

When Was Yahshua Born?

Today, most of the Christian world and even non-believers observe December 25th as the birthday of Yahshua. This date is highly unlikely and can be proven to be untrue.

Scripture tells us that Yahshua was born during the reigns of King Herod and the Roman Emperor Augustus.

Luk 2:1 And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.

Luk 2:2 (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

Luk 2:3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

History tells us that Caius Octavius Caepias was born in 63 BC. He had the honorary title of Augustus conferred upon him after the battle of Actium in 27 BC. He reigned 57 years from 44 BC to 14 AD. So we know Yahshua was born sometime within this interval. This taxing was made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria, but there is dispute over when this was, so we will look to other evidence.

Luk 2:4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

Luk 2:5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

Luk 2:6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

We also know that Yahshua was born during the time that the evil King Herod reigned.

Mat 2:1 Now when Yahushua was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

Mat 2:2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

According to the Jewish Historian Josephus, we are told that “Antony also feasted Herod the first day of his reign. And thus did this man receive the kingdom, having obtained it on the hundred and eighty-fourth Olympiad, when Caius Domitius Calvinus was consul the second time, and Caius Asinius Pollio [the first time.]” – Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews – Book XIV, Chapter XIV, Para. V.

The 184th Olympiad occurred from 44-40 BC. The two consuls mentioned above were in office in 40 BC. Herod was made king of Judea in 40 BC and according to Josephus, was camped outside Jerusalem 3 years later in 37 BC with his army and took Jerusalem at that time. Josephus also confirms to us that Herod died 37 years after being made king and 34 years before he had Antigonus killed in 3 BC. His first act of his reign was the extermination of the Hasmonean house to which Antigonus, the son of king Aristobulus II of Judea, belonged.

Nelson's Bible Dictionary says that Herod died of a terrible disease in Jericho in April, of 4 BC. However, this date has been refuted and proven impossible by other historians, such as Ernest Martin in 1978 (*The Birth of Christ*), and have placed the death of Herod in 1 BC. So this would place the birth of Yahshua prior to 1 BC.

Also, Herod was likely mad just before he died as he slaughtered the innocent male children 2 years old or younger.

Mat 2:16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wrath, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men.

We are also told that in the fall of 4 BC, Augustus called for all the inhabitants of Judea to be taxed (See Luke 2:1 above). They knew that the most opportune time to tax the Jews was when they were in Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles. Mary had not yet given birth to Yahshua. The city was full of those coming from other parts of Judea and the world for the Feast of Tabernacles. Bethlehem was about 5 miles south of Jerusalem and was considered to be in the area of the Feast. There was no room at the inn because of the vast number of people in the city for the Feast. So they found a place to stay in a stable with feeding trough for animals and there he was born.

So we know he was born sometime around the Feast of Tabernacles. Is there more proof? Yes. We are also told that he was born when the shepherds were in the fields with their flocks. Shepherds took their flocks into the fields in March and brought them in by November. This was the time between the former and latter rains, April through October. There is often snow in that area during November and December. They would never be in the fields during that time.

The Conception and Birth of John the Baptist

The father of John the Baptist was a priest of the order of Abiyah (Abijah). There were 24 courses of priests that officiated in the temple. King David had divided the duties into 24 courses (1Ch 24:3) in which they served a week at a time. But upon return from the Babylonia captivity, only 4 of these courses returned. They were Jedaiah, Immer, Pashur and Harim. To restore the original number, each of these 4 families was directed to draw 5 lots each for those who had not returned, so as to form once more 24 courses.

So Zecharias, the father of John the Baptist was not really of the order of Abiyah, but was one of the 4 orders that returned from Babylon. However, he officiated in the 8th order which was that of Abiyah. This cycle of priests ministered in the temple up until its destruction in 70 AD.

The first day of Nisan on 5 BC was a Sabbath and since the priestly courses changed every Sabbath, the first course of Jehoiarib served the first week of the New Year. All orders served during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost and Sukkot. The normal rotation would resume after these 3 Feasts. So, since the Feast of Unleavened Bread

occurs on the 15-21, all courses of priests would minister in the temple. The 8th course of Abiyah would therefore minister until just before Pentecost from the 27th of Iyyar to the 5th of Sivan (June 1-8). However, Pentecost began the following day on Sivan 6. So there was no chance for Zechariah to return home as all 24 courses of priests served in the temple on the week of Pentecost. So the earliest Zechariah could have made it home was probably a couple of days later. The conception of John the Baptist would likely have occurred sometime during the 15th – 21st of Sivan (June 18-24).

Luk 1:5 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.

Luk 1:6 And they were both righteous before YHWH, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of YHWH blameless

Luk 1:7 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years.

Luk 1:8 And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before YHWH in the order of his course,

Luk 1:9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of YHWH.

Luk 1:10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.

Luk 1:11 And there appeared unto him an angel of YHWH standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

Luk 1:12 And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

Luk 1:13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

After Zacharias finished his service he returned to his house. It is likely that Elisabeth conceived toward the end of the 3rd month of Sivan (June 18-24). The gestation period for humans is 280 days which is just over 9 months. Since Elisabeth would have conceived around Sivan 19-23 (Abt 18th to June 24th), John would have been born around Passover of 4 BC.

The Jews always set a place at the Passover table for Elijah. Yahshua identified John as coming in the spirit of Elijah.

Mat 17:10 And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that EliYah must first come?

Mat 17:11 And Yahushua answered and said unto them, EliYah truly shall first come, and restore all things.

Mat 17:12 But I say unto you, That EliYah is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.

Mat 17:13 Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

The angel that appeared to Zacharias and announced that he was to have a son added:

Luk 1:16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to YHWH their Elohim.

Luk 1:17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of EliYah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for YHWH.

So since the Passover occurs on Nisan 14, it is likely that John was born on that date.

We are also told that John was 6 months older than Yahshua (Luk 1:36). So this would make the conception of Yahshua to be around the time of Hannukah, the Jewish festival of lights. Yahshua is called the light of the world in John 8:12; 9:5; 12:46.

Luk 2:1 And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.

This taxation occurred at the end of the civil year after the harvests were reaped. Although Judea was a Roman protectorate and the Romans did not collect taxes directly from the inhabitants of Judea, they were receiving tribute from Herod and therefore allowed him to collect taxes from the people. This taxing was done to coincide with when the people were required by Torah to go to Jerusalem for the Feast of Sukkot (Tabernacles).

Luk 2:4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

Luk 2:5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

If it were for the purpose of coming to Bethlehem to pay taxes, only Joseph would have been required to go. But since it was also the time of the fall Feasts and he was required to go up to Jerusalem for Sukkot, he took her with him also. Some have speculated that because of the circumstances of her pregnancy and her spending the first 3 months of it with Elisabeth, she was able to hide the fact that she was pregnant from the community at Nazareth. But to remain there and give birth after only being espoused to Joseph for 6 months, would surely cause them problems. So, if she could go with Joseph and give birth somewhere else where she wasn't known, and then return much later with the child, many unsavory comments might be avoided as no one would know exactly when the child was born.

Jerusalem at that time had a population of about 120,000 and during the 3 Feasts of which every Hebrew male was required to present himself, the numbers of those attending the Feast could exceed 2 million people. Since the number of pilgrims exceeded the capacity of the city to provide guest chambers for them, they spread out into the close neighboring towns. Bethlehem was 4 miles south of Jerusalem and was considered to be in the festival area of Jerusalem.

Luk 2:6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

Luk 2:7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

This explains why there was no room at the inn for them. It was during the time of the fall harvest Feast of Sukkot. His birth in Bethlehem was a fulfillment of Micah 5:2.

What other indications that the birth of Yahshua took place in the fall instead of the winter as celebrated by much of the world?

Luk 2:8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

In Jerusalem, winter comes around the end of October. The winters are very harsh with cold rains, icy winds and occasionally sleet and snow. So the shepherds removed their flocks from the fields where they had pastured from the springtime until autumn and housed them in shelters. No shepherds would have been in the field with their sheep in the winter. Even today, sheep there are housed during the winter months.

If Yahshua had been born in December, Joseph would not have departed for Egypt 40 days later after Mary's purification and sin offering. Night time temperatures would be near freezing at that time.

Luk 2:9 And, lo, the angel of YHWH came upon them, and the glory of YHWH shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

*Luk 2:10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of **great joy**, which shall be to all people.*

Luk 2:11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is the Messiah the Sovereign.

The Feast of Sukkot (Tabernacles) is called the "season of our joy" and "the feast of the nations". This is the only Feast in which YHWH said for us to rejoice (Lev 23:40).

The evidence is overwhelming that Yahshua was born on the first day of the Feast of Sukkot (Tabernacles) in 4 BC. He was circumcised on the 8th on the great last day of the Feast. Sukkot along with the last great day is an 8 day observance.

*Joh 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt (**tabernacled**) among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*

Yahshua's ministry began in 27 AD right about his 30th birthday. He was crucified in 30 AD in which year the conjunction and vernal equinox occurred on the same day to begin the New Year. This is the only way to reach a Wednesday crucifixion date and a resurrection at the end of the Sabbath. Remember Yahshua was in the tomb 3 days and 3 nights or he wasn't the Messiah. The closest the "sighted sliver" of the moon can produce a Wednesday crucifixion date is 34 AD and that is provided the crescent can be sighted 10 hours after the conjunction which is nearly impossible.

Conclusion:

Yahshua was born during the Feast of Sukkot (Tabernacles) in 4 BC, began his ministry in 27 AD and was crucified in 30 AD. It would have been impossible for him to be born on December 25, which date is the supposed birth date of practically all sun gods, especially Mithras worshipped by the Romans at the time of Yahshua.

Sir James Frazer in his study on ancient religions writes “Among the gods of eastern origin who in the decline of the ancient world competed against each other for the allegiance of the West was the old Persian deity Mithra. The immense popularity of his worship is attested by the monuments illustrative of it which have been found scattered in profusion all over the Roman Empire. In respect both of doctrines and of rites the cult of Mithra appears to have presented many points of resemblance not only to the religion of the Mother of the Gods but also to Christianity. The similarity struck the Christian doctors themselves and was explained by them as a work of the devil, who sought to seduce the souls of men from the true faith by a false and insidious imitation of it. So to the Spanish conquerors of Mexico and Peru many of the native heathen rites appeared to be diabolical counterfeits of the Christian sacraments. With more probability the modern student of comparative religion traces such resemblances to the similar and independent workings of the mind of man in his sincere, if crude, attempts to fathom the secret of the universe, and to adjust his little life to its awful mysteries. However that may be, there can be no doubt that the Mithraic religion proved a formidable rival to Christianity, combining as it did a solemn ritual with aspirations after moral purity and a hope of immortality. Indeed the issue of the conflict between the two faiths appears for a time to have hung in the balance. An instructive relic of the long struggle is preserved in our festival of Christmas, which the Church seems to have borrowed directly from its heathen rival. In the Julian calendar the twenty-fifth of December was reckoned the winter solstice, and it was regarded as the Nativity of the Sun, because the day begins to lengthen and the power of the sun to increase from that turning-point of the year. The ritual of the nativity, as it appears to have been celebrated in Syria and Egypt, was remarkable. The celebrants retired into certain inner shrines, from which at midnight they issued with a loud cry, “The Virgin has brought forth! The light is waxing!” The Egyptians even represented the new-born sun by the image of an infant which on his birthday, the winter solstice, they brought forth and exhibited to his worshippers. No doubt the Virgin who thus conceived and bore a son on the twenty-fifth of December was the great Oriental goddess whom the Semites called the Heavenly Virgin or simply the Heavenly Goddess; in Semitic lands she was a form of Astarte. Now Mithra was regularly identified by his worshippers with the Sun, the Unconquered Sun, as they called him; hence his nativity also fell on the twenty-fifth of December.... Excerpt from Sir James George Frazer (1854–1941). *The Golden Bough*. 1922. XXXVII. *Oriental Religions in the West*.

The Catholic Church under Constantine felt it was easier to incorporate heathen beliefs and practices into Christianity to attract the heathen masses rather than try to convert them. This compromise has led us realize that our fathers have indeed inherited lies.

Jer 16:19 O YHWH, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall

say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit.
Brick Parrish – Oct 2010