

# Preparing Ourselves for the Spring Feasts

By [www.messianicsabbath.com](http://www.messianicsabbath.com)

The Spring Feasts begin with Passover during the Hebrew month of Nisan. But “Nisan” is a Babylonian name adopted well after the [original command](#) to observe Passover. In looking at the Hebrew name of the month, I found it was actually much more – more than a name or even a month. It’s a season, a designation, a process - the understanding of which brought all new revelation about the significance of the Spring Feasts.

## Nisan - The Month of the Abib

The name of the month is first mentioned in [Exodus 13:4](#) when Yehovah refers to it by its Hebrew name, “Aviv” (printed “Abib” in our English Bibles). This is one of only two months called by its Hebrew name in the Bible. It is mentioned in four verses in our Bibles: three in Exodus and one in Deuteronomy - all having to do with keeping Passover. (In the Hebrew texts it actually appears in [six verses](#).)

Exodus 12:2 tells us, “*You are to begin the calendar with this month, it will be the first month of the year for you.*” Since Abib is the first month of the year, Abib 1 is New Year’s Day, and every Abib 14 is Passover (Nisan 14). Then Abib 15-21 is the Feast of Unleavened Bread. During that same week is the Feast of Firstfruits, in which the first sheaf of barley is brought to the priest, who waves it before Yehovah as an offering of Firstfruits.

But I found out that Abib isn’t just a month; it was a word ([Strong’s #H24](#)) before Yehovah designated it the first month. It is an agricultural word referring to crops. In fact in the four references to Abib in the Bible the Hebrew text reads, “...in the month of THE Aviv.” So Abib was a type of an event before it was ever the name of a month.

So I wondered, what is THE Abib?

## The Meaning of The Abib

Exodus 9:31 is about the seventh plague before the Exodus – the hailstorm: “*The flax and barley were ruined because the barley was ripe (in the ear) and the flax in bud.*”

In Hebrew this word ripe is “aviv.” It’s a description referring to the stage of growth of grain or barley when the seeds have reached full size and are filling with starch, but have not yet dried. It’s the point

when the barley is ripe for eating. It has come to mean springtime, as in the name Tel Aviv, which means “Spring Hill.”

The Exodus happened at the time the barley was ripe, Abib 14. And, at the time of the Exodus is when Yehovah commanded that this month be the first month of the year.

But here’s where it gets interesting. In Hebrew Aviv is spelled אֵבִיב (Aleph, Vet, Yod, Vet). Look at Aviv in the [Paleo Hebrew](#) characters:

א – Aleph = א representing an Ox and meaning strength, leader, first

That makes sense as the first month, the leading month.

ב – Vet = ב representing a House and meaning tent, home, family

י -- Yod = י representing a Hand and meaning work, a deed, to make (action)

ב – Vet = ב representing a House and meaning tent, home, family

This portrays a home, a dwelling place, then an action, then a second dwelling place.

This is exactly what happened at the Exodus. The Israelites’ home was in Egypt, then by Yehovah’s actions - the plagues – their address changed. They were on their way to their new home, the Promised Land.

Even the month they were in depicts the Exodus. That got my attention, then I found six other relocations that happened in Abib.

## Abib – A Time of Relocation

### 2. [Exodus 40:17-35](#)

<sup>17</sup> “*So the tabernacle was set up on the first day of the first month in the second year...*”

<sup>34</sup> “*Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.*” <sup>35</sup> “*Moses could not enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.*”

This is another relocation, and it happened on Abib 1 - the first day of the first month – new year’s day. This time Yehovah’s presence is moving from one place to another. Yehovah’s presence dwelt in the heavenlies, then Moses set up the tabernacle, by the work of his hands (Yod) and Yehovah’s presence moved to its new dwelling place – the Ark in the Holy of Holies. He’s now dwelling with man for the first time since the Garden of Eden.

3. Fast forward another 1500 years to Yeshua’s birth. In his DVD, [“The Mishkan Clue”](#), Jonathan Cahn makes a very convincing argument for the date of Nisan 1 – Abib 1 as Yeshua’s birthdate. It would fit with this pattern of relocation we see during Abib. At Yeshua’s birth we have Yehovah’s Son relocating from Yehovah’s right hand to earth by a supernatural act – the virgin birth – an act of Yehovah’s hand.
4. We also see the same thing at Yeshua’s resurrection. On Nisan 14 – Abib 14 (Passover) Yeshua is crucified, leaving his earthly body by the hand of the Romans and Jewish leadership. Three days later his body is transformed supernaturally to an immortal body. That’s the kind of relocation I’m looking forward to! He’s mortal, then he’s crucified, then he’s immortal - moving from one state to another.

We have these four major milestones in Yehovah’s plan all happening in the month of the Abib – the tangible presence of Yehovah moving from one place to another by supernatural acts.

Let’s look further into what we know took place in the month of the Abib.

5. [Joshua 4:19-24](#)

<sup>19</sup> *“On the tenth day of the first month the people went up from the Jordan and camped at Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho...”*

<sup>23</sup> *“For the Lord your God dried up the Jordan before you until you had crossed over. The Lord your God did to the Jordan what he had done to the Red Sea when he dried it up before us until we had crossed over.”*

This is just after the Israelites crossed over from the wilderness to the Promised Land. Remember, the Levites had to wade into the Jordan River with the ark, then Yehovah supernaturally stopped the

river from flowing, piling up the water on one side, so the 1.5 million Israelites could pass through. This is a relocation by a supernatural act of Yehovah, moving from where they had been for 40 years to their new home. It happened during the Abib.

This is a reminder of what Yehovah did for them 40 years ago at the Red Sea during their relocation from Egypt – which also happened in the month of Abib. They’re finally now moving on to their new home as they were meant to 40 years ago.

6. Ezra was sent by King Artaxerxes from Babylon to Jerusalem to teach the Torah in the month of Abib.

*Ezra 7:9 “[Ezra] had begun his journey from Babylon on the first day of the first month, and he arrived in Jerusalem on the first day of the fifth month, for the gracious hand of his God was on him.”*

(Read the full story: [Ezra 7-8](#))

In this account, Ezra deliberately didn’t ask the king for soldiers or protection on the trip, because he had told the king that Yehovah would be with them. It tells us that the trip was five months long. Ezra soon realized he would be carrying all this loot from the king (millions of dollars’ worth of precious metal by today’s standards) with only the accompanying musicians, teachers and priests. They had no defense, day or night on their five-month journey. So Ezra instructed the people to pray and fast for protection before they left.

This is why he says several times in this story “The hand of our Yehovah was on us, and he protected us from enemies and surprise attacks along the road.” This is the supernatural hand of Yehovah guiding them from one home to another.

7. Nehemiah was King Artaxerxes’ personal attendant. 13 years after Ezra left for Jerusalem, Nehemiah heard that Jerusalem was in disrepair, the wall was in ruins, the gates had been burned, the people hated by the Gentiles.

Nehemiah 2:1-8

*“And it came about in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, that wine was before him, and I took up the wine and gave it to the king...”*

*<sup>4</sup> Then the king said to me, "What would you request?" So I prayed to the God of heaven.<sup>5</sup> I said to the king, "If it please the king, and if your servant has found favor before you, send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' tombs, that I may rebuild it." <sup>6</sup> Then the king said to me, the queen sitting beside him, "How long will your journey be, and when will you return?" So it pleased the king to send me, and I gave him a definite time..."*

It was the month of Abib and Nehemiah was now relocating by the hand of Yehovah. After he got to Jerusalem, he told the others in vs. 18 *"the gracious hand of my Yehovah has been on me."*

This is the kind of thing that happens in Abib – supernatural relocations.

Even the barley itself is pictured in the word Abib. When the barley is ripe, it's harvested and made into food. It's relocated from the ground by the hand of man and brought into our bodies.

### **The Chaff and the Wheat in the Abib**

Look again at the Exodus. On the one hand you have Yehovah destroying Egypt's barley during the plagues. Then fast forward 40 years, and the Israelites are crossing the Jordan into the Promised Land in Abib. The scene they would have been greeted with is the new barley crop in Jericho. (In the excavations around Jericho's fallen wall, they've identified that one of the crops in their storage areas was barley.)

We have these references of Yehovah destroying the earth when the barley is ripe, and restoring new life at the same time of year. Both the destruction and restoration have to do with separating out the righteous and punishment of the unrighteous.

This is "separating the chaff from the wheat," which John the Baptist is referring to when he says of Yeshua in [Luke 3:17](#), *"He is ready to separate the chaff from the wheat with his winnowing fork. Then he will clean up the threshing area, gathering the wheat into his barn but burning the chaff with never-ending fire."*

The barley plant has a hull that must be removed to eat the seed or to use the seed to make food. The chaff or husk is destroyed when the barley is harvested. This process mirrors the theme of the events that took place in Abib.

- In the Exodus, the Egyptians were ripe for punishment; the Hebrews were ripe for deliverance. We see the chaff removed and the seed brought out.
- Forty years later Jericho was ripe for punishment when the Israelites crossed the Jordan; the new generation of Israelites were ready to begin their new life.

In looking through all that happened in the month of Abib in the Bible, there were various other accounts of both relocation and removing evildoers ripe for punishment.

But as we look at the seven examples stated above, one more thing becomes clear: the theme of destiny.

### **Abib – A Time of Moving Toward Our Destiny**

The barley plant itself is planted for the purpose of becoming food. That's the barley's destiny. The month of Abib is named for the ripe barley, a time of harvesting to bring it to its intended purpose.

- When Yehovah destroyed the barley in Egypt as part of the plagues before the Exodus, it meant the Israelites would soon be moving toward their intended destiny – the Promised Land.
- When Ezra left Babylon, he began pursuit of his destiny. Restoring the Torah back to the Israelites in Jerusalem is what he's known for, that's the legacy he left us; that was his pre-ordained destiny.
- When Nehemiah left to rebuild the wall, that was his destiny.
- When the Israelites crossed the Jordan into Canaan, that was the destiny Yehovah had desired for them from the beginning, when he promised that land to Abraham.

Think about the spiritual implications for us: It's during this month that Yehovah brought us out of bondage for our destiny of redemption and abundant life under his rule and lordship.

- The tabernacle was Yehovah's dwelling place on earth. Moses' assembling of the tabernacle on Abib 1 was the time in which Yehovah's presence came to dwell on earth.
- If Yeshua's birth was on Abib 1, his presence again came to dwell with us on earth at this time.

This speaks of our destiny – dwelling with him on earth during the Millennium and dwelling with him eternally after that.

- Yeshua’s resurrection from the dead three days after Passover, is on Abib 17, the Feast of Firstfruits. [1 Corinthians 15:20-22](#) tells us, “*But now Yeshua has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep... so also in Yeshua all will be made alive.*”

This is our destiny – resurrection from the dead.

Abib is a time when we move closer to our destiny – moving out of bondage, dwelling with Yehovah spiritually. It’s a time when milestones are reached that bring us a step closer to our destiny.

**Summing up the theme of The Abib**, we have:

1. The idea of moving from one place to another by the supernatural hand of Yehovah.
2. The unrighteous becoming ripe for punishment and the righteous ripe to step into their future.
3. Moving toward our destiny.

But so far all of this is just information. What do we do with it? Now that we know what season we’re in, how can we use it to continue to conform to the image of Yeshua?

### **What is our role in all this?**

As Nisan approaches and we look forward to the New Year (Nisan 1), Passover (Nisan 14), and the beginning of the Spring Feasts, how do we participate with Yehovah in the process?

It starts in Adar. The month before Abib is Adar (the Babylonian name), the last month on the Hebrew calendar. In the month of Adar, the barley is inspected to see how far along it is in the growth process. If the experts find that the barley will not be ripe by Abib (Nisan), we add another month to the end of the year. It’s called Adar 2. This is called “Shanah Me’uberet” - a leap year on the Hebrew calendar. On leap years, we have Adar 1 and Adar 2 – 13 months.

When they inspect the barley in Adar, if the barley isn’t far enough along in its growth, the next month will not be called Abib, and the new year will not begin. How can you call a month Abib – meaning the barley is ripe - if the barley is not ripe? Abib is not

just the name of a month, it’s a description of the barley’s progress and a season.

This teaches us that we also will not be moved toward our destiny until we are abib – ripe, ready. Yehovah will add another month, another year, maybe several. The first generation of Israelites in the wilderness weren’t abib to enter the Promised land, so they missed out altogether. Forty years later – during the abib – the second generation of Israelites were ripe to take the land.

So how do we prepare ourselves for our destiny? We may not even know what it is?

### **The Process of Becoming Abib**

The short answer is obedience – listen, guard, keep and do his instructions ([Deuteronomy 7:11-16](#)). Our preparation for the future is in Yehovah’s hands. Only he knows what’s ahead. If we want to be ready for our future, we have to hear and obey his leading.

This includes keeping ourselves holy. Holiness is a joint effort - some of it we are responsible for; some of it Yehovah does for us.

Leviticus 11:45 “*For I am Yehovah who brought you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God; you shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.*”

There’s an example of this among the events that took place in the month of Abib. In [Exodus 40](#) when Moses was commanded to set up the tabernacle on the first day of Abib, He was also told to consecrate Aaron and his sons for the priesthood. How Yehovah consecrates Aaron and his sons is an example of how we cooperate with Yehovah in maintaining our holiness and preparing for our destiny.

Leviticus 8 describes this consecration. ([Read the whole chapter.](#)) As you read the following passage, consider all the parallels to Passover:

Leviticus 8:30-36 “*Then Moses took some of the anointing oil and of the blood which was on the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron and his garments, and also upon his sons and his sons’ garments; so he consecrated Aaron and his garments, and his sons and his sons’ garments with him. And Moses said to Aaron and his sons, “Boil the flesh at the door of the tent of meeting, and there eat it and the [unleavened] bread that is in the basket of ordination offerings, as I commanded, saying, ‘Aaron and his sons shall eat it’;*

*and what remains of the flesh and the bread you shall burn with fire. And you shall not go out from the door of the tent of meeting for seven days, until the days of your ordination are completed, for it will take seven days to ordain you. As has been done today, the Lord has commanded to be done to make atonement for you. At the door of the tent of meeting you shall remain day and night for seven days, performing what the Lord has charged, lest you die; for so I am commanded.” And Aaron and his sons did all the things which the Lord commanded by Moses.”*

Here we have Aaron and his sons sitting at the door of the tent of meeting with the blood of the lamb on their bodies and clothing, eating the lamb that has atoned for them with unleavened bread, burning up whatever they cannot eat and not leaving the tabernacle, so that they will not die.

This is what the Israelites did one year earlier on Passover (see [Exodus 12](#)). They ate the lamb that saved their lives, with unleavened bread. They burned up whatever they could not eat. They stayed inside their houses. Except now the blood is on the people instead of just the doorway. This is personal. Aaron and his sons are becoming the “doorway” between Yehovah and man. They are carrying the blood of the Lamb every day, so that the people will not die in Yehovah’s presence. This is such a powerful physical representation of Yeshua’s priesthood.

This consecration went on for seven days.

### **Our Seven Days of Consecration**

What if we were to sit in Yehovah’s presence for seven days, like Aaron did? Would he consecrate us? Would we progress in becoming Abib – ready to move toward our destiny?

I do this at least once a year – spend every morning for seven days sitting in Yehovah’s presence. I look forward to this time and wish I had seven full days, like Aaron did. I eat unleavened bread as Aaron did, and imagine how it must have been sitting at the doorway of the tent of meeting.

I retrace where all the various [furniture pieces](#) are (the ark, the altar of incense, the table of showbread, the menorah, the brass laver and the brazen altar). I think about what Moses would have been doing in the tabernacle each day (keeping oil in the menorah, sacrificing the burnt offering each day, [replacing the showbread](#) on the Sabbath.) I try to consider what

Aaron’s experience may have been – the [priestly garments](#) he’s wearing, his sons, his anticipation of what it will mean to be a priest. Was there manna on the ground every morning even in the tabernacle? What would it have been like as the pillar of cloud transformed into fire [every evening](#)? It’s an exciting place to ponder.

After I did this the first time, I was surprised at the outcome. Each year is a little different in terms of what Yehovah reveals about himself, about his Son Yeshua and about me. It’s a powerful way to overlay our understanding of the priesthood today onto its original, literal picture. It’s one way we ourselves can be consecrated for our priesthood as we separate ourselves and focus on Yehovah and his word.

Spending time in Yehovah’s presence for the purpose of just letting him -- asking him -- to consecrate you is one of the ways we can participate in becoming Abib for our destiny. I encourage you to set aside a period of time to sit in his presence.

### **Abib for the Spring Feasts**

Preparing ourselves for the new year, Passover, our Passover Lamb, and Firstfruits - that’s what this season is about. Yehovah called the month Abib and tells us over and over to observe this month and tell the Exodus story, because it signifies everything he wants us to focus on: moving from one dwelling place to another by Yehovah’s supernatural hand.

- First, the Exodus – a physical relocation,
- Then, from sin to righteousness – a spiritual relocation,
- And soon, from mortal to immortal – our eternal dwelling place.

It’s a time of separating ourselves from unrighteousness in preparation for the “[winnower’s fork](#)” separating the chaff from the wheat. It’s a time of our cooperating with the Holy Spirit’s leading in becoming abib, just like the barley – ripe for our destiny.