



WHEN WAS JESUS BORN, AND IS IT FOUND IN THE HOLY BIBLE?

“When was Jesus born, and is it found in the Holy Bible?” Let us see what the Bible says! We can do this by relating the conception and birth of Jesus (**Yeshua**) with the conception and birth of John the Baptist. Let's begin our scriptural detective work in the gospel according to Luke chapter 1:

- Luke 1:5, **“There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abijah: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.”**
- Luke 1:8, **“And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, ...”**

The clue given to us here is that Zacharias was of the **“course” of Abijah**. First, we need to understand what *“the division of Abijah”* was. King David on God's instructions (1Chr. 28:11-13) had divided the sons of Aaron into 24 groups (1Chr. 24:1-4), to setup a schedule by which the Temple of the Lord could be staffed with priests all year round in an orderly manner. After the 24 groups of priests were established, lots were drawn to determine the sequence in which each group would serve in the Temple. We find in 1Chronicles 24:1-19 that the descendants of Aaron's 24 grandsons (the sons of Eleazer and Ithamar) were divided into 24 divisions or courses for the purpose of serving at the Temple. **1Chronicles 24:10** tells us that the 8th division of service was assigned to Abijah's descendants.

Each of these divisions served at the Temple for an eight-day period (1 Chr. 9:25). The service began and ended on the weekly Sabbath (2 Chr. 23:8). In addition to their normal service, all 24 courses served additionally at the Temple during the three holy seasons every year. Those three festivals were Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, and Tabernacles (Deut. 16:16). The Jewish Book of History called the **Mishnah** indicates that each course served a week during the first half of the year, the three annual festival weeks, and a week during the last half of the year, for a total of five weeks during a normal year.

A normal year on the Hebrew calendar consists of twelve lunar months of 29 or 30 days, for a total of 354 days. This is about 11 days less than a solar year (365.24 days). During a regular Jewish year (which occurs 12 times in a 19-year cycle), 51 weeks of coverage would be needed to ensure that the Temple was cared for every week throughout the year. 24 (first half of the year) + 3 (festival weeks) + 24 (second half of the year) = 51 weeks

Between the 1st and the 9th week of the year, two of the three festival times when all 24 courses served occurred. **Therefore, the course of Abijah, the 8th course, would serve its first regular week during the 9th or 10th week of the year** (depending on how the Feast of Pentecost [Weeks] fell on the calendar).

The Jewish calendar begins in the spring, during the month of Nisan (Exodus 12:2), so the first “course” of priests, would be that of the family of Jehoiarib, who would serve for seven days. The second week would then be the responsibility of the family of Jedaiah. **The third week would be the feast of Unleavened Bread ... and all priests would be present for service.**

Then the schedule would resume with the third course of priests, the family of Harim. By this plan, when the 24th course was completed, the general cycle of courses would repeat. This schedule would cover 51 weeks or 357 days, enough for the lunar Jewish calendar (about 354 days). So, in a period of a year, each group of priests would serve in the Temple twice on their scheduled course, in addition to the 3 major festivals, for a total of about five weeks of duty.

Now back to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist. Luke 1:23-24, ***“And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house. And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, ...”*** Beginning with the first month, Nisan, in the spring (March-April), the schedule of the priest's courses would result with Zacharias serving during the 10th week of the year. This is because he was a member of the course of Abijah, the 8th course, and both the Feast of Unleavened Bread (15-21 Nisan) and Pentecost (6 Sivan) would have occurred before his scheduled duty.

This places Zacharias' administration in the Temple as beginning on the second Sabbath of the third month, Sivan (May-June). Having completed his Temple service on the third Sabbath of Sivan, Zacharias returned home and soon (*“after those days”*) conceived his son John. ***So John the Baptist was probably conceived shortly after the third Sabbath of the month of Sivan.***

Now the reason that the information about John is important, is because according to Luke, Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the sixth month of Elisabeth's pregnancy: READ LUKE 1:24-27. Note that verse 26, refers to the sixth month of Elisabeth's pregnancy, not Elul, the sixth month of the Hebrew calendar, and this is made plain by the context of verse 24 and again in verse 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.”***

It appears that Mary stayed with Elizabeth right up to the time for her to give birth (Lk.1:56). The average time for the gestation of a human baby is nine months/40 weeks/280 days. Nine months from the time of John's conception in late **Sivan**/early **Tammuz** would bring us to Passover of the next year in the 1st Hebrew month called **Nisan**.

Now working from the information about John's conception late in the third month, Sivan (May-June), and advancing six months, we arrive late in the 9th month of Kislev (Nov-Dec) **for the time frame for the conception of Jesus**. It is notable here, that the first day of the Jewish festival of Chanukkah, the Festival of Lights, is celebrated on the 25th day of Kislev, *and Jesus is called the light of the world* (John 8:12, 9:5, 12:46).

Based on a conception shortly after the third Sabbath of the month of Sivan, projecting forward an average term of pregnancy about 10 lunar months (40 weeks), we arrive in the month of Nisan. It would appear that John the Baptist may have been born in the middle of the month, which would coincide with Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Interestingly, the Jews were looking for the return of Elijah which was based on the prophecy of Malachi 4:5, ***“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD”***.

Jesus identified John as the “Elijah” that the Jews had expected (Mt. 17:10 -13; also cp. Luke 1:17). So then, the Feast of Unleavened Bread begins on the 15th day of the 1st month, Nisan, and this is a likely date for the birth of John the Baptist, the expected “Elijah”.

Jewish month	Begins the New moon of	John the Baptist	Jesus
1. Abib / Nisan	March-April	Birth of John 15 Nisan	4
2. Zif / Iyyar	April-May		5
3. Sivan	May-June	Conception of John after 3rd Sabbath	6
4. Tammuz	June-July	1	7
5. Ab / Av	July-August	2	8
6. Elul	August-September	3	9
7. Ethanim / Tishri	September-October	4	Birth of Jesus 15 Tishri
8. Bul / Marheshvan / Heshvan	October-November	5	
9. Chisleu / Chislev / Kislev	November-December	6	Conception of Jesus 25 Kislev ?
10. Tebeth / Tevet	December-January	7	1
11. Shebat / Shevat	January-February	8	2
12. Adar	February-March	9	3
-----	-----	-----	-----

The Birth of Jesus Christ. Since Jesus was conceived six months after John the Baptist, and we have established a likely date for John's birth (March/April), ***we need only move six months farther down the Jewish calendar to arrive at the most likely date for the birth of Jesus.***

From the 15th day of the 1st month (*Jewish*), Nisan, we go to the 15th day of the 7th month (*Jewish*), Tishri (Sept./Oct.). And what do we find on that date? **It is the festival of Tabernacles!** The 15th day of Tishri begins the third and last festival of the year to which all the men of Israel were to gather in Jerusalem for Temple services. (Lev. 23:34). That's why there was no room in the Inns! Bethlehem is only about 5 miles from Jerusalem, and all the men of Israel had come to attend the festival of Tabernacles as required by the Law of Moses. Every room for miles around Jerusalem would have been already taken by pilgrims, so all that Mary and Joseph could find for shelter was a stable! **JESUS WAS PROBABLY BORN ON THE 1st DAY OF THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES!**

Conclusion

So, if you have followed the above reasoning, based on the scriptural evidence, a case can apparently be made that Jesus Christ was born on/around the 15th day of the month of Tishri, on the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles, which corresponds to the September - October time frame of our present calendar!

READ: Isaiah 7:14, Matt. 1:23, John 1:14 and SHOUT TO THE LORD!