

For Unto Us a Child is Born

“For to us a child is born, a son will be given to us, and the government will be upon His shoulder. His Name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, My Father of Eternity, Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:5)

The Book of Luke establishes for itself credentials, which are significant to every believer. Dr. Luke claims to have the accuracy of an eyewitness concerning details of the life and times of the Messiah:

¹Now many have undertaken to organize an account of the events fulfilled among us, ²just as they were handed down to us from the start by the eyewitnesses and reporters of the word. ³Therefore it seemed best to me also, because I have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, to write for you an orderly record, most excellent Theophilus ⁴so you may know for sure the truth of the words you have been taught (Luke 1:1-4)

In Luke’s own words, these *carefully investigated accounts were given to us as an accurate and ordered narrative*. Luke gives us details that help establish the birth of Messiah *Yeshua* during the Feast of *Sukkot*. We will assume the reader has familiarity with the Jewish calendar. With it, we can establish the exact timing of the birth of the Messiah to be on or about the Feast of *Sukkot*.

“⁵In the days of Herod, King of Judah, there was a kohen named Zechariah from the priestly division of Abijah. Elizabeth, his wife, was from the daughters of Aaron” (Luke 1:5)

Zechariah served in the temple at an appointed time twice each year – in the division or course of *Abijah*. These appointed times were called *divisions or courses* in the Hebrew Scriptures and are found in 1 Chronicles Chapter 24. King David himself made the appointments as follows:

“³David, with Zadok of the sons of Eleazar and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, divided them into their offices according to their avodah. ⁴More leading men were found among the sons of Eleazar than among the sons of Ithamar, so they divided them: the sons of Eleazar had 16 leaders of clans and the sons of Ithamar had eight leaders of clans.” (1 Chronicles 24:3-4)

“⁵Thus, they were impartially divided by lot for there were officials of the Holy Place and officials of God, both from the sons of Eleazar and from the sons of Ithamar. ⁶The scribe Shemaiah, son of Nethanel from the Levites, recorded them in the presence of the king, the princes, Zadok the priest, Ahimelech son of Abiathar, and the leaders of the clans of the kohanim and of the Levites: one clan taken for Eleazar and one for Ithamar... ¹⁰the seventh for Hakkoz, the eighth for Abijah” (1 Chronicles 24:5-10)

Each period of service was called a division or course in Scripture, corresponded to one week of ministry, twice each year beginning on the 4th week of Tishri (the 23rd of Tishri), after King Solomon dedicated the Temple during the Feast of *Sukkot* (2 Chro. 5:1-15; 7:1,2; 7:9-10)

“³All the people of Israel assembled before the king at the festival in the seventh month...¹¹When the cohanim came out of the Holy Place (for all the cohanim who were present had consecrated themselves; they didn’t keep to their divisions)” (2 Chr. 5:3,11 CJB) {“did not then wait by course” KJV; “without regard to divisions” TLV}

“¹When Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of יהוה filled the house, ²so that the cohanim could not enter the house of יהוה; because the glory of יהוה filled יהוה’s house.” (2 Chr. 7:1-2, CJB)

“⁸So Solomon celebrated the festival at that time for seven days, together with all Israel, an enormous gathering; <they had come all the way> from the entrance of Hamat to the Vadi <of Egypt>. ⁹On the eighth day they held a solemn assembly, having observed the dedication of the altar for seven days and the festival for seven days. ¹⁰Then, on the twenty-third day of the seventh month, he sent the people away to their tents full of joy and glad of heart for all the goodness יהוה had shown to David, to Solomon and to Israel his people.” (2 Chr. 7:8-10, CJB)

The pattern of priestly ministering established by King David before the Temple was ever built was honored and perpetuated by King Solomon and was in effect at the time of *Yeshua*. The analysis that follows draws from the fact that if we establish when *Zechariah* was in the Temple in his course, we will know both when John the Baptist and *Yeshua* were both conceived and born.

The time of Zechariah's first biannual ministration in the Temple during the eight-course (the course of *Abijah*) was during the later part of the Jewish month of *Kislev*, which corresponds roughly to the middle of December in our calendar. His second biannual ministration was during the 3rd week of the month *Sivan*, which corresponds to the 1st week in June in our calendar. We know that Zechariah was in his 2nd biannual ministration from the words of the Angel Gabriel in Luke 1:8-23. The Greek phrase translated "...the days of his ministration were accomplished..." in the KJV ("When the days of his priestly service had been completed..." in the TLV) clearly indicate that he had finished his duty for the year (he was finished with his 2nd biannual course).

²³"When the days of his priestly service had been completed, he went home" (Luke 1:23)

Now we know that Elizabeth, Zechariah's barren and aged wife was to conceive *miraculously* and thus, John the Baptist is conceived in the beginning of the 4th week of *Sivan* (roughly our 2nd week in June). Elizabeth then hid herself for five months.

²⁴After these days, his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and hid herself for five months, saying, ²⁵"Adonai has done this for me! In these days He looked upon me, to take away my disgrace among the people. ²⁶Then in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by Adonai into a town in the Galilee named Natzeret" (Luke 1:24-25)

After Elizabeth was six months pregnant (³⁶Behold, even your relative Elizabeth has conceived a son in her old age; and the one who was called barren is six months pregnant" Luke 1:36) with John the Baptist, the Angel Gabriel was sent unto Mary (*Miryam*), the espoused wife of Joseph (*Yosef*) and announced to her:

³⁰The angel spoke to her, "Do not be afraid, Miriam, for you have found favor with God. ³¹Behold, you will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and you shall call His name *Yeshua*)... ³⁵And responding, the angel said to her, "The Ruach ha-Kodesh will come upon you, and the power of Elyon will overshadow you. Therefore, the Holy One being born will be called Ben-Elohim. ³⁶Behold, even your relative Elizabeth has conceived a son in her old age; and the one who was called barren is six months pregnant. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸So Miriam said, "Behold, the servant of Adonai. Let it be done to me according to your word." And the angel left her" (Luke 1:30-31; 35-38)

Thus, *Yeshua* is conceived six months after Elizabeth conceived, during the 4th week of *Kislev*, corresponding roughly to the beginning of our 2nd week in December (Chanukah starts on the evening of *Kislev* 25, and from *Kislev* 29 to *Tishri* 15 is exactly 280 days). The human gestation period is 40 weeks or 280 days. If we count 40 weeks from the 4th week of *Sivan* we find that John the Baptist is born on or about *Passover*. Neither Elizabeth's nor Mary's were ordinary human pregnancies. They were "*Perfect, Spirit-led, Spirit-induced and Spirit-directed pregnancies*" therefore, we can safely conclude that exactly at the end of the 40 weeks, John is born of Elizabeth and *Yeshua* is born of *Miryam* in Bethlehem (Hebrew, *Beit Lehem*, literally the house of bread), on or about the first day of 3rd week of *Tishri*, exactly 6 months from John's birth in the Jewish calendar. This is the beginning of *Sukkot* (the Feast of Tabernacles) in Scripture on the 15th day of *Tishri*. We know the Jewish people before the time of *Yeshua* look for the coming of Elijah on *Passover* (as indicated in any *Hagaddah*). *Yeshua* (and the angel Gabriel) confirmed that the Elijah that was to come before the Messiah was indeed John the Baptist. Happy Birthday Jesus / *Yeshua*!