

## Crescent Moon: Which Crescent?

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*"Cry aloud, spare not; Lift up your voice like a trumpet; Tell My people their transgression, And the house of Jacob their sins. . . . Those from among you shall build the old waste places; You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In. If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, From doing your pleasure on My holy day, And call the Sabbath a delight . . . .*

*(Isaiah 58:1, 12-13, NKJV)*

The process of digging for truths long buried or forgotten under the rubble of error and tradition is a time-consuming process. It calls for much patience and careful, diligent searching for the gems of truth scattered abroad. Differences of opinion on some particulars are inevitable as the precious jewels of truth are found, dusted off, and restored to their rightful setting. Because the restoration of truth is a *process*, forbearance and Christian courtesy should be extended to all, allowing each individual the religious liberty to worship as convicted by his or her study.

Among those who wish to honor the Creator by worshipping on His holy Sabbath day, calculated by the divinely designed calendar of Creation, there are five basic approaches for determining the beginning of the month. These are:

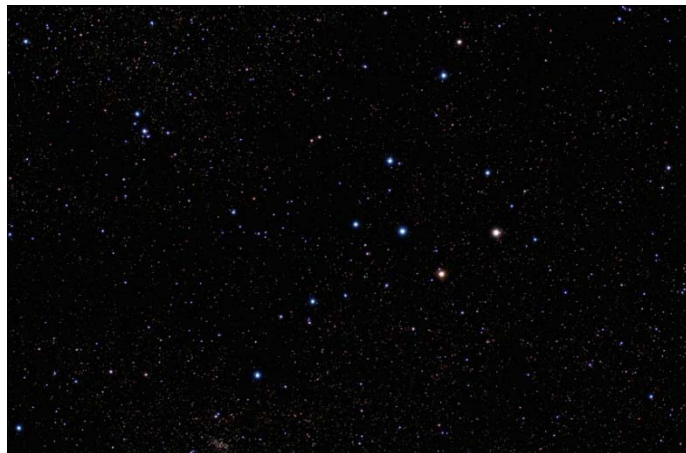
1. Conjunction
2. First Visible Crescent
3. Horned Crescent
4. Full Moon
5. Jerusalem Time

There is a certain amount of overlap among the various methods as some who use Jerusalem Time may figure it by conjunction, and others by the visible crescent. Understanding the principles on which the various methods are based is important to having a solid foundation for one's own beliefs and is helpful when sharing with others.

The calendar application designed for World's Last Chance can be used for any of these methods, but New Moons, Sabbaths and annual feasts are figured from first visible crescent.

## Conjunction

One of the most widely used methods for determining the start of the lunar month is to use conjunction, or the "black/dark" moon. "Conjunction" occurs when the earth, moon and sun are in alignment. Because the moon is between the earth and the sun when in conjunction, the moon cannot be seen on earth because the illuminated half is facing the sun, away from earth. Many Gregorian calendars will give the primary phases of the moon and these can be used for gaining an idea of when New Moon day comes, regardless of the method used. However, it is important to understand that the "New Moon" as given on Gregorian calendars and in almanacs is what is known as the "astronomical new moon" or, in other words, conjunction.



At conjunction, the moon rises at dawn with the sun, so no moon can be seen that night.

Those who believe New Moon day should occur at conjunction have various ways of calculating conjunction. Some watch for the last visible crescent, and then begin their New Moon day when they can see *no* moon in the sky. Others watch for the first slender crescent and then proclaim the next day as being the first day of the work week. The main problem with the latter approach, is that it makes New Moon retroactive (being declared New Moon day after it has already past.) Such a technique observes "New Moon" as a two-day observance on 30-day months, or roughly half of the time.

Many sincere believers calculate the beginning of their months using conjunction. Two of the main arguments used in favor of this method are:

- The seventh-day Sabbath aligns very nicely with the four phases of the moon: First Quarter, Full Moon, Second Quarter, Conjunction (Black moon).
- A conversation recorded in 1 Samuel 20 where both David and Jonathan both acknowledge that the next day is New Moon.

## Alignment with Lunar Phases

It is true that when conjunction begins the lunar month, the month's four Sabbaths fall precisely on the days following the four phases of the moon. However, this is not conclusive evidence that the Creator intended conjunction to be the starting point of His months (lunations). Lunar months are commonly said to be 29.5 days long. Technically, they are a little bit longer than that: 29.530589 days which is 29 days, 12 hours, 44 minutes and 3 seconds long.

That amount of time is divided up into the four weeks which comprise each lunation. Each week is 7.4 (or 7.38264725) days long. That fraction of time left over at the end of each week accrues during the month. This means that at the end of the second week, 14.8 days have passed. At the end of the third week, 22.2 days have passed.



The fact is, nothing in the Creator's calendar, taken individually, perfectly aligns with any other individual element within the calendar. Lunar years are 354.367068 days long and do not perfectly align with the solar years of 365.242190 days.

All time must be accounted for - even the

fraction left over. Thus, the Gregorian calendar has a leap day once every four years most of the time. (Once every few hundred years, there will be 8 years between leap days. The last time this occurred was in 1900. The time previous to that was 1600.) The Creator's calendar is so precise that even these fractional amounts of time are regulated by the moon. Thus, seemingly "perfect" alignment of the Sabbath with the four primary phases of the moon is not conclusive evidence that New Moon should be kept from conjunction.

## 1 Samuel 20

In this chapter, Jonathan and David are planning a way whereby they may know King Saul's intentions toward David. During the course of the conversation, first David (verse 5) and later Jonathan (verse 18) state "Tomorrow is the New Moon." Those who believe New Moon coincides with conjunction claim that only when New Moon occurs on conjunction can such a definite statement be made. However, this is not true. Conjunction can span up to three nights of no moon. Because Hebrew months never had more than 30 days, any method of figuring the start of the month, when consistently used, will allow such assurance of when the New Moon occurs.

Heaven did not deem it necessary to provide a single chapter or even verse that explicitly explained the true calendar. Under such circumstances, the seeker for truth must rely upon the weight of evidence. Where Scripture is silent, historical records that do not contradict the Bible can be helpful. The overwhelming weight of evidence indicates that using conjunction for New Moon is a recent development, not known or used in Bible times.

## First Visible Crescent

World's Last Chance calendar application uses the first visible crescent of the moon for beginning the lunar month. The beauty of the Creator's calendar is that *anyone* can use the calendar strictly by *observation*. Once the first visible crescent is seen, the next day is New Moon day. While a certain amount of calculation is necessary for those who live where there are



several months of night in winter and several months of light in summer, this can

easily be done because of the dependability of the moon's movements. Even its "anomalies" can be calculated with great accuracy!

The accumulated weight of historical evidence supports beginning the months with the sighting of the crescent moon and not the "black" moon (conjunction) when no moon can be seen.

Sir Isaac Newton is most widely known for his scientific discourses. What is less well-known is that he was a theologian who wrote more on religion than any other topic. Regarding the beginning of the Jewish lunar month, he stated:

The month began on the new moon . . . not at the true conjunction, but at the first appearance of the new moon: for the Jews referred all the time of the silent moon, as they phrased it, that is, of the moon's disappearing, to the old moon; and because the first appearance might be about 18 hours after the true conjunction, they therefore began their month from the sixth hour at evening, that is, at sunset next after the 18th hour from conjunction. And this rule they called Jah . . .

I know that Epiphanius tells us, if some interpret his words rightly, that the Jews used a vicious cycle, and thereby anticipated the new moons by two days [that is, making the first of the month fall on the conjunction]. But this surely he spake not as a witness, for he neither understood astronomy nor Rabinnical learning, but as arguing from his erroneous hypothesis about the time of the Passion. For the Jews did not anticipate, but postpone their months . . . lest they should celebrate the new moon before there was any. And the Jews still keep a tradition in their books, that the Sanhedrim [*sic*] used diligently to define the new moons *by sight*: sending witnesses into the mountainous places, and examining them about the moon's appearing . . . (Isaac Newton, *Observations upon the Prophecies*," London, 1733, p. 161 as quoted in "Sir Isaac Newton on the Jewish Calendar, Year of the Crucifixion.")

The Karaites (or Caraites) were a medieval sect of Hebraic Jews who rejected the "fixed" calendar still in use by modern Rabbinical Jews.

The tenth century controversy between the Babylonian schools and those of Palestine over the calculation of the Calendar, aroused the Karaites, and other sectaries, who refused to acknowledge the existing Rabbinical form of Calendar. The Karaites declared for observation of the moon for the determining of the new moon day, and the state of the barley-crop for the position of the first month in the spring. ("The Karaites," Grace Amadon Collection, Andrews University, underline in original, italics supplied.)

It should be understood that the Karaite/Caraites Jews of today no longer abide strictly by the original calendar either. Beginning in 1780, the Karaites began a series of compromises with the rabbinical calendar. Today, they also follow a fixed calendar.

The great beauty of this calendar and mode of reckoning the beginning of the month is found in its simplicity. Anyone anywhere can know that they are looking at the New Moon when they see the first crescent moon in the Western sky after sunset. While it is true that some people on earth will worship on one Gregorian date and others on another, this should be no deterrent. Earth is a round planet and the Sabbath was created for a round world.



Furthermore, it is only the International Date line that arbitrarily waltzes back and forth across the Pacific that gives the appearance of some people worshipping on one day and others on the next day. When the luni-solar calendar is applied to Gregorian dates, New Moon day can have two Gregorian dates because of the International Dateline. However, when the Creation Calendar is used by itself, there is no discrepancy. Abib 1 is the same in Jerusalem as it is in Mexico. Only when the two different methods of measuring

time are compared, does it have the appearance of two different dates.

Historian and chronologist Joseph Scaliger stated that the Hebrew calendar was "the most ingenious and most elegant of all systems of chronology." (De Emendatione Temporum, p. 108.) This beautiful, precise and extremely accurate method of time-keeping is the Creator's divinely designed calendar and it is why WLC has created a calendar that uses the first visible crescent for declaring New Moon day. Anyone, anywhere can know and follow Yahuwah's calendar.

## Horned Crescent

By definition, the "horned" crescent is a slightly older moon. Depending upon the time at which conjunction occurs, the first visible crescent may be a horned crescent, but not always. When the first visible crescent is a thin thread, this is not

accepted as the horned crescent that begins the month. Rather, the older moon of the second night after conjunction is the New Moon which begins the month.

There are some historical references to the High Priest having on the walls of his quarters at the temple the crescent moon which he used when examining the witnesses, so he could determine the height of the moon from the horizon, its tilt and size.

Using a horned crescent makes it very easy to calculate, because the horned crescent is never looked for until the second night after conjunction. The third day after conjunction is then accepted as New Moon day. However, using the horned crescent requires a knowledge of the horned crescent and a willingness to wait for it past the first visible crescent which sometimes appears before the moon is old enough to present a horned crescent.

## Full Moon

People who begin their months on the full moon base this practice on a text found in the New King James Version of the Psalms:

*"Blow the trumpet at the time of the New Moon, At the full moon, on our solemn feast day." (Psalm 81:3, NKJV)*

The King James Version renders the text: "Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day." (Psalm 81:3)



The words translated "time appointed" come from the Hebrew word *keçeh* which means "fullness or the full moon" which is full in the middle of the lunation. The belief that New Moon falls on the full moon is based strictly on the New King James Version's mistranslation of the text.

The "appointed time" mentioned in Psalm 81:3 is a time appointed for worship, but it is not the New Moon. It is a different time appointed for worship that comes in the middle of the month. Specifically, this text is referring to an annual feast which



occurs in the middle of the month. In the first month, Abib, Passover occurs on the 14th with the first day of Feast of Unleavened Bread on the 15th. These sacred events mark the beginning of the religious year: the cycle of annual feasts.

Seven months later, on New Moon day of the seventh month, occurs "Feast of Trumpets" when trumpets were literally blown to announce the approach of Day of Atonement, the holiest of the annual feasts. Feast of Tabernacles begins on the 15th of the seventh month. The fifteenth is not only a weekly seventh-day Sabbath but also the middle of the month when the moon is full.

Various other translations help to clarify the correct meaning of this text:

- "Sound the ram's horn at the new moon, and when the moon is full, at the day of our feast." (New International Version)
- "Blow the trumpet at the new moon, and in the fullness of our festival day." (Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia)
- "Sound the shofar at Rosh-Hodesh [new moon], and at full moon for the pilgrim feast." (Complete Jewish Bible)
- "Sound the ram's horn at the New Moon, and when the moon is full, on the day of our Feast." (NIV Hebrew-English Old Testament)
- "Sound the trumpet at the new moon, and at the day of our festival, when the moon is full." (Psalms for Today: A New Translation from the Hebrew into Current English)

In these Hebrew-based translations, it is easy to see that New Moon is a day that is different from the Full Moon, which occurs later in the month. The various translations of Psalm 81:3 which show that New Moon and the day of the full moon are two different days is a good illustration of why no sound Biblical doctrine rests upon a single verse of Scripture. Rather, all of the evidence needs to be gathered together and examined. The interpretation which carries the weight of evidence without contradiction is the true interpretation.

## Jerusalem Time

The belief that New Moon day should be determined by Jerusalem's new moon is from the fact that Jerusalem was the holy city, set apart for Yahuwah's glory. This practice is supported by texts such as the following:



But unto the place which . . . [Yahuwah your Elohim] shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come: And thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, . . . . And there ye shall eat before . . . [Yahuwah your Elohim], and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein . . . [Yahuwah your Elohim] hath blessed thee. (Deuteronomy 12:5-7, KJV)

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of . . . [Yahuwah], to the house of the . . . [Elohim] of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of . . . [Yahuwah] from Jerusalem. (Isaiah 2:3, KJV)

Scripture states that in the earth made new, everyone will gather together to worship the Creator on Sabbaths and New Moons.

"And it shall come to pass, That from one New Moon to another, And from one Sabbath to another, All flesh shall come to worship before Me," says . . . [Yahuwah]. (Isaiah 66:23, NKJV)

It is possible that figuring the New Moon in the new earth will be from Jerusalem. At the very least, those who go to worship, will worship on the day that it is Sabbath at that location, as people today who cross the international date line worship on the Gregorian date as it falls at that location.

One benefit from worshipping by Jerusalem's new moon is that it unites the world on the same day of worship. This is also how modern Jews calculate their annual feasts. They look for the crescent moon from the Temple Mount.

The Jews set aside the Biblical calendar in the 4th century C.E. and no longer use it for the weekly Sabbath. However, they use a modified version for calculating the annual feasts.

Modern Jewish calendation is based solely on calculation, using a point of conjunction from which to calculate when they expect to observe the first crescent:

The "molad" is the conjunction between the sun and the moon, when the moon is centered between the sun and the earth, and cannot be seen. However, the Torah says that... the moon... [must be] spotted by witnesses, and this only occurs hours later, at the beginning of the moon's first phase. This stage is referred to as "chiduso shel lavana" - the renewal of the moon's cycle. . . . Today, the calculation determines the (average) molad, not the actual crescent. (Rabbi Yaakov Bernstein, Torah.org.)

Maimonides and most other Jewish chronologers agree that the modern Jewish calendar is based upon the "mean motions of the sun and moon, *the true [calendar] having been set aside.*" (Maimonides, *Kiddusch Ha-hodesch*, Tr. Mahler, Wein, 1889, emphasis supplied, cited in *Calendar Fraud*, p. 9 by eLaine Vornholt & Laura Lee Vornholt-Jones.)

Having set aside the ancient calendar of Creation, and observing Sabbath on



Saturday has necessitated the adoption of *Dechiyot*, or four rules of postponement. These rules are not necessary when the original calendar is used because Yahuwah designed the moon's anomalies to harmonize the divine time-keeping system. If for no other reason, this alone should be convincing evidence the modern Jews should not be held up as The Authority

for when to worship.

The problem with using Jerusalem time for finding New Moon is that it requires access to the Internet or some other modern means of communication to learn when the New Moon was observed at Jerusalem. The Creator designed a precise

time-keeping system that allows each person, no matter where he is on the earth, to observe for himself the New Moon. This is the beauty of the divine calendar.

- For more on why WLC does not use Jerusalem time, click [here](#).

## FIRST VISIBLE CRESCENT

### Northern Hemisphere



**Above the equator, the new crescent follows the curvature of a D.**

### Southern Hemisphere



**Below the equator, the new crescent follows the curvature of a C.**