

How Holy is the New Moon?

*Taking a look at what the Scriptures say in regards
to keeping and celebrating the day of the New Moon.*

Ministers of the New Covenant | Conyers, GA

How Holy is the New Moon?

Matthew Janzen | 7.2011

This study has been written in hopes of showing the reader from Scripture that the day of the New Moon is to be kept as a sacred day by the people of the Most High. I have mentioned the New Moon to several people over the past 12 years since I began to celebrate it and the majority of the time I receive an odd look from the faces of others. One woman told me that it sounded like I was wrapped up in astrology. Hopefully, by the end of this article you will be able to see the Scriptural support for the New Moon and begin to put it into practice in your own life.

In Scripture, the New Moon is *not* categorized with the six working days.

1 "This is what the Lord Yahweh says: The gate of the inner court that faces east must be closed during the six days of work, but it will be opened on the Sabbath day and opened on the day of the New Moon. 2 The prince should enter from the outside by way of the gate's portico and stand at the doorpost of the gate while the priests sacrifice his burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. He will bow in worship at the threshold of the gate and then depart, but the gate must not be closed until evening. 3 The people of the land will also bow in worship before Yahweh at the entrance of that gate on the Sabbaths and New Moons. (Ezekiel 46:1-3)

Here in the book of Ezekiel is strong evidence that the New Moon is *not* one of the six working days. Not only did the holy prophet Ezekiel understand the New Moon as a day of worship, but so did the prophet Isaiah (we will consider his writings shortly). Two points should be considered. *First*, the only place they could obtain their belief concerning the New Moon was from Yahweh through previous revelation. In other words, they understood the New Moon to be a day of worship by reading Yahweh's instructions in the current Scriptures of their time.¹ *Second*, to dispute with what each of these prophets very plainly declared, in each of their respective books, is actually not disputing with them at all, but it is essentially disputing with Yahweh Almighty. Yahweh was doing the actual speaking in both Ezekiel and Isaiah. Both carry with them a "this is what Yahweh says," and the Scriptures are firm in the fact that the prophets spoke not by their own will, but by the inspiration of Yahweh's Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:19-21). Instead of using our finite minds and saying, "I find nothing in the law commanding us to keep the New Moon holy," we should go with the inspired understanding of Ezekiel and Isaiah, because we certainly know that

¹ It is true that before revelation from Yahweh was written down it had to be orally transmitted by Yahweh to His servants here on the earth. However, we do know that from early times portions of the Scriptures began to be written down. Deuteronomy 31:10-13 shows that Moses wrote down the entire law that Yahweh gave to Israel and this law was to be read during the Festival of Booths in the Sabbatical year. We also know that Daniel, even in Babylonian captivity, had the writings of the prophet Jeremiah to read (Daniel 9:1-3).

Yahweh gave them an accurate knowledge of the New Moon. What exactly did the prophet Isaiah say concerning the New Moon?

22 "For just as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, will endure before Me," this is Yahweh's declaration, "so your offspring and your name will endure. 23 All mankind will come to worship Me from one New Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another," says Yahweh. (Isaiah 66:22-23)

The saved of Yahweh will worship before Him on every New Moon and Sabbath. This is not merely the New Moon of the seventh month, which the ancient Jewish historian Philo specifies as the *sacred moon*,² but this is each and every New Moon throughout the year. As it says, "...from one New Moon to another." I believe we should take Yahweh's word on the issue.

I would also like to point out another mention of the New Moon by one of Yahweh's inspired prophets.

² In *The Works of Philo*, (translated by C.D. Yonge, Hendrickson Publishers, 1993, Fifth Printing 2000) Philo writes in his book *The Special Laws II – XI*. (41) "The eighth [festival] is the festival of the sacred moon, or the feast of trumpets." He also states in *The Special Laws II – XXXI*. (188) "Immediately after comes the festival of the sacred moon; in which it is the custom to play the trumpet in the temple at the same moment that the sacrifices are offered. From which practice this is called the true feast of trumpets..." In Philo's list of festivals this sacred moon is number eight in sequence. He distinguishes this festival from the ordinary festival of the New Moon in that he speaks of the festival of the New Moon as the third festival in *The Special Laws II – XI*. (41) paragraph 3 where he states: "The third [festival] is that which comes after the conjunction, which happens on the day of the New Moon in each month."

This mention is found in the prophetic book of Amos 8:4-6.

4 Hear this, you who trample on the needy and do away with the poor of the land, 5 asking, "When will the New Moon be over so we may sell grain, and the Sabbath, so we may market wheat? We can reduce the measure while increasing the price and cheat with dishonest scales. 6 We can buy the poor with silver and the needy for a pair of sandals and even sell the chaff!"³ (Amos 8:4-6)

Why was it that the wicked could not sell grain on the New Moon? Could it be because gainful employment or commerce was suspended on this day? I believe this to be the best possible interpretation. Those in Israel who observed the New Moons (monthly) and Sabbaths (weekly) would not purchase grain and wheat from the sly traders and markets on those days.⁴ This is how

³ Some have attempted to say that this was the 7th New Moon in the year, i.e. the Day of Shouting's (frequently referred to as the Feast of Trumpets). However, the passage does not say it was the Day of Shouting's, it states simply states that it was the New Moon. Leviticus 23:24, Numbers 29:1, Ezra 3:6, and Nehemiah 8:2 all refer to the Day of Shouting's by using the terminology "the first day of the seventh month" or "in the seventh month, on the first day of the month". The most logical way to understand the passage in Amos, is by understanding it according to the New Moon mentioned in Ezekiel 46:1-3, and Isaiah 66:22-23. Never is the Day of Shouting's identified by the simple phrase *rosh chodesh* (Hebrew for New Moon). Those in opposition may point to Amos as the sole mentioning of the day in this way, but the Amos passage is not one in which to base this on, as it is the passage under consideration and debate.

⁴ For those who understand the weekly Sabbath to be regulated by the moon it makes perfect sense for the traders of the land to be anxiously waiting

the New Moon was understood by the prophets. Although people have attempted to bypass the meaning of this verse, their understanding in no way parallels the understanding of the prophets. So here is a question you can ask yourself: would the greedy and wicked traders have wondered when the New Moon would be over, if they wished to sell a product to you?

Another passage which *may* indicate that the Israelites understood that Yahweh did not permit them to buy and sell on the New Moon can be found in Nehemiah 10:29-31.

29 join with their noble brothers and commit themselves with a sworn oath to follow the law of God given through God's servant Moses and to carefully obey all the commands, ordinances, and statutes of Yahweh our Lord.
30 We will not give our daughters in marriage to the surrounding peoples and will not take their daughters as wives for our sons.
31 When the surrounding peoples bring merchandise or any kind of grain to sell on the Sabbath day, we will not buy from them on the Sabbath or a holy day. We will also leave the land uncultivated in the seventh year and will cancel every debt.

Notice that the people of Israel covenanted to cease from buying anything not only on the Sabbath, but also on the "holy day." The words "holy day" in verse 31 are taken from

for the New Moon and Sabbath to be over. This is because the last Sabbath of the moon/month following the moon cycle is the 29th day of the moon which is then followed by the New Moon. This back-to-back day of no selling for the traders would have caused them to say or think, "When will these days be over with!"

two separate Hebrew words (*kodesh; yom*).

I believe we can conclude, when looking at the Scriptures in their entirety, that the New Moon is classified as a holy day, a day which is set apart and sanctified. That would mean the New Moon was one of the days Israel would not buy victuals on, and the passage in Amos is an example of the Israelites not purchasing such items on the New Moon. Based upon this Scriptural evidence, certain reference works conclude the following:

It is evident from the writings of the prophets and from post-Exilic documents that the New Moon was an important national festival. It was often called a feast along with the Sabbath (Psa. 81:3; Isa.1:13; Ezek. 46:1; Hos. 2:11), on which all business ceased (Amos 8:5), the pious Israelites waited on the prophets for edification (II Kings 4:23), many families and clans presented their annual thank offerings (I Sam. 20:6,29), social gatherings and feasting were indulged in (I Sam. 20:5,24)...⁵

The festive nature of the new moon is suggested by the two days of feasting hosted by Saul (1 Samuel 20:5, 18, 24-27), the rest from work (Amos 8:5, although not prescribed in the Pentateuch), and its description as a time of rejoicing (Num. 10:10). The common people seem to have regarded it as an occasion upon which to consult prophets (2 Kings 4:23). According to the latter prophets the day was

⁵ Unger's Bible Dictionary, page 352

subject to abuse (Isa. 1:13-14; Amos 8:5). In the eschaton the new moon and Sabbath would be redeemed to mark the times of universal praise (Isa. 66:23).⁶

The first day of the lunar month was observed as a holy day. In addition to the daily sacrifice there were offered two young bullocks, a ram and seven lambs of the first year as a burnt offering, with the proper meat offerings and drink offerings, and a kid as a sin offering (Nu 28:11-15). As on the Sabbath, trade and handicraft work were stopped (Am 8:5) and the temple was opened for public worship (Isa 66:23; Eze 46:3). The trumpets were blown at the offering of the special sacrifices for the day, as on the solemn festivals (Nu 10:10; Ps 81:3). It was an occasion for state banquets (1Sa 20:5-24). In later, if not in earlier, times fasting was intermitted at the new moons. Judith 8:6. The new moons are generally mentioned so as to show that they were regarded as a peculiar class of holy days, distinguished from the solemn feasts and the Sabbaths (1Ch 29:30; 2Ch 2:4; 8:13; 31; 3; Ezr 3:5; Ne 10:33; Eze 45:17). The seventh new moon of the religious year, being that of Tisri, commenced the civil year, and had a significance and rites of its own. It was a day of holy convocation. The religious observance of the day of the new moon may plainly be regarded as the consecration of a natural division of time.⁷

Based on a lunar calendar, Israel would celebrate the day with a festival. Like the Sabbath, no work was to be done (1 Sam. 20:5-6, 2 Kin. 4:23; Ezek. 46:3). The merchants eagerness for the day to end revealed their appetite for greed.⁸

New Moon in the Law⁹

In the book of Numbers 10 we find that Yahweh specifically instructed Moses on the making of two silver trumpets. These trumpets were to be for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps (Numbers 10:2). Yahweh then explicitly tells Moses that when they sounded with them (both trumpets) the entire congregation was to gather together for an assembly, but if only one trumpet was sounded, the elders or rulers alone were to approach Moses (Numbers 10:3-4).

⁸ *The MacArthur Study Bible*, NKJV, note on Amos 8:5.

⁹ While this study now ventures into the first five books of Scripture, often referred to as the Torah or the Pentateuch, two points should be centered in on. The first is that there is a stress in Scripture not just upon the law, but also upon the prophets. One example is where our Messiah stated in Matthew 5:17, "Do not think I came to destroy the law or the prophets." Those of us in the pro-Torah camp often stress to others that Yeshua's mission was not to come and destroy the law, but we sometimes miss the fact that He also mentions the prophets in the very same context, showing that the prophets of Yahweh held equal weight with the law of Moses, both speaking under the direction and inspiration of Yahweh. Secondly, one needs to be aware that the prophets and even the writings (Psalms, Proverbs, etc.) are also referred to as "the law" by both Yeshua in His ministry, and Paul in the Apostolic Scriptures. Yeshua refers to the book of Psalms as the law in John 10:34, and Paul refers to the prophet Isaiah as the law in 1 Corinthians 14:21. Therefore, after reading the prophets Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Amos we should recognize that we have just read part of Yahweh's law on the issue of the New Moon

⁶ *Eerdman's Bible Dictionary*, page 761

⁷ *Smiths Bible Dictionary*, "New Moon"

An interesting fact to point out is that *two trumpets* were to be blown on the day of the New Moon in addition to the burnt offerings that were commanded to be offered by Yahweh.¹⁰ This is seen in Numbers 10:10.

10 You are to sound the trumpets over your burnt offerings and your fellowship sacrifices and on your joyous occasions, your appointed festivals, and the beginning of each of your months. They will serve as a reminder for you before your God: I am the Yahweh your God.

Two trumpets were blown on the day of the New Moon, thus an assembly was in order. I should point out here that there have been a few comments made concerning interpreting Numbers 10:10 in this fashion. It has been said that the sound of both trumpets on the New Moon was merely the command to blow them over the burnt offerings on that day, and not for the sake of calling the assembly. However, let's think about this for a moment. I do realize that the reference to the "*day of your gladness*" does not *necessarily* have to mean a festival occasion, but when it comes to the New Moon I believe this is the only way to understand this. The reason I choose to interpret this passage as a commanded assembly on the New Moon is because I see no other place in the Torah/Pentateuch where Ezekiel or Isaiah could have obtained the idea of

¹⁰ Special offerings were to be offered on the day of the New Moon in addition to the regular daily burnt offerings, per. Numbers 28:11-15. Every other day on which special offerings were made was an out-of-the-ordinary day for the Israelites; thus it was with the New Moon.

worship on a New Moon. They must have gotten it from somewhere so if not here, where? Must we have a "thou shalt worship on the New Moon," or can we learn by approved example, and this passage in Numbers, that worship was commanded on the day of the New Moon?¹¹

Because of my interpretation of Numbers 10:10 I've been accused of trying to add to the law of Yahweh. I am in no way trying to add anything to the law of Yahweh, I am just trying to make logical sense out of the passages which clearly indicate a worship service on the New Moon. If one chooses to ignore these passages, I can only wonder how they might one day answer Yahweh when He calls all flesh to worship Him on the New Moon, "But Yahweh, I can't find that in your Torah." Are you willing to "enlighten" Almighty Yahweh of this?

¹¹ This same reasoning of some which states, "I must have a thou shalt or thou shalt not" has led people to make absurd conclusions on other biblical doctrines or teachings. Such can be found in the case of wearing clothes. There are certain people and groups who find nothing wrong going topless or wearing next to nothing on their body. The Bible never comes right out and states, "Thou shalt wear clothes". The closest verse to come to a command is found in Exodus 28:42 which says, "And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach..." The same idea is found in Exodus 20:26. However, the clothing here is only commanded for the breeches, not the upper body where a shirt is commonly worn. I might also add that the breeches here were to only cover the loins to the thighs. What I am trying to press is this: we do learn from the Scriptures that male and female should wear clothing and not show their nakedness (Genesis 3:21). We learn this however, not from a direct, forceful command, but from an approved Scriptural example.

Association with Holy Times

We might also look to a few other passages which associate the New Moon with the annual festivals as well as the weekly festival. These can be found in the books of Isaiah and Hosea.

13 Stop bringing useless offerings. Your incense is detestable to Me. New Moons and Sabbaths, and the calling of solemn assemblies — I cannot stand iniquity with a festival. 14 I hate your New Moons and prescribed festivals. They have become a burden to Me; I am tired of putting up with them. (Isaiah 1:13-14)¹²

11 I will put an end to all her celebrations: her feasts, New

¹² This passage is sometimes erroneously interpreted as meaning false New Moons and Sabbaths. In other words, the ones they had concocted in opposition to Yahweh. The New Moons, Sabbaths, and festivals mentioned here are indeed Yahweh's feast, as even the phrase "the New Moons, and Sabbaths" is used. Verse 13 does not say YOUR New Moons, but only uses this terminology in the following verse (vs. 14). The context of the passage indicates that what had happened was that the people of Judah were transgressing many of Yahweh's commandments, but still attempting to appear before him at the appointed times along and offer sacrifices. Verse 17 of chapter 1 informs us that at least a few of the areas they could improve upon was in seeking judgment, relieving the oppressed, and taking proper care of the fatherless, and widow. This may be compared to the instance where Saul recovered the animals that were to be slain with the wicked (1 Samuel 15:15). Saul thought that these fine animals could be used in sacrifice to Yahweh, but he had instead broken the commandment of Yahweh spoken through the prophet Samuel. Samuel told Saul that obedience was better than sacrifice. This did not mean sacrifice was a bad thing; not at all. Yahweh delighted in burnt offerings and sacrifices (Genesis 8:21), and even commanded them (Exodus 20:24). However, a life of obedience must be given to Yahweh first and foremost, instead of merely trying to gain His approval with a sacrifice.

Moons, and Sabbaths — all her festivals. (Hosea 2:11)

In my previous studies to this, I had concluded that at least the passage in Isaiah was identifying the New Moon as one of the callings of the assembly. I felt that the phrase "the calling of assemblies" served to identify the celebrations of the New Moon and Sabbath. Whether or not this is entirely accurate is not really the point, I can see it both ways. Regardless, the New Moon in both texts is *associated with* annual feasts, and weekly feasts. This gives greater implication to the New Moon as a festival, rather than *merely* a beginning point for each month of the year. We see this time and time again throughout Scripture.

Let's look again to the book of Ezekiel 45:17 to show further how the New Moon is associated with other "commanded worship/no work" days.

17 Then the burnt offerings, grain offerings, and drink offerings for the festivals, New Moons, and Sabbaths — for all the appointed times of the house of Israel — will be the prince's responsibility. He will provide the sin offerings, grain offerings, burnt offerings, and fellowship offerings to make atonement on behalf of the house of Israel.

The phrase, "for all the appointed times of the house of Israel" could very well be identifying the feasts (yearly), New Moons (monthly) and Sabbaths (weekly). The phrase "appointed times" in this passage, is taken from the Hebrew word *moedim* which is defined by various Hebrew

lexicons as meaning "appointment, fixed time, season, festival, assembly, etc." The word is seen to be associated with both the sun and moon in Genesis 1:14-18 and Psalm 104:19.

Is there any reason why the phrase "in all the solemnities" could *not* be identifying the three sacred times just mentioned? What would be left? The words feasts, New Moons, and Sabbaths, as mentioned before, cover everything; the yearly, monthly, and weekly appointments.¹³ Whether or not this is true, this is still yet another passage *associating* the New Moon with the festivals of Yahweh. Another often overlooked passage concerning the New Moon is found in the book of 2 Kings 4:18-23.

18 The child grew and one day went out to his father and the harvesters. 19 Suddenly he complained to his father, "My head! My head!" His father told his servant, "Carry him to his mother." 20 So he picked him up and took him to his mother. The child sat on her lap until noon and then died. 21 Then she went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, shut him in, and left. 22 She summoned her husband and said, "Please send me one of the servants and one of the donkeys, so I can hurry to the man of God and then come back."

¹³ The Greek Septuagint text reads slightly different in this verse of Ezekiel 45:17. Notice the difference: "And through the prince shall be offered the whole-burnt-offerings and the meat-offerings, and the drink-offerings in the feasts, and at the New Moons, and on the Sabbaths, and in all the feasts of the house of Israel..." The addition of the emboldened word "and" leads one to believe that the phrase "all the solemnities" may refer to other appointed times. However, as I have stated, what would be left? Feasts, New Moons, and Sabbaths cover every solemnity of Israel.

23 But he said, "Why go to him today? It's not a New Moon or a Sabbath." She replied, "Everything is all right."

Here, the woman wanted to go and visit the man of Yahweh. Her husband asks why, seeing it was not the New Moon day or the Sabbath day. This shows that on New Moons and Sabbaths people generally consulted prophets or holy men. Commentator Albert Barnes correctly comments on this passage when he states:

New Moon—By the Law the first day of each month was to be kept holy. Offerings were appointed for such occasions Num. 28:11-15, and they were among the days on which the silver trumpets were to be blown Num 10:10; Ps. 81:3. Hence, "New Moons" are frequently joined with "Sabbaths" (see Isa. 1:13; Ezek. 45:17; Hos. 2:11; 1 Chr. 23:31).¹⁴

A modern Bible commentator makes these comments on 2 Kings 4:23.

The first day of the month and the seventh day of the week were both marked with special religious observances and rest from work (cf. Numbers 28:9-15). The husband implied that only on such dates would a person visit a prophet.¹⁵

This again shows what we know already from the rest of Scripture. The New Moon and Sabbath are separate from the six working days.

¹⁴ Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament - 2 Kings 4:23.

¹⁵ The MacArthur Study Bible, NKJV, 2 Kings 4:23

One final passage, associating the New Moon with the annual and weekly feasts, is found in the Apostolic Scriptures - Colossians 2:16.

Therefore, don't let anyone judge you in regard to food and drink or in the matter of a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day.

There is a digression of events mentioned here in regards to special times. We have the holy day(s), these were to be observed *yearly*. We have the New Moon(s), these were to be observed *monthly*. Then we have the Sabbath(s), with nothing left but the *weekly* observance.

This passage teaches us not to let anyone outside the body of Messiah, judge or condemn us for our regard towards the *special days* of Yahweh. One of these special days is the day of the New Moon. It would do us good to take heed to this command from the Apostle Paul.

The "How" of the New Moon

When studying Scripture we should be aware that we learn things not only by a direct "thou shalt" command, but also by approved Scriptural examples. In this study of the New Moon we have learned the following things by perusing the passages in Scripture which speak of a New Moon.

- It is to be a day of worship
- It is to be a day to consult an elder
- It is to be a day to refrain from gainful employment
- Yahweh's people will worship in the future on the New Moon

In addition to this we might add that a special meal may be in order on

the New Moon, this is evident in the account of I Samuel 20. We should also point out that there is an approved example where Israel indeed did come together in convocation on the New Moon in the eleventh Scriptural month.

3 In the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first of the month, Moses told the Israelites everything Yahweh had commanded him to say to them. (Deuteronomy 1:3)¹⁶

I should also point out this in closing: the New Moon does not carry the exact same restrictions as the weekly Sabbath. We see this to be the case in finding certain actions which took place on the New Moon, which would have been unlawful on Sabbath. These actions are as follows.

- Travel | Ezra 7:9
- Taking of a Census | Numbers 1:1-2
- Rearing up of the Tabernacle | Exodus 40:1-2

While certain actions could be done on New Moons that could not be done on Sabbaths, this does not decrease the amount of importance we have seen the Scriptures place on the day of the New Moon. All of Yahweh's appointments or Sabbaths do not have the exact same restrictions. For instance both the weekly Sabbath and the Day of Atonement are designated by the Hebrew word *shabbat* in Scripture (Exodus 16:23; Leviticus 23:32).

¹⁶ If you continue to read Deuteronomy, you will find that the majority of this book was a New Moon message delivered by Moses to Israel.

However the Day of Atonement restricts eating (Leviticus 23:37; Acts 27:9), whereas the Sabbath does not (Exodus 16). The different restrictions or requirements does not negate the fact that both times are holy, and are designated by Yahweh as *Sabbaths*. All of Yahweh's appointments are by extension Sabbaths, but there is technically only one primary Sabbath; the weekly Sabbath. As we have seen, the New Moon does in fact have certain requirements that are the same with the Sabbath. It can therefore fall under the *category* of Sabbaths.

Conclusion

Yahweh has blessed my family abundantly since we began to observe the New Moon according to Scripture. We have been ridiculed by some, but most response has been positive. We have also found that there are many students of Scripture who feel the same as us on this subject. I cannot with a clear conscience ignore the passages in Scripture indicating a distinction between the New Moon and the working days, and the association between the New Moon and the annual/weekly Sabbaths. Hopefully this article will bring further unity in the body of Messiah, rather than cause more division. My hope is for everyone to thoroughly study the subject through, laying aside all biases and previous beliefs.

Further Objections

There have been a few objections given to those who feel that followers of the Messiah should celebrate the New Moons as a special day to Yahweh. These arguments will now be answered to the best of my ability

that Yahweh has given me. More objections will be encountered, as is the case with any controversial topic. We should all keep an open mind, letting Scripture be our guide.

Objection 1

There is no record of a New Moon being celebrated prior to the days of Moses.

While this is a true statement, what does it prove? There is also no record of any person celebrating the weekly Sabbath day prior to Moses. The first instance where we have concrete record of Sabbath observance *by people* is found in the sixteenth chapter of Exodus. One may argue that the Sabbath was kept by Yahweh in the book of Genesis 2:2-3. However, this proves nothing as to its observance by humans. The case remains that there is not a single record until Exodus 16 showing that the Sabbath was celebrated by people. For one to not celebrate the New Moon because of this argument would only be consistent if one also did not celebrate the weekly Sabbath.

However let's examine the possibility of both scenarios' being accurate. What if the Sabbath and New Moon were not a part of Yahweh's law until the time of Moses, does this mean that they are not a part of Yahweh's law now?

Galatians 3:19 is sometimes incorrectly used to say that any law not in existence in the days prior to Moses has now been abolished under the New Covenant. However, the context of the third chapter of Galatians is teaching us that the law in question is the entire law written in tables of stone. Under the New

Covenant of Yahweh, the law is not merely written on tables of stone, but is also written upon Israel's hearts and minds (Hebrews 8:7-10).

We know of a surety that both the Sabbath and the New Moon were kept by the early assembly because of the passage in Colossians 2:16-17.

This passage urges believers in the Messiah to not let any man judge them in their respect to the holydays, New Moons, and Sabbaths. It was the false teachers of verses 4, 8, 18, and 22 that were imposing their judgment and tradition upon the items mentioned in verse 16. You must understand verse 16 within the context of these verses.

If the early believers in Messiah observed the Sabbath and New Moons as special days we ought to do the same today even though we may not have a written record of the observance of these days prior to the time of Moses.

Objection 2

From one New Moon to another in Isaiah 66:23 means from month to month.

I recently encountered someone who explained to me that they felt the passage of Isaiah 66:23 to be referring to months and weeks. In other words, from month to month and from week to week all flesh will worship before Yahweh in the new heavens and new earth. I do not accept such an interpretation. The passage at hand is specifically dealing with *worship*. Seeing that all through Scripture worship is shown to be done by Yahweh's people, to Almighty Yahweh, there is no reason for us to

see this being echoed by Yahweh again through the prophet Isaiah.

Even if this passage was to be translated "from month to month" (as does the Septuagint translation) the understanding would still be "on each New Moon." A similar construction is seen in Zechariah 14:16 where Scripture states, "*Then all the survivors from the nations that came against Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, Yahweh of Hosts, and to celebrate the Festival of Booths.*" Notice that the nations go up from "year to year" yet this does not mean they are constantly "going up" every day of the year. The meaning is that at a set time during the year (in this case the Feast of Booths) they are to go up to *worship*. The same holds true for Isaiah 66. At a set time each month and week (the New Moons and Sabbaths) all flesh comes to worship before Yahweh.

Objection 3

The New Moon in the book of Amos (8:5) should be translated month based on the Septuagint.

This objection is rather new to me and it has even been insinuated by some that I may have purposefully ignored the Septuagint text of Amos 8:5 (in my previous studies) because I knew it did damage to my position on the New Moon. I cannot help it if someone thinks this about me or not, all I can say is that I did not consider consulting the Septuagint text of this verse until it was pointed out by someone who does not observe the New Moon in the same fashion as myself.

This argument is related to the previous one on Isaiah 66:23. Both Isaiah 66:23 and Amos 8:5 in the Septuagint render the word as "month" rather than "New Moon." The actual Greek texts of both passages have the Greek word *mane* (month) rather than the Greek word *noumenia* (New Moon). The Greek language thus contains two different Greek words for month and New Moon while the Hebrew language uses one word (*chodesh*) that can either be understood as speaking of a whole month or specifically the first day of a month (New Moon).

However, what this argument fails to recognize is that the Greek language sometimes uses the words *mane* and *noumenia* interchangeably. Consider the following verses in the Septuagint:

And to be over all the whole burnt offerings that were offered up to the Lord on the sabbaths, and at the new moons (*noumenia*), and at the feasts, by number, according to the order given to them, continually before the Lord. (1 Chronicles 23:31, LXX)

Behold, I also his son am building a house to the name of the Lord my God, to consecrate it to him, to burn incense before him, and to offer shewbread continually, and to offer up whole burnt offerings continually morning and evening, and on the sabbaths, and at the new moons (*noumenia*), and at the feasts of the Lord our God: this is a perpetual statute for Israel. (2 Chronicles 2:4, LXX)

Both passages here are referring to the same basic subject; the offerings

that take place on the Sabbaths, New Moons, and annual Festivals. Both of the above texts use the Greek word *noumenia* (or a variation thereof). Now notice a parallel passage:

According to the daily rate, to offer up sacrifices according to the commandments of Moses, on the sabbaths, and at the new moons (*mane*), and at the feasts, three times in the year, at the feast of unleavened bread, and at the feast of weeks, and at the feast of tabernacles. (2 Chronicles 8:13, LXX)

Notice that the subject of all three passages is basically the same. The Sabbaths and annual Festivals are mentioned and the New Moons are sandwiched in between them. However, in 2 Chronicles 8:13 the Greek word translated as New Moons is actually the Greek word *mane* rather than the Greek word *noumenia*. This proves that the Greek Septuagint can use the word *mane* and still be referring to the special first day of a Scriptural month, and *not* to the entire month. Such is also the case with the Isaiah 66:23 passages I previously covered. Further evidence of these two words being interrelated is also seen in the fact that in the *Hebrew* calendar, months were determined by the cycle of the moon. Therefore every time the Greek Septuagint uses the word *mane* it is still referencing a month that was regulated by the cycle of the moon. We can even see this from the Greek New Testament writings. For example, James 5:17 speaks of Elijah praying earnestly that it would not rain, and for three years and six months (*mane*) it did not rain

on the land. What kind of months was James referencing here? It would have to be months determined by the moon seeing that James was specifically referring to the time of Elijah; the pre-exilic period of time. Clearly the Greek words *mane* and *noumenia* are interrelated in Scripture even though they are different words in the Greek language. Should we see the Amos 8:5 text as speaking of an entire month or a special day? I believe that the context of the passage forces us to believe that a particular day is under consideration. The reason here is because there does not exist a month in the Hebrew calendar that suspends buying and selling, i.e. commercial, gainful activity. Attempts have been made to say this is referring to the seventh month on Yahweh's calendar (by appealing to *Today's English Version of the Bible*, and *the Living Bible*) but these attempts fall very short because the seventh Hebrew calendar month contains many days wherein buying and selling are allowed. Counting all the Sabbaths and the New Moon of the seventh month give us a total of 6 days that buying and selling are prohibited. This also gives us a total of 23 days (subtracting 6 from 29) where buying and selling would be lawfully allowed. There is nothing - *zero evidence* - in Scripture that would even begin to imply that the faithful Israelites in Amos' day ceased from buying from others for the entire seventh month of their calendar. The greedy traders in the land would have never asked the question, "When will this entire month be over with so we can sell grain?" because they could have sold grain on 23 days of that month! However, if

they are asking about specific days (New Moon and Sabbath) it makes perfect sense because the Israelites would not have bought seeing such as a violation of the teachings of Yahweh throughout the Scriptures.¹⁷

¹⁷ For more information on the New Moon as well as many other topics in Scripture please visit our website at ministersnewcovenant.org