The Epicurean's Delight

If there is one food in the world in which the Epicurean takes delight above all others - it is the crab. The sign of the Crab (Sartan/Cancer) denotes a time of the year when the most extreme aspects of the physical world are most attractive. The crab symbolizes being given over to the pleasures of the flesh. The crab is most at home in water. And water flows as it desires... The heavenly body that rules Cancer is the moon, and the moon's pull on the earth greatly influences the earth's largest body of water - the sea - the native home of the crab.

The Aramaic translation of Tammuz is 'heating', which suggests the heat of physical desire. However, this same heat can be used to fire the spiritual side of a person and bring him to return to G-d. Heat can be turned into light. This month's sign corresponds to the tribe of Reuven, and it was Reuven who was the first person to return to G-d purely out of love, turning the 'heat' of his personality into light.

Real Time

Whenever you look at the sun it looks the same. It looks the same in January as it does in May. In August or December. It's as though the sun is unaware of the months passing by. It neither waxes nor wanes. It is always the same yellow ball. The appearance of the moon, on the other hand, is always changing. It starts with a small sliver of light.
Would they still be able to hold on to their power and position? Everything they did reflected this ambivalence to their mission. Even when G-d performed miracles for them, they interpreted the events as threats. For example, everywhere they went they were amazed to see funeral cortèges. G-d had arranged it this way for their own good, so that the local inhabitants would be kept busy with the cares of burying their dead and not pay attention to these foreigners and what they might be doing. But the spies, rather than trusting in G-d’s Providence said that the Land ‘devours its inhabitants’!

In other words, when a person’s sight is defective, when he sees things through “black-tinted glasses,” he interprets the good that G-d does as being bad for him.

The month of Tammuz is the domain of the tribe of Reuven. Reuven comes from the Hebrew word ‘to see’. The goal of this month is to improve our ‘sight’. To realize that everything is for our good, even when we can’t see it.

It grows until it’s full, and then it wanes until it vanishes. Every month it appears again anew. That’s why the Hebrew word for month ‘Chodesh’ is from the same root as the word for ‘new’ - chadash, (and in English, the word month has the same root as moon.) However, the moon is ‘unaware’ of the cycle of the year. It has no cycle which connects it to the year - all new moons are the same, regardless of the time of year they occur.

To count the years, we use the sun because the sun, apart from its daily rotation, returns to the same place in the sky every 365 days and 6 hours.

So the sun ‘knows’ no months, and the moon ‘knows’ no years. The Christian world counts by the sun, and they divide the solar year into 12 subdivisions which they call ‘months’. But their ‘months’ are not really ‘moon-ths’ because they are intervals of 31, 30, 28, and even 29 days, regardless of when the new moon is and the month actually begins. Their calendar is based on convention rather than reality.

The 17th of Tammuz is a day of fasting which commemorates five tragedies in the history of the Jewish People. 1. The incident of the golden calf and the breaking of the first tablets of The Law. 2. The walls of Jerusalem were breached in the time of the first Temple. 3. The daily offering in the Temple was discontinued for lack of available sheep. 4. Apostomus burned the Torah. 5. An idol was set up in the Sanctuary.