

Are Two Witnesses Needed?

 sightedmoon.com/can-we-know-the-times-and-seasons/

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(Extracted from News Letter 5852-022)

The 11th day of the 5th month 5852 years after the creation of Adam
The 5th Month in the Seventh year of the Third Sabbatical Cycle
The 3rd Sabbatical Cycle after the 119th Jubilee Cycle
The Sabbatical Cycle of Earthquakes, Famines and Pestilence

The Shemitah Year
The Year of letting the land rest
The Sabbatical year that begins March 10, Aviv 2016 and goes to Aviv 2017

July 16, 2016

Shabbat Shalom to The Royal Family of Yehovah, or should I say Sabbatical Shalom in this year of the Shemitah.

Are you ready to begin to obey the rulings of the court?

Last week I left you with a question about should we have two witnesses or can you rely on one that has proven himself trustworthy and accurate?

You may recall that only Dr. Roy Hoffman was able to sight the new moon and he provided a picture as well.

I also asked where is this commanded in scriptures?

And I then used the one witness of Roy Hoffman to number my days of the month. Last Sabbath I said it was the 4th day and wonder if I should change the date this week to be the 10th or the 11th.

Why am I debating this?

Is going with one witness biblical? To set the precedent now in the fourth month will eventually lead to another great controversy in the 1st of 7th month when the Holy Days come.

How do we resolve this?

Where in scripture does it say we need two witnesses? This was the question I asked you all.

Deu 19:15 One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sins. At the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be made sure.

Deu 17:6 At the mouth of two witnesses or three witnesses shall he that is worthy of death be put to death. At the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.

Psalm 89:37 It shall be established forever like the moon, and *like* a faithful witness in the heavens.

We also have two witnesses in Daniel 8 and in Revelation 11.

Dan 8:13 Then I heard a certain holy one speaking, and another holy one said to that one who spoke, Until when shall the vision last, concerning the daily sacrifice and the transgression that astounds, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled?

Rev 11:3 And I will give power to My two witnesses, and they will prophesy a thousand, two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. 4 These are the two olive trees and the two lamp stands standing before the God of the earth.

When Yehshua was at the temple they used two witnesses to sight the moon then. I have the following statement that says before that time the witness of one respected Jew was testimony enough. This comes from the writings of Rambam on the crescent moon.

Accordingly, in the early generations, testimony regarding [the sighting of] the new [moon] was accepted from any Jew [without further enquiry], for any Jew can be presumed to be an acceptable witness unless one knows with certainty that he is unacceptable. When the followers of Baithos 8 began conducting themselves in a debased manner and would hire people 9 to testify that they had seen the moon when in fact they had not, the court decreed that it would accept testimony regarding [the sighting of] the new [moon] only from witnesses whom the court knew to be acceptable. Moreover, they would examine and question their testimony. It was the de facto system used in Second Temple times by both the Pharisees and the Temple Priesthood.

This is Neusner's translation:

RoshHa. 1:7 A. A father and his son who saw the new moon should go [to give testimony]. B. It is not that they join together with one another [to provide adequate testimony], C. but so that, if one of them should turn out to be invalid [as a witness], the other may join with someone else [to make up the requisite number of witnesses]. D. R. Simeon says, "A father and his son, and all relatives, are valid to give testimony about the new moon." E. Said R. Yose, "M'SH B: Tobiah, the physician, saw the new moon in Jerusalem-he, his son, and his freed slave. F. "And the priests accepted him and his son [as witnesses to the new moon], but they invalidated the testimony of his slave. G. "But when they came before the court, they accepted his [testimony] and that of his slave, but they invalidated that of his son."

It shows there were two rival courts and both required 2 witnesses, although they had different standards as to who was acceptable as a witness. Now this isn't definitive proof of what the Torah requires, only what was understood in the 1st century.

The fact that the Temple Priests and Pharisees agreed on the basic principle, while disagreeing on some of the specifics, has weight for me.

In my time of observing the crescent moon I do recall a time when we had a few witnesses who all had seen an airplane. Should we have accepted their witness because all three said it was the moon they saw? When the pictures were examined it turned out to be a plane.

Rambam also says the following things;

7. What is the process through which the testimony regarding the sighting of the moon is accepted? Anyone who saw the moon and is fit to testify²⁰ should come to the court. The [judges] should bring them all to a single place,²¹ and should make a large feast for them, so that people will come regularly. The pair [of witnesses] who arrive first are examined first according to the questions mentioned previously.²² The one of greater stature is invited [into a private chamber] first and asked these questions. If his testimony is accurate according to [the data that the court arrives at through] calculations, they invite his colleague in. If their statements are comparable,²³ their testimony is substantiated.

[Afterwards,] the remaining pairs are asked questions of a broader nature. [In truth,] their testimony is not required at all, [and they are being asked] only so they will not depart disheartened, so that they will come frequently [in the future].²⁴

Once the court sanctifies the new month, it remains sanctified regardless of whether they erred unwittingly, they were led astray [by false witnesses], or they were forced [to sanctify it].³⁵ We are required to calculate [the dates of] the festivals based on the day that they sanctified [as the beginning of the new month].

Even if [a person] knows that [the court] erred, he is obligated to rely on them,³⁶ for the matter is entrusted to them alone. The One who commanded us to observe the festivals is the One who commanded [us] to rely on them, as [implied by Leviticus 23:2]: “Which you will pronounce as days of holy convocation.”³⁷

Rosh HaShanah 2:10 relates that once Rabbi Yehoshua differed with Rabban Gamliel concerning the acceptance of the testimony of witnesses with regard to Rosh HaShanah. Since Rabban Gamliel was the head of the High Court, his opinion was accepted. To emphasize the importance of following the necessity for uniform adherence to the decisions of the court, Rabban Gamliel ordered Rabbi Yehoshua to appear before him carrying his staff and his wallet on the day that Rabbi Yehoshua thought should be considered as Yom Kippur.

After consulting with his colleagues, Rabbi Yehoshua obeyed Rabban Gamliel’s instructions. Afterwards, Rabban Gamliel honored Rabbi Yehoshua for his humility and deference to the court’s authority.

As it stands now we have a number of people in Israel sighting the moon and they have become good and trusted at it.

We also have well respected and trusted people representing different groups checking the Barley.

The reports are shared amongst each other and then shared to the rest of us in the world. A difference in understanding when the barley must be ripe has occurred this year. And sadly we are this year of 2016 on two different calendars. After searching out the meaning of “Abiv”, we have proved to ourselves the offering is to be “Abiv” in time for the First Fruits offering and not by the sighting of the New Moon to proclaim the month “Abiv”. Nehemiah holds to the Karaite teaching that it must be in time for the New Moon proclamation. We have written newsletters

explaining this. Read the articles on the 2016 Barley Controversy located under the Appointed Times tab.

So I am wondering if there is any way a court could be set up and all of us submit to it?

Lev 23:2 Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, The feasts of Jehovah, which you shall proclaim, holy convocations, even these are My appointed feasts.

We, the people, must proclaim Yehovah's feasts. He will make the moon visible and the ripeness of the barley apparent to us or hide them from us. But when we see them then the Holy Days are to be proclaimed, and if we err then we should do so united.

Are we ready for this?

Are we who were once alienated to Yehovah and have now come back to obey Him, are we able to work with Judah in this declaration of when the Moon is and when the Feasts are?

Are those of us from Judah ready to work with those who claim to follow Yehshua yet still obey the torah?

Are we ready to have an official court to rule over whether we have one witness for the moon or whether we have two?

Are we ready to have a court rule over how the barley is to be determined?

Are we ready yet?

Pray to Yehovah and ask Him to reveal to you the truth as to when the year begins and when to keep the Feasts.

This newsletter has been updated to include an example from another newsletter.

On July 5, 2016, we had a good example of this...what do we do when we have one very good witness and Scripture says we need two?



On Tuesday, July 5, 2016, the new moon was sighted from Maale Adumim, Israel by Dr. Roy Hoffman of the [Israeli New Moon Society](#). Here is his report:

I saw the Moo[n] from Mitspe Nevo, Ma'ale Adummim, Israel this evening (Tuesday 5th July 2016). I spotted it with binoculars (25 x 100mm) at 19:43 (UTC+03) then with the naked eye at 20:03 shortly before it disappeared over the mountains at 20:04. The picture was taken at 20:03. Temperature 26½°C, pressure 955 mbar, humidity 57%.

Dr. Hoffman's photo at the top of this message confirms beyond any doubt that he sighted the new moon and he is a highly skilled and experienced observer.

We also received several reports from those who were not able to sight the new moon from Israel. As of this writing, Dr. Hoffman is the only observer to have successfully sighted the new moon tonight. In ancient times, two witnesses were required to testify as to the sighting of the new moon. I have struggled with this issue over the years. The Torah does not specify that two witnesses are required, yet experience has convinced me of the value of never relying on a single witness. So what do we do this month? My advice is to work it out for yourself in fear and trembling with prayer and study before the Creator of the Universe. When the King Messiah sits on the throne of David and brings peace to the world, he will teach us the truth. Until then we need to do the best we can with the information we have. If we receive further reliable reports, we will let you know.

So now brethren, what do we do? It is just the 5th month, but if this was the 1st or the 7th month, then what should we do? This coming seventh month is also going to be very close as to whether or not the moon is sighted on one day or the next. If we have just one reliable witness such as Dr. Roy Hoffman along with a clear picture as we do for this month, do we accept this by the word of one witness? Or must we insist on two, even though we have a valid picture to go with his testimony? Where are the scriptures that demand we use two witnesses?

This month we have one good witness and a picture. Now you must judge.

I have sided with him on this month. But what do we do for the 1st or 7th month?