

Christmas and Easter

Are they Christian?

Compiled by Rachel Cory-Kuehl

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Scripture quoted from the NKJV unless otherwise noted.

I believe Jesus was born at Sakkot (The Feast of Tabernacles). Allow me to explain.

King David divided the priesthood into 24 “courses” (*1Chron. 24:1-19*). The divisions came up in a prescribed order by clan, to serve for 2 weeks at the Temple. (All of the divisions came up to serve at the high holy days.) Zechariah was of the clan of Abijah - the 9th course of the Hebrew year. He would have come up to serve for the second and third week of June (per our Western calendar). By lot, Zechariah was chosen to burn the incense on the golden altar before the veil. An angel appeared, who predicted the birth of his son John, who would later become John the Baptist. Jesus and John the Baptist were second cousins.

Zechariah’s wife Elizabeth would have conceived about the 4th week of June. She was 6 months with child, when the Angel appeared to Mary at Nazareth. Mary then went to visit her cousin, probably traveling with pilgrims to the Feast at Jerusalem.

Six months from the 4th week of June, is the 4th week of December. Perhaps near the Winter solstice. It is possible that Mary conceived on the 25th of December. We don’t know. The New Testament writers did not think it important to identify the exact day.

If Mary conceived on or about the 25th of December, that would have put the birth of Mary’s child at late September - just at Sakkot in most years. The prophecies did say that God would come to ‘tabernacle’ with us.

NO ROOM AT THE INN

The Law of God through Moses, commanded that a woman be separated for 40 days following the birth of a male child (*Lev 12:1-8*). She would be ritually “unclean” for that period of time. Anyone who touched her would also become ritually “unclean” - unable to offer sacrifice at the Temple, or even to enter the Temple court. “Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord” and to “offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord. . .” (*Luke 2:22-24*).

The Law concerning **ritual impurity after childbirth** is found in Leviticus Chapter 12. It was common for the poorer classes to “separate” new mothers in the stable, with lots of clean straw. Stables at Bethlehem were in the plentiful caves - not wooden structures. Interesting: It was at Bethlehem, that flocks were raised for sacrifices at the Temple. Pilgrims coming from many miles away would purchase a perfect lamb for sacrifice, rather than bring an animal with them.

Bethlehem was the ancestral home of Joseph. He had dozens of relatives there. It is highly unlikely that Joseph would seek to shelter at roadside inn. What is likely, is that **the relatives had not prepared a “room of separation” for a woman giving birth**. There was “no room” ready for Mary’s impending ritual impurity. It makes perfect sense that they would prepare a place of separation in a stable area. They could then prepare a “room” inside a house, soon after.

I think most folks know that the “wise men” did not visit the nativity scene at the stable. The text says, “when they were come into the house, they saw the young child” (*Matt 2:11*). When the magi arrived, Mary and the infant Jesus were living in a house. We don’t know whether the magi brought their gifts to a house at Bethlehem, or to one at Nazareth (70 miles away). We do know that **Joseph took His wife and child back to Nazareth when Jesus was just over 40 days old, soon after His presentation at the Temple** (*Luke 2:39*).

Herod the Great (a man of Edomite ancestry - rejected by the Jews) had been set up as king over Israel by the Romans. He was extremely paranoid concerning his power and rule. His power reached well beyond Jerusalem and Bethlehem. He could have murdered all the infant boys at Nazareth too. We know he killed the males 2 years and younger, at Bethlehem, because (1) the chief priests and scribes read Micah 5:2 to him, identifying Bethlehem as the place, and (2) Herod asked the magi how long ago the star had appeared in the sky, signifying the birth of a new “king of the Jews.” **Jesus would have been 2 years old at this point, and living at Nazareth, when Joseph was warned in a dream to take Him with Mary to Egypt**. Two years later Herod would be dead, and Archelaus, his eldest son, would rule over Judea, Samaria, and Idumea. He did not rule over the Galilee, where Nazareth is located. The Romans later removed Archelaus because of his excessive cruelty, and replaced him with a Roman governor - Pontius Pilot.

Archelaus had a very violent reputation. Joseph was understandably reluctant to live within his territory, and God told him in a dream to go back to Nazareth in Galilee (*Matt 2:22*). Herod Antipas, another son of Herod the Great, ruled Galilee and Perea. He was a more tolerant ruler (though he did much later, have John the Baptist beheaded).

CHRISTIAN-IZED PAGANISM

The rebirth of the sun after the winter solstice was celebrated in the Northern Hemisphere long before it came to be celebrated as the birthday of Christ the Savior. The Romans, including Emperor Constantine, worshiped Mithra (the sun god). He continued to worship Mithra right up to his death bed, at which time he was finally “baptized” a Christian. This despite his claim to conversion many years before.

Constantine hated the Jews. He decreed that no Christian holy day could be celebrated on the same day with a ‘Jewish’ holy day. (Guess he wanted to forget that Jesus *was* a Jew and kept the Torah of God.) Remembrance of the crucifixion was **moved** from Passover to the following “Good Friday.” Celebration of the resurrection was **moved** from The Feast of Firstfruits, to the next Sunday, which just happened to coincide with the Feast of Istar (or Easter) - the Goddess of Fertility, with colored eggs and bunnies, roast ham and colorful Spring costumes. Sunday was **substituted for** the weekly Sabbath of the 7th Day.

The following are links to website articles which I have found informative concerning the pagan origins of Easter, and of Christmas. I do NOT necessarily agree with everything taught.

<http://www.eastertruth.info/>

<http://119ministries.com/sunburned-119-ministries>

<http://www.truthontheweb.org/easter.htm>

<http://www.christiananswers.net/q-eden/edn-t020.html>

<http://www.lasttrumpetministries.org/tracts/tract1.html>

<http://www.religioustolerance.org/easter1.htm>

Following Constantine, the Roman Catholic Church continued to celebrate the Romanized-Christianized pagan holy days for some 1700 years. The same holy days were retained by the Protestants of the Reformation, and carried into American culture.

CELEBRATING THE FEASTS OF THE LORD

I personally believe we should commemorate “the Feasts of the LORD” at their appointed times in the Hebrew calendar. These Hebrew/Torah “appointed times” tell the story of what Christ has done for us. He died on Passover and rose on The Feast of Firstfruits. The Holy Spirit was poured out at Pentecost.

In the earth made new by Christ, all the redeemed will “go up to the Mountain of the LORD” to worship Him “from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another” (*Isaiah 66:22-23*). The ‘New Moon’ was one of the Lord’s appointed worship gatherings under the First Covenant. The Feasts of the LORD were also called “sabbaths” - meaning rest days.

Why would the people of God take 2000 years off, from keeping God's holy days, only to keep them once again in the earth made new? Why not start now?

Zechariah Chapter 14:16 has "everyone who is left of all the nations" going up to "worship the King" and "to keep the Feast of Tabernacles" at Jerusalem.

Christmas and Easter were NOT two of the Feasts of the LORD. It is unlikely we will celebrate those holidays in the earth made new. That does not mean we will forget our Lord's nativity. We will celebrate it every year, at The Feast of Tabernacles. In my home, I hang up a large nativity tapestry during the week of Sakkot. We sing Christmas carols. On Christmas, I hang up a tapestry depicting the angel's announcement to Mary.

*We pray this short commentary will prove a blessing.
Prophecy Viewpoint*

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[Go to our resources page for books and materials on the Feasts of the LORD.](#)

LINKS to some great teachings:

<http://biblelight.net/sukkoth.htm>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Am0uv5k-YxM>

<http://www.christmastruth.info/>

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