



December 29, 2023

The Calendar's Construction not Clearly Revealed

Warm hellos once again friends, brethren, fellow laborers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God from here on the Gulf Coast. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

The end of the year 2023 on the Roman calendar will finish just a couple more days. We'll begin 2024. The Winter solstice has taken place and the length of the days is increasing. It is still a long time until spring for most in the United States, and the transition from snow shoveling (like I've had to do for years in several places I have lived), to lawn mowing is a ways away for many! They are both regular chores that one must keep up with but I personally look forward to mowing the lawn again here fairly soon (rather than shovel snow). We seldom receive snow here in Lower Alabama where we live, but where my mother lives in Nebraska they do receive a lot more, and the temperatures are much colder...

Last Friday evening in my weekly letter, we looked at some of the components of a Calendar System referred to in the Scriptures.

Years and months and days are mentioned, but there is no technical description of how to determine them. There are hints that the length of the year and the lunar cycle was most likely different before the flood of Noah. If a change occurred, when did that change take place? Did the change in the water canopy and the movement of subterranean water affect the angular momentum of the earth?

Then there is a puzzling statement made about an event that took place during the days of Peleg (not to be confused with the famous soccer player). "*To Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided . . .*" (Genesis 10:25) Some speculate that the continental shift took place

then--some years following the Flood--and this would have been a dramatic geological event! Could the rotation and orbit of the Earth have been affected and changed then? We really don't know!

There was obviously some kind of calendar system in place with the references to numerically named months and days of the months referred to in Genesis 7-8.

Interestingly the determination of months took place even during the time that the flood waters covered the earth and after the rain subsided and then while the waters subsided. How were the beginnings of these months determined?

It seems likely that during some of this time, there was considerable cloud cover and the clouds obscured the view of the moon. So how was the beginning of the month determined if there was no visible sighting of the moon possible? Was there a system of calculation in place that determined the beginning of the months? We don't know and are not informed about any of these details.

Following the emergence of Noah and his family from the ark, Noah offered sacrifices to the LORD. God said that He would not destroy man or the earth based creatures again as He had done with the Flood. The rainbow was a beautiful sign or a promise from Him.

Then God refers to the seasons of the year. "*While the earth remains, Seedtime and harvest, Cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease.*" (Genesis 8:22) Is God saying that there were these seasons and temperature cycles before the Flood? Or is he referring to the conditions that would now take place after the Flood?

We know that the tilt of the earth and revolution of the Earth around the sun produces the seasonal variations. Was that tilt angle established in Genesis 1 and did it change after the Flood? We don't know for sure. We can only speculate.

Here's another question. Why is the Hebrew word *chodesh* also translated new moon? There are 20 instances where this occurs. When the context is analyzed, this makes sense.

Let's examine the first instance when *chodesh* is translated as "new moon." "*And David said unto Jonathan, Behold, tomorrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat: but let me go, that I may hide myself in the field unto the third day at even.*" (1 Samuel 20:5)

We've already observed that it is the lunar cycle that is close to the 30 day months alluded to in Genesis 7:24 and the related verses. It seems logical to conclude that David is referring to the first day of the next month that would be established that next day.

What lunar phase or condition is associated with the beginning of the month? And how was that beginning of the month predicted to take place the next day? Does this imply some kind of calendar calculation? Or does it imply that the visibility of the moon has been observed over several days and that there will be an observed condition to be logically predicted for the next day?

Okay, so I realize that I am asking a lot of questions and not responding with dogmatic answers. I'm trying to emphasize that the subject of the calendar and how it was constructed is not clearly revealed in Scripture.

I realize that we can construct a calendar system that corresponds to exact equinoxes and lunar conjunctions and it may seem to be a simple and logical construct. But we don't see even a brief explanation in the Scriptures of the calendar system that is simply in place and used by the society at that time, whether at the time before the Flood or in Egypt at the time of the Exodus of Israel. We'll continue with these thoughts next time...

Arms up friends! Our sincere prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Thanks in advance for your heartfelt prayers for us.



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