

## Evolution of New Year

The New Year falls on January 1. However, it is on the eve of the New Year December 31, that the majority of celebrations occur, with a farewell to the year ending and continue throughout the day on January 1.

The setting of New Year's goals or New Year's resolutions part of the letting go of the old and the ushering in of the new. It is hope of future success spiritually, as well as financially which marks the holiday.

The earliest known record of a New Year's celebration dates 2,000 B.C. in Mesopotamia. People celebrate the beginning of the New Year and the end of an old year by usually holding traditional religious rituals. Now a days, people around the world hold social and cultural observance.

The New year is associated with the calendar which has changed several times during the ages. During the middle Ages, March 25, the feast of the Annunciation, The date Mary, Virgin Mother of God, was told she was carrying the Son of God, was New Year's Day. The Gregorian calendar and the Roman Catholic Church chose January 1 as the beginning of the year. However, wherever the Julian calendar was observed, January 14th was the New Year. So, the calendar was fundamental in the determination of the New Year, as was the Autumnal Equinox, the Winter Solstice, and the appearance of the new moon closest to the spring equinox.

Babylonia celebrated the New Year when the first moon appeared after the Spring Equinox, usually in mid March. Assyria held their's in late September closest to the Autumnal Equinox and the Greeks chose the Winter Solstice, December 22 and 23 as their new year.

Rosh' Hashanah, "Feast of Trumpets", is the start of the Jewish New Year. It begins on the first day of the month of Tishri, September 6th and lasts for 48 hours. It ushers in 10 days of penance (Tishri lasts from September 6 through October 5th).

The Chinese New Year begins in late January or February and lasts one month. Parades and fireworks are part of their festivities.

Japan celebrates January 1 through the 3rd. The entrances to homes are decorated with ropes made of straw to keep out evil spirits. By using fern, bitter orange and lobster to decorate they believe good fortune, prosperity and a long life will be their reward.

Finally, the Sri Lankans enjoy the New Year in two different dates. The Buddhists and the Hindus celebrate New Year in 14<sup>th</sup> of April and the Christians and others celebrate New Year on January 1st

Happy New Year!

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