

says, "Thrice in the year shall all your men children appear"; This means that the month cannot be placed so early as to make the Passover fall before the circuit of the year begins at Passover.

It had been thought by the Rabbis that circuit of the year applied only to the last feast in the list: tabernacles, but the lack of punctuation in the original text argues against this, and also the astronomical facts. For in order to place tabernacles at the fall equinox one is forced to not place Passover at the spring equinox in some years. They do not mesh exactly. For this reason the Rabbis came up with the rule that at least one day of Tabernacles must fall after the fall equinox (tequfah). This would require advance calculation of all 7 months, a feat of celestial mechanical calculation which no one was capable of in those days, and which would have been provided for —if that is what the text meant! However, without the preposition, it is easy, and we now see, logically required, that 'circuit of the year' apply the whole cycle of feasts mentioned in the context, and specifically in vs. 22 that the feast of weeks (16th of Aviv) commence after the circuit of the year begins.

In addition, this little rabbinic rule contradicts the normal appearance of the barley in a few unique cases when a month will fall with its 16th day after the equinox, but without a day of tabernacles falling on or after the fall equinox. They thus would postpone the month even though the normal time of the barley tells us that the first 16th is within the lower bound, and the 16th of the next month is vetoed by the barely criteria.

Except for this minor error of using the fall tequfah, the barley and 'circuit' rules explain the Talmudic tradition that the 16th must fall after the equinox. This is just a functionally equivalent way of combining the rules into one rule. Likewise, to say that the moon nearest to the equinox is to be used is another way of combining the barley and 'circuit' rules into one rule.

(We must further point out that 'tequfah' is only used in relation to the sun at the springtime in the other contexts. So the rabbis are not consistent here).

Also, while it may be possible to define the beginning of the lunar year with a new moon, it is not possible to so define the 'circuit of the year,' because the moon does not make a circuit of the heavens in a year, but one circuit every month. And 'circuit' (tequfah) is a word specifically tied to the sun in Psalms, "KJV Psalm 19:6 His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof"; The sun does a daily circuit and a yearly circuit. The Psalm is speaking of the daily circuit. However, Gen. 1:14 tells us that the sun and moon are to be signs for 'days' 'set times,' and 'years'; The sun defines the 'days' and 'years' and the moon the 'set times'; The Karaites completely ignore the motion of the sun as a 'sign' for the year, and the sign value of the sun is clearly stated in Rev. 12:1-3.

Barley is not mentioned in Gen. 1:14, nor is it mentioned in Exodus 12:2. The month of 'the Aviv' takes its name from the fact that the barley is waved in it at the beginning of the feast of weeks. We are thus to guard the set time of the

month for waving the barley, which is when the barley is normally at the peak state of green ears. There may be less barley, or more barley depending on conditions, or no barley in a sabbatical or jubilee year that is allowed to be harvested, but in no case does the month get its name from the amount of barley that is available, nor was it set by going out to find varying amounts of barley or by calculating percentages of barely in a field in each year with no regard to results from other years.

In the wilderness, where they kept the Passover (Number 9), there was no barley, and there was no wave sheaf, because the precept is worded 'when ye come into the land', and barley does not grow in the wilderness, at least not in any predictable fashion, since things in the desert grow when it rains, if it rains. What they 'guarded' then was the 'month of the aviv,' which means the set time for the "spring", and this they had to do in the wilderness based on their knowledge of the circuit of the year at the aviv equinox.

This is proved in Exodus 34:18:

לְמוֹעֵד חֹדֶשׁ הָאִיִּב

"At the set time (moed) of month of the Aviv"; 'Guard the month of the Aviv' (Deut. 16:1), therefore, means sticking to the 'set time in the month of Aviv,' and while it is the wave offering that gives the month the name; it is not the barley alone that determines the 'set time' of the month. The first month was defined first, and then the month was named 'the aviv' later, on account of the set time for the offering. That is why Exodus 12:2 does not mention the 'aviv' but only the 'first of the months of the year';

Only in Exodus 12:2 is the 'first of the months' criteria mentioned, and not the Abib; On the other hand, in the Abib passages, the 'first of the months' is not mentioned. It should be clear then that the Karaite claim that "first of the months" is defined solely by Abib is missing half the evidence. If "first of the months" were defined by "Abib" then we should expect "Abib" to occur in the same passage as "first of the months"; but it does not, and this is because 'first of the months' was not defined by observing barely alone in the manner of the Karaites.

So we are to 'Guard the month of the Aviv' on the basis of the 'set time' of the Exodus from Egypt, and the precept to keep the feasts in a circuit of the year. The barley only prevents us from postponing the first month too far.