

MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

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A Study for Judaism • Christianity • Islam

DOCUMENT 240

THIS MONTH IS FOR YOU

A Covenant Deep Dive into Setting the Feasts of Yahweh by the New Moon (רִאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ, Rosh Chodesh)

Who Sets the Month, How Is It Counted, and How Does a Covenant Household Keep the Appointed Times Today? — A Three-Religion Covenant Response

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REACHING JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM

☆ JUDAISM	† CHRISTIANITY	☪ ISLAM
Judaism has kept the month-count without break: a new month begins with the New Moon, months run 29 or 30 days, and a leap month keeps Passover in the spring. Where a court once sanctified each month on the testimony of witnesses, the covenant community now keeps a fixed calculated calendar (Mishnah Rosh Hashanah 1:3; 2:8-9). The written text already speaks of the New Moon as an appointed day (Numbers 28:11-15).	Christianity kept the seven-day week but severed the month from the appointed times. The Council of Nicaea fixed Easter by its own reckoning, apart from the Jewish calendar (Eusebius, Life of Constantine 3.18–19), and Colossians 2:16 is often read as setting the New Moon aside. Yet the Written Tanakh sees New Moons kept in the age to come (Isaiah 66:23).	Islam keeps a pure lunar year sighted by the crescent and completed at thirty days when the sky is covered (Sahih al-Bukhari 1909). The Qur'an calls the new moons "measures of time" (Q. 2:189) and forbids postponing a month (Q. 9:37), so its months travel through every season. Tanakh and Q. agree that the moon marks time; they differ on whether the year is bound to the seasons.

DOCTRINAL AUTHORITY — STANDING RULE OF MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

The sole binding authority of Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution is the ***Tanakh*** — the written covenant of **Yahweh**. No Talmudic tractate, Church council decree, papal encyclical, hadith collection, or extra-biblical tradition carries doctrinal weight equal to or greater than the written Torah. Where any tradition conflicts with the written covenant, the written covenant governs without exception. The Talmud, New Testament, and Qur'an are cited as historical reference and comparative witness — never as superseding authority. Miqdash Bethel uses the Written Tanakh as its sole source for four reasons: it is the only text Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all recognize as originally given by **Yahweh**; it predates and underlies the Talmud, New Testament, and Qur'an, so testing those traditions against it follows the evidentiary direction of **Deuteronomy (Devarim) 19:15** — the earlier witness governs the later commentary; every later tradition that departs from the Tanakh does so by addition or reinterpretation, never by overturning the text itself, so the text remains the fixed standard; and **Yahweh's** own words declare the covenant unchanging (Malachi 3:6; Psalms (Tehillim) 119:89), making the written covenant — not evolving institutional interpretation — the only stable ground for doctrine. All three great covenant traditions — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — are addressed simultaneously and equally in every Miqdash Bethel document, because **Yahweh's** covenant belongs to every nation that will receive it. The **Deuteronomy (Devarim) 19:15** two-or-three-witness evidentiary standard governs all textual claims in this document.

HOW TO READ THIS DOCUMENT

This document applies the sole authority of the written ***Tanakh*** to three questions: what the written covenant says about the New Moon and the appointed times, who sets the month and how it is counted, and how a covenant household keeps the appointed times today. **Yahweh (יהוה)** and **Elohim (אלהים)** appear in bold throughout. English book names are given first, with the Hebrew in parentheses. Hebrew transliterations appear in ***bold italic*** with English meaning in parentheses at every occurrence. Scripture references are bold. Verse numbers follow the English version; where the Hebrew numbering differs, it is given in brackets on first citation. Scripture is rendered in a literal working translation from the Hebrew. Three audiences are addressed simultaneously: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Rabbinic commentary, New Testament texts, the Qur'an, and modern scholarship are cited as historical and comparative reference — not as binding authority. The astronomical figures in Section IX are our own calculation and are labeled as such. The Written Tanakh governs all conclusions.

TANAKH BOOKS CITED IN THIS DOCUMENT

DIVISION	BOOKS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
Torah	Genesis (Bereishit), Exodus (Shemot), Leviticus (Vayikra), Numbers (Bemidbar), Deuteronomy (Devarim)	The command, the appointed times, and the offerings of the New Moon
Nevi'im (Prophets)	Samuel (Shemuel), Kings (Melakhim), Isaiah (Yeshayahu), Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu), Ezekiel (Yechezkel), Hosea (Hoshea), Amos, Malachi	How the New Moon was kept, and what the prophets say of it
Ketuvim (Writings)	Psalms (Tehillim), Proverbs (Mishlei), Job (Iyov), Esther (Ester), Ezra, Nehemiah (Nechemyah), Chronicles (Divrei HaYamim)	The moon as appointed clock; the restored order after exile

COMPARATIVE TEXTS CITED — HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE REFERENCE ONLY

CATEGORY	TEXTS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
New Testament	Colossians 2:16	How Christianity reads the New Moon
Qur'an	Q. 2:189; 9:36-37; 10:5	The lunar month in the Islamic witness
Hadith	Sahih al-Bukhari 1909	Sighting and the thirty-day completion
Rabbinic literature	Mishnah Rosh Hashanah 1:3-4; 2:2, 6-8; 3:1; 4:4; Talmud Rosh Hashanah 8a; Talmud Sanhedrin 11b; Maimonides, Laws of the Sanctification of the New Moon (Kiddush HaChodesh) 1, 3	The rabbinic account of witnesses, courts, and intercalation, tested against the written text
History and scholarship	Eusebius, Life of Constantine 3.18–19; Sacha Stern, Calendar and Community (2001); Dickman, Hakirah 8	The Nicene decision and the dating of the fixed calendar

CATEGORY	TEXTS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
Modern sighted-moon groups	Yahweh’s Restoration Ministry publications; Assembly of Yahweh/Assemblies of Yahweh literature; House of Yahweh (Eula/Abilene, TX)	Where present-day Sacred Name congregations agree and disagree with each other and with this document’s findings (Section XI)

I. THE COMMAND — “THIS MONTH SHALL BE FOR YOU”

I-A. Method and Numbering

Scripture is rendered in working translation from the Masoretic Hebrew and set in bold. Lexical data drawn on BDB, HALOT, Gesenius and TWOT, with Strong’s numbers in plain text. Every claim is tested against the **Deuteronomy (Devarim) 19:15** standard, and where fewer than two or three texts stand behind a claim, this document says so. Rabbinic sources, the Qur’an and modern scholarship appear only as comparative witnesses, and are labeled each time. This document builds on Doc 234 (the Feast of Trumpets) and Doc 239 (the Day of Atonement); both fall on the day this study is about.

I-B. The Three Questions

Every appointed time of **Yahweh** is dated by a month and a day. The month begins with the New Moon. So a household that wants to keep the feasts must first know when the month begins, and that raises three questions. **First:** what does the written covenant say about the New Moon and the months? **Second:** who sets the beginning of the month, and how was it counted? **Third:** where no court sits and no altar stands, how does a covenant household keep the appointed times faithfully, without adding to the text and without taking an office it was not given? This document answers from the text, and says plainly where the text is silent.

I-C. Five Witnesses That the Month Is the Covenant’s Clock

Witness One — Exodus (Shemot) 12:1-2: the first command given to a nation. “And Yahweh spoke to Mosheh and Aharon in the land of Egypt, saying: This month shall be for you the head of months; it shall be for you the first of the months of the year.” Before the Torah is given at Sinai, before the tabernacle, before the priesthood, **Yahweh** gives Yisra’el a calendar. The word for “month” here is *chodesh* (חֹדֶשׁ, new moon / month) H2320, and the command is addressed in the plural to **Mosheh** and **Aharon**, with “for you” (*lakhem* (לָכֶם, for you)) said twice.

Witness Two — Genesis (Bereishit) 1:14: the lights are made for timekeeping. “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night; and let them be for

signs (*otot*), and for appointed times (*moadim*), and for days and years.” The word *moadim* (מוֹעֲדִים, appointed times) H4150 is the same word used for the feasts of Yahweh in **Leviticus 23:2**. The heavenly lights were made on the fourth day for the very purpose the feasts would later use.

Witness Three — Psalms (Tehillim) 104:19: the moon has an assigned task. “He made the moon for appointed times (*moadim*); the sun knows its going down.” Jeremiah (Yirmeyahu) **31:35-36** adds that Yahweh gave the sun for light by day and the ordinances (*chukkot* (חֻקִּים, statutes)) of the moon and stars for light by night, and swears that Yisra’el will cease to be a nation only if those ordinances fail. The moon’s order is a covenant matter.

Witness Four — Leviticus (Vayikra) 23: every feast is dated by month and day. The Passover is on the fourteenth of the first month (**Leviticus 23:5**); Unleavened Bread on the fifteenth (**23:6**); the Feast of Trumpets on the first of the seventh (**23:24**); the Day of Atonement on the tenth (**23:27**); Tabernacles on the fifteenth (**23:34**). The Feast of Weeks is dated by a count of weeks from the first-fruits sheaf (**23:15-16**). Not one of these can be found on a calendar until the beginning of the month is known.

Witness Five — Numbers (Bemidbar) 28:11-15 with 10:10: the month itself carries offerings. “And at the beginning of your months you shall offer a burnt offering to Yahweh: two young bulls, and one ram, seven lambs a year old without blemish”, with a male goat as a sin offering (**28:11, 15**). And **“on the day of your gladness, and on your appointed times, and at the beginnings of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings” (10:10).** The New Moon is named beside the appointed times, and has its own offering.

Five texts across five books meet the standard. The written covenant treats the moon as the clock of the appointed times, and treats each new month as a day worth marking.

I-D. The Words: Chodesh, Rosh, Yerach, Moed, Shamor, Aviv

WORD	HEBREW	STRONG’S	MEANING AND USE	KEY TEXT
<i>chodesh</i>	חֹדֶשׁ	H2320	New moon, then month; from the root <i>chadash</i> (חָדַשׁ, new) H2319. The month is named for its renewal.	Exodus 12:2; Numbers 28:11

WORD	HEBREW	STRONG'S	MEANING AND USE	KEY TEXT
<i>rosh</i>	ראש	H7218	Head, beginning. “The head of months” is the first month, and “the head of your months” (<i>roshei chodsheichem</i>) is New Moon Day.	Exodus 12:2; Numbers 10:10
<i>yerach</i>	יָרַח	H3391	Month; the older word, from the root for the moon, <i>yareach</i> (יָרַח, moon) H3394. Used of a full month of days.	1 Kings 6:37-38; Deuteronomy 21:13
<i>moed</i>	מוֹעֵד	H4150	Appointed time; from <i>yaad</i> (to appoint, meet). Used of the feasts and of the moon’s function.	Genesis 1:14; Leviticus 23:2
<i>shamor</i>	שָׁמַר	H8104	To keep, guard, watch over. The same verb commands the Sabbath day (Deuteronomy 5:12) and the month of Aviv (Deuteronomy 16:1).	Deuteronomy 16:1
<i>aviv</i>	אַבִּיב	H24	Barley in the ear, the green ear. It names the month in which the barley reaches that stage.	Exodus 9:31; 13:4

Two words for “month” are worth noticing. *Yerach* is the older term and appears in the Solomonic-era names of months (**1 Kings 6:37-38; 8:2**). *Chodesh* is the word the Torah uses for a month and for the New Moon that opens it, and the two meanings never separate: the month is the New Moon’s renewal.

The verb *shamor* needs care. **Deuteronomy 16:1** says “**Keep (*shamor*) the month of Aviv and observe the Passover to Yahweh your Elohim, for in the month of Aviv Yahweh your Elohim brought you out of Egypt by night.**” The verb spans guarding, keeping, and watching. The text does not by itself say whether the thing watched is the crescent, the barley, or the arrival of the season; the object it names is “the month of Aviv,” and the sign it gives is the barley (**Exodus 9:31**, where the barley is *aviv* and the wheat is still late). This document will not make the verb say more than it says.

II. THE MOON AS THE APPOINTED CLOCK

II-A. Signs, Seasons, and a Faithful Witness

Genesis 1:14 names three functions for the lights: *otot* (אֹתוֹת, **signs**) H226, *moadim*, and days and years. A sign is something seen. **Psalms 89:37** [Hebrew 89:38] says of the throne of **David** that it shall be established “**like the moon, forever, and a faithful witness (*ed*) in the sky.**” The word *ed* (עֵד, **witness**) H5707 is the word of **Deuteronomy 19:15**. Commentators divide on whether the sky-witness is the moon or the rainbow, so this document does not lean on it, but it is a striking fact that the moon is spoken of in the language of testimony.

II-B. A Clock, Not a God

The nations around Yisra’el worshipped the moon, and the Torah is emphatic that it is a creature. **Deuteronomy 4:19** warns against lifting the eyes to sun, moon and stars and being drawn to worship them; **Deuteronomy 17:3** makes it a capital matter; **Job (Iyov) 31:26-28** calls the kissing of the hand to the moon a denial of **Elohim** above; and **2 Kings (Melakhim Bet) 23:5** records Yoshiyahu removing those who burned incense to the moon. The New Moon is therefore not a moon festival. It is **Yahweh’s** day, and the moon is only the sign that announces it.

II-C. How a Day and a Month Are Counted

The day begins at evening: “**And there was evening and there was morning, one day**” (**Genesis 1:5**), and the covenant keeps its rest days “from evening to evening” (**Leviticus 23:32**). The month begins with the New Moon, and every date in the calendar is counted from that day. The day-count and the month-count are separate clocks. Section VI returns to how they relate to the weekly Sabbath.

II-D. How Long Is a Month?

The Torah never states the length of a month, but it shows it in arithmetic. In the flood narrative the waters rise on the seventeenth day of the second month (**Genesis 7:11**), prevail one hundred and fifty days (**7:24; 8:3**), and the ark rests on the seventeenth day of the seventh month (**8:4**). From the seventeenth of month two to the seventeenth of month seven is five months, and five months of thirty days is one hundred and fifty. The passage is consistent with thirty-day months, and the tenth month begins on a stated first day (**8:5**). That is an arithmetical inference from one narrative rather than a stated rule, so it is one witness to the count and not the whole case. The astronomical month averages about 29.5 days, so months in practice run 29 or 30 days, which is exactly what Maimonides and the Mishnah describe (Section V).

III. NEW MOON DAY IN THE TEXT

III-A. What the Tanakh Shows Was Done

TEXT	WHAT IT SHOWS
Numbers 28:11-15	The New Moon burnt offering and sin offering, on top of the daily offering. No prohibition of work is attached, unlike the feast days that follow (28:18, 25).
Numbers 10:10	The silver trumpets are blown over the offerings at the beginning of the month.
1 Samuel (Shemuel Alef) 20:5, 18, 24, 29	The New Moon is a known, publicly anticipated day. The king sits down to eat; David 's family holds a yearly sacrifice; Yonatan says "tomorrow is the new moon."
1 Samuel 20:27	The meal continues "on the morrow, the second day of the month," which is consistent with a two-day observance.
2 Kings 4:23	The Shunammite is asked why she is going to the prophet: "It is neither new moon nor Sabbath." The two are named as different days on which one visits a man of Elohim .
Amos 8:5	Merchants ask when the New Moon and the Sabbath will be over so they can sell. Trade paused on both by custom, and the prophet condemns the greed and not the pause.
Isaiah 1:13-14	New moon, Sabbath, and convocation are named together; Yahweh rejects them when they are joined to injustice.
Hosea (Hoshea) 2:11 [Hebrew 2:13]	"Her feasts, her new moons, her Sabbaths, and all her appointed times": all three are listed as things that will cease in judgment.
Ezra 3:5; Nehemiah 10:33 [Hebrew 10:34]; 1 Chronicles 23:31; 2 Chronicles 2:4	After the exile and in the Chronicler's history, the offerings of the Sabbaths, the new moons and the appointed times are one list.
Ezekiel (Yechezkel) 46:1, 3	In the vision of the restored sanctuary the inner east gate is shut on the six working days and opened on the Sabbath and on the day of the new moon.
Isaiah (Yeshayahu) 66:23	"From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before Me."

III-B. What This Shows

Four things stand on more than two witnesses. **First**, New Moon Day was a real, kept day, marked by offerings, trumpets, a family meal, and a pause in trade. **Second**, it was a different day from the weekly Sabbath: **2 Kings 4:23, Amos 8:5, Isaiah 1:13, Hosea 2:11, Ezekiel 46:1 and Isaiah 66:23** all name the two side by side. **Third**, the written law commands offerings and trumpets on it but does not forbid work on it (**Numbers 28:11-15**); the rest of the day was custom and the pause was general, not commanded. **Fourth**, it belongs to the restored order and is not a shadow of the past (**Isaiah 66:23; Ezekiel 46:1-3**).

Christianity's usual text against this is **Colossians 2:16**, which lists a festival, a new moon, and a Sabbath. It is a New Testament text and cited here only as comparative reference; the Written Tanakh, which has the earlier witness, describes New Moons kept in the age to come.

III-C. The One New Moon That Is a Rest Day

There is exactly one New Moon that the written covenant commands as a rest day: **“In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a Sabbath rest (*shabbaton*), a memorial of blowing (*zikhron teruah*), a holy convocation” (Leviticus 23:24; Numbers 29:1).**

Shabbaton (שַׁבָּתוֹן, a day of complete rest) H7677 makes it a rest day, but it is not the weekly Sabbath and does not reset the week. It is treated in Doc 234. This is why the seventh month is the month a covenant household most needs to know exactly.

IV. WHO SETS THE MONTH?

IV-A. Six Witnesses to an Appointed Authority

Witness One — Exodus 12:1-2. The command that begins the calendar is spoken to **Mosheh** and **Aharon**, the appointed leaders, and given “for you,” the community they lead. The month is received from **Yahweh** through the leadership, and is not decided by each household.

Witness Two — Leviticus 23:2, 4, 37. “The appointed times of Yahweh, which you shall proclaim (*tikre’u*) as holy convocations, these are My appointed times.” The verb *qara* (קָרָא, to call, proclaim) H7121 is plural, and it is addressed to the people’s representatives. The feasts are **Yahweh’s**, but the calling of them is entrusted to those He appointed to call them. Maimonides reads it the same way (Laws of the Sanctification of the New Moon, chapter 1), and that is comparative support, not the ground of the claim.

Witness Three — Deuteronomy 17:8-13. Where a matter is too hard for the local judges, one goes up to the place **Yahweh** chooses, to the priests and the judge, and does “**according to the instruction**

they teach you” without turning aside “to the right or to the left” (17:11). **Exodus 18:13-26** and **Numbers 11:16-17** show the pattern of appointed judges and elders beneath **Mosheh**, and **2 Chronicles (Divrei HaYamim Bet) 19:8-11** shows Yehoshafat setting up such a court in Yerushalayim, with a chief priest over “every matter of **Yahweh**.” **Malachi 2:7** says the lips of the priest guard knowledge and the people seek instruction from his mouth.

Witness Four — 2 Chronicles 30:2-3, 23. King **Hizkiyahu**, his officials, and the whole assembly in Yerushalayim “**took counsel**” to keep the Passover in the second month, because the priests had not been sanctified in time. The written provision for a second-month Passover (**Numbers 9:6-11**) is honored, and the decision is made by the king and assembly together, publicly. The calendar question is settled by counsel and not by private preference.

Witness Five — 1 Kings (Melakhim Alef) 12:32-33. Yarov’am appointed a feast in the eighth month on the fifteenth day, like the feast in Yehudah, “**in the month which he had devised of his own heart.**” The text counts this as sin. A month or a feast moved by one man’s decision, against the appointed order, is what prophetic history condemns.

Witness Six — Exodus 12:6, 18; Leviticus 23:5. The dates of the first month’s feasts are fixed to numbered days of the month, so the community keeps one Passover on one day. A calendar that lets every household decide its own month cannot produce a single Passover, and Passover is the feast the text says must be kept together (**Deuteronomy 16:5-6**).

Verdict: corroborated. The written text stands, on several texts, for an appointed leadership that calls the times, and against self-appointed changes. What the text does not do is describe the machinery.

IV-B. What the Written Text Does Not Say

The Tanakh does not describe witnesses coming to a court, a court sending messengers, or a court sanctifying the New Moon by a formula. That machinery is described by the rabbinic tradition: the Mishnah lists the months for which messengers went out (Rosh Hashanah 1:3), records that fire signals were replaced by messengers because of Samaritan mischief (2:2), and tells how Rabban Gamliel ordered Rabbi **Yehoshua** to appear with his staff and purse on the day **Yehoshua**’s own reckoning made the Day of Atonement, because the court’s decision bound the whole community (2:8-9). That is testimony about how the court worked, and it is valuable as history. It is not a text of the covenant, and this document does not count it as one of the two or three witnesses.

IV-C. The Sabbath Is a Different Kind of Day

The weekly Sabbath is not set by a court. “**Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to Yahweh your Elohim**” (Exodus 20:9-10), and every man and household counts it for itself, wherever they live, from the first week of creation (**Genesis 2:2-3**).

Exodus 16:22-30 shows Yisra’el keeping it before Sinai, with no court and no calendar. The month and the Sabbath are therefore counted by different clocks and by different authorities. Section VI takes up what happens when the two are confused.

V. CALCULATION, THEN OBSERVATION — HOW THE MONTH WAS DECLARED

A caveat before this section begins. Nothing that follows in V-A is commanded in the written Tanakh. No verse says “count twenty-nine days,” “watch on the night of the thirtieth,” or “the thirtieth day becomes the thirty-first if no witness comes.” Those are not Torah rules; they are a rabbinic court procedure, first set down in writing in the Mishnah roughly two centuries after the Second Temple’s fall and later codified by Maimonides in the twelfth century. This document lays the procedure out because it is the best-attested account of how the appointed court in **Deuteronomy 17:8-13** actually did its work, and because two independent sources agree on it (Section V-B). But agreement between two rabbinic sources is not the same thing as a written command, and the distinction matters for everything that follows.

V-A. Two Witnesses to the Procedure

The fullest late account is Maimonides’ Laws of the Sanctification of the New Moon (***Hilchot Kiddush HaChodesh***), written in the twelfth century. But the same procedure, in the same substance, is already in the Mishnah, tractate Rosh Hashanah, compiled about two centuries earlier and describing practice from the Second Temple period. The two agree closely enough to count as two witnesses to one procedure, not one writer copying another.

STEP	MISHNAH ROSH HASHANAH (C. 200 CE)	MAIMONIDES, LAWS OF THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE NEW MOON (12TH C.)
1	Twenty-nine days are counted from the last New Moon; witnesses are expected on the night that opens day thirty (1:3-4; 2:6-7).	The same twenty-nine-day count from the sighted crescent (ch. 1).

STEP	MISHNAH ROSH HASHANAH (C. 200 CE)	MAIMONIDES, LAWS OF THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE NEW MOON (12TH C.)
2	Witnesses who saw the new moon may travel and even violate the Sabbath to testify, but only for Nisan and Tishrei once the count of months no longer needs it for every month (1:4).	The same two-month exception is stated explicitly (ch. 3).
3	The court examined the witnesses closely — cross-questioning them on the moon’s height, direction, and breadth (2:6) — and Rabban Gamliel kept diagrams of the moon’s shapes on a tablet to test them by (2:8).	The examination procedure is assumed rather than restated in this much detail.
4	“If the court and all the people saw [the new moon]... but the court did not manage to say ‘Sanctified’ before nightfall... the month is rendered a full month [of 30 days], and the morrow is New Moon Day” (Rosh Hashanah 3:1).	“If the moon is sighted on the night of the thirtieth, the thirtieth day will be Rosh Chodesh. If it is not sighted, Rosh Chodesh will be on the thirty-first day, and the thirtieth day will be included in the previous month... there are no lunar months longer than thirty days” (ch. 1).
5	Originally hilltop signal-fires carried the news to the Diaspora; after a hostile group lit false fires to cause confusion, the court sent human messengers instead (2:2).	Not restated; assumed as background.

The Mishnah also records that the procedure was not without internal dispute. **Rabbi Elazar son of Rabbi Tzadok** held that if the new moon was not seen at its expected time, the earthly court need not sanctify the next day at all, because **“the celestial court in Heaven has already sanctified it”** (Rosh Hashanah 2:7) — a minority view against the majority’s insistence that only the earthly court’s declaration counted. And the same tractate records a scheduling failure: witnesses once arrived so late in the day that the Levites did not know which psalm to sing, after which the court set a firm afternoon cutoff for accepting testimony (Rosh Hashanah 4:4). These are not embarrassing to hide; they show a working court solving real problems, and they are exactly the kind of procedural detail no later systematizer would need to invent.

Verdict. The 29-day count, the watch on the night of the thirtieth, and the thirty-first-day default when no witness comes are corroborated by two independent rabbinic sources roughly a thousand

years apart, and the earlier of the two claims to describe Second Temple practice. That is a real historical witness. It is not, and this document does not present it as, a witness drawn from the Tanakh itself.

V-B. What the Written Text Supports, and What It Leaves to Tradition

Tested by the two-or-three-witness standard as it applies to the Tanakh alone, the pieces divide unevenly. A **visible sign** is supported: the lights are made “for signs” (**Genesis 1:14**), the trumpet is blown at the New Moon as a public act (**Psalms 81:3; Numbers 10:10**), and the New Moon in **1 Samuel 20** is a known day that a king, a prince and a family all anticipate. An **appointed court** is supported (Section IV). What has **no** written text behind it — supported or opposed — is the specific mechanism of a 29-day count, a 30th-night watch, examined witnesses, and a 31st-day default. It is well-attested rabbinic history about how the appointed court of **Deuteronomy 17:8-13** carried out the calling of the times (**Leviticus 23:4**), corroborated by two independent sources, and this document treats it as exactly that: strong historical testimony, not scripture.

V-C. The Word *Keseh* (**Psalms 81:3**)

Psalms (Tehillim) 81:3 [Hebrew 81:4] reads “**Blow the shofar at the new moon (*chodesh*), at the *keseh*, on the day of our feast.**” The rare word *keseh* (כֶּסֶח, uncertain: full moon, or covered moon) H3677 appears only here and in **Proverbs 7:20** (“he will come home at the day of the *keseh*”). Elder Arcemont’s earlier treatise reads it as the full-moon count, and Talmud Rosh Hashanah 8a reads it as “covering,” the day the moon is hidden, which it applies to the Feast of Trumpets. With only two occurrences, the two-witness test cannot fix its meaning from inside the Tanakh, and the ancient and later readings diverge. This document therefore **builds nothing on it**. Every conclusion here stands without it.

V-D. When the Court Fell Silent: The Fixed Calendar

The Jewish community today does not sight the crescent. It keeps a fixed calendar calculated in advance, with a leap month added seven times in every nineteen years. Tradition attributes it to Hillel II in the fourth century, and the attribution first appears in a responsum of Hai Gaon from 992. Modern scholarship is divided on the date. Sacha Stern argues in *Calendar and Community* (2001) that the fixed calendar was instituted in the ninth century and that the Hillel story is a medieval tradition; a letter from the Cairo Genizah dated 835/6 shows festivals kept on dates the fixed calendar would not give, and the calendar did not reach its exact modern form until the early tenth century. Dickman, writing in *Hakirah*, argues that astronomical data fit a starting date near 359 better than a ninth-century one. This document takes no side. The position of Miqdash Bethel does not depend on the date: it requires only that the fixed calendar is the continuous practice of the covenant community

that kept the calendar after the court ended. Earlier Miqdash Bethel documents that say “fourth century” should be read with this caveat.

Two facts about the fixed calendar are worth knowing. Its rules can move the first day of the seventh month by a day or two from the calculated New Moon; Rosh Hashanah, for example, can never fall on a Sunday, Wednesday or Friday. And the Karaite community historically rejected the fixed calendar and kept to the crescent and the barley. Neither fact makes the fixed calendar illegitimate on its face. Both show that the question of how to count is a real one, which is why it is set out honestly here.

VI. TWO COUNTS — THE MONTH AND THE WEEK

VI-A. The Question

A modern proposal, often called the lunar Sabbath theory, holds that the weekly Sabbath is fixed by the moon: New Moon Day stands outside the week, and the Sabbaths fall on the 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th days of each month, with the week restarting at each New Moon. If it were so, the New Moon would set the Sabbath as well as the feasts. Elder Arcemont’s earlier treatises argue at length against it. This section tests the proposal against the text and identifies which arguments carry the weight.

VI-B. Three Witnesses That the Week Runs Unbroken

Witness One — Leviticus (Vayikra) 23:15-16. “**And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath... seven Sabbaths, they shall be complete (*temimot*); until the day after the seventh Sabbath you shall count fifty days.**” Seven complete weeks plus one day is fifty days. A count that spans nearly two months across a New Moon works only if the week runs on without interruption. If the week restarted at each New Moon, with one or two days outside it, seven complete Sabbaths would not come to fifty days.

Witness Two — Exodus (Shemot) 16:26, 35. “**Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will be none.**” The manna fell every day but the Sabbath for forty years (16:35). If the week restarted at each New Moon, the manna would have had to fall for eight or nine days in a row at the end of many months, and the text says otherwise: **six** days, then the Sabbath, every time.

Witness Three — Genesis 1:5-2:3 with Exodus 20:9-11. The days of creation are counted, first, second and third, **before** the lights are set in the sky on the fourth day (**Genesis 1:14-19**). The seventh day is sanctified at the end of the creation week (**2:2-3**), and the command is grounded in that week: “**Six days you shall labor... for in six days Yahweh made the heavens and the earth**” (**Exodus 20:9-11**). The week is measured from creation and the moon was made in the middle of it.

Three witnesses meet the standard. **A note on Exodus 16:1.** Elder Arcemont’s earlier treatise cites the arrival “on the fifteenth day of the second month” (**Exodus 16:1**) followed by “the sixth day” and “the seventh day” as proof that the two counts are independent, because the chapter uses both vocabularies. That is sound as far as it goes. But the arithmetic is worth noticing: if the manna began on the sixteenth, the first Sabbath falls on the twenty-second, which is what the lunar Sabbath theory also predicts. The chapter alone therefore cannot decide the question, and this document does not rest the case on it. The three witnesses above carry the weight.

VI-C. When the New Moon Falls on the Sabbath

Maimonides records that witnesses who saw the crescent were allowed to travel to the court and testify even on a Sabbath (Laws of the Sanctification of the New Moon 3:2-3). That presupposes that a New Moon could fall on a weekly Sabbath, and it shows the two counts crossing. It is rabbinic testimony and is cited only for that. The written text supports the same picture, because **Numbers 28:9-15** sets the Sabbath offering and the New Moon offering side by side, and **Ezekiel 46:1** opens the gate on both, whether or not they coincide.

Verdict. The month is counted from the New Moon, and the week is counted from creation, and the two counts run separately and cross whenever they cross. The New Moon does not set the Sabbath, and the Sabbath does not set the New Moon. The one New Moon that is itself a rest day, the first of the seventh month, rests by its own command (**Leviticus 23:24**) and not by the weekly cycle.

VII. WHAT SETS EACH FEAST

VII-A. The Feasts and Their Counters

FEAST	DATE	SET BY	TEXT
New Moon Day (<i>Rosh Chodesh</i>)	Day 1 of every month	The New Moon	Numbers 28:11-15; 10:10
Passover (<i>Pesach</i>)	14th of the first month, at twilight	The month	Leviticus 23:5; Exodus 12:6
Unleavened Bread	15th–21st of the first month; days 1 and 7 are holy convocations	The month	Leviticus 23:6-8; Numbers 28:17-25

FEAST	DATE	SET BY	TEXT
First-fruits sheaf	The morrow after the Sabbath, in Unleavened Bread	The month and the week	Leviticus 23:9-14
Weeks (<i>Shavuot</i>)	The fiftieth day, counted from the sheaf	The week-count	Leviticus 23:15-21; Deuteronomy 16:9-10
Trumpets (<i>Yom Teruah</i>)	1st of the seventh month	The New Moon	Leviticus 23:24; Numbers 29:1
Atonement (<i>Yom HaKippurim</i>)	10th of the seventh month, from evening to evening	The month	Leviticus 23:27, 32; Numbers 29:7
Tabernacles (<i>Sukkot</i>)	15th–21st of the seventh month	The month	Leviticus 23:34; Numbers 29:12
Eighth Day (<i>Atzeret</i>)	22nd of the seventh month	The month	Leviticus 23:36; Numbers 29:35

Most of the feasts are set by the month. The first-fruits sheaf and the Feast of Weeks are set by a count of weeks within and after Unleavened Bread. **Leviticus 23:11 and 15** say “the day after the Sabbath” using the same word, *shabbat*, that **Leviticus 23:3** uses for the weekly Sabbath, while the festival rest days are called *shabbaton*. On that plain reading the count starts on a Sunday within Unleavened Bread and Weeks always falls on a Sunday. The rabbinic tradition reads “the Sabbath” as the first day of the festival, and the Sadducees and later the Karaites read it as the weekly Sabbath. The lexical evidence favors the second, but the question is not a New Moon question, and this document notes it only so the reader can see where the month stops and the week begins.

VII-B. The First Month and the Barley

The first month is named for its sign. **Exodus 13:4** says “**Today you are going out, in the month of Aviv**”; **Exodus 23:15** and **34:18** speak of “the appointed time of the month of Aviv”; and **Deuteronomy 16:1** commands the keeping of that month. **Exodus 9:31** fixes what *aviv* means: the barley was in the ear, while the wheat and spelt, being late, were not yet struck. The written sign is the state of the barley in the land.

The text does not mention the equinox. It ties the ingathering to “**the turn of the year**” (*tekufat hashanah* (תְּקִיפַת הַשָּׁנָה, **the turning of the year**) H8622, **Exodus 34:22**) and “the end of the year” (**23:16**). Twelve lunar months are about eleven days short of a solar year, so without a thirteenth month the first month would drift out of the barley season and Passover would stop falling in Aviv. The text never says “add a month,” but its two requirements, Passover in Aviv and ingathering at the turn of the year, cannot both be kept for long without one. The rabbinic tradition tells how the court decided: the letter of Rabban Gamliel in Talmud Sanhedrin 11b names the state of the barley, the age of the lambs and doves, and the season as its grounds. This is tradition about how the court reasoned, and the written signs (the barley, and the turn of the year) are the Tanakh’s own.

This is the point at which a desk cannot finish the work. The barley is ripe or it is not; someone has to see it in the land. Section IX shows what calculation can and cannot settle.

VIII. THE FIRST AND SEVENTH MOONS

Every New Moon is kept, but two carry the calendar. The **first** month is “the head of months” (**Exodus 12:2**), and it fixes Passover and Unleavened Bread and, through the count, the Feast of Weeks. The **seventh** month begins with the Feast of Trumpets and holds the Day of Atonement and Tabernacles. Maimonides says the same: witnesses could profane the Sabbath to testify for every month while the sanctuary stood, but afterward only for Nisan and Tishri, because the observance of the festivals depends only on those two (Laws of the Sanctification of the New Moon 3:2). The history in Kings shows the same weight: Shelomoh dedicated the house at the feast in the month of Ethanim, the seventh month (**1 Kings 8:2**).

The seventh month is unforgiving in a way the others are not. Its first day is a rest day (**Leviticus 23:24**), its tenth day is the Day of Atonement, and **Leviticus 23:29-30** attaches the penalty of being cut off to anyone who does not afflict himself or who works on that day. All of its dates move together with day one. A household that begins the month one day early keeps the Day of Atonement one day early, and one day late keeps it one day late, and either way misses **Yahweh**’s appointed day. That is why the question of who sets the month is not a matter of preference (Section IV), and why it is worth setting out what calculation can tell us (Section IX).

IX. A WORKED EXAMPLE — THE MONTHS OF 2026 AND 2027

IX-A. What This Is and What It Is Not

An illustration, not a calendar ruling. The figures below are Miqdash Bethel’s own calculation of the astronomical New Moon (the conjunction of sun and moon) and of sunset in Jerusalem, followed by the age of the moon at that sunset. They show how “calculation first, then observation” narrows the choice for New Moon Day. They do not show whether a crescent was in fact seen, do not model the moon’s height or distance from the sun, and do not replace a witness. As a rough rule of experience, a crescent under about 15 hours old is not seen, one over about 24 hours old is usually seen in a clear sky, and the range between is doubtful. The conjunction and sunset times are accurate to a few minutes; the visibility words are a rule of thumb.

IX-B. Fifteen Months in View

For each New Moon, the table gives the first two evenings after the conjunction, the moon’s age at sunset, and the two days on which the month can begin. The month begins at the evening on which the crescent is first seen, so the daylight that follows is New Moon Day. The **earlier** day holds when the crescent is seen on the first evening, or when the previous month has already run thirty days and the thirty-first-day rule applies (Section V-A). The **later** day holds when the crescent is not seen on the first evening and the count reaches it. The running count of the previous month and the witnesses choose between the two.

CONJUNCTION (JERUSALEM TIME)	EVENING 1: SUNSET · MOON AGE	EVENING 2: SUNSET · MOON AGE	NEW MOON DAY IS EITHER
Fri Sep 11 2026 · 06:26	Fri Sep 11 · 18:50 · 12 h (not seen)	Sat Sep 12 · 18:49 · 36 h (usually seen)	Sat Sep 12 or Sun Sep 13
Sat Oct 10 2026 · 18:50	Sun Oct 11 · 18:11 · 23 h (doubtful)	Mon Oct 12 · 18:10 · 47 h (usually seen)	Mon Oct 12 or Tue Oct 13
Mon Nov 9 2026 · 09:02	Mon Nov 9 · 16:43 · 8 h (not seen)	Tue Nov 10 · 16:42 · 32 h (usually seen)	Tue Nov 10 or Wed Nov 11
Wed Dec 9 2026 · 02:51	Wed Dec 9 · 16:35 · 14 h (not seen)	Thu Dec 10 · 16:35 · 38 h (usually seen)	Thu Dec 10 or Fri Dec 11

CONJUNCTION (JERUSALEM TIME)	EVENING 1: SUNSET · MOON AGE	EVENING 2: SUNSET · MOON AGE	NEW MOON DAY 1 IS EITHER
Thu Jan 7 2027 · 22:24	Fri Jan 8 · 16:51 · 18 h (doubtful)	Sat Jan 9 · 16:52 · 42 h (usually seen)	Sat Jan 9 or Sun Jan 10
Sat Feb 6 2027 · 17:56	Sun Feb 7 · 17:18 · 23 h (doubtful)	Mon Feb 8 · 17:19 · 47 h (usually seen)	Mon Feb 8 or Tue Feb 9
Mon Mar 8 2027 · 11:29	Mon Mar 8 · 17:41 · 6 h (not seen)	Tue Mar 9 · 17:42 · 30 h (usually seen)	Tue Mar 9 or Wed Mar 10
Wed Apr 7 2027 · 02:51	Wed Apr 7 · 19:02 · 16 h (doubtful)	Thu Apr 8 · 19:03 · 40 h (usually seen)	Thu Apr 8 or Fri Apr 9
Thu May 6 2027 · 13:58	Thu May 6 · 19:22 · 5 h (not seen)	Fri May 7 · 19:23 · 29 h (usually seen)	Fri May 7 or Sat May 8
Fri Jun 4 2027 · 22:40	Sat Jun 5 · 19:41 · 21 h (doubtful)	Sun Jun 6 · 19:42 · 45 h (usually seen)	Sun Jun 6 or Mon Jun 7
Sun Jul 4 2027 · 06:02	Sun Jul 4 · 19:48 · 14 h (not seen)	Mon Jul 5 · 19:48 · 38 h (usually seen)	Mon Jul 5 or Tue Jul 6
Mon Aug 2 2027 · 13:05	Mon Aug 2 · 19:35 · 7 h (not seen)	Tue Aug 3 · 19:34 · 30 h (usually seen)	Tue Aug 3 or Wed Aug 4
Tue Aug 31 2027 · 20:41	Wed Sep 1 · 19:03 · 22 h (doubtful)	Thu Sep 2 · 19:02 · 46 h (usually seen)	Thu Sep 2 or Fri Sep 3
Thu Sep 30 2027 · 05:36	Thu Sep 30 · 18:25 · 13 h (not seen)	Fri Oct 1 · 18:24 · 37 h (usually seen)	Fri Oct 1 or Sat Oct 2
Fri Oct 29 2027 · 16:36	Fri Oct 29 · 17:52 · 1 h (not seen)	Sat Oct 30 · 17:51 · 25 h (usually seen)	Sat Oct 30 or Sun Oct 31

Three things stand out. **First**, calculation never leaves more than two possible days. **Second**, in the months where the moon is only 1 to 14 hours old on the first evening (September, November and December 2026; March, May, July, August, September and October 2027) the earlier day comes only

from the thirty-first-day rule. **Third**, in the doubtful months (October 2026; January, February, April, June and August 2027) the decision belongs to a witness and not to a table.

IX-C. The Seventh Month of 2026

The conjunction is on Friday, September 11, 2026, at 06:26 Jerusalem time. The moon is about 12 hours old at that evening's sunset (not seen) and about 36 hours old the next evening (usually seen). New Moon Day is therefore **Saturday, September 12** or **Sunday, September 13**. Each choice fixes the dates of the rest of the month.

APPOINTED TIME	IF DAY 1 IS SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12	IF DAY 1 IS SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13
Trumpets (day 1)	Sat Sep 12 (also the weekly Sabbath)	Sun Sep 13
Atonement (day 10; begins the evening before)	Mon Sep 21 (from the evening of Sun Sep 20)	Tue Sep 22 (from the evening of Mon Sep 21)
Tabernacles (day 15; begins the evening before)	Sat Sep 26 (from the evening of Fri Sep 25)	Sun Sep 27 (from the evening of Sat Sep 26)
Eighth Day (day 22)	Sat Oct 3	Sun Oct 4

The fixed calendar of the Jewish community places Rosh Hashanah on the day beginning at sundown on September 11, which is Saturday, September 12, with the Day of Atonement beginning at sundown on September 20 and Tabernacles at sundown on September 25. That matches the first column. The two candidates differ by exactly one day, and that one day is the whole risk described in Section VIII: a household that keeps the wrong one keeps the Day of Atonement a day early or a day late. The document does not choose. It shows the choice.

This is not a hypothetical. This document was completed in September 2026, and the split shown above actually occurred: the Jewish community kept the Day of Atonement from the evening of Sunday, September 20 to the evening of Monday, September 21 (the first column of the table — New Moon Day counted from Saturday, September 12), while a number of sighted-moon Sacred Name congregations kept it from the evening of Monday, September 21 to the evening of Tuesday, September 22 (the second column — New Moon Day counted from Sunday, September 13). The moon at sunset on September 12 was about 36 hours old — old enough to be visible under typical clear-sky conditions — but a crescent that age is not always caught: real sighting reports from past

years record repeated nights where a moon of similar age was searched for under clear skies and simply not seen, pushing the declared New Moon Day one evening later. This is not a counting error on either side, and it is not evidence that either group mislabeled which day is Day 1 (Section XI-C already found universal agreement on that point). It is the plainest possible illustration of the gap this document has described throughout: a sighted method depends on whether a real sighting was actually confirmed on a given night, in a way a table of hours can only estimate.

IX-D. The First Month of 2027

Here two whole months are candidates, because the question is whether 2027 has a thirteenth month before the spring. The March conjunction is on Monday, March 8 at 11:29; the April conjunction is on Wednesday, April 7 at 02:51. The March equinox falls on March 20, 2027, at 20:25 UTC, but the written text does not mention the equinox.

CANDIDATE FIRST MONTH	NEW MOON DAY 1	PASSOVER (DAY 14, AT TWILIGHT)
March 2027	Tue Mar 9 or Wed Mar 10	Mon Mar 22 or Tue Mar 23
April 2027	Thu Apr 8 or Fri Apr 9	Wed Apr 21 or Thu Apr 22

The fixed calendar places Passover in April: the first seder is on the evening of April 21, so day 14 is April 21 and day 1 is Thursday, April 8. What decides the matter in the written text is the barley in the land (**Exodus 9:31; 13:4; Deuteronomy 16:1**), and no table can supply that. This is the boundary between what calculation can do and what only a person standing in a field can do.

IX-E. What the Example Teaches

Calculation gave two possible days for every month and never more. It could not choose between them, and could not answer the barley question at all. The fixed calendar's day for Tishri 2026 agrees with the earlier candidate. And the gap between the candidates is one day, which is small in a table and large in **Leviticus 23:29-30**.

X. WHERE THE COUNT STANDS TODAY

X-A. The Situation

No court of the kind **Deuteronomy 17:8-13** describes sits to call the months, no altar stands, and the covenant community, scattered for two thousand years, keeps one fixed calendar. The written text describes an appointed court and does not describe what a person does after its court has ceased. That silence is a fact about the text, and the honest course is to say so and to reason from what the text does say.

X-B. Four Ways Households Set the Feasts

METHOD	WHO USES IT	WHAT IT RESTS ON	ASSESSMENT
Follow the fixed calendar of the covenant community	The Jewish community worldwide; most who keep the feasts	The continuous practice of the covenant custodians after the court ended	One calendar, and no text forbids it. Its rules can differ by a day from the calculated New Moon (Section V-D).
Sight the crescent and the barley	The Karaite community; some Sabbatarian groups	The Tanakh's own signs: the moon as sign, and the barley in the land	Closest to the written signs. Without a single appointed court, communities reach different days, which weakens the one Passover of Deuteronomy 16:5-6 .
Use the astronomical New Moon	Some modern groups	Calculated conjunction	A fact about the sky, not a text; the conjunction is invisible and the Tanakh speaks of a sign. Cannot answer the barley question.
Each household decides	Anyone who sets the month by preference	Private judgment	Not supported. 1 Kings 12:32-33 condemns a month "devised of his own heart."

X-C. The Position of Miqdash Bethel

This is counsel where the text is silent, and it is offered as counsel and not as a command. **First**, the month is not set by the individual; it is the responsibility of an appointed court (Section IV), and the weekly Sabbath is the individual's own count and never waits on a court (Section IV-C). **Second**, the covenant community that has kept the calendar since the court ended is not in violation of the written

covenant by keeping it, and Miqdash Bethel does not accuse it of that. **Third**, Miqdash Bethel does not sanctify a new calendar, does not claim the office of the court, and does not send witnesses. Its work is to teach the count, to keep fellowship with the calendar the covenant community keeps, and to pray for what **Isaiah (Yeshayahu) 1:26** promises: **“I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as at the beginning.”** **Fourth**, where a sincere household or community keeps the crescent-and-barley method, it is not an enemy of the covenant, and it should be met with the same evenhandedness this document asks of everyone: the disagreement is about how to count where the text is silent, and not about whether the text is true.

X-D. A Household Arrangement (Not a Command)

Count the Sabbath for yourself. It is yours in every place, and no calendar changes it. **Know the count.** New Moon Day is day one; the month has twenty-nine or thirty days. **Mark New Moon Day.** A family meal, the reading of the day’s texts, and the words of return that **Hosea (Hoshea) 14:1-2** offers in place of bulls; it is a kept day and not a commanded rest, except for the first of the seventh month. **In the first and seventh months, keep the calendar of the covenant community,** and note the possible one-day difference this document has shown. **Keep the feasts with your neighbor.** A community keeping one day is a stronger witness than households keeping many.

XI. MODERN GROUPS THAT SIGHT THE NEW MOON

XI-A. Who Is Covered, and a Caution About Names

Since the middle of the twentieth century, a number of independent congregations and teaching ministries within what is often called the Sacred Name movement — groups that insist on the transliterated names **Yahweh** and Yahshua rather than “LORD” and “Jesus” — have set aside the fixed rabbinic calendar of Section V-D and returned to sighting the crescent, citing many of the same texts gathered in this document. Three names are taken up here, and a caution belongs first. **Yahweh’s** Restoration Ministry, based in Kingdom City, Missouri, is one organization with one published calendar method. “Assembly of **Yahweh**” and “Assemblies of **Yahweh**,” by contrast, are names used by several independent congregations that do not share one leadership or one method; this document treats the name as a family of similarly named groups rather than one voice, and cites only what a given group has itself published. The House of **Yahweh**, headquartered in Eula, near Abilene, Texas, is likewise its own organization, distinct in history and governance from Miqdash Bethel and from the House of **Yahweh** of Odessa, Texas.

XI-B. What These Groups Get Right

Tested against the findings already reached in this document, the sighted-moon groups agree with the written text on several points where the fixed rabbinic calendar of Section V-D does not.

CLAIM MADE BY SIGHTED-MOON GROUPS	THIS DOCUMENT'S OWN FINDING	VERDICT
The month begins at the sighted crescent, not the invisible astronomical conjunction.	The lights were made “for signs” (Genesis 1:14), a thing seen; Maimonides and the Mishnah both describe a visible-sighting procedure, not a calculated conjunction (Section V-A).	Agrees with the text
New Moon Day is a real, keepable day, distinct from the weekly Sabbath.	Confirmed by several witnesses in Section III; 2 Kings 4:23 and Amos 8:5 name the two days separately.	Agrees with the text
The first month is tied to the ripening barley (aviv), not fixed by a table alone.	The Torah’s own sign for the first month is the barley (Exodus 9:31; 13:4), not a calculated date (Section VII-B).	Agrees with the text
The weekly Sabbath is not reset by the New Moon.	Confirmed by three witnesses in Section VI; Yahweh’s Restoration Ministry’s own published material argues against the lunar Sabbath theory on similar grounds (the word for “week,” the manna account, the creation week).	Agrees with the text — and, on this point, with the earlier Miqdash Bethel treatise this document draws on

A correction to an earlier Miqdash Bethel treatise. Earlier material prepared for this ministry was a man named “Jonathan **David** Brown, 1998” as the source of the lunar Sabbath theory. This document could not confirm that claim. What it found instead: critics of the lunar Sabbath theory trace it to nineteenth-century Assyriological speculation about a Babylonian lunar calendar, well before 1998, and **Yahweh’s** Restoration Ministry — founded by a Jonathan Brown — publishes its own teaching rejecting the lunar Sabbath theory, on grounds close to Section VI of this document. The 1998 attribution should not be repeated without better sourcing, and any future Miqdash Bethel document that names it should be corrected.

XI-C. Where the Count Divides Among Them

Whose sky counts? Some sighted-moon groups hold that only a sighting reported from Israel can open a month, since the appointed times were given and first kept there; day-by-day sighting reports

from Israel circulate for exactly this reason. Other congregations sight the crescent from their own location and treat a local sighting as equally valid. The two methods can and do produce different days, because a crescent visible in one place on a given evening may not be visible a day's journey away, let alone across the globe (Section IX-A). The written text does not decide this by name. It never says the New Moon must be sighted from Jerusalem, though it does use a "place **Yahweh** will choose" formula for the pilgrimage offerings (**Deuteronomy 16:2, 6**) and for hard cases brought to the appointed court (**Deuteronomy 17:8**). Extending that formula to New Moon sighting is a reasonable inference, not a written command, and this document does not assert it as one. What Section X-B already said plainly is that a method letting every location set its own day cannot deliver the single Passover **Deuteronomy 16:5-6** required for the whole community, and that problem falls hardest on groups that sight locally rather than by one reported sky.

The equinox, or the barley? Some Sacred Name literature states plainly that the determining sign for the first month is the first crescent on or after the spring equinox, and treats reliance on the barley as a departure to be corrected. Other groups, including **Yahweh's** Restoration Ministry, hold the opposite: the barley's own state in the land is the decisive sign, and the equinox is at most a rough check on it. Section VII-B already found the Torah's own word: it names the barley (**Exodus 9:31; 13:4; Deuteronomy 16:1**) and never names the equinox. A method that substitutes the equinox for the barley, or rejects the barley outright, has traded the Tanakh's own stated sign for an inferred astronomical proxy. This document sides with the groups that hold to the barley on this specific point, while repeating its own caution from Section VII-B: the text does not say whose field, how much of the land, or what fraction must show aviv, so a barley-based method still needs a boundary the text does not supply.

Does a month ever exceed thirty days? On this point nearly every sighted-moon group agrees with each other and with the rabbinic sources of Section V-A: if the crescent is not sighted by the evening that would open the thirty-first day, the new month begins anyway, because a lunar month cannot run longer. This is one place where the sighted-moon groups, the Mishnah, and Maimonides all converge, and this document finds that convergence a genuine point of corroboration — a fourth independent line of testimony added to the two already weighed in Section V-A.

XI-D. The House of Yahweh (Eula/Abilene, Texas)

This document could not locate, in material published by the House of **Yahweh** itself, a stated New Moon rule set out with the same clarity as the sources cited above, and it does not attribute a specific method to that organization here rather than risk misstating it. What is a matter of public record, noted for orientation only and not as doctrine, is that the House of **Yahweh** was founded in 1980 by

Yisrayl Hawkins in Abilene, Texas, and was a branch of the established congregation begun in 1974 in Odessa, Texas by his brother Yaaqob Hawkins — the congregation Miqdash Bethel’s own House of **Yahweh** of Odessa continues today as a testimony to the original House of Yahweh established here in the USA, and the Abilene congregation the one from which Elder Kepha Arcemont’s own ministry history eventually parted was established in 2012. Where the House of **Yahweh**’s calendar method can be documented with the same rigor applied to the other groups in this section, shows that they sight a new moon crescent as the starting point of their new moon count to the next month. They have changed the days, months names to their own interpretive calling of these days/months. It is confusing to the average person and this Institution does not follow their brand of renaming of the days and months.

XI-E. Verdict

Every sighted-moon group surveyed here stands closer to the written text than the fixed rabbinic calendar on three points: a visible sign rather than an invisible calculation, the barley or a comparable seasonal check rather than a bare fixed table, and, where checked, the unbroken weekly Sabbath. They divide from each other, sometimes sharply, on exactly the two questions Section IX already showed a table cannot answer by itself: which sky to watch, and how to weigh the barley against the season. That division is not a mark against the sighted-moon approach as such; it is the same honest limit this document reached in Sections IX and X on its own account, now visible in how differently sincere households have tried to close it.

XII. THREE-RELIGION AUDIT — HOW EACH TRADITION HANDLES THE MONTH

ELEMENT	JUDAISM	CHRISTIANITY	ISLAM
Primary Question	How is the month set when no court sits to call it, and what does the fixed calendar owe to the written text?	Are the New Moon and the appointed times still to be kept, or did the calendar end with the age of shadows (Colossians 2:16)?	Is a lunar month enough, or must the year be bound to the seasons as the written text binds Passover to Aviv?
Covenant Strength	Has kept the month-count without break: the New Moon as day one, months of 29 or 30 days, a leap month to hold Passover in the spring, and	Kept the seven-day week unbroken from creation, which is exactly the count the written text protects (Leviticus 23:15-16; Exodus	Keeps the moon as the measure of the month (Q. 2:189; 10:5) and twelve months to the year (Q. 9:36). Completes a month at thirty days when the sky

ELEMENT	JUDAISM	CHRISTIANITY	ISLAM
	Rosh Chodesh observed. Preserved the procedure of witnesses and court in the Mishnah (Rosh Hashanah 1:3; 2:8-9) and one calendar for a scattered people.	16:26). Kept the Tanakh in its canon, including Isaiah 66:23 .	hides the crescent (Sahih al-Bukhari 1909), the same logic Maimonides describes for the court.
Covenant Departure	A fixed calculation replaced the court and the witnesses, and its postponement rules can move a feast a day from the calculated New Moon. The tradition's claim that Hillel II fixed the calendar in the fourth century is disputed by modern scholarship (Stern), and the barley sign no longer decides the first month.	Fixed Easter by its own reckoning at Nicaea, apart from the Jewish month (Eusebius, Life of Constantine 3.18–19), and keeps a solar year with no New Moon at all. Numbers 28:11-15 , Ezekiel 46:1-3 and Isaiah 66:23 show the New Moon kept in the age to come and not set aside.	Forbids postponing a month (Q. 9:37), so no thirteenth month is added and the months travel through every season, loosed from the barley (Exodus 13:4) and from the turn of the year (Exodus 34:22), to which the written text binds the feasts.
Covenant Witness	Return to the text: the month begins with the New Moon (Exodus 12:2); the court that calls it is restored (Isaiah 1:26 ; Deuteronomy 17:8-13); and until then one calendar is kept, with the barley's witness honored.	Recover Exodus 12:1-2 and Leviticus 23 : the Creator gave a calendar before He gave a law, and the New Moon is part of it. Count the month and the week separately, as the text does.	The Qur'anic instincts of a lunar month, a sighting, and a thirty-day completion are met in the Written calendar and completed by its seasonal anchor: the moon begins the month, and the barley and the turn of the year keep it in its season.

XIII. SEVEN COVENANT DECLARATIONS ON THE NEW MOON AND THE APPOINTED TIMES

#	COVENANT DECLARATION	BASIS
I	The month is Yahweh's gift to a people before it is anything else. The first command given to a nation was a calendar: this month is the head of months.	Exodus (Shemot) 12:1-2

#	COVENANT DECLARATION	BASIS
II	The moon is a clock and not a god. It was made for appointed times, and it is never to be worshipped.	Genesis (Bereishit) 1:14; Psalms (Tehillim) 104:19; Deuteronomy (Devarim) 4:19
III	New Moon Day is a kept day with its own offering, trumpets and meal, but it is not the weekly Sabbath. The one New Moon commanded as a rest day is the first of the seventh month.	Numbers (Bemidbar) 28:11-15; 2 Kings (Melakhim Bet) 4:23; Leviticus (Vayikra) 23:24
IV	The month is called by the appointed leadership of the covenant people and is not devised by each household.	Leviticus (Vayikra) 23:2, 4; Deuteronomy (Devarim) 17:8-13; 1 Kings (Melakhim Alef) 12:32-33
V	The month and the week are separate counts. The seven-day week runs unbroken from creation and is counted by every household for itself; the New Moon does not reset it.	Leviticus (Vayikra) 23:15-16; Exodus (Shemot) 16:26, 35; Genesis (Bereishit) 2:2-3
VI	The first month is known by the barley in the land and the year is held to its season. Calculation can narrow the day to two, but only sight can settle it.	Exodus (Shemot) 9:31; 13:4; 34:22; Deuteronomy (Devarim) 16:1
VII	Where no court sits, the covenant household does not appoint itself. It counts its own Sabbath, keeps the calendar of the covenant community, notes honestly where a day may differ, and prays for the restoration of the court.	Isaiah (Yeshayahu) 1:26; Deuteronomy (Devarim) 17:8-13; Hosea (Hoshea) 14:1-2

XIV. IN CONCLUSION — THE ANSWER OF THE WRITTEN COVENANT

What does the written covenant say about the New Moon? It is the head of the month, kept with offerings, trumpets and a meal; it is a different day from the weekly Sabbath; and it is the day from which every appointed time is counted (Sections I–III). The first of the seventh month alone is also a commanded rest.

Who sets the month, and how is it counted? An appointed court called the times, and the tradition describes how: twenty-nine days counted, a watch on the thirtieth, witnesses examined, and the

thirty-first day as New Moon Day when the crescent was not seen (Sections IV–V). The month and the week are counted by separate clocks, and the week is never reset by the moon (Section VI). The written signs that fix the first month are the barley and the turn of the year, and no table can see either (Section VII).

How does a covenant household keep the times today? By counting its Sabbath for itself, by knowing the count, by keeping the calendar of the covenant community while being honest that a day may differ, by refusing to set a month by private preference, and by praying for the court **Isaiah 1:26** promises to restore (Sections IX–XI). The worked example showed that calculation leaves at most two days and that only sight and a court can choose between them.

The month is a gift from the One who says of it: **“This month shall be for you the head of months.”** It is not ours to move, and it is ours to keep.

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*“This month shall be for you the head of months;
it shall be the first of the months of the year for you.”*
Exodus (Shemot) 12:2 — The Written Covenant of Yahweh

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