

New Moon Calculation

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The timing of the New Moon each spring determines when God's New Year begins (see study: The Key to Determining the Beginning of a New Year). From this point each month is numbered as God did not give them names. The correct calculation of the first New Moon determines when the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread are to be observed. The correct calculation of the seventh New Moon determines the God-ordained Holy Days that fall during that month (see study: God's Holy Days). Conversely, an incorrect calculation of a New Moon will result in transgressing God's command regarding the observance of His New Moon days and holy convocations (Lev. 23:1-2). Many "Christians" marginalize God's feasts, and claim they do not need to be observed today. This position fails to recognize that Christ's apostles continued to observe them after his death and resurrection (Ac. 2:1; 27:9).

There is a scripture that has been mistranslated countless times which obscures what the apostle Paul said regarding the continued observance of God's Holy Days during the Second Covenant. In his writings, Paul said God's people should never allow those outside the body of Christ to judge them for what they drink, or foods they abstain from, or the manner in which they observe God's Festivals, New Moons or Sabbaths. Only those who obey God and are in the body of Christ are equipped to rightly judge matters related to God's appointed times,

Therefore, let no one judge you in eating and drinking, or in part of a Festival, or a New Moon, or Sabbaths, ¹⁷which is a shadow of things to come, except the body of Christ (Col. 2:16-17; RNT; emphasis added; cf. 1Tim. 3:15).

Denying that God's appointed times are applicable today, conveniently ignores prophecies declaring that punishment will come upon any nation refusing to observe God's festivals after Christ's return (Zech. 14:16-21; cf. Isa. 66:22-23). Finally, this anti-law position overlooks what Christ said regarding the "restoration of all things" prior to his second coming, which will include the observance of these commanded festivals at their appointed times,

And his disciples asked him, saying, 'Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?'
¹¹Then Jesus answered and said to them, 'Elijah truly is coming and will **restore all things.**' (Mt. 17:12-13; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted; emphasis added).

In the scripture above, Christ was not referring to John the baptizer doing a work similar to Elijah because John had already been martyred (Mt. 17:12-13). Instead, another entity will re-establish the law and commandments of Almighty God, that are applicable during the Second Covenant, before Christ returns as "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev. 19:16). Therefore, it is essential that God's people know how to calculate the New Moon correctly. Otherwise, they will be deceived and transgress God's commands

regarding the observance of His Holy Days. By extension, they will be responsible for leading others into sin (1Jn. 3:4).

If a New Moon is determined from the point that the first crescent becomes visible the moon is no longer “new.” In order to be “new” its previous cycle must be completed and the new cycle about to commence. This precise moment between the old cycle and the new one is the moment the moon becomes “new”. This point is called the conjunction, which occurs during the dark phase of the moon’s cycle and must be calculated in advance as a New Moon cannot be seen by human eyes. Christ is the “key” to correctly understanding this truth (Rev. 1:18; 3:7). He mentioned numerous times that his prophesied return will be at a time of darkness, which is compared to a New Moon that does not reflect light,

Is not the day of the Lord darkness, and not light? Is it not very dark, with no brightness in it? (Amos 5:20).

As the bridegroom (symbolic of Jesus Christ; cf. 2Cor. 11:2) was delayed, they (the ten virgins) all slumbered and slept. ⁶ But **at midnight there was a cry**, ‘Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him’ (RSV; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Because the majority of people throughout the ages have rejected Almighty God, His “faithful witness” Jesus Christ, who is compared to the Moon, will return and judge them at a time when he is least expected,

It (Christ’s throne) shall be established forever **like the moon**, even like **the faithful witness in the sky** (Ps. 89:37; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

And from **Jesus Christ, the faithful witness**, the firstborn from the dead (associated with darkness prior to being resurrected), and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood (Rev. 1:5; emphasis added).

As a New Moon cannot be seen with human eyes, Christ’s return is compared to the darkness associated with a New Moon,

They have dealt treacherously with the Lord, for they have begotten pagan children; now **a New Moon shall devour them** and their heritage (Hos. 5:7).

For you (God’s people who seek to obey His word; cf. Mt. 4:4) yourselves know perfectly that **the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night** (1Thes. 5:2; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Using the word “thief” could refer to the fact that the fallen host will not know when Christ is going to return and “take away” their ability to deceive mankind for a thousand years (Rev. 20:1-3).

Very few people will be ready for Christ’s return because they do not observe God’s law and commandments correctly, including His New Moons. This is why Christ admonished God’s true servants to be vigilant in righteous conduct so they are not taken by surprise,

Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not expect him (Mt. 24:44).

But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. ⁵You are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of the night, nor of darkness. ⁶Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober (self-controlled). ⁷For **those who sleep, sleep at night**, and those who get drunk are drunk at night (1Thes. 5:4-7; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Therefore, the key to understanding when a New Moon occurs will be tied to the work of, and prophecies pertaining to, Jesus Christ. Even many in the spirit realm will be taken by surprise at the suddenness of Christ's return. This is similar to the suddenness associated with the moment in time when the moon returns to its new cycle; otherwise known as the conjunction or brief moment in time when the moon and sun are in closest alignment,

Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And **the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to his temple** (the spiritual church of God), even the Messenger of the Covenant (Jesus Christ), in whom you delight. Behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts (Mal. 3:1; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

The suddenness of Christ's return, and the first resurrection that will occur at the same time, is described as happening in "the twinkling of an eye",

Behold, I tell you a mystery (hidden truth): We (referring to those in the body of Christ) shall not all sleep, but **we shall all be changed** – ⁵²**in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye**, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and, and we shall be changed (1Cor. 15:52; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Those in the spirit realm will see Christ returning to earth, including everyone responsible for killing him. However, the assumption that everyone in the physical realm will see Christ coming is false and based on a misunderstanding of many scriptures on this subject. For instance, in the following scripture those "who pierced him" can only refer to Satan and the fallen host because the human beings responsible for killing Christ will not be resurrected until the end of Christ's millennial rule on earth (Rev. 20:5). The scenario described in the next scripture does not preclude troubling events that may be occurring simultaneously in the physical realm,

Behold, he is coming with clouds (cf. Ac. 1:9-11), and every eye will see him, and **they also who pierced him**. All the tribes of the earth will mourn because of him (see study: Two Earths). Even so, Amen (Rev. 1:7; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Christ explained that no human being will be able to observe heavenly signs and use them to interpret when he will return. This principle applies to determining when a New Moon will occur. It cannot be observed because it cannot be seen by human eyes. Instead, it must be calculated ahead of time,

Now when he was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them and said, **'the kingdom of God does not come with observation** (Lk. 17:20; emphasis added).

Observation of the crescent moon is an integral part of many pagan worship systems, and eventually it was adopted by the Jewish religious leaders to determine when a New Moon begins,

Kastor of Rhodes said the shoes of Roman senators were decorated with ivory lunules (crescents) to show that after death they would inhabit the moon. Roman religion taught that “the souls of the just are purified in the moon.” Wearing the crescent was “visible worship” of the Goddess (of the moon). That is why the prophet Isaiah denounced the women of Zion for wearing lunar amulets (Isa. 3:18) (The Woman’s Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets; Barbara Walker, p 671).

Crescent ornaments (SHD 7720, moon, crescent; ornament worn on the necks of men, women and camels; cf. Jges. 8:21, 26) were a symbol of increasing good fortune and as such were the most approved charm against the evil eye (The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary; Merrill F. Unger, p 321).

Few religious symbols occurred in so many contexts as symbols of the moon. In the runic menological calendar the moon-sickle (sliver of the crescent) stood for the festival of Harvest Home, which the Scots called Kirn- from Koreion, moon-virgin Kore – which (Roman) Christians renamed the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy. In Gaul the crescent moon stood for the druidic Diana. *Crescere* meant “to grow,” a form of Latin *creare*, to produce, to create; hence the crescent. Gauls made communion cakes in crescent shape. Modern France still makes them, and calls them *croissants*, “crescent,” colloquially known as “moon-teeth” (The Woman’s Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets; Barbara Walker, p 673).

Just as the day of the weekly Sabbath was known ahead of time; so too was the New Moon. There was no need to observe the heavens for a crescent in order to determine when a New moon would occur,

Thus says the Lord God; The gate of the inner court that faces east shall be shut on the six working days; but on the Sabbath day it shall be opened (for worshipers to enter) and **on the day of the new moon** it shall be opened (Eze. 46:1; RSV; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

And David said to Jonathan, ‘Indeed **tomorrow is the New Moon**, and I will 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; emphasis added).

One of the arguments used to support a crescent as the means for determining when a New Moon occurs is based on the position that early civilizations did not have the means to accurately measure the conjunction. This has been proven incorrect by a number of recent discoveries. Writing in “Universe Today”, author Marcelo Gleiser’s article entitled “The World’s Oldest Known Calendar Discovered in Scotland” says,

It was a surprise when recent findings showed that at least one group in Scotland had not only a preoccupation with the passage of time but also the means to follow it. This was the discovery of researchers led by Vincent Gaffney, Professor of Landscape Archeology at Birmingham University. Analyzing the landscape along the Dee Valley, they found a series of 12 large pits with rocks designed to mimic the various phases of the moon, arranged along a 164 foot arc. The pits aligned perfectly with the midwinter solstice of 10,000 years ago (the phase where the sun would have risen then), so that the group could keep track of the passage of the seasons and the lunar cycle. The central stone, representing the full moon, measures about seven feet in diameter. The way the pits were dug allowed for its “recalibration,” moving them year after year to keep pace

with the solar year (www.university.com/103967/ancient-astronomical).

God inspired the prophet Daniel to write about an individual who would change “times and law”, thereby causing people to transgress God’s appointed festivals. This individual is Satan, who has the ability to deceive people so they fulfill his plans (Rev. 12:9),

He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute (wear out) the saints of the Most High, and shall intend (SHD 5452, think) to **change times and law**.... (Dan. 7:25a; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

The word “change” in the original Hebrew language is from the Hebrew # 8133 meaning *to alter*, especially for the worse (cf. Ezra 6:11-12). The word “times” is from the Hebrew # 2166 meaning *a set time, or season – used of holy times or feast days*. The word “law” is from the Hebrew # 1882 meaning *law of God*. Therefore, it can be concluded that one of the purposes for misleading people regarding how to correctly calculate a New Moon is aimed at making people transgress God’s appointed festivals that are counted from the New Moon of the first and seventh months.

Changing the way God’s calendar is to be observed is regarded as a sin. King Jeroboam did this by changing God’s appointed festivals of the seventh month to the eighth, and setting up two golden calves for the people to worship,

Jeroboam ordained a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, like the feast that was in Judah (on the seventh month), and offered sacrifices on the altar. So he did at Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made... (1Kgs. 12:32a).

Jeroboam did not repent of this sin and God’s punishment was as follows,

Therefore behold! I will bring disaster on the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam every male in Israel, bond and free; and will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam as one takes away refuse until it is gone. ¹¹The dogs shall eat whoever belongs to Jeroboam and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the field; for the Lord has spoken it (1Kgs. 14:10-11).

Therefore, how and when God’s appointed festivals are kept is a very serious matter. Counting from the crescent of the moon will lead to sin, which is a transgression of God’s law (1Jn. 3:4). Also, using the time of the New Moon conjunction as it occurs in Jerusalem, and then extrapolating that to one’s local time zone in another part of the world, will mean that some New Moons are actually postponed each year. Instead, the New Moon is to be calculated based on its conjunction locally. This way each member of God’s spiritual temple will make this determination. During the First Covenant period, the physical temple in Jerusalem was the main focus of all religious activities including the timing of the conjunction. However, Christ predicted that this would not continue and in 70 CE the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed,

The woman said to him (Christ), ‘Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. ²⁰Our fathers worshiped on this mountain (i.e. Samaria; cf. v 9), and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.’ ²¹Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, **believe me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father.** ²²You worship what you

do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews (through Christ). ²³But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him (Jn. 4:19-23; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Then as he (Christ) went out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, 'Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!' ²And Jesus answered and said to him, 'Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down' (Mk. 13:1-2; Ed. note in parenthesis).

When God considers His temple today, it is not a physical building in a physical location. Instead, His focus is on a spiritual temple wherever it is located on earth,

Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? ¹⁷If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are (1Cor. 3:16-17).

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body (by righteous conduct) (1Cor. 6:19-20; Ed. note in parenthesis).

And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? ¹⁶And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said, 'I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people' (2Cor. 6:15-16).

.... Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. ²¹in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, ²²in whom you also are being built together for a habitation (dwelling) of God in the Spirit (Eph. 2:20b-22; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Therefore, God dwells in His temple which is no longer a physical building in a physical location. Consequently, the city of Jerusalem cannot be considered the point from which a New Moon conjunction must be calculated. Instead, it is calculated based on the location of God's people at the time of each conjunction. Although God's law and commandments will proceed from "Jerusalem" following Christ's return (Isa. 2:1-4; Mic. 4:2), there is no instruction in God's law and commandments stating that a New Moon conjunction must be calculated from "Jerusalem", except for those living in and around that city (cf. Zech. 14:16-19). In fact, time zones are a relatively new phenomenon created by mankind to address inefficiencies in mercantile trade and later industrial development; initially via sea (longitude: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Harrison; cf. Rev. 18:19) and then rail (railway time: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Railway_time).

Jesus Christ made it clear that the intended location for God's people is in the spirit realm, and not a city that exists on this planet,

In my Father's house are many mansions (dwellings); if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself (reference to the first resurrection); that where I am, there you may be also (Jn. 14:2-3; Ed. notes in parentheses).

In conclusion, calculating when a New moon occurs is extremely important because if

the timing is incorrect it will lead to observing God's Holy Days at the wrong time and thereby breaking God's law, which is a sin leading to death (1Jn. 3:4; cf. Rom. 6:23).

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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