

What time of year was Jesus born?

Short answer with limited Bible references. How long was Jesus Ministry? – 3 ½ years per prophecy (*Dan. 9:26*) and gospel accounts. Luke says he was about 30 years old when he began His ministry (*Luke 3:23*). On what day did Jesus die? Passover, 30AD (March/April – month of Nisan – Abib). Means he would have been born 33 ½ years previous in what we would consider the fall of the year (Sept/Oct).

More complete Scriptural answer:

John's birth is tied to Jesus' birth – six months before Jesus per gospel account of Luke. Can we determine approximately when John was born? Yes, by tracking when Zacharias would have been performing his priestly service in the Temple.

Luke 1:5-9. Order of Abijah or Abia. What time of year would the order of Abijah serve? We must go back to Old Testament for important clues/information.

1 Chron. 24:1-5 (24 total divisions or orders), **1 Chron. 24:10** (Order of Abijah/Abia) served eighth in the rotation). Each order would serve for a 7-day period (**1 Chron. 9:25**). Showed up to begin work on the Sabbath (i.e. "came in") worked through the week, went out on the next Sabbath. (**2 Chron. 23:8**) Records seem to show that all Priests served in the temple during the 3 Feasts to accommodate the large crowds and their sacrifices that were required under the law (**Deut. 16:16**). So those dates would be excluded when determining which order served which week during the Israelite calendar year. So, this left the remaining weeks to be covered by the 24 orders arranged by King David and Zadok. Thus, each order would need to serve twice a year.

Order of Abijah/Abia's week of service calculated.

Year began with month of Abib/Nisan (**Ex.12:2,13:4**) Since we don't count the week of Passover (about 3rd week of sacred calendar), Abijah would serve somewhere in the week or two before the Feast of Weeks (2 weeks to Passover, six weeks after Passover week – 8 weeks total – approx. last few days of Iyar, first 4-5 days of the month off Sivan – mid to late May). It's likely some years Zacharias would have served in the Temple for a 2-week straight period encompassing the normal week of Abijah's service followed by the week celebrating the feast of weeks (due to calendar year rotation). The other week that those of the order of Abijah would have served in the temple would be 26 weeks later (since we don't count the week for the Feast of Weeks or the week for the Feast of Booths/ Ingathering) from the week they served in the month of Sivan which would be during the month of Chislev (somewhere in the first 7-10 days of that month).

It is during this time (month of Sivan) that the angel Gabriel appears to Zacharias and tells him Elizabeth will conceive and bear him a son (**Luke 1:13**). After Zacharias's days of service Elizabeth becomes pregnant (**Luke 1:24**). Assuming Elizabeth conceives sometime after the Feast of Weeks (since Zacharias would stay around the Jerusalem area so he could serve during the time of the Feast of Weeks) this puts John the Immerser's birthdate around mid-Adar (March/April), the time of Passover.

Once Elizabeth becomes pregnant, she kept herself in seclusion for 5 months. Luke's narrative says that in Elizabeth's 6th month of pregnancy (month of Chislev our November/December) that the angel Gabriel appears to Mary announcing that the Holy Spirit will come upon her, overshadow her and she shall conceive the Christ child (**Luke 1:26-36**). So, Jesus would have been "conceived" around the time of Hannukah (Festival of Lights). This puts Jesus' birth in the month of Tishri (September/October), the month that held the day of Trumpets (1st), Day of Atonement (10th) and the Feast of Booths 15th-21st.

Other interesting thoughts concerning the narrative of Jesus' birth per the gospel of Luke. They had to head to the hometown of Joseph to be counted for the census. His hometown is Bethlehem, close to Jerusalem. Since Mary's a descendent of David, (Luke that's her hometown too.

Luke says there was no room at the inn. This could be due to the crush of people coming into town to be part of the census; but since Jesus was likely born during the month of Tishri, the same time of the year for the day of Trumpets/Day of Atonement & Feast of Booths, the entire area surrounding Jerusalem would be filled with people. That would account for the lack of available lodging as well.

With all the Jews needing to appear at the temple for the Day of Atonement as well as the Feast of Booths per the Law of Moses, wouldn't these events also serve as an efficient way to execute the census with all the Jews in town? Hmmmm....

Since the months of Chislev (Nov/Dec) and Tebeth (Dec/Jan) are typically times during that area's rainy season, it's unlikely the Shepherds would be out in the fields with their sheep (See ***Ezra 10:9; Song of Solomon 2:10-11***). However, if it's the month of Tishri, around the Feast of Booths, lots of people including shepherds, would be out in the Fields in the booths they'd constructed, right?

Also, there's John's statement in his gospel account as he was moved by the Holy Spirit to record that John the Immerser came to testify about the light – ***John 1:7*** (Hmmm, Jesus conceived during the month the Jews celebrated the Festival of light in Chislev) Oh, and John, the one who was also supposed to prepare the way for the Passover Lamb (Jesus), was born probably around the time of the day of preparation (Passover). Interesting brethren!

As well as his statement in ***John 1:14*** – ***“And the Word became flesh and dwelt*** (literally in the Greek – tabernacled) ***among us, and we saw His glory...*** exactly what the Jews were supposed to recall and be reminded of as part of their celebrating the Feast of Booths.

Jewish Calendar		
Name	Corresponds with	No. of days
Abib/Nisan	Mar/Apr	30
Ziv/Iyar	Apr/May	29
Sivan	May/June	30
Tammuz	June/July	29
Ab	July/August	30
Elul	Aug/Sept	29
Ethanim/Tishri	Sept/Oct	30
Bul/Heshvan	Oct/Nov	29 or 30
Chislev	Nov/Dec	29 or 30
Tebeth	Dec/Jan	29
Shebat	Jan/Feb	30
Adar	Feb/Mar	29 or 30