



Was Jesus Christ Born on December?

This is a brief compilation of authoritative sources that leads the readers to understand the truth about the Christmas festival.

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Every year, during the month of December, most Christian families around the world rejoice greatly commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ. In many countries, the Nativity is represented by decorative figures in homes.

The figures consists of: Joseph, Mary, the Baby laying on a crib surrounded by some oxen, donkeys, sheeps, shepherds, the Christmas tree (an evergreen), the three wise men from East, and a variety of other allusive figures. By the way, although the Holy Scriptures do not mention nor provide us with Joseph's age, the Christian tradition usually introduces him as an old man with white long beard; however, modern scholars and theologians have started to be skeptical about such depiction.

During the month of December, mail offices become entirely full of clients who come to send post cards to their family members and friends. Stores hire extra help due to the busy season, after all, many people buy gifts for themselves, for their families and friends. Also toy factories get millions of dollars in revenues.

On the streets there is a joyous and happy environment. Everything is happiness, smiles and hellos. People on the streets wishes Merry Christmas one another. Radio stations play Christmas music all day long, radio and TV stations are full of allusive ads. In fact the spirit of Christmas is found everywhere.

There are cases during this time of the year that enemies reconcile. People who have been absent from home decide to phone or visit the family. There are people that do not consume alcohol, but during this time decide to give it a try in order to experience how it feels to be drunk, after all, the feeling during this time of the year is one of seasonal freedom.

Truly, Christmas season awakes in some cases those personal feelings that have been asleep during the past eleven months: Feelings of love, forgiveness, compassion, and fellowship. Christmas is a festivity in which opposite church denominations share the same way of thinking. Church choirs practice Christmas carols. Thus, church denominations unify under a common

ideal.

Undoubtedly, Christmas is a powerful festivity that easily tears down denominational barriers, unifying the biggest family on earth. Whether Roman Catholic or Protestant, what counts is Christmas.

However, a very interesting question remains: Is it true that Christ's birth was in December 25? What are the bases to prove He was born on that date? Let's see the following sub-title to find out something about it.

What some sources say

Let's consider what one of the oldest Christian organizations after the first century's apostolic church has to say about this matter. (I am of course referring to the Roman Catholic Church). Let's keep in mind that the Roman Catholic Church has set many of the current believes protestant churches practice:

"The Nativity, feast that commemorates the birth of Christ. Nativity's date that now is December 25, varied until the fourth century in the Western Church and until the fifth century in the Eastern Church. In Egypt and Greece Nativity was celebrated on January 6, and in other countries on April 20. December 25 was observed in Occident since the fourth century as the birth of Christ..." (Adjunct Dictionary to the Bible by Monsignor Juan Straubinger. Barsa edition. The Catholic Press Inc. Chicago, Ill, 1966).

From this authoritative source we come to two conclusions: Firstly, it is not true that Jesus Christ was born on December 25 as churches nowadays believe and celebrate. Therefore, to celebrate His birth in that date is unrealistic. Christians agree to celebrate the birthday of our Saviour, but, why December 25 and not a different date? This question has a clear answer.

Secondly, there was no consent on any specific date: January 6 and April 20. Also, before the fourth century, December 25 was still unknown.

Why such discrepancy between dates? Simply because the Holy Scripture does not command the celebration of Christ's birthday, otherwise the Gospels would provide to its readers with a specific date. That's why Christianity took December 25.

When December 25 was instituted

"25 of December is Christmas Day although

almost certainly not the day on which Christ was born, as is popularly supposed. The date was eventually fixed by the Church in A. D. 440, the day of the winter SOLSTICE, which had anciently been a time of festival among heathen peoples...” (Ivor Evans. Dictionary of Phrase & Fable, p. 233. Art.: Christmas. Cassell Ltd. London 1981).

After reading this source it is easy to understand that it was until the year 440 C. E. when the Church decreed that December 25 would definitely be the day of Christ’s birth. It seems this historical account is not widely known. According to this source, December 25 was a date ancient heathen had established for their idolatric cults.

Supportive arguments can be exposed by Christians to celebrate Christmas on that date, although historical facts point out to something truly amazing. Historians have clearly shown how the Church took dates and festivals from pagan nations to celebrate them with Christian meaning (please, see “The Two Babylons” Chapter III, by Alexander Hyslop).

Another Historian: Edward M. Deems, says:

“Being December 25 under no probabilities the date of birth of Christ, its election by the Occident church without a doubt is arbitrary” (Holi=Days and Holidays. Funk & Wagnalls Co. Ed. 1969, p. 404. Art. Christmas).

Why December 25?

It would be interesting to ask why December 25 was chosen instead of a different date. The American Encyclopedia, Vol. 6, p. 666, Edition of 1993, Grolier Inc., says:

“Origins of Christmas: The reason to establish December 25 is something dark, but it is usually sustained that that day was elected to correspond with the pagan festivities in winter time, when days start to be longer, to celebrate the ‘rebirth’ of the sun”

Historical sources say that in December 25, heathens from Middle East and Europe celebrated a big festival: The ‘rebirth’ of the sun, their god. Also, it is interesting to know that many centuries before our Saviour’s birth, the sun was worshipped as god: the greatest one among all gods. A god honored by an-

cient Egyptians with hymns. Notoriously, the actual weekly Sunday is exactly the same pagan sun day.

Interestingly, the most powerful nation in ancient world, Rome, was a sun worshipper, thus, the whole world under its rule was also sun worshipper.

Nowadays, the Roman Empire belongs to history; nevertheless, its idolatric influence still continues in the Christian world, a good number of roman temples dedicated to worship the sun, are now Roman Catholic temples which continue depicting images of the sun in windows and on top of altars.

Constantine, the Roman emperor, is famous not because of his abilities to rule, but because he protected the Church. During his reign the sun was officially worshipped. Constantine decreed that everybody in the empire (Christians included) had to stop working in the first day of the week, this day was called “venerable day of the sun”. It is generally accepted that Constantine was converted into the Christian Religion, however, he continued to be a sun worshipper. History also tells he was baptized in the Church prior to his death.

Protestantism and December 25

Millions of Christian Protestants celebrate Christmas (Mass of Christ) as decreed by the Roman Catholic Church in A. D. 440, although the day has pagan origins. Of course, there are always ingenious arguments to celebrate the festivity. One of those arguments says that it does not matter if heathen people celebrated the birth of the sun on December 25. What really matters is that (for Christians) that date celebrates the birth of the “Sun of righteousness” which is Christ (Mal. 4:2 KJV), however, Malachi’s prophecy by no means suggests that our Lord should be born on the same day heathen celebrated their festival.

Does the Scripture give hints to a specific date?

The Scripture does not mention anything regarding a specific date. It only provides hints that lead to exploring the situation to conclude that the Nativity did not happen on any of those dates previously mentioned.

“Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph, the son of Heli,” (Luke

3:23 NIV)

This verse could be the key to find an approximation to the month when the Lord's birth occurred. The verse says His ministry begun when He was thirty years old.

Since Levite priests began their work in the Sanctuary in Jerusalem at the age of thirty, the understanding obviously concludes that Jesus' ministry begun just when He started to be thirty years old. Another hint, linked to His age is the Passover. Jesus Christ died when that holy supper was celebrated in Nisan 14.

Based on Daniel 9:27, the Lord's ministry lasted three and a half years. This means He died when He was thirty three years old plus six months. Subtracting these six months lead us to the month of His birthday:
 From Nisan 14, to Adar 13 there is one month,
 From Adar 14, to Shevat 13 there are two months
 From Shevat 14, to Tevet 13, there are three months
 From Tevet 14, to Kislev 13, there are four months
 From Kislev 14, to Chesvan 13, there are five months

From Chesvan 14, to Tishrei 13, there are six months

This clearly demonstrates that our Lord's birthday was in any day within Tishrei. Tishrei is the tenth month in the Jewish calendar, and fits between September and October.

Now the truth about the Nativity on December 25 has been exposed. Authoritative sources declare how a date hold by pagan nations to the birth of the sun was linked to the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Is it worth to continue celebrating the Nativity in that date? Now it depends on the reader to continue this tradition or not.

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