

TIME

Tested Tradition The Renewed Biblical Calendar

By Daniel Larimer

*Do you know the ordinances of the heavens?
Can you establish their rule on the earth?*

Feb 5th, 2026

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*Freely you have received, freely give.
— Matthew 10:8*

ISBN 978-1-7365211-5-1

Contents

Introduction.....	1
Inherited Lies	5
Principles of Evaluation	13
Alleged Authority of Sanhedrin.....	27
Where Does the Day Start?	35
When Does the Day Start?	47
When Does the Month Start?.....	87
When does the Year Start?	113
How to Observe the Signs.....	121
When is the Sabbath?	127
The Day of Saturn.....	157
32 AD Resurrection	179
Herod the Great	209
Passion Week - 3 Days & 3 Nights	227
Solar Only Calendars	243
Regal vs De Facto Reckonings	245
Herod's Appointment & Battle of Actium	249
Stability of Astronomical Calculations.....	259
The Path to Salvation	267
Commands to Follow.....	279
Appointed Times	291
Miscellaneous Commands	319
Closing Remarks.....	323

For there is a proper time and procedure for every matter...

— Ecclesiastes 8:6

If anyone imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know.

— 1 Corinthians 8:2

Introduction

It is the honor of kings to search out a matter and there is no greater mystery than seeking to know Him by honoring his appointed times and Sabbaths. Most assume the calendar and Sabbath day is a settled matter, but few have actually tested this assumption against history, physics, and the rest of scripture, instead history is mercilessly twisted to fit preconceived conclusions — traditions inherited from our fathers in which there is no profit.

This book is written to those who value truth over tradition and are willing to test everything to show yourself approved, a workman that need not be ashamed. The biggest hurdle to discovering the truth is our own unavoidable cognitive biases that blind us to truths that are obvious in hindsight. We get anchored to the first thing we hear, to the things that are most familiar, and the ones that are most socially acceptable. For teachers and pastors, even considering a teaching that would instantly cause you to lose your following, your congregation, or your job is enough for your subconscious to go into overdrive to defend what you already believe over an inconvenient truth.

God is truth and he seeks those who will humble themselves, because the fear of the LORD is instruction in wisdom, and humility comes before honor. We must first humble ourselves before our eyes

can see and our ears can hear new wisdom. The ideas presented in this book are the result of years of study in which every effort was made to seek the truth over what is comfortable, familiar, and widely accepted; and, while I believe the conclusions are conclusive enough to justify writing this book, they are not guaranteed to be infallible.

Then I saw all the work of God, that man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun. Even though a man should seek laboriously, he will not find it out; and though the wise man claims to know, he cannot find it out.

— Ecclesiastes 8:17

Though it may seem impossible to know anything with certainty, we are still expected to seek truth and obey our understanding with all of our heart, mind, body and soul.

The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge, for the ears of the wise seek it out.”

— Proverbs 18:15

What knowledge could be of greater value than to learn God's appointed times, the days He has set aside to meet with mankind, and the shadows pointing us to the substance of Jesus? Without this knowledge we are lost, walking in darkness, and stumbling without the light of His truth. And while we may have good intentions in keeping the Sabbath and feasts on popular days, our good intentions done in ignorance still constitute unintentional sins.

God overlooked people's ignorance about these things in earlier times, but now he commands everyone everywhere to repent of their sins and turn to him

— Acts 17:30

Many are tempted to remain ignorant, to avoid knowledge, and trust in God's mercy on the ignorant; however, willful ignorance leads to destruction.

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.

—Hosea 4:6

Sin always has consequences, even if we are ultimately forgiven; therefore, we should seek the Truth in all things and once discovered we should obey the Truth because Jesus is the Truth. Let us not make a habit of practicing lawlessness and always remember this warning from Yeshua:

"Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness.'

— Matthew 7:22-23

We are not saved by our obedience to his law, but our effort at obeying is the evidence of a renewed heart. Obedience can never repay the debt we owe; however, continued disobedience will continue to defile and willful, unrepentant disobedience is tantamount to the rejection of Yeshua and the Spirit of Grace. It is only by the blood of Jesus and his mercy that we are forgiven and the debt of our sins is paid.

The Name of our Lord

God, the creator of the universe, has a name and the Hebrew texts call him: יְהֹוָה. Most English Bibles translate this as “the LORD” and “Yeshua”. I choose to use the name Yeshua as a closer transliteration of the Hebrew name for Yeshua. God and Lord are titles like President, Master, or King and do not identify any specific “god”.

"It shall come about in that day," says יְהוָה, "That you will call Me Ishi (my husband) and will no longer call Me Baali (my Lord), For I will remove the names of the Baals (lords/false gods) from her mouth, So that they will no longer be mentioned or remembered by their names."

- Hosea 2:16-17

There is great debate about how to pronounce these names, and He will reveal the truth to us in His time, but since there is no need to pronounce these names in this book I will simply use יהוה any time I need to refer to Yahuah, Yehovah, Yahweh, the great I AM, the creator of Heaven and Earth, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and Heavenly Father of Yeshua. If it is good enough for the original texts of the Bible then it is good enough for me!

Quotes

Throughout this book I quote scripture, but occasionally I annotate that scripture to provide context or alternative understandings of the underlying word in Hebrew or Greek. My clarifications are placed in "(...)" and insertion of context are "[...]" . I also substitute “יהוה” with יהוה in translations that are otherwise from other English translations. Where possible I use KJV, NKJV, ESV, and AMP versions of the Bible in that order based upon my understanding of which version is most accurate to the underlying Hebrew and Greek and which reads the best without distorting the meaning of the text.

I view all translations as evidence of the underlying Hebrew and Greek and not proof. Each translator brings their own perspective when resolving ambiguous cases and only those with the greatest context can truly resolve all ambiguity in an accurate way. When in doubt look up the verses for yourself.

Structure

This books length stems largely from the need to refute an abundance of misconceptions, rationalizations, and the like.

How easy it is to make people believe a lie, and how hard it is to undo that work again!

— Mark Twain, Autobiography of Mark Twain

O LORD, my strength and my stronghold, my refuge in the day of trouble, to you shall the nations come from the ends of the earth and say: “Our fathers have inherited nothing but lies, worthless things in which there is no profit.”

— Jeremiah 16:19

The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him.

— Proverbs 18:17

Inherited Lies

Scripture warns us that we would inherit lies, that the traditions of men will nullify his laws (Mark 7:6–13, Matthew 15:3–9, Colossians 28), and that the Pharisee sect that informs most of our understanding of how the ancient Jews allegedly interpreted Torah cannot be trusted (John 8:44), and not give heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth (Titus 1:14). We were also warned that the anti-christ spirit would seek to change the times and seasons (Daniel 7:25) and that this spirit has been at work in the world at least since the time the New Testament was written (1 John 4:3).

In spite of all of these warnings, every single attempt to date the crucifixion (whether one expects it to land on Wednesday, Thursday, or the traditional Friday) follows the same hidden pattern:

1. Assume Pharisee's Jewish traditional calendar
2. Decide the day of week the crucifixion “must” have been.
3. Eliminate all years that don't match the assumed calendar
4. Force everything else to fit regardless of how unlikely
5. Disregard all evidence, including scripture, that doesn't match

The end result is that people contort scripture, Josephus, Roman records, earthquakes, passion week, celestial signs, and anything else that they come across to fit their interpretation of the day of week — even if it takes some extremely creative interpretation, claiming of scribal error without evidence in some places, and denying them in spite of evidence in others. In the process of stretching their interpretations they impugn the credibility of their primary witnesses many times over.

This process violates at least 6 different scriptures by elevating rabbinic Jewish fables and inherited tradition to unquestionable truths, *forcing unnatural interpretations of all other facts — including scripture!*

That creative interpretation is called *special pleading* — when we bend the rules for one piece of evidence so that it will agree with a conclusion we have already decided must be true. In practice, the adoption of special pleading effectively **discards inconvenient evidence**, because the primary justification for the special pleading is that the prior conclusion forces an otherwise **unnatural interpretation**. This is also called *motivated reasoning*, where rules are bent to protect a preconceived conclusion from contradictory evidence.

Seeking the truth is hard work and we are all prone to cognitive biases and using **unsubstantiated facts** that we **take for granted as being undeniable**. Just like we acclimate to the smell of our own house. It is only when returning from vacation that we can smell what our visitors notice every time they visit. For over 1000 years all of society has served (aka worshiped) the 7 day planetary god week and we assume it has always been this way all the way back to creation. Furthermore, we assume the 7th day is Saturday simply because that is what our ancestors have told us.

In this environment any researcher who challenges the assumption is ignored, and thus everyone has financial and social incentive to not challenge the assumption. Are you willing to seek the truth regardless of the consequence?

Putting Assumptions to the Test

What would happen if we put these assumptions to the test, if we didn't bend every other interpretation to bow before the day of Saturn? That is what this book will explore.

Suppose all of the other facts, interpreted without special pleading, point decisively to the year of the cross occurring in 32 AD with 99% certainty. This would put Passover on a Monday, which is fundamentally incompatible with the biblical account when you assume the traditional calendar.

Suppose we identify other Biblical events that occurred on a weekly sabbath or known day of the week, such as the week manna fell in Exodus, the day First Fruits was observed in Exodus and Joshua, or the day the first and second temples fell?

The question then becomes whether the abundant qualitative and quantitative evidence for the cross in 32 AD and other dated events is enough to overcome the claimed "*absence of evidence*" supporting minority calendar positions. Consider that the number of pre-70 AD quotes that unambiguously refer to a continuous 7 day cycle being observed it is shockingly few and the links to Saturday are even fewer. This book will address every quote we can find so that you can see how little primary evidence exists for the traditional calendar week assumption.

We know there were a half dozen different calendars in use at the time of Yeshua and we would expect a Pareto distribution in surviving documents. In any historical period with multiple competing calendars, document production and survival almost never distribute evenly: a small minority of groups (often ~20% or less) generate the vast majority (~80% or more) of texts that end up preserved. In 1st-century Judea, the groups that left the largest surviving footprint (Pharisees, diaspora communities, later rabbinic circles) overwhelmingly used the empirical lunisolar calendar we now call the "traditional" Jewish calendar. The Temple priesthood itself, however, was a relatively small, elite, centrally-located institution that produced far fewer day-to-day documents than scattered scribes, synagogues, and private individuals across the empire. Furthermore, the documents that were produced were destroyed in 70 AD with the loss of the temple.

Given how few documents have survived that evidence the majority position, even if a large minority calendar was officially

observed by the Temple priests, we would not expect to see much direct evidence of it. This is especially true when the majority is actively hostile to minority positions. They either passively neglect reproducing or actively destroy opposing records. It is therefore a logical fallacy to assert that absence of explicit evidence is evidence of absence in this situation.

"The doctrine of the Sadducees is this: That souls die with the bodies; nor do they regard the observation of anything besides what the law enjoins them... But this doctrine is received but by a few, yet by those still of the greatest dignity. But they are able to do almost nothing of themselves; for when they become magistrates, as they are unwillingly and by force sometimes obliged to be, they addict themselves to the notions of the Pharisees, because the multitude would not otherwise bear them."

— *Antiquities of the Jews* (Book 18, 1:4)

All of that said, the Bible provides all the evidence we need to determine the true calendar when one reads it carefully and without the tainted traditions inherited by the Jews. This literal reading that relies only on the Bible is therefore the most likely reading supported by elite Sadducees (those of greatest dignity) that do not regard anything but what scripture requires of them (according to Josephus). Thus, rather than a "lack of evidence" we actually have the strongest possible evidence of an alternative calendar straight from scripture.

The issue we face that the Pharisaic Jews have nullified scripture with their creative interpretations and dismissals and we accept their word over the plain reading.

You nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many other similar things.

— *Mark 7:13*

Pastors tell us to trust the Jews, that they know what God really meant, and that they have kept the oral tradition which passed down critical context missing from the scriptures. Most Christians assume the Jews were rigorous when it comes to keeping Torah and the commandments because they are ignorant to the difference between the Oral Torah (aka, the tradition of the elders, human tradition, dogma, ordinances, decrees) and the instruction of God found in the written scriptures. It is this oral dogma that Yeshua tells us nullified, or made no effect, the written scripture.

Because most Christians assume the problem with the Pharisaic Jews is that they were “too legalistic” and “too strict” in following God’s commands they cannot imagine that in their zeal they nullified and perverted the very commands of God they claim to follow in favor of their tradition. In light of this, the primary witness used by the majority cannot be trusted. In fact, scripture commands us not to trust them:

This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.

— Mark 7:6-13

You (Pharisees) are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

— John 8:44

Therefore rebuke them (Pharisees from Circumcision Party) sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, not devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the commands of people who turn away from the truth.

— Titus 1:13-14

See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.

— Colossians 2:8

If scripture declares a particular sect to be sons of the father of lies, how can we accept any testimony from this sect? Are we to presume that they can be trusted on some things but not others? How can we know which things can be trusted and which cannot?

Scripture gives us the answer: *test all things and hold to that which is good*. Now here is the real challenge: how do you test the traditions that we have received? I contend that scripture gives us everything we need to prove God's calendar beyond reasonable doubt and that we cannot let extra-biblical oral traditions taint how we view the scriptures. The fact that scripture explicitly tells us to not pay attention to these oral traditions should be the first warning sign.

Extra-Biblical Evidence

The first and most frequent objection to considering any other calendar is the "*lack of evidence*" from outside the Bible. This book will definitively disprove that assertion, but lets first test the validity of the argument itself. Suppose there was an ancient historian that provided a detailed description of an alternative calendar that contradicted the traditional Jewish calendar. What then?

We cannot simply pick and choose historical sources based upon our subjective feelings nor can we assume that lack of extra-biblical confirmation of alternative calendars validates the surviving Jewish tradition. Consider how this line of argument has played out many times over:

Existence of King David and his dynasty — Once dismissed by many scholars as legendary or mythical (no extra-biblical evidence existed for a significant "united monarchy" around 1000 BC), the **Tel Dan Stele** (discovered 1993) provided the first extra-biblical

reference to the "House of David," confirming his historical existence and lineage.

Existence of Pontius Pilate — As Roman prefect of Judea who sentenced Yeshua, his role was questioned by some due to limited non-biblical mentions; the **Pilate Stone** (discovered 1961 in Caesarea Maritima) is an inscription bearing his name and title, confirming him as a real historical figure.

Hittites as a major empire — The Bible describes them as a powerful people (e.g., Genesis 23, 2 Samuel 11), but 19th-century critics called them fictional due to no known records; excavations at **Hattusa** (late 19th/early 20th century) uncovered thousands of Hittite tablets and ruins, proving they were a real ancient superpower.

Belshazzar as king of Babylon — Mentioned in Daniel 5 as the last Babylonian ruler, he was long considered fictional by critics (no records named him king); **Nabonidus Cylinder** inscriptions (discovered 19th century) confirmed Belshazzar as co-regent under his father Nabonidus, matching the biblical account.

King Hezekiah's tunnel and actions — His water tunnel in Jerusalem (2 Kings 20:20, 2 Chronicles 32) and Assyrian siege were doubted; the **Siloam Inscription** (found 1880) describes the tunnel's construction, and Assyrian records (e.g., Sennacherib's annals) confirm the 701 BC siege of Jerusalem.

Existence of Quirinius as governor during Yeshua's birth — Luke 2's census under Quirinius was challenged as an anachronism; inscriptions and records confirmed his governorship and a related census/enrollment in 2 BC

Pool of Bethesda's five porticoes — John 5 describes a pool with five colonnades in Jerusalem, doubted as unhistorical; excavations uncovered the pool's remains with exactly five porticoes (or portico-like divisions), confirming the description.

King Shishak's invasion of Judah — 1 Kings 14/2 Chronicles 12 records Pharaoh Shishak plundering Jerusalem; **Karnak Temple reliefs** (discovered 19th

century) list his campaign into Judah, naming cities matching the biblical account.

Existence of Edomite/Israelite advanced organization in David's era — Minimal evidence led to doubts about a united monarchy; recent finds at **Timna Valley mines** show advanced, wealthy operations (copper smelting) in the 10th century BC, supporting organized kingdoms without large permanent structures.

Given this track record, demanding an extra-biblical confirmation of something that can be derived from the Bible itself is a major fallacy. When it comes to something as basic as "*describe the phase of the moon that starts the month?*", you will be told "*the Bible doesn't say*", which you will come to find out is far from the truth. What they really mean is, "*the Bible doesn't describe a dark or sliver moon*"; therefore, it "*doesn't say*" anything that confirms the tradition we assume to be true.

It is the alleged silence of the Bible that causes some people to adopt extra-biblical books like The Book of Jubilees or The Book Enoch to understand the calendar, they then pair these sources with the Dead Sea Scrolls and derive solar calendars that contradict Jewish tradition. These texts even address the calendar dispute going back over 2000 years. Since these sources cannot be denied, we are left with multiple candidate calendars and using the Bible alone to test the calendars for truth. The fallacy most people fall into is the false dichotomy of assuming you must pick one of these ancient calendars simply because there exists extra-biblical evidence for it. In reality what we may be witnessing is the documentation of ancient heresies; therefore, we must consider the possibility that all extra-biblical texts are wrong in part or in whole.

Principles of Evaluation

When seeking the calendar that is most likely described by the biblical text we must first establish some core principles by which we can evaluate proposed candidates. These principles claim no authority beyond the unbreakable word of God; they are simply what must follow if we hold that Scripture is true, sufficient, and cannot be added to, subtracted from, or made too difficult for the ordinary believer to obey.”

If we accept—as the foundation of this inquiry—that every word of God is pure (Prov. 30:5), that not one jot or tittle will pass from the Law until all is fulfilled (Matt. 5:18), and that the Scripture cannot be broken (John 10:35), then the following evaluative criteria are not optional preferences, personal biases, or competing traditions. They are inescapable deductions from the text itself. Any calendar system that fails these tests necessarily contradicts or adds to the written revelation, which Scripture forbids.

The principles in this chapter derive their neutrality from three interlocking biblical axioms:

- 1. God alone is the lawgiver and judge** (Isa. 33:22; James 4:12). No human institution, court, tradition, or calculation can legislate or alter what God has already declared.
- 2. We are commanded neither to add to nor take away from His words** (Deut. 4:2; 12:32; Rev. 22:18–19). Any rule, postponement, calculation method, or interpretive authority not explicitly present or clearly implied, or narratively demonstrated in Scripture is an addition that Scripture itself prohibits.

3. The commands of God are not too difficult, but are near us...so that we may do them (Deut. 30:11–14). Therefore, the means of discerning and obeying the appointed times must be accessible to the ordinary person wherever they go in the world.

Because these axioms are non-negotiable within the premise that Scripture is true and unbreakable, the derived principles are not “biased toward observation” or “against rabbinic views.” They are simply the logical boundary conditions that any proposed calendar must satisfy to remain faithful to the text. In this light, the following principles are not one side of a debate; they are the scriptural guardrails that define the boundaries of the debate.

Chief among these principles is whether understanding time requires one to know math, astronomy, and how to calculate the calendar or whether everyone should be able to look at the sky and discern the appointed times by observation alone. A related question: are observations objective or subjective and who has authority to interpret the observations? Some might ask why is this even relevant?

This is relevant because God commanded us to keep his Sabbath Holy and to remember his appointed times. While it could be argued that many commands only apply to priests in the temple, some of these commands require all people to appear or perform actions on specific dates such as Passover and Day of Atonement and there are grave consequences prescribed to those who fail to obey.

“Also on the 10th day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you...For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. And whatsoever soul it be that does any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people.”

— Leviticus 23:29-30

This command applies to all people, requires all people to know the day of the month, and failure to obey it results in the extreme

consequence of being cut off. Thankfully we have the blood of Yeshua to cover our unintentional sins, but once we are saved we should desire to obey his commands with all of our heart, mind, body and soul. Thus we should be able to identify this day and afflict ourselves as instructed or else we continue sin.

With this underlying motivation that applies to all people, we must evaluate what calendar system all people are capable of following and being accountable to. Consider that scripture directly tells us that the commands are not too difficult or beyond our reach:

Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach.

— Deuteronomy 30:11

We now have **a metric by which we can judge calendars: are they beyond the reach of the average man armed only with a Bible?** Do they require an elite group of astronomers and mathematicians to discern? Any calendar that is only viable with modern technology and speed of light communication is extremely suspect because it would have been beyond the reach of people 3500 years ago. I argue that the calendar should be so simple to understand that a 12 year old or younger could reliably follow it without any outside authority. Consider that the youngest King of Israel was 7 years old; therefore one could argue that this is an age of some level accountability.

Given the consequences for failure to obey, it seems logical that there is an objective standard — that the times themselves are holy and **our failure to read the clock properly doesn't change the holy times.** God makes reference to a calendar and gives commands relative to this objective calendar. He does not prescribe a process, which if followed, allows man to change the times and appointed times. In fact any change to the appointed times is the spirit of Antichrist.

He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change the times and the law.

—Daniel 7:25

The next principle that this book will leverage is that **the Bible often demonstrates things implicitly in the storyline rather than explicitly as instruction.** Yeshua lived a perfect, sin-free, life; therefore, his life is a demonstration of the true calendar even if he never once explicitly addressed the calendar.

Some people use Yeshua's lack of explicit statements as confirmation of the assumed inherited Jewish calendar; however, that is a circular argument that ignores the documented reality that there may have been major divisions between what was officially practiced in the Temple and what was practiced throughout the countryside outside of Jerusalem. Josephus described the tension between the Sadducees who held the highest positions and the Pharisees who held favor with the masses. The Sadducees tended to stick to only what was in scripture. Therefore, we must avoid the circular logic caused by survivorship bias when testing calendars.

Map vs Territory

Before going forward we must get a clear understanding of the difference between the map and the territory or actual land — because this distinction is what allows us to test claims without falling into circular reasoning. There are an infinite number of maps, but only one territory or physical reality. Proving a map existed 2000 years ago does not prove that it was accurate or even that it was in use. We can prove many different maps existed and they all disagree with each other.

A calendar is a map of time and the physical reality is אֱלֹהִים' appointed times. If you want to test a map, you must go out into the physical world and see if the map accurately directs you to your destination.

If you want to test a calendar, we must know with near certainty that a particular point in time was one of אֱלֹהִים' appointed times and we must know this without a direct or indirect circular reference back to an assumed calendar. Just because your map says the treasure is

buried under the X, doesn't mean the X is in the right place. Instead we must first find some treasure, then see what maps have an X in the right place.

Scripture & The Calendar

The first thing you will discover when searching for the scriptural evidence that the month starts with the dark or sliver moon is that everyone references books outside the cannon. The book of Enoch, Jubilees, or Sirach are examples. This opens up a broader debate about whether these books are indeed "flawless scripture" or merely commentary on scripture or even writings of false prophets? However, if they contradict the canonical scriptures then they cannot be trusted for doctrine. In other words, these extra-biblical books could be just another source documenting the tradition of men we were warned to avoid.

If canonical scriptures didn't say anything about the moon, then we have no basis to judge or test these extra-biblical books to know whether what they are adding is consistent with known scripture. But if the scriptures do provide even a hint of evidence in a different direction, then we start to have an argument that these non-canonical books are clearly not scripture. So while extra-biblical books can be useful confirmation of concepts proven by canonical scriptures, they cannot be relied upon to introduce new doctrines such as calendars.

It is my contention that the calendar is such a critical key to understanding prophecy and knowing Him and his laws and statutes that His calendar will be imbedded implicitly throughout the canonical text in a way that is hard to corrupt.

Consider for a moment if the scriptures were too overt in describing the calendar, then the enemy would have a very easy target to corrupt with the change of a word or two. But if the scriptures capture evidence of the calendar indirectly then it wouldn't be an obvious target to corrupt.

So those advocating the sliver or dark moon who admit right out of the gate that they have little to no canonical evidence for a sliver or dark moon have already conceded the point. In later chapters I am going to present an abundance of verses from the cannon that support a full moon. This leaves a high burden for Enoch, Jubilees, and Sirach to overcome to be considered scripture that doesn't contradict the cannon.

All of that said, because dark and sliver mooners rely on tradition and other works, it might be a case that they just haven't dug deep enough to find the evidence in the cannon. This is a wake up call to stop relying on tradition and start looking for real evidence and avoiding logical fallacies.

Summary of Principles

Here is the broad, standalone criteria derived from the highest principles that can test any proposed calendar system for biblical fidelity.

1. **Commands Are Accessible to All:** God's instructions, including appointed times, are straightforward and within reach for ordinary people, so the calendar must be simple enough for anyone—including children—to understand and follow without specialized knowledge.
2. **Universal Personal Accountability:** Holy days apply to every individual, with serious consequences for non-observance; everyone must be able to reliably identify the correct dates.
3. **Connected to Sun, Moon, and Stars:** The bible explicitly states that the sun, moon and stars are for signs and appointed times and days and years. These lights are the hands on God's celestial clock; therefore, any calendar must remain synchronized with the heavens.
4. **Objective, Unchangeable Holy Times:** Appointed times are fixed and holy by divine decree; human failure to discern them does not alter their sanctity, and no process is given for man to modify them, instead we must seek and discover them like other natural laws of physics.
5. **Implicit Demonstration in Narrative:** Scripture reveals truth through lived examples, not just explicit written rules
6. **Agricultural/Seasonal Alignment:** Ensures calendars maintain harmony with natural cycles, preventing holy days from drifting out of commanded seasons for decades, centuries, and millennia.
7. **Practical Global Decentralized Observation:** Assesses whether a calendar supports biblical unity while allowing practical accessibility over all time periods.

It is with these principles that this book will dive deep and test everything so we can hold that which is good. But before we go further we must address alleged Rabbinic authority.

Some may immediately object that these principles are biased against a calculated calendar and fail to account for authority given to elders. They may claim calendar chaos if a centralized authority is removed and elevate unity over perfection. I ask you to consider that to a secular audience all lunar calendars are pure chaos with their months drifting relative to the familiar Gregorian calendar. The chaos is not related to the calendar, but to the conversion from one calendar to another. If the lunar calendar were the sole calendar then no one would experience any chaos.

The true source of chaos is human authorities abusing authority to interpret the signs in the sun, moon, and stars. When their opinion is binding regardless of the objective reality, they have used it for political means. The Julian and Gregorian calendars solved this by removing almost all subjective interpretation except the exact location of the international dateline which remains subject to political manipulation.

There is nothing wrong with using calculation so long as the calculation does not produce a different result than the observation would. The heavens are the ground truth, the means by which God has declared his times and speaks his calendar to us.

He made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows its time for setting.

— *Psalms 104:19*

*The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.
Day to day pours forth speech,
and night to night reveals knowledge.
There is no speech, nor are there words,
whose voice is not heard.
Yet their voice goes out through all the earth,
and their words to the end of the world.*

— *Psalms 19:1-4*

Let God be found true, though every man be found a liar, as it is written: "That You may be justified in Your words, And prevail when You are judged."

— Romans 3:4

Regardless of what calculations we make or what opinions those who claim authority pronounce, God's word spoken through the stars reveal the truth and in light of this truth, all contrary opinions are lies and all men liars. We are all accountable to God's truth regardless of the lies told by men.

The Myth of 'Proper' Hermeneutical Principles

You've probably been there—I know I have. As someone who's spent years digging into Scripture, teaching others to question traditions and seek the plain, logical meaning of the text, I've lost count of the times fellow Bible teachers or seminary grads have dismissed my interpretations with that smug line: "You just don't understand proper hermeneutical principles." As if invoking this academic-sounding label instantly wins the argument, like waving a magic wand of authority. It's frustrating, isn't it? They act like these "principles" are some objective, divinely ordained toolkit for unlocking the Bible, when in reality, they're often just a smokescreen for rationalization, circular reasoning, and control. In this chapter, we're going to pull back the curtain on this charade. We'll expose how common this appeal is in both Jewish and Christian circles, define what these so-called principles really are, hunt for a "complete list" (spoiler: good luck finding one that's truly universal), and then dissect them one by one—highlighting the good (if any), the bad (the misapplications), and the ugly (the inherent dishonesty that makes them tools for bias rather than truth). If I'm wrong and these principles actually hold up as genuine, objective rules anyone can follow without falling into traps, I'll lay out the case fairly. But based on logic, Scripture, and a healthy dose of discernment, I suspect we'll find they're more about propping up traditions than revealing God's intent.

Let's start with how pervasive this is. In rabbinic Judaism, "hermeneutical principles" are baked into the system—think Talmudic

debates where rabbis wield the 13 middot (rules) of Rabbi Yishmael like a sledgehammer to derive halakha (law) from the Torah. Seminaries like Yeshiva University or the Hebrew Union College teach these as foundational, training students to see them as the bridge between written and oral Torah. It's so ingrained that questioning them feels like heresy; after all, they're supposedly from Sinai itself. Flip to Christian circles, and it's eerily similar. Evangelical seminaries—Dallas Theological Seminary, Westminster, and many others—hammer home "biblical hermeneutics" in required courses, often drawing from texts like Gordon Fee's *How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth* or R.C. Sproul's guidelines. Liberal seminaries like Harvard Divinity or Union Theological add postmodern twists, but the core idea persists: "Follow these principles, or your interpretation is invalid." Pastors parrot this in pulpits, Bible study leaders use it to shut down debate, and online forums are full of it. Why? It gives the illusion of objectivity while letting "experts" gatekeep truth.

The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him.

— Proverbs 18:17

So, what exactly are "hermeneutical principles"? At their simplest, they're supposed to be structured rules or guidelines for interpreting texts—in this case, the Bible. The word "hermeneutics" comes from the Greek *hermeneuo*, meaning "to interpret" or "explain," tied to Hermes, the messenger god. In biblical studies, these principles claim to provide a methodical way to extract meaning, avoiding wild speculation. For Jews, they're midrashic tools to expand the Torah into practical laws. For Christians, they're often framed as "historical-grammatical" methods to honor the text's original context and intent. Sounds noble, right? But here's the rub: these aren't neutral algorithms. They're human constructs, often retrofitted to justify preconceived doctrines. They promise clarity but deliver subjectivity, assuming layers of "hidden meaning" that only the initiated can access—echoing the Gnostic error Paul warned against in Colossians 2:8: "See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition."

Now, where can one go to find a "complete list" of these principles? That's the first red flag—there isn't one definitive,

universally agreed-upon canon. For rabbinic Judaism, the go-to is the Baraita of Rabbi Yishmael in the Sifra (a midrash on Leviticus), listing 13 middot. You can find it in the Talmud (e.g., Sanhedrin 86a) or online at sites like Sefaria.org. But even there, variations exist—some lump rules together, others expand Hillel's original seven. For Christians, it's even more fragmented. No single "complete" list exists; instead, you'll find compilations in seminary textbooks like *Basic Bible Interpretation* by Roy Zuck (12 principles) or *Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes* by Henry Virkler (focusing on 7-10 core ones). Evangelical sites like GotQuestions.org or Bible.org offer summaries, but they differ—some emphasize literalism, others typology. Liberal scholars add 'reader-response' or "feminist hermeneutics." If these were true principles—like gravity or math axioms—they'd be consistent and verifiable. Instead, they're cafeteria-style: pick what fits your theology. This alone exposes the dishonesty; invoking "proper principles" often means "my school's list, not yours."

With that foundation, let's dissect the key ones. I'll start with the rabbinic 13 middot, as they're the archetype many Christian principles borrow from, then pivot to common Christian adaptations. For each, I'll highlight the good (logical potential), the bad (common abuses), and the ugly (core flaws that make them unreliable "principles").

1. A Fortiori Inference: Inferring from minor to major (e.g., if A is true in a lenient case, it's truer in a strict one).

Good: This mirrors basic deductive logic—if Scripture says God provides for birds (Matthew 6:26), how much more for us? It's forward-looking and testable.

Bad: Rabbis use it to extrapolate laws without bounds, like turning a minor ritual into a major prohibition, ignoring context.

Ugly: It's unfalsifiable; you can always argue "how much more" to fit your agenda, assuming escalation without proof. Not a principle—more a slippery slope fallacy.

2. Verbal Analogy: Linking verses with similar words to apply laws across them.

Good: Encourages cross-referencing, like connecting "Sabbath" usages for consistency.

Bad: Words get twisted—e.g., same root in unrelated contexts forces artificial links, overriding plain meaning.

Ugly: Circular: Rabbis claim only tradition validates which analogies are "valid," creating an elite gatekeeper class. If anyone could use it, chaos; but restricting it exposes bias, not objectivity.

3. Building a Principle from One or Two Verses: Deriving a general rule from specific examples.

Good: Builds patterns, like inferring mercy from multiple forgiveness stories.

Bad: Overgeneralizes—two verses on tithing become universal mandates, ignoring cultural shifts.

Ugly: Assumes isolated verses "build" without whole-Bible harmony; prone to confirmation bias, where you cherry-pick to "build" what you want.

4-6. General-Specific-General: Rules for when broad statements are limited or expanded by details.

Good: Respects structure—e.g., a general command ("love your neighbor") clarified by specifics (Leviticus 19).

Bad: Endless debates on what's "general" vs. "specific," leading to legalistic hairsplitting.

Ugly: Self-referential; rabbis define categories to resolve ambiguities in their favor, embodying rationalization over deduction.

7-11. Something in General That Comes Out: Exceptions teaching about the whole or new matters.

Good: Handles outliers logically.

Bad: Creates loopholes—e.g., an exception for one law morphs into exemptions everywhere.

Ugly: Unfalsifiable layering; "comes out" implies hidden depths only experts see, echoing esoteric knowledge Yeshua condemned (Matthew 23:13).

12. Learned from Context: Interpret by surrounding verses.

Good: Basic common sense—context is king.

Bad: "Context" stretched to include distant traditions.

Ugly: Selective; ignores broader canon if it contradicts local "inyano."

13. Two Contradicting Verses Resolved by Third: Harmonize apparent conflicts.

Good: Promotes unity, like reconciling grace and works via Ephesians 2:8-10.

Bad: Forces harmony where none exists, rationalizing away tensions.

Ugly: Assumes no real contradictions, begging the question; the "third" verse is often cherry-picked.

Shifting to Christian hermeneutics, which often repackage these with a Protestant twist, but inherit the same issues:

Literal/Historical-Grammatical Method: Seek plain meaning in original context.

Good: Aligns with Scripture's clarity (Psalm 119:105).

Bad: "Literal" bends for allegories, like in Revelation.

Ugly: Claims objectivity but smuggles biases—e.g., dispensationalists vs. covenant theologians read the same text differently.

Let Scripture Interpret Scripture (Analogy of Faith): Clear verses explain obscure.

Good: Deductive harmony.

Bad: "Clear" is subjective—your clear verse is my obscure.

Consider Genre and Context: Adjust for poetry, history, etc.

Good: Avoids wooden literalism.

Bad: Genres redefined to fit doctrines (e.g., Genesis as "myth").

Ugly: No fixed genre rules—academics invent categories, echoing rabbinic midrash.

Authorial Intent and Cultural Background: What the writer meant.

Good: Respects human authors under inspiration.

Bad: Speculative—we can't mind-read ancients.

Ugly: Relies on extra-biblical "experts," introducing secular biases.

Do these meet the definition of a true "principle"—an objective, universal rule that can be followed consistently without bias?

Objectively, no. **A real principle, like deductive logic (premises to conclusion), is verifiable and falsifiable.** These are broadly elastic, self-serving frameworks that empower interpreters over the text.

To the teaching and to the testimony! If they will not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn (light).

— Isaiah 8:20

Let's ditch the gatekeepers and return to Scripture alone—testing everything, holding fast to what's good. That's a "principle" worth following.

Alleged Authority of Sanhedrin

There is a well known Jewish “fable” that each month two witnesses were required to observe the first visible sliver of the moon and that on the testimony of these two witnesses the new month could be declared. The basis of this approach is this command:

A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established.

— Deuteronomy 19:15

This verse applies to crimes and court cases, and is being used to resolve a sign **as if the sign could be disputed**. Most Christians take this for granted as “*how it should be done*” and assume it must be described somewhere in the Bible, but it is not found anywhere. Consider the implications if the start of every month could be corrupted by 2 or more people claiming they saw the sign even if they did not. Given the heart of the antichrist spirit to deceive people into sinning, this would be guaranteed to occur and the same oral history that tells us the fable also records false reports:

Originally, they would light torches on the mountaintops [after the court sanctified the new month]. They would light from one mountain to another until the signal reached the Diaspora.

But when the Cutheans (Samaritans) began to act deceitfully and lit fires on the wrong days to confuse the Jews, the Sages instituted that messengers should go out [instead] to inform the people.

— Mishnah Rosh Hashanah 2:2–4

Switching to messengers doesn't solve the problem of false witness fires because messengers are too slow and can also lie, especially for appointed times like the Feast of Trumpets that occur on the first day of the month. A messenger could travel at most ~70 miles before sunrise. Only with modern speed of light communication or advanced calculation techniques beyond the average person can this calendar structure even be considered beyond Jerusalem.

A consequence of having to evaluate the testimony of human witnesses is that it places someone in position of authority to determine the sincerity of the individuals and that the necessary "due process" has been followed. This in turn means that with this process it isn't the general population's observations that matter, but the decree of a corruptible central authority. We all know how trustworthy centralized human institutions are.

The Babylonian Talmud in Rosh Hashanah 18b–19a and parallels state that the **Sanhedrin's** intercalation (adding leap months) and new month **declarations are final, even overriding potential witnesses** if needed for alignment.

Some argue that you must obey the Sanhedrin on the basis of this scripture:

According to the teaching that they will teach you and according to the judgment that they will say to you, you shall do; you shall not deviate from the word that they will tell you, right or left."

— Deuteronomy 17:11

The oral torah documented in the Talmud interprets this verse as giving a group of people the absolute authority to interpret Torah and all others must obey them — even if their rules appear to contradict scripture.

"Even if they tell you that right is left and left is right, obey them."

— *Sifrei Devarim 154, Rashi on Deuteronomy 17:11*

"Even if [the judge/Sanhedrin] tells you about what appears to your eyes as right that it is left, or left that it is right—listen to them."

— *Rashi*

In this scriptural context “they” is defined in the prior verses as the Levitical priests located in the place God chooses (The Temple in Jerusalem).

Go to the place that אָמַר your God will choose (Jerusalem Temple), and come to the Levitical priests and to the judge who will be in those days, and inquire.

— *Deuteronomy 17:7-8*

And the subject matter jurisdiction of the court is defined here:

If any case arises requiring decision between one kind of homicide and another, one kind of legal right and another, or one kind of assault and another, any case within your towns that is too difficult for you, then you shall arise and go up to the place that אָמַר your God will choose.

— *Deuteronomy 17:9*

The Pharisaic Jews interpreted this broadly so as to give them ultimate authority over all matters. A self-serving interpretation if there ever was one. From this authority they can give orders that are in direct contradiction to Torah and imply that their orders carry the full authority of God and the masses must obey them or they are disobeying God. They have made themselves into gods.

The issue is that this text is clearly focused on “*cases too difficult for local towns*” and thus local towns are to have authority over the plain reading of the Torah on simple matters. The calendar, being a command that scripture implies is “*not too difficult for you*” is clearly a local matter.

Furthermore, this is authority to judge a dispute and not an authority to legislate. It focused on disputes between people over property rights and assaults. It is the difference between congress and the supreme court. God is the sole law giver and judge of the law, disputes between brothers regarding property rights are the jurisdiction delegated to elders by Torah.

The Fallacy of Case Law Authority

In the United States our legal system has a concept of “case law” where courts consider the opinion of prior court rulings when making new court rulings. In theory, this is supposed to provide consistency in ruling over time, but in practice it causes divergence from the actual constitutional law over time. One “wrong” opinion issued by the supreme court becomes a de-facto law that nullifies the actual constitution. Small errors accumulate over time like a game of telephone until the law that is enforced is unrelated to the law that is written.

To avoid deviation from the actual law, all rulings need to be independent interpretations. One judge’s opinion should not be binding on the next judge’s opinion. The written law is the ground truth and everything else is subject to error.

In science there is a principle that all measurements contain some level of error and to find the best approximation of the truth you must take many independent measurements of the same value and aggregate them. If you need to combine two measurements to find the area of a square, then the error of the area is amplified by the errors in the measurements of the two sides. Each side must be measured multiple times and averaged before multiplying the averages to get the area.

This same principle could apply to interpreting Torah. Each case or dispute must look at the Torah with fresh eyes and avoid looking to past decisions for guidance. Each part of the Torah must be independently evaluated and decisions that involve combining

interpretations of two or more parts of Torah have greater chance of error just like area calculations have greater margin of error than length calculations. Therefore, more care must be taken before building on more complex rulings.

When it comes to the calendar, one must aggregate dozens of verses across scripture because there is no distilled passage that gives explicit instructions. Thus it is more like attempting to calculate the volume of a complex object than measuring the length of one of its sides. For this reason, we need many independent measurements not a single authoritative ruling by a centralized source.

History of Sanhedrin's "Authority"

A court must have proper authority for its rulings to be binding and that means it must trace its delegated authority directly from God and the Torah. A group of people cannot simply assemble and declare themselves to have divine authority over a matter.

In Jewish tradition, the Sanhedrin (or Great Sanhedrin, a supreme court of 71 members) claims its roots to the Bible. This is a theological origin which any group of 71 people could claim as the basis of their authority. The original elders were chosen by Moses and Moses was given authority to chose from God. From this point forward the elders would reach a consensus on approving new members. In theory, as long as this process was followed then a group could claim authority all the way back to God's command to Moses.

The issue is that this process was not followed without introducing corrupting authorities. During the period of Judges there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

*And it came to pass, when [the prophet] Samuel was old, that he **made his sons judges** over Israel... And his **sons walked not in his ways**, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.*

— 1 Samuel 8:1–3

The elders of Israel approached Samuel, saying his sons are corrupt and they want "*a king to judge/rule us like all the other nations*". God tells Samuel this request is actually a rejection of Him as their

true King, but instructs Samuel to grant it after solemnly warning them about how the king will tax them heavily and abuse his powers.

At this point “authority” of the elders was passed to the authority of the King anointed by God. This went first to Saul, then when he was corrupted, passed to David. David passed it on to Solomon who became corrupt and the kingdom was divided upon his death. From this point forward the “judges” were appointed by kings, most of whom lacked proper anointing.

Then Israel was taken into captivity and under captivity they lost the ability to “rule themselves” and thus the chain of authority was broken for over a generation. The new root of authority would be the biblical prophets who oversaw the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple. However, this source of authority was also corrupted.

Historically, the Sanhedrin as a formalized institution emerged during the Hellenistic period under foreign rule (Greek and Roman), evolving from earlier bodies like the council of elders under Persian and Seleucid control (c. 333–165 BCE). Key developments:

- **c. 200 BC:** Earliest traceable origins as a supreme theocratic court under Seleucid rule, granting Jewish autonomy in Judea.
- **c. 191 BC:** Formal restructuring when the High Priest lost confidence; the office of Nasi was created, separating leadership from the priesthood.
- **c. 76–57 BC:** First explicit mentions during Hasmonean rule and Roman reorganization by Aulus Gabinius, who established **five local synedria** (councils) in 57 BCE.

The Great Sanhedrin in Jerusalem (meeting in the Chamber of Hewn Stones in the Temple) is attested from the 63 BC Roman conquest to the 70 AD Temple destruction. It functioned as a legislative, judicial, and religious body until Roman suppression.

Sources vary due to fragmentary evidence (e.g., Josephus, Talmud, New Testament), but the consensus is that while concepts are ancient, the institution as known crystallized in the 2nd–1st centuries BC. **It was disbanded after the Bar Kokhba revolt (135 AD)** and fully abolished by Emperor Theodosius I in 395 AD. Modern revival attempts (e.g., 2004 in Tiberias) claim continuity but lack broad recognition.

Under Roman rule in the first century, the Sanhedrin operated with significant but limited autonomy. While the body traditionally filled its ranks through internal co-optation of qualified priests, elders, and scribes, ultimate authority rested with Rome. **Roman governors and client rulers directly appointed and deposed the high priest**, who presided over the Sanhedrin and wielded decisive influence over its proceedings.

Historical records, particularly from Josephus, illustrate this control: procurators like Valerius Gratus (ca. 15–26 AD) repeatedly removed high priests and installed figures such as Joseph Caiaphas (Antiquities 18.2.2), ensuring the leadership aligned with Roman interests. Similarly, **Herod the Great purged and appointed members to secure loyalty**, and later procurators intervened when actions (such as convening without approval) threatened order.

Membership thus prioritized political reliability over purely religious or scholarly merit. The high priest and key aristocratic elements—often Sadducean elites—owed their positions to Roman favor, rendering **the Sanhedrin's authority derivative of imperial power rather than independent divine or traditional mandate**. This structure fostered compliance with Roman policy, as the council's legitimacy and survival depended on demonstrating loyalty to the occupying regime. In practice, Rome remained the ultimate source of the Sanhedrin's effective power during this era.

What we can conclude from this is that appeals to the Sanhedrin for authority on interpreting Torah and the calendar are extremely suspect and their rulings should not be given divine authority.

Under Roman rule in the first century, the apostles explicitly rejected the authority of the Sanhedrin when its commands conflicted with God's directives. In Acts 5, after being arrested for preaching about Yeshua despite prior orders to stop, Peter and the other apostles stood before the council and declared their higher allegiance.

“But Peter and the apostles answered, ‘We must obey God rather than men.’”

— Acts 5:29

This direct confrontation occurred in the context of the Sanhedrin's prohibition against teaching in Yeshua's name (Acts 5:28). The apostles viewed obedience to God as supreme. **Human authority**,

even when exercised by religious leaders under Roman oversight, could not override divine mandates.

"But Peter and John answered them, 'Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.'"

—Acts 4:19–20 (ESV)

In both cases, the apostles acknowledged the Sanhedrin's position but subordinated it to God's ultimate authority. Their stance highlighted that loyalty to Rome's derivative power through the council did not bind believers when it contradicted divine commands, prioritizing obedience to God over any human institution.

Therefore, when it comes to the calendar one cannot appeal to the fixed calculated calendar from 358 AD to determine God's appointed times because this was over 200 years after the Sanhedrin was disbanded and by Rome and the apostles instructed us to obey God, and His Word expressed in Torah, rather than rulings of the Sanhedrin that contradict it.

A similar line of reasoning can apply to any church authority attempting to change the Sabbath and feast days. There is simply no human authority to change the appointed times of תְּמִימָה.

"When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth."

— Sherlock Holmes

Where Does the Day Start?

The most fundamental building block of any calendar is the day, so before we can determine anything else we must identify where and when the day begins. Tradition tells us that the day starts at sunset and we will explore those claims in another chapter because it is a less fundamental issue. **The real fundamental issue is “where” does the day begin** because whether sunset or first light, not every place on earth experiences it at the same time.

Once we know where the day begins, then we can discuss what signs, if any, start the year, month, sabbath week, and day. The question of “*where*” is often dismissed as a “*corner case*” or an “*exception*” that has no practical relevance, but it is actually the most fundamental question for anyone claiming they observe a Sabbath that goes back to creation or are keeping feasts on the proper day where they live. Without agreeing on this starting meridian dateline, timekeeping devolves into local solipsism¹: your “today” could be someone else’s “yesterday” or “tomorrow” just a few hundred miles away.

This isn’t an edge case—it’s the **core calendar design problem** that time zones and the International Date Line (IDL) were invented to

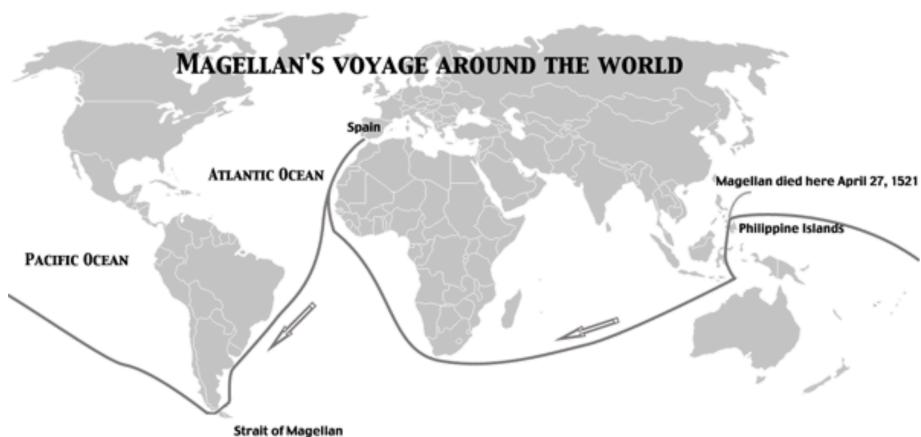
¹ **Solipsism** is a philosophical position or theory that only one’s own mind (or self) is certain to exist, and everything else—the external world, other people, and other minds—cannot be known to exist independently and might not exist at all outside of one’s own consciousness or perceptions.

solve. The problem is all fixed datelines have been invented within the past 1000 years and the IDL is less than 180 years old, yet **we are searching for objective and divinely authoritative definition of when and where one day begins and another ends for everyone on earth.** Picking what feels good or is convenient or familiar isn't good enough. We want truth, not tradition.

There are multiple proposed locations with various theories about how the Bible could imply it, but **the exact location is of far less significance than whether a fixed location is even possible in the first place given the principles laid out to evaluate calendars.** If the location is fixed, can everyone on earth know when the year or month starts even if they cannot observe the sign from their location?

According to Jewish tradition a day begins at sunset; therefore, people presume one can simply count sunsets in order to keep track of the Sabbath. A calendar that counts days by observing the sunset falls apart the moment people start migrating around the globe. Those who migrate east will count a different number of sunsets from those who migrate west; therefore, when their descendants meet on the other side of the world they will not have an objective definition of the 7th day Sabbath. One people group will be a day ahead, the other a day behind and there would be no objective way for both to keep a continuous 7 day cycle together.

When Magellan sailed around the world his crew kept detailed logs of every day of their journey, yet when they arrived home they discovered their date differed by one day from those who stayed home; therefore, a devout Saturday Sabbath Christian or Jew who sailed around the world would end up keeping a different Sabbath day than everyone else and he wouldn't even know it until he came back to land. He could easily spend months observing the wrong sabbath for his timezone if he relied on his own subjective count of sunsets.



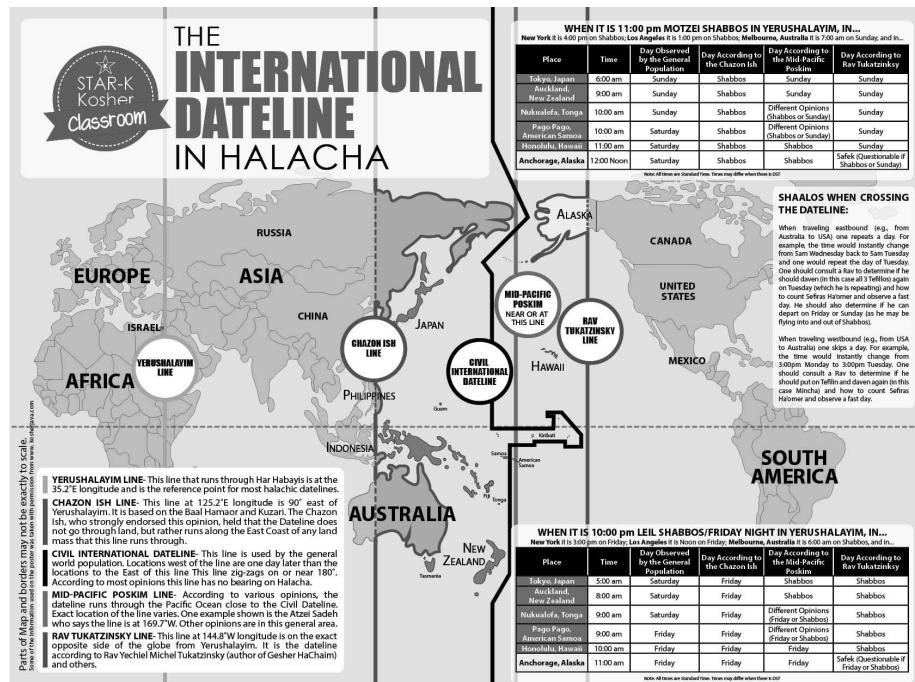
Where Does the Day Start?

The historical record from Antonio Pigafetta's journal (the primary eyewitness account) explicitly states that when the Magellan's ship reached the Cape Verde Islands, the crew believed it was **Wednesday** (July 9, 1522, according to their logs), but the locals informed them it was **Thursday**, July 10th. Pigafetta wrote:

"They answered it was Thursday, at which they were much amazed, for to us it was Wednesday, and we knew not how we had fallen into error."

If the day count is tied to the land and not the observer, then an international dateline is required and each person would be responsible for knowing when they crossed it in order to keep the Sabbath appropriate for their location. The modern international date line was invented in 1844 (only about 180 years ago). This dateline is not fixed and countries can move it by decree if it suits their economic interests to do so.

The Island of Samoa caused a great disturbance among the Seventh day Adventists church when they passed a law moving the country to the other side of the international date line. With this



Parts of Map and borders may not be exactly to scale. www.star-k.org

change those who wanted to stay on the seven day cycle they have always known would have to start worshiping on Sunday instead of Saturday. **No one ever stopped to ask how they knew that the original dateline was correct in the first place.**

Modern Jewish scholars interpreted the following passage from the Babylonian Talmud, Rosh Hashanah 20b, to determine a dateline:

Rabbi Zeira said that Rav Nahman said: The moon is invisible for twenty-four hours [around the conjunction]. For us [in Babylonia], six hours of the old [moon] and eighteen of the new [moon]. For them [in Eretz Yisrael], six of the new [moon] and eighteen of the old [moon].

This is interpreted to mean that the moon's invisibility spans 24 hours globally, with the division (6/18 hours) reflecting time differences between regions. The Talmud further states that if the molad (the average time of dark moon conjunction) occurs before noon in Jerusalem, the moon **might be visible** close to sunset **somewhere**, but if after noon, it won't be—implying a "cutoff" point where the day has fully begun worldwide.

We calculate its [the moon's] birth [molad]. If it was born before noon — it is certain that it [the new moon] will be seen close to sunset. If it was born after noon — it is certain that it will not be seen close to sunset.

Baked into the Talmud quote is an assumption "*The moon is invisible for twenty-four hours*" and yet Stellarium reports that the moon is 0.0% illuminated for just 6.5 hours and after 12 hours it is just 0.2% illuminated. Modern astronomy shows that it takes at least 15 hours from the conjunction to be visible with the naked eye, an implied 0.4% illumination and a total period of 30 hours of "invisibility". Furthermore, **the alleged "24 hours" of invisibility would rarely align with any fixed dateline, aligning only about once every 2 years.**

This is just one conception of the dateline, another is to view Jerusalem as the center of the world and the dateline as 180 degrees on the other side of the globe.

Thus says יְהוָה: This is Jerusalem. I have set her in the center of the nations, with countries all around her.

— Ezekiel 5:5

And with this perspective added to the mix, there are now three potential datelines that can be used and all of them “conceived” within the past 1000 years.

Synchronizing The Northern and Southern Hemispheres

But there is one additional wrinkle, the sign you use to start the month might not be seen the same way in northern and southern hemispheres and thus the dateline issue becomes far more complex for dark and sliver moons than for the full moon. A problem with the sliver moon is that there are often over 24 hours difference between when the first visible sliver can be seen in the Northern and Southern hemispheres. This discrepancy arises from the Moon's orbital tilt relative to the Earth's equator (about 5 degrees), combined with the seasonal variations in the ecliptic's angle to the horizon. At the crescent phase, the Moon is only visible for a brief window (typically 15–60 minutes after sunset), and its low position makes it highly sensitive to latitude: northern observers might see it one evening, while southern ones at the same longitude wait another day due to the Moon's apparent path appearing steeper or shallower.

This becomes obvious at the extremes of the North and South poles, where the 24 hours of darkness during part of the year means the sliver isn't visible at all—since the sliver is only observable when the Moon is near the Sun, requiring a clear post-sunset horizon. Meanwhile, other phases of the Moon, like the full or gibbous, can be visible in broad daylight or during polar twilight.

But this isn't just a polar issue—it affects moderate latitudes too, where most people live. For example, at latitudes around 30–40°N (e.g., the Mediterranean or southern U.S.) vs. 30–40°S (e.g., southern Africa or Australia), the crescent's visibility can differ by a full day due to the Moon's position relative to the horizon and atmospheric conditions. This can cause two people at the same longitude to be on

different calendar days because the sliver is visible for such a short period of time in a given night that it could easily be below the horizon, obscured by haze, or too close to the Sun's glare in one hemisphere but not the other.

Real-world examples from Muslim communities, who rely on crescent sightings for starting Ramadan and celebrating Eid, illustrate these challenges vividly. In 2025, controversy erupted when Saudi Arabia (in the Northern Hemisphere) announced the Eid al-Fitr crescent sighting on March 29, despite astronomical data showing it was scientifically impossible—due to the Moon being too young (less than 12 hours old) and a recent solar eclipse making visibility improbable for hours after. This led to accusations of premature declaration, with southern countries like Australia and Indonesia often starting a day later based on local sightings, causing global disunity. Similar issues recur annually: Northern Hemisphere nations (e.g., UK, Morocco) might align with Saudi announcements, while Southern Hemisphere ones (e.g., South Africa) report no sighting, resulting in different Ramadan start dates even in the same time zone. These discrepancies aren't rare—they stem from the inherent variability of crescent observation, leading to "moon wars" that frustrate communities, disrupt family gatherings, and even impact economies (e.g., varying holiday dates across borders). Scholars debate "unity of horizons" (one global sighting binds all) vs. "difference of horizons" (local/regional), but the practical result is ongoing division.

In contrast, on a full moon calendar, northern and southern hemispheres are synchronized by longitude in all regions that have at least some short period of darkness every night—which covers the vast majority of habitable Earth (up to about 60° latitude). The full moon is visible for nearly 12 hours (rising around sunset, setting around sunrise), making it far less dependent on brief windows or perfect horizons. It's observable in daylight if needed, unmistakable in shape, and aligns naturally across hemispheres, fulfilling the biblical call for signs that are accessible and unifying for all peoples under heaven (Gen. 1:14; Deut. 4:19). This avoids the disunity and subjectivity plaguing crescent-based systems, ensuring God's appointed times remain objective and decentralized.

How to Test Datelines?

How then can we test these datelines to determine the truth? After all, one cannot simply pick the one that “feels” the best or “appears” most logical to our human mind. We are seeking God’s truth not man’s concept of the best system.

In addition to the Sabbath we need to know the day a new month begins and scripture tells us that the sun, moon, and stars are to be the signs of the appointed times. The problem is **all of these fixed datelines rarely sync up with the moon’s visibility** because it takes 29.530587 days for the moon to circle the earth. This means that **each month the location of the conjunction (or other sign) drifts by ~191.01 degrees** on the earth’s surface. If there were to be a dateline then one could easily argue that it would have to move with the sign of the moon and by doing so the calendar remains tied to observation of the sun, moon, and stars.

If the dateline does not move with the moon, then everyone, everywhere would have to calculate whether the sign of the start of the month was hypothetically visible in Jerusalem (or anywhere else in the world deemed to have Biblical authority for signs). The idea of the “dateline” moving with the moon may seem foreign, but it is just a formalization of what up to a billion people already do when you factor in the Muslim population, Jews that use local observance, and even many in the Hebrew Roots movement.

Solar only calendars, such as presented in the Book of Jubilees, don’t have the moon sighting to work with; therefore, they must use something like the equinox at the start of the year, this means either their “dateline” would rotate about 87.192 degrees on the surface of the earth every year (0.2422 days) or everyone must calculate the equinox in Jerusalem and use one of the other fixed datelines.

Observation vs Calculation

There is only one way I know to solve the mystery of the dateline that preserves the property that the calendar is knowable by observation and not calculation: a dateline that is implied by the movement of the sun, moon, and stars and not fixed to any geographical location. Each location makes its own observation of the heavenly lights in the sky to determine when the year, months, and calendar days begin.

And God said, 'Let there be lights (plural) in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them (plural) be for signs and for seasons (appointed times), and for days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.'

— Genesis 1:14-16

Any fixed international dateline is using something other than the lights in the heavens to separate days and appointed times for everyplace on earth except Jerusalem. It would require sophisticated calculations and/or communication networks to implement globally.

The Jews use the molad to determine when the sliver moon is hypothetically visible. The molad is a mathematical average time of the lunar conjunction (when the Sun, Earth, and Moon align, making the Moon invisible) and **only accurately predicts a hypothetically visible crescent about 80% of the time**. The end result of their approach is that they are not actually using the “lights in the expansion of the heavens” to determine the appointed times, but rather the absence of light and an poor approximation derived calculation from an average.

To maintain a fixed dateline requires everyone, everywhere, to agree on a fixed point of reference for observing the lights in the heavens given by God to define signs, and seasons (months), and days and years. Most would suggest Jerusalem as the “center of the nations”, which, in theory, would make Jerusalem the reference timezone and place the dateline 180 degrees on the other side of the globe; however, it doesn’t matter where you pick if it isn’t possible to trivially calculate or communicate it to every location on earth in a timely manner.

With these two things (location and celestial sign) established a person would require the ability to calculate if it were hypothetically possible to view the visible sign in Jerusalem. Calculating the **visibility of a thin sliver moon** (young lunar crescent) in Jerusalem from any random location on Earth — using **only pen and paper** in the pre-computer age — would be **extremely difficult** and, for all practical purposes, **impossible** to do accurately from distant locations.

Core Challenges with Pen & Paper

No precise ephemerides (datasets) — You need the exact time and position of **conjunction** (sun, moon, earth alignment), plus the daily motions of Sun and Moon. In ancient/medieval times, these were approximated from **hand-calculated tables** (*zīj* in Islamic astronomy), which were themselves laboriously derived over years and copied by hand. Without a good *zīj* for your latitude, you're basically guessing.

Topocentric correction is brutal — Visibility depends on positions as seen from **Jerusalem's specific latitude/longitude**, not Earth's center. The Moon's parallax is $\sim 1^\circ$ max, so from a random location (especially far away), you need to adjust for your own position relative to Jerusalem. This requires spherical trigonometry, knowing your exact latitude, and estimating the geocentric \rightarrow topocentric shift — all by hand with log tables or sine tables if you're lucky.

Key parameters are tedious to compute:

- Moon's age** at Jerusalem's sunset (hours since conjunction)
- Lag time** (time between sunset and moonset in Jerusalem)
- Elongation** (angular separation Sun–Moon)
- Altitude of Moon** above horizon at sunset
- Azimuth difference** between Sun and Moon

Each requires iterative calculations using mean motions, anomalies, equation of center, etc., from Ptolemaic/Indian/Islamic models — hundreds of multiplications/division by hand.

No global view — From a random spot on Earth, you can't easily know if the Moon is even above the horizon in Jerusalem at the critical time. You'd need to know Jerusalem's local time relative to yours (**longitude difference** \times 4 min/degree), which again requires tables or very rough estimates.

Determining longitude 1000 years ago (around the 11th century AD, during the Islamic Golden Age and early medieval Europe) was **extremely difficult** — one of the hardest problems in astronomy, navigation, and cartography at the time. It remained unsolved for practical, everyday use (especially at sea) for another 700 years, until the 18th century with marine chronometers (mechanical clocks).

The core principle was already understood since ancient times (Hipparchus, ~150 BC): longitude difference = time difference \times 15° per hour (since Earth rotates 360° in 24 hours). But turning that into accurate measurements **required knowing the exact same moment at two distant places** — essentially synchronizing clocks across vast distances without modern technology.

The only practical method in the ancient world is the simultaneous observation of lunar eclipses which occur at the same time on all parts of the world. This may work for pairs of cities, but accuracy depends upon the precision of measurements and in ancient times this was lacking.

For all intents and purposes it would be impossible for the average person to determine and validate the times and seasons. Even if they had all the raw data, exceptionally few had the skills to perform the calculations. Astronomy required wealthy individuals to hire you, give you access to rare texts and tools, or ample leisure time — privileges of the elite. What is more, only about 5% of the population is mentally gifted to the degree required to learn the calculations. If there was no one around to train you in how to perform the calculations only 1 in a million people would be able to derive the formulas from first principles.

The masses would be at the mercy of an elite group of people to determine a local calendar that depended upon calculating observations that would have been made in Jerusalem. For a short period of time the Jews claim that signal fires were used to communicate observations from Jerusalem to Babylon; however, that system didn't last long because the Samaritans would light false fires. In other words, **this kind of calendar system fundamentally ties the masses to an elite group of leaders** who get to determine the calendar and who ultimately manipulate it for political purposes.

"...the pontiffs misused this system of intercalation horribly. For they, being men, and politicians too, used to intercalate for the advantage of tax-farmers or against the interests of defendants in pending cases, so that festivals and sacred days might fall at particular times to suit their convenience."

— *Censorinus* (*a respected 3rd-century AD Roman calendar authority*) *De Die Natali* (*On the Birthday*)

Julius Caesar, having been elected Pontifex Maximus in 63 BC (a position that gave him ultimate authority over the calendar), used the chaos as justification for radical reform. In 46 BC he decreed the famous "Year of Confusion" (445 days long) to realign the calendar with the sun, then introduced the new Julian calendar starting in 45 BC (365 days with a leap day every four years), effectively removing human discretion over months and intercalation entirely. The reform deliberately broke the old pontifical monopoly that had enabled the political manipulation.

The astute individual might notice that the Jews have used a calculated calendar going all the way back to 350 AD. The problem is this calculated calendar is only an approximation and not an honest, objective, reflection of the sun, moon and stars and it certainly doesn't allow those in distant lands to use an objective light in the heavens as the sign of the appointed times.

In summary, an international dateline is required to overcome the inherently subjective nature of counting observed sunsets and **a fixed international dateline is impractical to implement by observation alone in ancient times.** This means that any calendar based on it requires extensive measurement precision followed by high precision computation or speed of light communication and these are things which have only existed for the past 200 years or less.

The Bible informs us that the lights in the heavens are to be used to determine the appointed times. I interpret this to imply that the average person should be able to determine the times simply by observing the sky where ever they happen to be. This implies that the international dateline moves with the sun or moon and that fact alone means a continuous cycle going back to creation is extremely unlikely to be what someone only reading the written scriptures could conclude and, most importantly, be able to obey.

Objections

Critics may object that a moving celestial 'dateline' lacks explicit Scripture. Yet the same charge applies equally to any fixed meridian—whether secular (IDL, 1884) or halakhic (Jerusalem-opposite proposals

from medieval rabbis onward). No verse commands, 'Establish a permanent line 180° from Jerusalem to preserve the week,' nor narration demonstrate such a mechanism. Scripture is silent on global synchronization, focusing instead on local obedience via heavenly signs (Gen. 1:14). Thus, both approaches infer beyond the text, but only local observation adheres strictly to 'no additions' and 'accessible to all' principles without requiring elite calculations or modern tech.

The definition of the dateline impacts all of the feast days, because the first day of the month is based upon the day a particular sign is observed and it impacts the continuous cycle because the geographical definition of a day changes with the moon. Therefore, the Lunar Sabbath theory may be the most aligned with the practical realities of a calendar where days are determined by the lights in the heavens and not merely by our individual subjective counting of sunsets.

But we will not rest this conclusion on this unavoidable mathematical reality of the earth and moon having orbits that are not evenly divisible by a 24 hour day. This book will go on to prove via many independent lines of evidence that the cross was not in 30 AD and was almost certainly 32 AD. This would produce a Monday Passover on the traditional calendar, which is totally incompatible with the narrative in the gospels. This and many other lines of evidence confirm what we just inferred must be true from first principles of astronomy.

"All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident."

— Arthur Schopenhauer

When Does the Day Start?

When does the day start? It seems like a simple question whose answer would be inconsequential, but in reality there are major consequences in how we understand and obey God's law. Most have probably heard that the Jews start the day at sunset and simply assume they know what they are talking about.

Those who do dig into this question find that the Jews use the following rationale:

1. Creation began in Darkness
2. Evening and morning is repeated 6 times in Genesis 1
3. Day of Atonement is kept evening to evening
4. Unleavened Bread is kept evening (of 14th) to evening of 21st
5. Evening used as boundary "unclean until evening"
6. Nehemiah enforced sabbath by closing gates at evening.

On the surface this looks pretty compelling, but a deeper dive will reveal these to be rationalizations that sound good but are actually logically incompatible with the narrative structure in the text and the plain meaning of the Hebrew words. In this chapter we will investigate each of these claims in detail and demonstrate that their arguments are either inherently ambiguous or subjective interpretations and therefore worthless for establishing higher-order principles or they are inversions of the plain reading of the text to support a preconceived conclusion.

After addressing the traditional position I will dive into the compelling objective and practically incontrovertible evidence that the calendar day begins at daybreak, first light, or what is broadly called morning. This lines up with our natural experience of life where our day begins when we wake up.

What came first, light or darkness?

For the sake of completeness we need to address the common rabbinic argument that “*biblical time always starts with darkness*”. They use this theory as the basis for starting the month on a dark moon and starting the calendar day at night. Some also view the year as starting in the fall. Here is how their argument generally goes:

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep... And God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light...And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.”

— Genesis 1:1-5

*“Notice the sequence. Creation began in **darkness**. God then introduced **light**. That darkness-before-light sequence defined the first day. This wasn’t just the start of creation—it was the start of time itself. That same order—darkness first, then light—sets the pattern for how God measures time”*

— 119 Ministries

This argument isn’t unique to 119 Ministries; it is inherited from Jewish oral tradition. This tradition framed the context of Genesis 1 in a way that leads people to this conclusion, but the framing itself is not true evidence—it is a rationalization, an explanation crafted to reach a preconceived goal of justifying the tradition of the day starting in the evening. If we had independent proof of evening before morning in the calendar day, then this argument could serve as corroborating evidence; however, it makes unsupported assumptions and leaps when it claims this is the one and only unambiguous way to understand the passage. If there is reasonable ambiguity, then it can not be the foundation for proving higher-level ideas about the structure of the day or the start of the month.

How does one prove something is a rationalization compared to true deductive reasoning? Discernment between rationalization and deductive reasoning boils down to direction, motivation, openness to falsification, and emotional involvement. Both can sound logical on the surface, but they operate in fundamentally different ways.

Deductive reasoning (true logical deduction): A structured, top-down process starting from general premises assumed to be true → applying rules of logic → arriving at a specific conclusion that must follow if the premises are accurate and the form is valid. The conclusion is certain (in valid deduction), and the process is truth-seeking. It's forward-looking: you follow the logic wherever it leads, even if the result is uncomfortable or contradicts your desires.

Rationalization (psychological defense mechanism): A post-hoc, after-the-fact, justification where you start with a desired conclusion (often driven by emotion, self-protection, guilt avoidance, or ego defense) → then work backward to construct seemingly logical reasons or explanations to support it. It's conclusion-first, not evidence-first. The "logic" is retrofitted to protect the ego or avoid discomfort, not to discover truth.

I will demonstrate that by presenting what I believe to be a much stronger "*rationalization*" for the light before darkness from this same text. Then we can reflect on how we can honestly test these two theories to determine which potential rationalization is actually demonstrated throughout the Bible.

"In the beginning, God..." — Genesis 1

"God is light, in whom there is no darkness at all"

— 1 John 1:5

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

— Yeshua, John 8:12

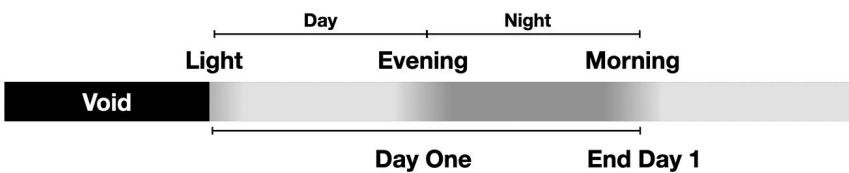
"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made."

— John 1:1-3

Thy word is a lamp (light) unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

— Psalms 119:105

Combine these verses with the observation that the first words were “Let there be light” and then “darkness” was separated from the light. Genesis goes on to say “The earth was without form and void” which invokes a concept of “void” or “nothingness” and is a way of saying that nothing existed, neither time, space, darkness nor light. Nothing or voidness is not the same as darkness as darkness is “something” and not “nothing”. In computer science it is the difference between a “null/undefined” value and a 0 value. It is an uninitialized state beyond our ability to conceive.



The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

— Revelation 21:23

Since God was in the beginning and he has never been without glory, his light must have been from beginning. We also see that Yeshua is the Lamb and lamp and through his light all things were made.

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it"

— John 1:5

If darkness existed before light, then it implies a point in time when darkness had overcome the light, something scripture said has not happened.

"I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, יְהוָה, do all these things."

— Isaiah 45:7

Here Isaiah clearly points to light forming before creating darkness and reinforces this order because generally speaking prosperity comes before disaster (loss of prosperity).

"If I say, 'Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,' even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you."

— Psalm 139:11–12

This verse solves the mystery of “darkness was over the face of the deep”, which is compared to “the Spirit of God was overing over the face of the waters”. Thus, in this context the “darkness” is a symbol of the “Spirit of God” and the Psalm says that “darkness is as a light to you

(*Spirit of God*)". This verse also establishes the order of light turning into night, not night turning into light.

At the meta level, the rabbinic approach to Genesis 1 follows an inductive and retroductive² pattern: it observes textual sequences and existing practices, then builds upward to general rules about time, often using verbal analogies, a fortiori³ reasoning, and creative expansions to fill gaps. These interpretive tools—commonly called “**hermeneutical principles**”—were developed by rabbinic authorities themselves, which can **introduce circularity**: the rules help confirm the very conclusions the tradition already holds. The method also frequently employs “midrashic” expansion, a style of interpretation that adds allegorical, narrative, or symbolic layers not directly stated in the text. While this can produce rich insights, it risks implying access to hidden meanings known mainly within the tradition, prioritizing harmony with established customs over strict evidential constraints, and making the reasoning less accessible or falsifiable⁴ to outsiders.

In contrast, the **light-first reading** uses a deductive⁵ structure: it begins with broad scriptural statements about God’s nature and applies logical inference downward to specific conclusions about creation order. This approach **emphasizes cross-canonical consistency**, **symbolic resolution of ambiguities**, and **openness to falsification by testing for contradictions** elsewhere in the Bible. It relies less on self-defined interpretive systems or communal tradition,

² **Retroductive (or retroductive) reasoning:** Working backward from an observed result or surprise to guess the most likely explanation or cause that would make sense of it. It's like detective work: "This puzzle doesn't fit— what hidden thing must have happened to explain it?" Also called abduction or "inference to the best explanation."

³ **Fortiori reasoning:** A logical shortcut meaning "from the stronger" (Latin). If something is true in a harder or more extreme case, it must be even truer in an easier case. Example: "If a parent would give good gifts to a stranger's child, how much more would they give to their own?"

⁴ **Falsifiable / falsification:** The idea (from philosopher Karl Popper) that for a claim or theory to be truly testable and meaningful, there must be some possible evidence or observation that could prove it wrong. If nothing could ever disprove it—no matter what happens—it stays untested and more like an assumption than solid reasoning

⁵ **Deductive reasoning:** Starting from general truths or rules you accept as true, then applying logic step-by-step to reach a specific conclusion that must follow if the starting points are correct. It's "top-down" thinking—like a math proof—where the conclusion is certain (if the premises are true and the steps valid), not just probable.

aiming instead for objective coherence that follows the logic wherever it leads.

To maximize the likelihood of discovering truth, we favor the deductive method grounded in comprehensive scriptural synthesis. It starts from neutral premises, rigorously checks for internal contradictions, and minimizes retrofitted justifications or appeals to authority. This aligns more closely with the Bible's own portrayal of light as the path to revelation and understanding, encouraging interpretations that are transparent, testable, and less vulnerable to cultural or traditional bias.

Only by establishing the order of day and night by other objective methods can we truly differentiate which is valid deductive reasoning and which is true rationalization. But before getting to the objective methods, I want to present a few more “subjective” arguments from scripture.

Order of Words Day and Night

While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold (morning frost) and heat (afternoon), summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.

— Genesis 8:22

There is a parallel verse in Jubilees, which is not scripture and cannot define doctrine, but does support what the canon already established by listing 4 things that have a definite order. The word “frost” comes from a translation of Aramaic Peshitta Holy Bible translated to English. Since summer and winter are also listed, we can assume cold does not mean winter and therefore frost is likely referring to morning.

All the days of the earth, seed-time and harvest shall never cease, cold (morning frost) and heat (afternoon), summer and winter, and DAY and NIGHT shall not change their order nor cease forever.

— Jubilees 6:4–5

In this instance I am using Jubilees as evidence that at least one ancient highly influential commentary on scripture **agrees with my**

interpretation of Genesis 8:22 that this verse is demonstrating order by example. I consider this use of non-biblical text to be acceptable. If it were not a parallel to Cannon of Genesis 8:22 then I would reject it as introducing new doctrine.

If you search the Bible for the phrases “Day and Night” and “Night and Day” you will find :

31 references to “day and night”

13 references to “night and day”

It is fascinating that 31 and 13 are reversed just like day and night are reversed. “Day and Night” is used over twice as often as “Night and Day”, so from a purely democratic perspective, it gets 2/3 of the vote.

In our modern culture 13 is considered evil and “unlucky”, but what meaning is associated with these numbers in the Bible?

Meaning of 31

Part of the meaning of the number 31 in the Bible comes from one of the Hebrew names for God. Gematria is a way of interpreting Scripture by substituting the letters of a Hebrew (or Greek) word by their equivalent numeric values and arriving at a total. **One reference to God is El** (see Deuteronomy 32:15, 17, Job 3:4, etc. in Hebrew), which is composed of the Hebrew letters Lamed and Aleph. **Their numeric values are 30 and 1, respectively, for 31 total.**

One of the most commonly occurring names in God’s word is Moses, a type of Messiah. It appears in 31 King James books. Proverbs 31 is famous for being the “virtuous wife” chapter.

Meaning of 13

The number 13 is symbolic of rebellion and lawlessness in the Bible. The Greek word *drakon*, Strong’s Concordance #G1404, occurs 13 times in Greek New Testament verses. The word is used only in the book of Revelation. It is always translated as the word “dragon,” a symbolic reference to God’s adversary Satan the devil.

Nimrod, the mighty hunter who was “before אַנְשָׁן” (meaning he tried to take the place of God, Genesis 10:9), was generation 13 in

Ham's line (Ham was one of Noah's three sons who survived the flood).

13 represents all the governments created by men, and inspired by Satan, in outright rebellion against the Eternal. King Solomon spent a little more than seven years building Jerusalem's temple, God's house of prayer for the nations (1Kings 6:38). In contrast, **He spent 13 years building a home for himself!** Solomon is also related to the number 666 and the dragon.

Prophetic Significance of Word Counts

The King James Version reveals subtle mathematical fingerprints that feel too precise for mere chance. Key names tied to central biblical figures—**Father, Son, Yeshua, Christ, and Holy Ghost**—appear in balanced, interlocking patterns that repeatedly circle back to 7, Scripture's number of divine completeness (seen in creation's seven days, the seven seals, and more).

These names align in groupings that hit multiples of 7 or combinations echoing perfect order. Mentions of **Yeshua** split perfectly even across odd- and even-numbered New Testament books —exactly 490 each way (total 980), mirroring Christ's own teaching on forgiveness: "seventy times seven" (70×7).

The entire KJV bible including verse numbers has exactly 823543 words which is 7 to the 7th power or 7^7 words. There are dozens of patterns like this in scripture that do not appear in any other body of text and for this reason when we see 31 occurrences of "*day and night*" and 13 occurrences of "*night and day*" we need to pay attention.

Evening and Morning

If you ask the Jews for the technical definition of a calendar day they will regularly point to this pattern in Genesis:

light ... and there was evening and there was morning — day one
firmament ... and there was evening and there was morning — day two
waters gathered ... vegetation ... and there was evening and there was morning — day three

lights ... and there was evening and there was morning — day four

waters teem ... birds fly ... and there was evening and there was morning — day five

living creatures ... man in our image ... and there was evening and there was morning — day six

— Genesis 1 (*creation outline*)

They will then argue that, by repetition, scripture is demonstrating that the day is evening before morning. The problem with this argument is the very definition of terms. Consider the following passage which is universally understood as talking about night.

Aaron and his sons shall keep it in order from evening to morning before ְאַרְבָּעָה; it shall be a perpetual statute throughout their generations for the sons of Israel.

— Exodus 27:21

Outside the veil of the testimony in the tent of meeting, Aaron shall keep it in order from evening to morning before ְאַרְבָּעָה continually

— Leviticus 24:3

"The lamps burned the entire night and would extinguish in the early morning... After they went out in the morning, the lamps would be cleaned out and fresh oil and new wicks would be placed in them. This service was known as 'hatavat ha-menorah'—preparing the Menorah for kindling [in the evening]."

— Mishnah Tamid 3:9

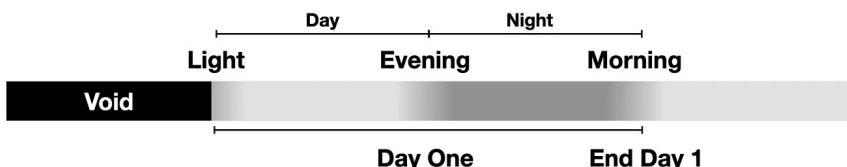
In this context the oral tradition clearly understood evening to morning to be a way of saying "night". This is reinforced when one looks closer at the deeper meaning of the underlying Hebrew words for morning and evening.

When Does the Day Start?

In Biblical Hebrew, the word for **evening**, *erev* (בֶּעָשָׂר), derives from the root בְּעָשָׂר, which carries meanings such as "to mix" or "to intermingle." This etymology reflects the twilight period when light and darkness blend together, creating a sense of confusion or mixture (as objects become indistinct in fading light), or when the day transitions into night. This root also appears in related terms like *erev rav* ("mixed multitude") and *eruv* (a symbolic "mixing" of domains for Shabbat observance).

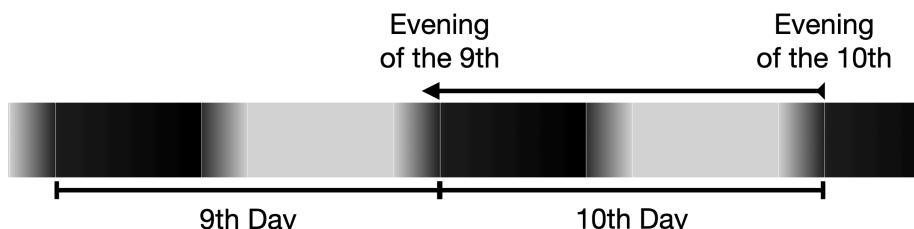
The word for **morning**, *boker* (בּוֹקֵר), stems from the root בְּקַר, which means "to break through," "to split," or "to cleave." This evokes the image of light breaking through the darkness at dawn (similar to English "daybreak"), piercing the night and bringing clarity and distinction. The root also relates to inspection or discernment (as in *bikoret*, meaning examination), tying into the morning when things become visible and distinguishable.

The logical conclusion from studying the words is that days are split in the morning and connected in the evening. Thus the pattern Genesis establishes is that each day ends at daybreak. Each day's work is done until evening then daybreak ends the day.



Yeshua answered, 'Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world.'

— John 11:9



In this verse we see that Yeshua repeats the pattern of "working" or "walking" during the 12 hours of daylight. Ancient sundials had 12 divisions so all days had 12 hours, as the seasons changed the length of the hour changed. An hour was 8.33% percent of the daylight. Therefore all the work of creation was done during the daylight hours and no work was done from evening until daybreak.

The end result of the traditional interpretation is that they must adopt logically inconsistent interpretations of the same phrase in different places. They must expand the definition of "morning" to be from first light until noon and expand the definition of evening to be from noon until morning. This is inconsistent with other definition of evening.

The Hebrew phrase "**bein ha'arbayim**" (בֵּין הַעֲרָבִים), commonly translated as "**between the evenings**" or "**between the two evenings**", appears in the Torah primarily in contexts related to the timing of key rituals, such as the daily Tamid sacrifices (Exodus 29:39, 41; Numbers 28:4, 8), the lighting of the menorah and offering of incense (Exodus 30:8), the Passover lamb slaughter (Exodus 12:6; Leviticus 23:5; Numbers 9:3, 5, 11), and the provision of quail (Exodus 16:12).

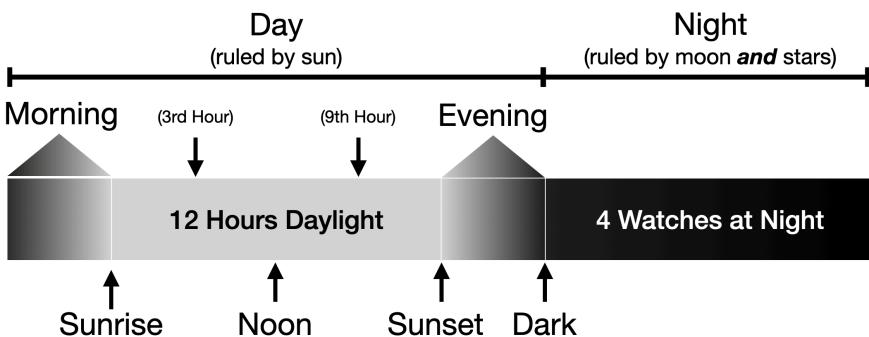
This expression has sparked debate over its precise meaning due to its literal wording ("between the evenings"). In mainstream Jewish tradition (reflected in the Talmud, Mishnah, and later halakhic practice), it refers to the **afternoon period**, roughly from midday or early afternoon (after the sun begins to decline, around noon) until sunset—often specified as the time for the afternoon/evening sacrifice (around the ninth hour, or 3 PM in later Temple practice). This interpretation allowed the large-scale slaughter of Passover lambs in the Temple during daylight hours on the 14th of Nisan, as described by Josephus (who notes sacrifices from about 3–5 PM). The "two evenings" are understood as the "evening" of the day's decline (post-noon waning) and the "evening" of sunset, creating an interval in the latter half of the daylight period.

An alternative, more literal understanding—held by groups like the Sadducees, Samaritans, Karaites, and some modern biblical scholars—takes it as the **twilight period** after sunset until full darkness (dusk), when the first "evening" (sunset) transitions into the second "evening" (complete nightfall). This aligns with a stricter reading of the Hebrew and ties into the biblical day beginning at

When Does the Day Start?

evening, placing rituals like the Passover killing at the start of the 14th (after sunset on what we might call the 13th evening).

For Rabbinic Jews, the morning Shema recitation (a key daily obligation) provides further definition: Mishnah Berakhot 1:2 states it must be recited from when one can distinguish between tekhelet (blue) and white (dawn/light) until the end of the third hour (ideally), though post facto until midday in some views (Talmud Berakhot 8a; Maimonides follows this). This shows **ancient understanding placed the core of "morning" from first light to roughly halfway between sunrise and noon.**



While the Jews may have used the ability to distinguish between blue and white, I believe that scripture provides a more authoritative way to know when night ends and morning begins. Morning has arrived when the light of the sun is able to wash out the constellations. Evening has ended and night has begun when the constellations become visible.

And God made the two great lights – the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night with the stars”

— Genesis 1:14-16

These definitions of terms become critical when one desires to hold rationalizations to the accountability of logical consistency. Without well defined terms people are prone to twist the meaning of words different ways in different circumstances to fit their conclusion.

Keeping your Sabbath from Evening to Evening

The next go-to scripture for establishing the traditional evening-to-evening interpretation of the calendar day are the instructions for the Day of Atonement.

¶ said to Moses, "The tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. Hold a sacred assembly and deny yourselves, and present a food offering to ¶... It shall be to you a Sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict yourselves. On the ninth day of the month beginning at evening, from evening to evening shall you keep your Sabbath."

— Leviticus 23:26–32

At this point you will hear them say something like: The text directly states “from evening to evening you are to keep your sabbath”. QED! End of story. Game over. Case closed.

They think they have won, but in reality have taken things out of context in the classic manner that Rabbinic Judaism takes many things out of context to invert their meaning.

There is a well known story, known as the Oven of Akhnai from the Talmud (Bava Metzia 59b), involves a rabbinic debate around 100 AD about whether a segmented oven (Akhnai's oven) could become ritually impure. Rabbi Eliezer argued it was pure, citing logic and invoking miracles—a carob tree uprooted, a stream flowed backward, the academy walls leaned, and a heavenly voice declared him correct. The majority of sages disagreed. Rabbi Joshua rebuked the heavenly voice by quoting Deuteronomy 30:12: "It [the Torah] is not in heaven," meaning divine law is now in human hands, not subject to ongoing heavenly intervention. The Talmud explains this via Rabbi Yirmeya: Since the Torah was given at Sinai, heavenly voices are ignored, as per Exodus 23:2's directive to "*incline after the majority.*" God reportedly smiled and said, "*My children have triumphed over Me,*" affirming human authority in interpreting law.

Rabbinic Judaism uses "*Torah is not in heaven*" to emphasize that halakha (Jewish law) is determined by earthly rabbinic consensus and traditions (the Oral Torah), not miracles or new revelations,

empowering sages to adapt and expand laws. "*Incline to the majority*" supports following the rabbis' majority vote in disputes.

Here is the verse that the Rabbis use to elevate majority rule over a voice from heaven:

You shall not fall in with the many to do evil, nor shall you bear witness in a lawsuit, siding with the many, so as to pervert justice, nor shall you be partial to a poor man in his lawsuit.

—Exodus 23:2

They chose certain phrases to pull out of context claiming that they are the only ones who know the code for interpreting the passage. Exodus is clearly say "*do not follow the majority*", but they inverted its meaning.

Here is how they determined that Torah is not in heaven:

For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.

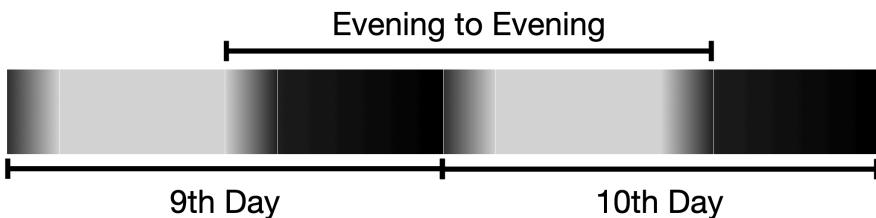
— Deuteronomy 30:11-14

By systematically ignoring context they read a verse that says the commands are not too difficult to mean that Torah, God's very word, is not in heaven and that it only exists on earth where men, not God, have the sole authority to interpret it. This clearly contradicts Psalms:

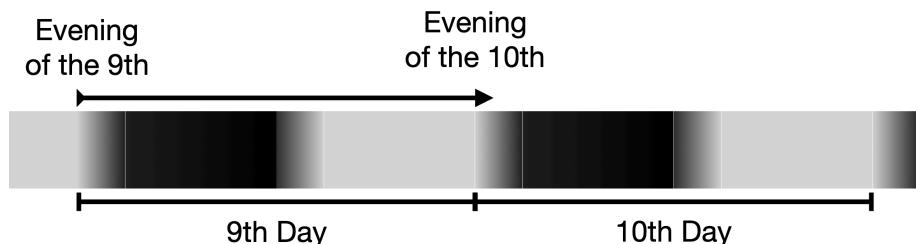
Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens.

— Psalm 119:89

This is the exact same pattern that we see unfold with the rationalization regarding the day of atonement instructions a phrase referring to the Sabbath of Day of Atonement is taken out of context and applied to all weekly sabbaths. But that's not all, the very instructions for the Day of Atonement clue us into the calendar day being crossed during the fast.



We rigorously defined evening as being from sunset to dark and as the period of mingled light and dark. It is not an exact moment in time. Using inclusive counting this means *Evening to Evening* is more than 24 hours long. Furthermore, scripture clearly identifies one evening as belonging to the 9th calendar day and the other as belonging to the 10th calendar day. This means that even if you give evening a definition of "sunset" you must still determine whether you are going to assign that moment to the calendar day before or the twilight after and then apply that rule consistently. If you were to say that sunset belongs to the start of evening then you get the following diagram:

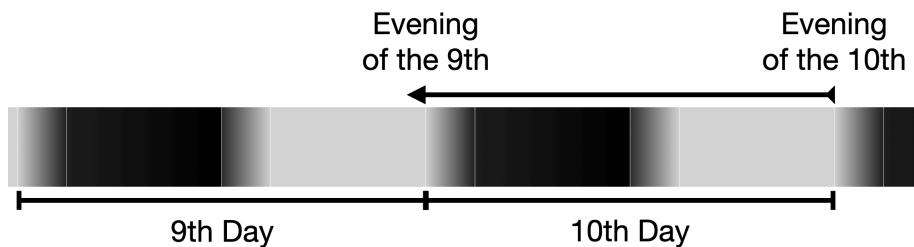


This wouldn't make any sense because logically this puts the Day of Atonement on the 9th day of the month and there is no reason at all to mention the 10th day. The bigger problem is the consistency issue with using sunset because previously these same people argued that

the day starts in darkness; however, forcing “evening” to mean just the moment sunset attached to twilight means that the day starts mingled with light and darkness. They would have to change the meaning of “evening” to “at dark” and then assign the moment of “at dark” to the calendar day after it not before. At dark being the moment the stars disappear (or you can longer distinguish blue and white in their parlance). However, the majority have already committed to the idea that “*between the evenings*” is between noon and sunset.

Remember, in Genesis they have already claimed that the calendar day is defined as “Evening and Morning”. Here they claim the calendar day is defined as “Evening to Evening”. In order to resolve this issue they have to change the assignment of “Evening” to belong to the day leading up to it. And this creates a paradox in Genesis because the “Evening and Morning — Day N” pattern now incorporates a reference to Day N-1 or Day 0.

Therefore, if you assign “sunset” to belong to the daylight before it then you get the following:



Once again the day begins with mingled “light and dark” in contradiction to their Genesis interpretation even if only for the “exact moment” of going from twilight to dark. You end up with no need to reference the 9th day because you could simply say fast on the 10th day of the month, night and day.

The bottom line is that there is no way to interpret the Day of Atonement evening to evening instructions as consistent with an evening to evening, sunset to sunset, calendar day without fundamentally invalidating prior arguments in Genesis and excusing what would appear to be an unnatural reference to the 9th calendar day. Given these issues the best one could argue is that this verse is ambiguous and thus has no ability to contribute to the argument of when the calendar day begins.

Unleavened Bread from Evening to Evening

The next alleged proof of evening to evening calendar days are the instructions given for the seven days of unleavened bread.

For seven days you must eat unleavened bread (Exodus 12:15). In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening

— Exodus 12:18

All of the arguments related to Day of Atonement apply to this verse as well with the only difference being that the Day of Atonement was a single day and this is 7 days in duration. At issue is whether or not the days mentioned are aligned with calendar days or whether the explicit mention of evening suggests that the calendar day has been split for the purposes of the feast.

Scripture gives us much more to work with in interpreting the feast of unleavened bread because it is tightly connected to the Exodus story and in the gospels.

Let's start by reviewing the instructions given to Moses regarding the 14th day.

...you shall keep it (the lamb) until the 14th day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight (between the evenings)...you shall let none of it remain until the morning (daybreak); anything that remains until the morning you shall burn...They shall eat the flesh that (14th) night...I will pass through the land of Egypt that (14th) night.

— Exodus 12:4-10

These verses collectively point to the night of the 14th being connected to the day of the 14th. They have all night until morning to eat the lamb, but must burn the remains before morning. Rabbinic Jews attempt to get around this by rationalizing that the Passover

refers to the lamb sacrificed between the evenings (~3 PM) on the 14th, but twice the verse connected the night as being part of the 14th day when it refers to it as “that night”. People have to rationalize a difference between the “technical definition” they allege is provided by Genesis and the “common language” they say is being used here. This is a level of imprecision that one would not expect from Moses or God.

Take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. None of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning.

— Exodus 12:22

We are then told that on this Passover they are not to go out of their houses until morning. This is a critical fact when you assume that Moses would obey God perfectly and the instructions clearly gave them until morning to finish eating and burn.

“They set out from Rameses in the first month, on the 15th day of the first month; on the day after the Passover the children of Israel went out with a high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians.”

— Numbers 33:3

“Observe the month of Abib and keep the Passover to יְהוָה your God, for in the month of Abib יְהוָה your God brought you out of Egypt by night.”

— Deuteronomy 16:1

And now we bring it all together with God bringing Israel out at night on the 15th day of the month, which cannot be the night of the Passover lamb because they were commanded not to go out of their house until morning.

Now we need to circle back to the 7 days from the 14th until the 21st. The Hebrew word for “day”, yom, is overloaded and can have different meanings depending upon context. It could mean 7 “daylights”, “calendar days”, or “24 hour periods”. To impose any specific meaning of yom into this context goes beyond the text says and thus cannot be used to “prove” calendar days as that would be circular reasoning.

The narrative of Exodus goes on to say that they journeyed from Rameses and camped in Succoth. This is approximately 20 miles (or less in some estimates) and is about 1 days travel.

And the children of Israel removed from Rameses, and pitched in Succoth.

— Numbers 33:5

The Israelites journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children...Consecrate to me all the firstborn. Whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel, both of man and of beast, is mine.

— Exodus 12:37, 13:2

Here we see the introduction of the typology of “first fruits” when they camped after a days journey. A later chapter will provide the evidence that first fruits is always on the 16th of the month, and that aligns perfectly with them leaving the night of the 15th, traveling all night and into the day on the 16th where they setup camp just in time for the narrative to mention first fruits.

If they had left on shortly after midnight on Passover (when angel of death struck down the first born) then there would be almost 36 hours until daylight on the 16th and the implied travel distance (in haste) would be over 60 miles which is far more than archeologists estimate as the distance between Rameses and Succoth. Alternatively they would have to argue that they traveled from shortly after midnight until after sunset and setup camp in the dark. This is still closer to 30-40 miles and doesn’t naturally follow the narrative. It seems far more natural for them to travel through the night and setup

camp in the day so they can actually prepare unleavened bread and other things and be ready for travel the next night. Traveling by night is much preferable in the desert!

Resurrection Day Timeline

While we are on the subject of First Fruits, lets talk about the events the day Yeshua rose from the grave. It clearly starts early on the first day of the week after first light, while it was still dark, toward sunrise.

Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

— John 20:1

and early in the morning of the first of the sabbaths, they come unto the tomb, at the rising of the sun.

— Mark 16:1-2

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared.

— Luke 24:1

Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb

— Matthew 28:1

This clearly establishes that the first day of the week, the 16th of the month, includes some time before sunrise while it is still dark but just enough light for people to see. The next event is later in the afternoon, after the disciples had heard from the women, disbelieved

it, and went to see for themselves. They start walking to Emmaus when Yeshua joins them.

That very day (first day of week) two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem...but they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.' So he went in to stay with them.

— Luke 24:13

This walk ends near evening when the day was far spent, likely around sunset when it makes sense for their companion to stop walking and rest for the night. They prepared food and Yeshua broke bread and gave thanks. At this moment the disciples recognized him.

And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem...And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, 'אֵלֹהִים has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!' Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

— Luke 24:33

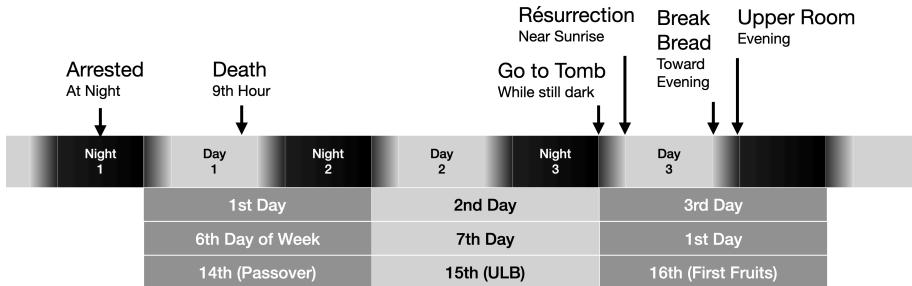
If they were running like fit cross-country runners it would take them almost a full hour to return the 7 miles to Jerusalem. If it was “near evening” and the “day far spent” before they started their return journey, it would almost certainly be well after sunset by the time they arrived and then shared their story.

"On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Yeshua came and stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.'"

— John 20:19

When Does the Day Start?

And here we have another direct assertion that Yeshua appeared after the disciples returned from Emmaus and that it was evening on



the first day of the week. This strongly suggests that both the pre-sunrise and post-sunset periods were considered the first day of the week. This dramatically undermines the traditional idea that the day begins at sunset, but still leaves open the possibility of the day beginning at dark.

This timeline has two ways of reconciling 3 days and 3 nights, the first is using inclusive counting of the day and night of any calendar day and the second it to recognize that the parallels with the story of Jonah start with Judas fleeing Yeshua and end with Jonah's journey to Nineveh (parallel to road to Emmaus). I've dedicated an entire chapter to these parallels and establishing that Jerusalem was known as the "heart of the earth".

Manna and Quail

The next demonstration-by-example of first light start of day comes from the second month in Exodus where the God gave Israel manna every morning and quail every evening except on the sabbath.

"They set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the people of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the 15th day of the second month after they had departed from the land of Egypt."

— Exodus 16:1

After some narrative about the people grumbling we are told that quail came that evening and in the morning manna fell.

*"In the evening quail came up and covered the camp and in the morning dew lay around the camp. And when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as frost on the ground. When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, 'What is it?' For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, 'It is the bread that **אֱלֹהִים** has given you to eat."*

— Exodus 16:13

On the 6th day Moses informed them that they would receive twice as much and instructs them to bake and boil.

*"On the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers each... he [Moses] said to them, 'This is what **אֱלֹהִים** has commanded: "Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to **אֱלֹהִים**; bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over lay aside to be kept till the morning."*

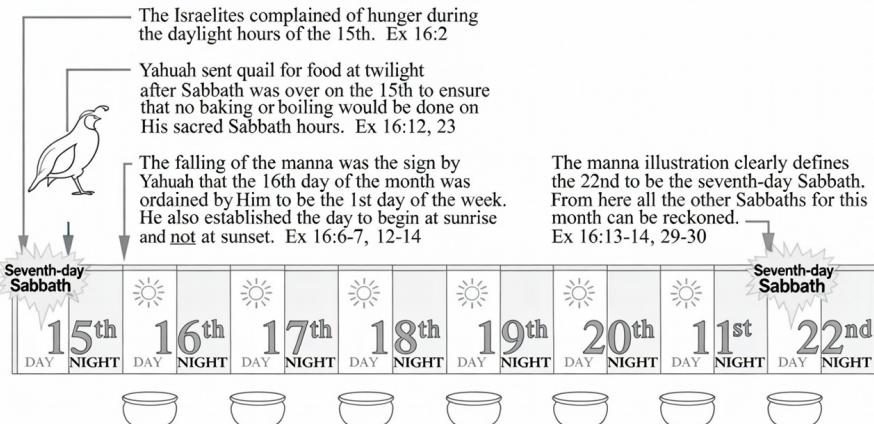
— Exodus 16:22–23

The next morning they went out to gather and found none.

"Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, which is a Sabbath, there will be none." On the seventh day some of the people went out to gather, but they found none.

— Exodus 16:26–27

The key to understanding the start of day is that they were told to keep the extra prepared manna until tomorrow which starts in the morning. The morning being the start of the sabbath when they would need the provisions prepared the night before.



Thus the timeline demonstrates that the Sabbath is only during daylight hours. This is confirmed in Genesis where the 6th day ended at morning and then God rested on the 7th daylight. We know that the evening hours are not sabbath hours because Quail came the evening of the 15th.

Tomorrow Always Refers to the Next Morning

One of the clearest and most consistent patterns in Scripture is how the word “tomorrow” is used. In Hebrew, the primary term is *machar* (מַחְרָה), and in nearly every narrative context, “tomorrow” points directly to the **next morning** or **dawn**—the moment light breaks and the new day begins in earnest. It is not a vague reference to the next 24-hour period starting at sunset; it is tied to the arrival of morning light, when activity, provision, divine action, and obedience resume.

This usage is especially powerful in contexts that define sacred time, such as the manna cycle and Sabbath instructions. “Tomorrow” repeatedly marks the transition to the next calendar day at first light, reinforcing the book’s central thesis: the biblical day begins at daybreak, not sunset.

Here are the key examples that demonstrate this pattern:

“This is what יְהוָה has commanded: ‘Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to יְהוָה; bake what

you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over lay aside to be kept till the morning.'"

— Exodus 16:23

Moses speaks these words on the sixth day of the week. He commands the people to prepare the double portion of manna so that “tomorrow” (the Sabbath) can be observed without gathering or cooking. The very next verse says they laid it up “till the morning,” and then on the morning of the seventh day they went out to gather and found none .

“Tomorrow” here is explicitly the morning of the Sabbath. The new day arrives when the sun rises and manna fails to appear—confirming that the holy rest begins at first light. If the day had started at sunset the previous evening, Moses would have said something like “tonight begins the Sabbath” or “from evening you shall rest.” Instead, the focus is on “tomorrow” and “the morning.”

“Moses said to Joshua, ‘Choose men for us and go out, fight against Amalek. Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand.’”

— Exodus 17:9

The command is given the day before the battle. “Tomorrow” is immediately followed by action at dawn: “*Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought against Amalek*”, with Moses standing on the hill from morning until evening. The new day of conflict begins with morning light.

“Joshua said to the people, ‘Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow יְהוָה will do wonders among you.’”

— Joshua 3:5

The very next verse: “*Joshua rose early in the morning...*” (but the sequence ties consecration directly to the morning wonders). “Tomorrow” means the coming dawn when God parts the waters and the people cross.

*"When the men of the town rose early in the morning,
behold, the altar of Baal was broken down..."*

— Judges 6:28

Gideon acted at night (v. 27). The discovery—the next significant event—occurs “early in the morning.” “Tomorrow” (implied) arrives at daybreak.

*"Saul sent messengers to David's house to watch him,
that he might be killed in the morning. But Michal,
David's wife, told him, 'If you do not save your life
tonight, tomorrow you will be killed.'"*

— 1 Samuel 19:11

“Tomorrow” means the morning execution. The threat begins when light returns.

*"Then his wife Zeresh and all his friends said to him,
'Let a gallows fifty cubits high be made, and **in the morning** tell the king to have Mordecai hanged on it.'"*

— Esther 5:14

Again, “in the morning” is parallel to “tomorrow”—the action is set for dawn.

"Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

— Matthew 6:34

Yeshua ties “tomorrow” to the concerns of the next daylight period—work, provision, and life’s troubles that occur under the sun.

*"Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today
and tomorrow, and the third day I finish my course."*

— Luke 13:32

“Today and tomorrow” refers to consecutive days of daylight ministry. “Tomorrow” is the next morning’s work.

Across these passages, “tomorrow” is never used to describe an evening start. It consistently points to the **next morning**, when the day becomes active with light, obedience, divine intervention, or judgment. In the manna narrative—the most detailed calendar test in Scripture—“tomorrow” and “the morning” are used interchangeably to mark the start of the Sabbath day. The absence of manna at dawn confirms the holiness of that new day from first light onward.

This pattern is not accidental. It aligns perfectly with the sun ruling the day (Gen. 1:16), the emphasis on light as the defining sign (Gen. 1:14–18), and the natural human experience of waking to a new day at dawn. When Scripture says “tomorrow,” it means “when morning comes”—the next calendar day begins at daybreak.

Traditional evening-to-evening advocates, address this body of verses collectively by arguing that “tomorrow” (*machar*) is an idiomatic expression for the **next full 24-hour cycle**, which—under their assumed sunset-start framework—begins at evening, even if the narrative spotlights morning events. They claim the emphasis on “morning” or “early dawn” (e.g., in Exodus 16:23’s “till the morning,” Joshua 3:5’s early rising, or 1 Samuel 19:11’s morning threat) reflects the **practical, visible test** of the new day during daylight hours, when work, battles, or divine wonders occur, but does not redefine the day’s boundary. For instance, in Exodus 16, preparation happens before sunset so rest can begin at evening (“tomorrow” starting then), with morning’s lack of manna simply confirming the ongoing Sabbath. Similarly, in battle or journey contexts (Exodus 17:9, Joshua 3:5), “tomorrow” includes the preparatory night if needed, but the story focuses on dawn action because that’s when communal obedience or conflict unfolds under light. In NT teachings (Matthew 6:34, Luke 13:32), “tomorrow” is said to mean the forthcoming worries or works of the next cycle, starting from evening rest leading into active daylight. This harmonizes the verses by importing the evening-start premise, insisting the morning references are narrative conveniences, not boundary markers.

This counter-argument is lacking because it presupposes the evening-start framework without deriving it from the verses’ own

language, effectively begging the question and rendering the evidence circular. Across all these passages, Scripture consistently omits any reference to "tonight," "evening," or "sunset" as the transition to "tomorrow"—instead tying the new day's arrival directly to morning light, provision, or action (e.g., no manna at dawn in Exodus 16, early rising in Judges 6:28 or Esther 5:14). If evening were the true start, the texts could easily clarify with phrases like "from evening tomorrow" or "when night falls," but they don't; the plain reading demands "tomorrow" begins at daybreak. Moreover, this explanation introduces inconsistency: why would God/Moses/Yeshua/Joshua repeatedly frame sacred time around morning if the day had already begun hours earlier in darkness? It prioritizes harmonization with tradition over the verses' internal logic, which uniformly presents "tomorrow" as the next dawn—the natural, light-based start of the calendar day.

Astronomical Description of The Day

Scripture gives us another way to identify the daily cycle and this comes from Psalms.

*In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun.
Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race
His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his
circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid
from the heat thereof.*

— Psalm 19:4–6

The heavens are symbolically compared to a tabernacle, whose door is in the east at sunrise. The sun starts its cycle in the morning and runs a circuit that returns to the same point. This provides a clear description of morning to morning daily cycle that is hard to interpret as evening to evening.

Astronomically, this matches the apparent solar motion we observe: the sun "rises" in the east (its "going forth"), arcs across the

sky in a full circuit, and "sets" in the west, only to reappear the next morning from the same eastern "end." The bridegroom and runner metaphors evoke energy, new beginnings, and purposeful motion starting at daybreak, making it challenging to read this as an endorsement of days primarily defined by sunset. Instead, it invites us to see the daily cycle as anchored in the sun's triumphant morning emergence—light overcoming darkness anew each day, declaring God's glory from the start. This poetic astronomy supports viewing the fundamental "day" as morning-to-morning in its celebratory, experiential sense.

Unclean Until Evening

One of the most frequently cited arguments for an evening-to-evening calendar day comes from the numerous verses in the Torah that declare someone or something "unclean until evening." Traditional interpretations—rooted in rabbinic Judaism and echoed in many Christian commentaries—assume this means the person remains unclean for the remainder of the current calendar day, with the transition to a new day at sunset somehow effecting ritual purification. This view implies that the calendar itself, or the mere passage of time marked by evening, holds the power to cleanse. However, a closer, context-driven reading reveals a different reality: "evening" here often serves as a shorthand reference to the daily evening sacrifice, part of the continual burnt offering system that provided ongoing atonement for the entire community. It is this sacrificial atonement—not a calendar boundary or the setting sun—that restores cleanliness.

To understand this, we must first examine the daily sacrificial system established in the Torah. These offerings, performed every morning and evening, were central to Israel's worship and explicitly tied to atonement, creating a rhythmic cycle of renewal twice daily for the people.

You shall say to them, This is the offering by fire that you shall offer to ייְהוָה: two male lambs a year old without defect as a continual burnt offering every day. You shall offer the one lamb in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight... This shall be a

*continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the doorway of the tent of meeting before **אֱלֹהִים**, where I will meet with you, to speak to you there. There I will meet with the sons of Israel, and it shall be consecrated by My glory. I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar; I will also consecrate Aaron and his sons to serve as priests to Me. And I will dwell among the sons of Israel and will be their God.*

— Exodus 29:38–39, 42–45 (NASB)

This continual offering sanctifies the people and the sanctuary, enabling God's dwelling among them—functioning as communal atonement. The burnt offering ritual inherently involves atonement, as seen in the broader Torah instructions.

He shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, so that it may be accepted for him to make atonement on his behalf.

— Leviticus 1:4 (NASB)

The phrase "unclean until evening" appears repeatedly in contexts of ritual impurity, such as bodily discharges, contact with unclean animals, or handling the dead. In each case, the timing aligns with the evening sacrifice as the point of communal atonement, rather than an arbitrary calendar reset.

And if a man has a seminal emission, he shall bathe all his body in water and be unclean until evening.

— Leviticus 15:16 (NASB)

Whatever the unclean person touches will be unclean; and the person who touches it will be unclean until evening.

— Numbers 19:22 (NASB)

Anyone who touches her bed shall wash his clothes and bathe in water and be unclean until evening.

— Leviticus 15:21 (NASB)

These declarations do not suggest that "evening" itself purifies; instead, they point to the evening sacrifice as the mechanism for restoration. The individual remains separated during the day, allowing time for personal washing or reflection, but cleanness is restored through the collective atonement of the blood offering.

A key scriptural link comes from the prophet Daniel, where "evenings and mornings" explicitly refer to the daily sacrifices, not calendar days per se. In his vision of the abomination that desolates, the disruption is measured in terms of these offerings.

He said to me, "For 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be properly restored."

— Daniel 8:14 (NASB)

This prophetic use of "evenings and mornings" directly echoes the Torah's morning and evening sacrifices (Exodus 29; Numbers 28), confirming that these terms symbolize the twice-daily atonement cycle. The 2300 figure represents interrupted offerings, further decoupling "evening" from a calendar boundary and tying it to sacrificial renewal.

It is worth noting that Daniel 8:14 refers to the disrupted daily offerings as "evenings and mornings"—the reverse of the usual "morning and evening" order found in Exodus 29 and Numbers 28. This reversal does not indicate a different ritual sequence; rather, it reflects the prophetic context of counting interrupted sacrifices starting from the point of desolation (likely beginning with the missing evening offering). The flexibility of the phrase in Scripture confirms that "evenings and mornings" is a shorthand for the tamid sacrifice cycle itself, not a fixed definition of when a calendar day begins or ends. In this

In summary, the "unclean until evening" verses are not about waiting for a calendar day to end; they instruct waiting until the evening sacrifice, which provides communal atonement and restores purity. This interpretation maintains logical consistency: cleanness

comes from God's provision of sacrifice (a shadow of Messiah's ultimate atonement), not from the sun's position or human timekeeping. It aligns with the Torah's emphasis on blood for purification, avoiding the strained assumption that a day change inherently cleanses. By reframing "evening" as a reference to the tamid offering, we see these verses as pointing to divine mercy renewed daily, rather than rigid calendrical mechanics.

If one wants to use renewal as the basis of the calendar they must also consider other verses:

אֱלֹהִים' loving kindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.

— Lamentations 3:22–23 (NASB)

For his anger is but for a moment; his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

— Psalm 30:5 (ESV)

Satisfy us in the morning with Your lovingkindness, That we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.

— Psalm 90:14 (NASB)

Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love, for in you I trust. Make me know the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul.

— Psalm 143:8 (ESV)

And finally on the them of sacrifices consider the following verse which clearly demonstrates that morning is the break, the end of being considered “*same day as his offering*”.

The flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving shall be eaten on the day of his

offering. He shall not leave any of it until the morning.

— Leviticus 7:15–17

Nehemiah's Gate-Closing: Practical Enforcement, Not Proof of Evening Start

One of the most frequently cited proofs for an evening-to-evening Sabbath is Nehemiah's action of closing Jerusalem's gates "before the Sabbath" or "as it became dark." The assumption is that this closing marks the precise moment the Sabbath begins at sunset. But this reading imports more into the text than it actually says, turning a practical security measure into a calendrical rule.

The key verses read:

And it came about that just as it became dark at the gates of Jerusalem before the Sabbath, I gave an order and the doors were shut (as he gives every night). And I gave an order that they were not to open them until after the Sabbath. (the added order) Then I stationed some of my servants at the gates so that no load would enter on the Sabbath day.

Once or twice the traders and merchants of every kind of merchandise spent the night outside Jerusalem. (Thinking the gates would open as normal) Then I warned them and said to them, "Why do you spend the night in front of the wall? If you do so again, I will use force against you." From that time on they did not come on the Sabbath.

— Nehemiah 13:19–21 (NASB)

The text does not state, "*Close the gates at sunset, for that is when the Sabbath begins.*" Instead, Nehemiah orders the gates shut "before the Sabbath" and kept closed "until after the Sabbath." The critical phrase is "**until after the Sabbath**"—meaning the gates remain shut past the point where they would normally be opened in the morning. This is

the real insight: his command overrides the usual daily routine of opening gates at dawn.

In ancient walled cities, gates were routinely closed every evening at dark for security and opened again in the morning when it was safe and trade could resume. This pattern appears elsewhere in Scripture:

But she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them with the stalks of flax which she had laid in order on the roof. So the men pursued them on the road to the Jordan as far as the fords; and as soon as those who were pursuing them had gone out, they shut the gate.

— Joshua 2:6–7 (NASB, context: gate closed at dark)

And Samson lay until midnight, and at midnight he arose and took hold of the doors of the gate of the city and the two posts and pulled them up along with the bars; then he put them on his shoulders and carried them up to the top of the mountain which is opposite Hebron.

— Judges 16:3 (NASB, implying gates closed at night)

Closing gates at evening was standard procedure—every night, not just before Sabbaths. Nehemiah's innovation was not the evening closure itself (which happened routinely), but the **additional order to keep them closed until after the Sabbath**—i.e., not to open them at the usual morning time.

This reveals the practical motivation: over-enforcement to guarantee no Sabbath violation. Merchants were camping outside overnight, presumably waiting to enter at first light to resume trade. If the Sabbath began strictly at sunset, closing gates before dark would already prevent any Sabbath trading, yet Nehemiah went further by ensuring the gates stayed shut into the morning. Why? Because opening them at dawn would require someone to be present on the Sabbath to manage the gates and confront any lingering traders—defeating the rest commandment. By keeping them closed “until after the Sabbath,” he eliminates the need for anyone to work or engage with commerce during the holy day, including the normal morning gate-opening routine.

The text is therefore silent on the exact moment the Sabbath “starts.” It describes precautionary and sustained enforcement, not a definition of day boundaries. To read “before the Sabbath” as proof of sunset start is circular: it assumes the Sabbath begins at evening in order to conclude that closing gates before evening proves the Sabbath begins at evening. At best, the passage is ambiguous; at worst, it highlights human zeal to protect holiness through extra safeguards, not a revelation about timekeeping.

In short, Nehemiah’s order is about preventing dawn commerce and avoiding Sabbath labor in gate management—not about establishing when the day or Sabbath begins. The key insight is the command to keep gates shut **until after the Sabbath**—overriding the normal morning opening—because practical rest required more than just an evening shutdown. This strengthens the case for interpreting the actions as contextual enforcement rather than calendrical doctrine.

Seeing the Forest – A Morning-to-Morning Day

After examining each tree in detail—the traditional arguments, their internal tensions, the Hebrew word studies, narrative timelines, sacrificial contexts, and poetic astronomy—we step back to view the whole forest. When we remove anchoring bias (the assumption that tradition must be correct), tradition bias (the weight of centuries of rabbinic interpretation), and logical fallacies (circular reasoning, selective redefinition of terms, post-hoc rationalization), a clear pattern emerges: the mountain of direct textual evidence points to the biblical day beginning at **morning / daybreak / first light**, with evening marking the transition into rest and the end of the active cycle.

The Strongest Arguments for a Morning Start

The cumulative case for morning-to-morning is built on interlocking, objective layers that cohere without strain:

- **Creation's foundational pattern** (Genesis 1): God names light “day” first, separates it from darkness (named “night” second), and structures each completed cycle with “evening and morning — the [nth] day.” Morning consistently serves as the boundary that ends the prior day and initiates the new one with light, work, and divine activity.

- **Astronomical and poetic renewal** (Psalm 19:4–6): The sun emerges rejoicing from its tabernacle at dawn, beginning its circuit with energy and glory-declaring purpose. The bridegroom and runner metaphors evoke new beginnings at sunrise—hard to reconcile with a day primarily defined by sunset retreat.
- **Word order and emphasis** (Genesis 8:22): God promises enduring cycles in deliberate sequence—seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, **day and night**—placing day first as the initiating, productive element. This is reinforced by the overwhelming asymmetry: “day and night” appears 31 times vs. “night and day” only 13 times.
- Narrative logic in major events:
 - Passover lamb eaten “that night” (still the 14th), stay inside until morning, departure “by night” on the 15th (Numbers 33:3; Deuteronomy 16:1), travel to Succoth with camp setup during daylight—fitting naturally with morning as the reset.
 - Resurrection timeline: Women arrive “while it was still dark” / “toward the dawn” on the “first day of the week,” events extend through evening (John 20:19)—pre-dawn darkness belongs to the new day, not the prior Sabbath.
- **Sacrificial boundaries** (Leviticus 7:15–17): Peace offerings eaten “on the day of his offering,” nothing left “until the morning”; leftovers permitted to the next day but burned by the third morning. The morning cutoff defines “same day” limits more cleanly than sunset.
- **Daily renewal from God** (Lamentations 3:22–23; Psalm 30:5; 90:14; 143:8; 59:16): Mercies are “new every morning,” joy comes “in the morning,” satisfaction and love heard “in the morning”—Scripture repeatedly portrays dawn as the appointed time for fresh compassion, strength, guidance, and blessing.
- **Hebrew word roots** (erev = mixing/blending at twilight; boker = breaking through/clarity at dawn): Days are logically “split” (new clarity) in the morning and “connected” (blended transition) in the evening.

These elements form a holistic, self-reinforcing picture: light-first theology, observable solar cycles, consistent phrase priority, narrative flow, sacrificial timing, and explicit morning-renewal language all converge on morning as the natural, God-ordained start.

Dismissing the Traditional Arguments

Each traditional proof for evening-to-evening, when examined without preconception, reveals itself as ambiguous, contextually limited, or reliant on rationalization rather than plain reading:

- **Creation began in darkness** → Descriptive of pre-ordered chaos, not prescriptive for all days; light is named and rules “day” first; theological priority (God is light, no overcoming darkness) favors light-first order.
- **“Evening and morning” repeated in Genesis 1** → Evening-to-morning describes night watches (Exodus 27:21; Leviticus 24:3); Hebrew roots show morning as the splitting/starting point; formula completes each cycle at morning, not begins at evening.
- **Day of Atonement “evening to evening”** (Leviticus 23:32) → Special ritual extension for a high holy day (inclusive >24 hours, mentions 9th to avoid overlap); creates paradoxes when forced as universal (contradicts Genesis pattern, requires inconsistent “evening” assignments); ambiguous at best.
- **Unleavened Bread “at evening”** (Exodus 12:18) → Narrative ties night events to the same day (Passover lamb “that night” on 14th); departure “by night” on 15th after morning stay; travel/camp logic fits night travel on 15th with daylight setup on 16th; yom overloaded—cannot prove calendar days without circularity.
- **“Unclean until evening”** → Refers to waiting for evening sacrifice/atonement (tamid cycle, Daniel 8:14’s “evenings and mornings”); cleanliness from blood atonement (Leviticus 17:11), not sunset/calendar flip; majority view assumes sunset transition, but text ties to sacrificial renewal.
- **Nehemiah closing gates “at evening”** → Gates closed every night for security (Joshua 2; Judges 16); innovation was keeping them closed “until after the Sabbath” (overriding normal morning opening); precautionary over-enforcement to

prevent dawn trade/Sabbath labor; ambiguous and circular if used to prove sunset start.

The pattern is unmistakable: traditional arguments rely on selective emphasis, redefinition of terms in different contexts, post-hoc harmonization, and elevation of ritual exceptions to universal rules—classic rationalization to protect an inherited conclusion. Strip away these biases, and the plain text, Hebrew etymology, narrative coherence, and repeated morning-renewal theme stand as a consistent mountain of evidence for the day beginning at first light.

When tradition no longer anchors our reading, the forest becomes clear: Scripture presents a light-centered, morning-renewed rhythm that aligns with creation's order, the sun's joyful circuit, God's daily mercies, and practical obedience. The day starts when light breaks through—declaring God's glory anew.

When Does the Month Start?

When I first started seeking the truth in the calendar I came across this crazy idea that the month starts with the full moon. I almost dismissed it as too ridiculous to even consider, but something inside me prompted me that I needed to “*test everything and hold on to that which is good*”. If I had dismissed something simply because it was so far from every *tradition* I had ever heard I might never have discovered the most compelling case from scripture to define the start of the month.

Having an accurate map is critical if you want to find your destination. A calendar can be viewed as a map of time and lets us know when to expect **耶和華** to act in major ways. If you desire to keep his commandments, such as the Sabbath and the Feasts, then you need to know when the month starts.

I'm friends with several prominent YouTuber teachers from well known ministries who hold to traditional calendars and I challenged them to prove their calendar using only Stellarium, a night sky simulator, and the canonical scriptures (the Bible). Both of them told me I was rigging the challenge by not allowing them to introduce evidence of tradition of men and non-canonical texts. These teachers who lean heavily on a particular calendar in their teachings conceded right out of the gate that they had no meaningful evidence from the cannon. This should be a major warning that we need see what cannon does say before adopting the traditions of men.

The First Statute given Moses

The very first command or statute given to Moses was:

And יְהוָה spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you...

— Exodus 12

Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto יְהוָה thy God...And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks... and thou shalt observe and do these statutes.

— Deuteronomy 16

The first statute mentioned in Deuteronomy 16 is observing the month of Abib which means we must know when that month begins and ends if we are to walk in it as a sign that יְהוָה is our God.

"But I said to their children in the wilderness, 'Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers'.

— Ezekiel 20

So the question one must ask is what were the statutes of their fathers that they are not to walk in?

Ancient Egyptians started their lunar months when the waning moon disappeared just before dawn.

— Google AI & Wikipedia

Here is what we know. Every ancient culture from Babylon to Egypt to China had a calendar that started the month on the dark or sliver moon. This is a tradition of the entire world! The question is, did the whole world happen to follow יְהוָה's calendar, or did the Jewish people get coerced or otherwise corrupted to follow the world's calendar? How could we even determine which is true? Were "some of the statutes" of our fathers, such as their Egyptian calendar months "Ok" and others "not ok"? If so how could we tell?

Right off the bat, ፩፻፲፭ addresses the calendar and gives them an instruction about the start of the year and it is in this context they were told not to walk in the statues of their fathers, which could include the calendar, of Egypt.

So what would happen if we only looked at scripture and we looked at it with fresh eyes, not eyes tainted by a Jewish Rabbi telling us what it means.

Before going further we must address word/phrase “new moon” which has a modern scientific definition as the day the moon is invisible because it is in conjunction between the earth and sun. A better understanding of the phrase is *“the phase of the moon that marks the beginning of a month”* because there are many different traditions that use different phases. The scientific association with the dark moon is an artifact of how the majority of ancient nations started their months at or near the dark moon. It would be circular reasoning to say the month starts on the dark moon because the dark moon is called a new moon.

This argument presents a **cohesive case for a full-moon** calendar system using a **Sola Scriptura** framework, built upon a **literal interpretation** of several biblical texts and the physical astronomy described therein. This argument posits that the Holy Scripture provides an explicit, self-defining mandate for a calendar system that begins each month with the full moon, effectively nullifying contradictory traditions of men that use the dark conjunction or sighted sliver moon.

The Creation Mandate and the Rule of the Lights

Genesis 1:14–16 establishes the purpose and authority of the sun and moon: they are for “signs” (*'ōtōt*) and “appointed times” (*mō'ādīm*).

And God made the two great lights — the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night with the stars” (Genesis 1:16, literal syntax)

— Genesis 1:14-16

This passage establishes a non-negotiable condition for the moon’s authority for signs: it must “govern at night **with the stars**.”

Full Moon: Only the **full moon** is visible from dusk till dawn, ruling the *entire* night alongside the visible constellations. This is a dual witness and there is one objective day where this occurs.

Crescent Moon: The sliver (crescent) moon quickly vanishes with the sunset, isn't visible with the stars, is incapable of co-ruling the whole night with the stars, and isn't a great light considering it is barely visible. Its defining property is that **it is the smallest possible light on the moon that can be seen**. Thus, it lacks the divine authority of a "great light" for defining the sacred *mō'ădīm* (appointed times). It is also a lone witness without sun or stars.

Dark Moon: Is not a light, thus it is not for signs and there can be two or three nights where no moon is visible even with ideal viewing conditions and thus the sign is ambiguous without calculation.

This mandate is echoed in the Psalms:

"The sun to rule by day... The moon and stars to rule by night."

—Psalms 136:8–9

The full moon also fits the requirement that all things be established by two or three witnesses. (Deut 19:15, 17:6; Mat 18:16; 2 Cor 14:1; 1 Tim 5:19; Heb 10:28), and we will see later that **the moon and stars are faithful witnesses** unlike those from the Jewish fables, because God is true and every man a liar.

The Direct Definition of the Month's Start

The scriptural pattern continues with direct instruction in Psalms 81:3, which uses synonymous poetic parallelism to equate the start of the month with the full moon phase:

*"Blow in the renewed moon (*hodesh*) the shofar; in the full moon (*keseh*) for the day of our feast (*hag*)."*
(Psalms 81:3, literal translation)

—Psalms 81:3

Without an inserted “*and*”, the text equates ḥodesh (renewed moon) with keseh (fullness/full moon). The command is to sound the shofar for the unified event which marks the “*day of our feast*”, the Renewed Moon celebration. This verse defines the full moon as the authoritative “*new moon*” for the biblical calendar. There is no comparable verse that describes a dark or sliver moon in scripture.

Some scholars interpret keseh as the noun form of the Hebrew root כֹּסֶת (k-s-h). This root means “*to cover*” and is used in phrases like “*The waters covered the mountains*” or “*the cloud covered the mountain*”. They argue that the moon is “*covered*” or not visible; however, there are multiple ways of understanding “*covered*” because it could just as easily imply “*light covered moon*”. Most scholars believe keseh to be an Aramaic loanword meaning “full moon”. Hebrew, Aramaic, and Akkadian/Assyrian (all Semitic) frequently share vocabulary, especially for astronomical/time terms:

- Aramaic **kista** (or similar forms) meaning “full moon.”
- Assyrian/Akkadian **kuseu** (or related) also denoting “full moon.”

These are closer cognates than forcing a purely Hebrew “*cover*” derivation. Loanwords were common in Biblical Hebrew (especially post-exilic or via cultural contact), and astronomical terms often borrowed from neighboring languages. The “*cover*” root produces a logical but strained metaphor (dark moon as “*covered*”), while the loanword directly matches a concrete astronomical sense without needing extra explanation.

Since many Hebrew root words are homonyms that may have completely unrelated meanings and the meaning of “*covered*” could just as easily apply to “*covered with light*” the balance of evidence points toward a full moon interpretation. If this was the only scripture pointing toward a full moon one could argue ambiguity, but this is only one of many legs of the argument.

The word used for feast (ḥaggēnu) does not require it to be a pilgrimage feast such as Passover or Tabernacles but can apply equally to Renewed Moon feasts. Those who attempt to explain this away as two different times of blowing have to insert “*and*” into the text and narrow the meaning of this word to only be a pilgrimage feast vs its broader use of any festive occasion or sacrifice.

Furthermore, they have to apply it to only some months and not all. We know that renewed moon day was a festive feast because of the story of David being expected to eat with the king on the renewed moon. A third of the time this word is used in scripture it is referring to something other than a Pilgrimage Feast in the middle of the month.

The Hebrew Root: Renewal and Fresh Perfection

At its core, the Hebrew word translated as “new moon”, **ḥōdeš**, comes from the verb **ḥādaš** (חָדַשׁ), which means “to be new,” “to renew,” or “to make fresh.” This isn’t a vague “starting over” — it’s about **restoring to a complete, perfect state**, like polishing something worn to its original shine. The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon (BDB, p. 294) defines **ḥādaš** as “to be new, renew, repair”, implying a **fresh, unblemished completeness** rather than a bare beginning.

For example:

- In Ezekiel 36:26, God promises a “**renewed heart**” — not a blank slate, not a partially renewed, but a fully renewed, perfect one.
- In Isaiah 43:19, “Behold, I will do a **renewed thing**” — something completely restored and effective, not partial.
- In Psalms 104:30, “You renew the face of the earth”
- Isaiah 61:4, “they shall renew the ruined cities”
- Psalms 51:10, “Renew a steadfast spirit within me”
- 2 Chronicles 24:12, “Renew the house of **יְהוָה**”
- 2 Chronicles 15:8, “Renewed the altar of **יְהוָה**”
- 1 Samuel 11:14, “Let us renew the kingdom”

In all of these cases the word implies to restore to perfection. Applied to the moon, this suggests **ḥōdeš** marks the phase when the moon is fully **renewed, its most perfect form** — a visible, complete circle of light. BDB notes that in Semitic contexts, such roots often carry this sense of “perfection through renewal,” tying back to the idea of wholeness.

Quick Explanation of the Noun Form (**שֶׁמֶן**)

Root: Same three letters **ש-מ-ן** as all the verbs above.

Form Change: The noun is a qal passive participle (something that has been renewed) with a vowel shift (o-class for time nouns). This is standard Hebrew grammar for turning a verb into a noun meaning “the renewed thing” (like **רָמֶשׁ** from **רָמַשׁ** = “guard” → “the one who guards”).

No Extra Letters: The core is **שְׁמֵן**—same as the verbs. The final is just the standard noun ending for this pattern.

The noun **הֹדֶשׁ** is not a different word—it’s the noun version of the verb **הָדַשׁ**, implying *“the moon that has been renewed to perfection.”* Every verb use proves the meaning is full restoration. The noun carries the exact same meaning to the moon.

Diving Deeper into Meaning of Letters

To derive the meaning of a Hebrew word from the combined meanings of its individual letters is a legitimate approach rooted in the ancient origins of the Hebrew alphabet, which began as a pictographic script (Proto-Sinaitic, around 1800 BC) where **each letter was a symbol representing an object or concept**. Over time, these symbols evolved into abstract letters, but early Semitic scholars and biblical linguists (like those in the works of Jeff Benner or the Ancient Hebrew Research Center) recognize that **Hebrew words often carry layered meanings from their letters’ original symbols** — similar to how English words like “understand” combine “under” (position) + “stand” (posture) to convey grasping an idea. This method isn’t mystical or arbitrary; it’s a form of symbolic etymology used in academic Hebrew studies to uncover deeper intent, especially for roots like this one where the letters evoke vivid images. It’s not the only way to define words (context and usage are primary), but it provides thoughtful insight when the plain meaning aligns with the symbolic one, as we’ll see below.

The letter-by-letter breakdown of the word for “renewed moon” (**הֹדֶשׁ** in vocalized form; bare consonants: **וּדָשׁ**). The following table shows the ancient pictographic symbol for each letter and its general meaning in biblical Hebrew.

Modern	Paleo	Symbolic Meaning
וּ	וּ	a wall, fence, separation, or enclosure

Modern	Paleo	Symbolic Meaning
ת	דלת	door, gate, move, transition
וּ	וּ	teeth, fire, light, menorah, shine, whiteness

Putting the letters together (**וְתַנֵּה** = **ḥōdeš**), the word evokes a **protected enclosure (וְ)** **entering through a gate/door (תָּ)** and **transformed by fire/light/menorah/whiteness (וּ)**—a vivid picture of the moon moving into its complete, enclosed circle of bright shining whiteness or light. This isn't a dark or partial phase (which lacks enclosure or light and whiteness); it's the one night the moon is fully “enclosed” in perfection, and “lit up” like fire, and standing in one of the 12 pearly, moon like, gates which are often associated with the constellations, the Mazzaroth, or zodiac of the heavenly tabernacle.

The image fits the full moon without force, aligning with the Bible's own use of the word for renewal to completeness. These letters also note dividing or separation of months as the gate/wall between one month and the next. The shining whiteness is hard to connect to a dark moon.

The Eternal Witness and the “One” Moon

The theological weight for the full moon is sealed by God's eternal oath in Psalm 89, where the *specific* grammar points to the full moon as the perfect, unchanging witness.

“Once (’ahath, feminine) I have sworn by My holiness... His throne shall be established forever like the sun before Me, like the moon — a faithful witness in the sky.”

—Psalms 89:35–37

The unusual feminine Hebrew word *’ahath* (“one/once”) is used deliberately. It bypasses the normal masculine form (*’ehād*) to reference the unique “oneness” or “completeness” of the perfectly full moon which is also feminine. This “faithful witness” must be reliable and complete, mirroring the unchanging nature of the “Father of

lights" and in stark contrast to the human "*witnesses*" used by tradition. In mathematical terms the moon goes from 0 to 1 or from nothing to fullness.

A Perfect Gift without Shadow of Turning

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, nor shadow of turning.

—James 1:17

This verse from James makes an explicit reference to the "*Father of Lights*" to bring the context of the heavens and the perfect, complete, full gift which has no "*shadow of turning*". Shadow of turning perfectly describes **the dark or crescent moon** and establishes that it **is not associated with the Father of Lights**. God's law and timekeeping must be perfect and unchanging. The full moon is the physically most stable, perfect, and visually complete phase. To use the dark moon or fleeting, variable crescent moon is to follow "*shadows of turning*" and "traditions of men" that nullify Torah truth.

Deuteronomy tells us the **sun, moon, and stars are a gift** or allotment given to all mankind, not to worship as gods like the god-names given to the Gregorian days of the week, but for the appointed times.

*Lest you lift up your eyes to heaven, and see **the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven**, and be drawn away and bow down to them and serve them — those which יְהוָה your God has allotted / apportioned / given as a portion to all the peoples under the whole heaven."*

— Deuteronomy 4:19

The Twelve Pearly Gates

"It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed ... And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl." — Revelation 21:12

This verse deliberately repeats the word “one / single” twice in a single verse connecting it to the “once I have sworn” and the full moon faithful witness. The ancient Hebrew copy of Revelation, likely its original form, uses the **exact same root** (תָּמָם) used in Psalm 89:38 for the moon’s “once” (תָּמָם)—its one single night of perfect oneness.

Scripture repeatedly calls the heavens God’s tabernacle / dwelling place and all dwellings have gates or doors:

He who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tabernacle to dwell in.”

— Isaiah 40:22

*In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun.
It is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber
(through a gate/door), like a champion rejoicing to
run his course. It rises at one end of the heavens
and makes its circuit to the other;*

— Psalms 19:4-6

“Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons? Do you know the ordinances of the heavens? Can you establish their rule on the earth?”

— Job 38:33

With these verses we establish that the Mazzaroth (the constellations in the Zodiac) are connected the times and seasons and are the gates associated with the months and named after the 12 tribes

When Does the Month Start?

of Israel. The twelve tribes were encamped around the tabernacle in the wilderness in the **exact same order** as the twelve signs of the Mazzaroth. For example, Leo the Lion is associated with the tribe of Judah.

This aligns with the meaning of the Hebrew letters that describe the renewed moon as an enclosed light in a door/gate and matches the imagery of the Pearly Gates containing One Whole Single Pearl like a Full Moon sitting among the stars.



Zodiac and the 12 Tribes

Tribe	Zodiac Sign (Mazzaroth)	Key Blessing Imagery and Relation (Gen 49; Deut 33)
Judah	Leo (Lion)	Describes Judah as a "lion's whelp" who crouches and prevails; emphasizes strength and leadership. Matches Leo's regal, fiery lion symbol; leads the east side of the encampment.
Issachar	Virgo (Virgin/Maiden)	Portrays Issachar as a "strong donkey" bearing burdens (labor/service); links to rest and wisdom. Virgo's harvest maiden symbolizes diligent work and purity.
Zebulun	Libra (Scales)	Sees Zebulun as a "haven for ships" (trade/balance); Ties to abundance from seas/mountains. Libra's scales represent justice, commerce, and equilibrium.
Reuben	Aquarius (Water-Bearer)	Calls Reuben "unstable as water" but first in strength; Prays for his survival. Aquarius' water pourer evokes fluidity and humanity; leads the south side.
Simeon	Pisces (Fishes)	Notes Simeon's weapons and scattering; Deut 33 omits direct mention (often grouped with Levi). Pisces' dual fish symbolize division and hidden depths.
Gad	Aries (Ram)	Says Gad "shall raid at their heels" (warrior/raider); Praises his lion-like strength and choice land. Aries' ram signifies initiative and conquest.
Ephraim	Taurus (Bull)	Joseph, Ephraim's father, speaks of fruitfulness; Calls him a "firstborn bull" with horns pushing peoples. Taurus' bull represents steadfast power; leads the west side (often with Manasseh as Joseph's branches).
Manasseh	Gemini (Twins)	Derived from Joseph's blessings as a "fruitful vine"; Links to Ephraim as twins with "ten thousands." Gemini's twins evoke duality and multiplicity.
Benjamin	Cancer (Crab/Shell)	Portrays Benjamin as a "ravenous wolf" dividing spoil; Says he "dwells in safety" under God's shelter. Cancer's protective crab shell ties to security and tenacity.
Dan	Scorpio (Scorpion/Eagle)	Describes Dan as a "serpent by the way" that bites heels (judgment/venom); Calls him a "lion's whelp" leaping. Scorpio's scorpion (or eagle paranatellon) symbolizes transformation and stinging justice; leads the north side.
Asher	Sagittarius (Archer)	Says Asher's "bread shall be rich" (abundance); blesses with oil, iron, and lasting strength. Sagittarius' archer evokes aim, exploration, and prosperity.
Naphtali	Capricorn (Goat-Fish)	Calls Naphtali a "doe let loose" with beautiful words; Promises full favor and possession. Capricorn's goat-fish hybrid represents ambition, agility, and watery depths.

The East Gate and the Full Moon

Ezekiel gives us the clearest, most concrete calendar instruction in the entire prophetic future temple when he gives the instructions to open the East Gate on the day of the Renewed Moon.

"Thus says יְהוָה GOD: The gate of the inner court that faces east shall be shut the six working days, but on the Sabbath it shall be opened, and on the day of the new moon it shall be opened ... The people of the land shall worship at the entrance of that east gate before יְהוָה on the Sabbaths and on the new moons."

— Ezekiel 46:1–3

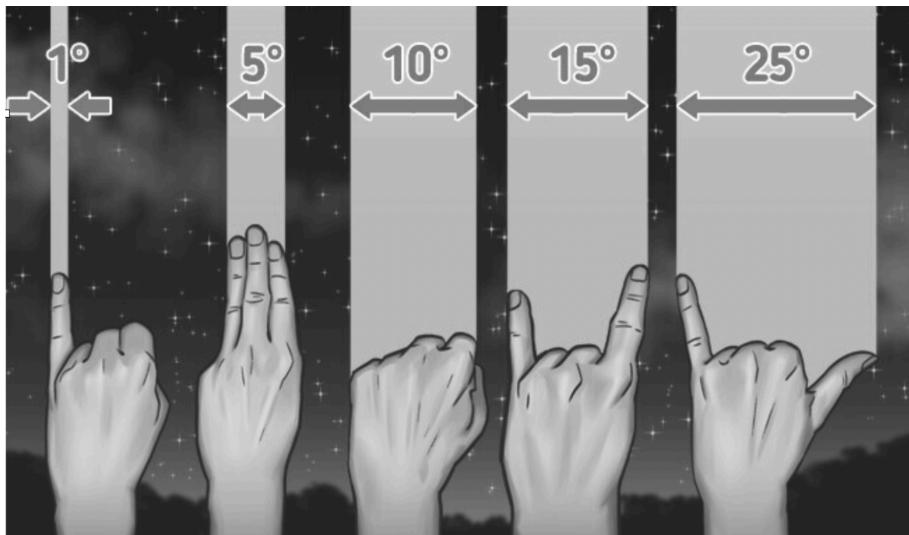
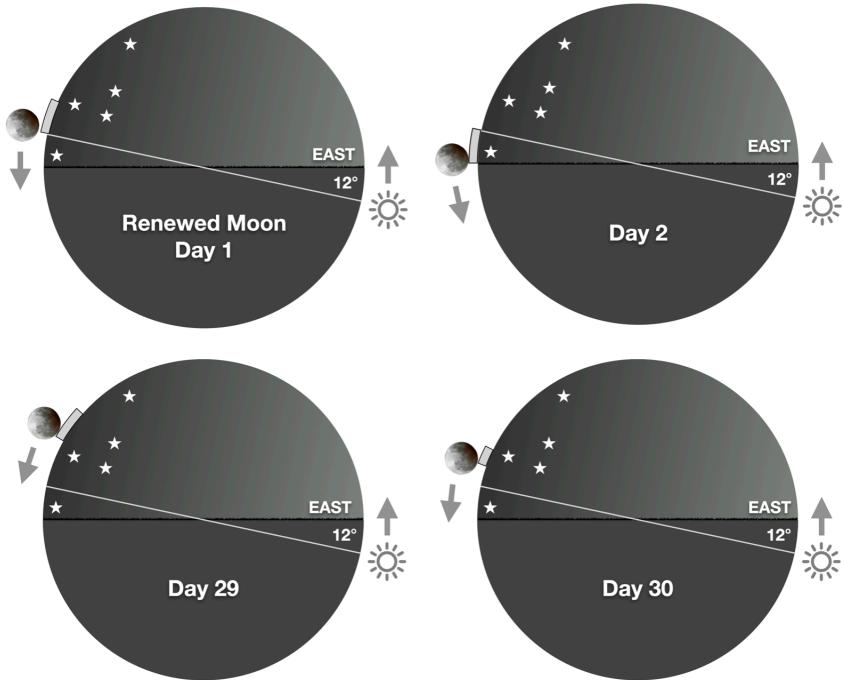
This instruction tells us to look east, where the sun and moon rise and open the gate. The earthly tabernacle is a reflection of the heavenly tabernacle.

They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: 'See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.'

— Hebrews 8:5

From this we can infer that the signs in the heavens should follow the instructions on earth. The full moon, a faithful witness, should stand in the east gate or constellation on Renewed Moon Day. As the earth orbits the sun the constellation will change, and each month brings a new constellation.

This instruction says we should worship or bow down or face east, so a sign like the sliver moon in the west is fundamentally incompatible.



The Testimony of Sirach (Ecclesiasticus)

The argument presented thus far for the full-moon calendar system has relied exclusively on a literal, internal analysis of the Hebrew Scriptures (the *Tanakh*). We have deliberately dismissed mainstream Jewish and Christian traditions based on the scriptural warnings against the “commandments of men” that “nullify the word of God” (Mark 7:13).

However, a question remains: Is this full-moon interpretation a purely modern invention, an modern idea read back into the text?

To answer this, we can utilize extra biblical texts like the Book of **Sirach** (Ecclesiasticus) as *historical documents* — not inspired Scripture — to confirm the existence and cultural plausibility of the concepts we've derived from the Bible alone.

Sirach is part of the Apocrypha, accepted as canonical by some traditions (Catholic/Orthodox) but excluded from the Hebrew and most Protestant canons. We do not use it to establish doctrine, but to establish **historical context**.

Using a historical document does not violate *Sola Scriptura*. It is the same as using Josephus, the Dead Sea Scrolls, or even a modern encyclopedia to understand the cultural landscape or vocabulary of the time. It confirms that the specific interpretation derived from Genesis 1 and Psalms 81 was a recognizable idea within the ancient Jewish world.

“He made the moon also to serve in her season (gates) for a declaration of times, and a sign of the world. From the moon is the sign of feasts, a light that decreases in her perfection (plérōma/fullness/totality/completion). The month is called after her name, increasing wonderfully in her changing, being an instrument of the armies above, shining in the firmament of heaven...”

— Sirach 43:6–8

This passage confirms that in the minds of some Jewish writers living around 200–175 BC, the “sign of feasts” was explicitly linked to the moon’s “perfection”, “fullness”, or “totality” (*plérōma*). Scripture assigns feasts as days of the month; therefore, the sign of the feasts is

the sign for the start of the month. The verse also follows the pattern of perfection, decreasing then increasing again just like the moon does through the month.

Interpretations favoring a dark conjunction or sighted crescent as the month's beginning introduce unnecessary strain. A dark-start view redefines *plérōma* as an endpoint of waning (fading to invisibility) rather than its literal peak of completion and brightness, despite the preposition *ἐν* ("in/at") placing the decrease squarely within that full state. The text omits any reference to darkness, concealment, or renewal from obscurity, beginning its emphasis at illuminated perfection. A crescent view, meanwhile, elevates the "marvelous increase" of verse 8 as the renewal sign while demoting *plérōma* to a secondary mid-month event, inverting the sequence: it would require starting with waxing, reaching perfection, then waning—contrary to the flow from *plérōma*-initiated decrease to contrasting increase. Such readings often depend on looser translations that shift "in her perfection" toward "after completing its course" or imply waning follows fullness separately, but the Greek syntax keeps decrease tied directly to the state of *plérōma*.

In its simplest, unbiased reading, Sirach 43:6–8 celebrates the moon's cycle with fullness as the focus: the point of perfected light where observable change begins (decrease), followed by the beauty of growth amid phases. This portrayal lends Second Temple-era plausibility to a full-moon monthly start, where the heavens declare appointed times through visible glory rather than hidden absence, preserving the text's elegant astronomical hymn without added assumptions or reordered logic.

This historical usage lends support to our linguistic interpretation of *kesh* in Psalms 81:3. It proves that our reading—that the moon's completion or oneness is the marker for the appointed times—was a viable and circulating concept in antiquity, not a modern eisegesis (reading our own meaning into the text).

The existence of a text like Sirach counters the mainstream assertion that the full-moon calendar is a radical, fringe idea. It was a plausibly known tradition during the Second Temple period, a time of intense calendrical debate (evidenced by finds among the Dead Sea Scrolls).

While mainstream Judaism ultimately coalesced around the dark/sliver moon calendar after the Temple's destruction, Sirach serves as

evidence that other, highly developed Jewish perspectives existed that favored the full moon as the authoritative marker.

Abraham Covenant on a Dark Day

The precise alignment between Abraham's covenant in Genesis 15 and the Exodus from Egypt in Exodus 12 supports a full-moon commencement for the scriptural month. Scripture presents these events as occurring on the "selfsame night" exactly 430 years apart, with matching lunar conditions. The timing of darkness and departure fits naturally with a month starting at full moon.

And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him....And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces."

— Genesis 15:12, 17

The emphasis is on total darkness—no lunar light is present or implied. The covenant seals under a moonless sky during the night portion of the day.

*Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of **אֶלְאָזֶן** went out from the land of Egypt."*

— Exodus 12:40–41

This departure is specified as the night of the 15th of the first month (Abib/Nisan), the evening of the first day of Unleavened Bread. For the 15th's night portion to be naturally dark (matching Genesis 15's "great darkness"), the month must start at the full moon

*And they departed from Rameses in the first month, **on the fifteenth day of the first month**; on the morrow after the passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians."*

— Numbers 33:3

In a traditional crescent-based calendar the full moon falls around the 14th–15th. This would make the Exodus night brightly illuminated by a near-full moon—breaking the "selfsame" dark-night parallel with Abraham's covenant. This is an example of the principle of the Narrative revealing the calendar implicitly rather than explicitly stating it.

The Fading Light of Youth

Ecclesiastes 12 presents one of Scripture's most poignant depictions of human aging and the inevitable decline of vitality. The Teacher uses vivid astronomical metaphors to describe how the brightness of youth gradually dims:

*Remember also your Creator **in the days of your youth, before the evil (dark) days come and the years draw near of which you will say, 'I have no pleasure in them'; before the sun light and the moon and the stars are darkened and the clouds return after the rain...***

— Ecclesiastes 12:1–2

The sequence is deliberate: first the **sun** (greatest light, governing the day), then the **light** itself, then the **moon**, and finally the **stars** are darkened. This progression mirrors the natural order of celestial decline as perceived from earth—daylight fades, moonlight wanes, and even starlight seems diminished under clouds or failing vision. The imagery is not random; it evokes a complete cycle of brightness

giving way to obscurity, just as the body loses strength and the spirit returns to God (v. 7).

If we apply this celestial analogy to the lunar month, the parallel becomes striking. The "youth" of the month should correspond to its brightest, most vigorous phase, just as human youth is marked by peak strength and illumination. Only the **full moon** fits this description:

- It is the moment of maximum light, when the moon governs the entire night with undiminished radiance
- From that point of perfection, the light begins to fade night by night—waning through gibbous, quarter, crescent, until darkness envelops the mid-month period.
- The "darkening of the moon" in Ecclesiastes 12:2 thus finds its monthly echo in the waning phase that follows fullness, not in a faint beginning or invisible start.

A month that begins in darkness or a slender crescent would invert the analogy: its "youth" would be the weakest, least visible phase, with brightness increasing only later. This reverses the natural pattern the Teacher describes—youth as brightness that fades, not obscurity that grows. Scripture consistently portrays renewal as restoration to completeness (*ḥādaš* = to make fresh/perfect, as in Ezekiel 36:26 or Psalm 51:10), not a tentative emergence from nothing. The full moon alone embodies that restored perfection at the month's outset, after which the light predictably declines, mirroring the Teacher's warning that the years of strength give way to the "evil days" of diminishment.

This lunar parallel is not mere poetic license. The moon is God's appointed "*faithful witness in the sky*" (Psalm 89:37), and its cycle is meant to teach us about time, seasons, and the human condition (Psalm 104:19). Just as youth begins in full vigor and fades toward the end, so the biblical month begins in full lunar glory and wanes toward mid-month darkness—setting the stage for major appointed times (Passover, Sukkot) to fall during the darkest nights, illuminated only by divine light (as in the pillar of fire during the Exodus). Then we are reborn on first fruits as Yeshua was raised from the dead with the first visible crescent and ultimately we are fully renewed. To start the month in weakness or concealment would contradict both the

astronomical witness and the life-cycle imagery Scripture uses to instruct us.

In this light, Ecclesiastes 12 reinforces the fuller biblical portrait: the moon's "youth" is its perfected fullness, not its hidden or partial beginning. The month that starts at full moon honors the Creator's design—beginning with brightness that fades, just as our days under the sun begin strong and draw toward their close.

The Predictability of the Renewed Moon

Another compelling argument for the full-moon commencement of the biblical month emerges not from complex linguistic debates but from the simple, practical reality of observation and the way Scripture assumes people could know the day in advance. The narrative in 1 Samuel 20 provides a clear window into this reality, while the mechanics of lunar visibility reveal why a crescent-based system creates uncertainty that the text does not reflect.

In 1 Samuel 20:5, David speaks to Jonathan with confidence: "*Behold, to tomorrow is the new moon [hodesh], and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat...*" Later, Saul expects David at the table on that day (vv. 24–27). The statement "*tomorrow is the new moon*" is made the day before, and both men treat it as a known, reliable fact around which royal plans and meals are arranged. The king's court and household operate as if the day is certain—no mention of waiting to see if the moon appears, no contingency for clouds or poor visibility, no suggestion that the day might shift by a night or two. This level of advance certainty is difficult to reconcile with a system dependent on sighting the first visible crescent.

While it's true that one could roughly "predict" a crescent by averaging the lunar cycle (29–30 days) or using basic math from previous observations, the exact day of visibility remains inherently uncertain in a pure observation-based system. The thin crescent is only visible for a short window after sunset, and factors like weather, atmospheric conditions, horizon obstructions, or the moon's precise age after conjunction can delay sighting by 1–3 days. Even with averaging, there's no guarantee—clouds could obscure it, forcing a wait. This unpredictability is captured in the biblical idiom for Yom Teruah (the new moon feast of the seventh month), often called "*the day and hour no one knows*" (echoing Matthew 24:36). In a crescent

system, the day isn't confirmed until witnesses actually see the sliver, making advance announcements like David's risky or imprecise. A dark conjunction system requires calculation as observation alone is ambiguous as 2 to 3 nights in a row could have no visible moon.

By contrast, the full moon is the easiest lunar phase to predict and confirm through observation alone:

- It is visible for nearly the entire night (~10–12 hours), rising near sunset and setting near sunrise.
- Its appearance is unmistakable: a fully illuminated disk that clearly indicates the moon's phase.
- **Advance predictability:** The night before Renewed Moon Day, observe when the moon sets. If the moon sets while the sun is still **6° above the horizon** (during afternoon daylight), this predicts that the next morning a full-looking moon will be visible at **12° above the western horizon at first light**. This 6°/12° rule provides objective, observable criteria for determining when the month begins, requiring no astronomical calculations.
- **Renewed Moon Day timing:** In a full moon calendar, the month begins at first light after the full moon (Renewed Moon Day), when the waning gibbous moon is still 12-24° above the western horizon at dawn. This provides a clear, observable marker for the start of each month. At sunrise, the moon would be approximately 24-36° above the western horizon, depending on the exact waning phase. This provides a clear, observable marker for the start of each month.

This observational asymmetry is decisive. A crescent-based system introduces real uncertainty: tomorrow might not show a visible crescent, forcing a delay and disrupting plans. A full-moon system allows confident advance knowledge: count the days, observe the waxing progression, and the bright, unmistakable full disk will appear as expected. The narrative in 1 Samuel 20 assumes exactly this kind of certainty—no hesitation, no “*if we see it,*” no waiting for sighting. David and Jonathan plan around the day as if it is fixed and known. The king’s table is set with the expectation that the day has arrived. This fits the full moon far more naturally than a weather-dependent sliver.

The Solar Eclipse At the Cross

The darkness during Yeshua's crucifixion was foretold in the Old Testament as a sign of divine judgment and redemption. In Amos 8:9, the prophet declares:

"And it shall come to pass in that day, saith GOD, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day."

— Amos 8:9

This prophecy describes a darkening of the sun at midday—"in the clear day"—as in a solar eclipse, not an ordinary sunset. The event at the cross is consistent with this with added supernatural enhancement: Matthew 27:45 records that "*from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour*" (noon to 3 p.m.). Mark 15:33 and Luke 23:44–45 confirm the same three-hour period, with Luke noting that "*the sun was darkened.*" This was no brief or routine phenomenon; it lasted far longer than any possible solar eclipse (maximum ~7.5 minutes) and covered "*the whole land,*" indicating a supernatural intervention.

The timing is explicit in the Gospels: the crucifixion took place during Passover, on or near the 14th of Nisan (Matthew 26:17–19; Mark 14:12–16; Luke 22:7–13; John 19:14). Leviticus 23:5 places the Passover sacrifice "*at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month,*" with the feast beginning that evening. This mid-month placement is fixed in Scripture.

A solar eclipse—the only natural cause of daytime solar darkness—requires the moon to be in its dark moon phase (aligned between Earth and Sun, invisible from Earth). This alignment occurs roughly two weeks after the full moon. At full moon, the moon is on the opposite side of Earth from the Sun—making a solar eclipse astronomically impossible. Observers familiar with lunar cycles would have immediately recognized and recorded a solar eclipse when the moon was at or near full. Yet all ancient records merely record it as an unusual solar eclipse.

This impossibility is decisive for the calendar question. If the month began at the full moon, the waning phase would naturally bring the dark/new moon around days 14–15, making mid-month the

darkest time of the lunar cycle. The crucifixion darkness, occurring precisely during this naturally dark mid-month period, would then be supernaturally intensified—light withdrawn during the sacrifice of the Lamb, fulfilling the prophetic word of Amos 8:9 without requiring an impossible eclipse. The predictable solar eclipse serves as a historic marker of the event that aids in identifying the year of the cross.

A dark or crescent month start would place the full moon mid-month (around the 14th–15th), which contradicts the emphasis on total, unnatural darkness when covenants are cut — remember Abraham. Only a full-moon start aligns the mid-month timing with the natural lunar darkness that the event amplified. The three hours of midday darkness, occurring at the time of the Passover sacrifice, fits the pattern of God using and intensifying His created signs (Genesis 1:14) for redemptive purposes.

We will spend a whole chapter proving that the calendar day begins at first light, so for now simply assume that the analogy to the day beginning in darkness is built on a false premise and if you want to use that kind of analogy to support the start of the month in darkness then it will ultimately turn the tables and support the full moon to start the month.

Summary

Here is a concise bullet-point summary of the chapter's key evidence for the full-moon month start. This list is designed so we can quickly grasp the **magnitude and cumulative weight** of the case, with all 15 points standing as an independent line of reasoning from Scripture, astronomy, narrative, or historical context.

1. **Creation Mandate – The Moon as a "Great Light" to Govern the Night** Genesis 1:16 and Psalm 136:8–9 require the lesser light to rule the night with the stars. Only the full moon remains visible

from dusk to dawn, co-ruling the entire night alongside constellations (dual witness). Crescent vanishes quickly after sunset, dark moon provides no light at all.

2. **Two or Three Witnesses Principle** Deuteronomy 19:15 (and parallels) demands matters be established by two or three witnesses. Full moon + stars provide concurrent, visible testimony all night; crescent is brief/lone, dark moon absent. The moon and stars are faithful witnesses in the sky (Psalm 89:37).

3. **Psalm 81:3 – Direct Equation of Renewed Moon (*hodesh*) with Full Moon (*keseh*)** Synonymous poetic parallelism without an inserted “and” equates the blowing of the shofar on the renewed moon with the full moon for the day of our feast. No comparable verse defines a dark or sliver moon as the start.

4. **Hodesh / ḥādaš Root – Renewal Means Restoration to Perfection** Every biblical use of ḥādaš (renew) describes complete restoration to wholeness (new heart, renewed strength, renewed altar, renewed earth). Only the full moon visually embodies full restoration after waning; crescent is partial, dark is absence.

5. **Pictographic Hebrew Letters (*h-d-š*)** Ancient symbols: enclosure/wall (*h*) + door/gate (*d*) + teeth/fire/light/whiteness (*š*) → enclosed, shining circle of full light passing through a gate. Fits the full moon as the one night it is fully enclosed in perfection and lit like fire/whiteness; hard to connect to dark or partial phase.

6. **Psalm 89 – The Moon as Faithful Witness of "Oneness"** The feminine “once/’ahath” (unusual) + “faithful witness in the sky” points to the moon’s unique night of perfect completeness (full moon). Contrasts with variable crescent/dark phases.

7. **James 1:17 – No Shadow of Turning from the Father of Lights** God’s gifts are perfect and unchanging. Full moon is the most stable, visually complete phase; crescent/dark are variable and shadowed, fitting “shadow of turning.”

8. **Revelation 21:12 – Twelve Single Pearly Gates** Gates are single pearls (one whole, round, white). Echoes Psalm 89’s “once/one” and the full moon as a perfect, luminous circle among the heavenly gates/constellations.

9. **Mazzaroth and 12 Tribes Alignment** Numbers 2 encampment order matches the 12 zodiac signs (Genesis 49 / Deuteronomy 33

animal imagery). Renewed moon (enclosed light in a gate) fits full moon standing in the heavenly tabernacle gates each month.

10. Ezekiel 46:1–3 – East Gate Opens on Renewed Moon Inner east gate opens on new moon for worship (people face east). Full moon rises in the east at sunset, visible during night worship; crescent rises in the west after sunset, incompatible with eastward orientation.

11. Sirach 43:6–8 – Sign of Feasts from Moon's Perfection (plérōma) Second Temple text links the "sign of feasts" to the moon's fullness where light decreases, then marvels at increase. Sequence (perfection → decrease → increase) matches full-moon start; mid-month full in dark/sliver inverts the order.

12. Abraham Covenant & Exodus Parallel – Selfsame Dark Night on 15th Genesis 15 covenant sealed in total darkness; Exodus 12:40–41 departure on "selfsame day" 430 years later (Numbers 33:3 – 15th). For mid-month (15th) to be naturally dark, month must start at full moon (waning to dark mid-month). Crescent start would make 15th near full/bright.

13. Ecclesiastes 12 – Youthful Brightness Fades to Dark "Evil Days" Youth = peak brightness (sun/light/moon/stars); old age = darkening. Month "youth" = full moon (brightest phase), fading to mid-month darkness. Inverts if month starts dark/crescent (youth = weakest phase).

14. 1 Samuel 20 – Advance Certainty of "Tomorrow is the New Moon" David announces "tomorrow is the new moon" with confidence; Saul expects him. Full moon is unmistakable and predictable days in advance (waxing progression visible at sunset). Crescent is weather-dependent, uncertain, often delayed 1–3 days.

15. Crucifixion Darkness (Amos 8:9 Prophecy & Eclipse Impossibility) Amos 8:9 prophesied sun darkened at noon. Crucifixion darkness (3 hours, noon–3 p.m.) occurred during Passover (14th–15th). Solar eclipse impossible at full moon. Mid-month darkness only natural if month starts at full moon (waning to dark mid-month). Supernatural intensification of natural lunar darkness.

This list captures the **breadth and interlocking nature** of the evidence: direct textual equations, semantic consistency, astronomical

observation, narrative predictability, prophetic alignment, and historical plausibility. Each point stands on its own yet reinforces the others, building a cumulative case that the full moon—not the dark or sliver—serves as the visible, perfect, and predictable sign God appointed for times and seasons.

When does the Year Start?

The final variable we must nail down is identifying which month starts the year. There are a number of different proposals out there, but before getting to the proposals we must start with the principles and then test each of the proposals against it.

We have already established that the Sun, Moon, and stars are for days *and years*. We have also put forth the principle that everyone, everywhere, without reliance upon a subjective central authority, or impractically difficult manual mathematics, should be able to observe and obey God's commands. The reason for this is because scripture says "*they not too difficult for you*". Scripture adds one additional constraint or principle that applies to the places the start of the year in the spring:

*This month shall be unto you the beginning of months:
it shall be the first month of the year to you.*

— Exodus 12:2

This command comes directly from God to Moses and Aaron in the context of the first Passover and the Exodus from Egypt. The month in view is Abib (later called Nisan), the spring month when Passover occurs. This establishes Nisan (spring) as the starting point for the **religious/sacred calendar**—the counting of months for festivals, feasts, and redemptive events (e.g., Leviticus 23 frequently refers to "the first month" for Passover/Unleavened Bread).

Other verses reinforce this primacy of the spring new year for religious purposes:

This day came ye out in the month Abib.

— Exodus 13:4

*In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, is **אֶת-פָּסַח**'s passover.*

— Leviticus 23:5

The name **Abib/Aviv** is not arbitrary; it describes a precise stage of barley ripeness essential to the divine calendar. Exodus reveals this during the plague of hail:

And the flax and the barley was smitten: for the barley was in the ear [abib/aviv], and the flax was bolled.

— Exodus 9:31

Here, "*in the ear*" (aviv) indicates barley that has formed heads—mature enough to be destroyed by hail, yet not fully ripe and dry. This stage ensures the crop is brittle and vulnerable but still standing with kernels developing inside.

This matters for Passover timing because the first month must begin such that barley reaches harvest-readiness by the wave-sheaf offering (first fruits) on the 16th of the month.

*Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: **from such time as thou begin to put the sickle to the standing corn [grain]** shalt thou begin to **number seven weeks.***

— Deuteronomy 16:9

The sickle begins on the standing barley during Passover week—typically 15–21 days after the month's start—so the month opens when barley is aviv (in the ear, heading, soft dough stage), ensuring it ripens fully by First Fruits without rotting in the field from over-maturity. If barley were already overripe at month's start, the harvest would begin too early, spoiling the appointed timing; if too green, it could not mature in time for the omer offering.

The ripening season for barley—from the point when the first heads reach harvest-readiness to when the last heads in a field are

fully ripe and ready for harvest (physiological maturity, hard kernels, low moisture)—typically spans 2 to 4 weeks, depending on variety, weather, and field conditions.

Lunar years do not perfectly align with solar years and the barely harvest is largely determined by the solar climate. This means that there can be up to 29 days shift in the start of the lunar year which happens to be near the upper limit of the barley harvest tolerance.

The barley ripening season in ancient Israel (particularly in the warmer Jordan Valley and lowlands, where the earliest crops matured) generally began around 2–4 weeks after the vernal (spring) equinox (typically March 20–21 in the Gregorian calendar).

First ripe barley ("aviv" stage): The earliest heads reach the aviv stage (young ears in the head, soft dough/milky, harvest-ready for the wave sheaf) often around late March to early April, or roughly 7–26 days after the equinox. Historical and modern observations (e.g., from 19th–20th century reports and contemporary Israeli agricultural data) place the start of harvest in the Jordan Valley/Jericho area as early as end of March (about 10–20 days post-equinox in average years), with some variability due to weather which generally postpones it.

General field ripening: Full harvest readiness across a region (from first to last heads) spreads over 2–4 weeks, as microclimates, elevation, and varieties cause staggered maturity. In the Jordan Valley (lowest/warmest), it could start 1–2 weeks earlier than in the hills around Jerusalem.

The equinox marks the astronomical start of spring, and barley's growth is solar-driven. Aviv barley needed to be present at the month's beginning (new moon) so it could ripen in time for the wave sheaf ~15–21 days later (during Unleavened Bread). Biblical and historical sources ensure the first month opens such that harvest aligns post-equinox without over-maturity/rot (barley spoils quickly once fully ripe).

Because we have a principle that everyone, everywhere must be able to discern the seasons, we cannot rely upon direct subjective observation of the state of the barley harvest to determine when the year starts because barley timing is largely location dependent and in

many places you cannot even grow barley. Instead we use the barley as evidence of what kind of celestial events to look at.

The Spring Equinox

The most common sign that people use, one way or another, is the Spring Equinox which is the day when the sun rises due East and sets due West and at noon is directly overhead. At this time there is about 12 hours of daylight and 12 hours of darkness.

Yeshua once asked his disciples a simple yet profound question in the midst of rising danger:

Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world."

— John 11:9

This wasn't casual small talk about the weather or the length of daylight. It was a deliberate revelation of timing, purpose, and alignment with divine order. When Yeshua spoke of exactly **twelve hours**, he pointed to a moment of perfect balance—when day and night divide equally. This occurs at the spring equinox, the turning point when light begins to overcome darkness in the northern hemisphere. In the land of Israel, around latitude 31°N, this balance happens near March 20–22 in our modern reckoning.

Now consider the biblical calendar, which isn't arbitrary or man-made in the way modern civil calendars are. The year begins with **Nisan**—the month of Aviv—tied directly to the ripening of barley and synchronized with the spring season. The renewed moon that starts Nisan is the one closest to or following the spring equinox, ensuring Passover falls in spring, when renewal and liberation are manifest in nature itself. The equinox marks the **tekufah**, the seasonal turning described in Scripture (Exodus 34:22), a natural turning point that aligns solar cycles with lunar months to keep the feasts in their appointed times.

The events surrounding Yeshua's words in John 11 unfold just before Passover. He had delayed going to Judea despite the threat to his life, then declared it was time to go—because the "day" had its appointed hours, and he was walking in the light of his Father's will. After raising Lazarus, John 11:55 notes that "*the Passover of the Jews was*

at hand," with many people already traveling to Jerusalem to purify themselves. Then, John explicitly states:

Six days before the Passover, Yeshua came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Yeshua had raised from the dead.

— John 12:1

The following table is the minimum reconstructed timeline given the available information. It shows that the latest possible day for Yeshua to say “are there not 12 hours in a day” is the 4th of the first month; however, if the stay in Ephraim was longer than one day then it could easily push the “12 hours in a day” comment to Renewed Moon day on the first day of the month. In this context Yeshua’s question could rhetorically be stating the precondition for the year starting.

14th	Passover
10th	Triumphant Entry
9th	Yeshua came to back Bethany (15 miles), 6 days to Passover
8th	Sabbath (assuming Lunar Sabbath, no narrative points here)
7th	Yeshua walks to Ephraim (15 miles)
6th	Yeshua raises Lazarus on 4th day
5th	Yeshua travels to Lazarus (20+ miles)
4th	Second Day Yeshua Waits, says “are there not 12 hours”
3rd	First Day Yeshua Waits, Lazarus Dies
2nd	Yeshua receives message and
1st	Renewed Moon Day (message about Lazarus’ sickness sent)

Whether or not this was his intention, the fact remains that if the year were to start before the Spring Equinox then the barely would be unlikely to be ready. Bad weather conditions such as being cold and wet can delay Barley, but good weather conditions cannot easily accelerate it.

Feast of Ingathering

You shall observe the Feast of Weeks... and the Feast of Ingathering at the turning (tekufah) of the year.

— Exodus 34:22

The Feast of the Ingathering is a name for the feast of Tabernacles which is the 15th of the 7th month. Many scholars connect tekufah with the equinox as one of the turning points in the calendar. If the Feast of Ingathering is at one turning point, then it stands that Passover should be near the other.

Traditional Start of Year

The traditional **calculated Jewish calendar** (established by Hillel II in the 4th century CE and still in use today) does **not always** place Nisan 1 after the vernal equinox. While its primary goal is to ensure Passover (Nisan 15) falls in spring—typically after the equinox—through a combination of **intercalation** (adding Adar II in leap years on a 19-year Metonic cycle) and **postponement rules** (deḥiyot for Rosh Hashanah/Tishrei 1), these mechanisms prioritize seasonal alignment for the feasts rather than strictly fixing Nisan 1 post-equinox.

The calendar relies on **calculating the equinox** (along with the molad/new moon conjunction and weekday rules) weeks in advance to decide intercalations and postponements. This means that about 1 in 5 years they start the year so early that the Barley is unlikely to be ripe by first fruits.

A particularly notable year where this happens is 33 AD. The second most popular date of the cross, April 3rd, 33 AD depends upon assuming a calendar that starts the month several days before the equinox. A result only possible by calculation and if your calendar is indifferent to the need for barely ripeness. When you add the necessary postponement, Passover in 33 AD falls on Saturday using the “visible crescent” calendar.

Spica

Some people put forth the idea that “Aviv” is a reference to the “barley seed” in the hand of the constellation virgo. They then use the metric that the Renewed Moon (full moon) should set after the star Spica. In recent centuries this approach can align with using the first full moon after the equinox on many years, but some years it falls a month later. If you go back 2000 years then the two align more frequently, but if you go back 4000 years then this calendar comes in too early relative to the equinox.

The precession of the equinoxes is a slow, cyclical wobble in Earth's axial tilt, akin to a spinning top gradually shifting its orientation, caused by gravitational pulls from the Sun and Moon on Earth's equatorial bulge. This precession completes a full cycle every approximately 25,772 years, causing the position of the vernal equinox (where the Sun crosses the celestial equator) to drift westward along the ecliptic by about 50 arcseconds per year relative to the fixed background stars. As a result, the zodiac constellations that align with the equinoxes and solstices slowly shift over millennia—what was once Aries at the spring equinox in ancient times is now Pisces, and will eventually become Aquarius.

Linking the start of the year to any fixed stellar reference, such as the Sun or Moon's position relative to a star like Spica in Virgo (the “barley seed” in some interpretations), inevitably leads to seasonal drift over thousands of years because these alignments are sidereal (star-based) and ignore precession's gradual realignment of Earth's seasons with the zodiac. A calendar tied to such a star will initially sync with solar seasons but slip backward by about one zodiac sign every 2,000 years—too early relative to the equinox 4,000 years ago, occasionally aligning 2,000 years ago, and lagging a month later in recent centuries. This drift disrupts harmony with the land's rhythms, as feasts wander from spring renewal to winter chill.

For these reasons it fails to meet one of the principles outlined for the start of the year.

Conclusion

To ensure the year starts with ripe Barley on Aviv 16th requires the use of the first renewed moon after the equinox. Even 2 weeks earlier would cause some years to lack ripe Barley. Any additional delay and the barley harvest would be entirely over in some years.

And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to distinguish between the day and the night, and let them be signs to mark the seasons and days and years. And let them serve as lights in the expanse of the sky to shine upon the earth.” And it was so.

— Genesis 1:14

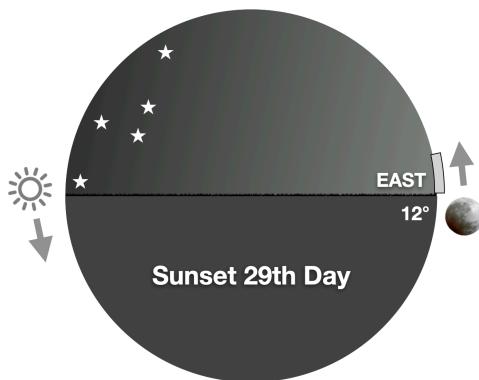
How to Observe the Signs

The Bible is very explicit that God created lights to be signs; therefore, the sign of the start of the day should be the presence of light, not the absence of light. Likewise, the sign for the start of the month should also be the presence of light of the moon. Darkness is not a sign that we should follow.

In prior chapters we established that the day begins *“early in the morning while it is still dark”* and also that the sun rules the day while the moon rules at night *“with the stars”*. We can therefore conclude that the day begins when the light of the sun washes out the constellations. This is generally called Nautical Twilight which is when the sun is 12 degrees below the horizon. This is convenient because each day the moon moves 12.2 degrees in the sky so the moon can only appear in Nautical Twilight exactly one morning per month. However, the math indicates that it is possible for the exact moment of the full moon to completely skip Nautical Twilight in edge cases going from 12.1 degrees above horizon one day to 0.1 degrees below the horizon the next.

Since the start of the month must align with the start of a day, we need to be looking for a visible sign at first light that indicates that this first light is also the start of the month. Somewhere on earth the full moon will be exactly 12 degrees above the horizon when the sun is 12 degrees below the horizon. This location becomes the dateline for the month. The full moon should be exactly opposite of the sun; therefore, if the full moon is visible with the stars in the morning less than 12 degrees above the horizon then you know you have started Renewed Moon Day, the first day of the month. This is true because the full moon already happened in an earlier timezone. If it is within the margin of measurement error (+/- 0.5 degrees, 1 moon width) then you are sitting near the new monthly dateline. For 96% of the planet this is unambiguous each month, but for those who are +/- 30 minutes from the dateline it could be difficult to discern which side your location falls on.

While I believe that is the “technical” sign, we have another sign visible at sunset on the 29th day of the month that is a leading indicator. **If the sun sets before the moon rises** then in 12 hours the moon should be less than 12 degrees above the horizon at sunrise. If the sun and moon are at the horizon at the same time they are almost certainly more than 180 degrees apart because of refraction adds about 1 degree to each and thus at sunrise the moon will be more than 12 degrees above the horizon. Thus if you see sun and moon at the same time at sunset then you will add a 30th day to the month.



This sign is something a 6th grader could follow with a high degree of accuracy. The simultaneous horizon observation is a good rule of thumb that anyone could follow without using any tools, but we also want a 6th grader to be able to observe the true sign in the morning without any tools.

If you want to observe the sign in the morning, then you need to measure its height above the horizon at nautical twilight. This will give you the most accurate observation of the sign. The moon itself is 0.5 degrees in width in the sky, so the full moon sitting on the top of your fist will place the moon clearly within 10.5 degrees of the horizon. This method will work reliably for ~95% of the months when the moon is clearly less than 12 degrees; however, there will be always be months of ambiguity about once every 2 years when the dateline falls near your location.

You can get more accurate measurements using tools which can be as simple as identifying a fixed spot to observe the moon and marking the expected height on a nearby building. With primitive tools we can get accuracy of about 0.5 degrees in the sky (one moon width) but there will always be some ambiguity. Furthermore, the moon's orbit has a slight tilt to it which is why we don't have solar and lunar eclipses every month, therefore the full moon isn't always 100% in line with the sun and earth.

With 0.5 degree of measurement ambiguity it means people living on the ground within an area about as wide as a single timezone would have some ambiguity with their direct measurement. However, they still retain the measurement from 29 days earlier which would not be ambiguous at all being approximately 6 degrees above the horizon. One could posit a rule that in case of ambiguity do the opposite of what you did last month. This rule will give you the right answer for ambiguous cases 90% of the time. This in turn means about once every 18 years (known as a Saros cycle) your conclusion will be in error. This means a 99.5% accuracy rate by observation alone.

Every month you get an opportunity to make a new measurement and with these measurements you can calculate the average length of a month and your position in the cycle. Thus with little more math than simple averages over time you can resolve the ambiguous cases accurately 99.9% of the time. Observation is primary and is the

ground truth, simple averages of observations is a simple secondary approach.

Unavoidable Ambiguity

In spite of all of these techniques there will always be some degree of ambiguity on the knives edge of any visible sign. In theory, with enough precision you could calculate the exact moment of the sign such that you get different answers on the two sides of your house. Tools like Stellarium would allow us to do this easily on our phones. At these extreme precisions all calendar systems start to break down and we must rely upon the grace of God if we cross the time-dimension of the sabbath day and profane it in some way.

For starters, the 12 degree twilight line is just a broad convention derived from 1000's of years of practical application. Nothing in scripture says that 12 degrees is the exact number. The visibility of stars with the moon is subjective, depending upon eyesight and atmospheric conditions thus knowing the exact moment authority changes from the sun to the moon with the stars is beyond the precision we can derive from scripture. Even if we had exact precision from scripture, weather conditions and terrain impact the ability of people to measure and calculate things.

The full moon may be the least ambiguous sign, but it doesn't overcome the lack of precision in interpretation of scripture. This means that even with our best efforts we may be off on the start of the month by up to 1 day. This in turn means we could be wrong about the objective day of the sabbath by up to 1 day part of the time.

Think about this like a property line around the mountain of God that we are told "do not cross" or the hypothetical question of how thick must your gloves be to safely touch the ark of the covenant? From this perspective it would be wise to treat an ambiguous 30th day as-if it were Renewed Moon day, then if 24 hours go by and the moon is still unambiguously above the horizon the next morning you have a second chance to adjust and keep Renewed Moon day. That said if the moon was within moons width of 12 degrees at the start of the 30th day, then it will be pretty close to the horizon at the start of the next day. Taking measurements near the horizon is more error prone due to terrain and atmospheric refraction and thus your level of ambiguity is unlikely to be reduced.

The issue with getting Renewed Moon day wrong is that you would get the Sabbath Day wrong for the next 4 sabbaths and the only way to stay truly safe is to treat all 4 of these sabbaths as sabbaths. But that doesn't solve the issue with other feast days like Passover. Hypothetically the ancients wouldn't have offered two Passover lambs when they were not sure of the day.

In the Millennial Kingdom we will have direct revelation from God about the times and seasons, until then we can only approximate them and we lean on the grace of God and blood of Yeshua to cover our unintentional sins. The key is that the sins must remain unintentional and thus we should still put our best effort forward to discern the times and keep holy space-time holy and only follow consensus of the elders when the start of the month is truly ambiguous. We would error to give the elders authority over the start of most months.

When is the Sabbath?

Earlier chapters identified a core problem with identifying where a calendar day begins and the impossibility of establishing a fixed international dateline without speed of light communication or advanced computer aided calculations. Even something as simple as establishing your longitude or timezone was beyond known human ability until less than 400 years ago.

In the chapter on “Where Does the Day Start” we introduced the idea that the first “timezone” to see the sign of the new month establishes the dateline for that month. With this method everyone everywhere regardless of how primitive their mathematical and astronomical skills had the ability to obey the commands as given in Torah. But every time we solve one problem we introduce another, if starting a new month moves the “dateline” then every couple of months your home location will move to the other side of a date line.

There is a well known solution to this problem which many know as a “Lunar Sabbath” where the Sabbaths are kept on the 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th day of each month. The theory of a lunar sabbath is strongly supported by independent evidence which this chapter will present, but what is unique to this book is the first principles, physics based approach that demonstrates why a Lunar Sabbath is the only practically observable approach throughout the ages.

Nature of the Sabbath

All of that said we must first establish the true nature of the sabbath. Is it a command each individual follows to work six days and rest on the 7th or is it a holy set-apart time with rules about what people are allowed to do in this set apart time. It is more than just a set apart time, it is set apart “space-time” for everyone who follows a sabbath based upon their local time.

Anyone passionate about “Saturday Sabbath” will go to great lengths to argue against those keeping “Sunday” and think “Lunar Sabbath” folks are down right crazy.

The Sabbath was changed from Saturday to Sunday not by any biblical command or apostolic authority, but by the Roman Catholic Church centuries later. No man, no pope, no council has the authority to alter what God Himself established and declared holy from the foundation of the world. The seventh day remains the Sabbath—man cannot move what God has fixed.”

— Jim Staley, Passion for Truth Ministries

We've all been told that the Sabbath is now on Sunday. But how many of us have truly tested that? ... The Scriptures never authorize a change from the seventh-day Sabbath established at creation and commanded in the Torah. No apostolic writing, no word from Yeshua, transfers or abolishes this perpetual sign. Man-made tradition cannot override what God declared holy forever.”

— 119 Ministries

The Sabbath was not instituted for the Jews alone; it was made for man. ... It is the sign of God's power to create and to redeem. ... No man can change it.”

— Ellen G White (7th day Adventist Founder)

"The Sabbath was established by God at creation as the seventh day, declared holy forever, and commanded in the Torah as a perpetual covenant sign. Yeshua never changed it, the apostles never transferred it to Sunday—no Scripture gives any man, church, or council the authority to move what Yahweh Himself fixed and sanctified. The change to Sunday came from human tradition and ecclesiastical power, not from the Word of God. We must return to the biblical Sabbath, for no one has the right to override the Creator's command."

— Michael Rood (A Rood Awakening Ministries)

The primary argument for this type of position is that God blessed the Day and made the Day holy. The holiness of the day pre-dates the command to respect the day's holiness.

And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

— Genesis 2:2-3

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to אֱלֹהִים your God. On it you shall not do any work... For in six days אֱלֹהִים made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore אֱלֹהִים blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

— Exodus 20:8-11

If the day is holy then no man can change the day, we can only discover it and remember it and honor it by resting like **אֱלֹהִים** did. Scripture goes on to say that the Sabbath is a sign that He is our God and that they are an appointed time:

*You are to speak to the people of Israel and say, ‘Above all you shall **keep my Sabbaths**, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, **אֱלֹהִים**, sanctify you.’...Therefore the people of Israel shall **keep the Sabbath**, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations, as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days **אֱלֹהִים** made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.*

— Exodus 31:13, 16-17

*Moreover, I gave them **my Sabbaths**, as a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am **אֱלֹהִים** who sanctifies them.*

— Ezekiel 20:12

*And keep **my Sabbaths holy** and make them holy, that they may be a sign between me and you, that you may know that I am **אֱלֹהִים** your God.*

— Ezekiel 20:20

*Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, These are the appointed feasts [mo'adei] of **אֱלֹהִים** that you shall proclaim as holy convocations; they are my appointed feasts [mo'adai]. Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day is a **Sabbath** of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work. It is a Sabbath to **אֱלֹהִים** in all your dwelling places.*

— Leviticus 23:2-3

And God said, 'Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years.'

— Genesis 1:14

There is no way around the fact that the Sabbath day qualifies for 3 of the 4 purposes of the lights in the heavens: it is a sign, an appointed time, and a type of day. This connects closely to the idea that months are a larger unit of time which are divided into weeks called Sabbaths which are subdivided into days.

From renewed moon to renewed moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, declares יהוה.

— Isaiah 66:23

The different classification of days is defined by Ezekiel:

This is what יהוה GOD says: 'The gate of the inner courtyard facing east shall be shut for the six working days; but it shall be opened on the Sabbath day and opened on the day of the renewed moon.'

— Ezekiel 46:1

There is a logical contradiction in instruction if it is possible for a Renewed Moon day to fall on a work day as the gate cannot be open and shut at the same time. You would have to assign a priority to renewed moon day over work days, but that is not found in the text.

So now the full nature of the Sabbath comes into view, it is a sign, and appointed time, a week long structure, a day of rest and separate from Renewed Moon days. It is objective, existing outside any individual person having started before man was created. All of these properties are why those who care about the Sabbath argue so

strongly against any person taking it upon themselves to change or redefine it.

The common problem with all of the passionate arguments for Saturday is that they never define the dateline and depending upon the dateline one chooses the sanctified time might fall on a different day of the Gregorian week. And if the dateline is celestial and moves every month then that could change everything!

The temporal mechanics of the traveling across the international dateline are enough to cause most people's head to spin, so I will save that argument until the end of this chapter. I will first present to you how I originally proved the Lunar Sabbath to myself before I grasped the deeper underlying issue baked into the structure of creation that forced it.

Recall the principle of the Terrain vs Map from the chapter on "Principles of Evaluation". I pointed out that if you have 100 maps you cannot prove which map is true by comparing them to each other, you must go out into the real world to known events and find the "ground truth" and then see which maps align with reality. This is exactly how I went about proving the Lunar Sabbath.

32 AD Sabbath Implications

In the chapter titled "Proving 32 AD Resurrection" I detailed many fully independent proofs to show that John the Baptist started his ministry at the start of the 15th year of Tiberius which is universally understood to be fall of 28 AD when he turned 30 years old. Yeshua was baptized just before Passover 29 AD shortly before his 30th birthday and then went immediately into the wilderness and thus no documented Passover activity in 29 AD. That year also happened to be the 7th year of the Sabbath cycle which started at the 1406 BC Jordan river crossing and was confirmed by Josephus when Herod the Great took Jerusalem. This means that Yeshua declared the Year of **אֵלֹהִים**'s Favor at the end of the 7th year as commanded by Torah and by this we precisely identify Luke chapter 4 near the start of his ministry in fall 29 AD. Six months later at Passover 30 AD we are told the temple has taken 46 years to build which lines up exactly with the timeline Josephus gives us. This is the first Passover of 3 mentioned, which makes 31 AD the second and 32 AD the year of the cross. Finally 32 AD happens to be the 490th year from the order to

restore and rebuild Jerusalem which aligns perfectly with the prophecy given to Daniel.

The evidence for this is overwhelming if you allow the plain reading of the text and historical accounts to speak for itself without otherwise irrational twisted interpretations to support an unchallengeable assumption that Saturday was the Sabbath of the time. So for the sake of this discussion, trust that 32 AD is the year of the cross and then verify it later. In 32 AD the traditional calendar puts Passover on Monday or Tuesday which makes resurrection on the first day of the week 6 or 7 inclusive days and totally incompatible with Yeshua being raised on the 3rd day even if you use the most extreme interpretations of a full 72 hours in the tomb.

If, on the other hand, a Lunar Sabbath calendar was being used by the Jewish faction in charge of the temple, then Passover would always be on the 6th day of the week. This would then line up with abundant evidence that First Fruits was always on the 16th of the month (see the chapter on "When is First Fruits?"). All of the evidence pointing to 32 AD and First Fruits always on the 16th is therefore compatible with Lunar Sabbath but incompatible with all other known calendars.

Testing Known Weekly Sabbaths

Once we know that 1406 BC was the year of the Jordan River crossing, established in its own dedicated chapter, we can determine that 1446 BC is the year of the Exodus. From this we can determine where Saturday fell in the first, second and third months. We know that the 8th, 15th and 22nd of the second month were sabbaths from the story of the manna. They arrived on the 15th grumbling, that same night they got quail and the next morning was their first serving of manna. They received manna for 6 days and got a double portion on the 21st in preparation for the Sabbath on the 22nd. If the 22nd is a sabbath then the 15th must be a Sabbath considering that the Sabbath has been established since creation and was not created at Mt. Sinai.

For the sake of this experiment we will consider two traditional calendar theories, one starts the month the first sunset after the dark conjunction and the other starts the month the first evening a visible crescent is plausible to be seen with the naked eye. The year will start the first "New Moon" after the spring equinox. We will then look at the day of week on the continuous cycle for the 15th of the

second month, this will tell us what calendars, if any, are compatible with a continuous weekly cycle and the Exodus narrative.

The results show that the first visible crescent seen by two witnesses would make the 15th of the second month a Friday which is entirely incompatible with the Exodus narrative. Some would be tempted to claim that they just couldn't see it, but that evening the moon age was 1.5 days with 2.4% illuminated which is considered easily visible by any standard. This leaves only calendars that rely on calculation of the dark conjunction, a sign without any light, as potentially compatible with a weekly sabbath. This in turn contradicts the recorded oral tradition of two human witnesses making an observation and undermines the credibility of the Rabbinic Jews for faithfully transmitting the true calendar. Their modern calendar is closer in operation to a dark conjunction, but is built on top of a calculated "molad" which is accurate on average but individual months can differ by up to 12 hours from the real dark conjunction.

Calendar	Julian Date	Lunar Date	Day of Week
Dark	5/23/1446 BC	2/15	Saturday
Visible	5/24/1446 BC	2/15	Friday
Full	6/6/1446 BC	2/15	Saturday

Some may argue that perhaps there is error in 1446 BC determination, which I believe is unlikely given other evidence, but for the sake of completeness we can see if 1447 BC or 1445 BC work for the first visible crescent approach, but 1447 is either a Tuesday/Wednesday (depending on visibility assessment) and 1445 BC is Saturday/Sunday depending on visibility. This makes 1445 BC plausible on a sighted moon calendar, but breaks the Sabbath year cycle from Josephus' testimony and pushes Yeshua's declaration of the year of **תִּשְׁעָצֶל**'s favor to fall 30 AD. The consequences are devastating to Saturday sabbath theory.

First Fruits on First Day of the Week

Now that we have pinned down calendars to Dark or Full conjunction we can see if these can pass other tests. Scripture tells us that First Fruits is on "the day after the Sabbath".

*...you shall bring a sheaf of the **firstfruits** of your harvest to the priest. He shall wave the sheaf before **אַיִל**, to be accepted on your behalf; **on the day after the Sabbath** the priest shall wave it."*

— Leviticus 23:10-11

We know that Yeshua was raised on First Fruits and that he was raised on the first day of the week.

*But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the **firstfruits** of those who have fallen asleep....But each one in his own order: Christ the **firstfruits**, afterward.*

— 1 Corinthians 15:20

So now we can go to the story of Joshua where we are shown they ate first fruits on the 16th of the month.

Now the children of Israel camped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover on the 14th day of the month at twilight on the plains of Jericho. And they ate of the stored produce (from prior year) of the land on the day after the Passover (15th), unleavened bread and parched grain, on the very same day. Then the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the stored produce of the land (day after 15th is 16th); and the children of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate the food of the land of Canaan that year.

— Joshua 5:10-12

From this text we can clearly establish that the 16th is the first day of the week (being first fruits) because they could not eat of the produce of the land that year (1406 BC) until after first fruits. This

means the 15th had to be a weekly sabbath. We can now calculate a table showing the day of week on each of the calendars:

Calendar	Julian Date	Lunar Date	Day of Week
Dark	5/2/1406 BC	1/15	Sunday
Visible	5/3/1406 BC	1/15	Monday
Full	6/6/1406 BC	1/15	Sunday

What we discover is that none of the calendars have Saturday on the 15th of the 1st month in 1406 BC. So we now have three witnesses that prove the visible crescent wasn't in use in 1446 BC (1406 BC, and 32 AD) and two witnesses that the Dark Conjunction or Molad were not in use (1406 BC and 32 AD). The terrain is simply not compatible with the Saturday sabbath map.

We can now establish another First Fruits witness from the Exodus. Recall from the chapter on "When does the Day Start?" that they journeyed from Rameses and camped in Succoth. This is approximately 20 miles (or less in some estimates) and is about 1 days travel.

And the children of Israel removed from Rameses, and pitched in Succoth.

— Numbers 33:5

The Israelites journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children...Consecrate to me all the firstborn. Whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel, both of man and of beast, is mine.

— Exodus 12:37, 13:2

Here we see the introduction of the typology of "first fruits" when they camped after a days journey. A later chapter will provide the evidence that first fruits is always on the 16th of the month, and that aligns perfectly with them leaving the night of the 15th, traveling all night and into the day on the 16th where they setup camp just in time for the narrative to mention first fruits. Since first fruits is always on

the first day of the week this means that the 15th was a weekly Sabbath in the first month.

The implications of this are huge because the scriptural narrative naturally suggests that the 15th of both the 1st and 2nd month are weekly sabbaths and yet that is mathematically impossible because a month as 29 or 30 days, neither of which are divisible by 7. What is powerful about this witness is that it is entirely independent of the actual year of the Exodus.

The First Fruits Paradox

The debate over the timing of first fruits goes back over 2000 years and this debate tells us far more than most people realize. Lets explore what we can conclude from the debate itself, independently of which side you end up on.

So what is the debate? The Septuagint, Josephus, Philo, and examples in the Bible (Joshua and Exodus) all tell us that **First Fruits is always observed on the 16th** of the first month, the 3rd day from Passover on the 14th. Josephus reports that this was the practice in the Temple. Scripture also tells us that we are to count 7 complete sabbaths from First Fruits until the 50th day, which is declared to be “the day after the 7th Sabbath”.

I will provide the evidence for the above claims in a bit, because I want to get to the point quickly. If the understanding from the Septuagint and every historian that survived was practiced in the temple, then scripture gives us an apparent contradiction:

And ye shall number to yourselves from the day after the sabbath, from the day on which ye shall offer the sheaf of the heave-offering, seven full weeks: until the morrow after the last week (sabbath) ye shall number fifty days, and shall bring a new meat-offering to ΣΥΡΖ.

— Leviticus 23:15-16 (Brenton's Greek Septuagint)

And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, seven full (undivided) weeks (sheva shabbatot) shall they be. You shall

count fifty days until the day after the seventh week (shabbat), and you shall present a grain offering of new grain to יהאָז.

— Leviticus 23:15-16 (Hebrew)

If you start “from the day after the sabbath, aka **from the day of first fruits**”, which everything from the Septuagint to Josephus says is always on the 16th and then count 7 full sabbaths (weeks) which you interpret as exactly 50 days will you end up on “*the day after the 7th sabbath*”?

In 6 out of 7 years you will not land on first day of the week if you use the continuous weekly cycle. The only way to escape this paradox is if first fruits is not always on the 16th but is the first Sunday after Passover and this is many people attempt to resolve it. But we have already seen how that breaks down with historical narratives in 1446 BC, 1406 BC, and 32 AD. Scripture strongly points to First Fruits always being on the 16th.

We can gain some more insight into the nature of this count by looking at how Josephus describes it. He notes it is called the feast of weeks and the unit of what is being counted is a week.

“When a week of weeks has passed over after this sacrifice, (which weeks (sevens) contain forty and nine days) on the fiftieth day, which is Pentecost, but is called by the Hebrews Asartha, which signifies Pentecost, they bring to God a loaf, made of wheat flour...”

— *Antiquities of the Jews (Book 3, Ch 10, Section 6; 3.252 in Whiston's numbering).*

This aligns with what scripture strongly implies. The Sabbath is defined as six days of work followed by a day of rest. This structure of the sabbath is demonstrated in Genesis and referenced multiple times. There are over 20 occasions in scripture where the word “Sabbath” is used as a synonym for week and not just a reference to a single day of rest.

The nature of a “Sabbath” count referring to a “week” structure rather than a “day” in the context of the Pentecost instructions is revealed by the use of “*complete/perfect sabbaths*”. A complete or perfect sabbath would have to be 7 days long with the 7th being the day of rest. This seems to be the most logical way to understand the difference between “complete sabbath” and “incomplete sabbath” because how else would a “sabbath day” be considered “incomplete”.

As a result of this dispute, people fall into one of three camps:

- Keep First Fruits aligned and let Pentecost fall where it may
- Keep Pentecost on the first day of the week and move First Fruits
 - Understand the month as 4 weeks (sabbaths) and only count the days that are part of the sabbaths (6+1 days). Renewed Moon days are separate and outside of the count.

The last approach has one other winkle in that there is a possible reading of Leviticus as: “*from the day after the sabbath (week) from (that starts) the day you brought first fruits, count 7 complete sabbath weeks*”. The question is whether this is a Hebraic parallelism or a way of identifying the “sabbath week” you start the count of weeks from or merely a way of identifying the “sabbath day” you start the count from. In other words, is the week of unleavened bread part of the count or do you start counting after the week of unleavened bread. Considering the context is counting weeks (sabbaths) and not days, it could be argued either way.

The second way of interpreting it places Pentecost on the 16th of the 3rd month. This is documented in the book of Jubilees (which is not scripture, but that doesn’t automatically make it wrong so long as it doesn’t conflict with a legitimate interpretation of scripture).

And it came to pass in the first year of the exodus of the children of Israel out of Egypt, in the third month, on the sixteenth day of the month, that God spake to Moses, saying: ‘Come up to Me on the Mount and I will give thee two tables of stone of the law and of the commandment, which I have written, that thou mayst teach them’

— Chapter 1:1 (R.H. Charles translation)

For it is the feast of weeks and the feast of first fruits: this feast is twofold and of a double nature: according to what is written and engraved concerning it, celebrate it.

— Chapter 6:21 (R.H. Charles translation)

And in the fifth year of the fourth week of this jubilee, in the third month, in the middle of the month, Abram celebrated the feast of the first-fruits of the grain harvest.

— Jubilees 15:1 (R.H. Charles translation)

And she bare a son in the third month, and in the middle of the month, at the time of which ינין had spoken to Abraham, on the festival of the first fruits of the harvest, Isaac was born.

— Jubilees 16:13 (R.H. Charles translation)

From this we have further evidence about how this was counted by a major sect of ancient Israel (especially the Essenes). So how did the Essenes come to this conclusion? Their 364 day calendar has 30 days per month, so the 16th of the 3rd month is 60 days from the 16th of the first month. It turns out they count first fruits from the 26th... which we know cannot be because Yeshua was raised on first fruits.

I submit for your consideration that we are witnessing the effect of attempting to map an older true calendar tradition on to newer corrupted calendars where it just doesn't quite fit.

Some sects stuck with the 16th tradition for the first month and moved Shavuot in the 3rd month to the 6th even though it is rarely the day after a sabbath day. Others stuck with Shavuot the 16th of the 3rd month and moved the first month to the 26th. **However, what if the deeper truth is that first fruits is always on the 16th of the first month and Shavuot / "pentecost" on the 16th of the 3rd month and we count weeks on a Lunar Sabbath calendar?** This would resolve all conflict, and explain why we count weeks and not days. It would be a

clever way of encoding the Lunar Sabbath into scripture in such a way that it would be hard to erase without leaving inconsistencies.

Now that I have made my case, here is the supporting primary evidence for First Fruits always being on the 16th.

The Septuagint (LXX) translation of specifies the timing of the First Fruits sheaf offering as occurring on the “morrow of the first day” (implying the day after the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, or the 16th of the first month).

And **אֱלֹהִים** spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, and thou shalt say to them, When ye shall enter into the land which I give you, and reap the harvest of it, then shall ye bring a sheaf, the first-fruits of your harvest, to the priest; and he shall lift up the sheaf before **אֱלֹהִים**, to be accepted for you. **On the morrow of the first day [of unleavened bread]** the priest shall lift it up. And ye shall offer on the day on which ye bring the sheaf, a lamb without blemish of a year old for a whole-burnt-offering to **אֱלֹהִים**. And its meat-offering two tenth portions of fine flour mingled with oil: it is a sacrifice to **אֱלֹהִים**, a smell of sweet savour to **אֱלֹהִים**, and its drink-offering the fourth part of a hin of wine. And ye shall not eat bread, or the new parched corn, until this same day, until ye offer the sacrifices to your God: it is a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwellings. And ye shall number to yourselves from the day after the sabbath, from the day on which ye shall offer the sheaf of the heave-offering, seven full weeks: until the morrow after the last week ye shall number fifty days, and shall bring a new meat-offering to **אֱלֹהִים**.

¹ — Leviticus 23:9–16 Brenton's English, Septuagint

Josephus describes the First Fruits offering as occurring on the 16th of the first month (the second day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread). As a first-century Jewish historian who lived through the

period leading up to the Temple's destruction in 70 AD, his account reflects the Pharisaic practice observed in the Temple during that era:

But on the second day of unleavened bread, which is the sixteenth day of the month, they first partake of the fruits of the earth: for before that day they do not touch them. And while they suppose it proper to honour God, from whom they obtain this plentiful provision, in the first place, they offer the first-fruits of their barley, and that in the manner following. They take an handful of the ears, and dry them: then beat them small, and purge the barley from the bran: they then bring one tenth deal to the altar, to God; and casting one handful of it upon the fire, they leave the rest for the use of the Priests.

— *Antiquities of the Jews (Book 3, Ch 10, Section 5)*

Philo of Alexandria describes the sheaf offering (First Fruits) as a festival succeeding the first day of the paschal feast (implying the 16th of the first month, the day after the 15th):

And there is also a festival on the day of the paschal feast, which succeeds the first day, and this is named the sheaf, from what takes place on it; for the sheaf is brought to the altar as a first fruit both of the country which the nation has received for its own, and also of the whole land.

— *On the Special Laws (Book 2, Section XXVIII, 162)*

Philo gives another witness supporting Lunar weeks even though he starts the month with the dark moon per Babylonian and Egyptian tradition:

"For it is said in the Scripture: On the tenth day of this month let each of them take a sheep according to his house; in

order that from the tenth, there may be consecrated to the tenth, that is to Elohim, the sacrifices which have been preserved in the soul, which is illuminated in two portions out of the three, until it is entirely changed in every part, and becomes a heavenly brilliancy like a full moon, at the height of its increase at the end of the second week".

— *On Mating with the Preliminary Studies*, XIX (102)...

In Philo's allegorical interpretation of the Passover lamb selection on the tenth day of the month, he compares the soul's gradual consecration to the moon's waxing phases. The soul advances through stages of illumination until it reaches full transformation, described as the brilliant fullness of the moon at its peak. This climax, he states plainly, happens at the end of the second week.

The assumption here is unmistakable: "weeks" are not independent seven-day units but divisions aligned with the moon's cycle. In a lunar month, the full moon appears reliably around the fourteenth or fifteenth day—precisely where the second week concludes when counting begins at the new moon. Philo offers this as an obvious parallel, one his readers would grasp instantly without explanation.

This reveals that in his first-century Jewish context, at least among Alexandrian thinkers, weeks were understood as lunar quarters: new moon to first quarter, first quarter to full, full to last quarter, and last quarter to new. The full moon naturally marks the end of the second segment, making the "end of the second week" a direct reference to mid-month lunar fullness.

The tenth day serves as a symbolic milestone—well advanced in illumination, roughly two-thirds toward perfection—leading to the full moon four days later. The analogy's clarity and force depend entirely on this lunar structure. If weeks were detached from the moon's phases, the precise timing of full brilliance at the "end of the second week" would feel arbitrary rather than poetically inevitable.

Thus, the passage quietly confirms that weeks were framed within the moon's observable rhythm, with the seventh-day rest falling at the natural turning points of light in the heavens. This embeds the weekly cycle inside the monthly lunar order, rather than allowing it to float free.

While this is strong evidence of a Lunar Sabbath being known in the days of Yeshua (Philo was a contemporary of Yeshua and Josephus), I believe it is mistaken with respect to the phase of the moon which starts the month as I have proven in its own chapter.

Now that we have addressed much of the evidence for Lunar Sabbath in scripture I hope you have the motivation to follow the deeper underlying physical reality that compels a lunar sabbath. All of creation testifies!

Destruction of Temple after Sabbath

Another way of testing the Sabbath is the documented claim that the 9th of Av was a weekly Sabbath when both temples fell. Since we know these years with high levels of confidence we can see which calendars are compatible with the claim:

"When the Temple was destroyed for the first time, that day was immediately after Shabbat, and it was immediately following a Sabbatical year, and it was the week of the priestly watch of Jehoiarib, and it was the Ninth of Av. And the same occurred when the Second Temple was destroyed."

— Babylonian Talmud, Ta'anit 29a (c. 500 CE)

"The Temple was destroyed the first time on the ninth of Av and it was the end of the Sabbath [motza'ei Shabbat], and it was the end of the Sabbatical year... And similarly for the Second Temple."

— Babylonian Talmud, Arakhin 11b

But the tenth day of the month Lous [Av] was come, which is the day that had been fatal to the temple of old, when it was burnt by the king of Babylon; for the same day it was now burnt by this present Roman general.

— Flavius Josephus, *The Jewish War* 6.4.5

The flames took their way as far as the rooms that joined to the holy house, and which were situated the upper height of them; at which time one might guess at the vast riches of what was in those rooms... But as for the holy house itself, it was burnt down in the month Lous, on the tenth day of the month, the same day and month wherein it had been burnt formerly by the king of Babylon.

— Flavius Josephus, *The Jewish War* 6.4.8

As you can see from these quotes there is some disagreement on whether the temple fell on the 9th or 10th of Av and the consequence is to give some wiggle room by selectively trusting some sources and not others.

Calendar	Julian Date	Lunar Date	Day of Week
Dark & Visible	8/4/70 AD	5/9	Saturday
Dark & Visible	8/5/70 AD	5/10	Sunday
Dark	8/26/587 BC	5/9	Saturday
Dark	8/27/587 BC	5/10	Sunday
Visible	8/27/587 BC	5/9	Sunday
Visible	8/28/587 BC	5/10	Monday

As you can see, the talmudic claims of the 9th of Av are incompatible with their claims that it fell the day after the Saturday Sabbath in 70 AD because the 9th of Av is Saturday, but it is compatible in 587 BC; however, only on the observable sliver calendar. Remember we already invalidated the visible crescent for the start of manna in Exodus. The 9th of Av is also incompatible with scripture which agrees with Josephus that the temple fell on the 10th:

*Now in the 5th month, on the 10th day of the month — which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon—Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard, who served the king of Babylon, entered Jerusalem. And he burned the house of **אֵל**, and the king's house and all the houses of Jerusalem; every great house he burned down.*

— Jeremiah 52:12-13

If you only consider the 10th of Av, then the Talmudic claims work in 70 AD and 587 BC, but *only on the dark conjunction moon*. This makes another invalidation of their fable about starting the month the evening the first visible crescent is seen if you hold to a Saturday Sabbath understanding.

Josephus records that the Romans learned that the Jews refused to pro-actively fight on the Sabbath though they would defend if directly attacked.

And indeed it was a hard thing to fill up that valley, by reason of its immense depth, especially as the Jews used all the means possible to repel them from their superior situation; nor had the Romans succeeded in their endeavors, had not Pompey taken notice of the seventh days, on which the Jews abstain from all sorts of work on a religious account, and raised his bank, but restrained his soldiers from fighting on those days; for the Jews only acted defensively on Sabbath days.

— Josephus, *The Jewish War*

Which thing when the Romans understood, on those days which we call Sabbaths they threw nothing at the Jews, nor came to any pitched battle with them; but raised up their earthen banks, and brought their engines into such forwardness, that they might do execution the next day.

—*Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, Book 14, Ch 4, S3*

A consequence of this strategy is that Jerusalem would tend to fall a day or two after the Sabbath. Enemies would build the ramps on the Sabbath but not attack, so as not to give the Jews license to break their rest. Then the very next day they would be ready to attack with full force.

Josephus records that the ramps were completed on the 8th of Av, which, according to Josephus' other testimony, implies that the 8th of Av was a Sabbath day being observed and this would be 100% compatible with the Lunar Sabbath theory.

And now two of the legions had completed their banks, on the 8th day of the month Lous [Ab]. Whereupon Titus gave orders that the battering rams should be brought, and set over against the western edifice of the inner temple.

— *The Jewish War (Wars of the Jews), Book 6, Ch 4*

Putting everything together, the Rabbinic tradition is internally self-contradictory by simultaneously claiming Saturday was the sabbath, that the month started by seeing the crescent, and that both temples fell the day after the sabbath. They also contradict scripture and Josephus which claims the 10th was the fall. The only way to start to save them is to adopt a month starting “first sunset after dark conjunction” and the 10th of the month for the fall. This resolves many contradictions but remains incompatible with claiming 1406 BC First Fruits falling on Sunday.

The real tell is Josephus saying the ramps were built on the sabbath (while the Jews rested) and that they were completed on the 8th day of the month. Josephus has generally proven to be far more reliable a witness than the Rabbinic Jews who frequently demonstrate their willingness to bend facts to support their “high moral principles”.

So how does moving dateline impact the Sabbath?

A dateline that moves every month based upon where the moon is located at the start of the month means that **you can stay in one**

location and still “cross the celestial dateline”. On a lunar calendar you may cross this dateline every 2 or 3 months. If you use one of the solar calendars then you will cross this moving dateline about once every 4 years. The mere thought of this is enough to cause a panic attack in the minds of those who like the deceiving simplicity of counting 7 days with a fixed dateline and the aid of computer programs like Stellarium and societal conventions like the international dateline.

Before doing an example with the celestial dateline, lets look at some real world case studies with international travel and even extreme cases like astronauts under the conventional 7 day cycle that people have such zeal for.

Traditional Jewish Sabbath Case Study

Suppose a traditional Jewish sabbath observer, who reckons each day from one personally sighted sunset to the next, boards a hypothetical nonstop **westward flight** from Los Angeles to Auckland, New Zealand **departing at noon on Friday**—while it is still the sixth day, hours before LA sunset at 7 PM. These planes generally fly faster than half the Earth's rotational speed, so the Sun appears to move westward at less than half its normal apparent rate relative to the traveler. **The flight lasts 14 hours** of elapsed time, with solar time advancing by only 7 hours during the journey. Departing at noon (7 hours before sunset), the Sun progresses slowly toward the horizon but never reaches it—**no sunset is sighted from takeoff to landing**. Midway, after about 6 hours (before 6 PM LA time, which is still before sunset in Los Angeles), **the plane crosses the International Date Line, immediately advancing the calendar date from Friday to Sunday afternoon at the crossing point, skipping Saturday entirely** even as continuous time passes in the air. The traveler lands in Auckland precisely at sunset solar time on Sunday evening. **From noon Friday to the first personally observed sunset on Sunday night, no sunset intervenes, and no labeled Saturday occurs—no sunset marks the start of the Sabbath, no sunset marks any day transition during the journey, and the entire skipped day passes unmarked in the air.** In this strict sunset-sighting framework, the traveler experiences no part of a Sabbath, leaving on the middle of the 6th day of the week arriving on the start of the 2nd day of the week.

Some Jews take issue with an individual's travel producing the result that they entirely skip local Sabbath for over 7 subjective days and believe that in these dateline crossings the individual should find a way to keep a 24-hour sabbath period around the time of their travel. These Jews have adopted a number of different "rules" which either have you keep Sabbath on your departure timezone or keep multiple consecutive sabbaths if traveling east. **They generally adopt some policy that ensures each individual never experiences more than 6 consecutive days (144 hours) without a Sabbath.**

Extreme cases like astronauts (e.g., Ilan Ramon on the Space Shuttle Columbia in 2003): With multiple sunrises/sunsets per orbit and crossings of the IDL-equivalent issues, he observed Shabbat based on the time at his last residence (Cape Canaveral), following consultations with rabbis and precedents like the Tiferet Yisrael on polar/Arctic travel where local sunset is unreliable or absent.

In doing this **they change the principle of the sabbath being connected to the objective time of the land, the day God sanctified**, to it being a personal command detached from the locals during transitions. Once this principle is accepted those keeping every Sunday are still following the command because the principle that an "objective day" has been declared holy has left the room. One could argue that each person has their own personal sabbath cycle that starts the day they are born.

The idea of personal sabbath cycles conflicts with the goal of community synchronization and gatherings that are expected on the sabbath. This elevates the gathering to the highest priority over all other issues and establishes the principle that the majority has the power to change the Sabbath day because it is no longer about a cycle that continues back to creation but community unity.

A purely principle based approach must conclude that for each location God declared a specific window of time to be holy and any individual in that location during that time must respect the holiness of that space-time. To truly know the sabbath and respect its holiness one must know both the when and where boundaries. This is similar to the special rules that only apply when you enter the physical location of the temple. **A principled approach concludes the Sabbath is a multi-dimensional objective space-time concept just like the temple.** Any rule of thumb that converts the Sabbath to a subjective experience such that different people in the same location reach

different conclusions about whether their shared space-time is holy is likely in error (adding to or taking away from scripture) regardless of good intentions.

Sabbath with Dynamic Celestial Dateline

Lets get more precise for a minute and **work through an example** of what a moving celestial dateline means in practice. We will start with a working **assumption that the first month the dateline is Jerusalem**. This means that this is the first location anywhere on earth that was able to view the sign of the start of the month (whether sliver moon, full moon, dark moon, etc). **29 days later the moon has not returned to the same phase because it takes 29.53 days to orbit; therefore, those in Jerusalem add a 30th day.** Those on the other side of the world (e.g. Hawaii) happen to see the sliver moon because it takes the earth 12 more hours before their sunset/sunrise and so they only have a 29 day month for the first month. So while Jerusalem started the first month 12 hours ahead of Hawaii, they start their second month 12 hours behind Hawaii.

This is mind bending because it would be as if the number of days in “January” in a given year depended upon your location! Each person has a trivial calendar with their own local observations, but now converting a local date/time in one location to the same moment in time in a different location is far more involved. **We moved the complication of knowing when to observe dates to knowing how to convert between local calendars.** One is required for Torah observance that is accessible to all, the other is only required for international trade that only applies to the few and only in an era where speed of light communication and computers makes it trivial to automate.

What happened the moment the first “timezone” was able to observe the sign of the new month? Did it define a new international global date line for that month? If so, when do those who added a 30th day cross it? After the 30th day they will also confirm that the new month has begun, but they know that their observation isn’t authoritative because they had to add a 30th day — some other timezone observed the sign before they did.

The 30th day spends half the day moving into the “future” and once the first timezone observes the sign to start the new month and establishes a new dateline they are virtually teleported back a day. It is as if the 30th day of the 1st month was another way to express the

“0th day” of the second month. We know this because **the first day of the second month is always after the 29th and 30th day of the first month.** This means the timezone that was once 12 hours behind has suddenly become 12 hours ahead in “absolute time” assuming **we apply the rule that the furthest advanced calendar month/day is the true marker of the heavenly clock.**

For the sake of simplicity, lets assume the 29th day of the first month was a Friday. Jerusalem moves into Saturday on the 30th of the 1st month, which they attempt to observe as a Sabbath. Hawaii moves into Saturday as the first day of the second month. Since the first day of the second month is always after the 30th day of the 1st month, it means that Jerusalem is now on the “day before the first of the second month” or the 0th day of the 2nd month. **The “0th day” or “30th day” is truly phantom, it is like the day a person gains or loses when they cross the international dateline by airplane.**

And so Jerusalem is now left to decide if Saturday the 30th of the 1st month in Jerusalem is before or after Saturday the 1st of the second month in Hawaii. Some will likely suggest that Jerusalem should just keep its own weekly cycle regardless of the day of the month, but now the international dateline issue at creation shows up. The fixed cycle requires an objective fixed dateline which requires a central authority and real time global communication or advanced computation to follow.

Common Objections

There are a number of knee-jerk responses that people give when they first hear about a Lunar Sabbath that deserve to be addressed up front.

“The Bible never once says to reset the week at the new moon – adding uncounted days is pure eisegesis.”

The Bible also never once mentions a 13th month or when to add it, but most are willing to accept the silence on this issue. The Bible also never explicitly says that weeks go on forever, this is pure anchoring bias, tradition bias, and majority bias.

"Genesis 2 shows a 7-day cycle before the moon was even created; you can't make the Sabbath lunar-dependent."

Genesis also shows “morning and evening” before the sun was created. All this proves is that space-time exists outside of the heavenly clock created on the 4th day. The sun, moon, and stars communicate the time they do not define the times anymore than changing your wrist watch causes you to time travel.

"Exodus 16 starts the manna count on the 16th without mentioning a new moon reset—your consecutive 15ths theory forces the text to say what it doesn't."

Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. The text only describes a single week and doesn't expand directly upon the broader cycle. That said, the rules regarding “Sabbath Years” and “Jubilee Years” show that in some years he provides enough for 3 years.

"Your 1446 BC and 32 AD dates rely on your own chronology; change one assumption and the whole 'mismatch' disappears—circular reasoning."

These dates require their own evidence and that evidence is provided in this book. The reality is that the traditional calendar forces motivated reasoning by eliminating years that are incompatible with the calendar conclusion. My approach ignored the calendar and looked for the strongest independent evidence and then let the best fit calendar be revealed.

A moving dateline every month would make community-wide observance impossible in practice—God would not hide His holy day behind such confusion.

This appeal to “community-wide observance” is really an appeal to “global observance” which I have already demonstrated is impossible on Saturday sabbath without faster than light communication and/or advanced computational capabilities and centralized authorities. Those that set the feast days by visible signs rather than the Jewish fixed calendar already have a “moving dateline” they just don’t think of it as such. Not only does it move but it isn’t even consistent at the same longitude in the north and south. All confusion only stems from attempting to do date/time conversions between different timezones and/or converting between different calendar types. If you follow the simple rules every local community will have a trivial time following and obeying.

Every objection either applies equally to the continuous-cycle view or collapses under its own logic when the text’s actual silence and practical realities are considered. The lunar model doesn’t add more assumptions—it removes contradictions while staying faithful to creation’s design and Torah’s observability for all people, everywhere, in every era.

Summary of Argument for Lunar Sabbath

The Sabbath is more than a personal rest day It is an objective, holy “space-time” — a fixed window of time God set apart as a sign of His identity, a mark of sanctification, and one of His appointed times (mo’edim). It is tied to the same heavenly lights that mark signs, seasons, and sacred times.

Heavenly lights govern time The sun, moon, and stars were created to signal appointed times, days, and years. The Sabbath fits three of these purposes: it is a sign, an appointed time, and a weekly structure. New moons and Sabbaths are repeatedly paired as sacred markers, and temple gates open for both while closed on ordinary workdays.

Fixed weekly cycles create practical problems Without instant global communication or precise longitude knowledge (impossible until recent centuries), no one could reliably maintain a single, unbroken 7-day cycle across the planet. A moving celestial dateline based on the first sighting of the new

moon solves access for everyone, but it shifts monthly — requiring Sabbaths to reset with the lunar month.

Lunar Sabbath resolves contradictions Sabbaths fall on fixed lunar dates (8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th). This allows consecutive 15ths in adjacent months to both be Sabbaths (impossible in a 29- or 30-day month with a continuous cycle). It also keeps First Fruits consistently on the 16th while making Pentecost land on the 16th of the third month, matching ancient patterns.

Historical narrative tests fail continuous cycles In 1446 BC (Exodus year) and 1406 BC (Jordan crossing), no continuous-cycle calendar (dark conjunction, visible crescent, or modern fixed) places the 15th on Saturday where the text requires it. Lunar fixed dates align perfectly. In 32 AD, the crucifixion/resurrection timeline fits only when Passover lands on the 6th day of the week — again compatible with lunar Sabbath.

First Fruits must be fixed on the 16th Ancient sources (Temple practice, first-century historians, and biblical examples) place the sheaf offering on the 16th. Counting seven complete weeks from there drifts Pentecost in a continuous cycle but aligns perfectly when counting “Sabbath weeks” and excluding new moon days — a lunar structure.

Philo confirms lunar weeks A first-century writer describes the full moon arriving at the end of the second week, treating weeks as lunar quarters (new moon to first quarter, to full, etc.) — evidence that lunar-tied weeks were understood in Yeshua’s time.

Travel and dateline examples expose the issue Real-world cases (flights skipping days, astronauts using home time) show that even modern fixed cycles require subjective rules to “save” the Sabbath. A lunar system with local moon observation keeps the holy time objective and community-synchronized without needing technology or central authority.

What It All Means

The Sabbath is not a man-made tradition or a personal choice — it is a divinely declared, objective holy space-time embedded in creation’s design through the moon’s cycles. A continuous 7-day week detached from the moon cannot be reliably observed across the ancient world, leads to contradictions in key biblical events, and fails

practical tests of global accessibility. The lunar Sabbath — resetting with each new moon — harmonizes the scriptural patterns, historical alignments, and physical reality of timekeeping. It is the only model that keeps the Sabbath both celestial (marked by heavenly lights) and universally observable without modern tools. After ruling out the impossible, the Lunar Sabbath that remains is most likely the truth however unconventional it may be.

The Day of Saturn

If you are still not convinced by the argument for a Lunar Sabbath, lets take a moment and consider the argument for and against Saturday without proposing the Lunar sabbath. Does Saturday stand on its own merit or does it have enough baggage to cause us to search deeper?

The seven day cycle is inherently a tradition of men because it is only knowable on the basis of the testimony of our fathers. Most sabbath debates focus on Saturday vs Sunday and whether man has authority to change it. There is no real dispute that there was a change from Saturday to Sunday, what most people dispute is mans right to change it and I have already thoroughly covered that the space-time of the Sabbath has been declared holy. All of the energy spent on the Saturday vs Sunday debate takes the focus off of the real issue, the unquestionable assumption that Saturday has always been the seventh day of the week and the Yeshua confirmed Saturday by virtue of not explicitly speaking against it in the Bible.

This argument from silence is built off of the following quote from Josephus that states everyone, Jew, Greek, and barbarian rests on the seventh day.

There is no city, Greek or barbarian, nor any nation to which the custom of abstaining from work on the seventh day has not penetrated—not even the remotest parts of the earth.

— Josephus, *Against Apion* 2.282 (Loeb Classical Library translation)

What is casually left out is that this was written toward the end of Josephus' life around 93 AD, over 20 years after the temple fell and 60 years after Yeshua's death. Twenty years is enough for an entire new generation to be born and raised with no memory of how things were before them.

Any competing calendars potentially observed by the temple priests were lost in the ashes and downfall of the levitical priesthood's power and the popular Rabbinic calendar took over. Consider what Josephus says about the competing doctrines of the day:

What I would now explain is this, that the Pharisees have delivered to the people a great many observances by succession from their fathers, which are not written in the laws of Moses; and for that reason it is that the Sadducees reject them, and say that we are to esteem those observances to be obligatory which are in the written word, but are not to observe what are derived from the tradition of our forefathers. And concerning these things it is that great disputes and differences have arisen among them, while the Sadducees are able to persuade none but the rich, and have not the populace obsequious to them, but the Pharisees have the multitude on their side.

— Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 13.297 (~93 AD)

The high priests controlled the Temple, sacrifices, calendar decisions (including intercalation for festivals), and day-to-day Temple operations. This made the Sadducees the de facto religious authorities in practice, even if the Pharisees had greater popular sway. Caiaphas (high priest c. 18–36 CE), the one who presided over Yeshua's trial (John 11:49–53; 18:13–24) was identified as a Sadducee by Josephus.

But the high priest rose up, and all who were with him (that is, the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with jealousy and arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison. — Acts 5:17

In Jewish War 2.17.8–10 (2.409–410), Josephus notes that during the revolt (66 CE), the high priestly families (Sadducean) and their retainers were targeted by the rebels precisely because of their elite status and collaboration with Rome. Therefore, any practice of the Sadducean sect was likely destroyed when the temple fell and was documented as being broadly unpopular with the masses. This unpopularity supports the notion that after 20+ years it would be long forgotten and the few who remembered it would not be worth noting when Josephus said “no city without the custom” as clearly not everyone in every city kept the customary sabbath.

The masses likely moved on to “popular” Saturday observation which more seamlessly aligned with the pagans around them. While these quotes cannot prove that there was a difference in calendar, they do effectively **refute the presumption** that there was uniformity between popular practice and temple practice. If Yeshua followed the temple practice then no one could criticize him even if he followed a different practice than Pharisees and Yeshua would have no need to lecture people about different Sabbath days when those in power are already keeping the same as He is and his actions speak for themselves.

Even without this line of reasoning, the plain text of Josephus quote is compatible with multiple calendars with different definitions of the “7th day” as he makes no clear reference to Saturday or a continuous cycle. If we want to get to the origin of Saturday, then we need to look elsewhere.

Origin of Planetary Week

Roman poet Albius Tibullus (c. 55–19 BCE) provides the first known mention of a planetary day name in Latin literature, referring to “Saturn’s day” as an unlucky or sacred day for activities. This is from his Elegies (Book 1, Poem 3, line 18), composed around 27–19 BCE. It indicates awareness of Saturn’s day within an emerging planetary framework, though not yet a full weekly cycle description.

*“Often too auguries and evil omens frighten me, /
Often too Saturn’s sacred day with its rosy light.”*

— Tibullus, Elegies 1.3.17–18 (c. 27–19 BCE)

This suggests Saturn's day was already culturally recognized as inauspicious, aligning with astrological taboos—evidence of the planetary week's nascent form in late Republican Rome.

The first identifiable full date linked to a planetary day name is from a graffito in Pompeii (destroyed 79 AD), referencing "dies Solis" (Sunday). It reads: "*VIII IDVS FEBRVARIVS DIES SOLIS*", translated:

"Eighth day before the Ides of February, day of the Sun."

— Pompeii Graffito (CIL IV 8820, 6 February 60 AD)

This represents the end of the crumb trail of evidence that connects Sunday to a continuous cycle of 7 days from modern times. Everything else is inference and assumption.

In *Roman History* (37.18–19), Dio Cassius explains that the 7-day planetary week originated with the Egyptians and was adopted by the **Romans, who adjusted the order slightly**. He notes that the sequence of days—Saturn, Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus—arises from the “planetary hours” system: each day is divided into 24 hours, starting at sunrise, with the first hour ruled by the planet that names the day. The 25th hour (the first of the next day) falls three planets ahead in the Chaldean order (Saturn → Jupiter → Mars → Sun → Venus → Mercury → Moon), producing the familiar week cycle. This astrological method, rooted in ancient Egyptian and Babylonian traditions, shows the week’s pagan origins rather than a direct biblical mandate.

"The custom, however, of referring the days to the seven stars called planets was instituted by the Egyptians, but is now found among all mankind, though its adoption has been comparatively recent; at any rate the ancient Greeks never understood it, so far as I am aware. But since it is now quite the fashion with mankind generally and even with the Romans themselves..., I wish to write briefly of it.... I have heard two explanations, which are not difficult of comprehension, it is true, though they involve certain

theories. For if you apply the so-called “principle of the tetrachord” (which is believed to constitute the basis of music) to these stars, by which the whole universe of heaven is divided into regular intervals, **in the order in which each of them revolves, and beginning at the outer orbit assigned to Saturn**, then omitting the next two name ☽ of the fourth, and after this passing over two others reach the seventh, and you then go back and repeat the process with the orbits and their presiding divinities in this same manner, assigning them to the several days, **you will find all the days to be in a kind of musical connection with the arrangement of the heavens**. This is one of the explanations given; the other is as follows. If you begin at the first hour to count the hours of the day and of the night, **assigning the first to Saturn**, the next to Jupiter, the third to Mars, the fourth to the Sun, the fifth to Venus, the sixth to Mercury, and the seventh to the Moon, **according to the order of the cycles which the Egyptians observe**, and if you repeat the process, covering thus the whole twenty-four hours, you will find that the first hour of the following day comes to the Sun. And if you carry on the operation throughout the next twenty-four hours in the same manner as with the others, you will dedicate the first hour of the third day to the Moon, and if you proceed similarly through the rest, each day will receive its appropriate god. This, then, is the tradition.”

— Dio Cassius, *Roman History* 37.18–19 (c. 229 CE;
Loeb Classical Library translation, Earnest Cary)

This quote is quite involved, so here is the table that shows how the hourly system produces the order of the day names starting with Saturn / Saturday.

Day #	Roman / Ruling Planet (First Hour)	Full Day's Hour Sequence (Simplified: Shows how remainder advances)
1	Saturn	Hours: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon (repeat x3 +3: ends with Sun)
2	Sun (advances 3 from Saturn)	Hours: Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars (ends with Moon)
3	Moon (advances 3 from Sun)	Hours: Moon, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury (ends with Mars)
4	Mars (advances 3 from Moon)	Hours: Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon, Saturn, Jupiter (ends with Mercury)
5	Mercury (advances 3 from Mars)	Hours: Mercury, Moon, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus (ends with Jupiter)
6	Jupiter (advances 3 from Mercury)	Hours: Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon, Saturn (ends with Venus)
7	Venus (advances 3 from Jupiter)	Hours: Venus, Mercury, Moon, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun (ends with Saturn)
8	Saturn (cycles back)	Repeats Day 1 pattern.

These days had superstitious ideas associated with them that are directly connected to forbidden practices of astrology:

You are wearied with your many counsels; let them stand forth and save you, those who divide the heavens, who gaze at the stars, who at the new moons make known what shall come upon you. Behold, they are like stubble; the fire consumes them; they cannot deliver themselves from the power of the flame..

— Isaiah 47:13–14

Day #	Egyptian/Chaldean Ruling Planet	Notes
1	Saturn	Farthest planet; often considered ominous .
2	Jupiter	Benevolent, expansive influence.
3	Mars	Associated with war and energy.
4	Sun	Central light-bringer.
5	Venus	Love and beauty.

6	Mercury	Communication and commerce.
7	Moon	Closest; governs tides and emotions—then cycles back to Saturn.

Dio Cassius (c. 229 CE) credits the Egyptians with originating the planetary week, explaining its mechanics through the "planetary hours" system. While his account aligns with Hellenistic astrological texts and reflects the common belief among educated Romans, it represents a second-hand tradition rather than direct evidence from ancient Egyptian sources. The system likely emerged in Ptolemaic Egypt as a Greco-Babylonian synthesis, not as a purely indigenous Egyptian practice.

By Dio's time, it was a widespread belief in the Greco-Roman world that the **art of astrology**, including the assignment of planets to days and hours, **came from Egypt** (via the Chaldeans/Babylonians but transmitted through Ptolemaic Egypt). This view is echoed by:

Ptolemy (*Tetrabiblos*, c. 150 CE) — an Egyptian astronomer who describes the planetary hours system in detail.

Pliny the Elder (*Natural History* 2.188, c. 77 CE) — attributes the invention of the week to the Egyptians.

Vettius Valens (Egyptian astrologer, 2nd century CE) — uses the same planetary hours system in his own horoscopes.

Dio is repeating a consensus view among educated Greeks and Romans. Pliny gives testimony from the era the Temple fell claiming that the Egyptians invented the 7 day week and naming them after the planets.

"The Egyptians were the first to divide the day into twenty-four hours, and the week into seven days, naming them after the seven planets."

— *Pliny the Elder, Natural History 2.188 (c. 77 CE)*

Recall that long before the 10 commandments, around the first Passover, God gave his first command, a calendar command:

אֱלֹהִים said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, 'This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you.'

— Exodus 12:1–2

You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, where you lived, and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan, to which I am bringing you. **You shall not walk in their statutes.** You shall follow my rules and keep my statutes and walk in them. I am **אֱלֹהִים** your God.

— Leviticus 18:3–4

Scripture then continuously warns about worshiping the sun, moon, and stars. And when it says worship it means to serve or follow, and not our modern concept of singing praises.

*And beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, you be drawn away and bow down to them and serve them, things that **אֱלֹהִים** your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven.*

— Deuteronomy 4:19

...transgressing his covenant, and has gone and served other gods and worshiped them, or the sun or the moon or any of the host of heaven, which I have forbidden...

— Deuteronomy 17:2–3

And he deposed the priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to make offerings in the high places at the cities of Judah and around Jerusalem; those also who burned incense to Baal, to the sun and the moon and the constellations and all the host of heaven.

— 2 Kings 23:5

By the time this system reached widespread use in the Roman world (first century BCE onward), cultural and religious shifts began to reposition Sunday as the practical "first" day. The Sun—central, life-giving, and increasingly worshiped in the late Empire (especially under the Sol Invictus cult)—gained prominence. Roman inscriptions and graffiti, like the Pompeii record from 60 CE naming a date as "dies Solis," already treated Sunday as a notable starting point in daily reckoning. This elevation was not a change in the underlying planetary sequence but a cultural reframing: the week could be listed or observed beginning with the Sun's day, pushing Saturn to the end as the seventh.

The decisive promotion came under Emperor Constantine in 321 CE. In his famous edict, Constantine declared:

"On the venerable Day of the Sun let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed."

— *Codex Justinianus 3.12.2*

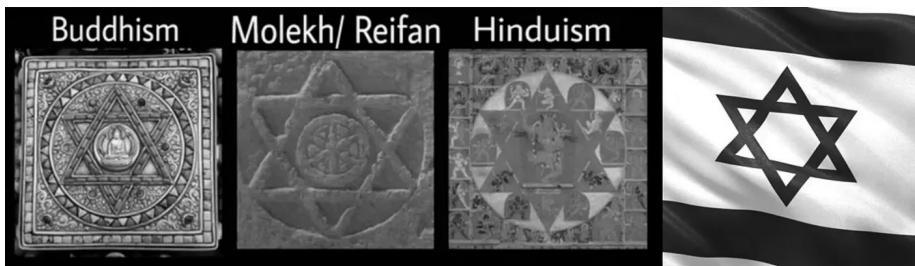
This made Sunday the official first day of the civil week and a mandatory rest day across the Empire—blending emerging Christian observance (Sunday's Day as resurrection day) with lingering solar reverence. The planetary names remained unchanged (Saturday stayed Saturday's day), but the week's "head" shifted to Sunday in calendars, law, and custom. What began as an astrological cycle rooted in Egypt's star-lore had morphed, through Roman adaptation and Christian influence, into a structure where Sunday stood first—leaving Saturday as the close of the cycle rather than its beginning.

This change in custom was likely supported by the Jews who Steven accused of worshipping Saturn right before he was stoned.

With Saturday moved to the 7th day of the week by Roman convention it now trivially aligned with the scriptural command to rest on the 7th day.

Then Elohim turned, and gave them up to the worship of the host of heaven... Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star (day) of your god Remphan (Saturn), figures which ye made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.

— Acts 7:43



The six-pointed star—known as the Star of David in Judaism—appears in remarkably similar forms across many ancient and religious traditions, suggesting a shared symbolic archetype far older than its modern Jewish association. In Hinduism, the Shatkona (six-pointed star formed by two interlocking triangles) represents the union of Shiva (upward triangle) and Shakti (downward triangle), symbolizing cosmic balance and the merging of male/female energies. Buddhism employs the same hexagram in some yantras and mandalas, often as a symbol of harmony between wisdom and compassion or the six realms of existence. Tibetan and Indian esoteric traditions also use it in protective diagrams and deity iconography. Even earlier, the hexagram appears in Mesopotamian, Phoenician, and alchemical contexts as a symbol of the macrocosm/microcosm union or planetary balance. This widespread use—from Indian mysticism to Near Eastern seals—shows the six-pointed star as a universal geometric motif long predating its adoption as the exclusive emblem of Judaism, where it only became prominent in the Middle Ages.

The connection to Saturn is confirmed by Tacitus who claims the Jews owe the basic principles of their religion to the god of Saturn and they chose the 7th day because it is a day of idleness.

"They [the Jews] are said to have dedicated the seventh day to rest because that day brought an end to their toils; but in fact they chose it because it is a day of idleness, and for the sake of pleasure. Others say that it is an observance in honor of Saturn, either because they owe the basic principles of their religion to the Idaeis (who are supposed to have been expelled with Saturn from his kingdom and to have left behind the name 'Saturnian' for the land of Italy), or because, of the seven stars which rule mankind, the star of Saturn is in the highest orbit and exercises the mightiest influence, and because many of the heavenly bodies move in orbits of seven-day periods.

For this reason the seventh day has been set aside for rest, in honor of Saturn. These are plausible theories, but the Jews observe the seventh day not so much because of any religious scruple as because it is a day of idleness, and they are given over to pleasure. The rest of their customs are base and abominable, and owe their persistence to their own perversity."

— Tacitus, *Histories* 5.4; Loeb Classical Library translation)

This aligns with the superstition we already saw from Tibullus that Saturday had bad omens. It is considered “unlucky” to begin any undertaking.

If this were a court trial and you had to prove beyond reasonable doubt that the 7 day cycle was uninterrupted back to creation, then the evidence presented so far suggests that Saturday was known as the first day of the week going back to ancient Egypt and it wasn’t until Roman times that it got moved to the 7th day of the week. The

Jews fell in to pagan Saturn/Moloch worship and went along with the pagan 7 day cycle adapting their interpretation of the commandment to ease integration with the broader culture.

Saturn in the Bible

Let's do a deep dive and see where we can find Saturn in the Bible. In my studies, I found some very interesting things—connections that tie this planet to ancient idolatry, demonic worship, and even the number of the beast. Lets start with the biblical hints at Saturnian influences. The word "devils" in some translations pops up in contexts of false worship:

And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils (Satyr), after whom they have gone a whoring. This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout their generations.

— Leviticus 17:7

The Hebrew word here transliterates to "Satyr," which sounds suspiciously like "Satur" and refers to a hairy he-goat, possibly a demon-possessed entity in pagan rituals. It's not a stretch to see echoes of Saturn, the Roman god often depicted with goat-like features in later mythology.



And he (Jeroboam) ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils (Satyr), and for the calves which he had made.

— 2 Chronicles 11:15

Jeroboam's idolatry involved these "Satyr" figures alongside golden calves, blending northern kingdom apostasy with foreign gods. Now tie this to explicit star worship:

But ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun (Rephan/Saturn) your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves.

— Amos 5:26

According to sources like Nelson's Bible Dictionary, Chiun or Rephan represents the star-god Saturn, equated with Moloch—the deity demanding child sacrifices. Historically, Saturn's worship originated in Babylonian Chaldea, linked to Nimrod (Genesis 10:8-10), the rebellious hunter-king who founded Babel.

In Chaldean, Saturn is "Satur," but in Aramaic, it's "STUR," with letters summing to 666 in gematria—a direct nod to the beast's number.

Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is 600, 60 and 6.

— Revelation 13:18

Table of Sequential & Gematrical Values of the Arabic Alphabet														
Sequential Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Arabic Letters	ا	ب	ج	د	ه	ز	ت	ث	ص	ي	ط	ل	ك	ن
English	A	B	O	D	H	W	Z	HH	TT	Y	K	L	M	N
Gematrical Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	20	30	40	50

Sequential Value	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Arabic Letters	س	ع	ف	ق	ر	ت	ث	ذ	ص	ض	ظ	ل	ك	ن
English	S	U	F	Q	R	T	Th	Zh	Dh	DZ	ZH	L	K	N
Gematrical Value	60	70	80	90	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	900	1000

$$S + T + U(w) + R = 666$$

This numerical tie isn't coincidence; it's a scriptural red flag. The six-pointed star, often called the Star of David today but absent from biblical descriptions of Israelite symbols, could symbolize this "star of your god."

Planetary anomalies add further intrigue: Jupiter's striped appearance with its great red spot evokes a "*striped and pierced*" messianic prophecy (Isaiah 53:5), while Saturn's north pole hexagon—a perfect six-sided shape—seems too designed for randomness, hinting at intelligent design.

Early church fathers like Tertullian decried these Saturn-festivals infiltrating Christian practice, while rabbinic Judaism post-70 AD standardized Saturday amid Roman rule, possibly to align with "dies Saturni" and avoid persecution.

Scripture suggests that they adopted false sabbaths:

*Ye who are approaching the evil day (Day of Σαββατοκύριακη),
who are drawing near and adopting false sabbaths.*

— Amos 6 (Brenton's Septuagint Translation)

This LXX rendering warns of "false sabbaths," implying counterfeits amid idolatry. So if Saturday went back to creation, what "false sabbaths" is Amos referring to? Some will claim it points to Sunday or Lunar Sabbath followers, but how can we know the ground truth?

Jeremiah gives a prophetic warning that the determining factor on whether or not Jerusalem will be destroyed is whether they kept the sabbath.

If you are careful to obey me, declares Σαββατοκύριακη, and bring no load through the gates of this city on the Sabbath day, but keep the Sabbath day holy by not doing any work on it, then kings and officials sitting on the throne of David will enter the gates of this city riding in chariots and on horses, accompanied by their officials, the people of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and this city will be inhabited forever. People will come from the towns of Judah and the villages around Jerusalem, from the territory of Benjamin and the western foothills, the hill country and the Negev, bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices, grain offerings and incense, and thank

offerings to the house of יהוה. But if you do not obey me to keep the Sabbath day holy by not carrying a load as you come through the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, then I will kindle an unquenchable fire in the gates of Jerusalem that will consume her fortresses. — Jeremiah 17:24-27

We know for a fact that Jerusalem was consumed by fire when the temple was destroyed in 70 AD. If the Sabbath space-time is what is holy and the Jews reinterpreted the pattern of six days of work plus one day of rest to be of higher importance than the actual time, then the result would be to treat the real space-time of the sabbath day as a work day and then zealously rest on a real work day.

"The Second Temple was destroyed even though they were occupied with Torah, mitzvot, and acts of kindness, because at that time baseless hatred prevailed."

— Babylonian Talmud, Yoma 9b

Since the Bible consistently shows the extreme lengths the Sadducees and Pharisees would go to enforce “rest” on the sabbath, even preventing people from carrying a mat or healing, it stands to reason that it is more likely that the calendar changed when the Sadducees gave into political pressure of the masses than that they abandoned the Sabbath all together.

The Talmud, which was only written down centuries later, claims that the reason for the temple’s fall was desecration of the Sabbath and cites Ezekiel as evidence. Thus the question isn’t if the sabbath was profaned but how was it profaned and changing the day would entirely profane it by making the actual space-time sanctified by God a work day even as they treat a work day with extreme zeal for rest.

Abaye said: Jerusalem was destroyed only because people desecrated the Shabbat in it, as it is stated: 'And from My Shabbatot they averted their eyes, and I was profaned among them' (Ezekiel 20:24).

— Babylonian Talmud, Yoma 9b (c. 500 CE)

Jerusalem was destroyed only due to the desecration of the Sabbath.

— *Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 119b (c. 500 CE)*

Was Jeremiah's Prophecy was Already Fulfilled

Now some may claim that Jeremiah's prophecy was already fulfilled when the first temple was destroyed. To assert that a biblical prophecy like Jeremiah's warning has been conclusively and singularly fulfilled in a past event—such as the Babylonian destruction of the First Temple—betrays an unwarranted confidence in limiting divine revelation to a solitary historical moment. Such claims often stem from a rigid, reductionist hermeneutic that overlooks the multifaceted nature of Scripture, where prophecies frequently unfold in layers: an immediate application serving as a type or shadow for broader, enduring truths. This pattern is evident throughout the biblical canon, from the dual echoes of Isaiah's Immanuel sign (near-term reassurance amid Assyrian threats, yet pointing to the Messiah) to the apocalyptic visions in Daniel and Revelation, which scholars across traditions recognize as having both proximate and ultimate realizations. By insisting on a "one-and-done" interpretation, one presumes to circumscribe God's timeless sovereignty, as if the unchanging character of the Divine (Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8) could not extend principles of covenant faithfulness and judgment across epochs.

This approach is presumptuous because it elevates human exegesis to an infallible arbiter of prophetic intent, ignoring the humility required when engaging sacred texts that invite ongoing discernment. It overreaches by demanding absolute closure where the text itself allows for ambiguity—Jeremiah's conditional promise of perpetual habitation for Jerusalem if the Sabbath is honored speaks not merely to a specific era but to an eternal ethic of obedience, potentially reverberating in subsequent crises like the Roman siege of 70 CE. And it functions as an argumentative shortcut, a rhetorical dismissal that sidesteps substantive dialogue by shifting the onus onto others to prove multiplicity, rather than substantiating the claim of exclusivity.

At the heart of the matter lies the principle of epistemic humility in theological debate: the burden of proof rests squarely on those who posit a definitive, singular fulfillment, for they must demonstrate—through textual, historical, and theological evidence—that no further application is conceivable or intended. In contrast, to suggest the possibility of multiple layers requires only a reasonable showing that the prophecy's language and themes align with later events, without necessitating ironclad proof of duality. Mere plausibility suffices to challenge such absolutism, fostering a more open inquiry that honors the depth and dynamism of God's word rather than confining it to the confines of one historical footnote.

100 Languages call Saturday Sabbath

Some claim that over one hundred languages name the seventh day after "Sabbath" (sábado, sábado, subбота, etc.) is proof that the seven-day cycle has been preserved unchanged since creation or Moses. Yet this pattern is not ancient or universal evidence—it is the footprint of Roman and Christian expansion. The word "Sabbath" comes from Hebrew shabbat through Greek sabbaton and Latin sabbatum, spreading across the Roman Empire and beyond via the Church after Constantine's 321 CE edict formalized the planetary week. Most of these languages belong to regions evangelized by Latin Christianity (Romance, Slavic, parts of Africa and Asia) or colonized later; they reflect post-biblical missionary influence, not pre-Christian knowledge. English keeps "Saturday" from the Roman dies Saturni, and Germanic forms like Samstag blend "Sabbath" with pagan roots only after Christianization in the early Middle Ages. No Sumerian, Egyptian, Chinese, or pre-Hellenistic language has a native "Sabbath" term for the seventh day before contact with Judaism or Christianity. What looks like global testimony is actually the echo of one dominant tradition overtaking others—not proof of divine continuity from Eden, but evidence of how powerfully Roman culture and the Church reshaped time itself. True continuity must be sought in Scripture alone, not in the names men have given the days.

Evidence from Early Church Fathers on Sabbath/Sunday Distinction Without Cycle Change

Here is an argument that many Saturday advocates will make. They claim early church fathers like Ignatius (c. 35–107 CE), bishop of Antioch and a disciple of the apostle John, provide direct testimony that the Christian community distinguished the Jewish Sabbath (Saturday) from ἡμέρα's Day (Sunday) without suggesting any disruption or change in the seven-day cycle. In his *Epistle to the Magnesians* (chapter 9), Ignatius writes:

"If, therefore, those who were brought up in the ancient order of things have come to the possession of a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath, but living in the observance of ἡμέρα's Day, on which also our life has sprung up again by Him and by His death—whom some deny, by which mystery we have obtained faith, and therefore endure, that we may be found the disciples of Yeshua Christ, our only Master..."

— Ignatius, *Epistle to the Magnesians* 9 (c. 107 CE)

Interpretations of this passage assume the Sabbath remains the seventh day (Saturday) as known from Jewish tradition, while Christians shift focus to Sunday (the first day) as the resurrection day. They claim Ignatius doesn't indicate a "lost" or reordered cycle; he simply contrasts the old (Sabbath) with the new (Lord's Day) within the same weekly framework. Similarly, Justin Martyr (c. 100–165 CE) in his *First Apology* (chapter 67) describes Christian worship on Sunday without implying any calendar shift:

"And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits..."

— Justin Martyr, *First Apology* 67 (c. 155 CE)

Justin explains Sunday as the day of creation's first light and Christ's resurrection, positioning it as the first day after the Jewish Sabbath—preserving the seven-day order without alteration.

The problem with this line of reasoning is the assumption that the “early church fathers” hadn’t already deviated following after the pagan customs. Consider that Christianity was born out of Judaism and was heavily influenced by errors inherited from the Pharisees and we have already covered the half dozen verses that tell us to not do as they do. Thus documenting a behavior 80+ years removed from the cross doesn’t actually substantiate anything other than the same kind of corruptions impact the Jews and Christians alike.

Dead Sea Scroll Evidence

Another line of argument is the Dead Sea Scroll calendar which has a continuous weekly cycle; but this cycle is based upon a 364 day solar calendar. In order to keep synced with the weekly cycle they have to insert an undocumented week every 7 or so years. Being disconnected from the moon already reveals fundamental incompatibility with scripture. At best this documents ancient connection to Egypt and the planetary week.

God’s Claimed Preservation

We shall, then, put down the five millions of Jews now in the world as so many living witnesses that Saturday is the true seventh-day Sabbath. Indeed, I believe, and it is evident, that the leading object of אֱלֹהִים in scattering the Jews among all nations and yet preserving them a distinct people, was to make them witnesses of the truth of His word, and to preserve the knowledge of His holy Sabbath among all nations.

—Dudley M. Canright (Seventh Day Adventist)

The “God preserved the Sabbath” argument assumes divine intervention ensured an unbroken weekly cycle from Creation to Saturday, using Jewish continuity as proof. However, this overlooks Second Temple calendrical pluralism and popular discontent with Temple elites (Josephus, Antiquities 13.298). Claiming uniformity and implicit endorsement by Yeshua ignores survivorship bias—the rabbinic calendar survived post-70 AD, but alternatives didn’t—making the link to Genesis unprovable and speculative.

Scripture explicitly states that he would temporarily take the Sabbath from them due to their idolatry and unfaithfulness and we already established Jeremiah's prophecy that Jerusalem would be destroyed for failure to keep the Sabbaths.

I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts.

— Hosea 2:11

The sabbath will be restored in the 1000 year reign and this prophecy strongly hints at a connection between Renewed Moons and Sabbaths, it reads like "hour to hour, minute by minute" where one is a subdivision of the other.

And it shall come to pass that from renewed moon to renewed moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before Me.

— Isaiah 6:22-23

Therefore, the argument that the Jews is the method by which the true sabbath has been preserved is unfounded. Consider that the evidence presented in this book shows that the sun, moon, and stars — all of creation — testify to the truth when combined with literal reading of scripture that is not filtered through circular hermeneutics.

Summary

In closing, the trail of evidence leads us to a sobering conclusion: Saturday, as we know it, bears the unmistakable marks of human tradition rather than an unbroken divine mandate from creation. The continuous seven-day cycle, with its planetary names and astrological mechanics, emerged from ancient Egyptian and Babylonian star-lore, not from Scripture's plain account of the seventh day. What began as Saturn's day—the first in the Chaldean sequence—shifted to become the seventh in Roman practice, a reframing cemented by Constantine's edict in 321 CE that elevated Sunday, the "venerable Day of the Sun," as the official starting point of the week. The Jews, already entangled with pagan influences through exile and

intermarriage, appear to have adapted their observance to fit this broader cultural framework, aligning the seventh-day rest with Saturn's day to ease integration with the surrounding world.

The crux of the argument for Saturday going back to creation is the unsubstantiated and logically unprovable claim that there was one and only one calendar system known and followed by Jews at the time of Yeshua's ministry. I have provided ample evidence that multiple calendars existed and that the masses often disliked the policies of those in control of the temple. Therefore, contrary to popular assertions, it is a logical fallacy rooted in survivorship bias to assert that Yeshua implicitly blessed the tradition we have inherited and thereby prove the claim it goes back to creation.

32 AD Resurrection

Proving the year of the cross and the calendar are not just academic trivia, it is absolutely necessary if one wants to walk in the Truth, interpret prophecy, and prove that you are keeping feasts and sabbaths at the appointed times.

Every single attempt to date the crucifixion (whether one expects it to land on Wednesday, Thursday, or the traditional Friday) follows the same hidden pattern:

1. Start with the Pharisee tradition about how the temple calendar allegedly worked.
2. Use that calendar to decide what day of the week the crucifixion “must” have been.
3. Pick the year between AD 26 and 36 in which Passover falls on that weekday (usually 30 or 33 AD)
4. Make everything else fit the chosen year no matter how unlikely

This conclusion is reinforced when I prompt Grok AI to summarize the primary reason for and against potential years. What you should note is that given only 14 words the primary arguments for or against each year always reference the day of the week. The calendar is assumed to be so absolute that all other facts pale in consideration.

Year	% Believe	Key Reasons For/Against (≤ 14 words each)
28	<1%	Clement of Alexandria's calculation / Too early for John's ministry start and Passover Friday.
29	<1%	Fits some early timelines / No Friday on Nisan 14; ministry too short.
30	~60%	Nisan 14 on Friday (April 7); strong astronomical lunar fit. / John's three Passovers imply longer ministry.
31	<1%	Some Wednesday crucifixion views. / No Friday on Nisan 14; lacks support.
32	<1%	Fits Daniel 9 in certain views. / No Friday on Nisan 14; little acceptance.
33	~40%	Nisan 14 on Friday (April 3); lunar eclipse visible. / Less favored by scholars than 30 AD's fit.

These assumptions violate at least 6 different scriptures by elevating rabbinic Jewish “fables” (as the Bible puts it) and inherited tradition to unquestionable truths, *forcing unnatural interpretations of all other facts*. The point of this chapter is to go through the evidence without any consideration for the day of the planetary week and interpret every primary source we can find as straight forwardly as possible.

If the result of this effort yields unambiguous support for a year where Saturday Sabbath is entirely incompatible with the gospel accounts, then this becomes one of the strongest arguments for Lunar Sabbath which is compatible with the gospel accounts on every year. On the other hand, if the evidence is inconclusive, contradictory, or points to a year with a Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday crucifixion then we would have various degrees of ambiguous evidence neither supporting nor contradicting Saturday or the Lunar Sabbath.

There are several years we can pinpoint with extremely high confidence using *entirely independent* lines of evidence:

1. The year John the Baptist Started his Ministry (Fall 28 AD)
2. Yeshua declared Favorable Year of תְּשׁוּבָה (Fall 29 AD)
3. Temple was 46 years in building. (30 AD)
4. The 490th year from Ezra’s Decree (32 AD)
5. Passover Solar Eclipse (32 AD)
6. The year Herod Died (1 BC)

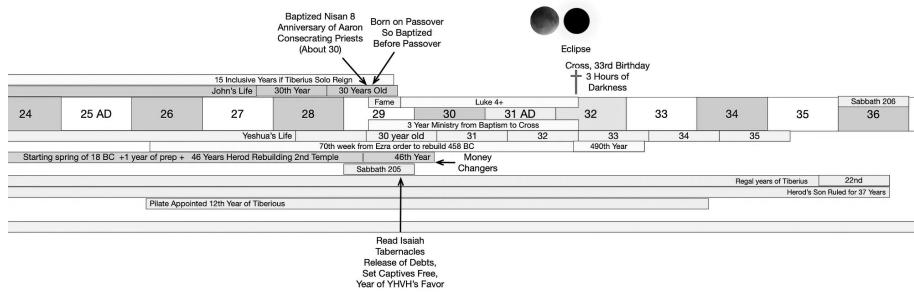
Then from this information we have various constraints defined by the Bible including:

1. 3 Passovers mentioned in the Gospel of John,
2. Yeshua is 6 months older than John the Baptist,
3. They start their ministries at 30.

There is sufficient evidence to identify the day Yeshua most likely born and even the week of John's conception. Each element will have to be rigorously proven, and the alleged conflicting evidence addressed, which will take time. We will go through all of the primary sources and double check the rationale used to derive popular assumptions.

It usually boils down to the same fundamental problem, because of assumed infallibility of Passover timeline and the day of the cross most researchers were forced to rationalize and adopt less straightforward interpretations of the facts before them, often dismissing testimony as "errors" without evidence, assuming implausibly tight timelines of various events, and deviating from standard practices, etc. Others then built on top of these unreasonable assumptions without challenging the foundation.

Timeline to the Cross



The most straightforward reading of Tiberius' 15th year without any special pleading is that Tiberius' 15th year started fall 28 AD and runs through fall 29 AD. According to scripture, it is during this window that John's ministry must start and that John must turn 30.

The Day of YHVH's favor is declared at the end of every 7th year as slaves are freed and debts are forgiven. Evidence points to this

cycle starting in 1406 BC and this is confirmed by Josephus documenting such a sabbath in 35 BC. Therefore, the only year that Yeshua's could lawfully say "*this is fulfilled in your hearing*" is Day of Atonement 29 AD.

At this time Yeshua's had already grown in fame and spent 40 days in the desert after his baptism. A plausible argument could be made that his first miracle, turning water into wine, is a typological fit for the feast of new wine around the 10th of the 5th month. This was after 40 days in the desert, which pushes his baptism to sometime before Shavuot in 29 AD. Since Yeshua is 6 months younger than John and he was not quite 30 years old when baptized, this puts a window for Yeshua's baptism in the first 3 months of the Hebrew calendar in 29 AD (aka between Nissan 1 and the Shavuot/Pentecost).

The Priestly Cycles confirm John's conception around Hanukkah, his birth around Tabernacles, and Yeshua's birth around Passover, consistent with him being the Lamb of God. Thus Yeshua's baptism was likely the start of Nissan before Passover aligned with the anniversary Aaron dedicated the priests.

Given the 40 days in the wilderness, it is impossible for 29 AD to be one of the Passovers mentioned. This is consistent with the next fact. Once you fully investigate the years of Herod the Great (see the chapter on "Herod the Great") it becomes clear that the 46th year of building the temple was spring 29 AD to spring 30 AD; therefore, the most likely date for the first Passover encounter is 30 AD which in and of itself destroys the most popular theory: the 30 AD cross. The evidence for the years of Herod the Great's reign is so great that we have 99.9% confidence in this:

30 AD Passover #1 (46 years building temple): John 2:13 — "And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Yeshua went up to Jerusalem."

31 AD Passover #2 (mid-ministry, feeding of the 5,000 near the time): John 6:4 — "And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh."

32 AD Final Passover (leading to crucifixion): John 11:55 — "And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves."

Using King James Pure Bible Search “Passover | Easter” occurs exactly 77 times; therefore, it appears there is a high probability there is a supernatural checksum in play. There are also 7⁷ words/verse numbers in the standardized KJV; therefore, removing a Passover verse would break at least two seemingly supernatural checksums on the integrity of the canon. I point this out because some argue that one of these verses was an addition to the text and others argue that there may have been more Passovers. This is not hard evidence, but it does make one pause before considering arguments that these Passover references were scribal insertions.

Finally, 32 AD is the 490th year from Ezra’s decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem which aligns with Daniel’s prophecy on the timeline to the Anointed Prince. This means that 32 AD is a perfect match and 33 AD has to plead undocumented Passovers in combination with non-literal non-inclusive 490 years among other things.

All earlier years require unique and historically unsupported rationalizations that Luke used an unconventional 14th year of Tiberius and ignore or stretch beyond reason a multitude of completely independent proofs of the reign of Herod the Great. I don’t expect you to believe me on this, so we will go through every single piece of primary evidence I could find and let you draw your own conclusions.

Big claims require big evidence and I will prove them each in turn.

Tiberius 15th Year

The first major piece of evidence is that Luke tells us John the Baptist started his ministry in the 15th year of Tiberius.

In the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, while Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

— Luke 3:1-2

In standard Roman historiography, Tiberius Caesar's reign is universally dated from his accession in AD 14 following Augustus's death on August 19 of that year, with Senate confirmation shortly thereafter, leading to a **consistent reckoning of his 15th regnal year as spanning approximately fall AD 28 to fall 29**. Ancient sources such as the historians Tacitus (in his Annals), Suetonius (Lives of the Caesars), and Cassius Dio (Roman History), along with contemporary inscriptions, coins, and official documents like the Res Gestae Divi Augusti, uniformly count Tiberius's years from this point without reference to any prior co-regency or alternative starting dates, treating his sole emperorship as the benchmark for chronological references to events like provincial appointments, military campaigns, and senatorial decrees. This accession-based method aligns with broader Roman imperial dating conventions, where regnal years began from the emperor's formal assumption of power, and remains the unchallenged consensus among classical scholars and numismatists outside of specific interpretive debates in biblical studies.

Most people, especially in Christian circles and among those familiar with New Testament studies, describe **Luke** (the author of the Gospel of Luke and Acts) as a **highly detail-oriented and accurate historian**—often calling him a "historian of the first rank" or one of the most reliable ancient writers.

This reputation stems largely from the work of scholars like **Sir William Ramsay** (a prominent archaeologist who initially approached Luke skeptically but reversed his view after fieldwork, concluding that Luke demonstrates "habitual accuracy" in geography, politics, titles of officials, and local customs, placing him alongside great historians like Thucydides). Ramsay's assessment has been echoed widely: Luke is praised for meticulous research, eyewitness-like details (especially in the "we" sections of Acts), and precise naming of 32 countries, 54 cities, and 9 islands without error.

Luke's attention to detail strongly suggests that he would utilize widely accepted practices when dating the years of Tiberius and is unlikely to be the sole historian to count the years in an unprecedented manner.

Suetonius (*Life of Tiberius* 23–24, 73): Anchors succession precisely to Augustus' death on August 19, AD 14 (Nola), with Senate ratification shortly after. Total reign phrased as factual elapsed

time from that point to March 16, AD 37 (~22 years, 7 months). No mention of earlier grants (e.g., AD 12–13 tribunician power) shifting the start; those are described as preparatory privileges (*Tiberius* 21).

Tacitus (*Annals* 1.5–14): Details the exact sequence — Augustus' death August 19, AD 14; **Tiberius** convenes Senate using existing powers but **hesitates on full titles until September**. Events and durations tied to this AD 14 pivot (*Annals* 6.51 confirms ~23 years total from succession). No alternative start referenced.

Dio Cassius (*Roman History* 57.1–3): Explicitly dates the imperial transition to AD 14, with year-by-year narratives beginning there (e.g., "in the consulship following Augustus' death"). Tribunician renewals pre-AD 14 noted (56.28), but regnal narrative and durations start post-accession.

Josephus (*Antiquities* 18.2.2, 18.6.10): States Tiberius "succeeded him" directly after Augustus' death, with precise duration "twenty-two years, five months, and three days" matching elapsed time from mid-late AD 14 to AD 37. No reset to Jewish calendars or pre-AD 14 counts; treats Tiberius with Roman factual months/days.

Inscriptions and Coins (e.g., *Roman Imperial Coinage* Vol. I; CIL entries): Tiberius' titles (e.g., TRIB POT I starting AD 14/15 issues; PONTIF MAXIM from AD 15) and regnal numbering reset at sole rule in AD 14. No carryover from earlier tribunician terms.

Based upon all of this, it is most likely that Luke used the exact same convention as everyone else at the time. *Even Tiberius hesitated to claim full titles until the senate ratified him.* The only reason people rationalize any other interpretation is to make their other "sacred" interpretations fit without having to claim scripture is in error. In other words, it is only the other misinterpreted evidence from Herod the Great's reign and other scripture that is presented as evidence that Luke used a unique dating method. However, allowing

that other evidence to reinterpret Luke here is circular logic. We must let each piece of evidence stand independently before considering them collectively.

Year of Release

Yeshua proclaimed liberty on the Day of Atonement in the Year of Release when he read Isaiah 61 in Nazareth.

The Spirit of ḥaššāl is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor (debt forgiveness). He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives (those sold to serve) and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed (by debt), to proclaim the year of ḥaššāl's favor. And he began to say to them, 'Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.'

— Yeshua, Luke 4:18–19

Proclaiming the year of ḥaššāl's favor and forgiveness of debts is what Torah commands to be done at the end of every seven years. That fact that Yeshua declared it fulfilled in their hearing tells you exactly when this event took place — at the end of the 7th year.

At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release. And this is the manner of the release: Every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbor shall release it; he shall not exact it of his neighbor, or of his brother; because it is called ḥaššāl's release.

— Deuteronomy 15:1–2

And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee.

— Deuteronomy 15:12

And Moses commanded them, saying: ‘At the end of every seven years, at the appointed time in the year of release [Shemitah], at the Feast of Tabernacles, when all Israel comes to appear before יְהוָה your God... you shall read this law before all Israel.

— Deuteronomy 31:10–11

And you shall count seven sabbaths of years for yourself, seven times seven years; and the time of the seven sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years. Then you shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement you shall make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you.

— Leviticus 25:8–10

So we are told that at the end of every 7 years, which would be the fall feasts, we are to proclaim liberty throughout the land on the Day of Atonement. To be fair, this specific command is in the context of a Jubilee, but the same liberty is also proclaimed every 7th year. Luke gives us additional context that allows us to infer it was a Day of Atonement — they treated Yeshua like a scapegoat!

When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. But passing through their midst, he went away.

— Luke 4:28–30

The Torah describes two goats: one sacrificed, the other (scapegoat) sent away bearing sins.

And Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins. And he shall put them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness. The goat shall bear all their iniquities on itself to a remote area, and he shall let the goat go free in the wilderness.

— Leviticus 21:22

Later Jewish tradition adds the goat being pushed off a cliff in the wilderness to ensure death.

He [the man appointed] brought it [the scapegoat] out to the wilderness... They made for it a ramp because of the Babylonians who used to pull its hair and say to it, 'Take [our sins] and go, take and go.' ... The man who led it divided the crimson thread [tied to its horns]: half he tied to the rock, and half between its horns, and pushed it [the goat] from behind. And it rolled down and before it reached halfway down the mountain it was dashed to pieces [limbs separated]. He then returned and sat under the last booth until it grew dark.

— Mishna : Yoma 6:6

Driving Yeshua off of the cliff like a goat tied to a rock is exactly what was acted out in Luke 4. It is noteworthy that while the Jews were violating the Torah by throwing the goat off a cliff, Yeshua “passed through their midst and went away” just like Leviticus commands “he shall let the goat go free in the wilderness”. And so we have by typology and by law that Yeshua did this in the 7th year on the Day of Atonement, or at the very least “at the end of the 7th year”.

We have already established that the cycle began when they crossed the Jordan River in 1406 BC and this is **confirmed by Josephus in 36/35 BC** with the capture of Jerusalem on a Sabbath year (counted fall 36 BC to fall 35 BC). Following this cycle we discover that **Yeshua did this on Day of Atonement in 29 AD**, in the first story after his baptism in Luke chapter 4. At this time he had already grown famous for miracles in the surrounding towns.

And Yeshua returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

— Luke 4:14

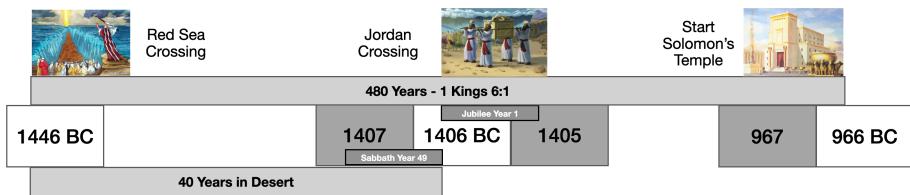
This means he needed time to grow in fame after being baptized and spending 40 days in the wilderness and before the Day of Atonement 29 AD which lines up perfectly with Yeshua getting baptized shortly before his 30th birthday (Passover). His 40 days in the wilderness would end shortly before Shavuot allowing 7 weeks before his first miracle at the Feast of New Wine and another 7 weeks before the Day of Atonement.

Jordan River Crossing

Confirming 29 AD as a Sabbath year requires that you can trust the 1406 BC date for the crossing of the Jordan River. This is established by the following foundational evidence:

And it came to pass in the 480th year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of ۳۴۲۷.

— 1 Kings 6:1



The year that Solomon's temple began construction in 966 BC is well established by both secular and biblical sources. This puts the Exodus from Egypt in 1446 BC which aligns perfectly with the records of Egyptian Pharaoh's. From there Israel spent 40 years in the desert.

If 1406 BC was the first year of a Jubilee cycle, then 1407 BC was the 7th year of the Sabbath cycle. Putting it all together, 29 AD is the 7th year of the 205th Sabbath from Jordan river crossing.

The year of the crossing is further confirmed by aligning with the following Jubilees:

1. 573 BC - Ezekiel 40 Rosh Hashanah (the head of the year)
2. 672 BC - The scripture was restored to Josiah
3. 965 BC - Second year building Solomon' temple
4. Josephus' confirmed Sabbath year 35 BC

We know many dates with high confidence because **the years of Nebuchadnezzar are established by clay tablets that record 21 positions of the sun, moon, and stars.** These records provide as close to absolute certainty as you could hope and are the ultimate basis of key dates. The bottom line is that if the dating of Solomon's temple was off by even a single year all of these other dates would also come out of alignment.

Empire Wide Loyalty Oath

The next point of reference scripture gives us to the timing of Yeshua's birth is the census that caused Joseph and Mary to travel to Bethlehem.

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census (apographē) should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census (apographē))

*that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.)
And everyone went to their own town to register.*

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

— Luke 2:1-5

In 3–2 BC Augustus organized an empire-wide act of allegiance to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of his rule and the granting of the title Pater Patriae ("Father of the Fatherland") in February 2 BC. The event was called an ἀπογραφή / apographē (the exact word Luke uses in Luke 2:2 and that is normally translated "census") because, in the official Roman administrative language of the time, any formal registration of persons that produced a written list of names was labelled an apographē — regardless of whether the ultimate purpose was taxation, military service, or a loyalty oath.

"There was also a great disturbance among the people because of a command that the king gave to swear allegiance to Caesar and to himself. For there were certain men among the Jews who valued the laws of their country above all things... Accordingly, when all the people of the Jews gave assurance of their good-will to Caesar, and to the king's government, these very men [the Pharisees] did not swear, being above six thousand; and when the king imposed a fine upon them, Pheroras' wife paid the money for them."

— Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 17.2.4

The primary evidence is the Res Gestae Divi Augusti itself (chapter 35) together with a surviving oath-text found on a Greek inscription from Paphlagonia (OGIS 532) that was sworn "by all the people in the land" in early 2 BC.

The inscription (OGIS 532, found at Gangra/Germanicopolis in Paphlagonia, modern Turkey) records a loyalty oath to Augustus and his family. Its opening lines date it explicitly to:

"In the third year after the twelfth consulship of Imperator Caesar, son of the god, Augustus, on the day before the nones of March [i.e., March 4 or 5; sources vary slightly on exact phrasing, but consistently "day before the nones of March"] at Gangra..."

Augustus' 12th consulship was in 5 BC, so "*third year after*" places the oath in 2 BC (specifically early March 2 BC). (4 BC = 1 year after, 3 BC = 2 year after, 2 BC = 3 year after).

Therefore Joseph and Mary would almost certainly have made the journey in the early spring of 2 BC — exactly the period when a late-pregnancy Mary could still travel and when Yeshua was born shortly afterwards in the spring of 2 BC, matching the revised chronology perfectly. **The lack of room in the inn is easily explained by the Passover Crowd.**

This would put John's birth 6 months earlier, in the fall of 3 BC. If you add 30 years to that John would start his ministry in fall of 28 BC, perfectly aligned with the most straightforward understanding of what Tiberius' 15th year would have meant to people when Luke wrote his gospel.

There is no other documented registry until 6 AD which makes this detail with the strongest possible primary evidence a second fully independent witness to the timing of the start of John's ministry.

All of that said, there is one mystery that remains unexplained:

*This was the first census (*apographē*) that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.*

— Luke 2:2

Quirinius is commonly understood to have become governor in 6 AD which happens align with another census that was taken; however, unlike the 3-2 BC, the 6 AD census (*apographē*) did not require people to return to their home. 6 AD is also far too late of a

date for a plausible birth of Yeshua. This means either Luke was mistaken (unlikely) or the word “first” should be could be translated as “before” as many have argued. The translation as “before” would be far more probable if Luke was originally written in Hebrew as some scholars (like James R. Edwards) argue.

46 years building Temple

John gives us a very clear time marker for the first Passover — it had taken 46 years to build it at that point:

The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Yeshua went up to Jerusalem.... It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?

— John 2:13,20

The only question we need to figure out is when did they start building the temple:

In the eighteenth year of his (Herod the Great) reign... he undertook to rebuild the Temple."

— Josephus Ant. 15.380

Josephus writes this immediately after describing Herod’s final consolidation of power in 36 BC (see chapter on Herod the Great). The eighteenth year of Herod’s reign, in the sense required by the context of *Antiquities* 15.380, is most likely the eighteenth year after he seized Jerusalem — not the eighteenth year after the Senate’s decree in Rome.

This places the intent to rebuild the temple in 18 BC, because his first effective year started spring 35 BC, 6 months after capturing the city in 36 BC. However, **the Jews did not trust Herod** and wouldn’t let him start construction immediately.

But Herod himself went about the work with great zeal, because he hoped that this would be the most illustrious monument of his reign. The people, however, were

afraid that, even if he should collect the materials, he might not carry out the rebuilding, but that, having pulled down the whole temple, he might leave it in that condition and not be able to complete the new one. And this danger appeared probable, because the undertaking was so vast. Therefore Herod, in order to remove this suspicion and to prove that he was in earnest, prepared all the materials beforehand, and collected a thousand wagons to carry the stones, and selected ten thousand of the most skilled workmen, and purchased priestly garments for a thousand priests, and trained a thousand priests in the arts of masonry and carpentry, and only then, when everything was ready, did he begin the reconstruction. And so he pulled down the old foundations and laid others, and upon them he erected a new temple."

— *Antiquities of the Jews* 15.11.2-3

If we date purely from the 18th year, then the 46th year would be spring 29 to spring 30; however, we have already established that he would have been in the wilderness for 40 days this particular year. The prep work was extensive (training 1000 priests, gathering materials) so the earliest they could start would be the following year: spring 17 BC.

Add 46 construction years later brings us to the spring of 30 AD, the very first Passover at which it could be said 46 years. Construction on the temple was on going through 65 AD just a few short years before the temple was destroyed.

If 30 AD was the first passover, then the second was 31 AD and the final would be 32 AD. At the time this was said Yeshua also said:

'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.'

— *John* 2:18

While it obviously alludes to him being killed and resurrected on the 3rd day, it also can be interpreted prophetically as 3 years from this conversation: 30 AD, 31 AD, and 32 AD inclusively. This prophetic interpretation is not strictly necessary, but it doesn't hurt the case.

Daniels 490 year Prophecy

The book of Daniel has one of the most profound prophecies in the Bible because it gave us an exact timeline, with year counts, to the arrival of the Anointed Prince. There are several ways of viewing these prophecies but they all point to the same year. I have taken the liberty of doing a literal translation of the Hebrew.

*Know therefore and understand, that **from the going forth of the commandment** to restore and build Jerusalem **until Anointed Prince** shall be 70 (שבעים) sevened (שביעש). ($70 \times 7 = 490$)...*

— Daniel 9:25

Your bible probably translates it something closer to:

*... until Anointed Prince there will be **seven weeks and sixty-two weeks**. It will be rebuilt with plaza and moat and the times end in distress.*

— Daniel 9:25

Under this understanding you would add it up and conclude 69 weeks or 483 years. People then reference the prior verse for context:

Seventy weeks (490 years) have been determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, for sin to be ended, and to seal up transgressions, and to blot out the iniquities, and to make atonement for iniquities, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal the vision and the prophet, and to anoint the Most Holy.

— Daniel 9:24

This is the origin of looking for Daniel's 70th week given that 69 of 70 weeks appear to be accounted for in Daniel 9:25; however consider what John had to say:

He Himself is the propitiation (atonement) for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

— 1 John 2:2

Given Yeshua was the propitiation for our sins and this is one of the things mentioned to happen in 70 weeks. This means that one of the layered interpretations of Daniel 9:24 and Daniel 9:25 is that atonement would be made 490 inclusive years from the order to restore and rebuild Jerusalem.

I thought the translation of Daniel 9:25 was awkward by mentioning 7 weeks and 62 weeks which is why I decided to look deeper into the text. Surely there is a reason he didn't just write 69. When I looked deeper I chose to consider all plausible interpretations of the vowel points because the vowel points were an oral tradition that was not written down until 100's of years after Yeshua.

When you look at the literal Hebrew and avoid interpretive re-ordering of words you will see it reads like a mathematical code:

There shall be 70 (שבעים) sevened (שבעה) and 70 (ששים) sixty (ששים) and two/second (שניים) they will come back [again] and rebuild the plaza and moat and in anguish/distress the times end.

— Daniel 9:25

Standard Hebrew is similar to English in that we would generally say "seventy weeks" and not "weeks seventy", but in Daniel he intentionally writes "weeks seventy". It goes deeper than that because the word translated as "weeks" is actually the exact same letters as the word "seventy" which is an oddity. This word literally means "a group of 2 or more 7's" which by default is 70, but can also be "a complete cycle of 7's" which is an apt description of a Jubilee of 49 years.

The word order is a contextual hint that something more is going on here and that there is symbolic word-play going on. Here is my proposed interpretation of the literal text:

*There shall be 70 (שבעים) sevened (שבעה) [years] and [on] Jubilee (ושביעים) sixty (ששים) and then a second (יתנין) [order with 70x7] they will **come back** [again, a second time] and rebuild the plaza and moat and in anguish/distress the times end.*

— Daniel 9:25

It turns out that on the 60th Jubilee Sultan Suleiman II gave an order to restore and rebuild Jerusalem and this order included the Plaza (Temple Mount) and moat/trench. The evidence of this decree is engraved in stone and visible in Jerusalem today. The first order to restore and rebuild Jerusalem lacked the plaza and moat. Thus history is a witness to the interpretation. We are now in the 490th year from the second decree which suggests the second coming of Messiah Prince may be at hand.

The point of this is to add support to the expectation of Messiah Prince after 70 “sevened” or 70 repeated 7 times, aka 490 years from the first decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem as documented by Ezra.

Scripture tells us the year the decree was issued and that Ezra left in the 1st month and arrived in the 5th month.

And the year seven to Artaxerxes king of Persia... and they came to Jerusalem in the month the fifth... this the copy of the letter which sent Artaxerxes the king.

— Ezra 7:7–9

Upon the death of Cyrus, Cambyses reigned... [earlier kings omitted]. But now the seventh year of Artaxerxes was come, and our nation was in great

danger of perishing, by reason of the kings' anger at us... Ezra, a priest and a scribe of the laws of Moses, came to the king, and with many tears besought him to give him leave to go to his own country... The king was so moved with compassion, that he wrote a letter to the treasurers of Syria and Phoenicia, and to those beyond the river, and gave order that they should assist Ezra in building the temple, and in offering sacrifices, and in whatever else he should ask... Ezra gathered together the captivity beyond the river, and fasted, and besought God for a prosperous journey... And he set forward the twelfth day of the first month, and came to Jerusalem in the fifth month...

— Josephus

A Case for 458 BC Decree

In reconstructing the chronology of biblical events, particularly those tied to the post-exilic period in Ezra and Nehemiah, the precise dating of Artaxerxes I's seventh regnal year (Ezra 7:7–9) emerges as a pivotal anchor. This year marks Ezra's departure from Babylon in the month of Nisan (spring) and his arrival in Jerusalem in Av (summer), under the king's decree permitting the restoration of Jewish religious practices and governance. Historical scholarship has debated whether this seventh year aligns with 458 BC or 457 BC, with implications for broader prophetic timelines, such as Daniel 9's "seventy weeks." Through an analysis of primary sources—including the biblical text, Flavius Josephus, and Aramaic papyri from the Elephantine Jewish colony in Egypt—we can substantiate a high confidence in 458 BC as the correct alignment, rendering 457 BC unlikely.

The Historical Context and Regnal Reckoning

Artaxerxes I ascended the Persian throne following the assassination of his father, Xerxes, in late 465 BC. Persian kings typically employed a spring-to-spring (Nisan-to-Nisan) calendar for

regnal years, with an accession period covering the remainder of the year following a predecessor's death. Under this system:

Accession year: Late 465 BC to Nisan (March/April) 464 BC.

Year 1: Nisan 464 BC to Nisan 463 BC.

Year 7: Nisan 458 BC to Nisan 457 BC.

Ezra's journey, commencing on Nisan 1 and concluding on Av 1 (a four-month span), thus falls squarely in the spring and summer of 458 BC if adhering to the Persian-Babylonian reckoning. Some scholars propose a Jewish fall-to-fall (Tishri-to-Tishri) calendar, shifting the seventh year to 457 BC, based on evidence from Nehemiah and certain Elephantine documents. However, as detailed below, the cumulative evidence from extrabiblical artifacts strongly favors the Persian calendar's application here, particularly for an official decree issued under imperial authority.

Key Evidence Supporting 458 BC

1. **Biblical and Josephan Alignment:** The Ezra narrative specifies a Nisan-to-Av journey in the seventh year, implying a spring start. Josephus corroborates this with a first-to-fifth-month timeline, fitting a standard Persian regnal count. For 457 BC, it assumes a strict fall calendar, but the journey's spring timing fits less seamlessly, as it would push the decree into late 458 BC without strong warrant from the Persian administrative context.
2. **Elephantine Papyri: Anchoring the Accession:** These Aramaic documents from a Jewish-Persian garrison in Egypt provide contemporaneous records of Artaxerxes' reign. Several papyri, such as AP 6, fix the accession to late 465 BC and year 1 to Nisan 464 BC, directly supporting year 7 as 458 BC. Others, like AP 13 and Kraeling 4, confirm later-year consistencies, while AP 8's year 6 check aligns well. Although some double-dated papyri suggest occasional fall reckonings among Elephantine Jews, this was not uniform for regnal years in official Persian contexts, and the overall corpus supports the spring-to-spring system for Artaxerxes' chronology.
3. **Cairo Sandstone Stele: Decisive Overlap:** This artifact, discovered in an Elephantine context, explicitly dates to year 7

in May–June 458 BC, corresponding to the Hebrew month Sivan—potentially during Ezra's travel. This precise solar-lunar overlap fits perfectly with a spring start for year 7 in 458 BC. For a fall-to-fall reckoning (as proposed for 457 BC), the date falls too early: May–June 458 BC would still be in year 6 (ending in Tishri 458 BC), creating a mismatch without evidence of calendar anomaly.

Why 457 BC Is Extremely Unlikely

Advocates for 457 BC cite a Jewish fall calendar, evidenced in Nehemiah (Neh. 1:1; 2:1, where Kislev precedes Nisan in the same year) and some Elephantine double-datings. However, Ezra's context—operating under Persian authority—likely defaults to the imperial spring calendar, as the decree was an official edict from the king. The Cairo Stele's May–June 458 BC dating as year 7 creates a six-month discrepancy for 457 BC, undermining the fall reckoning in this instance. Moreover, while Elephantine Jews sometimes used fall reckonings for civil matters, this was not consistently applied to Persian regnal years in decrees, and the stele's explicit dating aligns with spring norms. Scholarly consensus among many historians favors 458 BC for these reasons, often tied to Persian administrative practices rather than interpretive biases in prophetic exegesis.

Conclusion: High Confidence in 458 BC points to 32 AD

This date harmonizes the biblical account with Persian administrative norms and key Elephantine evidence, providing a robust chronological foundation. The 457 BC alternative requires overriding the decree's Persian context with a less-attested uniform Jewish calendar shift, which falters against artifacts like the Cairo Stele. Thus, we can assert with extreme confidence that Artaxerxes I's seventh year aligns with 458 BC, anchoring related biblical timelines with historical precision.

Given spring 458 BC is the first year of the decree, the 490th year starts spring 32 AD. Thus, according this interpretation of Daniel's prophecy, the atonement for sins should be completed no later than Passover 32 AD.

Signs in the Sun, Moon and Stars

Scripture tells us that the sun, moon, and stars are for signs and seasons, so we should expect some kind of activity in the heavens on the day of the cross. Scripture even predicts a sign that would occur:

*And it shall come to pass **in that day**, saith GOD, that I will cause the **sun to go down at noon**, and I will darken the earth in the clear day.*

— Amos 8:9

And then Matthew and the other gospels describe it happening.

Now from the sixth hour (noon) there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. (3 PM)

— Matthew 27:45

In Babylonian days they knew enough to predict exactly when to expect an eclipse, but not where the eclipse would occur. The clearest primary evidence of this knowledge comes from Babylonian astronomical diaries (cuneiform tablets, e.g., from the Seleucid era, ~3rd–1st century BC). These record predicted solar eclipses that were expected but not observed at the prediction site (Babylon), because the path of visibility shifted geographically.

A direct example is preserved and quoted in historical compilations (e.g., F. Richard Stephenson's *Historical Eclipses and Earth's Rotation*, drawing from original tablets):

The 28th, 74 deg after sunrise, solar eclipse (at) 5 months' distance; when I watched I did not see it.

— Diary for year 65 (SE), king Antiochus

This refers to a predicted solar eclipse on 7 September 247 BC. Babylonian astronomers, **using arithmetic progressions** (precursors to the Saros cycle), **accurately forecasted the time** (here, ~74 degrees after sunrise, equivalent to a specific hour) but the eclipse was not visible in Babylon — it occurred far north. The prediction was for a

potential event on that date/time, but location/visibility was uncertain.

Pliny the Elder (*Natural History* 2.10) notes varying visibility and timing of eclipses by location, implying ancients recognized that predictions were global in timing but local in observation:

...this eclipse is visible to different nations...

— Pliny the Elder

Combined with the Saros cycle (known to Chaldeans/Babylonians by ~7th century BC, later to Hipparchus), which repeats eclipses ~every 18 years + 11 days but shifts the path ~120° westward (one-third around Earth), ancients could reliably predict recurrence **times**, but not precise **paths/locations** without advanced parallax/geometric models (achieved later by Ptolemy in the *Almagest*, ~2nd century AD).

This limitation is why Babylonian records often note “*predicted but not seen*” — they knew **when** to watch, but not definitively **where** it would appear. No earlier Greek source (e.g., Herodotus on Thales) claims location prediction; Thales (~585 BC) reportedly forecasted only the year/season.

Now that we have established that the professional sky watchers were very sophisticated and knew not only that solar eclipses can only occur on the dark phase of the moon, but they also knew the exact months in which to expect a solar eclipse. This means that an a solar eclipse occurring on a full moon would have been a most astonishing event, an event that would be noted by those who record such things. The fact that the supernaturally dark eclipse was recorded as a solar eclipse means the timing was most likely aligned with an expected solar eclipse and the only thing unexpected about it was its duration and intensity.

Here is a summary of every ancient witness I could find documenting the eclipse at the cross:

Phlegon (c. AD 137): In the fourth year of the 202nd Olympiad (July 32 to July 33 AD), an eclipse of the sun happened, greater and more excellent than any that had happened before it; at the sixth hour, day turned into dark night, so that the

stars were seen in the sky, and an earthquake in Bithynia toppled many buildings of the city of Nicaea.

Thallus (c. AD 52): Thallus, in the third book of his Histories, explains away this darkness “*as an eclipse of the sun*”

Tertullian (c. AD 197): Urges Romans to “*investigate it even now*” in their archives (Apologeticus 21.19). The Acta Diurna or consular fasti likely noted this spring portent, as eclipses were state omens.

Talmud (Sanhedrin 43a): whispers of “darkness over all the land” on the eve of Yeshu’s hanging — uncensored manuscripts tie it to Passover timing.

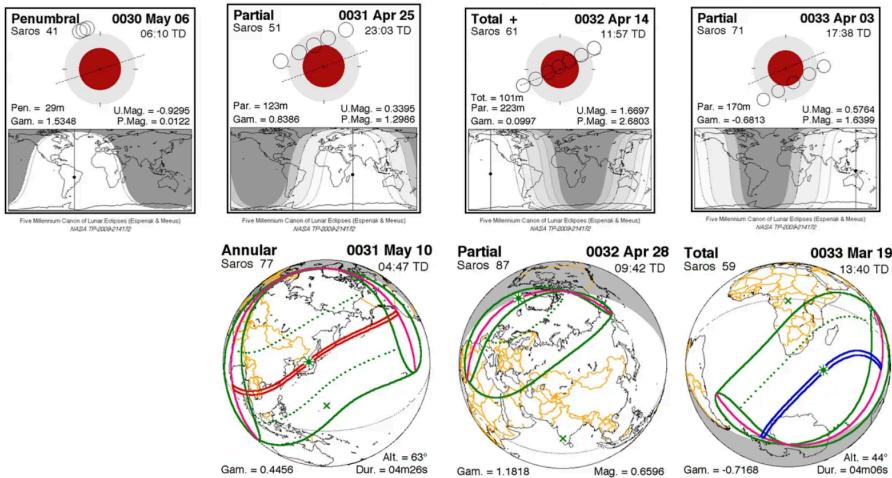
Of these reports, only Phlegon provides an approximate date connected to the 4th year of the 202nd Olympiad. This claim appears to support a 33 AD crucifixion, but is over 105 years removed from the event and could easily be approximate because it is only 2.5 months off from Passover 32 AD.

NASA’s Five Millennium Canon of Solar Eclipses documents a partial solar eclipse on April 28, 32 AD (Julian calendar), with greatest eclipse at approximately 9:42 UT.

In Jerusalem (longitude ~35°E), local time would have been **around 12:42 PM** — midday

Visibility: A partial eclipse with a maximum obscuration of about 66% in northern latitudes (gamma 1.1818, magnitude 0.6596). The path of partiality swept across northern Europe and the Arctic, but **from Jerusalem, it would have appeared as a significant bite out of the sun’s western edge, dimming the light for roughly 2–3 hours.**

Only in 32 AD do we have a solar eclipse visible in Israel and occurring on Passover when you follow the Full Moon start of month calendar evidenced in this book. If this were the only data point available, then 32 AD is clearly the best fit. Not only that, but the lunar year began with a full blood moon (though not visible in Israel). This makes 32 AD the most stand-out year from 30 to 33 AD. Thus even with a dark moon calendar, Passover would have the most unique sign out of the years.



The Friday Argument

Throughout this book we have been systematically testing various calendars against as many primary sources that allow us to connect a day of week to a day of month and a year. The goal is to see which of the many calendar theories (dark moon, sliver moon, full moon, etc) are compatible. When it comes to traditional arguments about what years “Passover” was technically compatible with the gospel narrative, most people are willing to cherry pick any calendar theory for how the month might have started if it suites their narrative. Then, in other contexts they will pick a different calendar, and they rarely attempt to force consistency, instead they chalk it all up to the “fog of history”.

We have identified three ways to start the month derived from common ways adopted by various groups or assumed to be true by tradition.

1. **Dark:** The first sunset after the dark conjunction
2. **Crescent:** The evening with the first naked-eye visible crescent
3. **Full:** The first morning after the full moon

Event / Year & Key Date Assumption	Dark	Crescent	Full
Exodus Manna (1446 BC) 15th of 2nd month	✓	✗	✓
Jordan Crossing / First Fruits (1406 BC) 15th of 1st month	✗	✗	✗
First Temple Destruction (587 BC) 9th Av critical	✗	✓	✗
First Temple Destruction (587 BC) 10th Av critical	✓	✗	✓
Second Temple Destruction (70 AD) 9th Av critical	✗	✗	✗
Second Temple Destruction (70 AD) 10th Av critical	✓	✓	✓

If you study the table closely you will discover that no single method is compatible with all known test cases, but significantly, the most common assumption (first visible crescent) which is testified in great detail, using robust stories about two witnesses reporting it and signal fires, is the least compatible with all available testimony. So what would happen if we took the most compatible option of the group, the Dark Conjunction, and used it as the basis for determining the day of the week for Passover in the years 30 to 33 AD?

There are numerous rules that people could apply for how to start the year but regardless of which ruleset you use it always boils down to one of two months. Ironically, this equates to either first or second Passover. This means if you miss first Passover due to a calendar error you end up keeping second Passover without realizing it (assuming you start the months properly).

Year	Month 1 Date	Month 1 Day	Month 2 Date	Month 2 Day
28 AD	Mar 29	Monday	Apr 27	Tuesday
29 AD	Apr 17	Sunday	May 16	Monday
30 AD	Apr 6	Thursday	May 5	Friday
31 AD	Mar 26	Monday	Apr 24	Tuesday
32 AD	Apr 13	Sunday	May 12	Monday
33 AD	Apr 2	Thursday	May 1	Friday

Recall Passover is always on the 14th (by definition), followed by Unleavened Bread on the 15th, and First Fruits on the 16th. Recall the ample evidence to support that First Fruits was kept on the 16th according to Josephus.

But on the second day of unleavened bread, which is the sixteenth day of the month, they first partake of the fruits of the earth: for before that day they do not touch them.

— Josephus

See the chapter on Passion Week and the true meaning of “heart of the earth” for the full evidence that the most plausible day for Passover suggested by the Bible had to be a Friday by a wide margin.

With that foundation, we can see that for all potential years: using the least conflicted traditional calendar (the dark conjunction) and most universally accepted starting month that **there is not a single year with a Friday Passover.**

This forces everyone to adopt most conflicted sliver moon calendar that is incompatible with most tests or adopt an extreme minority view regarding how the year starts. The majority rule is that Passover must occur after the equinox, but some say, like we do, that the “new” moon must occur after the equinox.

In our pursuit of truth, we must approach these matters with humility and grace, recognizing that many sincere believers have long held to cherished interpretations of the crucifixion timeline and the Sabbath. Yet Scripture calls us to test all things (1 Thessalonians 5:21) and to let the Word be our final authority, not tradition or majority opinion.

The difficulty arises when attempts to harmonize the Gospel accounts with a fixed planetary week require the simultaneous use of multiple, mutually incompatible calendar systems for events that Scripture presents as occurring under one unified divine order. The Exodus manna, the crossing of the Jordan and eating new grain on the appointed day of First Fruits, the precise three Passovers in John, the darkness at the crucifixion, and the resurrection timing—all are explicitly tied to God’s perfect, unchanging timing. These are not isolated incidents that can be assigned different rules of new-moon sighting or equinox priority on a case-by-case basis. To do so implies

that God Himself operated under shifting calendrical frameworks within the same redemptive history, or that He altered the courses of the sun, moon, and stars at various points to accommodate human reckoning. Such a view, however unintentional, casts doubt on the reliability of the very scriptural markers God gave us as signs and seasons.

When ancient biblical texts produce contradictions under a Saturday-Sabbath assumption, the response is often to introduce "reasonable doubt" by suggesting celestial anomalies or divine interventions. When more recent historical tests (such as the dates of the temple destructions) conflict, the same traditions that are leaned upon to affirm an unbroken Saturday Sabbath are quietly set aside as unreliable oral transmission or Talmudic error. Yet those same traditions are upheld elsewhere when they appear to support the desired conclusion.

This selective application reveals a deeper tension: **logical inconsistency is, by definition, incompatible with truth.** God is not a God of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33), but of perfect order and unchanging character. He is Truth itself (John 14:6), and contradiction cannot reside in Him. If a proposed framework demands that we accept mutually exclusive calendars operating at once, or that God must have suspended the ordinary laws of creation (contrary to his promise that Day and Night would not cease) to make the pieces fit, then that framework cannot be aligned with the nature of the God we serve.

With gentleness and respect, therefore, I invite every reader to lay aside preconceptions and ask: Does the model you hold truly honor God's perfection, or does it require you to tolerate contradictions that Scripture itself does not permit? The call is not to defend a tradition at all costs, but to seek the harmony that must exist when we allow one consistent, biblically faithful calendar to govern the whole record. In doing so, we honor the God whose works are perfect and whose ways are just, trusting that truth will stand firm under honest scrutiny.

Conclusion

This case builds on several independent chronological anchors (e.g., Tiberius' 15th year as fall 28-29 AD for John's ministry start, the 46-year temple timeline placing the first Passover in 30 AD, the 490-year count from the 458 BC decree landing on 32 AD, and the partial

solar eclipse aligning with Passover under a full-moon-start calendar). These interlock without mutual dependence, creating a tight timeline for a 3 year ministry ending in 32 AD. Alternatives like 30 or 33 AD require ad hoc adjustments—such as redefining regnal years, inserting undocumented Passovers, or ignoring constraints like the Year of Release proclamation—to fit, which introduces unnecessary complexity. The logic favors the option where facts align naturally over one needing extra rationalizations.

On the Sabbath, the analysis shows fixed planetary weeks (Saturday) generate inconsistencies across historical test cases (e.g., temple destructions, Exodus events) unless cherry-picking calendar starts, leading to conflicts in weekday-Passover alignments for 28-33 AD. A lunar sabbath system, tied to moon phases, eliminates these by allowing flexibility without violating the data, satisfying Occam's razor: fewer assumptions to explain the same observations make it the stronger model.

Herod the Great

Understanding the years of Herod the Great is necessary because they impact the timing of other key markers such as establishing a witness to the 7 year sabbatical year cycle and the timeline of the construction of the temple. The evidence we have from the Gospel of Luke and the 2 BC census should be enough on its own to establish that Herod died in 1 BC, but scholars have ended up using their interpretation of Herod's death as the basis for questioning the legitimacy of Luke's testimony and arguing that Luke used an unconventional means of counting the years of Tiberius. For all of these reasons we need to go though the 7 independent proofs of the years of Herod's reign to establish beyond all reasonable doubt that he died in 1 BC. This book has additional chapters addressing how Josephus uses Regal vs De Factor Reckonings and expounding upon the Battle of Actium. I go to such great lengths to account for all the evidence of Herod the Great because sloppy interpretations are used to rationalize traditional 30 AD crucifixion narrative and ultimately the Saturday Sabbath.

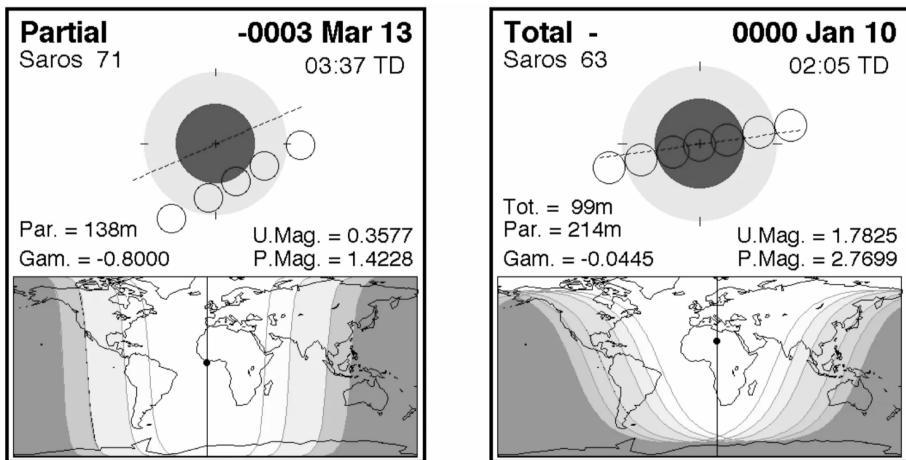
Herod's Death

Josephus tells the story with great detail. Herod had just burned alive two revered rabbis and forty of their students for tearing down the golden Roman eagle he had placed over the Temple gate. That same night the eclipse occurred:

"But Herod deprived this Matthias of the high priesthood, and burnt the other Matthias, who had raised the sedition, with his companions, alive. And that very night there was an eclipse of the moon."

— Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.6.4 §167

Josephus mentions only one lunar eclipse in his entire twenty-one volumes of history. He places it here, deliberately, as the opening act of Herod's final collapse. From that night forward Herod's body rotted while he still lived: gangrene, worms, suicidal despair. God, Josephus says, "*was now punishing him for all his iniquities*" (*Ant.* 17.6.5 §168–169).



The astronomical record confirms two possible dates. NASA's Five Millennium Catalog of Lunar Eclipses lists a deep total eclipse on the night of **10 January 1 BC (Julian calendar)**. The moon rose already eclipsed over Jerusalem and remained blood-red for an hour and thirty-nine minutes — far more dramatic than the faint partial eclipse of 4 BC that is usually cited, an eclipse which happened at 3 AM when few would notice it.

If this were the only evidence you had, the full blood moon is hands down the most likely event within the 10 year window. The only reason to consider the extremely partial eclipse of March 13, 4 BC is if all the other evidence was pointing that direction. So this eclipse marks the third independent witness, the first being the census, and the second being 30 years from Tiberius 15th.

Aside from the visual distinction, Josephus describes a sequence of events leading to Herod's death for which the shortest plausible timeline is 35 days and longest plausible is 85 days. On the calendar most assume from tradition, there were at most 29 days between the eclipse and Passover which occurred *after* the public mourning for the king was over.

*When the public mourning for the king was over...
before the feast which is called Passover*

— Josephus (*Antiquities* 17.9.3)

It requires extreme special pleading to fit that timeline if you are committed to a dark/sliver moon start of month and the 4 BC eclipse; however, if you reference the Jan 10, 1 BC eclipse there are a full 114 days which gives ample time for the timeline to unfold. The only way to save the 4 BC eclipse is to consider the full moon calendar which would buy you another 15 days — enough to be plausible but still tight.

The Reign of Herod

Now that we have established Herod's death by 3 witnesses, we can look at additional witnesses to support how his regal years were reckoned. We will use additional independent proofs that don't work backward from his death. When taken together the proofs of the years of his reign also contribute to the proof of his year of death which in turn confirm that Luke used conventional dating for Tiberius.

The evidence from his death already strong points to his regal years starting in 38 and 35 BC; however, conventional assumptions put it at 40 and 37 BC, a 2-3 year difference. We can derive these dates by subtracting 37 and 34 years from 4BC and 1 BC according to the testimony of Josephus.

*37 years from the time the Roman Senate
proclaimed him king (39 BC), and 34 years from the
time he captured Jerusalem and slew Antigonus.*

— *Antiquities* 17.8.1 §191; *War* 1.33.8 §665)

Josephus gave us two witnesses, so let's start with the year Herod captured Jerusalem. Josephus tells us that Herod conquered Jerusalem 27 years to the day from when Pompey conquered Jerusalem. Both events happening on the Day of Atonement (the 10th of 7th month).

*This calamity befell Jerusalem during
the consulship of Marcus Agrippa and Caninius*

Gallus in Rome, in the hundred and eighty-fifth Olympiad, in the third month [of the siege], on the day of the fast, as if it were a recurrence of the misfortune which befell the Jews under Pompey after so many years, on the day which even now they call the fast. For it was on that day that Pompey, after breaking through the wall, entered the temple with his troops, and though the Romans did no harm to the holy objects, but slaughtered many of the people, and took the city, and carried off the people into captivity.

— Josephus in *Antiquities of the Jews*

We know Pompey captured Jerusalem in 63 BC. Every single ancient author who gives a specific year or consular pair for Pompey's capture of Jerusalem agrees on 63 BC. There is no ancient source that puts it in any other year. 63 BC is not a modern guess — it is the unanimous testimony of the original Roman and Greek historians who were either alive at the time (Cicero) or writing within a generation or two.

Herod took Jerusalem on the very same day ... after twenty-seven years' time

— Josephus in *Antiquities of the Jews*

Therefore, exactly 27 years later to the day, puts Herod taking Jerusalem in 36 BC on the Day of Atonement. After he takes the city in the fall, his first "de facto" year of rule starts in spring of 35 BC as the Jews used spring-to-spring reckoning for local rulers. This aligns perfectly with the 1 BC death.

The reason they can argue for 37 BC is because Josephus gave some other points of references including: the consulship of Marcus Agrippa and Canines Gallus and the 185th Olympiad and all of these references do not appear to agree. So let's dig in deeper.

The 185th Olympiad ended before the Day of Atonement in 36 BC, but the siege started months beforehand, during the 185th Olympiad. It is therefore plausible to reconcile this statement with both 38 and 36

BC, but it does lean slightly in favor of 38 BC because the entire event would fit in the Olympiad.

The consulship of Marcus Agrippa and Caninius Gallus ran from January to December 37 BC, which appears incompatible with a siege concluding in the fall of 36 BC. Yet the same consulship is equally problematic for the 37 BC siege if we apply the conventional spring-to-spring (Nisan-based) reckoning for Jewish kings, where Herod's de-facto reign would begin the following spring (35 BC for a 36 BC capture, or 36 BC for a 37 BC capture). To force a 37 BC capture to align with Herod's 34 de-facto years ending in 4 BC (or even 1 BC), the 37 BC side must plead that Josephus deviated from standard practice—either by using fall-to-fall (Tishri) reckoning or by counting the partial accession year inclusively as year 1. Such adjustments are uncharacteristic of Josephus, who consistently applies spring-to-spring non-inclusive reckoning for pre-Herodian Jewish monarchs. In contrast, the 36 BC case requires only a modest extension of the consular reference: Josephus frequently anchors ongoing campaigns to the consuls in power when hostilities began or orders were issued, rather than the exact year of completion. Thus, while both interpretations demand some flexibility with the consulship, the 36 BC timeline aligns more naturally with Josephus's typical regnal-year conventions and requires far less departure from his established historiographical habits.

The last bit of testimony we have from Josephus is that this event occurred on a Sabbath Year.

*This calamity befell Jerusalem in a sabbatical year,
just as it had previously under Pompey.*

— *Antiquities of the Jews* 14.16.2

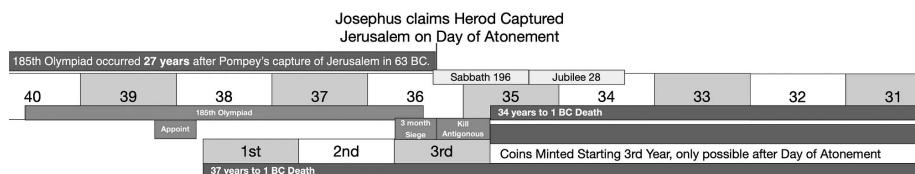
Sabbath years start in the Fall with the first season seeds are not planted because no harvesting would be allowed in the spring. Assuming 1406 BC Jordan river crossing started the cycle then spring 35 BC would be the 7th year of the cycle and the timing would fit perfectly.

I've presented extensive evidence on this event due to the apparent internal contradictions in Josephus's own statements, so let's organize it into a helpful table to reveal the big picture. What the table demonstrates is that a 37 BC date forces Josephus to appear

inconsistent or erroneous on key details, while 36 BC requires only minor adjustments—such as referencing the start of the siege or decree rather than its end. The consequence of assuming Josephus deviated to non-standard regnal-year reckoning or was outright wrong about the 27 years 'to the day' from Pompey is that it undermines his testimony on all other matters.

Evidence	37 BC Fit	36 BC Fit
27 years exactly from Pompey	✗ Off by years	✓ Exact match
185th Olympiad	✓ Full fit	⚠ Slight straddle
Consul Agrippa & Caninius Gallus	⚠ Non-standard reign count	⚠ References start of siege
Cassius Dio sequence	⚠ Compressed	✓ Natural flow
Sabbatical year capture	✗ Misaligned	✓ Perfect alignment

Allowing special pleading against Josephus's plain words—whether reinterpreting "twenty-seven years to the day" or forcing non-standard regnal counting—opens the door to dismissing his other clear testimonies at will. The lunar eclipse marking Herod's death, the temple's construction timeline, and every detail critics use to challenge Luke's straightforward account of Tiberius's fifteenth year could be similarly waved away. Once we treat Josephus as malleable when inconvenient, his entire witness becomes unreliable, leaving us with no solid anchor for biblical chronology beyond tradition and preference.



Herod's Age at Death

To further confirm the reign and death of Herod the Great, we turn to a fifth fully independent line of evidence: his age at death. By cross-referencing his documented age during a known historical event with his age at death, we can pinpoint the year he died with high precision. This relies solely on Josephus's accounts, without external assumptions or adjustments.

Key Event: Herod's Appointment as Governor of Galilee

Josephus records that Herod was appointed governor of Galilee at just 15 years old, during a period that overlaps with the 9th year of Hyrcanus II's rule as high priest and ethnarch (spring 55 BC to spring 54 BC).

"This [appointment as governor of Galilee] was done in the ninth year of Hyrcanus the high priest and ethnarch, in the month Panemus" (July).

— *Antiquities 14.8.5*

The 9th year of Hyrcanus II is universally dated to 55/54 BC, as Hyrcanus became ethnarch following Pompey's conquest in 63 BC. Using inclusive counting (common in ancient chronologies), this aligns precisely.

Antipater ... made his son Herod governor of Galilee, when he was but fifteen years old.

— *Antiquities 14.9.2 (continuation)*

This confirms the appointment occurred in the same year (55/54 BC), when Herod was 15. A simple subtraction from this anchor point gives us Herod's birth year:

If the appointment was in 55 BC: 55 BC - 15 years = born in 70 BC
(accounting for Herod being 15 until his 16th birthday).

If in 54 BC: 54 BC - 15 years = born in 69 BC.

Thus, Herod was born around 70/69 BC.

Josephus states Herod's age at death in two separate works:

He was about seventy when he died.

— *Antiquities* 17.6.1 & *War* 1.33.1

Adding 70 years implies a death in either 1 BC or 1 AD depending upon the exact birthday overlap. This plain, evidence-based calculation—using only Josephus's statements—supports a 1 BC death without contradiction or special pleading.

The traditional 4 BC death date would make Herod at most 67 years old contradicting Josephus' claim of 70 years old. Here are some examples of how those arguing for 4 BC address these inconvenient facts:

Jack Finegan (in *Handbook of Biblical Chronology*, rev. ed. 1998, p. 300) notes the discrepancy and suggests Josephus's age is likely an error or loose approximation:

"Josephus states that Herod was fifteen years old when appointed governor of Galilee (Ant. 14.158), but this would make him only about sixty-five at death in 4 B.C., whereas Josephus also says he was 'about seventy' (Ant. 17.191; War 1.665). The age of fifteen is probably an error, perhaps a s scribal mistake or rhetorical exaggeration."

Harold W. Hoehner (in *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*, 1977, p. 12) echoes this, calling the fifteen-year-old reference "**a mistake in Josephus**" and prioritizing the "about seventy" at death to fit 4 BC.

Andrew E. Steinmann (a minority-view critic of 4 BC) summarizes the consensus approach in *From Abraham to Paul* (2011, p. 220) and his articles: the 4 BC supporters "**treat the age of fifteen as erroneous or approximate**" to avoid re-dating everything else.

Now it is fair to note that Josephus isn't perfect—no ancient historian is—and I'm not claiming his testimony must be flawless to hold value; after all, minor inconsistencies or rhetorical flourishes are

common in texts from that era. However, the key distinction lies in the nature of these supposed "errors": if they were truly random scribal mistakes, exaggerations, or approximations, the odds that they would all conveniently align to form a coherent, interlocking narrative supporting a 1 BC death for Herod (e.g., the age-15 appointment, reign spans, eclipse timing, and successor overlaps) are vanishingly small, far more likely to scatter into chaos than converge on an alternative timeline. Instead, this pattern suggests a bias in the critics' approach: they selectively dismiss details as erroneous only when they threaten the traditional 4 BC framework, while upholding Josephus as reliable elsewhere, revealing a preference for preserving consensus over following the evidence where it naturally leads.

In other words, they have opened Pandora's Box of discrediting their star witness with respect to the life of Herod the Great, and if their star witness can get these details wrong why would anyone trust their cherrypicked quotes and interpretations of Josephus to override the plain reading of inspired scripture regarding John the Baptist's 30th year aligning with Tiberius' 15th year?

Start of His Regnal Years

The traditional chronology dates Herod's appointment as king by the Roman Senate to late 40 BC, shortly after the Treaty of Brundisium (October 40 BC). This allows him to return quickly to Judea, begin campaigns in winter 40/39 BC, conquer Jerusalem in 37 BC, and die in 4 BC—fitting the 37- and 34-year reign spans Josephus records. However, this timeline depends on the assumption that Herod's entire journey from Alexandria to Rome was completed swiftly enough to keep the Senate vote within the 40 BC consular year, with no significant delays from storms, ship repairs, or winter weather.

Our evidence for Herod's death in 1 BC and the conquest of Jerusalem in 36 BC requires the appointment to occur after Nisan 1 in 39 BC (around April/May in the Julian calendar), so that spring 38 BC becomes his first full regnal year under non-inclusive reckoning. The voyage itself provides the natural explanation for this 5–6 month gap, and the full moon calendar's delayed Shavuot on July 1, 40 BC—already proven beyond reasonable doubt in this book—extends the journey timeline in a realistic way.

Josephus describes the Parthian invasion escalating around Shavuot, when the enemy exploited the large crowds gathering for the feast:

But while there were daily skirmishes, the enemy waited for the coming of the multitude out of the country to Pentecost, a feast of ours so called.

— *Antiquities* 14.13.3

Assuming Pentecost was fixed on the 15th of the third month in the Temple calendar, and months beginning at the visible full moon, the feast falls on July 1, 40 BC. The invasion peaks in early July, prompting Herod's immediate overland escape to Masada, Petra, Rhinocolura, and Alexandria—a journey complicated by political rejections (no aid from Arabia or Cleopatra) that could take 4–6 weeks, placing his arrival in Alexandria in mid-August 40 BC.

From Alexandria, Herod sailed amid the summer etesian winds and encountered a violent storm that forced a detour to Rhodes:

[Herod] sailed away in a storm, which fell upon him as he sailed, with great danger; and he was sorely shaken with the tempest, and was thereby in distress.

— *Antiquities* 14.14.3

Refitting a large vessel in Rhodes—hiring crew, sourcing timber, and awaiting supplies—could easily require three or more months under typical ancient conditions, extending into late October or early November 40 BC. The Mediterranean's mare clausum (closed sea) season began in November, with storms and short days making voyages rare and perilous until March. Herod likely wintered in Rhodes or along the route to avoid disaster, as historical parallels (e.g., Paul's winter shipwreck in Acts 27) illustrate the risks of pressing on.

Sailing the windward leg to Brundisium (against northerlies) in early spring 39 BC (March/April) fits the safer post-winter window, with Herod then proceeding overland to Rome. Appian sequences the appointment during Antony's eastern reorganizations after the treaty:

He [Antony] appointed kings over the nations who had assisted him, Herod over Idumaea and Samaria...

— *Civil Wars* 5.75

This narrative flow extends into Antony's winter 40/39 BC in Athens, allowing the Senate vote to slip past Nisan 1 in April/May 39 BC amid bureaucratic delays—quorums, auspices, or Antony's schedule. Dio Cassius's account (*Roman History* 49.22) further supports this by placing Herod's campaigns after Ventidius's 39–38 BC Parthian victories, implying an early-to-mid 39 BC appointment without contradiction.

Scholars like Andrew Steinmann (*From Abraham to Paul*, 2011) and W.E. Filmer (1966 *Journal of Theological Studies*) affirm this minority view, interpreting Appian and Dio's ambiguities as permitting a 39 BC date to harmonize with a 36 BC conquest and 1 BC death. The full moon calendar's two-week shift, combined with Shavuot's mid-summer placement, naturally extends the journey by three weeks compared to traditional thinking, making post-spring 39 BC not just possible but probable under realistic conditions.

Critics asserting a rigid late-40 BC appointment bear the higher burden: they must prove Herod's multi-leg odyssey defied storms, refit timelines, and winter risks to complete swiftly—without a shred of direct evidence for such haste. Their speed is speculative, built on idealized assumptions to preserve the 4 BC death consensus, while this reconstruction meets plausibility through documented delays and source flexibility. With five or more independent witnesses (including scripture) converging on 1 BC, the evidence demands we follow where it leads, not force-fit it to tradition. It is not rational to allow something as flimsy as speculation about a journey's length serve as the foundation of Herod's Regal years, especially in light of how much other objective evidence it would overturn.

Years of High Priests

The sixth independent line of evidence for the reign of Herod the Great also comes from Josephus, who is proving to be reliably internally consistent in his testimony.

Accordingly, the number of the high priests, from the days of Herod until the day when Titus took the temple and the city, and burnt them, were in all 28; the time also that belonged to them was 107 years.

— Josephus: *Antiquities* 20.10.2

Since it is widely accepted that Titus took the temple and city in the summer of 70 AD, we can do some simple math and identify that the “days of Herod” points to the summer of 38 BC, Herod’s first regnal year after his appointment by Rome. The alternative view is to use inclusive counting, yielding a range from 37 BC to 70 AD. This has been used to support a 37 BC siege of Jerusalem instead of a 36 BC date.

Using exclusive counting in instances where Josephus references an exact day marking the end would be consistent, and it aligns well with the start of Herod’s regnal authority after his appointment, reflecting the first full spring-to-spring year in 38 BC. This yields approximately 107 years to 70 AD, treating the figure as a close, rounded span common in ancient historiography for symbolic or narrative emphasis.

Using inclusive counting implies 37 BC years + 70 AD years as the range. This fact has been used to argue that Herod’s de facto years count from 37 BC instead of from 35 BC. The issue with assuming 37 BC as the start of his de facto regnal years is that it requires inclusive counting for de facto years, as a 37 BC capture would place the first spring-to-spring de facto year starting in 36 BC. Alternatively, it forces moving the capture of Jerusalem to 38 BC to keep the spring-to-spring timeline, but if that adjustment is made, the 107 years wouldn’t span the first high priest appointment made shortly after the capture of the city.

The bottom line is that Josephus’s 107-year number is close enough to fit both theories and not a perfect fit for any theory. However, the 38 BC regnal / 35 BC de facto start is the better fit overall, as Josephus’s phrase “days of Herod” emphasizes the era beginning with his effective control and first high priest appointment post-conquest (late 36 BC), yielding ~106 years—a near match to 107 that allows for rounding without shifting events or mixing reckoning methods. This maintains internal consistency in Josephus’s narrative, where the high priest span is tied to the practical onset of Herod’s

authority rather than a nominal or partial year, avoiding the traditional view's need for adjustments that misalign the first appointment or force inconsistent counting.

The 107-year figure is a broad summary interval, presented without precise markers like 'to the day' so treating it as approximate by one year is reasonable and consistent with Josephus's occasional rounding in non-critical summaries. In contrast, the 27-year interval from Pompey's capture is stated explicitly as 'after twenty-seven years' time' and 'on the very same day' — a precise chronological claim that the traditional view must reinterpret as inclusive or non-literal to fit 26 years. This is the crucial difference: my model preserves the plain sense of Josephus's most emphatic chronological marker, while allowing minor flexibility only on a summary number. The traditional view does the reverse — it overrides the emphatic claim to preserve exactness in the summary. That asymmetry favors the reading that requires fewer adjustments to the text itself.

Herod's son Philip's Reign

One of primary arguments for Herod's death in 4 BC is derived from the documentation of the reigns of his children. We will address each child in turn, starting with Philip.

According to all early copies of Josephus Antiquities of the Jews, Philip dies 22nd Tiberius after 37 years.

Josephus' Antiquities of the Jews 18.4.6 states that Philip the Tetrarch (Herod's son) "departed this life in the 22nd year of the reign of Tiberius after he had been tetrarch of the region of Batanea, Trachonitis, Auranitis, Gaulanitis, and Paneas for thirty-seven years.

— *Antiquities of the Jews 18.4.6*

If this were the only variation then there would be no dispute as 37 years back from Tiberius' 22nd year places the first year of Philip's reign as the year of Herod's death in 1 BC. The issue is that the majority of the newer manuscripts claim the 20th year. This would put the first year of his reign starting the *year after* the alleged 4 BC death of Herod.

It is not uncommon for scribes to “correct” texts to align with scholarly consensus, and I submit that this is exactly what happened with the later manuscripts. Here are the two variations:

“20th year” (*εἰκοστῷ*): Supported by the majority of Greek manuscripts, including the primary witness codex Laurentianus (9th century) and **most later Greek copies** (e.g., Palatinus Graecus 14, 10th century). This is the reading in standard critical editions (Niese, Thackeray Loeb 1927–1965).

“22nd year” (*δωδεκάτῳ*): Found unanimously in the early Latin translations (Vetus Latina tradition, 4th–8th centuries, e.g., Codex Sangallensis 135, 8th century, and other pre-1544 Latin MSS like the 6th-century Codex Fuldensis fragments). **Some Greek fragments (e.g., 10th-century minuscules) show traces of “22nd,”** but it’s a minority in Greek. The Latin unanimity (**all ~20 surviving early Latin copies of this passage**) suggests an early variant, possibly from a 2nd-century Greek archetype lost in the main line.

The older Latin tradition preserves the “22nd” consistently, indicating an ancient reading (pre-4th century). Traditional interpretations favor “20th” due to Greek number of copies, but the “22nd” is attested unanimously in early translations. So which of these two manuscripts carries the most weight on its own, independent of any other facts?

	20th year	22nd year
Age of witnesses	Oldest complete Greek MS: 9th century	Latin copies go back to 4th–6th century (and are unanimous)
Geographic spread	All later Greek copies descend from a single Byzantine family	Latin copies are from North Africa, Gaul, Italy — independent lines
Unanimity	Greek has some minor variants, but majority is “20th”	Every single early Latin copy says “22nd” — no exceptions
Known scribal tendency	Greek scribes in the Middle Ages often “corrected” numbers to match what they thought was right (e.g., harmonising with other reigns)	Latin translators in late antiquity were extremely literal and rarely changed numbers

External attestation	No other source confirms Philip died in AD 33/34	The Year 37 coin exists — if Philip died in AD 35/36 (22nd year), a Year 37 coin in AD 36/37 is normal. If he died AD 33/34 (20th year), a Year 37 coin is impossible.
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In every single metric the older 22nd year manuscripts win, hands down. They are 300 to 500 years older, from multiple independent geographic origins, in unanimous agreement, and align with external attestation.

Now we can build a complete picture of what happened as it was common for Herod's family to ante-date their reign to the day they were appointed, not the day they took power. Herod the great took power after 3 years, thus his own reign was ante-dated by Josephus and Herod's' own coins by 3 years.

Son	Added to a will (timing from Josephus)	Actual power	Coins start (Year 1)	Ante-dating
Archelaus	Named in an earlier will ~5/4 BC	Spring 1 BC	4 BC	4 years
Antipas	Named in an earlier will ~5/4 BC	Spring 1 BC	4 BC	4 years
Philip	Named in the final will late 2 BC / early 1 BC (Ant. 17.8.1 – last will)	Spring 1 BC	1 BC	1 year (partial year counted as full)

Evidence for Antipas' reign being back dated can be inferred from a lack of coins from his first 3 years. Scholars (e.g., Kogon/Fontanille's die study of ~800 specimens) confirm the "year 4" as the earliest, with no evidence of prior minting as earlier years show no surviving coins or die links. While absence of evidence is not evidence of absence, the lack of coins is consistent with the written testimony. Meanwhile Archelaus' coins are few and contain no dating inscriptions.

Herod's Three Sons: Testing 4 BC Death Date

If Herod the Great died in spring 4 BC (before Passover) as alleged by most, the regnal chronologies of his three sons should align smoothly with Josephus, Roman sources, and coin evidence. Archelaus and Antipas fit reasonably well under standard Herodian ante-dating practices, but Philip creates an challenging problem.

Archelaus (ethnarch of Judaea)

Josephus records a 10-year reign (Ant. 17.13.2), ending with exile in AD 6 (confirmed by Dio Cassius 55.27.6). If power began immediately upon Herod's death in spring 4 BC, the timeline works cleanly. Coins begin in "Year 1" = 4 BC, with the usual 1-year ante-dating: the partial overlap with Herod's final year is counted as Archelaus's full first year. No special pleading is required—this is normal Herodian practice.

Herod Antipas (tetrarch of Galilee and Perea)

Antipas ruled for 43 years according to Josephus (Ant. 18.7.2) and was banished in AD 39 (Dio Cassius 59.8.2). Starting in spring 4 BC, the length matches exactly. His coins also open in "Year 1" = 4 BC, again using the standard 1-year ante-dating (partial final year of Herod counted as full Year 1). Like Archelaus, this requires no unusual justification.

Philip (tetrarch of Batanea and surrounding regions)

Here the contradiction emerges. Josephus states Philip reigned 37 years (Ant. 18.4.6) and died in the 20th year of Tiberius. The majority Greek manuscripts place Tiberius's 20th year in AD 33/34. Counting exactly 37 years backward from AD 33/34 lands precisely in spring 4 BC—leaving **zero room** for ante-dating. Coins would therefore begin in "Year 1" = 4 BC with **no partial-year overlap** counted from Herod's last months.

This zero-year ante-dating is unprecedented for this region. Archelaus and Antipas both back-dated by at least one year (treating Herod's partial final year as their Year 1). No Herodian ruler ever counted from the exact moment of accession without such adjustment. Philip's case forces an exact 37-year span from spring 4 BC, breaking the consistent pattern seen in his brothers.

Conclusion

The 4 BC death date accommodates Archelaus and Antipas without difficulty, but Philip's reign length and coin dating demand an impossible zero-year ante-dating. This single anomaly strongly undermines the 4 BC scenario.

Herod's years anchor the Gospel timeline, sabbatical cycles, and temple construction. Luke's Tiberius fifteenth year and the 2 BC census alone place his death in 1 BC—yet the traditional 4 BC date prompts scholars to doubt Luke and invent unconventional Tiberius reckoning.

Seven independent proofs converge on 1 BC:

1. January 10, 1 BC total lunar eclipse —dramatic and visible, unlike 4 BC's faint partial.
2. 114-day post-eclipse window to Passover, fitting Herod's illness and mourning.
3. Exact 27 years "to the day" from Pompey's 63 BC capture to Herod's 36 BC conquest on Atonement.
4. Sabbatical-year match for from 1406 BC Jordan cycle.
5. Age ~70 at death, from 15 in 55/54 BC Galilee governorship — born ~70/69 BC.
6. 107 high priests from Herod's "days" (38/35 BC) to 70 AD.
7. Early Latin MSS: Philip dies Tiberius 22nd year (AD 35/36) after 37 years from 1 BC—superior to Greek "20th."

These align Josephus without error or non-standard counting. 4 BC demands dismissing "27 years to the day," Herod's age as "scribal mistake," timeline compression, and unprecedented zero-year ante-dating for Philip, the result is to undermine Josephus selectively to preserve tradition.

Passion Week - 3 Days & 3 Nights

The timeline from Yeshua entering Jerusalem on a donkey to his appearance in the upper room after his resurrection has been hotly contested due to a number of factors including conforming to calendar assumptions and the interpretation of the Sign of Jonah. I argue that Yeshua does everything on his appointed times and must fulfill all things according to Torah. After all the appointed times have always been a shadow of things to come and the substance is of Christ.

Yeshua entered Jerusalem on the 10th day of the month according to the Passover instruction to take the lamb into the house on then 10th day.

Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household.

— Exodus 12:3

Then the Passover Lamb was to be killed “between the evenings” which is generally thought to be between noon and sunset or about 3 PM.

and you shall keep it until the 14th day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at between the evenings (between noon and sunset).

— Exodus 12:6

This aligns with the exact time Yeshua was killed:

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour (3 PM). And about the ninth hour Yeshua cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' ... And Yeshua cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

— Matthew 27:45–50

"It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Yeshua, calling out with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!' And having said this he breathed his last."

— Luke 23:44–46

Then scripture strongly implies that Yeshua was raised on First Fruits:

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

— 1 Corinthians 15:20

Both biblical accounts demonstrate that First Fruits on the 16th of the 1st month and the Septuagint (ancient Greek translation of

Leviticus) shows that the ancients understood that it was the day after the first day of unleavened bread. Since the first day of unleavened bread is always on the 15th, it implies first fruits is always on the 16th. The traditional Hebrew biblical text says the day after the sabbath which is identical in meaning to the Septuagint under a Lunar Sabbath interpretation but potentially ambiguous under a Saturday sabbath. Nevertheless, Josephus confirms that they always observed first fruits on the 16th.

When you put all of that together we have hard calendar dates for the day he was killed and the day he was raised that satisfy the 12 verses that state he would be killed and *raised on the third day from the day he was delivered up, beaten and died*. This is a fundamental challenge for those who say that he died on a “Wednesday” or “Thursday” because by the universally used inclusive counting those would be 4 or 5 inclusive days. Instead they overturn or these verses and the first fruits typology based upon a single verse referring to 3 days and 3 nights in the “heart of the earth”. Before getting into the Sign of Jonah, lets review the 11 scriptures establishing the time frame. Take special note that the time frame starts from the suffering and not the death:

From that time Yeshua began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.

— Matthew 16:21

and they will kill him, and he will be raised on the third day. And they were greatly distressed.

— Matthew 17:23

and deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day.

— Matthew 20:19

And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again.

— Mark 8:31

for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days he will rise.

— Mark 9:31

who will mock him and spit on him, and flog him and kill him. And after three days he will rise.

— Mark 10:34

saying, The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.

— Luke 9:22

And after flogging him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise.

— Luke 18:33

and said to them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead.

— Luke 24:46

Yeshua killed by hanging him on a tree. God raised him on the third day and made him to appear

— Acts 10:39–40

that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures

— 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

*That very day (first day of the week)...The things concerning Yeshua of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and rulers **delivered him up** to be condemned to death, and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, **it is now the third day** since all these things.*

— Luke 24:19-21

All 12 of these verses are quite clear about the timing, especially when combined with Passover and First Fruits timing, but these verses are often over looked in favor of the Sign of Jonah.

The Sign of Jonah

*An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For just as Jonah was **three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish**, so will the Son of Man be **three days and three nights in the heart of the earth**.*

— Matthew 12:38-40

The argument is that “*heart of the earth*” means dead and / or in the grave and that Friday (Day 1), Saturday (Night 1, Day 2), and Sunday (Night 2, Day 3) is missing one of the 3 nights of the Sign of Jonah. Therefore, they argue, he must have been killed on Thursday and put in the grave exactly at sunset. This would allow Thursday night to be the first night, but requires ignoring that in all 12 verses the latest they

start their reference point is his death and many start their reference point earlier at being handed over. This appears to strain the plain reading of many verses to support an imperfect application of a single verse derived from an assumed interpretation of the Sign of Jonah.

The typical way to resolve the “3 days and 3 nights” is to allow it to be understood as a metaphor for 3 inclusive calendar days; however, there is an even stronger case that can be derived by doing a deeper study on the meaning of the phrase “heart of the earth” and of the parable of Jonah.

While most assume it means “grave”, it was actually a well documented expression used to refer to Jerusalem itself.

and against a people gathered from the nations (to Jerusalem), who have acquired livestock and goods, who dwell in the navel of the earth (tabbur ha'aretz).

— Ezekiel 38:12

Greek-speaking Jews and early Christians sometimes replaced “navel” with “heart”.

Philo of Alexandria (1st-century Jewish philosopher, writing in Greek) repeatedly calls Jerusalem “*the metropolis... the middle (μέσον) and heart (καρδία) of the whole earth.*”

The Sibylline Oracles (Jewish composition, Book 5.250) explicitly says of Jerusalem: “*She is the navel (όμφαλός) and heart (καρδία) of the earth.*”

Later Greek manuscripts and patristic quotations of Ezekiel 38:12 actually change ὄμφαλόν (“navel”) to καρδίαν (“heart”) when referring to Jerusalem.

With this understanding we can not better appreciate that there are 16 Parallels with the story of Jonah start from Judas fleeing Yeshua to betray him the night of the last supper and ending on the road to Emmaus. The following table highlights that the Sign of Jonah is really a detailed symbolic prophecy about what was about to happen to him.

Jonah	Yeshua
Jonah flees God	Judas leaves Yeshua
Jonah pays the fare	Judas is paid 30 pieces of silver
Jonah goes “down” to Joppa and into the ship	Yeshua goes down to Jerusalem (from the mount of olives)
Jonah falls into a deep sleep	Disciples fall asleep three times in Gethsemane
Captain wakes Jonah: “What do you mean, sleeper? Arise!”	Yeshua wakes disciples: “Could you not watch one hour?”
Sailors question Jonah about his identity and the cause of the storm	High Priest / Pilate question Yeshua about his identity and the cause of the trouble
Sailors cry “we are innocent of this man’s blood”	Pilate washes hands: “I am innocent of this man’s blood”
Sailors cast lots to find the guilty one	Soldiers cast lots for Yeshua’s garments
Weeds / “red” wrapped around Jonah’s head	Crown of thorns (blood-red wrapped around Yeshua’s head)
Great storm / sea roaring in commotion	Crowd roaring in commotion during trial and crucifixion
Jonah says “Throw me overboard”	Yeshua voluntarily lays down his life
Jonah hurled into the sea → storm stops	Yeshua dies → earthquake, darkness, veil torn
Three days & three nights in the fish (inclusive count)	Three days & three nights in the heart of the land (inclusive count)
Jonah vomited out alive on dry land	Yeshua rises alive from the tomb
Jonah travles to Ninevah	Yeshua walks to Emmaus

With this timeline we can now identify the third night of the 3 days and 3 nights as being the night he was arrested and taken into Jerusalem, the heart of the earth. He spent 3 days and 3 nights there and left on the road to Emmaus which documents that he was out of Jerusalem on the 3rd day, perfectly fulfilling the prophecy.

The Plain Reading of Yeshua's Burial

In approaching the burial of Yeshua through a plain reading of the Scriptures, we set aside any preconceived notions about calendars, day lengths, or external pressures like impending holy days. Instead, we let the narrative unfold as it is written, focusing on the sequence of events described in the Gospels. The accounts in Matthew 27:57–60, Mark 15:42–47, Luke 23:50–56, and John 19:38–42 present a deliberate, honorable process carried out by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, with the women from Galilee observing. This is not portrayed as a frantic scramble but as a fitting burial for the Messiah, aligned with first-century Jewish customs of dignity and care for the dead.

The story begins with Yeshua's death at the ninth hour. Shortly after, Joseph—a respected member of the council and a secret disciple—approaches Pilate to request the body. Pilate, surprised that death has already occurred, summons the centurion for confirmation before granting permission. Joseph then takes the body down from the cross. Nicodemus joins him, bringing a substantial mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight, which was a quantity fit for a royal entombment, echoing the honors given to kings like Asa in 2 Chronicles 16:14.

From there, they prepare the body according to Jewish burial customs. This would involve first washing the body to cleanse it of blood, sweat, and dirt from the crucifixion—a respectful act to restore dignity. Next comes the anointing: the myrrh (a resinous, aromatic substance) and aloes (fragrant wood powder) are mixed and applied, likely by pouring or sprinkling them into the folds of linen strips as the body is wrapped, creating a protective and fragrant shroud. This wrapping forms a cocoon-like enclosure, securing the spices within to honor the deceased and combat natural odors. Finally, the prepared body is laid in a new tomb hewn from rock, in a nearby garden—a serene and private location chosen for its convenience and suitability.

The women who had followed from Galilee watch the entire process, noting how the body is laid. After this, they return home to prepare their own spices and ointments, intending to complete or supplement the anointing later.

Logical Timeline for a Proper Burial

Without any assumptions about time constraints from

hypothetical calendars, the plain sequence suggests a process unfolding over several hours, allowing for the care and reverence implied in the texts. Historical Jewish sources, such as descriptions in Josephus (Antiquities 15.3.3 on honorable burials) and the Mishnah (Semahot 8:1–7 on wrapping and anointing), indicate that a **dignified burial for someone of status could reasonably take 4–8 hours or more from start to finish**, depending on the number of helpers and the thoroughness of each step. With Joseph and Nicodemus working together—possibly with assistance from servants or others—the timeline might look like this, based solely on the narrative flow:

Step	Description from Scripture	Estimated Duration for Proper Execution
Request and Confirmation	Joseph asks Pilate; Pilate confirms death with centurion	1–2 hours (including travel and discussion).
Removal from Cross	Body is taken down.	30–60 minutes (careful handling of wounds and limbs).
Transport to Tomb	Body carried to the nearby garden tomb	15–30 minutes (short distance, but respectful transport).
Washing and Anointing	Body cleansed and spices applied	1–3 hours (thorough mixing, layering in linens for full coverage with 75 pounds).
Wrapping and Placement	Linen shroud applied; body laid in tomb	30–60 minutes (securing wrappings, sealing entrance).

This adds up to a total of approximately 5–8 hours from the moment of death, allowing the preparation to be done with the respect due to the Son of God. The women's observation and subsequent preparation of additional spices suggest they had time to return home afterward, further indicating no undue rush in the primary burial.

Supporting Evidence from the Shroud of Turin

One artifact that aligns with this plain reading is the Shroud of Turin, which bears the image of a crucified man consistent with first-century Jewish burial practices. Forensic analysis shows blood flow patterns and body positioning that indicate the body was wrapped shortly after death, with a mixture of myrrh and aloes (detected via

pollen and chemical residues) layered in the linen, supporting a thorough, multi-hour preparation process rather than a minimal one. The absence of decomposition signs on the shroud further corroborates a timeline where the body was entombed promptly but properly, without extended exposure.

In this plain reading, the burial emerges as a profound act of devotion, unfolding naturally over the hours following death. It sets the stage for the women's return with their spices, the Sabbath rest, and the eventual discovery of the empty tomb on the first day of the week, all without needing to impose external timelines or restrictions. This approach honors the text as it stands, revealing a Messiah buried with the dignity He deserved.

The Old Testament prophecy that the Messiah's body would not undergo decay is found in Psalm 16:10, which is explicitly applied to Yeshua in the New Testament. Here are the key verses:

For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption.

— *Psalm 16:10*

Therefore he says also in another psalm, 'You will not let your Holy One see corruption.' For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep and was laid with his fathers and saw corruption, but he whom God raised up did not see corruption.

— *Acts 13:35–37*

He foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption.

— *Acts 2:31*

Because you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption.

— *Acts 2:27*

These passages emphasize that, unlike ordinary humans (such as David), the Messiah's body would not experience the natural process of decomposition, fulfilling a divine promise of resurrection without corruption.

A Rushed Burial Would Be Problematic

A rushed burial, as might occur under severe time constraints (e.g., minimal cleansing, hasty wrapping, or insufficient spices), would pose significant issues in the context of first-century Jewish practices and the prophecy of no decay. Jewish customs, as reflected in sources like the Mishnah (Semahot 8:1–7), emphasized thorough preparation to honor the deceased and mitigate the rapid onset of decomposition in a hot climate like Judea (where decay could begin within hours post-death, with rigor mortis setting in 3–4 hours and odors soon after). A hurried process might involve skipping steps like full washing or adequate anointing, leaving the body more exposed to environmental factors and accelerating natural breakdown. This could imply "corruption" (pit in Hebrew, diaphthora in Greek, meaning decay or putrefaction), directly contradicting the prophecy that the Holy One's flesh would see none. The Gospels portray the burial as complete and honorable, not abbreviated, underscoring divine fulfillment: any implication of haste leading to decay would undermine the miraculous nature of the resurrection, where Yeshua's body rose incorruptible, as a sign of victory over death.

Kingly Accommodations Throughout His Life and Burial

From birth to burial, Yeshua was provided with accommodations befitting a king, symbolizing His divine royalty and fulfilling prophecies of the Messiah as the King of Israel. At His birth, the Magi presented gold (a royal treasure), frankincense (used in priestly incense, signifying divinity), and myrrh (a perfume for anointing and burial, foreshadowing His death)—gifts reserved for monarchs (Matthew 2:11). During His ministry, Mary anointed His feet with costly perfume (a pound of pure nard, worth a year's wages), wiping them with her hair, which Yeshua defended as preparation for His burial (John 12:3–7; Mark 14:3–9). This act echoed royal anointings, like those of kings in the Old Testament (e.g., 1 Samuel 10:1).

His burial continued this pattern: Nicodemus brought seventy-five pounds of myrrh and aloes—a lavish, kingly quantity akin to royal entombments (John 19:39–40; compare 2 Chronicles 16:14 for Asa's spice-filled burial). The body was wrapped in fine linen (Mark 15:46), and laid in a new, rock-hewn tomb owned by the wealthy Joseph of Arimathea (Matthew 27:57–60), fulfilling Isaiah 53:9: "And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death." Even in death, these provisions—far exceeding standard burials—affirmed His kingship, contrasting the humility of His life with the eternal honor of His resurrection.

All of these considerations fit seamlessly with the prior evidence of a first light start of day presented in the chapter "*When Does the Day Start?*", but require significant compromises and time compressions to work with the traditional calendar and sunset start of day.

The Apparent Women and Spices Paradox

The Gospels describe the actions of the women who followed Yeshua from Galilee—Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, Salome, Joanna, and others—in relation to the spices and ointments for His burial. Two passages seem at first to conflict:

They saw the tomb and how His body was laid. Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. And on the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

— Luke 23:55–56

When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might come and anoint Him.

— Mark 16:1

At first glance, Luke says the women prepared spices *before* resting on the Sabbath, while Mark says they bought spices *after* the Sabbath. Critics sometimes claim this requires two Sabbaths (a high day followed by a weekly one) with a workday in between, implying a longer timeline than Friday crucifixion to Sunday resurrection. However, the paradox disappears when we read the accounts plainly

as complementary rather than contradictory. The women did not do everything in a single moment; they performed two related but separate actions at different times.

Resolution Under Sunrise-Start Day (No Haste Required)

In the sunrise-start day framework (day begins at dawn, as argued elsewhere with resurrection evidence from pre-dawn tomb visit to post-sunset upper room), the timeline provides generous room for deliberate, reverent actions without any imposed rush. The Sabbath begins Saturday morning (~6 AM), giving the women the full evening and night of Friday after the burial to work.

Friday Afternoon/Evening/Night (After Burial): Yeshua dies at the ninth hour (~3 PM). Joseph and Nicodemus complete the initial burial with 75 pounds of myrrh and aloes (John 19:39–40). The women observe how the body is laid (Luke 23:55; Mark 15:47). They then return home and prepare whatever spices and ointments they already have on hand (Luke 23:56a). With no sunset deadline, this preparation can take several hours into the night—mixing, grinding, measuring—done thoughtfully and without pressure.

Saturday Morning to Sunday Morning (Sabbath Rest): They rest fully during the Sabbath day, from Saturday dawn to Sunday dawn, honoring the commandment (Luke 23:56b; Exodus 20:8–11).

Saturday Evening/Night (After Sabbath Ends): Once the Sabbath concludes at Sunday dawn (or practically in the preceding evening as the day transitions), the women go out and buy additional spices (Mark 16:1)—perhaps fresher supplies, more quantity, or specific types to supplement what Joseph and Nicodemus used. They then proceed to the tomb very early Sunday, while it is still dark or at sunrise (John 20:1; Mark 16:2; Luke 24:1), discovering the empty tomb.

This sequence is natural and unforced: “prepared” refers to using what they had Friday night, “bought” refers to acquiring more

Saturday evening/night. No contradiction exists; the actions are sequential and complementary, driven by devotion.

Resolution Under Traditional Sunset-Start Day

Even under the conventional sunset-to-sunset calendar, the paradox resolves without needing two Sabbaths or extra days:

Friday Afternoon/Evening (Before Sunset): After burial, the women return home before sunset and quickly prepare whatever spices they already possess (Luke 23:56a).

Saturday (Full Sabbath Rest): They rest from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday (Luke 23:56b).

Saturday Evening (After Sunset): Markets reopen post-Sabbath; the women buy additional spices (Mark 16:1) and head to the tomb at dawn Sunday.

Again, “prepared” (Luke) is Friday evening with available items; “bought” (Mark) is Saturday evening. The accounts harmonize as two phases of the same intent.

In both frameworks, the women and spices accounts fit a Friday crucifixion to Sunday resurrection without strain. There is no need to stretch the timeline to Wednesday or Thursday to create artificial gaps. This is especially true if you accept the conclusion that the Sabbath is only during daylight hours and not inclusive of the night. The plain reading shows devoted women acting in stages—preparing immediately after burial, resting on the Sabbath, buying more afterward, and arriving early Sunday—perfectly consistent with the repeated “third day” statements (Luke 24:21, 46; Acts 10:40; 1 Corinthians 15:4) and the fulfillment of First Fruits on the 16th.

This resolution upholds the integrity of all four Gospels, honors the women’s faithfulness, and reinforces that the burial itself was complete and kingly, while the women sought to add their own loving touch. No contradiction remains when the texts are allowed to speak plainly.

Issues with Traditional Resolutions

Issue	Wednesday	Thursday
"Third Day" Verses	Wednesday → Sunday = 5 days inclusive (violates all 12 verses)	Thursday → Sunday = 4 days inclusive (contradicts the 12 verses)
Burial Time	~3 hours to sunset; 75 lb spices + washing + wrapping require 4–6 hrs → overruns high Sabbath	~3 hours to sunset; same prep needs 4–6 hrs → overruns high Sabbath
Women's Spices	They let the hastily prepared body decay without going on the work day between the sabbaths.	High Sabbath + weekly Sabbath = back-to-back rests → no gap for buying/Preparing while body decays rapidly
Decay Risk	72–96 hrs → almost certain decomposition (contradicts no-decay prophecy)	60–72 hrs → high risk of decay (contradicts incorruptibility)
Sabbath Logistics	Assumes high Sabbath, prep day, weekly Sabbath → contradicts single Preparation Day	Two consecutive Sabbaths with no intervening day
First Fruits Alignment	Sunday = 17th or 18th (misses fixed 16th per Josephus)	Sunday = 17th (misses 16th)
Sign of Jonah	Forces grave literalism; ignores Jerusalem as "heart of the earth" and 16 parallels	Same literalism; extended grave time strains inclusive idiom

In the Wednesday crucifixion theory, death occurs Wednesday afternoon (14th Nisan), followed by high Sabbath Thursday (15th, Unleavened Bread), a supposed "workday" Friday, weekly Sabbath Saturday, and resurrection Sunday (or late Saturday). Proponents use the Friday "gap" to explain the women's spices: they prepare/buy on Friday (resolving Luke 23:56's pre-Sabbath prep and Mark 16:1's post-Sabbath buy), resting on the two Sabbaths.

But this raises a glaring internal contradiction: If Friday was a full workday with no rest restrictions, why didn't the women visit the tomb *that day* to anoint the body? The Gospels show their devotion—they observed the burial (Luke 23:55; Mark 15:47), prepared spices immediately after, and went at dawn Sunday despite risks. A free Friday would logically prompt an earlier visit, especially with decay concerns in Judea's heat (decomposition starts ~24–48 hours post-death, per ancient views like John 11:39's four-day "stink").

Summary

The Passion Week is a living demonstration of the true calendar and its natural reading demands a “Friday” or “Lunar Sabbath” based calendar with first light start of day. This causes major contradictions once you realize how this interacts with the broader calendar debate.

Using the Dark moon calendar (like what Jews use today) and the standard start of year, there is simply no year that is compatible. You must adopt a delayed start of year in 30 or 33 AD to keep this calendar.

Cross with Dark Conjunction Start of Month

Year	Month 1 Date	Month 1 Day	Month 2 Date	Month 2 Day
28 AD	Mar 29	Monday	Apr 27	Tuesday
29 AD	Apr 17	Sunday	May 16	Monday
30 AD	Apr 6	Thursday	May 5	Friday
31 AD	Mar 26	Monday	Apr 24	Tuesday
32 AD	Apr 13	Sunday	May 12	Monday
33 AD	Apr 2	Thursday	May 1	Friday

This in turn forces one into a first visible crescent start of month and a calendar that allows the month to begin well before the equinox. If you use the a viable start of year rule for the crescent calendar then 33 AD has Passover on Saturday in 30 and 33 AD. Meanwhile the “blood moon” and other celestial events people point to in 33 AD also fail to line up.

I hope you can start to see the problem, in order to arrive at a Friday Passover people must:

1. Start the month on the Dark Moon
2. Start year after equinox rather than traditional rule

Or...

1. Start the month on a visible Sliver Moon
2. Start year before equinox contrary to barley requirements

Either way post people are currently holding logically inconsistent beliefs about calendar rules.

Solar Only Calendars

The notion of a strictly solar calendar for the biblical year, divorced from lunar observation, has been advanced in certain interpretive circles, yet it encounters significant difficulties when examined against the primary scriptural evidence and linguistic data.

First, proponents frequently appeal to extra-canonical works such as 1 Enoch and the Book of Jubilees to support a fixed 364-day solar framework with unchanging weekday alignments for the festivals. These texts, while influential in certain Second Temple Jewish sects, lack canonical authority within the Hebrew Bible and were not endorsed by the prophetic tradition or the New Testament writers. Reliance upon them introduces an external interpretive grid that risks violating the biblical injunction against adding to or subtracting from the given revelation (Deut 4:2; 12:32; cf. Rev 22:18–19). The canonical Scriptures present the calendar as a harmony of solar, lunar, and agricultural indicators without recourse to such supplementary sources.

Second, the assertion that **שְׁנִי** (**hōdeš**, “new moon/month”) denotes merely a generic “new month” unconnected to lunar phases, and thus compatible with a solar reckoning, is contradicted by biblical usage. The term is repeatedly paired with explicit lunar terminology in contexts that underscore the moon’s role. Psalm 81:3 (Heb. 81:4) juxtaposes **שְׁנִי** with **נֶצֶח** (**keseh**, “full moon”): *“Blow the trumpet at the new moon, at the full moon, on our feast day.”* Ezekiel 46:1–3 links the “new moon” (**hōdeš**) with Sabbath observances in a cyclical pattern

tied to visible renewal. Most tellingly, Psalm 104:19 states, “*He made the moon (יָרְאַת, yārēah) for appointed times (מִזְבֵּחַ, mō'ādim); the sun knows its going down,*” explicitly connecting the moon to the mo'ādim, of which the new moon is the inaugural marker (cf. Num 28:11–15; Isa 66:23). These passages demonstrate that שְׁנִינָה (ḥōdeš, “new moon/month”) functions as the visible lunar renewal, not an abstract solar interval.

Third, the traditional weekly cycle they utilize places Passover on a Tuesday and First Fruits (the 16th) is never the first day of the week. While this could be rectified by shifting their continuous cycle, it would no longer align with modern Saturday. Since we have already demonstrated that a Tuesday Passover is incompatible with the gospel account these calendars are beyond our ability to reconcile.

Fourth, the 364-day solar calendar documented in the Dead Sea Scrolls requires inserting an undocumented week every 7 years to maintain synchronization with both the solar year and the weekly cycle. While some may object that lunar calendars also require a 13th month (which Scripture never explicitly mentions), there is a critical distinction: the 13th month is a natural consequence of aligning lunar months (~354 days) with the solar year (~365.25 days) to keep feasts in their proper seasons—a necessary adjustment for agricultural alignment. In contrast, the undocumented week insertion in a 364-day solar calendar is required because the system itself is fundamentally broken: it doesn't match the actual solar year, and its weekly cycle drifts out of alignment. This demonstrates that the calendar is mathematically and theologically unsustainable, requiring additions that have no scriptural basis or natural justification.

Fifth, the Exodus narrative demonstrates that the 15th of both the first and second month were Sabbaths (Exodus 12:15-16; 16:1, 22-30). This is mathematically impossible with any solar calendar that maintains a continuous 7-day weekly cycle and fixed month lengths. If the 15th of month one is a Sabbath, then 29-30 days later (the 15th of month two) would shift by 1-2 days in a continuous cycle, making it impossible for both to be Sabbaths. This scriptural evidence directly refutes solar calendars that claim a continuous weekly cycle, as they cannot accommodate consecutive 15ths both being Sabbaths.

What this demonstrates is that these extra-biblical books are incompatible with the evidence from the Bible and should be viewed skeptically.

Regal vs De Facto Reckonings

Josephus provides the primary (and often sole) ancient narrative for Herod the Great's life and chronology in his two major works: *Antiquities of the Jews* and *The Jewish War*. These texts contain a deliberate **dual reckoning** for Herod's reign: one longer count tied to his formal appointment as king, and a shorter count tied to his actual possession of power in Jerusalem. The key interpretive question is: When Josephus refers to events “*in the reign of Herod*” or “*in the [ordinal number] year of the reign of Herod*” without further qualification, which count does he intend?

This chapter builds the strongest possible case **using only Josephus' internal evidence**—his wording, grammatical patterns, explicit statements, repeated qualifiers, and narrative consistency across books. No external dates (Roman consuls, Olympiads, eclipses, Actium, sons' reigns, coins, or modern calendars) are assumed or imported. The argument rests entirely on how Josephus himself structures his account, particularly his explicit benchmark at Herod's death and his consistent use (or non-use) of qualifiers throughout the narrative.

The Explicit Benchmark at Herod's Death

The clearest internal guide appears at the moment of Herod's death, where Josephus deliberately provides **two parallel counts** without ambiguity:

*...having reigned, since he had procured Antigonus to be slain, **thirty-four years**; but since he had been declared king by the Romans, **thirty-seven**.*

— *Antiquities 17.8.1 (Whiston translation)*

*...having reigned **thirty-four years**, since he had caused Antigonus to be slain, and obtained his kingdom; but **thirty-seven years** since he had been made king by the Romans.*

— *War 1.33.8*

This is Josephus' own summary statement, placed at the natural endpoint of the reign narrative. Key observations from the text alone:

The **longer count (37 years)** is linked to being “declared/made king by the Romans” – a formal, titular act.

The **shorter count (34 years)** is linked to “procured Antigonus to be slain” or “caused Antigonus to be slain” – an event tied to actual conquest and removal of the prior ruler.

Josephus presents the **37-year count first** in the sentence structure (in both passages), then contrasts it with the 34-year count using “but” (Greek *de* or equivalent connective), signaling the primary/default as the longer one.

No further explanation is needed for the reader to understand the distinction; Josephus assumes the audience grasps that “*declared king by the Romans*” refers to an earlier, official grant, while the Antigonus event marks practical control.

This benchmark establishes a clear rule: When Josephus wants the reader to use the shorter (Antigonus/conquest-based) count, he qualifies it explicitly. The unqualified or primary “*reign*” phrasing defaults to the longer (Roman-declared) count.

Patterns of Qualification Throughout the Narrative

Josephus maintains this pattern consistently when referring to Herod's reign length or ordinal years:

Unqualified “reign” phrases (e.g., “in the reign of Herod,” “of the reign of Herod”) appear in broad, summary, or introductory contexts and align with the longer count unless overridden.

De facto qualifiers are repeatedly added when Josephus intends the shorter count or when describing events after conquest:

- “since he had procured Antigonus to be slain” — *Ant.* 17.8.1
- “from the death of Antigonus” — *War*
- “since he had caused Antigonus to be slain” — *War* 1.33.8

Similar qualifiers appear in other passages discussing post-conquest events (e.g., references to “from the time he took Jerusalem” or equivalent in siege/conquest sections).

In the narrative flow:

Before the conquest: Herod is repeatedly called “king” or described as receiving/holding “the kingdom” from Roman grant, even while fighting for control. The language emphasizes title and legitimacy.

After conquest: When Josephus counts years for building projects, family events, or wars, he often adds qualifiers if precision matters, but broad “reign” statements revert to the primary (longer) framework.

This asymmetry is telling: Josephus never defaults to the shorter count without a qualifier like “from the death of Antigonus” or “since he took Jerusalem.” The absence of such a phrase signals the regal/default count.

Ordinal Year References and Contextual Clues

Ordinal years (e.g., “in the seventh year of the reign of Herod”) provide further internal consistency: When Josephus uses an ordinal without qualification (e.g., “in the seventh year of the reign of Herod” in *Ant.* 15.5.2), the plain reading follows the same rule as the death summary: regal unless context forces otherwise.

Events tied to pre-conquest or Roman-context (e.g., preparation for Roman wars) fit more naturally with the longer count, as the narrative treats Herod as “king” from appointment onward.

Post-conquest events (e.g., temple building in the 18th year, family intrigues) sometimes carry implicit de facto flavor due to context, but Josephus adds qualifiers when he wants to emphasize the shorter span.

The pattern holds: qualification means *de facto* intent; no qualification implies regal/default.

Narrative Consistency and Authorial Intent

Josephus writes as a historian emphasizing legitimacy (Herod's Roman backing) while acknowledging practical realities (the siege and Antigonus' fall). By leading with the 37-year count at death and using qualifiers only for the 34-year span, he signals priority: the regal count reflects Herod's self-understanding and Roman perspective (client-king status from Senate grant). The *de facto* count is a Jewish/historical corrective for actual rule in Judea.

This dual presentation is intentional: Josephus preserves both for completeness but defaults to regal in unmarked cases.

Conclusion: A Robust, Text-Immanent Rule

From Josephus' own words—especially the explicit dual statement at Herod's death—the strongest internal case is that Josephus defaults to the regal reckoning (from Roman declaration) in unqualified references to “the reign of Herod” or its ordinal years. He shifts to *de facto* only with explicit qualifiers like “since Antigonus was slain,” “from the death of Antigonus,” or equivalent conquest markers.

This rule emerges directly from the text's structure, grammar, and patterns without any external assumptions. It provides a consistent lens for reading the Herodian narrative, minimizing interpretive leaps and honoring Josephus' careful historiographical distinctions. Those who plead contrary to this rule have the burden of evidence.

Herod's Appointment & Battle of Actium

We have already established that Herod the Great's first Regal Year was 38 BC and his first de-facto year after conquering Jerusalem was 35 BC by many independent lines of evidence; however, many scholars insist his first Regal Year had to be 39 BC or, if by ascension counting, 40 BC. They then use this timing to reinterpret all of the other evidence pointing at Jerusalem falling in 36 BC and favoring a 37 BC fall of Jerusalem. The ripple effects impact the timing of the second temple construction and the implied year of Yeshua's first Passover during His ministry. The question becomes, just how strong is the evidence of his appointment in 40 BC and his first regal year in 39 BC?

It all hinges on a well established historical battle, known as The Battle of Actium. This battle is known to be precisely September 2, 31 BC. The precise date of the Battle of Actium is attested in the surviving ancient historical accounts, most notably Plutarch's Life of Antony (early 2nd century CE) and Cassius Dio's Roman History (early 3rd century CE), which both explicitly place the decisive naval engagement on that day. These narratives, though composed long after the event and influenced by Augustan propaganda favoring

Octavian, draw on earlier contemporary or near-contemporary sources, including official Roman records, eyewitness memoirs (such as those potentially from Agrippa or other participants), and senatorial annals. The consistency of the date across these independent traditions, combined with its alignment in later compilations (e.g., by Appian and Velleius Paterculus) and its unchallenged acceptance in modern scholarship, confirms September 2 as the established chronological anchor for the battle's climax in the Ambracian Gulf.

This is a solid anchor that Josephus then connects to Herod:

"Now at this time it was that the fight happened at Actium, between Octavius Caesar and Antony, in the seventh year of the reign of Herod..."

— Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 15.5.2

If Herod's first Regal year started spring 38 BC then his 7th regal year would end spring 31 BC, almost 6 months before the battle. In this point Josephus appears to be close but not perfect in his timing; the said, the situation is even worse for 39 BC appointments which place Josephus off by a year and a half.

To get around this they plead that Josephus must have meant "de-facto" years, which they then claim places the 1st year of Herod's de-facto reign to be 37 BC and resolves the conflict. This goes against Josephus' convention discussed in the prior chapter on Regal vs De-facto reckonings as a surface reading of the text clearly implies Regal years.

But the real challenge with the 37 BC interpretation is that they must also argue that Josephus was using ascension year reckoning, because, by their timeline, Josephus didn't take Jerusalem until fall of 37 BC. Thus two extra-ordinary pleadings of inconsistency of Josephus (de-facto year and ascension reckoning) are required to resolve a single 6 month error and overturn all other evidence for 36 AD fall of Jerusalem and 1 BC death of Herod.

The 40 BC Appointment Date

If 37 BC was ascension reckoning to the de-facto reign, then 40 BC would be ascension reckoning to the appointed reign. The evidence presenting for a 40 BC appointment depend entirely on an unproven

assumption about travel logistics, an assumption that seems implausible the more you study it.

Before his Appointment Josephus documents that Herod was in Jerusalem as the Parthian invasion escalated. The Parthian invasion of Judea in 40 BCE, during which **Herod was present in Jerusalem** before fleeing, is detailed by Josephus in both *Jewish War* (*Bellum Judaicum*) and *Antiquities of the Jews*. In *Jewish War* 1.13 (sections 248–273), Josephus describes how the Parthian generals Barzapharnes and Pacorus (the king's son), lured by promises from Antigonus (son of Aristobulus II), invaded Judea to install Antigonus as king and depose Hyrcanus II. **Herod and his brother Phasael defended Jerusalem during the initial assault around Pentecost**, with Herod holding the palace and Phasael the walls. Pacorus entered the city under pretext of mediation, but the Parthians betrayed the defenders: Phasael and Hyrcanus were lured out and captured, while Herod remained in Jerusalem but recognized the peril.

A key passage recounts Herod's realization of the trap and his escape: "*Herod, seeing the treachery of the barbarians, and that he was in danger of being made a prisoner, took counsel with his friends what was to be done... He resolved to fly away by night*" (*War* 1.16.1–2, approx. sections 286–287). Herod fled Jerusalem at night with his family and supporters, fighting off pursuers, first to Masada, then Petra and beyond, while the Parthians installed Antigonus in Jerusalem and mutilated Hyrcanus to disqualify him from the high priesthood.

In *Antiquities* 14.13–14 (sections 330–491), Josephus provides a parallel but expanded account, emphasizing the Parthians' advance: "*Pacorus... followed the coast route... Entrusting a squadron of horse... the prince ordered him to proceed in advance into Judaea*" (*Ant.* 14.13.1). Herod defended Jerusalem initially but, foreseeing capture, evacuated the city: "*Herod... took his mother and his other relations... and fled away by night*" (*Ant.* 14.13.10–14.14.1), escaping to Idumea and eventually Rome to secure his kingship from the Senate.

These narratives portray Herod as actively in Jerusalem during the invasion's onset, defending it until the Parthian betrayal forced his flight, after which Antigonus ruled under Parthian auspices until Herod's Roman-backed reconquest in 37 BCE.

Now when that festival which we call Pentecost was at hand, all the places about the temple, and the

whole city, was full of a multitude of people that were come out of the country, and which were the greatest part of them armed also..

— *Jewish War 1.253*

And with this we have the first time marker, a time marker that depends upon an interpretation of the Jewish Calendar and feasts. In the chapter on Appointed Times, I document how “Pentecost” and the “Feast of New Wine” are connected to the 9th of Av and is separate and independent from Shavuot. How fitting that Jerusalem once again appears to have fallen at the 9th of Av just like the first and second temples! This calendar interpretation is not necessary to prove my point, because using it would be the same kind of circular reasoning others use to prove their calendars. Thus we must consider the earliest possible date which is the Shavuot interpretation on the Dark Moon calendar to give the “benefit of the doubt” to the traditional calendar. Note the irony, in order to prove a 30 AD cross and defend their calendar, they must start by assuming their calendar in order to justify a 40 BC appointment. Assuming traditional calculations of Shavuot being 50 days from first fruits (16th of Abib), we would use a starting point of June 23, 40 BC.

From this starting point Herod flees by land to Alexandria via Masada, Petra, Rhinocolura. This journey is estimated to take 4 to 6 weeks because he was a fugitive in a time of war. This takes us to July 22nd to August 5th 4 BC.

Following his escape from Jerusalem during the Parthian occupation and a subsequent overland dash through Arabia and Egypt, Herod the Great encountered a violent summer storm while sailing from Alexandria toward Italy. Josephus recounts the episode concisely:

after encountering a violent storm barely reached Rhodes in safety by throwing the cargo overboard

— *Antiquities of the Jews 14.377*

"[Herod] sailed away in a storm, which fell upon him as he sailed, with great danger; and he was sorely shaken with the tempest, and was thereby in distress."

— *Antiquities 14.14.3*

Upon landing, Herod found the city still recovering from earlier wars; despite his own depleted resources, he contributed generously to its rebuilding and, more critically for his mission, undertook the outfitting of a warship.

Josephus isolates the key action:

He also built a trireme, and setting sail from there for Italy with his friends, landed at Brundisium.

— *Ant. 14.378;*

He fitted up a three-decked ship of very great magnitude

— *Jewish War 1.280*

In the Hellenistic naval tradition, particularly at Rhodes—a premier shipbuilding center famous for its trihemiolia squadrons—such work involved far more than mere carpentry. Seasoned timber had to be sourced and seasoned, carpenters and caulkers hired, a full complement of rowers and sailors recruited and trained, and stores (water, grain, weapons, sailcloth) assembled and loaded. Such processes, even in a shipbuilding hub like Rhodes with its established yards and skilled artisans, typically demanded **at least three months**, often extending longer if supply chains faltered or labor shortages intervened.

In the most favorable conditions, traveling to Rhodes would take about 4 days, however with a major storm sails would have to be brought down and ships could be driven off course by weeks. But for the benefit of the opposing position we will assume the trip took only 1 week. This means the “at least three months” would begin July 29th to August 12th and end around November 1st to November 15th.

By November the ancient convention of *mare clausum*—the “closed sea”—during the Mediterranean winter. From roughly November through March, violent storms, unpredictable gales, reduced daylight

hours, and poor visibility rendered long-distance or open-water voyages rare, hazardous, and generally avoided by prudent commanders and merchants alike (especially one who just survived such a storm!). The primary rationale was the heightened risk of shipwreck, dispersal of fleets, and loss of life in an era when navigation relied heavily on coastal landmarks, seasonal winds, and rudimentary forecasting. Vegetius, writing in the late fourth century CE but reflecting long-standing Greco-Roman practice, articulates this seasonal restriction clearly:

For the violence and roughness of the sea do not permit navigation all the year round, but some months are very suitable, some are doubtful, and the rest are quite impossible.

—Vegetius

Modern scholarship, drawing on earlier sources such as Hesiod, Pliny, and epigraphic evidence, generally corroborates a pattern in which *safe sailing predominated from late spring through early autumn*, with November marking the effective transition to the closed period. Voyages attempted outside this window were exceptional and often driven by urgent military necessity rather than routine commerce or transit, underscoring how the interplay of refitting delays and winter closure could impose strategic pauses of several months on ancient operations in the region.

The traditional narrative, assuming the best possible conditions, supplies, ship building times, places Herod leaving during the “closed sea” winter period for a journey that typically takes 20 to 30 days from Rhodes to Rome. This in turn means they would have had to retrofit a “*ship of very great magnitude*” in less than 2 months if they want to plan to arrive before the sea closed.

The story of Paul and his shipwreck shows what happens when you attempt to sail in the winter, after the Day of Atonement in the 7th month. After the went many weeks in the storm the crashed on an island where they were taken care of for 3 months until they could safely sail on a “ship from Alexandria”.

Assuming Herod took the risk, he would arrive in Rome mid December under the best of conditions. Josephus describes his rapid appointment:

Herod lobbied Antony, emphasizing the strategic advantage of installing him as king amid the Parthian threat. Antony, persuaded (and possibly influenced by Herod's bribes or arguments), brought the matter before the Senate. The Senate voted unanimously in Herod's favor, appointing him king of the Jews without delay.

Josephus explicitly states that this occurred **just seven days** after Herod's initial meeting with Antony:

There he was declared king of Judea just seven days after meeting with Antony"

— *Ant. 14.387, cf. War 1.14.4*

Public business—including regular Senate meetings—was significantly restricted or suspended during major festivals like Saturnalia (primarily December 17–23 in the late Republic and early Empire, under the Julian calendar). Other December observances (e.g., Opalia on December 19 or later Sol Invictus elements) added to the festive atmosphere but were less disruptive. Unlike some months with clustered feriae (e.g., April), December's holidays centered on Saturnalia, making mid-to-late December a period of reduced senatorial function rather than a total monthly shutdown. Ancient sources like Macrobius (Saturnalia), Cicero, and calendar reconstructions (e.g., Fasti) confirm this pattern of holiday precedence over routine governance during the festival.

The bottom line is this: even with the fastest travel times, ship building times, and assuming the earliest possible starting point of the traditional calendar, the timeline to confirm his appointment by December 31 was incredibly tight. If, based upon the evidence in this book, the calendar of the Jews as indeed based on a full moon and not a sliver moon, and Pentecost was indeed the Feast of New Wine then the journey becomes impossible to reconcile before the “closed sea”.

Herod Takes Royal Power

Scholars will often rely upon the following quote at the end of Josephus' story about how he came to power:

Thus did Herod take over royal power, receiving it in the hundred and eighty-fourth Olympiad, the consuls

*being Gnaeus Domitius Calvinus, for the second time,
and Gaius Asinius Pollio.*

— Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews* 14.389

The **hundred and eighty-fourth Olympiad** (184th Olympiad) refers to a four-year period in the ancient Greek chronological system, where each Olympiad was reckoned from the summer Olympic Games (traditionally held in July or August) and spanned approximately mid-year to mid-year.

Consensus among historical sources and modern scholarship dates the **184th Olympiad to 44 BCE to 40 BCE**, specifically from **July 1, 44 BCE, to June 30, 40 BCE**. This reckoning aligns with the standard ancient convention of Olympiads beginning in the summer following the previous Games.

At issue here is that June 30, 40 BC is just a few weeks from the earliest possible start date for Herod's journey; therefore, either Josephus is mistaken about the Olympiad or he is dating the start of his story about how Herod came to power and not the end of his story. It is simply impossible for Herod to travel to Rome leaving Pentecost and arriving by June 30th even without any ship wrecks or other delays.

The consuls Calvinus (second term) and Pollio are independently attested in Roman fasti as holding office in 40 BC, aligning with the 184th Olympiad (44–40 BC). However, this is also inconsistent with other historical records:

Appian's narrative in Civil Wars 5.75, which places Antony's establishment of client kings—including "*in Idumea and Samaria, Herod*"—in a **sequence of events following the Treaty of Misenum (dated to August 39 BC)**. Appian describes Antony making these appointments as part of preparations for his Parthian campaign, after reconciling with Octavian and Pompeius at Misenum, and just before wintering in Athens (late 39 BC into 38 BC). This contextual placement, corroborated by Dio Cassius (Roman History 48.54), who details Antony's eastern activities in 39 BC without mention of a 40 BCE Roman sojourn.

Putting everything together, the direct testimony paces Herod's appointment in August 39 BC and Josephus was clearly documenting the start of the journey and not the end. The case for 40 BC starts off assuming traditional calendar, then assuming best possible travel

times, refitting times, and risking winter weather to arrive in the last days of 40 BC. All this while ignoring other historians and the inherent incompatibility of Josephus' own dating. On the other hand, if you assume the calendar in this book, then the journey started 10 weeks later than assumed placing his travel from Alexandria late September to early October which is when there is a moderate risk of early storms. Earlier travel timelines are not statistically aligned with the reported weather.

And thus rather than proving 40 AD, this line of evidence actually strongly supports a 39 AD appointment and 38 AD first regal year. The chain cascades down to Herod's death in 1 BC and the 46th year of the temple in 30 AD with Yeshua's first of 3 passovers leading to the cross in 32 AD and by extension extensive proof against Saturday Sabbath.

Stability of Astronomical Calculations

Modern astronomical software (Stellarium, NASA JPL ephemerides) can accurately retro-calculate celestial events back thousands of years. Historical records confirm these calculations are reliable well within the post-flood biblical timeline.

Important Note on Chronology: Records claiming dates older than ~4000 BC contradict the scriptural age of creation. Therefore, only events that align with biblical chronology are considered reliable evidence.

For each historical celestial event, we evaluate three key factors:

- 1. Certainty of Independent Date:** How certain are we of the date from historical records alone (without astronomical calculations)?
- 2. Stellarium Match Quality:** How well does Stellarium's retro-calculation match the historical record (path, timing, visibility)?
- 3. Uniqueness:** How likely is it that there are multiple potential matches (could other dates also fit the description)?

Verified Ancient Celestial Events

Event	Independent Date Certainty	Stellarium Match	Uniqueness
Solar Eclipse October 22, 2134 BCE	High: Chinese astronomers Hsi and Ho executed for failing to predict; earliest recorded eclipse in written history. Specific date in historical records.	Excellent: Visible in ancient Chinese capital; Fang asterism in Scorpius matches historical description precisely.	High: Unique match for this date and location; no other eclipse fits the Fang asterism reference in this timeframe.
Venus Records ~1700 BCE	High: Venus Tablet of Ammisaduqa: Detailed cuneiform records of Venus appearances/disappearances over 21 years. Specific astronomical data.	Excellent: retro-calculations confirm all 21 years of Venus cycles match precisely.	Very High: Unique 21-year pattern; no other period matches this specific sequence.

Historical records with high independent date certainty and excellent Stellarium matches prove that astronomical calculations are accurate back to at least 2134 BCE (4,100+ years ago), well within the post-flood biblical timeline. The unique matches for these events demonstrate that celestial movements have followed natural laws since the flood era, consistent with biblical chronology.

Biblical Confirmation of Stability

The Bible itself confirms that we should expect this stability. After the flood, God made a covenant with creation:

“While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.”

— Genesis 8:22

This promise establishes that the regular cycles of celestial movements—day and night, seasons, and the agricultural calendar tied to them—would continue uninterrupted. The sun, moon, and stars would maintain their regular patterns, ensuring that “day and night shall not cease.”

Implication for Astronomical Calculations: This biblical promise means that celestial movements have followed natural laws since the flood, making astronomical retro-calculations reliable. If God had supernaturally interfered with celestial movements several times, this promise would be meaningless—we could not rely on “day and night” or “seedtime and harvest” following predictable patterns.

Application to Joshua's Long Day: This verse also provides crucial context for understanding Joshua 10:12-14. If “*day and night shall not cease*” is a divine promise, then a literal interpretation of Joshua’s prayer (requiring the Earth to stop rotating, thus ceasing day/night cycles) would contradict this covenant. This strengthens the case for an idiomatic interpretation that preserves both the biblical promise and the natural laws governing celestial movements.

This in turn allows us to test the validity of the Sabbath account and calendar using the Exodus timeline and Stellarium or similar software.

Joshua's Long Day

The biblical account of Joshua’s prayer—“*Sun, stand still at Gibeon, and you, moon, over the Valley of Aijalon*”—has been interpreted literally by some, requiring the Earth to stop rotating (which would cause global catastrophes and contradict Genesis 8:22). However, a plain reading in context reveals this is an idiomatic expression rooted in Ancient Near East divination practices, where celestial bodies “*standing still*” or “*waiting*” meant they were positioned as a sign/omen. This natural interpretation aligns with the principle that celestial movements follow natural laws (as proven by historical records) and Genesis 8:22, avoiding the special pleading required for a literal miracle.

At that time Joshua spoke to ְיַעֲזֵר in the day when ְיַעֲזֵר gave the Amorites over to the men of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, 'Sun, stand still at Gibeon, and moon, in the Valley of Aijalon. And the sun stopped in the middle of the sky and did not hasten to go down for about a whole day.

— Joshua 10:13

The Key Locations

The sites mentioned by Joshua are securely identified through archaeology (e.g., inscribed artifacts and topography matching the Bible). They’re in the central Judean highlands, about 10 miles northwest of Jerusalem:

Gibeon (modern el-Jib / Al-Jib): A hilltop city (31.84750°N, 35.18639°E) where the battle started. Excavations revealed Iron Age remains and “GB’N” jar handles confirming the name.

Upper Beth Horon (modern Beit Ur al-Fauqa): The high ground of the strategic pass (31.87722°N , 35.11861°E), our assumed observer point on the battlefield ridge.

Valley of Aijalon (modern Ayalon Valley near Yalo): A broad western lowland (central point: 31.84028°N, 35.02250°E), where the pursuit led.

From Beth Horon, Gibeon lies ~5 miles southeast, and Aijalon Valley ~8 miles west-southwest.



Astronomical Calculations: Azimuth Deviations

We used the haversine formula (standard for GPS bearings) to compute azimuths (compass directions from true north) from the observer at Upper Beth Horon:

1. Input coordinates into the formula: Distance and direction based on latitude/longitude differences.
 2. Calculate bearing to Gibeon: $\sim 117.29^\circ$ (from north).
 3. Deviation from due east (90°): $+27.29^\circ$ (south of east).
 4. Bearing to Aijalon Valley: $\sim 245.68^\circ$.
 5. Deviation from due west (270°): -24.32° (north of west).

Margin of error: $\pm 8^\circ$ (from 200–500m site uncertainties and observer position on the ridge, typically 4–8°). This confirms a ~24–

27° southern skew, typical for late winter (10th/11th month) full moon positions.

The Celestial Alignment: Full Moon Opposition

In ancient near east culture (e.g., Babylonian omen texts like the Enuma Anu Enlil), a full moon visible opposite the midday sun was a “bad omen” for enemies—sun/moon “standing still/silent” (Hebrew *damam*). From Beth Horon:

Sun high “over Gibeon” (east/southeast, mid-morning).

Moon low “over Aijalon Valley” (west, setting during daylight).

This opposition requires a nearly full moon, which occurs on day 29 (the day before the next full moon), creating an eerie, prolonged visual sign of divine favor for Israel and doom for Amorites.

36 Moments: The Book of Jasher’s Detail

The surviving Book of Jasher (88:63–64), referenced by Joshua’s rhetorical question “*Is not this written in the book of Jasher?*”, specifies the phenomenon lasted about 36 moments (roughly 36 minutes). This brief but noticeable “*extension*” fits an observable astronomical event, not an Earth-stopping miracle requiring hours.

And יָמָם hearkened to the voice of Joshua, and the sun stood still in the midst of the heavens, and it stood still six and thirty moments...

— *Jasher 88:64*

Hebrew ‘Damam’ — Be Silent, Cease Activity

The Hebrew word translated “stand still” (דָמַם, *damam*) often means “be silent” or “cease activity” in figurative contexts (cf. Psalms). Strong’s also suggests “tarry” as a mean. This is strikingly similar to Revelation 8:1: “*There was silence in heaven for about half an hour.*” Both describe celestial bodies being “still” or “silent” as an omen — not physical stoppage. The connection between 36 moments (~36 minutes) and “about half an hour” reinforces this link.

The Sunset Transition: Day Becoming ‘Whole’

As evening approached during the battle, the sun was low in the west over Ajalon valley, nearing sunset — the point where the day’s “complete” cycle ends and authority symbolically shifts to the moon’s rule over night. The day only becomes “whole” or “complete” once the sun sets. With the nearly-full moon already risen in the east, both luminaries were visible simultaneously — a natural phenomenon that poetically appears as the sun “lingering” or “tarrying” or overlapping into the moon’s time to rule, as if reluctant to hand over dominion. The sun was not in a “hurry” to set.

Determining the Date

In a full-moon-start system (month begins at full moon), the event’s timing can be determined from the geographical and astronomical evidence:

The Azimuth Evidence: The ~23–27° southern deviation from due east/west indicates a late winter full moon position. This aligns with the **10th month (Tevet)** or **11th month (Shevat)** in the Hebrew calendar, depending on when the year began relative to the spring equinox.

The Day of the Month: The celestial alignment described—sun over Gibeon (east/southeast) and moon over Ajalon (west)—occurs when the moon is in opposition to the sun. In a full-moon-start calendar:

- Day 1 - The month begins just after the full moon
- Day 15 would be the dark moon, opposite of full moon
- Day 29 would be the day before the next full moon, when the moon is again nearly full and visible during daylight hours opposite the sun

The geographical description (sun in east/southeast, moon in west during daylight) requires the moon to be nearly full and setting in the west while the sun is in the east—this occurs on **day 29 of the month**, the day before the new month begins with the next full moon.

Month Determination: The hailstorm (Joshua 10:11) and the late winter azimuth positions indicate this was either: Tevet (10th month, December–January), or Shevat (11th month, January–February), around the 29th day—especially if the year started close to the spring equinox, which would shift the calendar timing:

Hebrew Month	Approx. Gregorian (Modern Equivalent)	Azimuth Deviation Fit	Hail Likelihood
9th	November–December	Good (~25–30° south)	Moderate
10th	December–January	Excellent (~20–25° south)	Very High
11th	January–February	Good (~15–20° south)	High

Conclusion: The geographical and astronomical evidence points to **the 29th day of either Tevet (10th month) or Shevat (11th month)** as the date of Joshua's long day, with Tevet being the best fit but Shevat also viable especially if the year started close to the spring equinox. This natural celestial alignment—a full moon opposition visible from the specific battlefield locations—was interpreted idiomatically as the sun and moon “standing still” as a divine omen, requiring no supernatural interference with celestial movements and fully consistent with Genesis 8:22’s promise that “day and night shall not cease.”

This typology-rich event (hail, heavenly pause, kings in caves) points to a unique winter sign, foreshadowing Revelation’s judgments, while demonstrating that even this “miraculous” event fits within natural celestial movements, confirming that astronomical calculations remain reliable.

Here is the patience (steadfastness, enduring, perseverance) of the saints (holy ones, blameless): here are they that keep the commandments of Yeshua, and the faith in Yeshua.

— Revelation 14:12

The Path to Salvation

The vast majority of the “church” has been taught that keeping his commandments is a “*works based salvation*” and that the old testament and its laws are no longer relevant. We are not saved by our works, but we can be condemned by willful, unrepentant breaking of his commands and denying their truth.

Do not think that I (Yeshua) came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill (to cause to abound, to bring to realization, to establish, to bring to fullness). For assuredly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one jot (punctuation) or one tittle will pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least (or nothing) in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

— Matthew 5:17-10

Yeshua came to explain the law and everything he taught can be found in the old testament. It is the old testament that spoke of Yeshua through prophecy of the coming Messiah; therefore, the Messiah’s first and now second coming is part of his word, his law, and it must be fulfilled.

For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.

— Hebrews 10:26-27

What is sin? How do we know it?

What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, “You shall not covet.”

— Romans 7:7

Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.

— 1 John 3:4

What is “the truth” that we have received knowledge of? We must be careful not to rely solely on dictionary definitions of words which often change over time. The Bible is symbolic and defines its own terms so that the meaning can survive translation errors and language evolution and be carried through many different languages. We must let the Bible define its own terms, this is the key to understanding the Bible.

Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.

— Psalm 119:142

Righteousness is a way of referring to the keeping of the law and the Psalms just declared it to be everlasting, never ending, and the truth. With this definition, Hebrews 10:26 can be understood to say if “*if we sin willfully after we have received knowledge of the law (of Moses)*”.

This is supported by Paul immediately bringing up the law of Moses after talking about willful sinning.

Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of ֵלֶאָה underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says ֵלֶאָה. And again, "ֵלֶאָה will judge His people." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living ֵלֶאָה.

— Hebrews 10:28-31

Once we have knowledge of the law we must profess it to be the truth and ask for forgiveness when our flesh continues to break it. If you deny the truth, the law, then you are willfully sinning and denying Yeshua as your Lord/Master.

But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

— Matthew 10:33

For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words (which come from his Father via Moses and the Prophets), of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels.

— Luke 9:26

Yeshua is “*the way, the truth (the law, the word), the life*” and the law is “the truth”; therefore, by denying His law, his words, you are denying Yeshua and He will deny you before his Father, ֵלֶאָה.

The testimony of Yeshua is his advocating for us as our High Priest.

Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Yeshua the Son of ֵלֶאָה, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted (tested) like we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne

of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

— Hebrews 4:14

It is the High Priest who makes intercession on behalf of the people and who presents the sacrifice to cover the sins of the people. Yeshua presents his own blood to cover our unintentional sins and those sins for which we have repented.

Yeshua's role as our High Priest is defined by the old testament law that clearly identifies that willfully and defiantly ignoring the law is blaspheming קָרְבָּן (aka grieving the spirit of grace).

The priest (Yeshua) shall make atonement before קָרְבָּן for the person who commits an error when he sins unintentionally, making atonement for him so that he may be forgiven. You shall have one law for him who sins unintentionally, whether he is native-born among the Israelites or a stranger who is living among them as a resident alien.

But the person who does [anything wrong] willfully and defiantly, whether he is native-born or a stranger, that one is blaspheming קָרְבָּן, and that person shall be cut off from among his people [excluding him from the atonement made for them].

— Numbers 15:28–30 AMP

Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works (beginning, old ways); or else I will come unto thee quickly (suddenly), and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

— Revelation 2:5

Works Based Salvation?

So then, is keeping the law a works based salvation? No. It is only by the Law that we have a High Priest in Yeshua who intercedes on our behalf for unintentional sins, providing the blood and testimony of Yeshua, to forgive our unintentional sins and those sins (law breaking) that we have repented (turned) from. His role as our High

Priest is established by the law, and by the law there is no means of salvation except through that High Priest's intercession and blood.

Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'

— Luke 17:9–10

Yeshua makes it very clear that obedience isn't earning our salvation. We are in debt because of our sins and the wages of sin is death, but the gift of **שֶׁמֶן** is eternal life (Romans 6:23). If we could earn something by obeying then obeying would have been optional. As servants we have nothing that our creator didn't give us in the first place; therefore, we owe him our very life. When we sin we owe him even more; therefore, the more we sin the greater our debt grows and the first rule of getting out of the hole is to stop digging. Stop sinning!



The typical three step path to salvation is:

- A. Admit that you are a sinner (law breaker)
- B. Believe that Yeshua paid for your sin on the cross
- C. Confess that Yeshua is Lord (Master) and
Call on Him for Salvation

You cannot complete the first step without knowing what it means to be a sinner, that is, without knowing the law which you broke. You cannot accept the second step without believing the law provides a High Priest, demands a sacrifice, and prophecies of a Messiah, and that Yeshua meets the requirements of the law and prophets. And you cannot complete the final step without submitting to follow Yeshua as your master. And who is Yeshua except the word and the law made flesh who does nothing except what his Father said, and that which was written in the old testament.

I am able to do nothing of Myself. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My will, but the will of the One (אֱלֹהִים) having sent Me.

— John 5:30

So Yeshua replied, "Truly, truly, I tell you, the Son can do nothing by Himself, unless He sees the Father doing it. For whatever the Father does, the Son also does.

— John 5:19

For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but to do the will of Him who sent Me.

— John 6:38

Yeshua is our Judge and High Priest and everything he says and does is as he heard from אֱלֹהִים. Yeshua himself followed the law, doing only that which אֱלֹהִים spoke. An in-depth study of everything Yeshua did and said will show that everything he taught can be found in the old testament.

A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.

— Luke 6:40

Then said Yeshua unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

— Matthew 16:24-26

If you aspire to be a Christian, a “like-Christ”, then your aim is to be like him, to walk has he walked, and to do nothing unless we see the Father, **אֵל**, doing so or commanding so, as it is written in the old and new testaments. If you are living through the tribulation, then Matthew 16:26 is the number one warning to keep in mind.

Go and Sin No More

Sin is the transgression of the law; therefore, when Yeshua says “*go and sin no more*” it can be understood as “*go and keep the law*”. Once we have been made well, by calling upon Yeshua to save us from our breaking of the law, we cannot keep *willfully* breaking it.

And Yeshua said unto her, “Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more”.

— John 8:11

*Afterward Yeshua found him in the temple, and said to him, “See, you have been made well. **Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you.**”*

— John 5:14

Notice that the penalty for sinning, also known as breaking the law after being healed, is worse than if we had never been healed or saved in the first place. This lines up exactly with what Paul said

*Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of **אֵל** underfoot...*

— Hebrews 10:29

The most obvious way to willfully break the law of יְהוָה is to claim there is no law, it has been done away with, and that you do not have to follow it because “*Yeshua has paid the price for you not following it*”.

Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. Whoever abides in Him does not sin (willfully). Whoever sins (willfully) has neither seen Him nor known Him.

— 1 John 3:4-6

“Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ “And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.’

— Matthew 7:22-23

All Have Sinned & Continue to Sin

For I (Paul) do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.

— Romans 7:15

If sinning after coming to Yeshua is even worse than never knowing Yeshua, then who can be saved? Even Paul, author of most of the New Testament, admits that he continues to do the very thing he hates, sin.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

— Romans 3:23

Based upon the fundamental truth that all have sinned, all are deserving of death and there is nothing of our own power we can do to have salvation except pray for His mercy and have faith in His finished work on the cross.

He that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

— John 8:12

And ye shall know the truth (the law), and the truth shall make you free... Yeshua answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever commits sin is the servant (slave) of sin. And the servant abides not in the house for ever: but the Son abides ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

— John 8:34

While in the flesh we are at war with sin and lawlessness. This war was described by Paul in Romans 7:

If, then, I do what I do not want to do, I agree with the law that it is good. But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

— Romans 7:16

The first thing to notice is that Paul declared the law good in his mind and spirit. If we do not agree that the law is good then we are in agreement with the sin that dwells within us. Paul states that this sin-nature, inherited from Adam, has enslaved our flesh. Sin is “personified” like a demon having influence over our flesh causing us to act contrary to our mind and will.

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for the will (to follow the Law) is present with me, but how to perform what is good (the Law) I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will (desire) not to do (breaking the law), that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

I find then a law (authority) that is the evil present with me, the one who wills to do good (the law).

*For I delight in the law of **אֱלֹהִים** according to the inward man (mind and spirit).*

But I see another law (authority) in my members (flesh), warring against the law (authority) of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law (authority) of sin which is in my members.

*O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank **אֱלֹהִים**—through Yeshua Christ our Lord!*

*So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of **אֱלֹהִים**, but with the flesh the law of sin.*

— Romans 7:16-25

How then shall we be saved?

This chapter went into great depth to highlight that salvation depends upon confessing that the law (of **אֱלֹהִים** via Moses and the Prophets) is good. We must be willing to obey the law in our mind and spirit even if the flesh continues to enslave us to sin against our will.

*That if you confess with your mouth, “Yeshua is Lord,” and believe in your heart that **אֱלֹהִים** raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*

— Romans 10:9

This simple verse means confessing that Yeshua is Lord. Yeshua does nothing that **אֱלֹהִים** didn't tell him (as documented in the Old Testament). He came to fulfill and establish the law of **אֱלֹהִים** documented by Moses and the Prophets. Confessing Yeshua to be Lord means he is your master and that your desire and will is to do nothing Yeshua hasn't commanded you. And if Yeshua only commands what **אֱלֹהִים** commands, then we should desire to do all that **אֱלֹהִים** commands.

If that is the desire of your mind and heart then you will do your best to keep the law of **אֱלֹהִים** even if you occasionally sin. It means

that when you become aware of your sin, breaking the law, you immediately repent and stop sinning. If you deny the law with your mouth, you have denied Yeshua as Lord and he will deny you.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of Θεοῦ, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Yeshua for good works, which Θεοῦ prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

— Ephesians 2:8–10

Our salvation is not a result of works which means no one can boast they are saved because of their works. I certainly wouldn't want my salvation to depend upon my works because, like Paul, I do what I hate and not what I teach. We are saved because we make Yeshua our Lord and follow the Law of his Father to the best of our ability and with the help of his Holy Spirit.

Can one have salvation without repentance? What is repentance except the turning from sin to obedience? Obedience is the logical outcome of confessing him to be your Lord. Is preaching obedience a works-based salvation or is attempted obedience the evidence of faith? Why try to obey unless you have faith that Yeshua's blood will cover your failures? Did Yeshua's death on the cross free us from any obligation to attempt obedience?

So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

— Romans 7:12

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

— Matthew 7:21

What is doing the Father's will except being obedient to the least of his commands? Is perfect obedience possible? Not in the flesh. Is

perfect obedience required for salvation, No. But a mind and heart of obedience is.

Many say “Lord, Lord”, confessing with their mouth, but their actions show a rebellion to seeking to understand and follow His commands. They say in their hearts, *“There are no laws or commands because I am forgiven of all sin”*. This is like a reckless driver claiming there are no rules of the road because someone has paid his tickets. When you say “Lord, Lord” you are saying “master, master”, and how can someone be your “master” unless you attempt to obey their commands?

Commands to Follow

Now that we have established that His law and commandments are holy and good, and confessed that Yeshua is our Lord who saves us from our unintentional sin, we must seek to know him and his will. Knowing him and knowing his commandments go hand-in-hand.

Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked. Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.

— 1 John 2:4-7

Many reject the observance of the Feast Days, others take issue with observing the Sabbath, still others debate about eating pork and shellfish. Each of these will be addressed and more as we learn to walk as Yeshua did.

All Scripture [old testament is all that existed when stated] is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

— 2 Timothy 3:16–17

If all scripture is useful for training in righteousness, then clearly the old testament laws are still useful. There was no law from the old testament which Yeshua broke; therefore, to the best of our ability we ought to do the same. If you are unable to do all of these things, like the thief on the cross, you can still be saved. The key is to know the difference between being unwilling and unable. The thief was willing to be baptized, but unable, given he was on the cross and about to die.

Is anyone in danger of losing their salvation by keeping the feast days and Sabbath? Clearly Not! However, teaching against them puts you in danger of being little or nothing in the Kingdom.

What is the consequence of not repenting and continuing in that behavior while professing “*saved by grace through faith alone*”? Couldn’t a murderer exclaim “*works based salvation!*” to anyone who would dare rebuke them and warn them that they dare to grieve the spirit of grace? If we can expect people to repent from murder, on what basis is murder different from keeping the Sabbath? Are they not both among the 10 commandments?

Now this I say and testify in αγάπη, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. they are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of uncleanness (eating pork, etc). But that is not the way you learned Christ!

— Ephesians 4:17-20

Many modern translations have substituted “impurity” for “uncleanness” to hide the clear connection to uncleanness in the old testament.

Repentance is a type of “work”. Identification of any extra commands from scripture creates “more work”. Any obligation that people wouldn’t willingly assume without the law is deemed “work”. Even atheists are against murder and theft, and they often have higher “moral” standards than many professing Christians. If you only obey instructions that your flesh agrees with, then you are no different from the Gentiles.

So anyone who brings scripture forward to teach additional instructions beyond what even atheists would naturally follow is rejected as “*preaching works based salvation*”. Hypocrites! Obeying legitimate commands is not works based salvation, the only debate should have is whether a command and instruction is from **אֱלֹהִים** or not.

Can you lose your salvation for *willfully* ignoring a command? I believe the scriptures say yes. Can you get your salvation back by repenting from that willful act? Yes.

If I tell the righteous man (he who is covered by the blood of Yeshua) that he will surely live (be saved), but he then trusts in his righteousness (Yeshua is our righteousness) and commits iniquity (lawlessness), then none of his righteous (lawful) works will be remembered; he will die because of the iniquity (lawlessness) he has committed.

— Ezekiel 33:13

You will say then, “Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in.” Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness (law). Otherwise you also will be cut off.

— Romans 11:19-22

Can you lose your salvation by obeying what you thought was a command but was actually a misunderstanding? Not that I can tell unless your actions conflicted with another command. In which case you have a situation of one interpretation of scripture appearing to

conflict with another. In any case, seeking Him means seeking out his instructions and being willing to follow them, not rejecting anyone that presents scriptural evidence that there are certain things we are supposed to do.

He Put an End to Sacrifices

As prophesied by the Prophets, **¶¶¶** put an end to sacrifices for sin and now any sacrifice for sin other than the blood of Yeshua is an abomination. This future end to the sacrifice system for sins was expected from the time of Moses and the Prophets. Furthermore, the commands related to sacrifices were for the Levite Priests and did not apply to anyone other than the priests. And without Levite priests we cannot make sacrifices of any type.

*Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that **¶¶¶** set up, not man. For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; thus it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer. Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, since **there are priests who offer gifts according to the law. They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things.***

— Hebrews 7:8

We have a new High Priest who intercedes on our behalf and covers our sins; however, this doesn't eliminate sin just the penalty of sin for those who repent. Someone paying your speeding ticket on your behalf doesn't remove the law of speed limits. And your speeding ticket is only covered if you truly repent and do not grieve the spirit of grace.

While there are no more sacrifices for sin, there will still be other kinds of offerings, presented in the Millennial Kingdom which will be offered by a reinstated priestly class. Notice that when the book of Hebrews was written, there were still **priests who rightly offered gifts according to the law, a copy or shadow of the heavenly things.**

For example, Feast of Tabernacles will be observed along with related sacrifices (those that are not related to sin).

And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

— Zechariah 14:16

If Yeshua is your Lord, then your will would be to obey the law of gifts and sacrifices when you are able to, but until the Levite priests are identified and trained and the millennial temple built we are unable to offer such gifts. This failure might be a sin, but if it is, it is a sin covered by the blood of Yeshua much like the failure of the thief on the cross to get baptized. It is my belief that no priests or legitimate temple will be available until after 2031 so do not be deceived into supporting sacrifices in any Jewish temple built during the tribulation, those sacrifices will be an abomination. In any event, the laws of sacrifices and gifts are so underspecified that we will have to wait for them to be written on our hearts before we can do them properly.

What is the Smallest Commandment?

Everyone agrees that we should follow the greatest of the commandments:

And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" And he said to him, "You shall love ייְהוָה your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

— Matthew 23:34–40

But I think that we should also be asking ourselves, “*what is the smallest commandment*” because thinking “*I follow the greatest so the smallest doesn’t matter*” is a spirit of rebellion. Perhaps some remain

intentionally ignorant covering their eyes and putting their fingers in your ears saying “*I can't hear you*”.

Imagine you have a child that “obeys” only your greatest commands, those which they happen to agree with, but otherwise ignores every thing else you ask them to do, do you think such a child loves you or despises your commands.

The greatest command is “**You shall love יְהוָה your God** with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all your mind”.

*For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.
And his commandments are not burdensome.*

— 1 John 5:3

Therefore, you cannot even keep the greatest commandment without attempting to keep the smallest commandment with all of your heart, soul, and mind.

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

— Matthew 5:17–20

Notice that this may not be a salvation issue, it is a treasures in heaven issue. Apparently, even teaching people to relax the least of the commandments isn’t enough to lose your salvation and be denied the Kingdom if it wasn’t willful. That said, there are translations that suggest that “least in the kingdom” could be translated as “like nothing in the kingdom”. It is better to stay away from that side of the spectrum.

...but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

— Matthew 6:20–21

We are commanded to lay up treasures in heaven. If you are not concerned with treasures in heaven, then where is your heart? And how do we lay up treasures in heaven? **Those who follow and teach the least of these commandments will be the greatest (richest) in the kingdom of heaven.**

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.

— Matthew 23:23

The Pharisees focused on the small things at the exclusion of the big things, but modern Christians teach the “big things” at the exclusion of the small things. Many teach that keeping the weightier matters is all that matters; however, Yeshua clearly stated that we should not neglect the smaller matters.

So my challenge to you is to enumerate as many commands and instructions as you can identify from His word and then follow them as closely as you can as the means of loving him with all of your heart, mind and soul and not as a means of earning your salvation.

Are Those Instructions Just for the Jews?

Many people assume that God has two sets of expectations, one for the Jews and one for everyone else. According to this doctrine, the “Jews” have many more commands they must follow and everyone else, the “Church”, is given a much lower bar.

Yeshua Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

— Hebrews 13:8

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Yeshua.

— Galatians 3:28

But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you. Then you will say, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not become proud, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God’s kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off. And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again. For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree.

—Romans 11:17-24

The question you must ask yourself is this how do you know whether you are a “Jew” or a member of the “Church”? The entirety of the early church was Jews that followed Yeshua and accepted Him as their savior. Was this early church expected to follow more commands than everyone else because of their genetic heritage? Must we do a DNA test to determine what category we fall into? No!!

Are you a Party to the New Covenant?

The New Covenant is only with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, to which we are grafted in as wild olive branches.

Behold, the days are coming, declares יהוה, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their

fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares יְהוָה. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares יְהוָה: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

— Jeremiah 31:31–33

"There shall be one law for the native and for the stranger who sojourns among you."

— Exodus 12:49

The intentional sinner is blaspheming יְהוָה and shall be cut off. Causing people to “doubt” the law is the oldest deception in the book.

And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

— Genesis 3:1

This is the same technique Satan is using today. He is deceiving people by getting them to make excuses for ignoring and denying God’s law, the very law the Northern and Southern tribes were scattered for breaking. The law of the very olive tree we have been grafted into, under a new, superior, high priest.

His law clearly states that it is forever in many places and He cannot lie nor contradict himself.

So this day (Passover) shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to יְהוָה throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.... "And you shall observe this thing as an ordinance for you and your sons (future generations) forever."

— Exodus 12

'Therefore the children of Israel (and those grafted in) shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout

their generations as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days יהוה made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.'"

"This shall be a statute forever for you: In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether a native of your own country or a stranger who dwells among you. It is a sabbath of solemn rest for you, and you shall afflict your souls. It is a statute forever.

— Leviticus 16:29,31

'And you shall proclaim on the same day that it is a holy convocation to you. You shall do no customary work on it. It shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

— Leviticus 23:21

'You shall keep it (Tabernacles) as a feast to יהוה for seven days in the year. It shall be a statute forever in your generations. You shall celebrate it in the seventh month. 'You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths.

— Leviticus 23:41

"Observe and obey all these words which I command you, that it may go well with you and your children after you forever, when you do what is good and right in the sight of יהוה your God.

— Deuteronomy 12:28

As evidence that forever means forever and not just "until Yeshua", consider this prophecy about the millennial reign:

And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, יהוה of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso

will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, יהוה of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

— Zechariah 14

By this point you should get the idea that we are commanded to love him by keeping the smallest of his commandments and that many commandments that modern churches teach us to ignore are actually declared by יהוה to be ordinances forever and even prophesied to be observed in the future. This book will summarize how to follow commands we are to observe, such as the Sabbath, the calendar, and the diet. In this way you can avoid grieving the spirit of grace and have confidence that you have repented from what likely caused you to miss the rapture in the first place so that you will have more assurance that if you die a martyr you will wake up on the right side of eternity.

Yeshua could not teach against the commands of יהוה given through Moses because if he did, then by the very law of יהוה he would be considered a false prophet.

If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder that he tells you comes to pass, and if he says, 'Let us follow other gods,' which you have not known, 'and let us serve them,' you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams. For יהוה your God is testing you, to know whether you love יהוה your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You shall walk after יהוה your God and fear him and keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and hold fast to him.

— Deuteronomy 13

Beware Traditions of Men

One of the biggest mistakes and misunderstandings people make is to assume that the Jews and their traditions are in alignment with יהוה's commands. The Jews put more weight on their oral tradition written down in the Talmud than they place in the Bible.

"Watch out!" Yeshua told them. "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."... Then they understood that He was not telling them to beware of the leaven used in bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

— Matthew 16:6,12

Modern day Jews are the descendants of the Pharisees and carry on with their teachings.

Then came to Yeshua scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me." But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

— Matthew 15

As a rule of thumb, if you cannot find the command in the Bible then you should treat it as a tradition of men. Not all traditions are "bad", so long as they do not contradict or nullify the commands documented in the Bible and you do not teach or impose those traditions on others as if they were commands from **אֱלֹהִים**.

Appointed Times

אֱלֹהִים gives us appointed times, known as 'moed', seasons or feasts of (אֱלֹהִים) אֱלֹהִים during which he meets with mankind. You may be familiar with the spring feast of Passover during which Israel was brought out of slavery in Egypt in 1446 BC and also when Yeshua was crucified as our Passover lamb in 31 AD. Then there are summer feasts of Shavuot and Pentecost and finally the fall feasts where we expect Yeshua to return. These feasts are known as The Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, Feast of Tabernacles, and the Last Great Day (of Tabernacles) known as the Atzeret, but commonly translated as solemn assembly.

In order to understand the roadmap of the tribulation and major movements of אֱלֹהִים you must learn the timeline of these feasts. It is by understanding His feasts that I identified the Day of אֱלֹהִים, the Last Great Day, the Atzeret, as October 9th, 2024. If that day arrives as I understand from scripture, then chances are that the following timeline represents the true biblical calendar. Later chapters will provide extensive proofs, but the following is an outline of the key appointed times that you will want to observe as a sign that אֱלֹהִים is your Elohim (God).

And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am אֱלֹהִים your God.

— Ezekiel 20:20

The feasts also contain commands for us to observe and remember, so those seeking to obey the least of His commands do well to understand the days and their meanings.

New Days

Each calendar day starts at first light and goes until the next first light. First light is about an hour before sunrise. This is contrary to Jewish tradition of sunset to sunset which they inherited from Babylon. A later chapter will dive into the Biblical evidence for this conclusion.

Every day there is supposed to be a morning and evening sacrifice of a lamb by the High Priest. This is not something we can do directly, because we are not priests. That said, we can still offer morning and evening prayers in remembrance of this appointed time.

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

— Romans 12

New Months

The month starts in the morning at first light after the night of the full moon. A full moon can be identified as the first day on which the sun sets at or before the full moon rising.

You shall blow with the New Moon (month) Shofar in the Full Moon for the day of our festival sacrifice.

— Psalms 81:3

This translation of Psalm 81:3 reflects the literal order of the Hebrew words and factors in all of the prefix and suffix letters. Common translations, such as the KJV, substitute “appointed time” for “full moon”, but all modern texts such as NKJV, NASB, and ESV recognize it as the full moon.

By tradition, the phase of the moon all other cultures started the month on was the dark or sliver moon. This is why NASA considers the dark moon the “New Moon” because it was the moon phase at the beginning of the month. That said, there is nothing in scripture I was

able to find that contradicts the interpretation of Psalm 81:3 full moon as the start of the month.

If the day of **אַתָּה** arrives on the Atzeret of October 9th, 2024 then you have all the confirmation you need that **אַתָּה** reckons His Holy Days from the full moon. That said, I will provide further evidence for the full moon in a later chapter so that you may know that He clearly prophesied the day of judgment. All of that said, if things do not come to pass according to my interpretation of scripture, the error is with me and not Him.

The Bible gives specific instructions for the first day of the month which suggests that this day was of greater significance than ordinary days and Sabbaths.

*And in the beginnings of your months you shall offer a burnt offering unto **אֱלֹהִים**: Two Bulls, 1 ram, 7 spotless lambs... 1 kid goat, and along with the continual daily offering (1 lamb in the morning and 1 lamb in the evening).*

— Numbers 28:11

Yeshua was the ultimate sacrifice for our sins and other sacrifices can only be offered by priests; therefore, these instructions are not for us to follow at this time. Never the less, they still indicate the value **אַתָּה** placed on the start of the month. At the very least, if you have a Shofar, you can blow it on the daylight after the Full Moon.

*Thus saith **אֱלֹהִים אֲלֹהִים**; The gate of the inner court that looks 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.*

— Ezekiel 46

This verse clearly establishes that there are three kinds of days on **אַתָּה**'s calendar: working days, sabbath days, and new moon days. It further establishes that the month starts with the full moon, because scripture compares the sky to a tabernacle.

*...In the heavens/sky He has set a tabernacle for the sun,
which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
And rejoices like a strong man to run its race. Its rising is
from one end of heaven/sky...*

— Psalm 19:4-6

The east gate, or front gate, of the sky is the area where the sun and moon rise, and on the new months the east gate opens for the full moon to rise. Notice that this verse also provides evidence for the day to begin at first light because this is the beginning of the circuit (circle, cycle) of the sun. The sliver moon can only be sighted in the west at sunset.

On New Moons there is no buying or selling:

*"When will the new moon be over, that we may sell grain?
And the Sabbath, that we may offer wheat for sale,*

— Amos 8:5

Weekly Sabbaths

Many people are probably familiar with the Sabbath being the 7th day of the week during which everyone is to rest and there is no buying and selling.

*"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to **יְהוָה** your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days **יְהוָה** made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore **יְהוָה** blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.*

— Exodus 20:8

More broadly, the term Sabbath refers to a week ending in a day of rest. The Hebrew word ‘yom’ is typically translated as “day”, but has many different meanings including:

6. daylight, as opposed to night
7. 24 hour period
8. An abstract division of time, or a period of time
9. A year
10. A lifetime

With this understanding, a week ending with a daylight of rest could be called a “day” because it is an abstract division of time. With this context it makes sense why Exodus 20 mentions all 7 days. You could therefore translate it as:

*Remember the Sabbath week, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh **daylight** is a Sabbath to **יְהוָה** your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six **daylights** **יְהוָה** made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the **seventh daylight**. Therefore **יְהוָה** blessed the **Sabbath daylight** and made it holy.*

— Exodus 20:8 Interpreted

Now that we understand that the Sabbath is a group of 7 days ending in a day of rest, we must ask ourself when does the week start? Some people believe the Sabbath daylight is Saturday, others Sunday, and still others Friday! Scripture gives us some insight:

*And it shall come to pass (after the day of **יְהוָה**), From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me.*

— Isaiah 66:23 ESV

Years are divided into months and months are divided into “New Moons” and “Sabbath Weeks” and “Sabbath Weeks” are divided into “6 work days” and “1 rest day”. We know that months are not evenly divisible into the year; therefore, there are some years with a 13th month. Likewise, “Sabbath Weeks” are not evenly divisible into some months; therefore, some months have an extra day after the 4th

Sabbath week before the next New Moon day. Scripture is silent on the nature of the 13th month and on the 30th day of some months.

Through careful study of scriptures and tests of history I have proven beyond reasonable doubt that the Sabbath is the 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th day of each lunar month. On these days there is a half-moon, dark-moon, or full moon. A later chapter is dedicated to proving this out.

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 (moed/feasts/appointed times), and for days, and years: And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night with the stars. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness.

— Genesis 1:14-18

We know that the sun, moon, and stars are for signs and appointed times and we also know that the Sabbath is a sign and appointed time; therefore it makes sense that the Sabbath should be governed by the sun, moon and stars.

'Therefore the children of Israel (and those grafted in) shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.' It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever'.

— Zechariah 14

With the Sabbath days connected to the phases of the moon, we have a clear sign for our appointed times with שַׁבָּת that cannot be corrupted by the tradition of men. The traditional continuous weekly cycle has a number of contradictions and ambiguous situations that make it a logical impossibility. For starters, if you count your days as the number of sunrises you observe, with the Sabbath starting every 7th sunrise, then two people leaving the Garden of Eden in opposite directions (one eastward, one westward) will meet on the opposite

side of the globe and will forever disagree about what day is the Sabbath. With a Full Moon Lunar Sabbath any disagreement would be resolved at the start of the next month and if traveling at historical speeds, before trains and air planes, they would be synced up before they even met.

A benefit of the Full Moon Lunar Sabbath understanding is that there are never any conflicts between the weekly Sabbath and other appointed times. Sabbaths are days of rest, healing, and coming together to read the Bible. It would be challenging to keep the Sabbath on Preparation Day for Passover which involved a lot of work. A future chapter will provide the extensive proofs that this is the true Sabbath.

Yeshua and Paul both had a custom of teaching in the synagogues on the Sabbath. I blow the shofar in the morning to announce it and in the evening to close it while avoiding buying, selling, and chores. To remind myself to avoid work and relax, I wear pajamas. Do not fall into the trap of the Pharisees which added traditions of men that prohibited travel, war, fasting, gleaning grain, and healing on the sabbath.

New Years

The first month of the year begins on the daylight after the first full moon after the spring equinox.

And יְהוָה spoke unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, this month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.

— Exodus 12

Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto יְהוָה thy God: for in the month of Abib יְהוָה thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night.

— Deuteronomy 16

The word “Abib” means fresh, young barley ears which means the first month of the year begins in the spring. This is critical because the first fruits of barley are waived on the 16th day of the first month. The spring Equinox is March 20th from 2024 through 2032. Because there

are an average of 29.5 days per month, there are only 354 days in a Lunar year. This means that on some years the 12th month will end before the Equinox, and in those years there is a 13th month. This occurs an average of 8 out of 19 years.

Passover & Unleavened Bread

The feast of Passover and Unleavened bread is a remembrance of two of the most important events in biblical history: the Exodus of Egypt and the crucifixion and resurrection of Yeshua. From the evening of the 14th until the evening of the 21st you shall eat unleavened bread. More specifically, no leaven should be found anywhere in the homes of the people and community.

We no longer have priests to kill a Passover lamb and Yeshua was the final Passover lamb to be offered as a sacrifice for sin. That said, it is still possible for us to eat lamb and unleavened bread as a memorial. On the 13th of the month is the Last Supper which we were instructed to "do in remembrance of him".

For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."

— Luke 22:18-20



Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the 10th day of this month each man must select a lamb for his family, one

per household... You must keep it until the 14th day of the month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel will slaughter the animals at between noon and sunset (about 3 PM).

— Exodus 12:3,6

The Passover to יְהוָה begins at twilight on the 14th day of the first month. On the 15th day of the same month begins the Feast of Unleavened Bread to יְהוָה. For 7 days you must eat unleavened bread. On the first day you are to hold a sacred assembly; you are not to do any regular work. For 7 days you are to present an offering made by fire to יְהוָה. On the 7th day there shall be a holy convocation; you must not do any regular work.'"

— Leviticus 23:5-8

Six days thou shalt eat unleavened bread: and on the seventh day shall be a solemn assembly (Atzeret) to יְהוָה thy God: thou shalt do no work therein.

— Deuteronomy 16:8



First Fruits of Barley

And יְהוָה spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, and thou shalt say to them, When ye shall enter into the land which I give you, and reap the harvest of it, then shall ye bring a sheaf, the first-fruits of your harvest, to the priest; and he shall lift up the sheaf before יְהוָה, to be accepted for you. On the [to]morrow of the first day [of Unleavened Bread] the priest shall lift it up.

— Leviticus 23:9-14 Septuagint

And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath [week] starting the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering;

— Leviticus 23:15

The text of Leviticus appears to point to the 16th in two different ways. First it says it is the day after the Sabbath, second it references the day the sheaf was offered, which we know was the 16th. I added the implied [week] to clarify that the “sabbath day/period of time” likely refers to 6 work days followed by a sabbath daylight, and not a single calendar day, as we discussed earlier. This interpretation is confirmed by Jewish historian Philo from Alexandria, Egypt around the time of Yeshua.

The solemn assembly (Atzeret) on the occasion of the festival of the sheaf having such great privileges, is the prelude to another festival of still greater importance; for from this day the fiftieth day (Shavout) is reckoned.

— Philo Special Laws II, XXX

Since the Passover Atzeret is on the 7th day of Unleavened bread, we have historical evidence that the Jews interpreted “the morrow after the sabbath starting the sheaf wave offering” to be after the 21st of the month rather than starting on the 16th, which is what would be implied if “sabbath” was interpreted as a single day rather than 7 days.

Next, we have evidence from Biblical history that First Fruits was on the 16th day of the month.

And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the 14th day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. And they did eat of the old grain of the land on the morrow after the passover (1st day of Unleavened Bread), unleavened cakes, and parched grain in the selfsame day. And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old grain of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

— Joshua 5:10–12

The book of Joshua documents that they ate of the land on first fruits of Barley which is the 16th of the month. We can confirm this interpretation with the writings of Josephus. Josephus and Philo aren't scripture, but are a great second or third witnesses.

But on the second day of unleavened bread, which is the 16th day of the month, they first partake of the fruits of the earth, for before that day they do not touch them.

— *Josephus*

We are also told that Yeshua was the first fruits of those who slept, or risen from the dead. This clearly implies that Yeshua rose on the 16th day, which was the 3rd day after he was killed as our Passover lamb on the afternoon of the 14th day of the month.

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.

— *1 Corinthians 15:20*

Shavout: First Fruits of Wheat

*And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths [weeks] shall be complete: Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto **YHWH**. Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; **they shall be baked with leaven; they are the first fruits unto **YHWH**.***

— *Leviticus 23:15-17*

We know that the seven "sabbaths" is talking about units of "weeks" because this is also called the "feast of weeks".

*And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of (beginning from) the first fruits of wheat harvest, and [going to] the feast of harvest at the year's end (cycle). **Thrice in the***

year shall all your men children appear before יְהוָה, the God of Israel.

— Exodus 34:22

Upon doing a closer study of the Hebrew, the word for “first fruits” has a ‘yod’ suffix which indicates “beginning of” and implied going to the harvest at the cycles end, which is the first fruits of oil. The very next verse lets us know that there are three first fruits celebrations in this period. Combined with the first fruits of Barley there are a total of four first fruit harvests: barley, wheat, wine, and oil.

All the best of the oil, and all the best of the wine, and of the wheat, the first fruits of them which they shall offer unto יְהוָה, them have I given thee.

— Numbers 18:12

Now therefore, the wheat, the barley, the oil, and the wine which my lord has spoken of, let him send to his servants.

— 2 Chronicles 2:15

And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

— Revelation 6:6

And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil.

— Joel 2:24

Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of יְהוָה, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all.

— Jeremiah 31:12

And thou shalt eat before יְהוָה thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, the tithe (first fruits) of thy wheat, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear יְהוָה thy God always.

— Deuteronomy 14:23

For she did not know that I gave her wheat, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal (false god, meaning lord).

— Hosea 2:8

As you can see, wheat, wine, and oil are used together throughout the Bible and are associated with the first fruits which we are to give to יְהוָה. Each of these first fruits is separated by seven complete sabbaths (weeks), starting after the first week after Unleavened Bread. This gives us the following dates:

First Fruits	Month	Day	Feast
Barley	1 st	16	Unleavened Bread, Yeshua's Resurrection
Wheat	3 rd	16	Shavout, Baptism and Ascension of Yeshua
Wine	5 th	9	Pentecost, 9th of Av, Birth of Yeshua, First Miracle Water into Wine
Oil	7 th	1	Feast of Trumpets, Rosh Hashanah, Conception of Yeshua

That said, depending upon the year, New Oil might be on the 30th day of the 6th month, being the last day of the cycle. Typically Rosh Hashanah is considered the “head of the year” which lines up exactly with Exodus 34:22 when it says “feast of the harvest at the years end”. An alternative interpretation is that first fruits is always offered on the first day of the week; therefore, the first fruits of oil might be the 2nd day of the 7th month.

First Fruits of Wine (Pentecost)

This feast is the least well known by traditional Christian and Jewish teaching, but once you study the scriptures it becomes a secret hidden in plain sight.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.... Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine. ... But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

— Acts 2

When they Holy Spirit came down on Pentecost they were accused of being drunk on New Wine, which is only available when grapes are freshly harvested at the end of July. Peter's defense is even more telling, because by law you could not partake of New Wine until after the First Fruits were offered and they were offered at the 3rd hour of the day (about 9 AM).

We can connect Pentecost to the worship of the Golden Calf by comparing 3000 killed to the 3000 saved. The timeline of Exodus has the Golden Calf incident occur at least 50 days after they arrived at Mount Sinai on the 3rd day of the 3rd month. That would line up perfectly for the 9th day of the 5th month.

And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell (died) of the people that day about 3000 men.

— Exodus 32:28

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about 3000 souls.

— Acts 2:41

Historically, this is a tragic day for the Jews because both the first and second temple were destroyed on the "9th of Av", which we now know to be Pentecost. This book shows evidence that the First Fruits of Wine is the most likely appointed time for Yeshua's conception, and it just so happens that Jewish tradition expects the Messiah to come on this date.

One of Yeshua's final words at the last supper was that he would not drink wine again until "*new wine*":

I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new [wine] with you in my Father's kingdom.

— Matthew 26:29

How can we be sure this is an actual feast?

The narrative of Moses descending Mount Sinai in Exodus 32, during the events surrounding the Golden Calf, offers a scriptural foundation for recognizing a "New Wine Feast" as an appointed time (moéd) in the biblical calendar. This feast, declared by Aaron as a legitimate observance "to שׁבּוֹת," aligns with the principles of harvest dedication and the inauguration of new wine. The Septuagint's unique phrasing in Moses' identification of the camp's noise emphasizes the initiatory aspect of wine in the celebration, connecting it to Torah laws on first fruits. Without delving into judgments on the execution, this account establishes the feast as a divinely oriented moéd, marking the proper beginning of the vintage season through consecrated offerings and joyful partaking.

As the Israelites awaited Moses' return from Sinai, Aaron responded to their request by creating the Golden Calf and proclaiming a feast. The text presents this as an intentional religious observance dedicated to the God of Israel, framing it as an appointed time for communal celebration. In Exodus 32:5:

And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, Tomorrow is a feast to שׁבּוֹת.

— Exodus 32:5

The Hebrew word for "feast" here is chag (חַג), often denoting a pilgrimage festival or appointed time (moéd). By declaring it "**יְמִינָה**," Aaron positions the event as a legitimate moéd, akin to the appointed times outlined in Leviticus 23:2. The following day involved offerings, eating, drinking, and revelry (Exodus 32:6), elements consistent with biblical harvest feasts where wine plays a central role.

Upon descending the mountain, Moses hears the sounds of the feast and discerns its nature. The Septuagint (LXX) rendering of Exodus 32:18 provides a key insight into the wine-focused inauguration:

*And Moses said, It is not the voice of them that begin the battle, nor the voice of them that begin of defeat, but the voice of them that **begin of wine** do I hear.*

— Exodus 32:18, LXX Septuagint

The Greek φωνὴν ἐξαρχόντων οἴνου—literally "*the sound of those leading off with wine*" or "**beginning with wine**"—highlights the feast's initiatory character. The verb ἐξαρχόντων (from ἐξάρχω) conveys starting or leading a ritual activity, such as commencing a harvest celebration with the new vintage. This aligns with the feast's declaration as a moéd, where the "beginning with wine" marks the appointed time for accessing and celebrating the fresh produce of the vine.

The Scriptures integrate wine into appointed times through laws ensuring its consecrated use, particularly via first fruits offerings. These establish the proper framework for a feast inaugurating the vintage, as implied in the narrative's harvest-like elements. Numbers 18:12 addresses the dedication of new wine:

*Every first offering of oil, and every first offering of wine, their firstfruits of corn, whatsoever they may give to **יְמִינָה**, to thee have I given them.*

— Numbers 18:12, LXX

This positions the choicest new wine as an offering "to **יְמִינָה**,"

mirroring the feast's intent and setting the moed's starting point with divine dedication.

Exodus 22:29 emphasizes timely presentation of harvest products:

Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors [including pressed wine].

— Exodus 22:29

In the context of a feast "to יְהוָה," this supports beginning the celebration with the vintage's first fruits, aligning with the moed's proclaimed purpose.

Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of יְהוָה, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the firstborn of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all.

— Jeremiah 31:12

First Fruits of Oil / Feast of Trumpets



Oil Holder
Feast of New Oil



Shofar
Feast of Trumpets

The Feast of Trumpets is often associated with Rosh Hashanah (the head of the year) and the first fruits of new Oil. This is the time of year when Olives are ripe. Not much is known about how to celebrate

this, but from Nehemiah it appears they gathered and read the scriptures.

Then יְהוָה spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'In the 7th month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a sabbath-rest, a memorial of blowing (shouting) of trumpets, a holy convocation.

— Leviticus 23:23-24

When the 7th month came, the children of Israel were in their cities. Now all the people gathered together as one man in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate; and they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses, which יְהוָה had commanded Israel. So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly of men and women and all who could hear with understanding on the first day of the 7th month. Then he read from it in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate from morning until midday, before the men and women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law.

— Nehemiah 8

This day is holy unto יְהוָה your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law.

— Nehemiah 8:9

Many people expect the Feast of Trumpets to be the rapture, but on the day of the rapture he comforts those who mourn. Since Nehemiah had to instruct the people not to cry, we should assume that on this day we also should not cry.

'And in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work. For you it is a day of blowing the trumpets. You shall offer a burnt offering as a sweet aroma to יְהוָה

— Numbers 29:1-6

On the day of your gladness also, and at your appointed feasts and at the beginnings of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings. They shall be a reminder of you before your God: I am יהוה your God."

— Numbers 10:10

Considering Feast of Trumpets always falls on a New Moon (full moon) day, we should also blow the trumpets along with the shouting. This day also serves as a 10 day warning for the Day of Atonement, which is a day of Judgment.

Day of Atonement

The day of Atonement is considered a day of judgment and the 10 days leading up to it are traditionally focused on examining our lives and repenting of our sins. When the day of atonement arrives we discover whether יהוה accepted us or not. This is the only feast day where we are expected to fast from the evening of the 9th day to the evening of the 10th day. It is also a sabbath day of rest where there is no buying or selling. It is on this day that our sins may be forgiven and every seven years we are commanded to forgive all debts to those in the body of Yeshua.

And יהוה spake unto Moses, saying, Also on the 10th day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto יהוה. And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before יהוה your God. For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. And whatsoever soul it be that does any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people. Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month

at evening, from even unto evening, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.

— Leviticus 23:27

*And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself: And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before **אֱלֹהִים**, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail: And he shall put the incense upon the fire before **אֱלֹהִים**, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not: And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.*

— Leviticus 16:11-14

Because Yeshua is our High Priest and He is not guilty of any sin, this part of the Day of Atonement is no longer necessary. Going forward Yeshua makes Atonement for our sins using his own blood.

*Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat: And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remains among them in the midst of their uncleanness. And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel. And he shall go out unto the altar that is before **אֱלֹהִים**, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round*

about. And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.

The Scapegoat

And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.

And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there: And he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place, and put on his garments, and come forth, and offer his burnt offering, and the burnt offering of the people, and make an atonement for himself, and for the people. And the fat of the sin offering shall he burn upon the altar. And he that let go the goat for the scapegoat shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward come into the camp.

Yeshua is our “scape goat” and we put our sins on him and he takes them away. After we confess our sins we are commanded to be baptized and this is a reflection of the instructions given to the priests on the Day of Atonement.

And the bullock for the sin offering, and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall one carry forth without the camp; and they shall burn in the fire their skins, and their flesh, and their dung. And he that burns them shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp.

The Day of Atonement

*And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that lives among you: For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before **¶¶¶**. It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever. And the priest, whom he shall anoint, and whom he shall consecrate to minister in the priest's office in his father's stead, shall make the atonement, and shall put on the linen clothes, even the holy garments: And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation. And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. And he did as **¶¶¶** commanded Moses.*

— Leviticus 16:15-34

It is on the Day of Atonement on the 49th year of the cycle that we proclaim liberty (freedom from debts) throughout all of the land and consecrate the 50th year, the first year of the next jubilee cycle.

Then you shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement you shall make the trumpet to sound throughout all your land. And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you; and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family. That fiftieth year shall be a Jubilee to you; in it you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of its own accord, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine.

— Leviticus 25:9-11

'On the tenth day of this seventh month you shall have a holy convocation. You shall afflict your souls; you shall not do any work. You shall present a burnt offering to יְהוָה as a sweet aroma: one young bull, one ram, and seven lambs in their first year. Be sure they are without blemish. Their grain offering shall be of fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths of an ephah for the bull, two-tenths for the one ram, and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs; also one kid of the goats as a sin offering, besides the sin offering for atonement, the regular burnt offering with its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

— Numbers 29:7-11

It was on the Day of Atonement that Yeshua went to Nazareth, opened the scriptures, and read Isaiah 61. He then proclaimed it fulfilled in his hearing.

The Spirit of יְהוָה יְהוָה is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings (news, the forgiveness of debts) unto the meek (poor, in debt); he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives (indebted), and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn.

— Isaiah 61:1-3

When Yeshua read it he stopped just before “and the day of vengeance of our God.” That day will be proclaimed on the Day of Atonement in the last year of 70 jubilees, September 28th, 2024.

At the end of every seven years (On the Day of Atonement) you must cancel debts. This is the manner of remission: Every creditor shall cancel what he has loaned to his neighbor. He is not to collect anything from his neighbor or brother, because יְהוָה's time of release has been proclaimed. You may collect something from a foreigner, but you must forgive whatever your brother owes you.

— Deuteronomy 15:1-3

Notice the the debts are only canceled among those in Israel and Israel is who we are grafted into as the body of Yeshua. The foreigner are those outside the body of Yeshua. It is only by the blood of Yeshua that we obtain forgiveness of sins and our resulting debt to **אֱלֹהִים**. This day is one of the most anticipated days for **אֱלֹהִים**'s people.

Feast of Tabernacles

The next feast is known as the Feast of Tabernacles, or the Feast of Nations. It starts on the 15th day of the 7th month. This is a week long feast where people were people dwell in temporary structures (tents) and expected to allocate a sizable portion of their income to this celebration so that both the rich and poor could celebrate in the feast. Traditionally people would travel to Jerusalem for this feast, but now we honor it in spirit and truth wherever we find ourselves.

Every seventh year the entire book of the law, the first five books of the Bible, is to be read in the hearing of everyone during the Feast of Tabernacles. This means Tabernacles 2024 and Tabernacles 2031 should do this.

*And **אֱלֹהִים** spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto **אֱלֹהִים**. On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto **אֱלֹהִים**.*

— Leviticus 23:33-36

*Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto **אֱלֹהִים** seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath. And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before **אֱלֹהִים** your God seven days. And ye shall keep it a feast unto **אֱלֹהִים** seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month. Ye*

shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths: That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths (tents), when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am יְהוָה your God.

— Leviticus 23:39-43

And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of יְהוָה, and unto all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, When all Israel is come to appear before יְהוָה thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear יְהוָה your God, and observe to do all the words of this law: And that their children, which have not known any thing, may hear, and learn to fear יְהוָה your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.

— Deuteronomy 31:9

And on the second day were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even to understand the words of the law. And they found written in the law which יְהוָה had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month: And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written. So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water gate, and in the street of the gate of

Ephraim. And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness. Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, according unto the manner.

— Nehemiah 8:13-18

The feast of tabernacles is not just for the past. The Prophet Hosea declares that **耶和華** will make us dwell in booths again in the future.

And I that am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt will yet make thee to dwell in tabernacles, as in the days of the solemn feast.

— Hosea 12:9

*And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, **耶和華** of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, **耶和華** of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith **耶和華** will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.*

— Zechariah 14:16-19

Atzeret of Tabernacles

The Atzeret always falls on the 22nd day of the 7th month and is considered the 8th day of Tabernacles which starts on the 15th day. The Atzeret is the last feast day on the Biblical year.

The true calendar of אֱלֹהִים has been hidden in the scriptures and I believe modern Jews have given us a tradition inherited Pharisees in which there is no profit.

It is the glory of אֱלֹהִים to conceal a matter and the glory of kings to search it out.

— Proverbs 25:2

O אֱלֹהִים, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit.

— Jeremiah 16:

Miscellaneous Commands

This chapter is to point you to some basic commands that many people may not be aware of. The love of יהוה is to keep his commands and he who keeps and teaches the least shall be the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.

WWJD? Wear Tassels

Again the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the children of Israel: Tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a blue thread in the tassels of the corners. And you shall have the tassel, that you may look upon it and remember all the commandments of יהוה and do them, and that you may not follow the harlotry to which your own heart and your own eyes are inclined, and that you may remember and do all My commandments, and be holy for your God. I am יהוה your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am יהוה your God.”

— Numbers 15:37-41

You shall make tassels on the four corners of the clothing with which you cover yourself.

— Deuteronomy 22:12

Greatest Command

"Teacher, which commandment is the greatest in the Law?"

Yeshua declared, " 'Love אֱלֹהֶיךָ your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

— Matthew 22:36-40

Diet Laws

The church has wrongly taught that the dietary laws have been done away with since Yeshua. When reading the New Testament scriptures it is important to keep in mind that the definition of the word "food" is found in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. Food did not have the modern meaning of "anything we put in our mouth". When we eat "biblical food" it goes into our mouth and is purified by our stomach and then expelled, thereby cleaning all "biblical food".

On the day of judgment those who *willfully* eat swine and other "unclean food" without repentance will be thrown into the fire.

For by fire and His sword (nukes), אֱלֹהֶיךָ will execute judgment on all flesh, and many will be slain by אֱלֹהֶיךָ ... those who eat the flesh of swine and vermin and rats—will perish together," declares אֱלֹהֶיךָ.

— Isaiah 66:16-17

Biblical Food:

- **Land animals:** Animals with split hoofs that chew their food are permitted, but camels, pigs, rock badgers, and hares are not.
- **Water animals:** Fish with fins and scales are permitted, but shellfish and fish without fins and scales are not.
- **Fowl:** Certain fowl are forbidden, including birds of prey, birds that eat carrion, and certain water birds. Poultry, pigeon, and doves are permitted, as are wild birds not on the forbidden list.
- **Blood:** Blood from mammals and birds is forbidden.
- **Fat:** Forbidden fat is the covering fat of mammals, not the fat marbled into the meat.

10 Commandments

And God spoke all these words, saying:

"I am ֶלְךָ your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

"You shall have no other gods before Me.

"You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, ֶלְךָ your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

"You shall not take the name of ֶלְךָ your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of ֶלְךָ your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days ֶלְךָ made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore ֶלְךָ blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which ֶלְךָ your God is giving you.

"You shall not murder.

"You shall not commit adultery.

"You shall not steal.

"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's."

— Exodus 20

Forgive Others

For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. "But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions."

— Matthew 6:14

Judge Not

Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again.

— Matthew 7

This particular verse and concept has been distorted by those who seek to nullify the law. The idea is that only **Yeshua** can judge the heart of a man and pronounce them guilty or not. It is not judging others to remind them of what the law of **Yeshua** says or to declare certain behaviors to be breaking **Yeshua's** law. The line is crossed when you condemn others to hell or proscribe salvation unto yourself by virtue of your keeping of the law in more points than them.

Keeping the law can be a source of pride that tempt many people to think too highly of themselves. That pride is a deadly sin and the penalty of breaking the greatest or the least of the laws is the same: death. Since all have sinned and continue to sin while in the flesh it is foolish to condemn others simply because they disagree with you. I do not wish to be judged by my ability to discern all doctrine correctly and follow it; therefore, I do not condemn others simply because they disagree with my conclusions.

Closing Remarks

There is much to learn as we grow to be more like Yeshua, but it all boils down to this:

Then Peter said unto them, repent (turn), and be baptized (bathed, washed), everyone of you in the name of Yeshua Christ for the forgiveness of sins (lawlessness), and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

— Acts 2:38

Yeshua answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water (baptized) and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

— John 3:5

One of the criminals who were hanged there was hurling abuse at Him, saying, “Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!” But the other answered, and rebuking him said, “Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? “And we indeed are suffering justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.” And he was saying, “Yeshua, remember me when

You come in Your kingdom!" And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."

— Luke 23:39-43

As far as it depends upon you, profess that his law is good. Yeshua is the word, and the thief professed that there was nothing wrong in Yeshua and by his belief he was saved even if he was unable to obey. Seek his word and obey with all of your heart, mind, and soul and call out to him for salvation and he will raise you up.

This book has put a heavy focus on “laws” and “obedience” because the church has focused on His abundant love and mercy and neglected obedience. He gives us his laws for our own good and out of love. Do not worry that your flesh is enslaved to sin despite your best efforts. He came to set us from that enslavement so that we could have the blessings He intends.

But as it has been written: "no eye has seen, and no ear has heard, and has not entered into heart of man, what God has prepared for those loving Him."

— 1 Corinthians 2:9

Now no chastening (tribulation) seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness (lawfulness) to those who have been trained by it.

— Hebrews 12:11

