BIBLICAL TIME
Isaiah 66:22-23 - “For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me,” says the LORD. “So shall your descendants and your name remain. And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me,” says the LORD.

The sun divided the day from night, establishing a biblical day. But the moon provided the division of the month—one new moon to the next equaled one lunar, biblical month. As the moon waned, ending one month, the children of Israel looked for the New Moon—and once sighted, a new month began.

The prophet hints that this is how God will calculate months in His kingdom to come.

Genesis 1:14 Then God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years

It is most probable that in Gen 1:14, where "seasons" the reference is to the sacred seasons as fixed by the moon's appearance; and so he made the moon for sacred seasons (Brown, Driver, Briggs, Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977, 417).

PURPOSE IN TIME
Ecclesiastes 3:1 - "To everything there is a season,
A time for every purpose under heaven:

The two operative words in Eccl 3:1 are:
- יָמִים (zeman) = appointed time as per Neh 2:6, Est 9:27, 31, Eccl 3:1. [These are the only four places the word occurs] Always the meaning is "appointed time", or "definite time". This may refer to a date (Est 9:27, 31) or a starting time, or a duration (Neh 2:6), etc.
- יָמִים (eth) = appointed time, season, time, period, etc. It occurs much more often and the meaning overlaps with the above word. Many times they are direct synonyms.
Eccl 3:1 uses these two words in synthetic chiastic parallelism as follows (my literal translation):

- To everything an appointed time
- A time for every purpose under heaven

Therefore, time is defined by purpose and purpose is manifested in time.

THEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR FESTIVALS

- (a) Two theological elements can be traced in all of them: the grateful and joyous commemoration of the redemptive acts of God, and care for the poor and the needy (ISBE 2:295; Wilms, 42–45). According to Cox (21), “The festival breaks through the routine and opens man to the past, it widens his experience and reduces his provincialism.” Religious feasts were the reenactment of God’s salvific events in the past (esp. the Exodus). They had a distinct educational value in nurturing succeeding generations in the faith. The feast became the recurring reminder that God can also determine the present circumstances of everyday reality (Otto, 44).

- (b) The feasts were instituted not only to maintain community between God and Israel, but also to reestablish community among Israelites themselves by taking care of the widows and orphans (Vriezen, 284, 320). Deuteronomy in particular is concerned with the needs of the poor, which were to be addressed in the creation of solidarity among all Israel during the commemoration of a feast (Deut 16:11, 14).

- (c) The increase in the importance of the temple and priesthood in Jerusalem (esp. with the reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah) led to a concentration on the outward performance of festivals, sacrifices, and fasting (Isa 1:14–15; 58:3–5; Amos 5:21; Eichrodt, 1:47). Modern theological interpretation of the OT festivals should be aware of the ongoing danger of degrading religious feasts to a level of superficial adherence.

EXODUS 12:1-13

1 Now the LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, 2 “This month is the beginning of months for you; it shall be the first month of your year.

3 Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man must select a lamb for his family, one per household. 4 If the household is too small for a whole lamb, they are to share with the nearest neighbor based on the number of people, and apportion the lamb accordingly.
5 Your lamb must be an unblemished year-old male, and you may take it from the sheep or the goats. 6 You must keep it until the fourteenth day of the month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel will slaughter the animals at twilight. 7 They are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the door frames of the houses where they eat the lambs.

8 They are to eat the meat that night, roasted over the fire, along with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

9 Do not eat any of the meat raw or cooked in boiling water, but only roasted over the fire—its head and legs and inner parts. 10 Do not leave any of it until morning; before the morning you must burn up any part that is left over.

11 This is how you are to eat it: You must be fully dressed for travel, with your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. You are to eat in haste; it is the LORD’s Passover.

12 On that night I will pass through the land of Egypt and strike down every firstborn male, both man and beast, and I will execute judgment against all the gods of Egypt. I am the LORD. 13 The blood on the houses where you are staying will distinguish them; when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No plague will fall on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

**NUMBERS 9:1-4**

1 In the first month of the second year after Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, the LORD spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai: 2 “The Israelites are to observe the Passover at its appointed time. 3 You are to observe it at the appointed time, at twilight on the fourteenth day of this month, in accordance with its statutes and ordinances.”

4 So Moses told the Israelites to observe the Passover, and they did so in the Wilderness of Sinai, at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. The Israelites did everything just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

**RENEWAL IMPLIES RELEASE AND REVELATION**

Exodus 12:2 indicates God numbered the months based on when Israel was released from captivity in Egypt, the very first Passover: “This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.” It was the Hebrew month Abib—roughly our March/April.
Nahum Sarna writes in the JPS Torah Commentary that God did so as a stark visual—Israel would be starting a new order of life dominated by the consciousness of God's active presence in history: “The entire religious calendar of Israel is henceforth to reflect this reality by numbering the months of the year from the month of the Exodus.”

**The implication of time would be connected to the intentionality of purpose.**

### THE TIME OF PREPARATION AND PERCEPTION FOR THE SEASON

1. **Households -** According to the house of their fathers. Literally, "for a father's house," i.e. for a family. Exodus 12:3
2. **Community -** Let him and his neighbor take it according to the number of the souls. If there were a household of only five, which could not possibly consume the lamb, any large neighboring family was to send five or six of its number, to make up the deficiency.
3. **Inspection -** Ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day. The interval of four days (see ver. 3) was probably intended to give ample time for the thorough inspection of the lamb, and for obtaining another, if any defect was discovered.
4. **Priestly functions of prayer and reconciliation -** The whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it. One of the main peculiarities of the Paschal sacrifice was this - that the head of each family was entitled - in the early times was required to offer the sacrifice for himself.
   a. In it no one intervened between the individual and God. Thus, it was recognized that the whole nation was a nation of priests, as are Christians also, according to St. John (Revelation 1:6) and St. Peter (1 Peter 2:5).
5. **Divine Doors Protected –** And strike. The “striking” was to be by means of a bunch of hyssop dipped into the blood (ver. 22). The selection of the doorway as the part of the house to receive the stains of blood is probably to be connected with the idea that the secondary agency producing death, whatever it was, would enter by the door – and if the door showed the house to have been atoned for, would not enter.
6. **Expectation of movement and divine direction -** With your loins girded, etc. Completely prepared, i.e., to start on your journey - with the loose wrapper (beged), ordinarily worn, collected together and fastened by a girdle about the waist; with sandals on the feet, which were not commonly worn in houses; and with walking-sticks in the hand.
7. **Timeliness and consumption -** You shall eat it in haste. As not knowing at what moment you may be summoned to start on your journey, and as having to see to the burning of the bones after the flesh was eaten, which would take some time. Timeliness of what you consume is critical in this season.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

Your generosity is positively changing lives in our church, community, and around the world. Apostle Paul reminds us in 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 that whoever sows sparingly will reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will reap generously. Thank you for continuing to help others see the generous nature of the body of Christ through your giving.

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