

The New Moon

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In Matthew 17:11, Jesus Christ stated that before his return the work of another “Elijah” will begin,

Then Jesus answered and said to them (his disciples), ‘Elijah truly is coming and will restore all things’ (Mt. 17:11; NKJV throughout unless noted; Ed. notes in parenthesis).

This restoration involves the correct understanding and observance of God’s law (see article: *Has Christ’s Prophecy Regarding Elijah Been Fulfilled?*).

One aspect of God’s law includes the observance of the New Moons. In a prophecy regarding this restoration of New Moons, Isaiah clearly shows that New Moon observance is considered an integral part of God’s law,

‘For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me,’ says the Lord, ‘So shall your descendants and your name remain.’²³ And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, *all flesh* shall come to worship before Me,’ says the Lord (Isa. 66:22-23).

It is important to note that “all flesh” will keep the New Moons showing that observance of God’s law is not limited to the Jewish people, as it is often incorrectly asserted,

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male or female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:28).

This quote from the apostle Paul shows that no one can claim they are exempt from following the example set by Jesus Christ. As Christ was a sinless sacrifice he observed his Father’s law, which included keeping the New Moons and did not add to it or subtract from it,

You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take anything from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you (Dt. 4:2).

Whatever I (God) command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it (Dt. 12:32; Ed. notes in parenthesis).

Therefore, if anyone claims to be a follower of Christ, they need to obey every word of God,

But he (Christ) answered and said, ‘It is written, ‘Man(kind) shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God’ (Mt. 4:4; Ed. notes in parentheses).

So part of the work of an ‘Elijah’ of the latter days will include restoring the observance of the New Moon as a day of worship because it is part of God’s law and, more specifically, God’s Holy Day sequence. For those who regard New Moon observance as

being of little importance, it should be noted that more animals were sacrificed on a New Moon than on the weekly Sabbath, which reinforced its significance,

And on the Sabbath day two lambs in their first year, without blemish... (Num. 28:9a).

At the beginning of your months (from SHD # 2320 – *chodesh* – translated New Moon 20 times) you shall present a burnt offering to the Lord: two young bulls, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year, without blemish (Num. 28:11; Ed. notes in parenthesis).

Also (on the New Moon) one kid of the goats as a sin offering to the Lord shall be offered... (Num. 28:15a; Ed. notes in parenthesis).

These verses show that two animals were offered on a weekly Sabbath compared to eleven on a New Moon day. In a prophecy depicting events on earth after Christ's future return, the individual regarded as "the prince" will offer a different number of animals, but there are still more on a New Moon,

Likewise the people of the land shall worship (future tense) at the entrance to this gateway before the Lord on the Sabbaths and the New Moons. ⁴ The burnt offering that the prince offers to the Lord on the Sabbath day shall be six lambs without blemish, and a ram without blemish (Ez. 46:3-4; Ed. notes in parenthesis).

On the day of the New Moon it shall be a young bull without blemish, six lambs, and a ram; they shall be without blemish (Ez. 46:6).

In this future scenario (the millennial rule of Jesus Christ), there are seven animal sacrifices on the weekly Sabbath, and eight on the day of the New Moon. However, one of the eight animals on the New Moon is a young bull, which is much larger than any of the other animals being offered. Therefore, taking the position that New Moon observance is of lesser importance, compared to the weekly Sabbath, contradicts the word of God. Mankind is being shown, through the animal sacrificial system, that Almighty God regards New Moon observance as being as important as keeping the weekly Sabbath.

Ancient Israel would congregate for important instruction one each New Moon day. This is evident in a comment from the husband of a Shunammite woman (from the land of Issachar),

Then she called to her husband, and said, 'Please send me one of the young men and one of the donkeys, so that I may run to the man of God and come back.' ²³ So he said, 'Why are you going to him today? It is neither the New Moon nor the Sabbath' (2Kgs. 4:22-23).

On a weekly Sabbath, or a holy day during one of God's annual festivals, normal work activities were to cease with the exception of food preparation,

On the first day (of the Days of Unleavened Bread) there shall be a holy convocation (gathering), and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for you. No manner of work shall be done on them; but that which everyone must eat – that only may be prepared by you (Ex. 12:16; Ed. notes in parentheses).

As the New Moon days were as important as the weekly Sabbaths, we should expect that no work was allowed on them,

Thus says the Lord God: 'The gateway of the inner court (of God's temple) that faces toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the Sabbath it shall be opened (for worship), and on the day of the New Moon it shall be opened (Ez. 46:1; Ed. notes in parentheses).

As ancient Israel was expected to work six days of the week, this gateway to the inner court of the temple was closed. But it was opened for worship on the Sabbaths and New Moons because the nation was commanded to rest from their normal work activities on these days.

This fact is confirmed, during the time of Amos, when God corrected Israel for having the wrong attitude toward resting on the New Moons because they were too fixated on dishonest gain,

Hear this, you who trample on the needy, and make the poor of the land fail, ⁵ saying: 'When will the New Moon be past, so that we may sell grain and the Sabbath, so that we may trade our wheat? ⁶ Making the ephah small and the shekel large, falsifying the balances by deceit, that we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals – even sell the bad wheat?' (Am. 8:4-6).

Other than having a profound misunderstanding God's law, the main reason many people do not rest on God's Sabbaths, New Moons, and Holy Days is because they are self-willed, greedy, seeking only personal gain or pleasure, and therefore unwilling to do what their Creator says. Obedience to God requires faith which involves trusting Him that He will provide – including when we stop working or doing our own pleasure to keep these appointed times,

If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy day of the Lord honorable, and shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words (related to work and other worldly pursuits). ¹⁴ Then you shall delight yourself in the Lord; and I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, and feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father (a blessing that is more spiritual in nature). The mouth of the Lord has spoken (Isa. 58:13-14; Ed. notes in parentheses).

In contrast, the nation of Judah would attend God's festivals but they were living contrary to His law on so many other levels. Because of this hypocrisy, God stated that he would not acknowledge their worship of His appointed times,

Alas, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity (sin), a brood of evildoers, children who are corrupters! They have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked to anger The Holy One of Israel, they have turned away backward (Isa. 1:4; Ed. notes in parenthesis).

When you come to appear before Me, who has required this from your hand, to trample My courts? ¹³ Bring no more futile sacrifices; incense is an abomination to Me. The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies – I cannot endure iniquity and (with) the sacred meeting. ¹⁴ Your New Moons and your appointed feasts my soul hates; they are a trouble to Me, I am weary of bearing them. ¹⁵ When you spread out your hands (in prayer), I will hide My eyes from

you; even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of bloodshed.¹⁶ Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean (inwardly); put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil,¹⁷ learn to do good; seek justice, reprove the oppressor; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow (Isa. 1:12-17; Ed. notes in parentheses).

The apostle Paul addressed this same form of hypocrisy in the church at Corinth,

Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse.¹⁸ For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it.¹⁹ For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you.²⁰ Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper.²¹ For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk.²² What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame the poor? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you (1Cor. 11:17-22).

Rather than selfishly oppressing others, especially those who are already downtrodden, God's people are expected to behave in a manner that is above reproach,

Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble and to keep oneself unspotted from the world (Jas. 1:27).

So as important as it is to observe God's Holy Days, including the New Moons, it is of equal importance that we examine our conduct before we approach Almighty God during His appointed times. This principle regarding proper worship is brought out in Matthew,

And I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be held subject to the judgment; and whoever shall say to his brother, 'raca,' (an expression of contempt) will be held subject to the council (the Sanhedrin); and whoever shall say, 'you godless one,' will be held subject to the fire of Gehenna (i.e. death in the burning garbage dump outside Jerusalem – symbolic of judgment).²³ "If therefore you are offering your gift upon the altar of burnt sacrifice, and there remember that your brother has something against you,²⁴ "leave your offering there before the altar of burnt sacrifice and go (do not worship, instead), first be reconciled to your brother, and then come offer your gift (Mt. 5:22-24; RNT; Ed. notes in parentheses).

After Christ's death and resurrection, the early church continued observing God's New Moons in accordance with our Father's instructions. However, there were some in the fellowship who came from an ascetic background and taught that treating one's body more severely, through practices such as abstaining from certain pleasures and not rejoicing during a holy day, would bring a person closer to God. This conduct is contrary to God's word as we will see shortly. The apostle Paul addressed these people very sternly because some were even teaching that Christians were to do homage to cosmic principalities (Col. 2:10, 15) including angelic powers (Col. 2:15, 18),

Let no one defraud you of your reward (everlasting life), taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,¹⁹ and not holding fast to the Head (of the church – Jesus Christ), from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase which is from God.²⁰ Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though

living in the world, do you subject yourselves to (ascetic) regulations – ²¹ do not touch, do not taste, do not handle (Col. 2:18-21; Ed. notes in parentheses).

These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh (Col. 2:23).

It was this same group of people who were criticizing members of the body of Christ for rejoicing and celebrating during the New Moons even though God clearly states that His people are to rejoice and enjoy themselves during His appointed times, which is the reason Paul rebuked them,

Therefore, let no one judge you in eating and drinking, or in part of a Festival, or a New Moon, or Sabbaths ¹⁷(which is a shadow of things to come), but the body of Christ (Col. 2:16-17; RNT).

And you shall spend that money (allocated to be spent during God's festivals) for whatever your heart desires: for oxen or sheep, for wine or similar drink, for whatever your heart desires; you shall eat there before the Lord your God, and you shall rejoice, you and your household (Dt. 14:26; Ed. notes in parenthesis).

So instead of claiming that Colossians 2:16 proves Almighty God's Holy Days are no longer applicable to mankind, it actually confirms the opposite. His people are expected to observe and rejoice during His appointed times, which include the New Moons. Even secular sources comment on the fact that God's people should have been observing the New Moons long after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ,

How, then did the Romish Church fix on December the 25th as Christmas day? Why, thus: Long before the fourth century, and long before the Christian era itself, a festival was celebrated among the heathen, at that precise time of the year, in honor of the birth of the son of the Babylonian queen of heaven; and it may fairly be presumed that, in order to conciliate the heathen, and to swell the number of the nominal adherents of Christianity, the same festival was adopted by the Roman Church, giving it only the name of Christ. This tendency on the part of Christians to meet Paganism half-way was very early developed; and we find Tertullian, even in his day, about the year 230, bitterly lamenting the inconsistency of the (so-called) disciples of Christ in this respect, and contrasting it with the strict fidelity of the Pagans to their own superstition. "By us," says he, "who are strangers to Sabbaths, and new moons, and festivals, once acceptable to God, the Saturnalia, the feasts of January, the Brumalia, and Maronalia, are now frequented; gifts are carried to and fro, new year's day presents are made with din, and sports and banquets are celebrated with uproar; oh, how much more faithful are the heathen to their religion, who take special care to adopt no solemnity from the Christians." (Quote from, "The Two Babylons" Pg.121-122, by Alexander Hislop; published by EZ Reads, 2009).

So it was known during the time of Tertullian (approx. 230 CE) that Christians should have been observing the New Moons, but preferred to adopt the various forms of pagan religious beliefs. It is no different today, and it will take the return of Jesus Christ to universally establish his Father's law including the observance of the New Moons. In the meantime, those who understand this truth have the responsibility of faithfully observing God's New Moons, Sabbaths, and Holy Days (Isa. 2:2-4).

It is not possible to observe God's Holy Days without first understanding the importance of the New Moons because it is only by the correct calculation of the New Moons that the other holy days can be observed at the appointed time. For instance, the New

Covenant Passover is to kept at the end of the 14th day of the first New Moon of the year (see the study: New Covenant Passover), coinciding with the time that Israel left Egypt. So if the first New Moon of the year is not calculated accurately, it cannot be determined when the Passover should be observed. These calculations cannot depend on observation (of the crescent) because the New Moon commences when it is at the end of its cycle, which occurs during a short period of complete darkness. Also, God is not the author of disorder (1Cor. 14:33), and He expects His people to be prepared ahead of time for His Holy Days,

And David said to Jonathan, 'Indeed tomorrow (at the evening) is the New Moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king to eat. But let me go, that I may hide in the field until the third day *at evening* (1Sam. 20:5; Ed. notes in parenthesis).

David knew exactly when the New Moon would occur, and he mentioned that it would be kept from evening to evening (from dark to dark; see the study: *How to Determine the Beginning and End of the Day*) because he would be gone for three days commencing with the first evening meal and celebration associated with the New Moon,

Then Jonathan said to David, 'Tomorrow is the New Moon; and you will be missed, because your seat will be empty (1Sam. 20:18).

Jonathan is the second witness to the fact that the calculation for determining when the New Moon was to be kept was known in advance.

Both King David and Jonathan knew when the New Moon would occur. They were not relying on observation of the crescent as some belief-systems do. They understood that a New Moon occurred at a precise moment in time when the earth comes between the Moon and the Sun (conjunction).

In order to correctly keep the New Moons on the same day in all the time zones around the world, it has to be calculated from one starting point or location. Doing so ensures observance of the New Moon within the period of one day rather than over two days. Consequently, a standard calendar can be used throughout the world. As scripture states that God's law proceeds from Jerusalem, this starting point or location should be the point from which all other time zones determine a New Moon day from the closest evening (when it becomes dark) that occurs before the conjunction until the following evening,

...For out of Zion (spiritual Jerusalem) shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem... (Isa. 2:3b; cf. Mic. 4:2b).

Today, we can go to various websites to easily determine the conjunction for the New Moon days (see: *Resources*).

Daniel prophesied that the rulers of this present world would seek to change God's appointed days of worship. This has clearly been fulfilled because instead of keeping God's Holy Days, the nations of this world have substituted their own holidays. The New Moons were given to mankind by God as a monthly day of rest according to His

determination, which can fall on any day of the week. Instead, we have one-day holidays frequently occurring on a Friday or Monday each month in the secular calendars of this world. Only rarely do they fall on a New Moon,

He (one of the rulers of this present age) shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High (those keeping God's commands and appointed times), and shall intend to change (God's) times and law (including the time of the New Moons)... (Dan. 7:25a; Ed. notes in parenthesis).

Nevertheless, those who seek to do the work of the end time "Elijah" must follow Almighty God's instructions regarding the correct time of worship associated with the New Moon.

This document is the collaborative work of individuals who believe God's truth should be given freely (Mt. 10:8; 1Cor. 2:12; 2Cor.11:7; Rom. 10:14-21) and the message of the one true God should be made available to all nations (Mt. 24:14) as a prerequisite to the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings (Mt. 17:10; 19:17; Mk. 9:11; Lk. 1:17; Rev. 19:11-16).

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