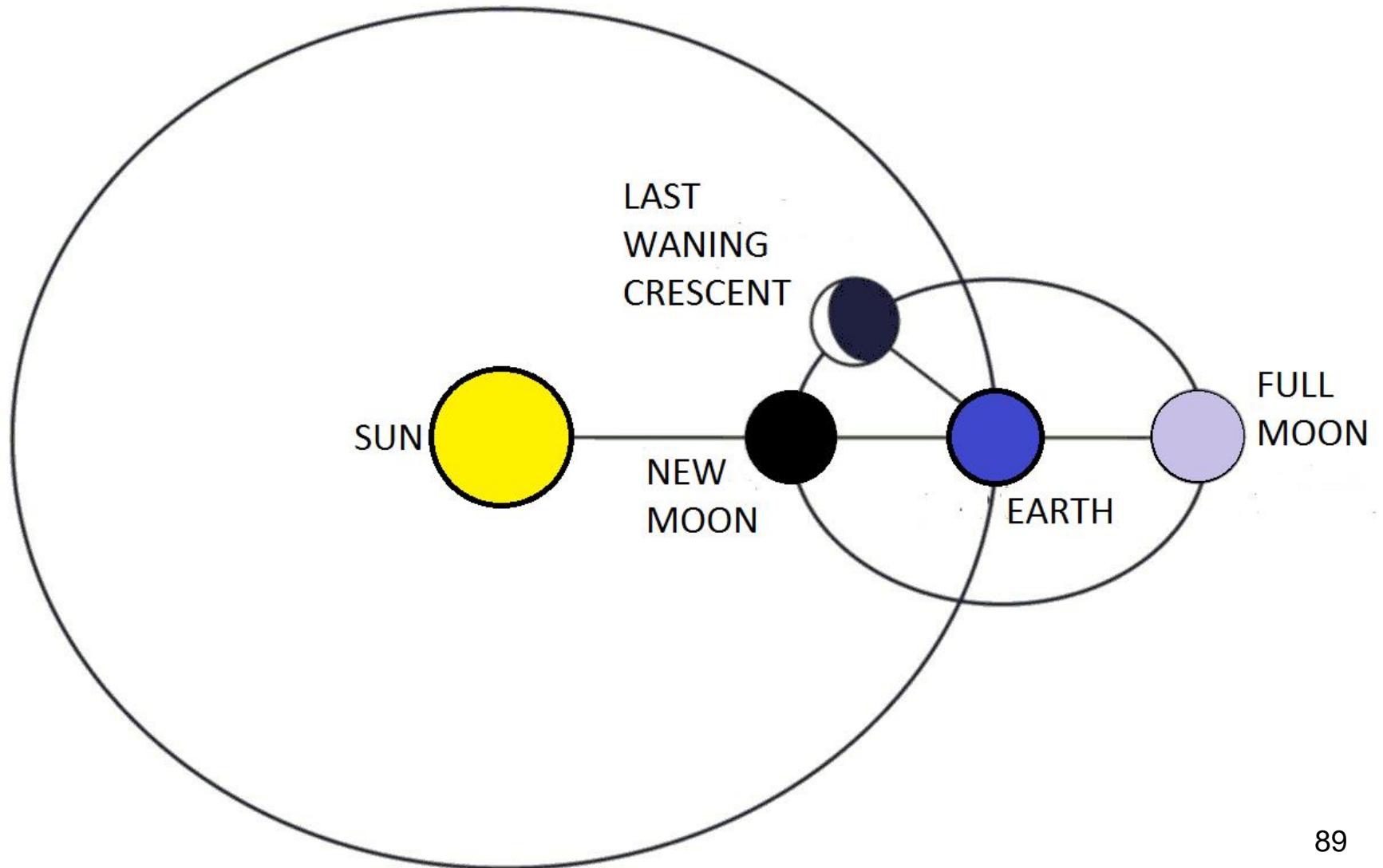


# The REAL Hebrew Month!

- Perhaps the most contentious piece of any calendar debate is how to reckon the Hebrew month.
- **There are two main positions in play:**  
**One school says that the New Moon begins when the waxing crescent is seen over Jerusalem skies near sunset.**
- The other says the month begins at conjunction, so let's see what those look like...



# The Conjunction looks like this



## The REAL Hebrew Month!

- As you can see, **conjunction is when the sun, moon and earth line up about once every 29.53 solar days.**
- The waning crescent, shown above the conjunction line, has long since passed out of view.
- The Full Moon, the opposite extreme of the lunar cycle, is more than 14 days away at this moment. ***Then we have...***

# The First Waxing Crescent looks like this



Picture taken 5/15/2010 shortly after sunset of 1<sup>st</sup> waxing crescent before nightfall and is untouched. Does this look like twilight to you?

# The REAL Hebrew Month!

- So which is the correct way? Well I already alluded to the fact that Gideon removed and destroyed crescent medallions in Judges 8.
- **Now I think we need to see just how pagan following the crescent moon really is,** and then we will return to the Biblical merits of the practice afterwards.
- Here's just a small sampling of evidence...

# The REAL Hebrew Month!

Pagan Crescent Moon Worship...

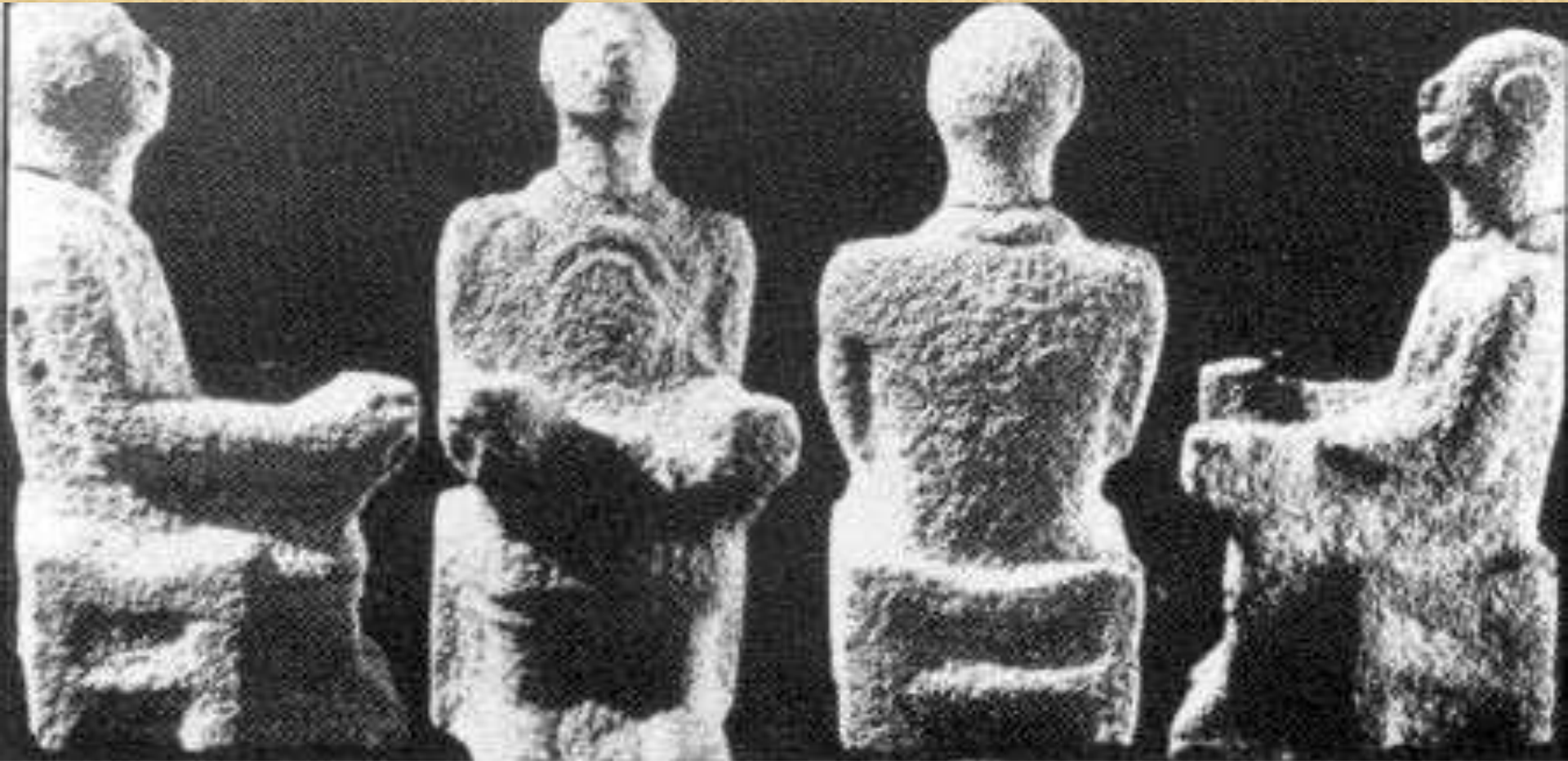


# The REAL Hebrew Month!

Paging false moon god...we are ready for your close up!



The REAL Hebrew Month!  
(Is this where you want your calendar to come from?)



The moon-god from all four sides. Note the crescent moon carved on his chest.

# The REAL Hebrew Month!

➤ But what does Torah say?

When you raise your eyes to heaven, when you see the sun, the moon, the stars -- the entire array of heaven -- do not be tempted to worship them and serve them.

Yahweh your God has allotted these to all the other peoples under heaven.

(Deuteronomy 4:19 NJB)



# The REAL Hebrew Month!

- So while the heavens are supposed to declare Abba YHWH's glory (Psalm 19:1), they are not supposed to have the glory of deity worship!
- In fact, all of Abba YHWH's cycles start in darkness for that express reason.
- "It was evening and it was morning", and the fact darkness precedes light in Genesis 1, proves the day starts in darkness.

# The REAL Hebrew Month!

- When the sun goes down on Friday night, the Shabbat starts, again, in darkness and it ends on Saturday sunset, also in darkness.
- **So if the day and week end in darkness, why not the month?**
- In fact, **the last Hebrew month is named “Adar”—Aramaic for “darkness”—so the year ends that way too** before the ripening of Abib starts the new year!

## The REAL Hebrew Month!

- By contrast, the Hebrew word for “crescent”—*saharon*—is not once linked to the start of the lunar cycle in Tanakh!
- The word appears a total of 3 times, twice in Judges and once in Isaiah, and every time it appears it is linked to paganism. The association then with the crescent “new” moon is an unproven and un-  
Scriptural lie!

## The REAL Hebrew Month!

- To try to counter these hard facts, crescentists have tried to twist Scripture to make it come out their way.
- Psalm 81:3, for example, does ***not*** read “blow the shofar at the full moon”, nor is it translated that way in the most ancient Aramaic or Greek versions.
- Instead, the key Hebrew word ***kiceh*** clearly means “dark moon”! Here’s why...

# The REAL Hebrew Month!

**Blow the trumpet at the new moon**, in the glorious day of your feast. (LXX, as translated by Brenton)

Blow the trumpets in the new moon, **in the time appointed**, on our solemn feast days. (Aramaic Tanakh, as translated by Lamsa)

- So “full moon” does not appear here, and the only reason “appointed time” does with Lamsa is because Aramaic ***kiceh*** means this as we see here:

## The REAL Hebrew Month!

And they answered: He has already appointed a time for repenting, as it reads [Prov. 7:19] “By the day of **kiceh** only he will return”, **and the term kiceh means “an appointed time”**, as it reads [Ps. 81:3]: “Blow on the new moon, the cornet at the time appointed (kiceh) on the day of our feast.”-Rodkinson, Babylonian Talmud (Mishnah, Vol. 8), Sanhedrin, p. 301.

# The REAL Hebrew Month!

However, this hardly helps the crescentist position for two reasons:

- 1) New Moons are sometimes also moedim, like Yom Teruah, so it doesn't mean the full moon feasts alone.
- 2) One would also have to assume an Aramaic Primacist position for this Psalm in order to prove this point, but since ***kiceh*** here is in Hebrew form, this avenue won't work.

## The REAL Hebrew Month!

- Finally, I think we all really should see this word in action in the actual Scriptures to see just how ridiculous the idea of ***kiceh*** as “full moon” is:

The water prevailed more and more upon the earth, so that all the high mountains everywhere under the heavens were **covered** (יִכְעַח). (Genesis 7:19 NAU)



## The REAL Hebrew Month!

Now Yahweh had wondered, 'Shall I **conceal** (הִתְכַּוֵּן) from Abraham what I am going to do, as Abraham will become a great and powerful nation and all nations on earth will bless themselves by him? (Genesis 18:17-18 NJB)

She said to the servant, "Who is that man walking in the field to meet us?" And the servant said, "He is my master." Then she

## The REAL Hebrew Month!

took her veil and **covered** ( וַתִּתְּקֵה ) herself.  
(Genesis 24:65 NAU)

Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is it  
for us to kill our brother and **cover up**  
( וַיִּכְסֵי ) his blood? (Genesis 37:26 NAU)

The deeps **cover** ( וַיִּכְסֵי ) them; they went  
down into the depths like a stone.  
(Exodus 15:5 NAU)

# The REAL Hebrew Month!

Then Moses went up to the mountain, and the cloud **covered** ( סָ֫וַהַּ ) the mountain.  
(Exodus 24:15 NAU)

How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is **covered** ( כִּ֫וְּרָה ).  
(Psalm 32:1 NAU)

But the earth will be full of the knowledge of the glory of Yahweh as the waters **cover** ( כִּ֫וְּרָה ) the depths of the sea. (Hab 2:14 NJB)

# The REAL Hebrew Month!

Arise, shine out, for your light has come, and the glory of Yahweh has risen on you. <sup>2</sup>

Look! Though night still **covers** ( נֶחֱפָה ) the earth and darkness the peoples, on you Yahweh is rising and over you his glory can be seen (Isaiah 60:1-2 NJB)

- So, I hope the point is made, because if not there's many more where these came from!

## The REAL Hebrew Month!

- Waters, clouds and darkness all **cover** the sea, the earth, the sky. Purposes are **concealed** by YHWH regarding Abraham, and all with this same word.
- I think you see why I have to say it is extremely tenuous to apply this **normative** use of this word **kiceh** to a full moon, especially when another more suitable word (**lebanah** = white) is available.

# The REAL Hebrew Month!

- It is also worth pointing out that the dark moon can most certainly be calculated with precision by simply following Torah commands!
- In an earlier presentation on the number 50, I proved that adapting the omer count to 50 weeks will allow you to predict your 1 Abib NM 1 year in advance and then changing to 50 months allows this 5 years in advance!<sup>h10</sup>

# The REAL Hebrew Month!

- Not only is the crescent notoriously unreliable because of it frequently not being seen, **relying on its first appearance to start the month all but guarantees your full moon feast will start too late, well past the time of full moon!**
- This is why David could calculate the time of the real new moon and know it would be proclaimed for 2 days (1 Samuel 20).

# The REAL Hebrew Month!

- Furthermore, proclaiming a normal 2 day moon feast/sanctification time is impossible when going crescent forward only (or CFO).
- **But the crescent was used as a backwards marker to let Israel know that month HAD ALREADY STARTED BEFORE THIS!**
- And if the waxing crescent is a sign...



## The REAL Hebrew Month!

- **Why not sight the WANING crescent of the Old Moon also as a sign to be consistent? I do!**
- I bring this up because the lunar day is 24 hours and 50 minutes long.
- **This means when you see the moon rise on night 1, night 2 you will see it rise again 50 minutes later.**

# The REAL Hebrew Month!

- In addition to calculating the time of New Moon up to 5 years in advance, ancient Israel also knew something important...
- If the next night, when expecting the moon to rise about 50 minutes later than it did before, no moon is seen...
- ...you know with certainty it has gone into conjunction! **And with that know-how, you also know the 2<sup>nd</sup> rule...**

# The REAL Hebrew Month!

## Rule #2:

The sunset after lunar conjunction is always the start of the month!

## The REAL Hebrew Month!

- So if the conjunction happens at 3 PM, that is before sunset, that sunset about 4 hours later is the start of the month.
- But if the conjunction happens at 3 AM, then that is after sunset, and you add a 30<sup>th</sup> day, so that the following sunset starts the month. It's really that easy!
- But there's one more thing to consider...

## chodesh means...

Derived from ***hadash*** this word has two meanings...

- **חֲדָשׁ (ח<sup>1</sup>dash)** **renew, repair.** (ASV and RSV also restore.) (613a).
- **חֲדָשׁ (ח<sup>1</sup>d<sup>1</sup>sh)** **new, new thing, fresh.**
- In order to find out which one is right, we'll look at verses where it is describes the moon, but first here's a general reference-

chodesh means...

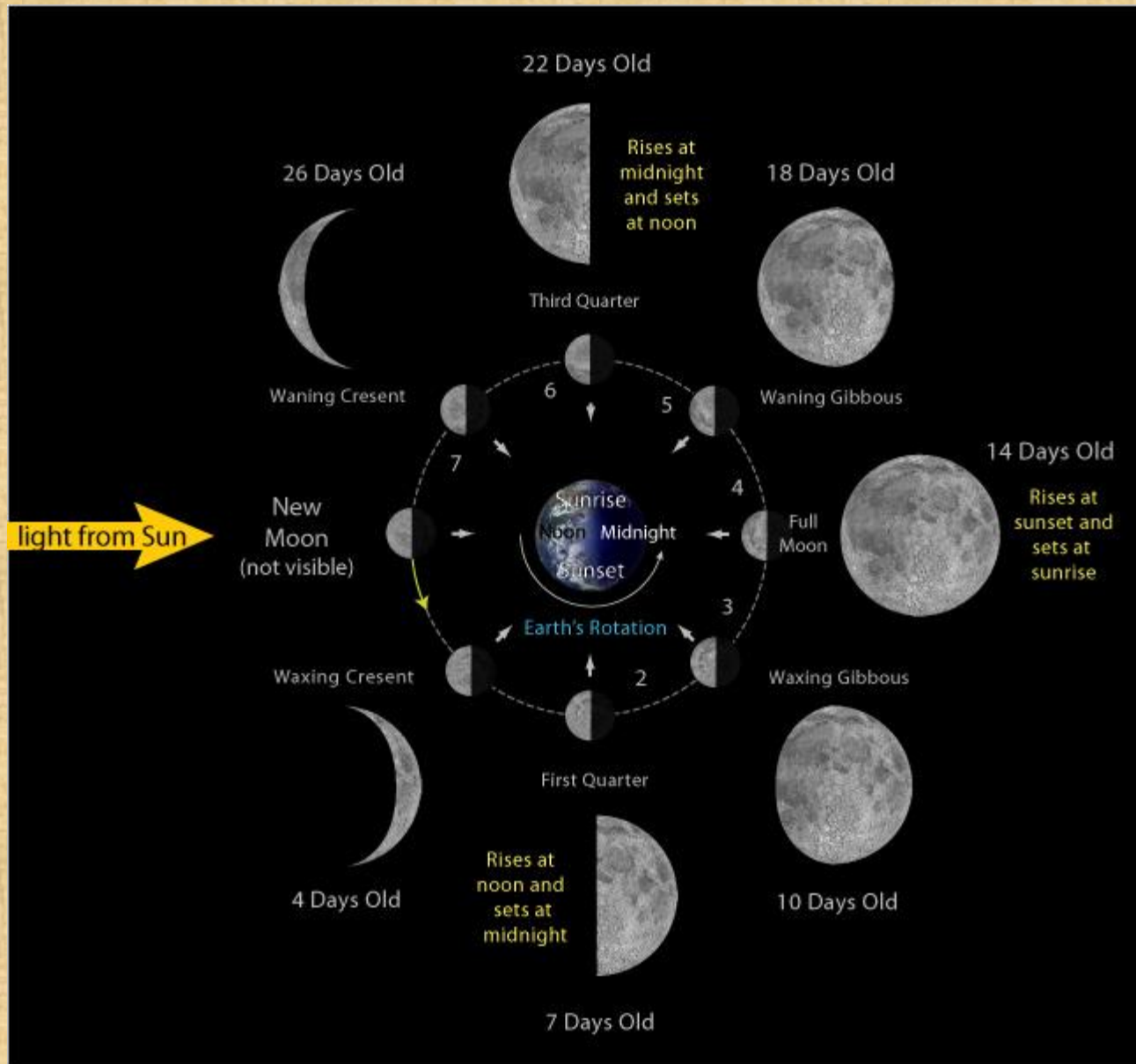
You have heard; look at all this. And you, will you not make it known? ***I proclaim to you new (שׁוֹדוֹת) things from this time, even hidden things which you have not known.*** They are created now and not long ago; and before today you have not heard them, So that you will not say, Behold, I knew them. (Isaiah 48:6-7 -Matara)

chodesh means...

Behold, the previous things have come to pass. ***Now I declare new*** (שׁוֹדָה) ***things. Before they spring forth*** I declare them to you. (Isaiah 42:9 - Matara)

- In both cases, “new” is defined as “hidden” or “not seen”, “not gone forth”, just like ***kiceh***. By contrast the crescent has “gone forth” for days...

# Remember this?





chodesh means...

For behold, ***I create new*** (שִׁטָּף) ***heavens***  
***and a new*** (שִׁטָּף) ***earth and the***  
***previous things will not be***  
***remembered*** or come to mind.

(Isaiah 65:17 - Matara)

➤ Now the “heavens” which would include the moon are defined in the “newness” that means “unseen, unremembered”.

chodesh means...

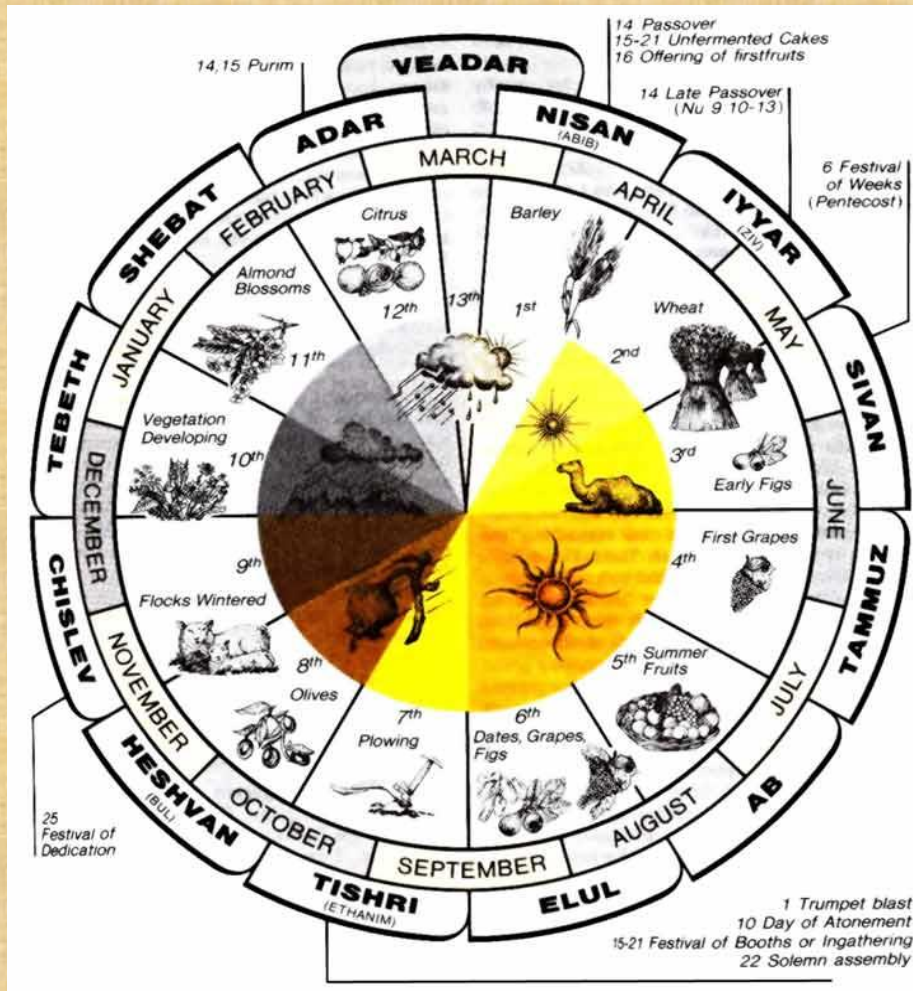
***For just as the new* (שִׁטְרָה) *heavens*  
*and the new* (שִׁטְרָה) *earth* which I make  
will endure before Me, declares YHWH,  
So your offspring and your name will  
endure. And it shall be from ***new moon***  
(שִׁטְרָה) ***to new moon*** (שִׁטְרָה) and from  
sabbath to sabbath that all mankind  
will come to bow down before Me," says  
YHWH. (Isaiah 66:22-23 -Matara)**

## chodesh means...

- I think the imagery could not be clearer. When dealing with a brand new month, the new heavens and earth follow the same pattern as the “new things”, starting from before they spring forth into the physical world!
- And the final proof is that this “newness” is directly linked to the new moon itself!

# Next in Part 4...

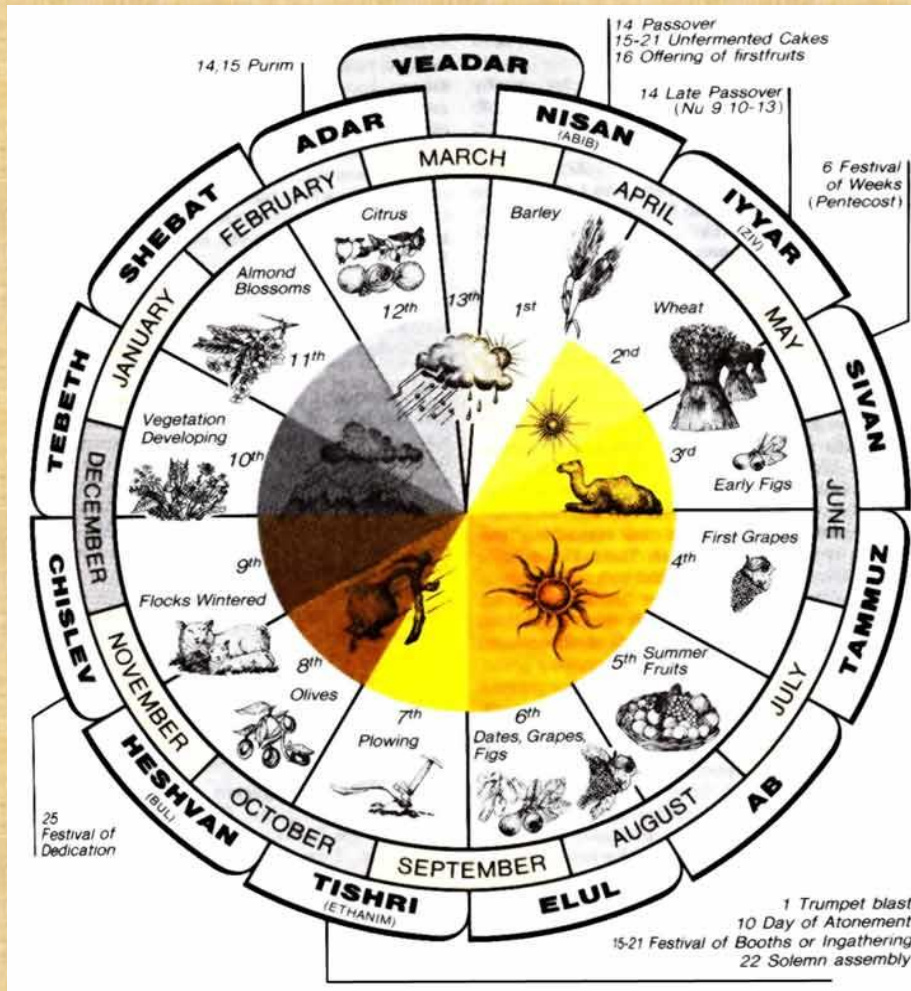
## The Two Minor laws



Intermission...



# The Two Minor laws



## The Two Minor laws

- Once the Hebrew year and Hebrew month are set, **it's really up to the moon to count towards the feasts.**
- However, the individual Hebrew days remain solar and must be 24 hours long.
- There were only two ways for ancient people to reckon 24 hour days: **Either sunrise to sunrise (which is paganism) or sunset to sunset (the Torah method).**

## The Two Minor laws

- **Sunset is the last and in some ways, the greatest, of all the calendar signs.**
- **Even the Vernal Equinox itself in a way yields to sunset.** In Hebrew reckoning the solar year doesn't end at vernal equinox as astronomers do today.
- Instead, **the Hebrew year runs sunset after VE to the sunset after the next VE.**



## The Two Minor laws

- The same is true for both the month and the day. The lunar month may astronomically end at conjunction, **but the Hebrew day it ends on still must complete normally, at sunset.**
- Since the sun outranks the moon (and it is a star itself) sunset has the final say on when the month actually ends. ***And all this brings us to our 3<sup>rd</sup> rule...***

## The Two Minor laws

**Rule #3: Keep Shabbat where  
you live but Feasts on  
Jerusalem Standard Time.**

## The Two Minor laws

- It's very simple: Since our days are regulated by when the sun sets in our local area, **we take the calendar day when a New or Full Moon happens in Israel and apply that day to our location when the sun sets there.**
- In other words, if the moon becomes new at 7 AM Jerusalem time on February 5<sup>th</sup>, this is what you do...

## The Two Minor laws

- 1) Take the same calendar date of that New Moon for where you are (February 5<sup>th</sup>).
- 2) See whether that New Moon happens before or after sunset, Jerusalem time. Here it's at 7 AM, before sunset. **Check it's the same day for your location.**
- 3) If NM is before sunset (JT), that sunset starts the new month also where you live. If after sunset, add a 30<sup>th</sup> day where you are.

## The Two Minor laws

4) If someone though lives in a location—say, like Australia—**that is a day ahead on their calendar at the same moment the New Moon happens in Israel**, then that day (Feb 6<sup>th</sup>) is NM day. ***Really, that's it!***

➤ In this way, all people all over the world can harmonize with the center of the world, Jerusalem skies, the apple of Abba YHWH's eye, at the moment it happens. ***And now, the 4<sup>th</sup> and last rule...***

## The Two Minor laws

**Rule #4: The omer count begins on the 16<sup>th</sup> of Abib, ends on Shavuot 50 days later and can hit any day of the week.**

## The Two Minor laws

- The Omer count begins according to the Pharisaic calendar that Josephus described and Y'shua approved of in Matthew 23:1-2 by never arguing with them on the ***timing*** of a Shabbat or a Great Feast.
- Here is what Josephus said about the Omer count and Shavuot...

## The Two Minor laws

**But on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of unleavened bread, which is the 16<sup>th</sup> day of the month, they first partake of the fruits of the earth,** for before that day they do not touch them. And while they suppose it proper to honor Elohim, from whom they obtain this plentiful provision, in the first place, they offer the first fruits of their barley. (Antiquities,3:250)



## The Two Minor laws

➤ Another clue is given here...

And from the day on which you bring the sheaf of elevation offering -- the day after the Sabbath -- you shall count off seven weeks. They must be **complete (*tamim*)** you must count until the day after the 7<sup>th</sup> week – 50 days; then you shall bring an offering of new grain. (Leviticus 23:15-16)

## The Two Minor laws

- If the omer count was always on a Sunday, there would be no need to say “your weeks must be complete!” because counting Sunday to Saturday is the normal ordering and would be complete automatically!
- The very fact that the *tamim* instruction is there proves the omer count must be a floating day.

## The Two Minor laws

- After all, if the omer count began on a Tuesday, **we could well see the need for an added instruction to tell us to end the week “tamim” on Monday, rather than Sunday.**
- Also, Moshe is extremely precise in his instructions, **telling us not only the actual day, but the time of day for a feast** (e.g. Pesach is towards twilight on Abib 14).

## The Two Minor laws

- **So, if it is true that the omer count is fixed to the morning of the Sunday following Passover, why wouldn't Moshe just say so?**
- **Why cloud the issue with “morrow after the Shabbat” when Moshe knows full well there are two Shabbats, one for the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the other the regular weekly Shabbat? The 16<sup>th</sup> of Abib for the omer count is confirmed!**

## Conclusions

- I hope this presentation, while not super short, was nevertheless concise and fairly easy to follow.
- As I said at the outset, the four laws are not hard...it's documenting them against other systems that can take a while.
- We can and we should though check out these ideas against Scripture, whether it's my teaching or anyone else's. **And let us not forget the Scripture...**

## Conclusions

**Yahweh who provides the sun to shine by day, who regulates moon and stars to shine by night**, who stirs the sea, making its waves roar, he whose name is Yahweh Sabaoth, says this, **'Were this established order ever to pass away before me, Yahweh declares, then the race of Israel would also cease being a nation for ever before me!'** Yahweh says this, **'Were the**

## Conclusions

**heavens above ever to be measured, the foundations of the earth below ever to be fathomed, then I too would reject the whole race of Israel for all that they have done, Yahweh declares.'**

(Jeremiah 31:35-37 NJB)

- And with all that said, I have just one more important statement to make here...

תודה רבא

Todah Rabbah

*Peace and blessings*

**Andrew Gabriel Roth**