

## Is the Moon part of Yahweh's Calendar?

Updated 12.2020 - 2.2021

*NOTE: This study was originally in written form (8-12-04) for an internet discussion on whether Yahweh's calendar was solar based or lunar based. It rebuts those of a solar calendar persuasion that claim the moon has no part in Scriptural months or days. There is a video form of this essay, and I hope it is beneficial to all.*

There are extremes on both sides of the calendar issue. Some people take a total solar position, while others go with a total lunar calendar. I've seen the total solar people call the lunar folks moon-worshippers, and I've seen those who focus on the moon call the solar folks sun-worshippers. I don't believe any of these people are worshipping the sun or the moon, but I do believe each of these positions err.

In my years of calendar study (since 1999) I have seen more strictly solar folks than lunar, so this study will focus on the Scriptural evidence for the moon being a part of the calendar.

I am only interested in the truth, and there is so much evidence favoring the moon as part of Yahweh's heavenly calendar that I cannot dismiss it. I'll give 8 points from Scripture showing this, as well as interweaving Hebrew history in with a few of these points.

### Point 1 - GENESIS 1

In Genesis 1:14-16 we are told that Yahweh made two great lights. We are not told specifically here what these two great lights are. Some say that only the sun and stars are in view, but it doesn't make sense that the stars would be the second of the two great lights, because the stars are innumerable (Genesis 15:5). They would be a *category* of lights (plural) not a single light (one of the two).

Just a casual reading of this text, and a common knowledge of looking up into the sky during day and night, leads to understanding these two lights as being the sun and the moon.

### 1. Matthew Janzen

December 17, 2020 at 7:03:07 AM  
All Bible verses are taken from the  
World English Bible unless  
otherwise mentioned.

### 2. Matthew Janzen

January 28, 2021 at 10:45:28 AM  
"Now the whole of time being  
divided into two portions day and  
night, the sovereignty of the day  
the Father has assigned to the  
Sun, as a mighty monarch: and  
that of the night he has given to  
the moon and to the multitude of  
the other stars."

Philo, Creation XVIII.56

### 3. Matthew Janzen

January 28, 2021 at 10:47:09 AM  
"They were also created to serve  
as measure of time; for it is by the  
appointed periodical revolutions of  
the sun and moon and other stars,  
that days and months and years  
are determined."

Philo, Creation XIX.60

2 of 28

Some say, "But the moon isn't mentioned, while the stars are." Well... the sun isn't mentioned here either, but no one has a problem seeing the sun by inference. I believe it's just as easy to see the moon by inference.

This basic understanding of the two great lights being the sun and moon is further seen by examining some parallel texts to Genesis:

**Jeremiah 31:35-36** Yahweh, who gives the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, who stirs up the sea, so that its waves roar; Yahweh of Armies is his name, says: [36] "If these ordinances depart from before me," says Yahweh, "then the offspring of Israel also will cease from being a nation before me forever."

**Psalms 136:7-9** To him who made the great lights; for his loving kindness endures forever: [8] **The sun to rule by day**; for his loving kindness endures forever; [9] **The moon and stars to rule by night**; for his loving kindness endures forever:

These texts show us that the two great lights mentioned in Genesis 1:14-16 are the sun and the **moon**. Therefore it is *both* the sun and the moon that are for signs, seasons, days, and years. Both are used in determining the Scriptural calendar. A calendar that does not use one or the other is a deficient calendar. It lacks a necessary component, so one's calculation of time will be off if they only use one light to determine **time**.

Some have asked why the stars are specifically mentioned in Genesis. I believe the proper understanding is that they are an addendum to the moon, being additional lights that show up during the night. Notice in both Jeremiah and Psalms that the stars are mentioned *along with* the moon, but *after* the moon. The HCSB rendering puts this nicely at the end of Genesis 1:16 by saying "as well as the stars." The LXX (Brenton) bares this out by saying, "the stars also."

#### 4. Matthew Janzen

January 28, 2021 at 10:33:24 AM

"Now Jacob was pleased with the dream: for, considering the prediction in his mind, and shrewdly and wisely guessing at its meaning, he rejoiced at the great things thereby signified, because it declared the future happiness of his son; and that, by the blessing of God, the time would come when he should be honored, and thought worthy of worship by his parents and brethren, as guessing that the moon and sun were like his mother and father; the former, as she that gave increase and nourishment to all things; and the latter, he that gave form and other powers to them; and that the stars were like his brethren, since they were eleven in number, as were the stars that receive their power from the sun and moon."

Josephus, Ant 2.2.3

3 of 28

### Point 2 - GENESIS 37

In my first paper on this matter I did not include Genesis 37 as a proof. Over the years I've come to see that this text makes a solid point that is easy for people to see and understand in relation to the calendar.

**Genesis 37:9-11** He dreamed yet another dream, and told it to his brothers, and said, "Behold, I have dreamed yet another dream: and behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars bowed down to me." [10] He told it to his father and to his brothers. His father rebuked him, and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Will I and your mother and your brothers indeed come to bow ourselves down to you to the earth?" [11] His brothers envied him, but his father kept this saying in mind.

In the dream that Joseph was given, the sun, moon, and eleven stars represent Joseph's father, mother, and brothers. The father is represented by the greatest light (sun), seeing he is the head or chief over his wife and children. Next comes the wife and mother represented by the moon. We know the mother is over the children as she is rearing and teaching them in the home that she is a keeper of, thus the eleven stars represent the children, Joseph's brothers.

The point here is that the sun, moon, and stars are seen as a **family**. A family on earth represents them in the dream, but they are a family of heavenly lights. To remove the moon from calculating the calendar would be like a husband and wife divorcing and separating, which always causes some kind of turmoil in the family.

That's what the solar only people are asking us to do, even though they do not say it. Their position makes us split up the husband and wife (sun and moon), and then turmoil is caused in our calendar calculations.

### Point 3 - The Hebrew Word(s) for Month

The word translated month (most commonly) in the Old Testament is the Hebrew word chodesh. I've heard it said so many times that chodesh

doesn't have any relation to the moon, and just means "new month" referring to the first day of the new, solar month.

This word is defined by Hebrew Lexicons as follows:

**Strong's:** "H2320 / chodesh / kho'-desh From H2318; the new moon; by implication a month:—month (-ly), new moon."

**Brown, Drivers, Briggs:** "chodesh 1) the new moon, month, monthly 1a) the first day of the month 1b) the lunar month"

**Gesenius:** "the new moon, the day of the new moon, the calends of a lunar month which was a festival of the ancient Hebrews... (2) a lunar month, beginning at the new moon... the period of a month."

I'm not aware of any Hebrew lexicon that doesn't attach a lunar understanding to the word chodesh. The word chodesh can function as the first day of a new, lunar month, or as the entire lunar month as a whole.

One of the biggest proofs to show this definition to be valid is by seeing how the word chodesh is used interchangeably with another Hebrew word - *yerach* - a word that refers to the actual orb of the moon; the moon itself.

**1 Kings 6:38** In the eleventh year, in the **month** (yerach) Bul, which is the eighth **month** (chodesh), the house was finished throughout all its parts, and according to all its specifications. So he spent seven years building it.

1 Kings 8:2 All the men of Israel assembled themselves to king Solomon at the feast, in the **month** (yerach) Ethanim, which is the seventh **month** (chodesh).

The word yerach is defined by Brown, Drivers, and Briggs Hebrew lexicon as "1. Month (lunar cycle), moon, 1a. Month 1b. Calendar



month.” Yerach is also used in Exodus 2:2 where Moses’ mother hid him as a baby for three months; in Deuteronomy 23:21 where a captive woman mourns her parents for a full month; and in 1 Kings 6:37 in reference to the month Zif. This word is also translated as “moon” in both Deuteronomy 33:14 and Isaiah 60:20.

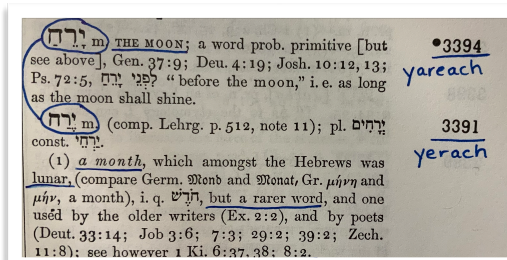
A related word to yerach is yareach. In Strong’s these are #3391 (yerach) and #3394 (yareach). Lexicons define yareach as “moon,” and when you look at yareach and yerach in Hebrew, they are the exact same Hebrew letters (*yod - reysh - chet*), and only differ in vowel pointing.

In Psalm 104:19 we are told that Yahweh “appointed the moon (yareach) for seasons (moedim).” The word seasons here (#4150 Strong’s) is the same word

used back in Genesis 1:14 in the phrase “signs, SEASONS, days, and years.” This is a word used throughout the Hebrew Bible in reference to appointed festivals. It’s translated into English using the word feasts in Leviticus 23:2, 4, 37, and 44. The word refers to times as Passover and Tabernacles. By comparing Psalm 104:19 with Genesis 1:14-16 and Leviticus 23 we see that Yahweh Himself appointed the moon to tell us when the festivals would occur in the year.

On top of all of this we have the Septuagint rendering the word *chodesh* into Greek as *noumenia* a Greek word that refers to a lunar month. This Greek word contains the word “men,” (pronounced mein) a word that is defined by Kittel’s Theological Dictionary of the New Testament as “moon, month.”

Our English word moon is derived from the Greek word *mein*; the same goes for our English word month. You can see the interchangeability



## 5. Matthew Janzen

January 28, 2021 at 10:36:16 AM

"But at the beginning of the second year, on the month Xanthicus, as the Macedonians call it, but on the month Nisan, as the Hebrews call it, on the new moon, they consecrated the tabernacle, and all its vessels, which I have already described."

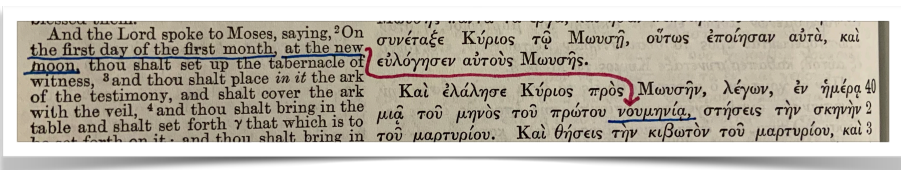
Josephus, Ant 3.8.4

6 of 28

between *mein* and *noumenia* by comparing 1 Chronicles 23:31 (*noumenia*), 2 Chronicles 2:4 (*noumenia*), and 2 Chronicles 8:13 (*mein*) where Sabbaths, new moons, and set feasts are mentioned.

The word *noumenia* is used in the Torah, in Numbers 10:10 in the LXX to reference "in your new moons." Compare that with the Hebrew Bible which says "in the beginnings of your months" and you will see that the new *moon* is the beginning of the month.

The same thing is seen in the LXX at Exodus 40:1-2 which says, "And the Lord spoke to Moses saying, On the first day of the first month, at the new moon (*noumenia*), thou shalt set up the tabernacle of witness." Again, this shows that the first day of the month was the new moon for ancient Israel.



The word *noumenia* is also used in the Torah portion of the Septuagint in Numbers 28:11 and 29:6 for the monthly festival of the new moon. This makes for a total of FIVE mentions in the Torah Septuagint for the new moon, recognizing it as a holyday.

### Point 4 - The New Moon Festival

On the heels of the last point, it be shown that ancient Israel had a festival on the first day of the scriptural month, the new moon festival.

There are so many texts showing this. For example, our last point touched on Numbers 10:10, 28:11, and 29:6 in the Septuagint. All of which speak to the New Moon being a holy day. The texts in Numbers 28 and 29 are significant, because those chapters detail the offerings that are to take place on all the days of the year. Notice that the chapter (28) begins with the daily offerings (the regular working days). Next comes

the specified Sabbath offerings (28:9-10), and then come the specified New Moon offerings (28:11-15). This Torah text shows us that the New Moon is different from a regular working day, seeing it is set apart for additional offerings.

I will now discuss four main texts which show the New Moon as a festival taking place each month on the Hebrew calendar.

**Ezekiel 46:1** “Thus says the [Master] Yahweh: “The gate of the inner court that looks toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the Sabbath day it shall be opened, and on the day of the new moon it shall be opened.

This is every Sabbath (not just some Sabbaths) and every New Moon (not just some New Moons). Notice how the New Moon is separate from the six working days, in the same context as the Sabbath. The New Moon is not the Sabbath (as it’s mentioned as separate), but it is also not one of the six working days (of Exodus 20:8-11).

When I first began keeping the New Moons as set-apart days (back in 1998) I was still observing Sabbath on Saturday. If the New Moon fell on a Wednesday I would stop working and honor the New Moon. Then I would work on Thursday and Friday, and stop working again on Saturday. That meant I had only two consecutive work days prior to the Sabbath; not six as the commandment speaks of. I kept the New Moon holy, but I counted it as one of the six working days up to the seventh day Sabbath.

This text in Ezekiel speaks differently than that practice. Can the Sabbath ever fall on one of the six working days? Can the Sabbath and a working day occupy the same space of time? No one who keeps Sabbath believes that is possible. Why then do many Torah keepers ignore the New Moon here? It’s mentioned in the same context as the Sabbath, separate from the six working days. This gate is open on the Sabbath and New Moon, but closed on the working days. It makes much more sense for Yahweh’s calendar to never have the New Moon occupy the same

space of time as a working day or the Sabbath. It is in a category all by itself.

**Isaiah 66:23** It shall happen that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh will come to worship before me," says Yahweh.

When I first began to keep the Sabbath, Isaiah 66 was one of the reasons why. I was shown how the Sabbath would be kept in the new heavens and new earth (66:22), so why weren't we keeping it now? I thought it was an excellent point, but for whatever reason, I didn't immediately see the new moon to be a holyday too, even though it is mentioned in the same sentence as the Sabbath - a day of worship. Again, it is inconsistent to promote the Sabbath based on this text but not the New Moon.

Notice again how the implication is *all* Sabbaths and *all* New Moons, not just some of each. "One new moon to another" means every time it rolls around (once a month).

**2 Kings 4:22-23** She called to her husband, and said, "Please send me one of the servants, and one of the donkeys, that I may run to the man of [the Almighty], and come again." [23] He said, "Why would you want go to him today? It is not a new moon or a Sabbath." She said, "It's alright."

First, notice how the New Moon keeps getting mentioned in the Bible alongside the Sabbath. I am amazed that there was a time in my obedient life that I did not see this. I remember one time a policeman pulled me over for making a left hand turn. He asked me, "Didn't you see that big sign back there saying 'No Left Hand Turns'?" The next time I drove that route I looked for the sign and there it was; as big as a Stop Sign. I just hadn't noticed it the time before, just like I used to not notice the New Moon in the Bible.

The context of this passage is that a son was out in the field with his father and the working harvesters (so it was one of the six working days). The son began to complain to his father that his head was hurting, so a servant took the boy to his mother, and the boy died laying in his mother's lap. The mother laid the boy on a bed and then told her husband she was going to see the "man of Elohim," which in this case would be Elisha. Her husband responded by asking her why she would go to him when it wasn't the New Moon or Sabbath.

I've sometimes wondered why the husband asked this question. Shouldn't he realize that this extreme circumstance called for the prophet's help? Sometimes us husbands don't think before we ask questions, while the wife/mother does. Regardless, the question shows that holy men or prophets were consulted on the New Moons and Sabbaths. Prophets were teachers of Torah - instructors in the ways of Yah. It wouldn't be wrong or sinful to visit the man of Elohim on a working day, but it wasn't a normal practice because you had to labor. On the Sabbath and New Moon that labor was suspended which gave people time to go and visit holy men to receive teaching and instruction.

These passages (and many more) are meaningless if one attempts to say that the phrase "new moon" just always means a month (as the solar only people do). They are best understood as meaning that there was a special festival in ancient Israel on the first day of the lunation or moon (like we learned in the Torah from Exodus and Numbers).

Next is the only text in the Newer Testament to mention the new moon as a set-apart time.

**Colossians 2:16** Let no one therefore judge you in eating, or in drinking, or with respect to a feast day or a new moon or a Sabbath day,

Notice how the new moon is sandwiched right in between feast days and sabbaths. That would make no sense if it's just a regular day on which we are allowed to do all our own work.

Back in 2005 I took place in a public, formal debate on a Scriptural topic, and after that debate everyone there kind of just mingled around and discussed Scripture. There was an older, British fellow that I was talking to about my observance of the law of Moses. He asked me if I kept the Sabbath and Feasts. I said yes. He then smirked a bit, and looked as though his next statement was going to be a “gotcha question.” He asked, “Do you keep the new moons? You know they’re listed with the Sabbath and Feasts in Colossians.” At that time (2005) I had been keeping the new moons for about 7 years, so I was able to tell him my practice. He was astonished and replied, “Well, at least you’re consistent.”

The underlying Greek text for the word new moon in this passage is the word we went over earlier from the Septuagint: *noumenia*. It’s defined here by Strong’s as, “the festival of the new moon,” and by Thayers and the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament as “new moon.” What this shows is that even down to the days of Apostle Paul, the new moon was still considered a set-apart day in some fashion, right along with the Sabbath and annual Feasts. It doesn’t make sense for Paul to group the new moon in if it was just a working day.

And again, the main point of this article is that this shows the lunar aspect of Yahweh’s calendar. The Greek word *noumenia* is a lunar based word showing that the months (lunar) began with the New Moon.

### **Point 5 - Psalm 81**

Further proof that the moon was used in counting days on Yahweh’s calendar is found in Psalm 81:3-6. This passage reads as follows (WEB).

"Blow the trumpet at the New Moon, at the full moon, on our feast day. For it is a statute for Israel, an ordinance of the God of Jacob. He appointed it in Joseph for a testimony, when he went out over the land of Egypt, I heard a language that I didn't know. "I removed his shoulder from the burden. His hands were freed from the basket."

According to this text, not only was the new moon a special day, but the **full** moon was a feast day (*chag* = a pilgrim feast) in ancient Israel.

The Hebrew word for full moon here (*keseh*) is translated as “time appointed” in some English Bibles, but Strong’s, Brown-Driver-Briggs, and Gesenius’ all define it as “full moon.” At [BibleHub.com](http://BibleHub.com), 24 out of 38 English versions say “full moon.” The NET Bible gives this as a footnote on the verse:

Heb “at the full moon on the day of our festival.” The Hebrew word כֶּסֶה (*keseh*) is an alternate spelling of מָלַךְ (*keseh*, “full moon”).  
 sn The festival in view is probably the Feast of Tabernacles (Booths), which began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month when the moon was full. See Lev 23:34; Num 29:12.

Albert Barnes’ (Notes on the Old Testament) adds this:

**In the time appointed** - The word used here - כֶּסֶה *keseh* - means properly the full moon; the time of the full moon. In Syriac the word means either “the first day of the full moon,” or “the whole time of the full moon.” (Isa Bar Ali, as quoted by Gesenius, Lexicon) Thus, the word means, not as in our translation, in the time appointed, but at the full moon, and would refer to the time of the Passover, which was celebrated on the fourteenth day of the lunar month; that is, when the moon was at the full. Exodus 12:6.

**On our solemn feast day** - Hebrew, In the day of our feast. The word solemn is not necessarily in the original, though the day was one of great solemnity. The Passover is doubtless referred to.

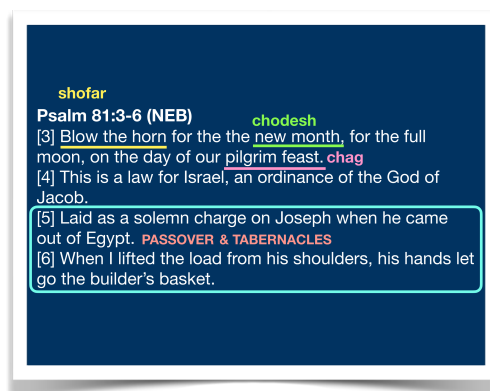
Most importantly, the context of Psalm 81 teaches us that the feast day is speaking specifically to the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of Tabernacles, which are both commanded to begin on the 15th day of the moon (Leviticus 23:6, 34).

This is seen in Psalm 81:5-6 where the land of Egypt is mentioned, along with removing the burdens and baskets. At Passover time (which jump starts the Feast of Unleavened Bread) the Israelites were delivered from bondage. Yahweh went throughout the land of Egypt (Exodus 12:12; Psalm 81:5), and brought deliverance.

When was Israel delivered from Egypt? Exodus 12-13 and Numbers 33:3 tell us it was on the 15th day of the month/moon. By comparing these texts with Psalm 81, we can know they were delivered on the full moon. The full moon then falls on or around the 15th day of the month.

While the Feast of Unleavened Bread is in immediate view here, the Feast of Tabernacles also fits into Psalm 81. Both Unleavened Bread and Tabernacles stem from that same deliverance. The Israelites were made to eat unleavened bread, *and* they were made to dwell in

temporary shelters in the wilderness. (Note: These are the chag [pilgrim feasts] spoken of in verse 3; the new moon is not a chag. Note also that the shofar is in view here [vs. 3] and not the silver trumpets [Num. 10].)



## Point 6 - Historical Witness

### Philo on the Full Moon

Not only do we have Psalm 81 marking the great festivals of Israel on the full moon, we also have a Jewish historian - Philo - verifying this mark. What makes Philo so significant is his ancient, Hebrew



perspective. Philo lived before, during, and after the time of Yeshua of Nazareth.

There are times when Philo gives his opinion or interpretation about matters in Scripture. There are other times when he just relays information; information on what took place in the Israel of his time, among the Hebrew people. This is beneficial for us when it comes to the understanding of the calendar, and what was taking place in and around Jerusalem, while the Jews went up to celebrate the holy festivals.

#### **Specials Laws 1.XXXV(189)**

"On the fifteenth day, at full moon, the feast which is called "the feast of booths" is celebrated for which the supplies of the sacrifices are more numerous."

Philo here ties the 15th day of the month to the full moon, exactly as Scripture does by comparing Exodus, Numbers, and Psalms.

#### **Questions and Answers on Genesis 1(91)**

"...it is on the fifteenth day that the moon is rendered full of light, borrowing its light of the sun at the approach of evening, and restoring it to him again in the morning; so that during the night of the full moon the darkness is scarcely visible, but it is all light."

Again, Philo ties the fifteenth day (speaking of the month) with the night of the full moon.

#### **Moses 2.XLI(224)**

"Accordingly, in this month, about the fourteenth day of the month, when the orb of the moon is usually about to become full, the public universal feast of the passover is celebrated, which in the Chaldaic language is called pascha"

Philo doesn't mention the fifteenth day of the month here, but his mention of the fourteenth continues to show the point, as he is speaking of Passover (which takes place on Abib 14; see Exodus 12 and Leviticus 23). He says the moon is *almost* full, placing the full moon on the 15th day of the month, at the start of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

#### 6. Matthew Janzen

January 28, 2021 at 10:40:50 AM

"For some of them are offered up every day, and some on the days of the new moon, and at the festivals of the full moon; others on days of fasting; and others at three different occasions of festival."

Philo, Special Laws 1.XXXV.169

#### 7. Matthew Janzen

January 28, 2021 at 10:57:46 AM

"And this feast is begun on the fifteenth day of the month, in the middle of the month, on the day on which the moon is full of light, in consequence of the providence of God taking care that there shall be no darkness on that day. (156) And, again, the feast is celebrated for seven days," (Context shows that the Feast of Unleavened Bread is being spoken of.)

Philo, Special Laws 2.XXVIII.155

#### 8. Matthew Janzen

January 28, 2021 at 11:00:53 AM

"Again, the beginning of this festival is appointed for the fifteenth day of the month, on account of the reason which has already been mentioned respecting the spring season, also that the world may be full, not by day only but also by night, of the most beautiful light, the sun and moon on their rising opposite to one another with uninterrupted light, without any darkness interposing itself between so as to divide them."

Philo, Special Laws 2.XXXIII.210

14 of 28

<sup>6</sup> This shows that the Hebrews in Philo's day observed lunar months, with  
<sup>7</sup> the longest festivals (Unleavened Bread and Tabernacles) commencing  
<sup>8</sup> on the full moon. The significance here is that Philo lived during the time of Yeshua of Nazareth, so what Philo observed taking place at Passover must have included the Messiah.

### Josephus on the Lunar Month

Not only do we have Philo as an early Jewish witness, we also have the more well known historian Flavius Josephus. Josephus is not as old a witness as Philo, but he is not far off, living in the first century A.D. and being witness to the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70. Josephus gives us witness that the Hebrews celebrated their festivals based upon lunar months. So when the Bible says something like, "until the fourteenth day of this month" (Exodus 12:6), it is an instruction for the 14th day of the cycle of the moon.

#### Antiquities 3.10.5 (Also see 10.3 on Day of Atonement)

"In the month of Xanthicus, which is by us called Nisan, and is the beginning of our year, on the fourteenth day of the lunar month, when the sun is in Aries, (for in this month it was that we were delivered from bondage under the Egyptians,) the law ordained that we should every year slay that sacrifice which I before told you we slew when we came out of Egypt, and which was called the Passover;"

Here he speaks of the month Nisan, which is just another name for the older Hebrew name Abib (compare Exodus 13:4 with Esther 3:7). In this month the ancient Israelites were delivered from bondage, and the Passover was celebrated.

Josephus speaks of the 14th day of the lunar month. He says *lunar* month because other calculations of months existed. There even exists a solar month in Hebrew thought, as the sun travels through the various signs of the zodiac in 30 degree segments, but this 14th day (of Exodus 12:6) takes place in a *lunar* month.

## 9. Matthew Janzen

February 28, 2021 at 2:06:41 AM

The names Apocrypha and Deuterocanon were assigned to these books as time progressed through Christian history. Jerome, the author of the Latin Vulgate (4th Century A.D.) was the first to call these books Apocrypha - meaning "hidden" - due to his belief that they were to be tucked away in a manner apart from Holy Scripture. Deuterocanon or Deuterocanonical (lit. "Second Canon") was a term assigned to these books in Roman Catholicism in the 1600's A.D. as a response to the Protestant Reformation's understanding of these books as merely historical and not inspired by the Holy Spirit. A good history of these books can be found at [scrollpublishing.com](http://scrollpublishing.com) under the titled "Apocrypha: Separating Myth from Fact" by David Bercot.

15 of 28

Notice also how he mentions the sun being in Aries at this time. That is another piece to the puzzle, although not the focus of this study. I bring this up here to show that Josephus recognized there was a solar and stellar aspect to the Hebrew calendar, but the months were lunar.

### Antiquities 2.15.2

"They left Egypt in the month Xanthicus, on the fifteenth day of the lunar month; four hundred and thirty years after our forefather Abraham came into Canaan, but two hundred and fifteen years only after Jacob removed into Egypt."

This goes back to what we covered in regards to Psalm 81:3-6 and Numbers 33:3. The children of Israel left Egypt at the full moon, which was the 15th day of the lunar month. (Also see Ant. 3.10.3)

### Sirach on the Moon Setting the Feasts



Next I'd like to show some historical evidence from what is commonly called the Apocrypha or Deuterocanon. It's debated amongst streams of the Christian faith as to whether or not these books should be listed in the canon of Scripture. These books are included in some early English Bible translations, like the Geneva Bible or the 1611 King

James Version. They are also included in the Septuagint, the oldest, complete Old Testament in existence, and the primary Bible of the early Christian assembly.

When you look at the quotations of the Old Testament in the New Testament, you will find that over 90% of the quotations come directly from the Septuagint. When you begin reading and studying these books that aren't commonly read by most Christians, you'll see them alluded to in the New Testament, and quoted or alluded to throughout the writings of the ante-Nicene "church fathers." They were well read and well

## 10. Matthew Janzen

February 22, 2021 at 7:05:08 AM

Source: The Biblical Canon, by Lee Martin McDonald, Preface to the Third Edition, p.XVII "Even in the NT writings themselves, more than 90 percent o the quotations fro the OT come from the Greek Bible! That has clear implications for canon formation."

9

10

known in early Christianity. Regardless, these books give historical witness of Hebrew understandings during the time of the second temple, yet prior to the first coming of the Messiah. One of the books is titled the Wisdom of Sirach, written by a Hebrew named Yeshua Ben Sira in the early 2nd century B.C. (around the years 200 to 150 B.C.).

**Sirach 43:6-9** (Douay-Rheims) And **the moon** in all in her season, **is for a declaration of times** and a sign of the world. [7] **From the moon is the sign of the festival day**, a light that decreaseth in her perfection. [8] **The month is called after her name**, increasing wonderfully in her perfection. [9] Being an instrument of the armies on high, shining gloriously in the firmament of heaven.

The first thing to notice is that the moon is spoken of as a female. This aligns with what we learned back in Genesis 37, where Jacob-Israel recognized Joseph's dream to be speaking of his wife.

Next, look at how the functions of the moon are described. A declaration of times, the sign of the festival day, and the month being called by her name. All of this aligns with what we've learned from the Tanak (Older Testament). Yahweh appointed the moon for seasons (moedim; Psalm 104:19). She signals the longest festivals (Unleavened Bread, Tabernacles; Psalm 81:3-6). The month is called after her name (chodesh=yerach=yareach=Scriptural months).

I want to note here the phrase "a light that decreaseth in her perfection." That is a reference to the lunar cycle coming to completion. As the moon wanes (or decreases, in the last half of the month) she goes back to a renewal period - her conjunction with the sun - and then shines again to the human eye soon thereafter. That is her perfection or completion, and it happens when she decreases. The Lexham English Septuagint reads here "a light that wanes at the completion." The Orthodox Study Bible reads "a light that wanes as it completes its course."

Sirach gives a glorious description of the moon, and a beautiful secondary witness to what other books in the Older Testament have taught us.

### **Point 7 - The Thirteenth Month**

A calendar based on the moon and the sun requires a 13th month approximately every 3 years. This is due to the length of a lunar year of (354 days) being 11 days shorter than a solar year (365 days). 11 times 3 (11 days over a 3 year period) equals 33, and is a longer period of days than an entire lunar month (29 or 30 days), so a thirteenth month has to come into play in order to keep the feasts aligned in their proper seasons.

If we just kept counting 12 lunar months each year, eventually the first month of the year (Abib) would fall further and further back into winter, then fall, then summer, then back to spring again. This is what happens with the current Islamic calendar, and is why their festival celebrations travel throughout their year; their calendar is a strictly lunar calendar.

I would say that the best argument the solar-only-calendar proponents have against the lunar aspect of the calendar is that the Bible never specifies a thirteenth month. We see verses that speak of the 12th month of the year (2 Kings 25:27; 1 Chronicles 27:15; Esther 3:7, 13; Jeremiah 52:31; Ezekiel 32:1), and we also see that the tree of life (in the future) is said to produce 12 manner of fruits, yielding her fruit every month (Revelation 22:2). What we do not see - specifically - is a mention of a 13th month.

However, I do not believe this point negates all of the other points covered in this study. I believe we can harmonize this area of lack with the other areas of plenty.

What's interesting is that there are 12's and 13's in Scripture. What I mean is that the number 12 is significant in Scripture, and generally, when you find the number 12, the number 13 is in the background if you look just a little deeper. For example, there were 12 sons/tribes of Israel; most people know that. But the tribes can be numbered as 13 if we split Joseph into Ephraim and Manasseh, which Scriptures do (Genesis 48;

Numbers 13:1-15; Deuteronomy 33:13-17). The same thing can be seen in the 12 apostles of Yeshua (Matthew 10:2; Luke 6:13). We generally think of these apostles, but forget that Saul of Tarsus, also called Paul, was a 13th apostle, born out of due season (Galatians 1:1; 1 Corinthians 15:8-9).

Most of the time there will be 12 months in a Scriptural year, and that would account for the Scriptures speaking predominantly of 12 months. A 13th month is only necessary about every three years, so in a span of 50 years, that's roughly 16 years that have 13 months verses 34 years with 12 months.

Something else to keep in mind is that solar-only calendar adherents hold to a strict 12 month year with 30 days in each solar month. That's 360 days, which is 5 days shorter than a solar year. What do they do with the extra days? It may vary among groups, but they intercalate or have "null days" in order to keep the new year in line so it doesn't back track 5 days each time a year rolls around. Where in Scripture does it speak of these extra days? My point is that they have the same problem we do when it comes to intercalation and the 13th month. No matter what position you take you have to intercalate somehow in order to make everything align.

I use to wonder why Yahweh's calendar isn't exact or precise. There's 29 or 30 days in a month (which the week of 7 days doesn't perfectly divide into). There's more precisely 365.25 days in a solar year, and 354 days in a lunar year (of 12 moons). Nothing is exact or perfectly divisible. I was riding down the road one day meditating on this and something dawned on me: if Yahweh's calendar was perfectly divisible, who wouldn't walk in it? Humans love things that make human sense, but we have a hard time believing in or submitting to things that don't make human sense. Maybe Yahweh designed all of the cycles in the heavens imprecise because he wanted us to walk in what He said with an amount of faith? We obey even though it's not exact, just because He has told us the sun, moon, and stars set His calendar (Genesis 1:14-19).

There are people who study the calendar that believe there were originally 12 months of 30 days a piece that equaled to exactly 360 days (and no more) in the year. They contend that there was some type of cosmic shift or disruption in the heavens that caused the lights to fall out of order. I don't go along with this, and Jeremiah 31:35-37 appears to speak against it. What I think is happening here is human reasoning. It makes more sense to us to have it all align perfectly. I believe Yahweh wants us to have some faith. His children will walk by His heavenly lights because He said so, not because everything aligns perfectly.

All of that being said, I do believe there is a text we can dig into in order to show a case where a 13 month year had to take place in order for a commandment to be carried out properly.

In Ezekiel 1:1-2 we are told that Ezekiel received a vision from Yahweh on the 5th day of the fourth month, in the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity. In Ezekiel 2:7 Yahweh again speaks unto Ezekiel telling him to warn Israel concerning their treachery against Yahweh. Then in Ezekiel 3:15 we find that Ezekiel dwelt by the river Chebar for seven days bringing us to the 11th day of the fourth month, in the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity.

Now, in Ezekiel 4:1-11 he is given instructions by Yahweh to lay on his left side 390 days, and when he accomplishes this he is to then lay on his right side 40 days, equaling a total of 430 days.

The next time reference in Ezekiel is found in chapter 8:1 where we see that Ezekiel was sitting in his house in the sixth year (of king Jehoiachin's captivity) on the 5th day of the sixth month. This shows that Ezekiel had finished his instructions given in chapter 4 because he was *sitting* in his house not *laying* on either his left or right side. If Ezekiel was using a strictly solar calendar he could not have possibly obeyed Yahweh's instructions by the time reference given in Ezekiel 8:1. Here's why.

From the 11th day of the fourth month, in the fifth year of Jehoiachin (Ezekiel 1:1-2; 2:7; 3:15) to the 5th day of the sixth month in the sixth year of Jehoiachin (Ezekiel 8:1) **is only (at the most) 415 days on a strictly solar calendar** (that can only consist of 12 months maximum). If Ezekiel used this calendar, he could not have obeyed the instructions of Yahweh. However, **had this particular year been one consisting of 13 months (lunar-solar year)**, Ezekiel could have obeyed the instructions from Yahweh, because an additional 29 or 30 days are added with the extra month.

A 13 lunar month year would allot for 14 months in between the two time references in Ezekiel 1:1-2 and Ezekiel 8:1.  $14 \times 29.5 = 413$ . Adding the additional days of the 4th month (Ezek. 1:1-2 = 19 or 20 days) and the 6th month (Ezek. 8:1 = 5 days) gives us a total of 437 to 438 days, which is 8 days more than Ezekiel needed to obey Yahweh's instructions. So when he was sitting down in his house in 8:1, he had been finished with the instructions given to him for a week or so.

Keep in mind that Ezekiel 4:9-10 shows that Ezekiel was told to make enough bread to last him the entire 430 days. I have given the solar-only people the best possible scenario available, taking for granted that Ezekiel made all this bread in one day, i.e. the 11th day of the fourth month. If we factor in the making of twenty shekels of bread (Ezekiel 4:9-10) for each day, this further disproves the notion of the strictly solar calendar, because the time span would decrease for the solar-only adherents.

### **Point 8: Nature's Phenomenon**

This brings me to my last point. When you begin taking the time to watch the moon, how in the world can you dismiss the phenomenon of its coming and going and changing shape over and over?

It gives us the most natural time piece for a month, consisting of either 29 or 30 days. Why is it that even still the length of our modern months are approximately 30 days a piece? It stems from the pattern in the ancient, lunar calendar. You cannot look at the sun and know when to



begin and end a month. The sun never changes shape. Go out and look at the sun today, and then tomorrow, and then the next day. All three days will look the same. But when you start watching the moon you see a difference each night. Is that just a coincidence? I always tell

people that the sun speaks to us the beginning and ending of a day, but the moon tells us what day we are in. They are a husband and wife working together as a team.



The same can be said for the week. I haven't gotten much into the aspect of lunar weeks in this paper (that's not my intention or goal), but take some time to notice that in each cycle of the moon you have 4 quarters or 28 days of light. The moon quarters in approximately 7 day intervals (7.3). That leaves over either 1 or 2 days each "moonth," which account for the time period of renewal in the moon's course.

Nature is talking to us about these things each night. I believe Psalm 19:1-3 (KJV) speaks to this when it says that "The heavens declare the glory of the Almighty and the firmament sheweth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard." How do the heavens utter speech and show knowledge? The sun, moon, and stars. Notice here that it's not just by day that the heavens speak, but by night as well, as during the night we receive extensive knowledge by observing the moon and the stars.

Nature teaches us these things through the moon. How can we just walk past it? We may choose to ignore the moon, not listening to what she says, but it is not wise to ignore your mother's instruction (Proverbs 1:8; 6:20). There may be a gem here we have missed. Honoring our father and mother can be seen not only as our parents on the earth, but the

father (sun) and mother (moon) Yahweh has placed in the sky to tell time.

### **What About the Book of Jubilees?**

Some people attempt to use the book of Jubilees to either teach (1) a solar-only calendar or (2) that the moon is not included in calculating vital aspects of the Scriptural, yearly cycle.

I'm not convinced the Jubilees is an inspired book of Sacred Scripture. Most churches throughout history have not accepted it as Scripture, and it is not found in the earliest manuscripts we have of the Septuagint. There is one church (Ethiopian Orthodox) who has retained it in their faith's Canon, but that's it. Regardless, the book was found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, so it was read during the late B.C. era.

If Jubilees is not Sacred Scripture, we can still learn from reading it like we learn from reading many Hebraic, historical writings. We learn from reading what other Bible students believe. I always enjoy reading commentaries on Scripture, because I realize I'm not the only person in history who studies the Bible and comes to conclusions. We do ourselves a disservice when we only read the Bible; it's arrogant and self-centered. It's acting like we are holier than everyone else, and no one else gets to use their brain and have an opinion after reading and studying. It's best to listen to all people and hear out all angles. We can come to our own conclusions, but in a multitude of council there is safety.

Jubilees is most likely the work of a second-temple period Hebrew, so it gives us insight into what this person (and others) believed during that time. We can learn from it, and there are parts of it that are true and connected with Scripture, I just don't believe it carries the weight of books like Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. It's similar to reading the works of Philo and Josephus (who often spoke of the same occurrences as the Pentateuch). They were highly intelligent Israelites, and we can learn from both of them, but they are not Sacred Scripture.

So why do people use Jubilees to discount the moon in the calendar? It stems mainly from some of the early chapters in the book. In chapter 2 we read the following:

(7) And on the fourth day he made the sun and moon and stars and placed them in the firmament of heaven that they should shine over the earth and to rule over day and night and to divide between night and day and between darkness and light.

(8) And God established **the sun** as a great sign over the earth and for days and for sabbaths and for months and for festivals and for years and for jubilees and for all seasons of the years.

(9) And he shall divide between light and darkness and for prosperity that all things that sprout and grow on earth may prosper.

(10) These three kinds God made on the fourth day.

You can see the parallels with Genesis 1:14-19 which speaks of the greater and lesser light along with the stars. All three are mentioned here in Jubilees 2:7, 10. The contention by the Solar Calendar position is in verse 8 where it says “God established the sun,” and goes on to mention times the sun determines

In my first reading through Jubilees I dismissed this section as error. I knew that Genesis 1:14-19 established both the sun and moon as time-keeping devices, saying “let them” (plural) be for signs, seasons, days, and years. The more I meditated on this chapter in Jubilees, along with the Holy Bible, I saw how Jubilees could possibly be in harmony with Scripture, but worded something differently, centering in on the sun’s role in the calendar (which I believe in).

Does the fact that Jubilees 2:8 says the sun is for days, sabbaths, months, etc. negate the moon’s role? Well, if we say that it absolutely does then are we going to say that Psalm 104:19 dismisses the sun’s role in the holy appointments? That Psalm says “He (Yahweh) appointed the moon for seasons (moedim = holy feasts).” It goes on to say “the sun knows when to set” (WEB), but it does not link the sun with setting the

appointments. Of course Psalm 104:19 is accurate, but it cannot contradict Genesis 1:14-19 that assigns both the sun and moon to the moedim/seasons/appointments. Just as Psalm 104:19 mentions the sun in passing, Jubilees 2:7 mentions the moon and stars in passing, so neither text has to be negating any of the heavenly lights. Jubilees could just be centering in on the sun's role in the calendar, and if this was all that Jubilees said, I could go with this understanding. But, I think there is more to it than that. I'll say here that while the calendar presented in the book of Jubilees may not align with the calendar I've presented in this paper, I don't believe Jubilees 2 contradicts the Torah, no matter what the original intent of the author was.

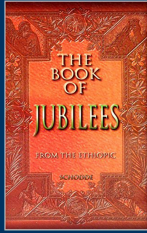
I found a bigger obstacle than this in Jubilees 6 where a disorder in the calendar is mentioned. Jubilees 6:29 speaks of the year being complete in 364 days. This is odd to me because we can count in real time a solar year and it comes out to about 365 days, not 364. More exactly, there are 356.25 days in a solar year, and this is why our modern Gregorian Calendar adds a day at the end of February roughly every 4 years (called a leap year). Originally, a solar year was from spring back to spring, marked by the spring equinox. You can calculate this your self by finding the spring equinox and then just counting the days; you don't even have to go by anyone's calendar. When you roll back around to the spring equinox again, you will have a little more than 365 days.

It seems that the 364 days was chosen by the author of Jubilees due to the number 7 being divisible into 364. 7 goes into 364 a total of 52 times, producing exactly 52 weeks in the year. Stay with me here.

On first glance, it looks like the Jubilees calendar recognizes 4 new moon days as not being counted in with the months of the year. Jubilees 6:21 speaks of these as the new moons in the 1st, 4th, 7th, and 10th months, and calls them "the days of remembrance and the days of the festivals in the four divisions of the year." (Jubilees 6:21) Now comes the tricky part. I am reading an English translation of the book of Jubilees that says "new moon," but the context in Jubilees is the head of particular months, and the months presented are **solar** months of 30 days

each. So while 4 “new moon” days are sanctified in Jubilees, the original author is probably not speaking of the head days of lunar months, but rather the head days of solar months - the 4 turning points in the year before each season: spring equinox, summer solstice, fall equinox, winter solstice. The author is saying that each of these turning points constitute a special day that is not counted in with the 30 day solar months, but is set aside as a marker for each season of the year.

Jubilees 6:27 says that 13 sabbaths belong to each of these 4 divisions.  $13 \times 4 = 52$ . So it looks like these new month days of remembrance (recalling events in the life of Noah) were counted in with the week, but not counted in with the 12 solar months. They couldn't be counted in with the months because 12 solar months of 30 days each only comes to 360 days, not 364.



364 day year  
52 weeks of 7 days

12 solar months, 30 days each

12x30=360 / Why 364?  
4 “head of month” days  $91 \times 4 = 364$

1	+	90	=	91
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Head Day: Months 1, 2, 3  
Head Day: Months 4, 5, 6  
Head Day: Months 7, 8, 9  
Head Day: Months 10, 11, 12

What about the extra 1.25 days in the year? I don't know what this particular author or group of people did with that extra time, but it had to fall into play somewhere, because it exists whether they wanted it to or not. If you minus 1.25 days from your solar calendar each year, the beginning of the year would slowly fall back a little more than a day each year. My guess is they just let a day go by at the end of the year and didn't count it as anything, because if nothing was done in let's say 100 years time, the new year would be taking place in autumn rather than spring.

Moving along... Jubilees 6:32, 34-35 says this: “And all the children of Israel will forget and will not find the paths of the years, and will forget the new moon and the sabbaths and the festivals, and in all

the order of the years they will err... (34) And there will be those who will make observations of the moon, for this one corrupts the stated times and come out earlier each year by ten days. (35) And in this way they will corrupt the years and will observe a wrong day as the day of testimony and a corrupted festival day, and everyone one will mix holy days with unclean ones and unclean with holy; for they will err as to months and sabbaths and festivals and jubilees."

Verse 34 is centered in on and pushed by the solar-only calendar proponents, especially when they talk to someone like me who places the moon in a key role in Yahweh's calendar. I do make observations of the moon, and the moon does come out earlier than the sun, by an actual 11.25 days each year (not 10 as this author says). Jubilees gets the 10 days by subtracting 354 from 364. It teaches there are 364 days in a solar year, and when you subtract the 354 days in the lunar year (of 12 moons) you get 10 left over. It should actually be 365.25 minus 354 if we are going to be honest with what takes place in the heavens.

So what is Jubilees teaching here? Is the author teaching against using the moon in calculating the calendar? I believe that is the most probable understanding, and if that is the case it shows that there was more than one calendar followed in antiquity by the Hebrews. We have to come to grips with the fact that not everyone agreed on everything back then, just as people who follow Yahweh don't always agree today.

It is possible that the author could be speaking of people who use *only* the moon in counting the years, like the Islamic faith. Since the lunar year is shorter than the solar year, to only observe the moon's cycle would lead one to begin the year sooner and sooner each time it rolled around. Your year would consist of 12 lunar months of 354 days total, and that's 11 days (or 10 in Jubilees) shorter each time. You'd eventually begin your year in what we now call February, January, December, November, October, until it lapsed completely back around to spring. It goes back to what I dealt with in the section on the 13th moon coming

into play a little more than every 3rd year in order to keep the seasons in line.

The more I study and meditate on the calendar presented in the book of Jubilees, the more I think the solar only calendar people are correct in their interpretation of the book. I think it presents a calendar that dismisses the moon entirely in calculating the years, months, weeks, days, and holy appointments. I think there were a group of people that interpreted the Torah differently than others, and I disagree with their interpretation. I believe the author of Jubilees contradicted what is taught in the Law and the Prophets.

I'm okay with admitting that Jubilees teaches a different, solar-only calendar. I can glean from Jubilees, and even recognize parts of it as legit truth without believing it is without error in every verse and practice. The author of Jubilees certainly knew of the moon's course (as he mentions it), but it can be read to stop at that. I'm not comfortable with dismissing all of the Scriptural and historical evidence I've presented in this paper, that the moon was used in calculating the some key aspects of the calendar.

One more thing before I move on - Jubilees 6:36 says, "And on this account I command thee and testify to thee that thou shouldst testify to them, for after thy death thy children will corrupt, so that they make a year only 364 days, and on this account they will err as to new moons and sabbaths and fixed times and festivals and will ever eat blood with all kinds of flesh."

This seems to be self-contradictory with Jubilees 6:27-30 which applies the number 364 to a proper year's length. One verse says it's proper while the other says it is corrupt. At this point in my studies, I'm not sure how to reconcile these two statements.

## **CONCLUSION**

I believe the best calendar position is to accept the two great lights Yahweh ordained in Genesis. Many people say that the heathens used

the moon in their calendar so it is not to be used. This is absurd argumentation seeing many heathen nations use or used the sun in their calendar as well; some used a strictly solar calendar.

In my studies I've learned that every single nation or civilization in antiquity used the heavenly lights somehow for their time pieces, because that's all there was to use. Without the lights in the heavens, their cycles, pivot points, conjunctions, etc. time would not even exist. But the fact is: the sun and the moon were first used by Yahweh for His calendar. If heathens take the originally pure time pieces of Yahweh and corrupt them that is their problem, not mine or yours. We must use the road map Yahweh has given us in His Scriptures and learn to love Yahweh's time-pieces; both the sun and the moon.

May Yahweh bless you for studying His Word...  
~Matthew Janzen (3.28.20)