

**OUR LORD'S MEMORIAL DATE FOR 2018**  
— **Thursday, March 29, after 6:00 p.m. your local time** —

*Methods for calculating the annual date for the Memorial differ among Bible Students.  
We do not insist that ours is the only way, but the UK Bible Students use the following.*

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Using astronomical tables, one needs to determine the following:

1. Date and time of the Vernal Equinox for the given year
2. Date and time of the New Moon *preceding* the Equinox
3. Date and time of the New Moon *following* the Equinox
4. Date and time of the New Moon which occurs *closest* to the Equinox

To find **Nisan 1**, an additional step is required:

5. Add *2h 21m* to account for the time difference at the meridian in Jerusalem

There are differences, on the order of seconds, between various data sources, but these are not statistically significant overall. Our data is from *Astronomical Tables of the Sun, Moon, and Planets*, by the Belgian astronomer, Jean Meeus, the acknowledged expert; where are slight discrepancies in the data, we rely on his figures. At least two other reputable sources consulted are identified in the **Sources**, at the end of this article.

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The data for **2018** follow. Times are in 24-hour Universal Time (UTC), expressed in hours and minutes (*ignoring seconds*), followed in parentheses by the 12-hour clock time (*a.m./p.m.*):

1. Date and time of the Vernal (Spring) Equinox  
**March 20 at 16h 16m (04:16 p.m.)**
2. Date and time of the New Moon *preceding* the Equinox  
**March 17 at 13h 12m (01:12 p.m.)**
3. Date and time of the New Moon *following* the Equinox  
**April 16 at 01h 58m (01:58 a.m.)**

**Therefore:**

4. Date and time of the New Moon which occurs *closest* to the Equinox is  
**March 17 at 13h 12m (01:12 p.m.)**
5. To this add the time difference of *2h 21m* at the meridian in Jerusalem

This results in **March 17 at 15h 33m (03:33 p.m.)**

Calculations required to arrive at Nisan 14 are counter-intuitive. Remember that the day of the Memorial corresponds to a Jewish day running from *evening to evening*, unlike the customary midnight to midnight. To determine the hour at which Nisan 1 *starts*, one must back up from the Jerusalem meridian time to the *nearest preceding* 6:00 p.m., then *add* 13 days to the result to reach the *start* of Nisan 14.

For **2018** the Jerusalem meridian time is **March 17 at 15h 33m (03:33 p.m.)**

*Back up to the nearest preceding 6:00 p.m.:-*

Thus Nisan 1 *starts* the previous day – that is, 6:00 p.m. on **March 16**

*Count 14 days forward from and including* **March 16**. This brings us to **March 29**

So Nisan 14 *starts* at 6:00 p.m. (1800) on **Thursday, March 29** your local time.

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#### SOURCES

*Print-only*

**Astronomical Tables of the Sun, Moon, and Planets, Jean Meeus (Willmann-Bell, Inc.; 1983), pp. 3-43, 4-19.**

*Online*

**Her Majesty's Nautical Almanac Office Astronomical Information. Sheets (PDF)**

*Equinox and Phases of Moon* <<http://astro.ukho.gov.uk/data/ais/pdf/ais105.pdf>>

**United States Naval Observatory**

*Equinox* <<http://aa.usno.navy.mil/seasons?year=2018&tz=+0>>

*Phases of Moon* <[http://aa.usno.navy.mil/cgi-bin/aa\\_moonphases.pl?year=2018&ZZZ=END](http://aa.usno.navy.mil/cgi-bin/aa_moonphases.pl?year=2018&ZZZ=END)>