Setting the Jewish Lunar Calendar

Slide 1: Yehuda: In the times of the old rabbis whenever a new moon was sighted the witness who saw the moon went to the Beis Din/ Jewish court where they gave him a test… some of the questions on that test were, did you see the moon before the sunrise of after the sunset, was the moon in the south of the sky or in the north, how big did the moon seem, and how high did the moon appear to be in the sky? It even says that Rabbi Gamaliel had a wall with pictures that represented the questions for mute and deaf people. If the man passed the test they checked for the same answers from the second witness and then sent messengers out across Israel because the new moon is the beginning of the Jewish month. (*From mishna Rosh Hashana)*

Slide 2: Yael: Most Jewish holidays occur on a new moon such as Passover,Tu Bishvat, Purim, and Sukkot. Rosh Chodesh is special because it has a new moon. Shavuot is a waxing crescent, Yom Kippur's moon is a waxing Gibbous and Chanukah is a waning crescent. Hillel II established the permanent calendar in around the year 500.