



Merry
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A Christmas Message
You Don't Want To Hear

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Christians and their understanding of Christmas

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JESUS' REAL BIRTHDAY

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Most biblical scholars and preachers readily admit that they know Christ was not born on December 25th. However, they claim that this day is as good as any other to celebrate the birth of Jesus, despite the fact that it was originally a pagan celebration called Saturnalia which commemorated the birth of the sun god.

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Deuteronomy 12:28 (NASB)

28 “Be careful to listen to all these words which I command you, so that it may be well with you and your sons after you forever, for you will be doing what is good and right in the sight of the Lord your God.

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29 “When the Lord your God cuts off
before you the nations which you are
going in to dispossess, and you
dispossess them and dwell in their
land,

30 beware that you are not ensnared
to follow them, after they are
destroyed before you, and that you
do not inquire after their gods,
saying, ‘How do these nations serve
their gods, that I also may do
likewise?’

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31 You shall not behave thus toward the Lord your God, for every abominable act which the Lord hates they have done for their gods; for they even burn their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods.

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32 “Whatever I command you, you shall be careful to do; you shall not add to nor take away from it.

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Few know that there is a biblical way to determine when the Messiah was actually born. We can do this by relating the conception and birth of Jesus (Yeshua) with the conception and birth of John the Baptist.

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First, we need to understand "the division of Abijah." We find in 1 Chronicles 24:1-19 that the descendants of Aaron's 24 grandsons (the sons of Eleazer and Ithamar) were divided into 24 divisions or courses for the purpose of serving at the Temple. 1 Chronicles 24:10 tells us that the 8th division of service was assigned to Abijah's descendants.

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Each of these divisions served at the Temple for an eight-day period (1 Chr. 9:25). The service began and ended on the weekly Sabbath (2 Chr. 23:8). In addition to their normal service, all 24 courses served at the Temple during the three holy seasons every year. The Jewish Mishnah indicates that each course served a week during the first half of the year, the three annual festival weeks, and a week during the last half of the year, for a total of five weeks during a normal year.

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The eighth for Abijah

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A normal year on the Hebrew calendar consists of twelve lunar months of 29 or 30 days, for a total of 354 days. This is about 11 days less than a solar year (365.24 days). During a regular Jewish year (which occurs 12 times in a 19-year cycle), 51 weeks of coverage would be needed to ensure that the Temple was cared for every week throughout the year.

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24 (first half of the year) + 3 (festival weeks) + 24 (second half of the year)
= 51 weeks

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Between the 1st and the 9th week of the year, two of the three festival times when all 24 courses served occurred. Therefore, the course of Abijah, the 8th course, would serve its first regular week during the 9th or 10th week of the year (depending on how the Feast of Weeks fell on the calendar).

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The birth of John

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Luke 1:8-24 (NKJV)

8 So it was, that while he [Zacharias] was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, 9 according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the Temple of the Lord.

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10 And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense. 11 Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

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12 And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

13 But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.

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14 And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. 15 For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.

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16 And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. 17 **He will also go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah,** 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

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18 And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years."

19 And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings."

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20 But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time." 21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the Temple.

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22 But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the Temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless. 23 And so it was, **as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house.**

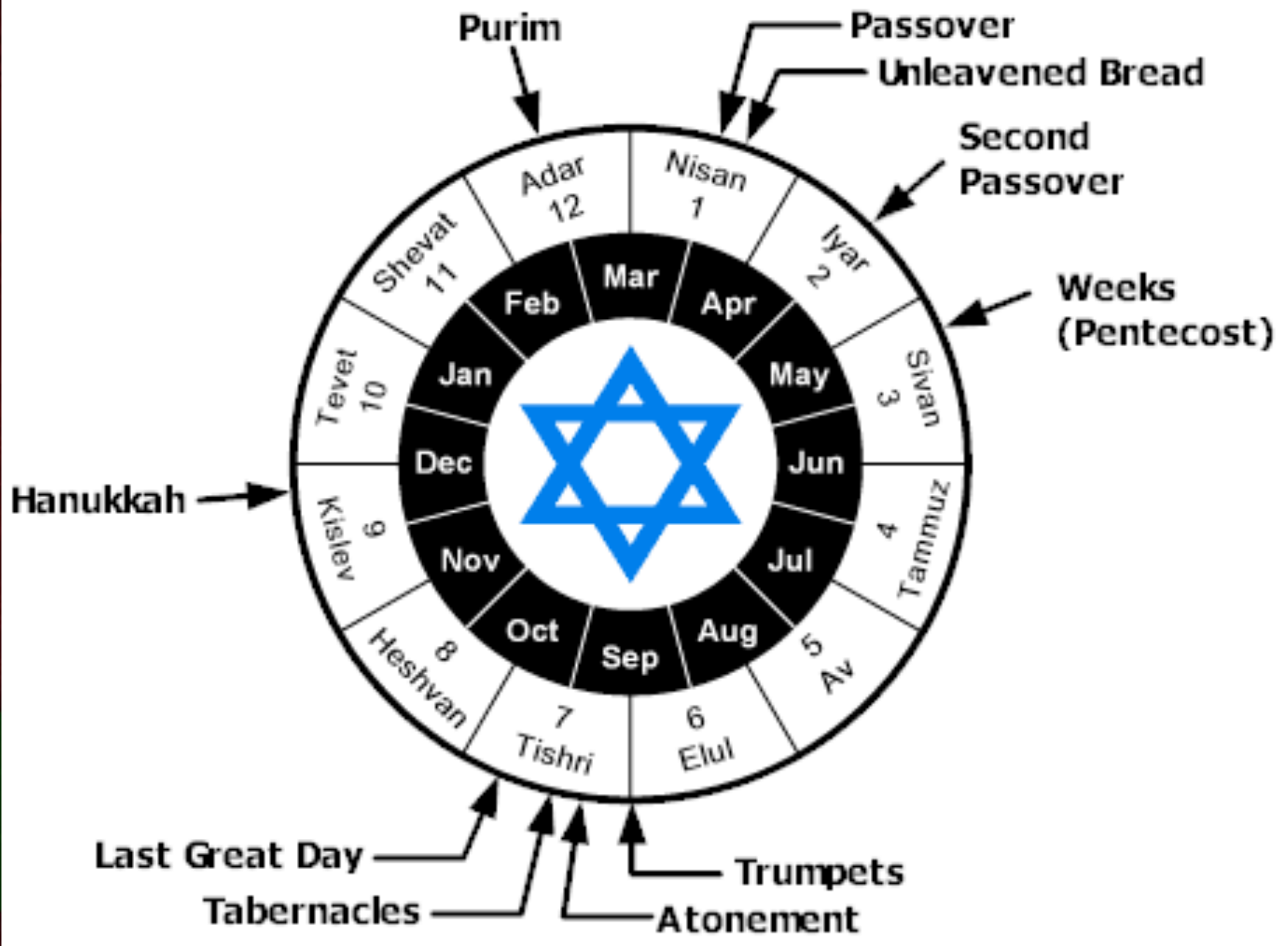
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24 Now after those days his wife
Elizabeth conceived; and she hid
herself **five months**, saying, 25 "Thus
the Lord has dealt with me, in the
days when He looked on me, to take
away my reproach among
people." (NKJV)

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Zacharias' wife Elizabeth would have conceived John the Baptist shortly following the week of his service at the Temple. This would have been sometime in late Sivan or early Tamuz.

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Jesus' Birth Foretold

Luke 1:26-38 (NKJV)

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26 Now **in the sixth month** [of Elizabeth's pregnancy] the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

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28 And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!" 29 But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.

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30 Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, **you will conceive** in your womb and bring forth a son, and shall call his name JESUS.

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32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. 33 And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

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4 Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" 35

And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

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36 Now indeed, **Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren.** 37 For with God nothing will be impossible."

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38 Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

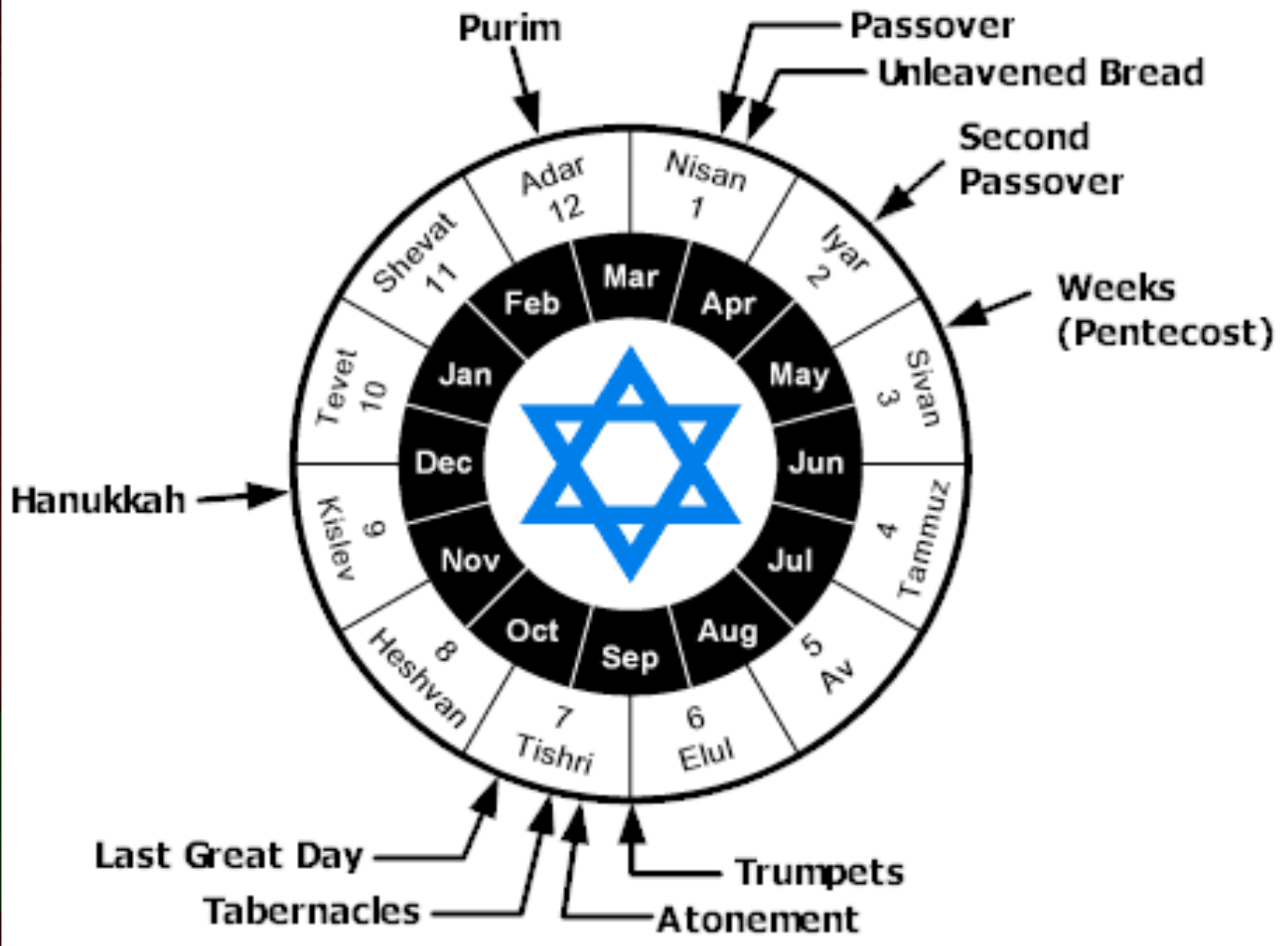
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The Holy Spirit likely overshadowed Mary very soon after her encounter with the angel Gabriel. If John the Baptist was conceived in the two week period after Sivan 19, Jesus would have been conceived about six months later, at the end of the Hebrew month Kislev or the beginning of the month Tevet.

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Mary would probably have conceived Jesus sometime from Kislev 24 to Tevet 7. Kislev 25 is the beginning of the Feast of Chanukah, also known as the Festival of Lights. This eight-day feast continues to Tevet 2.

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John was born in March around
Passover the first month of Jewish
calendar

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Jesus observed the Feast of Chanukah (called the "Feast of Dedication" in John 10:22) while he was on earth. John gives us an indication that Jesus was in fact conceived during this Festival of Lights (Chanukah) when he speaks of him at the beginning of his Gospel:

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John 1:4-9(NASB)

4 In Him was life, and the life was the **Light** of men. 5 The **Light** shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

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6 There came a man sent from God,
whose name was John. 7 He came as
a witness, to testify about the **Light**,
so that all might believe through him.

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8 He was not the **Light**, but he came
to testify about the **Light**.

9 There was the true **Light** which,
coming into the world, **enlightens**
every man.

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LUKE 1:39 Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, 40 and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. 41 And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. (NKJV)

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LUKE 1:56 And Mary remained with
her **about three months**, and
returned to her house. (NKJV)

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It appears that Mary stayed with Elizabeth right up to the time for her to give birth. The average time for the gestation of a human baby is nine months/40 weeks/280 days.

Nine months from the time of John's conception in early Tamuz would bring us to Passover of the Jewish year 3756 in the 1st month called Nisan. This Hebrew date fell
in the month of March

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LUKE 1:57 Now Elizabeth's **full time came for her to be delivered,** and she brought forth a son. (NKJV)

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It's highly symbolic that John the Baptist was born at the time of Passover.

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It was customary for Jews to drink 4 cups of wine before the Passover meal representing the 4 redemptive promises made by God to His people

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The fifth cup is called the cup of
Elijah

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17 It is he who will go as a
forerunner before Him in the spirit
and power of Elijah...

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Malachi 4:4-6 (NASB)

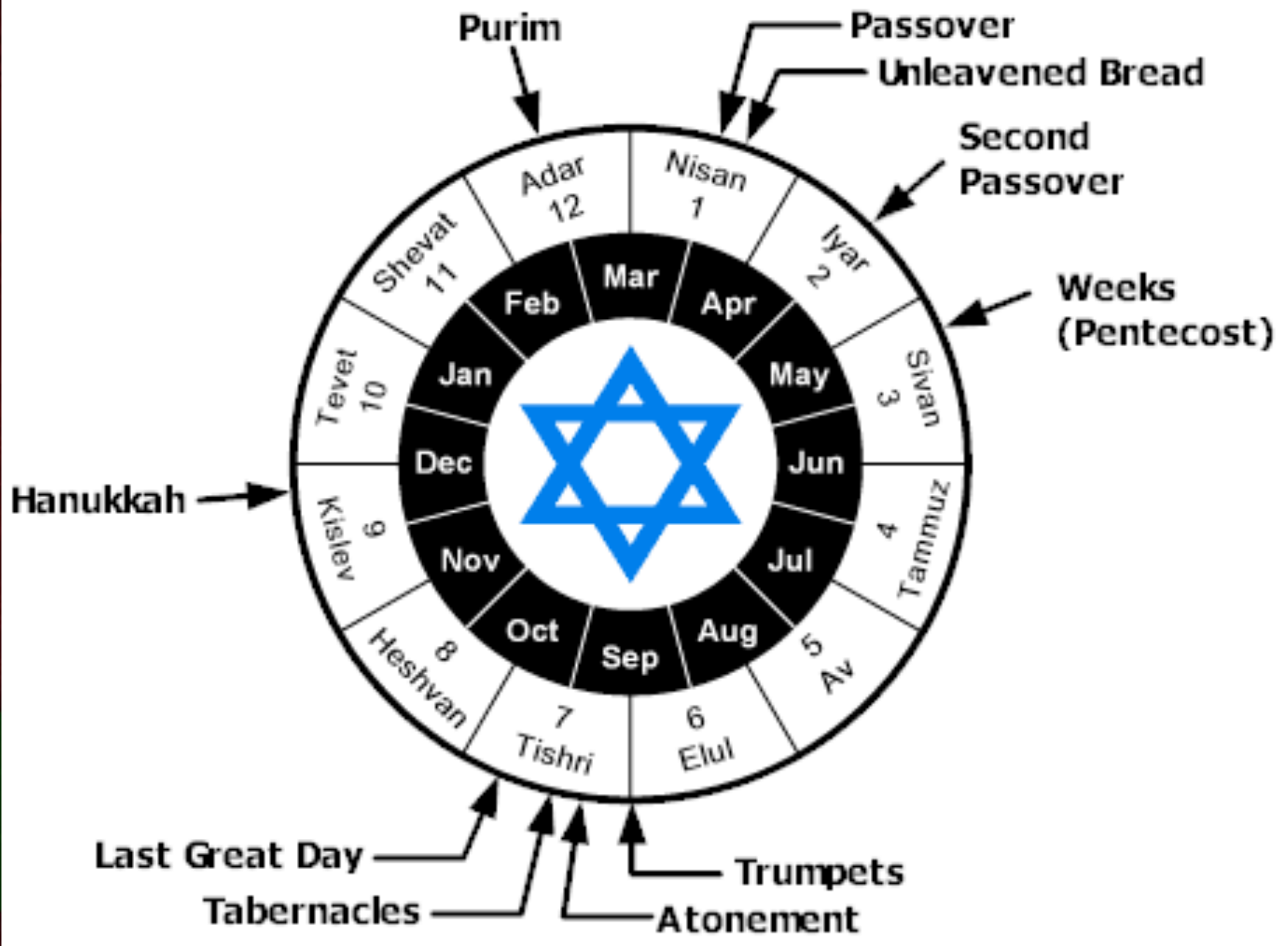
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Matthew 17:10-13 (NASB)

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John was born during Passover
It was their hope that Elijah would
come during Passover

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When was Jesus born?

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Since Jesus was conceived during Chanukah, six months after John the Baptist, he would also have been born six months after John was born:

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YESHUA

The only Name that saves!

Ramon Baco

LUKE 2:1 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.

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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,

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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.**

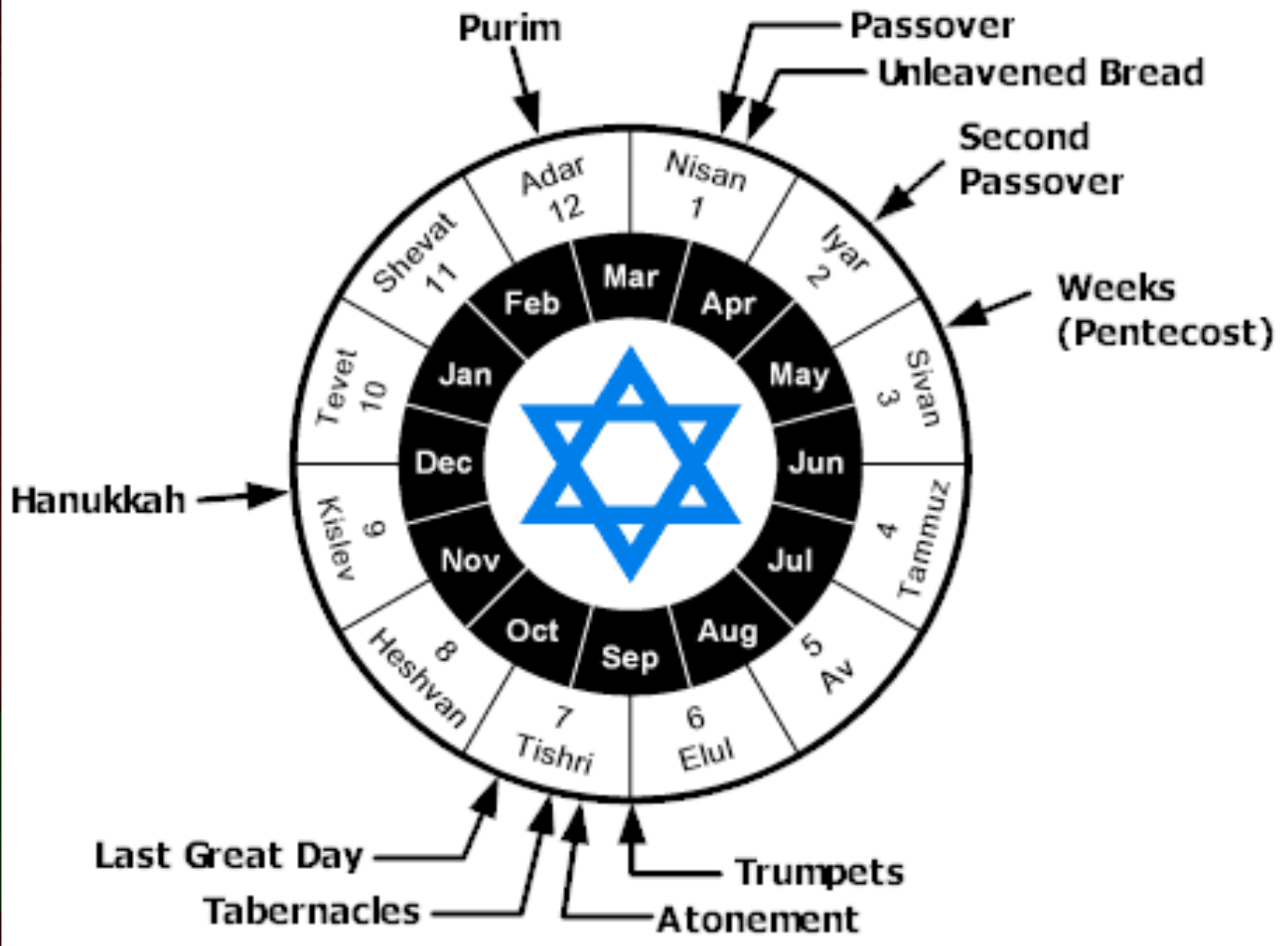
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7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. (NKJV)

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Since John was born on Passover, the 15th day of Nisan (the 1st Jewish month), Jesus would have been born six months later on the 15th day of Tishri (the 7th Jewish month). The 15th day of the 7th month begins the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:34-35), also known as Sukkot. Jesus was born on the 1st day of the Feast of Tabernacles! This fell in the month of September.

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The feast of Tabernacle

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Leviticus 23:34-35 (NASB)

34 “Speak to the sons of Israel, saying,
‘On the fifteenth of this seventh month
is the Feast of Booths for seven days to
the Lord. 35 On the first day is a holy
convocation; you shall do no laborious
work of any kind.

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The Feast of Tabernacles, also called Booths, comes on the fifteenth of Tishri (September-October), the seventh month according to the Jewish (biblical) calendar. This was the third feast that required a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to worship in the Temple and offer sacrifices and offering to the Lord.

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Deuteronomy 16:16-17 (NASB)

16 “Three times in a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your God in the place which He chooses, at the Feast of Unleavened Bread and at the Feast of Weeks and at the Feast of Booths, and they shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed.

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17 Every man shall give as he is able,
according to the blessing of the Lord
your God which He has given you.

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This is Israel's Thanksgiving feast in which they acknowledge the Fall harvest and God's provision for them. It is happy celebration and a time of joy and rejoicing.

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In addition to the hint of Jesus' conception during Chanukah, we also find an allusion to his birth during the Feast of Tabernacles in John's Gospel:

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JOHN 1:14 And the Word became
flesh, and did TABERNACLE
among us, and we beheld his glory,
glory as of an only begotten of a
father, full of grace and truth. (YLT)

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The Greek word translated "tabernacle" above is eskenosen. This word is a form of skenoo (#4637 in Strong's Greek Concordance). While it is usually translated "dwelt," Strong's says this word literally means: "to fix one's tabernacle, have one's tabernacle, abide (or live) in a tabernacle (or tent), tabernacle . . ."

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This feast also remembers Israel's deliverance from Egypt and their subsequent wandering in the wilderness for forty years. During this time Israel lived in tents and worshiped at the Tabernacle which was also a tent. To remember this time the Jews build small tabernacles or booths which walls of plaited branches and thatched roofs as God instructed in Leviticus 23:42.

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Leviticus 23:42 (NASB)

42 You shall live in booths for seven days; all the native-born in Israel shall live in booths,

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For seven days they were to live in these booths as a vivid reminder of the days in the wilderness living in tents. This was a way to acknowledge that GOD is with us.

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Matthew 1:23 (NASB)

23 “Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which translated means, “God with us.”

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Eight days after his birth, in accordance with the Law of Moses, Jesus was circumcised on the Eighth Day of Assembly (Shemini Atzeret), another holy day of God (Lev. 23:36):

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Leviticus 23:36 (NASB)

36 For seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the Lord. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation and present an offering by fire to the Lord; it is an assembly. You shall do no laborious work.

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LUKE 2:21 And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the child, his name was called JESUS, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. (NKJV)

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Jesus was not born on
December 25th

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Why was December 25th chosen
to be Jesus' birthday?

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December 25th does have profound religious significance. Although we have clearly demonstrated that December 25th was not Christ's birthday, that day does have profound religious significance. In fact, long before Christ was born, December 25th was the most widely recognized and celebrated holiday of ancient times among the idolatrous nations.

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