

# A Look at the History of Postponement Rules

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News Letter 5849-049

23rd day of the 11th month

5849 years after the creation of Adam

The 11th Month in the Fourth year of the third Sabbatical Cycle

The Third Sabbatical Cycle of the 119th Jubilee Cycle

The Sabbatical Cycle of Earthquakes Famines, and Pestilences

January 25, 2014

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Shabbat Shalom Brethren,

Two weeks ago we showed you the history of the conjunction moon calendar. Although my title may have caused some to think I was endorsing the conjunction moon I was, in fact, showing how hypocritical it is to follow the conjunction moon in light of the Talmud which they so often quote. We have shown you that the sighted moon/sighted crescent was the method used continually up until about the 11th century when Rambam made it the law everywhere. You should now realize that the last sitting council of the Sanhedrin never did change the calendar. It was not done until the 11th century C.E. All Hillel did was make the methods of calculations known with which they would check with the witnesses who came to report the sighting of the moon.

Yeshua would not have had to correct them on this as it had not yet been changed at the time He was here.

This week we want to follow up on that article by pointing out the postponement rules which are now used in the Hebrew calendar and show you when they came into being. Some of you may be shocked to know about the postponement rules and also when they first began to be used. Again, they never came into use until about the **11th century** and then not all at once. It was over time.

The following article is an very well researched explanation of this very fact produced by Brian Hoeck of *Truth on the Web Ministries*.

The reason we point these truths out to you is very simple. If you keep the Sabbath on Sunday you are sinning. We all know that. If you keep the Holy Days at the wrong time, you again have sinned and missed your appointment with Yehovah on the day He sanctioned. By using the Hebrew calendar you are gathering on days that *men* sanctioned. And let me also say if you keep the Sabbatical year in the wrong year you have not kept the Sabbatical Year Yehovah sanctioned. By not keeping these appointments with Yehovah at the right time you are sinning. We all know sin is the transgression of the law as 1 John 3:4 tells us.

Here are a couple of Scriptures to meditate on.

Pro 28:9 He who turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is a hateful thing.

Joh 9:31 But we know that God does not hear sinners, but if anyone is God-fearing and does His will, He hears him.

**What are “postponements?” What purpose do they serve? Were they in use by ancient Israel under Moses? Did Jesus heed or even know of these rules? Did God ordain them? Did Hillel II ordain them? Does the Mishnah or Talmud enjoin their use? What is their origin? Let us delve deeply into the matter.**

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The following quote divulges the workings of postponements. It may take a few readings to grasp some understanding of it.

“The *dehiyyot* [postponements] are as follows:

- (a) If the Tishri *molad* falls on day 1, 4, or 6, then Tishri 1 is postponed one day. [This postponement is often referred to as ADU, which is an acronym formed from the Hebrew letters *alef* (1 for Sunday), *daled* (4 for Wednesday), & *vov* (6 for Friday)]
- (b) If the Tishri *molad* occurs at or after 18 hours (i.e., noon), then Tishri 1 is postponed one day. If this causes Tishri 1 to fall on day 1, 4, or 6, then Tishri 1 is postponed an additional day to satisfy *dehiyyah* (a).
- (c) If the Tishri *molad* of an ordinary year (i.e., of twelve months) falls on day 3 at or after 9 hours, 204 *halakim*, then Tishri 1 is postponed two days to day 5, thereby satisfying *dehiyyah* (a).
- (d) If the first *molad* following a leap year falls on day 2 at or after 15 hours, 589 *halakim*, then Tishri 1 is postponed one day to day 3.

### 3.1.2 Reasons for the *Dehiyyot*

*Dehiyyah* (a) prevents Hoshana Rabba (Tishri 21) from occurring on the Sabbath and prevents Yom Kippur (Tishri 10) from occurring on the day before or after the Sabbath.

*Dehiyyah* (b) is an artifact of the ancient practice of beginning each month with the sighting of the lunar crescent. It is assumed that if the *molad* (i.e., the mean conjunction) occurs after noon, the lunar crescent cannot be sighted until after 6 P.M., which will then be on the following day.

*Dehiyyah* (c) prevents an ordinary year from exceeding 355 days. If the Tishri *molad* of an ordinary year occurs on Tuesday at or after 3:11:20 A.M., the next Tishri *molad* will occur at or after noon on Saturday. According to *dehiyyah* (b), Tishri 1 of the next year must be postponed to Sunday, which by *dehiyyah* (a) occasions a further postponement to Monday. This results in an ordinary year of 356 days. Postponing Tishri 1 from Tuesday to Thursday produces a year of 354 days.

*Dehiyyah* (d) prevents a leap year from falling short of 383 days. If the Tishri *molad* following a leap year is on Monday, at or after 9:32:43 1/3 A.M., the previous Tishri *molad* (thirteen months earlier) occurred on Tuesday at or after noon. Therefore, by *dehiyyot* (b) and (a), Tishri 1 beginning the leap year was postponed to Thursday. To prevent a leap year of 382 days, *dehiyyah* (d) postpones by one day the beginning of the ordinary year.”

(*Explanatory Supplement to the Astronomical Almanac*, P. Kenneth Seidelmann, editor; document online at: <http://astro.nmsu.edu/~lhuber/leaphist.html>)

Now, if these postponement rules were in force and in use by ancient Israel, both under Moses and on through the Temple periods, we should expect to find mention of them in his and their writings.

## The Scriptural Record

First and foremost, our foundation, is the Word of God—The Holy Scriptures. Beginning our search here, does one find any instance of postponement rules? Does it state in the Torah—say, Leviticus 23 for example, that the Day of Shouting (aka “Yom Teruah”/“Day of Trumpets”) is the first day of the seventh lunar cycle **unless** that day of the seventh new moon happens to occur on a Sunday, Wednesday, or Friday—in which cases, please observe it the day following?

One may search even the whole of Scriptures, but will never find such.

Leviticus 23:24 plainly states that it is the first day of the seventh moon of the year that is to be sanctified with a holy assembly. Nowhere does Scripture state that this God-appointed holy assembly can be shifted to a day different than the seventh new moon day of the year.

## The Historical Record

Looking into historic documents, we find that the postponements were not yet in use in Jesus’ day, nor for even centuries thereafter.

The *Mishnah* (spanning the time period of 200 B.C. – 200 A.D.), which came to make up the first part of Talmud, states:

“R. [If] the Day of Atonement coincides with the Sabbath, the loaves [of the showbread in the Temple] are divided in the evening. S. [If] it coincided with the even of the Sabbath [i.e., Friday], the goat of the Day of Atonement is eaten in the evening.” (Rabbi Jacob Neusner, *The Mishnah, a New Translation*, “The Fifth Division: Holy Things,” under “Menahot,” p.758).

“Footnote (16) If it were of immediate importance, the *shebuth* would have been permitted. But in any case when the Day of Atonement falls on a Friday, the vegetables, even if trimmed, cannot be cooked on the Sabbath.” (*Mas. Shabbath 114b*)

“Footnote (12) The Day of Atonement. Where the Day of Atonement fell on a Friday, the Shewbread was then baked on a Thursday.” (*Mas. Menachoth 100b*)

“...if his menstruant wife and his sister were with him in his house and he united, in error, <sup>9</sup> with one of them and does not know with which, or if Sabbath and the Day of Atonement [followed each other] <sup>10</sup>...”

“Footnote (10) i.e., when the Day of Atonement fell upon a Friday or Sunday.” (*Mas. K’rithoth 19a*)

As shown above, even well after Christ’s time in the flesh, the Day of Atonement was still being observed on both Fridays and Sundays which cannot be done under modern CRC rules.

Further readings from the Mishnah provide historical proof that other Appointed Times likewise were not postponed:

“The bones and sinews [of the Jewish Passover—the 15th] and what remains over must be burnt on the 16th. If the 16th falls on a Sabbath they must be burnt on the 17th, since they override neither the Sabbath nor a festival day” (*The Mishnah*, translated by Danby, p.146, *Pesahim 7:10*)

This shows the “Passover festival” (i.e., the first day of the Feast of Unleavens) occurring on a day not allowed by the current CRC (i.e., Friday). Also, utilizing the current fixed calendar, an Abib 16 Sabbath occurrence would put Sivan 6 (which is the post-Mishna rabbinical reckoning of Pentecost <sup>[1]</sup>) on the Sabbath. This is yet another CRC no-no.

“During the Second Commonwealth down to the fourth century C.E. [at the earliest], the festival of Passover could fall on any day of the week including Friday.” (Dr. Solomon Zeitlin, “The Judean Calendar During the Second Commonwealth and the Scrolls,” *Jewish Quarterly Review*, July 1966)

While we of the “Church of God” do not observe the fasts added by the Jews, we shall look at one of them here now in the context of this study. The fast of the ninth of Av is never allowed to occur upon a Friday under the rules of the current CRC. However, in Bible times, and on through the Mishnaic period, this was not so:

“They may not decree a public fast on the first day of a month or during [the Feast of] the Dedication or at Purim. But if they had begun they may not interrupt the fast. So Rabban Gamaliel. R. Meir said: Although Rabban Gamaliel has said, ‘They may not interrupt the fast,’ he admitted that they need not fast the whole day. So, too, with the Ninth of Av if it fell on the eve of a Sabbath [i.e., a Friday].” (*The Mishnah*, Danby, p.197, *Taanith 2:10*)

The Mishnah also records the following concerning the Day of Shouting (“Trumpets”), which is the day that these Postponement rules are based around:

“A child can be circumcised on the eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, or twelfth day, but never earlier and never later. How is this? The rule is that it shall be done on the eighth day; but if the child was born at twilight the child is circumcised on the ninth day; and if at twilight on the eve of Sabbath, the child is circumcised on the tenth day; if a Festival-day falls after the Sabbath the child is circumcised on the eleventh day; and if the two Festival-days of the New Year fall after the Sabbath [that is, on Sunday and Monday] the child is circumcised on the twelfth day” (*The Mishnah*, Danby, p.117, *Shabbath 19:5*).

This Mishnaic quote shows that “Festival-days” can immediately follow Sabbath.<sup>[2]</sup> It likewise clearly states that specifically “Rosh HaShanah” (Tishri 1) could fall on the first day of the week, and thus it is seen that the postponement of this Day of Shouting (a.k.a. “Feast of Trumpets”/“Rosh HaShanah”) from Sunday to Monday was not yet established during Temple times nor in the Mishnaic period.

Why is it that the first day of Ethanim (a.k.a. “Tishri”) is not allowed to fall on a Sunday according to the rabbinical calendar anyway?

“If Rosh Hashanah fell on a Sunday, Hoshanah Rabbah would fall on the Sabbath and would call for the elimination of certain rituals which the pharisaic rabbis did not want to forgo” (*Jewish Quarterly Review*, Vol 25, No 1, 1997; Article by Rabbi Saul Leeman, “Why is Pesach So Late This Year?”).

“Sunday is considered unfit, because with Rosh ha-Shanah falling thereon, the seventh day of the Feast of Tabernacles (*Hosha’na Rabbah*) on which the ceremony of “beating the willowtwigs” is an important part of the service, would fall on the Sabbath, and the observance of the ceremony could not be permitted.” (Henry Malter, *Saadia Gaon: His Life and Works*)

“Rosh Hashana never falls on a Sunday because that would mean that Hoshana Rabba (the last day of Sukkot, which always falls on 21 Tishri) would fall on a Saturday, which would not be desirable. In talmudic times, Hoshana Rabbawas regarded as a day much like Yom Kippur. It brought to an end the long holiday period beginning with Rosh Hashana, and was considered to be the one final opportunity to reverse an unfavorable decree issued against the individual on the High Holidays. If Hoshana Rabbawere to fall on the Sabbath, this would interfere with the ceremony of beating a bunch of *hoshanot* (willows) during the synagogue services, an action forbidden on the Sabbath [Both the action of beating the willow-twigs, and the forbiddance thereof on the Sabbath, are by later rabbinical decree, not by God]. Beating the willows was an act of self-flagellation and a sign of remorse, similar to the *malkot* ceremony practiced on Yom Kippur” (Alfred J. Kolatch, *The Jewish Book of WHY*, p.228)

Do you agree that we should not observe “Trumpets” on the correct day because of this rabbinical tradition and reasoning? How many of the CRC-observant brethren are even aware that this is why “Trumpets” is never observed on a Sunday within the so-called “Hebrew calendar”?

The following Mishnaic quote proves that Ethanim 21 (“HoShana Rabba”) was not postponed from falling upon the Sabbath in the Temple and, at the least, pre-Talmudic times, and thereby likewise further shows that “Trumpets” was not postponed from being observed on the first day of the week:

“4:1 A. [The rites of] the lulav and the willow branch [being carried around the altar by the priests] are for six or seven [days]...

“4:3 A. The willow branch rite is for seven days: How so?

B. [If] the seventh day of the willow branch coincided with the Sabbath, the willow branch [rite] is for seven days...

“4:5 F. And on that day [i.e., “the seventh day of the willow branch” (Ethanim 21)] they walk around the altar seven times...

“4:6 A. As the rite concerning it [is performed] on an ordinary day, so the rite concerning [is performed] on the Sabbath” (Rabbi Jacob Neusner, *The Mishnah, a New Translation*, “The Second Division: Appointed Times,” pp.286-287, *Sukkah 4:1,3,5,6*)

The following historical records of the Jews, also from the Talmudic period, show that the 1st day of the seventh new moon was not postponed from occurring on a Friday:

“1. IN THE SEVENTH MONTH, IN THE FIRST DAY OF THE MONTH SHALL BE A SOLEMN REST (XXIII, 24). This bears on what is written in Scripture:

For ever, O Lord, Thy word standeth fast in heaven (Ps. CXIX, 89). It was taught in the name of R. Eliezer: The world was created on the twenty-fifth of Elul. The view of Rab agrees with the teaching of R. Eliezer. For we have learned in the Shofar Benediction<sup>3</sup> composed by Rab: ‘ This day, on which was the beginning of work, is a memorial of the first day, for it is a statute for Israel, a decree of the God of Jacob. Thereon also sentence is pronounced upon countries, which of them is destined to the sword and which to peace, which to famine and which to plenty; and each separate creature is visited thereon, and recorded for life or for death.’<sup>4</sup> Thus you are left to conclude<sup>5</sup> that on New Year’s Day, in the first hour the idea of creating man entered His mind, in the second He took counsel with the Ministering Angels, in the third He assembled Adam’s dust, in the fourth He kneaded it, in the fifth He shaped him, in the sixth He made him into a lifeless body, in the seventh He breathed a soul into him, in the eighth He brought him into the Garden of Eden, in the ninth he was commanded [against eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge], in the tenth he transgressed, in the eleventh he was judged, in the twelfth he was pardoned. ‘This,’ said the Holy One, blessed be He, to Adam, ‘will be a sign to your children. As you stood in judgment before Me this day and came out with a free pardon, so will your children in the future stand in judgment before Me on this day and will come out from My presence with a free pardon.’ When will that be? In the seventh month, in the first day of the month.

- (1) New Year’s Day; the day on which God sits in judgment upon the world. The exposition that follows is intended to explain why the first day of the year was chosen as the day of judgment.
- (2) The bearing is not clear. In *Pes. R. XL*, 2 this verse is expounded as showing that mercy governs God’s attitude in His judgment of man and that this was so in the case of Adam who was judged on the first day of the year.
- (3) I.e. in the second of the special passages inserted in the Additional Service on New Year’s Day. This second benediction is now known as Zikronoth, remembrance.
- (4) V. A.P.B., p. 250.
- (5) The conclusion is only that Adam was created on New Year’s Day, the first of Tishri, this being the sixth day from the twenty-fifth of Elul.” (*Midrash Rabbah – Leviticus 29:1*)

The Talmud likewise claims that Adam was created on Ethanim 1 (aka, “Tishri 1”):

“He was created on New Year’s Day, the first of Tishri, and all that is related of him occurred on that very day. In the first hour his dust was assembled; in the second he was rough-hewn; in the third his limbs were articulated; in the fourth the soul was breathed into him; in the fifth he stood erect; in the sixth he gave names to all creatures; in the seventh Eve was brought to him; in the eighth they begot Cain and Abel; in the ninth they were forbidden to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; in the tenth they sinned; in the eleventh sentence was passed; and in the twelfth they were driven out of Eden (Sanh. 38b; cf. also Lev. R. 29:1).” (*Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Volume 2, article: Adam, pp.236,237)

Now we, as the rabbinic Jews who authored the material above, are quite aware what day Adam was created, aren’t we? The Book of Genesis explains clearly to us that he was created on the sixth day—the day before the Sabbath (Gen. 1&2). This being the fact, it is clear that the

“rabbis” who authored these Midrash and Talmudic quotes did not believe Ethan 1 was to be postponed from occurring on the day before the weekly Sabbath (that is, on Friday).

### The Origin of Postponements

We have examined the Scriptural and historical records and have found them replete with proof that the postponement rules of the CRC were not in use in either the 1st or 2nd Temple periods, nor thereafter during the Mishnaic period.

So when did these man-made rules come into place? Did Hillel II institute them in 358/359 C.E. when he published the, up til then, “secret” astronomical information which had been used by the Sanhedrin to determine if the witnesses who came to testify of their sighting of the fresh crescent were lying or not?

“The plain fact is that, as seen by recent scholars, the system of the fixed calendar was not developed until fully three or four centuries after the close of the Talmudic period, about A.D. 485. [therefore, around the eighth or ninth century C.E.]...Nor can anything be found in the Talmud about the weighty calendaric matters as the regulated succession of full and defective months within the year, the four postponements of New Year’s Day, the 19-year cycle, or the number and succession of intercalated years in this or any cycle.” (*The Code of Maimonides*, Book Three Treatise

Eight *SANCTIFICATION OF THE MOON*, translated from the Hebrew by Solomon Ganz; Introduction by Julian Obermann, *Astronomical Commentary* by Otto Neugebauer, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956, p xli-xlii)

“There is...unimpeachable evidence from the works of writers with expert knowledge of the calendar that the present *ordo intercalationis* [sequence of intercalations—the 19 year cycle] and epochal *molad* were not intrinsic parts of the calendar of Hillel II, these being seen still side by side with other styles of the *ordo intercalationis* and the *molad* as late as the 11th century. Also the four *dehiyyot* [postponement rules] developed gradually. ...By the tenth century the Jewish calendar was exactly the same as today.” (Cecil Roth, editor, *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Vol. 5, p.50, article:

Calendar)

While we cannot be positively sure as to when the postponement rules were added alongside the other man-made rules of the then-developing calculated rabbinical calendar, we know with complete confidence that these rules were not in use, nor even conceived of and known, during Jesus’ day. There are some indications that the initial elements of these postponements began to creep in near the end of the Talmudic period, but as the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* quote states above, these rules developed gradually, along with the rest of the rabbinic calendar rules, over the course of many years.

### Pushed Off For Preparation?

It is claimed that we need this “ADU” postponement to block Sabbath and annual Holy Days from occurring back-to-back, lest there be no day of preparation in between to prepare for the second of the two Appointed Times. Is this claim genuine in God’s eyes?

The concept of “preparation day” stems from Exodus 16 with:



“...on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily...bake what you shall bake, boil what you shall boil, for tomorrow is the Sabbath.” (Exodus 16:5,23)

What preparation is needed for Atonement (a day of fasting) that its observation is to be moved from a Sunday to Monday on such years, as in 2000, when it rightfully is to be observed Sunday?

What are we “baking and boiling” for the Day of Atonement that one must bump it over one day to have a preparation day in its rightful place when nothing is eaten on this God-appointed fast day anyway???

The fallacy of such a rule is further disproved by this very fact: God specifically declared one of His appointed times to occur on “the morrow after the Sabbath”!

*IF* God is truly against Sabbaths and annual Holy Days being back-to-back, and He feels and understands that they are “impractical” for us humans to keep, *why* then did He Himself ordain at least one back-to-back Sabbath/Holy Day every year (i.e., the seventh Sabbath of the count from Elevation Sheaf day followed by Pentecost—Leviticus 23:15-21)?

Facts are facts, brethren. Through the whole of Scripture, there are no indications of postponements rules. Through the late 2nd Temple (Jesus’ day) and early post-2nd Temple records, we find significant evidence against postponements being used or even known.

It has been claimed by many who hold to the CRC that the burden of proof to change from it lies upon those of us who already have left it—that we need to present the evidence to them. But the Biblical fact is this: We are each admonished through the apostle Paul to prove all things—not to others, but to our own selves. We, individually, are to put all doctrines and the like to the test BEFORE we hold fast to them. Dear friends, how many of us can claim we have done such testing and proving of this so-called Hebrew Calendar?

FOOTNOTES:

1. See our article **Determining Elevation Sheaf Day & Pentecost** [BACK](#)
2. This Mishnaic quote below, in agreeance with *Shabbat 19:5* and other historical quotes given, shows that Festival days can occur immediately following Sabbath:

“The Two Loaves were consumed never earlier than the second and never later than the third day. Thus if they were baked on the eve of the Festival-day and consumed on the Festival-day, that would be the second day. If the Festival-day fell on the day after the Sabbath, they must be consumed on the third day.” (*Menahoth 11:9*) **BACK**

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