

Are we preparing for the biblical new year? It starts this coming Wednesday evening March 22nd at sundown.



*"From now on, this month will be the first month of the year for you."* Exodus 12:2

## Happy New Year!

I remember a number of years ago discovering for the first time that YHWH had a new year and that it was in the spring just before Passover. Since that time I have tried in spiritual and practical ways to mark my new year as starting at this time as well.

It does seem to make practical sense that God's new year would correlate with new life emerging in the spring. It's also interesting to note that directly

following this new year is the first festival on the biblical calendar. Passover marks our redemptive starting point and points to the beginning of our spiritual journey.

Tomorrow I will speak more about this special time that begins this Wednesday evening March 22nd at sundown. We will discuss the spiritual themes and how we as a community are entering into new things this coming year. I'm excited to not only enter this new season but also to share some insights about this tomorrow.

I'm also including a couple of practical thoughts that I wrote about last year as well:

In light of God having a new year, what would be practical responses on our part to partake of this?

1. **Individual Observance:** Three broad categories of helping to make the new year tangibly personal come to mind.

- First of all, it can involve an assessment of the previous year where we look back over the year from last Passover. What good things happened? What tough things happened? What did you feel that God was saying to you? What things do you want to leave behind as you enter a new year? What were lessons learned from the previous year?
- Secondly, I believe God would desire cooperative anticipation on our part where we become excited as we discover what God would have for us as we partner with Him for the coming year. What new things are in front of you? What are the most important areas God would have you focus on for this coming year? Are there any areas of distraction that you need to leave behind?
- And finally I believe He would have us involved in focused action for the coming year. What S-M-A-R-T (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and tangible) goals can we set in place to help us achieve that which God would have for us this year? To accomplish the above well, it would probably take at least an hour of set-apart time with God to carefully ask Him, listen and think

about what is on His heart for us in this season. Can we set apart some time with Him to process what He would have for us?

2. **Family Traditions:** There are things that we as families and/or groups of friends can do to make these festival seasons days of great focus and joy. There are many resources available on the internet to help with planning for this. Jess and I have also developed a simple erev Shabbat liturgy that helps us as a family to enter into the Sabbath. I would be glad to email a copy for anyone interested in having this.

3. **Corporate Meetings:** God has a number of “appointed meetings” that He has set up for His people to corporately attend together in this season (Leviticus 23). To celebrate these festivals as God fully intended we cannot just observe them individually or as a family. He wants us actively involved in a local congregation (and even with congregations joining together) as extended families of Believers coming together for fellowship, worship, instruction, and fun. Tomorrow I will share more about the upcoming appointed times (in addition to Sabbath) during the next three weeks that we as a congregation will be a part of.

In closing, let’s line up our calendars and lives with God’s desires and calendar in order to take part in that which He is emphasizing in this season.