

The Zadoc Calendar.

The Zadoc calendar has 364 days in its year and it is a solar calendar. The actual days in a year are about 365.24219 days according to the Time and Date website. That is why we have an extra day every four years because after 4 years, .24 adds up to almost an additional day. In the case of the Zadoc calendar, after four years, it is about 5 days off because it is short 1.24219 days per year! Therefore, when it comes to God's feasts, after 4 years, those who use the calendar would be celebrating God's feasts 5 days too early. So, the question is, why would anyone use a calendar like this? It would be wrong within just one year. Maybe the Zadoc priests were sincere, but a person can be sincerely wrong.

I question whether the majority of the people who were farmers and who lived in the country would know when to begin their journey to Jerusalem for a feast using the Zadoc calendar. But if you are convinced that you should use the Zadoc calendar you should use it. Just remember that it will be often off after just one year. It should be noted that every 1,000 years our calendar is off by 2 days. Although inconsequential, it is not such a big difference as the Zadoc calendar.

Also, since God's feasts would always come earlier than they should using the Zadoc calendar, the book of Acts seems to address the issue of those who came to Jerusalem too early. Acts 2:11 NKJV says, "When the Day of Pentecost had fully come." Perhaps we could say that when Shavuot came with completeness' meaning people were there ahead of time waiting. When Yeshua told His disciples to remain in Jerusalem until the promised Holy Spirit was given, He doesn't tell them which day. Perhaps people using the Zadoc calendar arrived early and connected with some of Yeshua's disciples who told them that they were to wait for the promised Holy Spirit.

So, the Essenes who some say followed the Zadoc calendar waited as well as other followers of Yeshua. The Essenes historically were a more cautious and observant group of believers. So, if they tried using the Zadoc calendar, they would have found that it is a faulty calendar and stopped using it. It is doubtful that a more cautious group of people would continue to use this calendar.

Also, it should be noted that the ancient rabbis often thought their way of doing things was right even though they were wrong. I once heard a story of a rabbi who instead of pouring water on the altar, poured it on the ground. No one was supposed to pour water on the altar! He was right, the other rabbis were wrong! After he did that, the other rabbis pelted him with their citrons (which is an oblong fruit 5-6 inches long) perhaps injuring him terribly or even worse. The rabbis considered their traditions to be right instead of what the Torah teaches. It was the same with keeping God's feasts. A rabbi decided that he was going to keep God's feast on the right day because he knew the day the Sanhedrin had chosen was the wrong day. Here is the story.

From StudyLight.org online about Gamaliel II:

Gamaliel forced Joshua b. Hananiah, another famous pupil of Johanan b. Zakkai, to recognize the authority of the president in a most humiliating way, namely, by

compelling Joshua to appear before him in traveler's garb on the day which, according to Joshua's reckoning, should have been the Day of Atonement.

The Timing of God's Feasts.

So, when does the Bible say that God's feasts occur? Believers are supposed to be keeping God's feasts because they are after all, God's feasts. Leviticus 23:2 NKJV says, "The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, **these are My feasts.**" It doesn't say they are Jewish, English, American feasts or of any ethnicity, but they are God's feasts. So, the people who say these are ethnic feasts are wrong.

Way back in the beginning, God determined the timing of His feasts. Genesis 1:14 NKJV says, "Then God said, 'Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and **seasons.**'" That word **seasons is the word "meetings"** (the Hebrew word *moed-im*). Moshe used a tent to meet with God before the Tabernacle was built. The account where Moshe meets with God uses the same Hebrew word there as in Genesis 1:14. It is the same word meeting (*moed*) except in the singular. Exodus 33:7 NKJV says, "Moses took his tent and pitched it outside the camp, far from the camp, and called it the tabernacle of **meeting**. And it came to pass that everyone who sought the LORD went out to the tabernacle of **meeting** which was outside the camp." So, according to the Bible, the Sun and the Moon in the sky determine when we meet with God. The Hebrew word for meeting (*moed*) is used two times in Exodus 33:7. It is translated meeting because that is what it means.

So, what specifically determines when we meet with God? The Sun determines the days. Genesis 1:5 NKJV says, "Evening and the morning were the first day." So, the days are defined from evening to morning. In our time, midnight on our clocks determines the next day. In ancient times, they did not have clock so the next day started after sunset. Days were from evening to the beginning of the next evening. The Bible says the Sabbath day is the 7th day of the week (namely, from our sunset on Friday night to sunset on our Saturday. Since our Sun determines the days, it determines when the 7th day occurs. These scriptures define what day the Sabbath occurs.

Genesis 2:2-3 NKJV says,

The seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

Exodus 20:8-11 NKJV says,

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

This can sometimes be confusing for those who are used to changing days in the middle of the night, but after observing the Sabbath on the right day and right timing with sunset determining the beginning of the day for a while it becomes routine. We should use the biblical calendar for God's feasts and the civil calendar for our civil activities. Our civil calendars provide order in our society and are therefore good to keep.

What about the months and God's other feasts? The Bible says the Moon determines when the months occur and therefore when God's other feasts occur. Psalms 104:19 NKJV says, "He appointed the moon for seasons; the sun knows its going down." The Moon can't tell us when all the different seasons are (Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter) because the Moon appears every month. Again, the word translated seasons there in Psalms 104:19 is the Hebrew word ***moed-im*** which means meetings. The Moon determines when God's feasts are.

That's why in Isaiah it says we worship God from one New Moon to another. Isaiah 66:23 NKJV says, "'And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me,' says the LORD." God's feasts occur in a particular month, namely the 1st month and the 7th months. The Bible tells us what days of the month they are to be observed. So, the Sun determines when the true Sabbath is kept and the Moon signals when the other feasts are to be kept.

The New Moon.

The first of each biblical month begins on a New Moon. Psalms 81:3 NKJV says, "Blow the trumpet at the time of the New Moon." The blowing of the trumpet signaled the New Moon and the beginning of the next month. It is when the Moon reappears in the sky, the first crescent of the moon after a short period of complete darkness. It is not the modern New Moon which is when the Moon is dark. It makes sense that the ancient people would say the Moon is a new Moon because it has reappeared.

The ancient New Moon signaled when the biblical month began and the numbering of the days of the month. This account is talking about the Passover which occurs in the biblical month of Nisan also known as the month of Aviv or Abib. Exodus 12:2-3 NKJV says, "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb.'" The 10th of the month is when to pick a lamb for the Passover. The context is the Passover which occurs in the Spring. In the context, Exodus 12:11 NKJV says, "It is the LORD's Passover."

In Deuteronomy we find out that the first of months being referred to is the month of Aviv. God says that we are to guard the month of Aviv. The word "observe" in the following verse is the Hebrew word for **keep or guard**. Deuteronomy 16:1-2 NKJV says, "Observe the month of Abib, and keep the Passover to the LORD your God, for in the month of Abib the LORD your God brought you out of Egypt by night. Therefore you shall sacrifice the Passover to the LORD your God, from the flock and the herd, in the place where the LORD chooses to put His name."

So, why does that month need to be guarded? There must be something significant about this month. **It is because it is the first month of every year.** Do not be confused by Rosh

Hashanah. It does not begin the actual first month, but it is the 7th month. There are rabbis who point this out, but they are largely ignored. Before Israel took the names of the Babylonian calendar, the month of Aviv was what their 1st month of the year was called. It is now called the month of Nisan. That month was the time of year that Israel was set free by God from their slavery and their mistreatment in Egypt. It is this month that the calendar resets because Aviv is to be the 1st month of each year. So, even though we've adopted the Babylonian names for the months, there are still God's feasts in certain months. We have to call the months by something. It may not be the best names, but it provides a standard. God will probably give us His names for the months in the future kingdom.

Also, of significance, the Israelites were to bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of barley to the priest in Jerusalem after Passover. Leviticus 23:10 NKJV says, "You shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest." According to Josephus, they brought a sheaf of barley to the Temple in Jerusalem (see Antiquities 3.10.5). Barley is a Spring crop so we know that the barley had to be ripened enough for each family to be able to bring some to Jerusalem. So, by the first day of the month of Aviv, the barley needs to be ripe enough to be able to make that the 1st month. **Therefore**, the first month of the biblical year is determined by whether the barley is ripe enough to declare it the first month of the year.

If the barley is not ripe enough by the time of the first crescent of the New Moon, an additional month is added. The biblical calendar self-corrects the timing to make sure the calendar starts in the Spring season. The farmers would know when to go to Jerusalem because they had enough barley to bring a sheaf. Also, farmers can also know when the other months of the year begin by observing when the first crescent of the Moon reappears. They would know when to keep all the Feasts of God because of that. Observing the Moon is an easy method for keeping track of time. After a few times seeing the Moon reappear, a person knows what to look for anywhere in the world. When the Moon reappears, it is always on the bottom right side of the Moon.

We know that the Zadoc calendars were not taken from what the Bible says, but from nonbiblical ancient literature. Sometimes we can learn things from commentaries and ancient sources, but they are not the word of God. The Bible is our best source for truth. We need biblical concepts explained at times because the people and times talked about in the Bible are ancient. The Bible needs to be understood within the context and times it was written. We should try to understand the Bible the way the people of their time would have understood it. We need the truths of the Bible to live by, and the Bible provides our best source for truth.

Unfortunately, traditions often override biblical truth because people get used to doing things a certain way. There is a problem with the civil calendars of the different countries because they are different than the biblical calendar. These calendars are set up to provide order and set the civil dates of that country. There is no reason to not follow them because they provide order for life in that country. But there is also no reason we cannot follow the biblical calendar and observe God's feasts on the right day. In some countries this can be difficult, but at present, the United States allows their people the freedom to choose their personal religious holidays, feasts, or days of observance.

It can be a little confusing at times to also follow the biblical calendar for our biblical feasts and days of observance. I try as best as I can to follow the biblical calendar knowing that even the Israeli calendar is a set calendar and often does not show God's feasts occurring on the actual biblical day! It would not be difficult for Israel to do that, but they have decided to do it their way anyway. I use the "Time and Date" website. You can select Jerusalem and see when the Moon reappears each month. Do the best you can. Deuteronomy 5:29 NKJV says, "Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!" God has good intentions for us so we should want to keep His good commandments. We should treat God for who He is, the creator of all that exists and follow what the Bible says.

Work out your salvation with fear and trembling. Psalms 2:11 NKJV says, "Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling."