

Yeshua and Sukkot

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Introduction

We need to recognize it has been two thousand years since our Messiah Yeshua was born. The account of His birth is well preserved in the Brit Chadashah (New Testament) scriptures. However some of the details providing discernment as to the exact day of His birth and the season are of lower resolution than we wish. Presented in this article are evidences and a strong argument as to Yeshua's birth being on the first day of Sukkot. It is up to the reader to decide if the weight of this material points unequivocally to Yeshua being born at this time.

We also have absolutely no information from first or second century sources as to the traditional date of Christmas as being accurate. The date of Christmas as used as Christ's birthday comes only from later sources in the third or fourth century. There is evidence that the date of Christmas comes from pagan sources with respect to Babylonian custom, and Sun Worship with December 25th being the date when it is noticeable that the sun is once again starting to move into longer days after the winter solstice. The Roman Empire was wide spread when Yeshua came to take away the sins of the world. Four types of "sun" worship were practices and pagans throughout the empire worshiped according to the customs of their ancestors. Legend or tradition has it that Tammuz was born on this date, the Ishtar (Easter) spring fertility festival is also closely tied to the winter festival with both being associated with the vernal equinox and the winter solstice respectively. Most believers are surprised to find out the traditions of the twenty first century we hold so dear are actually of pagan origin and have absolutely nothing to do with God's plan.

As Messianic Believers, if you have stopped celebrating Christmas as Yeshua's birthday, I strongly suggest a positive attitude toward your other Christian brothers who celebrate Christmas. They are not going to understand when you make a smug remark such as: "Oh, we do not celebrate Christmas," or "we do not celebrate that pagan holiday." The context they are going to here is that you do not acknowledge the birth of the Messiah. This leaves them wondering what you do believe. What is your relationship with the King of the Universe, the one through whom ALL things have come into existence? (John 1) As with most things the origin of Christmas might surprise even those who think they understand it's pagan roots. Could it be that it was a result of Hanukkah being on the 25th day of Kislev? You will have to read on to learn more.

I personally recommend the "positive" affirmation instead of the negative. Instead of telling people what you do not do, tell them instead what you do. We celebrate Sukkot, the Biblical Holiday God prescribed as recognition of our temporary existence until we are with our Messiah, in that celebration we recognize Yeshua came into the world (was born) on Sukkot. Also, Sukkot is when we will again, in the future, tabernacle (dwell) with our Yeshua at the Marriage Feast.

We long for that Shofar blast with a shout, given on the Feast of Trumpets, announcing the coming of our Messiah; we humbly wait as judgment falls on the world through the tribulation of Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement); and we rejoice at the thought of dwelling with Yeshua our Messiah when He establishes His kingdom at Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles).

The Conception of Yoc-han'an (John-The-Baptist) Luke 1:5:25

Zachariah was a priest in the order of Abijah. The reason he was in the Temple was because two times a year each order of priests would serve to perform the temple duties. We are given the order of the priests in 1 Chronicles 24. Abijah was the eighth order.

All the "Orders of Priests" served in the Temple together during the three pilgrimage appointed times of the LORD. Chag Ha-Matzot (Unleavened Bread), Shavuot (Weeks), Tabernacles (Sukkot or Booths).

We start with Nisan 1 with the first order of priests Jehoiarib, All the Orders are present for Chag Ha-Matzot (Feast of Unleavened Bread). So the 8th order of priests, the Order of Abijah is the week before Shavuot (Feast of Weeks). Since Shavuot is one of the pilgrimage feasts and Zachariah is in the temple on one of the days the preceding week, this explains why the whole multitude of the people were in prayer outside at the hour of the incense offering (Luke 1:10).

Luke 1:24-25 After these days Elizabeth his wife became pregnant, and she kept herself in seclusion for five months, saying, "This is the way the Lord has dealt with me in the days when He looked with favor upon me, to take away my disgrace among men."

So Elizabeth stayed in seclusion for five months.

The Conception of Yeshua at Hanukkah (Luke 1:26—55)

Luke 1:26-32 Now in the sixth month [of Elizabeth's pregnancy] the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming in, he said to her, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was very perplexed at this statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this was. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God." And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus [Yeshua].

Luke 1:36-38 "And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month. 37 "For nothing will be impossible with God." 38 And Mary said, "Behold, the bond slave of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

This was during the last part of the ninth Hebrew month of Kislev, at the time of Hanukkah (Feast of Dedication) Notice Elizabeth's response to Mariam was to call her "the mother of my LORD," this tells us Mariam was already pregnant with Yeshua Ha-Mashiach.

John 10 At the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah), when Yeshua was in the Temple, the Jews gathered around Him and were saying to Him, "How long will You keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ [Messiah], tell us plainly." ... "I and the Father are one."

John 10:36 do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?

This episode in Yeshua's life took place at the Feast of Dedication. If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly. Yeshua answered and it was clear to the Jews present He was saying he was the Messiah. They picked up stones to stone Him.

(John 10:30) "I and the Father are one." This testifies to His divine origin in His *conception*.

(See Appendix for more information about December 25th and Christmas)

The Birth of Yoc-han'an (John-The-Baptist) on Passover

27 weeks make up the first six months (two trimesters) and that was from Shavuot to Hanukkah. There are 14 weeks from the first day of Hanukkah (Kislev 25) to Passover (Nisan 14).

This means Yoc-han'an was born on Passover.

Luke 1:15-17

15 "For he will be great in the sight of the Lord; and he will drink no wine or liquor, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb. 16 "And he will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God. 17 "It is he who will go as a forerunner before Him **in the spirit and power of Elijah**, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

At the Passover Feast, we always set a place setting and pour a cup of wine for Elijah. That is because it is understood that Elijah must come first.

Remember Yeshua told us:

Matt 17:12-13

12 but I say to you that Elijah already came, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they wished. So also the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands." 13 Then the disciples understood that He had spoken to them about John the Baptist.

Passover plus the Feast of Unleavened Bread make up 8 days. John born on the first day of Passover would have been circumcised on the 8th day, this would be the last day of the Feast of Unleavened bread.

The Birth of Yeshua Ha-Mashiach on Sukkot (Tishri 15)

Six months after John the Baptist was born we have Sukkot.

Yos'ef bar David (Joseph, Family of King David) and Miry'am (Mary) would have been on their way traveling to Jerusalem for the pilgrimage feast. Lots of travelers, and the best weather of the year. Bethlehem, especially at this time of year would be considered all but a suburb of Jerusalem, only 5 miles away. Remember King David's father Jesse was from Bethlehem and the family tree had continued. This is why Joseph would have been using the occasion to comply with the edict to be counted in the census.

Luke 2:1-21

Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. 2 This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. 3 And everyone was on his way to register for the census, each to his own city. 4 Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, 5 in order to register along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child. 6 While they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth. 7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 In the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. 10 But the angel said to them, " Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; 11 for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12 " This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." 13 And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

14 " Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased."

15 When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds began saying to one another, "Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us." 16 So they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger. 17 When they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child. 18 And all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds. 19 But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart. 20 The shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them.

21 Jesus Presented at the Temple

And when eight days had passed, before His circumcision, His name was then called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.

NASU

The last day after Sukkot is a Sabbath and it is called the 8th day.

We have one other place in scripture called the 8th day: circumcision. Notice this is when Yeshua would have been being circumcised, on the 8th day of Sukkot.

God gave us no indication of why he made an additional day onto Sukkot. And He simply calls it the 8th day.

Deut 16:14

14 and you shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter and your male and female servants and the Levite and the stranger and the orphan and the widow who are in your towns.

NASU

Sukkot is a time to celebrate and rejoice

What better time to rejoice than at Yeshua's birth?

Josephus tells us 2.5 million people would have shown up to celebrate. There would have been Sukkahs all over the place. This also explains why Joseph found no room in his ancestral home. Lots of relatives had already shown up.

Shepard's were in the field. This would not have been winter because they would have brought the sheep in.

Stable and Sukkah are not the same word in Hebrew.

Information From Thomas Lancaster

Mirror to another story of Abraham and Sarah, Sarah laughed,
Zachariah bulked, made mute until these things take place at their appointed time.
John was the Elijah, sages said that Elijah would come at Passover.
Now 6 months later, Sukkot is 6 months later
Passover Nisan 15 ----- Tisheri 15

Joseph had property rights.

Senses would take place for a year (not a day). At the very least the Romans would have picked the most logical time when all Jewish people would pilgrimage to Jerusalem and a time logical to pay the tax. After the fall harvest is when the most people would have their money and so the pilgrimage fall feast makes the most sense from a government standpoint. The middle of winter makes the least sense of all to require people to move around.

Joseph was religious, so the time to do it would have been at the same time as you went to Jerusalem.

3 choices: Passover, Shavuot, Sukkot

Proclaim great JOY: Jewish people immediately think Sukkot

Luke 2:4 Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace ...

Sing Hallel Psalm 113 to 118 on the pilgrimage feasts.

118 "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD" this is normally emphasized on Sukkot (Bert Yelin).

Because Luke does not normally use Semitic words, he is writing to "Theophilus" he changes Hosanna to Glory in the highest, (Mark 11 equivalent text uses Hosanna)

Luke 19 Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the LORD, equivalent to Blessed in the coming kingdom of our father David.

Now we know he is saying Hosanna in the Highest.

Sukkot is when we celebrate with Hosanna in the Highest and throw out Palm branches. This is why when Yeshua was riding into Jerusalem on the donkey the people were throwing out the Sukkot palm branches and proclaiming the hallel portion most associated with Sukkot, when the LORD would come: Hosanna in the Highest.

Welcome 7 guests into your sukkah, Micah 7 shepherds, 8 leaders.

8th day festival is the 8th day.

What is the other "8th day" event in the Torah? circumcision.

If Yeshua was born on the first day of Sukkot, what was the 8th day?

2nd Century, manuscript from medieval times. (NOT Christian, of historical significance)

This is a non-believing source and a story about Christianity, it is not a true story but one that was circulated starting in the 2nd century and this manuscript dates back to medieval times.

So many believers they even said the Believers were beating them up at the temple.
Story of a man named Kepha: Simon Peter [not a true story] If you will go with me on this sin:
Given the task to distinguish between believers and non-believers.

"I am a disciple of Jesus: proves it by healing a leper"

Then says Jesus taught us many things:

- You should not keep the Sabbath
- All sorts of other things...
- Not to celebrate the Feast of Unleavened bread (hag-ha-matzot)
 - Instead celebrate the day of his death
- Instead of Shavuot
 - Celebrate the 40 days from his execution to the ascension into the firmament
 - Swapping out Ascension day for Shavuot
- Instead of celebrating Sukkot
 - Celebrate the day of His birth
 - And on the 8th day celebrate his circumcision

Notice the purpose of this document: It is to ***"explain Christianity as the Jewish people new it in the 2nd century"***.

- Well known Christians and Jewish believers celebrated Passover on the 14th of Nisan
 - Primarily disciples of John (the Apostle that also wrote Revelation)
 - Lower Asia Minor
 - Quartodeciman Disputes involved the Passover and Sabbath and other things.
 - It is extremely significant that Constantine presiding over the Council of Nica and excommunicated the Quartodecimans from the Roman Catholic Church and from that day on ALL Jewish (God's) appointed times of Leviticus 23 were outlawed.
- So where are the people of the Jewish community getting this information to try to explain the substitution of Sukkot for a birthday party of Yeshua Ha-Mashiach?
 - In other words celebrating Yeshua's birth in place of Sukkot and celebrating His circumcision instead of the "8th" day celebration, Shemini Atzeret.

This text becomes strong evidence the early Christians were celebrating Sukkot with the knowledge of Yeshua's birth on this day.

- NOT substituting it "instead of", but celebrating it "with the knowledge of".
- It is trying to explain Jewish Christianity to people who are not believers.
- They were explaining with the knowledge known by Jewish believers in the second century.