

Jews Observed Same Lunar Sabbath as The Messiah Did

Philo (20 BCE – 50 CE), known also as **Philo of Alexandria** (gr. Φίλων ὁ Ἀλεξανδρεὺς), **Philo Judaeus**, **Philo Judaeus of Alexandria**, **Yedidia** and **Philo the Jew**, was an Hellenistic Jewish philosopher born in Alexandria.

Philo used allegory to fuse and harmonize Greek philosophy and Judaism. His method followed the practices of both Jewish exegesis and Stoic philosophy. His work was not widely accepted. "The sophists of literalness," as he calls them^[1], "opened their eyes superciliously" when he explained to them the marvels of his exegesis. Philo's works were enthusiastically received by the Early Christians, some of whom saw in him a cryptic Christian. His concept of the Logos as God's creative principle apparently influenced early Christology. To him Logos was God's "blueprint for the world", a governing plan.^[dubious – discuss]

Arguments have been put forth that Philo was actually the founder of Christianity by virtue of his combination of Jewish theological ideas and those present in the Greek mystery religions, a combination of which would appear much like Christianity. It is possible the followers of Jesus seized upon Philo's precepts and incorporated them into the letters that became the New Testament.^[2]

The few biographical details concerning Philo are found in his own works, especially in *Legatio ad Gaium* ("embassy to Gaius"), and in Josephus.^[3] The only event in his life that can be determined chronologically is his participation in the embassy which the Alexandrian Jews sent to the emperor Caligula at Rome as the result of civil strife between the Alexandrian Jewish and Hellenized communities. This occurred in the year 40 CE.

Ancestry, family and early life

Philo was probably born with the name *Julius Philo*. Philo came from an aristocratic family who lived in Alexandria for generations. His ancestors and family were contemporaries to the rule of the Ptolemaic dynasty and the rule of the Seleucid Empire. Although the names of his parents are unknown, Philo came from a family who were noble, honourable and wealthy. It was either his father or paternal grandfather who was granted Roman citizenship from Roman dictator Gaius Julius Caesar. Philo had two brothers Alexander the Alabarch and Lysimachus.

His ancestors and family had social ties and connections to the Priesthood in Judea; Hasmonean Dynasty; Herodian Dynasty and Julio-Claudian dynasty in Rome. Philo was a contemporary to the life of Jesus of Nazareth and the lives of The Apostles of Jesus. Philo along with his brothers received a thorough education. They were educated in the Egyptian, Jewish, Greek and Roman cultures, particularly in the traditions of Judaism, the study of the Old Testament and in Greek Philosophy.

WHY ARE THE WRITING'S OF PHILO THE JEW SO IMPORTANT?????

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

The evidence reveals that Philo’s beliefs were representative of those of Judaism during that period of time. Philo, who was born and raised in Alexandria, Egypt, was one of more than

100,000 Jews living in that city. When the prefect Flaccus initiated a massacre of the Jews in the year 39 CE, Philo was selected to head the Jewish delegation that went to Rome to plead their case before Gaius Caligula.

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

Absolutely. Sabbath observance is one of the most distinguishing marks of Judaism, or as author Dayan Grunfeld put it, the Sabbath "epitomizes the whole of Judaism." For Philo to have "gone against the grain" of Judaism with regard to Sabbath observance would have signaled a break with Judaism. We can thus discern that if Philo observed the lunar weeks and Sabbath by the phases of the moon each week, so did the rest of his fellow Jews, including our Savior because there were no controversy between our Savior and the Jews concerning the weekly Sabbath .

We believe Philo did a pretty decent job of explaining how, the weeks are connected to the moon, which are covered in his book.

We feel that a major blow to Sat- sabbatarian theology involves that which Philo "left out" of his writings pertaining to any Saturday Sabbaths. Not once did Philo mention another week other than the "lunar" cycle in determining the Sabbath day. In fact, the word "Saturday or Saturn's day" isn't mentioned even "once" in Philo's entire book.

This is significant, as elsewhere in Philo's writings, he devotes much space to discussing the cycle of the moon and the #7. In fact, the day of the new moon is listed separate from the weeks as one of the major feasts, and he never counted the new moon when counting the 28 days of the 4 weeks or 4 Sabbaths each month/moon. We find it to be very interesting that Philo mentioned the "moon" and it's phases of waxing and waning in his commentary regarding the Sabbath. In his writings, Philo distinguishes new moon observance as a separate feast from the weekly Sabbath, and that is why he never includes the new moon in counting out the weeks.

Please study Philo carefully and prayerfully because Philo was an "eye witness " of how things were done by the Jews in our Savior's day, including when a week begins and ends. We should not ignore the testimony of eye witnesses when searching for the truth on how something was done. Here are a few of the many proofs of how the Jews in our Saviour's day understood weeks and Sabbaths.

In order to have a lunar Sabbath, you must have a lunar “week”, did Philo link the Sabbath or the “week” with the phases of the moon or not??? The answer is yes in fact the lunar week and lunar Sabbath is the only week or Sabbath mentioned in Philo’s writings. Let us begin in his writings.

ON MATING WITH THE PRELIMINARY STUDIES, X1X (102) it says,

"For it is said in the Scripture: On the tenth day of this month let each of them take a sheep according to his house; in order that from the tenth, there may be consecrated to the tenth, that is to God, the sacrifices which have been preserved in the soul, which is illuminated in two portions out of the three, until it is entirely changed in every part, and becomes a heavenly brilliancy like a full moon, at the height of its increase at the end of the second “week”...

Please let what Philo just said sink in. His readers and fellow Jews of that era, or in those days understand that the weeks were by the moon, and that at the end of the second week they would be a full moon. This statement needs no interpretation. The people understood that the weeks were by the moon, same as in the Scriptures. If this is so then the sacred seventh day of the week, which comes at the end of the second week must be a full moon Sabbath (Psalms 81:3-6). Why? Because in many places Philo speaks of the weekly seventh day, and we all know that the seventh day comes at the end of the week. People would like for us to believe that the months were originally by the moon but the weeks were not.

Philo was making an observation of how a person can be spiritually illuminated to a full brilliance just like a full moon at the height of its increase at the end of the second week. Philo did not count the new moon when counting out the weeks as these calendars do today. This statement is very easily proven from the writings of Philo because he states in other places thought his book that the full moon is on the 15th each month and he also separates the new moon as a separate feast day, from the weeks. Writers today would instead count the new moon day in counting their weeks, but it is obvious from Philo that he did not count the new moon day when counting out the weeks. This is because at the end of the second week the full moon would be on the 14th instead of the 15th as Philo plainly declares many times. In other words you have your new moon worship day, then six workdays and then the weekly Sabbath on the 8th day of the moon (Ezech-46:1).

You then have six more workdays and a full moon on day 15 or at the end of the second week or second seven, i.e. at the end of 14 days after the new moon worship day. This proves the new moon was not counted in counting out the weeks same as YHWH did not count it in Exodus the 16th chapter when he made the Sabbath known to Moses. If the new moon was ever counted in counting out the weeks in Scripture, there would be pinpointed weekly Sabbaths on the 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th etc. Yet, you cannot find these days pinpointed

anywhere in Scripture because these days are always preparation days for the weekly Sabbath.

When Philo spoke of the 10th or 15th day of the month, he was counting the new moon day in his count, but it is an absolute that when he counted out the week, he did not count the new moon, which in itself proves lunar weeks. Remember Philo is just stating “how” things were done in his day.

Getting back on point we must remember that the works of Philo are very significant in that he walked the earth before and at the same time and twenty years after the resurrection of the Son of YHWH. He was one of the most influential men of that time, living as Jew in Alexandria, Egypt, and read from the Septuagint Bible. The Septuagint, was the most quoted from by our Savior and His Apostles.

Did Philo ever mention that the Sabbath could be found counting from the New moon??? The answer is yes, in Philo’s writings about such things as the Priesthood, festivals etc. are in harmony with the Bible we now read today. At one point in his writings he did make mention that some states or provinces were keeping only one Sabbath per month counting from the new moon, whereas we know all four should be kept properly.

Here is Philo on this issue: THE DECALOGUE, XX (96) It says, “The fourth commandment has reference to the sacred seventh day that it may be passed in a sacred and holy manner. Some states keep the “holy festival” only once in the month, counting from the new moon, as a day sacred to God; but the nation of the Jews keep every seventh day regularly, after each interval of six days”.

Please notice carefully what Philo wrote above. First, one must realize that Philo understood that the new moon was a festival all by itself and was not one of the six ordinary working days (Ezekiel 46:1-3). The gate of the inner court was to be shut on the six working days and opened on the Sabbath and new moon. Philo here says that some provinces were observing the holy Sabbath day festival only once in the month. Notice how he centers in on “only once” in the month. He also mentions that they were keeping it by counting from the new moon and recognizing it as a day sacred to YHWH. Now, if counting from the new moon to find the weekly Sabbath is erroneous, how did these states keep the holy festival once a month? Think about this. Philo did not say they kept a Sabbath or their Sabbath or a bogus Sabbath, but rather he said they kept the holy festival sacred to YHWH.

This has to mean that the proper way to find the holy festival of the Sabbath is to count from the new moon. Philo continues by saying that the Jewish nation keeps every seventh day holy after each interval of six days. This poses no problem at all to lunar sabbatarians as we too do what Philo did. Philo already gave us the proof that counting from the new moon was the proper way to find the holy festival of the Sabbath, therefore when he says the Jews

keep every seventh day holy, he is speaking of every seventh day after each interval of six working days periods from new moon to new moon. This is the only logical way to understand this particular passage in Philo.

If Saturday keeper were to say that "some states keep the holy Sabbath only once a month counting on today's calendar, but we keep every seventh day after six workdays" would the only possible way to construe what you're saying is that your Holy Sabbath day was found in a different way than by the "calendar" or were both of you counting on today's calendar? You just acknowledged that they kept the holy Sabbath day "only once" a month and they found it by today's calendar that Julius Caesar introduced, but that don't mean that you don't use the "same" calendar now does it? **The same is true with Philo, they both counted from the new moon, but some were keeping it only once each month/moon. It is common knowledge most people use the calendar of today but when Philo made the very same statement, the weeks and holy Sabbath days were by the moon, that too was common knowledge.**

When Philo made the statement that "some states keep the Holy Sabbath/festival only once a month/moon counting from the new moon" and follows up by saying they keep every Sabbath day after six days does not mean that he did not count for the holy Sabbath/festival in the same way that the people that kept it only once a month/moon did i.e. from the new moon.

The same thing applies to you if you said that some people keep the holy Sabbath/Saturday only once a month by the calendar but you keep every Sabbath after six workdays. (That doesn't mean that you counted a different way or had a different calendar than they) I know a Baptist Church that has service every third Sunday counting on the today's calendar and I know another Baptist church that keeps every Sunday after six workdays are we to suppose that there are not counting by the same calendar? Philo used the word intervals and we know that there are approximately 12 monthly "intervals" each year and each month has four Sabbaths with "intervals" of six work days between each with a Sabbath at the end of each and Philo kept every one of them not only one per moon. Speaking of intervals, Philo in The Special Laws 1. (178) speaking of "intervals" or after six work day "lunar" intervals, Philo writes,

(178)... "there is one principle of reason by which the moon waxes and wanes in equal "intervals", both as it increases and diminishes in illumination; the seven lambs because it receives the perfect shapes in periods of seven days— the half-moon in the first seven day period "after" its conjunction with the sun, full moon in the second; and when it makes its return again, the first is to half-moon, then it ceases at its conjunction with the sun.

If you would stop and think for a minute, how that Philo acknowledges that some states were finding the sacred holy Sabbath by counting from the new moon but was keeping it

"only once" every moon. In reality Philo would have said "Some states keep the holy Sabbath only once a "moon" or "new moon", I don't believe he used the word "month" which proves that the weekly Sabbaths were by the moon, at least you will have to acknowledge that some people were keeping the Sabbaths by the moon, (not month) or they kept at least one of the holy Sabbaths each moon/month.

As for now allow me to continue in Philo's writings: ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION, 1 IV (8) "Again, the periodical changes of the moon, take place according to the number seven, that star having the greatest sympathy with the things on earth. And the changes which the moon works in the air, it perfects chiefly in accordance with its own configurations on each "seventh day". At all events, all mortal things, as I have said before, drawing their more divine nature from the heaven, are moved in a manner which tends to their preservation in accordance with this number seven. ... Accordingly, on the seventh day, God caused to rest from all his works which he had made."...

Had a Hebrew speaking Jew wrote this he would have said "it perfects chiefly in accordance with its own configurations on each "Sabbath" day" instead of each "seventh" day because elsewhere in his writings, Philo identifies that when he mentions the seventh day he is speaking of the Sabbath day. Above, he tells us that the moon perfects its own configurations on each seventh day. It was understood, that at the end each period of six work days there would be a weekly Sabbath. The Greek speaking Jews referred to the Sabbath as the seventh day or the sacred seventh day, while in the language of the Hebrews it was termed Shabbat, or the Sabbath.

Continuing on with Philo: THE DECALOGUE XXX (159) "But to the seventh day of the week he has assigned the greatest festivals, those of the longest duration, at the periods of the equinox both vernal and autumnal and autumnal in each year; appointing two festivals for these two epochs, each lasting seven days; the one which takes place in the spring being for the perfection of what is being sown, and the one which falls in autumn being a feast of thanksgiving for the bringing home of all the fruits which the trees have produced" ...

Let's look carefully at what Philo is saying. But to the seventh day of the week He has assigned the greatest festivals, in other words the greatest (longest) festivals have been assigned to the seventh day of the week (15th Sabbath) which begins the Festival and lasts for seven days. We know both of these seven day feasts begin on the 15th (Sabbath). Each of them lasts for seven days, and each one of these events were assigned to the seventh day of the week (15th) or weekly Sabbath to begin the Feast and it lasted seven days.

Philo goes on to say that each month (1st and 7th) should receive an especial honor of one sacred day of festival, for the purpose of refreshing and clearing the mind with its holiday. Notice he did not say they would receive two holydays of festivals, but one, the 15th. To prove the seventh day of the week is the same as the 15th, elsewhere Philo states, "Again

the beginning of this feast is appointed for the fifteenth day of the month (or seventh day of the week) on account of the reason which has already been mentioned respecting the Spring season might receive special honor of one sacred day of festival."

In other words, Philo is saying the weekly Sabbath begins these feasts, and is on the 15th. This proves the Sabbaths by the lunar calendar because there is no way the weekly Sabbath (15th) can begin these two festivals on the 15th in the 1st and 7th month each year, on a continuous seven day cycle by the calendar of today. Let's continue:

F.H. Colson's translation of THE DECALOGUE XXX (159) reads, "The fourth, which treats of the seventh day, must be regarded as nothing less than a gathering under one "head" of the feasts and the purifications ordained for each feasts, the proper lustrations and the acceptable prayers and flawless sacrifices with which the ritual was carried out. By the seventh I mean both the seventh which "includes" the most creative of numbers, six, and that which does "not include" it but takes precedence of "it" and "resembles" the unit. "Both" these are employed by Him in reckoning the feast-times." (Colson's translation of Philo.)

What can be plainer than that? Let's analyze it. "The fourth, which treats of the seventh day, must be regarded as nothing less than a gathering under one "head" of the feasts." How can the weekly Sabbath day be regarded as a gathering under one head of the feasts unless it heads these feast i.e. begins them each year. This proves Lunar Sabbaths. Philo continues by saying, "by the seventh I mean "both" the seventh which "includes" the most creative of numbers, six, and that which does "not include" it but takes precedence of it and "resembles" the unit." The word precedence means it comes before the number six during the feasts, i.e. one of the sevenths comes before the number six during the 7 day feast and the other seventh comes after it and is combined with it.

This is impossible if he used the count for the Sabbath as the people of today. The word precedence also has a footnote that has the actual Greek word and states, "the verb, derived from the adverb, seem to be used as a thing which gets in front of something else and obscures it so here the idea may be that the unit or monad does not need six to make it equivalent to seven." (Spec. Leg. Iv.52).

This seventh is the weekly seventh and is in front of the six days during the feasts because to the weekly seventh day he has assigned these feasts. The footnote that says "...here the idea may be that the unit or monad does not need six to make it equivalent to seven..." This is because this single unit or monad does not need six to make it equivalent to seven because it is a seventh and both Yonge's and Colson's translation says it is made to resemble the unit/first or number one.

Last but not least it says, "Both" these are "employed" by Him in reckoning the feast-

“times.” You cannot reckon feast-times with a seventh that jumps around during the 7 day feast, on a man-made calendar. Both the sevens have to be fixed not just the one that is on the 21st because He employed both sevens in reckoning the feast-times. If one of the sevenths could move it would also fall on the 21st at times and would also be combined with the number six and there would be only one seventh then. I could go on and on with quotations from Philo, but anyone can call me at 770.483.8542 if you’d like to discuss this matter further. To close we will place the facts from Philo from both the Yonge and Colson translations.

FACT #1: Both translation state that the full moon is at the end of the second week which has been argued that the weeks have nothing to do with the moon. FACT #2: They both state that the full moon is on the 15th. FACT #3: They both teach that the 15th begins both of the 7-day feasts/festivals each year, which is the same 15th/full moon that is at the end of the second week. (This is impossible with the Roman calendar) The question is, could this same 15th be the weekly seventh day that the festivals are assigned to? He says both of these festivals has been assigned to the seventh day of the week, yes it is the 15th that is at the end of the second week and it is the 7th day of the lunar week and the same seventh day that begins theses feasts. They were keeping lunar weeks, let’s examine fact number four and see.

FACT #4: Both translations conclusively teach that they are two sevenths in each of these festivals and both are connected in some way with the number six. When Philo states that there are two sevenths in both the festival of unleavened bread and the festival of booths is he somehow missing the point Saturday sabbatarians would bring up today - that there is a third seventh that will hit in between the 15th and the 21st the majority of years that the feasts come around? Why does Philo not mention this third seventh? It is because none exists. Philo only mention two sevenths in relation to the feast and the first of these two sevenths is none other than the weekly seventh day Sabbath that leads the feasts and is considered the first day of the feast - the 15th.

Does Philo mention the Sabbaths in connection with the waxing and waning of the moon? On page 17 of Ralph Marcus' translation of Philo’s work entitled “Questions and Answers, Exodus, Book 1”: in says, “9. (Ex. xii. 6a) Why does He command (them) to keep the sacrifice until the fourteenth (day of the month)? (Consisting of) two Sabbaths, it has in its nature a (special) honour because in this time the moon is adorned. For when it has become full on the fourteenth (day), it becomes full of light in the perception of the people. And again through (another) fourteen (days) it recedes from its fullness of light to its conjunction, and it wanes as much in comparison with the preceding Sabbath as the second (waxes) in comparison with the first. For this reason the fourteenth (day) is pre-festive, as though (it were) a road leading to festive rejoicings, during which it is incumbent upon us to meditate”.