

# Biblical New Year 2013

How did Jesus Christ observe the start of each New Year when He walked this earth?

Well, He kept the same calendar as the Jews of His day, and with them watched for the first crescent visible new moon, which starts each month, but the start of the new year was determined by God's influence upon His creation, and in particular the barley crop, necessary because of the offering of the wave sheaf during the week of unleavened bread, which had to be the first sheaf of the first fruit barley harvest.

So, towards the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> month the priests went out into the fields around Jerusalem, and received reports from further, about the state of the growing barley crop. Would it be ready to start the barley harvest in just over 2 weeks time? The answer determined whether or not one extra month would need to be added to that year, to delay the New Year by one month. This delay is called intercalation.

Today the Church of God follows Jesus Christ's instruction of 1 Peter 2:21, '*For even to this were you called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow his steps.*' So, at the moment (March 14<sup>th</sup> 2013) the team of inspectors is travelling over Israel in order that we do the same and can accurately figure the timing of God's Holy Days.

The following is **just one of the reports** sent in by the inspectors this year, who always include an ordained minister of the Church of God.

Tuesday March 12, 2013

Summation:

Hi Folks,

Today is an incredibly beautiful day here in Shores. We are well into the 80's and climbing. All of Israel is experiencing very unseasonable rises in temperatures and will for the next 5 days according to the forecast. The winds are very strong from the south which is good for drying out and forcing the barley crop to mature quickly. Unfortunately in may not bode well for a sighting this evening because such conditions inevitably bring in a lot of haze. But we wait on God/Elohim to make that decision as sunset approaches.

We have not made it to Jerusalem today but I was able to get some pictures of fig trees here at Shores that we have followed for several years as well. Their timing has always been that of the ones by the Old City. We endeavor to use the same fields of barley, vineyards, fig trees, etc., from year to year so we have an accurate history of growth conditions to compare to and follow through on.

Some have referred to us as witnesses to the start of the year. That is not a correct labeling of us. We are simply inspectors and recorders of the witnesses in creation given by the Creator as to the start of the year. For the sake of all the new folks let me run through them briefly.

The first and foremost witness is the barley itself. It must be physiologically mature enough to be able to be used for a wave sheaf offering during Unleavened Bread if the year were to begin at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> month. Once again we only use barley which has germinated on its own and which is found in agriculturally good ground. We do report on the conditions of mechanically planted barley as well for there are some folks who use that. We try to serve most needs as to one's personal beliefs without prejudice. We do not use irrigated barley. It is our belief that God/Elohim will influence the meteorological conditions to time the barley harvest. We also have 6 more criteria or witnesses to the start of the year. They are as follows not in any order of preference.

2) Grapes from the older vineyards and not the designer grapes of today.

3) Storks migrating through the Jordan Valley and doves singing their mating songs (which they have been doing the past two days each morning)

4) The lambs being of sufficient size to be used at Passover which I will address in more detail shortly.

5) The Red Anemones, a beautiful flower which can cover the landscape at times.

6) The fig trees budding which we have followed for several years now. (Thank you Peter for that focus.)

Our Savior teaches us summer is near when we see the tender sprouts appear.

7) The heavy rains and cold temperatures.

I am reminded of some scriptures Brian Hoek customarily quotes in regard to these. Song of Solomon 2:10-13; "My beloved spoke, and said to me: Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away. (very prophetic) For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the Turtledove is heard in our land. The fig tree puts forth her green figs and the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell. Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away." I could say a lot about this here but the reason I bring these scriptures up is to point out there are these and many, many more scriptures which address each of these witnesses throughout the bible as to their patterns for the season of Abib. They are recorded in many of the studies and reports to be found on the web site. The reports from 2005 onward have lots of information as to such as well as agricultural patterns and facts.

Let me address the lambs for that can be confusing to some. They are an integral part of determining the start of the year. To qualify for a Passover lamb there are multiple criteria used. One is it must be of its first year or less than a year old. That is simple to read and to grasp. The reason only under one year why however is very important to keeping Passover at the time the Creator decides. Remember everything is patterned, placed, and influenced by Him in creation to point us to Him and His purpose. In this case we are talking about appointed times. In a normal 12 lunar month year the ewes give birth (in Israel) between January/ February time frame. We are talking about the norm not the exception. With that happening the lambs will be of sufficient size to be utilized for eating at Passover for the entire household of a father, and in some instances for the neighbor's household as well according to Exodus 12. Simple so far. Now let's say we come to a year in which the Creator has started the breeding season later for the purpose of having them ready and acceptable for an intercalated year. That is why I personally use the flocks under control of the Bedouins for they do not use things like artificial insemination. If someone were to declare the next year to be a 12 month year then there would not be lambs meeting the requirement for Passover. Why? Because many of the ewes would be just giving birth and the lambs would be too young and tender for God/Elohim had intended them to be ready for a month later. The Lambs from the prior year would already be more than a year old for they were born during the January/February time frame. What a catastrophe in a sacrificial system. No lambs and probably no wave sheaf as well. Not good. Can you see why they are a witness, a marker, to Abib starting? I hope this helps in your understanding of such things. The more you know about all this the less you will be able to be deceived.

Now let's briefly cover some agricultural facts and patterns as to how they relate to intercalating and what we look for here in Israel. We are required to be able to discern such things so that we do not keep the appointed times of meeting with the Creator out of sync with His timing. You have heard it often but let's apply it in a very clear way, "Your New Moons and appointed feasts My soul hates; they are a trouble to Me, I am weary of bearing them" (Isa 1:14) Many of us today are being called out of that way of doing things. We are being directed and educated into a correct way of following the directions the Creator has left us in the Bible and in creation to keep His times of meeting and not our own or for that matter someone else's. This brings up the cautionary point that Satan does not want us to be in sync with God/Elohim. He is the master counterfeiter and deceiver. He will be waiting for opportunity to detour us from what is right to what is not right. We need to "test the spirits" brethren with a clear conscience and a knowledgeable base and not just rely on another. The body of Christ/Messiah needs to do her part in all of this. The inspectors over the years who are of the body understand this. They understand the function they are undertaking is about edifying the body and is not about acquiring money, influence, standing, notoriety, a following, or any such vain pursuit. In doing what is right one will give all the evidence to the body so that each and every individual can digest it and use it accordingly in their one on one relationship with Christ/Messiah.

That brings us to when and how we intercalate so let's just focus on barley for now. The scriptures tell us we are to start the harvest of the early grain (barley) during the days of Unleavened Bread. They also tell us we are not to consume any of that grain until after the wave sheaf has been conducted and accepted by God/Elohim. We can read that in Lev. 23. We also can read in Duet. 16 that we are to start a 49 day harvest or count once we put the sickle to the grain. That together tells us once the wave sheaf is offered on wave sheaf day during the days of UB we have 49 days to conduct the harvest. Once again I am paraphrasing some of the scriptures pertinent to what we are talking about. So now we have our basic rules as to timing of the harvest. It could not start as a major event until during the days of UB. Does that mean the brunt of the harvest does so each year? Of course not. There was the feast going on,

a hag is a better term for they had to travel to where God/Elohim had placed His name. Remember there are 49 days to start and complete it. This obviously did not preclude the harvesting of a wave sheaf which was to be offered for then nothing would happen.

Putting this together with agricultural facts gives us a lot of instruction as to intercalation or adding a 13<sup>th</sup> lunar month. Our Creator influences the meteorological conditions to bring this all about. He is in control from year to year. Let's use this year as a starting example to gain some simple understanding. When we started conducting this year's inspections we noticed something right off the bat. All the barley we were seeing was in the head between the Zadok Scale stages of 6-8. That is a defined period of growth in the life cycle of a barley plant. It is limited by God/Elohim Himself and placed in creation by Him. The life cycle can't exceed His parameters. This told us we were definitely going to have a normal year. We just needed to find the quantities of barley which would be mature enough to qualify as a wave sheaf offering approximately 21 days from the day we started. If we did not have a normal year all that barley would be lost for it would have matured long before the next possible time for a wave sheaf offering which would be 6-8 weeks down the road. The reasons why can be found in our reports and summations from 2005 and onward. Simply put it would drop, spoil in the intense heat, or be used up by animals and birds. So, we knew where we were in the timing of things barley speaking. This is not always the case however. In some years there is a complete mix with some in the boot (heads still not visible) to flowering, to milk stages, etc. Those years are more difficult to establish and that is why our Creator has given us the other markers or witnesses to look for to assist us. We did encounter one year when there was virtually no barley in agricultural ground out of the boot. No Heads visible. The only barley with heads, which by the way were dead and empty were the "goat grass" located on the hilly, stony grazing not growing crop ground. That year many of us intercalated for there would have been virtually no barley ready to harvest during the 49 days allotted for it. If the barley is mainly looking like grass it will not be ready! On top of that, all the other markers were not to be seen as well. Excuse me, the rains were torrential and continuous and it was cold! I don't bring this up to poke anyone in the eye. These are things we need to understand for we have all been deceived in the past in many things and will have those types of situations placed in front of us again and again regardless of what doctrine we are working with. I hope this is easy to follow. When looking to a normal year or an intercalated year we need to put all the witnesses together and then make a very big personal decision. Do not let anyone make it for you. Evaluate what you are presented using the spirit of God/Elohim which we have been given.

With so many people being led to this watershed understanding of the true Biblical Calendar we must be vigilant and on guard. We need to repeat over and over what it is we are to be looking for. They are simple patterns running through scripture and creation which will be repeated over and over each and every year. This is all a learning process. All we wish to do is download what we have learned and have been given so that others in the body can do the same. It's that simple. We hope we have been able to conduct ourselves to that degree, as do all the inspectors we work with in the body from year to year. Our peace we give to you!





Having found evidence that the barley will be ripe enough for a wave sheaf offering during Unleavened Bread and that the barley harvest can follow, the next task was to watch for the visible new moon when it could first be expected, which this year was the evening of the 12<sup>th</sup> March . That evening the horizon in Israel was covered with clouds, and haze filling the rest so that there was no chance.

As one of the inspectors wrote "that defers to the 30<sup>th</sup> day which mean the New Year starts after sunset tonight [March 13<sup>th</sup> 2013] for those who follow a first crescent sighting from Israel ". So, this year the Feast Days are :-

## 2013 Feast Dates

All Biblical dates start from sunset of the previous day.

These represent a normal 12 month year

First Day of the new year: Thursday, March 14

**Passover:** Wednesday, March 27

**First Day Unleavened Bread:** Thursday, March 28

Wavesheaf Day: Sunday, March 31

**Last Day Unleavened Bread:** Wednesday, April 3

**Pentecost:** Sunday, May 19

Tentative Festival dates for the 7th month

(providing that the moon is sighted when expected)

**Trumpets:** Sunday, September 8

**Atonement:** Tuesday, September 17

**Tabernacles:** Sunday, September 22-Monday, Saturday, 28

**Last Great Day:** Sunday, September 29 ( See Leviticus 23 )