

# The Lunar Sabbaths



and the

[JewishEncyclopedia.com](http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com)

## Jewish Encyclopedia

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**I**n my recent discussions with Lunar Sabbath enthusiasts I have often been presented with a few quotes from the Jewish Encyclopaedia (and a few other sources) in support of that theory. These quotes are triumphantly presented as a solid historical evidence of the authenticity of the theory. I think it would only be fair to examine this aspect properly. This examination will demonstrate what many seem to have missed about the origins of the Lunar Sabbath theory. There is much that is based on humanism and is therefore anti-Biblical. Not only that but it will also show that those who use such evidence to support the Lunar Sabbath theory are doing a disservice to their cause and would be better advised to seek out the accurate history of this question. The reason for these claims is plain.

### The claims examined

The *Jewish Encyclopedia* explains the reasons for attempting to link the Sabbath with the moon. Anyone reading the subtitles will realize that this is merely a *proposed* alternative to the Bible basis for the Sabbath. Notice:

#### “Probable Lunar Origin.

##### —Critical View:

The origin of the Sabbath, as well as the true meaning of the name, is uncertain.”  
*The Jewish Encyclopedia*, Article: Sabbath  
(<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/12962-sabbath#anchor10>)



It is freely admitted that the lunar origin of the Sabbath is only *probable*. The real origin is said to be *uncertain*. This is why this entry is subtitled as the “critical view”. As can be obviously seen, this critical view does not acknowledge nor recognize the Biblical origin for the Sabbath. The critical view is presenting an alternate humanistic/naturalistic view rather than the divine origin. This is affirmed in the following words:

“It [the Sabbath] was probably originally connected in some manner with the cult of the moon, as indeed is suggested by the frequent mention of Sabbath and New-Moon festivals in the same sentence” *Ibid*

Once again we notice how this idea is only guessed at, as evidenced by the use of the word *probably*. Keep in mind that this is only a *critical view* offering a humanistic *probable* alternative to the Biblical origin of the Sabbath. One may well wonder why a Jewish article on the Sabbath would present this alternative non-Biblical view *after* speaking of the true Biblical origin of the Sabbath. The answer is simple. *The Jewish Encyclopedia* is seeking to offer a number of views, not all Biblical. This is their admission in the preface of the encyclopedia. We must be very careful when basing our views on alternate non-Biblical theories. Such a basis can only lead us into error. One question we must ask ourselves is this: just what does the *critical view* really mean? And where does it come from?

## The basis of the claims

In the preface of the *Jewish Encyclopedia* we find an explanation for offering the critical view which links the Sabbath with the moon. It is rather self explanatory:

“There are those who hold to the literal inspiration, while others reject this view and are of the opinion that the circumstances under which the various texts were produced can be ascertained by what is known as the Higher Criticism. It seemed appropriate in the more important Biblical articles to distinguish sharply between these two points of view, **and to give in separate paragraphs the actual data of the Masoretic text and the critical views regarding them.** ... The plan was adopted of treating the more important Biblical articles under the three heads of (a) Biblical Data, giving, without comment or separation of "sources," the statements of the text; (b) Rabbinical Literature, giving the interpretation placed upon Biblical facts by the Talmud, Midrash, and later Jewish literature; (c) **Critical View, stating concisely the opinions held by the so-called Higher Criticism as to the sources and validity of the Biblical statements.**” [Emphasis added]

*The Jewish Encyclopedia*, Preface

(<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/preface.jsp#12>)

This admission is very revealing. The Lunar Sabbath theory is based on higher criticism; it is the critical view. This gives us an insight into the various articles and quotes appearing in similar encyclopedias linking the Bible Sabbath with the moon. Such “evidence” is merely the view point of *higher criticism*; it is a mere opinion. This is the only way to link the Sabbath to the moon; by abandoning the Bible evidence and seeking the alternate views of the critics. These views, naturally, are offered without solid evidence for them (hence the use of doubtful terminology such as *probably*, *uncertain* etc.). This is nothing but guesswork and conjecture. This is a woeful way to arrive at *Biblical* doctrine!



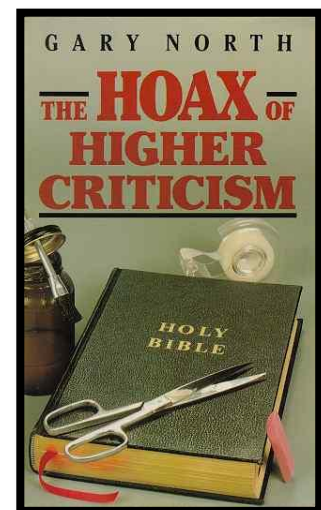
In order for us to truly appreciate the questionable source of this theory we must understand what *higher criticism* really means and how it relates to the Bible. As the above quote makes clear, *higher criticism* sits in judgement over “the sources and validity of Biblical statements.” The ultimate decider of conclusions in this field is not the Bible, but the critics themselves. This aspect needs to be examined carefully.

## Higher criticism vs. the Bible



Just what *is* higher criticism? Higher criticism is a system of Biblical analysis and interpretation based on the assumption that the Bible is a collection of myths and legends which were grouped together into books. These interpretations stem from a deep rooted denial of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures. This system is a humanistic effort to explain Bible truth. Higher critics utilize rationalistic and naturalistic presuppositions to arrive at their conclusions, and then offer these conclusions as the basis for truth. Bible believers have often found the conclusions of higher criticism unacceptable and heretical. Simply put, higher criticism does not acknowledge the Bible as a divine revelation, and so seeks to explain its truths by attributing them to a natural process. Higher Criticism is based on the evolutionary model and seeks to apply this godless model to the Scriptures. It is for this reason that *higher criticism* is strictly a humanistic and naturalistic process of theorization. Only Satan can be the inspiration behind such sentiments and efforts.

In his book *The Hoax of Higher Criticism* Dr. Gary North demonstrates that the men who pioneered the “higher criticism” of the Bible did not believe that Jesus was the divine Son of God. He further shows that the two most successful attacks on Christianity in the modern world have been biblical higher criticism and Darwinism (i.e. Evolution). Both views stem from the same source: a view of man as a *social* creature who lives in an evolving society. Both views substitute a philosophy of autonomous historical process for the Biblical creation, fall, redemption, and final judgment. It is this school of thought that has originated the Lunar Sabbath theory! This is one of the most compelling evidences of the falsehood of that theory. It is merely a naturalistic alternative to the Biblical Sabbath of creation. After all, the higher critics do not take the story of creation seriously!



“The higher critics have become the ultimate mythmakers by proclaiming the existence of a set of high ideals that are somehow associated with biblical myths (i.e., hoaxes). After telling the reader that the early chapters of Genesis are not historical, but simply symbolic, the authors assure us concerning the story of Adam’s fall: “But let us not be deceived by the simple story form of presentation.”” *The Hoax of Higher Criticism*, 1989, p.30

As the result of higher criticism, creation is seen as symbolic not literal, and Adam and Eve are nothing more than mythical figures. No wonder the creation Sabbath is not acknowledged!

“The higher critics present the Bible as a poorly assembled patchwork of lies and myths, and then they add insult to injury by arguing that their debunking operation somehow elevates our view of the Bible.” *Ibid*, p.24

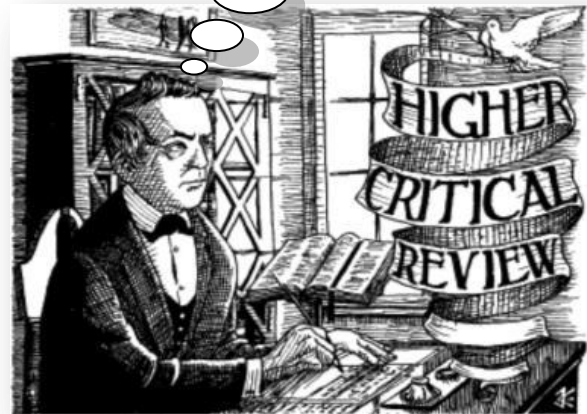
“Higher criticism and Evolution. Higher criticism is based on an evolutionary model of human morality and human history.” *Ibid*, p. 43

Just as the hoax of evolution is the effort of Satan to replace divine creation, so also is the Lunar Sabbath *hoax* an effort to displace the true Sabbath of creation. Both hoaxes come from the very same source. Not only that, but the men responsible for pioneering this work of higher criticism have some alarming credentials.

“The doctrines of Higher Criticism, started by the Catholic theologians Richard Simon and Dr. Alexander Geddes in 1678, ripped the heart out of the Scriptures and called into question the plainest teachings on history and origins. The writings of Moses were relegated to the realms of mythology and faith was thrown down to the ground.” Walter J. Veith, *Truth Matters*, Amazing Discoveries, 2007, p. 206

Comment is hardly necessary. The facts speak for themselves. Higher criticism is a thinly veiled effort to attack the Bible and the divine truths therein. All such attempts must fail. Thus, while many will seek to quote whatever source that promotes this critical view, we need to remember that it is just that: *a critical view*. The Lunar Sabbaths theory hails us from the realms of higher criticism. The work of higher criticism in dissecting, speculating, and reconstructing “truth” has destroyed faith in the Bible as a divine revelation.

We solemnly entreat everyone to examine the origin and background of the sources which they quote. Failure to do this can only result in confusion, as is the case at the present. People have run with the Lunar Sabbath theory without realizing the *source* of the theory. It is nothing but a *hoax*! Once again, the very evidence used to support the Lunar Sabbath theory reveals its un-Biblical origins.



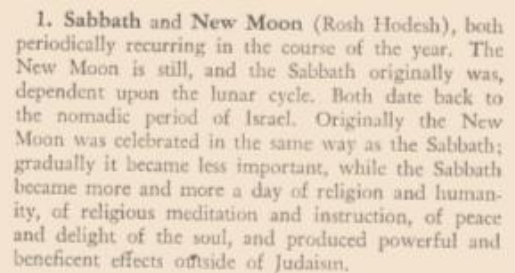
“The Bible of the higher critics cannot possibly be what it says clearly that it is: the revealed Word of the Creator and Judge of the universe. Now, if the Bible really isn’t what it says it is, then it must be a hoax. Once the implicit though politely unstated accusation of hoaxing is made, the question then arises: Who is the true hoaxer, God or the higher critic? There should be no doubt in our minds: the literary critic is the myth-maker. Literary higher criticism of the Bible is a hoax. No other word does it justice. It is a fraud, a lie, a denial that God’s revealed Word is what it says it is.” *The Hoax of Higher Criticism*, 1989, pp.32, 33

*Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. Colossians 2:8*

## Other Sources

Having examined the meaning behind *higher criticism*, we are now in a better position to understand the background and origins of some of the Lunar Sabbath claims. It is of vital interest to note the variety of sources that promote this theory of higher criticism. As we have plainly seen, the origins of the Lunar Sabbath theory are found, not in the Bible, but in the minds of the higher critics. This information is admitted by the very sources that are used to defend the Lunar Sabbath theory! As we examine a few other sources that promote this same idea we must keep in mind that these are all reproductions of the views of *higher critics*. Here are a few:

The New Moon is still, and the Sabbath originally was, dependent upon the lunar cycle . . . Originally, the New Moon was celebrated in the same way as the Sabbath; gradually it became less important while the Sabbath became more and more a day of religion and humanity, of religious meditation and instruction, of peace and delight of the soul. (*Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, "Holidays," p. 410.)



1. Sabbath and New Moon (Rosh Hodesh), both periodically recurring in the course of the year. The New Moon is still, and the Sabbath originally was, dependent upon the lunar cycle. Both date back to the nomadic period of Israel. Originally the New Moon was celebrated in the same way as the Sabbath; gradually it became less important, while the Sabbath became more and more a day of religion and humanity, of religious meditation and instruction, of peace and delight of the soul, and produced powerful and beneficent effects outside of Judaism.

With the development of the importance of the Sabbath as a day of consecration and the emphasis laid upon the significant number seven, the week became more and more divorced from its lunar connection . . . . (*Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. X, "Week," p. 482.)

The week of seven days was connected with the lunar month, of which it is, approximately, a fourth. The quadripartite division of the month was evidently in use among the Hebrews and other ancient peoples; but it is not clear whether it originated among the former. It is unnecessary to assume, however, that it was derived from the Babylonians, for it is equally possible that observations of the four phases of the moon led the Hebrew nomads spontaneously and independently to devise the system of dividing the interval between the successive new moons into four groups of seven days each. ([www.jewishencyclopedia.com](http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com), "Week.")

As can be plainly see, any source that quotes this theory is merely parroting the claims of the higher critics. This hoax, hatched in the mind of the higher critics, has found its way into a variety of sources and is readily believed by those who fail to recognize it for what it is. Chief among these sources is the *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* which has promoted this theory without offering any evidence or proof in its support, and without disclosing the origin of the theory. The *Jewish Encyclopedia*, on the other hand, actually admits that this theory is the view of the higher critics!

The similarity of thought in all these sources is ample proof that they are merely repeating the view of the *higher critics*. This is really where the Lunar Sabbath theory comes from. This is the only way to link the seventh day Sabbath to the moon. How sad that people are deceived, by lack of study, into believing it to be *Biblical!*

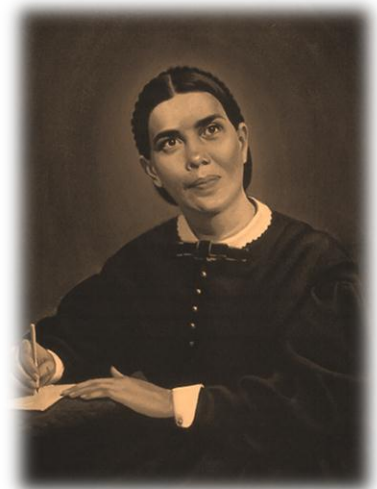
## Higher criticism and the Spirit of Prophecy

For the benefit of those who have regard to the counsel of the Spirit of Prophecy we would like to give a few quotes relating to higher criticism. We have already seen the origins of this field of study. It is interesting to note the contrast between the Bible and higher criticism in the following quotes:

“Even Bible study, as too often conducted in the schools, is robbing the world of the priceless treasure of the word of God. The work of **"higher criticism,"** in dissecting, conjecturing, reconstructing, is destroying faith in the Bible as a divine revelation; it is robbing God's word of power to control, uplift, and inspire human lives.” {Education, p.227}

“What is the condition in the world today? Is not faith in the Bible as effectually destroyed by **the higher criticism** and speculation of today as it was by tradition and rabbinism in the days of Christ?” {Ministry of Healing, p.142}

“A day or two later, some one brought to Elder Starr a pamphlet containing the sermon of an influential Wesleyan minister delivered at a recent conference held in Dunedin, in which he defended **the "higher criticism"** of the Bible, and made light of the opinion that it is a divine book, and that all portions of it are inspired. This led to more lessons on this subject, and a sermon on the **"Higher Criticism"** that was well attended by the people of Napier. We were surprised to see the extent to which our own brethren had been affected by this infidelity. We see more and more clearly, that, in all our labours, the Bible must be exalted, and that our people must come to know the wisdom and the power that are in the Word of God.” {Bible Echo, June 1, 1893 par. 13}



“Satan had the highest education that could be obtained. This education he received under the greatest of all teachers. When men talk of **higher criticism**; when they pass their judgment upon the word of God, call their attention to the fact that they have forgotten who was the first and wisest critic. He has had thousands of years of practical experience. He it is who teaches the so-called higher critics of the world today. **God will punish all those who, as higher critics, exalt themselves, and criticise God's Holy word.**” {Bible Echo, February 1, 1897 par. 9}

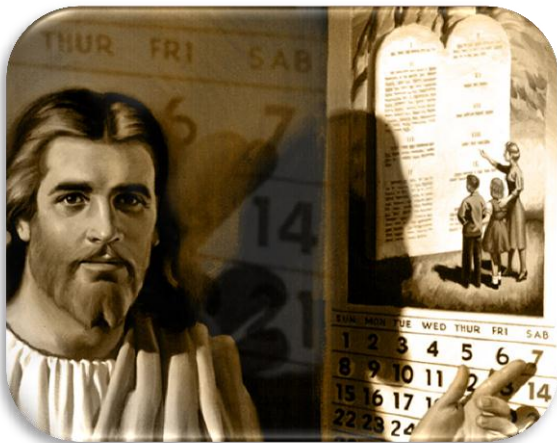
“As in the days of the apostles men tried by tradition and philosophy to destroy faith in the Scriptures, so today, by the pleasing sentiments of **higher criticism**, evolution, spiritualism, theosophy, and pantheism, the enemy of righteousness is seeking to lead souls into forbidden paths.” {Acts of the Apostles, p. 474}

Higher criticism is classed with evolution and spiritualism! Not only that, but Satan is the teacher of the higher critics! Under the guidance of Satan, these critics sit in judgement over God's word, inventing strange and fantastic ideas. That is where the Lunar Sabbath comes from. This fact is disclosed by the very sources used to support the theory! What an ironic tragedy. Yet this satanically inspired Lunar Sabbath hoax is robbing the faith of many. What is the chaff to the wheat? No wonder the Spirit of Prophecy is so plain in its condemnation of higher criticism. Thus it is impossible to use the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy to support a theory that originates in the realms of higher criticism. The two are diametrically opposed. Having abandoned the Bible as the accurate source of knowledge the critical view can only arrive at its conclusions by a collection of probabilities. It is Satan who is the teacher of such critics who invent these theories. One such example is the Lunar Sabbath theory.

*1 Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils*

## The real Sabbath

Contrary to the views of *higher criticism* the Sabbath is not based on the moon. The true Sabbath is what it has always been. Its basis is found in the creation story recorded in Genesis 1-3. This story, far from being mythological and allegorical as the higher critics suggest, is very real and factual. We can rely on this information with confidence and faith. We need not be uncertain or vague in this matter. Those who attempt to merge the critical view (the Lunar Sabbath) with the Biblical view (the true Sabbath) are attempting an impossibility. This union can only be accomplished by twisting of scripture and disregard of facts. Sadly, this has been the case with many who are falling for the lie.



*Genesis 2:2-3 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. (3) And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.*

*Exodus 20:8-11 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. (9) Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: (10) But the seventh day is the*

*sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: (11) For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.*

This is accurate history and origin of the Sabbath as is presented in the Bible. God never indicated any connection between His Sabbath and the moon. The 4<sup>th</sup> commandment is so plain that a child can understand it. This Biblical Sabbath has been preserved by God down through the ages to our time. It has never been lost, and God's faithful people in all ages are a witness to this fact. Even the Jews of today, in their Sabbath keeping, stand as a living testimony to the falsehood of the Lunar Sabbath of *higher criticism*.

Only the Bible can provide us with an accurate history of the Sabbath. To depart from this and disregard it can only lead to apostasy. This is clearly seen in the rebellion against the law of God in the form of the lunar Sabbath theory. It is only a Satanic delusion that can lead people to abandon the true seventh day Sabbath of God while thinking that they are discovering the 'real' Sabbath.

## Conclusion

We have seen that the so called historical evidence for the lunar Sabbath is based on nothing better than humanism. It is the view put forth by the *critics* of the creation Sabbath! The alternative to the Creation Sabbath is the Lunar Sabbath. In this clever way Satan is destroying the 4<sup>th</sup> commandment. We entreat and appeal to those who are basing their faith on such evidence to return to the Bible truth and the Bible Sabbath. Let us abandon the realms of *higher criticism* and be established on the word of God. Brethren, you are in dangerous straits and the enemy laughs for he knows where the truth lies. In the name of Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath, turn before it is too late.

*Nader Mansour*

*May, 2010*

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