

WHEN WAS JESUS BORN?

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INTRO: (Bring solar and lunar calendar)

In 2014 I gave a message on the time of the birth of Christ and I said we could come within a month from when Christ was born. I came across an interesting suggestion, and I now think we might be able to at least suggest the day Jesus was born. I am preaching this message simply for the sake of interest.

There are a number of other ways scholars have tried to find the date of Christ's birth, and we'll see some of those. But none the less, I look forward to giving another way of calculating the date of Christ's birth which I think will show us at least the month of His birth, and possibly the day. Some years ago, when I preached on the Gospels, I discovered the possibility of finding the month Jesus was born and now I want to suggest a possibility of the day as well.

I trust you will be encouraged with the things we can know, and even if we cannot come to the exact day, you will at least note a number of places that will give you reassurance that the Bible is truly the Word of God!

You have had many demanding messages over the past months, so this morning you can relax and enjoy new thoughts you might not have considered before, and you will not need to think through complicated theological issues this Christmas day. The greatest thing of all on this day we commemorate, is that Jesus Christ, Jeshua Hamashia, was in fact born! No honest historian can deny that!

I. TWO POSSIBLE TIMES OF THE YEAR

A. The Options

We begin by looking at two possible times of year Christ might have been born. I think that most who have tried to find the birth-date of Christ probably have come to the month of Tishri of the Jewish calendar or the fall time of the year. Tishri would be somewhere around our September.

Go to Luke 1:5:

5 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.

How do scholars come to Tishri as the month of Christ's birth? They do so by reckoning from the course of Abijah, in which John the Baptist's father served, just before his wife Elizabeth conceived. If you read through the OT, you will find that there were 24 courses of priests and they all served for two weeks in a year.

Scholars use the date from when Zachariah served, then go ahead 9 months and you are very close to the date John was born. Now all you have to do is go forward three more months and we are close to the time of the birth of Jesus. That is because Mary conceived three months later than Elizabeth. From that, one comes close to the birth date of Christ, and this gives us the month of Tishri.

What most fail to recognize is that each course of priests served two weeks but they did not serve two consecutive weeks, they served one week six months apart. So, using the course of Abijah as a starting point one could have either around Tishri, our September; or somewhere around the month Nisan, about our March. Christ's birth would then have been either in the fall or in the spring.

B. The Conclusion

We want to choose the best option now and establish if His birth would have been in the fall or in the spring. To determine this let us read Luke 3:21-23:

21 When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened.

22 *And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."*

23 *Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age..*

Now verse 23 is a very interesting verse. Take note that the words, *His ministry*, are not in the verse at all. The NKJV has tried to help Luke out with some awkward Hebrew wording for the English reader. The KJV says more accurately, "Now Jesus Himself began to be about 30 years of age..." So here is our question: How do you begin to be about 30 years of age? Well, what that means is He is not yet quite 30 years old. We may take this verse as the starting point to learning approximately when Jesus was born because it cannot be too far ahead.

So, when Luke says, "Jesus began to be about 30 years of age" we need to pay careful attention to those words. What is most instructive in these words is that we are somewhere not too far from the birthday of Christ but we are not quite there. This much is clear.

1. Day one

Since the date would be a little ahead of the time of His baptism, we want to trace the days forward from His baptism until we come to a definite date to see if it would have been in the fall or the spring. We begin our first day of calculation with Luke 3:22. Turn there. The KJV states verse 23 more literally than the NKJV when it says, "And Jesus Himself began to be about 30 years of age..." That is a very interesting way to word this and following a literal translation it is better.

So, Jesus' baptism is day 1. Now, if we can go forward from here and keep track of time, until we come to a definite date, we can determine if His birth was in the spring or fall.

2. Days 2-41

In Luke 2:24-38, we have Christ's genealogy so there is no passage of time between His baptism and the next event which we find in Luke 3:1-2 like this:

1 Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

2 being tempted for forty days by the devil. And in those days He ate nothing, and afterward, when they had ended, He was hungry.

Mark says that *immediately* after His baptism the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness (Mark 1:12). Because Jesus was tempted for 40 days, we now add 40 days to day 1 and we have days 2-41. All that is quite simple so far. We have come 41 days from His baptism.

3. Day 42-43

We now go to Matthew 4:11-12:

11 Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

12 Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee.

Matthew, Mark and Luke now leave out quite a lot of information, but thankfully the Gospel of John picks the progression up right there. The section left out by Matthew, Mark and Luke is covered by John 1:19 through 5:47. That is a large section and it is in the first part of this section that John carefully gives us the days between Jesus' temptation and His arrival in Jerusalem for His first Passover, and the Passover gives us a definite date. If we can carefully count those days, we have come very close to the time of Christ's birth.

And so, likely on the same day Jesus was tempted by Satan, He made His way back to Bethabara where John was baptizing and where He Himself had been baptized. One might add a day, but I think that is not necessary. So, where Matthew, Mark and Luke leave off, we go to John 1. In verses 19-28 John is

questioned as to who he is. And the next day, the day Jesus got there from the wilderness we come to our next time marker which brings us to day 43.

John 1:29 now says:

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

So, we are now at day 43. If we are right this far, and we are at least very close, then I believe that from here we can come to a definite date.

4. Day 44

We come to another time marker in John 1:35-42:

35 Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples.

36 And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

This concludes day 44. It is interesting that John so carefully notes the days in this part of his Gospel.

5. Day 45

Now note verse 43:

43 The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me."

We are now in day 45. Jesus is beginning to call His disciples. His ministry has begun and He is moving forward quickly.

6. Days 46-47

We come to our next time marker in John 2:1:

1 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.

Here is what I gather. On day 46 Jesus went to Galilee. He arrived in the evening and that begins day 47. That begins the first of the three days. He spends that day in Galilee and the next He goes to Cana, since He and His new disciples have been

invited to a wedding at Cana of Galilee. He arrives there on the 47th day in the evening.

7. Days 48-54

The next day the wedding begins. So, we are now at day 48. The wedding feast was likely the usual seven-day feast. The evidence for that is the amount of grape juice they used. There were six water pots which would have contained from 20-30 gallons each. That is 120-180 gallons! They had already depleted the amount they had expected they might use. I expect that this was quite a long feast. So, if we give it seven days, which was customary for Jewish weddings, then we have days 48-54.

8. Days 55-58

After the wedding at Cana, Jesus goes to Capernaum and spends a few days there. This is now day 55.

John 2:12 says:

12 After this He went down to Capernaum, He, His mother, His brothers, and His disciples; and they did not stay there many days.

It is almost certain by the festivities at the wedding in Cana, that it was a single woman that got married, and not a widow. Maids got married on Wednesdays. Widows got married on Thursday. So, Jesus would likely have left Cana on the next Wednesday. From Cana He went to Capernaum. I would gather He stayed there until after the Sabbath, which takes us from day 55-58. John 2:12 says He did not stay there many days. So, most likely He left right after the Sabbath, which was the fourth day after leaving Cana. So, there we have days 55-58.

9. Day 59

On day 59, Jesus starts out for Jerusalem. John 2:13 says:

13 Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

We are not told by which road He went and I am not sure how long that took. We will give it two days

which is plenty. But note that we are close to Passover time and there we have a definite date.

10. Day 60-63

We do not know how much time Jesus spent in Jerusalem before the Passover but it was likely at least a few days. He did cleanse the temple before the Passover so He will likely have been there a few days before the Passover. We get this from John 2:14-22 and because of time we won't read this passage.

So, I will give this as possibly days 60-63.

11. Day 64

For our 64th day we come to John 2:23:

23 Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did.

We have now arrived at a fixed date. This is Passover day. It is the evening of Nisan 14th. Nisan 14th is about like our April 1st. So, if we give or take a few days, we are somewhere between day 60 and day 65 from the time of His baptism. So, if Jesus began to be about 30 at His baptism, then His birth must have happened in the spring of the year. It cannot possibly have been in the fall time of the year nor December 25th for His baptism would have been after those dates.

I found a quote by John Gill on John 2:13 that adds some credibility to my calculations. He says this, "This was the first "passover" after Christ's baptism, which is generally thought to have been about half a year before; though so much time cannot be made out from the scriptural account; for from his baptism, to his return out of the wilderness to John, were forty days; and from thence, to his coming to Cana, four or, five days more; and perhaps he might be seven days in Cana; for so long a wedding was usually kept; and his stay at Capernaum was but a few days; all which do not amount to above eight or nine weeks at most..." end quote.

So, He has arrived at the approximate number of days I arrived at. If this is correct, then Christ

was most certainly not born December 25th, and He was then born somewhere from March to April. Because the beginning of the Jewish month falls somewhere in the middle of our months, He must have been born either in the month Adar or Nisan.

II. TWO POSSIBLE MONTHS OF HIS BIRTH

Having established that Christ was born in the spring we want to now look at which month He was born and we will have two options here as well. We'll gather the information first and then give the options.

A. The Information

1. Luke 2:3-8

Now, I think we can further narrow it down to within a month or two of His birth and give evidence for that. Turn now to Luke 2:3-8:

3 So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

4 Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David,

5 to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child.

6 So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered.

7 And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

I ask now, when did shepherds watch their flocks by night? Well, there is one time of year when they

did that. Anybody with sheep knows when you watch them both day and night. When is that? At lambing time! And when was lambing season? Just before Passover in the spring of the year! So, if one uses the course of Abijah, we again come to the spring time of the year!

2. Micah 4:8 and 5:2

Turn now to the book of Micah. In Micah we find some familiar verses from the OT regarding the birth of Christ. Turn to Micah 4:8. You see, after the temple was built and it was in a permanent place, special shepherds were trained to raise sheep for Israel's sacrificial days. They raised hundreds of thousands of lambs every year. These lambs were born around the area of Bethlehem. And close to Bethlehem was Migdol Edar, the tower of the flock. This is where the lambs were birthed and where the shepherds watched their flocks when it was lambing season.

Micah 4:8 says:

8 And you, O tower of the flock, The stronghold of the daughter of Zion, To you shall it come, Even the former dominion shall come, The kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem."

Now look at 5:2:

2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting."

Now listen to Luke 2:1-7:

1 And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.

2 This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria.

3 So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

4 Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David,

5 to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child.

6 So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered.

7 And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

So, listen to this from Cooper P. Abrams. He writes, "First, we know that Migdal Eder was the watchtower that guarded the Temple flocks that were being raised to serve as sacrificial animals in the Temple. These were not just any flock and herd. The shepherds who kept them were men who were specifically trained for this royal task. They were educated in what an animal that was to be sacrificed had to be and it was their job to make sure that none of the animals were hurt, damaged, or blemished." 6 These lambs were apparently wrapped in 'swaddling cloths' to protect them from injury and also used to wrap the Lord Jesus", end quote.

Now that is most fascinating. In my studies over the past years, I have come to the conclusion that Jesus was born at Migdal Eder as given by the prophet Micah. That is very significant because that was the tower of the flock, a place where the special sacrificial lambs were raised for the feasts of Israel. When the temple was built in Jerusalem, and worship became permanent there, the special sacrificial lambs were raised around Bethlehem. As I understand it, they were birthed at

Migdal Ader which is near Bethlehem. We are told that at the birth of Christ, the shepherds were out in the fields at night. It is clear that at no time would the sheep have had more careful attention than at lambing season and lambing season is said to have been from some time in February to early April. Scholars don't appear to be agreed as to exactly when but it was some time in the spring.

Now, it is important that we understand something here with regard to the Jewish year. The Jews used a lunar month but went by a solar year. The lunar month is 29 1/2 days. So, the Jewish months were 29 days, then 30 days, then 29 days etc... However the solar year is about 11 days longer than 12 lunar months. The solar year goes by the sun, which our calendar does as well. The Jews used a lunar month but a solar year. By using a solar year, their harvest times always fell much at the same time. You might have noticed that the Muslim Ramadan is on different dates every year and that is because they use the lunar calendar without giving consideration to the solar year.

(Show solar and lunar calendar)

The Jews, to compensate for the 12-month 11 day or so solar year added a month 7 times in a 19 year cycle to make up for the extra 11 days each year. Every year had 12 lunar months but in the spring of the leap years, the month Adar II was added to the regular Adar I month so in those years there were 13 months. This added month was the month before Nisan. This means that the date of Nisan 1st could vary quite a lot from year to year and so could the lambing season.

Cooper P. Abrams, in a very enlightening article called, "Where was the Birth Place of the Lord Jesus?" says this: "Typically, 'Migdal Edar', (the tower of the flock) at Bethlehem is the perfect place for Christ to be born. He was born in the very birthplace where tens of thousands of lambs, which had been sacrificed to prefigure Him. God promised it, pictured it, and performed it at 'Migdal Edar'. End quote.

So, it all fits together, for that is the place where sacrificial lambs were born! Jesus was not born behind an inn, in a stable where the donkeys of travelers and other animals were kept. He was born in Migdol Ader, at the birthing place of the sacrificial lambs that were offered in the Temple in Jerusalem which Micah 4:8 calls the 'tower of the flock.'

Another article called, "The Bible's Story of the Birth of Jesus", by Steve Rudd says, "Was Jesus born during the lambing period? There is a tradition that Bethlehem was in fact, the very town where the Jerusalem Passover lambs were born and raised. This is quite credible, considering the fact that David (through inspiration) created a whole new spiritual system with the temple in Jerusalem that Solomon built. David was also a shepherd and given he was king, would logically choose his birth town, the "city of David" (Bethlehem) to be the place that raised such important lambs for the annual day of atonement on Nissan 14, when the High Priest would take the blood and sprinkle it on the Ark of the Covenant. If this is true, then it is possible that Jesus was born in the very manger where the actual Passover lambs were born. The 'lambing season' for sheep **is in February in Israel**. It is an interesting suggestion that Jesus, being the "lamb of the world" was born at exactly the same time the literal lambs were born. If so then Jesus was born when the lambs were born and he died when the Passover lamb was slaughtered on Nissan 14." (<http://www.bible.ca/D-Xmas-story.htm>).

In another article from the internet called, "Why We Believe Messiah was Born on Passover" I quote this: "Considering how the seasons of the year affect the behavior of the sheep and the shepherds, it seems reasonable to conclude that the shepherds in the Judean hills would be "keeping watch over their flocks at night" in the spring and that, therefore, spring was a likely time for the birth of Messiah."

What we learn here is that there is a view that Jesus was born on Passover. I think that can be ruled out. First, the lambs were born before Passover. Second, that would not have been a good time to have the Roman census, and furthermore all males were to be in Jerusalem at Passover. Third, if He was born at Passover we would expect Jerusalem, not Bethlehem to have been crowded at that time.

Another article says, "Whilst many commentators who have remarked on the impossibility of Messiah being born on 25 December because of the shepherds have opted for an autumnal birth, they have invariably overlooked one vital piece of information which in my opinion gives us an important key to a spring birth for the Messiah, namely the fact that spring is the lambing season. In Israel and in surrounding nations lambing occurs over a two-week period from late March to early April. During this season the flocks require the constant attention of their shepherds, who keep careful watch over their sheep and their newborn for their own safety. At no other time of the year are shepherds so closely tied to their flocks" end quote.

(<http://www.nccg.org/241Art-6April.html>).

With the fluctuation of the months Adar I and Adar II, which we saw earlier, it is a clear possibility from Luke 3:23 that Jesus was born during the time the sacrificial lambs were being born. And because of the fluctuation of the months because of the solar year, He could have been born in the month Adar or Nisan.

(Demonstrate on Calendar: Lambing season stays relatively the same like the solar year, but the Hebrew month changes every year.)

The little we know of the place where Jesus was born in the Gospel accounts comes from the Gospel writer Luke. He says, "And she brought forth her

firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." And he also tells us there were shepherds in the field keeping watch over their flocks by night. This fits well with the prophecies of Micah, and with a spring birth date.

3. Luke 2:42

As I worked on this message, one day I was thinking of the only two places in the NT that speak of Jesus' birthday after He was born. They are the passage we have looked at and one more. Turn to Luke 2. We are given one window into the life of Christ after His birth but before He began to minister and that is when He was 12 years old, so look at verse 42:

42 And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast.

We note that He is not beginning to be about 12 years old, He was 12 years old. And note that they went to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. And we ask, which feast was it? Three times in the year all Jewish males were required to go to Jerusalem for special feast days. And now we ask, what feast was this? Go back one verse which says:

41 His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.

It is Passover, and note that He was now 12 years old. If He was born when the lambs were born, and they came to Jerusalem a bit early, He might have had His birthday while they were traveling from Nazareth to Jerusalem or while they were at Jerusalem.

With this information, we know that since He was born in the spring and it was during lambing season His birth would have been in the month of Adar or the month of Nisan, depending on the cycle of the year.

B. The Conclusion

Well, that is a lot of evidence for a spring birth. So what is my conclusion as to the month and the day of Christ's birth? Well, I recommend that we can at least speculate on the exact day on the Jewish Calendar of His birth, which will give us both the day and the month He was born.

Now I am very cautious to do something like this and let me say that it is based on an assumption, and if you don't think the day is correct you will at least be within a month or so of His birth. Also, if you have another suggestion, I would be most happy to listen.

The assumption is this, that since the fulfillment of the first four feasts happened on significant days, and His death happened on a very significant day, then His birth likely also happened on a significant day. Let me explain. There are seven Feasts that God appointed for Israel. Those feasts all have historical and prophetic significance. Four of those seven feast days have been fulfilled on the exact day they were to be kept. Jesus died on Passover, on the exact day of the feast. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was fulfilled in Him on the exact days they were kept, and He arose from the dead on the exact day of the Feast of First-fruits, and this Feast speaks of the resurrection. Then Pentecost was fulfilled on the exact day it was to be commemorated.

Because the first four feasts were all fulfilled on the exact day they were kept, I believe the last three will be fulfilled on the exact day they were kept. Now let me sound a little warning. Because the feast of Trumpets, a feast not yet fulfilled, points to the return of Christ, many Christians wait anxiously every year at the Feast of Trumpets for the rapture. Let me just say that the rapture is not the fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets nor is it a more likely date for Christ's return. When it comes to the rapture, we are told not to set dates and we are told to expect Him at any time. The Bible clearly tells us we cannot know the day or the hour. The rapture has no set day and we must never set dates for it.

But I have no doubt that Jesus will return at the second coming on the Feast of Trumpets because it will

be fulfilled on the day it is commemorated just like the previous four were. And you might say, "Well, then people will know when Christ will come at the second coming!" Yes, clearly! You see when the antichrist makes a covenant for seven years, you know from that alone when He will be coming. But most of mankind will give no heed to that.

Then on the Feast of Atonement Israel will be saved at the end of the tribulation. Because it is at the Feast of Atonement, that is prophetic of Israel's will repentance before God and their salvation. And on the Feast of Booths the millennium will begin, and thus all seven feasts will be fulfilled on the exact days they were commemorated.

So, we now ask, is there a special religious day that happens during lambing season on which Christ could have been born and that day is not during the time of Passover and it comes during lambing season and before Passover? Well, there is. It is the first day of the month Nisan. Passover happens on the 14th in the evening.

Turn to Exodus 12. The commemoration of the Passover was first instructed when Israel came out of Egypt. You will remember how they put blood on the doorposts of their houses and the death angel passed over each house that had the blood applied to the doorposts. And in Exodus 12, where the Passover was first instituted, it says this in verses 1-2:

1 Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying,

2 "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.

Nisan the 1st is the first day of the year on the religious calendar. Does it not make logical sense that Jesus would be born on the first day of the first month of the religious year of the Jews? I don't have time to show this but you can check out the significance of the Nisan 1st in other references in the OT.

Now let me explain something, Israel has two New Year's Days. The first day of Tishri, which is in the fall, is

the Jewish New-Years Day of the civil calendar. It is called Yom Kippur. It commemorates the first day of creation. It is somewhere in our month of September. But Nisan the first, which is exactly six months later, is the religious New-years Day of Israel. And Jesus was born at least somewhere near, if not on the actual New-Year's Day of the Jewish religious year and it is also in this time that the lambs were born in Israel. So here is what I think highly probable: Jesus Christ was born on the religious New-Years Day, Nisan 1st.

Consider this: He was the lamb of God born when the Passover lambs were born and He was born in the place where the Passover lambs were born. When He was to be crucified, He went to Jerusalem on the path the lambs went to Jerusalem; He entered the gates of Jerusalem at the Sheep gate where the sheep entered to be slaughtered, and a few days later He was killed on the day when the Passover lambs were slain. So, when John saw Jesus one day he said, "Behold the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world!"

There are more things I could give about this significant day but I had to cut things out of this message already because of length, so maybe another time.

Earlier we looked at the words of Luke that Jesus began to be about 30 years of age. If it was 60 days from His baptism to the Passover, and His birthday was Nisan 1st, then His baptism was a month and a half before His birthday and that is why it says that He began to be about 30 years of age, and if His birthday was Nisan 1st, then that wording is about as accurate as one could be. What is certain is that He was not born in the fall, nor December 25th.

I do not struggle with celebrating Christ's birth on December 25th as some do, and I'm not sure it makes too much difference on what day we might think He was born, but it has been a big question for many over the years and we can at the least come very close to establishing the date.

CONCL: So, in conclusion, when John the Baptist saw Jesus one day as he was baptizing, and Jesus had just come from 40 days of testing by Satan, John 1:29 says this:

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

Now listen to John 1:35-36:

35 Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples.

36 And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

Let me conclude this Christmas message like this: Jesus was indeed the lamb of God! This is my conclusion: He was born in the spring WHEN the lambs were born! He was born at Migdol Ader WHERE the lambs were born! He was swaddled LIKE the lambs were swaddled! At His death HE TRAVELED THE PATH the lambs traveled to Jerusalem before they were slain! He ENTERED BY THE GATE by which the sheep that were to be sacrificed entered! He was TESTED FOR DEFECTS like the lambs were tested for defects before they were killed. Like the Jewish authorities must find no fault in a lamb that was to be sacrificed, so NO FAULT WAS FOUND in Him by the Roman authorities that tested Him. Like the sheep died for others through no fault of their own, so He was condemned to die for others, THROUGH NO FAULT of His own! Like the sheep died on behalf of others, so He DIED ON BEHALF of the world. He DIED BY SHEDDING HIS BLOOD just like the lambs did, and He died exactly WHEN the sacrificial lambs died!

So, this Christmas day, behold the Lamb of God, and glory this day in what God accomplished through Him! And I want to encourage us with this: Very soon Jesus Christ will take His Church home. It will happen at a time unknown, and then in the next seven years the last three feast days will be fulfilled on the exact days they were to be kept. Maranatha!