

Does the ripening of the barley in Yerushalayim affect the beginning of the New Scriptural year?

According to Scripture ([Gen 1:14](#)), **ONLY the luminaries** are used for signs and appointed times, and for days and years, NOTHING else!

Nowhere in Scripture is there any suggestion that we have to wait for the ripening of the barley in Yerushalayim (Jerusalem) to announce the new Scriptural year!

The term "Abib" is mentioned four times in the Bible (Exo 13:4; Exo 23:15; Exo 34:18 and Deu 16:1) . . .

Adding no concepts other than what is plainly stated in these Scriptural references, we find the following:

- "Abib" is the Biblical name of a month
- Passover and Unleavened Bread take place during the month of "Abib"
- Because Passover and Unleavened Bread take place in the first month of the Biblical year, we can safely conclude that the Bible is telling us that "Abib" is the name of the first month of the Biblical year

Those who believe that the beginning of the New Scriptural year is dependent upon the ripening of Barley **ADD the following additional beliefs** to the above list . . .

- "Abib" refers to a certain stage of ripeness in the barley harvest
- "Abib" begins at the first new moon after the barley has reached this certain stage of ripeness
- Not just any barley will do - the barley ripeness in question is Jerusalem barley

But NONE of these additional beliefs is supported by the four mentioning's of the word "Abib" in Scripture. So, let us examine the meaning of the Hebrew word "Abib"

According to **Strong's Concordance #24** – Abib -- ear, green ears of corn not maize

From an unused root (meaning [to be tender](#)); green, i.e. A young ear of grain; hence, the name of the month Abib or Nisan -- Abib, ear, green ears of corn (not maize).

So where does the barley come into people's minds regarding Abib? **It isn't found in the Bible verses using this term, nor is it found in the Hebrew meaning of the word.**

No details about what comprises the "sheaf of first fruits" are given in [Lev 23:10-11](#). But, the Bible does specify the grains used in First Fruits in [2Kin 4:42](#) . . . Now a man came from Ba'al Shalishah, and brought the man of Elohim bread of the first-fruits, twenty loaves of barley bread, and newly ripened grain in his knapsack. And he said, "Give it to the people to eat."

Scripturally then, we **find proof for the following statements:**

- "Abib" is the name of the first month in the Scriptural year
- "Abib" is translated to mean "greening" or a time when plants are "tender" and there are "young ears of grain"
- Passover, Unleavened Bread and First Fruits are set apart days/festivals of YHWH that take place during the month of Abib

Barley and corn are the grains used in First Fruits.

It would be needed to have some freshly harvested barley and corn in order to keep First Fruits in Bible times.

But having barley for wave sheaf is a far cry different from waiting for the Jerusalem barley to be in a certain stage of ripeness and then watching for the next new moon.

The fact remains that Scripture never says to calculate the start of the year from the barley being in any stage of ripeness. It merely suggests a **connection in timing**. There is a big difference between general timing of having barley and the precise timing of watching for the first new moon after Jerusalem's barley is at a certain stage of ripeness (this is the Karaite viewpoint).

Rabbi Scheinerman, in Jerusalem, puts the Jerusalem barley growing season into early summer! This gives a pretty wide window in which to have the first of the year and still have barley in Abib.

But, the question it boils down to is: **does the year have to wait for barley to be ripe to begin? Or can there be a first month of the Biblical year without a barley harvest at all?** If there can be a Biblical beginning of the year without a barley harvest, then the logical conclusion is that the **barley is not the critical indicator of the year's beginning.**

There are **three occasions in Scripture** which clearly proves that the “doctrine” of the ripening of the Barley in Yerushalayim to announce the New Scriptural year is NOT inspired. Please consider these three occasions:

Consideration #1:

The **Jubilee years** had no grain planting - **no barley**

For two successive growing seasons (the Sabbath and Jubilee years), no grain was to be planted and, therefore, no maturing barley was available to consult (Lev 25:1-24). True, barley sometimes sprouts and grows voluntarily with no cultivation, but this was less likely in the second year. It was illegal to reap volunteer grain in the 50th year, so Israel probably allowed their flocks to graze the fields. This was legal (Lev 25:7,11).

Consideration # 2:

Noah knew the **beginning of year** while the **earth was covered with water** - **no barley**

During the flood, Noah was able to determine the first day of the year without consulting a barley harvest.

Gen 8:13 “And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry.”

Consideration # 3:

During Yisrael's **Wandering in the Wilderness** (40 years), they started the years - **no barley**

During the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness (a desert), Yisrael kept a careful record of the months and years - apparently without consulting the barley harvest in Canaan.

<http://www.lightedway.org/year.html>