

THIS (ABIB) shall be the BEGINNING of months!

By Rabbi Edward "Levi" Nydle-revised 7-1-03

"And Yahweh spoke to Mosheh and to Aharon in the land of Mitsrayim saying,"This month is the beginning of months for you; it is the FIRST month of the year for you. "Shemot (Ex.) 12:1-2

"In the FIRST month, on the fourteenth day of the month, in the evening, you shall eat unleavened bread UNTIL the twenty-first day of the month." Shemot 12:18

Early in my walk, like most people who have become involved in the Messianic "movement", turned to my Yehudi brothers for direction and instruction on the feasts and the calendar. Being new to the Torah, I realized the Jews had preserved the feasts and Torah for us Ephraimites to learn from them the proper way of Torah observance. We as Ephraimites are eternally grateful to our brothers. However, after several years of thinking that "Rosh Hashanah" was the "NEW YEAR", my head was turned around by Rebbe Moshe Koniuchowsky last year when he taught me through an article that 'Rosh Hashanah' was not the Scriptural New Year. He showed me that ABIB should be the Scriptural New Year and the entire Scriptural calendar revolves around our redemption of the Passover. It is a time of New Beginnings, for the calendar cycle of Yahweh's Feast days. Let us look at Scripture and history to prove our point.

The New Year date of Tishri 1 being the first month of the year is Talmudic in origin. Josephus (c.90CE) states that before the Exodus the Hebrews in Egypt (the world), followed Egyptian practice, and observed the month called Dios (Oct. /Nov.) in Greek, as the second month making the first month Tishri. Yet, with Mosheh, it became the eighth month. The first month of ABIB was to be the first month for everything relating to divine worship, but for buying and selling the ancient order was preserved.

Notice the month of Tishri, the seventh month, was the beginning of months for the Egyptians! This month was also the first month for the Macedonians. Yahweh, not Mosheh, changed this system for the Yisraelites before their Exodus out of Egypt in 1439BCE.

Josephus points out that even in his day (90CE) that the month of Tishri was only the New Year for the ordinary affairs of buying and selling. Josephus understood that the SACRED year began in ABIB. Philo (c.40CE) indicates the same thoughts. He wrote that the year began in the spring and that Mosheh proclaimed a rest (a Sabbath) for the land.

From the first revolt (66-70CE) through the Bar Kochba revolt (133-135CE), the records prove that the Jewish year began at Abib and not Tishri.

The first time we notice the reckoning of the year in Tishri is in the Mishnah (around 200CE). There it claims in R.Sh.1: 1 that there are four new years in one year! Even in the Mishnah, Abib is the New Year for kings and feasts. Tishri was used for the "years of foreign eras" (Danby *Mishnah*, p.188, n.7; cf. Gitt.8: 5). This was the era used by FOREIGN people, not the early Yisraelite (i.e. from the time of Mosheh) or Scriptural calendar system.

An important Talmudic work called the *Abodah Zarah* confirms that the beginning month for the year was CHANGED and it now differed from the days when the Yisraelites had their own kings (B.A, Zar.10a.).

To make a long study shorter, there is little doubt that the use of Tishri as the first month for the Jews did not occur until AFTER the Bar Kochba revolt (133-135CE), and was influenced by the dominance of foreigners in Yerushalayim and Judea after the revolt, and the decrees established by Hadrian thereafter. The *Seder Olam* states," And in the Exile (Diaspora) they write in documents according to the reckoning of the Greeks (i.e. the Seleucid Era)."

After the rabbis determined that the Sabbath year should start in Tishri, it was a small step to determine EVERY year from this same starting point.

At the time of King Herod (37-4BCE) the rightful line of high priests (Hasmonaeans) were removed and a degenerated priesthood, along with the rise of the scribes, soon changed sound doctrines originally practiced. Torah interpretations replaced the authority of the Scriptures, and dominated Jewish life in the times of Yahshua. Out of these scribes and sages there arose support for the Bar Kochba revolt. Foreign domination of Yerushalayim and Judea after the revolt necessitated contracts and other CIVIL matters be conducted with the Macedonian version of the Seleucid year (beginning in Tishri). This resulted in a movement towards a Tishri calendar by the Jewish people.

Conclusion: We can see all the pre-Mishnah records indicate that the Yisraelites began their calendar with the Abib 1. Because of the influence of pagan kings and foreigners the calendar was CHANGED to a Tishri calendar. We can see this calendar is not to be the beginning of months for us as Yisrael. It is not Scripture. Let us as Messianic Yisrael RETURN to Yahweh and His calendar as recorded in the Torah for us by the Ruach Hakodesh. Let us celebrate at this Passover season the BEGINNING of Months for us-ABIB!