



The Melchizedek Midrash: “Melchizedrash”

The Calendar, Part 2: Finding the Month with the Sighted New Moon

TESHUVAH MINISTRIES STUDY GUIDE

Written by Isaac and Rebekah Garvin

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TOPIC: The Calendar – Sighted New Moon

TESHUVAH MINISTRIES POSITION ON THE NEW MOON: New Moons are the head of each month. We hold to the simple understanding, logic and belief that the “New Moon” occurs at the first visible sighting of the sliver.

SIMPLE DEFINITION: In Hebrew, “New Moon” is one word, “Chodesh” and “Chodesh” means “month.” They are interchangeably used in the Scriptures.

METHOD OF STUDY: We’ll start with the Scriptures. We feel that just with the Scriptures alone we can deduct that we are to “observe” the visible new moon as the head of the months. But we offer some other ministries articles where we have gleaned from and some historical evidence for drawing the same conclusion, but we will also use some plain logic.

SCRIPTURES TO STUDY:

- 1) Scriptures that say true worshipers are obligated to observe the New Moon.
Deut. 16:1; Numbers 10:10; Numbers 28:11-15
- 2) Scripture references to the New Moon or beginning of months.
1Chronicles 23:31; 2Chronicles 2:4; 2Chronicles 8:13; 2Chronicles 31:3; Ezra 3:5, Ezekiel 46:1,3,6
- 3) Scripture references to New Testament believers *observing* the New Moons
Acts 18:21; Acts 27:9; 1Corinthians 5:7-8; Colossians 2:16
- 4) Scripture references to New Moons being celebrated when Yahshua reigns.
Ezekiel’s 46:3

WORDS TO STUDY IN HEBREW:

1) What is the Hebrew word for “**observe**” in Deut. 16:1? And what does it mean? _____

1ST BIGGEST BIBLICAL REASON FOR SIGHTING THE VISIBLE NEW MOON:

What the word “**observe**” means!

In Deuteronomy 16:1 “the word “observe” in the Hebrew is shamar and also means “look narrowly for, search” “watch” (No. 8104 in Strong’s). The Holladay Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon defines it as watching in the sense of looking. Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words includes the definitions “mark, watchman, wait, watch, look narrowly.”

Keeping in mind the Hebrew word for “observe” and it’s definition how do we keep the command to in Deuteronomy 16:1 — observe with our eyes or calculate? _____

“The command is to look for, wait for, watch and mark the new moon.....The problem is that you cannot see a moon that is completely black or dark, as it is during a conjunction. It would be lunacy sending out new moon watchers on the night of a conjunction to look for a moon they cannot see. To visually confirm the new moon there must be something to identify. Obviously, the invisible conjunction is not that something.” [What is a Biblical New Moon, Yahweh’s Restoration Ministry]

2) What is the Hebrew word for “**moon**” and what does it mean? _____

3) What is the Hebrew word for “**new moon**” and what does it mean? _____

Nehemia Gordon says, “The primary meaning of Hodesh (month) is actually “New Moon” or “New Moon Day” and it is only by extension that it came to mean “month”, that is, the period between one New Moon and the next.” He also says, “The Crescent New Moon is called Hodesh because it is the first time the moon is seen anew after being concealed for several days at the end of the lunar cycle.” And, “Because the moon is seen anew after a period of invisibility the ancients called it a “New Moon” or “Hodesh” (from Hadash meaning “new”).”

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:

1) How are “moon” and “new moon” linked? _____

2) Is the word for “observe” a noun or a verb? _____

LOGICAL QUESTIONS WE MUST ANSWER:

1) What is a lunar conjunction? _____

2) Can the moon be seen during a lunar conjunction? _____

3) Can you see an invisible or dark moon? _____

ARTICLES FOR YOUR NEW MOON STUDY:

1) **A MUST READ: Yahweh’s Restoration Ministry**

Though they do not follow the Aviv Barley they help to clear up in a simple article the

sighted New Moon issue here in this link: <http://www.yrm.org/whatisbiblicalnewmoon.htm>

2) Sighted Moon.com

Though they are Levitical and don't proclaim the Aviv barley the same as Nehemia does and still are not accounting for the missing years in their "From Creation" dating, they do teach about sighting the moon vs the dark moon. Beware of lengthy articles: <http://sightedmoon.com/>

3) Nehemia Gordon - www.nehemiaswall.com

Nehemia Gordon is a Karaite who is the world's leading expert in the aviv barley and sighted moon reckoning of years and months. Though he still rejects the Messiah we can not ignore his historical and textual expertise in this area. He writes, "There is no evidence whatsoever for an ancient "no-moon" calendar. On the contrary, it is a documented fact that until the Rabbis came along and corrupted the calendar in 359 CE all of Israel followed an observational lunar calendar." For technical understanding of a sighted moon and a calculated moon by a Jew: <http://www.nehemiaswall.com/hebrew-voices-orthodox-jew-who-sights-the-new-moon> (For a great overview of the aviv: <http://www.nehemiaswall.com/aviv-barley-in-the-biblical-calendar#more-7240>)

4) Michael Rood - www.michaelrood.tv

Michael teaches on sighting the New Moon.

5) **A MUST READ:** William F. Dankenbring - www.triumphpro.com

I love this article! He's right on with some righteous indignation for false teachings on this! I don't know what else is in his website, but this part is good! <http://www.triumphpro.com/new-moon-biblical.pdf>

6) **A MUST SEE:** Keith Johnson - www.bfainternational.com

A five minute video on it! — <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zn-TISvo6WY>

HISTORY HELPS US UNDERSTAND:

1) Encyclopaedia Judaica, Vol. 12, p. 1039

"Originally, the New Moon was not fixed by astronomical calculation, but was solemnly proclaimed after witnesses had testified to the reappearance of the crescent of the moon.... The switchover from watching for the first visible crescent to calculating conjunctions to determine the month's beginning came with Hillel II's calendar revisions in the 4th century C.E. "By the middle of the fourth century, the sages had established a permanent calendar and the public proclamation of the New Moon was discontinued" (Ibid).

2) How Ancient Israel dealt with finding the New Moons?

Educator, scholar and calendar expert, Arthur Spier tells us, "In the early times of our history . . . [the] beginnings of the months were determined by direct observation of the new moon. Then those beginnings of the months (Rosh Hodesh) were sanctified and announced by the Sanhedrin, the Supreme Court in Jerusalem, after witnesses had testified that they had seen the new crescent and after their testimony had been thoroughly examined, confirmed by calculation, and duly accepted." (**The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar, p.1**)

3) How Jews used to find it. "The importance of community in Jewish life dictated that all Jews celebrate holidays at the same time. That meant that a standard start of a new month had to be known by everyone so they could count the days before a festival in unison. At the time of the first Temple, the high priest made the determination based on the moon's first appearance in the sky. During the time of the Second Temple, two eyewitnesses would

testify before the Sanhedrin (rabbinical court) that they had seen the crescent sliver” (p.xxv).
Lesli Koppelman Ross in Celebrate! The Complete Jewish Holidays Handbook.

4) Philo, a contemporary of Yahshua, talks about the New Moon. “First of all, it is the beginning of the month, and the beginning, whether of number or of time, is honorable. Second, because there is nothing in the whole heaven destitute of light. Thirdly, because at that period the more powerful and important body gives a portion of necessary assistance to the less important and weaker body; for at the time of the new moon, THE SUN BEGINS TO ILLUMINATE THE MOON WITH A LIGHT WHICH IS VISIBLE to the outward senses, and then she displays her own beauty to the beholders. And this, as it seems, an evident lesson of kindness and humanity to men, to teach them that they should never grudge to impart their own good things to others, but, imitating the heavenly bodies, should drive envy away and banish it from the soul.” (page 581; section 140-141)

William F. Dankenbring says in response to Philo’s writing above, “How a person could miss this clear reference to the New Moon, proving that it occurs, in Hebrew understanding, at the FIRST VISIBLE CRESCENT OF THE MOON, is completely beyond me. But there it is clear as night and day! The real “new moon” is when “the sun begins to illuminate the moon with a LIGHT WHICH IS VISIBLE” not the point of actual conjunction, when there is NO light from the moon, but it is totally “in the dark” or INVISIBLE!”

5) 2ND BIGGEST BIBLICAL REASON FOR SIGHTING THE MOON:

What our High Priest in the Melchizedek order, Yahshua did and did not do!

Yahshua challenged the Rabbis on everything, but the calendar. There is no place where it is recorded that Yahshua celebrated a floating Shabbat, a dark moon or had a sun dial in his backyard. He didn’t have a problem with the day of the week that was set apart for his Father’s Shabbat, when the New Moons were celebrated or when the the Feast days were being set apart either. The Jews were on tract with the calendar at that point in history or Yahshua would have said something about it. Therefore, let us do what our Rabbi did. Philo, as stated above was a prominent Jewish leader and a contemporary of both Yahshua the Messiah and Paul. He was aware of what Yahshua and his disciples considered as the new moon. Note how he describes the new moon in his Treatise on the Special Laws, Book II, XI (41),:

“ [It] is that which comes after the conjunction, which... [is] the day of the new moon in each month.” In his detailed discussion of the new moon, Philo describes what constitutes a new moon: “...at the time of the new moon, the sun begins to illuminate the moon with a light which is visible to the outward senses, and then she displays her own beauty to the beholders.’ As Philo noted, the new moon follows the conjunction but it is not the conjunction itself. His observation reveals to us what was considered the new moon in Yahshua’s day and what the Savior Himself also observed as the new moon. That is all we need to know to realize what still constitutes the Biblical new moon today.” <http://www.yrm.org/whatisbiblicalnewmoon.htm>

USING LOGIC AND LINGUISTICS TO DETERMINE WHAT CONSTITUTES A NEW MOON

1) Which of the 2-3 days during a lunar conjunction (dark moon) would one actually consider it a “new moon”? “Another predicament is created by the use of the conjunction because during the period surrounding the conjunction there are as many as two or even three nights when no moon is visible. This leads us to wonder which three invisible moons are we commanded to “look narrowly for”? On which of three invisible starting points does

the month begin? Yahweh's calendar is based on observation. Man's calendars are based on calculation." [What is a Biblical New Moon, Yahweh's Restoration Ministry]

2) It has to be simple enough for the illiterate in ancient Israel to be able to keep the New Moon command. The ancients had to have something tangible to go by that was visible on only one day each month. They needed to see the first thin crescent of a moon as it began its building or waxing phase.

3) Israelites hearing the command at Sinai understood...something we don't.

Nehamia Gordon writes, "the Bible never comes out and says we should determine the beginning of months based on the New Moon. The reason for this is that the term for "Month" (Hodesh) itself implies that the month begins with the crescent New Moon. As will be seen, this would have been obvious to any ancient Israelite present when Moses recited the prophecies of YHWH to the Children of Israel and therefore there was no need to elucidate this concept any more than such terms as "light" or "dark." However, due to the long exile, we have lost the use of Biblical Hebrew in day to day speech. Therefore, we will have to reconstruct the meaning of Hodesh from the usage of the word in the Biblical text using sound linguistic principles."

4) We believe that Yahshua will come on Yom Teruah (the 7th New Moon)

Is that day knowable in advance? _____

The Scriptures says that we cannot know when the Messiah will return; although we all believe he will come back on Yom Teruah. "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only." Matt. 24:36. Yet most [the calculated] calendars tell us exactly "when the Feast of Trumpets is years and years in advance. So we do know, but Matt 24:36 say we can't know...So we conclude that by using a new sighted moon, which can't be known until it is actually seen in Jerusalem on the day it appears, that we must use the sighted moon method to determine the new month." This is logical. [<http://sightedmoon.com/conjunction-or-sighted-which/>]

"AN ACT OF WORSHIP": "Looking for the new moon crescent each month is, above all, an act of worship. It is axiomatic that we cannot let our worship be done by someone else. James tells us, "Be doers of the word, and not hearers only..." James 1:22. Do we have the dedication to go out and search the evening sky for a sliver of moon that is often very difficult to locate? Or do we just rely on others in our area or in some other part of the world to do it for us?... It takes no effort or sacrifice to see a full moon or follow computer calculations." [What is a Biblical New Moon, Yahweh's Restoration Ministry]

A MELCHIZEDEK* CONCLUSION OF HOW TO MARK THE NEW MOON: New Moons are the head of each month. We hold to the simple understanding, logic and belief that the "New Moon" occurs at the first visible sighting of the sliver. *We are calling this a "Melchizedek Conclusion" because not only did YHVH (the Meleck Tzadek) command us to "sight" it — Yahshua, our High Priest of the Father's Melchizedek order never challenged the practice of "sighting" the New Moon when he was here. Therefore, sighting the New Moon is how a disciple of Yahshua (Melchizedek priests) would mark the months, find the Feast of Trumpets (the 7th New Moon) and find Rosh ha'Shanah (the head of the year).

Now you can enjoy keeping the monthly rhythm! Your family will have fun trying to sight the New Moons in the sky as you have a picnic under the setting sun, marking YHVH's new month!