

Declaring the New Moon

Does the law go forth from Zion Today?

***For now I have chosen and sanctified this house,
that My name may be there forever;
and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.***

(2 Chronicles 7:16 NKJV)

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When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change

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Declaring the New Moon

Is a North American declaration valid?

Does it matter who sees it first?

Does the law go forth from Zion today?

Many nations shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of YHWH, To the house of the Elohim of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion the law shall go forth, And the word of YHWH from Jerusalem".

Mic 4:2

The feast days are determined by the observation of the new moon in the 1st and 7th "moonths". Does it matter from what geographic location we observe the new moon? If the new moon is observed on two different days, from two different geographic locations, does YHWH's Holyday calendar somehow automatically adjust accordingly? Can we decide by organizational convention to observe YHWH's festivals according to a location specific observation of the new moon? Can an observer in North America who sees the new moon the day before it is observed in Jerusalem, declare the start of a new month? Is it acceptable to YHWH to have 2 separate calendars during some months of the year; one declared from a North American new moon observation and the other declared one day later from a Jerusalem new moon observation? Is it acceptable to YHWH for us to use Israel (Jerusalem) to determine when the Abib Barley is ready, and use North America to determine when the new moon arrives? Does Jerusalem matter today? When is Passover where you live? When is the Feast of Tabernacles where you live?

These questions and much more will be addressed in this paper.

Background

For this study, the new moon is defined as the first visible crescent with horns facing to the left and sometimes pointing upward as seen below.



The spring and fall Holy Days play an important part of our worship and honor to YHWH and Yahushua Messiah. It is scripturally clear that the Holy Days are initiated by the physical observation of the new moon (Ex 12:1-2, Lev 23:5-27). It is also historically and scripturally clear that Jerusalem is the location

where YHWH placed His name and authority. In the Old Testament, it is evident the new moon observation was the responsibility of the Levitical Priests and each new month was declared by the physical observation of the new moon as viewed from Jerusalem (Nu 10:8-10, 1 Chron 23:31, Eze 46:1-6). Today, in some assemblies, it is the practice to search for and declare the new moon from the vantage point of the North American continent while disregarding the first visual observation from Zion (Jerusalem). Some even go as far as declaring the new moon from the first observation anywhere on the Earth with no geographic preference.

A new moon as referenced in this paper is defined as the first visible crescent (horns facing to the left). For most new moons, there is no conflict with the visual observation of the new moon from North America verses Jerusalem because they occur on the same night. The new moon is first spotted from Jerusalem and because of the Earth's rotation, 7-10 hours later (depending on your time zone) the same new moon is spotted here in North America (on the same calendar day). However, about 30% of the new moons do not follow this pattern of observation. These "exception" new moons (about 30% of the new moons), are previewed in North America one day early by comparison to Jerusalem. This occurs because the moon revolves around the Earth. Each month the new moon is first visible from a geographically different location. The amount of time from one new moon to the next (called lunation) is roughly 29.53 days. It should be noted that 29.53 is a mean average, the actual lunation month to month is a variable of this number. Our months on the Gregorian calendar are typically 30 or 31 days. It should be apparent that 29.53 does not divide evenly into 30 or for that matter 31.

Astronomy 101

A brief tutorial in lunar astronomy and some basic understanding of the orbital mechanics of the Earth and moon may be helpful to understand the moon crescents in relation to the Earth and sun. Although not to scale, the following graphic provides a visual perspective of the new moon cycle relative to the Earth and sun.



- The moon revolves around the earth, counter clockwise in the diagram above. One full revolution averages 29.53 days (from new moon to the day before the next new moon).
- From new moon (first visible crescent) to first quarter takes approximately 7.4 days. From new moon to full moon takes approximately 14.8 days.
- In the above diagram, the Earth also rotates on its axis counter clockwise.
- The Earth rotates on its own axis. One full rotation takes 24 hours. Specifically the time is 23 hours, 56 minutes and 4 seconds.
- The Earth's circumference at the equator is 24,901 miles. Dividing the circumference by the time for a complete rotation gives us the speed the Earth is rotating, which is approximately 1050 miles per hour. Yes, the ground you are standing on is actually spinning around at over 1000 mile per hour. And you thought you were really just standing still.
- At the same time, the moon is also revolving around the Earth at 2,288 miles per hour. During a full revolution cycle from one new moon to the next new moon, the moon travels a distance of 1,423,000 miles.
- The orbit of the moon around the Earth is elliptical. The average distance to the Earth is 234,400 miles.
- In addition to the orbital mechanics of the Earth and moon, both Earth and moon are travelling as companions in their orbit around the sun at a speed of 67,000 miles per hour. That speed figures to 18.5 miles per second. So the amount of time it took you to read "18.5 miles per second", the entire Earth travelled that distance on its orbital path. The total distance the Earth travels to make one complete revolution around the sun (one year) is 585,000,000 miles.
- Gen 1:14-19 – The creation now takes on an entirely new prospective. YHWH made it all, put it all in place and sustains it.

New Moon Terminology

Astronomical New Moon

In astronomy, the new moon is called the dark phase and there is no visible crescent. In this condition, the moon is in conjunction with the Earth. A lunar conjunction is defined as the event when the earth, moon and sun, in that order, are approximately in a straight line. No visible crescent is seen in this condition. This phase is also known as the dark moon.

Biblical New Moon

A day or two after conjunction (same as Astronomical New Moon), the first distinguishable crescent is visible. The first visible crescent marks the beginning of a new Biblical month. The Biblical new moon is also referred to as the crescent new moon. Although the terms for "New Moon" are potentially confusing, the Biblical New Moon, with its characteristic crescent is the subject of this paper.

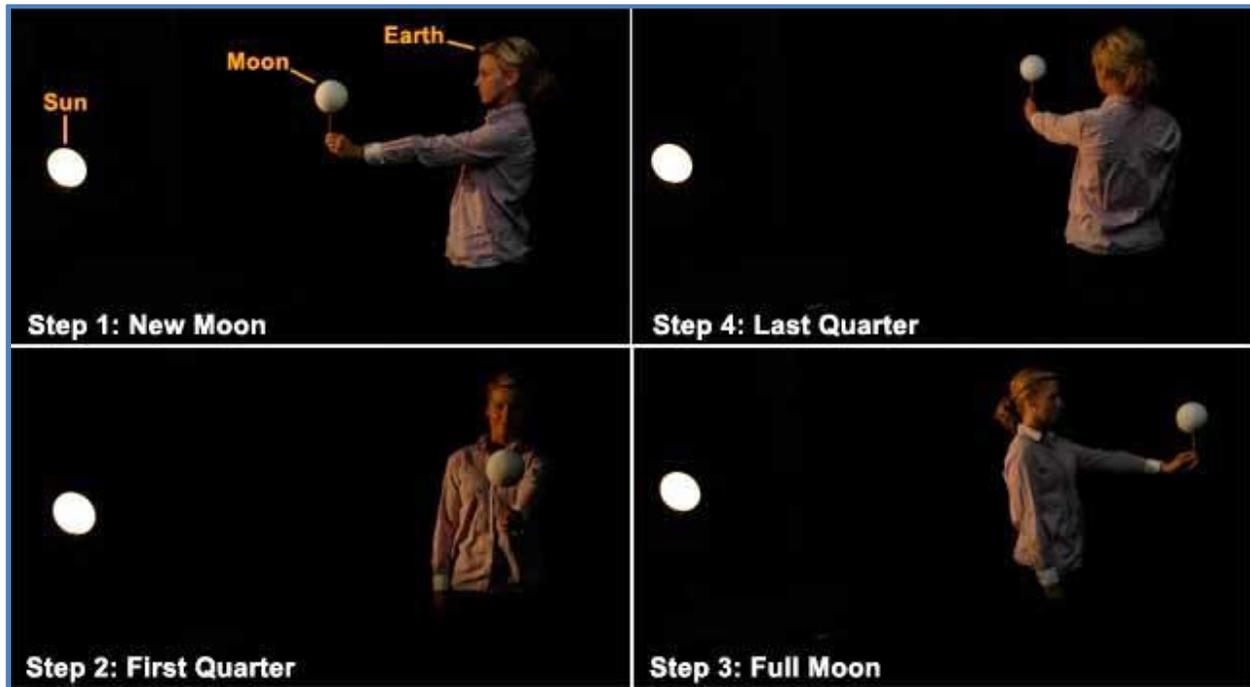
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_moon

Lab Project

A simple experiment will show you the basics of the interaction of the moon and Earth. You can perform this exercise in your own living room. All you need is a relatively bright floor light, a small light colored ball and you. The following diagram shows the 4 steps. If you have an assistant, ask him/her to stand outside the immediate circle that you move in and describe the shadow the light shines on the ball. You will need to perform this experiment in a room with only one light source. Additional lights will cause extraneous shadows on the ball which will confuse the observed result. Each step represents a quarter of the new moon cycle.

Earth Moon Size Comparison

- Earth actual diameter = 7926 miles
- Moon actual diameter = 2159 miles
- In round numbers the Earth is four times the diameter of the moon



- Step 1 – New moon phase – you will need your assistant to report where the sun's reflection is visible. (Your head is effectively the Earth in this experiment)
- Step 2 - First quarter phase – you will see the sun's reflection (your light source) on half or less of the ball.
- Step 3 – Full moon phase – the ball will be fully illuminated by the light source. Note: if you stand between the light source and the ball, your face will prevent the light source from shining on the ball. This is called a lunar eclipse which results from the Earth blocking the sun's light when the moon is at or near full.
- Step 4 – Last quarter phase – the moon is waning to the dark state just before the new moon cycle repeats itself.

Reference:

<http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/education/index.cfm?page=123>

Orbital Mechanics

It should be noted from this experiment that the Earth (your head) is rotating in a counter clockwise direction about 30 full rotations during the one complete new moon cycle (month). Each one of the 30 rotations takes 24 hours (a full 24 hour day). Thirty rotations make up a full month. In other words, at any given moment of time and depending on your geographic location on the Earth, you will have a different view of the sun's reflection on the moon. If you live in Chicago you will have a slightly different view of the sun's reflection on the moon versus if you live in Jerusalem. In reality, the orbital mechanics work out so that you will see a slightly fuller moon (more sun reflection) in Chicago versus Jerusalem on the same evening. That is because Jerusalem is 8 hours ahead of Chicago on the same calendar day. When it is 6 PM in Jerusalem, it is 10 AM in Chicago. By the time dusk comes to Chicago, the moon is 8 hours more advanced in its monthly cycle. As the Earth spins (rotates) on its axis, the moon continues to revolve on its orbit around the Earth reflecting more light as it continues on its orbit. If you were able to take a picture of the moon at 6 PM in Jerusalem and compare it with a picture taken at 6 PM in Chicago (8 hours later the same calendar day), you would notice a slightly fuller moon (larger crescent) at the Chicago location.

Most new moons are first observed in Jerusalem and 8 hours later, the same calendar day, the same new moon is observed in Chicago (albeit a small amount fuller because of the moon's orbit around the Earth).

Occasionally, about 30% of the time, the new moon is observed in Chicago but Jerusalem did not observe it. In other words, Jerusalem did not observe a new moon, however 8 hours later in Chicago it is observed. So how does this happen?

Now that you know a little bit about the moons orbital characteristics, the answer is simple to understand. The moon was just not advanced enough in its monthly cycle to be declared a new moon in Jerusalem; they simply could not see it. The moon was so low on the horizon (from Jerusalem's perspective) that the sun could not reflect the characteristic crescent. However, 8 hours later in Chicago, the moon had advanced far enough in its orbit that a small crescent is visible. If you go back to the Lab Project - step 1, you should be able to create this behavior.

- Line up the sun, moon and Earth (you) in a straight line.
- When you have everything lined up in a straight line, you see no reflection from the sun (light source). This is technically called the dark moon (see [Astronomical New Moon](#)). It should be noted that astronomers call the dark moon the new moon. This should not be confused with the first visible new moon referenced in this paper. See the previous section on [New Moon Terminology](#)
- Move the moon and the Earth (your head) counter clockwise.
- You will notice a slight reflection from the sun on the moon (the ball). There is a point where you see the first visible sliver of reflection. This is the new moon ([Biblical New Moon](#)).
- As you continue to turn counter clockwise, you will see an ever growing reflection from the sun (light source).
- This is what is happening when Jerusalem sees no moon and Chicago does see one.
- Chicago is actually previewing the new moon that will be visible in Jerusalem the next evening.

The end result effect is we sometimes see the new moon first visible in western latitudes a day ahead of the first visible new moon in the eastern latitudes.

Time Zones

The following graphic provides a worldwide view of time zone relationships. Notice the daytime period over North America shown by the bell shaped sunlit highlight. The snapshot that is captured shows daytime in North America and night time in Europe, Middle East and Asia. The clocks show the difference in time relative to Jerusalem.



Notice the following:

- If it is 6 PM in Jerusalem
- It is 1 AM in Tokyo, next Gregorian calendar day (Tokyo is 7 hours later than Jerusalem)
- It is 4 PM in London, same calendar day (2 hours earlier than Jerusalem)
- It is 11 AM in New York, same calendar day (7 hours earlier than Jerusalem)
- It is 10 AM in Chicago, same calendar day (8 hours earlier than Jerusalem)
- It is 8 AM in Los Angeles, same calendar day (10 hours earlier than Jerusalem)
- The day and night both advance to the west (from right to left)

It should be noted that time zones are a manmade convention designed to divide the Earth into 24 equal zones. The ancient Egyptians, dating back to around 1500 BCE, were the early adopters of a day divided into 12 night parts and 12 day parts, which evolved into our current 24 hour system. Time is a relative term; today the worldwide convention is a 24 hour day. We just as easily could have had a 10 hour day or a 60 hour day. Time is simply a universally accepted protocol by which we measure the progress of the rotation of the Earth. The "Scriptural International Dateline" will be the topic of a follow-on research paper.

If you live in North America, you follow Jerusalem's time; you are earlier in the calendar day, not later in the day. In North America, you will never precede or go before the time in Jerusalem; it is just not mechanically possible. In North America, depending on your location, you will always be 7-10 hours earlier in the calendar day compared to Jerusalem. Said a different way, Jerusalem will always be 7-10 hours later (ahead) in the calendar day by comparison to a North American location. If we declare a new moon in North America that is not declared in Jerusalem, we are in fact preceding or jumping ahead of Jerusalem's declaration. North America always waits for Jerusalem; Jerusalem never waits for North America.

Staggering Distances

Obviously, the distances from the Earth to the moon and the Earth to the sun cannot be proportionally correct in the confines of your living room. The experiment is intended to only help you visualize the effects of the sun's reflection on the moon as it revolves around the Earth.

Actual distances:

- Earth to moon approximate – 240,000 miles
- Earth to sun approximate – 93,000,000 miles

To give you an idea of the distances and sizes involved let's scale the Earth to the size of a basketball. At this scale the moon would be about the size of tennis ball. Using this same scale, the distance between the basketball (Earth) and tennis ball (moon) would be about 24 feet.

How about the sun? Using this same scale, the sun would be a ball about 85 feet in diameter and would be 1.75 miles away from the basketball (Earth).

Using this same scale, the nearest star would be 480,000 miles from the basketball (Earth). Yes, that is correct 480,000 miles from the basketball (Earth).

Business Conference – Virtual Time

Case Study

Let's see how the new moon affects the calendar for a business conference. In this exercise you are the new CEO of a multinational Fortune 500 petroleum exploration corporation known on the NASDAQ as "Philadelphia Offshore Corporation" or "PhileOff Corp" on the ticker. You have 25,000 employees positioned around the world. Your corporate headquarter is located in Philadelphia and has 1000 employees, mostly senior management. Your operations headquarters is located in Riyadh Saudi Arabia, where the remainder of the 25,000 employees report.

As the new CEO you decide to sponsor an annual company business conference for all employees. The conference will be held in April, 15 days after the new moon.

This is the invitation you (the CEO) send out to all your employees:

Thank you for making PhileOff such a profitable corporation. I would like to personally invite all of you to our corporate headquarters location in Philadelphia for a seven day, all expenses paid conference for you and your spouse.

Conference date: the 15th day after the new moon

Start time: 8 AM

Day 1 agenda:

Distribution of bonuses

Special Awards Dinner

We have had an outstanding year and the executive management team will personally meet you and present you with your bonus. Additionally, on the first day we will present 500 of you from our Riyadh location with "Outstanding Achievement Awards", valued as a pearl of great price.

On behalf of the Executive Management team, we look forward to seeing you on the 15th day after the new moon.

As the meeting date approaches, you (the CEO) ensure the Philadelphia Corporate Headquarters location is sparkling clean and ready for your first companywide business conference. The meeting halls are setup, the closed circuit video system has been tested and the Corporate Management team has been briefed.

On the 15th day after the new moon, you arise early and go to the office and meet with your executive management team at 7:30 AM. You are starting to feel a little anxious because of the significance of the day ahead, but something doesn't seem right. After all it's 7:30 and there are no early arrivals. You know the Riyadh personnel are always punctual with customer meetings; surely they would not be late for this event would they? By 7:45 AM your entire management team is now alarmed, why hasn't anybody shown up? You nervously ask your secretary if the invitation went out properly, and she replies affirmatively.

Now at 8:15 AM your secretary informs you that you have a call from the Riyadh location manager to confirm he is preparing to leave for the conference starting tomorrow. "What" you barked, "today is the 15th day after the new moon and you and the entire Riyadh office were intended to be here for the distribution of bonuses and the special Outstanding Achievement Awards". The Riyadh location manager responded that "today is the 14th day after the new moon, the conference starts tomorrow. Everybody here clearly saw the new moon 14 days ago."

Oops...

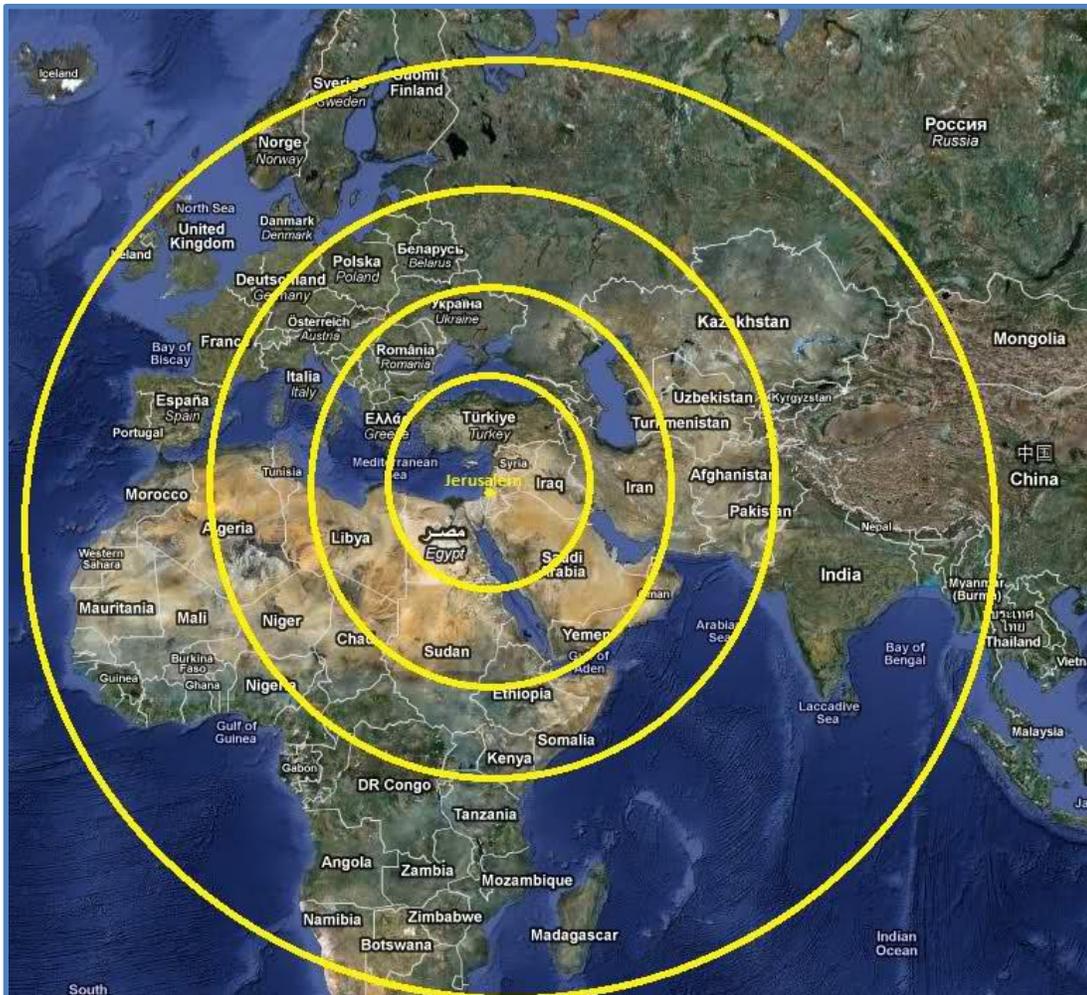
In this exercise If you lived in the western latitudes (North America as an example) and were scheduling a business meeting with your customers in the eastern latitudes (Asia), and told your company employees we will meet 15 days after we first observe the new moon, 70% of the time you would conduct your meeting the same day. However, about 30% of the time, you are going to preview the new moon the day before your Asian employees saw the new moon and your meeting schedule will be corrupted. So what do you do in those months? Do you have two meetings on separate days? Is there a "virtual calendar" for this situation? Probably not, you would need to agree on which new moon you would conduct your meeting on. Otherwise, you would have two separate calendars that month and would be on different schedules. No business can operate with a calendar that is virtual; when your 15th is my 14th or your 14th is my 15th. Somebody has to adjust.

Since there is no practical way to have a virtual calendar, we need to have a standard reference from which to determine the start of a month. Once we have a standard, there will be no necessity to keep two calendar schedules during certain months. In other words, there can be only one master location from which we keep the calendar.

Center of the Earth

The Bible makes it clear that the centralized scheduling location is Jerusalem. The following reference shows Ezekiel's testimony that Jerusalem is the center of the nations. The word "midst" used in the KJV and NKJV comes from the Hebrew word "tawvek". The connotation of "tawvek" is center. The HCSB and RSV translations better render the word as "center".

- *"Thus says YHWH Elohim: 'This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the midst of the nations and the countries all around her. She has rebelled against My judgments by doing wickedness more than the nations, and against My statutes more than the countries that are all around her; for they have refused My judgments, and they have not walked in My statutes.'* (Eze 5:5-6 NKJV)
 - Midst = H8432 = taw'-vek = to sever; a bisection, the center
 - *"This is what YHWH Elohim says: I have set this Jerusalem in the center of the nations, with countries all around her.* (Eze 5:5 HCSB)
 - *Thus says YHWH Elohim: This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the center of the nations, with countries round about her.* (Eze 5:5 RSV)
 - The word "midst" in the NKJV is translated as "center" in the HCSB and RSV versions.
 - Jerusalem is referenced as the center of the nations on the Earth.
 - *Do not remove the ancient landmark which your fathers have set.* (Pro 22:28)



Jerusalem Matters

Jerusalem is referenced 814 times in the Bible, with an additional 153 references for Zion. After Israel (2509 occurrences), Jerusalem is the most referenced location in the Bible.

- A precious and sure foundation is made in Jerusalem through Yahushua Messiah
Isa 28:16-17
- Abraham offered Isaac on Mt. Moriah, a prototype of Yahushua's sacrifice - Gen 22:1-19
- Isaac met his bride in Jerusalem, a prototype of Yahushua meeting His bride
Gen 24:63-67
- King David made Jerusalem the capital – 2 Sam 5:6-9
- Solomon built the first Temple at Jerusalem – 1 Kg 6:14, 2 Chron 3:1-2
- Zerubbabel and Nehemiah rebuilt the second Temple in Jerusalem – Neh 4 – 6, Ez 40 - 46
- Pray for peace in Jerusalem – Ps 122:6-7
- Jerusalem is the city of the Great King – Matt 5:35, Matt 23:37
- Yahushua was crucified in Jerusalem – Matt 27:33
- Yahushua was resurrected in Jerusalem – Acts 1:10-12, Luke 24:46
- Repentance and grace should be preached in His name, beginning at Jerusalem
Luke 24:47
- The new covenant assembly is centered in Jerusalem – Acts 1 & 2
- Jerusalem is the Heavenly city of the living YHWH – Heb 12:22
- Yahushua will return to Jerusalem – Zech 14:4, Math 24:30, Rev 5:10
- The Heavenly City will descend on New Jerusalem – Rev 21 & 22, Ez 47

YHWH's Name is Forever in Jerusalem

- *He even set a carved image of Asherah that he had made, in the house of which YHWH had said to David and to Solomon his son, "In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever. (2Ki 21:7 NKJV)*
 - Notice "forever" in spite of interim pagan practices.
- *He shall build a house for My name, and he shall be My son, and I will be his Father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever. (1Ch 22:10 NKJV)*
- *Now I am building a temple for the name of YHWH my Elohim in order to dedicate it to Him for burning fragrant incense before Him, for displaying the rows of the bread of the Presence continuously, and for sacrificing burnt offerings for the morning and the evening, the Sabbaths and the New Moons, and the appointed festivals of YHWH our Elohim. This is ordained for Israel forever. (2Chron 2:4 HCSB)*
- *And I have now chosen and consecrated this temple so that My name may be there forever; My eyes and My heart will be there at all times. (2Chron 7:16 HCSB)*

- *He built altars in YHWH's temple, where YHWH had said, "Jerusalem is where **My name will remain forever.**" (2 Chron 33:4 HCSB)*

Forever includes then, now and tomorrow. YHWH does not change, He is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow.

- *"For I am YHWH, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob. (Mal 3:6 NKJV)*
- *Yahushua Messiah is the same yesterday, today, and forever. (Heb 13:8 NKJV)*
- *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. (Jas 1:17 NKJV)*

Geographic Prejudice

Today, by manmade convention, some assemblies located in North American, set the dates for YHWH's Holy Days by declaration of the visible new moon, as viewed solely from the North American perspective. The North American viewing practice works fine about 70% of the time because it appropriately follows 7-10 hours after the Jerusalem reckoning. The date set by this practice for the new moon is used by these assemblies to anchor the start of both the spring and the fall Holy Day seasons. During the spring Holy Days (Abib), this reckoning is interlaced with the requirement to find "Aviv" barley suitable for the Wave Sheaf offering during the Days of Unleavened Bread. However, as a result of the orbital mechanics of the Earth and Moon, about 30% of the time the new moon is declared in North America a full day ahead of the same declaration in Jerusalem.

In addition some assemblies rely solely on the North American new moon declaration and depend on the Abib barley assessment as reported from Israel (Jerusalem). In 2013, the new moon for Abib was spotted a full day earlier in North America in contrast to being observed from Jerusalem. The end result is the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread were kept by those in Israel, Europe and Africa (probably India too) a day later than those in North America. It is more accurate to say that those in North America (that subscribe to the North American new moon declaration practice) sometimes kept the Passover one day early. With the geographically biased North American practice, the calendar consistency of YHWH's Holy Days is abandoned in favor of a manmade calendar agreement. Bottom-line, in 2013 there were 2 separate calendars during both the spring and fall holy days, depending on which continent you lived on. YHWH is not the author of confusion or inconsistency.

1 Co 14:33

As has been stated by an anonymous wise man:

This type of reasoning is not good exegetically,

Nor is it a good hermeneutical study.

But it is however, Babylonian confusion!

It should also be considered that one in every 3 or 4 new moons is previewed (a day ahead) in North America. If the existing North American new moon declaration practice is administered during the entire year, there would be 2 separate calendar systems in place during 3 or 4 months scattered throughout the year. Those that live in North America would have a different calendar (one day difference) from those in the East, Middle East, European and Asian countries. This method of time keeping is not of order, harmony and consistency.

It is clear to all of us that the use of Postponements in the Hebrew calendar is a manmade addition and has no scriptural foundation. Declaring the new moon as the start of a month from North America is also a manmade addition to YHWH's calendar. It is a logical conclusion that this practice, which is made for convenience and by convention with multiple assemblies, falls into the same category as the Rules for Postponements.

New Moon and Barley

An addition inconsistency is associated with the North American new moon practice; the Passover season is determined and observed at the concurrence of two events:

1. There will be sufficient Barley in the Abib level of maturity for the Wave Sheaf offering after Abib 14. Lev 23:10-11
2. There is a new moon visible to proclaim Abib 1. Ex 12:1-2

If one uses the argument that Jerusalem is no longer the spiritual center of the Earth and the law currently does not go forth from Zion, why is it important to find Abib Barley from Israel? Using this logic, if you declare the new moon from North America, you also need to declare the Barley from North America. It would seem consistent to look for Abib Barley from the same geography from where the new moon is being declared.

If it is important to declare Barley ready for the Passover from the geography of Israel, it is of equal importance to declare the new moon from the same location. These two events must be declared together from the same geography.

Previewing the New Moon

About 70% of the time, the new moon as observed in North America is in fact the same new moon first seen in Jerusalem although it is 7-10 hours old(er), depending on your time zone. As previously discussed, if you were able to take a picture of the same new moon (observed in North America) compared to the new moon observed 7-10 hours previously in Jerusalem, you would notice the North American new moon is slightly fuller than the one seen in Jerusalem. No problem, it is exciting to spot the new moon from your location. In the 70% situation, the person observing the new moon is actually witnessing the beginning of a new month. It should be clear though, that the new month is 7-10 hours older, because the new moon was first declared in Jerusalem the same day. The new moon was declared first in Jerusalem, not the North American location.

About 30% of the time, the new moon observed in North America is not the new moon observed from Jerusalem. In fact, in this case, no one even saw the new moon in Jerusalem. This is because the new moon was too low on the horizon in Jerusalem. In other words, in Jerusalem there was no visible new moon crescent. The Earth, moon and sun are in an approximate straight line alignment and no sunlight is reflected back to the Earth. This condition is called a lunar conjunction.

However, 7-10 hours later, the moon has continued on its revolution around the Earth and the Earth has rotated on its axis some 8-10,000 miles. The effect is the moon is no longer in a lunar conjunction state and the sun reflects the familiar left facing crescent. As a result, the moon that was not visible in Jerusalem is now visible in North America on the same calendar day.

In the 30% situation, Jerusalem will see the Biblical new moon the next evening at dusk. The new moon visible in North America (the day before) was simply a preview of the new moon declared from Jerusalem which properly initiates the new month.

Two Calendars?

The practice of the "me first" North American new moon declaration causes two calendars to be in affect about 30% of the time.

Here is an example of what happens:

1. There was no new moon spotted in Jerusalem on March 25th.
2. A new moon is spotted in North America on March 25th (7-10 hours after Jerusalem did not see the new moon). This "me first" North America moon is declared to be the new moon for the month of Abib.
3. The next evening, March 26th, the new moon is spotted in Jerusalem. The new moon seen in Jerusalem is declared to be the new moon for the month of Abib.

4. We now have 2 calendars in affect. The North American calendar starts on Monday, March 25th (Abib 1) and the Jerusalem calendar starts on Tuesday March 26th (Abib 1).
5. The Passover in North America will be on April 7th (Abib 14).
6. The Passover in Jerusalem will be on April 8th (Abib 14).
7. We now have 2 calendars for Abib with YHWH's holy days being observed on different days.
8. Should Passover start on April 7th in North America, a full day ahead of the start date in Jerusalem on April 8th?

In any given month, there can be only one location on the Earth where the new moon declares the new month.

Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of YHWH's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of YHWH, To the house of the Elohim of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of YHWH from Jerusalem. (Isa 2:2-3 NKJV)

Q & A

Q. The scripture in Isa 2:3 says the law proceeds from Zion, but isn't this a reference to the millennium?

A. Yes it is a reference to the millennium when all things will be restored; however it is also a reference for today as well.

- The law went forth from Jerusalem in the OT.
- The law went for from Jerusalem in Yahushua's time.
- The law will go forth from Jerusalem in the millennium.
- If then, and yet in the future, why not now?

Q. When Moses declared the Passover while in Egypt, he must have used a local new moon observation (Ex 12:2). Isn't this evidence that local observation was accepted as far back as 1446 BCE?

A. The starting location of the Exodus was Rameses in Egypt (Ex 12:37). This location is near the modern city of Cairo. The straight line distance from Cairo to Jerusalem is roughly 260 miles. In fact today, Cairo and Jerusalem share the same time zone (Eastern European Time). If you were measuring the difference in the new moon observation, the time would be less than 15 minutes. This amount of time is insignificant in the observation of the new moon from these 2 locations. It would be very rare if ever, the new moon would be seen in Cairo and not in Jerusalem in any given month. In this example, the new moon YHWH declared for Moses would have been the same new moon as observed from Jerusalem.

Q. What about the Apostle Paul who traveled for as long as two years and as far away as Corinth and locations in Greece, what new moon did he use?

A. Yes, Paul travelled as long as 2 years, but he didn't travel very far in that amount of time. The straight line distance from Corinth (measured from Athens) to Jerusalem is approximately 780 miles. Again today, Corinth (Athens) and Jerusalem are in the same time zone (Eastern European Time). If you were measuring the difference in the new moon observation, the time would be less than 45 minutes. This would be like comparing the new moon observation in New York City verses Chicago. It would be very rare, if ever the new moon would be seen in Chicago and not New York on the same night.

Q. I live in North America and see the new moon crescent, but you tell me that it doesn't count since Jerusalem did not observe the new moon the same evening. Why should I bother looking? Doesn't my observation count?

A. This is the classic "me first" approach. Yes, it is correct; your observation does not count. There cannot be two separate start days to a month. About 30% of the time, the North American new moon

observation previews or precedes the Jerusalem sighting. This is due to the orbital mechanics of the Earth and moon. Please refer to the section titled "[Astronomy 101](#)" for the basics on how the Earth and moon interact. Yes, it is exciting to look for the new moon from any geographic location. You must keep in mind that your viewing location is not the only viewing location. The Earth is 25,000 miles in circumference and it takes 24 hours to make a complete rotation and the ground under your feet is actually spinning at 1000 mile per hour or about 1500 feet per second.

Another answer to this question is in the form of a question: What would you tell the person in Jerusalem that did not see the new moon crescent when you did in North America? Would you tell him that your North American observation took precedence and was the proper declaration and his Jerusalem view was invalid?

Q. When the tribulation comes, we may not have access to the Internet, television or be able to know when the new moon is declared in Jerusalem. Shouldn't we be practicing local new moon declaration now in order to be prepared to keep YHWH's holy days during the tribulation?

A. As the tribulation matures, keeping YHWH's holy days is going to be harder and harder. However, as the Israelites were protected under YHWH's wing when they left Egypt (Ex 13:21 & Ex 14:19), so will those who demonstrate their unwavering faith be protected in the tribulation (Rev 3:10, Rev 12:14, Ps 27:5). The whole Earth is prophesied to be in chaos and eventually the sun and moon will not give their light, precluding any new moon declaration from any geographic location (Matt 24:29, Joel 2:31). The conditions will deteriorate to the point that we will not be able to declare a new moon; we will be totally dependent by faith in Yahushua.

We know that the 2 witnesses will be given the power to prophesy for 1260 days (Rev 11:3). We also know the whole Earth will rejoice when the 2 witnesses are finally killed at the end of the tribulation (Rev 11:10). This event will be witnessed by the entire Earth via Internet and television media broadcasting. This scripture seems to indicate that, although controlled, the Internet and television media will be functional. How else would the world know of the death of the 2 witnesses? This will be a CNN broadcast event. Even though there will be media censure by the despot authorities, the Internet will be alive and functioning. The Internet, by design, has secure and encrypted connections that are available to anyone with the skill to use them. Could it be that the 2 witnesses are given the authority directly from YHWH to declare the new moon? In any case, YHWH will provide for all our needs. We need not pursue solutions for tomorrow's problems that are based on today's conjecture.

- *And my Elohim shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Messiah Yahushua.*
(Phil 4:19 NKJV)

Q. We don't keep the weekly Sabbath on Jerusalem time, why should we use the new moon declaration from Jerusalem instead of our local North American declaration?

A. It is an invalid premise that we do not keep the weekly Sabbath in North America based on Jerusalem time. We in fact do keep the weekly Sabbath on Jerusalem time. This is the exact reason we should follow Jerusalem's lead for the new moon. The weekly Sabbath **always** starts in Jerusalem at sunset, Friday evening. As a result of the rotation of the Earth's axis, those of us that live in North America always observe the weekly Sabbath 7-10 hours after Jerusalem (depending on your North American time zone location). There are NO exceptions to this, it always happens this way.

This question also comingles the weekly Sabbath as a comparison to the new moon cycle (month). YHWH has placed the sun and moon near us as master time clocks. However, they support different elements of the master clock (calendar). The sun determines the day, the moon determines the month. The day is determined by the setting and rising of the sun. The month is determined by the waxing and waning of the moon.

- The word "month" is found 250 times in the Bible.
 - 246 occurrences in the OT
 - 4 occurrences in the NT

- In the OT "month" is almost always translated as:
 - H2320 = chôdesh = the new moon, by implication a month

The new moon determines the Holyday cycles, not the sun. To argue that the weekly Sabbath cycle is determined the same way as the annual Holyday cycle is astronomically misinformed.

- *He appointed the moon for seasons; The sun knows its going down.* (Ps 104:19)

We already follow Jerusalem's lead in keeping the 7th day weekly Sabbath. We should also follow Jerusalem's lead in the starting benchmark for the month.

Q. We are no longer under the Levitical priesthood; we are now under the Melchizedek order. Under the Melchizedek order we worship in spirit and in truth independent of our geographic location. Why do we still need to look to Jerusalem as the central location from which to declare the new moon?

A. During the millennium we will be under the Melchizedek order of the Priesthood and it is clear from the following scripture in Isaiah that the law and YHWH's word will proceed or go forth from Jerusalem.

Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of YHWH's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of YHWH, To the house of the Elohim of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of YHWH from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore. (Isa 2:2-4 NKJV)

It is reasoned by some that since there is no functional temple today, the law no longer goes forth from Jerusalem. This reasoning asserts that as soon as the millennial temple is up and running, Isaiah 2:3 will go into effect, but not before. This logic is applied to attempt to justify that the local assembly has the authority to declare the new moon.

The Bible clearly states that Jerusalem was, is and always will be where YHWH places His name. Even without a functioning Temple, there has been no interruption to YHWH's claim that Jerusalem is His city.

- *And YHWH said to him: "I have heard your prayer and your supplication that you have made before Me; I have consecrated this house which you have built to put My name there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.* 1 Kg 9:3
- *He also built altars in the house of YHWH, of which YHWH had said, "In Jerusalem shall My name be forever."* 2 Chron 33:4

In Daniel 9, the time setting is 522 BCE (the first year of Darius). The rebuild effort undertaken by Zerubbabel had ceased and would not restart until the 2nd year of Darius (see Ezra 4:24). The Temple was not operational until the 6th year of Darius (Ezra 6:15), which interestingly was a Sabbatical year (517-516 BCE).

- *"O YHWH, according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people are a reproach to all those around us. Now therefore, our Elohim, hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications, and for YHWH's sake cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate.* (Dan 9:16-17 NKJV)
 - Even though the city was still in ruins Daniel refers to it as "Your holy mountain".
 - Daniel prayed to YHWH not to turn away from Jerusalem - Dan 9:16
Dan 9:1 – 1st year of Darius = 522 BCE
However, Jerusalem/Temple had been destroyed in 587 BCE, rebuilt in 517 BCE.

- Even though the Temple was not operational, and the rebuild work had ceased, Daniel refers to the Temple as “your sanctuary”.
- This is the situation today. The city of Jerusalem is still YHWH’s holy mountain and the non-operational Temple is still His sanctuary.
- Daniel touched at time of evening prays – Dan 9:20-21
Dan 9:1 – 1st year of Darius = 522 BCE
However, Jerusalem/Temple has been destroyed in 587 BCE, rebuilt in 517 BCE
- Daniel focuses/prays for non-existent Jerusalem – Isa 2:3

Even though today the Temple currently is non-operational, Yahushua the High Priest of the Melchizedek order identifies Mount Zion as the heavenly Jerusalem. Yes, there is a double meaning using the physical location as a type of the spiritual location. If Jerusalem was no longer relevant, it would not be identified.

- Melchizedek is King of Salem (Jerusalem) – Heb 7:1
- *But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living Elohim, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and assembly of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to YHWH the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Yahushua the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, (Heb 12:22-25)*

We have come to the heavenly city, not will come.

YHWH has placed His name in Zion in perpetuity. The location is as relevant today as it was in King David’s time, and will be at the return of Yahushua Messiah, and on forever.

- *And YHWH said to him: "I have heard your prayer and your supplication that you have made before Me; I have consecrated this house which you have built to put My name there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually. (1 Kg 9:3 NKJV)*
- *He even set a carved image of Asherah that he had made, in the house of which YHWH had said to David and to Solomon his son, "In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever; (2 Kg 21:7 NKJV)*
- *Those who trust in YHWH are like Mount Zion, Which cannot be moved, but abides forever. (Ps 125:1 NKJV)*

Scriptures to Consider

- *But You, O YHWH, are a shield for me, My glory and the One who lifts up my head. I cried to YHWH with my voice, And He heard me from His holy hill. Ps 3:3-4*
- *And those who know Your name will put their trust in You; For You, YHWH, have not forsaken those who seek You. Sing praises to YHWH, who dwells in Zion! Declare His deeds among the people. Ps 9:10-11*
- *May YHWH send you help from the sanctuary, and give you support from Zion! Psalm 20:2*

Spiritually, YHWH’s help and deliverance comes from Zion

- *May YHWH answer you in the day of trouble; May the name of the Elohim of Jacob defend you; May He send you help from the sanctuary, And strengthen you out of Zion; Ps 20:1-2*
- *The Mighty One, YHWH, Has spoken and called the earth from the rising of the sun to its going down. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, YHWH will shine forth. Our Elohim shall come, and*

shall not keep silent; A fire shall devour before Him, And it shall be very tempestuous all around Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, And to the earth, that He may judge His people: "Gather My saints together to Me, Those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." Let the heavens declare His righteousness, For YHWH Himself is Judge. Selah "Hear, O My people, and I will speak, O Israel, and I will testify against you; I am YHWH, your Elohim. Ps 50:1-7

Perfection of beauty, city of hope.

- *His foundation is in the holy mountains. YHWH loves the gates of Zion More than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of YHWH! Ps 87:1-3*
- *YHWH said to my Master, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." YHWH shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! Your people shall be volunteers in the day of Your power; In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth. Ps 110:1-3*
- *Blessed is everyone who fears YHWH, Who walks in His ways. When you eat the labor of your hands, You shall be happy, and it shall be well with you. Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine In the very heart of your house, Your children like olive plants all around your table. Behold, thus shall the man be blessed who fears YHWH. YHWH bless you out of Zion, And may you see the good of Jerusalem All the days of your life. Yes, may you see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel! Ps 128:1-6*
- *Rejoice with Jerusalem, And be glad with her, all you who love her; Rejoice for joy with her, all you who mourn for her; That you may feed and be satisfied With the consolation of her bosom, That you may drink deeply and be delighted With the abundance of her glory. For thus says YHWH: "Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, And the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream. Then you shall feed; On her sides shall you be carried, And be dandled on her knees. As one whom his mother comforts, So I will comfort you; And you shall be comforted in Jerusalem." When you see this, your heart shall rejoice, And your bones shall flourish like grass; The hand of YHWH shall be known to His servants, And His indignation to His enemies. Isa 66:10-14*

Blessings proceed from Zion.

<p>Glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion city of our Yah; He whose word cannot be broken Formed thee for His own abode. On the Rock of Ages founded, What can shake Thy sure repose? With salvation's walls surrounded, Thou may smile at all Thy foes.</p>	<p>Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me, I once was lost but now am found, Was blind but now I see.</p>
<p>By John Newton</p>	

Reading Conventions

Consider for a moment the convention we use to read or write a book:

- Historically, if you lived in a country that is west of Jerusalem, you would read and write from left to right (Latin, Greek, German).
- Historically, if you lived in a country that is east of Jerusalem, you would generally read and write from right to left (Aramaic, Persian, Chinese, Japanese).
- Obviously, there are exceptions to this, but it is historically generally true. Today some of the languages have changed direction from the early manuscripts. As an example, Chinese is now written left to right.
- Even our languages point to Jerusalem.

Conclusion

1. Where did YHWH direct Abraham to move to?
2. Where is the Promised Land inherited by the tribes of Jacob?
3. Where was the Temple built?
4. Where was Messiah born?
5. Where was Messiah crucified?
6. Where was the New Testament assembly centered?
7. Where will Messiah return to?
8. Where will the new heaven and new Earth be located?

While there is no clear command in the Bible to declare the New Moon based on a Jerusalem observation, it is ultimately an unavoidable requirement that there is but one recognized standard calendar accepted throughout the entire world. In the millennium, is there a question from where we will declare the new moon? Will there be 2 accepted annual Passover dates, one for North America and one for everyone else? YHWH has chosen Jerusalem as His capital city. Jerusalem was, is and always will be the center of the Earth (Eze 5:5), from where YHWH's law is administered. There are simply no other alternatives.

- *My covenant I will not break, Nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips. Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David: His seed shall endure forever, And his throne as the sun before Me; It shall be established forever like the moon, Even like the faithful witness in the sky.* Ps 89:34-37
- *For Zion's sake I will not hold My peace, And for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, Until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, And her salvation as a lamp that burns.* Isa 62:1
- *Many nations shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of YHWH, To the house of the Elohim of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion the law shall go forth, And the word of YHWH from Jerusalem.* Mic 4:2
- *Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for Messiah to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things.* Luke 24:46-48
- *Do not remove the ancient landmark which your fathers have set.* Pro 22:28
 - *"You shall not remove your neighbor's landmark, which the men of old have set, in your inheritance which you will inherit in the land that YHWH your Elohim is giving you to possess.* (Deut 19:14 NKJV)
 - *'Cursed is the one who moves his neighbor's landmark.'* "And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'" (Deut 27:17 NKJV)
 - *Do not remove the ancient landmark, Nor enter the fields of the fatherless;* Pro 23:10
- *And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of YHWH shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, As YHWH has said, among the remnant whom YHWH calls.* - Joel 2:32
- *He who has ears to hear, let him hear!* Matt 11:15
- *He who has ears to hear, let him hear!* Matt 13:9
- *And he said to them, "he who has ears to hear, let him hear!* Mark 4:9
- *If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.* Mark 4:23
- *If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!* Mark 7:16

When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.