
Disclaimer: The following study is the compilation of research done by several authors and researchers. Considering that this is not the work of a single author, and I have made additions, no credit is given to any individual. Please verify every claim made in this study through your own diligent research (Acts 17:11, 2nd Tim 2:15). End notes have been provided so that you may read from the original publications in order to validate and verify that they were represented accurately.

Lunar Sabbaths?

1. What Are Lunar Sabbaths?

Frequently referred to as "Lunar Sabbaths," this is the belief teach that, in antiquity, the new moon dictated when the Sabbath day was to occur each month. Although there are various methods commonly taught with regard to exactly how this was done, the one I am most familiar with goes like this: The new moon conjunction determines day one of each month, and this day is a Sabbath day. The sighting of the crescent moon signals the official ending of this Sabbath day, and the beginning of day one of the work week. Thus, for example, a new moon conjunction might occur on a Tuesday. If the crescent is seen that night, this would make Wednesday the first day of the week during any given month. The seventh day of the week during that particular month would thus fall on a Tuesday. Some teach that this method was unlawfully changed by the Jews upon their return from the exile. Others teach that "Lunar Sabbaths" were in fact observed during the time of the Messiah, but were rejected at some unspecified point in time afterwards.

Of great significance to this issue is the fact that no one supporting this belief has come forward with solid, credible historical evidence dating and documenting exactly "when" such a change occurred. In fact, as we will demonstrate in this study, the available historical evidence reveals that Judaism, during the time of the Messiah, reckoned the weekly Sabbath the same as they do today. More on this later.

First, however, for those who might have a difficult time envisioning how one might follow a *Lunar Sabbath* calendar, we are displaying one for you to examine. The following calendar accurately depicts a potential month during any given year:

A Potential Lunar Sabbath Month

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Fifth Sabbath of Previous Month	1 Day of New Moon Conjunction (first Sabbath of new month begins)	1 Extended Sabbath ends with Crescent Moon Sighting (first Sabbath of the month)	2 Day one of work week (Sabbath this month will fall on a <i>Wednesday</i>)	3 Day two of work week	4 Day three of work week
5 Day four of work week	6 Day five of work week	7 Day six of work week	8 Day seven (second Sabbath of the month)	9 Day one of work week	10 Day two of work week	11 Day three of work week
12 Day four of work week	13 Day five of work week	14 Day six of work week	15 Day seven (third Sabbath of the month)	16 Day one of work week	17 Day two of work week	18 Day three of work week
19 Day four of work week	20 Day five of work week	21 Day six of work week	22 Day seven (fourth Sabbath of the month)	23 Day one of work week	24 Day two of work week	25 Day three of work week
26 Day four of work week	27 Day five of work week	28 Day six of work week	29 Day seven (fifth Sabbath of the month)	1 Day of New Moon Conjunction (first Sabbath of the new month)	1 Extended Sabbath (unless crescent moon is sighted night before)	2 Day 2 of new month's work week; Sabbath this month on a <i>Friday</i>

Note that the Sabbaths of the above calendar fall on the 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th days of the month. In any calendar promoted by *Lunar Sabbath* observers, this same sequence will always occur, whether the Sabbath should happen to fall on, say, a Monday or a Thursday. Also note that since the month begins and ends with a Sabbath day, there will always be *five* Sabbath days per lunar cycle. This does not include the *extended Sabbath days*, which we will address later in this study.

Those who adhere to the teaching that the Sabbath should be governed by the timing of the new moon are not themselves in agreement over how this belief was (apparently) practiced, which makes it difficult to come up with a response to each piece of logic they offer in support of their position. Some lunar sabbatarians believe the weekly Sabbath should fall on the 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th days of the month. Some believe the new moon governing the Sabbath observances each month was actually the conjunction of the moon. Others believe it was the visible new moon crescent. Thus, some believe the new moon crescent sighting heralded ***the beginning*** of, not only the new month, but also a new Sabbath day.

Others believe the sighting of the new moon crescent signaled **the end** of the first Sabbath day of the month and the beginning of a new work week. This particular view is represented by the calendar shown above.

A few years ago I attended a debate between a man espousing *Lunar Sabbaths* and a man who supports observing the weekly Sabbath as handed down to us by Judaism. Typical of all such debates I have attended, at the conclusion of the debate, each man felt he had presented his case in such an unequivocal manner that there was "no question" as to whether or not he had successfully refuted the other's position. To the credit of the man supporting *Lunar Sabbaths*, he maintained his composure and remained respectful throughout the debate, in spite of many hostile interruptions from a rather disrespectful audience. I don't believe anyone could question either his integrity or his sincerity. Nevertheless, his opponent brought up many points which I believe invalidates the *Lunar Sabbath* position and he raised too many questions that were not, in my opinion, satisfactorily answered. For the benefit of those who may be considering the observance of *Lunar Sabbaths*, I would like to offer my reasons for choosing to **not** implement such a drastic lifestyle change.

2. Reverse Numbers Logic

Before addressing the problems incurred by *Lunar Sabbath* observance, I believe it is important to direct your attention to a ploy that is often utilized by some individuals in an attempt to persuade others to give views such as this one more serious consideration than they would otherwise be willing to give it. This ploy is what we term *reverse numbers logic*. Here is how this system works: We all know of how society in general teaches that anything practiced and believed by the majority of people "must" be correct. This is the *truth in numbers logic*. In other words, our society, as a whole, believes that truth is decided by majority vote. Hopefully, we all know better than to believe such a thing. We know the Messiah taught that broad is the way leading to destruction and of how many will follow that path. The road to eternal life, however, is narrow, and only a few will follow it (Matt. 7:13-14). In other words, as the Messiah plainly outlined, majority vote most certainly does **not** decide truth. *Lunar Sabbath* proponents capitalize on this reality, using the fact that their numbers are small as a springboard to persuading others of how this demonstrates that their position "must" be correct. They then play a little "hardball" with this "reverse numbers logic" by sprinkling in sporadic comments to the effect that anyone who doesn't accept their position is "closed minded."

For example, here are a few quotations from some articles I have found on the internet:

"The new moon is indeed a PENDANT - the weekly Sabbath depends on it for its very existence since it is counted from the day after the new moon. Anybody with an open mind should be able to see this."¹

Of course, the implication is that those with closed minds will not be able to grasp their teaching. Those who are well grounded in Scripture will be able to see through such subtle uses of propaganda. These tactics are designed to sway the reader into accepting the author's position without regard to any distortions found in his writings.

The author goes on to write:

"Most of professing Christianity claims Sunday is the day, while Jews and various of the Adventists and Churches of God claim YEHOVAH God set Saturday apart from the rest of the week. This article suggests that both parties are in error and that we have no way of knowing when YEHOVAH's Sabbath day falls in our Gregorian calendar. The fact is, time has been lost! But YEHOVAH God, in His infinite wisdom and mercy, has planted clues in His Word the Bible - clues that those with an understanding mind can uncover and use to reinstate YEHOVAH God's TRUE SABBATH DAY!"

It appears that not only do open-minded folk grasp that the weekly Sabbath is dependent upon the lunar cycle, but those with an "understanding mind" can unearth the hidden clues that are apparently buried in Scripture and thus reinstate the "true Sabbath day." Those who are closed-minded and *lacking* an "understanding mind" will not be able to accomplish this feat. Surely, since all of us want to be open-minded and possess superior understanding, we will see and understand what the author sees! From all indications, the author of the above comments has a simple criterion for determining whether or not an individual has an open mind: Agreement with his position.

The author concludes his study with the following remark:

"It is my sincere hope and prayer that you, the reader, will have an open mind and see the irrefutable truth that YEHOVAH God set up His holy Sabbath days on the four quarters of the moon (Exodus 16) and intends for us to worship Him on these very days. The Saturday Sabbath is NOT YEHOVAH God's day - any more than Sunday is. In the search for truth we have uncovered vital new truth that, frankly, is going to separate the men from the boys; those who will obey YEHOVAH God without equivocation from those who will continue to thumb their noses at YEHOVAH and resist to the very end."

Are you a real man or are you just a "boy"? Are you an obedient believer or do you "thumb your nose" at Yahweh h'El Shaddai? According to the author of the above commentary, if you worship on the "Saturday Sabbath," you are, metaphorically speaking, just a "boy," not a man.

Moreover, unless you are able to understand and observe Lunar Sabbaths as the author does, you are figuratively thumbing your nose at the Creator. This is extremely arrogant.

Some lunar sabbatarians approach this issue from the perspective that those who observe the continuously repeating seventh-day Sabbath are following "traditions of men." Notice the claim listed in a booklet produced by a proponent of Lunar Sabbaths:

"Many people keep a seventh day, Heathens included, the Christians on Sunday, the Muslims on Friday, and the Jews on Saturday, etc. Anyone can keep a 7th day count, but how many can keep a Sabbath of YHWH? How many are willing to forget all the traditions of men that they have inherited? (The lies) 'Our fathers have inherited lies, vanity and things where there is no profit' (Jer. 16:19) Follow the scriptures they are profitable for doctrine (II Tim. 3:16)."

According to the above author, the true "Sabbath of YHWH" is, by process of elimination, **not** based upon a "7th day count," and those who observe a continuously repeating seven-day cycle ending in a Sabbath each week are keeping a Sabbath based upon "the traditions of men," which is in turn based upon "lies" that they have inherited.

Here's a commentary from yet another supporter of the Lunar Sabbath teaching:

"Have you been finding yourself weary of having fallen to deceit at every turn since your birth? If Yahweh has been leading you on His path to truth, at every turn now, you find that man (at Satan's instigation) has devised ways to supplant Yahweh's ways. Let's count a few of them."

The writer goes on to list 12 "false teachings" that he believes the adversary has allowed to creep into the assembly at large. Notice which item makes "number two" on his list:

"2. Sabbath was 'fixed' to a Saturn's day or a Sun day instead of being determined according to Yahweh's faithful witness, the moon and its lunar cycle."

Please note the author's subtle attempt to portray the regular weekly Sabbath handed down to us by Judaism as being fixed to "Saturn's Day." This, of course, is clever propaganda designed to subtly persuade the reader that the so called "Jewish Sabbath" stems from heathenism. By associating Judaism's day of rest with the name given to this day by heathens, the author hopes to succeed in discrediting the Jewish day of worship. Elsewhere (p. 2) he refers to this day as "the Saturday Sabbath," even though it is common knowledge that Judaism never associated any days of the week with the names of the planets. The author then concludes his treatise by making the following appeal to his readers:

"Can I say to you, 'BEWARE OF THE TRADITIONS OF MEN'? Yahshua warned the people of His day concerning the traditions of men. I personally believe that the Lunar Sabbath was primarily being observed during Messiah's day and that the seven day circle (known as the 'week') was instituted by man after the time of Messiah. CAUTION: If it is a widely accepted and celebrated holiday or tradition in this world today, I'd caution, BEWARE."

With this commentary, the author joins the previously quoted lunar sabbatarian in lumping the weekly (Saturday) Sabbath in with the "traditions of men." Even though those who observe the weekly Sabbath on Saturday are considerably fewer in number than those who worship on Sunday, apparently their numbers are still "too high" in the opinion of the author just quoted, and this consequently serves as a "red flag" indicating that the "true Sabbath" cannot fall on a Saturday each week. If the weekly (Saturday) Sabbath as handed down to us by Judaism is truly a "tradition of men," then certainly we need to examine this issue very closely and reevaluate our decision to set aside that day for rest and worship. On the other hand, if the day blessed by Yahweh can be shown as being the very day handed down to us by Judaism, then it is most certainly **not** a "tradition of men," and those who promote such an agenda are themselves guilty of subverting Yahweh's Word, as well as profaning the very day He blessed at Creation.

Although the author of the above commentary uses psychological manipulation and the power of persuasion in an attempt to sway the reader into believing that the "Saturday Sabbath" is not the true Sabbath of Yahweh, he rightly proceeds to challenge his readers to even question his writings, which is commendable. Nevertheless, the appeal to the senses has been made: If you observe something being practiced by large numbers of people, deception "must" be involved. Of course, the same logic employed by the author could be directed at those who believe in a Creator. Since nearly all Bible believers believe in a Creator, this should arouse our suspicions, at least if we pursue the logic he promotes.

We suggest that, instead of focusing any attention on *reverse numbers logic*, all of us should simply focus our attention on the truth of Yahweh's Word, using it as our ultimate guide. His **Word** should be our "measuring stick," not the numbers of people found to be practicing a certain belief. The Apostle Paul admonished the Thessalonian believers to "prove all things," holding fast to that which is good. We believe he would give us that same advice today. Furthermore, when historical evidence aligns with the "measuring stick" of Scripture, the truth of the matter is confirmed.

3. The Sabbath Observed by our Messiah

As quoted earlier, many the *Lunar Sabbath* proponents believe the Messiah recognized and observed the "Lunar Sabbaths" as opposed to the "Saturday Sabbath." However, they do not produce any evidence supporting this belief. Indeed, it would seem that they do not produce evidence because there isn't any. The evidence we have seen supports believing that the Messiah observed the weekly Sabbath on the day commonly known as Saturday. Consider the following evidence:

1) From time immemorial, Jews have always recognized the Sabbath as falling on the day known as Saturday. In fact, one of the most universally known terms existing in ancient and modern languages is the word "Sabbath" and its variants. Forms of this word have been discovered in over a hundred languages, all the way from Africa to eastern Russia, and in every single case the term is used to designate the seventh day of the week, the day corresponding to our Saturday. Here are just a few examples:

<i>Language</i>	<i>English Transliteration</i>
Coptic (Egypt)	pi sabbaton ("the Sabbath")
Tamashek (Atlas Mountains, Africa)	a-hal es-sabt ("the Sabbath")
Hausa (Central Africa)	assebatu ("the Sabbath")
Hindustani (Muhammadan and Hindu, India)	shamba ("Sabbath")
Kurdish (Kurdistan)	shamba ("Sabbath")
Georgian (Caucasus)	shabti ("Sabbath")
Malayan (Malaya, Sumatra)	hari sabtu ("day Sabbath")
Osmanlian (Turkey)	yom-es-sabt ("day of the Sabbath")
Kanzani-Tartar (east Russia)	subbota ("Sabbath")

As illustrated by the chart above, ancient languages have preserved both the intrinsic meaning and pronunciation of the original word for "Sabbath." As George A. Main concludes, "The fact that words in the original languages used to designate the seventh day of the week as the 'Sabbath' continued to be very similar while other words were so changed over time that they became unintelligible to people of other language groups, is ample proof that the Sabbath and the words used to designate the seventh day of the week as the 'Sabbath day' date back to Creation.

While the English speaking world indeed does refer to the 7th day of the week by the pagan title Saturday, the Israelites, Spanish, Latin, Portuguese, Greek, Georgian, Malay, Persian, Sudanese, Indonesian etc.... all refer to the 7th days as (a transliteration) of "Sabbath":

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Days_of_the_week

This should not come as a surprise considering that prior to the confusion of the languages, all people of the earth shared a common language. The universal application of the word Sabbath to designate the 7th day of the week is in complete harmony with the Biblical record found in Genesis 2:1-3."

2) If it is true, as proponents of the *Lunar Sabbath* theory assert, that the Jews of the Messiah's day observed the Lunar Sabbath, this begs the question of exactly "when" the change to the current "Saturday Sabbath" was instituted and how those who imposed such a change were able to effectively spread its effects on such a global basis. In spite of the attempts of *Lunar Sabbath* supporters to produce historical documentation of such a change, we have yet to see a single reference validating how and when it occurred, not to mention how this change was successfully imposed upon the Jewish people. This is not the case when it comes to changes imposed on those who worshipped YHWH and kept His Torah. The Talmud is replete with details of changes made when it came to observances, practices, Feast days, ect. The Takanat (laws which changed biblical laws) are clearly explained in the Rabbinical writings, as are the ma'asim (traditions which became mitzvot based on Rabbinical precedence). Hillel II (330-365 CE) proposed changes to the reckoning of the New Year and Feast Days because the Jews were no longer permitted to live in Israel, nor inspect the barley before the New Year began. We can see that when there was a change in the practice of the faith of those who worship the Elohim of Avram, Yitzchak, and Ya'akov -such changes were well always documented. Surely this would be case with something as foundational as the Sabbath day. Indeed, the evidence is overwhelming that, since antiquity, all Jews everywhere have only recognized the "Saturday Sabbath." Consider what would have had to have occurred for Jews to have "lost track" of the correct timing of the Sabbath:

Can you imagine all Jews, in every corner of the earth, awakening one day and forgetting what "day" it was? This is what those who promote *Lunar Sabbaths* must believe. They must believe that, between the year 70 CE and the Middle Ages, all Jews lost track of the "true Sabbath," and instead embraced a "false Saturday Sabbath." When and how did this change occur? Where is the documentation of this event or decree? Why is history silent regarding this "change"? These are questions that have not been successfully answered by *Lunar Sabbath* proponents. If indeed there was a transition from *Lunar Sabbath* observance to *Saturday Sabbath* observance, we should expect to find traces of cultures that continue a system of Torah based *Lunar Sabbath* observance in spite of the apparent "change" that was made on not only a sweeping, global basis, but on a *secret (undocumented) basis* as well.

In fact, despite the already sparse historical evidence produced by supporters of the *Lunar Sabbaths*, they believe there is additional evidence that will surface and that key historical evidence has been destroyed:

"I might also add that I believe more historical information will be forthcoming but I also believe that much historical proof of a lunar reckoning has been destroyed to hide the truth and further the deceitful schemes Satan has devised many ways to keep us from walking Yahweh's way of truth and light."

Again, for us to rationally believe that the "true Sabbath has been lost" by Judaism, we need an official, documented record of the change. The attempts we have seen to this point prove nothing of the sort.

4. The Timing of Yahshua's Death and Resurrection

We have shown that normative Jewish practice and belief before, during and after Yahshua's earthly ministry is not in harmony with the beliefs of those who observe *Lunar Sabbaths*. Those who study the narrative pertaining to Yahshua's death, burial and resurrection will notice that the timing of these events, as recorded by the authors of the Messianic accounts, demonstrates that they did not observe *Lunar Sabbaths*. Yahshua, as every scholarly reference we have consulted agrees, was killed on the day of Passover, Abib 14. The evening following the day of Passover, Abib 15, is a special Sabbath day, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This is the evening that the Passover lamb is eaten with bitter unleavened bread and bitter herbs. If you are familiar with this account, you may recall that the Jews hastened to have the bodies removed from the stakes before the onset of this special Sabbath day (John 19:31).

Three days and three nights later, Yahshua rose from the dead, and that evening began the first day of the week (Luke 24:1-7).

The fact that Yahshua rose in the evening prior to the first day of the week refutes the teaching of those who promote the *Lunar Sabbath* theology. You see, for those who observe *Lunar Sabbaths*, Abib 15 is not only a "high day Sabbath," it is **also** a weekly Sabbath day. Their dilemma thus consists of explaining how Yahshua was killed on the sixth day of the week (i.e., the day prior to their weekly Sabbath reckoning), and then, three days and three nights later, He rose from the dead just before the first day of the week.

If Abib 14 was the sixth day of the week, three days and three nights later brings us to Abib 17, which is the second day of the week, and the following morning, when the women went to the tomb, would have been the **third day** of the week, not the first day as recorded in the Besorah accounts. In order to make the Bible account "fit" their theology, *Lunar Sabbath* proponents come up with some pretty confusing explanations.

For example, one man is on record as explaining that Yahshua could not have been killed on Abib 14. According to him, Yahshua was slain on Abib 13 – a full day before Passover. We're not sure how such a belief helps to solidify his position, but we're sure he has it all worked out.

Still another proponent of *Lunar Sabbaths*, aware of the difficulty posed by the time frame surrounding Yahshua's death and resurrection, argues that "first day of the week" in Matthew 28:1 doesn't really *mean* "first day of the week." Here is a portion of his commentary:

"This phrase ['first day of the week'] always occurs during a time known to the Hebrews as 'the counting of the omer.' In other words, we believe *mia ton sabbaton* means 'early in week ONE of the counting of the omer - the counting of shabuwas (weeks/sabbaths).'"

Of course, those who promote *Lunar Sabbaths* are left to believe there are many mistranslations and distortions in Scripture, and that these errors are all a part of the "great conspiracy" to subvert Yahweh's Word.

Indeed, there are many mistranslations and distortions that have been perpetrated on Yahweh's Word. However, in nearly every case, the corruption can be traced and the proper translation can be confirmed by either checking out the original text or by comparing other texts for accuracy. In the case of Matthew 28:1, it is interesting that both Aramaic and Hebrew texts support the Greek rendering "first day of the week." Notice the rendering of Matthew 28:1 as translated from the Aramaic:

In the evening of the Sabbath, when the first day of the week began to dawn, there came Mary of Magdala and the other Mary to see the tomb.

As this text reveals, Yahshua had already risen before the first day of the week began, thus fulfilling perfectly the "three days and three nights" prophecy He gave concerning Himself (Matt 12:40). He could not have fulfilled this prophecy if He had been put to death on the sixth day of the week.

5. Do "Three Days and Three Nights" Mean Three Days and Three Nights?

As we have already outlined, part of the difficulty in addressing the Lunar Sabbath teaching is the fact that each lunar sabbatarian seems to have his own unique belief system that enables his view to fit within the parameters of his Biblical perspective. As soon as we address one view, demonstrating that it lacks the support of Scripture and history, we learn that a certain lunar sabbatarian never believed that particular method in the first place. We are then met with another aspect that, unless it is addressed, serves to "clinch" that particular lunar sabbatarian's position.

Having already dealt with a lunar sabbatarian's argument that "first day of the week doesn't really mean first day of the week," we were later introduced to yet another lunar sabbatarian who teaches that the expression "three days and three nights" doesn't really **mean** three days and three nights. This is what occurred at a lunar sabbatarian's presentation that we once attended. Having already been exposed to the one perspective involving a lunar sabbatarian's interpretation of "first day of the week," we had no idea that we would later encounter yet other lunar sabbatarians who **agree** with our interpretation of "first day of the week," but **disagree** with our interpretation of "three days and three nights! Of course, it is important for this particular lunar sabbatarian to believe that the expression "three days and three nights" doesn't really mean three days and three nights because, if it did, this would destroy his belief that the Jews of the Messiah's day were observing *Lunar Sabbaths*. You see, three days and three nights from the sixth day of week, which they believe marks the day of the crucifixion, brings us to the second day of the week. Since this particular lunar sabbatarian believes the Messiah had resurrected before the first day of the week, he is left to believe that "three days and three nights" must simply be an idiomatic expression that "really" means "parts of three days."

In fact, in a booklet distributed by one such individual, we read the following conclusion:

"Now, can 3 days and 3 nights be a period of exactly 72 hours? Of course it can, especially in our modern day reckoning of time. The fact is this though; if the phrase in Matthew 12:40 refers to the Messiah's entombment, **then it cannot be literal seeing it would contradict everything else the gospels have to say concerning the matter. May I point out once again... the text says absolutely *nothing* of 72 hours.**"
(Emphasis his)

In Matthew 12, we read that the scribes and Pharisees wanted to see a "sign" from Yahshua. In verses 39-40 He replied, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

The question arises as to whether or not the Messiah meant what He said in the above passage. Certain lunar sabbatarians, as noted above, believe He did **not** mean what He said, or as they would prefer to word it, "He was only speaking figuratively." Certainly if we are to understand the Messiah's words literally, He was indeed uttering an exact prophecy concerning the length of time He would be in the tomb. Either Yahshua meant what He said or He didn't. For a fantastic teaching on the prophesy of 3 days and 3 nights, I highly recommend "The Jonah Code" By Michael Rood.

Lunar Sabbath proponents point to such verses as Luke 9:22, where Yahshua said, "The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day." Lunar sabbatarians believe that verses such as Luke 9:22 cancel out the literal "three days and three nights" prophecy spoken in Matthew 12:40.

In other words, since the prophecy of Matthew 12:40 **only appears once**, whereas there are several instances of the mentioning of "the third day," a literal interpretation of Matthew 12:40 is to be avoided.

This reasoning reminds me of the ridicule a certain man named Jim directed at me during my first year of Sabbath obedience several years ago. We exchanged a few letters in which each of us presented our positions pertaining to the issue of whether or not the fourth commandment is still in effect. Of course, he was persuaded that the Sabbath is "Old Covenant" and was "nailed to the cross" at Calvary. At one point in our exchange I explained that in Matthew 24:20 the Messiah uttered a prophecy concerning the impending destruction of Jerusalem and of how He instructed His followers to pray that their flight not be on the Sabbath day. This was a prophecy of an event that was to transpire nearly forty years from the moment it was prophesied. A part of that prophecy included Yahshua's directive that His followers pray that their flight not take place on the Sabbath day, a clear example of how the Messiah never intended for anyone to believe that the Sabbath would be "done away" at His death, as He plainly knew that it would still be in force some forty years in the future.

Jim did not quite know how to respond to that oft-ignored verse, a verse so powerfully supportive of the ongoing preeminence of the fourth commandment. In his drive to deal with such a forceful prophetic statement upholding the permanence of the Sabbath commandment, Jim decided to focus on the fact that Yahshua is only recorded uttering this prophecy **once** in the four Messianic accounts. In other words, since this prophecy is only mentioned in the book of Matthew and **not** in any of the other three accounts, this must mean that its omission from the other books cancel it out! Here's a portion of what he wrote:

"How's come you and your group always quote Matthew 24:20 which deals with prophecy but never Mark 13 and Luke 21 which deal with the same prophecy? Of course, it is because Matthew has the word 'Sabbath' and the other two do not. People must not try to read more into Scripture than what is really there."

Jim's point was this: Since the warning about praying that their flight be not on the Sabbath is only found in one passage of the Bible ... since it is omitted by the other Messianic Accounts ... this "must" mean that Yahshua "didn't really mean what He said" in the account recorded by Matthew. Of course, no Bible student will ever come out and say, "He didn't really mean what He said in that verse." Instead, they will "beat around the bush," or "dance around the issue," putting forth their most valiant efforts to semi-elocquently express what they believe should be the proper understanding of the verse. In Jim's case, he went on to write that Yahshua's intended understanding was that the Jews, for a while (nearly forty years), would not "fully understand that the old Sabbath had been abolished." According to Jim, "This verse is not saying Christians should be observing the Sabbath after Christ's resurrection. The praying that the Jews' flight might not be upon the Sabbath day referred only to their delay in leaving Jerusalem which the Sabbath would give them (in case they kept it as a holy rest)."

In other words, anyone thinking that Yahshua's reference to praying that their flights be not on the Sabbath day was a reference to the ongoing legitimacy of the fourth commandment, is mistaken! This is the approach of a man who chooses to reject the validity of the fourth commandment in this day and age. Even after I demonstrated to him that the disciples continued obeying the Sabbath (as well as the rest of the Torah) after Yahshua had risen (Luke 23:56 for example) it didn't matter to Jim. He was convinced he understood better than those that walked with Messiah and recorded His very words.

Now let's go back to the booklet advocating Lunar Sabbath observance. Since the "three days and three nights" prophecy is only mentioned **once** ... since it is outnumbered by the phrase "on the third day" or "in three days," does this infer that Yahshua didn't really intend for His audience to understand that "three days and three nights" **means** "three days and three nights"? This is what some lunar sabbatarians insist as being true.

In response to those who conclude that we should not take Yahshua's words literally in Matthew 12:40, we believe it is fair to say that we can indeed harmonize the phrase "three days and three nights" with the other expressions. To begin with, the expression "after three days" can certainly be acknowledged as being synonymous with "three days and three nights." Three days are inclusive in each expression. "On the third day" is still inclusive of "three days and three nights." For example, if the Messiah was crucified on a Wednesday, then the third day, or three days later, would be Saturday. On the other hand, if He was killed on the sixth day of the week (as proposed by lunar sabbatarians), "after three days" would be the second day of the week, which fails the test of His having risen before the first day of the week. Instead of attempting to force "on the third day" to cancel out a literal understanding of "three days and three nights," we suggest harmonizing the wording of each expression. Rather than teaching that expressions such as "on the third day" nullify the "three days and three nights" expression, we believe the "three days and three nights" expression fully brings out and enhances our understanding of the other expressions.

Furthermore, there is scholarly support for the understanding that the expression "three days and three nights" **must** be understood in its literal sense. Notice the commentary found in Appendix 144 of the *Companion Bible*:

"The fact that 'three days' is used by Hebrew idiom for any part of three days and three nights is not disputed; because that was the common way of reckoning, just as it was when used of years. Three or any number of years was used inclusively of any part of those years, as may be seen in the reckoning of the reigns of any of the kings of Israel and Judah. But, when the number of 'nights' is stated as well as the number of 'days,' then the expression ceases to be an idiom, and becomes a literal statement of fact."

As this reference reveals, when the number of "nights" is expressed in addition to the number of "days," the literal understanding is intended. When Yahshua framed the words "three days and three nights," that is exactly what He meant.

Finally, the author of the booklet from which we quoted at the beginning of this section goes to great lengths to insist that Yahshua never intended for His audience to understand a *literal* 72 hour entombment. Is this true? No, it is not. The question, once again, becomes, "Do 'three days and three nights' really *mean* three days and three nights?" We believe that Yahshua fully understood the hours involved in such a time frame, as He plainly said, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight?" If we "do the math," we can easily discern that, indeed, Yahshua was referring to a full 72-hour interment.

6. Does "The Third Day Since These Things Were Done" Mean the Third Day Since Those Things Were Done?

Of course, now that we have gone to such lengths to establish that Yahshua meant what He said when He spoke of being in the "heart of the earth" for three days and three nights, the opposition brings up the incident of Yahshua's post-resurrection encounter with the two men on their way to Emmaus, as found in Luke 24:18-21:

¹⁷ And he said unto them, What manner of communications *are* these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

¹⁸ And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto Him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

¹⁹ And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto Him, Concerning Yahshua of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before the Almighty and all the people:

²⁰ And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and have crucified Him.

²¹ But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done.

Upon quoting the above passage, the lunar sabbatarian, in his booklet, goes on to insist that the "third day since these things" refers to the third day since the act of the crucifixion. In other words, since the last event mentioned by Cleopas is the crucifixion, this must make it the starting point for the "three days since" expression. This means that the Sabbath would have been day one since "these things were done," the first day of the week was day two since "these things were done," and the second day of the week was "day three" since "these things were done." As anyone can see, even the account of the men on the road to Emmaus disproves the lunar sabbatarian's argument.

Notice how he defends his position in his booklet:

"There are many attempts to make 'these things' of verse 21 mean several things. **The verses in and of themselves tell us what 'these things' refer to. They refer to how, '...our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and... crucified him.'** The delivering up of the Messiah to death was done at the beginning of the 14th of Abib in the garden of Gethsemane by Judas, and the death took place in the afternoon of the 14th - Just as the Passover lambs are being slaughtered on the Temple Mount. The third day since these things were done was the 16th of Abib, and this fits perfectly with the verse at hand." Messiah rose at First Fruits which is always celebrated on the evening of the first day of the week, following the weekly 7th day Shabbat.

As noted from the above commentary, the author believes that Abib 16 marks the "third day since" the afternoon of Abib 14. Is this true? No, it is not. It appears that perhaps he does not have the proper understanding of the definition of the word "since." The word "since," as defined by any good dictionary, denotes a time frame that is "Continuously throughout the time after (an event): *since* noon." Obviously, then, one day "since" the crucifixion, presuming it occurred on the sixth day of the week (in accordance with lunar sabbatarian belief), marks the afternoon of the Sabbath (Abib 15). Day two "since" the crucifixion marks the afternoon of the first day of the week (Abib 16). The "third day since these things were done," by the parameters that he himself sets, brings him **not** to Abib 16, but to Abib 17. Again, since this particular lunar sabbatarian believes the Messiah rose prior to the first day of the week, he has effectively refuted his own argument.

Nevertheless, how do those who, like us, who believe the Messiah was crucified on a Wednesday (in the midst of the week), answer the lunar sabbatarian's claim that Luke 24:21 refutes the "three days and three nights" interpretation? Well, as inferred by the above commentary, it all depends upon our understanding of what all "these things" entails. Do "these things" encompass the events leading up to the crucifixion ... in fact, terminating with that event? If so, then we do have a problem in trying to harmonize this particular text. If Wednesday was Abib 14, then Thursday was Abib 15, i.e., day one since "these things were done." Friday was Abib 15, i.e., day two, Saturday was day three, and Sunday, the day on which the men made their way to Emmaus, was day four. Since Cleopas clearly identified that day as being the third day since "these things were done," this leaves only one way for us to understand what Cleopas meant by "these things." It must include not only the crucifixion, but also, by extension, the sealing of the tomb, which occurred on Abib 15. George Dellinger expresses this point in his booklet "The Truth About Matthew 12:40":

"In Luke 24:21 Cleopas says: ' ... today is the third day since these things were done.' In verse 46 Jesus says He was to rise the third day. These two statements are not to be confused, as they do not mean the same day. The statement by Christ is a statement concerning His third day resurrection. But the statement of Cleopas means something else. Some like to claim that since Cleopas says this was the third day, and since the day he made this statement was the Sunday after Christ's suffering, it has to mean He

rose on Sunday. But not at all. What did Cleopas mean by 'these things'? He obviously meant the entire period of Christ's passion. This period did not end until His enemies had His grave sealed on Thursday. Sunday was indeed the third day from Thursday and was the third day since all the things of His sufferings were done."

As brought forth by Dellinger, the difference in interpretations of Luke 24:21 lies in defining what Cleopas meant by "these things." If, as our lunar sabbatarian friend believes, he meant the third day after the crucifixion, an understanding which can definitely be implied by the wording of the text, then Yahshua could not have possibly meant what He said in Matthew 12:40. His phrase "three days and three nights" could only represent an idiomatic expression that in reality designates parts of three days. On the other hand, if Yahshua's expression was intended to be taken *literally*, then something is amiss with the understanding that Cleopas was referring to a time frame whose beginning strictly coincided with Yahshua's crucifixion. The question arises, "Do we choose to take the Messiah literally at His word or do we prefer to take Cleopas literally?"

Obviously, we believe the literal words of the Messiah should have preeminence over the ambiguous words of a man whose name only appears once in the entire Bible. Rather than fussing over what Cleopas meant by "these things" in Luke 24:21, we recommend focusing on the literal words spoken by the Messiah ... the only prophetic "sign" He gave to validate His authority: Three literal days and nights in the grave.

7. Evidence From Philo

In the quest for historical evidence as it relates to this subject, we have noticed that Philo is not often mentioned by those who support *Lunar Sabbaths*. The writings of Philo are very important for establishing Jewish practice and belief both before and during the Messiah's time here on earth. Philo lived from approximately 20 BCE until about 50 CE. Thus, his lifetime spanned not only the years prior to the Messiah's birth, but also the years following His resurrection (not to mention the years in between).

The evidence reveals that Philo's beliefs were representative of those of Judaism during that period of time. Philo, who was born and raised in Alexandria, Egypt, was one of more than 100,000 Jews living in that city. When the prefect Flaccus initiated a massacre of the Jews in the year 39 CE, Philo was selected to head the Jewish delegation that went to Rome to plead their case before Gaius Caligula.

Think about the significance of Philo's having been chosen from among his peers for such a monumental task. Would Philo have been chosen for such a mission if his practice and beliefs had not squared with those of normative Judaism? He would not have been chosen unless his views matched those of his peers. We know from Philo's writings that he did *not* observe "Lunar Sabbaths." If normative Judaism had practiced "Lunar Sabbaths" while Philo rebelliously observed "Saturday Sabbaths," would this detail have affected their decision to select him to lead a delegation to Rome? No doubt.

Sabbath observance is one of the most distinguishing marks of Judaism, or as author Dayan Grunfeld put it, the Sabbath "epitomizes the whole of Judaism." For Philo to have "gone against the grain" of Judaism with regard to Sabbath observance would have signaled a break with Judaism. We can thus discern that if Philo observed the Sabbath on the day commonly known as Saturday each week, so did the rest of his fellow Jews.

We believe Philo did a pretty decent job of explaining how, when and where mankind received the Sabbath day. He explains that if it had not been for the giving of the manna, man would have lost the Sabbath day. Shown below is an excerpt from Philo's *On the Life of Moses II*, chapter XLVIII, sections 263-269. As we are about to see, Philo establishes that the timing of the first day on which the manna was given directly corresponds to the **first day of creation**. We are displaying Philo's entire discourse pertaining to the giving of the manna in order for you to fully examine the context of what he had to say on this subject:

XLVIII. (263) He gave a second instance of his prophetic inspiration not long afterwards in the oracle which he delivered about the sacred seventh day. For though it had had a natural precedence over all other days, not only from the time that the world was created, but even before the origination of the heaven and all the objects perceptible to the outward senses, men still knew it not, perhaps because, by reason of the continued and uninterrupted destructions which had taken place by water and fire, succeeding generations had not been able to receive from former ones any traditions of the arrangement and order which had been established in the connection of preceding times, which, as it was not known, Moses, now being inspired, declared to his people in an oracle which was borne testimony to by a visible sign from heaven. (264) And the sign was this. A small portion of food descended from the air on the previous days, but a double portion on the day before the seventh day. And on the previous days, if any portion was left it became liquefied and melted away, until it was entirely changed into dew, and so consumed; but on this day it endured no alteration, but remained in the same state as before, and when this was reported to him, and beheld by him, Moses did not so much conjecture as receive the impulse of divine inspiration under which he prophesied of the seventh day. (265) I omit to mention that all such conjectures are akin to prophecy; for the mind could never make such correct and felicitous conjectures, unless it were a divine spirit which guided their feet into the way of truth; (266) and the miraculous nature of the sign was shown, not merely in the fact of the food being double in quantity, nor in that of its remaining unimpaired, contrary to the usual customs, but in both these circumstances taking place on the sixth day, from the day on which this food first began to be supplied from heaven, from which day the most sacred number of seven began to be counted, so that if any one reckons he will find that this heavenly food was given in exact correspondence with the arrangement instituted at the creation of the world.

For God began to create the world on the first day of a week of six days: and he began to rain down the food which has just been mentioned on the same first day; (267) and the two images are alike; for as he produced that most perfect work, the world, bringing it out of non-existence into existence, so in the same manner did he produce plenty in the wilderness, changing the elements with reference to the pressing necessity, that, instead of the earth, the air might bestow food without labour, and without trouble, to those who had no opportunity of providing themselves with food at their leisure. (268) After this he delivered to the people a third oracle of the most marvelous nature, namely that on the seventh day the air would not afford the accustomed food, and that not the very slightest portion would fall upon the earth, as it did on other days; (269) and this turned out to be the case in point of fact; for he delivered this prediction on the day before; but some of those who were unstable in their dispositions, went forth to collect it, and being deceived in their expectations, returned unsuccessful, reproaching themselves for their unbelief, and calling the prophet the only true prophet, the only one who knew the will of God, and the only one who had any foreknowledge of what was uncertain and future.

Please notice that Philo plainly connects the first day of the giving of the manna to the first day of creation. Reflect, if you will, of how Philo reports that the first day of the giving of the manna traces back to the first day of creation. In other words, that continuous cycle of seven days continued on and on and on, all the way from the dawn of time clear up to the time when it was revealed to Moses and to the Israelites. As he very eloquently put it, the manna "was given in exact correspondence with the arrangement instituted at the creation of the world." If the first day of the giving of the manna truly corresponds with the first day of creation, this means an unbroken, continuous cycle of sevens connects that day to the first day of creation. Accordingly, if the first day of the giving of manna corresponds exactly to the first day of creation, then we can also discern that the seventh day on which no manna was given must also correspond **exactly** to the day on which Yahweh rested after His work of creation. Philo has thus identified an unbroken chain of sevens extending from the week of creation all the way down to the giving of the manna. Furthermore, since mankind's reintroduction to the weekly Sabbath at that point in time, that unbroken chain of weeks has continued down to us today, for in spite of how Yahweh's people may have desecrated and polluted the Sabbath day, it has not been forgotten, nor has it been lost.

Finally, we feel that a major blow to lunar sabbatarian theology involves that which Philo **left out** of his commentary pertaining to the Sabbath day and the giving of the manna. What critical element is left out of Philo's commentary above? It is the **lunar cycle**. Not once did Philo mention the (alleged) importance of the lunar cycle in determining the Sabbath day. In fact, the word "moon" isn't mentioned even **once** in Philo's commentary. This is significant, as elsewhere in Philo's writings, he devotes much space to discussing the cycle of the moon. In fact, the day of the new moon is listed as one of the major feasts by Philo. Yet, he never establishes any sort of connection between the moon and a Sabbath observance.

Curiously, every time we read a commentary about the Sabbath that is authored by a lunar sabbatarian, we have **always** come across the word "moon." We find it to be very interesting that Philo never **once** mentioned the word "moon" in his commentary regarding mankind's reintroduction to the Sabbath, nor did he ever mention the word "Sabbath" in his commentary about the new moon. He made no attempt to establish a connection from the one to the other.

In his writings, Philo distinguishes new moon observance as a separate feast from the weekly Sabbath. Here is a portion of what Philo had to say regarding the Sabbath day:

"The fourth commandment has reference to the sacred seventh day, that it may be passed in a sacred and holy manner. Now some states keep the holy festival only once in the month, counting from the new moon, as a day sacred to the Almighty; but the nation of the Jews keeps every seventh day regularly, after each interval of six days."

Philo declares that the Sabbath occurs after *each recurring interval of six days*. This is simply how it was reckoned.

Elsewhere in his writings, Philo affirms this ongoing, uninterrupted six-day interval:

"It (the number 'seven') was also greatly honoured by Moses, a man much attached to excellence of all sorts, who described its beauty on the most holy pillars of the law, and wrote it in the hearts of all those who were subject to him, commanding them at the end of each period of six days to keep the seventh holy; abstaining from all other works which are done in the seeking after and providing the means of life, devoting that day to the single object of philosophizing with a view to the improvement of their morals, and the examinations of their consciences."

Keeping a seventh day at the end of each period of six days creates a problem of gigantic proportions for those who attempt to keep *Lunar Sabbaths*. In fact, this recurring interval is **impossible** if one observes *Lunar Sabbaths*. Let us proceed to address this peculiar problem.

8. Extended Sabbath Days

If one should decide to observe "Lunar Sabbaths," at first there might not appear to be any problems. For the first three Sabbaths of the month, nothing remarkably unusual occurs. However, when one arrives at the fourth Sabbath of the "moonth," something extremely out of the ordinary takes place: *Extended Sabbath days*.

The best way to understand this anomaly is to understand how many days are contained in a month, coupled with how many weekly Sabbath days can occur during that span of time. A month is 29.5 days long. As we have already established, there will always be five Sabbaths in a "Lunar Sabbath month," with the fifth Sabbath falling on day number 29. Since a month is actually 29.5 days long, this leaves a half day extra.

Since there is really no such thing as "half days," there will actually be at least **one** extra day left over at month's end. Often there are **two days** left over, leaving three consecutive Sabbath days to be set aside for rest and worship. The calendar on page two shows examples of "extended Sabbaths" consisting of two extra days.

A Typical End of the "Moonth"

To better understand exactly how one would observe *extended Lunar Sabbaths*, one author (who supports beginning a month with the timing of the conjunction) offers a helpful scenario to better acquaint the beginner with "how it's done." Shown below is his narrative regarding what is done on the final weekly Sabbath of the "moonth":

"Now we have come to the 4th Sabbath - the 29th day of the lunar cycle. What a time of rejoicing it is, for our labors have ceased for this moonth and we enjoy the 7th Day Sabbath rest of Yahweh. At sunset (the completion of the 4th Shabbat of this moonth), we continue in the Sabbath mood and immediately begin the New Moon day or days. After the first full NEW MOON day (the second day of the MOONTH END PERIOD), we watch the western sky just after sundown to see if the first crescent of the moon is visible. If it is sighted, the trumpets are blown, bonfires lit and tomorrow we start a new work shabuwa [week] (this would be a two day moonth end). If the first crescent is NOT visible, we continue on in Sabbath [mood] and again watch for the first crescent. Seen or not seen, this 3rd Sabbath moonth end/beginning evening, the trumpets are blown and tomorrow we go to work."

How do proponents of *Lunar Sabbaths* deal with the "leftover days" prior to the next new moon? As implied above, they are simply treated as *extended Sabbath days*. Of course, those of our persuasion believe such a manner of observance effectively disrupts the seven-day cycle that we believe was implemented by Yahweh at Creation. However, those who espouse the *Lunar Sabbath* method do not regard the addition of extra Sabbath days as a "disruption," but as a *special extension of the Sabbath*. In this way, they justify adhering to this belief. But didn't YaHWeH say "Six days you shall work"?

Yahweh is not the author of confusion (I Cor. 14:33). The fact that absolutely no provisions or explanatory instructions are given pertaining to the alleged "extended Sabbath days" should tell us a lot. It should tell us that no such days existed, nor did Yahweh desire for His people to have any such understanding of His intentions. Something that goes so far out of the ordinary as these *extended Sabbath days* during such a four-week cycle would have most assuredly been clearly specified and the instructions for observance comprehensively outlined. There isn't a single mention of such "extended Sabbaths" in the Torah or any of the Rabbinical writings. It is nothing more than the creation of those who support a Lunar Sabbath. As we have already pointed out, Yahweh is **not** the author of confusion.

9. Lunar Sabbaths and the Count to Pentecost

A very significant problem arises for lunar sabbatarians when it comes to determining the count to Pentecost, also known as *Shavuot* or the Feast of Weeks. To better understand the nature of this problem, let's first take a look at the instructions Yahweh

gives for counting to this special feast day, as found in Leviticus 23:15-16:

¹⁵And 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 shall be complete:

¹⁶ Even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto Yahweh.

If we properly follow the instructions given above, the Feast of Weeks will fall on the morrow after the seventh Sabbath, which is fifty days following the wave sheaf offering.

Question: Is it possible to observe lunar sabbaths and have the feast of Pentecost fall on the morrow after the seventh Sabbath fifty days later? Let's carefully examine the following Lunar Sabbath calendar and follow the count to Pentecost, beginning in the first month (Abib) and ending in the third month (Sivan):

Potential Lunar Sabbath Month & Count to Pentecost: ABIB

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Fifth Sabbath of Previous Month	1 Day of New Moon Conjunction (first Sabbath of the new month)	1 Extended Sabbath ends with Crescent Moon Sighting	2 Day one of work week	3 Day two of work week	4 Day three of work week
5 Day four of work week	6 Day five of work week	7 Day six of work week	8 Day seven (second Sabbath of the month)	9 Day one of work week	10 Day two of work week	11 Day three of work week
12 Day four of work week	13 Day five of work week	14 PASSOVER	15 Day seven (third Sabbath AND high day Sabbath)	16 Day one of count to Pentecost	17 Day two of count to Pentecost	18 Day three of count to Pentecost
19 Day four of count to Pentecost	20 Day five of count to Pentecost	21 Day six of count to Pentecost;	22 Day seven (fourth Sabbath)	23 Day eight of count to	24 Day nine of count to	25 Day ten of count to Pentecost

		also a high day Sabbath	of the month)	Pentecost	Pentecost	
26	27	28	29			
Day eleven of count to Pentecost	Day twelve of count to Pentecost	Day thirteen of count to Pentecost	Day fourteen of count (fifth Sabbath of the month)			

Potential Lunar Sabbath Month & Count to Pentecost (2nd Month)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Day fifteen -- New Moon Conjunction (first Sabbath of the new month)	1 Day sixteen Extended Sabbath (new moon sighted after sunset)	2 Day seventeen of count to Pentecost
3 Day eighteen of count to Pentecost	4 Day nineteen of count to Pentecost	5 Day twenty of count to Pentecost	6 Day twenty-one of count to Pentecost	7 Day twenty-two of count to Pentecost	8 Day twenty-three of count to Pentecost	9 Day twenty-four of count to Pentecost
10 Day twenty-five of count to Pentecost	11 Day twenty-six of count to Pentecost	12 Day twenty-seven of count to Pentecost	13 Day twenty-eight of count to Pentecost	14 Day twenty-nine of count to Pentecost	15 Day thirty of count to Pentecost	16 Day thirty-one of count to Pentecost
17 Day thirty-two of count to Pentecost	18 Day thirty-three of count to Pentecost	19 Day thirty-four of count to Pentecost	20 Day thirty-five of count to Pentecost	21 Day thirty-six of count to Pentecost	22 Day thirty-seven of count to Pentecost	23 Day thirty-eight of count to Pentecost
24 Day thirty-nine of count to Pentecost	25 Day forty of count to Pentecost	26 Day forty-one of count to Pentecost	27 Day forty-two of count to Pentecost	28 Day forty-three of count to Pentecost	29 Day forty-four of count (fifth Sabbath of the month)	

Potential Lunar Sabbath Month & Count to Pentecost (Sivan)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Day forty-five of count (Conjunction + new moon sighted after sunset)

2	3	3	4	5		
Day forty-six of count to Pentecost	Day forty-seven of count to Pentecost	Day forty-eight of count to Pentecost	Day forty-nine of count to Pentecost	Day fifty of count to Pentecost (not morrow after seventh Sabbath)		

Does day fifty (the day of Pentecost) occur on the morrow after the seventh Sabbath in accordance with the directive given in Leviticus 23:15-16? Answer: No, it absolutely does not!

How a Lunar Sabbatarian "Makes it Work"

Strange as it may seem, we have learned of at least one lunar sabbatarian who has a solution to the above predicament. Remember the "extended Sabbath days" we mentioned in our previous chapter? Well, those "extended Sabbath days" don't **really** count as "days," at least not in the mind of this particular lunar sabbatarian. By regarding those extra days as comprehensively representing one single day, the count to Pentecost does indeed end on "the morrow after the seventh Sabbath." Below is the man's commentary explaining his method: "Let me make it clear to you: Because Ps. 104:19a in plain language tells us the moon was created for Moedim, it specifically is telling us of the relationship between feast days (moedim, appointed times) and the moon. Moedim have affinity with the Moon cycle. That affinity shows that when the moon is impossible to view due to its position in relationship to the viewer on earth, aka 'renewal or dark days,' those days are not to be counted toward Moedim. Case in point is the counting of the Omer and the occasion of Shavuot."

The author of the above remark employs what is known as *Biblical hook* in drawing a conclusion that on the surface appears to be founded and established on a plain verse of Scripture, but in fact is so unscriptural that it would appear far more dubious to most people had he chosen to not include the Scriptural reference (Ps. 104:19). The only way to unveil the erroneous conclusion is to examine and harmonize the whole of Scripture. We will more closely examine the relationship between the moon and the *moedim* [mowadah] in chapter 24.

The use of a tactic known as *overspecification* is also evident in the above commentary. *Overspecification* involves arriving at a more detailed or specific conclusion than is legitimate from a Biblical text. In the explanation given above, we are somehow supposed to understand by reading Psalms 104:19 that "renewal or dark days" are not to be included in the count to Pentecost. However, there is no way anyone could possibly extrapolate such a conclusion by reading Psalms 104:19, shown below:

¹⁹ He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down.

Again, the author of the commentary cited above uses Psalms 104:19 as his proof text to establish his point that "extended Sabbath days" should not be included in the count to Pentecost, even though the text of Psalms 104:19 offers no such insight.

As we investigate this particular lunar sabbatarian view, let's examine a calendar depicting exactly how the lunar sabbatarian quoted above would count to Pentecost. Shown below is a calendar illustrating his method:

A Lunar Sabbatarian's Unique Count to Pentecost

Potential Lunar Sabbath Month: ABIB (Extended Sabbaths Don't Count as Days)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Fifth Sabbath of Previous Month	1 Day of New Moon Conjunction (1st Sabbath of the month)	1 Extended Sabbath ends with Crescent Moon Sighting	2 Day one of work week	3 Day two of work week	4 Day three of work week
5 Day four of work week	6 Day five of work week	7 Day six of work week	8 Day seven (second Sabbath of the month)	9 Day one of work week	10 Day two of work week	11 Day three of work week
12 Day four of work week	13 Day five of work week	14 PASSOVER	15 Day seven (third Sabbath AND a high day Sabbath)	16 Day one of count to Pentecost	17 Day two of count to Pentecost	18 Day three of count to Pentecost
19 Day four of count to Pentecost	20 Day five of count to Pentecost	21 Day six of count to Pentecost; also a high day Sabbath	22 Day seven (fourth Sabbath of the month)	23 Day eight of count to Pentecost	24 Day nine of count to Pentecost	25 Day ten of count to Pentecost
26 Day eleven of count to Pentecost	27 Day twelve of count to Pentecost	28 Day thirteen of count to Pentecost	29 Day fourteen of count (fifth Sabbath of the month)			

Potential Lunar Sabbath Month, 2nd Month, (Extended Sabbaths Don't Count)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Day fourteen continues-- New Moon Conjunction (first Sabbath of new month)	1 Day fourteen continues -- Extended Sabbath (new moon sighted after sunset)	2 Day fifteen of count to Pentecost
3 Day sixteen of count to Pentecost	4 Day seventeen of count to Pentecost	5 Day eighteen of count to Pentecost	6 Day nineteen of count to Pentecost	7 Day twenty of count to Pentecost	8 Day twenty-one of count to Pentecost	9 Day twenty-two of count to Pentecost
10 Day twenty-three of count to Pentecost	11 Day twenty-four of count to Pentecost	12 Day twenty-five of count to Pentecost	13 Day twenty-six of count to Pentecost	14 Day twenty-seven of count to Pentecost	15 Day twenty-eight of count to Pentecost	16 Day twenty-nine of count to Pentecost
17 Day thirty of count to Pentecost	18 Day thirty-one of count to Pentecost	19 Day thirty-two of count to Pentecost	20 Day thirty-three of count to Pentecost	21 Day thirty-four of count to Pentecost	22 Day thirty-five of count to Pentecost	23 Day thirty-six of count to Pentecost
24 Day thirty-seven of count to Pentecost	25 Day thirty-eight of count to Pentecost	26 Day thirty-nine of count to Pentecost	27 Day forty of count to Pentecost	28 Day forty-one of count to Pentecost	29 Day forty-two of count (fifth Sabbath of the month)	

Potential Lunar Sabbath Month, Sivan, (Extended Sabbaths Don't Count)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Day forty-two of count (Conjunction + new moon sighted after sunset)
2 Day forty-three of count to Pentecost	3 Day forty-four of count to Pentecost	3 Day forty-five of count to Pentecost	4 Day forty-six of count to Pentecost	5 Day forty-seven of count to Pentecost	6 Day forty-eight of count to Pentecost	7 Day forty-nine of count to Pentecost
8 Day FIFTY PENTECOST						

If you follow the count to Pentecost as illustrated above, you will note that the count began on the second day of the "lunar month week," i.e., a Thursday. It ended on the first day of the week, i.e., a Sunday, which was the day following the weekly Sabbath of that particular "moonth."

In order to succeed in having the day of Pentecost fall on the morrow after the weekly Sabbath of that "moonth," it was necessary to not include the "extended Sabbath" days in the count. Day fourteen of the count to Pentecost, according to the above calendar, was 72 hours long, and day number forty-two of the count lasted 48 hours! In other words, as day number fourteen wore on, the sun rose and set on two different occasions, but neither of those 24-hour periods counted as a "day"! This is, by all practical understandings of Scripture and historical records, a very bizarre and unorthodox method of reckoning the count to Pentecost. It is very unreasonable for such an unusual method to have existed without specific directions outlining its implementation, especially with regard to the fact that "extended Sabbath days" only count as "one day." Yet this is precisely what the lunar sabbatarian quoted above expects all of us to believe. In fact, he adds elsewhere in his commentary that those who do not follow his lunar sabbatarian method are "either wittingly or unwittingly covenanting with the image of the beast."

10. Another Lunar Sabbatarian's Solution to the Count to Pentecost Predicament

As we have already pointed out, part of what makes answering lunar sabbatarians so difficult is the fact that even they are not in unity concerning the proper method of reckoning Lunar Sabbaths. We are faced with the same obstacle with regard to the count to Pentecost predicament. Without going into a lot of detail, we have met one man whose solution to the problem involves believing that Pentecost can only occur during the **fourth month** of the year instead of the third month. In his booklet on this subject, here is a portion of what he wrote:

"Pentecost is on the 29th (Sabbath) of the 4th Moon. Same as the other two Pilgrim feasts (1st and 7th Moons) are on Sabbaths."

Please bear in mind that the above-expressed commentary is completely void of any historical support, and is only supported by the author's own singular interpretation of Scripture. On top of this, by the very standards set by this particular lunar sabbatarian, Pentecost can *never* fall on "the morrow after the Sabbath." Notwithstanding, we will only focus our attention on the month during which he insists Pentecost must be celebrated. If Scripture were to plainly state that the Feast of Weeks must fall during the third month, or even the fourth month of the year, there would be no argument as to the month during which it occurs each year. However, since Scripture is silent with regard to the specific month of Pentecost, the door is opened for controversy. Without going into detail as to exactly how the author of the above commentary was able to determine that Pentecost must fall within the fourth month of the year, let's just suffice it to say that writers such as Philo and Josephus both wrote statements clearly revealing that Pentecost could only have occurred during the third month of the year. Notice what Josephus wrote:

"When a week of weeks has passed over after this sacrifice [of the Passover lamb] (which weeks 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, of two tenth deals, with leaven."

Josephus explained to his Roman audience that his fellow Jews count fifty days from the Paschal sacrifice to the Feast of Pentecost. Since the Passover lamb was killed during the first month of the year, fifty days later brings us to the third month. As if Josephus wasn't plain enough in explaining how and when to observe Pentecost based upon his own personal observation and participation, Philo makes it even plainer. Philo, as we have already mentioned, lived from approximately 20 BCE to 50 CE. Here is what he wrote concerning the count to Pentecost:

"The solemn assembly 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 is reckoned making up the sacred number of seven sevens, with the addition of a unit as a seal to the whole; and this festival, being that of the first fruits of the corn, has derived its name of Pentecost from the number of fifty, (*pente*"*kostos*)."

As Philo matter-of-factly explains, the fiftieth day is reckoned from the "festival of the sheaf," which is the day of the wave sheaf offering that occurs during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Counting fifty days from this particular day, which we know falls during the first month of the year (Abib), can only bring us to the third month of the year.

To completely seal the matter of the month in which Pentecost falls in each year, we refer you to the *Book of Jubilees*. *The Book of Jubilees* has the distinction of having been found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, and is thus representative of Jewish thought of at least the first century of our era, and most likely earlier. As if the month during which Pentecost falls each year was in doubt, this Jewish record completely resolves the matter. Notice what is recorded in *Jubilees* :

"On this account it is ordained and written on the tablets of heaven that the celebration of the festival of weeks should be in this month, once a year, for a renewed covenant in each year and year. And during the time this festival was being celebrated in heaven, from the days of creation to the days of Noah, it was twenty-six jubilees and five weeks of years; and Noah and his sons observed it seven jubilees and one week of years until the time when Noah died."

According to this historical source, the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) has been observed in heaven since the days of creation. The question is, though, "When we read 'this month' in the above quotation, which month is being referenced?" To find the answer, simply go to the first verse of the chapter in which this feast is mentioned. Here is what we read:

"And at the new moon of the third month he came out of the ark and built an altar on that hill."

It was during that same month that Noah observed the festival of weeks, also known as *Pentecost*, *Shavuot*, and as we are about to see, the *Festival of First Fruits*. *The Book of Jubilees* also records Jacob (Israel) observing this same festival in the third month:

"And Israel arose from Haran, from his house, at the new moon of the third month, and came by the way of the well of the oath, and offered a sacrifice to the Elohim of his father Isaac, on the seventh of this month, and Jacob remembered the dream which he had dreamed at Bethel, and he feared to descend down to Egypt. And while he was thinking that he would send word to Joseph that he should come to him, and that he would not go down, he remained there seven days, if he might see a vision, whether he should remain or go down.

And he celebrated the harvest festival of first fruits with old grain, for there was not a handful of seed in all the land of Canaan, for it was unfruitful for all the animals and beasts and birds, and also human beings."

Again, the *Book of Jubilees* plainly establishes that Pentecost falls during the third month of the year. This same understanding can be logically understood from the context of Scripture, even if it doesn't specifically tell us to observe this feast in the third month.

Now that we have proven the month during which Pentecost falls each year, we are back to "square one." How do we implement the count? As we have already observed, the only way for a lunar sabbatarian to arrive at the "morrow after the seventh Sabbath" is to believe that the "extended Sabbath days" all count as only one day ... an important rule that is mysteriously absent from Scripture.

11. The Importance of Historical Evidence: Did Josephus Observe Lunar Sabbaths?

We are accustomed to hearing people criticize Josephus. We have heard people call him everything from a coward to a traitor. These criticisms are most often forthcoming because they know that Josephus did not practice one or more of their religious beliefs. The natural tendency, then, is to find a way to discredit him. We therefore did not expect any lunar sabbatarians to offer support for the accuracy of Josephus' writings.

To our surprise, however, we have met a lunar sabbatarian who had nothing negative to say about Josephus. Of course, the caveat is that he believes Josephus was himself a lunar sabbatarian! Even more ironic, as we will see later, is the fact that while on the one hand he respects Josephus as a historian, on the other hand he (later) advises his reading audience to "forget history" and focus totally on the Torah. Shown below is the author's ringing endorsement of any piece of history that seemingly supports his position:

"I could go on and on even into history where the Historian Josephus records Sabbaths that can be pinpointed and they are on the 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th. When the Romans saw that the Jews [rested] on the Sabbath but that they didn't fight unless attacked, they moved their engines and battering rams right up to the walls on the Sabbath which otherwise they could not do, and on the next day they battered them to the city and He records that it was the 23rd that they battered them, or the day after the Sabbath when they had everything in place.

"This proves the pinpointed Sabbaths in his time was still on the 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th of the moon and the New Moon was **still not counted** as one of the six workdays. Coincidence? You be the judge."

Interestingly, the author of the above commentary, in this particular instance, sanctions the use of historical references in researching this topic. Notice that he did not cite where in Josephus' writings we can go to find that the Romans battered the Jews on the 23rd day of the month, nor does he provide a quote documenting his remark. Elsewhere in his booklet, as we just warned you, he dismisses historical evidence, as evidenced by the following quotation:

"The solution to when to rest and worship is as simple as falling off a log, but it can only be accomplished by forgetting everything you have learned about when the Sabbath starts, and start over, using only the Bible for instructions. Forget history, forget tradition of men, and forget everything but the Torah (law)."

On the one hand, the author of the two separate commentaries quoted above (from the same booklet) expects his reading audience to embrace any historical references that seemingly support his Lunar Sabbath position while on the other hand, he simultaneously cautions them to "forget history." The apparent inconsistency in his approach, while lamentable, is nevertheless understandable. Historical evidence supporting one's interpretation of Scripture is like "icing on the cake." If so much as the slightest piece of historical evidence supporting *Lunar Sabbaths* is unearthed, then we can expect the lunar sabbatarian to capitalize on it. This is what the lunar sabbatarian quoted above attempted to do. While we believe he misconstrued and misapplied that historical evidence, we can nevertheless understand his approach.

However, the vast majority of historical evidence, as we have already shown, speaks *against* the lunar sabbatarian position, and this is why the typical lunar sabbatarian will toss out the historical records. Historical evidence contrary to his position is summarily rejected and we are cautioned about the manipulation of historical records and other conspiracies. Since we cannot trust the historical records, our total faith must be placed in the Torah. It sounds very noble, on the surface, to cry out, "Forget everything but the Torah." Underneath, however, lies a spiritually dangerous mentality that we should all be wary of: The "Scripture and Scripture alone" mentality. Of course, Scripture should be the final arbiter between truth and untruth, so we definitely need to establish Yahweh's Word as being the ultimate source of truth. Nevertheless, sometimes controversies arise - controversies that bring to bear more than one interpretation of what Yahweh intends for us to understand. When more than one interpretation is possible, history becomes important. It allows us to see how ancient believers interpreted the instructions found in Scripture. It is from history, for example, that we learn of heathens who mistakenly perceived Jews as fasting on the (Saturday) Sabbath because no smoke was seen coming from their houses that day. Instead of *fasting*, though, the Jews were simply abstaining from *cooking* that day. It is from these ancient observations that we learn how the believers of Old interpreted Scripture.

For those of us who trust in Yahshua as the Messiah and Son of Yahweh, it is also important to reflect on the fact that during His earthly ministry, He had plenty to say with regard to how His fellow Jews observed the Sabbath, but never was there a disagreement with regard to when it was observed. It is for these reasons that historical evidence is important. When historical evidence aligns with our interpretation of Scripture, it tends to solidify that interpretation. For those who reject historical evidence while crying, "I go by Scripture and Scripture alone!", what they are **really** saying is, "I go by my interpretation of Scripture and **my interpretation** alone!" Thus, whenever points of doctrine are subject to more than one interpretation, historical evidence is not only admissible evidence, it is **vital evidence**.

In the case of Josephus, as it turns out, we believe the evidence in fact demonstrates that he and his fellow Jews observed the same continuously repeating cycle of seventh-day Sabbaths that are observed by Jews of today. Notice what he wrote in *The Wars of the Jews*, Book I, ch. 2, sect. 4:

"And as the siege was delayed by this means, the year of rest came on, upon which the Jews rest every seventh year as they do on every seventh day."

The continuous, unending, repeating cycle of weeks ending in a Sabbath day are here referenced by Josephus. Also worthy of note in the quotation above is *another* Sabbath observance mentioned by Josephus: *The sabbatical years*. The Scriptural instructions for the observance of Sabbatical *years* provide additional evidence supporting the continuous repeating cycle of *weeks* ending with a Sabbath day. Just as Yahweh prescribed with regard to **weeks**, so he prescribed for **years**, at least insofar as sowing and reaping. Every seventh year, the land was to rest from sowing and reaping. Notice that at the end of seven "Sabbath cycles" of years, another Sabbath year is added (Leviticus 25:8-13). This added year is called *the year of jubilee*.

What is significant about the Jubilee year? Simply put, Yahweh specifies a "double Sabbath" of years at the end of the seventh cycle. You might call the Jubilee year an "extended Sabbath." Notice that Yahweh precisely prescribed what to do at the end of the 49th year: He gave instructions to "do it again"! The question immediately arises as to why Yahweh didn't give such instructions pertaining to the alleged "extended Sabbaths" that lunar sabbatarians maintain should be observed at the end of each month. This would immediately call into question an inconsistency in Yahweh's Word. Why would Yahweh give plain instructions pertaining to an "extended Sabbath year," but **fail** to give instructions with regard to "extended Lunar Sabbath days" at the end of each month? Those of us who know and appreciate the fact that Yahweh is **not** inconsistent understand the reason for the omission of "extended Lunar Sabbath days" in His Word: They never existed, nor were any such days ever intended to be observed.

Continuing on with Josephus, there is additional evidence that neither he nor his fellow Jews ever observed *Lunar Sabbaths*. In *The Wars of the Jews*, Book I, ch. vii, sect. 3, Josephus makes special mention that the Jews would only fight defensively on the Sabbath-days:

"... 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."

It is significant that Josephus on several occasions makes note of the fact that his fellow Jews only acted defensively on the Sabbath. Josephus makes mention of this fact as if to continually remind his reading audience of this particular custom. Certainly, then, if Josephus made reference to any instances wherein his Jewish counterparts took part in battles without noting that it was the Sabbath day when such battles took place, we can safely presume that it *wasn't* the Sabbath day when those battles were fought.

Case in point: On the fifteenth of the month Lous [Ab], a group of seditious Jews made an assault on the Antonia Fortress. According to lunar sabbatarians, the fifteenth day of each month is a Sabbath day. Did Josephus just happen to neglect mentioning that this particular day was a Sabbath day *or* did he treat it as he would any other working day of the month? Not only did Josephus leave off mentioning that the fifteenth day of that particular month was a Sabbath day, but he also matter-of-factly described the seditious Jews' attack on the fortress. Typically, as we have already shown, the Jews did not mount attacks on the Sabbath day - they would only act in self-defense on that day. If they had acted contrary to the acceptable "Sabbath protocols," we can be certain that Josephus would have made note of it, much as he did in *Wars of the Jews*, Book II, Ch. 19, sect. 2, where he wrote the following:

"But as for the Jews, when they saw the war approaching to their metropolis, they left the feast [of Tabernacles], and betook themselves to their arms; and taking courage greatly from their multitude, went in a sudden and disorderly manner to the fight, with a great noise, and without any consideration had of the rest of the seventh day, although the Sabbath was the day to which they had the greatest regard; but that rage which made them forget the religious observation [of the Sabbath], made them too hard for their enemies in the fight."

As can easily be discerned from the above reference, Josephus customarily described any occasion wherein his Jewish counterparts participated in any unusual acts on the Sabbath day. For Josephus to mention a Jewish attack on the fifteenth of the month without specifying that it was a Sabbath day when they mounted the attack is a convincing illustration that the fifteenth day of the month was not necessarily considered the Sabbath day.

This same principle can be demonstrated with the eighth day of the month. As we have already seen, lunar sabbatarians regard the eighth day of the month as a regular Sabbath day. Did Josephus share this same regard for the eighth day? No, he did not. In *The Wars of the Jews*, Book II, Ch. XIX, Sect. 9, he describes the Jews' assault and decisive victory over the Roman commander Cestius Gallus and his army. This assault occurred on none other than the eighth day of the month Marchesvan.

Again, not only did Josephus not mention that the eighth day of this month was a Sabbath day, but he also described a ferocious attack on the Romans perpetrated by the Jews. For Josephus to have gone to such great lengths in establishing that the Jews as only fought in self-defense on the Sabbath, and then mention dates such as the eighth and fifteenth on which they fought **offensively** can only indicate that those two particular days of the month are **not** necessarily Sabbath days.

We need not stop with the evidence offered by Josephus regarding the day on which the Jews customarily set aside for rest and worship. Without a doubt, by the time of Eusebius of Caesarea, who lived from 263 until 339 CE, the switch from worshipping on the day known as Saturday to Sunday was commonly known and well established among Christians. In his *Ecclesiastical History*, Book 1, ch. 4:8, he writes of how Jews before the days of Abraham, like Christians of Eusebius' day, did not observe the Sabbath. Although I disagree with Eusebius' assessment, his testimony illustrates the distinction that was made between Sunday observance and Saturday observance. Here is what Eusebius wrote:

"They [the Jews before the time of Abraham] did not, therefore, regard circumcision nor observe the Sabbath; neither do we."

What "Sabbath" was Eusebius referring to? A lunar sabbatarian might bring forth an argument that by "Sabbath" Eusebius was making reference to *Lunar Sabbaths*. If Eusebius so much as ever *heard* of Lunar Sabbaths, he never made allusion to such a method of reckoning. Instead, he makes the distinction between the *Sabbath of the Jews* and the *Lord's Day* observed by Christians. He makes this distinction while describing a sect called the *Ebionites*. The Ebionites represented a group of people who, according to Eusebius, rejected the virgin birth of Yahshua and who taught obedience to the Torah. Here is how Eusebius described their day of worship:

"They also observed the Sabbath and other discipline of the Jews just like them, but on the other hand, they also celebrated the Lord's days very much like us in commemoration of his resurrection."

The only historical record testifying to the relationship of the Sabbath to "the Lord's Day" of Christianity is that the one superseded the other. In other words, according to Christianity, although the fourth commandment enjoined believers to worship on the day commonly known as Saturday, that day was later changed to Sunday in commemoration of the Messiah's resurrection. We are not expressing agreement with such a decision, nor do we even agree that the Messiah rose on Sunday morning, but that is not the point. The point is, this is what Christians such as Eusebius believed and taught, and that teaching continues to this day, namely, that Sunday worship replaced Saturday Sabbath worship.

Other historical writings also testify that Saturday Sabbath worship was supplanted by Sunday ["Lord's Day"] worship.

Although there is some question as to their reliability, the fact remains from the dating of these documents that the teaching of Sunday replacing the Saturday Sabbath was in effect at a relatively early date. According to *Constitutions of the Holy Apostles*, which is arbitrarily dated to either the second or third century, the "Lord's day" excels the Sabbath day:

"For the Sabbath is the ceasing of the creation, the completion of the world, the inquiry after laws, and the grateful praise to God for the blessings He has bestowed upon men. All which the Lord's day excels, and shows the Mediator Himself, the Provider, the Lawgiver, the Cause of the resurrection, the First-born of the whole creation, God the Word, and man, who was born of Mary alone, without a man, who lived holily, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and died, and rose again from the dead. So that the Lord's day commands us to offer unto Thee, O Lord, thanksgiving for all." (*Constitutions of the Holy Apostles*, Book 7, Sec. 2, Chapter 36)

One of the earliest documents alluding to Christian theology pertaining to Sunday worship replacing Saturday Sabbath worship is the *Didache* dated by some to the year 90 CE. According to some, the work is a forgery intended to give an impression of antiquity. Nevertheless, it was apparently in use by the year 180, according to *Encyclopedia International*: "Used by Christians by 180, it is probably early and shows that church orders were a concern of the early postapostolic age." Although the *Didache* doesn't make an outright distinction between the weekly Sabbath versus Sunday worship, it implies that perhaps there was a custom of meeting on Sunday, which they designated "the Lord's day":

"Gather together on the Lord's day, break bread and give thanks, having first confessed your sins so that your sacrifice may be pure. But do not let anyone who has a quarrel with a companion join with you until they have been reconciled, so that your sacrifice may not be polluted; for this was spoken by the Lord: 'In every place and time offer me a pure sacrifice, for I am a great king, says the Lord, and my name is wonderful among the Gentiles.'" (*Didache* 14:1-3)

Regardless of what "Lord's day" meant to the earliest of early believers, by the time of Eusebius, it meant "Sunday" as opposed to the "Saturday Sabbath" observed by the Jews. Try as they might, no lunar sabbatarian has successfully produced a single historical writing outlining the progression from *Lunar Sabbath* to *Saturday Sabbath*, eventually culminating in *Sunday* worship. The only recorded change is that of Christians who believed the sanctity of the Saturday Sabbath was transferred to Sunday. This is history ... history that lunar sabbatarians would like for us to "forget."

12. A Lunar Sabbatarian's New Testament Argument Implodes

In his booklet "Proof That the Weekly Sabbath Days Are Determined by the Moon," author Arnold Bowen attempts to establish proof from the New Testament that the Messiah observed Lunar Sabbaths. I find that many of his claims are dubious at best, and are impossible to really prove either way, which means they prove nothing. Some of the points he makes are so ridiculous that we are hesitant to even mention them. For example, on page 29 he mentions a Feast of Tabernacles celebration observed by Solomon, as recorded in II Chronicles chapter seven. In verse 10 of that chapter, we read that Solomon sent the people away on the 23rd day of the seventh month. The author of the booklet asks his readers, "Why didn't he send them away on the 22nd?" The answer to that question is so easy that it is almost embarrassing for us to even address it here: The 22nd day of the seventh month is a Sabbath day, regardless of whether you look at it from a lunar sabbatarian perspective or otherwise. The Feast of Tabernacles is an eight-day feast that begins on the fifteenth day of the seventh month and concludes with a high day Sabbath on the 22nd (Lev. 23:34-36). Would it have been appropriate for Solomon to have sent the people home on a Sabbath day? No, it would have been very *inappropriate* for him to have done such a thing. To answer the author's question, then, Solomon didn't send the people home on the 22nd because it was the "last great day" of the Feast of Tabernacles, which is a specially designated Sabbath day. Someone with such a limited understanding of the Mo'edim should never be teaching people about something as essential as the Shabbat.

On at least one occasion, some careless exegesis serves to cause his theory to utterly implode upon itself. Once again, it has to do with a Feast of Tabernacles celebration. To illustrate the demise of this man's research, we display the paragraph from his booklet:

"Another place the New Moon and Sabbaths are pinpointed is **John 9:14**. To prove this, compare the following verses: **John 7:2** tells us the Feast of Tabernacles was at hand. Verse 10 tells [us] that He went up to it. Verse 37 tells us that on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, which is the 21st (see Lev. 23:36) and (Ez. 45:25). John 8:1 tells [us] that He went to the Mt. of Olives and verse 2 says that early in the morning He came again into the temple and taught (on the 22nd Sabbath) and verse 59 says He went out of the temple and passed by. Chapter 9:1 tells of seeing the blind man as He passed by. Verse 6 says He made clay, and verse 14 says it was the Sabbath (22nd) when He made the clay which proves the 22nd was a Sabbath and the 2nd day of the Moon (Mark 14:1) was the 1st workday of the week again, and the weekly Sabbaths were on the 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th. How could we fail to see these Sabbaths always being on these set days of the Moon? And here again, Our Savior (the Son of YHWH) was keeping the Heavenly Sabbaths that were created in Heaven and not by man's calendar. The Sabbath here was on the 22nd when He kept it, needless to say that the 29th was a Sabbath also, won't you follow His example?"

Summing up the above commentary, the author believes the last day of Tabernacles fell on Tishri 21 (the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar) and that the following day, the 22nd, was a Lunar Sabbath day. He believes the Messiah taught in the Temple on that day, then later healed a blind man. Was the blind man healed on the 22nd of Tishri? As we are about to see, the answer is no, he was not.

Mr. Bowen includes Ezekiel 45:25 as one of his proof texts, as though this one verse establishes that Tabernacles is strictly a seven-day feast. According to Leviticus 23:36, however, this feast goes beyond the seven days, as an **eighth** day is also observed, and it is counted as a Sabbath day on which no "servile work" is to be performed. Let's read Leviticus 23:36:

³⁶ Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto YHWH: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto YHWH: *it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein.*

As is obvious, this is more than just a seven-day feast: An eighth day is added by Yahweh. Even Josephus understood this truth:

"Upon the fifteenth day of the same month [Tishri, the seventh month], when the season of the year is changing for winter, the law enjoins us to pitch tabernacles in every one of our houses, so that we preserve ourselves from the cold of that time of the year; as also that when we should arrive at our own country, and come to that city that we should have then for our metropolis, because of the temple therein to be built, and keep a festival for eight days, and offer burnt-offerings, and sacrifice thank-offerings, that we should then carry in our hands a branch of myrtle, and willow, and a bough of the palm-tree, with the addition of the pomecitron. That the burnt-offering on the first of those days was to be a sacrifice of thirteen bulls, and fourteen lambs, and fifteen rams, with the addition of a kid of the goats, as an expiation for sins: and on the following days the same number of lambs, and of rams, with the kids of the goats; but abating one of the bulls every day till they numbered seven only. On the eighth day all work was laid aside [*Author's note: Why mention this fact if it was such common knowledge that the eighth day was the regular Sabbath anyway?*], and then, as we said before, they sacrificed to God a bullock, a ram, and seven lambs, with a kid of the goats, for an expiation of sins. And this is the accustomed solemnity of the Hebrews, when they pitch their tabernacles." (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Bk.3, chapter 10, sec.4).

As Josephus acknowledged, the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles is the **eighth** day, not the seventh day. Although it is indeed termed a "feast of seven days" in Leviticus 23:35-36, we know that Yahweh added an eighth day, making **that day** the last day of the feast. Philo also recognized the Feast of Tabernacles as having a total of *eight* days. Notice what he had to say:

"And after the festival has lasted seven days, He adds an eighth as a seal, calling it a kind of crowning feast, not only as it would seem to this festival, but also to all the feasts of the year which we have enumerated; for it is the last feast of the year, and is a very stable and holy sort of conclusion, befitting men who have now received all the produce from the land, and who are no longer in perplexity and apprehension respecting any barrenness or scarcity." (*The Works of Philo: The Special Laws, II, XXXIII, 211*)

Philo refers to the eighth day of Tabernacles as a "crowning feast" to all the festivals of Yahweh's circle of feasts. It is, according to Philo, a day added by Yahweh to the Feast of Tabernacles, as he states later in that same section that "the number eight was assigned to the feast." This is just one example demonstrating that Philo recognized Tabernacles as being an eight-day feast, not a seven-day feast. It's not over until the ending of the eighth day.

Elsewhere, in another of his writings, Philo describes the actions of Moses and his brother Aaron during a certain feast. Philo doesn't give us the name of the feast, but notice the description he gives, and see if you can determine which feast he had to be referring to:

"Then Moses entered into the tabernacle, taking his brother by the hand, and it was the eighth and last day of the festival, for the seven previous days had been devoted to the initiation of the hierophants [priests]; he now initiated him and his nephews." (*On the Life of Moses II,* Chapter XXX, section 153).

As recorded by Philo, the first seven days of this unnamed feast were used in initiating the priests, and then on the **eighth day of the festival**, referred to as being the **last day** by Philo, Moses initiated Aaron and Aaron's sons. Even though Philo doesn't specifically mention "which" feast this was, it should be fairly obvious that it was the Feast of Tabernacles, and Philo regarded it as being an eight-day feast.

The primary oversight in the lunar sabbatarian's commentary, then, can be found in his remark that the last day of the feast is the 21st. In expounding upon John 7:37, here is what he wrote (quoted again):

"Verse 37 tells us that on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, which is the 21st"

Hopefully we all know by now that the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles is the fifteenth day of the seventh month. If the first day is the fifteenth of the month, then the **last day** of an eight-day feast must of necessity fall on the **twenty-second day of the month**, NOT the 21st as he erroneously reported in his booklet. Again, he demonstrates a clear lack of understanding as it relates to the Moedim.

We might also add at this point that the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles is commonly termed "The Last Great Day." This, in fact, is how the last day of Tabernacles was referred to in the book of John: ³⁷In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Yahshua stood and cried, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink."

Scholars agree that this is a reference to the eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles, which falls on the 22nd day of the seventh month (not the 21st). Here is what Adam Clarke had to say in his commentary:

"37. *In the last day, that great day of the feast.* This was the eighth day, and was called the *great day* because of certain traditional observances, and not on account of any excellence which it derived from the original institution. On the seven days they professed to offer sacrifices for the seventy nations of the earth, but on the eighth day they offered sacrifices for Israel; therefore the eighth day was more highly esteemed than any of the others."

Adam Clarke understood the "last day" of Tabernacles as being the eighth day of the feast.

We will concede that not all scholars are as certain of this fact as Adam Clarke was. Here is what Merrill C. Tenney has to say in his contribution to *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*:

"37. The climax of the controversy came 'on the last and greatest day of the Feast' of Tabernacles. According to the provision of the law, the feast was held for seven days, followed by an eighth day of spiritual observance, including an offering to God. The feast was established as a memorial to the wandering in the wilderness, where water and food were scarce. When the people emerged from the desert into the land of Canaan, they enjoyed regular rainfall and plentiful crops. The celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles included a daily procession of priests from the temple to the Pool of Siloam, from which they drew water that was poured out as a libation at the altar. This was accomplished by the recital of Isaiah 12:3, 'With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.'

Whether the 'last day' of the feast was the seventh or the eighth day is not clear. Deuteronomy 16:13 calls for seven days; Leviticus 23:36 prescribes an eighth day, which follows the routine of the first seven. Josephus (Antiq. 3. 10. 4) says that on the eighth day there should be a sacrifice of a calf, a ram, seven lambs, and a kid in propitiation of sins. If 'the last and greatest day of the Feast' refers to the eighth day, it makes the appeal of Jesus all the more meaningful. On that day Jesus took the opportunity to make a public announcement concerning himself."

Mr. Tenney expresses uncertainty as to whether or not the "last day" was the eighth day of the feast, yet even he admits that the eighth day makes more sense.

Please pardon us for being more forthright about this than Mr. Tenney, as we will state without reservation that this can **only** be a reference to the eighth day. For one to believe that the "last day" of Tabernacles is the seventh day effectively means he believes the eighth day is utterly removed from the feast.

The last day of the Feast of Tabernacles is the eighth day, not the seventh day. The eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles is the 22nd day of the seventh month. As the lunar sabbatarian pointed out in his booklet, the following day after this feast had ended and everyone had gone home (John 7:53) was a Sabbath day. This Sabbath day, being the day following the 22nd of the month, could only have fallen on the 23rd day of the 7th month, disproving the author's claim that the Bible only speaks of Sabbath days occurring on the 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th days of the month.

In fact, Arnold Bowen, in his booklet, publicly offers a \$1,000 reward to anyone who can pinpoint a weekly Sabbath on any other day than the 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th days of the month. Based upon the proof listed above, we sent him a letter requesting that he make good on his offer. His response was to insist that the Feast of Tabernacles has never been an eight-day feast. Pointing to the verses of Scripture wherein Tabernacles is listed as being a seven day feast, he concludes that, in accordance with Scripture, it is **only** a seven-day feast. As for the eighth day that Yahweh added, the author holds that all Yahweh was doing was telling everyone to hang around an extra day after the feast was over, as it would always be a *Lunar Sabbath* day anyway. Furthermore, he expressed surprise that this was "the best we could do," maintaining that our position is "like a drowning man grasping straws," as the eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles, to him, is simply another Lunar Sabbath day, and not a part of the feast.

Here is an excerpt of his comments pertaining to the *eighth day* of Tabernacles, expressed verbally in his audio taped response:

"In your letter you said that somebody was taking away the eighth day of the feast - no, you're not taking away the eighth day of the feast, because it's a **seven day feast!** How can you take the eighth day away from a seven day feast when the feast only lasts **seven days** - because the last day of the feast is the seventh day! And that's the Last Great Day!"

Again, Mr. Bowen maintains that it would only be natural for Yahweh to expect His people to stay together for that extra (eighth) day, as he believes it was simply the regular weekly Sabbath day following the Feast of Tabernacles. As we will see in the next chapter, this position certainly makes us wonder why Yahweh didn't instruct His people to keep an eighth day after the Feast of Unleavened Bread as well.

The Feast of Tabernacles Disproves Lunar Sabbath Doctrine

The Feast of Tabernacles in and of itself disproves the *Lunar Sabbath* doctrine. Number one, as we demonstrated earlier in this chapter, Leviticus 23:36 establishes that day eight of this feast is regarded as a Sabbath day on which no "servile work" is to be performed.

This same "no servile work" command is repeated in Numbers 29:35. It is very important that we distinguish between "no servile work" and "no work." According to the fourth commandment, **no work** is to be done on the Sabbath day. On the eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles, however, only *servile work* is prohibited. There is a great distinction between what is allowed on days when *no work* is permitted versus what is allowed when only *servile work* is prohibited. For a more thorough explanation of this distinction, please read chapter fourteen.

It is apparent that lunar sabbatarians believe the regular Sabbath "no work" restriction is lifted when those Sabbath days coincide with feast days, such as the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles. However, the author of the booklet "Proof That the Weekly Sabbath Days Are Determined by the Moon" maintains that the day following the seventh day of the Feast of Tabernacles, the eighth day, is a regular Sabbath day, and not a part of the feast. If this is so, we can only wonder why Yahweh only prohibited "servile work" and not "all work" on that day!

Number two, if day eight of the Feast of Tabernacles isn't **really** "day eight" of the feast, but only a regular "Lunar Sabbath" day, someone needs to explain why Yahweh prescribed different sacrifices for that particular eighth day than what He instructed to be offered on the regular Sabbaths. For the regular Sabbaths, Yahweh instructed two lambs to be offered as burnt offerings in addition to the two lambs required for the daily burnt offerings (Num. 28:9-10). For the eighth day of Tabernacles, however, **seven lambs** were offered, in addition to a bullock, a ram and a goat (Numbers 29:36-38)! If, as lunar sabbatarians believe, this "eighth day" was separate from the Feast of Tabernacles, then why wasn't it treated the same as the other (alleged) *lunar Sabbath days*? Why did Yahweh prescribe different sacrifices for that "eighth day" than He did for regular Sabbath days?

The answer should by now be all too obvious. The "eighth day" was *not* regarded as a weekly Sabbath day (unless it happened to fall on the weekly Sabbath). It was truly the eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles - added by Yahweh as a high day Sabbath. It was a day of "no servile work," whereas the weekly Sabbath is a day of **no work** (Ex. 20:9, Lev. 23:3). On that high day Sabbath, Yahweh commanded special sacrifices to be offered - sacrifices that did not match those He commanded to be offered on the weekly Sabbath day.

Number three, despite the lunar sabbatarian's resolute insistence that there has never been an *eighth day* of the Feast of Tabernacles, the very fact that Yahweh terms it a day of "no servile work" proves that, indeed, He **did** add that day to the feast. Yahweh clearly established that His regular weekly Sabbath day is a day of **no work**.

According to the lunar sabbatarian's theology, that "eighth day" is indeed a regular Sabbath day, not a part of the Feast of Tabernacles.

If this is so, we should expect that day to be a day of ***no work at all***; instead, it is only a day of *no servile work*. The fact that Yahweh lightens the restrictions on that *eighth day* instead of imposing the same restrictions as He does for the regular weekly Sabbath conclusively proves that it is indeed a part of the Feast of Tabernacles and thus, the "last great day" of the feast.

Finally, consider the lunar sabbatarian's words. He plainly states that the "eighth day" *never* was a part of the Feast of Tabernacles. If this is so, then perhaps he would like to tell us what "eighth day" refers to? Eighth day of ***what***? If there is an *eighth day*, then what is that eighth day in reference to? What is the *seventh day*? The *sixth day*? The *first day*? The obvious answer is that it is the ***eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles***, which falls on the twenty-second day of the month.

13. Comparing The Feast of Unleavened Bread With The Feast of Tabernacles Provides Additional Evidence

We have thus far shown many examples illustrating how Yahweh never intended for His people to glean that His Sabbaths are based upon the phases of the moon. An additional example can be found in comparing the instructions for observing the Feast of Unleavened Bread with the instructions pertaining to the Feast of Tabernacles as found in Leviticus chapter 23. As we have already demonstrated, the author of the booklet "Proof That Weekly Sabbath Days are Determined by the Moon" makes a critical mistake in severing the eighth day from the Feast of Tabernacles. By doing this, he makes it appear more similar to the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which only consists of seven days, the last day of which is a "high day Sabbath."

However, the Feast of Tabernacles is truly an eight-day feast, and was understood as such by the ancients. A lunar sabbatarian might think, "Well, the Feast of Tabernacles is only a seven-day feast ... the 8th day is only included because it is a (lunar) Sabbath anyway! After having kept the feast for seven days, Yahweh wanted them to stay together for the eighth day, which was a regular Lunar Sabbath!"

In response, we would ask why this same formula isn't given for the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Since the Feast of Unleavened Bread begins on Abib 15, which (according to lunar sabbatarians) is a regular Sabbath day, the seventh day of that feast falls on Abib 21, which is *not* a regular Sabbath day, but a "high Sabbath day." Thus, since the day following that high Sabbath day would be a regular Sabbath day, why didn't Yahweh simply command them to have a double Sabbath together, making the Feast of Unleavened Bread an eight day feast like the Feast of Tabernacles?

Doesn't it seem strange that Yahweh would have the Feast of Unleavened Bread end on the preparation day for the weekly Sabbath each year?

Apparently we are expected to believe that, upon concluding the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the participants gathered up their belongings and went home, even though the ending of such a feast each year would simultaneously mark the beginning of the weekly Sabbath day! This would have them packing and traveling on the Sabbath!

Certainly, if the Feast of Unleavened Bread ended on preparation day for the weekly Sabbath each year, we would expect Yahweh to have provided instructions in His Torah for what to do upon reaching the conclusion of that feast. Why not just instruct us to keep an eighth day, just like the Feast of Tabernacles?? We are curious as to what advice a lunar sabbatarian would have given a feast keeper in Jerusalem for what to do upon the conclusion of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Summing up this section, the instructions for adding an eighth day to the Feast of Tabernacles are very inconsistent if it was already understood that the 22nd day of the month was a Sabbath anyway. Furthermore, if the Feast of Unleavened Bread ended on Abib 21, which is always preparation day for the Lunar Sabbath, and since Abib 21 is always a "high day Sabbath" anyway, why didn't Yahweh simply instruct His people to observe a "double Sabbath" at the end of that feast? Indeed, the silence regarding an annual "double Sabbath" at the conclusion of the Feast of Unleavened Bread is telling evidence that no such "double Sabbath" was common. It was the **exception**, not the norm.

14. The Sabbaths and New Moons Together in Scripture

Lunar sabbatarians defend observing *Lunar Sabbaths* with such Scripture verses as Ezekiel 46:1 & 3, as shown below:

Verse 1: Thus says Yahweh Almighty: "The gateway of the inner court that faces toward the east shall be shut THE SIX WORKING DAYS; but on the SABBATH it shall be opened, and on the day of the NEW MOON [chodesh] it shall be opened.

Verse 3: Likewise the people of the land shall worship at the entrance to this gateway before Yahweh on the Sabbaths and the New Moons [chodesh].

Upon quoting the above verses, here is the commentary offered by *Lunar Sabbath* proponents:

"Notice here that it says the gate '*shall be shut the six working days*,' then EXCLUDES the Sabbath AND new moon from *these days*."

The author's desired effect is that of persuading the reader that, since the gate of the Temple will be shut for "six working days," and since the new moons and Sabbaths are *excluded* from being called "working days," this must of necessity mean that "new moons" and "Sabbaths" fall on the same days. If there were no other evidence for us to examine, we could understand how one might arrive at the conclusion that a new moon day cannot possibly fall during one of the "six working days," based upon the reading of the above passage of Scripture.

However, since there *is* other evidence for us to consider, we believe it is prudent to recognize the distinct possibility that the day of the new moon, regardless of the day of the week upon which it fell, was treated as a special day in its own right, apart from the weekly Sabbath day and apart from the six working days. Furthermore, if indeed the new moon was always regarded as a Sabbath day by early believers, one can only wonder why we never read of "the new moon Sabbath" or "the Sabbath of the new moon."

One lunar sabbatarian, in making reference to the above passage in Ezekiel, stated, "It would be better for you if that passage (in Ezekiel) was nonexistent. But since it *is there*, it makes a difference." In other words, the fact that the new moons are listed separately from the working days, in his opinion, thwarts our position.

Well, conversely speaking, it would be better for *his* case if there were a passage in the Torah stating, "Ye shall do no servile work on the day of the new moon." It would be even *better* for his case if there were a Torah passage stating, "Ye shall do no work on the 8th day, the 15th day, the 22nd, and 29th days of each month." But since no such passage exists, his position is indeed suspect.

For those who maintain that Ezekiel 46:1 & 3 support treating the new moons with the same force as the Sabbath day, we suggest considering the following commentary, taken from *Mercer Dictionary of the Bible*:

"Because certain OT texts mention Sabbath and new moon together (2 Kgs 4:23; Isa 1:13; Amos 8:5), it is argued that originally the Sabbath was celebrated one day each month, as the new moon appeared. Later, according to this view, the prophet Ezekiel 'made the Sabbath day the sign of the covenant with Yahweh' (Ezek 20:12, 20) taking the idea of observing the Sabbath every seven days from the older Babylonian custom (de Vaux, 476). The major difficulty this poses is in explaining how Israel's Sabbath, which had such a positive meaning, could have been based on such a negative idea as that of the Babylonians. When Sabbath and new moon, furthermore, are mentioned together in the OT, there is no need to assume that the texts are speaking of anything other than two separate and distinct religious holidays. The relationship between the Hebrew *s(abba)"t* and the Akkadian *s(apattu* can be understood by the fact that both terms refer to 'the day that marked a definite boundary' (de Vaux, 477), one dividing the months, the other dividing the weeks."

As explained by this reference, the weekly Sabbath and the new moon are given a clear line of demarcation in Scripture.

Another verse often quoted by lunar sabbatarians in support of their view is Amos 8:5 -

⁵When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? And the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit?

This verse, on the surface, might seem to imply that each new moon day has the same force as the weekly Sabbath, as buying and selling, both of which involve the work of a servant, were apparently prohibited on that day, just as it is on the weekly Sabbath. However, what is mysteriously missing from Amos 8:5 is a *Torah precedent* outlawing work on each new moon day. **In the Torah** (the books of the law), there is a glaring absence of a directive to treat each and every new moon day as a Sabbath day. The **only** new moon day that is treated as a Sabbath day is the first day of the seventh month, **Yom Teruah**, also known as the Feast of Trumpets. Furthermore, Yahweh specifically gave His people instructions for "when" they are to set aside days for holy convocations. Those days are outlined for all to see in the book of Leviticus, chapter 23, and the days of each new moon are not included. The chapter opens with these words:

¹And Yahweh spake unto Moses, saying,

²Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, *Concerning* the feasts of Yahweh, which ye shall proclaim *to be* holy convocations, *even* these *are* My feasts.

If you would read this entire chapter, you will notice that the only new moon day singled out by Yahweh as being a day of holy convocation is *Yom Teruah*, better known as the Feast of Trumpets. No other new moon observance has been so ordained by Yahweh. In fact, one might well wonder why instructions for observing a special day of rest on *Yom Teruah* would have even been mentioned if it were already a "given" that each new moon day was a day of rest.

The *New Bible Dictionary* recognizes that the new moon of Amos 8:5 is likely a reference to the Feast of Trumpets:

"Amos depicts the merchants of his day anxiously awaiting the end of the new moon and of the Sabbath so that they could resume their fraudulent trading. It seems therefore to have been regarded, like the Sabbath, as a day on which normal work was not done. The reference may be, however, to the new moon of the 7th month, regarding which the law stated specifically that no servile work was to be done on it (Lv. 23:24-25; Nu. 29:1-6)."

This reference recognizes the fact that only one new moon day is a day of commanded abstention from work, and that day is the first new moon of the 7th month (*Yom Teruah*).

If Yahweh intended no work to be done each new moon day, He would have specifically given us instructions outlining such a requirement. He wouldn't have left such an important matter open to interpretation. It would have been plainly stated. The absence of such a command, therefore, can rightfully be interpreted as just that: the absence of a command, which means abstention from work is only required on the first day of the seventh month. This is the only new moon day on which no (servile) work is allowed.

Certain feast days, such as *Yom Teruah*, although classified as Sabbaths, do not have the same level of restrictions imposed upon them as does the weekly Sabbath, and this in itself demonstrates that ancient Israel never observed *Lunar Sabbaths*.

The Torah, in fact, treats the high day Sabbaths of the feasts as having a different requirement (with lighter restrictions) than the weekly Sabbaths. Certainly different guidelines for high day Sabbaths as opposed to the weekly Sabbath demonstrates that high day Sabbaths do not necessarily fall on the same days as the weekly Sabbath. Since a *Lunar Sabbath* calendar has the high day Sabbaths falling on the same day as the weekly Sabbaths, this doctrine makes such a distinction an impossibility. Briefly stated, the Torah prohibits all manner of work on the Sabbath (Ex. 20:10, Lev. 23:3). This includes food preparation (Ex. 16:5, 23). However, on the *high day Sabbaths*, which may fall on any day of the week during a festival, the preparation of food is allowed (Ex. 12:16). On the weekly Sabbath, again, *no work* is allowed. On the *high day Sabbaths*, only "servile work" is prohibited (Lev. 23:7, 8, 21, 25, 35, 36). That "servile work" is a direct reference to food preparation is obvious from this particular stipulation being absent from the instructions for the Day of Atonement, a day on which not only food preparation, but also food **consumption**, is prohibited. Since food preparation is not allowed on the weekly Sabbath, yet **is** allowed for the high day Sabbaths (except Atonement), this specifies a clear distinction between high day Sabbaths and weekly Sabbaths - a distinction that is not recognized by those who promote *Lunar Sabbaths*.

Lunar sabbatarians teach that when "high day Sabbaths" coincide with the weekly Sabbath, the "lighter restriction" principle governing those high day Sabbaths supersedes the "no work" restrictions imposed by Yahweh upon the weekly Sabbath. For example, on the fifteenth of Abib, which is the first high day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, even though that day is also a weekly Sabbath day (for lunar sabbatarians), the "no work" rule that is normally in effect for the weekly Sabbath is waived for that one day. This interpretation, though matter-of-factly affirmed by lunar sabbatarians as being "the way it was done," is void of Scriptural elucidation, as well as historical support.

15. Worship Commanded on the New Moon?

In a presentation upholding his belief that all believers should have a holy convocation on the day of the new moon, lunar sabbatarian Matthew Janzen expressed the following:

"But the law does very clearly indicate that worship was required on the new moon. Now we've already read Ezekiel 46 and Isaiah 66 that in the new heavens and the new earth, we will worship Yahweh from one new moon to another, but in Numbers chapter 10, verse 10 it says,

"¹⁰Also in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings, that they may be to you for a memorial before your God: I am Yahweh your God."

Obviously lunar sabbatarians use Numbers chapter 10 as proof that we should hold a holy convocation on the days of the new moon. However, this can be shown as being a contextual misunderstanding of the instructions given in that chapter. In Numbers 10, Yahweh instructs Moses with regard to four separate instances in which the trumpets were to be blown:

The calling of the assembly (v. 1)

The journeying of the camps (v. 1)

Going to war against an oppressing enemy (v. 9)

Over burnt offerings that took place on the day of gladness, in the solemn days (appointed feasts), and in the beginnings of each month (v. 10)

According to lunar sabbatarian belief, the fact that trumpets were blown over burnt offerings on the day of the new moon proves that this day is a day of holy convocation. However, according to Numbers 10:10, the trumpet blasts were not ordained as instances in which assemblies were called; rather, they were for, as the verse plainly states, blowing over the burnt offerings and sacrifices. Nothing more. Furthermore, as we have already established, the day of the new moon is mysteriously missing from Yahweh's list of ordained holy convocations as enumerated in Leviticus 23. Without a doubt, the day of the new moon was a special event that required special sacrifices, and we believe that many of Yahweh's people did gather at that time for the observance, but not for a "holy convocation." Even today, many people assemble at the time of the new moon, first of all to look for it, and once it is sighted, they celebrate the beginning of the new month. It is truly a special time. However, nowhere are we commanded to either observe the day of the new moon as a holy convocation **or** a day of rest.

Numbers chapter 10, then, cannot justifiably be used to infer that Yahweh's people are commanded to assemble on the day of the new moon any more than we are required to assemble on the "days of gladness."

Mr. Janzen also cites Isaiah 1:10-15 as evidence that the new moon is a day of worship. Let's read this passage to see if it supports his position:

¹⁰Hear the word of Yahweh, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our Almighty, ye people of Gomorrah.

¹¹To what purpose *is* the multitude of your sacrifices unto Me? Saith Yahweh: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.

¹²When ye come to appear before Me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread My courts?

¹³Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; *it* is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.

¹⁴Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hateth: they are a trouble unto Me; I am weary to bear *them*.

¹⁵And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide Mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

In citing the above passage, the lunar sabbatarian directs our attention to verse 13, where the words "new moons," "sabbaths" and "calling of assemblies" are mentioned. He believes the phrase "calling of assemblies," in that context, is used identify a requirement shared by both the Sabbath and the new moons. In fact, here is how he presented it:

"Now I want you to notice that Yahweh says, 'The new moons, the sabbaths, the calling of assemblies. Now this would be - I thought of an example - this would be like if I was to say, 'You know, red, blue and yellow, your basic colors.' When I say 'your basic colors,' I'm identifying the colors that I just spoke of.

"When Yahweh said, 'The new moons, the sabbaths, comma, the **calling of the assemblies** ... the 'calling of the assembly' that He was identifying was **the new moons and the Sabbaths!**'"

What Janzen attempted to establish with his commentary was that the phrase "the calling of assemblies," as found in Isaiah 1:13, serves as an *appositive*. An appositive is a noun or pronoun -- often with modifiers -- set beside another noun or pronoun to explain or identify it. Here is an example of an appositive: *War and Peace*, the famous anti-war documentary, was authored by Leo Tolstoy. In the preceding sentence, "the famous anti-war documentary" identifies the book *War and Peace*, and is thus used as an *appositive*. In the same way, the lunar sabbatarian claims that the phrase "the calling of assemblies" is also used as an appositive in Isaiah 1:13. Is his claim valid? No, it is not.

Before we demonstrate how and why his claim is invalid, we need to first address the alternate possibility that, instead of being used as an appositive, the phrase "the calling of assemblies" is used to express an *additional example* of gatherings that Yahweh said He could not bear. In other words, not only was Yahweh unable to bear their new moon and Sabbath observances, but He was also fed up with their other assemblies, some of which were commanded, some of which were not. As we have shown, the new moon was never a commanded day for rest and holy convocation, in spite of the other observances associated with it.

This is clearly how the translators of the Septuagint understood Isaiah 1:13, as noted below:

¹³Though you bring fine flour, it is vain; incense is an abomination to Me; I cannot bear your new moons, and your sabbaths, and the great day.

According to the Septuagint, the phrase "calling of assemblies" doesn't even *appear* in the text of Isaiah 1:13. This was the Jewish understanding of this verse during the second century BCE.

Furthermore, even a literal reading from the Hebrew Masoretic text of Isaiah 1:13 reveals that "the calling of assemblies" is simply referring to the calling of other assembly meetings in addition to any festivities associated with the new moons and the Sabbaths. Notice the literal reading as given by Jay P. Green in *The Interlinear Bible*:

¹³Do not add to bringing vain sacrifice; it is hateful incense to Me. I cannot endure the new moon and Sabbath, the calling of meeting, and the evil assembly."

As noted by Green's literal translation from the Hebrew text, "the calling of meeting" is in no way identifying the new moon. It is most definitely not used as an appositive in Isaiah 1:13, and hence, the lunar sabbatarian misinterprets this verse.

The bottom line here is simply this: We do not have a biblical mandate to observe new moons. Instructing others to abstain from work on a day that is not ordained by Yahweh ignores the plain warning He gives us in Deuteronomy 12:32, where He commands us not to add or take away from His commands.

³²What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it!

Only Yahweh can declare a day as "holy," and He did not make any such declaration with regard to the new moons. The special observances associated with the new moons are not to be mistaken as a mandate to cease from labor on that day. We are not to sanctify a day for holy convocation that Yahweh has not ordained for such a purpose. The day of the new moon, then, cannot be a holy day, since we have no explicit statement from Yahweh declaring it as such. There is no command for worship or assembly on these days. Yahweh has given us His feast days and His weekly Sabbath for assembly and worship. Adding new moon days not ordained by Yahweh to the list of days mandated for assembly and worship is to add to Yahweh's Word.

16. New Moon Offerings Versus Sabbath Offerings

One can only wonder why there are completely separate, different and distinct instructions pertaining to offerings for the Sabbath day as opposed to the day of the new moon. If we are to understand that both the new moon and the Sabbath always fell on the same day, should we not expect the same offerings to cover both aspects of the same day? Of course, the new moon only occurs once a "moonth," so some may counter by remarking that the special offerings as specified for the day of the new moon were given *in addition to* the specified offerings for the weekly Sabbath. Perhaps, they might reason, on the day of the "new moon Sabbath" there were special new moon offerings in addition to the regular Sabbath offerings, and then for each ensuing weekly Sabbath during that month, only the regular Sabbath offerings were carried out.

On the Sabbath, it was specified that two lambs were to be sacrificed as burnt offerings in addition to the "regular (daily) burnt offerings." On the day of the new moon, Israel was commanded to offer two young bullocks, a ram, seven lambs of the first year and a male goat (Num. 28:11-15). No mention is made in Scripture that the new moon offerings were sacrificed *in addition to* the Sabbath offerings. Shall we, then, presume that they were offered in addition to the Sabbath offerings? No, we should not, especially in view of the fact that in Numbers 28:15 we are told that the new moon offerings were to be offered in addition to the "**regular burnt offering**" (New Revised Standard Version).

Please note that just as the special Sabbath offerings were performed *in addition to* the regular daily burnt offerings, in the same way, the new moon offerings were **also** offered "in addition to" those same daily burnt offerings. This clearly implies that the new moon did not necessarily fall on the day of the weekly Sabbath, nor did it govern the determination of a weekly Sabbath. If the ancient believers regarded the new moon day as a Sabbath day, we would expect to find that the specified new moon offerings would be commanded to be offered in addition to the **Sabbath offerings**, not in addition to the regular daily burnt offerings.

The "regular burnt offerings" were the standard daily offerings, apart from the Sabbath offerings. Since the new moon offerings were sacrificed in addition to the daily offerings, as opposed to being in addition to the Sabbath offerings, this in itself demonstrates that no "Sabbath sanctity" was ever attributed to the new moon day by early believers. It is clear that the Sabbath offerings and the New Moon offerings were not offered on the same day unless, of course, the new moon happened to fall on a weekly Sabbath day.

One lunar sabbatarian claims that the day of the New Moon is not "**the** Sabbath." He bases his claim on his interpretation that the same instructions given in reference to the Feast of Trumpets can be applied to **all** New Moon days.

For example, on the Sabbath day, **no work at all** is permitted, while on the Feast of Trumpets only *servile work* is prohibited. Thus, he reasons, only servile work is prohibited on **each** New Moon day throughout the year.

As with many lunar sabbatarian claims, this reasoning is based on a faulty premise.

The premise, of course, is that Yahweh's instructions pertaining to the Feast of Trumpets (*Yom Teruah*) must also govern **all** New Moon days throughout the year.

Of course, this premise is immediately recognized as bogus based upon the obvious fact that Yahweh would not have focused His attention solely on **one** New Moon day if He actually intended the same instructions to apply to **all** New Moon days.

17. Evidence from Manna in the Wilderness

Perhaps the most telling evidence in support of believing that ancient Israel never observed "Lunar Sabbaths" can be found in one of the chapters of the Bible most frequently cited by supporters of the *Lunar Sabbaths* doctrine: Exodus 16. Nearly every article written in support of observing *Lunar Sabbaths* expresses support for believing that, since the fifteenth day of the second month is mentioned in this chapter immediately before the "giving of the manna," this means that this fifteenth day was a Sabbath day. Perhaps it was, but we are not told that it was. As some would say, "I believe everything this verse has to say, but I don't believe the interpretations that some people offer to explain what they *believe* this verse says."

First of all, let's consider the fact that, according to Exodus 16:1, the children of Israel arrived in the Wilderness of Sin on the fifteenth day of the second month. For them to have arrived in the wilderness of Sin on the fifteenth day of the month means they were traveling on the fifteenth day of the month. This begs the question, "If we are to believe this was a Sabbath day, then why were they **traveling** on that day, especially in view of the fact that they were just about to be given their first 'Sabbath instructions'?"

Thus, although this passage does not expressly tell us, it is very likely that the Israelites arrived in the wilderness of Sin on a regular work day instead of a weekly Sabbath day.

It would appear, based upon the reading of Exodus 16:1-2, that the Israelites began complaining about a lack of food soon after arriving in the Wilderness of Sin. However, we cannot be certain that they began complaining on that very day. Perhaps a day or two after their arrival they began complaining. Perhaps. Again, we are not told. Is it possible, though? Yes, it is. It is highly speculative to build a doctrine around the possibility that a travel day such as this was also a Sabbath day. This in itself demonstrates that it is far more likely that the Israelites arrived at their destination, not on a Sabbath day, but on a *work day*.

Since it is vital to certain adherents of the *Lunar Sabbath* persuasion that the fifteenth of the month is a Sabbath day, the evidence just mentioned illustrates that it is far more likely that the fifteenth day of that month was *not* a Sabbath day for the children of Israel.

Furthermore, we must closely examine the story of the manna. As you may recall from that story, Yahweh gave the Israelites just the right amount of manna each day to meet their daily needs. He did not give them too little, nor did He give them too much. This is significant, especially when we arrive at the sixth day of the week.

According to Exodus 16:18, "But when they measured it [the manna] with an omer, those who gathered much had nothing over, and those who gathered little had no shortage; they gathered as much as each of them needed." (NRSV) It would appear that Yahweh knew **exactly** how much manna each Israelite would require for his or her daily needs. They were given neither too much nor too little.

When the sixth day of manna arrived, the Israelites found, to their astonishment, that they had gathered twice as much as they had on the previous five days.

And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one *man*: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. (Ex. 16:22)

Please notice that the Israelites did not find three times as much manna, nor did they gather four times as much manna on the sixth day. It was exactly *twice as much*. Just enough for two days, covering the sixth day plus the following day.

Although this particular occasion would not have been the end of the month (for those who believe in *extended Sabbaths*), it is very significant that we do not **ever** read of the Israelites gathering manna in order to sustain them for three, or even four, days. If indeed Yahweh made provision for *extended Sabbaths* once a month, we should expect to at least once read of such a monthly occurrence. However, history is completely silent, not only regarding the monthly *extended Sabbaths*, but also of the monthly three to four-day supply of manna being gathered prior to the final Sabbath of each month during the Israelites' wanderings in the wilderness.

Yahweh knew precisely how much manna each individual would need, not only for each day, but also for each Sabbath, and for each Sabbath He gave them a two-day supply, not a three-day supply, and not a four-day supply.

Furthermore, Moses made this fact abundantly clear in Exodus 16:29. He instructed the Israelites, saying,

"See for that Yahweh hath given you the Sabbath, therefore He giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day."

We are aware of at least one proponent of *Lunar Sabbaths* who argues that the word "two" does not appear in the Hebrew text of the verse quoted above. Indeed, he is correct. He therefore maintains that Yahweh gave His people "the bread of days" on the sixth day, which infers that the bread could last longer than a mere two days. However, we would counter that in the Septuagint version, which is the Greek translation of the Torah completed around 250 BCE, the Greek text plainly reads "the bread of two days."

In other words, regardless of whatever the original intent may have been in the original Hebrew text of the above verse, the general understanding in 250 BCE was that Yahweh gave the children of Israel the manna of **two days** on the sixth day of each week. This, then, reflects the understanding of normative Judaism 250 years prior to the Messiah's birth, which matches the understanding of Philo, as mentioned earlier. In fact, here is what Philo had to say regarding the amount of manna given on the sixth day of each week:

"... that portion which was rained down on the day before the seventh not only did not change its nature, but was dispensed in a twofold quantity."

Philo mentions the double portions that fell each sixth day, but he fails to mention any special provisions for "extended Sabbath days." As outlined earlier, Philo's writings mirrored Jewish practice and belief of that period in history, which intersected the lifetime of Yahshua the Messiah. As we know, there was no dispute between Yahshua and the Jews over "which" day was the Sabbath day.

One lunar sabbatarian, Matthew Janzen, upon learning of our expressed concern over the lack of directive (or even example) from either Scripture or history pertaining to the "extended Sabbaths," pointed out that similar instructions and examples are missing with regard to what the Israelites were to do when the Day of Atonement fell the day before the weekly Sabbath. Here is his commentary, which is an excerpt from a presentation he delivered on this topic:

"We should also point out that the objections given concerning the new moon sometimes come with mentioning the giving of the manna. Yahweh gave manna for six days, and then He didn't give it on the seventh. What happened on the 29th day of the moon - on *that Sabbath*, and then you had a one or two day feast of the new moon? Did He give them enough manna on the 28th to last them the 28th and the 29th, and the new moon? He didn't ever give any **instructions** for it! Because He didn't give any explanatory instructions, that means that it wasn't going to **happen** - that's what they say!

"Well, I don't really know ... the Bible doesn't come right out and tell us what they did, but I can speculate. But I should point out that no explanatory instructions were given concerning the **Day of Atonement!** Would Yahweh just stop the manna on the 10th day of the seventh month? Now we learn from Numbers 9 and the Passover that the festivals were at least kept in some form in the Wilderness. Now obviously Saturday sabbatarians would say no manna was given on the Day of Atonement.

However, this does not invalidate my point on there being **no instructions given**. Better yet, what if the Day of Atonement came on the 10th and the weekly Sabbath came on the 11th? Did Yahweh make that manna on the 9th remain edible **until** the 11th? He never brought up the issue ... did this mean it couldn't happen?

"Or what about if the Sabbath fell on the 20th day of Abib, and then the next day, Abib the 21st, was a high holy day? Did Yahweh give the children of Israel enough manna on the 19th of Abib to last them the 19th, the 20th and the 21st? You see, the Saturday sabbatarians ... they have the **same problem**. These people that come to me about this issue of the new moon, they've got the **same problem**! No explanatory instructions were given concerning these things! That did not necessarily mean they wouldn't happen!"

Summarizing Janzen's point, those who observe the continuous cycle of weekly Saturday Sabbaths have no room to dismiss the lunar sabbatarian position pertaining to there being no instructions or examples with regard to how the Israelites would have dealt with no manna given on either two or three consecutive days each and every month. As the lunar sabbatarian put it, we have "the same problem!"

Regrettably for the lunar sabbatarian, he is mistaken in his assessment. We do **not** have the same problem. The major difference lies in the fact that **his** "problem" is a recurring, monthly one. Month after month after month after month, and year after year after year. Without fail for forty years.

As for the lack of instructions pertaining to what to do when the Day of Atonement fell on the day before the Sabbath, the lunar sabbatarian is indeed correct. No instructions were given. However, this was the **exception**, not the rule. For lunar sabbatarians, the anomaly of *extended Sabbaths* was the **rule each and every month**. It was **not** the exception, it was the rule, and this is a major difference that the lunar sabbatarian failed to address in his presentation.

In his presentation, Janzen makes yet another point in rationalizing the lack of Scriptural instructions pertaining to *extended Sabbaths*:

"But the thing that comes up is that people ask, "How does the *Lunar Sabbath* fit in, because there is an uneven number of days in a lunation? You have 29.5 days in a lunation, and 'four sevens' is only twenty-eight! How does it fit in?"

"Well, the same people that pose this question to myself, should be posing **another** question to them(selves), and that is what is known as the *intercalary thirteenth moon* of the Scriptures. Now what I mean by that is, that approximately every *third year*, it is an absolute fact of nature - nature itself teaches us some things - and this is one of them that it teaches: It teaches us that a thirteenth moon will rise approximately every third year. Most of the time it will be twelve moons in a year.

If you want to consistently just go by twelve moons, you'll end up celebrating Passover in the middle of *winter*, because you have to allow for that space of time to come in until your next new moon after the *vernal* or spring equinox, which starts the beginning of the year. If you don't have a 13th moonrise, you'll be keeping Tabernacles in the summer and Passover in the winter, and I can show that to anybody. But what they do, and it's very shady unless you really know where to examine the Bible on the thirteenth moon, but it can be proven - there's a case where a lunar year was, there in Ezekiel, but that - you'd have to really read that on a piece of paper - that would be too in-depth to go into tonight. But I do a *similar calculation* with the new moon."

Janzen's point is this: If those of our persuasion are going to demand evidence of Scriptural instructions pertaining to the *extended Sabbaths* that would naturally occur each month for those who observe *Lunar Sabbaths*, then we had better be prepared to answer why there are no Scriptural instructions with regard to the *thirteenth month*. Of course, we recognize that occasionally Yahweh's year contains a thirteenth new moon if the barley is not yet aviv at the time of the twelfth sighting, yet never are we told that a year may contain a thirteenth month, nor is a thirteenth month so much as *mentioned* in Scripture, although it can indeed be demonstrated from the book of Ezekiel that such a month must have occurred.

What does Janzen's point prove? Nothing. First of all, as even he admitted, it can be shown from the book of Ezekiel that, despite the absence of a Scriptural directive, a thirteenth month was indeed observed and recognized by the prophet Ezekiel. Secondly, Janzen ignores the historical evidence pertaining to the observance of a thirteenth month. Historically speaking, Jews have always recognized the occasional intercalation of a thirteenth month. As alluded to by Janzen, if they had not done this, then eventually Passover would have occurred in winter, then in fall, etc. The historical understanding of the need to intercalate a 13th month stands in stark contrast to the **historical silence** with regard to the alleged "extended Sabbaths" required by lunar sabbatarians each and every month. Any attempt to compare the lack of Scriptural instructions pertaining to the intercalated thirteenth month with the lack of Scriptural instructions pertaining to "extended Sabbaths" can only be perceived as a **lack of historical understanding** pertaining to the subject of the intercalated thirteenth month.

For adherents to the *Lunar Sabbath* belief, it was a simple matter for Yahweh to have provided a double portion of manna on the sixth day and to have made that allotment of manna last for three or even four days each and every month. We will not argue that point. Yahweh can certainly do that and so much more.

However, once the Israelites entered into the Promised Land, the miracle of the manna ceased. If you carefully read Yahweh's instructions to the Israelites pertaining to food preparation in advance of the Sabbath, you will notice that in Exodus 16 He plainly instructed them to prepare their double portion of manna, not on the Sabbath day, but on the sixth day (Ex. 16:5). In fact, He made it clear that they were to do all their baking and boiling prior to the Sabbath (Ex. 16:23). All manner of cooking and food preparation is forbidden on the Sabbath.

This particular law has serious ramifications for those who observe *Lunar Sabbaths*. Not only are they prohibited from doing any cooking on the weekly Sabbath, but neither are they permitted to do any such food preparation on the *extended Sabbaths*. In other words, they must prepare, not only for the weekly Sabbath, but also for the extra day or two following the final Sabbath of each month! For ancient Israel, their lack of modern appliances to assist with such extensive food preparation **and** preservation would have posed serious health risks. Even today, it would be difficult for many families to prepare and preserve a full three day supply of food in a typical refrigerator.

The lunar sabbatarians whose writings we have been exposed to completely ignore the command prohibiting food preparation on the Sabbath. In fact, one writer, quoting from yet another lunar sabbatarian author, described the time of the new moon as a time when "Everyone just sort of went 'on hold' and enjoyed the barbecue!" The clear implication is that the "extended Sabbath days" were a time for not only feasting, but also food preparation, an unmistakable violation of Yahweh's torah.

18. More Scriptural Evidence Seals the Matter

If there were one verse of Scripture in which we would read something to the effect that a Sabbath day happened to fall on, say, the twelfth day of the month, this controversy wouldn't exist. If it were that easy to come up with a proof text disproving the lunar sabbatarian argument, this would be "case closed." However, no such verses have been located, which means it takes a little more digging into the Word to come up with the necessary evidence. Bits and pieces of evidence pieced together, then, serve to solidify the case against Lunar Sabbaths. For example, as noted earlier, the Sabbath on which Yahshua healed a blind man could only have fallen on the 23rd day of the month Tishri. Although it doesn't specifically state that this is the day on which the blind man was healed, we do know it was the day following the "last and great day" of the Feast of Tabernacles. Given the understanding that the last great day of Tabernacles is the 22nd day of the month, the following day was of necessity the 23rd day of the month, and it was clearly the Sabbath day.

In the Torah, we are given other strong hints that Lunar Sabbaths were never observed by Yahweh's people. For example, in Numbers 10, Yahweh gave instructions that the children of Israel depart from Sinai on the 20th day of the month, thus beginning a three-day journey to the Wilderness of Paran. Please bear in mind that the Israelites had been encamped at Sinai for eleven months by the time this command had been given. An obvious question is, "Why would Yahweh have the Israelites pack up and leave for a three-day journey, knowing that day two of their journey would be a Sabbath day?"

The obvious answer is, "Day two of that journey was not a Sabbath day! Nor were any of those three days!"

Even more clinching evidence can be found in Exodus 40. As if to seal the matter against *Lunar Sabbaths*, Exodus 40:2 proves that the first day of the month was not regarded as a Sabbath day, but as a regular work day. Notice the command Yahweh gave to Moses: ²On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation.

[NOTE: In 1 Esdras 5:57,59 (Apocrypha) we also find that Israel, under the leadership of Ezra "laid the foundations of the temple of Elohim on the new moon of the second month in the second year after they came to Judea and Jerusalem.... So the builders built the Temple of YHWH."]

Moses was commanded to "set up the tabernacle" on the first day of the month, which every lunar sabbatarian we have ever heard from believes was a Sabbath day. In fact, as one lunar sabbatarian author wrote,

"When locating the true Sabbath which follows the six work days, we must remember the New Moon day is **never** counted as one of the **six work days** as the following example prove."

As mentioned above, Moses was commanded to "set up the tabernacle" on a day that lunar sabbatarians consider a "non-working day." If we follow all the labor involved in setting up that tabernacle, you will notice that this is not standard procedure for a Sabbath day, when **no work** is allowed. The only labor allowed on the Sabbath day was the special functions of the priesthood, and we can assure you that setting up the tabernacle was **not** one of those special functions! Moreover, as we are about to see, setting up the tabernacle was very labor-intensive.

Notice, if you will, the actions of Moses on that day of so long ago:

¹⁷ And it came to pass in the first month in the second year, on the first *day* of the month, *that* the tabernacle was reared up.

¹⁸ And Moses reared up the tabernacle, and fastened his sockets, and set up the boards thereof, and put in the bars thereof, and reared up his pillars.

¹⁹ And he spread abroad the tent over the tabernacle, and put the covering of the tent above upon it; as YHWH commanded Moses.

Of course, some may protest our insistence that Yahweh would not have given Moses such a job to perform on the Sabbath day. They may point out that the priests had special functions they were expected to perform, even on the Sabbath, and since this was a "work for Yahweh," it would not have been unusual for Yahweh have instructed Moses to set up the tabernacle on the Sabbath day. As Yahshua said, "The priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are blameless." We need to keep in mind, however, that this clause does not mean they [or Moses] had a license to just do anything and everything on the Sabbath, and certainly not erecting the Tabernacle!

One lunar sabbatarian wrote the following:

"The New Moon is not defined as one of the 'six working days' according to the prophet Ezekiel in 46:1 of his writings. However, just because this is true does not mean that actions which were prohibited on the Sabbath were also prohibited on the new moon. For instance: travel was allowed on the new moon (Ezra 7:9), but not on the Sabbath (Ex. 16:29, Acts 1:12). I also know that cooking and food preparation were allowed on the new moon. This is seen in the command to observe the 7th new moon (Day of Trumpets) in that no servile work was to be done. This is defined in Ex. 12:16 as no work, '...save that which you must eat'"

In other words, as the author of the above commentary believes, the New Moon day has modified restrictions that are not in place for the regular Sabbath day. Thus, although the New Moon day is a Sabbath, certain forms of work are apparently allowed to be done on that day which are **not** permitted on the regular Sabbath day. This makes for additional confusion, however, because lunar sabbatarians maintain it is this very thing - **the New Moon** - that determines the regular Sabbath day each month! Based on the above commentary, although the Sabbath day is determined by the New Moon each month, the actual day of the New Moon is not a day of "no work." To the lunar sabbatarian quoted above, it is a day of "no servile work," and he bases his conclusion on the particular instructions given for the first day of the seventh month (the Feast of Trumpets), which is the only commanded New Moon day on which any labor restrictions are imposed. It is untenable that the day which determines the regular "no work" Sabbath should itself be a day on which certain forms of work are allowed, such as tabernacle construction.

Another notable aspect from the lunar sabbatarian quoted above is his expressed belief that travel was prohibited on the Sabbath day. As mentioned in the previous chapter, lunar sabbatarians typically teach that the day on which the Israelites arrived in the Wilderness of Sin, the fifteenth day of the second month, was a Sabbath day. Did Yahweh have the Israelites travel on the fifteenth day of that month only to later forbid them from doing such a thing? The lunar sabbatarian quoted above plainly stated that travel was permitted on the day of the new moon, but **not** on the Sabbath day. Since the fifteenth day of the month is not the day of the new moon, this means the Israelites should not have been traveling on that day ... presuming the fifteenth day of the month is a Sabbath day.

Of course, this plainly illustrates that, indeed, the fifteenth day of the month, as a day of laborious travel en route to their new encampment, could **not** have been a Sabbath day.

But let's return for a moment to the topic of Moses' labor intensive task of erecting the tabernacle, as described in Exodus 40. Notice that the word "Sabbath" is not found in that chapter. Isn't it more than a little unusual that we should read about all the **work** that was performed on the first day of that month, yet nowhere do we read that it was the Sabbath day? Furthermore, if it was justified for Moses to erect the Tabernacle on the Sabbath day, what kind of example was that for his fellow Israelites?

A very **poor** one. This would indicate that, so long as one is erecting something for Yahweh, such as a synagogue or assembly building, then, hey, since it's a work for Yahweh, it's okay to bring hammers, nails, power drills and other tools to worship services on the Sabbath!

Furthermore, it is quite a stretch to believe that Yahweh sanctioned erecting the tabernacle on the Sabbath while simultaneously sanctioning the stoning of a man found gathering sticks on that day. The inconsistency is so enormous that the parameters of acceptable Sabbath actions become too fuzzy for us to comprehend.

Certainly, then, the lunar sabbatarians' attempt to explain the erecting of the tabernacle as being permissible labor on the day of the "New Moon Sabbath" falls far short of their attempt to sway us. If the day of the New Moon is a Sabbath pointing to the other Sabbaths in a given month, then we can expect the same restrictions to govern its observance as those governing the other Sabbaths. Furthermore, the inconsistency of teaching that the fifteenth of the month is always a Sabbath on which no travel is allowed flies in the face of Exodus 16:1, where the Israelites obviously traveled on the Sabbath day with Yahweh's blessing.

19. Did Yahshua's Parents Travel on the Sabbath?

We have already mentioned occasions wherein it is very unlikely for days such as the fifteenth and the twenty-second days of the month to have been considered regular weekly Sabbath days insofar as it relates to travel. For example, lunar sabbatarians would have the Israelites arriving at the Wilderness of Sin on the Sabbath day, as the day of their arrival was the fifteenth day of the second month (Ex. 16:1). Later, the Israelites pulled up camp and departed for a three day journey on the twentieth day of the month (Numbers 10:11-33). Starting out on a three day journey on the twentieth day of the month means that they were still traveling on the **twenty-second day** of that month - a day considered as being a regular weekly Sabbath day by lunar sabbatarians.

As we have already established, it is difficult to answer every single lunar sabbatarian argument, as there are bound to be some lunar sabbatarians who would have no problem with taking off on a journey on the Sabbath, and thus any accounts and descriptions of believers traveling on days that they consider *lunar Sabbaths* will have no effect on their belief system.

Nevertheless, we are aware of one lunar sabbatarian who, as quoted in our previous chapter, plainly stated that traveling was forbidden on the Sabbath day. Here, again, are his exact words:

"The New Moon is not defined as one of the 'six working days' according to the prophet Ezekiel in 46:1 of his writings. However, just because this is true does not mean that actions which were prohibited on the Sabbath were also prohibited on the new moon. For instance: travel was allowed on the new moon (Ezra 7:9), but not on the Sabbath (Ex. 16:29, Acts 1:12)."

Striking out on a long journey is simply not something that one would do on the Sabbath day, certainly not in the days of Old. Yet, those who adhere to the *Lunar Sabbath* teaching must believe that Yahshua's parents did this very thing.

In the second chapter of Luke, we read of Yahshua's parents going up to Jerusalem to keep the feast of the Passover. Notice how Luke describes their experience:

⁴²And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

⁴³And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Yahshua tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and His mother knew not *of it*.

As this passage reveals, once the feast was over, Yahshua's parents left for home. For a lunar sabbatarian who believes it is improper to strike out on a journey on the Sabbath day, this departure poses a problem. You see, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for lunar sabbatarians, always ends on the sixth day of the week, i.e., the day before the weekly Sabbath. Once that feast is over, then, the Sabbath day immediately begins. In fact, as we mentioned in Chapter 13, the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for lunar sabbatarians, forms a part of a "double Sabbath," as the seventh day of that feast is a day of "no servile work" and a day of holy convocation. The next day, which is the seventh day of the week for lunar sabbatarians, is the regular weekly Sabbath - a day of "no work."

The obvious dilemma begging a resolution from lunar sabbatarians is how or why Yahshua's parents departed Jerusalem immediately after the feast had ended, since this would have been a Sabbath day.

Some may contend that Yahshua's parents didn't leave *immediately* after the feast was over. They may insist that "fulfilling the days" means waiting until even the regular weekly Sabbath was over before they departed Jerusalem. For those who may think in such terms, we refer you to the Aramaic text of the New Testament, which is considered an older, more reliable text than the Greek. Notice how George Lamsa, in his *Holy Bible From the Ancient Eastern Text*, translates Luke 2:43:

⁴³And when the feast days were over, they returned; but the boy Yahshua remained in Jerusalem; and Joseph and His mother did not know it."

It goes without saying that when day number seven of the Feast of Unleavened Bread is over for lunar sabbatarians, the weekly Sabbath begins. According to the above verse, as soon as the Feast of Unleavened Bread was over, Yahshua's parents departed Jerusalem. Luke does not insinuate that they hung around until after the weekly Sabbath was over. Yahshua's parents, as recorded by Luke, went "straight for home" as soon as the feast was over. Thus, presuming the lunar sabbatarian position is correct, Yahshua's parents departed on the day of the weekly Sabbath.

Of course, for those of us who disagree with the *Lunar Sabbath* position, it is obvious that the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread that year did **not** fall on the day before the weekly Sabbath. For example, it is quite possible that the seventh day of the feast fell on a Tuesday that year. Presuming that Yahshua's parents would have departed Jerusalem the following morning, this would have given them ample time to return to their home in Nazareth prior to the Sabbath.

20. The Creation Account

We do not question the sincerity of those who promote *Lunar Sabbaths*. However, we have found that responding to their theological exegesis usually only invites additional explanations that deviate even further from the message of Scripture.

For example, we believe it is reasonable to conclude that when Yahweh created the moon -on the fourth day of creation week (not the 7th), He created it in its "new" stage. Of course, if He created the moon in its "new" phase, this in itself would pose a major problem for proponents of *Lunar Sabbaths*. You see, only three days after creating this "new" moon, Yahweh rested and called that day of rest the "Sabbath" day. He blessed it and called it holy.

The problem this creates for *Lunar Sabbath* adherents is that the new moon cannot possibly occur three days before a weekly Sabbath day. As already quoted from one such proponent, once the new moon crescent is sighted, this marks (for them) the end of the weekly (extended) Sabbath and a new week begins. Let's say, then, for argument's sake, that the newly created moon was in conjunction state on the fourth day of creation. The fifth day of creation, then, marked day two of the month. The sixth day of creation was day three. The seventh day, the day Yahweh rested, was day four. Again, as previously expressed by those who promote *Lunar Sabbaths*, the first weekly Sabbath of the month can only occur on day eight of the "moonth." This, then, poses a problem for *Lunar Sabbath* adherents.

In order to make the Scriptural account of creation fit his theology, one proponent of *Lunar Sabbaths* teaches that the moon was created on the 25th day of the "moonth." In other words, the phase of that moon, in his view, "must" have been the equivalent of day 25 when it was created. Four days later, on the 29th day of that "moonth," he alleges that Yahweh rested. Of course, with the days arranged in this manner, the day on which he believes Yahweh rested aligns with his theology.

Since Scripture does not indicate the precise phase of the moon when it was created, the door is left wide open for us to speculate, leaving it up to the individual to determine which "logic" best fits the overall context of Scripture. We personally believe it makes more sense to believe that the moon was in its "new" phase when it was created. Others believe it was in its "old" phase. Since neither can outright prove the other as being mistaken, it is best to not use such conjecture in building and establishing doctrine.

21. An Historical Misunderstanding

Several years ago I challenged a lunar sabbatarian friend to give me historical evidence that Yahweh's people ever observed *Lunar Sabbaths*. In response, he gave me a photocopy of a page from *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*. On that page, he conveniently highlighted the following sentence for me to read:

"The New Moon is still, and the Sabbath originally was, dependent upon the lunar cycle."

We can definitely understand how someone might read the above commentary and then subsequently question the origin of the traditional Sabbath that has been handed down to us by Judaism, especially since the remark is found in a Jewish reference!

However, strangely missing from that particular commentary is the evidence supporting such a conclusion. Does their evidence come from Scripture? From historical records? What is their source? None is provided. This is certainly strange, coming from what would normally be considered a trustworthy reference. Adding to the mix here is the fact that this same reference *also* states, "The origin of the Sabbath is obscure." How can the *same reference* on the one hand claim that the Sabbath was originally based on the lunar cycle, and then on the *other hand* state that the origin of the Sabbath is "obscure"? The first thought is that, since these comments are found in separate articles in *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, they came from two different authors with two different perspectives of the historical record. However, it turns out that both articles were authored by the same person, a man named Max Joseph. Perhaps Mr. Joseph wasn't quite as certain of the original method of reckoning the Sabbath as lunar sabbatarians would like for us to believe.

We believe some answers to this enigma can be found in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. According to this reference, there have been some scholars who have advanced the theory that the weekly Sabbath was originally tied in with the lunar cycle. This same reference outlines the problems created by the assertions of such scholars:

"Beginning in 1905, J. Meinhold argued that the OT Sabbath was originally a monthly full-moon day and as such was borrowed by Israel from ancient Babylon. His hypothesis has found sporadic support.

It is recently defended by G. Robinson (1988) who argues that the sequence of 'new moon--Sabbath' in pre-exilic Sabbath texts (Amos 8:4-7; Hos 2:11-15--Eng 2:9-13; Isa 1:10-14; 2 Kgs 4:22-23) shows that the Sabbath after the monthly 'new moon' is a monthly 'full moon' day just as the sequence in Babylonian texts has *arḥum-s(apattu*, 'new moon-full moon.' In postexilic times the monthly (full moon) Sabbath is said to have been transformed into the weekly Sabbath. However, this alleged parallel has serious problems: (1) The sequence in all currently known Babylonian (and Sumerian) texts is *arḥum-sebutu-s(apattu*, '1st (new moon), 7th, and 15th (full moon) days,' which is totally unaccounted for in the OT. (2) The 8th-century text of Hos 2:13--Eng 2:11 (cf. Amos 8:5; Isa 1:13) manifests the sequence of 'feasts-new moons-sabbaths,' three festal celebrations in the order of increasing frequency of 'yearly (feasts), monthly (new moons), and weekly (sabbaths)' celebrations. The sequence also appears in reversed form of decreasing frequency of 'weekly (sabbaths), monthly (new moons), and yearly (feasts)' celebrations (Ezek 46:1, 3, 9; 1 Chr 23:31; 2 Chr 2:3--Eng 2:4; 31:3; cf. Ezra 3:5). Both sequences are unknown outside of Israel. (3) New moon and Sabbath continue to stand next to each other in later and particularly postexilic texts (Ezek 45:17; 46:1; Neh 10:33; cf. 1 Chr 23:31; 2 Chr 2:3--Eng 2:4) where *s(abba*"t refers clearly to the seventh day of the week. (4) The respective contextual settings are so distinct that they cannot be related to each other (Hasel 1988: 37-64; Kutsch 1986: 71-77). Furthermore, there is no compelling evidence in the OT for an alleged transfer from a pre-exilic monthly Sabbath to an exilic/postexilic weekly Sabbath."

As explained by the above reference, the teaching pertaining to the Sabbath's being originally based on a lunar cycle began to be argued in 1905. It appears that, prior to the turn of the 20th century, no scholars attributed the Sabbath to being originally based on the lunar cycle.

We're not sure if anyone can properly answer the question as to how the teaching pertaining to *Lunar Sabbaths* really came into being. However, we believe we have a fairly good idea. We have read from secular sources wherein the author attributes the Sabbath day as having been borrowed by Israelites from the Babylonians. For example, the encyclopedia we have in our home, *Encyclopedia International*, gives the following origin of the Sabbath day:

"The observance of specially holy days was frequent in the ancient world, and the name 'Sabbath' probably derives from the Akkadian word *shabattu*."

The above is the origin of the word "Sabbath" as understood by those in the secular humanist realm. Since these scholars teach that the Sabbath traces to Babylon, as opposed to initiating from the Creation account of Genesis, it only follows that certain ones will pick up on this line of reasoning and trace "true and correct Sabbath observance" to Babylon instead of closely following Scripture, combined with a careful examination of the history of the Jewish people. We can therefore understand how some individuals might believe that, indeed, the Sabbath as "observed" by Babylonians, stems from the actual roots of how Yahweh intended for this day to be reckoned.

Since the Babylonians apparently based their "sabbaths" on the lunar cycle, they reason that this is how Yahweh intends for His people to observe that day.

Bible-believing authors who contribute to such Bible dictionaries as *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, *Mercer Dictionary of the Bible* and *New Bible Dictionary* present what we believe is a more balanced overview regarding the origin of the Sabbath. In addressing the view (as disseminated by secular scholars) that the Sabbath originated in Babylon, they conclude that its origin ultimately traces back to the Creation account of Genesis. As man spread out over the face of the earth and began to corrupt the ways of Yahweh, the Sabbath became distorted from its originally intended manner of observance, and we believe this is where we can trace the true origin of the *Lunar Sabbaths* observance ... not to ancient Israel, but to unregenerate heathens. We join with those scholars who believe that the Sabbath is traced, not to Babylon, but to Creation, and that the seven day cycle initiated by this colossal event has not been disrupted or lost over the passing of time.

22. When Was the "Change" Made?

As we have noted throughout this study, a major difficulty that we have encountered in attempting to answer lunar sabbatarian claims involves their inconsistent answers and differing beliefs, even among themselves. Their historical claims serve as a prime example of these inconsistencies. Historically speaking, of course, lunar sabbatarians are relegated to adopting a conspiratorial view of the history of lunar sabbaths. Since there is no record of there having been a switch from a *Lunar Sabbath* to a 7th Day (*Saturday*) Sabbath observance, many lunar sabbatarians believe the change was somehow forcibly, yet covertly, perpetrated upon all Jews everywhere. The record of this successful venture was somehow covered up and the evidence destroyed. Yet, they believe there are bits and pieces of surviving remnants that prove the change was successfully completed at some point in history. The example we gave of the information so often cited from *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* demonstrates that some lunar sabbatarians are not so much interested in tracing the actual timeline of the change as they are in disseminating information, spurious though it may be, supporting their claim that a change was made at some point in history.

Was the Change Made in 46 BCE?

Pinpointing the precise timeline of when the apparent change was made has proved to be a major headache for lunar sabbatarians. For example, we have already quoted a man who wrote that he personally believes "The Lunar Sabbath was primarily being observed during Messiah's day and that the seven day circle (known as the 'week') was instituted by man after the time of Messiah." Arnold Bowen, in his booklet *Proof That Weekly Sabbath Days Are Determined by the Moon*, on the one hand traces the historical record of the change to Julius Caesar in the year 46 BCE, but then on the other hand has both Yahshua and the Apostle Paul observing the same (lunar) Sabbaths as the rest of the Jews of their day.

Notice what he wrote on page 9:

"A man called Julius Caesar broke the cycle in 46 BC when he had a calendar made and disregarded the moon cycles in the calculations. He used a 30-31 day count for the months no matter what the True Moon did. Thus, changing times as prophesied by Daniel the Prophet. The Roman week is an artificial measurement of time and is not found in Nature or the Bible, the same as the year beginning in January, and the day beginning at 12 am, and the New Moon, beginning anywhere it pleases 30-31. None of these are found in Nature or Scripture, they are traditions of men."

According to Mr. Bowen, then, the change from *Lunar Sabbath* to *Saturday Sabbath* occurred in the year 46 BCE. Elsewhere in his booklet, Bowen writes that Julius Caesar "booted the Moon out of the calendar." Judging by what we have just read, it should be reasonable to conclude that by the time Yahshua was born, His fellow Jews should already have been well grounded in the observance of the alleged "Roman week" with its "Saturday Sabbath," as Caesar would certainly have enforced such a change if he had in fact instituted one. Mr. Bowen does not provide details outlining **how** Julius Caesar successfully effected such a change upon all Jewry, nor does he provide documentation of such an historical account. This is nothing more than pure speculation on Bowen's part.

Nevertheless, as one would believe from reading Bowen's account of when *Lunar Sabbath* observance was banned by the Roman empire, the "Roman week" and *Saturday Sabbath* observance must have been well established among the Jews by the time Yahshua the Messiah came on the scene. Well, not really, at least according to the information provided elsewhere by Mr. Bowen. Elsewhere in his booklet he makes it very plain that the Jews of Yahshua's day were still observing the *Lunar Sabbath* - apparently without incurring the wrath of the Roman superiors! Notice Bowen's nonchalant summary of (lunar) Sabbath observance before, during and after the Messiah's day:

"I have pinpointed weekly Sabbaths by the moon on the 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th and I have shown where they were keeping the Sabbaths this way **before** the law (Exodus chapter 16) and the time of the law (II Chron. 7:9), before the crucifixion (John 9:14), and during the crucifixion (Luke 23:56), after crucifixion (Acts 20:6, 7), even up to the Historian Josephus, and we are keeping them that way now, and I showed where we will be keeping them that way in the future (Isa. 66:23)."

Again, as depicted by Bowen's own comments, the Jews of the Messiah's day were observing *Lunar Sabbaths*, even though he has already established that Julius Caesar imposed the "Roman week" upon his subjects, which included all of Palestine.

If the evil Julius Caesar ruthlessly "changed times" so as to impose the weekly Saturday Sabbath upon mankind, why were Yahshua and His fellow Jews, as well as the next generation of Jews of Josephus' day, peacefully observing "Lunar Sabbaths" instead of incurring punishment from the Romans for rebelling against the seven-day continuous weekly cycle? And why is there absolutely no historical documentation showing such a monumental and grievous decree against these Jews?

Bowen doesn't explain these glaring inconsistencies in his booklet.

As it turns out, historians agree that, instead of the Romans *imposing* the seven-day continuous weekly cycle upon the Jews, it was the Romans who *borrowed* the seven-day week from Judaism. Notice the information offered by *The New Encyclopædia Britannica*:

"The seven-day week may owe its origin partly to the four (approximately) seven-day phases of the Moon and partly to the Babylonian belief in the sacredness of the number seven, which was probably related to the seven planets. Moreover, by the 1st century BC the Jewish seven-day week seems to have been adopted throughout the Roman world, and this influenced Christendom."

This reference offers information that could be considered both helpful and damaging to the lunar sabbatarian cause. On the one hand, it seems to recognize the *possibility* that the seven-day week owes its origin to the lunar cycle. Most lunar sabbatarians would applaud that portion of the encyclopedia's commentary, whereas those of our persuasion believe the seven-day week is traced to Creation instead of the lunar cycle. However, the next portion of the encyclopedia's report refutes the lunar sabbatarians' position, as it candidly reveals that it was the Romans who borrowed the seven-day continuous cycle from the Jews, not vice-versa. In fact, it can be shown from history that before the Romans adopted Judaism's seven-day continuous week, they had been observing an eight-day week. Therefore, contrary to Mr. Bowen's claim, the Romans did not impose their week upon Judaism; in fact, they borrowed their seven-day continuous weekly cycle from the Jews well before the birth of Yahshua, and the Jews continued reckoning the Sabbath day based upon this same cycle instead of a lunar cycle. Their method of reckoning the Sabbath never met any protests or condemnation from Yahshua. While He had plenty to say with regard to their methods of observing the Sabbath, He had nothing to say with regard to their methods of reckoning the Sabbath.

This is significant.

Was the Change Made After the Babylonian Exile?

To further complicate the lunar sabbatarian position as to when the "change" was made, yet another lunar sabbatarian has established that the change from *Lunar Sabbaths* to the weekly *Saturday Sabbath* was made at the time of the Jews' return from their Babylonian Exile. Citing information he gleaned from a book entitled *The Seven-Day Circle* by Eviatar Zerubavel, here is what Matthew Janzen had to say in a presentation he gave on this subject:

"In that book, known as *The Seven-Day Circle*, ... somebody sent me this book to prove to me that Saturday was the Sabbath and that the issue didn't need to be looked at at all ... and I got the book in the mail ... got two copies of the book, I sent one to a friend, kept the other one ... and upon just examining the first chapter in the book, there were some pretty interesting statements. Especially when this man wrote (quote), 'There is actually no conclusive historical evidence that Jews had indeed observed the Sabbath regularly every seven days prior to the Exile, when they first came into close contact with the dwellers of Mesopotamia!' [Note: This quote came from page 8 of Zerubavel's book.]

"Now I want you to notice that he says there is ***no conclusive historical evidence*** that the Jewish people of the Hebrews (the Israelites) kept the Sabbath regularly every seven days prior to the Exile. ***The Exile*** is the Babylonian Captivity. Now the Babylonian Captivity happened ***before*** Ezra and Nehemiah's time. Ezra and Nehemiah came, there in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, ... the Temple was rebuilt, the festivals were reinstated, they were brought back, they rebuilt the Temple, they reinstated the Sabbaths Prior to that Exile, this man says that there is ***no historical evidence*** that the Sabbath was kept regularly every seven days. Now before he makes that statement, I want to show you that he's trying to prove that the Sabbath did not originate with Yahweh Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. But we ***know*** that that's not the case. We know that the Sabbath ***did*** originate with Yahweh - Genesis 2:1-3 proves that. The Bible says that Yahweh rested on the seventh day, and He hallowed the seventh day and sanctified it. But I don't want us to let this fact to go unnoticed, because if one chooses to look to history for the continuous seven-day cycle, he can only go to ***after the Exile of Israel*** and not before the Exile of Israel. Now that does this ***prove?*** This proves that Adam, Shem, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David, etc., etc., before the Exile, could ***not*** have kept have kept the Sabbath regularly every seven days ***if*** you want to go by ***historical evidence***.

"Mr. Zerubavel also continues on page 11 ... notice what he states on page 11 of his book. He states (quote): 'A continuous seven-day cycle that runs throughout history, paying no attention whatsoever to the moon and its phases, is a distinctively Jewish invention. Moreover, the dissociation of the seven-day week from nature has been one of the most significant contributions of Judaism to civilization.' Going on down, he says, 'The invention of the continuous week was therefore one of the most significant breakthroughs in human beings' attempts to break away from being prisoners of nature and create a social world of their own.' End of quote.

"BREAK AWAY FROM BEING PRISONERS OF NATURE!' When Yahweh said in Genesis 1:14, **what** were to be His measurements of time? None other than the natural bodies that He has placed up in the heavens ... more specifically, the sun and the moon. They make clear and distinct rotations of time for what we know as a calendar, as well as the stars may have some aspect in it, although maybe not very much.

"These statements that I just quoted to you by Zerubavel are after he says this. He says this (quote): 'The first people to have established a continuous weekly cycle that was entirely independent of the lunar cycle were the ancient Egyptians, possibly as a result of being sun worshippers, which essentially freed them from the necessity of observing lunar rites.'" (End of quote).

"Now this man is a **Jewish** man. He did an **in-depth study** on the history and the meaning of the week. The first chapter in his book is called 'The Origin of the Week.' It would do good for us to get this book and read it. I've got a copy and we can make some copies of the pages if anybody is interested. But it would do us well, I believe, to not just brush these historical facts off so quickly and instead reexamine our position on this supposed 'biblical' (quote, unquote, 'biblical') seven-day cycle that so many people are familiar with."

Upon reviewing this portion of Mr. Janzen's presentation, some immediate questions come to mind. Not having reviewed the book from which he quotes, one is left to trust that Janzen gave his listening audience an eclectic review of the book authored by Eviatar Zerubavel. Based upon this presumption, we are left with these questions:

- 1) If Eviatar Zerubavel writes that the Hebrews didn't observe the seven-day continuous weekly cycle prior to the Exile, does this mean his statement is correct?
- 2) Does Mr. Zerubavel provide evidence from historical records substantiating his conclusion? Where is the evidence that Judaism only began observing a continuous seven-day weekly cycle **after** the Babylonian exile?
- 3) If Mr. Zerubavel didn't even believe the Sabbath originated from Yahweh, can we trust his judgment with regard to **other** conclusions he makes?

Once we receive satisfactory answers to the above questions, our attention then focuses on why Janzen and Bowen arrive at *differing conclusions* with regard to how and when the "change" from *Lunar Sabbath* observance to *Saturday Sabbath* observance occurred. Furthermore, if it is true that *Lunar Sabbath* observance began after the Exile, **WHEN** during this time reference did the change occur? Was it during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah? If so, are we to believe that Ezra and Nehemiah instituted incorrect Sabbath observance in Palestine? If it was **after** the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, then **when**? And where is the historical record?

More questions begin to surface: If a "pagan" *Saturday Sabbath* began to be observed after the return from the Exile, then apparently this "incorrect" method of reckoning continued on down through the ages, all the way down to the days of the Messiah. Or so we are led to believe. Are we to understand that, somehow, upon the Messiah's arrival, the Jews turned things around and began "correct" Sabbath observance (i.e., *Lunar Sabbaths*)? If so, then when did the Jews take their **next** "wrong turn" in which they once again departed from "true Lunar Sabbath" observance? Neither Bowen nor Janzen give us the answers to these important and necessary questions.

As we can see, the historical scenarios presented by both Bowen and Janzen offer more questions than answers.

Finally, in quoting from Eviatar Zerubavel's book *The Seven-Day Circle*, we are aware of at least one instance in which Janzen employed a form of *selective scholarship*. Selective scholarship involves either of two actions: 1) choosing to only quote scholars who support one's position while ignoring the arguments of other scholars who disagree, and 2) quoting selective comments from one scholar that would seem to validate one's position while ignoring other comments found elsewhere from the same scholar that indicate otherwise. A classic case of lunar sabbatarians employing this type of *selective scholarship* will be addressed in chapter 25, involving a book entitled *Rest Days*.

In the case of the book *The Seven-Day Circle*, although we have not reviewed the book, a friend sent us photocopies of a few pages to demonstrate to us that, indeed, Janzen was picking and choosing quotes that would lend support to his position while ignoring others that would tend to discredit it. This unbalanced manner of presenting one's position, while not surprising (anymore), is nevertheless not indicative of truly unbiased scholarly inquiry.

For those who insist that Zerubavel's conclusion supports the origin of *Lunar Sabbaths* at Creation, we are displaying a quote from page 6 of his book:

"For those who take the biblical account of the Creation both seriously and literally, the length of the seven-day week presents no problem at all. The practice of working for six days and then resting periodically on the seventh, which appears to be the main *raison d'être* for the institutionalization of this cycle, is essentially believed to have originally been a divine temporal pattern which requires no further explanation. It was first practiced by God when creating the universe: 'And on the seventh day God finished His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it; because in it He rested from all His work which God in creating had made.'"

The above quote by Zerubavel is one that any "Saturday Sabbatarian" would agree with. The cycle of our seven-day week is simply traced to Creation. However, on the following page, the author contends that the Creation account does not necessarily establish the origin of a continuous seven-day cycle:

"(This in itself, incidentally, still does not explain the evolution of a continuous seven-day cycle. It has been argued, for example, that the Sabbath was originally the seventh day of the year and was observed, upon the conclusion of a six-day commemoration of the Creation, only once a year.)"

Judging by the above comment, Zerubavel expresses his belief that, while the seven-day cycle is traced to Creation, this doesn't mean it was a *continuous* cycle. "Saturday Sabbatarians" would disagree with this conclusion while "Lunar Sabbatarians" would concur. Thus, it appears that, on the one hand, Zerubavel supports tracing the seven-day cycle to Creation, while on the other hand he expresses uncertainty of such a conclusion.

Of course, as quoted by Janzen in his presentation, Zerubavel's book offers sporadic comments indicating that he believes the continuous seven-day cycle was invented by Jews upon their return from the Babylonian Exile. This can only mean that Ezra and Nehemiah, when enforcing Sabbath protocols upon their Jewish compatriots, instituted a different Sabbath than the one imposed by Yahweh through Moses at Sinai. As untenable as this belief is, this is what lunar sabbatarian Janzen is left to believe.

Elsewhere in Zerubavel's book, however, he does issue commentaries *invalidating* the lunar Sabbath position. For example, notice what he wrote on page 9:

"Those who believe that our seven-day week has derived from the lunar cycle seem to forget that the latter is not really a twenty-eight day cycle. In fact, approximately twenty-nine days, twelve hours, forty-four minutes, and three seconds--that is, about 29.5306 days--elapse between any two successive new moons. (That should also preclude any lunar origin of the fortnight, which literally means 'fourteen nights.' One half of the lunar cycle is actually much closer to fifteen than to fourteen days.) The lunar month clearly cannot be divided in a 'neat' manner into weekly blocks of complete days. Any subdivision of the lunar cycle necessarily involves some mathematically inconvenient remainder of hours, minutes, and seconds. A precise quarter of the lunar cycle, for example, amounts to 7.38625 days, and any week of that length would necessarily have to begin at different times of the day."

Does the above commentary come from a man supporting the original observance of *Lunar Sabbaths*? It does not appear as such, and this particular commentary was conveniently overlooked by the lunar sabbatarian in his presentation, obviously because it tends to contradict his use of the book as lending support for his position. This is dishonest exegesis. But this has become the patten for those who refuse to allow YHWH to have the final word on the subject.

As we expressed earlier, Zerubavel himself seems uncertain of what to believe. On the one hand, he writes that tracing the seven-day cycle to the seven days of the Creation account is a "divine temporal pattern which requires no further explanation." On the other hand, he expresses the notion that no Jews observed the Sabbath regularly every seven days prior to the Babylonian Exile. (Suddenly, it seems, "further explanation" *is* required!). We are puzzled by an author who would go to the pains of writing a book on this subject when he himself is so uncertain of what to believe. Our friend only sent us the first fifteen pages of Zerubavel's book, and in those fifteen pages we are left to conclude that Zerubavel doesn't really know which position to support. Adding to the confusion of his writings is the fact that he didn't choose to provide historical evidence substantiating his claim that the Jews didn't observe a continuous seven-day weekly cycle until their return from the Exile. The necessary inclusion of the evidence supporting this claim is critical in establishing its validity, yet Zerubavel chose to leave it out of his book. It is obvious that Janzen, in quoting Zerubavel's comment, likewise didn't feel it was necessary for Zerubavel to provide evidence validating his statement. Apparently, in Janzen's estimation, the words of an author *alone* are sufficient evidence.

23. Evidence From the Dead Sea Scrolls

Lunar sabbatarian sent me an audio taped message he put together in an attempt to persuade me to "stop kicking against these truths" and begin observing his *lunar sabbaths*. We have already covered nearly all the arguments he presented in that tape ... except one. One item he brought up that we really haven't touched upon is the subject of the calendar found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. Transcribed for you below are this lunar sabbatarian's comments with regard to his research:

"You know, we found, even in the Dead Sea Scrolls, written in the old Paleo-Hebrew, that confirms exactly we're saying. It says, 'On the eighth day of the month,' ... now that's **every** month ..., 'the eighth day of the month,' it says, that the moon, you can see it during the sky vaguely (?), but at night you really can see it, and at night, which would begin the ninth day of the month, or the first day of the week; in other words, it calls the ninth day of the month the first day of the week. Well, if that's true, then the sixteenth is going to be the first day of the week, just like there in the resurrection when the firstfruits are waved on the morrow after the Sabbath, speaking of the weekly Lunar Sabbath."

The lunar sabbatarian quoted above is the same one who has a knack for subverting the words of both Philo and Josephus, presenting his case that those men actually taught in favor of *lunar sabbaths*, when in fact it is abundantly clear that they did not. Because of this, we couldn't help but be skeptical of his sources, which as of this writing have not been revealed to us. Is it true, as he claims, that the Dead Sea Scrolls provide evidence that ancient Jews were in fact observing *lunar sabbaths*?

Another lunar sabbatarian, John D. Keyser, also assails that the Dead Sea Scrolls establish the *Lunar Sabbath* doctrine as being the method of Sabbath observance recognized by ancient Judaism. The following is an excerpt from his web article entitled "From Sabbath to Sunday: The Story of the Jewish Rest Day":

"When the Dead Sea Scrolls were uncovered, the archaeologists found three manuscripts dating to around the first century B.C. that had one purpose in common: to synchronize the 354-day lunar calendar with the 364-day solar calendar. In addition, the archaeologists found that two of these manuscripts -- 4Q320 and 4Q321 -- record the beginnings of the solar months and the festivals. The third, 4Q321a, may have done so as well, but, unfortunately, the relevant portion of the text has perished. All of these texts designate the name of the priestly rotation in service at the temple in Jerusalem at the time in question. Twenty-four courses of priests served altogether -- rotating into service for a week at a time. The names of these courses follow the Biblical list found in I Chronicles 24:7-18.

"Now in manuscript 4Q320 Mishmerot A (fragment 1, column 1) we find -

"Line 7: On the SABBATH of the course of Hakkoz is THE THIRTIETH DAY OF THE LUNAR MONTH, on the thirtieth day of the second solar month.

"Line 12: On the SABBATH of the course of Seorim IS THE TWENTY-NINTH DAY OF THE LUNAR MONTH, on the twenty-fifth day of the seventh solar month.

"Going now to manuscript 4Q321 Mishmerot Ba (fragment 1, column 1) we read -

"Lines 4 & 5: ...and the FIRST CRESCENT [of the moon] is on the SABBATH of the course of Pethahiah, ON THE NINTH OF THE MONTH.

"Finally, in manuscript 4Q321a Mishmerot Bb we discover -

"Line 5: The FULL MOON IS ON THE SABBATH of the course of Koz, on the thirtieth day of the second month...

"Right here is plain evidence that the priests in Jerusalem were keeping the lunar-based calendar that included weeks pegged to the phases of the moon! This was in the first few centuries before Christ. In a note found in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* we find mentioned that without correction "the LUNAR CALENDAR of the scroll writers lost nearly half an hour a month. These differences might be relatively insignificant for a few years, but eventually the seasons would begin to wander through the year, and THE PHASES OF THE MOON would not correspond to what was expected" (Wise, Abegg and Cook. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1996. P. 298)."

In citing the Dead Sea Scrolls as "plain evidence" that ancient Judaism observed *Lunar Sabbaths*, we believe Keyser was a bit premature. In other words, he "jumped to conclusions" that are not in fact borne out by the ancient texts he relies on so heavily.

Notice, for example, his quotation from lines 4 and 5. According to those lines (presuming they are correctly translated), the first crescent is on the ninth day of the month. For those who know that ancient Judaism regarded the first crescent as representing the **first** day of the month, it is absurd to believe the first crescent could have fallen on the **ninth** day of any month. Something "ain't right" here! Adding further injury to Keyser's position is the fact that the Sabbath, according to the above text, occurred on the **ninth** of the month, whereas according to Keyser's teaching, the weekly Sabbath must fall on the **eighth** day of each month.

Equally absurd is Keyser's quotation from line 5, where the "full moon" occurred on the thirtieth day of the second month. Again, for those who know that ancient Judaism regarded the full moon as occurring at the **middle** of the month, it is ludicrous to believe that a full moon could have fallen on the **thirtieth day** of any month. Again, something "ain't right"!

We decided to do some investigating of our own and we located an online translation of the Dead Sea texts cited by Keyser in his article. Although he referred to them as *Mishmerot*, they are more commonly rendered *Mishmarot texts* or the *Priestly Service Texts*. "Mishmarot" is a Hebrew term meaning "watches," and is used in this instance as a reference to the twenty-four watches or "courses" of the Levitical priesthood.

We immediately noticed problems associated with that text when compared with the *Lunar Sabbath* teaching. The very first line of this text, when translated into English, reads as follows:

"[On the first {day} in {the week of} Jedaiah {which falls} on the tw]elfth in it {the seventh month}...."

According to this translation, the first day of the week fell on the twelfth day of the seventh month. If the twelfth day of the month was the first day of the week, then we know the **eleventh day** must have been the Sabbath day. Of course, according to the lunar sabbatarians, the weekly Sabbath can never fall on the eleventh day of the month. As we have already learned, lunar sabbatarians teach that the weekly Sabbath can only fall on the 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th days of the month. Therefore, the very first line of the *Mishmarot Text* disproves lunar sabbatarian theology. However, a lunar sabbatarian might argue that the translator's use of square brackets [] and curly brackets { } indicates added words. Perhaps this is so; however, the lunar sabbatarian has lots of explaining to do as he goes through the rest of the document. For example, here is another line:

"On the fifth {day} in {the week of} Immer {which falls} on the twe[n]ty-third in the te[n]th {month}."

According to the above line, the fifth day of the week fell on the twenty-third day of the month.

If the fifth day of the week fell on the twenty-third day of the month, then we can easily deduce that the Sabbath day fell on the **eighteenth day** of the week - again, a Sabbath day that is not possible according to *Lunar Sabbath* theology. Here is yet another line from the *Mishmarot Text*:

"On the fou[r]th {day} in {the week of} Jeshua {which falls} [on] the twentieth in the second {month}."

Once again, the above timetable utterly destroys lunar sabbatarian theology. If the fourth day of the week fell on the twentieth day of the month, then by tracing the days backwards we find that the Sabbath day fell on the **sixteenth day** of the month, another impossibility for lunar Sabbath theology.

Interestingly, it is obvious that Keyser was intent on presenting a strictly biased perspective with regard to the Dead Sea Scrolls. This is evidenced by the fact that, in presenting a one-sided quotation from the *Mishmarot Text*, he conveniently omitted the very next line, which clearly disproves his position. Let's examine the line displayed by Keyser in his article, only this time we will also display the *following line* from the *Mishmarot Text*:

"And duqah (*translated "first crescent" by Keyser*) {is on the} Sabbath of the course of Petahah, {which falls} [on the ninth in it {the eleventh month}]. On the first {day} in {the week of} Joiarib {which falls} on the t[w]enty-second in the twelfth month"

As we hope you can discern from the above, the first day of that particular week fell on the 22nd day of the month. According to Keyser, the 22nd day of the month is reserved for the weekly Sabbath, and thus the first day could not possibly fall on the 22nd day of the month. That Keyser would go to such lengths to present what he must have known is an unbalanced look at the Qumran calendar is itself a poor reflection on lunar sabbatarians, many of whom have resorted to the same tactics in their attempts to influence others to accept their position.

We thus see that, contrary to lunar sabbatarian claims, the Qumran calendar in no way supports their position.

24. Yahweh's Appointments

The Sabbath is listed in Leviticus 23:1-3 as one of Yahweh's feasts, or *mo'edim*. The Hebrew word *mowadah* (#4150 in *Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary*) can also be translated *appointments*. Thus, the Sabbath is one of the divine appointments that our Creator expects His people to keep each week. *Lunar Sabbath* advocates believe that Yahweh designed the moon to dictate exactly "when" His appointments are to occur during any given month.

The chief verse used in citing their belief is Psalms 104:19, where we read:

¹⁹ He appointed the moon for seasons [mowadah]: the sun knoweth his going down.

We can certainly understand how anyone desiring to apply the above verse in a very literal sense might arrive at the conclusion that anything tied in with *mowadah* is indelibly linked to the lunar cycle.

The weekly Sabbath, then, since it is listed as being one of Yahweh's *mo'edim*, must be connected to the lunar cycle, and this proves that those who promote *Lunar Sabbaths* are correct in their reasoning. At least this is what we have extrapolated from the writings of *Lunar Sabbath* supporters.

We are not about to deny the importance of Yahweh's lunar cycle, especially with regard to how indispensable it is for setting Yahweh's feasts. Does this mean, though, that the lunar cycle must be involved with anything connected to the *mo'edim*?

As we have already established, neither the use of the word *Sabbath* in Scripture, nor its understanding from historical perspective, aligns with the lunar cycle. Furthermore, it can be demonstrated from Scripture that the term *mowadah* is not necessarily tied in with the lunar cycle.

We read in Jeremiah 8:7, "Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times [*mowadah*]; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but My people know not the judgment of Yahweh!"

What does this passage tell us about the term *mowadah*? It tells us that the stork observes her "appointments." Are these appointments based on the lunar cycle? No, they are not. Consider the following commentary, as taken from *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*:

"Migratory birds recognize and follow the seasons of their migration instinctively. The stork, dove, swift, and thrush regularly return to Palestine every spring. They know more about God's appointed way for them than Judah knows about God's appointed way for her (cf. Isa 1:1-3)."

As the author of this commentary explains, the stork's *mowadah* is not dependent upon a monthly cycle, but a yearly cycle. It returns to Palestine, not once a month, but once a year. Certainly, then, it is foolish to insist that *everything* associated with a *mowadah* be simultaneously linked to the lunar cycle. Since there is no evidence, Scriptural or historical, that the weekly Sabbath was ever lunar based, we believe we are safe in concluding that the Sabbath *appointment* [*mowadah*] is based solely on the seven-day cycle instituted by Yahweh at the foundation of the earth. This seven-day cycle, unbroken since the dawn of Creation, culminating with the weekly Sabbath day, is one of Yahweh's most cherished *mo'ed*.

25. Selective Scholarship Versus Misapplied Scholarship

One thematic thread that runs through a lot of persuasive literature distributed and published by many religious organizations is the tendency to only quote from those scholars whose writings support their particular views, whether it be the origin of Christmas or the trinity doctrine. This is what we refer to as *selective scholarship*. In order to produce writings that are as unbiased and intellectually honest as possible, it is important to at least quote from scholars expressing an opposing view in order to present why such a position is either improbable or impossible to support with Scripture. We can excuse some cases in which the author only quotes from seemingly handpicked sources, as instances may certainly arise in which the author is simply not aware that other reputable references refute his position.

This having been said, some lunar sabbatarians are guilty of far worse than *selective scholarship* in their attempts to persuade others to adopt their view. Not only do they employ *selective scholarship*, but we have seen instances in which some of them have *misapplied* the very references they use to support their position. We have visited two web sites run by lunar sabbatarians, on which are posted persuasive articles in favor of observing lunar sabbaths. One article is entitled "From Sabbath to Saturday: The Story of the Jewish Rest Day," published by Hope of Israel Ministries and authored by John D. Keyser. The other article is entitled "The Burning Question: Sabbath - When is it?", published by Covenants of Promise Ministries and authored by Ernie L. Hoch. Both articles freely quote from what appears to be a very reputable book entitled *Rest Days: A Study in Early Law and Morality* by Hutton Webster, Phd. This book was published in 1916, and for all intents and purposes it would appear to be a worthy reference to turn to for solutions to the question as to how the ancients reckoned the Sabbath day. Authored by a man possessing a doctorate in his field of study, the book certainly has, on the *surface* at least, a respectable and authoritative exterior. The question, however, is, "How reliable is its *interior*?"

An even more sensitive, though necessary, question is, "Did authors John Keyser and Ernie Hoch misapply the words of the scholar whom they cited in their articles?"

Let's answer the first question before tackling the second one. On page 269 the book states that the Messiah taught His followers to obey the fourth commandment. Here is what author Hutton Webster wrote:

"Though Jesus regarded the Sabbath as still binding on his followers, his teaching that it was a social institution designed for practical benefit to mankind, and not as a fetish, brought him repeatedly into conflict with the Pharisees, and called forth those utterances which have been so strangely neglected by sabbatarians in after ages: 'For the Son of man is lord of the Sabbath'; 'The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath'; 'My Father worketh [on it] even until now, and I Work.'"

Upon reading the above in Webster's book, I recalled all those Scripture verses instructing us to walk in the Messiah's footsteps, the places where He Himself told His disciples to follow Him. One passage that especially rang out in my mind was John 12:26: "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me" Then, of course, I remembered the songs "Where He Leads Me I Will Follow" and "Trust and Obey." All of these instructions to follow the Messiah's example jelled into the above citation from Webster's book. According to Webster, this Man whom so many claim to follow had instructed His followers that the Sabbath day was still binding! But how could that **be**? The Church teaches that we were supposed to worship on **Sunday!**

But then the author's Luther-inspired bias rings loud and clear in the next sentence.

"Jewish Christians appear at first to have continued the observance of the Sabbath, but this practice met the unqualified condemnation of St. Paul."

I'm not claiming to be a Bible whiz now, and I certainly wasn't one back then, yet something didn't seem right about the above commentary. I thought, "**Where** did Paul ever condemn anyone for observing the Sabbath?" searching my mind, I couldn't recall any examples of Paul ever rebuking anyone for observing the Sabbath!

Again, as if to satisfy my curiosity, Webster offered a footnote to direct his reading audience to Biblical passages supporting his comment. The footnote takes us to the classic verses used by Sundaykeepers to promote their position against Sabbath observance: Colossians 2:16, Romans 14:5 and Galatians 4:10-11. Being curious as to how Paul "condemned" Sabbath observance in those verses, I looked up each one. I knew those verses offered **nothing** in the way of condemnation for worshipping on the Sabbath. In fact, the more of Paul's writings I read, the more I discerned that he was pretty much a "straight shooter," who wouldn't have minced words in informing his constituents that the Sabbath had been "done away." As it turns out, my subsequent investigation proved that Paul was in fact a practicing Sabbathkeeper who openly professed following the Messiah's example. Although that is a different study, I will nevertheless offer a footnote of my own for those who do not believe that Paul observed the Sabbath.

While I appreciate Hutton Webster's pointing out the fact that the Messiah taught the Sabbath as still being binding upon believers, I am forced to question his understanding of the scriptures by his misleading statement that was designed to persuade his reading audience that the weekly Sabbath had been "done away," replaced by Sunday.

Nevertheless, here is our point: As you can hopefully tell by now, Webster's book offers support that, **historically**, the principles surrounding worship on the weekly Sabbath were transferred to Sunday, the first day of the week. What's more, it was all done, according to Webster, with the blessing of the Apostle Paul. Thus, it is obvious that one could just as easily use Webster's book as a reference tool supporting the observance of **Sunday**, which raises the question as to how he could have simultaneously written that the Sabbath observed by first-century believers was "lunar based."

This, then, answers our first question and leads us to the second one. Our first question had to do with how reliable Webster's book is. For those who understand that the Apostle Paul never taught the abolition of the fourth commandment, it should be obvious that at least some of Webster's conclusions are less than accurate in the light of Scriptural evidence.

Our second question was, "Did authors John Keyser and Ernie Hoch misapply the scholar whom they cited in their articles?"

In order to properly answer that question, let's first address the page we just quoted from Hutton Webster's book. As we have already seen, Webster plainly stated his belief that the Apostle Paul condemned Sabbath observance in favor of Sunday observance. Did you glean from any of the above that Hutton Webster supports believing that the Sabbath practiced by those early believers was governed by the *lunar cycle*? No, he made it clear that the change was from the Saturday Sabbath to Sunday. Would lunar sabbatarians quote such comments from Webster's book? No, they would not and they have not, as Webster's commentary on page 269 of his book would obviously have a negative impact on lunar sabbatarians' "power of persuasion." This, then, is a prime example of *misapplied* and *selective scholarship* on the part of such lunar sabbatarians as John Keyser and Ernie Hoch.

Before we proceed any further with our review of Webster's book, I need to make it very clear that the book does offer valuable information, and can be very useful in our study of this issue; however, as with all sources, we must use them very carefully. To select certain portions while glossing over other pertinent information violates one of the rules of basic journalism and can be very misleading, if not dangerous. As we are about to see, some lunar sabbatarians definitely misappropriated information from Hutton Webster's book.

In citing books such as the one published by Hutton Webster, a lunar sabbatarian author knows that many readers will not take the time to examine their source to verify its scholarship and its authenticity. Consequently, what many readers don't know is the extent to which lunar sabbatarians misapplied the information found in Webster's book.

Notice the portion of Webster's book that John D. Keyser selected in an attempt to prove his case:

"Also, writes Hutton Webster, 'the establishment of a periodic week ending in a Sabbath observed every seventh day was doubtless responsible for the gradual obsolescence of the NEW MOON FESTIVAL AS A PERIOD OF GENERAL ABSTINENCE, since with continuous weeks the new-moon day and the Sabbath Day would from time to time coincide.'"

In quoting the above from Hutton Webster's book, Keyser attempts to establish Webster as promoting the belief that ancient Israel originally practiced lunar sabbatarianism before transferring over to a periodic seven-day week that ended with a Sabbath day.

Indeed, portions of Webster's book are written from such a perspective. However, visibly lacking are any clues pinpointing the exact time frame in history when the switch was made from *lunar* Sabbaths to **Saturday** Sabbaths. The following commentary from Webster's book is an example of how he (roughly) outlines the progression from *lunar* to *weekly* (Saturday) without the mention of any time frames:

"The Hebrew seven-day week, ending with the Sabbath, presented so obvious a resemblance to the Babylonian septenary period, which closed with an 'evil day,' that scholars have felt themselves compelled to seek its origin in Babylonia. The two institutions, nevertheless, show important differences. The Babylonian cycle, as far as we know, was never employed as a chronological unit; the Hebrew week was a true civil week, a definite and well-understood period of time. The Babylonian cycle seems not to have been dissociated from the lunation; the Hebrew week was a periodic week, running unfettered from month to month and from year to year. The Babylonian 'evil day' was an unnamed unlucky day, observed by the king, by priests, and by physicians, but not certainly by the people at large; the Hebrew Sabbath was a named holy day, dedicated to the worship of the national god and kept by the entire community as a festival. These real divergencies make it certain that the Hebrew week and Sabbath, in the form in which we know them, could not have been taken over without change from Babylonia. The celebration of new-moon and full-moon festivals, which both Babylonians and Hebrews appear to have derived from a common Semitic antiquity, underwent, in fact, a radically unlike evolution among the two kindred peoples. To dis sever the week from the lunar month, to employ it as a recognized calendrical unit, and to fix upon one day of that week for the exercises of religion were momentous innovations, which, until evidence to the contrary is found, must be attributed to the Hebrew people alone."

Author Hutton Webster expresses his recognition of the possibility that, indeed, the Hebrews at some point in time "dissevered" the week from the lunar month and fixed one day of that week as the day for "exercises of religion." At what time in the history of the Hebrews was this innovation carried out? Again, Webster doesn't say.

Here, in essence, is what the lunar sabbatarian must believe: He must believe that, when the Sabbath was given to Israel, it was based upon the lunar cycle. As we all know, both Israel and Judah eventually came to the point wherein they polluted the Sabbath. At this point, the lunar sabbatarian would believe that the true nature of the Sabbath, including the method of determining when it occurred, was either forgotten or rejected by those people. In the meantime, however, a form of this "original" Sabbath observance was preserved and recorded in Babylon, even though it deteriorated into the aspect of "unlucky days" instead of worship days. Even though no record of this manner of Sabbath observance has ever been found in Israel, it has been traced to Babylon, and the lunar sabbatarian accepts this record over and above any records to the contrary found in Israel. In fact, whenever the word "Sabbath" appears in any Hebrew texts, it is interpreted or redefined in light of the Babylonian record, i.e., it must have been "lunar."

This, in fact, appears to be what is supported by Webster Hutton in his book *Rest Days*. While on the one hand he offers support for the original uninterrupted seven-day sequence divided into weeks and unrelated to the lunar cycle, on the other hand he also expresses support for the originality of weeks based upon the lunar cycle, as quoted above by John D. Keyser in his article. Indeed, Webster's sequence is very confusing. As we have already demonstrated, Webster clearly presents the Sabbath practiced by ancient Israel as being distinct from *lunar Sabbaths*:

"The Hebrew week was a periodic week, running unfettered from month to month and from year to year."

Yet elsewhere he portrays the Sabbath as having once been based on the lunar cycle:

"That the term *shabba*"*th*, the designation of the full-moon day, should have come to be applied to every seventh day of the month seems to be quite in accord with both Babylonian and Hebrew usage, which as we have seen, led the month itself to be called after the new-moon day."

As already mentioned, what is strangely lacking in Webster's book is his explanation of ***how and when*** the change from a *Lunar Sabbath* observance to *Saturday Sabbath* observance occurred. The best he can do is describe it as a somewhat of a gradual "weaning process," the more dedicated Jews being pacified only by virtue of the fact that, with the transferal to the new "Saturday Sabbath" week, both Sabbath and new moon would periodically coincide. When did this "gradual obsolescence" that he refers to have its beginning? He does not offer an answer. Of course, he cannot portray its beginning as having been abrupt, as such a change would most definitely have been recorded. Therefore, out of what we believe is more convenience than documented evidence, Webster surmises that the present-day Sabbath reckoning of Judaism sprang from a gradual change so subtle that it somehow escaped the notice of both Israel and Judah. We believe such a gradual change is just as unlikely as an abrupt change.

Rather than interpreting existing archaeological and historical evidence found in Israel in light of Babylonian records, we suggest doing the reverse. Could it be that the original Sabbath was based on a periodic week ending in a Sabbath that was observed every seventh day? Could it be that as mankind corrupted that Sabbath day, he revamped it to the point that it was barely recognizable, sharing only a few similarities to the original? Could reprobate men have altered the seventh day Sabbath in such a way so as to cause its occurrence to be based on a lunar cycle instead of a periodic seven day cycle? Is this scenario possible? Yes, it is.

We believe that a likely scenario involves the events described above, progressing as man moved out over the face of the earth, including into an area known as Babylon. Although ancient Israel was certainly guilty of profaning the Sabbath, this does not mean its reckoning was altogether forgotten. Certainly, once the Jews resettled their land upon returning from their Babylonian captivity, Nehemiah saw to it that correct and proper Sabbath observance was restored and practiced among his people.

Was this proper Sabbath observance based upon a method preserved in Babylon? I do not believe so. Instead, as just stated, the proper method of observance was restored. This method continued up to the time of the Messiah, when even heathens recognized that the Jews were worshipping on the day those heathens termed "the day of Saturn."

More Reference Abuse

We believe we should add a further commentary attesting to how lunar sabbatarians Keyser and Hoch misrepresent Hutton Webster's book *Rest Days*. On at least three occasions, these lunar sabbatarians express views that conflict with the views brought forth by Webster in his book.

To begin with, both Keyser and Hoch make it clear in their writings that the "true" Lunar Sabbaths should fall on the 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th days of each "moonth." The following is from Keyser's study entitled "The New Moon and the Weekly Sabbath - *Side-By-Side!*":

"We can see here that YEHOVAH was setting up His weekly Sabbath cycle for the Israelites. If the 15th and the 22nd were Sabbath days -- then the 8th and the 29th of the month were also Sabbaths! So here we see a pattern -- 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th. What significance do these dates have in YEHOVAH God's calendar? Just this -- THEY CORRESPOND TO THE PHASES OF THE MOON!!"

Ernie Hoch, in his article "The Burning Question: Sabbath - When is it?", also establishes that the 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th days of the month (in addition to the first), must be considered Sabbath days:

"So we see that day ONE is a NEW MOON DAY (observed as a Sabbath day) then work six days (lunar days 2-7) and then rest for the 7th day Sabbath (on the 8th day of the lunar cycle). Count seven more days (2nd shabuwa) and you rest on the 15th day of the lunar cycle. Seven more days (3rd shabuwa) rest on the 22nd day of the lunar cycle and again on the 29th day of the lunar cycle."

Although both Keyser and Hoch make it clear "which" days of the *moonth* should be designated as Sabbath days, the author of the reference they so frequently cite, Hutton Webster, makes it equally clear that the Babylonians designated the 7th, 14th, 21st and 29th days:

"*Shabattum* being the technical expression for the fifteenth day as the time of full moon, it is only reasonable to conclude that, if not the name, at any rate the observances belonging to this day would be often transferred to the fourteenth of the month, or to any other day on which the moon became full. No other hypothesis will explain the outstanding fact that *shabattum* was equated with *ûm nûkh libbi* as a day for appeasing the anger of the deity.

And if for practical purposes the fourteenth day might be a *shabattum*, it is not difficult to assume that this was also the case with the days (seventh, twenty-first, and twenty-eighth, perhaps, also, the nineteenth), which marked other characteristic stages of the lunation."

In spite of agreeing with the Babylonian method of Lunar Sabbath-reckoning, lunar sabbatarians Keyser and Hoch apparently disagree with the Babylonian **application** as explained in Webster's book, opting instead to infuse their own private interpretations governing exactly "which" days the Sabbath should fall upon each month. In other words, "Never mind how it was actually done, here is how it **should** have been done, at least based upon our interpretation of Scripture!"

Secondly, it appears that Keyser and Hoch are at odds over when the new month begins. Keyser believes it is when the crescent moon is first sighted over the western horizon after sunset. Hoch believes a new month begins with the conjunction of the moon, at a time when it is invisible from earth. As mentioned earlier in our study, this is one example of how difficult it is to respond to lunar sabbatarian arguments, as each one seemingly has his own unique method that he believes has the unmitigated support of Scripture.

Which of those two methods is cited by Hutton Webster's *Rest Days* as being correct? Webster, in this instance, sides with John D. Keyser:

"As in all lunar calendars the month began with the visible new moon."

Reckoning the new month from the sighting of the crescent moon not only has the support of Scripture (Deuteronomy 16:1), but it was also referenced by our already-mentioned first-century witness, Philo. Hoch, then, is faced with the dilemma of not only being unable to reconcile his belief with the author whom he quotes to corroborate his position, but his stance also lacks any historical and Scriptural support.

Finally, both Keyser and Hoch fall into the trap of attempting to link Saturday Sabbath observance to the worship of the idol named *Saturn*. It is understandable that a lunar sabbatarian would attempt to find such a pretext in order to dissuade others from worshipping on Saturday each week; however, in order to use such a pretext, one has to come up with the evidence, and the very source quoted by both men makes it very clear that the Saturday Sabbath is in no way connected to the worship of Saturn.

Even more bizarre is the fact that Keyser quotes the very portion of Hutton Webster's book wherein he dismisses the notion that the periodic weekly Sabbath observed by Jews today is derived from the worship of Saturn. Keyser then goes on to "prove" that at a later point in history, this is in fact what did occur. Notice what Webster had to say about any attempts to connect the periodic weekly Sabbath with Saturn worship:

"An old and still common theory derives the Sabbath institution from the worship of Saturn, after which planet the first day of the astrological week received its designation.

The theory is untenable for more than one reason. In the first place the Hebrews did not name their weekdays after the planets, but indicated them by ordinal numbers. In the second place Saturn's Day began the planetary week, while the Jewish Sabbath was regarded as the last day of the seven, a suitable position for a rest day. And in the third place neither the Hebrews nor any other Oriental people ever worshipped the planet Saturn as god and observed his day as a festival."

Could Hutton Webster have made it any plainer? The Jewish Sabbath is in no way associated with the worship of the planet Saturn. In spite of this, Keyser somehow managed to find a way to take Mr. Webster's writing on this subject, then turn it around so as to make it appear that, indeed, this day *did* emanate from the worship of Saturn. He does this by quoting Webster out of context. Notice the exact quote from Webster:

"The association of the Sabbath Day with Saturday was probably one reason why Saturn, a planet in Babylonian astrological schemes regarded as beneficent rather than malefic, should have come to assume in late classical times the rôle of an unlucky star (*sidus tristissimum, stella iniquissima*). The oldest reference to Saturday is found in a verse by the poet Tibullus (d. 19 B.C.), who apparently identifies Saturn's Day with the supposed inauspicious Jewish Sabbath, when he gives as one of his excuses for not quitting Rome the bad omens which detained him 'on the sacred day of Saturn.' Ovid mentions 'foreign Sabbaths' along with the anniversary of the day of the battle of the Allia -- *dies Alliensis* -- as unlucky occasions. Frontinus, a Roman military officer and tactician (d. about 103 A.D.), says that Vespasian defeated the Jews by attacking them on Saturn's Day, when it was unlawful for them to do anything. Dio Cassius also speaks of the Jews having dedicated to their god the day called the day of Saturn, 'on which, among many other most peculiar actions, they undertake no serious occupation."

In each of the above-mentioned instances mentioned in Webster's book, the identification of the Jewish Sabbath with "the day of Saturn" was made by an unconverted heathen. To the unconverted heathen, the day on which the Jewish Sabbath fell was indeed "the day of Saturn." This is simply how they regarded that particular day. This in no way implies that this is in fact how the **Jews** regarded the weekly Sabbath! Nevertheless, those who read Keyser's selective quote from the above paragraph are in fact persuaded to believe the opposite of what Hutton Webster was actually attempting to convey in his book. Notice how Keyser quotes Webster, while adding his customary italics and caps for emphasis purposes:

"*The association of the Sabbath Day with Saturday,*' explains Webster, 'was probably one reason why Saturn, a planet in Babylonian astrological schemes regarded as beneficent rather than malefic, should have come to assume in late classical times the role of an unlucky star (*sidus tristissimum, stella iniquissima*)...Dio Cassius [Roman historian born 155 A.D., died after 230 A.D.] also speaks of the Jews having DEDICATED TO THEIR GOD THE DAY CALLED THE DAY OF SATURN [SATURDAY], on which, among many other most peculiar actions, they undertake no serious occupation'...Tacitus [another Roman historian] (*Historiae*, V, 4) thinks that the Jewish Sabbath may be an observance in honour of Saturn...' (**Rest Days**, p. 244-245)."

Keyser's use of italics and caps is designed to hammer home his view that the Jews "dedicated to their god the day called the day of Saturn." What he chose to not emphasize is the fact that this was the perspective of a heathen historian with regard to the Jewish people. We are curious if Keyser would appreciate it if some writer would describe **Keyser's** faith from the perspective of an outsider, especially if that writer expected his readers to regard that perspective as being factual. This is precisely what Keyser is expecting his readership to believe with regard to the Jewish Sabbath and the heathen perspective that their day of worship fell on "the day of Saturn."

Ernie Hoch is equally guilty of subverting Hutton Webster's conclusion as expressed in his book. Hoch, in his study, quotes extensively from Keyser's article, which as we have already seen, represents a gross deviation from Webster's intended, expressed conclusion. Hoch, however, goes a bit further than Keyser, as he freely and flippantly refers to the Jewish Sabbath as "the Saturday Sabbath" and the "Saturn's Day Sabbath" throughout his article.

Observations of Heathens Proves Day on Which the Sabbath Fell

Curiously, both Keyser and Hoch failed to make a crucial observation based on the information provided in Hutton Webster's book. Ironically, both men teach that the Sabbath observed by Jews during the time of the Messiah was "lunar based." Yet the very same men cite quotations from heathen observers who freely testified that the Jews were worshipping on "the day of Saturn," i.e., the day those observers recognized as a day honoring the idol named Saturn. This day coincided with the day on which the nation of Jews worshipped, and as even Keyser and Hoch would admit, this day was decidedly **not** based on any lunar cycle!

For example, as seen above, Keyser provides a quote from the Roman historian Tacitus, who observed that the "Jewish Sabbath may be an observance in honor of Saturn." This definitely indicates that Tacitus understood that the Jews of his day worshipped on the day commonly recognized as being dedicated to Saturn, i.e., Saturday. Tacitus was a first-century historian who was born circa 54 CE and died circa 117 CE. If the Jews of his day were observing a day that coincided with "Saturn's Day," this means they were worshipping on the same day as the Jews of today. If this day represents a departure from the day the Jews of the Messiah's day were worshipping, I would like to see the record of how and when this change occurred.

A change of this great magnitude could not have been successfully perpetrated upon the Jews without a historical record having been made of such a change. As an example of what I mean, I would like to challenge folks like Keyser and Hoch to go to the Jewish people and subtly persuade them to all worship on a different day than the one they currently recognize as being the Sabbath day. If they should happen to succeed in doing this while simultaneously managing to keep the record of their success from appearing in the history books, **then** we will recognize the possibility that perhaps indeed, the Jews changed from recognizing *Lunar Sabbaths* to observing *Saturday Sabbaths* without there being a record of the change in their custom.

Until we witness such a monumental change, we are persuaded to believe such Jewish writers as Philo and Josephus, who clearly wrote of how the Jewish Sabbath is based on an uninterrupted seven-day cycle. Until we witness such a change, we are inclined to believe that heathen writers understood the Jewish day of worship as falling on the day that the heathens attributed to the idol named Saturn. That day is the day commonly known in our society as Saturday.

26. I Samuel 20 and the "Uneven Days of Lunation"

While constraints on both space and time prohibit me from addressing each and every point brought up by lunar sabbatarians, we will attempt to at least respond to select ones that they believe establish the validity of their position. Some of what we believe are the more frivolous claims we simply have to ignore. For example, as we mentioned in a previous chapter, one lunar sabbatarian expressed his belief that, even though the day of the new moon **dictates** which day the weekly Sabbath will fall upon each week of a particular month, the New Moon Day is not to be treated as "**the** Sabbath." He arrives at this conclusion by virtue of the fact that only *servile work* is prohibited on *Yom Teruah* (the Feast of Trumpets). Since only *servile work* is prohibited on that particular New Moon Day, he interprets those instructions as pertaining to **all** new moon days, and this is how he justifies Moses' rearing up the Tabernacle in Exodus chapter 40. Since he reasons that certain forms of work must be allowed on the New Moon Day, Moses was apparently justified in performing this type of work on the "New Moon Sabbath." In fact, as he explains, on the day of the New Moon, he mows the lawn, does housework, etc., only shunning his regular employment on that day. Of course, the conclusion he draws is a conclusion based upon his own interpretation of Scriptural texts, a conclusion that is based upon a faulty premise. His premise is that **all** New Moon days are commanded Sabbath days, whereas, as we have already established in this study, Yahweh Himself outlines "which" days He expects His people to rest upon, and the only New Moon Day upon which we are to abstain from work is *Yom Teruah*. If He truly expects us to understand that we are to abstain from work on the day of each new moon, He would plainly have included those days in His approved list found in Leviticus chapter 23. Adding the New Moon days to that list is tantamount to adding to Yahweh's Word, a violation of Deuteronomy 12:32.

We are compelled to ignore many lunar sabbatarian claims simply because they are based upon the same faulty, outlandish premises, and circular reasoning as is the one above. The tangled web spun by lunar sabbatarians seems to grow more tangled with each aspect of their theology that we address, as they are thus compelled to come up with more explanations and forced interpretations to the point that we can only wonder how they can continue to accept Scripture as the inspired Word of Yahweh while promoting this teaching.

Some of their claims, although clearly based on similar faulty premises, need to be addressed because we understand that there is enough logic behind the claims that an individual who is not well-versed in Scripture may accept them as valid unless they are properly addressed and exposed.

The following claim, set forth by Matthew Janzen in his presentation, addresses a New Moon observance recorded in I Samuel chapter 20. Here is this particular excerpt from his presentation:

"In I Samuel 20 - now we are going to examine one passage here that I believe gives **credence** to how I believe we deal with the uneven number of days in the lunation, just like the thirteenth moon has to come in to deal with the contradictory number of days in a solar year and a lunar year. You have approximately 365¼ days in a solar year and 354 days in a lunar year - that's an *approximate* eleven day difference! Now that's an **absolute**! And most people that adhere to the festivals of Yahweh - I've never seen them get in big arguments and disputes about trying to reconcile **those** discrepancies! But yet when it comes with this uneven number of days of lunation, they just say, 'Well, there's just **no way** you can have this Sabbath in here like this, because 29.5 days **ain't gonna work**!'

"But yet we find in I Samuel 20 - I believe we find - what to do with the uneven number of days. I Samuel 20, verse three through five:

³And David sware moreover and said, Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes; and he saith, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved: but truly as Yahweh liveth, and as thy soul liveth, *there is* but a step between me and death.
⁴Then said Jonathan unto David, Whatsoever thy soul desireth, I will even do *it* for thee.
⁵And David said unto Jonathan, Behold, tomorrow *is* the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat: but let me go, that I may hide myself in the field unto the third *day* at even (End of quote).

"Now I want you to notice first of all here that the new moon is **specifically tied** ... with sitting with the king at meat. It was a special banquet. He says, 'I **shall not fail** to sit with the king at meat.' Okay?

"Some have said that meals were taken *every* day. However, this passage is giving us a focal point for the meal, i.e., the **new moon**. We should also notice that David mentions hiding in the field **unto the third day at even**. Now in his book *Keeping Yahweh's Appointments*, Jonathan David Brown [a lunar sabbatarian] comments on this verse in this fashion. He says (quote), 'He is going to hide himself in the field until the third day at even. The point to which the term 'third' is referenced is the current day he is speaking in, the day before the *chodesh*, ('chodesh' being the Hebrew word for new moon).'

"So he's speaking, let's say, in **today**: 'I'm going to hide myself, let's say, in the field until the third day.' This is day one, tomorrow is day two, the next day is day *three*. He's going to hide himself until the third day at even. All right, we continue to read the

passage - and it would do good to read the whole chapter, as well as a couple after that, too, in your spare time, but second time - I Samuel 20, verse 24 through 26. Notice what Saul said **on the new moon**:

²⁴ ... and when the new moon was come, the king sat him down to eat meat.

²⁵ And the king sat upon his seat, as at other times, *even* upon a seat by the wall: and Jonathan arose, and Abner sat by Saul's side, and David's place was empty.

²⁶ Nevertheless Saul spake not any thing that day: for he thought, Something has befallen him, he *is* not clean; surely he *is* not clean.

"So here again we see that the special new moon - why would you have to be **clean** to eat a meal?! Doesn't make sense! You don't have to be *clean* to eat a meal, there's nowhere in Yahweh's law that teaches that!"

[Note from Larry and June: We briefly interrupt Mr. Janzen's presentation at this point in order to take exception to the above comment. Of course, it is true that one does not have to be *clean* in order to eat a meal, but according to Numbers 5:2, the state of uncleanness requires a period of *separation* from others, which explains why David would have been absent from the king's meal.] Okay, now back to Mr. Janzen's presentation:

"But now notice now what took place on the second day of the *chodesh*. In verse 27 it says:

²⁷ And it came to pass on the morrow, *which was* the second *day* of the month, that David's place was empty: and Saul said unto Jonathan his son, Wherefore cometh not the son of Jesse to meat, neither yesterday, nor today?

"He specifically **pinpoints** yesterday and today: "WHY has he not come?? I thought he was unclean - something's up now!" We know Saul was ready to kill him!

"Notice what Jonathan David Brown says in his book again, on page 58. Listen very carefully. He says: 'Saul notices David's absence again on the *second of the chodesh*. This shows the length of this special new moon gathering at the king's table to be two days in a row. He tries to explain to himself that David's absence was due to him being unclean. The events then culminate in Jonathan shooting arrows as planned on the third day, counting from the day before the *chodesh*, at even. Saul doesn't ask again the next day why David didn't come' - in other words after those two days, the next day, Saul didn't say, 'Where's David at for this meal?' He didn't ask that [question] the next day; the *chodesh* was over.

"So the *chodesh* New Moon gathering appears to have ended after **two days**. We can safely assume, then, that because there were two days in which David was **expected**, that particular month had what we would commonly call thirty days in length.

We can also assume that both of those days were not normal work days by the very existence of the feast.' End of quote. I added a few of my comments in there when I was reading that.

"But there are specifically two days involved in this 'get-together' meal on the new moon. This is precisely what I am saying was done approximately every other month, although sometimes it'll be done every - like sometimes you'll have back-to-back what we would call thirty-day months.

"Day thirty and day one - what we would call them - would actually be counted as day one and two of the *chodesh* feast, with day **two** of the *chodesh* feast being the first official day of the following month. Now I want you to note these statements by the *Encyclopedia Biblica*, 1906, under the heading 'New Moon.' Quote:

"At a new moon, the clans also were accustomed to hold their yearly family sacrifices. So for example, the Bethlehemite clan to which David belonged. The second day of the new moon seems also to have been solemnly observed. The story related in I Samuel 20 shows us clearly what importance was attached to the feast."

"A few more paragraphs down in this encyclopedia we read:

"There seems to be in I Samuel 20:27, compare with verses 18 and 24, that in old times the feasts of the new moon lasted two days."

"Now what I **really** want to mention - before, really, these articles in this encyclopedia - is that certain and various Bibles translate it in this context. J. P. Green, in his Hebrew Interlinear - in other words, he's translated the Hebrew text into English - notice how he translates these verses. I Samuel 20:24, 26 through 27 and verse 34. Quote:

²⁴And David was hidden in the field and it was the new moon. And the king sat down by the food to eat.

²⁶But Saul did not say anything on that day, for he said, It *is* an accident; he is not clean; he *is* surely not clean.

²⁷And it happened on the **NEXT DAY OF** the new moon, that David's place was empty.

³⁴And Jonathan rose up from the table in the heat of anger. And *he* did not eat food on the second day of the new moon.

"Now Mr. Green **could** have translated this passage "the second day of the month." He **could** have. But he didn't choose to. **Why?** Because the context teaches a two-day new moon festival was taking place. I've also found that *The New English Version of the Bible* translates verse 34 in a similar way. Listen to this, *The New English Version of the Bible* says, in [chapter] 20 and [verse] 34 of I Samuel,

³⁴And Jonathan got up from the table in a rage and ate nothing that day, the second day of the new moon festival.

"Even the *Eerdman's Bible Dictionary* says, 'The festive nature of the new moon is suggested by two days of feasting hosted by Saul, *I Samuel 20:5*.'

"Now there have been some people that have said to me, 'Well, Solomon began building his temple on the second day of the new moon, the second day of the *chodesh*.' In II Chronicles 3:2 we find that Solomon began to rear the temple up on the second day of the month, or *chodesh*. Then they say, 'Well, did Solomon begin to build his temple on the new moon?'

"Well, I don't know! My first answer was, 'Well, of course not!' There's obviously **some** times in the Bible where it says 'the second day of the new moon' or the month, when it means **the second day of the month**. That's an obvious inference! But, after examining the context of I Samuel 20, *I* am left to believe that we learn here by approved example what to do with the uneven number of days in the lunation after observing the four Lunar Sabbaths of each month.

"Now I might add here that there **is** a possibility of Solomon rearing up his temple on the new moon. Yahweh actually *commanded* Moses to do it in Exodus chapter 40. Rearing up the temple was not considered unlawful to do on the new moon, and the new moon did not have all the restrictions that the Sabbath day did."

This marks the end of Matthew Janzen's commentary regarding I Samuel chapter 20, which he believes serves as an "approved example" of what to do with the *extended Sabbaths* at the end of each month.

In order to more effectively respond to Mr. Janzen's commentary, we are going to simply address one item at a time. To begin with, he once again draws a parallel between the lunar sabbatarians' inability to produce Scriptural instructions pertaining to *extended Sabbaths* with the intercalary 13th month, which although recognized by virtually all scholars and Jews alike, is a practice that is void of Scriptural instructions. We addressed this comparison in chapter 17, pointing out how unfair it is in light of the fact that the intercalary 13th month, though lacking Scriptural explanation, is **not** lacking in historical reference. Information regarding the *extended Sabbaths*, on the other hand, is absent both Scripturally **and** historically. If the lunar sabbatarian truly wishes to draw parallel comparisons, he should address a doctrine or teaching whose instructions are void of *both* Scriptural and historical support.

Janzen then attempts to reinterpret I Samuel 20 so as to make it fit his theology. In the course of so doing, he comes up with an interpretation that has never before surfaced. Until the latter part of the 20th century, no one, **anywhere**, (to the best of our knowledge) had come up with the interpretation that I Samuel 20 proves the existence and observance of *extended Sabbaths*.

In his attempt to harmonize J. P. Green's *The Interlinear Bible* with his lunar sabbatarian doctrine, Janzen either deliberately or unintentionally misquoted Green's translation of the text of I Samuel 20:27. Green's actual translation reads as follows:

²⁷And it happened on the **DAY AFTER** the new moon, that David's place was empty.

In what appears to be a deliberate attempt to put a different spin on Green's translation, Janzen read the words "next day of the new moon" into the above text, which might lead someone to believe that a new moon day may consist of more than one day. Perhaps, however, Janzen simply misread the text. Nevertheless, the words "day after the new moon" plainly reveal that the second day on which David was absent from the king's meal was **not** considered "a day" of the new moon, much less "**the day**" of the new moon!

The context of I Samuel 20 is only confusing when examined outside the parameters of Yahweh's law. As we have repeatedly pointed out, nowhere in the Torah are we commanded to abstain from work on the day of the new moon. Furthermore, nowhere are we directed to observe **two or more days** at the conclusion of each month! This in itself closes the case on any lunar sabbatarian attempts to criticize those who do not recognize or observe *Lunar Sabbaths*. If, then, there was a two-day New Moon celebration, does this mean it was a **commanded** observance? No, it does not.

This point is effectively reinforced by C. F. Keil in Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*:

"When Jonathan answered, '*What thy soul saith, will I do to thee,*' i.e., fulfil every wish, David made this request, '*Behold, to-morrow is new moon, and I ought to sit and eat with the king; let me go, that I may conceal myself in the field* (i.e., in the open air) *till the third evening.*" This request implies that Saul gave a feast at the new moon, and therefore that the new moon was not merely a religious festival, according to the law in Num. 10:10; 28:11-15, but that it was kept as a civil festival also, and in the latter character for two days; as we may infer both from the fact that David reckoned to the third evening, i.e., the evening of the third day from the day then present, and therefore proposed to hide himself on the new moon's day and the day following, and also still more clearly from vv. 12, 27, and 34, where Saul is said to have expected David at table on the day after the new moon. We cannot, indeed, conclude from this that there was a religious festival of two days' duration; nor does it follow, that because Saul supposed that David might have absented himself on the first day on account of Levitical uncleanness (v. 26), therefore the royal feast was a sacrificial meal."

As implied by Keil, there are no Torah restrictions forbidding holding a civil festival on the day of the new moon, nor is one limited to only holding such a festival for only one day. Clearly Saul held a two-day banquet in celebration of the New Moon. There is certainly no commandment outlawing such a celebration; there is likewise no command that such a celebration be observed.

Clearly the ancients attached a deeper sense of solemnity towards the day of the New Moon than many do today, and it is our loss if we miss out on the blessings gained by rejoicing at the sighting of Yahweh's new moon, celebrating the beginning of another month.

I would like to now address Janzen's teaching that "day two" of Saul's New Moon celebration was actually "day one" of the month. He stated, " ... day **two** of the *chodesh* feast being the first official day of the following month." In other words, Janzen believes "day two" is *really* "day one." This is clearly a forced interpretation, greatly enhanced by his subsequent misquote from Green's *The Interlinear Bible*. As Green's translation clearly reveals, David's second absence from Saul's table occurred on "the DAY AFTER the new moon." There can only be one day of the New Moon, and according to the Hebrew text, David's second absence was on the **following day, i.e., after** the New Moon. Again, C. F. Keil in his contribution to Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*, recognizes this fact:

"But on the second day, the day after the new moon (lit., *the morrow after the new moon, the second day*: yn\$ah is a nominative, and to be joined to yihyaw, and not a genitive belonging to \$edoxah), when David was absent from table again, Saul said to Jonathan, '*Why is the son of Jesse not come to meat, neither yesterday nor to-day?*' Whereupon Jonathan answered, as arranged with David (compare vv. 28 and 29 with v. 6). '*And my brother, he hath commanded me,*' i.e., ordered me to come. hfUic as in Ex. 6:13, and yixf), the elder brother, who was then at the head of the family, and arranged the sacrificial meal."

As understood by this Hebrew scholar, the second day on which David was absent from Saul's table was none other than the second day of the month. It was most certainly **not** "the first official day of the following month," as asserted by Matthew Janzen in his presentation. That day was simply an extra day of feasting hosted by King Saul (a rebellious king), and cannot be logically construed as a mandated observance.

Finally, it has been said that every translation of the Bible is a commentary. This having been said, the earliest commentary ever compiled is known as the *Septuagint* translation. Janzen cited the *Septuagint* at various times throughout his presentation, obviously at times when he felt this "commentary" supports his position. An occasion on which he chose to **not** cite the *Septuagint's* translation is the one in which he expounded on I Samuel chapter 20. It appears that he chose to not offer his listening audience the *Septuagint's* translation of I Samuel 20:27 because the *Septuagint* effectively disproves his notion that "day two is really day one." As we are about to demonstrate, the *Septuagint* translator, who translated the Hebrew text into Greek during the 3rd century BCE, rendered I Samuel 20:27 in such a way as to indicate that David was absent on the **second day of the month**, NOT the second day of an "extended Sabbath." Here is the English translation of I Samuel 20:27 from the *Septuagint*:

²⁷And it came to pass on the morrow, on the second day of the month, that the place of David was empty; and Saul said to Jonathan his son, Why has not the son of Jesse attended both yesterday and to-day at the table?

Clearly the Hebrew/Greek scholar who translated the above verse in the 3rd century BCE, over 200 years prior to the Messiah's birth, did not have the same understanding of this verse that is taught by lunar sabbatarians. Please bear in mind that the same translator, in I Samuel 20:5, makes reference to the "new moon," i.e., the *neomenia*. Once the day of the New Moon is past, however, the Greek text simply refers to it as the second "day of the month" (*menos*) in verse 27. Clearly, by the time of the *Septuagint's* translation, Jewish understanding of this account did **not** include even a trace that this "second day" was an "extended Sabbath day."

27. Consensus among the sects?

Much like the current "messianic / Hebrew movement" there has always been disagreement within Judaism. Today, what the world calls "Judaism" is made up of so many diverse and distinct groups. There's Orthodox Judaism, Reform Judaism, Reconstructionist Judaism, Conservative Judaism, Modern Judaism, Humanist Judaism, Alternative Judaism, Haredi Judaism, Jewish Renewal, Hasidic Judaism, Lubavicht Hasidism, Kabbalistic Judaism, Karaite Judaism..... and a few more that I have no doubt missed. There are even subgroups within each of these sects. All of them diverging on one or several points.

The saying is true "ask two Jews a question, you will get three opinions"

We know that in the 1st century, the faith was as diverse as it is today. There were Sadducees, Pharisees, Zealots, Karaites, Essenes, Netzarim, Ebionites...

- Note: Some may have noticed that I did not include Christianity in my list of 1st century sects. This is primarily due to the undisputed fact that what is known today as Christianity did not exist in the 1st century. Followers of the Messiah were either Netzarim or Ebionites. Christianity was the invention of the Roman (pagan) Emperor Constantine.

Of these 1st century factions, some believed in a literal resurrection, others did not. Some only saw the TaNaKh as inspired and others believed that the Rabbinical decrees (oral law) had as much (if not more) weight as the TaNaKh. There isn't enough time in this study to detail the differences in the various sects, but suffice it to say they rarely agreed on much.

Interestingly, there is one issue where you find them all in agreement. This issue of the revolving cycle of the 7th day (Saturday) Shabbat.

Of all of these diverse groups there was, and is to the present day- a consensus that the Shabbat is the seventh day of the shavua (week). Among the diverse forms of Judaism the lunar Sabbath is not a concept that any of them recognize as legitimate. In Israel today, the Shabbat is always on the day that the western world calls "Saturday".

It is true that they have their differences as to exactly *how* one was to keep Sabbath. Some believe that Sabbath begins when the Sun has set, others believe you must be able to see at least 3 stars in the sky in order to declare the beginning of Sabbath. Some believe that one must not lift anything heavier than a dried fig - while others see this as nothing more than the oppressive rules of a man-made religious system. The list goes on.

But when it comes to the continuous cycle of the 7th day (Saturday) Sabbath, they are all in agreement. Of course the lunar Sabbath proponent may be able to dig up some obscure group somewhere who may- either through poor scholarship or an ultra-liberal view of the scriptures, agree with the lunar Sabbath concept. Though I have not had success in finding such a group myself.

Don't get me wrong. I am the first to say that we do not do something simply because "Jews do it". Much of what is modern, orthodox, Rabbinical Judaism is very unbiblical. There are some practices that I would even describe as anti-biblical. No, we don't follow the rabbis we follow the Torah and our Messiah. We do what YHWH commands. Period.

That said, I think there is something important to consider here. Jews have the Torah, the language, and the history. And while they differ greatly on so many issues, the fact that they all agree when it comes to the 7th day (Saturday) Sabbath should be enough to cause us to take note.

YHWH is not so weak that He was unable to preserve His Sabbath. I believe that Sabbath was lost until it was restored to Abraham, then all of Israel at Sinai. YHWH gave Moses detailed instructions on how and when He was to be worshipped.

Could the Shabbat have been lost when the two houses were taken away into captivity? It's possible. But when know that the prophets once again restored the Sabbath when Judah returned. We know that Messiah did not "restore" the true day - indicating that they had faithfully maintained the proper 7th day Shabbat. Yahshua wasn't a shy man. If He had a problem with the correct day, or how they were reckoning the Sabbath, He would have no doubt addressed the issue. YHWH never forgot which day was His Shabbat... Just as He has guarded His Word, and His Name... He has also preserved His Sabbath.

28. The Scriptural Shabbat

When we study the issue of Sabbath we quickly come to understand that it is the “sign” between YHWH and His bride (corporate Israel). It is our “wedding ring” if you will. The Sabbath is what set us apart from every man-made religious system in the world. You can worship any “god” on every other day of the week... but the Shabbat is distinct. Resting and worshipping the Creator on His set-apart day, announces to the pagan world “I belong to Yahweh”. Clearly this is not small matter.

But, has Yahweh left us in the lurch regarding such an important part of the covenant we have with Him?

Of course not - His directive is clear, and His commandment is unambiguous. Remember that YHWH is not the author of confusion (1st Corinth 14:33)... Man is.

This is why it is so important to base all doctrine on the scripture – specifically the Torah. So, what exactly does the Torah tell us?

First, we are told at creation that Yahweh sanctified and made “kadosh” the 7th day:

“And on the seventh day Elohim ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made” B’reshit (Genesis) 2:2

What is missing from this statement? How about any mention of the moon. Which interestingly enough was not created on the 7th day but on the 4th day (Gen 1:14-19). Wouldn’t it make more sense that if Yahweh desired us to keep Shabbat based on the moon, He would have linked the Sabbath to the new moon, right here at creation – when the Sabbath day was designated as the 7th day? This must have slipped the mind of the All Mighty.

Something else to consider:

And Elohim said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years B’reshit 1:14

Again we see that Yahweh forgot to mention something here. According to the lunar Sabbath doctrine this verse *SHOULD* read:

“And Elohim said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, for Sabbaths, and years

Unfortunately, Yahweh again neglected to include such wording.

Much later when Yahweh chose a people for Himself, He established a covenant and gave Moses detailed instructions on how and when He is to be worshipped. One of the primary issues at hand was the restoration of His set-apart day - The Sabbath.

It was important enough to include in “Big Ten”. Let’s see what Yahweh had to say to Moses regarding this very important issue:

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of YHWH thy Elohim: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days YHWH made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore YHWH blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.
Exodus 20:8-11

What? That’s it? No mention of the moon again?? Once again it seems that the Creator of the Universe has dropped the ball here, and forgotten to explain to Moses that the Shabbat is connected to the moons. Sheesh!

Or perhaps (and I am just guessing here) He figured these instructions were all that were necessary to establish the shavua (week) and the Shabbat. Six days of work as there were six days of creation. The seventh day is the Shabbat in which we will rest, just as He rested from His work on this day. No moon necessary.

I should once again make the point that YHWH is not the author of confusion. If He doesn’t mention that the moon is somehow connected to the Shabbat, I think it’s very dangerous to add such a designation. I believe Yahweh specifically warns us about doing such things... as a matter of fact, He says it not once but twice - just in case we were not paying attention the first time:

Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of YHWH your Elohim which I command you. Deuteronomy 4:2

What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: **thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.** Deuteronomy 12:32

I believe that we are witnessing the restoration that was promised in these last days. It is so exciting to see (former) gentiles following Mashiyach and embracing the Torah (covenant) that was given to Israel - and all those who are grafted in through the Messiah of Israel.

But I believe that with this restoration comes the adversary who is desperately trying to thwart the plan of the All Mighty. The days of h’shatan are numbered, but if he can stave off the restoration through confusion, perhaps he can prolong his time – or so he thinks. Or perhaps he believes he can cause those who love Yahweh to turn from Him because they feel they cannot trust the clear instructions that YHWH gave to us. Of course this is speculation on my part.

But what I know is that these new winds of doctrine are designed to confuse the bride, and sadly many of those who don’t know what His Word says are taking the bait.

The Lunar Sabbath, equinox reckoning of the new year, dark (conjunction) new moon doctrine are all unscriptural and confusing. Not at all Yahweh ordained.

- We are told to keep the 7th day Sabbath (Gen 1: 14, 2:2, Exodus 20:8-11)
- We are told to reckon the beginning of months by the Aviv barley (Exodus 13:4, 12:2)
- We are told to begin the month according to the sighting of the new moon on the testimony of two witnesses. The dark moon can last several days, and two witnesses would not report seeing “nothing” in the sky. They must sight the new moon in order to report about it (contact me for an in-depth study on the New Moon sighting and historical proof that Israel always reckoned the month by sighting the first sliver).

In order to keep the “lunar Sabbath” one must constantly calculate and accommodate for the fact that the lunar Sabbath does not work with a 29.5306 day month. I ask, is this something a simple shepherd or farmer can do?

In order to recon the new year according the spring equinox (something that can be empirically show to have been invented in Babylon) the simple farmer or shepherd must either have had a watch, or time to sit around and measure the length of the days. Having measured the day at which he experienced equal day and night... he would not know it was the equinox until the next day... when the day was slightly longer than the previous one. He has now missed Rosh Hashanah. While there have been civilizations that used the Sun as a time clock, the ability to measure such minute changes that would demonstrate that a day was seconds longer (or shorter) than the next would require a modern clock which would not be invented until the 14th century. This would also require that the farmer or shepherd ignore his daily work duties in order to measure the days. Not only does this reckoning make little sense... but more importantly... this reckoning it NEVER given to us by YHWH. This reckoning takes YHWH out of the equation – this is dangerous. YHWH alone delivers the rain, and YHWH alone determines when His barely with reach aviv.

Lastly, the dark moon calculations are also extremely complex, that not until Isaac Newton was mankind able to completely understand the conjunctions. The dark moon can last up to several days, and would have been impossible to “witness”. Again I ask, would this science be something the simple farmer or shepherd could understand?

The reason I have asked this question about the simple shepherd or farmer and their ability to understand these three complex calculations is important. Yahweh made it clear that His Torah is not too hard for us (Deut 30:12) – much to the chagrin of the anti-Torah church who says that we cannot keep Torah. Sadly these complicated new (man-made) doctrines are proving the Christian church to be right.

These new doctrines are in direct contradiction to Deuteronomy 30:12 and make YHWH a liar. This isn't good. What I see from this particular passage is that YHWH's Torah can be obeyed by the simplest of peoples.

Obedying His Torah does not require that one have to understand complex math, “extended Sabbaths”, have advanced time keeping devices, get up before the sun and stand around measuring the length of days, or be able to know the precise point at which the unseen moon was “in conjunction”

No, all Yahweh requires is that we can count to seven, that we can inspect the barley, and that we can see the sliver of the New Moon. That’s it. It is beautiful in its simplicity.

This is what His Torah actually says, and all that His Torah says. Anything more that is added is leaven... and Yahweh clearly tells us NOT to do it.

29 . Conclusion

If you have actually read through all of this very tedious study, we congratulate you for your perseverance, as we believe so much of what we have covered only proves what most folks already knew in the first place: Yahweh gave His Sabbath day to the Israelites, and although it has been misused, abused, profaned and even ignored, it has not been misplaced or forgotten.

In light of all of the evidence, and the clear instructions of YHWH on the matter – one would have to be a luna-tic to embrace such a doctrine! Ok, that’s was just a joke... and I will admit a “cheesy” one at that. Get it “cheesy”.. the legend that the moon is made of cheese... Ok, I did it again. I will stop. Just trying to add a bit of comic relief here. I can see you are clearly not in the mood for it.

We have covered some of the elementary clues validating the truth of this assessment, such as the missing record of the alleged "change" from *Lunar Sabbaths* to the modern method of reckoning the Sabbath day, as well as the fact that for the Jews to have forgotten which day is the Sabbath day, they would have had to have all awakened one day and simultaneously forgotten which day it was.

We have probed not only the history of the word "Sabbath," but we have examined the history of Sabbath observance itself, noting that an unbroken chain of testimony exists from the days prior to the birth of Yahshua the Messiah up through the days of the historian Tacitus, Eusebius and beyond, proving that at some point following the resurrection of the Messiah, certain ones decided that believers were supposed to begin meeting on the *first day of the week* (Sunday) as opposed to the seventh day (Saturday) as practiced by the nation of Jews. Missing is any record of the Jews before, during or after the days of Yahshua the Messiah, observing any day other than the Sabbath on the day we know as Saturday.

We have outlined Scriptural evidence, including the fact that Moses would not have erected the Tabernacle on the day of the new moon if it had fallen on a Sabbath day, as such a task was very labor-intensive, as can be observed from the text of Exodus chapter 40.

We have examined the story of the manna, of how Yahweh gave the Israelites the bread of *two days* on the sixth day of the week. That manna was for their use on that sixth day *and* for them to prepare in advance of the Sabbath.

Since *Lunar Sabbaths* require "extended Sabbaths" at the end of each lunar cycle, we should expect to find instructions pertaining to how they were supposed to also prepare for such "extended Sabbath days" in the Torah. Instead, the silence is telling evidence that no such instructions were given because no such "extended Sabbaths" ever existed.

Even the New Testament provides conclusive evidence that the Jews of the Messiah's day worshipped on the day we know as Saturday. On the "last great day" of the Feast of Tabernacles, which always falls on the 22nd of the month, Yahshua stood and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink!" (John 7:37).

The next day (Tishri 23) was the Sabbath day on which He healed a blind man. Since that particular Sabbath day could only have fallen on the 23rd day of the month, and since lunar sabbatarians teach that the Sabbath can only fall on the 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th days of the month, their theology is decidedly shown to be false.

The above is merely a sampling of the compelling evidence that utterly refutes the *Lunar Sabbaths* teaching.

Lunar Sabbaths are certainly "something different." They have appealed to many people, and we believe many others who do not fully investigate this teaching may also choose to embrace their observance, primarily because there is a certain amount of logic employed that will cause many to reject the true weekly cycle as instituted by Yahweh Himself at Creation - unless it is carefully examined and weighed against the measuring stick of Scripture, combined with the evidence of history. That said, I believe *Lunar Sabbaths* will one day be a faded memory, a testimony to a passing fad that didn't attract enough people.

More important than attracting people, however, is whether or not this teaching has the blessing of Yahweh. As I believe we have shown, *Lunar Sabbaths* do not have Yahweh's blessing.

It is by now obvious that we are at great odds with those who promote *Lunar Sabbaths*. However, we want to stress that we are not really at odds with them personally. Instead, we are at odds with their *teaching*. As mentioned early on in this study, we have met some very sincere and respectful individuals who observe *Lunar Sabbaths*. We have no desire to demean either their intelligence or their character in any way. We believe it is possible to disagree sharply with others while simultaneously recognizing them as friends and fellow students of Yahweh's Word. We are encouraged by the love these people have for Yahweh and for their fellow man. Until that day when Yahweh reveals His truths to all mankind, may each of us strive to pursue scholarly inquiry with the respectful sharing of ideas.

30. End Notes

1. Also referred to as "Floating Sabbaths."

2. From "The New Moon and the Weekly Sabbath - *Side-By-Side!*", by John D. Keyser, Hope of Israel Ministries (Church of Jehovah), <http://www.hope-of-israel.org/sideside.htm>, p. 9.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid, p. 31.

5. Source: Booklet entitled *Proof That Weekly Sabbath Days Are Determined by the Moon* by Arnold Bowen, p. 45.

6. From "The Burning Question: Sabbath - When is it?" by Ernie L. Hoch, <http://www.yahwehmusic.com/covenants/burningquestion.htm>, 01/18/2002, p. 10.

7. Ibid.

8. In fact, as revealed by S. Bacchiocchi in *From Sabbath to Sunday*, p. 247, the designation "Saturday" (*dies saturni*) originally denoted the **first** day of the week, not the seventh.

9. From "The Burning Question: Sabbath - When is it?" by Ernie L. Hoch, <http://www.yahwehmusic.com/covenants/burningquestion.htm>, 01/18/2002, p. 13.

10. Source: Article "The Word 'Sabbath' is a Universal Term Found in Ancient and Modern Languages to Designate Saturday" by George A. Main, <http://www.christiancommunitychurch.us/dovenet/satlang.htm>. Although this information was obtained from an internet source, it can be verified through other linguistic sources.

11. Ibid, pp. 4-5.

12. From "The Burning Question: Sabbath - When is it?" by Ernie L. Hoch, <http://www.yahwehmusic.com/covenants/burningquestion.htm>, 01/18/2002, p. 13.

13. Source: "When was Yahshua's resurrection?" by Ernie Hoch, found at the following URL: <http://www.lunarsabbath.com/3rdday.htm>.

14. Source: *Holy Bible From the Ancient Eastern Text*, translated by George M. Lamsa, HarperSanFrancisco.

15. Source: Booklet *The Sign of Jonah*, by Matthew Janzen, Copyright 2002, p. 24.

16.From p. 27 of a letter that Jim sent me in 1987. I prefer to keep his last name anonymous.

17.Ibid, pp. 28-29.

18.Cf. John 11:9.

19.Source: Booklet *The Sign of Jonah*, by Matthew Janzen, Copyright 2002, pp. 15-16.

20.Definition taken from *The Reader's Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary*, The Reader's Digest Corporation, Inc., Pleasantville, New York, 1977.

21.Source: Booklet *The Truth About Matthew 12:40*, by George Dellinger, M.S., Sabbath Research Center, Westfield, Indiana, 1982, p. 20.

22.When we initially authored this study, we had only encountered one lunar sabbatarian who so much as mentioned Philo; however, since that time, we have corresponded with two lunar sabbatarians who both believe Philo actually taught in favor of the *Lunar Sabbath* doctrine. We answer their claims elsewhere in this study.

23.Source: *The Works of Philo*, translated by C. D. Yonge, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, Foreward (by David M. Scholer), p. xii.

24.From *The Sabbath*, by Dayan Dr. I. Grunfeld, fourth edition, Feldheim Publishers, Spring Valley, NY, 1988, p. 22.

25.Cf., *The Works of Philo*, translated by C. D. Yonge, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, "The Special Laws, II," XXVI, p. 581. Philo devotes an entire column to the "festival of the new moon" here, yet not once does he mention a connection to the observance of the Sabbath, nor does he mention that the day of the new moon is to be observed as a day of abstention from work.

26.Ibid, from "The Decalogue," XX, p. 526. See also "The Special Laws, II," XV, p. 574.

27.Ibid, from "On the Creation," XLIII, sect. 128, p. 18.

28. Identifying the 29th day of the "moonth" as the fourth (lunar) Sabbath is an obvious error on the part of the author, as in the previous paragraph of his article he had already explained that "Day one of a brand new lunar cycle is the New Moon Sabbath day." If day one is the first Lunar Sabbath day, this makes day eight the *second* Lunar Sabbath day, day fifteen the *third* Lunar Sabbath day, day 22 the *fourth* Lunar Sabbath day and day 29 the ***fifth Lunar Sabbath day***, as opposed to the fourth one mentioned by author Ernie L. Hoch.

29.Source: "The Burning Question: Sabbath - When is it?" by Ernie L. Hoch,<http://www.yahwehmusic.com/covenants/burningquestion.htm>, 01/18/2002, p. 13.

30.Source: Eliyah's Forums web site, thread entitled "Sighting the moon vs. conjunction," posted 01/31/03 by Yacov Seedeater (<http://www.eliyah.com/forum2/Forum10/HTML/000334-3.html>).

31.Ibid.

32.Source: Booklet entitled *Proof That Weekly Sabbath Days Are Determined by the Moon*, by Arnold Bowen, p. 50.

33.Source: *Antiquities of the Jews*, written by Flavious Josephus, Book III, chapter X, section 6. *Works of Flavius Josephus*, Vol. II, translated by William Whiston, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1992, p. 218.

34.Source: *The Works of Philo*, translated by C. D. Yonge, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, "The Special Laws, II", XXX (176), pp. 584-585.

35.Source: *Book of Jubilees* 6:15-16.

36.Ibid, verse one.

37.Ibid, chapter 44:1-3.

38.Source: Booklet entitled *Proof That Weekly Sabbath Days Are Determined by the Moon*, by Arnold Bowen, pp. 27-28.

39.It appears the author of the commentary cited here (Arnold Bowen) is making reference to Josephus' *The Antiquities of the Jews*, Book XIV, chapter iv, section 3. However, nowhere in that account is the 23rd day of the month mentioned, except in a footnote by the translator, in which he alludes to the possibility that Josephus' reference to "the day of the fast" coincided with the twenty-third of Sivan: "That is on the twenty-third of Sivan, the annual fast for the defection and idolatry of Jeroboam, 'who made Israel to sin.'" The translator then proceeds to admit that this could possibly be a reference to "some other fast [that] might fall into that month, before and in the days of Josephus." This note is found on page 287 of *The Works of Flavius Josephus*, Vol. III, translated by William Whiston, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1992 edition.

40.Ibid, page 43.

41.Cf., *Sabbath: The Day of Delight* by Abraham E. Millgram, The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, PA, 1947, p. 38: "It was a common belief among the ancient Romans that the Jews fasted on the Sabbath, because no smoke was seen from their houses on that day."

42. For additional references in Josephus pertaining to the Jews' only fighting defensively on the Sabbath day, see *Wars of the Jews*, Book II, Ch. 19, sect. 2, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book XII, Ch. 6, sect. 2, Book XIII, Ch. 1, sect. 3, Book XIV, Ch. 4, sect. 2, and *The Life of Flavius Josephus*, Sect. 32.

43. *Ab* is the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar, answering to July/August of the Roman calendar.

44. Cf., *The Wars of the Jews*, Book II, Ch. 17, sect. 7.

45. *Marchesvan* is the eighth month of the Hebrew calendar.

46. Source: *Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History*, Translated by C. F. Cruse, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, 2000, p. 14.

47. Ibid, p. 93.

48. Source: *Encyclopedia International*, Vol. 6, Grolier, Incorporated, New York, 1972, p. 11.

49. Source: Booklet entitled *Proof That Weekly Sabbath Days Are Determined by the Moon*, by Arnold Bowen, p. 6.

50. From *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City, MO, 1985 edition, originally published in 1810, p. 920).

51. Merrill C. Tenney is (or was) a professor of Bible and Theology at Wheaton College.

52. From *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 9, Frank E. Gæbelein, General Editor, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1981, p. 86.

53. Source: "Have We Been Observing the Sabbath At the *Wrong Time* All These Years?" by John D. Keyser, Hope of Israel Ministries (Church of God), <http://www.hope-of-israel.org/sabfloat.htm>, p. 20.

54. Source: *Mercer Dictionary of the Bible*, Watson E. Mills, Gen. Editor, Mercer University Press, Macon, Georgia, 1997, p. 779.

55. Source: *New Bible Dictionary*, 2nd ed., J. D. Douglas, Organizing Editor, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, IL, 1982, p.793.

56. With the exception of the seventh day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost and the Day of Atonement.

57. From an audio taped sermon delivered by Matthew Janzen on 06/08/03.

58.Ibid.

59.From *The Interlinear Bible*, Jay P. Green, Sr., General Editor and Translator, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, 1986, p. 540.

60.Source: *The Works of Philo*, translated by C. D. Yonge, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, Foreword (by David M. Scholer), "On the Life of Moses, I" p. 478.

61.Source: Audio taped sermon delivered by Matthew Janzen on 06/08/03.

62.Ibid.

63.From the article "From Sabbath to Saturday: The Story of the Jewish Rest Day," by John D. Keyser, Hope of Israel Ministries (Church of Yehovah), <http://www.hope-of-israel.org/sideside.htm> page 19. Note: In this particular instance, Keyser was quoting another lunar sabbatarian, Jonathan Brown, from his book *Keeping Yahweh's Appointments* (p. 58).

64.Source: Booklet entitled "Proof That Weekly Sabbath Days Are Determined by the Moon" by Arnold Bowen, p. 20.

65.Cf., Matthew 12:5.

66.Source: E-mail received from Matthew Janzen on 06/10/03.

67.Cf., Leviticus 23:24-25 and Numbers 29:1.

68.Cf., Exodus 16:1.

69.Source: E-mail received from Matthew Janzen on 06/10/03.

70.Source: *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. 5, Edited by Isaac Landman, The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, Inc., New York, 1941, article "Holidays," p. 410.

71.Source: *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. 9, Edited by Isaac Landman, The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, Inc., New York, 1943, article "Sabbath," p. 295.

72.From *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 5, David Noel Freedman, Editor-In-Chief, Doubleday, New York, 1992, page 850.

73.The Akkadians were predecessors to the Babylonians in Mesopotamia.

74.Source: *Encyclopedia International*, Vol.16, Grolier, Incorporated, New York, 1972, article "Sabbath," p. 70.

75.From "The Burning Question: Sabbath - When is it?" by Ernie L. Hoch,<http://www.yahwehmusic.com/covenants/burningquestion.htm>, 01/18/2002, p. 10.

76.Source: Booklet entitled *Proof That Weekly Sabbath Days Are Determined by the Moon*, by Arnold Bowen, p. 9.

77.Ibid, p. 31.

78.Source: *The New Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. 15, 15th edition, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., Chicago, IL.

79.From a presentation delivered by Matthew Janzen on June 8, 2003. Janzen was kind enough to mail us a recording of the presentation.

80.Source: *The Seven-Day Circle* by Eviatar Zerubavel, originally published in 1985 by Free Press and Collier Macmillan, p. 6.

81.Ibid, p. 7.

82.Ibid, p. 9.

83.From the article "From Sabbath to Saturday: The Story of the Jewish Rest Day," by John D. Keyser, Hope of Israel Ministries (Church of Yehovah), <http://www.hope-of-israel.org/sideside.htm> pp. 20-21.

84.Source: Web article entitled "Dead Sea Scrolls Calendar," translation and transcription by S. Talmon and I. Knohl, *The Qumran Library*. Article can be accessed at <http://users.erols.com/bcccsbs/dsscal.htm>.

85.Translation of the word "duqah" is apparently the subject of controversy. The translation displayed by Keyser renders "duqah" as "first crescent," or as other scholars translate it, "new moon." However, many other scholars are of the opinion that "duqah" can only refer to the full moon. For more information, we refer you to the web article entitled "Dead Sea Scrolls May Solve Mystery," by John C. Lefgren and John P. Pratt, reprinted from *Meridian Magazine*, 12 Mar 2003 (<http://www.johnpratt.com/items/docs/lds/meridian/2003/qumran.html>).

86.From *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, Frank E. Gæbelein, General Editor, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1986, p. 435.

87.From *Rest Days: A Study in Early Law and Morality* by Hutton Webster, PH.D., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1916, p. 269.

88.Ibid.

89.Acts 13:14, 42; Acts 17:2; Acts 18:4; Acts 25:8; Acts 26:19-20

90. That "Sabbath observance" is a reference to the weekly (Saturday) Sabbath is evident from Hutton Webster's commentary on page 267: "Friday and Saturday continued to have the designation *paraskenh`* and *sa)bbaton* [*sabbaton*], respectively, but Sunday, which by Jewish custom was called 'the first day' after the Sabbath, eventually received the designation *h(kuriakh\ h(ue/ra* (*dies dominica*), the Lord's Day."

91. Excerpt from "From Sabbath to Saturday: The Story of the Jewish Rest Day" by John D. Keyser, <http://www.hope-of-israel.org/sabtosat.htm>, p. 28. Note: Keyser was quoting page 255 of Hutton Webster's book.

92. From *Rest Days: A Study in Early Law and Morality* by Hutton Webster, PH.D., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1916, p. 253-254.

93. Ibid, p. 253.

94. We again refer the reader to the quote cited by John D. Keyser, as taken from p. 255 of Webster's book: "The establishment of a periodic week ending in a Sabbath observed every seventh day was doubtless responsible for the gradual obsolescence of the new-moon festival as a period of general abstinence, since with continuous weeks the new-moon day and the Sabbath Day would from time to time coincide."

95. From "The New Moon and the Weekly Sabbath - *Side-By-Side!*" by John D. Keyser, <http://www.hope-of-israel.org/sideside.htm>, p. 4.

96. From "The Burning Question: Sabbath - When is it?" by Ernie L. Hoch, 1/18/2002, <http://www.yahwehmusic.com/covenants/burningquestion.htm>, p. 5.

97. From *Rest Days: A Study in Early Law and Morality* by Hutton Webster, PH.D., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1916, pp. 240-241.

98. From *Rest Days: A Study in Early Law and Morality* by Hutton Webster, PH.D., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1916, p. 226.

99. The phrase "Observe the month of Abib" can also be translated "Watch for the new moon of Abib." The Hebrew word *shamar* is certainly better translated "watch" in such places as I Samuel 19:11 and the word *chodesh* can also be translated "new moon."

100. Source: *The Works of Philo*, translated by C. D. Yonge, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, Foreword (by David M. Scholer), "The Special Laws, II" p. 581. Philo writes, "For at the time of the new moon, the sun begins to illuminate the moon with a light which is visible to the outward senses, and then she displays her own beauty to the beholders."

101. From *Rest Days: A Study in Early Law and Morality* by Hutton Webster, PH.D., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1916, p. 243.

102.Ibid, pp. 244-45.

103.Excerpt from "From Sabbath to Saturday: The Story of the Jewish Rest Day" by John D. Keyser, <http://www.hope-of-israel.org/sabtosat.htm>, pp. 27-28.

104.Cf. "The Burning Question: Sabbath - When is it?" by Ernie L. Hoch, 1/18/2002, <http://www.yahwehmusic.com/covenants/burningquestion.htm>, pp. 2, 10.

105.From a presentation delivered by Matthew Janzen on June 8, 2003. Janzen was kind enough to mail us a recording of the presentation.

106.From *The Interlinear Bible*, Jay P. Green, Sr., General Editor and Translator, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, 1986, p. 258.

107.From *Commentary on the Old Testament*, by C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, Vol. 2, originally published by T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1866-91, reprinted by Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, 2001, pp. 503-504.

108.Ibid, p. 507.