

Shalom Paul!

First off, thank you very much for the detailed response. I appreciate the effort and feedback since not many have responded. I have put my replies in bold so you can easily distinguish what I have added here.

One quick note. I wouldn't be so critical of others that don't study these matters out as you do. I love math and studying out things like this, but you've obviously put a lot more thought into it than I am going to do. You are relying on data that others have collected and added some data of your own. Yahwh has gifted you to be able to understand math in a way that most people can't. We are all gifted differently. Brothers who are gifted in Evangelism for instance, can't even fathom why you would be spending any time on this argument that has already been bandied about by men full of the Spirit and smarter than me for hundreds of years instead of out trying to reach people with the Gospel. We all need to appreciate each others gifts. Even in biblical times, there were the scribes and pharisees, etc. that did the studying, the judgments were made, and the people followed those decisions. When questions like this needed to be figured out the Chief Priest gathered his most studied people around him and they presented their case, then Chief Priest made a ruling as the Holy Spirit guided him. I spoke to one man that was personally offended at the implication that it is lame or possibly a sin to follow others that they respect and have studied it out.

To clarify, (and I'll revisit this portion of the original article to try and make my position clearer) I do not think that listening to (or reading) the conclusions of others who have studied and then coming to a reasoned, prayerful conclusion is the same as simply going along with whatever the people around you are doing. The major difference I suppose is being purposeful. Just doing "whatever" because it is convenient or popular is what I come down hard on. I do appreciate that we each have gifts to be used in the body, and if someone were to say to a legitimate authority, "I will keep whatever calendar you decide," I could also respect that. (Please, pass this along to the person who was offended.)

I agree with you that the foundation of the discussion is based on the sun, moon, and stars for determining 'signs, and seasons, and for days and years'. It's just figuring out how they should line up that can be elusive. One of the things we know for sure is that we have to have some aviv barley for first fruits. Barley is a fascinating crop. Today's agriculture science tells us it is physiologically mature at 35% moisture (which is just starting to turn a golden hue). Basically, any time after that it can be roasted to dry it, roasted to a sweetened malt, or dried for normal grinding.

I notice you leave out "light" here. "Sun" and "moon" are not mentioned in Genesis. What do you do with the fact that it mentions "lights," not "heavenly bodies" as the determining factors?

I agree with your discussion of the start of the day in the evening, with one additional verse that we use in our house. John 11:9, "Are there not twelve hours in a day?" This became more useful to us in Alaska, when the apparent day length varied so much between summer and winter. We now simply use 12 hours centered on high noon (We use 60 minute hours, which means during winter, the day starts in the dark. I know there are other ideas about this, with some Rabbis changing the length of an hour to fit 12 hours into the daylight hours.). This can be observed anywhere on earth with a properly set up sundial.

Simple (well, actually there are multiple different ways sundials can be made, calibrated, etc, so it isn't that simple), anyone can determine it, and it agrees with Yeshua's statement.

To start with, please look at the full verse instead of just the first half. John 11:9 Yeshua answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. The very verse you are trying to use here to define "day" and "night" outside of the sunlight/darkness parameters, literally says that during the day, there is visible light for walking. How do you incorporate the second part of the verse into your system?

As you point out, twelve hours in a day can be taken to mean either, twelve sixty-minute hours, or twelve equal-length hours from morning to evening. Consider Leviticus 22:6-7, The soul which hath touched any such shall be unclean until even, and shall not eat of the holy things, unless he wash his flesh with water. And when the sun is down, he shall be clean, and shall afterward eat of the holy things; because it is his food.

I think this proves that A: the equal-length hours version must be true or B: the twelve sixty-minute hours should be aligned with sunset/evening rather than noon. If not, then Yeshua's statement disagrees with the Torah. Considering that length of daylight varies by just over four hours from winter to summer in Israel, the statements of, "the sun is down, now you are clean," can't work out otherwise since in summer you would have the person becoming clean two hours before the day ends and in winter, two hours after the day began.

From what I can find, the Greek (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_sundials#Modern_dialing) and Roman (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_sundials#Ancient_sundials) sundials were Nodus based and used twelve variable length hours, not twelve sixty minute hours. So in that respect, the context of Yeshua's statement, the way the gospels track time in general, and the thirty plus verses that correlate light with day and dark with night would incline me towards explanation A.

(What scriptural basis do you use to pick noon to align your twelve hours to? Are you really willing to support that someone standing near Jerusalem in summer can say, "Yep, it is no longer the Sabbath; I'm going to hit the fields for a couple hours," when they clearly see the sun 30 degrees above the horizon? I can't possibly imagine "the greater light to rule the day" meaning that.)

Granted, outside of the land that the feasts were designed to be kept in, we may have to adjust. Living in the southern hemisphere, our grape harvest won't match up with Tabernacles. Inside the Arctic Circle we have a unique situation where the sun sometimes does not completely set. Having watched some time lapse videos of this, I think I would choose to begin a new "day" at the lowest point in the sun's path each day.

I don't think Nehemiah was giving a definition of a day, but stating, as I would working in an outdoor occupation, that they worked until the first stars were visible, meaning they worked a long day. Without artificial lighting, not much can get done after dark. I'll refer to more of this later, but the varying day lengths are caused by the tilt of the earth's rotational axis, and I don't believe that was part of the

original creation, but a result of sin and the groaning that the creation is going thru; not originally something that was part of the set up order of signs, seasons, days and years.

True, the Nehemiah passage is not a direct statement of "this is a day." I find it interesting that we don't have that for any of the three calendar units in question. There is no direct, "you shall start the day at sunset" or "The month begins with the first sliver" or "wait until the equinox to begin the year." We are left to deduce the answers from scripture. So I don't really hang my hat on the Nehemiah passage as much as on the passages that tell us how to observe Unleavened Bread and Day of Atonement since, in conjunction with the until evening = until sunset, they show that there is time after evening/sunset before the next day fully starts. The appearance of stars is the only evening, light-based event I can come up with that remains at that point. In that respect, I think Nehemiah's statement is confirmation.

I also agree with the idea that the new moon is synonymous with months. I disagree that the visible sliver is required to be observed to start the month. As you mentioned, it is in reference to the moon cycle (alignment with the sun) and it is renewed each conjunction. This is true whether we see it or not

I disagree, the moon's light (which is what Genesis states is the "ruler") is not renewed until a sliver of visible "light on the earth" occurs. On what basis in scripture do you pick the conjunction as the point in the moon's cycle where it "renews?" Also, if the light is not the key factor, then why not go with the actual rotation of the moon around the earth (which is 27.32 days) instead of the visible phases of the moon which is where we get the 29.53 day lunar month?

I think it is inconsistent to claim to need to see a sliver, but then if you don't see it the day you expect to because of cloud cover, it is automatically the next day, even if you don't see it.

At this point, personally, I don't believe that cloud cover in an obvious "moon should be seen today" situation would delay the start of the month anymore than if cloud cover prevented me from seeing the sun set or the stars appear. Still, the best calculations we have at this point for new moon sighting are nowhere near the accuracy of sunset and civil twilight calculations, so when there is reasonable doubt involved, I give preference to the actual observation.

In fact, we both judge the accuracy of the calculations based on the observations. If someone said the conjunction of the moon happened today, but you look out and see a half-moon, you would know the calculations were wrong, not the moon itself. You even assume this when you say you believe the earth was created with all thirty-day months, yet still use a 29.5 day lunar cycle now. So if observations over time are the judge of the calculations' accuracy, then only observation makes sense as the arbiter when there is doubt.

And to claim it has to be observed in Israel, then somehow everyone on earth would need to know it nearly instantaneously, such as on Yom Teruah, isn't possible without something like livestreaming, internet, phones, etc, which may not always be available and were not until relatively recently. It seems to be a questionable method, but one that could provide confirmation (a witness) to what you (or your trusted astronomer) have calculated should be happening. "Watching for the sliver", can be a last ditch

method to get you to within a day or two if you suffer from "lack of knowledge" and can't determine the phases of the moon. A fact doesn't change based on if we see it or not (unless you are trying to apply some of the theories being talked about in quantum physics).

Why do you assume that the calendar has to be possible to keep accurately outside of Israel? Is it possible to keep any of the sacrifices outside of Israel? Does barley everywhere in the world ripen at the time of first fruits? Do the grapes at Tabernacles? Specifically Genesis 1:15 says the lights' purpose is to give light on "HaEretz." It also states that the lights are for "Moedim" and the feasts are inextricably tied to the growing seasons in Israel. The ideas of what you should do at and around the feasts don't work out on much of the earth's surface.

I agree with the idea of needing to add an occasional month, but I really don't think the record of Noah supports that necessarily. It seems it would be an unrealistic idea that you would have four 30 day months, and only one 29 day month during the given 5 month period. I believe a better way of reading it would be similar to me saying it rained for 40 days (starting on a given day), and today its sunny. The sunny day isn't part of the mentioned 40 days. Thus it could just be 150 days of water decreasing, then the arc rested (day 151). It seems we have biblical evidence of earth's rotational changes (Joshua's long day and the sun going backwards during Hezekiah's reign). There are other extra-biblical mentions of the sun going down during the day, and the stars falling, which could also indicate tilts in the rotational axis since creation.

Doing the math, the occurrence of 5 lunar months equaling 149 days during the months mentioned (accounting for the year beginning in the fall originally) happens about once in every four years. This year, 2019 is one. The first time I noticed that inclusive numbering resulted in the 4/5 setup, I mentioned it to a messianic scholar who was in the process of researching a Bible based chronology. (Since published under the title "Times and Appointed Times" By Michael McHugh.) He was able to take that info, do the calculations in his professional level astronomy program and said that the flood year did match up to a year in which the configuration of the months would have been correct.

You are probably aware of just how prevalent inclusive numbering is in the Hebrew mindset, but as a quick example: 2 Kings 18:9-10 And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it. And at the end of three years they took it: even in the sixth year of Hezekiah, that is the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken.

I'll be honest, I think the best we can do is have a system that works the best now with the current observed cosmic events that we have. If Yeshua tarries for another 1000 years, we may have to adjust our "system". We also know that the moon is moving away from the earth, the earth's rotation is slowing, but major events like the earth quake in Indonesia a few years ago actually sped up the earth's rotation measurably. So, creation is groaning, awaiting its renewal. So where does that leave me? My days are based on the principle of a 12 hour day 'light' portion (even if it isn't light the entire period, or still light after the 12th hour), and thus 12 hour night.

As you point out, the calculation systems are subject to the observations. I don't think Yahweh is surprised by the slow lengthening or shortening of the astronomical periods. He put the lights in the heavens to be observed from the earth and He likens His unchanging covenant with Israel to the courses of the sun, moon and stars.

Jeremiah 31:35-37 Thus saith Yahweh, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; Yahweh of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith Yahweh, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith Yahweh; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith Yahweh.

As far as the 12 hour day starting and ending independent of sunlight. Reading the Jeremiah passage that He "giveth the sun for a light by day" and then saying that there are portions of the day in which the sun does not give light (as you do) would in that context have to be equated to saying that He has partially broken His covenant with Israel. I really don't see how you can go there.

Months are defined by the 'renewal' at conjunction, with an international dateline 180 degrees opposite Jerusalem. If the conjunction occurs later than 12 hours after the start of the day in Jerusalem, we must wait until the 2nd day after the conjunction, because those living at the date line have already started their day. For seasons we use the spring and fall equinoxes as the best thing we can currently observe that doesn't constantly change with the retrograding precession of the equinoxes. I personally believe that at creation the new year and seasons were observed by viewing the sun's position in the ecliptic as it passed thru the constellations(basically like a clock), but that is degraded now also. This leads me to use the thing that is remaining the most constant; the equinoxes.

As you saw, I don't deny that the equinoxes and solstices are a good marking point in the solar year. Though it looks like a logical consistency error to be willing to declare a day to be a new moon when the event (conjunction) will happen in the next 12 hours, but then turn around and say that the equinox must happen before you start the new year. For instance, you say, "If the conjunction will happen in the next 12 hours, then we go ahead and start the month." To treat the two equally, wouldn't you need to say "If the equinox will happen in the next 15 days, then we go ahead and start the year," also?

So, I consider the scriptures and the things we observe personally. I disregard the things that can only be observed in Israel; mainly as you mentioned the aviv barley and the sighted sliver of the moon. You may think I'm being inconsistent because I use the time of conjunction in Israel to base my new months on, but I believe that is something that could be known wherever you live in the world thru observation of the stars. If you were dispersed from the land, you could compare the visible stars and know your position relative to where you were in Israel, and thus know your time difference by knowing the

number of degrees rotation that occurs per hour. Again, no necessary knowledge outside of what you can observe from your location.

I'm interested to see you back up, what I see as an assumption, that you must be able to know the calendar from outside the land.

But now back to your original question; when does the new year start? I really have to hang my hat on a few verses in particular. The passages you mentioned, Ex12:2, 13:4, and Lev 13:4 give us a good indication that Aviv is the beginning month. I think this coincides with Nisan that was adopted from the Babylonians. But we need to know when to add the 13th month. I thought your analysis of the Ezekiel passages was good to show a biblical source that they must have done that.

I didn't come up with that myself, but this year was the first time I had seen it.

I disagree though with your statement "The sheaf offered on the first day of the count to Shavuot is also the first time that any grain is cut on a national level." As I understand the limiting command, it is Lev 23:14; not to eat of the new grain until you have brought in the first fruit offering, not that you can't harvest. I don't believe Deut 16:9 should be understood as a restriction from harvest to be consistent with the other texts. The words "to put" are added to the text, and the Hebrew word translated 'begin' is used in Deut 20:6 as 'eaten' and 'eat', and many other places as 'begin' or 'beginning', so I think that the more likely translation of Deut 16:9 would to count the seven weeks from when you begin to eat your sickled, or harvested grain. Suffice to say, I'm not concerned about aviv barley, it will be there at the Feast of Firstfruits (unless you start your year too soon).

The root word in Deuteronomy 16:9 and 20:6 literally means begin or profane. If you look at the other place that it is used in reference to a vineyard, it is Deuteronomy 28:30 Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her: thou shalt build an house, and thou shalt not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof. It doesn't literally mean eat. It means "profane" or "take away from" which is closer to a mindset of harvest than consumption. Once you put your sickle into a field, you have profaned or began it.

For instance, from Young's Literal Translation: "Seven weeks thou dost number to thee; from the beginning of the sickle among the standing corn thou dost begin to number seven weeks." In this verse, "beginning of the sickle" and "begin to number" are the same root word. If it is logical to say that this isn't really the beginning of the sickle, it should be equally logical to say that isn't the beginning of the seven week count.

If you go beyond the root of the Hebrew to the actual word with its prefixes, then the only other place where the exact word is used is in 2 Chronicles 31:10, "And Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok answered him, and said, Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of Yahweh, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for Yahweh hath blessed his people; and that which is left is this great store." In this case, "From the beginning" of people bringing offerings, the priests had food to eat. It is a literal beginning.

If my Hebrew skills are insufficient, consider that English translators are unanimous in saying that the count starts from the harvest <https://www.biblegateway.com/verse/en/Deuteronomy%2016:9>. The only place I have ever seen someone go another way with this is when they were trying to prove that the harvest could start before first fruits. It doesn't really work with the Hebrew and it is contradicted by the historical testimony as well.

The next important verse to me is Ex 34:22. It apparently indicates the Feast of Ingathering (Sukkot) should be at years "tekufah". As I read all four verses with 'tekufah' in them, it appears to mean circuit, or completion of a cycle or period of time. In the context of Ex 34:22, it would seem the change or completion of a yearly cycle. Or more likely, the end of the growing season or harvest cycle is implied. This would naturally coincide with the fall equinox and would support the extra-biblical references of the equinox you mentioned. But that still leaves us with the question of whether the equinox should fall before the feast, during the feast, or any time before or during. I believe the most likely is to celebrate after the harvest is over, and the implied end is the equinox, or years end as it is translated in some versions.

Are you aware of the literal rendering of the Hebrew in Exodus 23:16? It reads, "the Feast of the In-Gathering, in the outgoing of the year, in thy gathering thy works out of the field." Not only is celebrating after the harvest is over unsupported, it doesn't even happen if you wait a month. Check HaYovel's trip dates and you will see even the second month will still have harvesting ongoing through Sukkot.

Even your idea that it should be celebrated "after the fall equinox" is contradicted since it is "in the outgoing of the year" not "after the outgoing of the year" that is literally in the verse.

I don't think we can say it must land during the feast, because a lunar calendar doesn't have that small of a window (8 days) to consistently hit. We would have to go to a solar calendar to do that consistently. So, even though Jewish tradition thought a determining factor was that Unleavened Bread must fall after the spring equinox, the only scriptural mandate that I see is the Ingathering (Sukkot) was to be held at the turn of the year's cycle. This leads me to think, because of the extra days from spring to fall equinox, and my desire to have Ingathering after the fall equinox, I must start my new year after the spring equinox or there will be years when Sukkot will begin before the fall equinox. As is the case this year when you began your year so early. This year the way we determine the new moon day, the last day of Sukkot would be the Sept. 22nd and the fall equinox is Sept 23rd. If you use the sliver sighting, you have a good chance this year of seeing it on the evening of Aug 31 before sunset, thus putting the last day of Sukkot on Sept 21st thereby missing the equinox entirely! Because of this possibility, I believe the best way to ensure this never happens is to always start the year on the first new moon after the spring equinox.

(I get my 8th day of the Feast of Ingathering falling on 9/22 by my count.) If tekufah does mean the precise moment of equinox, then yes there is a problem here. Like I pointed out though, at a minimum, the ancient books need the tekufah to be 4 days long for their math to add up. This

actually does put at least the last day or two of the feast this year into the tekufah, though not into the precise moment of the equinox.

Also, isn't it illogical to point out that scripture only mentions the fall equinox as a timing mechanism and then turn around and base your year off of the spring equinox when, even with your current understanding, you could get Tabernacles more accurately at the fall equinox by starting the new year before the spring equinox sometimes? (E.g. If a year were to start two days before the spring equinox, then all your qualifications would be met for Tabernacles against the fall equinox.)

And your quote from Josephus mentioning Aries, and that the sun entered Aries shortly after the equinox also supports this idea.

Why do you say this? Can you explain? I mapped it into the chart and Josephus' statement pretty blatantly contradicts the idea of starting the month after the equinox. I don't see how Josephus supports an after equinox viewpoint.

You also mentioned that while using the present Rabbinical calendar, there have been years where aviv barley has not been available. Starting the first month of the year after the equinox would solve that problem.

That was a reference by the Israeli agriculture director to the Talmud, which as you know isn't the most reliable source. If that was the case, then considering that the Jews always do first fruits on the 16th of Aviv and that it can actually fall nearly a week later if you are doing it correctly on the first day of the week, I wonder if maybe they were coming up against this scenario as a witness against their method. I'm not set on that though, since five days might not be enough to make a difference.

I did find it interesting that in at least one year, the very first day the Karaites found aviv (after delaying the start of the year) was the day the wave sheaf should have been offered. It seems to me like often Yahweh holds off on giving us the answer to prayer or providing for our needs until the last second. It helps build faith in Him alone.

The last verse that helps me hang my hat is Ex 40:1 where Moses is told to set up the tabernacle on the first day of the month. As you mentioned, they were supposed to set up the tabernacle aligned in an east/west orientation, and Moses would have known how to do this from his training in Egypt. They would only have known the exact alignment of east/west after the equinox, as that is the date when the sun sets exactly in the west and rises exactly in the east. A simple observation that can be done with a stick poked in the ground and watching the shadow, but it only happens on the equinox. So, after observing that, then on the first day of the next month, they were to set up the tabernacle. So, to me, the implied sequence is; Equinox (determine east/west line), set up tabernacle on first day of month which would be the first new moon after the equinox, and then celebrate the feast.

I don't disagree, but since the "closest to the equinox" version has 50% of its years starting after the equinox as well, it doesn't really prove anything. Either method works for this. The only thing this would prove is that you can't draw your starting line any earlier than about February 20.

I believe the observation about your dream of 6.43 degrees will enable you to visually see 15 days before the equinox whether or not this is going to be a leap year.

I'm not sure I understand what you are saying here. If I get it wrong, can you elaborate? I didn't get the number 15 in the dream. So, sounds like you are saying that when I asked the Father for wisdom on how to determine the beginning of the year, He instead gave me information on how to determine 15 days before the year. That reminds me of asking for bread and getting a stone. I can't really see Him doing that. It is easier for me to consider that I am applying the numbers to the wrong thing than that He didn't give me the wisdom that I asked for.

Actually, I just realized you only have 29 days in your chart, which could present a problem. You could have a 29 day period without a new moon. Was that a clerical oversight?

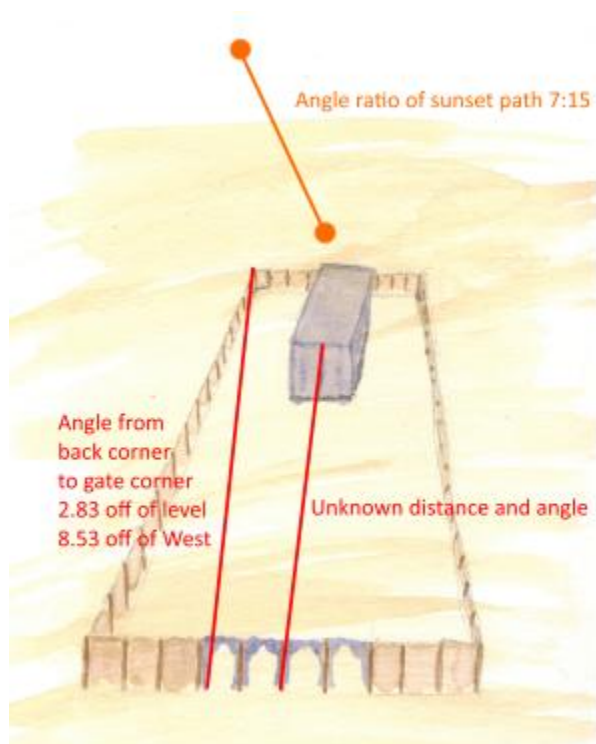
No. This was on purpose. This year, 2019, the period only covers 29 day beginnings. I don't know if it gets up to 30 on other years, but since in context I was specifically looking at the start of the new year period, I believe that the additional day, if ever needed, would have to go on the back end.

If I understand what you are saying correctly, if the southwest corner shadow isn't falling within the confines of the gate and you have a new moon, you must add a 13th month. Correct?

Not quite. If the southwest corner shadow does still fall inside the gate, then a leap month is needed.

We wouldn't start our new month until a new moon that occurs after the Holy Places shadow is centered in the gate, where as you would start your new month on the first new moon after the southwest corner shadow hit the north gate post. Right?

No, I'm looking for the southwest corner shadow to hit the south gate post.



Also, no, the shadow of the Holy Place being centered in the gate will not occur at the equinox. This is because the shadow reaches the gate well before sundown and the sun isn't directly west in the sky until sunset (it moves northward and down at approximately a 7:15 ratio on equinox day in Shiloh.) Exactly which day this will happen I am unable to precisely calculate as I haven't found anything in the scripture that gives us the location of the Holy Place in relation to the courtyard. Making an assumption that the Holy Place was absolutely centered in the courtyard it looks like the shadow would be at its closest to the middle of the doorway on April 7 in 2019.

Interesting observations. We could do the same thing to within a day. When the southwest corner wall shadow hits the gate, if it has been more than 15 days since the previous new moon, it will be a leap year.

You could do that, though why? None of the ancient calendar structures were set 15 days off of what they were supposed to point at. I think Yahweh is more accurate than that as well. It is possible that this shadow thing is just a very precise coincidence, of course, but arbitrarily counting 15 days after you get the sign seems like a stretch.

I'm trying to figure out how your dream can fit into what I believe are the set in stone criteria for the new year. 1. There must be Aviv barley for First Fruits. 2. The Fall Equinox must at the very least be during Sukkot. I like the idea of all the "Fall Feasts " being in the fall which happens if you start the first year of the month after the Equinox.

Number 2 is not quite true. Starting the year the day after the equinox would put Yom Kippur on the fall equinox in most years. Trumpets would only fall after the equinox if you waited 10 days or more after the spring equinox to start the year. Also, the scripture doesn't call them fall feasts so trying to place them in the fall on that account is unwarranted.

I enjoyed your study, and appreciate all your work you put into it. It helped me show my ideas, since you already had all the verses needed laid out. Please let me know if you see faulty thinking on my part.

Paul

Well, I have put some blunt replies on some of your ideas. I don't mean to offend or be disrespectful in that, but I do want to challenge you where I think your assumptions and logic are faulty. So in summary:

Re: Day Start

- **Having the sun still be up or having been down for several hours when you begin a new day does not make any sense to me. Getting around the Genesis 1:14-15 reference by claiming creation has degraded is one thing, but the same basic statements are repeated by Yahweh after the flood in Genesis 8:22 and in Jeremiah 31:35. (Which is post sin, post flood, post sun standing still and post Hezekiah's sundial.) Whatever happened or will happen to the lengths of day and night, the sun is a light by day and the moon and stars by night. Yahweh has made multiple promises to that effect.**
- **How do you see these verses like Jeremiah 31:35 fitting with your system?**
- **How do you incorporate the second half of John 11:9 into your system?**
- **What scriptural basis do you use to pick noon to align your twelve hours on instead of evening or at least morning?**

Re: Month Start

- This one makes a little more sense to me, but I still question the lack of visible "light on the earth." Also there is an inconsistency in declaring a new moon before the conjunction when the conjunction will fall within the first half of that day, but in the same type of case, not declaring a new year when the equinox will fall within the first half of that month.
- How do you fit into your system the fact that Genesis 1:14-15 mentions "lights," not "heavenly bodies" as the determining factors?
- On what basis do you pick the conjunction as the point in the moon's cycle where it "renews?"
- How are we supposed to check the calculations via observation on a cosmic event that is invisible to the human eye?
- If visible light is not the key to "renewal," why use the 29.53 day lunar visibility phases instead of the actual 27.32 day lunar cycle?
- Why do you assume that the calendar has to be possible to keep accurately outside of Israel when many other commands are obviously not?

Re: Year Start

- The passages you claim to hang your hat on here only give pretty vague indications to me. Setting up the Tabernacle by equinox doesn't mean that every year has to start after the equinox, only that some do, so it doesn't prove anything here. Tekufah in Exodus could mean equinox, but usage of the word in scripture doesn't force itself to that without bringing in outside sources. Those outside sources in turn need a Tekufah to be at least 4 days long for their math to work so Tabernacles falling at or after a "one moment" equinox doesn't seem like it is cut and dried at all.
- Again, why do you assume that the calendar has to be possible to keep accurately outside of Israel?
- What do you think of my deeper explanation of why "beginning of the sickle" has to be the beginning of harvest?
- Why do you say Josephus supports starting the year after the equinox?

Shalom!

-Joshua

P.S. While I'm not convinced that the heavenly cycles have stayed exactly the same since Genesis 1, I question the strength of your assumption that things have changed dramatically. I do think that it is certain they have not changed significantly since Yahweh's post-flood promise in Genesis 8:21-22. Here are some reasons why I think it makes sense to view our current cosmic setup as dating back to early Genesis in a very similar form.

1. Cain failing to bring first fruits, which implies seasons rather than a constant, equal growing season. If so, then there needs to be some tilt to the earth's axis already.
2. The commands surrounding the feasts, like first fruits during Unleavened Bread and Pentecost, were fulfilled by Yeshua in His first coming. From the foundation of the earth, that day was planned to be a day of first fruits which also implies seasons.
3. The promise of Genesis 8 includes day and night not ceasing, but obviously they date back to the six days of creation. That implies the "summer and winter" promised date back that far as well.
4. Our current 19 year Metonic cycle where lunar and solar years coincide is a nice match with 20 years old being the age of maturity in the story of Israel's 40 years in the wilderness. (20th year with Hebrew inclusive numbering = 19 years old American)
5. The earth, moon and sun are just the right distances apart, on the right plane and the moon and sun are just the right size to have equal apparent size. This gives us the possibility for eclipses.
6. The moon orbits around the earth at the same speed it rotates so that the same side of the moon continually faces the earth.

It is hard for me to see all these things as degraded versions of something better. What we have today already looks like it has the stamp of Yahweh's awesome and intricate handiwork to me.