

Some Basic Biblical Principles About Grain Agriculture

Every now and then I still hear an orator or two of supposed biblical understanding rail against the notion that God has placed a simple calendar pattern in the pages of the bible which every man or woman could use for their personal use in their commitment with keeping the appointed times of meeting with God. They normally stumble or fumble over the issue biblically until they become completely ridiculous. Then there are the few who simply command their followers to obey their proclamations for they are enlightened with superior knowledge period.

At one time there were many who used this outright assault on the scriptures but today they are more leery of such approaches because so many brethren have thrown off the shackles of hierarchy and read for themselves, one on one, with Christ. With this, Satan has become more subtle in his approach to deception. He has gone from the, “we are in charge and know more than you approach” to twisting and turning the scriptures to distort the simple biblical patterns into a can of worms. He accomplishes this by adding to and taking away from them, and of course sewing in fables and traditions of men. To follow such things, and to do so, is no different that one who would have offered leaven with a blood sacrifice. It is an abomination before God.

Satan however is very clever and a master of deceit. So the battle goes on to worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

Many who I know can open the bible and turn to many of the scriptures, which are used to teach us the pattern of the calendar. That encompasses things like the use of the sun and moon, grain harvests in Israel, specific name of the first month, etc. They know how to put these and much more all together to clearly show a biblical pattern to establishing the appointed times of meeting with God each biblical year. They can clearly show from scripture how God uses the barley harvest to declare the start of the year. Most who have this knowledge trust in the Lord, and not in some Jewish fable or tradition of men. You know the ones where the muckity-mucks declare the Jews have secret knowledge of such things handed down from Mt. Sinai. They profess that only the enlightened few posses it and pass it down even when scripture tells us that everything spoken to Moses by God there was

written down for all to see.

Ex 24:3-4, “So Moses came and told the people [not a select few] all the words of the Lord and all the ordinances [not just some of them]. And all the people [not just a select few] answered with one voice and said, all the words the Lord has said we will do.

And Moses wrote all the words [not just some] of the Lord...”

Go figure. What ever happened to the belief in “I will never leave you nor forsake you”? And that everything we need for righteous works is found written in the bible.

Most of us are not easily shaken or intimidated by the naysayers. We do not look down our nose at brethren because they may have a different doctrine or habit, for we know the scriptures tell us we are all to seek out our own salvation with trembling and fear. On the other hand the naysayers can get pretty incensed at times if we do not agree with them. That’s when the authoritarian threats start flying out of their mouths. For most of us this is relatively easy to deal with. We actually believe what is written in the bible. In 1 Peter 3:13-16 we read all about it.

“And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake blessed, do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled. But sanctify [set apart] the Lord God in your hearts [minds] and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.”

No brethren we are not easily shaken by one who gets in our face, or who may think they have dominion over our faith. We have learned how to deal with such things as we have grown in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. However a problem or the perception of one can start when a challenge arises and we can’t give an answer for it for the hope which lies in us quickly.

We will be dealing with such a matter today. It is the direct result of Satan working an evil work of

deception. Our greatest defense against him is to recognize that we have spiritual armor. We need to know how to use it. But there do come times when defensive armor is not enough. We are not in a war with mere mortal men even though they are usually the instruments Satan uses. We are in a war with the rulers of the darkness of this age.

To successfully wage this war we must not only clothe ourselves in our defensive armor but pick up our offensive weapon as well. We are to have girded our waists with truth so that we can actually stand up erect. We have the breastplate of righteousness on, and our feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. We carry the shield of faith, and have the helmet of salvation on our head. All of these are to protect us from Satan and his minion's assaults. They are wonderful and necessary tools we need in our lives as Christian soldiers in the service of our Lord. But they are not enough! We must be able to actually defend ourselves and others. That is why God has given us the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. No one can wield it proficiently without the spirit of God residing in them. It takes the spirit of God, the bible, and the armor of God working in unison to defeat the devil.

Many can have the proper clothing but may not have learned to use the spirit of God and the scriptures as the sword of God, as well as they could.

Remember what we are told in 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

Oh yes! It is a 2-edged sword. It takes practice to use it in battle whether defensively or offensively.

We are going to use that sword today to clearly defeat the devil in his attempt to deceive even the elect.

This year we had another entity enter the fray on reporting on the state of the barley crop in Israel. You can read about that here on the site in the article entitled, “Response to the claim that the year was a normal one instead of intercalated”.

Satan is no dummy. The more the merrier for him. Keep stirring the pot. Of course these new folks reporting on the “Aviv” are really not doing that. They actually hold the doctrine that the closest new moon to the equinox is the start of the year. But they try to hide this doctrine of imaginary hocus-pocus, by claiming the presumption that the barley harvest supports it. There in lies the problem. They need to manipulate the actual Aviv facts to fit their deception of doctrine. Thus they told us that a harvest can start by using; 1) anemic barley, 2) from anemic ground, and 3) that it can still be green in some of its composition.

There are some who are actually giving this falsehood a second look. Some brethren have put out the challenge or cry for help in some cases to come up with an answer from the bible, which proves this version of the equinox doctrine to be in error.

That is what we are going to do. We will not focus on the issue of the equinox for you can read that very detailed article here on the site as well as many other related articles. What we are going to do is see what the bible clearly says about the condition of the barley and where it is grown as to what God says is an acceptable condition and location for the start of the harvest and thus the start of the year.

Can it be anemic plants growing in a rock-strewn ravine in a desert hillside? Can it be green in color? Answers from the bible are coming.

When we enter into any biblical discussion of the biblical calendar and its components we need to first turn to Deuteronomy 11:11-12. Here we find the very defining statement on the subject.

“The land which you cross over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water from the rain of heaven, a land for which the Lord your God cares; the eyes of the Lord your God are always on it, from the beginning of the year to the very end of the year.”

This is a very vital statement of God, which fits perfectly into the pattern of biblical calendar information. Here we have God telling Israel that it is He who waters the land unlike where they just came from where they used to water it like a vegetable garden in Egypt (verse 10). He wants Israel, and in

turn us, to understand what grows there is completely dependant on His timing. He cares for it diligently and that caring starts from the very beginning of the year right up through the end of it. Yes God has a calendar in place, in Israel, which is to be used for the start of the year as well as its ending. It is agriculturally based with the use of the lunar year.

Lets continue reading to see that this is part of the very commandments of God here in Duet 11.

“And it shall be that if you diligently obey My commandments which I command you today, to love the Lord your God and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, then I will give you the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil. And I will send grass in your fields for your livestock, so that you may eat and be filled. Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them, lest the Lords anger be aroused against you and He shut up the heavens so that there be no rain, and the land yield no produce, and you perish quickly from the good land which the Lord is giving you.”

For anyone who does not believe that God has an agricultural based calendar in conjunction with the lunar cycle year you may as well stop here and save yourself the anguish. We will not be delving into the lunar aspects of it today and only into some of the agricultural aspects to answer the challenge given as to Aviv barley and where it is to be found and what it is to look like.

Lets start in Exodus 9:31-32.

“Now the flax and the barley were struck [#5221 Nakah: to strike or smite; destroy] for the barley was in the head [#24 Abib] and the flax was in bud. But the wheat and the spelt were not struck, for they are late crops [#648 Aphiyl; unripe, not grown up, darkened or concealed. As if the head was still in the boot or in the stalk].”

This here is telling us alot about growing conditions of grain in the Middle East. Flax and barley were characteristically earlier crops in ancient times as opposed to wheat and spelt, which were planted later. The barley and flax plants were much more mature

than the wheat and spelt. So much more advanced that the hail broke their stalks and destroyed it. They were much more brittle than the very young and flexible wheat and spelt crops.

That is a biblical fact as to the separation of the two grain harvests in the beginning of the year as we have so often studied. The barley was the first harvest started during the days of unleavened bread, and the wheat was the harvest at Pentecost, 7 weeks later. Leviticus 23:10-16 and Duet. 16:9 tell us about the timing of the early harvest which is barley. This harvest started on the first day of the week, which fell during the days of unleavened bread. It continued for 7 complete, perfect (tamin), weeks. The only configuration of a complete week is that which is found in the creation week. It starts with day one and ends with the Sabbath as day 7. That is a tamin or perfect week.

Some profess a perfect or complete week can start on any day of the week as long as it is 7 days long. How unbiblical is that!

Exodus 34:22 confirms that the second grain harvest is that of wheat.

“And you shall observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of the wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the years end.” [That is the end of the growing year.]

It is clear from these and many other scriptures we have addressed in the past that the barley and wheat harvest were separate from each other. One representing the early grain harvest the other the later grain harvest.

What is common to them both, are some very simple agricultural principles and patterns.

Mark 4:28-29, “For the earth yields crops by itself [not by any power of man], first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head. But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.”

Look at this simple illustration covering the major occurrences in grain growth to harvesting. We first see a blade emerge from the ground. The next major observation is the head emerging from the stalk or

“boot” as it is referred to. Then after a time period we see the grain in the head fill out to its maximum size. As we know this is completed in two stages with the individual kernels in the head growing to their maximum length and then filling with the starches to make them plump. Then the grain ripens and dries and then it is ready for harvest.

Joel 3:13 tells us the same harvest principle.

“Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe.”

Ripe here is #1310, bashal: boil, seethe, grow ripe. It is easy to see that a biblical principle of harvestable grain is that it has reached physiological maturity and then goes through the ripening process prior to harvesting. This is all pretty simple stuff to understand. Christ Himself laid out a very simple principle as to how we can tell the fields (plural) are ready to harvest. They are “white” #3022 leukos, from luke (light); white.

John 4:35, “Do you not say there are yet four months and then comes the harvest? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!”

Yes, the fields will be completely changed from green to white or a very light color. This does not mean bright yellow but much more sun bleached. Very light even unto white.

Rev 14:15, “And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, thrust in your sickle and reap, for the time has come for you to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.”

Lets read that from the Interlinear Bible.

“And another angel went forth out of the temple, crying in a great voice to the one sitting on the cloud, send your sickle and reap because your hour to reap came, because the harvest of the earth was dried.”

Dried or ripe here is #3583 xeraino, (from 3584) by implication to shrivel, to mature.”

Yes, the harvest is ready to put in the sickle after the plants have matured and have lost all their color and dried out.

Please notice all these scriptures in context are

applying agricultural principles and terms to the spiritual harvests of God which are to come. Those harvests will not start until the bride is completely matured and her number is complete. God will not start that harvest prematurely by harvesting a little here and a little there but wait until the whole field is ready for the first harvest, the barley harvest.

All these scriptures in context are talking about a field or many fields. The harvest will not take place until a field is completely mature. God has made that part of the life cycle of grain. That is a very simple agricultural fact when it comes to grain harvesting. **A sickle is indiscriminative as to which stalk it cuts for it is wielded in broad swipes and cuts many at one time. Harvesting a field is not tip toeing through it picking out a stalk here and a stalk there, which may have ripened before all the others.**

That is why the barley talked about in Ex. 9:31-32 was destroyed. It was ready for harvest and was a devastating loss. It was mature, dried out, and brittle. The hail broke it all down. It had qualified to be “abib” and thus the start of the first month in the biblical calendar of God.

Always remember abib or aviv are agricultural terms from the bible for physiologically mature grain and thus given by God as the name of the first month. God always names things for what they are. Abib is when the first of the barley fields have matured and are ready for harvest. The balance of the barley fields are harvested during the balance of the 7 weeks God has designated for it to take place in as evidenced by scripture, which we have so often covered.

2 Samuel 21:9 is just one of the many scriptures which tell us about this harvest and its timing.

“And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them on the hill before the Lord. So they fell, all seven together, and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first [days does not appear here], in the beginning of barley harvest.”

First here is #7223 rishon: former, first, chief. It is obvious the context here is referring to the first month not days. The translators add “days” for lack of understanding as to what is meant.

Lets not overlook the key ingredient as to the timing of the harvest.

Jeremiah 5:24, "They do not say in their hearts, let us now fear the Lord our God, who gives rain, both the former and the latter, in its season. He reserves for us the appointed weeks of the harvest."

Yes, once again it is God who is in complete control of the appointed times of harvest. He determines it by the use of his weather conditions, to suit **His timing and purpose**. He uses the amount of rain and temperatures to do so.

Amos 4:7, "I also withheld rain from you when there were still three months to the harvest. I made it rain on one city, I withheld rain from another city. One part was rained upon, and where it did not rain that part withered."

God is in complete control and determines where and when the harvest will begin by manipulating the weather. The harvest does not start at the same time each year because of this as we have seen over and over again. That is why we make the trip to Israel each year at the end of the 12th lunar month to see what state of maturity the barley crop is in.

God absolutely means what he says in Deuteronomy 11:11-12.

"But the land which you cross over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water from the rain of heaven, a land for which the Lord your God cares; the eyes of the Lord your God are always on it, from the beginning of the year to the very end of the year."

We can be assured that God is in complete control of when the start of the year takes place and the subsequent harvests and He does so by using His weather patterns.

Lets see just a few more of the many assurances of this simple fact.

Isaiah 30:23, "Then He will give the rain for your seed with which you sow the ground..."

Ezekiel 34:26, "I will make them and all the places around My hill a blessing; and I will cause showers to come down in their season; there shall be showers of blessings."

The timing of the grain harvests in Israel are completely dependent on how God uses the weather conditions. That is why we use self-seeded barley, which is not manipulated by man. There is no invisible, magical line in the sky used by God to determine when the year starts, as do all pagan religious calendars and followers of such, whether deceived or not.

God has placed lots of instruction in the bible on the subject of the start of the year as well as the start of the harvests and for that matter what is an acceptable field.

Isaiah 28:23-26, "Give ear and here my voice, listen and here my speech [Christ repeats that in Mark 7 and elsewhere often]. Does the plowman keep plowing all day to sow? Does he keep turning his soil and breaking the clods? When he has leveled its surface, does he not sow the black cummin and scatter the cummin, plant the wheat in rows, the barley in the appointed place, and the spelt in its place? For he instructs him in right judgment, his God teaches him."

God makes it abundantly clear that the farmer prepares the ground by plowing it and leveling it before he plants his grain crops of cummin, barley, wheat, and spelt. Try doing this in unacceptable locations like Ein Mab'ua.

It takes good ground to produce a good crop. This is clearly what God is telling us here. It takes effort and lots of work to get it right. If he does not put in the effort he will not have a good crop and in fact may not have any at all if he is careless. He sows his seed where he has worked the ground. He does not haphazardly approach his task. Isaiah here tells us it is God who teaches these principles of righteousness to us. Unfortunately there are some who would like to turn us from these biblical teachings and be indoctrinated into commandments and dominion of men.

We need to ask ourselves, do we believe God!

God uses the scriptures to teach us what is good and what is not. It is mankind's instruction manual. Often He uses the whole scope of farming to instruct us; from plowing, planting, growing, harvesting, raising livestock such as sheep, goats, cattle and such to teach

us in our Christian lives what He wants us to understand. Often He uses these things to describe His past, present, and future actions. We have just seen some of them from scripture.

One of the most vivid examples of this can be found in both Matthew 13 and Luke 8. God gives us the physical principles first and then applies it to spiritual functions.

Matt. 13:3-9, "Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying; behold a sower went out to sow. [After the field had been prepared]

4) And he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. [This seed will never germinate, let alone produce good fruit]
5) Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth.

6) But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away."
[Ein Mab'ua and similar locations]

We have witnessed this over and over again in Israel in spite of the claims of others who do not use righteous judgment from the scriptures. They are more impressed with traditions and fables of men.

There are area's which have not and will not be used for agricultural production of grain in Israel until God Himself decides to change their physical characteristics. Most of these areas are concentrated on the lee side of the Judean Mountains, the Central and Southern Jordan Valley, and the Southern Negev into the Sinai. In these areas there are isolated pockets where men have introduced large amounts of fertilizers and water to sustain a crop of vegetables, etc. Shortly after that manipulation stops nothing grows there anymore. These areas are found in the flat bottomlands of the Jordan Valley and Southern Negev. They are virtually deserts.

The soils here are virtually useless for growing a crop to fruition. For the most part they are too steep, rocky, dry, or very poor soils to grow anything based on normal agricultural principles of the bible. Much of these areas are used for grazing sheep and goats on a rotating basis at best.

A classic case of what God states in verses 5-6 here is

found in the infamous location of Ein Mab'ua being used by some as an acceptable "field" of grain. When one thinks of a field what do you generally think of? I think we know the answer to that. Let me say, the only individual who would regard Ein Mab'ua as a field is one who is deluded of the truth and instruction of God and devoid of basic agricultural common sense and principles. Areas such as this are not just stony and rocky with little soil but steep ravines with overhanging cliffs. The wild barley which grows here is anemic due to the lack of good soil and usually withers from the heat and lack of moisture prior to maturing and in most cases long before that. That which may make it is very short of stalk with narrow seed. Many of you have seen the pictures for they are on the site.

Isaiah addresses what actually took place in locations such as Ein Mab'ua. Remember its characteristics and configuration. It is located at the bottom of a very steep decent on the upper half of the lee side of the Judean Mountains, in a rock strewn ravine with steep cliffs overhanging much of it, and magical waters coming out of the cliffs bottom.

Isaiah 57:3-6 [from the Interlinear], "But you draw near here, sons of sorceress, seed of the adulterer and the harlot. On whom are you making sport? On whom do you make a wide mouth and draw out the tongue? [I'll tell you who they make sport of and stick out the tongue at. Anyone who is foolish enough to believe Ein Mab'ua is an ancient agricultural barley field and thus an acceptable location for a firstfruit offering to start the barley harvest and thus the timing of Gods appointed times of meeting each and every year] Are you not children of transgression, a lying seed, being inflamed with idols under every green tree, slaughtering the children in the torrent beds [dried up flash flood ravines] under the cliffs of the rocks? Your portion is in the smoothness of the torrent [the stones made smooth from the waters of the flash floods racing through the steep ravines] they, they are your lot: even to them you have poured a drink offering; you have offered a food offering. Should I be consoled over that?"

Once again biblical principles applied.

Continuing in Matt. 13, 7) "And some fell among thorns and the thorns sprang up and choked them."

Once again we have witnessed this and have taken many pictures of this very situation. Please do not confuse these thorns with Tares. Tares are something completely different. Tares of the bible are not thorns but Darnel. That is Rye grass, of which there are 4 types, which grow in Israel. We have identified all four in the past on inspections.

8) "But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

This good ground is just that. It is fertile, with depth of soil, able to be worked by a plowman, to prepare it to be sown, and receives adequate rain and warmth from God to bring forth a healthy crop to harvest time. This is exactly what we have read earlier in Isaiah 28 and elsewhere. God clearly describes what he calls good ground in the patterns throughout the scriptures.

This is exactly what we look for and use for a qualified location, for qualified barley, to be used for a wavesheaf, firstfruits offering during our inspections in Israel. We look in these locations of good ground for physiologically mature and healthy barley after the biblical patterns and principles of agriculture.

9) "He who has ears to hear, let him hear".

Do we remember in Mark 7 that Christ severely condemns the traditions of the elders or as some know them the mishnaic traditions or oral law which the Pharisees practiced rather than keeping the commandments of God during Christ's physical existence on this earth. Please take the time to read it for yourselves. He makes it clear He is only citing some of the many. However He sums up His comments about them as follows in verse 13;

"making the word of God of no effect through your traditions which you have handed down and many such things you do."

In Matthew 23 He does the same thing. In fact in verse 13 He says,

"But you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in."

There are those who are doing the same thing today and we need to be aware of it. They are using the same traditions mixed with scripture to deceive many on

many subjects including the calendar of God. Two groups giving abib reports are laced with such garbage rather than biblical teachings. We need to focus on the word of God and not fables, traditions, or commandments, of men.

Christ repeats to us in Mark 7 and in verses 14 and 15 "...hear Me, everyone and understand." And "If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear."

That is exactly what He said to the multitude standing on the shore listening to Him talk about the parable of the sower.

Why do we think Christ so often says, "He who has ears, let him hear"?

Because it isn't for everyone at this time and Satan knows that. He is busy trying to gobble it up before the individual takes root and when one does take root he puts it to severe tests when he is young and shallow. The disciples asked Him why He spoke in parables in verse 10. Look at His reply in verses 11-13,

"He answered and said to them, because it has been given to you to know the hidden truths of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand."

A simple biblical agricultural principle such as that of the sower goes in one ear and out the other of those who reject Christ and by those who have been deceived by them. They do not apply these simple principles and illustrations to make their doctrine biblically sound. Instead they embellish the traditions, fables, and commandments of these men and reject those of God.

Look what Christ says to His disciples in verses 16-17, "But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear, for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous desired to see what you see, and did not see, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear."

No mistaking what He said!

After this Christ now goes on to explain the spiritual application of the physical illustration of the sower in verses 19-23,

“When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who receives seed by the wayside. But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for awhile. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word [of God], immediately he stumbles [falls to the deceptions of the fable tellers].

Now he who receives seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he

becomes unfruitful.

But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands, who indeed bears fruit and produces; some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”

Yes brethren, God clearly tells us from scripture what is acceptable ground for barley to grow in which is to be used as an acceptable firstfruit offering which starts the early harvest.

He also makes it clear that green barley (and for that matter any portion of it) falls far short of what can constitute the necessary conditions to start a harvest.

Our peace we give to you.

Brian