

## The Beginning of the Year

By Yochanan Zaquantov

We hear a great deal from diverse groups on theories of when the beginning of the year should start. Much of it not found in the Tanakh. Yet, it continues to be passed on as viable theories.

What I hope to do today is to establish what the Tanakh says and where some of these other theories have come from. Let's start with the Tanakh and specifically the Aviv.

Wikipedia is an online encyclopedia had this to say about the beginning of the biblical year.

“Though it is not expressly prescribed in these terms, Pesach is a spring festival, so the 14th of Nisan is the first full moon after the [vernal equinox](#). Therefore, from the standpoint of determining the annual calendar cycle, the principal problem is that the lunar month/new moon of Nisan must occur before the spring equinox. Since at least the 12th Century, the Hebrew calendar has determined this time mathematically, but prior to this tradition held that the 1st of Nisan does not start (and an [intercalary month](#) would be added) "until the barley is ripe.”  
([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew\\_calendar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew_calendar))

First, this quote has some problems. For one, nowhere in the Tanakh is there ever a mention of the need to have Pesach or the new moon to be before or after the equinox. We can also see they believe it was determined mathematically since the 12<sup>th</sup> century or the 1100s C.E. It was actually earlier than that but even they acknowledge that the prior tradition was that a month was only intercalated (added to the previous year) on the ripeness of Barley or Aviv Barley.

Later in the same articles it states that Maimonides felt the scriptural way to calculate the calendar was flawed. So the calculations were used because smart gentiles had figured out the mathematics therefore the Sanhedrin must have used the same calculations. So much for the Torah being perfect needing no addition or subtraction. There are selections of this from a web site.

([http://64.233.169.104/search?q=cache:o\\_6wrQe6ppUJ:personal.stevens.edu/~msenator/hand0.pdf+%22Sanctification+of+the+New+Moon%22+Maimonides&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=3&gl=us&client=firefox-a](http://64.233.169.104/search?q=cache:o_6wrQe6ppUJ:personal.stevens.edu/~msenator/hand0.pdf+%22Sanctification+of+the+New+Moon%22+Maimonides&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=3&gl=us&client=firefox-a))

“Maimonides continues, showing analytically how the scriptural procedure for determining the calendar must be flawed, something he could explain through his faith. He noted that non-Jewish savants had presented mathematically correct methods of calculating the potential visibility of the new crescent, and reasoned that since these methods exist, they must have been used by the Court and the record of their use lost.” ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew\\_calendar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew_calendar))

So, the Sanhedrin (Court) may have or may not have used these modern calculations according Maimonides.

**“Our rabbis taught:**

**‘Based on three things is the year intercalated: on the Aviv, on the fruit of the trees, and on the (Solar) Equinox.**

**Based upon two of them the year is intercalated, but based on one of them alone the year is not intercalated; but when the Aviv is one of them, everyone is pleased.’”**

**[Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 11b, circa 100 CE]**

You will notice that on one witness that (Aviv, Fruit of trees or Equinox) that the year would not be intercalated. So if the only one was the Equinox then it still would not be intercalated. Yet we are told how to intercalate based upon the Aviv which is what the Tanakh tells us. This also shows us that the idea of the Equinox was known into as early as the 100 CE.

So let’s see what does the Tanakh say we should use. Aviv is reference number 24 (Aleph-Bet-Bet) which is mistranslated as spring but is ripening grain (Wheat, Barely, etc...). Even Strong’s Concordance defines it as green ears which could be anything from empty shells in flowering stage to milk to soft dough. The point one would have to consider is whether after parching material would be there for offering.

### **Proof that Chodesh HaAviv is the First Month**

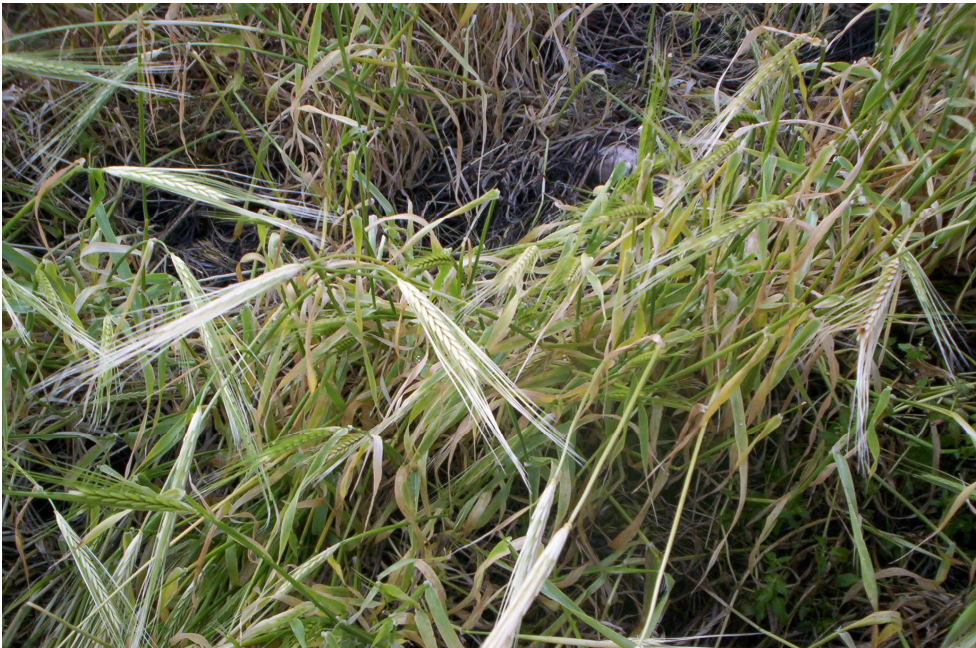
Exodus 9:31 (BHS)

And the flax (Pish'tah) and the barley (Sa'orah) were stricken, for the barley was in Aviv and the flax was in Giv'ol (cup),	וְהַפְּשֵׁתָה וְהַשְּׁעֵרָה נִכְתָּה כִּי <sup>31</sup> הַשְּׁעֵרָה אָבִיב וְהַפְּשֵׁתָה גִּבְעוּל:
--	---

Below is the flax seed boll.



This shows that Aviv is a stage of grain development. Below is Aviv Barley. It is not green ears but ripening grain fully mature. You will notice the yellowing of the beard and the seed kernels.



Leviticus 2:14 (BHS)

And if you bring-near a grain-gift of firstfruits to YHVH, Aviv (full formed but not fully dried), parched with fire, grits of Karmel (fully dried) you are to bring-near as your grain-gift of first fruits.

14 וְאִם־תִּקְרִיב מִנְחַת בִּכּוּרִים  
 לַיהוָה אָבִיב קָלוּי בְּאֵשׁ גְּרֵשׁ  
 כְּרֶמֶל תִּקְרִיב אֶת מִנְחַת  
 בִּכּוּרֶיךָ:

Aviv grain must be parched with fire but Karmel is not. Aviv still has moisture in it but it can be dried. I have seen parched Aviv Barley and there is substance to it and it could be used for an offering.

Exodus 13:4 (BHS)

<p>The day you are going out, in the New-moon/Month of Aviv (KaChodesh HaAviv).</p>	<p>הַיּוֹם אַתֶּם יֹצְאִים בְּחֹדֶשׁ<sup>4</sup> הָאָבִיב:</p>
---	--

If you link this back to Exodus 12:2

Let this New-moon/Month be for you the beginning of New-moons/Months, the beginning-one let it be for you of the New-moons/Months of the year.

Thus, the new moon/month is the one when the Aviv is present.

Exodus 23:15 (BHS)

<p>The Chag of the Matzot you are to keep: for seven days you are to eat Matzot, as I commanded you, at the appointed-time of the New-moon of the Aviv (Chodesh HaAviv)- for in it you went out of Egypt, and no one is to be seen before my presence empty-handed</p>	<p>אֶת־חַג הַמַּצּוֹת תִּשְׁמֹר<sup>15</sup> שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תֹּאכַל מַצּוֹת בְּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִךָ לְמוֹעֵד חֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב כִּי־בּו יֹצְאתָ מִמִּצְרַיִם וְלֹא־יֵרְאוּ פָנַי רִיקִים:</p>
--	---

The Feast of the Matzot is kept in the first month of the year. It must be a month where the Aviv is seen.

Exodus 34:18 (BHS)

<p>The Chag of the Matzot you are to keep; for seven days you are to eat Matzot, as I commanded you, at the appointed-time, in the New-moon of The Aviv (Chodesh haAviv), for in the New-moon of the Aviv (baChodesh haAviv) you went out of Egypt.</p>	<p>אֶת־חַג הַמַּצּוֹת תִּשְׁמֹר<sup>18</sup> שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תֹּאכַל מַצּוֹת אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִךָ לְמוֹעֵד חֹדֶשׁ</p>
---	--

	<p>הָאָבִיב כִּי בְּחֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב יֵצְאָתָּ מִמִּצְרַיִם:</p>
--	---

It even reminds them that they left Egypt was in the month when the Aviv was present.

Deuteronomy 16:1 (BHS)

<p>Keep the New-moon of the Aviv (Chodesh the Aviv). You are to observe Passover to YHVH Eloheykha, for in the New-moon of Aviv (baChodesh haAviv) YHVH Eloheykha took you out of Egypt, that night.</p>	<p>16 שְׁמֹר אֶת־חֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב וַעֲשֵׂתָ פֶסַח לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כִּי בְּחֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב הוֹצִיאָךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִמִּצְרַיִם לַיְלָה:</p>
--	--

All of these reference show that the New Moon or Month of The Aviv is the Beginning of the New Moons/Months. Both the Month of the Aviv coincides with the Pesach and we know that Pesach occurred in the first of the Year. There is no reference to an Equinox reference to determining the New Moon in the Tanakh.

Where did the Tequfah come from?

In a study of the Rabbanite Jewish Calendar we see that they have defined the Solstices and Equinoxes as Tequfot. Thus the practice of using a Spring Equinox began because their desire to keep the calendar in line with the seasons. Thus they adopted the Tequfah Nisan (Vernal Equinox) to which they get idea of using the equinox as a replacement for the Aviv.

In the Beit Alpha there is a mosaic, which notes the Zodiac and the four tequfah.



“Mosaic pavement of a 6th century synagogue at Beit Alpha, Israel. Signs of the zodiac surround the central chariot of the Sun (a Greek motif), while the corners depict the 4 "turning points" ("tekufot") of the year, solstices and equinoxes, each named for the month in which it occurs--tekufah of [Tishrey|Tishrei], (tekufah of Tevet), tekufah of Ni(san), tekufah of Tamuz.” ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Beit\\_Alpha.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Beit_Alpha.jpg))

Are the Tequfah in the Tanakh?

Yes, tequfah (Tav-Qof-Vav-Fey, Hey) reference number 8622 is the word used most to reference an ending point. It comes from a root verb naqaf (Nun-Qof-Fey) reference number 5362 which denotes a cutting off by encircling.

Yeshiyahu/Isaiah 29:1

1 “Ah, Ariel, Ariel, City where David camped! Add year to year, Let festivals **come in their cycles** (יִנְקְפוּ יִנְקְפוּ)! ”

This seems to reflect a circuit or completion.

Yeshiyahu/Isaiah 10:34

34 The thickets of the forest **shall be hacked away** (venaqaf וְנִקְּוּ) with iron, And the Lebanon trees shall fall in their majesty.

The Hiphil forms of the verb show a kind of encircling.

Yehoshua/Joshua 6:3, 11

3 Let all your troops march around the city and **complete one circuit** (haqeyf הִקְיִף) of the city. Do this six days,

11 So he had the Ark of the LORD go around the city and **complete one circuit**(haqef הִקְיִף); then they returned to camp and spent the night in camp.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 19:27

27 **You are not to round off** (lo taqifu לֹא תִקְפוּ) the edge-growth of your head, you are not to diminish the edge-growth of your beard;

So we see this is a kind of circle or circuit. So the Noun Tequfah can have the meaning of a circuit also.

Shemot/Exodus 34:22-23

22 The Pilgrimage-Festival of Weeks you are to make for yourselves, of the first-fruits of the wheat cutting, as well as the Pilgrimage-festival of Ingathering at **the turning**

(tequfat circuit תְּקוּפַת) of the year (hashanah הַשָּׁנָה). 23 At three points

(times) in the year are all your male-folk to be seen before the presence of HaAdon, Yehovah, Elohey of Israel.

What does the three feasts show us for the year? Is it referencing a fall equinox or simply the end of the growing season? We know it is not the end of the year because this feast of Ingathering happened in the seventh month. There were three times that we were to travel before the presence of Yehovah Chag Matzot (Feast of Unleavened Bread), Chag Shavu'ot (Feast of Weeks) and the Chag Sukkot or Asif (Feast of Booths or Ingathering).

Vayiqra/Leviticus 23:39

39 Mark, on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered **in the yield** (tevuat 4768 increase תְּבוּאַת) of your land, you shall observe the festival of Yehovah [to last] seven days: a complete rest on the first day, and a complete rest on the eighth day.

The increase of you land would only be completely known after you have harvested it. Thus, the Feast of Sukkot or Asif represented only the end of a growing season not an equinox. The circuit is from the beginning of the growing season to its end.

The next verse is Psalms 19:6 (7) (5-7)

5 Their voice carries throughout the earth, their words to the end of the world. He placed in them a tent for the sun, 6 who is like a groom coming forth from the chamber, like a hero, eager to run his course. 7 His rising-place is at one end of heaven, **and his circuit** (utequfato וְתִקְוֶפְתּוֹ) reaches the other; nothing escapes his heat.

We see this is very metaphoric language but what is trying to be shown is the Sun rises in one part of Heaven/Sky and sets or completes its course in the other part. So a tequfah as a circuit is the completion of its path or substance. Here like the growing season the sun ends its course but does not reflect an equinox. There are no stopping points along its course.

Shemu'el Aleph/I Samuel 1:20 (3, 19-22)

3 This man used to go up from his town every year to worship and to offer sacrifice to Yehovah of Hosts at Shiloh.—Hophni and Phinehas, the two sons of Eli, were priests of Yehovah there.

Hanna and Husband would go up to the sacrifice every year to Shiloh.

19 Early next morning they bowed low before Yehovah, and they went back home to Ramah. Elkanah knew his wife Hannah and Yehovah remembered her. 20 Hannah conceived, and **at the turn** (lit'qufot hayamim—for a circuit of the days לְתִקְוֶפּוֹת

הַיָּמִים) of the year bore a son. She named him Samuel, meaning, “I asked Yehovah for him.” 21 And when the man Elkanah and all his household were going up to offer to Yehovah the annual sacrifice and his votive sacrifice, 22 Hannah did not go up. She said to her husband, “When the child is weaned, I will bring him. For when he has appeared before the LORD, he must remain there for good.”

We see that the tequfot hayamim Circuits of the Days meant after a completion of many days and before the next yearly sacrifice that Elkanah brought she bore a child. Thus, again while it designates a completion of days it does not mean equinox.

The last reference to tequfah.

Divrey HaYamim Bet /2 Chronicles 24:23

**23** At the **turn of the year** (lit'qufat hashanah לְתִקּוּפַת הַשָּׁנָה), the army of Aram marched against him; they invaded Judah and Jerusalem, and wiped out all the officers of the people from among the people, and sent all the booty they took to the king of Damascus. **24** The invading army of Aram had come with but a few men, but Yehovah delivered a very large army into their hands, because they had forsaken Yehovah Eohey of their fathers. They inflicted punishments on Joash.

This verse can be interpreted in two ways. It says vay'hay lit'qufat hashnah "and was to turning the year". One was is this was a direct reference at the end of the growing season which was also referred to earlier as a turn of the year for Chag Sukkot. Which makes sense since the Army would want to invade if they knew the offerings were brought to the temple in that time or harvest foods were available to feed a traveling army. Or it could also be after a completion (circuit) of the year, the Army had come. Either way it does not refer in anyway to an equinox.

So what happened?

The best I can figure is that the Rabbanites took the word tequfah and applied it to the concept of equinoxes and solstices.

When did equinoxes and solstices start being observed?

Its beginning are not clear but it appears that it was well known by the time of Torah in that we see references to it.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 4:19

**19** And when you look up to the sky and behold the sun and the moon and the stars, the whole heavenly host, you must not be lured into bowing down to them or serving them. These Yehovah Eloheykha allotted to other peoples everywhere under heaven; **20** but you Yehovah took and brought out of Egypt, that iron blast furnace, to be His very own people, as is now the case.

Yehovah knew that other people would look to and observe as objects of worship the stars in heaven. We are told not to seek them out.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 18:9-15

9 When you enter the land that Yehovah Eloheykha is giving you, you shall not learn to imitate the abhorrent practices of those nations. 10 Let no one be found among you who consigns his son or daughter to the fire, or who is an augur (qosem qesamim), a soothsayer (me'onen), a diviner (menechash), a sorcerer (mekhashef), 11 one who casts spells (chover chever), or one who consults (sho'el) ghosts or familiar spirits (ov), or one who (yid'oni) inquires of the dead. 12 For anyone who does such things is abhorrent to Yehovah, and it is because of these abhorrent things that Yehovah Eloheykha is dispossessing them before you. 13 You must be wholehearted with Yehovah Eloheykha. 14 Those nations that you are about to dispossess do indeed resort to soothsayers (me'on'nim) and augur (qos'mim); to you, however, Yehovah Eloheykha has not assigned the like. 15 Yehovah Eloheykha will raise up for you a prophet from among your own people, like myself; him you shall heed.

Qosem qesamim is a diviner one who looks for omens or signs. It is from Qasam which is to divine. Me'onan is an observer of times or another form of diviner. Specifically he looked to the clouds. Menechash is from Nachash which is an experienced observer of signs and some verse call them enchanters. Mekhashef is from Kashaf which is a sorcerer or witch. Chover chever is from chavar which is joined and chever which is charmer. A person is able to join together words. Sho'el ov is asking of spirits. Sho'el is from Sha'al. What would a person want with any of these people. Answers to visions and dreams, knowledges of upcoming events, etc... What was one way to do this was through astrology.

In origins of the Equinoxes and Zodiac were the Greeks who took the studies from Mesopotamia (Babylon) and expanded upon it.

“Many of the famous ancient Greek mathematicians and philosophers including most notably Ptolemy himself studied astrology which was in a sense the astronomy of their day. Their contributions to modern western astrology also include an exact solar calendar with standardized houses and the twelve sun sign of the zodiac. Just as significantly the Greek astronomer Hipparchus discovered the precession of the equinoxes.” (<http://www.content4reprint.com/religion-and-spirituality/metaphysical/the-origins-and-history-of-modern-western-astrology.htm>)

So therefore the equinoxes used by the Rabbanite calendar were their original basis to use in place of an absence of Aviv to look at. Even Arthur Spier states this,

“In order to prevent the Jews scattered all over the surface of the earth from celebrating their New moons, festivals and holidays at different times, he [Hillel] made public the system of calendar calculation which up to then had been a closely guarded secret. It had been used in the past only to check the observations and testimonies of witnesses, and to determine the beginnings of the spring season.” (Spier, pg. 2)

Spier also tells us when these Mathematic calculations were used.

“This method of observation and intercalation was in use throughout the period of the second temple period (516 B.C.E – 70 C.E.), and about three centuries after its destruction, as long as there was an independent Sanhedrin.” (Spier, pg. 2)

So what was the real reason for the release of the calculation, which happened in 358 C.E?

“The Nasir Hillel II fixes the Jewish calendar on the basis astronomical calculations. Diaspora Jews no longer depend on the Sanhedrin for new moon announcements. Which had been outlawed by Constantius” (Gribetz et al, pg 74)

So what about the perfect zodiac cycle which tells us when the Spring is? We are often told that the zodiac sign of Aries the Ram is when spring falls. By knowing this we can know that spring is here. There is just a slight problem with that theory.

“By an ancient rule whose origin is unknown to any scholar, the Ages are defined by the passage of the spring equinox through the constellations of the Zodiac. There is no need to guess the timing of any Age, because they can all be calculated with relative precision, given that we have established proximate boundaries for those constellations. The spring equinox shifted from Aries, the Ram, into Pisces, the Fishes, around 120 CE and will remain in the Fishes until about 2800 CE. The extent of the Piscean Age is about 29 centuries because the constellation of the Fishes is exceptionally long. Other Ages are of different durations. The Age of the Ram (Aries) lasted from 1850 BCE to 120 BCE, an extent of 1730 years, more than a thousand years shorter than the Piscean Age that followed it...

The exact moment of transition into the Age can almost be identified by the year of a single historical event: the discovery of precession by the Greek Astronomer Hipparchus in 127 BCE. ([http://www.metahistory.org/lexicon\\_P.php](http://www.metahistory.org/lexicon_P.php))

So we see that we see that the Equinox has not been in Aries since 120 BCE. The reliance this as a true guide to spring will shift because of the progression of the equinox through the zodiac. We can also see that if the calculated Rabbanite calendar relies on the Sign of Aries for determination of Spring that it is now off because the beginning of spring now falls in Pisces. In his book, “Understanding the Jewish Calendar” Rabbi Nathan Bushwick identifies the Zodiac by month and their hebrew name. These are referred to as Mazalos.

Season	English Name	Hebrew Name	Month
Spring	Aries	Tleh	Nisan
	Taurus	Shor	Iyar
	Gemini	Teumim	Sivan
Summer	Cancer	Sartan	Tamuz
	Leo	Aryeh	Av

	Virgo	Besulah	Elul
Fall	Libra	Moznayim	Tishrei
	Scorpio	Akrav	Marcheshvan
	Sagittarius	Keshes	Kislev
Winter	Capricorn	Gedi	Teves
	Aquarius	Dli	Shevat
	Pisces	Dagim	Adar

(Bushwick, Pg. 28)

Even within the slip of time for the cycle of their calendar there would be a progression backward which would mean that it would slip back into Pisces every couple of years so they add a 13<sup>th</sup> month to bring it back into line. Today Aries would fall in Iyar not Nisan.

So what have see is that other than relying on the Aviv most other systems have problems in that they are mathematic systems meant to approximate the Lunar/Aviv system of determining the beginning of the year. In the past there may have been a reason to do mathematically but today and for many years there are individuals like Hakham Nehemia Gordon who have been making the New moon sighting each new moon/month and the establishing of the Aviv in the Land. As one who has done this first hand I can tell you this is not lightly done and is done in the scrutiny of many witnesses.

As a practice in the 2007 Aviv search, Hakham Nehemia, Ruth (a agricultural specialist) and myself took samples from each field and each checked 10 to determine how many where Aviv or not. This was written down and presented to the Karaite Chief Rabbi in Ofakim along with samples brought in from the fields.

Thus, the use of Aviv in determining the New Year is not theory but practice in the land today. We can have confidence that they people doing it know what to look for and are reporting it accurately.

Why the New Moon?

There are many people who choose astronomical (dark moon) or full moon based upon their logic or interpreting the 1 or a few scriptures to match their desire. They ignore the Hebrew and its grammar to understand this concept.

The New Moon in Hebrew is Chodesh (Chet-Dalet-Shin). It is reference number 2320. It can be found in the BDB on page 294. It is from the verb form of chadash 2318. Lets examine the verb form first then the related adjective form chadash 2319 and finally the masculine noun form chodesh.

Chadash the verb:

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 61:4

4 And they shall build the ancient ruins, Raise up the desolations of old, **And renew** (vechideshu וְחִדְּשׁוּ) the ruined cities, The desolations of many ages.

We see from the context that chadash is to renew. In this case it is to renew the city or rebuild after destruction.

Divrei HaYamim Bet/2 Chronicles 15:8

8 When Asa heard these words, the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage and removed the abominations from the entire land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities that he had captured in the hill country of Ephraim. **He restored** (vay'chadesh וַיַּחֲדֵשׁ) the altar of Yehovah in front of the porch of Yehovah.

We see from the context that chadash is to renew. In this case it is restored (renewed) the altar.

Tehillim/Psalms 51:12

12 Fashion a pure heart for me, O Elohim; **create** (chadesh חָדַשׁ) in me a steadfast spirit.

One would not create a new heart but renew one's heart in its purpose.

'Eychah/Lamentations 5:21

21 Take us back, O LORD, to Yourself, And let us come back; **Renew** (chadesh חָדַשׁ) our days as of old!

Again renew but not to make us new as in the beginning but renew to be made like new again.

Divrei HaYamim Bet/2 Chronicles 24:4, 12

4 Afterward, Joash decided **to renovate** (lechadesh לְחָדַשׁ) the House of Yehovah.

12 The king and Jehoiada delivered the money to those who oversaw the tasks connected with the work of the House of Yehovah. They hired masons and carpenters **to renovate** (lechadesh לְחָדַשׁ) the House of Yehovah, as well as craftsmen in iron and bronze to repair the House of Yehovah.

In both examples here we see chadash as renew as in repair not completed make a new.

Chadash the Adjective:

Shemot/Exodus 1:8

8 A new (**chadash** שִׁדְרָה) king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph.

Here is a different king not new in the sense of make new but new as in different.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 20:5

5 Then the officials shall address the troops, as follows: “Is there anyone who has built a new (**chadash** שִׁדְרָה) house but has not dedicated it? Let him go back to his home, lest he die in battle and another dedicate it.

In this case, it literally means newly built.

Yechez'qel/Ezekiel 11:19 (17-20)

17 Yet say: Thus said Adonay Yehovah: I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the Land of Israel. 18 And they shall return there, and do away with all its detestable things and all its abominations. 19 I will give them one heart and put a new (**chadashah** הַשִּׁדְרָה) spirit in them; I will remove the heart of stone from their bodies and give them a heart of flesh, 20 that they may follow My laws and faithfully observe My rules. Then they shall be My people and I will be their God.

There are two way to interpret this scripture either the spirit in them is renewed as in following him again or made right or he literally gave them a spirit they did not have before. Since they can not have literally a heart of stone. Then, I would lean more toward the renewing of their spirit.

Yechez'qel/Ezekiel 18:31

31 Cast away all the transgressions by which you have offended, and get yourselves a new (**chadash** שִׁדְרָה) heart and a new (**chadashah** הַשִּׁדְרָה) spirit, that you may not die, O House of Israel.

Here how does one literally get a new heart? He is telling us to act differently and thus renew our ways or make new the ways we are following. He tells us to get these things not that we will give them to us.

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 65:17 (17-18)

17 For behold! I am creating **A new heaven (shamayim chadashiym – heavens renew שָׁמַיִם חֲדָשִׁים)** and a new earth (va'aretz chadashah – and land renewed

וְאֶרֶץ חֲדָשָׁה); The former things shall not be remembered, They shall never come to mind. 18 Be glad, then, and rejoice forever In what I am creating. For I shall create Jerusalem as a joy, And her people as a delight;

It never refers to a New Jerusalem but only he will create it as a joy. So the land and heavens will be a metaphor for the way the people will be in that time. As if they had begun again without the bad past.

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 66:22 (20-23)

20 And out of all the nations, said Yehovah, they shall bring all your brothers on horses, in chariots and drays, on mules and dromedaries, to Jerusalem My holy mountain as an offering to Yehovah—just as the Israelites bring an offering in a pure vessel to the House of Yehovah. 21 And from them likewise I will take some to be levitical priests, said Yehovah. 22 For as **the new (renew) heaven (hashamayim hachadashiym**

**הַשָּׁמַיִם הַחֲדָשִׁים)** and the new (renew) earth (vaha'aretz hachodashah

וְהָאָרֶץ הַחֲדָשָׁה) Which I will make Shall endure by My will—declares

Yehovah—So shall your seed and your name endure. 23 **And new moon after new moon (chodesh bachadasho – new moon in its new moon חֹדֶשׁ בְּחֹדֶשׁוֹ)**, And sabbath after sabbath, All flesh shall come to worship Me—said Yehovah.

If you read just verse 22, you come away with the idea that Yehovah will create a New Heaven and New Earth. Yet, if this is so, then why would the nations bring back the people only for the old Heavens and Old Earth to be destroyed in the same line of thinking. Or as in the previous reference is this renewal as in they the Israelites as well as the nations will follow Yehovah as if the bad things are all forgotten. All flesh come to worship me seems to reflect that idea.

Chodesh – new moon:

As a month in Period.

Bereshit/Genesis 38:24

24 About three months (kamish'losh chodeshim כַּמִּשְׁלֹשׁ חֳדָשִׁים) later, Judah was told, “Your daughter-in-law Tamar has played the harlot; in fact, she is with child by harlotry.” “Bring her out,” said Judah, “and let her be burned.”

In a period of three chodeshim (months/new moons). Denoting a passing of a period.

Bamidbar/Numbers 11:20-21

20 but a whole month (Chodesh Yamim – Month of days חֹדֶשׁ יָמִים), until it comes out of your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you. For you have rejected Yehovah who is among you, by whining before Him and saying, ‘Oh, why did we ever leave Egypt!’”

21 But Moses said, “The people who are with me number six hundred thousand men; yet You say, ‘I will give them enough meat to eat for a whole month (chodesh yamim חֹדֶשׁ יָמִים).’

A month of days would designate a period of 29 or 30 days from one new moon to another.

Shemot/Exodus 12:1

12:1 Yehovah said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: 2 This month (hachodesh הַחֹדֶשׁ) shall mark for you the beginning of the months (rosh hachodesh rishon רֹאשׁ חֳדָשִׁים רִאשׁוֹן); it shall be the first of the months of the year for you (Hu lakhem lechadashey hashanah – shall be to you for new months of the year הוּא לָכֶם לְחֳדָשֵׁי הַשָּׁנָה). 3 Speak to the whole community of

Israel and say that on the tenth of this month (lechodesh לְחֹדֶשׁ) each of them shall take a lamb to a family, a lamb to a household.

We see that in these examples that Chodesh is both the measure of the month as one new moon to the next but also the moon itself in the renewing of its reflection. It is not created as new but renewed in its appearance.

How can we know that the moon is for the months?

Tehillim/Psalms 136:9

8 the sun to dominate the day, His steadfast love is eternal; 9 **the moon (hayare'ach** **הַיָּרֵחַ**) and the stars to dominate the night, His steadfast love is eternal;

Bereshit/Genesis 1:16

16 God made the two great lights, the greater light to dominate the day and the lesser light to dominate the night, and the stars.

The Greater light is known as the sun and the lesser light was known to be the Moon. Yare'ach is the Hebrew word for Moon.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 4:19

19 And when you look up to the sky and behold the sun and **the moon (hayare'ach** **הַיָּרֵחַ**) and the stars, the whole heavenly host, you must not be lured into bowing down to them or serving them. These Yehovah Eloheykha allotted to other peoples everywhere under heaven;

Related to this is Yerah which is used for a alternate word for Month.

Shemot/Exodus 2:2

2 The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw how beautiful he was, she hid him for **three months (sheloshah yerahiym** **שְׁלוֹשָׁה יָרְחִים**).

Devarim/Deuteronomy 21:13

13 and discard her captive's garb. She shall spend **a month's time (yerah yamim** **יָרַח יָמִים**) in your house lamenting her father and mother; after that you may come to her and possess her, and she shall be your wife.

Thus, we see that Yerah Yamim as Month of Days and Chodesh Yamim as Month of Days used with the denoting the number of a day in a month is related. Thus Chodesh is from Yare'ach or moon. Chodesh is from Chadash to renew or new thus the knowing that a Chodesh is a New Moon.

By using Hebrew grammar and the studying of the texts we can derive the understanding of what is Chodesh from the words used around it and the words related to it.

## Bibliography

Brunswick, Rabbi Nathan, *Understanding the Jewish Calendar*, 1989, Moznaim Publishing Company.

Spier, Arthur, *The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar*, Third edition, 1986, Behrman House, inc.

Gribetz, Judah, Greenstein, Edward L., Stein, Regina S., *The Timetables of Jewish History*, 1993, Touchstone.