

THE TIME IN OUR YEAR OF THE TRUE SEVENTH MONTH

As it was believed that the types predicted the Advent of the Lord on the **tenth day of the seventh month of the Jewish sacred year**, it was necessary to harmonize the Jewish time with our present calendar, to ascertain what day, according to our reckoning, would synchronize with that day of the Jewish year. According to the Rabbinical reckoning, it fell this year on the 23rd of our September; and many of the religious editors and their correspondents have made themselves quite merry that the Adventists should have supposed it synchronized with the 22nd of October, - "not one of the Adventists," as these learned men say, "having discovered the mistake." From a full and careful review and examination of the question, we are still convinced that **the true Jewish seventh month could only synchronize with our October**, - commencing with the first appearance of the new moon on the 13th of that month, and ending with the appearance of the new moon on the 11th of November. {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 137.10}

According to the Levitical law, the Jewish year began with the month "Abib," which signifieth "green-ears." All the Oriental nations, from the Chinese in the East, to the Latins in the West, with the exception of the Egyptians, commenced their year at about the vernal equinox. 1 From this fact Dr. Hales argues that it was the anniversary of the commencement of the primitive year. 2 The Egyptians began their year near the Autumnal equinox, when the waters of the Nile, in their annual flood, were at their greatest height. While the Israelites were in Egypt, they conformed to the Egyptian mode of computing time; but on their departure, the original year in their reckoning was retrieved. The month in which they left the land of their captivity, was thenceforth to be reckoned their first month. In Exodus xii,2, we read that God spake unto Moses, saying, "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." **And this month, we learn by Ex.ix,31,32, was about the time when the barley was in the ear, and the flax was balled,** but "the wheat and the rye were not grown up." **In the tenth of this month**, the children of Israel were commanded to **take a lamb of the first year without blemish, and to keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month**, when the whole assembly of the congregation **were to kill it in the evening** - (margin) "between the two evenings," which was, as we read in Deut.xvi,6, "at even, at the going down of the sun." 3 In that memorable night, they were to leave the land of Egypt, out of which God brought them, in accordance with his word. **In commemoration of that event, they were commanded annually, in the fourteenth day of the first month at even, to eat the Lord's passover.** And on the fifteenth day of the same month, was to be the feast of unleavened bread, which was to be eaten for seven days. **On the morrow after the Sabbath during this feast, a sheaf of the first fruits of the barley harvest, was to be waved before the Lord.**" Lev.xxiii,9-14. {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 137.11}

As the Jews were obligated to conform to this requirement, they could never observe the passover until the barley harvest was ripe; nor could they defer it much after its ripening, as they could not eat of the harvest until the "wave-sheaf" had been offered by the priest. The Jews, we are told, commenced their months with the first appearance of the moon, which, in that climate, was usually the second evening after the change. And **they commenced their year with the appearance of the new moon nearest the ripening of the barley harvest.** Their years consisted sometimes of twelve and sometimes of thirteen moons, an intercalary moon being added about once in three years. If, on the appearance of the moon at the end of Adar, the 12th moon of the preceding year, there was a probability that the barley would be ripe by the fourteenth day of the month, they made that moon the first month of their year; but if the barley would not probably be ripe till after the fourteenth day, they added the whole of that moon to the

old year, calling it Ve-Adar, or the second Adar. **If, therefore, we can ascertain the time in the year of the ripening of the barley harvest in Judea, we may know very nearly the commencement of the Jewish sacred year.** {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 137.12}

The following items respecting the seasons in Palestine, are taken from an "**Economical Calendar**" of that country, by Johan Gotlieb Buhle, Fellow of the Philologic Seminary, at Brunswick, 1785. **The Calendar was compiled from the researches of travelers of acknowledged authenticity**, at the request of the Directors of the royal college at Gottingen, and may be found in full in "Calmet's Dictionary." {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 137.13}

Feb. According to this Calendar, the snows and colds of Winter begin to cease about the last of February, which month is remarkable for its excessive rains. In this month, the fields, which are only here and there green in January, are covered on every side with verdure. Barley is sometimes sown as late as the middle of this month. The peach and apple blossom, and peas and beans. {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 137.14}

March. The cold seldom continues till March, except on the tops of mountains. In this month, the weather is mostly warm and temperate, so that the heat of the sun is often inconvenient for travelers. The inundation of the river Jordan, caused by the melting of the snow on the mountains, is about the end of this month, at which time, barley is often ripe at Jericho, when it is about fourteen days earlier than at Jerusalem. In this month, every tree is in full leaf. The fig blossoms about the middle, and the Jericho plume, toward the end of it. The latter rains commence in this month and continue into April; after which, none are observed until Summer. {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 137.15}

Apr. In April, the heat begins to be extreme. The harvest falls out entirely according to the rainy season. After the rains cease, the corn [barley] soon arrives at maturity; but it usually remains in the fields a long time after it is ripe. **Barley is ripe in the beginning of April, in the plain of Jericho,** according to Mariti l.c. **In all other parts of Palestine, it is in ear at this time, and the ears turn yellow about the middle of this month.** (Shaw l.c.) Egmont and Korte inform us, that it is for the most part cut down this month. Almonds and oranges also ripen; and the grass begins to be very high. {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 137.16}

May. In the month of May, the Summer season commences, when the excessive heat of the sun renders the earth barren. Wheat is cut down in May, in Galilee, but it is often not all gathered till the first of June. Frequently, barley is not all cut down until this month commences. Early apples are gathered this month. {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.1}

At the present time, the **Rabbinical Jews commence their year with the new moon nearest the vernal equinox**, irrespective of the barley harvest; so that their first month synchronizes with our March, and their seventh, with our September; but it is evident that as they disregard the ordinances of Moses, and substitute for them their traditions, they are therefore of no authority as to the true time for the commencement of the Jewish year. {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.2}

According to the Caraites Jews, the true year cannot commence until the appearance of the new moon in April. They are strict observers of the Mosaic law. Rees, in his Encyclopedia, says of them:- {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.3}

"Upon the whole, the **Caraites** are universally reckoned men of the first learning, **of the greatest piety, and of the purest morals of the whole nation.**" {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.4}

Calmet thus writes:- {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.5}

"Caraites, a sect of the Jews, implying persons consummate in the study of the Scriptures, and adhering closely to the letter of it. This distinguishes the Caraites from the Rabbins, who admit traditions. The Caraites pass for the most learned of the Jewish doctors." {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.6}

Of the Caraites, and Rabbinical Jews, Dr. Hales says:- {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.7}

"The Rabbinites held to oral tradition, and supposed that God dictated many things by word of mouth, to Moses on Mount Sinai, which were propagated in the traditions of the elders, and long after, were put in writing, lest they should be forgot. Hence, those maxims of their schools, 'the words of the Scribes are lovelier than the words of the law, the words of the elders are weightier than the words of the prophets.' They were reproved by our Saviour for teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.8}

"There was a sect of the Scribes called Caraites or Scriptarians, who rejected the cabalistic or allegorical interpretations of Scripture, and contended for the literal sense. And if the literal was inadmissible, they endeavored to discover the figurative meaning by careful comparison of Scripture with itself, in parallel places." New Anal. Chro. Vol.II, p. 788. {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.9}

The Caraites maintain that the Rabbins have changed the calendar, so that to present the first fruits of the barley harvest on the sixteenth of Nisan, as the law directs, would be impossible, if the time is reckoned according to the Rabbinical calculation: for barley is not in the ear, at Jerusalem, until a month later. The accounts of many travelers confirm the position of the Caraites. Mr. E. S. Colman, a converted Jew, who has been employed as a missionary to the Jews, in Palestine, in an article published in the American Biblical Repository, for April, 1840, says:- {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.10}

"At present the Jews in the holy land have not the least regard to this season appointed and identified by Jehovah, but follow the rules prescribed in the oral law, viz., by adding a month to every second or third year, and thus making the lunar year correspond with the solar. And when the fifteenth day of Nisan, according to this connotation, arrives, they begin to celebrate the above-mentioned feast although the chedesh haabib may have passed or not yet come. In general, the proper season after they have celebrated it, is a whole month, which is just reversing the command in the law. Nothing like ears of green corn have I seen around Jerusalem at the celebration of this festival. The Caraites observe it later than the Rabbinical, for they are guided by Abib, and they charge the latter with eating unleavened bread during that feast. I think, myself, that the charge is well founded. If this feast of unleavened bread is not celebrated in its season, every successive festival is dislocated from its appropriate period, since the month Abib is laid down in the law of God, as the epoch from which every other is to follow." {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.11}

Jahn, in his Archaeology, says, pp.111,112, that {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.12}

Moses "obligated the priests to present at the altar on the second day of the passover, or in the sixteenth day after the first new moon in April, a ripe sheaf. For if they saw on the last month of the year that the grain would not be ripe, as expected, they were compelled to make an intercalation, which commonly happened on the third year." {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.13}

"The Jewish Rabbins say, that March and Sept., instead of April and October, were the initial months of these two years. That they were so at a late period is admitted, but the change was probably owing to the example of the Romans, who began their year with the month of March. The Jews being pleased with their example in this respect, or overruled by their authority, adopted the same practice. That this is the most probable statement, is evident from the fact, **that the position of the Rabbins is opposed not only by Josephus, but by the usage of the Syriac and Arabic languages; from the fact also, that the prescribed observances of the three great festival days will not agree with the months of March and September**, as has been shown by Michaelis: see Commentat, de Meusibus Hebracorum in Soc, Reg. Goett - 1763 - 1768, p. 10, et. seq." {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.14}

Archbishop Usher even makes their year still later. In his Annals of the World, London ed. 1658, p. 26, he says:- {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.15}

"Upon the fourteenth day of the first month, (the fourth of May being our Tuesday,) in the evening, the Israelites celebrated their first passover, in the land of Canaan. Josh.v,10. Next day after the passover, (May fifth being on Wednesday,) they ate of the fruit of land of Canaan, unleavened bread and parched corn, and manna ceased the very day they began to live on the fruits of the land. Josh.v,11,12." {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.16}

Again he says, page 40. "The eighth day of the seventh month, (to wit, 30th of our October being Friday,) was the first of the seven days of the dedication. The tenth day, (with us Nov.1st, upon a Saturday,) was the fast of expiation or atonement held, whereupon (according to the Levitical law, chapter xxv,9,) the jubilee was proclaimed by the sound of a trumpet. The 15th day (our November 6th, being Friday,) was the feast of tabernacles. The 22nd, (our Nov.13th, being also Friday,) was the last of the feast of tabernacles, which was also very solemnly kept. 2Chron.viii,9; with Lev.xxii,36; and John vii,37." {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.17}

It is therefore very evident from the foregoing testimony, that the Rabbinical Jews are incorrect in their time for their commencement of the Mosaic year; so that, according to the Caraites reckoning and the ripening of the barley in Judea, the new moon of April is the proper commencement of the Jewish year. Consequently, this Jewish year began with the appearance of the moon on the 18th of April, bringing the passover on the 1st of May - **an entire moon later than the Rabbinical passover**. Reckoning from this moon, the seventh Jewish month commenced with the appearance of the moon on the 13th of October; so that **the tenth day of the seventh month synchronized with the 22nd of that month**. {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.18}

A reference to the climate in Judea and the time of ingathering, shows that October is the true seventh month. Josephus, after speaking of the "seventh month" and the "fast" on the "tenth day," says:- {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.19}

"Upon the fifteenth day of the same month, when the season of the year is changing for Winter, the law enjoins us to pitch tabernacles in every one of our houses, so that we preserve ourselves from the cold of that season of the year." Ant. B. 3, chap. 10. {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.20}

By the "Economical Calendar" before referred to, we learn that the climate during the Autumn, is as follows:- {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.21}

Sept. In September, the rainy season usually commences from the 18th to the 25th. The second clusters of the vine, which blossom in April, are ripe in this month; and cotton is also gathered. {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.22}

Oct. The rainy season in some years, does not commence in Palestine until October. Wheat, barley, millet, etc., are sown in this month; and the third clusters of the grapes are gathered. **The October rains, called early or former rains, follow about twenty or thirty days after the September rains.** {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.23}

Nov. November is reckoned among the rainy months. The trees retain their leaves, until about the middle of it. The nights are cold and uncomfortable. {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.24}

Dec. December is the first winter month. The coldest weather is usually from the 12th of December, until the 20th of January. Snow seldom remains all day on the ground, and ice seldom forms sufficiently to bear a man. {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.25}

The apostle Paul, in giving the history of his voyage to Rome, (Acts xxvii,5,) says, "when sailing was now dangerous because the fast was already past," he admonished them that the voyage would be of much hurt to the lading of the ship and to their lives. And in a very few weeks they were shipwrecked on the island of Malta, (Melita) where they remained three months through the Winter, Acts xxviii,11. As they would not be able to depart until about the middle of February, they must have arrived at Malta about the middle of November, a few weeks after the fast. The following extract of a letter dated on board the U. S. Frigate Cumberland, Port Mahon, Oct. 25th, 1844, which we copy from the Mercantile Journal of **Dec. 10th**, is further evidence **that the sailing in those seas becomes dangerous the last of October.** The writer says:- {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.26}

"We arrived here last night, after a tedious, boisterous passage of nine days from Malta. We had a succession of head winds, squalls, and rains, which were felt, in their full discomfort, after the series of pleasant weather we had experienced during our Summer's cruise. The passage from Malta to this port is, perhaps, the worst in this sea; the approximation of Sicily and Africa, and the sprinkling of rocks and reefs in the Strait, make it one of anxiety for the navigator - while the constant prevalence of storms off the south point of Sardinia, has earned for it the name of the Cape Horn of the Mediterranean." {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.27}

It is therefore evident that the seventh month must have commenced with the new moon in October; and that the tenth day of the seventh month of the Jewish sacred year, in A. D. 1844, could only synchronize with the 22nd of that month. {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.28}

As that time drew nigh, the meetings of the respective Advent bands were marked by a deep solemnity of feeling, an all-prevailing sense of the presence of God's Holy Spirit, and a realizing expectancy of the Saviour's appearing, at the time specified. For a short time before the 22nd, secular business was in most cases laid aside, and Adventists every where gave themselves to the work of preparation for his coming, as they would prepare themselves were they on their bed of death, expecting soon to close their eyes forever on all earthly scenes. There were some cases of extravagance, as has been in all great movements; and it would be strange if there had not been; these were greatly exaggerated, and were thus circulated in connection with hundreds of reports which had no foundation in fact; but the general effect on the

minds and hearts of those who embraced that view, was salutary and permanent. The Advent bands were thus prepared for any contingency, and for any disappointment. {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.29}

At length the day arrived, the long wished-for day, the day of hope and ardent expectation, the day that thousands looked to as the day that would release them from their earthly pilgrimage, and usher them into a state of endless joy. But it passed away. The sun arose and set, again arose, and disappeared again, until all hope that that was the appointed time which God would honor by Christ's appearing, expired in every breast. The expectation was proved to be premature. At first, the friends were sad, but still hoped on, believing a few days more would close the scene. The enemy came in like a flood; and dark and dreary was the prospect, unless the Lord should speedily come to save. But time continued on. The truth still shone forth from the sacred page. The slanders of the wicked were hurled back upon them, and the enemy fell back abashed. The Adventists were therefore cheered anew, their desponding hearts were reinvigorated, they saw this disappointment did not destroy their hopes that Christ will soon appear, and that the evidence of the Advent at the door, was unaffected by it. Consequently, they have renewed their strength, and are still toiling on, laboring in the cause, which they believe the cause of God, praying to be perfected in His love, and that they may with patience wait his Son from heaven; believing he may now at any moment come, and that his coming cannot be long delayed.

(To be Continued.) {September 3, 1857 UrSe, ARSH 138.30}