

**A**s discussed last month, 2019 is a leap year on the Hebrew calendar, it has 13 months. The 13<sup>th</sup> month is called Adar II. Here's why and how:

The Hebrew calendar is based on a lunar month and has just 354 days in a year (vs. the Gregorian calendar, which has 365 days). An extra month is added to the end of the Hebrew calendar every 2-3 years in order to keep the beginning of the year on Nisan 1, as commanded in Exodus 12:2. How do we determine what day Nisan will begin? Nisan begins when the sliver of the new moon can be sighted after the barley becomes ripe for harvesting in Israel. If the barley will not be ripe enough to make a wave offering at the Feast of Firstfruits, as commanded in Leviticus 23:11, then Nisan is put off a month, and a second month of Adar is added. Adding a leap year ensures that both of these commandments are kept, and that we continue to keep in season with Yehovah's timing.

Last month I discussed how this process relates to our own ripening for harvest in time for Passover, the Feast of Firstfruits and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which all take place in the following month of Nisan. By the end of Adar -- the end of the year -- the seeds that have been planted earlier in the year are ready to be harvested. Then, in the month of Nisan, the fruit of those seeds is transformed into solid food that sustains us and those around us.

Interestingly, a thirteenth month is not referred to anywhere in the Bible. However, some have calculated it from the dates given in one of Ezekiel's accounts of lying on his side for 430 days in Ezekiel 4.

On the other hand, the month of Adar or the 12<sup>th</sup> month, is mentioned eight times in scripture. I'd like to focus on aspects of Adar that become evident in looking at these scriptures.

- Two passages, 2 Kings 25:27 and Jeremiah 52:31, both depict Jehoiachin's release from prison in the 12<sup>th</sup> month:
 

*"Now it came about in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he became king, released Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison;"*
- Four passages in the book of Esther reference the 12<sup>th</sup> month:
  1. The month the Persians stopped casting lots to determine the day they would exterminate the Jews (Esther 3:7)
  2. The 13<sup>th</sup> day of Adar is chosen to exterminate the Jews (Esther 3:13)
  3. The king amends his decree to allow the Jews to defend themselves on the 13<sup>th</sup> of Adar (Esther 8:12)
  4. The 13<sup>th</sup> of Adar arrives, Esther 9:1-2:
 

*"The time approached for the king's order and decree to be carried out, the day when the enemies of the Jews hoped to overpower them. But, as it turned out, the opposite took place — the Jews overpowered those who hated them. Thus, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, the Jews assembled in their*

*cities throughout all the provinces of King Achashverosh to attack anyone who tried to do them harm; and no one was able to withstand them; because all the peoples were afraid of them."*

- One chapter of Ezekiel references two prophecies in the 12<sup>th</sup> month:
  1. Ezekiel 32:1-16:
 

*In the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, on the first of the month, the word of the LORD came to me saying, <sup>2</sup> "Son of man, take up a lamentation over Pharaoh king of Egypt and say to him, 'You compared yourself to a young lion of the nations, yet you are like the monster in the seas; and you burst forth in your rivers and muddied the waters with your feet and fouled their rivers.'" Thus says the Lord GOD, "Now I will spread My net over you with a company of many peoples, and they shall lift you up in My net.*
  2. Ezekiel 32:17-32:
 

*On the fifteenth day of the month in the twelfth year, the word of Adonai came to me... <sup>32</sup> "Though I instilled a terror of him in the land of the living, yet he will be made to lie down among the uncircumcised along with those slain by the sword, even Pharaoh and all his hordes," declares the Lord GOD.*

What stands out to me is the reversal of fortunes in each account:

- On Adar 27, the king decides to let Jehoiachin, king of Judah, out of prison.
- On Adar 13, the Persians are planning to exterminate the Jews, but are overpowered by them instead.
- On Adar 1 and again on Adar 15, Yehovah proclaims that Egypt will be overthrown, despite its fearsome reputation.

Some well-known scriptures come to mind that underscore this theme:

- Genesis 50:20: Joseph reassures his brothers after the death of their father, *"As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result..."*
- Romans 8:28: *"And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."*

We know this to be one of the ways Yehovah works in history and in our lives. Maybe this is that month - the month where physically insurmountable obstacles receive supernatural attention. Where could you use a reversal of fortune? Maybe it's in a relationship, a personal weakness, an oppressive situation, or a situation in which you've given up hope. Take heart, resubmit it to Yehovah this month, remind him of his miraculous deeds to Jehoiachin, Esther and Israel, and have faith that he can do the same for you. Take the attitude of Joseph and look for the good that has resulted from evil that has come to you. And make certain you are walking according to Yehovah's purposes, so these things can be supernaturally used by Him.