



Lunar Sabbath Illusion, Part 2

Genesis 1:14 is often cited to support a number of unscriptural calendar teachings, including a sunrise Sabbath doctrine and a solar-based, calculated calendar. Not to be left out, the lunar sabbatarians also seize on it as the preeminent proof for their doctrine. The passage is so general that it can be applied to any number of disparate teachings—a universal one size fits all.

Here is the passage: "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 years: And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And Elohim made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: He made the stars also. And Elohim set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and Elohim saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day."

Most lunar sabbatarians will make the following assumptions:

- 1) only the "lights in the heavens" determine the Sabbath, and
- 2) determining the monthly cycle of Sabbaths requires the use of both heavenly lights—the sun and the moon.

Asked how this passage specifically links the moon with the Sabbath, the lunar sabbatarian begins a game of dodge ball. There is absolutely nothing in the pericope expressly linking the moon and its phases to the weekly Sabbath. What role the stars play the lunar sabbatarian does not explain, giving only selective interpretation to the passage.

Sabbath in the Sky?

Lunar Sabbath proponents believe that the moon must be used to identify the Sabbath because the seventh-day Sabbath rhythm is not otherwise evident in nature. That is not entirely true, with science finding a continuous, rhythmic, seven-day behavioral cycle built into both the plant and animal kingdoms. Even humans need a rest every seven days.

Not even seasoned astronomers can look at the moon's phases and distinguish one day from another with complete accuracy. A moon the day before and a day after a first and third quarter phase looks very much like the quarter phase (half) moon itself, with only small variation. The average person would have a tough time trying to decide the Sabbath by such similarities in the moon's appearance.

When it comes to the Full Moon it gets really precarious, with three or four consecutive moons every month all appearing full. Which one do you choose as the Sabbath moon? "Although Full Moon occurs each month at a specific date and time, the Moon's disk may appear to be full for several nights in a row if it is clear. This is because the percentage of the Moon's disk that appears illuminated changes very slowly around the time of Full Moon. The Moon may appear 100%

illuminated only on the night closest to the time of exact Full Moon, but on the night before and night after will appear 97-99% illuminated; most people would not notice the difference. Even two days from Full Moon the Moon's disk is 93-97% illuminated." (quotation from U.S. Naval Observatory).

But that's not all. Every 2.7 years there are two Full Moons in a month, the second of which is known as the Blue Moon. So how would the average believer know when it will happen, not to mention decide which full moon is the correct one?

Here's an even worse nightmare for the lunar sabbatarian: There are months in which no full moons occur! For example, there was a full moon at 18:25 universal time on Feb. 28, 1991. This means there was no February full moon in east Asia and the Pacific, where it was already March. Years in which February lacked a full moon are 1809, 1847, 1866, 1885, 1915, 1934, 1961, 1999, 2018, 2037, 2067, 2094 (Meeus 1995, Odenwald). And that's just February, one month out of 12!

Now be honest: is this the chaos out of which Yahweh established His Sabbath calendar? Are His people supposed to be aware of all these difficulties, anomalies and inconsistencies while gazing up at the moon to determine their weekly day of rest? Do we need college degrees in astronomy to keep the Sabbath holy? Does that sound like the design of a precise, perfect, and wise Creator who gives plain and simple laws for us to observe? What about David tending his flocks in the field, did he know all of this? Or did he just need to know how to count to seven to keep the Sabbath holy? Frankly, the lunar Sabbath scheme appears more like the shenanigans of mythical Greek deities trying to frustrate human beings just for the fun of it.

Test Your Tutelage

True or False: It is proper to call Yahshua "our Messiah."

False. Why? Because "messiah" means anointed, a consecrated person. Properly He is Yahweh's anointed because Yahweh anointed Him, not us, Acts 10:38. Other terms sometimes misunderstood are disciple, which means a learner or student, and apostle, a term that means he who is sent; a delegate. To be an apostle one must have witnessed the resurrected Messiah, Acts 1:22.

New Publications Coming

Watch for three new booklets in the coming weeks: A booklet on how to evangelize effectively, a booklet on debunking the lunar Sabbath doctrine, and a much-needed study on the errors of Easter. All will be postal mailed when available to those receiving YRM News. If you have ideas for other needed studies, contact us!

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Shalom,

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