

September, 2002 - Time calculated  
from the birth of Yeshua HaMashiach.

Elul, 5763 - Time calculated  
from the creation of the world.

Blessings in the Feasts of the Lord!

## God's Calendar

God was the first one to establish a calendar. The two great lights that He made *"to rule the day and the night"* (sun and moon, Genesis 1:16) had an additional purpose: to be *"for signs and seasons, and for days and years"* (vs. 14). God's people determined the time of the month by observing the moon. A new moon marked the beginning of the month; a full moon marked the middle.

The Jewish calendar today is still a lunar calendar, based upon the moon making one revolution around the earth every twenty-nine and one-half days. This calendar was put in its present form over 1,600 years ago. Until 359 C.E., the Sanhedrin was the judicial body responsible for harmonizing the Jewish lunar calendar with the civil (solar;Gregorian) calendar. The first has 354 days, the later 365 days. The eleven-day discrepancy was reconciled by adding an extra month (Adar II) every two or three years, and by adding or subtracting a day each year from the months Cheshvan and Kislev as required.

In the civil (Gregorian) calendar, a new day begins at midnight and extends for twenty-four hours. In the Jewish calendar, the day begins and ends at sunset. The origin of the Jewish day is biblical: *"So the evening and the morning was the first day."* (Genesis 1:5)

An important principal is inherent in this aspect of God's calendar: GOD ALWAYS MOVES FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT. He creates order out of chaos. He reaches out to us in our sin and leads us to redemption. In Yeshua, He *"calls us out of darkness into His marvelous light."* (1 Peter 2:9)

## Sacred vs. Civil Calendars

God established a sacred calendar for His people when He took them out of Egypt. We read in Exodus 12:2 that *Abib*, the month in the spring at the time of the exodus, would be the first of their months. God was telling His people to begin to reckon time from the month of their redemption. He had given them a new beginning, a fresh start. (God gave us a new calendar too. We often feel that our lives really began in July and September of 1973 when we were redeemed by the blood of Yeshua).

The Jewish people also had another calendar, a civil one based on their agricultural seasons. The civil calendar to this day begins with the month of Tishri (generally in September or October). The holiday called *"Rosh HaShanah"* (*rosh*=head, *shanah*=year), literally, head of the year, is an alternative name given to the biblical holiday that falls on Tishri 1 mentioned in Leviticus 23:24. In the Bible this holiday is called *"Yom Teru'ah"* (the Day of Blowing the shofar or ram's horn) and falls during the 7th month of the sacred calendar. The Tishri 1 "new year" was instituted when the Jews returned from Babylonian exile, since Tishri 1 was the new year of the Babylonian calendar.

Something to consider: Celebrating Tishri 1 as "Rosh HaShana" as traditional Jews do instead of "Yom Teru'ah," might lead us to focus more on the "New Year," apples and honey and good wishes for sweetness, rather than the shofar and the voice of God calling us to repent, and prepare our hearts for the coming of Messiah.

**Messianic Jews should lead the way in reinstating "YOM TERU'AH," with its emphasis on the SHOFAR, as the first of the Fall Feasts.**

### **The Moadim of Leviticus 23**

*Mo'ed* in Hebrew means appointed time. We find God's schedule of divine appointments in chapter 23 of the Book of Leviticus. As aptly pointed out in **The Voice of the Lord, a Messianic Jewish Daily Devotional**, God's feasts serve as a devotional tool leading us to spend time with our Heavenly Father on special weekly, monthly and annual occasions. God has set these appointments to meet with us in order to bless us in special ways. (We are often more concerned about keeping our doctor's appointments than our appointments with our Father.) This month, September 2002, has three *moadim* or appointed times for all of us to meet with the Lord (this includes all God's children, Jew and non-Jew alike).

Sept. 7, 2002 - Yom Teru'ah (Feast of Trumpets) Sept. 16, 2002 - Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)

Sept. 21-28, 2002 - Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles)

*"Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying; 'Speak to the children of Israel,' saying, 'In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a sabbath-rest, a **Memorial of Blowing of Trumpets**, a holy convocation.' "* (Leviticus 27:23-24)

*"Also the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the **Day of Atonement**. It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire to the Lord."* (verse 27)

*"The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the **Feast of Tabernacles** for seven days to the Lord."* (verse 34)

All of the feasts are summed up in Leviticus 23:4: *"These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocation which ye shall proclaim in their **seasons** (moadim)."*

The feasts of the Lord, on God's sacred calendar, present an accurate picture of the Lord's plan of redemption through the Messiah Yeshua. His first coming and His return all occur according to the calendar of God. **Passover**, the first feast of the sacred calendar was fulfilled by Yeshua on the exact date of Passover when He died as the Lamb of God, taking upon Himself the sin of the world. Yeshua fulfilled the **Feast of Unleavened Bread** as the sinless Messiah, the Bread of Life from heaven that went into the earth. He fulfilled **Firstfruits** at His resurrection by being the firstfruits of those whom God raised from the dead. Fifty days after Passover, Yeshua fulfilled **Shavuot** or Pentecost right on time by sending the Holy Spirit to write the law of God on the table of man's heart. The long summer months on God's calendar during which there are no feasts symbolize the "Church Age" during which God has reached out to multitudes of Gentiles with the message of Yeshua.

The fall feasts of **Yom Teru'ah**, **Yom Kippur** and **Sukkot** come next. All of them are yet to be fulfilled. They will be, and we believe very soon. Right now, on God's calendar, the time of the

Gentiles is drawing to a close (Luke 21:24) and the Lord is dealing once again with His Jewish people, preparing them for the return of Yeshua, the Messiah.

The Hebrew word *moadim* translated as "appointed times" in the NKJV is the same word that is translated as "seasons" in Genesis 1:14. Could it be that God had the feasts in mind, His sacred calendar in place, His special appointments with man already set at creation? If Genesis 1:14 includes the idea of the feasts of the Lord, it is clear that just like Yeshua, the feasts are for **all** people, not just the Jewish people! **God is throwing a party and you are invited!**

### **Scripture by the Calendar**

The Jewish people read the Holy Scriptures according to the calendar. The Torah (first five books of the Bible) is broken up into weekly portions called "*parashot*." There is a portion from the Torah and a portion from the Nevi'im (Prophets) read each week in synagogues throughout the world. On any given sabbath, all Jews read the same portion from the Bible. How's that for being "on the same page!"

The synagogue readings for the fall holidays provide us with a great opportunity to not only hear from the Lord ourselves, but to pray that all Israel will receive kisses from God from His Word at His appointed times. Below are the portions for "Yom Teru'ah" (celebrated by traditional Jews outside of Israel for two days instead of one) and Yom Kippur:

Yom Teru'ah (Rosh HaShanah)	Day 1 Genesis 21:1-34 I Samuel 1:1-2:10 Numbers 29:1-6	Day 2 Genesis 22:1-24 Jeremiah 31:1-19 Numbers 29:1-6
Yom Kippur	A.M. Leviticus 16:1-34 Isaiah 57:14-58:14 Numbers 29:7-11	P.M. Leviticus 18:1-30

The Scripture readings on Yom Teru'ah (Rosh HaShana) include the miraculous birth of Isaac to Abraham (age 100) and Sarah (age 90) in Genesis 21 and the miraculous salvation of Isaac, whose life was spared when God provided a ram in his place (Genesis 22). The portion from I Samuel chapters 1 and 2 tells the story of Samuel's birth as the answer to the prayers of a childless woman. From barrenness to fruitfulness, despair to hope, death to resurrection, God has a message for us all:

**He has saved the best wine for last. It is time for our deserts to blossom.**

**A barren past does not mean a fruitless future when God is present!**

**God is never late!**

God has His own calendar, and His appointed times. We know that His ways are not our ways, nor His thoughts our thoughts (Isaiah 55:8), but time is different for Him as well: "*But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*" (II Peter 3:8) God had a "set time" (*mo'ed*) for the birth of Isaac (Genesis 21:2). It certainly wasn't according to Abraham or Sarah's time schedule. Abraham loved his older son, Ishmael, but it was time to separate Ishmael and Isaac. God told Abraham to listen to Sarah and send Hagar and her son away. The Lord told Abraham: "*In Isaac your seed shall be*

*called. Yet I will also make a nation of the son of the bondwoman, because he is your seed."* We read in Genesis 21 that Hagar and Ishmael left with bread and a bottle of water. Finding herself in the wilderness of Beersheba with no more water, Hagar lifted up her voice and wept. The boy must have cried out as well since the Bible (vs. 17) tells us that God heard the voice of the lad. An angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, telling her not to fear because God would make of Ishmael a great nation (the Arab nations). God opened Hagar's eyes to see a well of water. God was with them. A lesson to be learned: **We carry bottles, but God has wells.** He is the God of the abundant supply. He supplied at 11:59 for Hagar and Ishmael. They thought they were going to die, but God had other plans. He was **not late!**

A truth to be remembered: Isaac, the child of promise, was heir to the covenant. However, God provided for Hagar's son, Ishmael as well. Ishmael's descendants, the Arab peoples, have been abundantly blessed. They have land holdings that dwarf the tiny plot of land given to Isaac, and they have incredible wealth due to their oil holdings. They also have the **choice** of being grafted into God's covenant people if they can set aside their animosity.

### **More Gems From Genesis**

As Jewish people around the world hear the word of the Lord from Genesis 22, we pray that it will truly be a *mo'ed* for them, an appointed time to see the types and shadows in the story of the binding of Isaac. This portion of Scripture, called the *akedah* (binding in Hebrew) begins with Abraham saying "*Hineni*" ("Here I am") when God called him. Abraham was saying, "I'm on your schedule, Lord, not mine." What God asked of Abraham was a tremendous test of faith: to take his son Isaac, go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering. This was the child of promise, his beloved long-awaited son. Abraham obeyed at once, leaving early the next morning. He took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on his son Isaac. When Isaac asked his father where the lamb was for the burnt offering, Abraham replied: "*My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.*" (verse 7)

Abraham built an altar at the place chosen by God. He placed the wood in order, and bound his son Isaac on the altar. As Abraham was about to kill his son, the Angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and told him not to harm the boy. God had seen Abraham's heart, his faith, and his fear of the Lord. Abraham lifted his eyes to see a ram caught in the thicket by its horns, God's provision for the burnt offering. Abraham took the ram and offered it up instead of his son.

About 2,000 years later, Yeshua the Messiah was born: "*But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.*" (Galatians 4:5) God loved His son even more than Abraham loved Isaac, but what He didn't ask of Abraham, He asked of Himself: the sacrifice of His only son. Why? Because there was no other lamb worthy to take His place. The sin of the entire world had to be atoned for. Only the sinless Son of God could take man's place and make eternal atonement for each one of us. Yeshua had a choice in the matter. In a garden called Gethsemane on the east side of Jerusalem, the Messiah pondered the great price to be paid and came to the conclusion, "*Not my will, but Thine be done.*" (Luke 22:42)

Yeshua, God's Son, went willingly to the cross. God, the Father, did not spare His own Son. Yeshua is God's provision for sin for everyone, for **all time**. Yeshua, of Abraham's seed, has become the source of blessing for all nations. Salvation is "*of the Jews*" through the Jewish Messiah.

**We're on God's calendar this month**

We leave for Madrid, Spain on September 17, 2002. This two week trip is a gift from our Heavenly Father via one of His chosen vessels. Jamie has not been to Spain since she last lived there in 1970. (She also attended the University of Madrid in 1967 for one year during college.) Neil has never been to Spain, but both of us have desired to explore the rich Jewish heritage hidden beneath the surface in this country. We covet your prayers for the Lashes, the Kronmans and the children we leave behind in the U.S. May the will of our Father be accomplished in all our lives as we spend Sukkot tabernacling with the Lord in Spain. We anticipate a very special "season of our rejoicing" this year. A final confirmation of our journey came from one of our partners right after our return from our Mercy Missions Trip to Israel in May during which we distributed \$51,940.34, in love baskets. Sandy sent us the following verse from Romans 15:28-29:

*"Now I am going to Jerusalem to help God's people. The believers in Macedonia and Southern Greece were happy to give their money to help the poor among God's people at Jerusalem. They were happy to do this and really they owe it to them. These who are not Jews have shared in the Jews' spiritual blessings so they should use their material possessions to help the Jews. After I am sure the poor in Jerusalem get the money that has been given them, I will leave for Spain..."* (New Century Version)

Upon our return from Spain, we will begin production of three new Jewish Jewels television programs, "Ruth," "Bar Mitzvah Blessings," and "Lost and Found." They will begin airing some time in November. Please ask the Lord if this is an **appointed time** for you to help sponsor one of these programs.

Richest blessings during God's moadim,

Neil and Jamie

P.S. Did you know that with the exception of the seventh day, Shabbat (the Sabbath), the days of the week have no names in Hebrew? They are referred to as "the first day," "the second day," etc.