

Is the Rabbinical Molad/Lunar Conjunction New Moon?

Shalom. It is the duty of Man to serve the Alohym of Ysrayl by keeping his commandments (Ecclesiastes 12:13). In (gen 1:14) we learn that Both the Sun & moon were given the authority to be for Signs and govern Days, Years & Moedim. Thus ALL of Alohym's holy Moedim is to be governed by the observation of Sun & Moon.

In this topic we will cover New Moon and in retrospect its reckoning of Conjunction (Molad). We will use several witnesses to confirm the legitimacy of this reckoning type and also show its history which will in turn prove its legitimacy.

Modern Reckoning of New Moon

The modern understanding of New Moon is astronomically calculated and defined as 'Lunar Conjunction', which is when the moon is in its dark phase and is blocked from the sun's light by the earth; however this was not always how New Moon was reckoned. The ancient Israelites regarded New Moon by its first appearance or sliver of light.

Wikipedia Quotes:

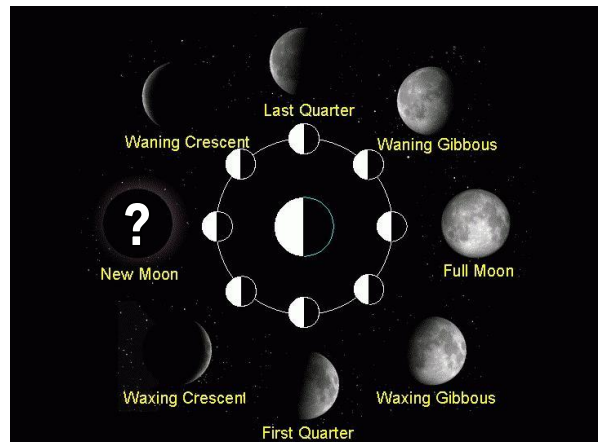
"In astronomy, new moon is the first phase of the Moon, when it lies closest to the Sun in the sky as seen from the Earth. More precisely, it is the instant when the Moon and the Sun have the same elliptical longitude. The Moon is not normally visible at this time except when it is seen in silhouette during a solar eclipse. See the article on phases of the Moon for further details.

The original meaning of the phrase new moon was the first visible crescent of the Moon, after conjunction with the Sun. This takes place over the western horizon in a brief period between sunset and moonset, and therefore the precise time and even the date of the appearance of the new moon by this definition will be influenced by the geographical location of the observer. The astronomical new moon, sometimes known as the dark moon to avoid confusion, occurs by definition at the moment of conjunction in elliptical longitude with the Sun, when the Moon is invisible from the Earth. This moment is unique and does not depend on location, and in certain circumstances it coincides with a solar eclipse.

... the new moon in its original meaning of first crescent marks the beginning of the month in lunar calendars such as the Muslim calendar, and in lunisolar calendars such as the Hebrew calendar, Hindu calendars, and Buddhist calendar." [END QUOTE]

So we see that modern science does in fact recognize that their method of New Moon was not the same as New Moon that other nationalities observe and keep, and that the Lunar & Solar Calendar of scripture that the Hebrew Israelites kept originally consist of the First Visible Crescent or (FVC).

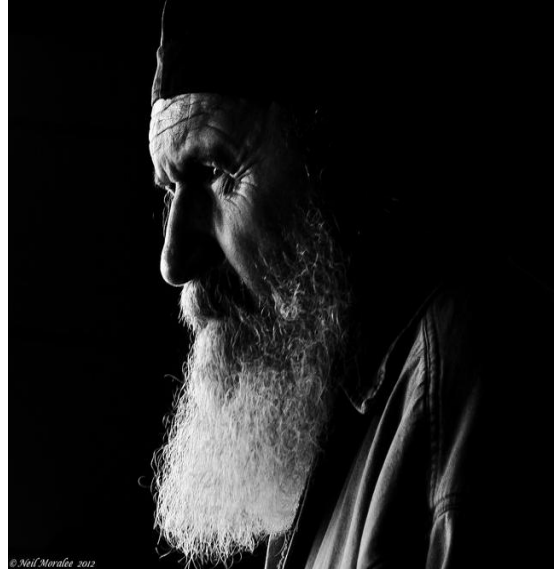
If this is the case, why do many in the truth ignore this, what other evidence is there to substantiate the usage of Lunar Conjunction as New Moon?



Jew-ish Molad

The very first thing we'd like to share about 'Molad' is that it is never used in Scripture in relationship with the moon. This should raise many eyebrows in itself. So, where did it come from and what does it mean?

The Rabbinical Jews believe that the moon is lined up with the sun and earth in such a way that it is completely invisible. This moment is called the *molad*, or "birth" of the new moon; however, the Jewish month was not originally calculated from the *molad*.



"Môlêd when her Conjunction with is a Hebrew word meaning renewal, rejuvenescence. It would be properly applied to the phase of the moon at the instant of time the Sun takes place. It is, however, commonly used not for the actual time of New Moon, but for the computed time, which governs the commencement of each year and of each Cycle...The length of a Lunation, as adopted by the founders of the present permanent calendar, is a constant quantity, whereas the Lunations of the true Moon are variable in their duration. The Moon of the Jewish Calendar is a mean or average Moon moving uniformly, in the same way as the artificial Moon of Hilarius [i.e., the "moon" (molad) of the CRC is likewise artificial], which is used in the Julian and Gregorian Calendars." (S.B. Burnaby, "Elements of the Jewish and Muhammadan Calendars", London: George Bell & Sons, 1901, p.40)

"The moment that the moon passes between the Earth and the sun is called the Molad - the birth of the moon. It is the theoretical beginning of the new month" (Understanding the Jewish Calendar, Rabbi Nathan Bushwick, pp.39-40 --emphasis mine)

359 A.D.

As Rabbinic Judaism departed from the true worship of Alohym, the Rabbinic Calendar was implemented in 359 C.E. by Hillel II based on the 19-year Metonic cycle of the Greek astronomer Meton of Athens. During the reign of the Roman Emperor Julian the Apostate. Hillel II was the "Nasi," or president, of the Sanhedrin between 320 - 385 C.E.

As the last head of the Sanhedrin, Hillel II, instituted a fixed calendar based on astronomical calculations of the molad. This fixed calendar also provides the additional leap months that are necessary to ensure the holidays and SABBATHS are kept in SYNCY WITH THE ROMAN JULIAN-GREGORIAN CALENDER. Hillel II's calendar allowed Jewish life to continue despite the disbanding of the Sanhedrin.

Shortly before the Sanhedrin disbanded, Hillel II sanctified each new moon dates in advance, and intercalated all future leap years until such time as a new recognized Sanhedrin would be established in Israel. He did this so that Jews all over the world would still be observing New Moon and Shabbat on the same Day.

'The Hillel II calendar was based on fixed calculations, not on the visible new moon sighting as the Jews had previously done when determining the beginning of months. (Dictionary of Judaism in the Biblical Period, by Jacob Neusner, p. 454, emphasis added.)'

After the year 359 A.D. the rabbinic Jews began to observe New Moon VIA Lunar Conjunction (called the "molad") rather than by the visible crescent according to all previous tradition. The scientifically, astronomically inclined rabbis acknowledge today that the current calendar used among them IS NOT the same as the ancient calendar used during the First & Second Temple Period.

This method does not appear to be original or scripturally instructed, but devised by Mans desperate attempts to maintain control over the interpretation of Alohym's luminaries. Thus, it's a Jewish invention and apart of rabbinical decree, not scripture.

If the New Moon was already determined by Lunar Conjunction/Molad, then there would have been nothing for Hillel II to change. But we learn that historically this was not the case. The modern Rabbinic calendar that was first published by Hillel II, although it continued to be refined until finalized by Moses Maimonides about 1178 AD.

One of the main problems with this Modern Rabbinic Calendar is that it ignores the Biblical New Moons for starting months, and instead relies on "Molads" or the average time between conjunctions; while Alohym has commanded all people to observe the New Moons.

Furthermore, going by the calculated lunar conjunction (Molad) contradicts the command in Deuteronomy 16:1: "Observe the month [chodesh, new moon] of Abib and keep the Passover..." Here, the word "observe" in the Hebrew is **shamar** and also means "look narrowly for, search" (No. 8104 in Strong's).

The Holladay Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon defines it as watching in the sense of looking. Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words include the definitions "mark, watchman, wait, watch, look narrowly." The command is to look for, wait for, watch and mark the new moon.

The problem is that you cannot see a moon that is completely black or dark, as it is during a conjunction. It would be lunacy sending out new moon watchers on the night of a conjunction to look for a moon they cannot see. To visually confirm the new moon there must be something to identify. Obviously, the invisible conjunction is not that something.

History does not support the originality of Molad as New Moon. It expressly shows that this method is one created and controlled by Rabbinical Jews and modern Astronomers.

Thus, lunar conjunction is Not the biblical new moon, but rather a Rabbinical one.

The Torah (Gen 1:14)

(Genesis 1:14) "And Alohym said, Let there be **lights** in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; **and let them be for signs**, and for seasons, and for days, and years."

First notice that the lights, not the darkness, would be used. A crescent is the first form of light of a new moon, or month (shining sword #2320, #2318). NOT THE DARK OF AN ASTRONOMICAL NEW MOON. The word for seasons is "moed" meaning the feast days.

In Genesis 1:14, we see that Alohym made signs in the heavens for Set Apart Days. So, what does the word SIGN or Hebrew OWTB mean?



SIGN/OWTB: Meaning: Sign, signal, beacon, **a distinguishing mark**, banner, remembrance, miraculous sign, omen, warning, Token, ensign, standard, proof, and miracle.

In the Tanakh, *owtb* describes such **visible** (not invisible) **signs** as:

Noah's rainbow (Gen 9:12–13, 17), Cain's mark (Gen 4:15), circumcision (Gen 17:11), and the Sabbath (Exod 31:13, 17; Ezek 20:12).

In addition, *owtb* is used some 80 times in the Tanakh to refer to *miraculous signs*. These include the plagues of Egypt (Exod 7:3; Deut 4:34, etc.), Alohym's miraculous *signs* to Gideon (Judg 6:17) and King Hezekiah (2 Kgs 20:9; Isa 38:7). In addition, Aaron's rod that budded was a *sign* or *token* (Num 17:25).

What do all these examples of how the Bible uses the Hebrew word *owtb* have in common? **They were all a visible sign that one could see.** This is the definition of the word *owtb* and how it is used in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Simply stated, the visible sliver of the new moon fits the definition of *owtb* as used in Genesis 1:14, while the astronomical conjunction (when the moon is in its dark phase and is invisible to the eye because the earth is between the moon and the sun) does not.

In regards to Molad/ Lunar Conjunction, since when did a Sign or distinguishing mark ever been invisible or unseen? The signs Alohym intended are made for clear signals or markers. They are clear and observable, not concealed and hidden. Thus, New Moon is to be not only a sign, but a distinguishing mark in the sense of its appearance.

The Torah (Psalms 81:3)

One of the most misinterpreted but widely used passages in scripture used to support the Rabbinical Molad as New Moon can be found in (Psalms 81:3). Some people have been confused by the use of the term “New Moon” in modern astronomy and have and have misapplied it to Biblical passages for support for this incorrect meaning of the term.



They usually cite **Psalm 81:3**, which says:

Blow on a horn for the **Hodesh** (New Moon) On the **Keseh** (Full Moon) for the Day of our Chag (Feast).

According to the “Rabbinical Molad Theory,” the term “Keseh” is derived from the root **Kacah H3680 (kä-sä)**’ meaning “to cover” and therefore means “covered moon” or “concealed moon.” According to this interpretation, when the verse says to blow on a horn on the day of **Keseh** it actually means “[blow on a horn] on the day of the Concealed Moon.”

However, the language here DOES NOT support this argument because the second half of the verse also refers to the day of **Keseh** as “the day of our Feast (**Chag**).” In the Bible, Feast (**Chag**) is a technical term which *always* refers to the three annual pilgrimage-feasts (Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Tabernacles; see Exodus 23 and 34).

Also, the root word **Kacah H3680 (kä-sä)**’ also means “to plump, i.e. fill up hollows”. How can you fill something up with nothing you can actually see? The definition of ‘HOLLOW’ is “having a hole or empty space inside and/or without significance. So, how does something become full of something and remain Empty?

The New Moon Day (**Hodesh**) is **never** classified as a “Pilgrimage-Feast” so **Keseh/Chag** cannot possibly be the same as the New Moon Day (**Hodesh**). It has even been suggested that **Keseh** refers to the Biblical holiday of **Yom Teruah** (Day of Shouting), which always falls out on the New Moon Day. Unfortunately for this theory, the Bible describes **Yom Teruah** as a **Moed** (appointed time) and *never* as a **Chag** (Pilgrimage-Feast) -- so **Keseh/Chag** cannot refer to **Yom Teruah** either!

It is more than likely that **Keseh** is related to the Aramaic word “Kista” and the Assyrian word “Kuseu” which mean “full moon” -- see **Brown-Driver-Briggs** p. 490b. This fits perfectly with the description of **Keseh** as the day of the **Hag** since two of the three Pilgrimage-Feasts (**Hag HaMatzot** and **Hag HaSukkot**) are on the 15th of the month, which is the time of the full moon!

The Book of Enoch

We have found it very interesting that the writings of Enoch gives very clear details about the Lunar Cycles. The focus here is the Rabbinical New Moon or Molad, which is known as lunar conjunction.

(ENOCH 78:14) “On the side whence the light of the moon comes out, there again she wanes until all the light vanishes and all the days of the month are at an end, and her sphere (disc) is empty, void of light.”

NOTE: The moon wanes until all the light vanishes and all the days of the month are at an end. When the moon is void of light, it is the end of the month, conjunction; this is the end of one month.

Notice that Enoch does not call lunar conjunction: ‘NEW MOON’, but rather the END of the Month.



Apocrypha on Lunar Conjunction

The Book Ecclesiasticus, which is in the ‘Apocrypha’ is a work from the early 2nd century B.C.E. written by the Jewish scribe Joshua ben Sirach of Jerusalem who lived before Philo.

(Ecclesiasticus 43:7) From the moon is the sign of feasts, a light that decreaseth in her perfection.

**Note: In the Greek text:

(Ecclesiasticus 43:7) ἀπὸ σελήνης σημεῖον ἑορτῆς, φωστήρ μειούμενος ἐπὶ συντελείας.

ἀπὸ=575-From, σελήνης=4582-Moon, σημεῖον=4592-Sign, ἑορτῆς=1859-Feast, φωστήρ=5458-Luminary, μειούμενος=?-Diminisheth, ἐπὶ =1909-Upon, συντελείας=4930-Completion.

Note: In the Greek text: The Moon is a Sign of feast, **a Luminary that Diminisheth upon COMPLETION. This outright refers to the transition from Light to darkness and the light diminisheth or disappears when its cycle is COMPLETE or at its END.

COMPLETION in Greek = συντελείας 4930

Meaning: An accomplishment, **completion, finale**, conclusion, consummation.

COMPLETION in Hebrew = 3615. Kalah

Meaning: to be complete, **at an end**, finished, accomplished, or spent, **FINISHED.**

Completion means that it is at its end. This verse speaks of the feast first and that the moon is the sign of them but its light diminishes upon completion. This confirms the writings of Enoch and is consistent with all other historical data that proves that **the Rabbinical Molad is NOT the Biblical new Moon.**

Philo

Philo lived from approximately 20 BCE until about 50 CE.

Thus, his lifetime spanned not only the years prior to the carpenter from Nazareth's birth, but also the years following his death. Philo's writings do not favor the Rabbinical Molad/Lunar Conjunction New Moon Theory for New Moon Reckoning in Ancient times:

THE SPECIAL LAWS, II XI. (41) The third is that which comes AFTER the conjunction, which happens on the day of the new moon in each month.

****Note:** Philo states that the New Moon is AFTER the conjunction, not BEFORE or DURING.

THE THIRD FESTIVAL

XXVI. (140) Following the order which we have adopted, we proceed to speak of the third festival, that of the NEW MOON. First of all, because it is the beginning of the month, and the beginning, whether of number or of time, is honorable. Secondly, because at this time there is nothing in the whole of heaven destitute of light.

****Note:** According to first-century Philo, when the new moon arrives, "nothing in heaven is left without light." He contrasts this with the conjunction, which he describes as the time when the moon is "lost to sight" and the side that faces earth is darkened.

****Note:** There are '3' Key Elements here:

(1) When Philo says that "nothing in the whole heaven [is] destitute of light" he is referring to the moon when it first becomes visible to the naked eye. Philo refers to the conjunction elsewhere and says that it is "dark."

(2) Notice that he synchronizes the new moon with both the time of the month's beginning, and the numbering of the days.

(3) It is a scientific fact that at the conjunction the moon is "destitute of light" with respect to the ability of any human to perceive it. Philo would be misleading here if he did not mean the first visible new moon, for before it appears there is something "destitute of light," namely the moon.

-->However, as Philo continues, when the new month begins, it (the moon) "resumes its natural brightness." As if those words aren't plain enough in describing when Philo believes the new month begins, he added that at the time of the new moon "the sun begins to illumine the moon with the light which we perceive and the moon reveals its own beauty to the eye."

(141) Thirdly, because at that period the more powerful and important body gives a portion of necessary assistance to the less important and weaker body; 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.



****Note:** At the TIME of the new moon, the sun begins to ILLUMINATE the moon with a light which is VISABLE to the --> outward senses<--, and then she displays her own BEAUTY to the beholders." (The Works of Philo, Special Laws II, 141, p. 581, Hendrickson, 1997, emphasis added).

In this passage He is talking about the FIRST VISABILITY of the New Moon VIA Outward Senses I.E. Naked Eye observation. No telescopes, Binoculars, NASA, USNO, ect, ect.

Philo states that the New Moon is AFTER the conjunction but it is KNOWN TO MAN when it becomes "VISIBLE" to the "OUTWARD SENSES", and not ANY visual aids and maps and charts, but natural eye observation of the Sun & Moon.

In this regard, visual observation is used as a SIGN to BEGIN the Festival of New Moon. A person's sights, smell, touch and hearing is their outward senses. Not calculations of that which is not seen.

"The history of the Jewish calendar may be divided into three periods--the Scriptural, the Talmudic, and the post-Talmudic. **The first [Scriptural] rested purely on the observation of the sun and the moon**, the second [Talmudic] on observation and reckoning, and the third [post-Talmudic--still used today] entirely on reckoning. "(The Jewish Encyclopedia article: "Calendar, History of" pp.498).

Conclusion

According to Scripture, Specifically for the matter to be established, If a mater doesn't have two or three witnesses it is not established whether it be of the punishment for sin or setting of a precedent in righteousness of the instructions of the Almighty.

However in this case we have several witnesses that overwhelmingly prove that the Rabbinical Molad or Lunar Conjunction is NOT the Biblical New Moon. It is a rabbinical and scientific invention that was created without any command from Alohym and is not exclusive to the Hebrew Israelites of Scripture.

The ancient Hebrews had no almanacs or telescopes to figure out when the lunar conjunction would occur. They relied completely on visual observation of the Sun & Moon. There was no UNSO or NASA, and scripture makes no mention of any ancient Israelite using binoculars, telescopes, data for one day, luni-solar calendar converters or any other method other then natural eye observation.

Scripture defines the Moon (and sun) as a light and sign (owth) that is a distinguishing mark that is VISIBLE to the human senses and is used to denote VISIBLE signs, not invisible ones.

Shalom,

Yoel Yahudah Ysrayl
New Moon Calendation
WWW.NEWMOONCALENDATION.COM
info@newmooncalendation.com

