

THE COURSE OF ABIJAH POINTS TO THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

By Marie Casale
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In 1Chr 24:1-19, King David divided the priests into twenty-four working shifts or courses. Each course worked in the temple for 1 week from noon Sabbath to noon Sabbath from the beginning of the year (Nisan 1). (Talmud Sukkah) All courses worked during holy days. When the twenty-four courses were completed, they started over to complete the year. Zacharias worked in the eighth course of Abijah. While he was serving in his course, the Angel Gabriel appeared to him and told him he would have a son named John. (Luk 1:5-17)

These calendars show the possible conception and birth dates for John the Baptist and Jesus Christ based on the Course of Abijah. Knowing that the Lord does important things for his people on his Holy Days and also his New Moons (For example: The book of Deuteronomy was given on a New Moon - Deut 1:3), I used the New Moon during the course of Abijah as the possible day when Gabriel appeared to Zacharias. I also used the New Moons as possible conception dates for Elizabeth and Mary. The result is that John the Baptist's birth occurred in the spring Holy Day season 5 BC and Jesus' birth occurred during the fall Holy Day season 5 BC.

Notice that a total eclipse of the moon occurred around the time of John the Baptist's birth in the spring and also around the time of Jesus' birth in the fall. (Please see endnote for verification of lunar eclipses in 5 BC)

6 BC March Yr 3755							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	1 st course begins noon Sabbath
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	2 nd course begins noon Sabbath
28	29	30	31				
Adar/Nisan							Nisan begins March 20

6 BC April Yr 3755							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
				1	2	3	Passover Apr 2
							All courses work beginning Passover
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	3 rd course begins noon Sabbath
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	4 th course begins noon Sabbath
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	5 th course begins noon Sabbath
25	26	27	28	29	30		Feast Unleavened Bread Apr 3-9
Nisan/Iyar							Iyar begins April 19

6 BC May Yr 3755								
S	M	T	W	T	F	S		
Iyar/Sivan							1	Pentecost May 23
							6 th course begins noon Sabbath	
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7 th course begins noon Sabbath	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	8 th course (Abijah) begins noon Sabbath	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	All courses begin noon Sabbath for Pentecost	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	Zacharias leaves to go home noon Sabbath	
30	31	Sivan begins May 18 - Possible day during course of Abijah that angel appeared to Zacharias Luk 1:5-17						

6 BC June Yr 3755							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
		1	2	3	4	5	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Possible conception of John Baptist Tammuz 1 (June 17)
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
27	28	29	30				
Sivan/Tammuz							Tammuz begins June 17

6 BC July Yr 3755						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Tammuz/Ab						Ab begins July 16

6 BC August Yr 3755						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				
Ab/Elul						Elul begins August 15

6 BC September Yr 3756						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		
Elul/Tishri						Tishri begins Sept 13

6 BC October Yr 3756						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
Tishri/Heshvan					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						
						Heshvan begins Oct 4

6 BC November Yr 3756						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				
Heshvan/Kislev						Kislev begins Nov 12

6 BC December Yr 3756						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	
Kislev/Tebeth						Tebeth begins Dec 12

5 BC January Yr 3756						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
Tebeth/Shebat						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					
						Adar begins Feb 9

5 BC February Yr 3756						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29				
Shebat/Adar						Adar begins Feb 9

5 BC March Yr 3756							John Baptist's birth Nisan 1 (March 9) or Feast of Unleavened Bread (March 23-29)
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
			1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12 th - End of 3 rd month of Mary's pregnancy
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	17 th - End 9 th month of Elizabeth's pregnancy
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	Total lunar eclipse March 23 8:30 PM
26	27	28	29	30	31		Passover March 22
Adar/Nisan							Nisan begins March 9

5 BC April Yr 3756							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
Nisan/Iyar							1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	12 th - End of 4 th month of Mary's pregnancy
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
30							Iyar begins April 8

5 BC May Yr 3756							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	12 th - End of 5 th month of Mary's pregnancy
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
28	29	30	31				Pentecost May 14
Iyar/Sivan							Sivan begins May 7

5 BC June Yr 3756							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
				1	2	3	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	12 th - End of 6 th month of Mary's pregnancy
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
25	26	27	28	29	30		
Sivan/Tammuz							Tammuz begins June 6

5 BC July Yr 3756							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
Tammuz/Ab							1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	12 th - End of 7 th month of Mary's pregnancy
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
30	31						Ab begins July 5

5 BC August Yr 3756							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
		1	2	3	4	5	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	12 th - End of 8 th month of Mary's pregnancy
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
27	28	29	30	31			
Ab/Elul							Elul begins Aug 4

5 BC September Yr 3756							Possible birth dates for Christ Sept 2 (Day of Trumpets) Sept 11 (Day of Atonement) Sept 16- 23 (Feast of Tabernacles)
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
					1	2	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	12 th - End of 9 th month of Mary's pregnancy
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	Sept 15, total lunar eclipse 10:30 PM
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	Tishri begins Sept 2
Elul/Tishri							

Endnote:

Two total lunar eclipses are verified for the year 4 BC by the NASA Catalog
[^ NASA lunar eclipse catalog Lunar Eclipses: -0099 to 0000 \(100 BCE to 1 BCE\)](#)

Cat Num	Calendar Date	TD of Greatest Eclipse	Luna Num	Saros Num	Ecl. Type
04811	-0004 Mar 23	21:17:09	-24784	61	T
04812	-0004 Sep 15	23:07:42	-24778	66	T
Data acknowledgment: "Eclipse Predictions by Fred Espenak and Jean Meeus (NASA's GSFC)"					

Why are these eclipses listed under the year 04 BC and not 05 BC? This is explained when you click on the Sros number and scroll to the heading 'calendar'.

It states:

"The Gregorian calendar is used for all dates from 1582 Oct 15 onwards. Before that date, the Julian calendar is used. The Julian calendar does not include the year 0. Thus the year 1 BCE is followed by the year 1 CE. This is awkward for arithmetic calculations. Years in this catalog are numbered astronomically and include the year 0. Historians should note there is a difference of one year between astronomical dates and BCE dates. Thus, the astronomical year 0 corresponds to 1 BCE, and astronomical year -1 corresponds to 2 BCE, etc.."

So the two lunar eclipses listed under the year 04 BC actually took place in 05 BC.

Many thanks to Fred R Coulter for helping me to understand the Course of Abijah from his book, *A Harmony of The Gospels in Modern English, The Life of Jesus Christ*