

The Feasts of the Bible and the Moon

With the modern month of each feast

Each feast and the moon it falls under, using the Bible as the reference (King James Version)

Why the moon tells the feast. In the Bible, the moon sets the times of the feasts, and every month begins at the new moon. So the day of the month the Bible gives each feast also tells you what the moon looks like that night: the 1st is the new moon, the 15th is the full moon, and the moon wanes after that.

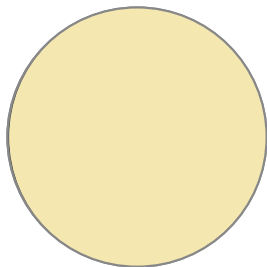
“He appointed the moon for seasons.” (Psalm 104:19). The Hebrew word for seasons here, mo’adim, is the same word Leviticus 23:2 uses for the feasts: “the feasts of the LORD.”

“This month shall be unto you the beginning of months.” (Exodus 12:2). This is the first month, called Abib (Exodus 13:4) and later Nisan (Esther 3:7).

“Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day.” (Psalm 81:3)

								
Passover	Unleavened Bread	Firstfruits	Pentecost	Trumpets	Atonement	Tabernacles	Hanukkah	Purim
Full moon	Full, then waning	Just past full	About half, waxing	New moon	Waxing gibbous	Full moon	Waning to dark	Full moon
March or April	March or April	March or April	May or June	Sept. or Oct.	Sept. or Oct.	Sept. or Oct.	Late Nov. to early Jan.	Feb. or March

How to read the moon pictures: the lit part is shown as the moon looks in the evening sky. A **growing (waxing)** moon is lit on the right; a **shrinking (waning)** moon is lit on the left. Each small moon below a feast shows one day of that feast. The **modern month** in red is when the feast falls on today's calendar.



Modern month:
March or April

Passover

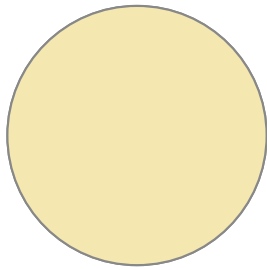
Pesach — the 14th day of the first month

Moon phase: FULL MOON (rising at evening)

“In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD’S passover.” (Leviticus 23:5)

“Ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month ... and kill it in the evening.” (Exodus 12:6)

The lamb was killed at evening on the 14th, and the Passover was eaten that night. On the night of the 14th going into the 15th, the moon is full, so the first Passover night in Egypt had the brightest moon of the month.



Modern month:
March or April



Day 15



Day 16



Day 17



Day 18



Day 19



Day 20



Day 21

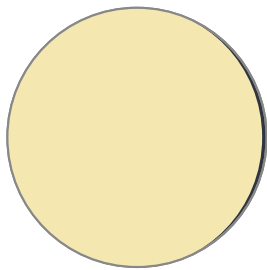
Unleavened Bread

Hag HaMatzot — the 15th to the 21st day of the first month

Moon phase: FULL MOON on the first day, then WANING for the week

“On the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.” (Leviticus 23:6)

The feast begins on the full moon, the day after Passover, and lasts seven days. Through the week the moon shrinks from full toward half (last quarter).



Modern month:
March or April

Firstfruits

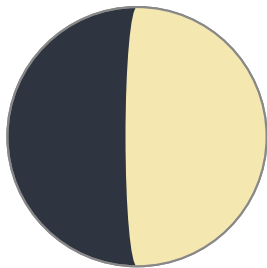
Reishit — “the morrow after the sabbath” during Unleavened Bread

Moon phase: JUST PAST FULL (waning gibbous)

“He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD ... on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.” (Leviticus 23:11)

“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.” (1 Corinthians 15:20)

The Bible doesn't give a number for this day. It falls in the week of Unleavened Bread (the 16th to the 22nd), so the moon is always just past full and starting to wane. Jewish practice keeps it on the 16th; others keep it on the Sunday of that week, the day Christ rose (Matthew 28:1).



Modern month:
May or June

Pentecost

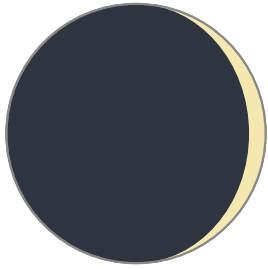
Shavuot — fifty days counted from Firstfruits, in the third month

Moon phase: ABOUT HALF LIT, WAXING (near first quarter)

“Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days.” (Leviticus 23:16)

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.” (Acts 2:1)

Pentecost has no day of the month; it is counted: seven full weeks plus one day (“Pentecost” means fiftieth). Counting fifty days from the just-past-full moon of Firstfruits lands early in the third month, the month Israel reached Sinai (Exodus 19:1). The moon then is young and growing, about half lit. If the count starts later in the week, it can be a little past half (waxing gibbous).



Modern month:
September or October

Feast of Trumpets

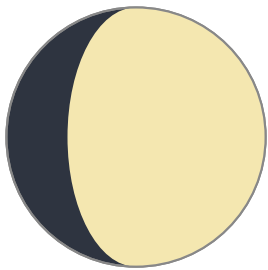
Rosh HaShanah — the 1st day of the seventh month

Moon phase: NEW MOON (the first thin crescent)

“In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets.” (Leviticus 23:24)

“Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day.” (Psalm 81:3)

This is the only feast on the first day of a month, so it is the only one on a new moon. In Bible times, the new month was marked when the first thin crescent appeared low in the west just after sunset. That is the moon shown here.



Modern month:
September or October

Day of Atonement

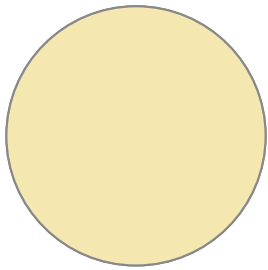
Yom Kippur — the 10th day of the seventh month

Moon phase: WAXING GIBBOUS (more than half, growing)

“Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement.” (Leviticus 23:27)

“It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls.” (Leviticus 23:32)

Ten days after the new moon of Trumpets, the moon is past half and growing toward full. Five days later, it is full for Tabernacles.



Modern month:
September or October

Feast of Tabernacles

Sukkot — the 15th to the 21st day of the seventh month, and the 8th day (22nd)

Moon phase: FULL MOON on the first day, then WANING

“The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD.” (Leviticus 23:34)

“On the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you.” (Leviticus 23:36)

Like Unleavened Bread in the first month, Tabernacles begins on the full moon, so the families living in their booths (Leviticus 23:42) had the brightest moon of the month. The eighth day falls near the half moon.



Day 15



Day 16



Day 17



Day 18



Day 19



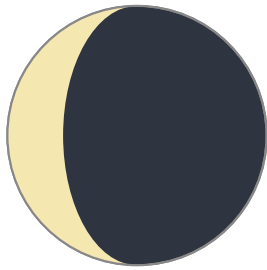
Day 20



Day 21



8th day (22)



Modern month:
**Late November to early
January**

Feast of Dedication

Hanukkah — the 25th day of the ninth month, for eight days

Moon phase: WANING CRESCENT, through the dark NEW MOON, to a new crescent

“And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon’s porch.” (John 10:22–23)

“Upon the five and twentieth day of the ninth month ... they kept the dedication of the altar eight days.” (1 Maccabees 4:52, 56)

John names the feast but not the day. The day and the eight days come from 1 Maccabees, part of the Apocrypha, which was printed in the original 1611 King James Bible. The 25th is near the end of the month, so the moon is a thin waning crescent and goes dark at the new moon partway through the feast. These are the darkest nights of the month, in winter, when the lamps are lit. By the last night, a hair-thin new crescent may just show low in the west after sunset.



Night 1



Night 2



Night 3



Night 4



Night 5



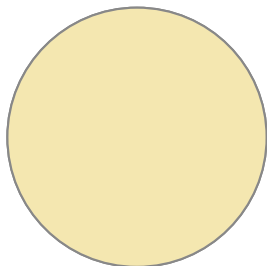
Night 6



Night 7



Night 8



Modern month:
February or March

Feast of Lots

Purim — the 14th and 15th days of the twelfth month (Adar)

Moon phase: FULL MOON

“To stablish this among them, that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly.” (Esther 9:21)

Purim falls in the middle of the month, so it is a full-moon feast, exactly one month before Passover, which is also on a full moon.



Day 14



Day 15

The pattern: Passover, Unleavened Bread, Tabernacles and Purim are full-moon feasts. Firstfruits is just past full. Trumpets is the one new-moon feast. Atonement is on a growing moon. Pentecost is counted, not dated, and lands on a young half moon. Hanukkah is kept in the darkest nights of the month.

Why the modern month changes: the Bible’s months follow the moon, and twelve moon-months are about 11 days shorter than our calendar year. To keep Passover in the spring (Exodus 13:4), a thirteenth month is added about every third year. So each feast moves back and forth within about a month on our calendar, which is why each one can land in either of two modern months (Hanukkah, at the turn of the year, can touch three). In rare years Unleavened Bread and Firstfruits run to May 1, and Pentecost counted from the Sunday can reach June 19.

The moon pictures follow the Bible’s day of the month (a month begins at the new moon). In any one year the real moon can run about a day ahead or behind.