The Biblical Calendar

HIGH-LEVEL STUDY GUIDE

Finding the Ancient Path

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UM4GYJvcBo4

Designed to align with the supplied transcript and companion presentation.

Teaching Summary

In this live conversation, FTAP host Ed and guest Dr. Douglas Hamp compare several approaches to the biblical calendar. Ed outlines the observational Aviv calendar, the 364-day Zadok calendar, and the calculated Hillel II calendar, noting the Enochian calendar as another proposal. Ed views the Aviv method as closest to his understanding of the Torah but questions who has authority to certify observations today. Hamp favors Hillel II as a practical common calendar for dispersed communities and emphasizes continuity, predictability, and unity. They also address the recurring seventh-day Sabbath, evidence from Yeshua and the apostles, the limitations of Qumran evidence, and the importance of pursuing love and humility rather than dividing over unresolved calendar questions.

Key Scriptures

- Genesis 1:14-19 - The heavenly lights serve for signs, seasons, days, and years; compare calendar claims with this passage.
- Genesis 2:2-3 - The seventh day is blessed and set apart; the discussion uses this as a basis for a recurring Sabbath.
- Exodus 12:1-6 - Israel is instructed concerning the first month and the Passover lamb on the fourteenth day.
- Exodus 13:4 - The departure from Egypt is associated with the month of Aviv.
- Exodus 23:14-17 - The pilgrimage feasts are established in connection with Israel’s worship and seasons.
- Leviticus 23:1-44 - The appointed times are presented, including Sabbath and annual feasts.
- Deuteronomy 16:1 - Israel is instructed to observe the month of Aviv and keep Passover.
- Psalm 104:19 - The moon is described as appointed for seasons; consider how this passage is used in calendar discussions.
- Matthew 12:9-12 - Yeshua disputes permissible Sabbath activity, a distinction the guest emphasizes.
- Luke 22:7-15 - Yeshua observes Passover with His disciples.
- Acts 20:16 - Paul plans travel in relation to Pentecost.
- Acts 18:21 - Some translations include a reference to an upcoming feast; check textual variants before using as a proof text.
- Revelation 2:1-7 - The message to Ephesus warns that doctrinal diligence does not replace first love.

- Matthew 22:36-40 - Loving God and neighbor is presented as foundational.

Key Takeaways

- Calendar observance is significant because Scripture names appointed times, yet the conversation distinguishes the scriptural commands from proposed methods of modern calculation.
- Ed describes the Aviv method as tied to barley and lunar observations, while acknowledging modern questions of calendar authority and regional agreement.
- The Zadok/Enochian proposals involve fixed 364-day systems; both speakers question whether the Qumran materials establish a binding calendar.
- Dr. Hamp advocates Hillel II for its predictability and its usefulness for communities dispersed across many locations.
- The speakers distinguish the ongoing seven-day Sabbath from proposals to reset the Sabbath by lunar month.
- Yeshua's and the apostles' participation in the Jewish festival cycle is discussed as relevant evidence, but it does not itself establish the later Hillel II calculation system.
- Both speakers urge humility and fellowship, warning against treating a disputed calendar position as a measure of someone's salvation.

Study Outline

1. Calendar Approaches

- Compare observational Aviv, calculated Hillel II, and 364-day Zadok/Enochian proposals.
- Distinguish descriptions in the presentation from claims established directly by biblical text.

2. Observations and Authority

- Examine barley and moon observation versus mathematical forecasting.
- Ask who has authority to announce the beginning of a month or year.

3. Unity and Diaspora

- Explore Hamp's reasons for supporting a predictable shared calendar.
- Consider how differing feast dates affect participation in community gatherings.

4. Yeshua, Sabbath, and Feasts

- Read the Sabbath creation account and Yeshua's interactions concerning Sabbath practice.
- Separate first-century observance from later calendar calculations.

5. Evidentiary Limits

- Consider what Qumran writings can illuminate without treating every manuscript as authoritative.
- Discuss why the speakers reject the lunar-reset Sabbath approach.

6. Love in Disputed Matters

- Reflect on Revelation 2 and the command to love God and neighbor.
- Respond charitably when other believers arrive at different calendar conclusions.

Discussion & Reflection

1. Which calendar systems are compared in the teaching?

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2. How does Ed describe the Aviv calendar?

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3. What is the main difference between an observational calendar and Hillel II?

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4. Why does Dr. Hamp favor the Hillel II calendar?

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5. Why is the question of calendar authority important in the discussion?

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6. How are the Zadok and Enochian calendars treated?

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7. What argument is raised against a lunar-reset Sabbath?

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8. Does Yeshua's first-century observance demonstrate that He used Hillel II?

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9. What is the significance of Paul's travel around the feasts?

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10. How should calendar disagreements affect fellowship?

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11. Is choosing the correct calendar presented as a test of salvation?

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12. What study approach does this conversation encourage?

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Personal Application

What would you need to research before adopting a calendar position?

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How can your congregation remain loving and unified amid disagreement?

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Prayer focus: Wisdom, humility, love, discernment, and respect for other believers.