

YAHWEH'S CALENDAR AND THE SIGN OF JONAH

Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying,
Matthew 12:38-40

But He, answering, said to them, *"An evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For just as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights."* Matthew 12:38-40

Table of Contents

Does the Bible Establish its Own Calendar System?	2
The Biblical Basis of the Calendar	3
The New Moon	4
New Years Day'--When is 1 Abib	5
Determining Calendar Dates for Other Years	7
Calculations of the New Moon	7
Calculation of 1 Abib	9
Development of the Rabbinical Calendar	11
Table 1 Comparison of Dates for 1 Abib	13
Table 2 Comparison of Dates for 1 Tishri	14
Accuracy of the Rabbinical Calendar	15
Origin of the Rabbinical Calendar	16
The Sign of Jonah	19
Two Sabbaths?	20
Table 3 Dates of the Passover	22
Tiberius Caesar's Fifteenth Year	23
Table 4 Meaning of the Biblical Holy Days	25

DOES THE BIBLE ESTABLISH ITS OWN CALENDAR SYSTEM?

The Bible sets up a series of unique Holy days, which include the weekly Sabbath (Exodus 20:8.-11) and the annual High Sabbaths such as Passover, Unleavened Bread, Feast of the First Fruit (Pentecost] Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles (Leviticus 23). However, some people doubt that the Bible fully sets out the basic rules of the calendar that determines the dates of the monthly and annual Holy Days. It is our belief that the Bible does give us the basis of Yahweh's lunar-solar Calendar.

Questions about the exact timing of Yahshua Messiah's death and resurrection led to our initial interest in this calendar. Our particular concern was whether Yahshua kept the 'Sign of Jonah' as He said He would in Matthew 12:40. One of the critical times involved in His crucifixion was the date of Passover, the day on which He was crucified.¹

Research confirmed that the 'Good Friday' dates for those years would be totally useless for determining the actual time of the crucifixion. The Roman Catholic method of calculating Easter was not invented until the third century CE, and was specifically set up to never coincide with the real date of Passover used by the Jews. We were convinced that if Yahweh's calendar system could be determined from Biblical sources, there would be no doubt that Messiah, as Yahweh's Son, would

¹ See Luke 22:1 to 13, which shows Yahshua instituting the Last Supper on the evening beginning the Passover. John 18:39 confirms that Yahshua was crucified on the Passover. John 19:31 tells us how the legs of the criminals were broken to hasten their death, so they would not be still suffering on their stakes on the High (Solemn) Sabbath, which was the next day

have used precisely that calendar. Applying the Biblical calendar to these events would then resolve any disputes about their timing.

The Biblical Basis of the Calendar

Some of the scriptures that determine the Biblical basis of the calendar are:

Genesis 1:14 Yahweh tells us that He has made the lights in the heavens. He also says they are to determine the "signs and seasons". The Hebrew for 'seasons'-*moede*-literally means "appointed times".

Leviticus 23:4 The same Hebrew word-*moede*-is used here, among other places, to refer to the timing of Yahweh's Annual Sabbaths.

Psalm 104:19 also reminds us that the moon is used to determine Yahweh's "Appointed Times".

Exodus 12 tells us that the month of the Passover is the first month of the year. (The "shall be" added to some translations does not exist in the Hebrew text of verse 2).

Exodus 13:4 calls this month 'Abib', a Hebrew word which means 'green ears', referring to the ripening ears of the winter barley crop. This event occurs in April or early May in Israel.

Leviticus 23:10-14 shows that the month of Abib always coincides with the beginning of the years harvest in Israel. Indeed, according to verse 14 they are not allowed to begin eating the new season's harvest until the wave sheaf has been offered on the Sunday during the Week of Unleavened Bread. (i.e.-the Wave Offering)

Thus we can see that this calendar is based on both an annual solar cycle, which is controlled by the ripening of the winter

barley crops and a monthly cycle determined by the moon. The importance of the 'greater light' and the 'lesser light' in determining Yahweh's Appointed Times has now been established.

The New Moon

Determining the timing of each month requires the observation of a simple astronomical event that clearly marks the beginning of the month: (Please note that all of the astronomical events mentioned in this article have absolutely nothing to do with astrology or worship of the heavens, both things that Yahweh specifically forbids. -See Deut 4:19, Isa. 47:13 These occurrences are merely markers that Yahweh has given us so we can use His calendar.)

The event that marks the start of each month is the visual observation of the crescent of the New Moon when it first becomes visible to the unaided eye. The term "New Moon" used in scripture does not refer to the Sun-Moon Conjunction which astronomers call the New Moon today. The Bible actually refers to the visible crescent, which cannot be seen until one to three days after the conjunction, Generally, it is only seen for a short time after sunset, as the sky becomes fairly dark The moment of seeing the New Moon marks the beginning of the first day of the new month. This explains the Jewish custom of counting days from dusk to dusk (Leviticus 23:32). Using any other time would result in confusion about whether that day was the last day of the old month or the first day of the new month. As the average lunar cycle is about four weeks and one and a half days long, the Annual Kodesh Days, such as Passover, fall on different days of the week from year to year.

Because the sighting of the New Moon was vital to the entire

calendar, It soon became an important ceremony. (See Numbers 10:10, I Chronicles 23:31 and Psalm 81:3.)

The incident recorded in I Samuel 20 shows that during King David's life the New Moon was still determined by observation. Uncertainty about which evening the New Moon would be visible led to a practice of planning two New Moon festivities on successive evenings to ensure everything would be ready on the actual evening the New Moon was sighted. If their calendar was based on a calculation, the first day of the new month would be known in advance, and only one New Moon festivity would have been planned. Verse 27, literally translated, says: "And It happened the next day, the second New Moon [festivity], that David's place was empty. And Saul said to his son Jonathan, "Why has the son of Jesse not come to eat, either yesterday or today?" The phrase used in this verse is distinctly different from other passages that merely mean 'the ninth day of the month' as in 2 Kings 25:3.

Ezekiel 45:17, and Ezekiel 46:1-3 show that the New Moon shall still be important in the Thousand Years Reign.

'New Years Day'- When Is 1 Abib?

The annual part of the calendar, i.e.- determining which day marks the beginning of the New Year, is quite different to the Gregorian calendar. The Gregorian New Year day is determined almost solely by the solar cycle. The length of the months has been carefully chosen to make the length of a year almost exactly one solar year.

The Biblical calendar uses only whole lunar months that begin and end when the New Moon is seen. As the average length

of a lunar cycle is about 29.53 days and a solar (tropical) year is 365.24 days, we find that a solar year actually consists of 12.37 lunar months. The 'fix' is similar to that used in the Gregorian calendar, which requires an extra day to be added to February (almost) every fourth year to prevent the gradual drift of the months into other seasons, a problem which plagued the old Julian calendar. The Biblical lunisolar calendar adds an extra month about every third year to keep its calendar synchronized with the seasons.²

However, the problem of deciding which year to add the extra month still remains. Using the ripeness of the winter barley crops as the indicator of which New Moon will also be New Year's Day -i.e. the first day of the first month (Abib) firmly locks the calendar into the solar cycle, which is responsible for the ripening of the crops.

The barley harvest takes nearly two months to complete in Israel, beginning in early April near Jericho and beginning in early May in the mountainous areas near Jerusalem. Seasonal variations can hasten or delay the harvest by perhaps a week.

All that is required is to estimate whether some grain, somewhere in Israel, will be ripe in time for the Wave Offering, which occurs on the Sunday during the Week of Unleavened Bread. As the harvest lasts well over a month, there will always be someone still harvesting at the next New Moon if the current New Moon is just a little too soon. Note that Yahweh only prohibits eating the new crops before the Wave Offering. He does not prohibit harvesting the crops, thus allowing farmers in warmer districts to begin their harvest before the Wave

²The Islamic calendar is a strictly lunar calendar with each year only 12 lunar months long. As a result, their calendar year moves backwards by about 11 days a year.

Offering in years when Abib begins late in the spring. (Lev 23:14)

Such are the rules of the Biblical calendar. Simple, direct observations can confirm all dates for those living in Israel. Jerusalem has been chosen as the focal point at which observations of the New Moon should be made as it is where Yahweh chose to build His Temple and is the spiritual capital of Israel.

Determining Calendar Dates for Other Years

However, how can one determine the dates on Yahweh's calendar when your location or the year you wish to inquire about makes direct observation impossible? This is a serious problem when trying to apply this calendar system to events that happened almost two thousand years ago. Is it possible to calculate the visibility of the New Moon and the maturity of the barley crops in ancient Israel?

Calculation of the New Moon

When we first attempted to discover the actual time of Messiah's crucifixion, we began by using the average length of the lunar cycle to determine the time of the sun-moon conjunction. We then estimated the probability of seeing the New Moon by considering the time of day the conjunction occurred. We later discovered that this is basically the method used to determine the traditional Jewish calendar.

However, we soon discovered that the actual time of the Sun-moon conjunction could vary enormously from our calculated average time.

We also discovered that the visibility of the New Moon was

mainly determined by the difference between the sun and moon's setting times, the distance apart they were in the sky and by the size of the illuminated fraction of the moon. To find these things required accurate calculations of the position of both the sun and the moon.

Calculating the position of the sun and thus its setting time is fairly simple, as it is a massive body with a very predictable motion. However, accurately calculating the position of the Moon is not an easy matter. Such a calculation was not even possible at the time the Rabbinical Jews developed their calculated calendar. Many factors affecting the position of the moon have only been understood for about a hundred years. To determine even the most important influences on the moon's position requires calculations hundreds of lines long. One mistake could make the entire calculation meaningless.

Thankfully modern computers can be programmed to make the necessary calculations in seconds. We developed a program based on *Astronomical Formulae for Calculators*; written by the ³Belgian astronomer, Jean Mews, which makes these calculations for us. Once the position and setting time of the sun is known for a particular evening and location, the position of the moon and its illuminated fraction is calculated for that time. Another calculation based on Karl Schoch's *Table for the Visibility of the New Crescent* is then used to decide if the moon will be seen that evening. If the New Moon will not be seen that night, the calculations are done again for the next evening.³ Thus the visibility of the New Moon is determined. This leaves only the determination of 1 Abib to see if it is the correct month for the Passover.

³The Accuracy of Schoch's Table is acknowledged by the Indian government, which use it to determine the New Moons for the Moslems in their country.

Calculation of 1 Abib

Is there a mathematical alternative to the 'ripening barley method available to determine the beginning of the new year?

Like the problem of calculating the start of each month, this question also has a solution based on astronomical observations. This time the sun is used, one of the two heavenly bodies that Yahweh gave us to determine His appointed times. The vernal (Northern Hemisphere Spring) equinox is used. An equinox occurs when the ecliptic (the Sun's apparent annual path) crosses the celestial equator (the extension of the Earth's equator out into space). Thus twice a year the Sun is exactly over the equator, and day and night are of equal length. The vernal equinox (usually around 21 March) is simple to calculate and gives results that correspond well with the ripening barley method. Interestingly, the equinox method was also known to the ancients and may have served as a crosscheck on the barley method even then.

Their method of determining the vernal equinox needed a gnomon. Constructing a gnomon requires only a flat surface, a straight stick, a piece of string, a plumb bob and a square. All these devices have been known for millennia. The plumb bob is used to setup the stick in a perfectly upright position. The square and string, stretched straight, are used to make the surface the stick is standing in perfectly horizontal. That is a gnomon. Marking the shadows cast by the stick at sunrise and sunset on the day of an equinox reveals a unique property on that day alone: the two shadows cast by the stick join to make a straight line.

The day of the equinox can then be used to determine, unambiguously, which month will start the new year. If the New

Moon is seen before the equinox, that month is counted as the extra (intercalary) month. This simple expedient ensures that the Wave Offering will not occur before 5 April and not later than 11 May. The result is a perfect coordination with the harvesting of the winter barley crops.⁴

The date of the equinox can also be easily calculated from data about the sun. It provides us with a simple, accurate method of selecting which New Moon will be 1 Abib for any year required. Thus the entire Biblical lunisolar calendar can be determined by astronomical calculations for any year. As all the Biblical Annual Kodesh Days are dated from the first and seventh months (Abib and Tishri), this calendar yields the exact time of all the Kodesh Days.

This program has enabled us to accurately calculate the positions (and thus the setting times, visibility, etc) of the sun and moon on the evenings that would have determined the start of 1 Abib in the year of the crucifixion. We thank Yahweh for providing a unique calendar system that can be used to precisely determine the time of the crucifixion, and many other Biblical events, thousands of years late.

We have been testing the predictions of these programs against actual observations of the New Moon for seven years now and have found them to be reliable.⁵ Though the program cannot predict transient weather conditions such as atmospheric moisture content, dust and cloud cover, the effect of the moisture and dust levels have been averaged in Schoch's Table to

⁴Another interesting point is that keeping records of the number of days between the equinoxes for a few years would give a very accurate idea of the length of the solar year, thus allowing prediction of the next equinox.

⁵An effectively identical calendar is also used by the Colorado Springs Church of God (USA), which we later discovered had independently developed their Bible-based calculated calendar before us.

minimize their *effect*.

Development of the Rabbinical Calendar

As we discussed earlier, calculations are only necessary for people living away from Jerusalem or for learning the time of past or future New Moons. For those living in Jerusalem, the date of 1 Abib, the first day of the New Year, can be determined by simply looking at the maturity of local crops. Comparing their maturity with the date of the vernal (Spring) equinox and looking for the New Moon after sunset for two or occasionally three days after the next sun-moon conjunction will give them 1 Abib. They do not need either a computer or a priesthood to tell them when 1 Abib occurs. The need for a predetermined calendar did not arise until the Jews were removed from Jerusalem and dispersed throughout the Roman Empire. Most authorities believe the conventional Jewish calculated calendar (the Rabbinical calendar) came into being sometime between 359 CE (AD) and 800 CE.

Some Jewish sects reject the 'traditional' Rabbinical calendar even though the need for a predetermined calendar did not arise until the Jews were removed from Jerusalem and dispersed throughout the Roman Empire. Most authorities believe the conventional Jewish calculated today. They hold to observation as the only scripturally correct method of determining the New Moons and Kodesh Days. They feel that the Rabbinical calendar is an insult to Yahweh. They have some reason for this concern. This quotation from the Shabbat 10b (part of the Mishna, written during the first two centuries CE) shows the arrogance that some Rabbis assumed in setting their calendar.

"Rabbi Pinhas and Rabbi Hiilklah said in the name

of Rabbi Simon: Each year, all of the ministering angels appear before the Kodesh one, praised be He, and ask, "Lord of the Universe' When does Rosh Hashanah occur this year?" And He answers them, "Why do you ask me? Let us inquire of the earthly court."

"Rabbi Hoshayah taught When the earthly court decrees "Today is Rosh Hashanah," the Kodesh one, praised be He, tells the ministering angels, "Set up the courtroom, and let the attorneys for defense and prosecution take their places, for My children have stated Today is Rosh Hashanah." But if the earthly court should reconsider and decide that the following day should be declared the first of the year, the Kodesh One, praised be He~ tells the ministering angels "Setup the court room and let the attorneys for prosecution and defense take their places on, the morrow, for My children have reconsidered and decided that tomorrow is to be declared the first of the year."

Note that when this passage was written, the Jews were not using a fixed calculated calendar as there would then have been no chance of 'reconsidering when Rosh Hashanah fell. Rosh Hashanah is the Feast o^ Trumpets which occurs on 1 Tishri, the first day of the seventh month. Rosh Hashanah means 'head of the year, signifying that by this time the idea of a 'civil year' beginning on 1 Tishri was well established.

Tables 1 and 2 compare the Rabbinical dates with accurate astronomical calculations based on Biblical principles.

1 Abib

Year C.E.	Biblical Calculations	Rabbinical Calculations	Difference (Days)
1981	7/4	5/4	+2
1982	27/3	25/3	+2
1983	15/3	15/3	+31
1984	$\frac{3}{4}$ (4/4)	3/4	0(+1)
1985	28/3 (24/3)	23/3	0(+1)
1986	11/4	10/4	+1
1987	31/3	31/3	0
1988	18/4	19/3	+32
1989	8/4	6/4	+2
1990	28/3 (29/3)	27/3	+1 (+2)
1991	16/4 (17/4)	16/3	+31 (32)
1992	5/4	4/4	+1
1993	25/3	23/3	+2
1994	13/4	13/3	+31
1995	2/4	1/4	+1
1996	21/3	21/3	0
1997	9/4	8/4	+1
1998	30/3	28/3	+2
1999	18/4	18/3	+31
2000	7/4	6/4	+1

Table 1 comparison of dates for 1 Abib given by Biblical and traditional 'Rabbinical' calculations. Dates in brackets are less probable dates fro days when the visibility of the New Moon is borderline.

1 Tishri

Year C.E	Biblical Calculations	Rabbinical Calculations	Difference (Days)
1981	30/9	29/9	+!
1982	19/9	18/9	+1
1983	8/10	8/9	+30
1984	27/9	27/9	0

Year C.E.	Biblical Calculations	Rabbinical Calculations	Difference (Days)
1986	6/10	4/10	+2
1987	26/9	24/9	+2
1988	14/10	12/9	+32
1989	3/10	30/9	+3
1990	22/9	20/9	+2
1991	10/10 (11/10)	9/9	+31 (+32)
1992	22/9	28/9	+1
1993	18/9 (19/9)	16/9	+2 (+3)
1994	7/10	6/9	+31
1995	27/9	25/9	+2
1996	15/9	14/9	+1
1997	4/10	2/10	+2
1998	23/9	21/9	+2
1999	11/10 (12/10)	11/9	+30 (+31)
2000	30/9	30/9	0

Table 2 Comparison of Dates for 1 Tishri given by Biblical and

traditional 'Rabbinical' calculations. Dates in brackets are less probable dates for days when the visibility of the New Moon is borderline.

The Biblical Calculation days are the earliest dates on which the New Moon is likely to be visible at Jerusalem on the previous evening.

Accuracy of the Rabbinical Calendar

Comparing the results show that the traditional Rabbinical calendar correctly calculates only four of the twenty 1 Abib dates (80% wrong) and two of the twenty 1 Tishri (Feast of Trumpets) dates (90% wrong). The results also show that for five of the twenty years (25% wrong) examined the Rabbinical calculation starts the year one month too early, before there is likely to be any barley ready to harvest anywhere in Israel.

When comparing this table with astronomical New Moon calculations, please remember that it is not the New Moon conjunction that is being calculated, but which evening the New Moon will first be visible to an observer with good eyesight in Jerusalem. Thus, if the New Moon is visible on the evening of 8 April, 1997, the first day of the first month (1 Abib) is given as 9 April, 1997 as the day goes from dusk on the eighth to dusk on the ninth, thus including all the daylight howl of 9 April.

The 1989 dates are an example of the inaccuracy of the Rabbinical calculations. The table shows us that the Rabbinical calculations predict that the New Moon will be seen on the evenings of the 5th of April and the 29th of September. However, astronomical calculations show that the moon will set 37 minutes before the sun on the 5th of April and 26 minutes before the sun on the 29th of September. The New Moon cannot be

seen until it is lagging well behind the sun in setting time, making observation of the New Moon on these dates totally impossible.

The inaccuracies of the Rabbinical calendar are partly due to the rudimentary knowledge of the moon's motion when their calendar was being developed. Sadly, now that much better calculations are available, they have been rejected in favor of tradition.

Apart from the crudity of the Rabbinical calculations, another error in their calendar arises from the fact that they only calculate the conjunction time for the seventh month. The date for 1 Abib is determined by merely subtracting a set number of days from 1 Tishri.

Origin of the Rabbinical Calendar

Curiously, a few Christian groups accept the Rabbinical calendar as being authoritative. One example is the World-Wide Church of God. In one of their church publications, Herman Hoeh claims that calendar calculation was already the main method of determining the time of the Annual Kodesh Days during Messiahs ministry. There is reason to believe that one very simple calculation was used then, but only used in months when overcast weather prevented direct observation: if the previous month had 30 days, the month just finishing was assumed to have 29 days. (or vice versa). There is no evidence that any other calculations were in use.

The existence and official use of the Rabbinical calculated calendar at the time of Messiah is denied by every authority on the calendar that we have read. The most optimistic historians place the beginning of the Jewish calculated Calendar at 359

CE. They claim that Hillel II introduced the calendar then.

However, Samuel Poznanski says "the tradition, which stands quite alone, is confronted with grave objections of these the following two are of special weight: (1) The supposed calendar is never referred to in the Talmud, which received its final redaction at the end of the fifth century. Nothing whatever is said there about the length of the month or the nineteen year cycle or anything else of the kind (2) ...Moreover, from the earliest post-Talmudic age we have dates which cannot be reconciled with the regular calendar in use today.'

"In point of fact, everything goes to indicate that the calendar, like all other productions of the kind, passed through a developing series of forms, and that it assumed its final shape in the schools of the official representatives of Judaism (called Geonim) in Babylonia. To the period of the Geonim, say the 7th and 8th cents., likewise belong two tractates relevant to the subject. One of these is entitled 'Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer', and contains almost all the elements of the modern calendar (caps. 6 8), but it shows so many instances of self-contradiction that we must assume the presence of various interpolations.

"In the 7th and 8th centuries, again, Judaism in the East was disturbed by the rise of various sects, many of which refused to recognize the existing calendar. One of its outstanding assailants was Anan b. David, the founder of Karaism (2nd half of 8th cent) who abandoned the method of computation, as being repugnant to Scripture, and reinstated that of lunar ob-

servation..."

"The importance attached to the recognition or repudiation of the then existing calendar may be gauged by the fact that the official circles of Judaism were free to intermarry with the Israelites, who actually recognized Yahshua and Mohammed as prophets, but not with the Karaites, the ground of distinction being simply that the former received the calendar while the latter did not.'

"...the Karaites-reverted in all respects to the ancient practice of determining the time of new moon by' observation, and intercalating a 13th month when required by the state of the crops, i.e., the ripening ears (Abib)"

"...Nor do the modern Karaites recognize the so called dehlyoth, 'displacements'."

Some displacements' involve changing the date of the first of Tishri if it is going to fall on Sunday, Wednesday or Friday. The 'displacements' are designed to keep the Annual Kodesh Days from occurring on Sunday or Friday.

The only reason given to justify this practice is that it is 'too difficult to have two Sabbaths in a row'. However, as the Karaites point out, there is no Biblical support for these 'displacements'. The Karaite practice of observing the Feast of Weeks on a Sunday is accepted by the World-Wide Church of God. This practice results in having two Sabbaths in a row it also opens up this question-if the Karaites are right about this aspect of the Kodesh Days, is it possible that they could be right in insisting on direct observation of the New Moon as the only scripturally acceptable method of determining the timing of Yahweh's Kodesh Days?

However, when direct observation is not possible, surely the most accurate calculations available should be used. Our calculated calendar simulates actual observation of the New Moon in Jerusalem as exactly as possible.

These calculations, shown in Table 3, reveal the date of the Passover in the year of Messiah's crucifixion. However, the usefulness of the Biblical calendar is not limited to only this issue. It is a powerful key that can unlock the exact time of many biblical events, it can also help us determine the true time of Yahweh's Kodesh Days today.

The Sign of Jonah

Our original interest in the timing of Yahweh's Kodesh Days arose from an attempt to find out if Yahshua actually spent three days and three nights in the grave as He said He would:

Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you.'

But He, answering, said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For just as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights." Matthew 12:38 to 40

As the Good Friday-Easter Sunday tradition only allows a maximum of two nights and one day in the grave, it actually denies that Yahshua kept the "Sign of Jonah", and thus casts doubt on His truthfulness. Did He keep this "Sign", or is He a fraud as the opponents of Biblical Christianity silently suggest? And if He did keep this Sign, is this yet another of the times that the

'Little Horn' spoken of in Daniel 7:8 has tried to change?

Two Sabbaths?

After unsuccessfully trying to reconcile the Crucifixion accounts in the Bible with the three days and three nights, we finally came across a World-Wide Church of God booklet which claimed that Messiah's crucifixion was really on a Wednesday, with two Sabbaths occurring during the time He was dead. Their argument was built on Matthew 28:1, which literally reads: *Now after the Sabbaths, as the first day of the week begun to dawn Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.*; and also on their knowledge of Yahweh's Kodesh Days and how they apply to the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Messiah. They claimed that in the year of the crucifixion, the Preparation Day on which Yahshua died occurred on Wednesday. The next day was the first day of the Week of Unleavened Bread, which was (and still is) a special annual High Day Sabbath. (Also referred to in John 19:31, Leviticus 23:4 to 8) It was the coming of this High Day or solemn Annual Sabbath that drove the Jewish leaders to request the breaking of the 'convicts' legs so they would die before the Week of Unleavened Bread formally began.

The Biblical account clearly shows that Yahshua died mid-afternoon on the Preparation Day. Yahshua's body was even placed in a tomb (the heart of the earth) just as the High Day began at dusk. The urgency involved was such that His body was interred without being properly embalmed. So it was that the three days and nights in the heart of the earth began at dusk at the end of the day of Preparation. That night and the next day (i.e. Thursday-the first High Day of the Week of Unleavened

Bread) were the first night and day of Messiah's interment.

The next night and day were the second day of the Week of Unleavened Bread. Normal work was permitted on that day. The booklet suggested, quite reasonably, that this was the day on which Messiah's followers went out and bought the herbs, spices and linen required to embalm Yahshua properly. They then had to prepare and blend the herbs and spices before they could embalm Him. By the time they finished, the day was nearly over, so the actual embalming had to be postponed again. The second night and second day (Friday) had now passed.

But the new 'day beginning at dusk was the normal weekly Sabbath. Thus Messiah's followers once again had to delay while the Sabbath was on. This was now the third night and the third day (Saturday). Interestingly, the Sabbath is the day of rest, and Yahshua rested on this Sabbath in the sleep of death.

This sequence is confirmed by Mark 16:1, which tells us that the women bought their spices after the Sabbath was over, and by Luke 23:56 which tells us that they kept the Sabbath after they had prepared the spices. Obviously two Sabbaths must have passed while Yahshua was in the grave.

The three days and three nights were fulfilled at dusk at the end of this Sabbath. Did Yahshua rise then, or did He wait and rise at dawn the next morning as is commonly taught? Indeed, John tells us that:

Early on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came, while the tomb was still in darkness, and saw the stone had been removed from the tomb.

Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Yahshua loved, and said to them, "They took the Master out of the tomb, and we do not know where they put Him." John 20:1 and 2

Yahshua was out of the tomb long before the women arrived before dawn to embalm Him. It is quite likely that He rose from the dead at dusk of the previous evening, exactly fulfilling the Sign of Jonah.

However, when we first heard this proposal, we were not sure if the Day of Preparation really did fall on a Wednesday that year, or even if the W WCG were using the right year.

Table 3 contains this summary.

Year CE	Biblical Calculations	Rabbinical Calculations
28	Wednesday, 28 April	Monday, 26 April
29	Monday, 18 April	Sabbath (Sat), 16 April
30	Friday, 7 April	Wednesday, 5 April
31	Wednesday, 25 April	Wednesday, 25 April
32	Monday, 14 April	Monday, 14 April
33	Sabbath (Sat.), 1 May	Friday, 3 April

The Biblical calendar system we outlined above was used to determine the date of Passover (also called the Day of Preparation) for a series of years during which the Crucifixion of Messiah might have taken place. The dates according to the

'modem' Rabbinical calculation system are also included.⁶

Tiberius Caesar's Fifteenth Year

All that remained was to determine the actual year of the Crucifixion. Once again the Bible contains the information required to determine the year. It can be dated by a reference to John the Baptist in Luke 3:1 to 3, which tells us that in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar, Yahweh called John out of the wilderness and instructed him to 'preach a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins'.

The fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar is the key to establishing this date. Tiberius became Emperor on 17 August, 14 CE, on the death of Augustus Caesar. The Jews then used a system of counting regnant years that began and ended on Feast of Trumpets. This was their 'civil' calendar, its origins are probably linked to the fact that the Year of Jubilee began during the seventh month (Lev. 25:8-17). However, 1 Abib was still recognized as the beginning of their religious calendar. Using this reckoning the first "year of Tiberius! reign ran from 17 August, 14 CE until 13 October, 14 CE, the date of the Feast of Trumpets that year. The second year of his reign ran from 13 October, 14 CE until 3 October, 15 CE, which was the Feast of Trumpets that year.

⁶This table shows Julian dates for both calculations. Normally our calculation uses the Gregorian calendar for all dates, whereas the Jewish calculation uses Julian dates before 1582 CE, which were 2 days earlier than the Gregorian dates during the first century CE. The Gregorian calendar matches the solar year more exactly, making our calculations of the equinox simpler. The Gregorian calendar was designed to match the two calendars during the third century CE, which marked the beginning of the Roman Catholic way of determining Easter.

This series continued until we reach the fifteenth year of his reign that by Jewish reckoning ran from 19 September, 27 CE until 7 October, 28 CE. Note that John began preaching during Tiberius' fifteenth year, not after his fifteenth year.

John probably began preaching on or just after the Feast of Trumpets, an ideal time for his message as the days between the Feast of Trumpets and Day of Atonement are a traditional time of reflection and repentance among the Jews. If Yahshua was baptized by John within 52 days after the Feast of Trumpets, Yahshua still had enough time to fulfill His three and a half year ministry before He was crucified, as the three and a half years are sometimes represented as 1260 days in prophecy. This time period fulfills the time that Daniel says must pass (the middle of the week) before the Messiah was cut off. (Daniel 9:26 & 27)

This places the time of Messiah's anointing in the late autumn of 27 CE and His crucifixion at the Passover 31 CE.

As this Passover occurred on a Wednesday, it confirms that Yahshua did keep the Sign of Jonah exactly as He said He would.

Those who have been taught that Yahshua was crucified on a Friday should note from the above calculation of the fifteenth year of Tiberius that 31 CE is the earliest possible year for the crucifixion. This means that the information given in the Bible actually denies the possibility of a Friday crucifixion in the year 30 CE. Nor is the 33 CE Friday date given by the Rabbinical calculation a realistic possibility as that calendar system was still being invented six hundred years later. The Friday crucifixion doctrine is a fraud instituted by a corrupt, apostate church, and actually denies that Yahshua fulfilled the Sign of Jonah. As this document demonstrates, Yahshua Messiah did in fact fulfill this proof of His identity as the Son of Yahweh. The key to this

knowledge has been the Biblical Calendar.

Biblical Kodesh Days	Believers Meaning
Passover	Death of Messiah for our sins. John 1:29
Week of Unleavened Bread	New Life, free from sin, granted Through Messiah's sacrifice. Romans 6:1 to 23.
Wave Offering or First-Fruit (during Week of Unleavened Bread)	Messiah's resurrection, symbol of Our future resurrection to eternal life I Cor. 15:20 to 23.
First-Fruits (Pentecost)	Messiah's followers receive kodesh Spirit. Acts 2:1 to 39.
Feast of Trumpets	Yahshua's return. Revelation 11:15 to 18; I Thes. 4:15 to 17.
Day of Atonement	Satan is imprisoned for his part in humanity's sin, living humankind stands before Messiah for judgment. Rev. 19:1 to 20:3; Matt. 25:31 to 46.
Feast of Tabernacles	Yahshua establishes His Kingdom on Earth, rebuilds earth with the help of His followers. Rev. 20:4 to 22:20.
Last Great Day	Satan released, humanity tempted for last time, unfaithful destroyed, eternal kingdom of peace established and New Jerusalem given to the saints. Rev. 20:5 to 22:20.

Table 4 Believers Meaning of the Biblical Holy Days.

Booklets and Tapes:

Passover is the Memorial, Not a Feast Day

Biblical Holy Days

Has time been lost

What You Should Know About Easter

He Arose, But When...

Identifying the Lost Ten Tribes

Origin of Western Christianity

Roots of Modern Christianity

The Christmas Book

Seminar Summary on Calendar (written paper)

Calendar Seminar (7 hour video)

Calendar Yahweh Gave to Moses

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