

# Christmas and Christ

## The birthday of John the Baptist

Luke 1:5-49

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

Luk 1:26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

1 Chronicles 24:1-19

1Ch 24:3 And David distributed them, both Zadok of the sons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, according to their offices in their service. 4 And there were more chief men found of the sons of Eleazar than of the sons of Ithamar; and *thus* were they divided. Among the sons of Eleazar there were sixteen chief men of the house of their fathers, and eight among the sons of Ithamar according to the house of their fathers. 5 Thus were they divided by lot, one sort with another; for the governors of the sanctuary, and governors *of the house* of God, were of the sons of Eleazar, and of the sons of Ithamar.

1Ch 24:10 The seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to Abijah,

- There are 354 days in a Hebrew calendar year (approximately 51 weeks)
- The high priest ministered on the weeks of the high holy days -- Passover, Pentecost and the Day of Atonement.
- They would run through the order of the priest twice in one year (2 x 24)
- The year began on the first of Nissan starting the "order of course."
- Abijah's order came on the 8<sup>th</sup> week.
- There are 8 weeks in Nissan and Iyar which includes one week of Passover in which the high priest was ministering. So the 8<sup>th</sup> week order of Abijah (Zachariah's turn) would actually be on the first week of Sivan (9 weeks from the beginning).
- The second week of Sivan includes the feast of Pentecost in which all males were required to be in Jerusalem worshipping at the temple so Zachariah would still be at the temple.
- It would have to be at least the third or fourth week of Sivan when John the Baptist was conceived.

Luk 1:23 And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

24 And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months...

**Normal Gestation Time:** The two weeks or so from the start of a womans period to ovulation is considered a part of the gestation (pregnancy) because the womans body is actually preparing itself for pregnancy. Considering the fact that it takes approximately 280 days for complete gestation, counting the two weeks before fertilization actually occurs, one only needs to count 280 days from the first day of the last period. Therefore, a quick rule of thumb is to note the first day of the last period, count back three months, then add one week (Gregorian calendar, add 2 ½ -3 weeks for Hebrew calendar).

- 280 days from the third or fourth week of Sivan would put the normal due date around the 1<sup>st</sup> week of Nisan in the Hebrew calendar, very close to Passover.
- The Jews expect Elijah to come back on Passover. In the observance of the Seder (Jesus last supper) meal at Passover, the Jews set an extra plate for Elijah's return. Part of the ceremony of the Seder is opening an outside door to see if Elijah has returned.
- Jesus said the Elijah did come already.

Mat 17:12 But I say unto you, That Elias 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. 13 Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

Luk 1:17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, 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 the Lord.

- Most all of the major events in the bible happen on one of Gods holy days.
- God fulfilled the Seder meal by having the one coming in the spirit and power of Elijah be born on the very day the Jews were looking for him, yet they missed it.
- Jesus was born 6 months after John the Baptist.

- Luk 1:26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,
- Luk 1:36 And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.
- Luk 1:49 For he that is mighty hath done *(already conceived when she met Elisabeth)* to me great things; and holy is his name.
- 6 months from Passover (14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, March or April) would put Jesus birth right at the Feast of Tabernacles (15<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> of Tishrei, September or October)
  - Jesus came to "tabernacle" among us.
- Mat 1:23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.
- If Jesus was born on the feast of tabernacles, then counting 280 days back would put Mary's conception around the Feast of Dedication or Hanukkah (25<sup>th</sup> of Kislev - 3<sup>rd</sup> of Tevet, November - December)
  - Hanukkah is known as the festival of lights. Jesus is the light of the world and God conceived His Son on another one of His holy days.
- Joh 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

### Winter Solstice

- The word *solstice* derives from Latin *sol* (Sun) and *sistere* (stand still), *Winter Solstice* meaning *Sun stand still in winter*.
- The Winter Solstice can occur on the shortest day or longest night of the year. It now occurs sometime between December 20 and 23 each year in the Northern hemisphere.

### History of the Day of Christmas

- There is no record of a December 25<sup>th</sup> celebration of the birth of Christ in Rome earlier than 336, in Constantinople, no record of a celebration before 378, in Alexandria, not before 400; and in Jerusalem, not before 425.
- There are no reliable historical documents that would place the birth of Jesus on December 25th. On the other hand, there is overwhelming documentation that the birthday of many of the sun gods of antiquity was recognized as December 25th.
- **Sol Invictus** ("the undefeated sun") or, more fully, Deus Sol Invictus ("the unconquered sun god").
- In 273 A.D. Aurelian brought the worship of Baal, from Syria, back to Rome, and instituted the cult of Sol Invictus, which combined the worship of all the pagan sun god-men/saviors as Appolo, Attis, Baal, Dionysus, Helios, Hercules, Horus, Mithra, Osiris, Perseus, and Theseus into a single festival called the "*Birthday of the Unconquered Sun*" on December 25<sup>th</sup>. The way Aurelian was able to get everyone, with their own specific sun gods, to be happy, was by proclaiming December 25th to be the birthday of "Sol Invictus." They recognized December 25th as the birthday of their own god, therefore they were happy with the new name "Sol Invictus" At the time, Mithraism and Christianity were fierce competitors. Aurelian had even declared Mithraism the official religion of the Roman Empire in 274 CE. Christianity won out by becoming the new official religion in the 4th century CE.
- The Codex Calendar of 354 shows December 25<sup>th</sup> to be the birthday of Sol Invictus. It is listed as the most important pagan birthday of the whole year. It was celebrated in the Roman Circus with extra chariot races. This is the sun god that Constantine the Great worshipped while claiming to be a "Christian." His coins state that he was "committed to Sol Invictus."
- By the beginning of the 4th century CE, there was intense interest in choosing a day to celebrate Jesus birthday. The western church leaders selected December 25<sup>th</sup> because this was already the date recognized throughout the Roman Empire as the birthday of various Pagan gods. Since there was no central Christian authority at the time, it took centuries before the tradition was universally accepted:
  - Eastern churches began to celebrate Christmas after 375 CE.
  - The church in Jerusalem started in the 7<sup>th</sup> century.
  - Ireland started in the 5<sup>th</sup> century
  - Austria, England and Switzerland in the 8<sup>th</sup>

- Slavic lands in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries.

- The abominable worship of Tammuz, as spoken of in the book of Ezekiel, is related to December 25th. The “Church of the Nativity” was established by Helena, the mother of Constantine, who declared that site to be the birth place of Christ. Jesus was not born there. It is a pagan sun worship cave in honor of Tammuz. The historian Jerome, who wrote the Latin “Vulgate,” tells us that Tammuz was worshipped there. “Christians” kneel and kiss spot on the floor where this sun gods statue was placed!

Eze 8:14 Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the LORD'S house which *was* toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz.

- Sun God worship dates back to ancient biblical times to the days of Nimrod (the great grandson of Noah), considered to be the implementer of sun god worship. Later the bible speaks about the worship of Baal and Asherah when Israel would fall into apostasy.
- Asherah was the goddess of fertility and supposedly had a virgin birth of a son which began the mother-son worship seen in religions today. Also known as the queen of heaven.

Jer 7:18 The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead *their* dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger.

- The image of Asherah was a tree used by the Pagan Canaanites and Phoenicians.
- One of these Pagan Phoenicians was Jezebel, who married Ahab, king of Israel.

1Ki 18:19 Now therefore send, *and* gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table.

### Christmas trees

- Many symbols and practices associated with Christmas are of Pagan origin: holly, ivy, mistletoe, yule log, gift giving, decorated evergreen tree, magical reindeer, snowmen etc.
- The word "Asherah" is often translated as "groves" because they performed their rituals in forests or "groves".
- The purpose of the tree object was to display the fertility emblems (phallus, testes, semen) in the pole, balls, and tinsel, but the object was also a type of altar, where offerings and sacrifices were placed. This is how people have come to place the wrapped "presents" beneath the tree, and bowing to it as they do so.
- When northern Israel was dispersed into the nations by the Assyrians in 722 BCE, they carried this "tree" custom with them.
- Around 600 BC, Jeremiah warned them about this “Christmas” tree worship, which he called “way of the heathen.”

Jer 10:2 Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. 3 For the customs of the people *are* vain: for *one* cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. 4 They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not.

- The round wreath symbolized the sun, and at the same time the “womb”, both thought of as symbols of fertility to Pagans.
- The "boughs" of holly were Saturn's emblem. The two swooping curves of holly are breasts. All of these items used for decoration have significant meaning to the Pagan, the nativity of Sol Invictus.

Our Christian ancestors knew better. The celebration of December 25th was illegal in England, The English Parliament abolished Christmas in 1647. It was outlawed in New England from 1649 to 1658. The December 25th celebration was condemned for its pagan roots by the Puritans, the Methodists, the Quakers, the Amish, the Presbyterians, and the Baptists. In Massachusetts, Puritans unsuccessfully tried to ban Christmas entirely during the 17th century.

Christmas was made a legal holiday in Massachusetts in 1856.