

# ONE TORAH FOR ALL

Zerubbabel ben Emunah

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רֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ

## Rosh Chodesh

(New Moon)

***Shemot (Exodus) 12:2***

***“This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you.”***

The focus of this study is the beginning of the month called “chodesh” or “rosh chodesh.” In this study we will need to examine the first of those months called “Rosh Chodesh,” which is the month of Aviv. While we will need to examine the beginning of the year, it is not the primary focus of this study; but rather, it is where we actually need to start this study.

On a note of interest, the Hebrew word which is rendered in the above passage as “you” in English is plural, which we can and should understand to mean that each and every member of Israel is to follow this same calendar and that the first month of the year is to be aviv.

In this period of the restoration of Ephrayim back to our heavenly Father’s house (His house of Torah), there is a lot of discussion concerning the calendar and all that is related to it, and rightly so. However, this discussion becomes highly charged with emotions at times and things are said that should not be said and in fact are not even true. And if they are true, because things may be taken out of their original context, the true meaning is lost or twisted to mean something other than originally intended by the original author. It is regrettable that this has happened and continues to happen. What each one of us must do is to determine within ourselves that above all else we need to walk in His Spirit and hold to His truths. And when we encounter those things like long held traditions which have actually been raised up against the knowledge of YHWH and lead us away from keeping His Torah, then we simply need to discard them. There are also those teachings of men today which are raised up against the knowledge of YHWH our Elohim; and there are other men who follow these teachings simply because the man who is teaching them has made a name for himself. This also is regrettable. These teachings need to be

carefully and scripturally examined and if these teachings do not come under the authority of Scripture, then they too need to be discarded. This present teacher's teachings are no exception to this!

This is much easier said than done. There are many things to take into consideration in a study such as this. Furthermore, there are things that are normally considered that should not be considered. What do we mean by this? For example, what is often done is that public opinion is examined in some way to help determine what the one who is searching these things out is to do. This is a grave error and typically will lead one in the wrong direction.

While it is typical that studies such as this one are read and examined, they should not be the primary source for our information in making decisions as to what we should and should not do. That should come from two primary sources. The first and foremost must always and ever be His Spirit. The second is His written word. In order to be able to read a study such as this and get the most out of it, it must be read in His Spirit. Second, it must be measured with the written word. All too often people are measuring His word with studies that they read. This will always lead one away from His truth! What we must do is to know the word well enough that when we come across something in a study that is not right we have a sufficient foundation in which to be able to hear the Spirit tell us that what we have just read or heard is not right and not according to His written word. Thus, we are then able to reject that which is not according to His Spirit.

The primary source of contention in the calendar debate is between two main camps. There are other camps, but these two are the main ones at present. In one camp we have the long held tradition of man to calculate the new moon and use a calculated calendar. In the other camp we have those who put forth the idea that we should use a sighted new crescent moon to begin the new month and new year; the belief being that the new moon in conjunction with the aviv barley begins the new year. Let us begin by discussing some quotes concerning the calculation of the new moon.

These first two quotes are from the work *Laws Concerning the Sanctification of the New Moon* by Maimonides. One of the reasons that these two particular quotes are so very important is that Maimonides tells us some very important information concerning the calculations done in the first century during the time of Mashiach. And yes, calculations were done in the time of Mashiach. However, unscrupulous men, who desire to bring us into bondage to the traditions of men, use this knowledge in an unrighteous manner to prove their point and to bring us into bondage to the traditions of men. As you read these quotes, please pay particular attention to *why* these calculations were done and for *what purpose* these calculations were used.

#### Chapter 1:6

Just as the astronomers who discern the positions and motions of the stars engage in calculation, so the Jewish court, too, used to study and investigate and perform mathematical operations, in order to find out whether or not it would be possible for the new crescent to be visible in its "proper time," which is the night of the 30<sup>th</sup> day. If the members of the court found that the new moon might be visible, they were obligated to be in attendance at the court house

for the whole 30<sup>th</sup> day and be on the watch for the arrival of witnesses. If witnesses did arrive, they were duly examined and tested, and if their testimony appeared trustworthy, this day was sanctified as New Moon Day. If the new crescent did not appear and no witnesses arrived, this day was counted as the 30<sup>th</sup> day of the old month, which thus became an embolismic<sup>1</sup> month. If, however, the members of the court found by calculation that the new moon could not possibly be seen, they were not obligated to be in attendance on the 30<sup>th</sup> day or to wait for the arrival of witnesses. If witnesses nonetheless did appear and testified that they had seen the new crescent, it was certain that they were false witnesses, or that a phenomenon resembling the new moon had been seen by them through the clouds, while in reality it was not the new crescent at all.

In this paragraph we learn that one of the reasons for calculating when the new crescent moon might be seen was to determine when the judges should be present in the court to receive the witnesses. It was also used to determine if witnesses were, in fact, credible witnesses. For, if a witness came forward and the calculations were such that it would not be possible to see the new crescent moon, then they knew that he was not a credible witness and his testimony was rejected. Please note that even though calculations were used at that time, the time of Mashiach (circa), without the actual sighting of the new crescent moon by credible witnesses, the new moon-new month was not and could not be declared.

In this next paragraph we will see further evidence as to the full purpose of the calculations of the new crescent moon.

#### Chapter 2:4

The court used to employ methods of calculation of the kind employed by astronomers in order to ascertain whether the new moon of the coming month would be seen to the north or to the south of the sun, whether its latitude would be wide or narrow, and in which direction the tips of its horns would point. And when witnesses appeared in order to testify, the court used to examine them as follows: Where did you see the new moon, to the north or to the south? In which direction did its horns point? How great was its altitude, in the estimate of your eyes, and how wide its latitude? If their testimony was found to conform with the results of astronomical calculation, it was accepted; but if it was found not to conform, it was rejected.

Please note that these calculations told them the following information about the new crescent moon.

1. On what day it should be visible
2. Whether the moon would be visible north or south of where the sun had set upon the horizon
3. Which direction the horns of the new crescent moon would be pointing
4. How far above the horizon the moon would be when seen
5. How far north or south (latitude) of the sun was the moon seen

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<sup>1</sup> Embolismic month means that it is a thirty day month.

Dear brothers and sisters in Mashiach, the sole purpose of the calculations concerning the new crescent moon prior to Hillel was for the express purpose of being able to examine the witnesses who came forward saying they saw the new crescent moon. The calculations concerning the new crescent moon during the time of Mashiach Yeshua were never used to establish the new moon! This was not done until Hillel II calculated the calendar and set it in place nearly three centuries after the destruction of the temple.

So, whenever you read a study attempting to convince one to use a calculated calendar which is basing its arguments upon the fact that calculations were done in the first century during the time of Mashiach Yeshua, you know why those calculations were done and you know what those calculations were used for, so do not be deceived by these unrighteous men who must know these things, but are not willing to tell you the truth. Let His Spirit guide you into all truth just as Yeshua promised He would do.

This next quote is from the *The Jewish book of Why* by Alfred J. Kolatch. Please note the great degree of honesty as to why the calculated calendar does certain things. It is too bad that those who are trying to get you to follow this calendar are not as honest as this. The reason that the writer can be so honest about this is because the rabbis teach that they have the power and authority to change Torah. So, when things like this are done by the rabbis, it is never even given a second thought. They are locked into the following of the traditions of men and toss aside the Torah commandments of YHWH our Elohim.

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Why does the first day of Rosh Hashana never fall on a Wednesday, Friday, or Sunday?

When the calendar was finally issued by Hillel II in 359 C.E., it was arranged so that the holidays would not interfere with the observation of the Sabbath and so that the Sabbath would not interfere with holiday observances.

If Rosh Hashana (1Tishri) were to fall on a Wednesday, Yom Kippur (10 Tishri) would fall on a Friday. If Yom Kippur were to fall on a Friday, that would make it impossible for Jews to prepare for Sabbath.

If Rosh Hashana were to fall on a Friday, Yom Kippur would fall on a Sunday, which would allow no time for Jews observing Sabbath to prepare for Yom Kippur, which would begin immediately after the Sabbath.

Rosh Hashana never falls on a Sunday because that would mean that Hoshana Rabba (the last day of Sukkot, would always falls [sic] on 21 Tishri) would fall on a Saturday which would not be desirable.

In Talmudic times Hoshana Rabba was regarded as a day much like Yom Kippur. It brought to an end the long holiday period beginning with Rosh Hashana, and was considered to be the one final opportunity to reverse an unfavorable decree issued against the individual on the High Holidays. If Hoshana Rabba were to fall on the Sabbath, this would interfere with the ceremony of beating a bunch of hoshanot (willows) during the synagogue services, an action forbidden on the Sabbath. Beating the willows was a way of expressing guilt and remorse, similar to the malkot ceremony practiced on Yom Kippur.

Please note that in these few paragraphs we see that man has devised ways in which he thinks that he knows better than our heavenly Father and has set out to arrange the high days of the year to coincide with his own traditions. No wonder YHWH says:

***Yeshayah (Isaiah) 1:14***

***“Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; they are a trouble to Me; I am weary of bearing them.”***

YHWH gave us instructions as to when to meet with Him. When man sticks his nose in and starts to calculate towards his own desires, His people suffer as a result, because they are no longer meeting Him on His appointed days. Instead they are attempting to meet with Him on their own manmade appointed days. Do you see the difference? May the Spirit of YHWH open our eyes that we may see His truth in this matter.

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 16:1***

***“Observe the month of Aviv, and keep the Passover to YHWH your Elohim; for in the month of Aviv YHWH your Elohim brought you forth out of Egypt by night.”***

This verse tells us several things, two of which are important to our present study. The first is the word “observe” which is the Hebrew word שָׁמַר – “shamor” which means “to keep watch.” This comes from the root word שָׁמַר – “shamar” which means “to protect, to distance from danger.”

We are being commanded to observe, keep watch and protect something in particular in this verse. It is the “month of Aviv.” In Hebrew this is the phrase שָׁמַר אֶת-חֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב – “shamor et-chodesh ha’aviv.” This means that one is to observe or to watch for the chodesh and aviv, or the new moon and the barley in the green ear. Simply put, in order to keep this commandment one has to see with his eyes the new moon and the barley in the green ear. So, for Israel to do this there must be at least two witnesses who are qualified and duly examined and then the new year can be declared to begin when these two things are witnessed. Please note that there are no qualifications for this, just that they must be seen by the proper number of witnesses in Israel. There are no calculations necessary.

Each month the chodesh must be looked for and seen in order that when it comes time to look for the barley in the green ear it will be seen in the proper season. Barley always ripens in the spring of the

year. So there is no concern that this has to be done after the equinox of the sun. This is a fabrication of man and an addition to His commandment to observe chodesh Aviv.

YHWH is the one who is in control of His calendar, not man. He will cause His moons to be seen as He desires. He will cause the barley in the land to ripen according to His plan and according to His will. We as His people just need to observe and pay attention to what He is doing so that we will meet Him on His appointed times.

The truth is that while the conjunction of the moon can be calculated, it cannot be “observed” as the Scriptural commandment teaches us to do. There are those who follow the conjunction, i.e., the calculated new moon. We have heard all these questions and arguments before. However, there are some difficulties present in the following of the conjunction as well as the full moon as the new moon that simply cannot be overcome and should not be ignored.

While the actual conjunction happens in a moment of time, the moon is actually hidden from our view during this time for a two to three day time period. So how do we know without calculations which day is the right day? Plus, the conjunction happens in a different place in relation to the globe each month. So, how is one to follow this with any degree of certainty? We can't!!! Not without calculations which is not observing the chodesh as Scripture commands us to do.

The full moon is just as fraught with difficulties. Typically the moon appears to be full for about three days. But its actual fullness is only a moment in time as it is exactly opposite the earth from the sun. This too, changes place in relation to the earth from month to month. But how is one to know with any degree of certainty when the full moon is? We can't! Once again calculations are necessary, which is not following the pashat meaning of “observing” the chodesh.

However, one can actually see the new sliver. It is not two or three days! It is one day. Before it was not seen; then it is seen. Bingo! New moon - new month!

The words of Mashiah Yeshua lay out the proper path to follow in this regard as well as regards our entire walk of faith. Please carefully and prayerfully consider these words!

***Matithyah (Matthew) 18:3***

***and said, “Amein I say to you, except you turn, and become as little children, you shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.”***

One does not need long fancy explanations to be able to see something. One does not need calculations to be able to observe His commandments properly. One simply needs to hear and obey. One simply needs to hear his Father's Voice and do as He instructs in the same way as a small child hears and obeys his father. So too, are we to simply hear and obey His commandments. He has commanded us to “observe” the chodesh and the aviv. When we do this at the pashat level, that is, when we simply hear

this commandment as a small child and then set out to do as our heavenly Father has instructed us to do, we cannot go wrong!

Is there any place in Scripture that teaches us to calculate anything at all? No.

Is there any place in Scripture that tells us that we are to obey His Voice? Many!

Children can obey the voice of their parents. We tell them what to do and they do it, or get disciplined. Many times, especially when they are young, we do not give them any explanation because, quite simply, they would not truly understand, even if we did. We simply tell them what to do and they do it.

YHWH's instructions to us are very much the same way. He knows that if we are going to walk the path of faith in the way that He intends for us to walk it then we must follow His instructions. His instructions are for each and every person. His instructions are for the simple and wise alike. Each person is as capable of keeping His commandments as the next. It does not take a genius to keep His commandments. All it takes is a willingness to do so, and the ability to obey.

In the case of Rosh Chodesh it does not take science, calculations, or any such sophisticated mental gymnastics that a child would have difficulty following, let alone an adult in many cases. One simply goes outside, looks into the sky towards the west, and if the new sliver of the moon is present, then it is Rosh Chodesh. If it is not seen with the unaided eye, then it is not Rosh Chodesh yet. Even a child can understand this and if one does not become as a child, then he will not enter into the kingdom of Elohim, or so taught our Mashiach.

Please consider this question: Are YOU able to calculate the conjunction? If not, then how would YOU be able to keep His commandments? But you can look into the evening sky and see the new sliver of the moon in its appropriate season!

There is one Torah for the native born as well as the sojourner among you.

Let us now consider the one passage in Scripture that in some English versions is translated with the term "full moon".

***Tehillim (Psalm) 81:3***

***Blow the trumpet at the new moon,  
At the full moon, on our feast-day.***

However, is "full moon" a correct rendering or a correct understanding? The verse in Hebrew is as follows:

חִגְנוּ	לְיוֹם	בַּכֶּסֶה	שׁוֹפָר	בַּחֲדָשׁ	תִּקְעוּ
Our feast	For day	at separation	shophar	at new moon	sound

The Hebrew word בַּכֶּסֶה – “bakkeseh” is the word which is rendered as “full moon” in the ASV and other translations. However, this is not the proper understanding of this word. The root word בכה or בכא – “bakah” means “separate” or “cover.” It is most often translated in the Tanak as “throne.” The idea is one of separation, being separated from that which is common. Thus, some translations render this verse as:

***Blow up the trumpet in the new moon,  
In the time appointed, on our solemn feast day.***

The phrase “in the time appointed” comes from בַּכֶּסֶה. There is another place in the Tanak where this word appears which should also be understood in this same way, i.e., in the time appointed.

***Mishle (Proverbs) 7:20***

***He has taken a bag of money with him,  
And will come home at the day appointed.***

In this verse from Mishle the Hebrew word we are interested is הַכֶּסֶה – “hakeseh” – “the appointed time.” Please note that in the previous verse this word ends with the Hebrew letter ה and in the verse immediately above this word ends with the Hebrew letter א, but it would be pronounced the same and has essentially the same meaning.

There is one other passage that we need to examine in which the New American Standard Version translates this word as “new moon” with a footnote stating that an alternate rendering would be “throne,” which is a better rendering of this verse considering the context.

***Iyov (Job) 26:9***

***He encloses the face of His throne,  
And spreads His cloud upon it.***

The Hebrew word here is spelled כִּסֵּה – “kiseh,” which means “throne” or “seat of honor.” This is speaking of the throne of the Almighty. The idea is that His habitation is hidden from the physical realm in which we live.

Now let us return to the passage in Tehillim and look at it once again.

***Tehillim (Psalm) 81:3-4***

***3 Blow up the trumpet in the new moon,  
In the time appointed, on our solemn feast day.***

**4 For this was a statute for Israel,  
And a statute of the Elohim of Ya'aqov.**

What we learn from this passage is that the new moon, that is, the moon in its newly sighted crescent, is a feast day. The Hebrew word is חַג – “chag” which means “feast.” This is an important truth, as we learn in verse four that this is a statute in Israel, i.e., that the day of the new moon, rosh chodesh, is a feast day. Exactly what that means we will examine further below.

One of the questions that many struggle with today is whether the new moon is a Shabbat or not.

**Amos 8:4-5**

**4 Hear this, you that would swallow up the needy, and cause the poor of the land to fail,  
5 saying, “When will the new moon be over, that we may sell grain? And the Shabbat, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and dealing falsely with balances of deceit;”**

Please carefully note in this passage that the unrighteous are being chastised by YHWH because they are not honoring His new moon and Shabbat because they want to buy and sell upon those days, when it is prohibited to buy and sell upon Shabbat.

**Vayyiqra (Leviticus) 23:3**

**“Six days is work done, and in the seventh day is a Shabbat of rest, a holy convocation; you do no work; it is a Shabbat to YHWH in all your dwellings.”**

A Shabbat is defined in Scripture as doing no work, which certainly includes buying and selling as both of these involve doing work. So, when we learn that one is not to buy or sell upon the new moon we can know that this is in fact a Shabbat to YHWH.

This next passage from Yeshayahu also shows us that YHWH views the new moon as a Shabbat. It is a little more subtle, but it is there. We have chosen to include other verses with this so that we can get the full impact of the context of what YHWH is saying through His prophet.

**Yeshayah (Isaiah) 1:10-17**

**10 Hear the word of YHWH, you rulers of Sodom; give ear to the Torah of our Elohim, you people of Gomorrah.**

**11 “What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me?” says YHWH; “I have had enough of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats.**

**12 When you come to appear before Me, who has required this at your hand, to trample My courts?**

**13 Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination to Me; new moon and Shabbat, the calling of assemblies, - I cannot endure iniquity and the solemn meeting.**

**14 Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; they are a trouble to Me; I am weary of bearing them.**

**15 And when you spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when you make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood.**

**16 Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes; cease to do evil;  
17 learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, and plead for the widow.”**

YHWH is speaking these words to the leaders and dwellers of Judah and Jerusalem. He is disgusted with them because they are acting religious, but their hands are full of blood. They are oppressing the poor, the fatherless, and the widow, and then acting all pious about it. It is this hypocrisy that YHWH hates and is addressing in this passage.

With that in mind, the solemn assemblies that YHWH is addressing include the new moon. From this we can glean that the new moon is not only a feast and Shabbat, but also a mo'ed or appointed time. We can also see this from the Torah Moshe. All of our feast days, including new moon day is to have the trumpets sounded over our sacrifices and offerings according to what YHWH commands us in the following passage.

***B'midbar (Numbers) 10:10***

***“Also in the day of your gladness, and in your set feasts, and in the beginnings of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt-offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings; and they shall be to you for a memorial before your Elohim, I am YHWH your Elohim.”***

In this next passage YHWH tells us what sacrifices He commands us to offer on rosh chodesh or new moon day.

***B'midbar (Numbers) 28:11-14***

***11 “And in the beginnings of your months you shall offer a burnt-offering to YHWH; two young bullocks, and one ram, seven he-lambs a year old without blemish;***

***12 and three tenth parts of an ephah of fine flour for a meal-offering, mingled with oil, for each bullock; and two tenth parts of fine flour for a meal-offering, mingled with oil, for the one ram;***

***13 and a tenth part of fine flour mingled with oil for a meal-offering to every lamb; for a burnt-offering of a sweet savor, an offering made by fire to YHWH.***

***14 And their drink-offerings shall be half a hin of wine for a bullock, and the third part of a hin for the ram, and the fourth part of a hin for a lamb; this is the burnt-offering of every month throughout the months of the year.”***

To sum up in list form what the offerings are to be on rosh chodesh they are:

- 2 young bulls with a meal offering and a drink offering for each
- 1 ram with a meal offering and a drink offering
- 7 young rams each with his own meal offering and drink offering

Please note that this is what is to be offered each and every new moon day of each month throughout the year. This is in addition to what is offered as the daily offering, and if the new moon falls upon a weekly Shabbat, then that is also added into what was offered on new moon day.

Later in this same context as YHWH is commanding Israel what to offer in the daily, Shabbat, new moon, and festival offerings, He also includes a special offering for Yom Teruah, which is a special new moon day of the seventh month.

***B'midbar (Numbers) 29:1-6***

***1 "And in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no servile work; it is a day of blowing of trumpets to you.***

***2 And you shall offer a burnt-offering for a sweet savor to YHWH; one young bullock, one ram, seven he-lambs a year old without blemish;***

***3 and their meal-offering, fine flour mingled with oil, three tenth parts for the bullock, two tenth parts for the ram,***

***4 and one tenth part for every lamb of the seven lambs;***

***5 and one he-goat for a sin-offering, to make atonement for you;***

***6 besides the burnt-offering of the new moon, and the meal-offering thereof, and the continual burnt-offering and the meal-offering thereof, and their drink-offerings, according to their ordinance, for a sweet savor, an offering made by fire to YHWH."***

On Yom Teruah, which is the first day of the seventh month the offering is as follows:

- 1 young bull with his meal offering
- 1 ram with his meal offering
- 7 young lambs each with his meal offering
- 1 male goat

In verse six we learn that this is in addition to the regular new moon offerings. So the offerings on this day, the first day of the seventh month, carry additional sacrifices and offerings as commanded by YHWH.

Also please note that as we learned in B'midbar 10:10 we are to sound the trumpets over our offerings on each and every new moon. But in addition to sounding the trumpets on each and every new moon YHWH also commands that the new moon of the seventh moon has additional soundings of either the trumpet or shofar (it does not specify which) as it does on the regular new moon soundings in which YHWH commands us to use the trumpets.

So, in addition to the regular sacrifices of the new moon, the seventh new moon has additional sacrifices. In addition to the regular soundings of the new moon, the seventh month has additional

soundings. In addition to the new moon being a regular Shabbat throughout the year, the seventh new moon is also one of the seven high Shabbatot of the year, i.e., one of the seven annual feasts.

There are those today who have begun putting forth the idea that the weekly Shabbat is somehow tied to the phases of the moon. However, this simply does not work according to Scripture.

***B'reshit (Genesis) 1:14-19***

***14 And Elohim said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years;***

***15 and let them be for lights in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth;" and it was so.***

***16 And Elohim made the two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; he made the stars also.***

***17 And Elohim set them in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth,***

***18 and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness; and Elohim saw that it was good.***

***19 And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.***

It was not until the fourth day of creation that Elohim made the sun, moon and stars. On the fourth day the sun, moon and stars were new creations. On the fourth day of creation there was a new moon. Three days later YHWH rested from all His work and rested on the seventh day of the week. A new moon can occur on any day of the week. In the case of the first week of creation the new moon first appeared on the fourth day of the week. The weekly Shabbat always falls on the seventh day of the week.

***Shemot (Exodus) 20:8-11***

***8 "Remember the Shabbat day, to keep it holy.***

***9 Six days shall you labor, and do all your work;***

***10 but the seventh day is a Shabbat to YHWH your Elohim; in it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your man-servant, nor your maid-servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates;***

***11 for in six days YHWH made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; therefore YHWH blessed the Shabbat day, and hallowed it."***

On the seventh day of each and every week we are to set that day apart and keep it as a day of rest and observance of His commandment to us as His people. One is supposed to work for six days and then rest on the seventh day. Because the lunar cycle of the moon is not an even 28 days, but rather just slightly more than that, a month is longer than four weeks. A month is actually 29 to 30 days in length. So those who are following a week set forth by observing the phases of the moon have a real dilemma on their hands because YHWH commands us to work for six days and then rest on the seventh day. His commandments do not make any provisions for any weeks to be shorter or longer. To do this is going against the plain and simple meaning of His commandment and is following after man rather than following YHWH our Elohim.

There are several different variations of the lunar Shabbat teaching, but they all have the same basic problem; that is, each one cannot get past the fact that we are to keep a count of weeks by the count of seven days. We are to work six days then rest one day, then start the count over again.

It is interesting to note that we even have a commanded feast in which we are to keep this count. It is the feast of Shavuot or the Feast of Weeks. Keeping this feast on a lunar week would not be possible. The count would be all messed up.

Some have even suggested that observing the chodesh each month is akin to worshipping the moon. Just because a person sees something with his eyes does not make it worship. YHWH commands us that when we sacrifice an animal, it is to be without blemish. This means that one will have to look that animal over very carefully. Does this mean that when he looks over this animal and observes it he is worshipping it? Of course not; how silly! To suggest that when one looks up into the sky to see if he can see the new crescent moon as YHWH has commanded us to do is to worship the moon is an attempt to scare people away from His commandments and to manipulate another with fear. Frankly, using fear to manipulate another person is akin to witchcraft and is worthy of death.

When we look at the pashat level of Scripture the conclusion of the matter seems rather simple. YHWH has commanded us to see with our eyes the chodesh (new moon). Any deeper interpretation cannot violate the pashat level of Scripture. It can add to it, but it cannot diminish it whatsoever.

So, whenever there is a new moon seen and declared from Israel, then gather with family and friends and have a feast, sound the shofar and study Scripture.

ABBA YHWH, open our eyes that we may see clearly to do and to keep and to observe each and every one of Your commandments in a way that pleases You; in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach. Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

Zerubbabel ben Emunah

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