

There are four primary dates identified by scholars for the date of Christ's birth – 6 B.C., - 4 B.C., - 3 B.C., and - 2 B.C.

There are clues in scripture we can analyze.

- **The timing** of the birth and ministry of John the Baptist (Luke 1:5-37, Luke 3:1-3).

Luke 3:1 – John began his ministry in the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar, which began in August 19, 14 A.D. So the 15th year was August of 28 A.D. to August of 29 A.D. John would have been at least thirty (Luke 3:23), pointing to **2 B.C.** as the birth date of John, with the birth of Jesus to follow. Some say the year for the birth of John the Baptist may have been earlier (by one year) in 3 B.C.

Luke 1:8-38 – John was born six months before Jesus.

Luke 1:5 – Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, served in the eighth rotation of duty at the temple (Abijah or Abia), which if in - 4 B.C., would have been the week of May 19-26, and if in - 3 BC would have been the week of July 6-13. The eighth rotation occurred twice in a year, however the winter dates would have resulted in a winter birth for Jesus (9 months plus 6 months), **not a time for shepherds to be in the fields**, so these winter rotation dates are not discussed here. We read in Luke that he couldn't finish his rotation, and went back to Elizabeth his wife, and she conceived John. 280 days after these two possible dates of - 4 or - 3 B.C., would result in a birth date for John of February / March of 3 B.C., or March / April of - 2 B.C. In summary, Jesus birthdate could be - 3 BC, or - 2 BC.

- **The timing** of the birth and ministry of Jesus (six months after John the Baptist), Luke 1:36, Luke 2:1-40, Luke 3:23, Matt. 1:20-23, Matt. 2:1-23. Six months later for the birth of Jesus would be September of - 3 B.C., on the Feast of Trumpets, September 11th - 3 B.C., or September of - 2 B.C., on the Feast of Trumpets – **September 29th, - 2 B.C.** Shepherds would not be in the field beyond Oct.
- **The shepherds** with their flocks in the open fields. The climate of Israel/Palestine after mid-October is very cold, and not conducive to flocks being in the fields.
- There are also clues in the writings of early historians relating to the Scriptures:

Tertullian – Wrote of Herod's death on January 14, - 1 B.C.

Josephus – Wrote of Herod's death in - 1 BC after the eclipse of the moon (mistakenly copied as - 4 B.C. in documents copied after 1552 A.D.--see remarks later).

Astronomy – Eclipses of the moon occurred in March 23, - 5 B.C., September 15, - 5 B.C., March 13, 4 B.C., and January 10, - 1 B.C.

Tertullian – Wrote that Augustus began to rule 41 years before the birth of Jesus, and Augustus died 28 years after the birth of Jesus (or **2 B.C.**).

Irenaeus – Wrote that Augustus began to rule in the autumn of - 43 B.C., and Jesus was born in the 41st year of his rule, or **- 2 B.C.** (possibly - 3 BC depending upon month that Augustus rule began).

Tertullian – Wrote that Jesus was born 28 years after the death of Cleopatra who died in 30 B.C. (or **- 2 B.C.**).

Eusebius – Wrote that Augustus began to rule in the autumn of 43 B.C., and Jesus was born in the 42nd year of his rule, and born the 28th year after the death of Cleopatra in - 30 B.C. The 42nd year ran from autumn of - 2 B.C. to autumn of - 1 B.C., and the 28th year ran from autumn of - 3 B.C. to autumn of - 2 B.C. So, the autumn of **- 2 B.C.** is the period of Christ's birth.

Historians – Agree that the 15th year of Tiberius's rule is from August of 28 A.D. to August of 29 A.D. Therefore, John the Baptist would begin his ministry during this period, and if 30 years old, the traditional age for a Rabbi (see Luke 3:23), he would be born sometime in - 3 to - 2 B.C., and Luke 1:5 discussion above points to spring - 2 B.C. Spring and summer represent preferable months to perform baptisms compared to winter.

- John 2:19-20
- 1) Jesus 1st early act just after baptism (age 30).
 - 2) Herod began construction in - 19 BC.
 - 3) 46 years after construction equals 27 AD and Jesus is 30+, which would make Jesus birth - 3 BC...but....
 - 4) 46 years in building--not since...could be 47 or 48 at this time- -2 BC, or - 1 B.C.

THE CENSUS – There was a requirement by Augustus to either swear allegiance to the Emperor, or pay a tax, in preparation for the special Roman Jubilee Year of February of - 2 B.C. The registration would have begun in - 3 B.C. and taken at least a year to cover the entire Roman Empire, and should have been concluded in - 2 B.C. sometime. Josephus wrote that an oath of allegiance was demanded by Augustus about 12 to 15 months before the death of Herod, so the registration could have been taken as early as February of - 3 B.C. (12 months before the Jubilee Year of February of - 2 B.C.), and as late as the death of Herod in January of - 1 B.C., considering that Rome allowed at least one year for a registration to be completed.

- **The Magi** – Something caused the magi to **1)** begin a journey to Jerusalem, **2)** follow events on their journey which would have taken 2 to 4 months travel time, and **3)** view a specific event as significant when the star seemed to stop (Matt. 2:9). The Magi were interpreters of dreams, and astrologers, who knew of the prophecies of Daniel, from Daniel's time in Babylon, during the captivity (Dan.5). The prophecies (Dan. 9), spoke of the Messiah coming sometime during this period of time of the 1st century, And the Magi were looking for it to be fulfilled. They looked for *signs* (Gen. 1:14 – God's story originally told in the Zodiac – see the **Zodiac Study**, or Books *God's Plan / Satan's Plan*, or *Revelation & End Times* at [Target Truth Ministries.com](http://TargetTruthMinistries.com)).

The Magi understanding

Aries = Judea, **Pisces** = Hebrews, **Virgo** = virgin, **Leo** = Judah, **Sun** = supreme father, **Moon** = supreme mother, **Regulus** = the king star in Leo, **Venus** = the brightest planet - the goddess (Ishtar), **Jupiter** = 2nd brightest planet – king, **Saturn** = the protector of the Jewish people, **Mercury** = messenger of the gods.

In - 7 B.C. – The Magi witnessed a triple conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in Pisces. These occurred in May, September, and December of - 7 B.C. This is a very rare occurrence, meaning a king (Jupiter), was to be born to the Hebrew people (Pisces), to bring protection (Saturn).

In - 6 B.C. – In February, three planets collided in Pisces (Jupiter, Mars, and Saturn), another very rare occurrence.

In - 6 B.C. – In April, there was a conjunction between Jupiter and the Moon in Aries. Coins of - 6 B.C. show Aries the lamb looking at a star.

In - 4 B.C. – This is a date referred to by many as the correct date, and it relates primarily to the writings of Josephus, which were copied *after* 1552 A.D., which related to - 4 B.C. as the date for the birth of Jesus. Prior

to 1552 A.D., the older manuscripts read 1 B.C. Coins were discovered which were dated to the period of - 4 B.C., which were coined to show the successors of Herod (Archelaus, Antipas, and Philip), therefore it was assumed that the correct date was - 4 B.C. However, evidence now shows that it was very common practice for rulers to date the reign of a new king to some date before his predecessors' death, so as to ensure his right to the title, and the treasury.

August 12, - 3 B.C. – Jupiter (King planet) and Venus collide (the first of a triple conjunction—
2nd July 17 – 2 BC, 3rd Oct. 12 - 2 BC.

September 11, - 3 B.C. – Jupiter and Regulus (King star in Leo constellation--brightest star and symbolic of a king), collide in Leo (Jewish royal tribe--the lion of Judah --Gen. 49:9-10--a Jewish King), and the Sun is located in Virgo (the sun is in Virgo for 20 days each year). See Revelation 12 discussion at the end of this Study. Some see this as the birth date. But it could be the one year announcement of Jesus' birth.

February 17, - 2 B.C. – Jupiter and Regulus collide for the 2nd time, and they collide with the Moon also.

May 8-9, - 2 B.C. – Jupiter and Regulus collide for the 3rd time, and again they also collide with the Moon.

June 17, - 2 B.C. – A very rare occurrence, in Leo, along with the Sun and Moon, the two brightest planets of Venus and Jupiter all collide. This would result in the brightest star ever seen and in the near-east this only occurred once in over 2,000 years.

August 27, - 2 B.C. – Jupiter while moving westward, collides with Mars and Venus and Mercury, all in Leo.

September 29, - 2 B.C. – Sun and moon in Virgo – see Revelation 12 discussion at the end of this Study. The magi set off on their journey to seek this great king to be born to the Hebrew people...based upon these signs.

December 25, - 2 B.C. – Jupiter in Virgo appeared to stop for 6 days (due to retrogression of the planet – a normal occurrence). From a vantage point in Jerusalem, Jupiter would have appeared stopped over Bethlehem. Of course, when the magi stopped in Jerusalem to inquire about a king being born, the child had already been born (Matt. 2:11 – a child, not a baby, and He was in the house, not a manger). This would be months *after* the birth of Jesus.

SEQUENCE :

John the Baptist born - March / April of - 2 B.C. This represents the most likely sequence to fit all the available evidence.

Jesus born	September 29 of - 2 B.C.
Jesus baptized 8 days later	October 6 - 2 B.C.
Jesus dedication 40 days later	November - 2 B.C.
Magi visit Jerusalem	December 25 - 2 B.C.
Jesus taken to Egypt	January - 1 B.C.
Herod ordered babies killed	January - 1 B.C.
Eclipse of the Moon	January 10 - 1 B.C.
Herod dies	January 14 - 1 B.C.
Herod buried	Passover - 1 B.C.
Jesus returns to Nazareth	After January 14 - 1 B.C.

WHY DECEMBER 25TH ?

Early Christians actually celebrated December 25th before Rome began celebrating December 25th as Christ's birth. The Roman holiday Saturnalia, or *natalis solis invicti*, the birth of the sun god (Nimrod), goes back to the Babylonian priesthood, and was celebrated as early as 274 A.D. by Rome.

Constantine required December 25th to be recognized for Christ's birth, along with all gods of the sun, in 313 A.D. The first recorded December 25th date for Christ's birth is listed as 336 A.D. in a Roman Almanac, according to Chuck Freas. Dr. Chuck Missler states it is first recorded in 354 A.D., in a calendar of Philocalus. The Christian church Bishops formally adopted December 25th in 440 A.D.

But, Christians had already associated December 25th with the birth of Christ much earlier than all these dates for a completely different reason, according to William Tighe, Professor of History at Muhlenberg College. The December 25th date related to the Jewish tradition of the great prophets having an "integral age," where their day of death was also, either their day of birth, or conception. Jesus death was dated to March 25th, and the feast of Passover. Early Christians celebrated March 25th as the Feast of Annunciation (His Conception), which would put His birth at December 25th. Also December 25th would be remembered as the date the magi in Jerusalem saw the star stand still over Bethlehem.

The Babylonian practices, including the celebration of December 25th, and the birth of the sun god (Nimrod), were passed on to the church by Constantine when he was pushing the Roman Empire to convert to Christianity. These Babylonian practices include the sacred traditions of the mother / child cult of Semiramis (known in various nations as Ishtar, Ashtaroth, Isis, etc.), and her son Tammuz (Ezek. 8:14; Jer. 44:17-19). (see Study on The Queen of Heaven, or books *Science, Origins, & Ancient Civilizations*, or *Eden to Evil*, or *God's Plan / Satan's Plan* – [Target Truth Ministries.com](http://TargetTruthMinistries.com)).

In the beginning was the Zodiac, a story in the heavens, created by God, about His plan of salvation. The story involved a virgin, and a child who was to redeem those who would trust in Him (see the section on the **Zodiac** in other books in this series, *God's Plan / Satan's Plan*, or *Revelation & End Times* – [Target Truth Ministries.com](http://TargetTruthMinistries.com)). This redemption story of the Zodiac became perverted as men endeavored to take control, and be worshiped themselves. Worship for these various nations centered around a woman and child, a copy, or imitation of God's plan. The earliest of these mother / child cults began with Nimrod and Babylon (Gen. 10:8-9), only a couple of generations after Noah and the flood. Nimrod, "*marad*," means "he rebelled," and the Babylonians built the tower of Babel. Nimrod set himself up as god and had priests cater to him.

Nimrod, after his death, was worshiped as the sun god (Baal). Nimrod had a queen Semiramis (the moon goddess – Semiramis is also known as Baal-Ti, or "my lady," or in Latin as Mea Dominain, or in Italian as Madonna). After Nimrod's death, Semiramis (Baal-Ti), became pregnant, supposedly from a sun beam (from Baal – the sun god - Nimrod), and she gave birth to Tammuz, who was presented to the people as the reborn (resurrected), Nimrod. When Tammuz died, he was supposedly resurrected 40 days later. Semiramis introduced Tammuz as the promised savior (Gen. 3:15). Both mother and child were worshiped, and God's Zodiac story had now been forever perverted. From this myth, false worship of the mother goddess and child, came Babylon's religious practices.

When the nations scattered (Gen. 11:9), they formed various new nations, with various new languages, and variations of this mother / child cult developed around the world in Egypt, with Osiris (Nimrod), and Isis (Semiramis), and their child Horas (Tammuz). Historian Herodotus recorded how the ancient Babylonian rites began being practiced in various nations around the world, as did Hislop (113), Leyard (134, 135), Woodrow (132), and Bailey (133). Even in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* (136), Vol. 14, pages 515ff, and Vol. 15, pages 450ff, it is noted that these practices pre-date the Christian Church.

These religious practices were eventually adopted by the Roman Empire when it came into power before Christ was even born. A few hundred years after Christ, these ancient Babylonian practices found their way into the Christian Church, because the Roman emperor desired to unite pagan Babylonian practices, and the Christian Church, into a single religion for the empire. This, of course, seemed a natural fit, as Mary and her Son (Jesus), matched well with the mother goddess and child pagan cults of most nations. Of course, Mary was never elevated to worshipful status by the early Christians. The elevation of Mary happened several hundred years after Christ died, due to the Roman emperor's desire to unite under one set of religious practices, which included worship of the Queen of Heaven.

Some of these *symbols and practices from Babylon*, which after 300 years found their way into the Christian Church in Rome, include:

- Elevation of the mother, the virgin, to Queen, or Goddess – co-equal to God.
- Lighting of candles, used to signify the sun god of light (Nimrod).
- Prayer beads, used to count, and repeat, prayers to the Queen of Heaven.
- Resurrection of Nimrod as Tammuz is celebrated at Ishtar (Easter).
- Birth of Nimrod is celebrated on December 25th.
- Forty days of lent prior to Ishtar (Easter), were practiced in recognition of the death, and resurrection, of Nimrod as Tammuz (Ezek. :14; Jer. 44:17-19).
- Purgatory is a place where the dead await purification, and dates back to these Babylonian pagan beliefs, which pre-date Christianity.
- The later Babylonians worshiped the mother by making an offering as a memorial to Heras (the Queen of Heaven – the Moon Goddess. Hera was the equivalent to Eve of the Bible to the Greeks – the mother of all – see Queen of Heaven Study – “Greece,” or books *Eden to Evil*, or *God’s Plan / Satan’s Plan* – Target Truth Ministries.com).
- The *cross*, the mystic Tau (the symbol of Tammuz), is used by Babylon to symbolize man’s power over death. To Christians, the cross represents God’s love (being willing to suffer the curse for us), God’s power over death (1 Corin. 1:17-18).
- Babylonian priests were to be celibate, and virgin women who wore crosses around their necks, were to attend the priests.

The Roman emperor, Constantine, combined the cultic practices with Christian worship, and in 378 A.D., Demasus, the Bishop of Rome, was crowned Pontifus Maximus (High Priest of Mysteries of the bridge between the dead and living, from the Babylonian tradition). Even at this date, most Bishops didn’t recognize the Pope in Rome as the authority of the church. Rome was not recognized until around 1,000 A.D., and even then, the Eastern church still did not recognize the authority of the Pope in Rome. This is still true today. Today, the Pope’s crown is an exact replica of the Babylonian priest’s crown (a fish head—the man/fish god Dagon). (see also Text Timeline Study, or Books, *Book of Chronologies and Time Charts*, or *God’s Plan / Satan’s Plan* – Target Truth Ministries.com). For more information on Babylon pagan practices and the “New Age,” see the Study titled “**Truth Matrix** - A Comparison of Faiths, and Evidence for their Beliefs” at Target Truth Ministries.com.

Many ancient myths, which seemed to parallel the story of Christ (virgin birth, resurrection etc.), were elevated to historical status in the late 1,800’s, and the early 1,900’s. Recent scholarship has however shown each of these fall far short of being historic parallels. Lee Strobel has provided evidence showing these myths have been either *later* embellished to relate to Christ, or were actually created *after* the time of Christ. Historically, these myths in no way even closely relate to the life of Christ. We must remember the original story of the virgin and the resurrection, were actually given in the Zodiac by God, and it has been perverted into these other myths.

Back to the birth of Christ, the Eastern Christian Churches celebrate the birth of Christ on the 6th of January, the 12th day of Christmas, and they believe there were 12 magi (the Bible doesn’t say).

MICHAELMAS - September 29th – This is the date celebrated for centuries in Europe as the true day of Christ’s birth. December 25th was actually banned in Europe because of its link to Babylon. Even the Pilgrims in America banned December 25th and celebrated the date of September 29th (see Why December 25th discussion).

REVELATION 12 – In - 3 B.C., and - 2 B.C., in September, at the Feast of Trumpets, on the horizon, one would see the picture described by John in Revelation 12 of a women clothed in the sun, standing on the moon. The woman (Virgo), and Virgo just above the moon, and the sun in Virgo.

To the Magi, this either (in - 3 B.C., or - 2 B.C.), would indicate the birth of a king, and confirm their understanding.

For John, this image could be what God had prepared for the world (Magi), to recognize as the Messiah's birth, but it also represents Israel, God's chosen (a part of the woman—the betrothed), standing on the moon, the image of false worship (see Study on Islam and the moon god Allah, or the book *God's Plan / Satan's Plan*, or *Science, Origins, & Ancient Civilizations*, at [Target Truth Ministries.com](http://TargetTruthMinistries.com)).

The woman (Israel), is about to give birth to the Messiah, who would be the source of salvation for the whole world. The name Jesus means "Salvation." Note that neither Herod, nor the priests, knew anything about what star (or event), that the Magi saw, as astrology is forbidden for Israel (Matt. 2:4).

September 29, - 2 B.C. is the most likely date for the birth of Christ, considering the available evidence.

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