

### 1. The Biblical New Year Nisan

Rosh Chodesh Nisan for Hebrew Year 5784 begins at sundown on Monday, 8 April 2024 and ends at nightfall on Tuesday, 9 April 2024. This is the start of month of Nisan on the Hebrew calendar. ניסן (transliterated Nisan or Nissan) is the 1st month of the Hebrew year, has 30 days, and corresponds to March or April on the Gregorian calendar. The Biblical New Year Nisan 1, is on the 8th of April this year, at the Sun eclipse, if anyone has missed that?! This is the eight time it goes over the USA, since 1776. Every solar eclipse happens at the new moon. The 2017 Solar eclipse that started on 1st of Elul, and this year's eclipse are making an ancient Alef and Tav, (Alpha and Omega) on our country, a mark of Yeshua. The shadow falls on cities called Ninevah along its way. There are many podcast's and speculations out there: Civil War, Warning, Repent! It sure is remarkable, but I leave that to others to ponder, and we will find out next week, maybe, what impact it really is making! It is interesting that it marks the New Beginning, The Biblical New Year.

### 2. The Renewal, Liberation from Slavery, Freedom of Time, and Freedom to Serve Yahweh

Just before the miraculous Exodus from Egypt, God told Moses that the month of Pesach was to be the first month of the new year. So, the first day of the first month, the start of the year, is in the spring according to the Bible.

*“This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you.”* (Ex 12:2)

Alternatively, *Ha Rosh*, should not be understood as month, but as a **renewal**. God showed Moses the new moon and told him. “When you see the new moon in its new phase, it shall be *Rosh Chodesh* for you (Rashi). *Rosh* meaning head or beginning of *Chodesh* the month. For you, *Lakhem*—this word appears twice in the verse, to stress a new relationship between the Jews and time. A slave's time belonged to the masters, not to act as they pleased. But from then, Jews would be masters of their own time, and their only master would be God (Sfono, The Chumash. pg. 349). In the Chanukah story, we can also note the fight over the commandments, Rosh Chodesh that initiated all the festivals, without a calendar no festivals, the circumcision and the Shabbat (Chumash p 348). God didn't give the month a name at that point, just as He didn't give the days of the week names in Genesis either. They were simply called the first day, second day, and so on, through to Shabbat. In the same way the months are referred to as the first month, second month, and so on. Today the first month of the Jewish calendar is known as the month of Nisan. The currently-used names of the months are of Babylonian origin, after the destruction of the First Temple (Ramban, Chumash, pg. 349). This is the real new year, according to the Bible—the month when **the tribes of Israel became a faith community** and the whole nation set off on their faith journey with God (One For Israel). So, the children of Israel were **set apart** for Gods purposes.

God later calls the first month Aviv: *“Observe the month of Aviv and celebrate the Passover of the Lord your God, because in the month of Aviv he brought you out of Egypt by night.”* Deuteronomy 16:1

Another new beginning came through the flood and Noah:

*Now it came about in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, on the first of the month, the water was dried up from the earth. Then Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the surface of the ground was dried up.* Genesis 8:13

### 3. The Month of Redemption

**A. Rosh HaShana:** Today, the Jewish New Year (Rosh Hashanah, the “head of the year”) is celebrated in the Fall, at Yom Teruah. In ancient times, the surrounding nations would likewise start their year according to the agricultural cycle, when the first rains came. Rosh Hashanah, also spelled Hashana or Ha-shanah, comes from Hebrew and, most simply put, means “beginning of the year.” Rosh Hashanah not only marks the new year—it also honors the creation date of Adam and Eve some 5,700 years ago, the first relationship, and the human connection with God's world. The history of Rosh Hashanah can be traced back to the sixth century BCE, though the holiday was never mentioned in the Torah. The phrase “Rosh Hashanah” was first mentioned in the Mishna (the first major written collection of the Jewish oral laws) in 200 C.E. In ancient times, there were four different New Years on the Jewish calendar. Each had a distinct significance:

- The first of the Hebrew month of Nisan, the New Year of Kings, was the date used to calculate the number of years a given king had reigned.
- The first of the Hebrew month of Elul was the new year for tithing of cattle, a time when one of every 10 cattle was marked and offered as a sacrifice to God.

- The first of the Hebrew month of Tishrei was the agricultural new year, or the New Year of the Years.
- The 15th of the Hebrew month of Sh'vat, known as Tu BiShvat, was the New Year of the Trees.

The Babylonians, among whom the Jews lived, marked a “Day of Judgment” each year. In addition to the biblical “holy convocation” and the transformed Babylonian “Day of Judgment,” the first of Tishrei also was associated with the anniversary of the creation of the world, *Yom Harat Olam*. For these three compelling reasons, the first day of the seventh month ultimately became the “official” Jewish New Year. While those terms are still preserved in the liturgy and rabbinic literature, Jews all over the world today usually refer to Rosh HaShanah as the Jewish New Year (Reform Judaism.org).

It must be said, however, that the idea of the year coming to an end in the fall is not entirely unscriptural. Succot also known as the Feast of Ingathering, is described twice as being at the end of the year: “You shall keep the Feast of Harvest, of the firstfruits of your labor, of what you sow in the field. You shall keep the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in from the field the fruit of your labor.” (Exodus 23:16) “You shall observe the Feast of Weeks, the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the year’s end.” (Exodus 34:22) (One For Israel).

**B. 1st of Nisan: But in contrast to other peoples, God told His own people their timetable would run very differently. Instead of fixing the calendar around the agricultural cycle, God kicks off the year beginning with His great story of redemption, which would foreshadow the redemption provided by the blood of Jesus on the cross (One For Israel).**

It was in that first month of Nisan that the entire nation of Israel was saved from slavery by the blood of the Passover lamb. They all took part in faith, obeying God’s instruction to put the blood on vertical and horizontal pieces of wood around their doorframes, trusting that death would pass over them as God had said. Later, the blood of the Messiah on the vertical and horizontal planks of wood on the cross would save countless millions from slavery to sin and death for those who trust in His sacrifice. **While the rest of the world was focused on the bread necessary for survival, God changed the pivotal point to highlight our need for redemption as even higher than our need for food. Life is precious, but eternal life even more so.**

Yeshua made this clear when He was tempted by satan: *But he answered, “The Tanakh says, ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of Adonai’”* Matt 4:4

Yeshua also mentioned to the disciples after He had ministered to the woman at the well: *Yeshua said to them, “My food is to do what the one who sent me wants and to bring his work to completion.* John 4:34

We are not to be concerned about these matters anyway, as the Father is feeding and clothing us. *“That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn’t life more than food, and your body more than clothing?”* Matt 6:23 (NLT)

#### 4. The Tabernacle

The first of Nisan is not only the start of the new year, but it was also highlighted once again to Moses, on another important occasion:

*The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “On the first day of the first month you shall erect the tabernacle of the tent of meeting.”* Exodus 40:1

*Hashem spoke to Moses, saying:..”On the day of the **first new moon**, on the first day of the month, you shall erect the Tabernacle, the Tent of meeting (The Chumash).*

Moses was shown the pattern for the tabernacle up on Mount Sinai, and the work was completed by the time Passover came round again for the first time since the great event itself. On the anniversary of the first month of the first year, when the calendar was first inaugurated, Moses and the Israelites completed the task of building the tabernacle.

***In the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month, the tabernacle was erected. Moses erected the tabernacle. He laid its bases, and set up its frames, and put in its poles, and raised up its pillars. And he spread the tent over the tabernacle and put the covering of the tent over it, as the Lord had commanded Moses.***

Exodus 40:17-19

Just as in the beginning God **stretched** out the heavens over the earth, Moses was instructed to stretch out, to spread the tent material over the tabernacle structure. This concept of spreading or stretching out is an interesting word to trace throughout the Scriptures when we’re thinking of the **first day of the first month**. God’s handiwork of creation is often referred to as stretching out the **heavens like a tent**:

*I made the earth and created man on it; it was my hands that stretched out the heavens, and I commanded all their host.* Isaiah 45:12

*‘Surely My hand founded the earth, And My right hand spread out the heavens; When I call to them, they stand together. Isaiah 48:13 (NASB 1995)*

Psalm 104 also builds on this metaphor of God stretching out the heavens like a tent, using imagery of the tabernacle structure with a cloth canopy stretched over it (also in Psalm 19:4; Isaiah 40:22, 42:5, 44; Jeremiah 10:12 and many other bible passages). A few different words for this stretching and spreading out of the heavens are used in Hebrew, some of which (like the word **רָקַע** **râqa'**, raw-kah'; a primitive root; to pound the earth (as a sign of passion); by analogy to expand (by hammering); by implication, to overlay (with thin sheets of metal); beat, make broad, spread abroad (forth, over, out, into plates), stamp, stretch (Strongs)...(as God stretches out the sky in Psalm 136:6 and Job 37:18) are also used to describe how the woven fabrics within the tabernacle were fashioned. These words also speak of the cherubim stretching their wings over the mercy seat, and of people stretching out their hands in intercession...**just as the arms of Jesus were stretched out on the cross as He offered up His life for us, bidding all to come. As He came and tabernacled among us...**

*And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us. We looked upon His glory, the glory of the one and only from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14 TLV*

A fresh start, a way back to how things were supposed to be; and a new start is open to us as we receive the gift of forgiveness and cleansing from the sacrifice of the Messiah, His arms stretched wide offering us salvation.

*Therefore, if anyone is in Messiah, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*

*2 Corinthians 5:17*

**So, the tabernacle was set up, and God’s glory fell on the first day of the first month, a year after Israel’s dramatic deliverance. A new beginning was made for God’s chosen people, with the tabernacle signifying a replica of Eden (One For Israel).**

<sup>35</sup>*Moshe was unable to enter the tent of meeting, because the cloud remained on it, and the glory of Adonai filled the tabernacle (Ex 40:35 CJB).*

## **5. The Shamim Celebration of Nisan 1**

A Torah Scroll is unfurled and the cantor begins to read from Exodus 12:1, “And God spoke to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, ‘This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year.’” Ahba Veahva’s members celebrate Rosh Hashanah in September like other rabbinic Jews. **The Seder al-Tahwid, however, is a remnant of an ancient custom of the Jews of the near East** (variably referred to as Mustaribun or Shamim) to commemorate the first day of the Jewish month of Nisan as a minor Rosh Hashanah as per Exodus 12:1. On their website, Congregation Ahaba Veahva explains the celebration as follows:

*The Great Exodus of Egypt: On Rosh Chodesh (the first of the month of Nisan), beni Yisrael (the children of Israel) heard the nes (miracle) that they were going to be redeemed on the night of the 15th, later in that very month. We hold this evening to remember the miracles and the chesed (kindness) that Hashem (God) does for His nation. “In Nisan we were redeemed in the past, and in Nisan we are destined to be redeemed again.” (a midrashic quote [Exodus Rabbah 15:2]) asserting that just as the Exodus from Egypt took place in Nisan so too will the **ultimate messianic redemption**)*

*We hold this evening to put everyone in the correct spiritual mindset—to realize with all their might (Joel S Davidi).*

## **6. Shall We Celebrate the New Year and Rosh Chodesh?**

While the Jewish civil new year is in the fall, and with some justification, the Bible says the first month of the year is to be in the Spring, in the month of the Passover. Unlike the many feasts of the Lord, God does not command a celebration, or even a rest! But here it is, anyway, the ceremonial head of the year—the real Rosh Hashanah (One For Israel).

\* Rosh Chodesh is an appointed time according to Numbers 10:10; we are instructed to blow the trumpet on the first day of the month.

*Also in the day of your gladness and in your appointed feasts, and on the first days of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be as a reminder of you before your God. I am the LORD your God.” Numbers 10:10*

\* Blowing the Shofar—Psalm 81:3, Numbers 28:11-15

<sup>11</sup>“*At each Rosh-Hodesh of yours, you are to present a burnt offering to Adonai consisting of two young bulls, one ram and seven male lambs in their first year and without defect; <sup>12</sup>with six quarts of fine flour mixed with olive oil as a grain offering for the one ram; <sup>13</sup>and two quarts of fine flour mixed with olive oil as a grain offering for each lamb. This will be the burnt offering giving a fragrant aroma, an offering made by fire for Adonai. <sup>14</sup>Their drink offerings will be two quarts of wine for a bull, one-and-one-third quarts for the ram, and one quart for each lamb.*

*This is the burnt offering for every Rosh-Hodesh throughout the months of the year.*<sup>15</sup> *Also a male goat is to be offered as a sin offering to Adonai, in addition to the regular burnt offering and its drink offering.*

Numbers 28:11-15

Sacrifices are an act of worship unto Yahweh. Rosh Chodesh is an appointed time for these sacrifices, but since we do not have a temple, we follow these instructions from our Heavenly Father in another way.

\* Instead of offering animals, we could offer our praises to Him. Our sacrifices will be to worship God. Brad and I usually praise Him with instruments and singing at the New Moon.

\* A feast on Rosh Chodesh (Numbers 10:10)...in your appointed feasts...but not a Shabbat

*So David said to Jonathan, "Behold, tomorrow is the new moon, and I ought to sit down to eat with the king. But let me go, that I may hide myself in the field until the third evening. David answered Y'honatan, "Look, tomorrow is Rosh-Hodesh, and I ought to be dining with the king. Instead, let me go and hide myself in the countryside until evening of the third day. 1 Sam 20:5*

*The Shunamit woman: <sup>22</sup>She called to her husband and said, "Please send me one of the servants with a donkey. I must get to the man of God as fast as I can; I'll come straight back." <sup>23</sup>He asked, "Why are you going to him today? It isn't Rosh-Hodesh and it isn't Shabbat." She said, "It's all right." <sup>24</sup>Then she saddled the donkey and ordered her servant, "Drive as fast as you can; don't slow down for me unless I say so." 2 Kings 4:22-23*

*Stop bringing worthless grain offerings! They are like disgusting incense to me! Rosh-Hodesh, Shabbat, calling convocations—I can't stand evil together with your assemblies! <sup>14</sup>Everything in me hates your Rosh-Hodesh and your festivals; they are a burden to me—I'm tired of putting up with them! Isaiah 1:13-14*

Rosh Chodesh, the New Moon has its significance, but it is not a Shabbat.

*"This is what Adonai Elohim says: 'The east gate of the inner courtyard is to be shut on the six working days, but on Shabbat it is to be opened, and on Rosh-Hodesh it is to be opened. Ezekiel 46:1*

*You say, "When will Rosh-Hodesh be over, so we can market our grain? and Shabbat, so we can sell wheat?" You measure the grain in a small eifah, but the silver in heavy shekels, fixing the scales, so that you can cheat. Amos 8:5*

## 7. The Future Rosh Chodesh

<sup>22</sup>*"For just as the new heavens and the new earth that I am making will continue in my presence," says Adonai, "so will your descendants and your name continue. <sup>23</sup>"Every month on Rosh-Hodesh and every week on Shabbat, everyone living will come to worship in my presence," says Adonai. Isaiah 66:22-23*

<sup>17</sup>*The prince's obligation will be to present the burnt offerings, grain offerings and drink offerings at the feasts, on Rosh-Hodesh, and on Shabbat—at all the designated times of the house of Isra'el. He is to prepare the sin offerings, grain offerings, burnt offerings and peace offerings to make atonement for the house of Isra'el.' Ezekiel 45:17*

## 8. Application:

\* We are commanded to celebrate the New Moon; it is a privilege.

\* The 1st of Nisan is the Head of all Rosh Chodeshs,

\* A new Beginning. It is a time of renewal.

\* We are also getting ready for Pesach, a time of redemption, soon to be celebrated in our community of faith.

\* It is a time to celebrate the New Beginning, with Yeshua's sacrifice in our mind; also His return as a king, and the future celebration of Rosh Chodesh.

\* **So let us meditate on all the points above, as we observe, the New Moon of the Biblical new year, blow the shofar worship Yahweh and have a feast!**

## References

The Chumash

Davidi, Joel S. *Journal of the History of Ideas Blog*. "The First of Nisan, The Forgotten Jewish New Year"

Hruzak, Robert. *Set Apart People. Rosh Chodesh. How do we celebrate this day?*

<https://www.setapartpeople.com/rosh-chodesh>

One For Israel. The Real New Year according to the Bible

<https://reformjudaism.org/jewish-holidays/rosh-hashanah/rosh-hashanahhistory#:~:text=Although%20the%20Torah%20refers%20to%20Nisan%20as%20the,assembled%20in%20the%20temple>