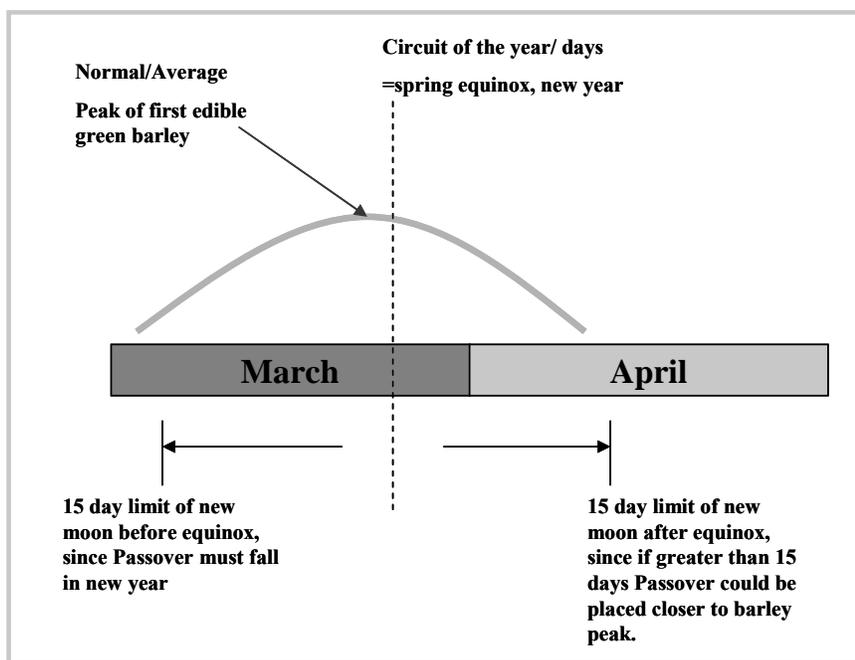


- (4) Denying the Gen. 1:14 role of the sun as a 'sign' for the year.
 (5) Ignoring the fact that tequfah 'circuit' is associated with the sun and not the moon (Psalm 19:5-6).

- (6) Saying the equinox is pagan when it is merely an astronomical event like the new moon.

Figure 33: The Peak of Aviv



By arguing that their interpretation of 'observe the month of the aviv' is more literal than ours, which it is not, because we do use the aviv to help define 'first month' the Karaites introduce non-literal interpretations elsewhere, e.g. 'the year,' and 'circuit,; also they are forced to introduce arbitrary definitions of what 'aviv is,' contradicting the precept not to 'delay the firstfruits'; they interpret 'month' in Deut. 16:1 as 'new moon' when the context shows it means 'month,' and so the requirement to find 'aviv' before the new moon is also arbitrary, and not literal. In addition, they suggest that Israel looked for barley in the wilderness and in sabbatical years, when the precept says 'when ye enter the land and reap,' when they have to change the criteria on what aviv is, from percentages to finding a few volunteer stalks. And they do all this despite the existence of an equally literal alternative interpretation of 'Guard the month of the Aviv" which allows us to interpret the other passages literally.

Furthermore, setting the calendar by barley that appears out of its normal time due to bad weather, cold, or droughts, results in an arbitrary and disorderly calendar, which creates economic hardships, and ruins many plans that cannot be made on two weeks notice.⁶

Ezra 8:31

⁶ I support the search for the Aviv, as this is a sign of God's blessing when it comes in season, and is necessary for the wave offering in the Temple. Furthermore, I think more observations could help us extend the statistical database of years in which Aviv normally appears before the equinox.

If Ezra 8:31, "on the twelfth day of the first month" was in 398 then it would date to Friday 4/16. But it more likely dates to Tuesday 4/4 in 397 B.C. It is unlikely that such a large journey would be planned to commence on the eve of the Sabbath. The Tuesday date makes considerably more sense. It allows the people to assemble at the departure point with a reasonable window of time to arrive, and allows 4 days to travel before they have to stop for the Sabbath.

This, then, is further evidence that the Tishri based year was being used. The year shaded blue is the Tishri equivalent of the 7th year of Artaxerxes (see charts).

This means that Ezra's reforms carry into the next Tishri year, which is exactly 49 years (7x7) from the building of the walls. And in this 49 years contain exactly 7 sabbatical years.

The first month on the biblical calendar in 397 begins just before the spring equinox. If the year were to be postponed here, in accord with methods in Babylon, then the departure date would change to Thursday 5/4. This argues against the assumption that they were using the local intercalation of the year, and that along with preserving the Tishri year, they were preserving the biblical method of intercalation.

We can see, however, that they did this without any knowledge of the first month from Jerusalem, because it took more than a month for any news to arrive. We can deduce from the use of the Tishri year that the biblical method of intercalation was also used, in which 'first of the months of the year' (Exodus 12:2) meant the first month with the majority of its days in the new year, as defined by the sun at the equinox.