

Greetings friends!

Chodesh **12** has come!

I recall how long and cold winter seemed to be when I was young. Living in the Eastern states the cold would be bitter and could chill a person all the way to the bone as we would say. The snow would crunch under our rubber buckle up over shoes and the air would cause tears to form in our eyes as we walked through it. Crisp weather it was called. The over shoes were good for keeping your feet dry and for traction but folks knew it would take two pairs of socks to keep your feet warm. The long-johns were an itchy last resort, but sometimes necessary just to keep warm.



Then the weather would tease us with an early Spring like storm, a freezing drizzle during the day only to turn to ice at night. The next day would be cold again and glittering from the ice on the tree limbs and power lines. Long ice cycles hung from the rain

gutters and a walk to the curb to meet the school bus was an exciting and sometimes bruising experience.

We were almost expectant that warmer temperatures would eventually come and the cold days and long nights of winter would fade away to the more balmy and hopeful days of planting season. Then burning fence rows and drainage ditches would somehow fill the air with an excitement along with the pungent aroma of burning wood and unwanted weeds. Hot beds prepared for seedlings would be covered with thin frost proofing linen and fields were beginning to show their color as the fresh dirt will have just been turned before it was made flat again by discs.

Meanwhile, the weather of the season was ever changing to meet its appointment with the terra to quench the thirst of all the freshly sown seeds of the fields. Early planting and crop season was near upon us. All knew it was only a matter of weeks, perhaps days, before that last killing frost passed and the seasons were officially renewed. Our constant reminder, for the moment however, was the nights still freezing grip upon the grasses and the absence of the buds upon the trees, the frost and a thin layer of ice at the edges of the creek. Oh well, we would say then, Spring's not that far away.

The dynamics of the transition from Winter to Spring season is quite a time for all the earth and its inhabitants. All mankind as well as the creation on Earth depend upon its arrival. Much history with mankind has occurred during this particular season. There has also been much fiction and science written to further purport manmade myths and legends about this season and its characteristics. One such is signified by the now internationally known Americana tradition of observing the shadow of Phil the groundhog on February 2nd in Punxsutawney, PA. More on that later.

But for our purpose we offer current data of the biblical calendar within it's season so that we may know "who's house we abide in". That is yet another months topic and we first need to present to you this month info. So first, **the data**.

The data:

On **February 2, 2003** at about 6:30 PM Jerusalem, Israel should see new moon **12** with a 1-2% illumination. Around the globe that same day the new moon should appear at about 6:30 PM - Western USA time. The new moon will have about a 2-3% illumination by the time it becomes visible in the Western States. It will be visible just after sunset at most location throughout the USA the evening of **February 2**.

Note that the date shown above in the right box of the banner. I've displayed the daytime date as opposed to the preceding days date for the new moon sighting. The first DAY is best represented by naming the daytime date which started [by biblical definition] at sunset the evening before. I'm just trying to be numerically correct as opposed to say, stating the year of "0". There really wasn't any year "0"; the year was either -1 or +1 at all times.

This chodesh **12** begins Biblical calendar month "eleven". Why is it month 12 and not 11 or 13? For answers to this question and more please see a helpful bible study titled [Calendar Studies - Abib](#). A complete booklet with answers to all your biblical calendar questions may be found at "[The Sacred Calendar Book](#)", <http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/sbs777/saccal/calbook/index.html>

Data this month is also from [Home Planet for Windows](#) and [Ephemeris vs. 2.0](#) software for Windows operating systems. These are free software packages and are available free for download at: <http://www.fourmilab.ch/>

Actual new moon sightings list for the last 2-3 years dates can be seen at the monthly new moon chart at: *Calendar Info* <http://home.earthlink.net/~dwlacey/faq/calendar/nmcalchart.html>

Names of the Month

February -- month of Februa

Middle English *Februarius*

Latin *Februarius* "of Februa"

Latin *Februa(s)* "Februa" + *-arius* "ary (pertaining to)"

Latin *Februarius mensis* "month of Februa"

Latin *dies februatus* "day of purification"

Februarius had 28 days, until circa 450 BC when it had 23 or 24 days on some of every second year, until Julius when it had 29 days on every fourth year and 28 days otherwise.

Februa is the Roman festival of purification, held on February fifteenth. It is possibly of Sabine origin.

Intercalaris -- inter-calendar month

Latin *Intercalaris* "inter-calendar"

Latin *Mercedonius* (popular name) "?"

Intercalaris had 27 days until the month was abolished by Julius.

The Jewish calendar month

[Strong's Hebrew 2320](#) - **chodesh** kho'-desh from 2318; the new moon; by implication, a month:--month(-ly), new moon; and Abib means green ears of grain. The *biblical calendar* month is similar to the Jewish calendar moon [month]:

Month	Weather	Crops & activity
Adar (אר) 	Spring rains	Almond in bloom / flax harvest
The civil month 6 [twelfth of the ecclesiastical year], Adar, was also named in the scriptures.		
12 Adar	Esther 8:12	Fire/twelfth
Est 8:12 Upon one day in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, <i>namely</i> , upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar.		



From **Strong's** Dictionary

H143

אָדָר 'adar

ad-awr'

Probably of foreign derivation; perhaps meaning *fire*; Adar, the H12 th Hebrew month: - Adar.

From **Easton's Dictionary**

Adar- large, the sixth month of the civil and the twelfth of the ecclesiastical year of the Jews ([Est 3:7](#),[Est 3:13](#);[Est 8:12](#);[Est 9:1](#),[Est 9:15](#),[Est 9:17](#),[Est 9:19](#),[Est 9:21](#)). It included the days extending from the new moon of our March to the new moon of April. The name was first used after the Captivity. When the season was backward, and the lambs not yet of a paschal size, or the barley not forward enough for abib, then a month called Veadar, i.e., a second Adar, was intercalated.

From **Geneva Bible**

Est 8:12 - Upon one day in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, [namely], upon the thirteenth [day] of the twelfth month, which [is] the month ⁽ⁱ⁾ Adar.

⁽ⁱ⁾ Which has part of February and part of March.

[Note: Most common Roman month references are NOT correct per biblical calendar - see [tefukah](#)]

Note from the author: The differences of the traditional Hebrew calendar, the Biblical and the Roman calendars reveal much regarding the histories and customs of their respective authors. We today use the civil Roman calendar for our commerce and governments with almost global acceptance. However, for the Bible student it should be noted that there are several factions among each of the faiths thus the sometimes confusing and differing names of the months, seasons, beginning of years including sometimes even the [Holy Days](#).

For further reading see ["The Sacred Calendar Book"](#).

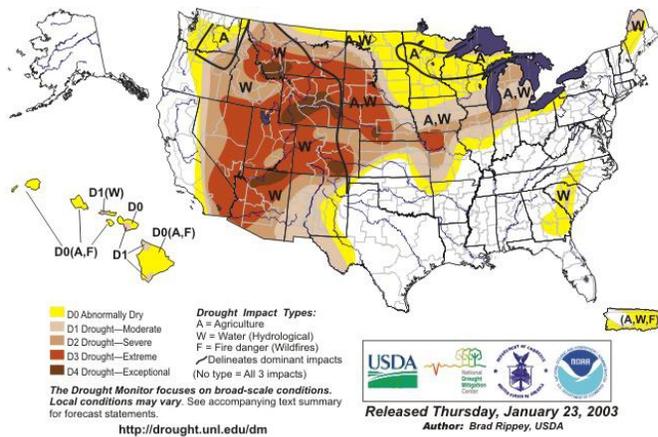
The birthstone for the month of February is the **amethyst**, the color is **purple**, the flower is the **Violet**-meaning **Faithfulness**.



Drought Info:

Here is a graphic of the current drought as given from NOAA and the others whom comprise the **Drought Monitor**:

U.S. Drought Monitor January 21, 2003 Valid 7 a.m. EST



Holidays

Note: Some Holidays are only applicable on a given "day of the week"

US : Groundhog Day (To ski or not to ski)

Switzerland : Homstrom-celebrates end of winter
----- (**Sunday**)

Religious Observances

Anglican, Roman Catholic, Lutheran :
Candlemas (Presentation or Purification)

Christian : Feast of St Cornelius

Liechtenstein, Vatican : Candlemas/Feast of Presentation of Jesus

Wicca : Imbolg sabbat

Roman Catholic : Commemoration of St Jeanne de Lestonnac, French foundress

This Day in Christian History

1779 Pioneer American Methodist bishop Francis Asbury reflected in his journal: 'God is gracious beyond the power of language to describe.'

1881 The first formal church youth organization was established in the Williston Congregational Church in Portland, Maine, by the Rev. Francis E. Clark, 29. Originally called "Christian Endeavor," it became the prototype of the modern denominational "youth fellowship."

1907 In a letter written to American statesman William Jennings Bryan, Christian Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy counseled: 'The most important thing is to know the will of God concerning one's life, i.e., to know what he wishes us to do and fulfill it.'

1944 German theologian and Nazi martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote in a letter from prison: 'There is a kind of weakness that Christianity does not hold with, but which people insist on claiming as Christian, and then sling mud at it.'

1955 English apologist C.S. Lewis wrote in a letter: 'It is right...that we should be much concerned about the salvation of those we love. But we must be careful not to...demand that their salvation should conform to

some ready-made pattern of our own.'

Source: William D. Blake. ALMANAC OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1987.

Additional information supplied by the author. Contact via E-mail: [William D. Blake. \(pilgrimwb@aol.com\)](mailto:pilgrimwb@aol.com)

From the **Old Farmers Almanac**

Question: How can we keep groundhogs from eating our vegetable garden?

Answer: In addition to installing an electric fence, there are several solutions. Try feeding them Juicy Fruit gum. Buy several packs and unwrap each stick. Place the sticks in the garden where the groundhogs have been eating. They will eat the gum and go away. Or try sprinkling blood meal or talcum powder around the perimeter of the garden, or planting a line of garlic near the entrance. You could also spray fox, bobcat, or wolf urine (available at garden supply stores) in the garden.

But what I really wanted to ask is ...

Question: How often has the groundhog really predicted the coming of spring?

Answer: According to researchers, over a 60-plus-year period, the groundhog has accurately predicted the coming of spring only 28 percent of the time.

A special insert: **Groundhogs Day information.**

European Roots (Adapted from "Groundhog Day: 1886 to 1992" by Bill Anderson)

Groundhog Day, February 2nd, is a popular tradition in the United States. It is also a legend that traverses centuries, its origins clouded in the mists of time with ethnic cultures and animals awakening on specific dates. Myths such as this tie our present to the distant past when nature did, indeed, influence our lives. It is the day that the Groundhog comes out of his hole after a long winter sleep to look for his shadow.

If he sees it, he regards it as an omen of six more weeks of bad weather and returns to his hole. If the day is cloudy and, hence, shadowless, he takes it as a sign of spring and stays above ground.

The groundhog tradition stems from similar beliefs associated with Candlemas Day and the days of early Christians in Europe, and for centuries the custom was to have the clergy bless candles and distribute them to the people. Even then, it marked a milestone in the winter and the weather that day was important.

According to an old English song:

*If Candlemas be fair and bright,
Come, Winter, have another flight;
If Candlemas brings clouds and rain,
Go Winter, and come not again.*

According to an old Scotch couplet:

*If Candlemas Day is bright and clear,
There'll be twa (two) winters in the year.*

Another variation of the Scottish rhyme:

*If Candlemas day be dry and fair,
The half o' winter to come and mair,
If Candlemas day be wet and foul,
The half of winter's gone at Yule.*

The Roman legions, during the conquest of the northern country, supposedly brought this tradition to the Teutons, or Germans, who picked it up and concluded that if the sun made an appearance on Candlemas Day, an animal, the hedgehog, would cast a shadow, thus predicting six more weeks of bad weather, which they interpolated as the length of the "Second Winter."

Pennsylvania's earliest settlers were Germans and they found groundhogs to in profusion in many parts of the state. They determined that the groundhog, resembling the European hedgehog, was a most intelligent and sensible animal and therefore decided that if the sun did appear on February 2nd, so wise an animal as the groundhog would see its shadow and hurry back into its underground home for another six weeks of winter.

The Germans recited:

*For as the sun shines on Candlemas Day,
So far will the snow swirl until the May.*

This passage may be the one most closely represented by the first Punxsutawney Groundhog Day observances because there were references to the length of shadows in early Groundhog Day predictions.

Another February 2nd belief, used by American 19th century farmers, was:

Groundhog Day - Half your hay.

New England farmers knew that we were not close to the end of winter, no matter how cloudy February 2nd was. Indeed, February 2nd is often the heart of winter. If the farmer didn't have half his hay remaining, there may have been lean times for the cows before spring and fresh grass arrived.

The ancient Candlemas legend and similar belief continue to be recognized annually on February 2nd due to the efforts of the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club.

Growing Fame
Groundhog Day Movie

From offering support of political events, to rooting for area sports teams, to becoming the star of a Hollywood movie, Punxsutawney Phil has increasingly been in the public eye.

Early observances of Phil's predictions were conducted privately in the wooded areas that neighbor the town. Today's celebration sees tens of thousands of visitors from all over the world as revelers await Phil's appearance as most fans wait to see their favorite rock stars.

The Punxsutawney Spirit newspaper is credited with printing the news of the first observance in 1886 (one year before the first legendary trek to Gobbler's Knob): "Today is groundhog day, and up to the time of going to press the beast has not seen his shadow."

Over the course of Phil's appearances, Phil has had numerous noteworthy highlights:



- * During Prohibition Phil threatened to impose 60 weeks of winter on the community if he wasn't allowed a drink.
- * In 1958 Phil announced that it was a "United States Chucknik," rather than a Soviet Sputnik or Muttnik that became the first man-made satellite to orbit Earth.
- * In 1981 Phil wore a yellow ribbon in honor of the American hostages in Iran.
- * Phil traveled to Washington DC in 1986 to meet with President Reagan. He was joined by Groundhog Club President Jim Means, Al Anthony and Bill Null.
- * Phil met Pennsylvania Governor Dick Thornburg in 1987.
- * In 1993, Columbia Pictures released the movie Groundhog Day starring Bill Murray.
- * Phil appeared on the Oprah Winfrey show in 1995.
- * In the years following the release of the movie, record crowds numbering as high as 30,000 have visited Gobbler's Knob in Punxsutawney!



Candlemas

Candlemas' is the Christianized name for the holiday, of course. The older Pagan names were Imbolc and Oimelc. 'Imbolc' means, literally, 'in the belly' (of the Mother). For in the womb of Mother Earth, hidden from our mundane sight but sensed by a keener vision, there are stirrings. The seed that was planted in her womb at the solstice is quickening and the new year grows. 'Oimelc' means 'milk of ewes', for it is also lambing season. The holiday is also called 'Brigit's Day', in honor of the great Irish Goddess Brigit. At her shrine, the ancient Irish capitol of Kildare, a group of 19 priestesses (no men allowed) kept a perpetual flame burning in her honor. Shewas considered a goddess of fire, patroness of smithcraft, poetry and healing (especially the healing touch of midwifery).

- [Daven's Journal - Imbolic](#)

That Explains It!

Topic: **Why do doughnuts have holes?**

The question as to why doughnuts have holes has been raised by dozens of bakers over the years, but most agree that the answer to this sticky question lies in the fact that the interior of these fried cakes would not cook fully without a hole in the center. In short, the consistency of a doughnut lacking a hole would be, quite simply, doughy.

Another riveting theory as to the origin of the bulls eye in the doughnut holds that a sea captain named Hanson Gregory, while manning his post one stormy night, found it impossible both to steer his vessel and to eat his fried cake. Out of sheer frustration, and probably out of hunger, he impaled his cake over one of the spokes of the ship's wheel, thereby creating a finger hold with which to grip the cake. Quite pleased with his ingenuity, Mr. Gregory ordered the galley's cook to fry the cakes in that manner henceforth.

Whatever the reason for the hole in the doughnut, this fried cake, with or without a hole, has been incorporated into the diets of people throughout the world for centuries. In fact, archaeologists found petrified fried cakes with holes amongst the artifacts of a primitive Indian tribe.

Many credit Dutch settlers to America with introducing the non-holed *olykoeks*, or "**oily cakes**," to this

continent, and with their subsequent popularity.

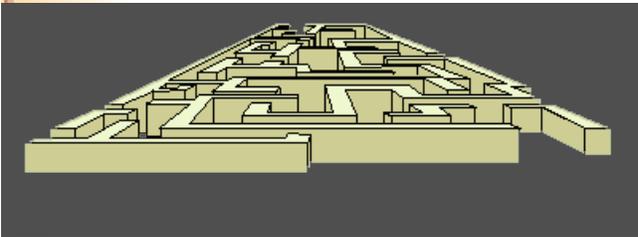
There is no disputing the fact that the fried cake became the rage in New York and in New England, and that before long, it became the specialty of coffee shops. Fried cakes came into their own in 1673, when a self-made New York marketing guru, Anna Joralemon, made their purchase at the market possible.

To this day, doughnuts, in any shape or form, remain married in our minds to coffee and police officers, and are here to stay.

Fast Facts - and Riddles



Ancient Riddles



I "At night they come without being fetched,
And by day they are lost without being stolen."

Hint: They belong to the night.

II "I never was, am always to be,
No one ever saw me, nor ever will
And yet I am the confidence of all
To live and breathe on this terrestrial ball."

Hint: It never comes

III "Runs over fields and woods all day
Under the bed at night sits not alone,
With long tongue hanging out,
A-waiting for a bone."

Hint: It's something very close to you.

IV "The beginning of eternity
The end of time and space
The beginning of every end,
And the end of every place."

Hint: It's in front of you right now.

V "There was a green house.
Inside the green house there was a white house

Inside the white house there was a red house.
Inside the red house there were lots of babies."
Hint: A fruit

(Answers, Backwards:
nolemretaw a; e rettel eht; eohs a; worromot; srats eht)

Signs in the lights of the heavens?

For current biblical calendar information please see the articles [Calendar Info](#) and [Calendar of the Saints II](#).

Further reading of "[The Sacred Calendar Book](#)" can also be seen at:
<http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/sbs777/saccal/calbook/index.html>

Scriptural Reading Study Notes [a mini study]

Pro 6:16 These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him:

Pro 6:17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

Pro 6:18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,

Pro 6:19 A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

From **MHCC** [Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary on the Whole Bible]

Pro 6:12-19 - If the slothful are to be condemned, who do nothing, much more those that do all the ill they can. Observe how such a man is described. He says and does every thing artfully, and with design. His ruin shall come without warning, and without relief. Here is a list of things hateful to God. Those sins are in a special manner provoking to God, which are hurtful to the comfort of human life. These things which God hates, we must hate in ourselves; it is nothing to hate them in others. Let us shun all such practices, and watch and pray against them; and avoid, with marked disapproval, all who are guilty of them, whatever may be their rank.

And finally, some shadowy (and harmless) images ...





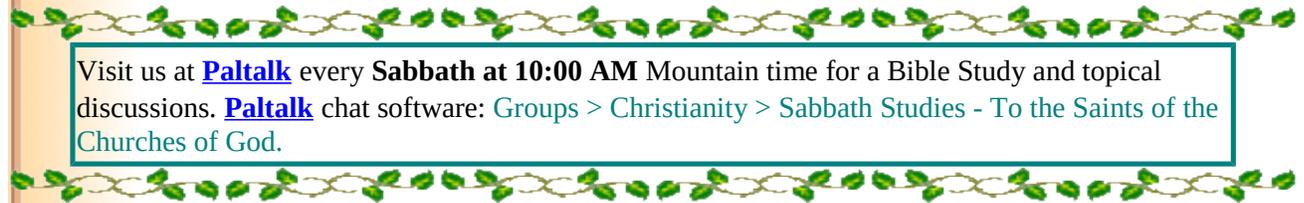
A February poem.

'A poem is an eye passed around the blind'
Geoffrey Grigson

**Still lie the sheltering snows, undimmed and white;
And reigns the winter's pregnant silence still;
No sign of spring, save that the catkins fill,
And willow stems grow daily red and bright.
These are days when ancients held a rite
Of expiation for the old year's ill,
And prayer to purify the new year's will:**
- Helen Hunt Jackson, *A Calendar of Sonnet's: February*

Media Links:

Audio files: [To the Saints Media](#)
Other audio files: [still coming]



Visit us at [Paltalk](#) every **Sabbath at 10:00 AM** Mountain time for a Bible Study and topical discussions. [Paltalk](#) chat software: [Groups > Christianity > Sabbath Studies - To the Saints of the Churches of God.](#)

To contact the author or to comment please email: dwlacey@earthlink.net or visit one of the links listed below.

A friend in Christ,
David W. Lacey

YHWH, The Almighty God of Israel Is With Us!

To the Saints of the Churches of God is at: <http://home.earthlink.net/~dwlacey/>

The **Stewarton Bible School** web page is at: <http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/sbs777/>

A Voice in the Wilderness web page is at: <http://www.avoicethewilderness.org>