

The Time is At Hand

"¹⁹Therefore, repent and turn to God, so that your sins may be erased; ²⁰so that times of refreshing may come from the Lord's presence; and he may send the Messiah appointed in advance for you, that is, Yeshua. ²¹He has to remain in heaven until the time comes for restoring everything, as God said long ago, when he spoke through the holy prophets." (Acts 3:19-21 CJB)

Just before the Israelites leave Egypt in Exodus 12 *The Almighty* commands the Children of Israel to begin counting the months of the year: *"¹Now Adonai spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt saying ²"This month will mark the beginning of months (Ha Chodesh HazeH Lachem Rosh Chadashim Rishon Hu Lachem HaChadshein HaShanah) for you; it is to be the first month of the year for you" (Ex 12:1-2).* The first day of *Aviv/Nisan* is an awesome day for our Jewish people. On this day when we received our first commandment as a nation: *sanctify (set apart) this new moon*. The new moon declaration has a profound spiritual and historic significance for Jews everywhere because it sets/establishes when the Biblical Holy Days (*chagim*) fall, how many days they encompass and when they are celebrated in or out of Israel. This *mitzvah* gives *Bnei-Yisrael mastery and privilege* over the reckoning of time. From that moment on the calendar with its cycle of *Shabbatot* and *High Holidays/Festivals (chagim)* could exist only when the *Sanhedrin (ancient High Court and Legislature in the land of Israel)*, aided by human witnesses, would declare a new month. This signifies more than control over the determination of time and the everyday events of daily life. It also represents the potential for change and renewal, for rebirth and growth, with for the waning and waxing of the moon each month. The *Torah* joins *Rosh Chodesh* with *chagim* when *Bnei-Yisrael* are commanded to be joyous, offer sacrifices, and be reminded of Him (*Nu. 10:10*).

Our divine gift of speech gives us the ability to verbally *sanctify* and bring into reality both objective and subjective principles. Time, holidays, and historical events can be observed in both *word and deed*. By *Blessing the New Moon* and establishing a calendar we are connecting the past to the present. Just as the new moon starts off small and gets visibly stronger each night, then slowly wanes only to renew itself again, so, too, do the Children of Israel have their *chagim cycles*. These are also manifestations of our longevity and vitality. We are to be renewed daily: *"¹⁶Therefore we do not lose heart. Though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16)* since *"they who wait for Adonai will renew their strength. They will soar up with wings as eagles..." (Isa. 40:31)*.

Passover is called the *Festival of Redemption* and redemption involves a *transfer of ownership*. Passover reminds Believers that they have become *a purchased possession* of *The Almighty* and therefore need to submit to the *Master's Instructions*. All too often we emphasize the freedom of Passover that has given us the opportunity to do what we want, rather than remembering that Biblically-speaking, Passover gave the people the *liberty to serve Him*. How does your life reflect the fact that you are a servant of *The Most High*? Can people see the effects that you have received the blood of the Lamb?

It is significant that to receive the blood of the lamb one had to do so in a most public manner – by applying it to the outside of one's home upon the door posts and lintels. This reminds us that we need to be public about our Passover Lamb – *Messiah Yeshua*. Receiving the blood of the lamb, *Yeshua's blood*, redeems us from the consequences of sin and death. Immediately after the people kept the Passover, the Lord gathered them and brought them out of Egypt – the place of bondage – to be free with Him. After we receive *Yeshua, The Almighty* begins a journey for Believers that will end with living in His Kingdom.

Make no mistake about it – the Egyptians knew immediately who kept the Passover and who did not. For those who did not, their house had death within it. Biblically speaking, death is related to sin. There-

fore those who reject *Yeshua*, the true Passover Lamb, are going to be living in the midst of sin, while those who have received *Yeshua* are going to be leaving sin behind, just as the Children of Israel left Egypt in a hurry. If one reads carefully the story of the Exodus from *Mitzrayim* one finds that there was joy in the homes of those who had kept the Passover and whom the Angel of death had not visited.

May we all experience this Happy New Year as we consecrate ourselves for *Pesach* – the *Festival of Freedom!* May we all bless *The Almighty* for the great bounty He provides for us and in the process, may we become blessed. Are you experiencing freedom? Do you have a great sense of gratitude for the deliverance from this sinful world that you have received? May the joy and freedom of knowing the *Lamb of God*, strengthen you this Passover Season and let us look forward to our *very own true freedom experience*. Happy New Year! This is *for us also* the *beginning of months*. *Shabbat Shalom!*