

# Shevat – A Month of Preparation for the New Year

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**T**he Hebrew year has 12 months (13 in a leap year). A Hebrew month starts when the first sliver of the new moon can be seen on the horizon just after sunset. The month of Shevat usually begins in January on the Gregorian calendar. It is the 11<sup>th</sup> month of the year. So we're just about through the whole year at this point.

I want to set the context for this month by looking at the new year coming up on the Hebrew calendar, so we can see where we're headed.

On the Gregorian calendar, the new year begins in the dead of winter. It can be a morale lift if we've gone through a hard year, or need to begin some new habits, or set new goals, etc. But January doesn't start a whole new season, per se.

However, on the Hebrew calendar, the new year begins in Nisan (typically in March & April) and it starts a whole new season – both spiritually and in the natural. It is a time of new life on the earth – specifically life from the dead. Crops spring out of ground that's been cold and hard for months. Baby animals who've been in the womb for months are born in the spring. All of nature comes to life again. Passover and the Exodus happens in Nisan – a new life began for the Israelites after 400 years in bondage. Remember, the Israelites crossed the Jordan in Nisan, beginning their new life in the Promised Land after 40 years in the desert. And of course, Yeshua was resurrected from the dead in Nisan (The Feast of First Fruits).

That's what we're building up to – a new life in a new year. We have just one more month to go (or two in a leap year – 2019 is a leap year).

This month, the month of Shevat is when we look back and take stock, a time to remember where we've come from. We reset our minds on Jehovah's ways and recommit to walking in his blessing.

Numbers 10:10:

*“Also on your days of rejoicing, at your designated times and on Rosh-Hodesh (the head of the month), you are to sound the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; these will be your reminder before your God. I am Adonai your God.”*

## Following the Pattern of Shevat

We see this in the Torah. Before the Israelites crossed the Jordan, Moses reminded them of their journey over the last 40 years, and recounted the Torah to them, explaining the blessings if they followed it and the curses if they didn't. This is what they were going to need to succeed in the Promised Land – to know and keep the Torah.

Moses begins his speech on the first day of Shevat. [Deuteronomy 1:1-3](#) tells us:

*“These are the words that Moses spoke to all Israel beyond the Jordan in the wilderness..., in the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month, Moses spoke to the children of Israel... Across the Jordan in the land of Moab, Moses undertook to expound this law.”*

At the end of Deuteronomy Moses dies and the people mourn him for 30 days. That's next month. Then the scouts are sent into Jericho and we have the story of Rehab. Then [Joshua 4:19](#) tells us:

*“The people came up out of the Jordan on the 10th day of the first month and camped at Gilgal, by the eastern boundary of Jericho.”*

So Moses starts his speech on Shevat 1, and by Nisan 10, the Israelites have crossed the Jordan and have Passover in the Promised Land.

## Prepare for New Life

So that's the journey we're beginning in Shevat.

This is a month to take stock of what we've learned so far. We remember where we've come from. We reset our minds on Jehovah's ways and recommit to walking in obedience and in his blessing. This prepares us for the new life that begins in the new year coming in Nisan/April.