# God's Calendar

Man-devised calendars have been producing problems ever since first conceived. The year 2000AD, for example, is alternatively the year 2544 to the Buddhist, 6236 to the ancient Egyptian, 5761 to the Jew, and the 'Year of the Dragon' to the Chinese. In the history of the commonly accepted Western calendar (the Gregorian from the Julian), days have been invented, as by Julius Cæsar[1] when the need of an additional eighty days was perceived; days have been lost, as by the then pope, Gregory XIII, when ten days were deleted;[2] and days have been moved, as when Augustus purloined a day from February to ensure that his month, August, had the same number of days, thirty-one, as Julius Cæsar's month of July.

## Judaic calendar

One calendar system that has had much claimed for it is the Hebrew calendar, frequently portrayed, especially by the Jews, as 'God's calendar.' Much has been written on its complexities and adjustments. Despite the claimed provenance, this calendar is hereinafter referred to as the Judaic calendar, for that is what it is: largely a product of rabbinic Judaism.[3] Questions surrounding the validity of this calendar, including its nineteen-year cycle[4] its losing one day every two hundred and sixteen years or so[5] against the solar cycle; its postponements;[6] its seven thirteen-month leap years in each cycle; and all the rest, have served in the past as rich propagation for a wide variety of speculations and fanciful ideas.

One fundamental question which demands serious consideration is whether the Judaic calendar is biblically accurate, with its civil year commencing on the first day of Tishri,[7] which itself can be subject to a one-day or two-day, or, on a rare occasion, three-day postponement, depending on the operation or otherwise of the four postponements.[8] The resulting impact on Trumpets, Atonement, Tabernacles, and the Last Great Day has perplexed many. The same question applies to the first day of Nisan in Jewish chronology and modus, and

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[1] 46BC

[2] in 1582AD

[3] with its roots found in ancient Babylon, q.v. inf.

[4] Metonic; or Hebrew: mahzor.

[5] 216 = 6x6x6, the Pythagorean period of regeneration and rebirth; others more realistically claim every 224 years; *Wikipedia*: The Hebrew calendar year is longer by about 6 minutes and $25+{}^{25}/_{57}$ seconds than the present-day mean solar year, so that every two hundred and twenty-four years, the Hebrew calendar will fall a full day behind the modern solar year, and about every two hundred and thirty-one years it will fall a full day behind the Gregorian calendar year.

[6] *Wikipedia*: 'Newton's date for the Crucifixion: 'Newton's choice....depended on invoking a postponement rule from the modern Hebrew calendar which Zeitlin (1966AD) has effectively argued was not used at th[e] time [of Christ].'

[7] Jewish New Year.

[8] Hebrew: dehioth, 'postponements.'

Passover / Unleavened Bread, and even Pentecost, when fixed by 'counting' in the Jewish manner,[9] as opposed to the Judæo-Christian / biblical system.[10]

These are, indeed, considerations of a most fundamental nature, for, on the accuracy of the Judaic calendar, stands or falls much of the practice and fecundity of worship on the part of many Christian sects and groupings which simply follow the Judaic calendar unquestioningly, or nearly so. Should this calendar be found to be systematically unrealiable in identifying and hallowing the holy days, however, then those following it are worshipping amiss.

Before commencing upon this question, it is useful to recall the proximate quality of the Judaic calendar, in that it loses about six-and-a-half minutes every year, resulting in the loss of a day in every two-hundred plus years, and four-and-a-half days in a millennium. It completes an entire time cycle every nineteen years,[11] with intrinsic inaccuracy, and manages to start the months on or near the molad, but in many cases not with any real accuracy. It's leap years are asynchronous,[12] and this deviation or volatility is alarming to those desirous of biblical accuracy.[13] The first question then, particularly in instances of postponement and a synchronicity, is a simple one: are they near enough to be considered accurate? Worryingly, the Encyclopœdia Brittannica states: 'The [Judaic] calendar is....schematic and independent of the true New Moon.'[14]

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[9] viz, alighting on 6th Sivan every year, rather than on a variable day year by year.

[10] q.v. inf.

[11] Greek: enneadecateris, based on the Greek astrologer Hipparchus' observations and calculations of 146BC

[12] q.v. inf.

[13] Eliau (pen-name for Clark, Frank T., an S.D.A.), *God's Sacred Calendar*, pp.17,18 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):
'The formula they adopted results in a Jewish calendar, which is a 19-year cycle of 235 lunar months. This is known as the Greek Metonic cycle and was a part of Babylonian Chronology dating to 626BC. This formula results in a year that averages 365.2468 days long (exactly 365 days 5 hours 55 minutes and $25+{}^{25}/_{57}$ seconds). The solar tropical year is about 365.24219 days long (365 days 5 hours 49 minutes and zero seconds). Therefore, the Jewish calendar year is about 6 minutes and $25{}^{25}/_{57}$ seconds longer than the solar tropical year. This results in a "drift" of the Jewish calendar of about a day every two hundred and twenty-four years. This means the year begins later and later as the centuries pass.
Thus, on average today, Jews celebrate their holidays about eight days later than did their ancestors in 4119 (Jewish year which is 358–359AD Julian / Gregorian) [Cox, Wade, P124: 'originating in 344AD in Babylon'], at the time the fixed calendar rules were said to have been published by Hillel II. At some point, the Jewish man-made rules and traditions also created rules called postponements which were not Biblical and corrupted the calendar even further. The beginning of the year was postponed a day or two based on arbitrary rules contrary to the commandment of God. These errors and other disagreements in calendar determination result in differences of a day or two in the beginning of the month. And occasionally the exact month of the year can be in dispute.'
The 'eight days' slippage is a calculated and not an actual representation. Jewish authorities admit that their calendar went through much amendment during the time from the destruction of the Temple until about 800–850AD, or possibly 900AD, when it finally settled. Such were the range and frequency of amendments that it is impossible to be certain about key aspects of the Jewish calendar during that time. Jewish authorities are unable to demonstrate a coherent continuity of a calendar system throughout this period. Indeed, the Jewish calendar even now is slipping by about 6½ minutes per annum, something which has led the Jews to expect their Messiah soon since they consider he will correct their calendar before it gets hopelessly and utterly out of synchronization.

[14] *Encyclopœdia Brittannica*, p.466 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

## New moon

Consideration of the 'New Moon' introduces the question of the correct definition of the term, which is not the visible crescent moon carelessly assumed by some, but the conjunctive, or dark / black, moon,[15] called a molad by the Jews, although the Jew's calculation of the molad nowadays incorporates a substantial degree of error. On this latter point, all sensible authorities agree.

Despite this. many Orthodox Jews contend that the 'New Moon' is the first sliver of visible moon observable from Jerusalem; this backed by Talmudic references to the practice known as the 'Sanctification of the New Moon' conducted by the chief priests after examining and confirming two satisfactory witnesses. Enticements by way of feasting levels of food and drink were on offer in order to ensure a sufficiency of enthusiastic potential witnesses.

This errant view is easily refuted by reference, in the first instance, to Maimonides, who defined the molad as: 'The moment in which the sun and moon, in their uniform motion, become conjoined in a certain part of the sky, which occurs in the same way everywhere—in contrast to the varying times at which the new crescent first becomes visible in different areas….as a rule, the day of the molad is the day of declaration, except in the four cases of postponement ....If the conjunction falls at any of these four periods, New Moon day [Tishri] is declared to be not on the day of the molad, but on the following day, or on the day after the following day.'[16]

From this it would be clear that, excluding the Jewish system of postponement, which is another matter, for the Jews at the time of Maimonides, the occurrence of the molad or conjunction determined the day of the New Moon. But that must be balanced against another comment by Maimonides, to the effect that the modern Jewish calendar is based upon the 'mean motions of the sun and moon, the true having been set aside.'[17]

Of course, the very notion that the chief priests could ever decide upon and 'sanctify' what God had long-before set and sanctified is wildly misguided, there being no biblical authority whatsoever for such a system. It is pure arrogation.

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[15] *Wikipedia* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):
'In astronomical terminology, the phrase new moon is the lunar phase that occurs when the Moon, in its monthly orbital motion around Earth, lies between Earth and the Sun, and is therefore in conjunction with the Sun as seen from Earth. At this time, the dark (un-illuminated) portion of the Moon faces almost directly toward Earth, so that the Moon is not visible to the naked eye.
[Some claim that t]he original meaning of the phrase new moon was the first visible crescent of the Moon, after conjunction with the Sun. This takes place over the western horizon in a brief period between sunset and moonset, and therefore the precise time and even the date of the appearance of the new moon by this definition will be influenced by the geographical location of the observer (and the local atmospheric conditions). The astronomical new moon, sometimes known as the dark moon to avoid confusion, occurs by definition at the moment of conjunction in ecliptic longitude with the Sun, when the Moon is invisible from the Earth. This moment is unique and does not depend on location, and under certain circumstances it is coincident with a solar eclipse].'

[16] Maimonides, *Code of Maimonides*, book 3, treatise 8, *'Sanctification of the New Moon,'* pp.31,32,89 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets; sublinear emphasis added)

[17] Maimonides, *Kiddusch Ha-hodesch*

Interestingly, the Day of Trumpets, commonly known to the Jews as Rosh hashanah,[18] is also known as Yom Hakeseh in the Talmud and Yom Teruah in both the Scriptures and the Talmud. Yom Hakeseh means 'the day of the concealed moon,' and Yom Teruah means 'the day of trumpets.' The remaining biblical name for this day, Zicharon Teruah, means *'the remembrance of trumpets.' 'Remembrance'* harks back both to the Lord's delivery of the children of Israel at the Red Sea[19] with the destruction of Pharaoh's forces, and to the first coming of Jesus Christ, and *'trumpets'* looks forward to His glorious Second Coming, the destruction of the forces of evil, and the salvation of His people. Trumpets, of course, falls on the first day of the seventh month, and, being on the day of the 'concealed' or dark moon, rarely alights on the Jewish first day of Tishri which is related to the Jewish molad and its vagaries, and then postponed by one or two days in more than sixty-percent of occasions. Jewish commentaries concede the point of there being no visible crescent: 'On all other festival holidays, which occur during the middle of the month, the moon is either full or very close to full. However, Rosh hashanah, which falls on the first of the month, appears when the moon is not even in view.'[20]

The Tanakh's Psalm, which in the Jewish view is taken to speak of the Jewish Rosh hashanah, contains this imperative: *'Sound the shofar at the new month* [moon]*, at the concealed time for our festival day.'*[21] Rosh Chodesh, *'the new month* [moon],' meaning, literally*, 'beginning renewal'* or *'beginning rebuilding,'* does not mean 'emitting some light' or 'crescent,' and cannot refer to the first visible crescent moon, the sight of which is subject to considerable variability due to atmospheric conditions and pollution levels. The first crescent moon is usually seen in the early evening at dusk low on the horizon and close to the sun. As a result, it is difficult to determine with any accuracy. Clouds, mist, or fog can obscure the crescent. Due to this wide-ranging variability, the accurate prediction of the first visible crescent is surprisingly difficult.

What might be termed the 'molad identification problem' is exacerbated by the schematic and recurring nature of the Judaic calendar. The fall of days in successive months in the Judaic regime is 30,29,30,29, and so on, with only a little local irregularity in the sequence occurring around leap years, whereas the actual lunation—the time between successive molads or dark moons—varies quite markedly,[22] and so gives off an irregular fall of months.[23] It follows that a schematic calendar, even if properly formulated, simply cannot alight on all of the true molads, and this fatal flaw is compounded further by the operation of the calendar postponement system.

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[18] although there is no biblical authority for this name used in connection with this feast. Jewish sages considered it to be a reference—Ezek 40:1a, *'in the beginning of the year, on the tenth of the month'*—with relation to the Day of Atonement falling in a Jubilee year, but this is erroneous too for the phrase *'in the beginning of the year'* clearly refers to the first month, the first month of God's calendar, sometimes called Abib. The '*tenth day*' reference is, in fact, one to the day of selecting the lamb for slaughter at Passover, as a foregleam to Christ's death.

[19] Hebrew: Yam-Suph, sea of reeds, or weeds, viz, The Gulf of Aqaba, south of Eilat; cf. I Kings 9:26

[20] (sublinear emphasis added); on the day of the astronomical new moon, the moon rises in the sky with the sun at dawn, and sets in the evening with the sun, at sunset.

[21] Tanakh, Psa 81:4 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

[22] q.v. inf.

[23] e.g., 29,29,30,29,29,30,29,30,30,29,30,30 in the year 2000–2001.

Sometimes, in about four percent of cases over the period 2000–2005AD, for example, the Judaic calendar does start a month with the actual, conjunctive, or dark new moon. Most of the time, however, it is one, two or even three days late. This spread appears to depend largely on whether there is a one or two day Rosh hashanah postponement, and then whether a new month starts after a thirty-day month. It should be obvious that a 'three or four day spread' over the astronomical conjunction is irreconcilable with any form of coherent, first visible crescent system. Indeed, matters are getting progressively worse, albeit slowly, as the average period between astronomical conjunctions is getting longer, so the Jewish average or 'virtual' molad will eventually end up occurring before the actual astronomical conjunction. In such circumstances, the Jewish New Moon would, on occasion, precede the real New Moon, the correct astronomical conjunction. This anomaly is appreciated by some religious Jews who hold that: 'In about a hundred years from now the Jewish calendar approximation will no longer 'work,' with the moon being sighted a day after the first of the month according to the Jewish calendar. Hence the Messiah must come in the next hundred years, and re-establish the High Court of Jerusalem which will work not according to pre-set calendars but according to the actual sighting of the moon.'[24]

## Background

In order to appreciate the ramifications of this, it is meet to consider a little background, restricting it to where there is at least some measure of common ground between most of the views on the accuracy or otherwise of the schematic calendar.

The Judaic calendar is luni-solar, meeting two requirements, solar and lunar, and this accounts for its relative complexity. The solar year of three hundred and sixty-five days and some hours is about eleven days longer than twelve lunar months, and so the calendar has the task of balancing-off the solar and the lunar year.

According to Spier, 'A special committee of the Sanhedrin, with its president as chairman, had the mandate[25] to regulate and balance the solar with the lunar year. This 'Calendar Council,'[26] calculated the beginnings of the seasons[27] on the basis of astronomical figures which had been handed down of old. Whenever the eleven-day differential between the solar and lunar years had accumulated to thirty days or so, a thirteenth month, Adar II, was inserted before Nisan in order to ensure that Nisan and Passover would occur in Spring,

[24] Rav S. A. Rappoport (sublinear emphasis added; concluding error ignored).
[25] merely claimed, arrogated; they did not have any such authority.
[26] Hebrew: Sod Haibbur.
[27] Hebrew: Tekufoth.

and not retrogress toward winter. Talmudic sources also suggest the intercalation of a month when Spring was not sufficiently evident.[28]

In the fourth-century,[29] when oppression and persecution threatened the existence of the Sanhedrin, Hillel II made public the system of calendar calculation which up until that time had been a closely guarded secret, and had been used as a check on the probity of claimed New Moon witnessing and to determine the beginnings of the Spring season.'[30]

## Construction & problems

Turning now to the construction of the schematic calendar, in particular to the method of setting the first of the months, the method of determining the first of the first month in God's reckoning, and, in addition, Rosh hashanah, the four postponements, and the insertion of the intercalary month. The first point of importance is found in Genesis: *'And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.*'[31] In the Tanakh it reads: *'God said,*

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[28] in other words, a late spring, in current parlance, although this would appear to be somewhat problematical when made to operate alongside a predetermined astronomical system of calculation, as they would appear, at least in large part, to be inimical. If, however, there was a declension from a strict, astronomical calculated system to some system or other which tended to result in bringing the Passover earlier in the year, then such matters as the then apparent late onset of spring would begin to come into play. There is more to this, however, than a mere declension. The *'observers of times,'* Hebrew: anan, meaning *'those who watch the clouds'* in order to determine when the rainy season was over and when the spring harvest season would begin, are condemned in the Bible in II Chron 33:6; Deut 18:10,11; II Kings 21:6; Lev 19:26. Anan, also literally *'observing the heavens,'* was a distinct form of enchantment, cf. Jer 27:9. If the Jewish authorities were watching the skies and the weather and setting their spring harvest season accordingly, they were not merely in declension, they were in the pit of abject folly and sin, and subject to the judgement in Isa 47:12-14 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): *'Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail. Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators* [or *'that make known months,'* viz., what shall come to pass every month] *stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee. Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame: there shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it.'* God utterly forbids this practice.

[29] 358–359AD

[30] Spier, Arthur, *The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar*, p.1 (slightly paraphrased for brevity); there is grave doubt, however, over whether the Hillel account represents the full story, or, indeed, anything remotely like it, for many claim that the Hillel calendar system was introduced with a view to securing the wholesale acceptance of the rabbinic system of calendar control, and that the astronomical system of the Sadducees theretofore was not used as a check, but as the core and sole system.

Cox, Wade, *Letter to the Churches of God re the New Moons and the Hillel Calendar*:

'Many false statements are made by these various ministers of the W.C.G. system. Much of it is through ignorance, but much of it also is by devious deceit. We have seen some of these people actually claim that the Hillel calendar was in use at the time of Christ in the Temple, when any basic student of the subject would tell you it was not introduced until two rabbis brought it from Babylon in 344CE and Hillel II authorised its use in 358CE. It was developed from there on until Maimonides or Rambam in the twelfth century. The Jews themselves proclaim those facts in their reference material.'

[31] Gen 1:14; K.J.V.

*"Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate day from night; and they shall serve as signs for the set times—the days and the years."'* The difference between the two is essentially the reference to *'seasons'* which appears in the former but is possibly elided in the latter. The word translated *'seasons'* in the K.J.V. is from a Hebrew word[32] that also appears in Psalms, on which the K.J.V. and the Tanakh are in agreement, the Tanakh rendering it: *'He made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows when to set.*'[33]

It will become evident that the inclusion of the marking of seasons in the purpose of the lights in the firmament has profound ramifications when it comes to extracting the correct calendar from the Bible. Concerning the seasons,[34] Spier notes: 'With the introduction of the permanent [Judaic] calendar, the solar and lunar years have been adjusted by a calculation which guarantees the coincidence of the lunar months with the seasons as required by the law. Therefore the independent computation of the beginnings of the four seasons, the Tekufoth, has lost its importance.'[35]

This is a candid though amazing admission, as later it will be shown that the seasons, especially those determined by the equinoxes, are of critical importance in the regulation of the calendar. Yet here there is an admission that the computation of the seasons has lost its impact on the Judaic calendar, being watered down to some vaguely worded 'coincidence.'

This divergence is also linked to disregarding the celebration of the New Moons in the Jewish rite. When the New Moons, called *'memorials before your God,*'[36] had become so ill-respected and downgraded, the critical role they played in the regulation of God's calendar was neutralised. The result was that months could then be structured on an inaccurate and schematic formula; the formal civil New Year, on which Scripture is utterly silent, could be conformed to the system in Babylon; the names of months altered to a heady Babylonian / Canaanite mix of pagan references; and a formalised intercalary system could be imposed in lieu of God's specified regulatory mechanism.[37] The Jewish sages ruled that the names of the months were to remain Babylonian, even though admittedly idolatrous, until the Messiah[38] would restore all Israel to the Promised Land. In the interim, the sages claimed that the idolatrous names are a reminder of things to come, and, indeed, that these same Babylonian names speak to God's people today. If that were the case, then what could they possibly have to say? The entire apostate and obscene Jewish presumption in all of this can be seen in the following statement from the Jewish Encyclopedia: 'Heaven itself yields to the authority of the earthly court of justice as to the fixing of the calendar and the festival days.'[39]

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[32] Hebrew: moed.
[33] Psa 104:19
[34] Hebrew: tekufoth.
[35] Spier, Arthur, *The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar*, p.19 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)
[36] Num 10:10
[37] q.v. inf.
[38] viz., the Jewish Messiah.
[39] *Jewish Encyclopedia*, p.337

## TABLE OF MONTHLY NAME COMPARISONS

| Jewish name[40] | Pagan name[41] & meaning (where known) | Jews' symbol[42] | Zodiac sign[43] |
|---|---|---|---|

[40] *Karaite Korner*:
'In the Torah the months are numbered as First Month, Second Month, Third Month, etc (Leviticus 23; Numbers 28). During their sojourn in Babylonia our ancestors began to use the pagan Babylonian month names, a fact readily admitted in the Talmud: "The names of the months came up with them from Babylonia." (Jerusalem Talmud, Rosh Hashanah, 1:2 56d).
The pagan nature of the Babylonian month names is epitomized by the fourth month known as Tammuz. In the Babylonian religion Tammuz was the god of grain whose annual death and resurrection brought fertility to the world. In the book of Ezekiel, the prophet described a journey to Jerusalem in which he saw the Jewish women sitting in the Temple "*weeping over Tammuz*" (Ezekiel 8:14). The reason they were weeping over Tammuz is that according to Babylonian mythology Tammuz had been slain but had not yet been resurrected. In ancient Babylonia the time for weeping over Tammuz was the early summer, when the rains cease throughout the Middle East and green vegetation is burnt by the unrelenting sun. To this day the Fourth Month in the rabbinical calendar is known as the month of Tammuz and it is still a time for weeping and mourning.
One field of Babylonian religious influence was in the observance of Yom Teruah as a New Years' celebration. From very early times the Babylonians had a lunar-solar calendar very similar to the biblical calendar. The result was that Yom Teruah often fell out on the same day as the Babylonian New Year's festival known as "Akitu." Akitu fell out on the 1st day of Tishrei which coincided with Yom Teruah on the 1st day of the Seventh Month. The fact that the Jews had started calling the Seventh Month by the Babylonian name Tishrei paved the way for turning Yom Teruah into a Jewish Akitu. At the same time the Rabbis did not want to adopt Akitu outright so they Judaized it by changing the name of Yom Teruah (Day of Shouting) to Rosh hashanah (New Year's). The fact that the Torah did not give a reason for Yom Teruah no doubt made it easier for the Rabbis to proclaim it the Jewish New Year's.
It may seem bizarre to celebrate Yom Teruah as New Year's considering that it falls out on the first day of the Seventh Month, but in the context of the Babylonian culture this was perfectly natural. The Babylonians actually celebrated Akitu, New Year's, twice every year, once on the first of Tishrei and again six months later on the first of Nisan. The first Babylonian Akitu celebration coincided with Yom Teruah and the second Akitu coincided with the actual New Year's in the Torah on the first day of the First Month.'

[41] *Encyclopedia Judaica*, p.48:
'These names belong to the Babylonian calendar which was adopted, with relatively minor alterations over the centuries, by the Jews. The Babylonian calendar was a lunisolar calendar with years consisting of 12 lunar months, each beginning when a new crescent moon was first sighted low on the western horizon at sunset, plus an intercalary month inserted as needed by decree. This system came into use sometime before 2000BC.
Until the 5th. century BC the calendar was fully observational, but beginning about 499BC the months began to be regulated by a lunisolar cycle of 19 years equalling 235 months. Although usually called the Metonic cycle, Meton (432BC) probably learned of the cycle from the Babylonians. After no more than three isolated exceptions, by 380BC the months of the calendar were regulated by the cycle without exception. Within the cycle of 19 years, the month Adaru 2 was intercalated, except in the year that was number 17 in the cycle, when the month Ululu 2 was inserted. During this period, the first day of each month (beginning at sunset) continued to be the day when a new crescent moon was first sighted—the calendar never used a specified number of days in any month.
The earliest document listing all the Babylonian months in succession is Megillath Ta'anith, compiled in the late 1st. or early 2nd. century AD (since it is already quoted in the Mishnah, a 2nd. century work).
According to a tradition quoted in the name of Hai Gaon (d.1038AD), the present Jewish calendar was introduced by the patriarch Hillel II....in 358–359AD....While it is not unreasonable to attribute to Hillel II the fixing of the regular order of intercalations, his full share in the present fixed calendar is doubtful.'

[42] these astrological signs and symbols, originating with pagan Chaldean astrologers c.2100BC, were adopted by the Jews during and after the Babylonian captivity.

[43] Taqizadeh, S. H., *Old Iranian Calendars*:
'The seventh Babylonian month—Tishritu—had, as it patron, Shamesh, the Babylonian sun-god. The feast of Mithra (or Bâga) was one of the most popular, if not the greatest of all the festivals of ancient Persia. Originally a pre-Zoroastrian

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Nisan | Nisanu—month of sacrifice | Lamb | Aries |
| Iyyar | Ayaru—month of procession | Ox or bull | Taurus |
| Sivan | Simanu—month of brick-making | Twins | Gemini |
| Tammuz | Du-uzu—month of Tammuz, fertility god | Crab / lobster | Cancer |
| Ab | Abu—month of torches | Lion | Leo |
| Ellul | Elulu—month of purification | Virgin or maid | Virgo |
| Tishri | Tishritu—month of beginning | Scales | Libra |
| Heshvan | Arah-samna—the eighth month | Scorpion | Scorpio |
| Kislev | Kislimu—month of warfare or rainbow? | Bow | Sagittarius |
| Tebeth | Tebetu—month of plunging (into water) | Flowing water | Aquarius |
| Shabat | Shabatu—month of rains and storms | Goat | Capricorn |
| Adar | Adaru—month of the threshing floor | Fish | Pisces |

Months of the Jewish Calendar - Pre-Exilic Calendar**:**

| Biblical Month Name | Month Number | Meaning of Biblical Month Name (Descriptive) |
|---|---|---|
| Aviv | 1 | Chodesh Ha-Aviv, Hebrew: 'month of Spring' in Hebrew[44] |
| Ziv | 2 | Chodesh Ziv, Hebrew: month of Radiance[45] |
| 3rd month | 3 | 3rd month in relation to the month of Aviv |
| 4th month | 4 | 4th month in relation to the month of Aviv |
| 5th month | 5 | 5th month in relation to the month of Aviv |
| 6th month | 6 | 6th month in relation to the month of Aviv |
| Eisanim or Ethanim | 7 | Yerach Eisanim, Hebrew: 'month of Natural Forces'[46] |
| Bul | 8 | Yerach Bul, Hebrew: 'month of Bountiful Harvests'[47] |
| 9th month | 9 | 9th month in relation to the month of Aviv |
| 10th month | 10 | 10th month in relation to the month of Aviv |
| 11th month | 11 | 11th month in relation to the month of Aviv |
| 12th month | 12 | 12th month in relation to the month of Aviv |

What little has survived by way of records from the second-century AD reveals a period when the Jews neglected to intercalate, making their Nisan occur earlier and earlier in the year. In an attempt at remediation, consecutive years with thirteen months were introduced, but the accuracy of the entire calendarial system was obviously open to serious question, even on the basis of the Jewish systemology.

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and old-Aryan feast consecrated to the sun-god, its place in the old-Persian calendar was surely in the month belonging to that deity, Bâgaayâ or Bâgaayâh, which almost certainly corresponded to the seventh Babylonian month of Tishritu.'

[44] Ex 13:4,23:15,34:18; Deut 16:1

[45] I Kings 6:1,37

[46] I Kings 8:2

[47] I Kings 6:38

In light of all of the radical changes, most of which actually took place over the protracted period of time between the fourth- and eleventh-centuries, it is necessary to determine the system that was in operation under the Sadducees during the Second Temple period, and during the life of Christ, for the only annual feast then observed by the majority of the Jews that appears in the New Testament and highlighted as being incorrect was Passover.[48] Pentecost, established by use of the Sadducean system, was correct, alighting on a Sunday after a fifty-day Omer count, confirmed by Bruce: 'In general, the Jewish Calendar in New Testament times (at least before [the date of destruction of the Second Temple]) followed the Sadducean reckoning, since it was by that reckoning that the Temple services were regulated. Thus the day of Pentecost was reckoned as the fiftieth day after presentation of the first harvested sheaf of barley, that is, the fiftieth day (inclusive) from the first Sunday after Passover;[49] hence it always fell on a Sunday, as it does in the Christian calendar. The Pharisaic reckoning, which became standard after [the date of destruction of the Second Temple], interpreted 'Sabbath' in Leviticus[50] as the festival day of Unleavened Bread and not the weekly Sabbath; in that case Pentecost always fell on the same day of the month [sixth day of the month Sivan].'[51]

The beginning of the year is month-one; not month-seven. The methodology for fixing the Jewish Rosh hashanah,[52] on Jewish first day of Tishri, is based on the following data reported in Encyclopedia Judaica, and by Spier: '[Rosh hashanah] is rarely on the day of the molad; postponements occur about sixty-percent of the time, so the postponements are the rule rather than the exception, as there are four obstacles or considerations, called dehiyyah, in fixing the first day of the month (rosh hodesh). Each dehiyyot may cause a postponement of two days:

1. When the Molad Tishri occurs on a Sunday, Wednesday or Friday, Rosh hashanah is postponed to the following day, mainly in order to prevent the Day of Atonement (10th Tishri) from falling on Friday or Sunday, and Hoshana Rabba (the seventh day of Sukkot; 21st Tishri) from falling on Saturday, but in part also serving an astronomical purpose....

2. Entirely for an astronomical reason, if the molad is at noon or later Rosh hashanah is delayed by one day, or, if this day is a Sunday, Wednesday or Friday, then to Monday, Thursday or Sabbath because of Dehiah 1....

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[48] late by one day, but this did not affect the calendar, as Christ kept it on the evening of the 14th Abib—'the evening before' or 'early-14th' in common parlance, while the bulk of the Jews kept in on the 15th Abib.

[49] Lev 23:15

[50] Lev 23:15

[51] Bruce, F. F., *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 1, p.223, article on '*Calendar*' (with added comment and clarification in square brackets). Of course, the authorities of the time had the Sabbatical years and the Jubilees incorrectly observed, if at all, but that is another matter, q.v. sup.

[52] also known as the Jewish New Year.

3. When the Molad Tishri of a common year falls on Tuesday, 204 parts after 3am, Rosh hashanah is postponed to Wednesday, and, because of Dehiah 1, to Thursday....

4. When, in a common year succeeding a leap year, the Molad Tishri occurs on Monday morning 589 parts after 9am, Rosh hashanah is postponed to the next day.'[53]

It is claimed by many commentators that these rules of postponement simply were unknown in, say, the time of Christ, or at the time of the preparation of the Talmud. It is also claimed that the Mishnah clearly shows that the Day of Atonement sometimes fell on a Friday or on a Sunday up to the time of its compilation and, hence, did so at the time of Christ some two centuries previously: 'They do not count less than four full months in a year, and never have appeared more than eight.'[54] The Soncino's[55] footnotes confirm that, contrary to the postponements system, the day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, did fall, sometimes, on a Friday or a Sun-day.[56]

It is therefore impossible for the postponement system to have been in place at the time of Christ. Dehiyyot, calendar postponements, are not derived from Scripture. Nowhere are they mentioned, and they are nowhere commanded by God. They are simply the devious manoeuvrings of an apostate people to render their Babylonian-derived pagan calendar—most probably first encountered during the Jews' captivity in Babylon,[57] but kept suppressed until after the time of Christ—more amenable to their apostate comfort and needs.

From all of this, it would appear an unavoidable conclusion that the regularised flow of twenty-nine and thirty day months, and the postponements pertaining, for they are related, could not have been in place at the time of Christ. Given that, it also strongly suggests that a formalised, repetitive-cycle schematic calendar form was also lacking. Schurer adds: 'In the context of the passage cited,[58] possible minimum and maximum limits are given with regard to the most varied things. The above-mentioned oscillation in the length of the year was therefore actually observed, and in the time of the Mishnah was still regarded as possible. As a matter of fact, the statement appeared so remarkable to the authorities of the Babylonian Talmud that attempts were made to give it a new interpretation.'[59] [60]

Referring back to Spier's comments on the Tekufoth—'Therefore the independent computation of the beginnings of the four seasons, the Tekufoth, has lost its importance'—and considering further its impact, there appears to be two main, or compounded, *'seasons'* in Scripture: *'While the earth remaineth, seed-time and har-*

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[53] *Encyclopedia Judaica*, p.44, with interleaved excerpts from Spier, Arthur, *The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar*, p.15
[54] Arakhin 2:2
[55] part of the Talmud.
[56] Shabbath 114b (footnote 16); Menachoth 100b (footnote 12); K'rithoth 19a (footnote 10).
[57] starting 597BC
[58] mArak. 2:2
[59] cf. bArak. 8b-9a; *Zuckerman Materialen*, pp.64f.
[60] Schurer, Emil, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, footnote #12, p.592

*vest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease,*'[61] and, *'Thou hast set all the borders of the earth: thou hast made summer and winter.*'[62] The vernal equinox was termed *'the return of the year*,'[63] and the autumnal equinox was termed '*the going out of the year*,' *'and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end* [going out of] *the year.*'[64]

Surprisingly many nowadays contend that the month in which the Passover occurs is determined from the New Moon nearest to the vernal equinox in the northern hemisphere. This appears to rest solely on questionable 'inferences' derived from extra-biblical information and sources, such as Josephus: 'Passover is in the fourteenth day of the lunar month, when the sun is in Aries, for it was in Aries that the children of Israel went out of Egypt [ departing on 15th Abib].'[65] The Encyclopedia Americana adds, 'The vernal equinox is still called "The First of Aries."'[66]

If the vernal equinox was then the beginning of Aries, and taking this with Josephus' information, then, in the absence of any more convincing 'evidence,' the matter is open as to whether the first molad of the month in which Passover falls was on or after the vernal equinox, since both could satisfy Josephus' criterion, but only the former satisfies the Aries equinox criterion. Placing it before the equinox is problematical, however, for there is nothing to support it in the evidence led.

The Jews' 'nearest molad to the vernal equinox' arrangement, however, would always satisfy the Josephus criterion on the Jewish fifteenth of Abib Passover, but not always for the fourteenth of Abib, which, on this basis, could fall one day prior to the vernal equinox. And again, on the Jewish basis, the 'molad after the vernal equinox' would satisfy it about fifty-percent of the time. Being indeterminate, this settles nothing and leaves open the question of whether the Sacred Year could actually start with the molad before the vernal equinox, for it would then be starting in the time of *'the going out of the year*,' in the winter season.[67]

It would seem strange that the beginning of the first full season, summer, at the vernal equinox, could possibly occur at a time when the true Sacred Year had already started. If the vernal equinox were a sign or a marker, which it gives every appearance of being, then it is difficult to see, prima face, why it would be set and then the entire 'back-lapped,' as it were, by starting the Sacred Year before it. The normal arrangement would be for the sign, and only thereafter that which was signalled.

It appears from historical records that the Samaritans and the Sadducees kept exactly the same method of determining the start of their months from their calculation of the molad vis-à-vis the vernal equinox.

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[61] Gen 8:22
[62] Psa 74:17
[63] I Kings 20:22,26; Hebrew: teshubah.
[64] Ex 23:16 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); Hebrew: yatsa, *'going out.'*
[65] Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 3.10.5. (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); cp.Ex 13:21b.
[66] *Encyclopedia Americana*, article, 'Aries.'
[67] cp. Gen 8:22; Psa 74:17; Hebrew: choreph, meaning *'crop gathered*,' *'autumn + winter season*' as opposed to *'spring + summer season*.'

The Samaritan records show, however, that their method of determining the start of the first month of the year was on the molad subsequent upon the vernal equinox; never before it. The Samaritans, however, set their vernal equinox immutably on the twenty-fifth of March, and this has had a slowly cumulative effect of displacing their feast days, tending to place some years one month behind compared with the adjusted vernal equinox, which was regressing very, very slowly over the centuries. The point remains, however, that by the time of the Second Temple, the Samaritans were celebrating their feasts sometimes—albeit infrequently—a month behind the Sadducees due to their late and slipping equinox. The Sadducees, for their part, were observing the same rule as the Samaritans by commencing the first month of the year on the first molad after the vernal equinox.

'The Imperial Library at St. Petersburg also possesses some Samaritan calendars, or astronomical tables....[The] Samaritan Pentateuch, an ancient version of the book of Moses, which has been preserved by the Samaritans and, along with the book of Joshua, constitutes their sacred scriptures. The Samaritan Pentateuch is most probably a recension of the same original as that from which the Jewish came, and possesses an independent value in determining the text [sic]. It is written in a non-Hebrew character, probably older than that of the Hebrew Septuagint [sic]. A manuscript copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch is in existence which is said by the Samaritans to have been written by Abishu, the great-grandson of Aaron.'[68]

How much of this is true is open to question, of course, and the Samaritan text can have no value in determining the true text, for the oracles of God were committed to the Jews,[69] but it does indicate an ancient continuity, and some regard for the Law. The question, then, is whether the Samaritans have retained a first month regime, albeit not reconciled to the current date of the vernal equinox, that is none other than that which was in place during the First Temple period, and, later, during the Second Temple period, but which became lost to the Jews in the period after the latter temple's destruction when the rabbinical struggle for control was at its height.

Evidence of a fixed and promulgated, as opposed to covert, Jewish intercalary system does not appear by even the second-century, according to Schurer. Concerning the decision of whether to intercalate, Shurer remarks: 'The Feast of Passover, to be celebrated at full moon in the month of Nisan [fourteenth], must always fall after the vernal equinox[70]....Anatolius, in a preserved fragment of great importance for the history of the Jewish calendar,[71] characterises this as the unanimous view of all the Jewish authorities....The statements of Philo and Josephus also accord with it. If therefore, it was noticed towards the end of the year that Passover would fall before the vernal equinox, the intercalation of a month before Nisan was decreed.'[72]

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[68] *Encyclopedia Americana*, articles, 'Samaritan Language and Literature,' & 'Samaritan Pentateuch.'
[69] Rom 3:2; oracles committed, but with some severe qualification, q.v. inf., and termination.
[70] Greek: meta isemerian earninen.
[71] in Eusebius HE vii 32, 16-19
[72] Schurer, Emil, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, Appendix 3

Sadly, this again proves nothing conclusive in the context of the positioning of the first molad vis-a-vis the vernal equinox. Anatolius was Patriarch of Constantinople[73] well after the period of interest, so 'the unanimous view of all the Jewish authorities' was several centuries later than the period in question and subsequent to the introduction of the Hillel calendar which was structured, theoretically at least, on the basis of 'the nearest molad.' Neither Philo nor Josephus provides an incontrovertible answer to the basic question of whether to commence the first molad of the year before or after the vernal equinox.

Both spring and autumn festivals coincide with harvests, but a maximum displacement of two weeks by operating the 'molad after the vernal equinox regime' in comparison with the Judaic model—anything more has the effect of a leap year having thirteen months, or, more correctly, a rearrangement of the fall of leap years—and an average of just over one week, on its own provides little or nothing by way of evidence in deciding the matter. The Judaic calendar, however, by dint of its aberrant Passover 'control' vis-a-vis the vernal equinox, manages, on occasion[74] to land the first day of Tabernacles before the autumn equinox.[75] In other words, its configuration permits, from time to time, the 'mid-point' of the seventh month[76] to fall within the six month fixed summer season.[77] This error—and it is an obvious error—flows directly from the Judaic calendar's placing the first day of Nisan before the vernal equinox in certain years.

The relationship to the main harvest is seen in, *'and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field.'*[78] The feast of Ingathering, or Tabernacles, falls after the physical harvest, and the final harvest is not brought in until a point at or about the equinox. The *'autumn and winter season'*[79] also means '*crop or harvest gathered*,' and it is obvious that the feast of Tabernacles, being the *'harvest-gathered feast*,' must fall within what is termed the fruit harvest-gathered season, and not in the earlier spring and summer grain harvest season. Tellingly, in the first millennium of the use of the Hillel calendar, the relationship was even more obtuse, with the whole of the feast of Tabernacles falling before the autumn equinox on about ninety separate occasions.[80]

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[73] 449–458AD

[74] e.g., 2002, 2013, 2021

[75] e.g., a non-postponed, dark lunar conjunction calendar, but with Passover positioned on Jewish reckoning vis-a-vis the vernal equinox, in 2016D gives the first day of Tabernacles as 17 Sept., while the autumnal (fall) equinox is on 22 Sept., five days later.

[76] 15th day of the 7th month.

[77] i.e., spring & summer season, Hebrew: gayits; leap years always have a mix of six summer months and seven winter months, as Adar II is added at the end of the year as a 7th winter month, so the summer season is always six months long.

[78] Ex 23:16b

[79] Hebrew: choreph.

[80] an approximation, surely; a somewhat similar phenomenon occurs with the Judaic New Moon on occasion—as in April, 2002AD, that being a year with no dehiyyah postponements—where the Judaic calendar, due to its rigidly schematic nature, managed to place the New Moon one day in advance of the true lunar conjunction: the antithesis of what is, by and large,at root, a schematically approximate system.

## Borrowings & errors

The Jewish adoption of the Babylonian nineteen-year cycle calendar, with its pagan names of the months; its autumnal start of the so-called civil year on the first day of Tishri; the method of calculation of leap years; the reconciliation to a supposed and erroneous date for the creation of man;[81] the four arbitrary post-ponements; the general alternating pattern of twenty-nine- / thirty-day months; and the modus of New Moon determination, have served to obscure and confuse matters. Jewish tradition actually claims that God gave express permission to Moses on the mount of Sinai to devise and operate a schematic, postponed calendar!

In the Judaic calendar:

1. The nineteen-year cycle loses one day every two hundred and twenty-four years or so against the solar cycle;

2. The Jewish molad does not always occur on the first day of the Hebrew month—it misses surprisingly many;

3. The Jewish molad is now out of synchronism with the correct astronomical conjunction, varying by as much as +/- seventeen hours;

4. The Judaic calendar's vernal equinox now stands on the 7th / 8th April, whereas the true equinox now occurs on 20th / 21st March;

5. Even on their calendar, the Jewish method of calculating the first day of Tishri gets the date placed further from their molad about two times out of three owing to the complex system of postponements used;

6. Then working to the first day of Abib, the start of God's year, the Jewish system usually manages to get that wrong too, as it is a count from an incorrect base;

7. While in the Judaic calendar, one hundred and seventy-seven days before the first day of Tishri is the first day of Nisan, the new moon might not agree. This is for two reasons, a) an accurate average count is not actually a round number of days, and b) the moon's speed around the earth varies;[82]

8. Then the Jewish system starts the first day of Nisan on the calculated first day of the month[83] on the quasi-basis of whichever first day of the month is nearest the vernal equinox, though, in turn, this is kept subject to the schematic workings of the Judaic calendar, with the result that:

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[81] 3760BC

[82] the moon is on an elliptical, not a circular orbit around the earth. Its path takes it farther, then closer, to the earth. When the moon is closer to the earth its speed from horizon to horizon increases. Conversely, when it is farthest from the earth, its speed decreases. As a result of this variability, Molad determination of 1st Nisan by the Jewish method of counting a round number of days from their assumed 1st Tishri is fraught with error.

9. Some Jewish Nisans commence in the winter season;

10. The Jewish leap years are out of phase; and, to compound matters;

11. The Jews then hold Passover and Pentecost on the wrong days of their wrong calendar; and,

12. Most of their other annual Holy Days fall in error too, for the Judaic calendar fails to secure accurate starts to the months.[84]

Despite all these pagan borrowings, inaccuracies, and errors—'In Judaism, the [Judaic] calendar is used for divination, astrology, and numerology'[85]—some not only contend that the Judaic calendar is God-inspired and relevant today, but that it was in operation more than two-and-a-half millennia before the earliest Jewish record of it. These utterly ridiculous assertions are based on wildly aberrant readings of the biblical account of the Flood and the Exodus.[86]

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[83] usually wrongly.

[84] the Jews' first day of Tabernacles, on 15th Tishri, by reason of the error in the Jews' New Moon determination allied to the operation of the postponements, often lands not on the true 15th Ethanim, but on the Mihragen, the day of the Babylonian feast of Mithra.

[85] Hoffman, Michael, *Judaism Discovered*, p.924 (with added comments and clarifications in square brackets)

[86] the claim for the flood is based on a calculation that gives 385 days for the year of the flood, and that the only calendar exhibiting a 385-day leap year is the Judaic calendar. In order to show 385 days, the undernoted period of 150 days has to be counted twice, the period of 40 days assumed to be separate and excluded from the period of 150 days, thirty days has to be taken for the month Nisan in the 600th. year of Noah's life (the first month of the year in God's sacred calendar may have either 29 or 30 days), and the start and finish dates for the actual 150-day period given in Scripture either ignored or regarded as being in error. It is worse, for by starting with the 'exclusive' 40 days, the timeline for the then first 190 days is as follows: 40 days starting on the 17th. of month 2, gives a 150-day start on the 28th. day of month 3, and ending on 29th. day of month 8, so from the 28th. to the 28th. doesn't give the 150 days inclusive for 5 months, as the Bible states, neither does it accord with the dates given in chpts. 7 and 8 for the start and termination of the 150 days (cf. notes 2-7 inf.).
Flood cadence in the Bible is as follows:
1. rain (windows of heaven opened) and the waters of the deep broken up: 17th. day of 2nd. month (Gen 7:11).
2. rain continued: 40 days (v.12) (The rain was of limited duration, as most of the flood water would come from the earth. It is known that there is much more water in the ground and at the surface than is contained in the clouds).
3. waters prevailed (from Hebrew: gabar, to be strong) in vv.18-20,24, from the day that the fountains of the deep were broken out (17th. of 2nd. month) for 150 days, v.24.
4. Gen 8:3, '*And the waters returned* [(from Hebrew: shroob, '*turned back*,' '*receded*') *continually* (from Hebrew: halak, '*went*') *and after the end of one hundred and fifty days were abated* (from Hebrew: chacer, '*diminished*').
5. the waters prevailed, or were strong, and none could resist the flood, from the first day (17th. of the 2nd. month) for 150 days, 'til the 17th. of the 7th. month.
6. so what happened on that day in the 7th. month?
7. v.4, '*And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.*' The word translated '*rested*' does not mean, as some erroneously contend, 'floating and stationary' 15 cubits above the summit of the mountain. That is ridiculous. The waters were, by that time, receding or diminishing, cf. v.3, and the ark came to rest, grounded, on the summit of the mountain. Given that the draught of such a large vessel would be quite considerable, the tip of the mountain would not be visible at the time of grounding.
8. the waters continued to decrease until, on the 1st. day of the 10th. month, the surrounding mountain tops were visible, v.5.

## Biblical resolution

There is, however, a sound biblical foundation for the simple resolution of these difficulties, and it is found in the words of King David in Psalms: *'He appointed the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down.'*[87] This verse contains a verifiable statement on the moon vis-a-vis the seasons,[88] but only if the true molad or conjunction starting the '*summer season*' is the first after the vernal equinox. If the first month 'straddles' the vernal equinox, as often happens in the Judaic calendar, it would be 'part-in and part-out' of the summer season, and as such could not mark the start of the summer season. The conclusion, therefore, so far, is that the start of the year must be with the first true molad or conjunction after the vernal equinox. The Hebrew word here translated *'moon'*[89] contains the idea of a complete lunation or month marking out the beginning of the year, and not that of a part-month in the old autumn and winter season[90] and a part-month in the new spring and summer season.[91]

The Sacred Year commences with the first month, as set by God, *'And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month*[92] *shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you,'*[93] and not the seventh month as operated by the Jews under continuing influence from

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9. 40 days later, Noah opened the window and released the raven, vv.6,7.
10. and after a further 7 days, v.10.
11. and after another 7 days, v.12.
12. then in v.13....*'and it came to pass* (an added phrase) *on* (rosh hashanah, the 1st. day of the 1st. month of Noah's 601st. year). The water was gone. This is apposite, for rosh hashanah is often the start of major things in the Bible.
13. v.14, on 27th. of the 2nd. month, the surface was dry, permitting Noah et al to disembark.

Rappoport, Rav S. A., points out that there are not two periods of 150 days; there is only one [in Hebrew, the question of whether the 40 days of Gen 7:17 is included in the 150 days period or not can appear moot, at first, but is clarified by the fact that the sole 150 days period starts on 17th. of the 2nd. month and ends on the 17th. of the seventh month, so the 150 day period is inclusive of the 40 day period].

Rappoport also states that there is no hard evidence of it being a leap year. It might have been, but it is impossible to tell from the information provided in Genesis chpts. 7 and 8.

The second claim is based on an aberrant reading of events surrounding the time of the Exodus, and the year following, deriving from Exodus chpt. 16 and Num 1:1, where a 385-day year is claimed on the assumption that God spoke on a weekly Sabbath day, with reference to Num 1:1, and then makes the further assumption that God usually spoke to man on either a weekly Sabbath or an annual holy day, and that the day in question was therefore a weekly Sabbath, which on the peculiarities of the operation of the Judaic calendar's leap year, is then said to 'prove' a 385-day year.

This is nonsense, for Num 1:1 tells us *exactly* what that day was: it was the first day of the second month, so it was a New Moon day, a Shabbathown, when God most certainly talks to His people on that Day (e.g. Ezek 26:1,29:17,30:20,31:1,32:1, etc.) Since a New Moon can and does fall on any day of the week, the 'weekly Sabbath' assumption is utterly ill-founded, and with it falls any contention on the 385-day calendar deriving from Exodus chpt. 16.

87 Psa 104:19

88 for consideration of the meaning '*appointed times*,' q.v. inf.

89 Psa 104:19; Hebrew: yareach, deriving from yerach, meaning *'lunation.'*

90 Hebrew: choreph.

91 Hebrew: qayits.

92 in which the Passover occurred; the Hebrew: ha-chodesh ha-zeh is much more specific, actually meaning '*this very month*.'

93 Ex 12:1,2

their Babylonian captivity. This is perhaps rendered a little clearer for some if the word *'month'* is sub-stituted by *'new moon,'* for that is the meaning of the Hebrew: *'And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This new moon*[94] *shall be unto you the beginning of new moons: it shall be the first new moon of the year to you.'* Taking this in tandem with the idea of a complete lunation, and the restriction of the feast of ingathering to the going out of the year, it leaves no room for doubt that the Sacred Year commences with the first new moon after the vernal equinox.

## God's way

Surprisingly, the following incredibly simple rules apply:

1. The astronomical conjunction,[95] the correct molad, gives the true first day of the first month of God's calendar, the first day of Abib;

2. This is the first true molad after the vernal equinox;[96]

3. All subsequent months commence with astronomical conjunctions;

4. This automatically gives the correct placement of leap years;

5. It is completely accurate, as it always reconciles to the vernal equinox; and, as a result,

6. It doesn't lose any time against the celestial / solar cycle.

The Earth loses about half-a-second every century, but God's calendar self-adjusts to this as the start of the Sacred Year is governed by the vernal equinox. As such, God's calendar is remarkably simple, and self-adjusting. The Sacred Year always starts with the first true molad, also known as the dark moon, or the conjunction, after the vernal equinox. The first day of the Sacred Year is that day in which falls the first true molad. All subsequent months start with the fall of the subsequent true molads. Leap years occur automatically, as the vernal equinox acts as a regulator, or bar, preventing the first month's true molad regressing beyond the date of the vernal equinox.

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[94] Hebrew: chodesh.

[95] the Moon's travel round the earth takes 24 hours, 50 minutes. In the event of no relevant and accurate astronomical data being available, then the time of the dark lunar conjunction can be estimated by the following means: at the last quarter phase of the moon, at sunrise, measure centre-to-centre the distance between the sun and the moon, in centimetres, divide by 0.51, and the answer gives the number of hours until the lunar conjunction. Using a piece of string, held 600mm from the eye, measure the above c/c distance in cms, and double it (the width of a thumb is approximately a centimetre). This gives a close approximation of the conjunction, apparently to within 20 minutes, if done carefully.

[96] equinox currently falls on 20th or 21st March.

## Methodology

In order to be able to calculate the correct months of God's Calendar, and derive the correct annual Holy Days, the following information is necessary:

1. The date and time of the vernal equinox (universal time);

2. The date and time of the lunar conjunctions (universal time); and,

3. The local time of Jerusalem sunsets.[97]

The calculations thereafter are as follows:

1. Once the vernal equinox is determined in universal time, two hours are added to give Jerusalem standard time. This sets the Jerusalem time of the vernal equinox, and the bar earlier than which the first New Moon of God's Sacred Year cannot occur;

2. This sets leap years automatically;

3. The same procedure is carried out with the lunar conjunctions in universal time to arrive at Jerusalem standard time;

4. The first conjunction after the specific time of the vernal equinox is the first New Moon of God's Sacred Year, calculated as follows:

5. The Jerusalem date and time of this conjunction is then compared with the Jerusalem sunset which has been adjusted for altitude[98] to ensure that the actual conjunction does not fall in the following day for Jerusalem, God's day being sunset to sunset;

6. This gives the time and correct date of the conjunction for Jerusalem;

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[97] adjusted for altitude of Jerusalem above sea level.

[98] c.2,440 feet above sea level measured from the Temple Mount; at most latitudes on the Earth, the effect of increased altitude is the same: it makes the Sun rise earlier and set later than it would at that same location from the ground. The variation with altitude is approximately linear, and so sunset is later by one minute for every 1.5 kilometres in altitude, and sunrise earlier by the same amount. In terms of Jerusalem, the elevation gives a minute deviation, too short to adjust with any meaningful accuracy data on sunrise and sunset which are accurate to one minute.
The visible sun (not from Jerusalem as it is blocked by hills) is seen earlier than sunrise and later than sunset. This is because of the refraction of the light from the Sun by the Earth's atmosphere since the Earth's atmosphere bends the path of the light so that we see the Sun in a position slightly differently from where it really is. The magnitude of this effect varies with latitude, but it's strongest at the equator, where the Sun rises two minutes earlier than it would if the Earth had no atmosphere, and sets two minutes after it would if the Earth had no atmosphere. This has no impact on the matter under consideration since the base data is taken from the geometrical sunrise and sunset, not the apparent.

7. The day on which this conjunction occurs (for Jerusalem) is the first day of Abib;

8. This procedure is repeated for all subsequent conjunctions for Jerusalem, giving the complete Sacred Year monthly calendar;

9. The annual Holy Days are then added in the normal manner on the dates set by God; and,

10. This completes the Sacred Year calendar.

It should be noted that by using this methodology, there is no need of any adjustment for Israeli Daylight Saving Time,[99] commonly termed Israeli Summer Time in determining the fall of the holy days.

## Illustration of divergence

| Year: 2000–2001<br>Holy Day/New Moon | Correct calendar date | Judaic calendar date |
|---|---|---|
| Passover [14th Abib] observed 'previous evening,'<br>but by Jews on their 15th Nisan: | 18 April, 2000 | 20 April, 2000 |
| Unleavened Bread: | 19–25 April, 2000 | 20–26 April, 2000 |
| Pentecost: | 11 June, 2000 | 9 June, 2000 |
| Trumpets: | 28 September, 2000 | 30 September, 2000 |
| Atonement: | 7 October, 2000 | 9 October, 2000 |
| Tabernacles: | 12–18 October, 2000 | 14–20 October, 2000 |
| Last Great Day / Shemini Atzeret: | 19 October, 2000 | 21 October, 2000 |
| First Day of Month: | | |
| Month 1 (Abib: 'sprouting'): | 5 April, 2000 | 6 April, 2000[100] |
| Month 2 (Ziv: 'flowering'): | 4 May, 2000 | 6 May, 2000 |
| Month 3: | 2 June, 2000 | 4 June, 2000 |
| Month 4: | 2 July, 2000 | 4 July, 2000[101] |

[99] I.D.S.T.

[100] Judaic calendar places molad one day earlier, but the schematic calendar renders the dates of the first of the months as shown in the table. This is due to a rule in the Judaic calendar that a 29-day month be succeeded by a 30-day month,[100] irrespective of the fall of the Jewish molad or the sighting of the New Moon.

[101] q.v. sup.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Month 5: | 31 July, 2000 | 2 August, 2000 |
| Month 6: | 29 August, 2000 | 1 September, 2000[102] |
| Month 7 (Ethanim: 'flowing rivers'): | 28 September, 2000 | 30 September, 2000 |
| Month 8 (Bul: 'rain'): | 27 October, 2000 | 30 October, 2000[103] |
| Month 9: | 26 November, 2000 | 28 November, 2000 |
| Month 10: | 26 December, 2000 | 27 December, 2000 |
| Month 11: | 24 January, 2001 | 25 January, 2001 |
| Month 12: | 23 February, 2001 | 24 February, 2001[104] |

And, on occasion, the divergeance can be much greater, as in certain leap years. Note that in no fewer than eight of the Judaic calendar's thirteen months which appear in Year 2002–2003 (Judaism's Year 5763), while the molad places one day earlier, the schematic calendar renders the dates of the first of the months as shown:

| Year: 2002–2003<br>Holy Day/New Moon | Correct calendar date | Judaic calendar date |
|---|---|---|
| Passover [14th Abib] observed 'previous evening,' but by Jews on their 15th Nisan: | 26 April, 2002 | 28 March, 2002 |
| Unleavened Bread: | 27 April–3 May, 2002 | 28 March–4 April, 2002 |
| Pentecost: | 16 June, 2002 | 17 May, 2002 |
| Trumpets: | 6 October, 2002 | 7 September, 2002 |
| Atonement: | 15 October, 2002 | 16 September, 2002 |
| Tabernacles: | 20–26 October, 2002 | 21–27 September, 2002 |
| Last Great Day / Shemini Atzeret: | 27 October, 2002 | 28 September, 2002 |
| First Day of Month: | | |
| Month 1 (Abib: 'sprouting'): | 13 April, 2002 | 14 March, 2002 |
| Month 2 (Ziv: 'flowering'): | 12 May, 2002 | 13 April, 2002[105] |

[102] q.v. sup.
[103] q.v. sup.
[104] q.v. sup.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Month 3: | 11 June, 2002 | 12 May, 2002 |
| Month 4: | 10 July, 2002 | 11 June, 2002[106] |
| Month 5: | 9 August, 2002 | 10 July, 2002 |
| Month 6: | 7 September, 2002 | 9 August, 2002[107] |
| Month 7 (Ethanim: 'flowing rivers'): | 6 October, 2002 | 7 September, 2002 |
| Month 8 (Bul: 'rain'): | 5 November, 2002 | 7 October, 2002[108] |
| Month 9: | 4 December, 2002 | 6 November, 2002[109] |
| Month 10: | 3 January, 2003 | 6 December, 2002[110] |
| Month 11: | 1 February, 2003 | 4 January, 2003 |
| Month 12: | 3 March, 2003 | 3 February, 2003[111] |
| Month 13: | N /A | 5 March, 2003[112] |

## New moon observance

By way of a form of codicil to this chapter, it is considered meet to review the observance of the New Moons commanded in Numbers: *'And in the beginning of your months ye shall offer a burnt offering unto the Lord,'*[113] culminating in, *'And one kid of the goats for a sin offering unto the Lord.'*[114] Chronicles adds, *'Behold, I build an house to the name of the Lord my God, to dedicate it to him, and to burn before him sweet incense, and for the continual shewbread, and for the burnt offerings morning and evening, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts of the Lord our God.'*[115]

The New Moons were set by God as sacred time. Their observance involved sacrifices, as did the other sacred times. In the time of King David, the New Moons were observed with a monthly king's banquet as well: *'And David said unto Jonathan, Behold, tomorrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at*

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105 q.v. sup.
106 q.v. sup.
107 q.v. sup.
108 q.v. sup.
109 q.v. sup.
110 q.v. sup.
111 q.v. sup.
112 q.v. sup.
113 Num 28:11
114 Num 28:15
115 II Chron 2:4 (sublinear emphasis added)

*meat*.'[116] It is claimed by some that the Hallel[117] was read in praise during the New Moon celebrations, although others dispute this.

As sacrifices do not pertain to the Judæo-Christian, the form of observance of the New Moon is difficult, in some ways, to ascertain in any detail from the scriptural record. That it involves a meal, praise, and prayer can be inferred or implied, but the prescription is not detailed. It is a sacred feast, verging on or actually being a completely formal Sabbath,[118] as at one time the Jews and the Israelites abstained from work. A frequently referenced tract in this context is found in Amos: *'Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit.*' [119] In many ways these are similar to the day of Trumpets, which itself falls on a New Moon, and where, again, little detail is given on the conduct of the feast, and little is said directly on the meaning or significance, although, with care and divine guidance,[120] it can be extracted. For example, the king's New Moon feast pict-ures the wedding supper of the Lamb, which takes place '*in the air*' before Christ's arrival on the mount of Olives, and which involves the 'firstfruits' as guests, and is barred or hidden from all others, presaged by the 'hidden moon.'

Tracing the New Moon observance through the Scriptures there is a special Psalm for the New Moon which appears to refer to Ethanim, which mentions the *'solemn feast day.*' This might not be so, however, as, *'Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day*,'[121] is better rendered: *'Blow up the horn*[122] *in the new moon, at the covered time, on the day of our feast.'* [T]*he covered time'* refers to the dark or New Moon.[123] Thus it could refer to all New Moons, being feasts, not just the day of Trumpets, Yom Teruah,[124] since Ibn Ezra confirms that the shophar was blown on all New Moons.[125]

The Tanakh, however, translates this same verse, as verse four,[126] thus: *'Blow the horn on the new moon, on the full moon for our feast day.'* The juxtaposition here of new moon and full moon is incongruous. The only feasts that occur on or about a day on which there is a full moon are the first day of Unleavened

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[116] I Sam 20:5

[117] comprising Psalms chpts. 113–118; Hallel deriving from Hebrew halal, meaning 'praise.'

[118] actually a Shabbathown.

[119] Amos 8:4,5 (sublinear emphasis added);*'new moon'* translation from Hebrew: chodesh, a simple reference to monthly New Moons.

[120] through the Holy Spirit.

[121] Psa 81:3; LXX: '*Blow the trumpet in the new moon at the glorious day of your feast.*'

[122] Hebrew: shophar.

[123] *'covered'* from Hebrew: kicceh, deriving from kacah and kasah, meaning *'closed, concealed, secret, hidden, veiled, covered, or plumped by being encased in flesh or clothed with apparel*.' According to *Gesenius' Hebrew Lexicon*, last before, it never applied to or inferred light emitting.

[124] Yom Teruah is one of the two annual holy days in the Bible not based on an historical event or agricultural activity. It was not considered the New Year by the Jews until after the Babylonian captivity.

[125] C.C.G. p.213, but a rather lacking reference.

[126] as Psa 81:4

Bread,[127] and the first day of Tabernacles,[128] but Scripture does not specify either as a full moon feast, or for horn[129] blowing. The significance of the first day of Unleavened Bread is that the children of Israel went out of Egypt by night.[130] The full moon was not light for their night-time journey, but rather that described in Exodus: *'And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night.'*[131] There is no 'full moon feast' in Judæo-Christianity. So why has the Tanakh chosen to translate *'the covered or hidden moon'* as *'the full moon'*? The answer appears to be simply a facile device in order to disguise the shift of the New Moon in rabbinical Judaism from the dark moon synodic conjunction to a sighting of the first visible crescent.[132] Without introducing the obscuring phrase *'the full moon,'* Judaism would be confronted with the unshakable dark moon conjunction.

Moving the New Moon also resulted, of course, in a shift of the annual holy days. In order to gain control of the religious observances of the Jews after the destruction of the Second Temple, and to preclude any possibility of a return to the Sadducaic system, the Pharisees and their heirs and successors determined to alter the sacred calendar so fundamentally as to render it utterly inoperable and irrevocable, in their eyes at any rate, until at the last their false-messiah would come to give the Sadducaic system its final denouement.

In the Torah, only two things are enjoined in the observance of the New Moon: the blowing of trumpets,[133] *'for a memorial before God,'* and special festive sacrifices.[134] The express object is that it would be *'for a memorial,'* that they be *'remembered before God.'*

Edersheim comments: 'So far as we can gather, the following was the order of service on New Moon's day. The Council sat from early morning to just before the evening sacrifice, to determine the appearance of the new moon. The proclamation of the Council—'It is sanctified!'[135]—and not the actual appearance of the new moon, determined the commencement of the feast. Immediately afterwards, the priests blew the trumpets which marked the feast. After the ordinary morning sacrifice, the prescribed festive offerings were brought, the blood of the burnt offerings being thrown round the base of the altar below the red line, and the rest poured into the

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[127] 15th Abib.
[128] 15th Ethanim.
[129] Hebrew: shophar.
[130] Deut 16:1; they travelled by day and by night, however, cf. Ex 13:21,22
[131] Ex 13:21 (sublinear emphasis added)
[132] *Wikipedia* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): [The nascent crescent], the first visible crescent of the Moon, [appears] after conjunction with the Sun. This takes place over the western horizon in a brief period between sunset and moonset, and therefore the precise time and even the date of the appearance of the new moon by this definition will be influenced by the geographical location of the observer. The astronomical new moon, sometimes known as the dark moon [or the dark lunar conjunction] to avoid confusion, occurs by definition at the moment of conjunction in ecliptic longitude with the Sun, when the Moon is invisible from the Earth. This moment is unique and does not depend on location, and under certain circumstances it may be coincident with a solar eclipse.
[133] Num 10:10
[134] Num 28:11-15
[135] only in the Rabbis' own eyes acting with powers to determine the calendar by being ordained judges, Hebrew: semikhah, as seen from Shemos Rabbah 12, 'God said to Israel: Until now, it was in My hands...from now on it is given to you.'

channel at the south side of the altar; while the blood of the sin-offering was sprinkled or dropped from the finger on the horns of the altar of burnt-offering, beginning from the east, the rest being poured out, as that of the burnt-offerings. The two bullocks of the burnt-offerings were hung up and flayed on the uppermost of the three rows of hooks in the court, the rams on the middle, and the lambs on the lowest hooks. In all, no less than one hundred and seven priests officiated at this burnt-offering—twenty with every bullock, eleven with every ram, and eight with every lamb, including, of course, those who carried the appropriate meat-offerings and drink-offerings. At the offering of these sacrifices the trumpets were again blown. All of them were slain at the north side of the altar, while the peace and freewill-offerings, which private Israelites were wont at such seasons to bring, were sacrificed at the south side. The flesh of the sin-offering and what of the meat-offering came to them, was eaten by the priests in the Temple itself; their portion of the private thank-offerings might be taken by them to their homes in Jerusalem, and there eaten with their households.[136]

At the blast of the priest's trumpets they ranged themselves before His throne, and this symbolical confession and proclamation of Him as their God brought them before Him, at the start of each month, to be remembered….And so every season of *'blowing of trumpets,'* whether at New Moons, at the Day of Trumpets ….at other festivals, in the Sabbatical and the Year of the Jubilee, or in the time of war, was a public acknowledgement of God as King. Accordingly, we find the same symbols adopted in the figurative language of the New Testament. As of old, the sound of the trumpet summoned the congregation before the Lord at the door of the Tabernacle, so 'His elect' shall be summoned by the sound of the trumpet in the day of Christ's coming,

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[136] cp. Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, pp.172,173 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'The perquisites of the priests were enormous. Of all the sacrifices offered in the Temple, only the burnt-offering was entirely consumed by the fire of the altar. In every other case, only a quite small part of the victim was burned, and of the rest the priest received a very large part. In the case of the sin offering, which was the offering not for an individual sin but for man as a sinner, only the fat was burned, and all the meat was the perquisite of the priests. It was the same in the case of the trespass-offering, which was the offering for particular sins. In the case of the peace-offering, which was the offering for special occasions of thanksgiving, the fat was burned on the altar; the worshipper received the greater part of the meat; but the priest received the breast and the right shoulder. The one remaining offering was the meat-offering, which was offered along with every other offering. The name is nowadays deceptive, for the meat offering consisted of flour and oil; it is called the '*cereal offering*' in the R.S.V. Of it only a small part was burned and the priests received all the rest. With the single exception of the burnt-offering there was no offering of which the priest did not receive a substantial part. No class of the people knew such luxury in food. In Palestine the ordinary working man was more than fortunate if he tasted meat once a week, whereas the priests suffered from an occupational disease consequent on eating too much meat. It is to be noted that even when a priest was not on actual Temple duty, and even if he was debarred from actually officiating at sacrifices because of physical blemish, he still received his full share of the offerings; for by far the greater amount of the meat which fell to the share of the priests need not be consumed in the Temple itself, but could be eaten in any clean place, and could, therefore, be distributed to the non-officiating priests in their own homes.
Nor did the privileges and perquisites of the priests end there. The priests received '*the first fruits of the seven kinds*' (Ex 23:19), i.e., of wheat, barley, the vine, the fig-tree, the pomegranate, the olive, and honey....For the personal support of the priests there was brought to the Temple the [Hebrew:] terumah, which consisted of the choicest fruits of every growing thing (Num 18:12). One-fiftieth of the crop was the average amount brought to the priests. In addition to this there were the tithes (Num 18:20-22), which consisted of one-tenth of everything which could be used as food [or converted into currency, q.v.]. This was for the support of the Levites, but the priests received their share. Still further, there was the [Hebrew:] challah, or offering of kneaded dough. The priests were entitled to one twenty-fourth part of the dough used in baking.'

*'And he shall send his angels with the great shout of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.'*[137] And not only the living, but those also who had *'slept,'*[138] and *'the dead in Christ.'*[139] Similarly, the heavenly hosts are marshalled to successive judgements, till, *'The king-dom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."*[140] [141]

Even during ancient times of severe religious decay, the New Moons were kept, albeit in vain, as seen in, *'Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them,'*[142] and, *'And now will I discover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers, and none shall deliver her out of mine hand. I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts.'*[143] Amos records the severe declension in relation to the northern kingdom of Israel, *'Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? And the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat?'*[144] The kingdom of Israel's apparent abstention from work on the New Moon does seem to indicate a divinely-sanctioned Sabbath. This is reinforced by the future or higher meaning of the New Moons given in Isaiah, *'And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord,'*[145] and also in Ezekiel, *'Thus saith the Lord God; The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the sabbath it shall be opened, and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened. And the prince shall enter by way of the porch of that gate without, and shall stand by the post of the gate, and the priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate: then he shall go forth; but the gate shall not be shut until the evening. Likewise the people of the land shall worship at the door of this gate before the Lord in the sabbaths and in the new moons.'*[146]

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[137] Mat 24:31; concluding phrase more correctly rendered in Green's Literal Translation, *'from the ends of the heavens to their end.'*
[138] I Cor 15:52
[139] I Thes 4:16
[140] Rev 11:15
[141] Edersheim, Alfred, *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services,* chpt. 15 (paraphrased for brevity)
[142] Isa 1:13,14
[143] Hos 2:10,11
[144] Amos 8:4-6
[145] Isa 66:23; Tanakh omits *'before.'*
[146] Ezek 46:1-3

Epstein adds this interesting snippet pertaining to more recent times: '[One of the innovations of the Safed school was] a fast on the eve of the New Moon—a fast instituted by Cordovero,[147] under the name of the Minor Day of Atonement[148]—the New Moon being conceived as an appropriate time for a monthly spiritual stocktaking.'[149]

In the sixteenth-century, this 'eve of Jewish New Moon' fast, Yom Kippur Katan, on the day preceding the Jewish New Moon on eight months of the year, would exhibit a tendency to occur on the actual day of the correct New Moon, just as it does today. Much earlier than the sixteenth-century, however, this would not occur nearly so often, for the Judaic calendar was woefully inept at getting even close to the lunar conjunctions in the first thousand years of its operation.

In essence, this means that religious Jews have a tendency toward fasting on the correct, dark moon lunar conjunction New Moons when Judæo-Christians are feasting in accordance with the scriptural example. Since the New Moon 'king's feast' pictures the wedding feast of the Lamb, Judaism, whether wittingly or not, is confirming the absence of its adherents from that wedding and celebration. Only the 'elect' can and will participate, and the 'elect' are nowhere to be found inveigled in Judaism.

## New moon foreshadows what?

In the past, the New Moon has been associated with the church, presumably through the close correlation with the sacrifices on each day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, by which means those in the church come out of sin, and as a precursor of the great wedding feast for the marriage of the Bride, with the church purified and presented to Christ. Certainly, the New Moon was sanctified, with sacrifices, trumpets, and a bringing of the people into remembrance before God, but the sin offering of a goat[150] appears to sit ill with the purified, risen church, but only in part, for while alive and before rising to meet the Saviour, they are still touched by sin.

The New Moons observed today, recited by Paul, *'Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body of Christ'*[151]—other than in the king's banquet—picture, as *'a shadow,'* or foreshadow the Millennium worship of the general people of the world before Christ. These, by dint of the trespass and sin offerings, [152] are not comprised of the 'intermediate peoples' or the greater church during the Millennium. They are mortal, they can and will sin, inadvertently. The New Moons, therefore, picture the new spirit of worship among the

[147] Moses Cordovera, 1522–76
[148] Hebrew: Yom Kippur Katon.
[149] Isidore Epstein, Isidore, *Judaism*, p.249 (added comment and clarification in square brackets)
[150] Num 28:15
[151] Col 2:16,17
[152] Ezek 46:20

mortal people of the Millennium, for all *'people in the land'* will worship, *'for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.'*[153]

## Exact date & time

The method of extracting the date of worship is not as stated by Spier: 'The New Moon, Rosh Hodesh, is celebrated the first day of each lunar month. If the previous month has thirty days, however, the thirtieth day is celebrated as Rosh Hodesh, but the start of the new month remains unaltered.'[154] The reason, as noted, is the Judaic calendar's schematic structure, which does not place the molads, conjunctions or dark moons, correctly.

It is clear that these sacred New Moons are to be reckoned from the conjunction in Jerusalem time, and not from local time elsewhere, else the New Moon / Yom Teruah could be a two-day affair, with the local new moon one day displaced from the first day of Ethanim Jerusalem New Moon / Yom Yeruah.

God vests the New Moon with considerable significance, for it is the day on which God frequently acts, as can be seen from many biblical passages, for example: *'They have dealt treacherously against the Lord: for they have begotten strange children: now shall a new moon devour them with their portions.'*[155]

## Imported complexities

It is held by many that the original calendar had a three hundred and sixty-day year in twelve equal months of thirty days. This is based on a reading of Genesis where it is recorded that the period of Noah's flood in its unabated state was from the second month, seventeenth day[156] until the seventh month, seventeenth day.[157] This span is held to equal exactly five months and comprise one hundred and fifty days in length.[158] The one hundred and fifty days is inclusive, however, and so the actual time lapse from the end of the seventeenth of the second month to the end of the seventeenth of the seventh month was one hundred and forty-nine days.[159] Looking at the fall of days in the sacred year spanning 2000–2001, there is found this sequ-ence: 29,29,30,29,29,30,29,30,30,29,30,30. Interestingly, the last five consecutive months aggregate one hund-red and forty-nine days, mark to mark, to which should be added 'one' for the 'inclusive' period, thus totalling one

[153] Isa 11:9
[154] Spier, Arthur, *The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar* (paraphrased for brevity)
[155] Hos 5:7
[156] Gen 7:11
[157] Gen 8:4
[158] Gen 7:24,8:3
[159] 150 – 1 = 149

hundred and fifty. This shows that the calendar of Noah's time was the same as used by Judæo-Christians today. God's sacred calendar didn't change. How could it?

Another claim is that the *'feast'* in Psalms,[160] from chag, indicates that the New Moon is the full moon of the three chagim or *'pilgrim'* feasts, chag being taken to be restricted purely to these feasts. But the second of these, Shavuot or Pentecost, fixed on the sixth day of the month Sivan in the Judaic calendar, falls nowhere near a full moon, so the claim falls. That chag possibly refers to other than these three feasts is seen in Judges and Exodus,[161] but what is common to all is the idea of travelling.[162] New Moons, also referred to as '*appoint-ed times*,'[163] were days of communal feasting, and, for those attending, would oft-involve travel.[164] The use here of chag for *'feast'* is very specific and very telling, for, in context, it indicates the commanded assembly of the 'elect' on the New Moon for the 'King's feast,' and that, in turn, clearly presages their travelling to and attendance at the wedding supper of the Lamb '*in the air*.'[165]

The infatuation with the full moon has its roots firmly bedded in paganism, for it derives from a word meaning 'head-dress' or 'cap,'[166] and also the notion of 'the full moon as a tiara of the moon god....as a feast day.'[167] Full moon feasts and observances are profoundly pagan, having sprung from a variety of moon-worshipping cults in the Middle East.[168]

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[160] Psa 81:3

[161] Judg 21:19 and Ex 10:9; use of the Hebrew word chag for a so-called pilgrim feast is not universally adopted in the Old Testament. Chag (which some attribute to a feast but not always a pilgrim feast) can be applied to feasts other than those usually termed '*pilgrim,'* while the correct term for the three annual commanded assembly feasts is shalosh regalim. The New Moons are feasts, involving the '*King's feast*,' q.v. inf. and cf. I Sam 20:24b., where attendees would travel to the king's palace, a foregleam of events at the Second Coming, q.v. sup.; Teruah, or Trumpets, is the culminating, massive chag at the last, for the spirit 'elect' having risen to partake of that feast then come with Christ to the mount of Olives on His glorious return.

[162] Hebrew: chagim, *'feet,'* with root word chagag, '*marching*;' also defined as '*to hold a feast, hold a festival, make pilgrimage, keep a pilgrim feast, celebrate, dance*,' and even '*stagger*.'

[163] Hebrew: moedim.

[164] I Sam 20:5; here differentiated from Hebrew: shalosh regalim, the pilgrimage festivals of Israel, q.v. sup. and inf.

[165] since the exact point of the dark lunar conjunction is an instant in time in the orbit of the moon when the sun, moon, and earth align, then the New Moon feast, celebrated by the 'elect' around the world, should be celebrated at that same instant, around the world, regardless of whether it be day or night.

[166] C.C.G. p213; Hebrew: kuseu.

[167] q.v. *New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew Lexicon*.

[168] Gesenius' *Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures*, translated by Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, p.367:
'A people of Arabia, of the race of the Joktanites....the Alilai living near the Red Sea in a district where gold is found; their name, 'children of the moon,' so called from the worship of the moon, or Alilat.'