

Dating Yeshua's Ministry

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While [The Moedim: Appointed Times](#) study has clearly placed the crucifixion of Yeshua on Wednesday, April 5, 30 AD, there are a lot of confusing perspectives on dating His birth and the start of His ministry that seem to boil everything down within a 2-year period of 5/4 BC and 26/27 AD respectively. Even the beginning of the 70 weeks prophecy given to Daniel has a Persian regnal dating and Jewish regnal dating that matches these 2-year periods of 458/457 BC respectively.

Ultimately, the fulfillment of the first 69 weeks of Daniel's 70 weeks prophecy remains unchanged by this as Christ's ministry still happens within the gap between the 69 and 70th week, but with all the varied hints given at dating, it's a good idea to document them for reference. Some make a larger point of this so that there are 3.5 years from the start of Christ's ministry in the autumn to His crucifixion in the spring 3.5 years later. This is used to tie in the first 3.5 years of the 70th week of Daniel to the first century, leaving only 3.5 years left to be fulfilled. Still others say the whole 7 years were fulfilled in history. I believe a plain and logical reading of the prophecy clearly shows verse 25 covering the first 69 weeks, verse 26 covering the time after the 69 weeks and before the 70th week during Christ's ministry and the destruction of Jerusalem, and verse 27 covering the 70th week. This is covered in greater detail in the [Daniel's 70 Weeks](#) study.

Regardless, I wanted to understand all the timing since there is a right answer out there, it's just obfuscated by so many dating positions that it gets very confusing. Ultimately scripture is correct and things like celestial events that we can roll back the clock on to provide dating is held in higher regard than the writings of historians, even though they come into play as well.

On Dating Precision

- Different calendars were used by different cultures at various times through history. Unfortunately, simply assigning a Gregorian calendar date to events requires a lot of translation of recorded events by various cultures and interpreting that information. The modern use of AD and BC didn't even come into use until after 525 AD so there was no common dating system to define years in the way we are used to today.
- Very often the year of an event is hotly debated and there are several dates that various experts agree on in their disagreement with other experts. These experts use sources for dating that come from recorded history of celestial events, Olympiads, regnal years of kings, and other various events of note that can vary by culture.
 - My first source of timing comes from scripture. This doesn't usually help directly with pegging events to our calendar and year, but Jewish authors of scripture, whether in the land or captivity, often gave reference to a time by calling out the year of reigns of the kings or leadership. They also would speak of various leaders in power at a particular time, giving clues of time frames in which events took place.
 - The writings of historians often end up being the source of dating information from references in scripture as well, looking at historical records to cross-reference events and attempt to peg them to a time. There are many like Herodotus (484-425 BC), Flavius Josephus (37-100 AD) that meticulously wrote out the history of the Jews in [Antiquities of the Jews](#) and [The Wars of the Jews](#), Eusebius Pamphilius (260/65-339 AD)
 - These historians often had access to manuscripts and documents lost to time, however it seems that even with these their dating was off. The various accounts don't always agree
 - It is my opinion that celestial events, with the help of God's design of the celestial clock and the understanding of it through mathematics, are a primary source of information for timing

when a celestial event is documented in association with historical events. With the aid of software like [Stellarium](#), we have the ability to wind back the celestial clock and see the events depicted in history according to our modern Gregorian calendar.

- Dating here is typically based on when one defines the start of a regnal year. This varied by culture and time where the beginning of a regnal year may or may not be inclusive of the partial year when coming to power, and the beginning of the calendar year would determine the season of the start of the regnal year. From [Did Ezra Come to Jerusalem in 457 BC?](#):
 - Egyptian - Thoth 1 - December (ca. 460 BC)
 - Babylonian - Nisanu 1 - March/April
 - Persian - Nisanu 1 - March/April
 - Jewish Civic - Tishri 1 - September/October (When non-Jewish regnal years were counted by)
 - Jewish Religious - Abib/Nisan 1 - March/April (When Jewish regnal years were counted by)
- So some would mark the official reign starting in fall while some were in spring, seemingly both around the equinoxes primarily. To further confuse things, some were inclusive so if the king took power after the regnal year began, it would include that year. And some would start at the next coming regnal year.
- Taking that into account and whether the writers of scripture, from which we base our understanding of Bible prophecy, were counting according to the Gentile reckoning of regnal years or their own, causes much confusion and ultimately in many cases you will end up with many saying something happened in x year and many saying it's x +/- 1 year.
 - I tend to agree with Rick Lanser, Mdiv who made a point that the Hebrews did things their own way, even when in captivity or under the rule of foreign kings. When writing scripture and referring to the reign of kings, it was from their own reckoning of the start of regnal years according to their civil calendar on Tishri 1 for Gentile kings and in the event of Jewish kings it was on Abib/Nisan 1.
- Where it matters in the **HIS**tory, Our Future Bible studies, this level of detail in history is not all that relevant as the major prophecy that will be covered in the [Daniel's 70 Weeks](#) study does not require this precision for fulfillment to be proven. I'm not qualified to wade into the debate and so I offer only the conclusions I've come to in my research of various perspectives.
- However, as we will see in this study, there is one year in particular that I believe we will be able to precisely narrow down from both the historical record and the Bible. Many references here will have different years for various aspects, but ultimately they come to the same conclusion on the year of the crucifixion and resurrection. I have been satisfied on the dates of these events that will be presented, but I would recommend digging through the details that are out there yourself and maybe you'll have less of a headache than I did.
- The overarching point of this study is to bring back to remembrance the Hebrew origins of the Christian celebration of the resurrection and Pentecost since they actually fulfilled the spring appointed times in His first coming. If God fulfilled our salvation according to a precise schedule determined and implemented by the Hebrews, is this not something we should take into account?
- And looking into our future, I believe we will see how the appointed times are an integral part of Christ's second coming in the fulfillment of the fall moedim. Can we expect the same kind of precision in fulfillment in the future, and what light can this shed on understanding the framework of the end?
- I highly recommend the online [Rosetta Calendar](#) tool that displays the same date in the Gregorian, Julian, and Hebrew calendar systems. It really helps to translate the Jewish calendar to the Gregorian and Julian. And even though the Julian calendar did not best calculate for leap years, it has been a count of days since 46 BC when it was created by Julius Caesar and can be handy using its number format in tools like [Stellarium](#) or validating a day of the week in the ancient past.

[Josephus' Timetable for the Herods](#)

Name	Start Date	End Date	Total Reign
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Herod the Great	37 B.C.	3 B.C.	34 years
Archelaus	3 B.C.	7 A.D.	10 years
Philip	3 B.C.	34 A.D.	37 years
Herod the Tetrarch	3 B.C.	38 A.D.	41 years
Lysinias	N/A	38 A.D.	N/A
Agrippa I	39 A.D.	44 A.D.	5 years
Agrippa II	Not Sure	Not Sure	–

The Birth of Christ

- Yeshua's Ministry Starts at 30 Years Old
 - **Luke 3:21-23** - "Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. **And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age**, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was [the son] of Heli,"
 - **Genesis 41:46** - "And **Joseph [was] thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt**. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt."
 - **Numbers 4:1-3** - "And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, Take the sum of the sons of Kohath from among the sons of Levi, after their families, by the house of their fathers, **From thirty years old and upward even until fifty years old, all that enter into the host, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation.**"
 - "The famous 12th century commentator Rashbam explains that at age 30 one is 'worthy of leadership.'" | [9] [Turning 30](#) aish.com
 - While not in the priesthood, it is interesting that the age one is considered to be old enough to be a Rabbi is 30 years old.
 - It seems that this is the age generally considered to be a point of taking on a leadership role.
 - Interestingly, this may point to the symbology of Yeshua being the Branch, that is a sprout, bud, growth, as His ministry lasted less than 3 years before His death and resurrection.
- John the Baptist
 - **Luke 1:5-9, 24-27, 36** - "There was **in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia**: and his wife [was] of the daughters of Aaron, and her name [was] Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were [now] well stricken in years. And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. ... And **after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months**, saying, Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on [me], to take away my reproach among men. And **in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary**. ... And, behold, **thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.**"
 - ◆ Zechariah's priestly functions were carried out during the course of Abia, which was June/July so John would have been born 9 months later around March/April. ([10] [Luke 1:5 Division of Abijah](#))
 - ◆ Mary was visited by the angel Gabriel 6 months into Elizabeth's pregnancy around

December/January so Yeshua would have been conceived around that time and born 9 months later in September/October.

- Travel to Bethlehem
 - **Luke 2:1-8** - "And it came to pass in those days, that **there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. ([And] this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)** And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."
 - ◆ Caesar Augustus reigned from 27 BC to his death in 14 AD, the last two years from 12-14 AD being "co-Princes" with Tiberius.
 - ◆ Josephus wrote about the census of Judea around 6 AD when Quirinius (Cyrenius) was governor of Syria. This is far out of the scope of time if read as I do with a basic understanding of the authors. So either Luke was in error or there's some nuance to this.
 - ◆ We should also not forget that there were originally no chapters and verses. These were created by Stephen Langton, an Archbishop of Canterbury, around 1,227 AD and became widely accepted to assist in finding passages. These divisions often lead to separating passages that were never intended to be. David J. Armitage wrote a paper on an alternate reading of Luke 2:1-7 that looks at a possible understanding of what Luke was saying.
 - ◇ "In conformity with wider Lukan usage, ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις ('in those days') in Luke 2:1 is taken to refer to the temporal setting most closely preceding it in the text. The temporal frame is therefore established by 1:80, such that 'those days' in 2:1 indicates the time when John the Baptist was growing up in the desert. The census is therefore placed within the period of John's maturing – a context compatible with the AD 6 date typically assigned to Quirinius' census." | ["Detaching the Census: An Alternative Reading of Luke 2:1-7"](#). Tyndale Bulletin. 69 (1): 75–95
 - ◆ One other point from this passage is that there was no room at the inn. This would make sense if they were coming to Bethlehem during Sukkot, a time when temporary shelters mirroring those Jacob used for his livestock, would have been abundant while places at the inn would be in short supply. So the manger, also referred to as a stall for animals in **Luke 13:15**, may have actually been a Sukkot.
- Season of Christ's Birth
 - **Luke 2:21-24** - "And **when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS**, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb. And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, **they brought him to Jerusalem, to present [him] to the Lord**; (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons."
 - ◆ **Leviticus 15:13-15** - "And when he that hath an issue is cleansed of his issue; then he shall number to himself seven days for his cleansing, and wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in running water, and shall be clean. And on the eighth day he shall take to him two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, and come before the LORD unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and give them unto the priest: And the priest shall offer them, the one [for] a sin offering, and the other [for] a burnt offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD for his issue."
 - ◆ As covered already, there are 3 times each year, Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, and

Tabernacles. The latter is an 8-day appointed time

- ◆ **Leviticus 23:34-36** - "Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month [shall be] the feast of tabernacles [for] seven days unto the LORD. On the first day [shall be] an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work [therein]. Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it [is] a solemn assembly; [and] ye shall do no servile work [therein]."
 - ◆ Since Mary's birth of Yeshua started an 8-day purification period, and Yeshua's circumcision had to be 8 days after His birth, it may have been that Yeshua was born on Tishri 15, the first day of Sukkot, and Mary's offering, Yeshua's circumcision and presenting to the Father at the temple all fell on Tishri 22, the final day of Sukkot.
 - ◆ **Deuteronomy 16:13-15** - "Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine: And **thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that [are] within thy gates.** Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD shall choose: because the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, **therefore thou shalt surely rejoice.**"
 - ◆ Truly at this time there was reason to rejoice, although very few knew it yet. The lowly shepherds in the field were honored with this knowledge and even the heavenly host rejoiced.
 - ◆ **Luke 2:8-14** - "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this [shall be] a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."
 - ◇ This also highlights another reason that agrees the season this happened in was the fall. "Abiding in the field" is [G63](#) - ag-row-leh'-o. This only occurs in this verse and is translated "to, in the fields, be under the open sky, even at night." Fall, at the end of the harvest, would be when the flocks would be out in the field, even at night, as winter would be too cold.
- The Magi from the East
 - **Matthew 2:1-12** - "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard [these things], he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, [in] the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found [him], bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And **when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother,** and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had

opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way."

- ◆ There are many misconceptions about the wise men from the East. It's assumed there are 3 of them, but in reality we aren't told how many there were, only that they brought three gifts. The fact that Herod and all Jerusalem were troubled at their arrival would seem to indicate there was a decent sized entourage.
 - ◆ The English translation "wise men" is [G3097](#) - mag'-os, a magus, the name given by the Babylonians (Chaldeans), Medes, Persians, and others, to the wise men, teachers, priests, physicians, astrologers, seers, interpreters of dreams, augers, soothsayers, sorcerers etc.
 - ◆ Since not all of Israel came back from the Babylonian captivity, it is believed that these wise men may have come from Babylon in the East, having Daniel's prophecies and perhaps other understanding given to him that we don't have in our scriptures regarding signs in the heavens. A very good documentary by Rick Larson called [The Star of Bethlehem](#) reveals what the magi from the East may have seen that compelled them to travel to Jerusalem. The timeline fits with what we will see about the season and year of Christ's birth. Dr. Michael Heiser also has discussed this in his article [September 11: Happy Birthday to Jesus](#) and podcast episode [Naked Bible 138: What Day was Jesus Born?](#)
 - ◇ **Note:** Captured video for playback in media folder 3BC-08-27 through 1BC-06-04 Virgo
 - ◇ September 3 BC - As viewed from Babylon, Jupiter crowns Regulus in Leo followed by Virgo rising with the sun and the moon at her feet on Yom Teruah, the Jewish civil new year.
 - ◇ November 23, 3 BC - Jupiter begins retrograde past Regulus
 - ◇ April 4, 2 BC - Jupiter ends retrograde coming back past Regulus
 - ◇ June 2 BC - 9 months later the king planet meets the mother planet becoming the brightest star in the skies over Jerusalem as it sets as viewed from Babylon.
 - ◇ November 2 BC - The Magi arrive in Jerusalem and tell Herod they've seen the star in the east asking where the baby king is. Herod finds out and says Bethlehem.
 - ◇ December 25, 2 BC - Jupiter stops within the constellation Virgo as it goes in retrograde to the south as viewed from Jerusalem.
 - ◇ They find the toddler Jesus living in Bethlehem and present the gifts
 - ◇ May 1, 1 BC - Jupiter ends retrograde, perhaps when Joseph and Mary are told they can return home after Herod's death?
 - ◆ Note also that the wise men from the East
 - ◆ Attached to the previous point about no room at the inn, when the wise men visit Bethlehem, they come to their house as depicted in [Matthew 2:11](#) with Yeshua as a young child, which doesn't necessarily mean he was still a baby at that time.
 - ◆ Yeshua was born in Bethlehem in Judea in the days of Herod the king when the wise men came
- Herod the Great & Slaughter of the Innocents
 - [Matthew 2:16-18](#) - "Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, **from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.** Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping [for] her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not."
 - ◆ Clearly from this we know that Herod had to be alive and that according to his conversation with the wise men, believed that the king they were coming to visit was

under 2 years old. King Herod died shortly after this decree, and there are two years proposed for his death, either 4 BC or 1 BC.

- ◆ Scholars recognize that Josephus reckoned the years of Herod's reign from the Jewish springtime month of Nisan to the next Nisan.
- ◆ There were also signs in the heavens around the fall to winter of 3 BC that could be attributed to guiding the wise men coming from the East. Accounting for first seeing it, preparing for, and traveling from the East, they likely arrived in Jerusalem in the fall of 2 BC and it was on December 25, 2 BC that Jupiter in retrograde would have hung in the sky over Bethlehem when looking from Jerusalem.
- ◆ Not sure of his age Herod killed all boys 2 and younger based on what the wise men said. This would also place His actual birth around 4 BC.
- ◆ There is also no indication that either the magi from the East nor Herod and his people actually knew the exact birth date of the Messiah. The magi saw signs in the heavens that drew them, but were these indicative of the actual birth or just a means to draw them?
- Herod the Great's death plays a major role in determining the birth of Yeshua. But there are many views on the dating of this, the two primary being in 4 BC and 1 BC. The former is the more widely accepted now, but originally the 1 BC dating was more widely accepted.
- **When did Herod die?**
 - Josephus says that Herod died the 5th day after ordering Antipater killed, 34 years since he killed Antigonus, and 37 years after Rome declared him king.
 - [Antiquities of the Jews 17.8.1](#) - "AND now Herod altered his testament upon the alteration of his mind; for he appointed Antipas, to whom he had before left the kingdom, to be tetrarch of Galilee and Perea, and granted the kingdom to Archclaus. He also gave Gaulonitis, and Trachonitis, and Paneas to Philip, who was his son, but own brother to Archclaus⁵¹⁹ by the name of a tetrarchy; and bequeathed Jarnnia, and Ashdod, and Phasaelis to Salome his sister, with five hundred thousand [drachmae] of silver that was coined. He also made provision for all the rest of his kindred, by giving them sums of money and annual revenues, and so left them all in a wealthy condition. He bequeathed also to Caesar ten millions [of drachmae] of coined money, besides both vessels of gold and silver, and garments exceeding costly, to Julia, Caesar's wife; and to certain others, five millions. When he had done these things, **he died, the fifth day after he had caused Antipater to be slain; having reigned, since he had procured Antigonus to be slain, thirty-four years; but since he had been declared king by the Romans, thirty-seven.**⁵²⁰ A man he was of great barbarity towards all men equally, and a slave to his passion; but above the consideration of what was right; yet was he favored by fortune as much as any man ever was, for from a private man he became a king; and though he were encompassed with ten thousand dangers, he got clear of them all, and continued his life till a very old age. But then, as to the affairs of his family and children, in which indeed, according to his own opinion, he was also very fortunate, because he was able to conquer his enemies, yet, in my opinion, he was herein very unfortunate."
 - ◆ ⁵²⁰ - "These numbers of years for Herod's reign, 34 and 37, are the very same with those, Of the War, B. I. ch. 33. sect. 8, and are among the principal chronological characters belonging to the reign or death of Herod. See Harm. p. 150--155."
 - ◆ [The Wars of the Jews 1.33.8](#) - "So Herod, having survived the slaughter of his son five days, died, having **reigned thirty-four years since he had caused Antigonus to be slain**, and obtained his kingdom; but **thirty-seven years since he had been made king by the Romans.**"
 - Sent Antigonus to Mark Antony to be killed

- ◆ Herod and Sosius, the governor of Syria, at the behest of Mark Antony, set out with a large army in 37 BCE and captured Jerusalem, Herod then sending Antigonus for execution to Mark Antony.
- ◆ [Antigonus II Mattathias](#) - "Due to the approach of winter, Herod postponed his siege of Jerusalem—where Antigonus and the remnants of his army took refuge—**until spring**. Herod and a supporting Roman army were **kept out of Jerusalem for 3–5 months but the Romans eventually captured the city**. The supporters of Antigonus fought until the Romans reached the inner courtyard of the Temple.[3] Antigonus was taken to Antioch and executed,[4] ending Hasmonean rule."
- ◆ [Antiquities of the Jews 14.16.1](#) - "AFTER the wedding was over, came Sosius through Phoenicia, having sent out his army before him over the midland parts. He also, who was their commander, came himself, with a great number of horsemen and footmen. The king also came himself from Samaria, and brought with him no small army, besides that which was there before, for they were about thirty thousand; and they all met together at the walls of Jerusalem, and encamped at the north wall of the city, being now an army of eleven legions, armed men on foot, and six thousand horsemen, with other auxiliaries out of Syria. The generals were two: Sosius, sent by Antony to assist Herod, and Herod on his own account, in order to take the government from Antigonus, who was declared all enemy at Rome, and that he might himself be king, according to the decree of the Senate."
- ◆ [The Wars of the Jews 1.17.2](#) - "But Herod had not yet been informed of these things; for after the taking of Samosata, and when Antony had set Sosius over the affairs of Syria, and had given him orders to assist Herod against Antigonus, he departed into Egypt; but Sosius sent two legions before him into Judea to assist Herod, and followed himself soon after with the rest of his army."
 - ◆ **Josephus: Summer/Fall 37 BC - 34 years = Spring 3 BC at his death**
 - Appointed by Rome
 - ◆ Josephus puts this in the year of the consulship of Calvinus and Pollio (40 BCE)
 - ◆ **Josephus: 40 BC - 37 years = 3 BC**
 - Appian of Alexandria places Herod's appointment by Rome in 39 BC
 - ◆ Appian ref: Steinmann, Andrew "When Did Herod the Great Reign?", *Novum Testamentum*, Volume 51, Number 1, 2009, pp. 1–29; Young, Rodger C. and Andrew E. Steinmann, "Caligula's Statue for the Jerusalem Temple and Its Relation to the Chronology of Herod the Great," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 62 (2019): 759–774; Steinmann, Andrew E. and Rodger C. Young, "Elapsed Times for Herod the Great in Josephus," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 177 (2020): 308–328; Steinmann, Andrew E. and Rodger C. Young, "Consular Years and Sabbatical Years in the Life of Herod the Great," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 177 (2020): 442–461.
 - ◆ **Appian: 39 BC - 37 years = 2 BC**
- Josephus says that Herod died just before a Passover.
 - [Antiquities of the Jews 17.9.3](#) - "Now, **upon the approach of that feast of unleavened bread**, which the law of their fathers had appointed for the Jews at this time, which feast is called the Passover⁵²² and is a memorial of their deliverance out of Egypt, when they offer sacrifices with great alacrity; and when they are required to slay more sacrifices in number than at any other festival; and when an innumerable multitude came thither out of the country, nay, from beyond its limits also, in order to worship God, the seditious lamented

Judas and Matthias, those teachers of the laws, and kept together in the temple, and had plenty of food, because these seditious persons were not ashamed to beg it. ... "

- [The Jewish War 2.1.1,3](#) - "NOW the necessity which Archelaus was under of taking a journey to Rome was the occasion of new disturbances; for when he had mourned for his father seven days ... And indeed, **at the feast of unleavened bread**, which was now at hand, and is by the Jews called the Passover, and used to be celebrated with a great number of sacrifices, an innumerable multitude of the people came out of the country to worship; some of these stood in the temple bewailing the Rabbins [that had been put to death], and procured their sustenance by begging, in order to support their sedition."
- ★ ▪ We are also told there was a lunar eclipse shortly before Herod died.
 - [Antiquities of the Jews 17.6.4](#) - "But the people, on account of Herod's barbarous temper, and for fear he should be so cruel and to inflict punishment on them, said what was done was done without their approbation, and that it seemed to them that the actors might well be punished for what they had done. But as for Herod, he dealt more mildly with others [of the assembly] but he deprived Matthias of the high priesthood, as in part an occasion of this action, and made Joazar, who was Matthias's wife's brother, high priest in his stead. Now it happened, that during the time of the high priesthood of this Matthias, there was another person made high priest for a single day, that very day which the Jews observed as a fast. The occasion was this: This Matthias the high priest, on the night before that day when the fast was to be celebrated, seemed, in a dream,⁵¹⁶ to have conversation with his wife; and because he could not officiate himself on that account, Joseph, the son of Ellemus, his kinsman, assisted him in that sacred office. But Herod deprived this Matthias of the high priesthood, and burnt the other Matthias, who had raised the sedition, with his companions, alive. **And that very night there was an eclipse of the moon.**"
 - This, to me, seems the most definitive way to date based on a lunar eclipse that doesn't rely on varied dating of reigns of various nations.
 - **March 23, 5 BC - 7:47 - 8:39 - 10:34 PM** (Full lunar eclipse from Jerusalem/Jericho [Stellarium])
 - ◆ **Note:** Captured video for playback in media folder
 - ◆ "There were still only twenty-nine days between this eclipse and the next Passover. All of the impossible situations which the March 13, 4 B.C.E. eclipse encounters are precisely the same with this eclipse. And besides, early 5 B.C.E. for the death of Herod plays havoc with all the chronological indications of Josephus and Roman records regarding the period of Herod's death. ... An early 5 B.C.E. date would cause utter chaos in the records of Josephus." | [The Lunar Eclipse of Josephus](#)
 - **September 15, 5 BC - 8:38 - 10:28 PM - 9/16/5 BC 12:21 AM** (Full lunar eclipse from Jerusalem/Jericho [Stellarium])
 - ◆ **Note:** Captured video for playback in media folder
 - ◆ "if one puts Herod's death back in late 5 B.C.E., then the year lengths of Herod's reign as mentioned by Josephus become altogether garbled and in no way do they make any sense to the historian."
 - ◆ "If the eclipse of Josephus were that of September 15, 5 B.C.E., then seven months would have passed before the next Passover. Seven months are far too long for the intervening events to have taken place. Note this point. Herod was in Jericho when the eclipse near his death occurred. The city is a furnace in late summer. It is situated just over 800 feet (c. 240 meters) below sea level and its mid-September temperatures are very

high. Why would Herod, who was uncomfortably ill at the time, subject himself to such oppressive conditions in the Jordan Valley when the pleasant environment of Jerusalem was, so near? It might be added, however, that if the eclipse were in the depth of winter, one could easily understand Herod's wish to be in Jericho. This point alone renders the September 15th eclipse as improbable for consideration." | [The Lunar Eclipse of Josephus](#)

- ◆ "Josephus said that on the very night of the eclipse the high priest Matthias was deposed from office by Herod. This Matthias had a pontificate of about nine or ten months. This is proved by Jeremias. ²⁸ The proof centers primarily on the fact that Josephus (or rather, Nicolas of Damascus who was eyewitness to the events) said that Matthias had been appointed to the high priesthood when the scheme of Antipater to kill his father (Herod) was first discovered. Josephus records that there was a seven month span from that time until Antipater returned from Rome to Jerusalem for trial. ²⁹ Within three days after Antipater got back to Jerusalem, Herod dispatched messengers to Rome asking Augustus' approval to have Antipater executed. The couriers would have taken no longer than three months to go to Rome and return. But a few days *before* news came back from Augustus that Antipater could be executed, the eclipse occurred. Notice what these facts mean. Matthias the high priest was deposed on the night of the eclipse. So, by adding the seven months between the discovery of Antipater's plot (when Matthias was promoted to the high priesthood) and Antipater's arrival back in Jerusalem, plus the two or three months for the messengers to go to Rome and return to Herod, there was a period no longer than ten months (probably closer to nine months) for Matthias' tenure as high priest. This may seem technical and complicated, but the results of the inquiry can help us very much in showing that the September 15th eclipse could not be the one referred to by Josephus. It would involve an impossible situation regarding the high priesthood of this Matthias. Indeed, this very Matthias was a famous personality in matters dealing with the priesthood and something happened to him during his priesthood that was remembered hundreds of years afterward. What was this? Josephus records a remarkable occurrence that happened during the time Matthias was high priest. He had a dream prior to the day of a "fast" in which he was sexually intimate with a woman. This rendered Matthias ritualistically unclean (no one could be sexually intimate even with his wife prior to conducting the sacred ceremonies of the Day of Atonement). Nothing like this had happened before in the history of the priesthood. The Sanhedrin had to make a decision about the matter. They determined that Matthias should step down from his office for one day. In the meantime a relative of his was commissioned to perform the sacred duties on that fast day. They appointed Joseph, the son of Ellemus, to stand in for Matthias. This incident was so unique in the conduct of temple ceremonies that it was talked about in the Talmud centuries later. ³⁰ And significantly, the Talmud records that the day of Matthias' disqualification was the Day of Atonement. This was the great fast day of the Jews commanded in the Law (*cf.* Acts 27:9). But how does any of this show that the September 15th eclipse could not be the one referred to by Josephus? It is quite simple to disqualify it. If this eclipse were the correct one, it would mean that Matthias' pontificate

ended on that very night (recall that Herod dismissed Matthias on the day of the eclipse), and that his high priesthood lasted nine or ten months at most. To go backwards nine or ten months from September 15th covers a period of time in which no Day of Atonement occurred. The previous Day of Atonement would have happened at least a month or two *before* Matthias was appointed to the high priesthood. These clear facts of history are certain on this matter. This shows that the eclipse of September 15, 5 B.C.E. thoroughly fails as a candidate's. ³¹ | [The Lunar Eclipse of Josephus](#)

- **March 13, 4 BC - 1:44 - 3:06 - 4:10 AM** (Partial, <1/3, lunar eclipse from Jerusalem/Jericho [Stellarium])
 - ◆ **Note:** Captured video for playback in media folder
 - ◆ "If the March 13, 4 B.C.E. eclipse were the one referred to by Josephus we have an impossible situation concerning an event on the Jewish calendar. The day of the eclipse would have been Adar 15. In the biblical book of Esther it is recorded that the Jewish nation in the time of Ahasuerus, king of Persia, **ordained the 14th and 15th days of Adar as days of resting and rejoicing. The days were known as Purim** (Esther 9:26, 32). Even Adar 13 was known as "the Day of Nicanor." This was a day when the Jewish nation rejoiced in honor of the overthrow of Gentile domination back in the early Maccabean period. And immediately following were the two festival days of Purim. If March 13, 4 B.C.E. were the day of Josephus' eclipse, then it occurred on the night of Adar 15, the second high day of Purim. ... It means that those rabbis would have been burnt alive on the Jewish day of Adar 14, the first day of the two high days of Purim. No court, unless completely illegal, would have had criminals executed and certainly not rabbis on the special day commanded in the Bible when the Jews "rested ... a day of feasting and gladness" (Esther 9:17–18). The whole nation would have been in an uproar over such a procedure." | [The Lunar Eclipse of Josephus](#)
 - ◆ "...modern scholars have to add an extra year to Herod's reign of 34 years from Antigonus' death (reckoning only two or three days of Nisan in 4 B.C.E. as a whole year) to make any reasonable sense out of their calculations." | [The Lunar Eclipse of Josephus](#)
- **January 9, 1 BC - 10:42 PM - January 10, 1 BC 1:29 AM - 4:13 AM** (Full lunar eclipse from Jerusalem/Jericho [Stellarium])
 - ◆ **Note:** Captured video for playback in media folder
 - ◆ "The eclipse of Josephus had to have been that of **January 10, 1 B.C.E.** All the events mentioned by Josephus fit quite comfortably with this eclipse..." | [The Lunar Eclipse of Josephus](#)
 - ◆ "There were three months from this eclipse to the next Passover. The messengers sent by Herod to Rome at the end of Antipater's trial in the previous autumn would have arrived back in Palestine (to Herod in Jericho) in 2 or 2 ½ months, which is very reasonable." | [The Lunar Eclipse of Josephus](#)
 - ◆ "At the death of Herod in late January, messengers immediately would have been sent to Rome to inform Caesar of Herod's death, thus permitting Sabinus to arrive from Rome just after the Passover to secure to the imperial treasury the property of Herod." | [The Lunar Eclipse of Josephus](#)
 - ◆ "Matthias would also have been available for the Day of Atonement in the previous autumn." | [The Lunar Eclipse of Josephus](#)
 - ◆ [Wars of the Jews 1.33.6](#) - "He then returned back and came to Jericho, in

such a melancholy state of body as almost threatened him with present death, when he proceeded to attempt a horrid wickedness; for he got together the most illustrious men of the whole Jewish nation, out of every village, into a place called the Hippodrome, and there shut them in. He then called for his sister Salome, and her husband Alexas, and made this speech to them: **'I know well enough that the Jews will keep a festival upon my death** however, it is in my power to be mourned for on other accounts, and to have a splendid funeral, if you will but be subservient to my commands. Do you but take care to send soldiers to encompass these men that are now in custody, and slay them immediately upon my death, and then all Judea, and every family of them, will weep at it, whether they will or no.'

- ◆ "There is a Jewish document called the *Megillath Taanith* (Scroll of Fasting, though it records festival days too) which was composed, initially, not long after the destruction of Jerusalem in C.E. 70. This scroll mentions two semi-festival days during which no mourning was permitted. One is Kislev 7. The month of Kislev corresponds in most years with our December. The other commemorative day was Schebat 2. This month answers to our late January or early February. No one knows why these two days of feasting are commemorated yet they must have been days of joy ordained before the destruction of Jerusalem in C.E. 70. What did they honor?" | [The Lunar Eclipse of Josephus](#)
 - ◇ "Indeed, even the earlier date of Kislev 7 (December 5th), which the commentator associated with Herod's death, may have relevance too. Look at what could have happened on that day. This could have been the time when the two rabbis (who were later executed) provoked the young men to tear down the golden eagle from the eastern portal of the temple. Such an occasion could well have inspired some commemorative date in which it was accomplished. In fact, this is the thing that Josephus reports." | [The Lunar Eclipse of Josephus](#)
 - ◇ "An early Jewish commentator who probably lived in the 7th century wrote a brief remark to Kislev 7 (December 5th), "The day of Herod's death." However, M. Moise Schwab, who studied the information about the scroll very extensively, felt that it was really the second of the days, Schebat 2 (January 28th) that was the actual day commemorating Herod's death. (S. Burnaby, *The Jewish Calendar*, 261.) And interestingly, this latter date fits remarkably well with the January 10th eclipse of Josephus. Herod's death on this very day would have occurred 18 days after the eclipse. All the information in Josephus about Herod's activities between the eclipse and his death fits nicely with the chronological facts. ... the *Megillath Taanith* records an unknown fast day for commemoration. It was Tebeth 9 (January 6th in 1 B.C.E.). This could very well have been the day the rabbis were tried and sentenced. And three days later on Friday, January 9th, the rabbis were burnt alive to correspond with the lunar eclipse that was predicted for that night. Delaying their execution to the eve of the eclipse (and especially since there were no biblical festival days involved as with the March 13, 4 B.C.E. eclipse) would have allowed Herod to tell the superstitious that even God himself was frowning on the sacrilegious deeds of the two rabbis and that God would express His displeasure that night with an eclipse. Herod would

have died 18 days later on Schebat 2 (January 28th). As mentioned before, this date is one of the undesignated festival days of the Jews mentioned in the Megillath Taanith and that it points to the time of Herod's death makes good sense." | [The Lunar Eclipse of Josephus](#)

- "Josephus's remark in Antiquities 17.6.4 that there was a lunar eclipse shortly before Herod died. This is traditionally ascribed to the eclipse of March 13, 4 B.C. (this eclipse was visible only very late that night in Judea and was additionally a minor and only partial eclipse. There were no lunar eclipses visible in Judea thereafter until two occurred in the year 1 B.C. Of these two, the one on December 29, just two days before the change of eras, gets my vote since it was the one most likely to be seen and remembered. That then dates the death of Herod the Great into the first year of the current era, four years after the usual date.)" | [10] [Herod's Death, Jesus' Birth and a Lunar Eclipse](#) biblearchaeology.org & [Andrew E Steinmann](#)
- 4 BC
 - When Did Herod the Great Die? [Part 1](#) | [Part 2](#) | [The Daniel 9:24-27 Project](#) by Rick Lanser Mdiv
 - [Pinpointing the Date of Christ's Birth](#) | [The Daniel 9:24-27 Project](#) by Rick Lanser Mdiv
 - [Messiah 2030 Part 3](#) -
 - ◆ Points out parallel of Pharoah having male children killed (Exodus 1:22) and Herod doing the same (Matthew 2:16). According to the Torah the Messiah was to be a prophet like unto Moses. (Deuteronomy 18:15, Acts 3:22) So Moses being 3 months old when hidden in Egypt (Exodus 2:2) and thereby associating Yeshua being 3 months old when taken to Egypt. Herod's order to kill those 2 and younger is said then to be him being overly cautious to get Yeshua going so far above 3 months old.
 - ◆ Agrees with common accepted timing
- 1 BC
 - "Filmer, for example, proposes that Herod died in 1 BCE, and that his heirs backdated their reigns to 4 or 3 BCE to assert an overlapping with Herod's rule, and bolster their own legitimacy." | [Wikipedia](#)
 - "...the Library of Congress five more editions read the twenty-second year," while none prior to 1544 records the "twentieth year." It was also found that the oldest versions of the text give variant lengths of reign for Philip of 32 to 36 years. But if we still allow for a full thirty-seven year reign, then "the twenty-second year of Tiberius" (A.D. 35/36) points to 1 B.C. (1 year B.C. + 36 years A.D. = 37 B.C.) as the year of death of Herod." | [When did King Herod the Great Reign and Die?](#) Neverthirsty.org
 - [The Lunar Eclipse of Josephus](#) - "It is not difficult to know which eclipse Josephus referred to if historians will do two things. First, they must eliminate unqualified lunar eclipses that could not be seen in Palestine from 7 B.C.E. to early 1 B.C.E. After that, the historical, archaeological and chronological evidence must be evaluated that supports the eclipse that can properly conform to the evidence provided in the records. Astronomy is the key to it all. It is a sure guide to any chronology if one has documentation to provide a historical environment to utilize the evidence of astronomy. In the case of Josephus' eclipse, there is considerable historical and archaeological documentation to allow historians to pinpoint the precise lunar eclipse to which Josephus had reference even in that dark decade in Roman history."

Time of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate, Herod Antipas, Herod Philip,

Lysanias, Annas and Caiaphas

- **Luke 3:1-3** - "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;"
 - Yeshua was likely born in the fall
 - **Luke 2:8** - "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night."
 - The flocks were not out in the fields at night during the winter season.
 - **Luke 1:5-9, 24-26, 36** - "There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife [was] of the daughters of Aaron, and her name [was] Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were [now] well stricken in years. And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. ... And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on [me], to take away my reproach among men. And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, ... And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren."
 - Yeshua was conceived and born 6 months after John was.
 - Zechariah's priestly functions were carried out during the course of Abia, which was mid-June so John would have been born around mid-March. ([Ref.](#)) This means that Yeshua would have been conceived 6 months later in mid-December and born in mid-September.
 - **Luke 2:1-7** - "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. ([And] this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And **Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem;** (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; **because there was no room for them in the inn.**"
 - The time of the fall feasts began in the 7th month with Yom Teruah on the first of the month, Yom Kippur 10 days later, and Sukkot 5 days after that. This was one of 3 appointed times that all males were supposed to present themselves in Jerusalem. Combined with the taxing, it's not surprising that there was no room for them to stay and it may be that the manger they stayed in was actually a sukkot as part of the appointed time. These temporary dwellings originated when Jacob used them to house his animals.
 - ★ ○ Since Yeshua began His ministry in the fall, John the Baptists ministry, which this passage is defining, would have started sometime before that in the spring/summer within the 15th year of Tiberius.
 - The beginning of His ministry in the fall of 26 AD would mean that John the Baptist would have to have begun his ministry in the 14th year of Tiberius.
 - The beginning of His ministry in the fall of 27 AD would allow for John the Baptist to have begun his ministry in the spring/summer of the 15th year of Tiberius.

- There's quite a lot of detail for timing the beginning of John the Baptists ministry, that led to the baptism of Yeshua which began His ministry. These all have to be true at that time.
 - **15th regnal year of Tiberius Caesar**
 - Co-regent with Augustus from 10/23/12 - 9/17/14
 - ◆ [Years of Tiberius](#) - "Tiberius Claudius Nero was born on Nov 16, A.U.C. 712 = 42 BC On June 26 A.U.C. 757 = AD 4, he was adopted by Augustus and designated his successor, (Dio, *Roman History* 55.13.1) from which time he was called Tiberius Julius Caesar. On Oct 23, A.U.C. 765 = AD 12, he celebrated a triumph for his military victories in Germany and Pannonia. Referring to this event, Suetonius (*Tiberius*, 21) says that "the consuls caused a law to be passed soon after this that he should govern the provinces jointly with Augustus and hold the census with him." **The date when Tiberius thus began to govern the provinces jointly with Augustus was probably AD 12, (Suetonius, ed J.C. Rolfe (LCL), vol 1, 323) although arguments have been presented for putting it in AD 11 or 13. (Holzmeister, *Chronologia vitae Christi*, 66)** In this connection Tacitus describes Tiberius Nero as collega imperii, "colleague in the empire" (Annals 1.3), and some consider him joint emperor with Augustus from this time on. (*The Encyclopaedia Britannica* 22:176)"
 - ◆ [Luke 3:1, the fifteenth year of Tiberius](#) - "Luke's perspective on the "reign" of Annas indicates that he would view the reign of Tiberius in a similar manner. That is, viewing his co-regency with Augustus as functionally reigning. **Thus, the "reign" of Tiberius through co-regency with Augustus would have started in A.D. 11, making his year 15 to be A.D. 26.** Of course, the debate centers around the issue of exactly WHEN the reign of Tiberius began. Those who hold to view (b) begin the reign of Tiberius on August 19, A.D. 14, at the death of Emperor Augustus. Accordingly, John's ministry would have begun in A.D. 28 or even 29."
 - ◆ From the perspective of Luke, Tiberius was governing in Judea in 12 AD, and there are coins minted of him in 12 AD and then 14 AD signifying his co-regency.
 - ◆ **The 15th year from the fall of 11 AD, would be from the fall of 25 - 26 AD.**
 - ◆ **The 15th year from the fall of 12 AD, would be from the fall of 26 - 27 AD.**
 - ◆ **4 BC birth** if Yeshua was about 30 when He started His ministry.
 - *Chronicon*, Eusebius - "198th [**13 A.D.**] - Diophanes of Prusa [by Mt. Olympus], stadion race Aristreas of Stratoniceia or (?) Maeander was the seventh after Heracles to win both the wrestling and the pancratium competitions. [At this time] **Tiberius became emperor of the Romans.**" [Source](#)
 - Roman Emperor from 9/17/14 - 3/16/37
 - ◆ [Years of Tiberius](#) - "On Aug 19, A.U.C. 767 = AD 14, Augustus died, with the funeral on or around Sept 12. On Sept 17 the Senate met, voted the deceased emperor a deity, Divus Augustus, and voted his designated successor, Tiberius, the new head of state. As emperor he was known as Tiberius Caesar Augustus. So Tiberius ruled as a colleague of Augustus from AD 12, and as a successor of Augustus from Aug 19 (or from Sept 17 if you count from the vote of the Senate), AD 14, and his rule continued until his death on Mar 16, A.U.C. 790 = AD 37.162 In Table 150 a preliminary numbering of his regnal years is given. Column 1 numbers from the time when Tiberius began to govern jointly with Augustus, and column 2 from the first full calendar year after that. Column 3 numbers from the death of Augustus and the succession of Tiberius, and column 4

from the first full calendar year after that. A further series of brief tables (nos 140-156) is intended to recognize other variables in calendars and regnal years which could, at least in theory, be involved."

- ◆ **The 15th year from the fall of 14 AD, would be from the fall of 28 - 29 AD.**
- ◆ **2 BC birth** if Yeshua was about 30 when He started His ministry.
- Eusebeus
 - ◆ Eusebius (Chronicon ii, ed. Migne, p. 535) states that Christ suffered "in the 19th year of the reign of Tiberius,"
- **Pontius Pilate governor of Judea**
 - [Wikipedia](#) - "Póntios Pilátos was the fifth governor of the Roman province of Judaea, serving under Emperor Tiberius from 26/27 to 36/37 AD."
 - ◆ There are also some views that his governorship started in 17/18 and 19 AD, but less widely accepted. This is not relevant to timing John the Baptists ministry however.
 - [Years of Tiberius](#) - "Tiberius, in his 3rd year had immediately upon Augustus' death, replaced the Roman prefect of Judea (Rufus appointed under Augustus) with Gratus, who as reported by Josephus held office for 11 years."
 - ◆ "... and he sent Valerius Gratus to be procurator of Judea, and to succeed Annius Rufus ... When Gratus had done those things, he went back to Rome, after he had tarried in Judea eleven years, when Pontius Pilate came as his successor." | Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, [William Whiston ed., Ant. 18.2.2](#) (Beardsley, 1895)
 - ◆ "In late A.D. 25 or into 26, Tiberius in his 14th year, then replaced Gratus (in his 11th year) with by Pontius Pilate, thus establishing Pilate as Prefect (governor) in Judea prior to and synchronous with Jesus' baptism. Pilate would hold office for 10 years until ordered by Vitellius (in Tiberius' 24th year) to return to Rome and answer to Tiberius for provoking Jewish unrest in Judea: Historians didn't provide the month of any events associated with Judean prefects, just their general years..."
 - **Pilate is governor of Judea in both 26 AD and 27 AD, and of course at the crucifixion in 30 AD. This is therefore inconclusive for proving one view or the other.**
 - ◆ This could only potentially provide insight if a more detailed time of year in 26 AD could be determined. If he didn't come to power until the fall/winter in 26 AD, then this would rule out 26 AD as the start of John the Baptists and Yeshua's ministries unless the earlier dates for his ascension were accurate.
- Herod the Great's Death & Successors
 - Common accepted view is 4 BC death of Herod the Great, but not the only view. See "The Birth of Christ" section above for more detail.
 - **Herod Antipas tetrarch of Galilee**
 - ◆ *Antiquities of the Jews 17.8.1* - "AND now Herod altered his testament upon the alteration of his mind; for he appointed Antipas, to whom he had before left the kingdom, to be tetrarch of Galilee and Perea, and granted the kingdom to Archclaus. He also gave Gaulonitis, and Trachonitis, and Paneas to Philip, who was his son, but own brother to Archclaus⁵¹⁹ by the name of a tetrarchy; and bequeathed Jarnnia, and Ashdod, and Phasaelis to Salome his sister, with five hundred thousand [drachmae] of silver that was coined. He also made provision for all the rest of his kindred, by giving them sums of money and annual revenues, and so left them all in a wealthy condition. He bequeathed also to Caesar ten millions [of drachmae] of coined money, besides both vessels of gold

and silver, and garments exceeding costly, to Julia, Caesar's wife; and to certain others, five millions. When he had done these things, **he died, the fifth day after he had caused Antipater to be slain; having reigned, since he had procured Antigonus to be slain, thirty-four years; but since he had been declared king by the Romans, thirty-seven.**⁵²⁰ A man he was of great barbarity towards all men equally, and a slave to his passion; but above the consideration of what was right; yet was he favored by fortune as much as any man ever was, for from a private man he became a king; and though he were encompassed with ten thousand dangers, he got clear of them all, and continued his life till a very old age. But then, as to the affairs of his family and children, in which indeed, according to his own opinion, he was also very fortunate, because he was able to conquer his enemies, yet, in my opinion, he was herein very unfortunate."

- ◆ After the death of his father Herod the great (4 or 1 BC disputed), Caesar Augustus appointed him tetrarch and he ruled until his death in 39 AD
- **Herod Philip tetrarch of Ituraea & Trachonitis**
 - ◆ His reign did end in the 20th year of Tiberius in 34 AD, but is the 37-year reign just based on coinage?
 - ◆ [When did King Herod the Great reign and die?](#) - "...the Library of Congress five more editions read the twenty-second year," while none prior to 1544 records the "twentieth year." It was also found that the oldest versions of the text give variant lengths of reign for Philip of 32 to 36 years. But if we still allow for a full thirty-seven year reign, then "the twenty-second year of Tiberius" (A.D. 35/36) points to 1 B.C. (1 year B.C. + 36 years A.D. = 37 B.C.) as the year of death of Herod."
- **Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene**
 - s
- **Annas and Caiaphas high priests**
 - Annas ben Seth, high priest - **6 - 15 AD**
 - Joseph Caiaphas, high priest - **18 - 36 AD**
 - "Pilate retained the same high priest, Joseph ben Caiaphas, for his entire tenure. [26-36 AD]" | [Wikipedia](#)
 - [Luke 3:1, the fifteenth year of Tiberius](#), Referred from [What was the "Fifteenth Year of Tiberius"?](#) - "And during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas." Annas (or "Ananus" as Josephus calls him) had been appointed high priest by Quirinius in the year A.D. 6, and was deposed by Valerius Gratus, about A.D. 15. **But though deposed, he remained for a long time the ruling spirit of the Sanhedrin.** Five sons and a grandson followed him in the high priesthood; also a son-in-law, the very one mentioned by Luke, namely, Caiaphas. The latter held the high priestly office from A.D. 18 to 36.... It may seem strange that Luke assigns the beginning of the Baptist's ministry to the high priesthood not only of Caiaphas but "of Annas and Caiaphas." Annas, after all, was deposed from that office in A.D. 15, long before John's ministry began, whether according to theory (a) [the traditional view] or (b) [the popular view]. That Luke assigns the beginning of John's ministry to the high priesthood of Caiaphas (A.D. 18–36) we can understand, but why to that of Annas? Nevertheless, Luke is correct. ***He is thinking of the actual situation, not the merely formal one. The actual situation was that both Annas and Caiaphas were "in the drivers's seat" during the entire period of John's ministry and during the entire length of Christ's ministry; Annas as well—perhaps even more than—Caiaphas*** [page 197, emphasis added]."
- Merge with above
 - **Luke 3:1-2** - "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being

governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness."

- On October 23, 12 AD, Tiberius Caesar governed jointly with Augustus until August 9, 14 AD when Augustus died and then reigned from September 17, 14 AD to March 16, 37 AD. [#6] [Years of Tiberias](#) God's Signature of Authority
 - Written from the perspective of Luke, he would recognize the period Tiberius's reign became apparent in the region.
 - Augustus coins were minted until 14 AD and [5] [Tiberius coins were minted first between 12-14 AD](#) and then [14-37 AD](#). numista.com
 - So the 15th year of Tiberius from October 23, 12 AD would be from the fall of 26 AD to the fall of 27 AD when John would begin his ministry.
- Pontius Pilate was in charge in Judea between 26 and 36 AD, and since he is central to determining Christ's fate from the Roman side of things, the crucifixion must fall within this range of years.
- Herod Philip (Not his father Herod the Great who reigned from 37-1 BC) was tetrarch of Galilee 1 BC - 37 AD. | [6] [When did King Herod the Great reign and die?](#) neverthirsty.org
- Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, and Yeshua was taken to him first after being arrested at the Garden of Gethsemane. Caiaphas was the high priest that year. | [7] [John 18:13-16 Annas and Caiaphas](#) bibleversestudy.com
 - John 18:12-14 - "Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him, And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year. Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people."
 - Annas was high priest from 7 - 14 AD, but was hard to control so the Romans deposed him and he remained behind the scenes pulling the strings for 5 of his 6 sons to be high priest in addition to his son-in-law Caiaphas.
 - Caiaphas was high priest from 18 - 36 AD.
- For all of these to be mentioned as surrounding this time provides a secular period in addition to the Biblical record, as historians have other sources besides the Bible for the times here. The tightest period is that of Pontius Pilate from 26 - 36 AD, but all the others mentioned fall within this timeframe as well.
- In his article [8] [What was the "Fifteenth Year of Tiberius"?](#), from [The Daniel 9:24-27 Project](#) series of articles, Rick Lanser Mdiv addresses the timing of the 15th year of Tiberius by looking at the timing given by Luke. "Luke pragmatically dated the 15th year of Tiberius according to when Tiberius obtained co-princeps authority over Judea. The evidence, drawn largely from Suetonius, is that Tiberius exercised imperium control over Judea in AD 13, making his 15th year, by Roman inclusive reckoning, AD 27. This would be the year when, in the fall, John baptized Jesus. Then the early events laying the groundwork for His public ministry take place, leading into His first Passover in the spring of AD 28. The second Passover of His ministry cited in John 6:4 took place in the spring of AD 29. Finally, the third Passover, when Jesus was crucified, came around...on April 7, AD 30. That was the conclusion arrived at in the previous installments of this study for entirely independent reasons."
 - As we will see, I believe that Rick Lanser used incorrect translation of the Hebrew calendar to the Julian date, which puts 14 Abib on April 7, 30 AD, a Friday. I believe his source for this may have been attempting to harmonize a Friday crucifixion in 30 AD, but as we saw in studying the Biblical roots of these moedim, they were tied to specific days of a lunar month, meaning they varied year by year against the solar calendar and days of the week.

- ◆ Looking at scripture and the Rosetta Calendar, and a simple calculation of the Julian date, the 14th of Abib would have fallen on April 5, 30 on Wednesday.
- ◆ **Messiah 2030 puts this at 26 AD, find more accurate date**
- ◆ <https://hermeneutics.stackexchange.com/questions/19215/luke-31-3-was-luke-mistaken-about-the-year-in-which-john-the-baptists-preachin>
- ◆ <https://history.stackexchange.com/questions/37567/is-there-any-historical-evidence-for-a-co-regency-of-tiberius-and-augustus?darkschemeovr=1>

First Year of Christ's Ministry, First Passover, and the Age of the Temple

- **John 2:11-21** - "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him. After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days. **And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,** And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up. Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. **Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?** But he spake of the temple of his body."
 - The first point of note is that this took place on the first Passover after Christ's ministry began that previous fall, so this is in the first year of His ministry beginning.
 - The response of the Jews to Yeshua foretelling His resurrection gives us evidence on timing. The Jews recognized the temple was in its 46th year of construction, so do we know when did that construction begin?
 - That would tell us definitively the year of the first Passover after His ministry began.
 - His baptism was the autumn of the year prior to that, and so connect Luke 3:21-23 to the timing of His birth.
 - **Luke 3:21-23** - "Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was [the son] of Heli,"
- **Antiquities of the Jews 15.11.1** (Whiston translation from the Greek): "And now **Herod, in the eighteenth year of his reign** [counted inclusively from the death of Antigonus], and after the acts already mentioned, undertook a very great work; that is to build of himself the **temple** [*neon*] of God, and make it larger in compass, and to raise it to a most magnificent altitude: as esteeming it to be the most glorious of all his actions, as it really was, to bring it to perfection; and that this would be sufficient for an everlasting memorial of him... "Our fathers, indeed, when they were returned from Babylon, built this **temple** [*naòn*] to God Almighty, yet does it want sixty cubits of its largeness in altitude; for so much did that first temple which Solomon built exceed this temple; nor let any one condemn our fathers for their negligence or want of piety herein, for it was not their fault that the **temple** [*naós*] was no higher; for they were Cyrus, and Darius the son of Hystaspes, who determined the measures for its rebuilding; and it hath been by reason of the subjection of those fathers of ours to them and to their posterity, and after them to the Macedonians, that they had not the opportunity to follow the original model of this pious edifice, nor could raise it to its ancient altitude; but since I am now, by God's will, your governor, and I have had peace a long time, and have gained great riches and large revenues, and, what is the

principal filing of all, I am at amity with and well regarded by the Romans, who, if I may so say, are the rulers of the whole world, I will do my endeavor to correct that imperfection..." [bracketed comments and emphasis added].

- **Points from scripture/history**
 - 18 years from Herod's regnal year to work on temple started
 - 46 years from temple work starting to Yeshua's first Passover
 - Josephus used spring-spring inclusive reckoning for regnal years (any part of a year counts as 1st year, see below examples)
- Herod's Ascension and Reign
 - 37 BC - March-April 4 BC (Emil Schürer)
 - [The First Year of Herod the Great's Reign](#) | [The Daniel 9:24-27 Project](#) by Rick Lanser Mdiv
 - 36 BC - January-April 1 BC (Filmer)
 - Filmer, W. E. "[Chronology of the Reign of Herod the Great](#)", *Journal of Theological Studies* ns 17 (1966), 283–298
- 38 BC - 21/20 BC - 27 AD
 - Messiah 2030? - To fit the points above, it would have to be these years for the reign of Herod and temple work. I know they hold a 27 AD, re-watch part 3.
- 37 BC - Fall 20-19 BC (year 1) - Spring 28 AD
 - [John 2:12-21 and Herodian Chronology](#) | [The Daniel 9:24-27 Project](#) by Rick Lanser Mdiv
 - Ultimate conclusion: Herod's reign began in 37 BC and in the 18th year of his reign work began in 19 BC, the "temple had been a building 46 years" is as of the spring of 28 AD.
 - Establish Herod the Great's reign beginning 37 BC. (another article will cover his death)
 - "Herod's stated objective was to broaden ("make it larger in compass") and increase in height the naós—the temple proper, the holy areas reserved for the priests—to its original Solomonic grandeur. The work began, as stated, in the 18th year of his reign..."
 - Wallace, citing Unger, Shepard and Robertson, emphasized that the temple had been *in the process* of construction (and was still unfinished) for 46 years.
 - Merrill F. Unger writes of Herod's temple in *ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE NEW TESTAMENT*, page 99. "This magnificent enterprise was begun in 20–19 B.C., and although the sanctuary proper was finished in a year and half, the larger plan envisioned by the monarch was not completed until A.D. 64. In Jesus' day the Pharisees declared that the temple already had been in the process of construction for forty-six years (John 2:20)."
 - J.W. Shepard in his classic *THE CHRIST OF THE GOSPELS*, translates John 2:20 as "Forty-six years this temple was *abuilding* and will you raise it up in three days?" (p. 95, emphasis added).
 - A.T. Robertson confirms, "As a matter of fact, it was not yet finished, so distrustful had the Jews been of Herod." (*WORD PICTURES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, The Fourth Gospel, verse 2:20*).
 - "If they were indeed restricting their focus only to the edifice of the holy place, we would have expected them to say, "It took a year and a half to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" But that is not what they said. Their reply encompassed much more than the time required for the corps of priestly stonemasons to do their job. In this context, I believe it is clear that the Jews were using the part to represent the whole—a figure of speech that grammarians term a *synecdoche*."
 - "we conclude that John 2:20 should be understood as teaching that, at the time of His first Passover after being anointed by the Holy Spirit when John baptized Him, the temple work begun in Herod's 18th year had begun 46 years previously, and was still

in process."

- [Pulpit Commentary](#) - "In forty and six years was this temple built as we see it today. This is one of the most important chronological data for the life of our Lord. Herod the Great, according to Josephus ('*Ant.*,' 15:11 1), commenced the rebuilding of the second temple in the autumn of the eighteenth year of his reign. We find that his first year reckoned from Nisan, A.U.C. 717–718 [37 BC]. Consequently, the eighteenth year must have commenced between Nisan, A.U.C. 734–735 [20 BC] and 735–736 [19 BC]. The forty-sixth year after this would make the Passover at which this speech was delivered—the spring of A.U.C. 781 [AD 28] (Wieseler, '*Chronicles [sic] Synopsis of the Four Gospels,*' translation; and Herzog, '*Encyc.*,' 21:546) [bracketed comments added]."
- Regnal Reckoning
 - Jewish - "On the first of Nisan is the [cut off date for the] New Year regarding [the count of the reigns of the Jewish] kings [which was used to date legal documents. **If a king began his reign in Adar even if was only for one day that is considered his first year**, and from the first of Nisan is considered his second year...]" (http://www.emishnah.com/moed2/Rosh_HaShanah/1.pdf, brackets original, emphasis added)."
 - ◆ "Thus, we see that the reigns of Jewish kings were reckoned on a spring-to-spring basis, incremented with the passing of each New Year on Nisan 1. In addition, the start date of a king's reign was always reckoned as belonging to Year 1 of his reign, even if it only preceded Nisan 1 by a single day. **This is the essence of inclusive reckoning**: a part of a year is deemed to be a whole year for counting purposes. That this policy is enshrined in the Mishnah is strong reason to presume it applies to the reign of Herod."
 - ◆ "Josephus specifically tells us, in multiple places in *Antiquities*, that he himself viewed Nisan as the first month of the year:"
 - ◇ *Antiquities* 1.3.3 – "But Moses appointed that *Nisan*, which is the same with *Xanthicus* [the Macedonian calendar name for the month], should be the first month, for their festivals; because he brought them out of Egypt in that month. So that this Month began the year, as to all the solemnities [sacred festivals like Passover] they observed to the honour of God: although he preserved the original order of the months [that is, by Tishri (fall-to-fall) reckoning, where the year begins with Rosh Hashanah] as to selling and buying, and other ordinary affairs" (bracketed comments added).
 - ◇ *Antiquities* 3.10.5 – "But in the month of Xanthicus; which is by us called Nisan, and is the beginning of our year."
 - ◇ *Antiquities* 11.4.8 – "And as the feast of unleavened bread was at hand, in the first month; which according to the Macedonians is called *Xanthicus*; but according to us, *Nisan*."
 - Roman - "Roman emperors, in contrast to Jewish rulers, appear to have had their reigns measured from their actual dates of accession, rather than measured in reference to a default New Year's date. Thus, Tiberius' first official Roman year began with his Senate approval on September 18, AD 14, and each succeeding year was incremented on that anniversary. The Roman consuls of record, however—the "ordinary" consuls—were reckoned as taking office at the start of each year. In this regard [Wikipedia](#) notes:"
 - ◆ If a consul died during his term (not uncommon when consuls were in the forefront of battle) or was removed from office, another would be elected by the Comitia Centuriata to serve the remainder of the term as *consul suffectus* (*suffect consul*). A consul elected to start the year—called a

consul ordinarius (ordinary consul)—held more prestige than a suffect consul, partly because **the year would be named for ordinary consuls** (emphasis added).

- Josephus used inclusive reckoning
 - **Antiquities 14.16.4:** “This destruction befel the city of Jerusalem when Marcus Agrippa and Caninius Gallus were consuls of Rome; on the hundred eighty and fifth olympiad; on the third month; on the solemnity of the fast. As if a periodical revolution of calamities had returned, since that which befel the Jews under Pompey. For the Jews were taken by him on the same day; and this was **after twenty seven years time**” [emphasis added].
 - “This reference contributes a consular date unambiguously locked to 37 BC. Moreover, it is double-dated to the 185th olympiad; the latter half (Jan-Jun) of its third year and first half (Jul-Dec) of its fourth year line up with 37 BC as well. The “third month” refers to the Jewish month Sivan (May/June) as counted from Nisan. The nature of the fast is an interesting question on its own, with a variety of answers proposed (the one I like best is that it refers simply to the Sabbath day, following Dio Cassius 37.16.4 and the discussion at <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/12264-pompey-the-great>), but it lies outside the scope of this study. The takeaway is that every detail in this passage indicates Herod became *de facto* king of Judea in 37 BC.”
 - **Antiquities 20.10.1:** “Accordingly the number of the High Priests, **from the days of Herod, until the day when Titus took the temple**, and the city, and burnt them, were in all twenty eight. The time also that belonged to them was an **hundred and seven years**” [emphasis added].
 - “Counting back 107 years inclusively from the sack of the temple in AD 70 brings one, once again, to 37 BC. (As an aside, the number of high priests specified by Josephus is also supported by the lists at http://penelope.uchicago.edu/josephus/ant-20.html#EndNote_Ant_20.20b and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_High_Priests_of_Israel. These lists differ only in that Wikipedia also mentions that Ananelus, Joazar ben Boethus, and Jonathan ben Ananus had short periods of restoration, a detail ignored in the margin note in *Antiquities*.)”
 - **Antiquities 15.5.2:** “At this time it was, that the fight happened **at Actium, between Octavius Cesar and Antony; in the seventh year of the reign of Herod**” [emphasis added].
 - “Here we have a universally accepted date solidly anchored in history in the Battle of Actium, when Octavian defeated Antony’s naval forces and cemented his sole rule over the Romans. This is known from multiple Roman historians to have taken place on September 2, 31 BC. Taking 31 BC as the seventh year of Herod, by inclusive reckoning, makes 37 BC his first year yet again.”
 - “Alexander Frazier posted the following pithy comment in the “Add Your Comments” area on the *Biblical Archaeology Review* website (<https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/people-cultures-in-the-bible/jesus-historical-jesus/herods-death-jesus-birth-and-a-lunar-eclipse/>) on March 18, 2018:”
 - ◆ Despite any counting methods that may be employed by various authors, whether Nisan to Nisan, Tishri to Tishri, or even January to January, it holds true nonetheless that **if the spring of 31 BCE is his seventh year, then the spring of 32 BCE is his sixth year, the spring of 33 BCE is his fifth year, and so on, making the spring of 37 BCE his first year** [emphasis added].”

- "Another researcher, Bob Pickle, has a special focus on the sabbatical year cycles. He points out on his website (<http://www.pickle-publishing.com/papers/sabbatical-years-more.htm#5>):"
 - ◆ Some scholars other than Wacholder [i.e., Filmer and those who follow him] would like to have Herod conquer Jerusalem in 36 BC instead, yet this is not possible. Twice Josephus informs us that the Battle of Actium (summer of 31 BC) occurred in the seventh year of Herod's reign (*Antiq.*, bk. 15, ch. 5, sect. 2; *Wars*, bk. 1, ch. 19, sect. 3). If he took Jerusalem in 36 BC, then 31 BC would have been his sixth year by non-accession-year [inclusive] reckoning, not his seventh year. So the data Josephus gives us regarding the Battle of Actium mandates that Herod's taking of Jerusalem be in 37 BC, not in 36 BC [bracketed comments added]."
 - "In passing I will note that the sabbatical year determinations published by Benedict Zuckermann match up perfectly, from the time of Ezra on, with the results of my own independent study of Daniel 9. A chart of Zuckermann's dates can be found at <http://www.pickle-publishing.com/papers/sabbatical-years-table.htm>."
 - "In a roundabout way, this brings us back to considering the 46 years the temple was said to be "a-building" by the Jews in John 2:12–21. We have first established solid reasons, based on multiple converging lines of evidence, to regard 37 BC as the beginning of Herod's reign, with 31 BC as his seventh. The same inclusive dating method used earlier makes the spring of 20 BC the start of Herod's 18th year. Construction of Herod's temple began in the fall of 20 BC (a conclusion indicated by the timeline seen in *Antiquities* 15—see also *Pulpit Commentary*, cited earlier). ... We basically want to know when the temple became 46 years old. We are not dealing here with the reign of a king, where the conventions expect inclusive dating from Nisan, but **with elapsed time after an event. This means year 1 of the count begins with the fall of 19 BC, after the first anniversary of the start of construction had passed, and continues through the spring of 18 BC. To this we add 45 additional years (with no year 0). This brings us to the spring of AD 28**—the 46th year counted non-inclusively, which began the fall of AD 27..."
 - [The First Year of Herod the Great's Reign](#) | [The Daniel 9:24-27 Project](#) by Rick Lanser MDiv
- 36 BC - 19/18 BC - 29 AD
 - some scholars, have rejected the "Schürer Consensus" and chosen to date the start of Herod's reign to 36 BC.
 - W.E. Filmer in 1966 ("The Chronology of the Reign of Herod the Great," *Journal of Theological Studies*, pp. 283–298)
 - Andrew E. Steinmann ("When Did Herod the Great Reign?" *Novum Testamentum* 51 [2009], 1–29)
 - "[Josef] Blinzler feels that A.D. 28 as marking the commencement of Christ's ministry is substantiated by John 2:20 where the Jews state that the temple had been in continuous construction for forty-six years since Herod began to build it in 20/19 B.C. *But the Jews are talking about the temple edifice...which was completed in 18/17 B.C. as having stood for forty-six years, that is, the Passover of A.D. 30, rather than the temple precincts...which were still in the building process*" (*Pentecost, The Words and Works of Jesus Christ*, p. 578, emphasis added).
 - Ernest L. Martin
 - Messiah 2030?
- Merge with above
 - [John 2:18-21](#) - "Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. **Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this**

temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body."

- Here is a clue that can give us an idea of what year this event took place in.
- "And now **Herod, in the eighteenth year of his reign, undertook a very great work, that is, to build of himself the temple of God in Jerusalem**. He decided to make it larger in compass, and to raise it to a most magnificent altitude, as esteeming it to be the most glorious of all his actions, as it really was, to bring it to perfection; and that this would be sufficient for an everlasting memorial of him." | [2] [The Antiquities of the Jews Book XV, Chapter 11](#)
- It was around 19 BC when Herod began his project to build it back up and expand it. 46 years later would land in 28 AD. John 2 speaks of the first Passover mentioned in Yeshua's ministry
 - [3] [John 2:12-21 and Herodian Chronology](#) Rick Lanser Mdiv - Places Herod's 18th year and construction of temple in autumn of 20 BC. 46 years later would be between fall of 26 AD and 27 AD. A couple possibilities:
 - ◆ Spring of 27 AD the Jews were recognizing they were in the 46th year of its building
 - ◆ Spring of 28 AD the Jews were recognizing they were in the 47th year of its building, but were making a statement it was 46 years old. (ie: the 47th anniversary was half a year away still.)
- This corresponds to around 27–29 AD according to scholarly estimates. | Scarola, Jack V. (1998). "[4] [A Chronology of the nativity Era](#)". In Jerry Vardaman (ed.). *Chronos, Kairos, Christos II: Chronological, Nativity, and Religious Studies in Memory of Ray Summers*. Mercer University Press.

Three Passovers

- This was the first Passover mentioned, which we know was the beginning of Yeshua's ministry as it follows His first miracle turning water into wine at the marriage supper.
 - **John 2:11-13** - "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him. After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days. And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,"
- This was the second Passover mentioned at the feeding of the 5,000. His teaching would have been more far-reaching during Passover as it's one of the 3 appointed times for all males to go to Jerusalem to present themselves before the Lord.
 - **John 6:1-4** - "After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is [the sea] of Tiberias. And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased. And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh."
- These were the third Passover mentioned, which was the Passover of Christ's crucifixion
 - John 11:55
 - John 12:1
 - John 13:1
 - John 18:28,39
 - John 19:14
- 27 AD | 2.5 year ministry | 4 BC birth
 - So while not explicitly stated that there were only 3 Passovers, only 3 were mentioned, which would suggest

Daniel's 69 Weeks, 483 Years

- **Foundation point:** Israel had 2 calendars, religious and civil, that started in Abib (Nisan) and Tishri respectively and was used to count regnal years for Jewish and Gentile kings respectively.

- [Did Ezra Come to Jerusalem in 457 BC?](#) Rick Lanser Mdiv - "...positing an exclusively Babylon-style, Nisan-based calendar for postexilic Jews conflicts with the consensus understanding of the ancient Jewish rabbis reflected in Mishnah Rosh Hashanah 1a. At http://www.emishnah.com/moed2/Rosh_HaShanah/1.pdf a version is given where clarifications of its meaning (Gemara comments) are incorporated with the Mishnah text in brackets:
 - **"On the first of Nissan is the [cut off date for the] New Year regarding [the count of the reigns of the Jewish] kings [which was used to date legal documents...] On the first of Tishrei is the New Year for [the counting of] years [of non-Jewish kings],** for the shemittah and the Yoveil count [and from that date it is prohibited Biblically to plant and plow] (one missing bracket supplied).
- "(The shemittah is the sabbatical year, and the Yoveil count is the Jubilee, both intimately connected with the agricultural cycle.) This differentiation of two calendars seen in the Mishnah conflicts with the supposedly "logical" assumption that after the exile the Jews "only had one calendar...for both religious and civil purposes." Rather, **it provides evidence for a Nisan-based calendar applied to religious festivals like Passover and the reigns of Judean kings, and a second, Tishri-based calendar applied to civil matters generally, including the reigns of kings of foreign countries like Babylon and Persia.** At <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/tractate-rosh-hashana-chapter-1> the Gemara elaborates, with a special focus on our Nehemiah verses:
 - "R. Hisda says: The rule of the Mishna—that the year of the kings begins with Nissan—refers to the kings of Israel only, but **for the kings of other nations it commences from Tishri.** As it is said [Neh. i. 1]: "The words of Nehemiah, the son of Hakhaliah. And it came to pass in the month of Kislev, in the twentieth year," etc. And it is written [ibid. ii. 1]: "And it came to pass in the month Nissan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king," etc. Since Hanani stood before Nehemiah in Kislev, and the Bible speaks of it as the twentieth year, and since Nehemiah stood before the king in Nissan, and the Text calls it also the twentieth year, it is clear that the New Year (for the non-Jewish king, Artaxerxes) is not Nissan (or in the latter case he would have spoken of the twenty-first year) (emphasis added).
- "When it says the year for foreign kings commences from Tishri, we must remember that **this was the Jews' own way of looking at foreign kings' reigns.** As the above example of Artaxerxes demonstrates, being directly ruled by the kings of Babylon and Persia did not change the Jewish perception that they were still "foreign" kings. The clear implication is that their regnal years would be viewed through the lens of the Jews' own longstanding customs, regardless of the official policies of those countries. As the rabbi noted, it was "the rule of the Mishnah"—the passed-down oral tradition which the rabbis compiled in written form. It had no connection with the Babylonian or Persian calendars, and therefore was independent of how those nations calculated the regnal years of their kings."
- **Daniel 9:25** - "Know therefore and understand, [that] **from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince [shall be] seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks:** the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times."
 - It must be determined what year the "going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem" was given.
 - There is significance of double-dating by the Jews of foreign kings according to their civil calendar beginning in Tishri in September/October, whereas the Babylonian and Persian regnal years were counted in Nisanu in March/April. The Jews counted their own Jewish kings in Abib/Nisan in March/April. References:
 - [Did Ezra Come to Jerusalem in 457 BC?](#) from [The Daniel 9:24-27 Project](#) series by Rick Lanser, MDiv
 - [Elephantine papyri and Daniel 8:14](#) by Siegfried H. Horn, Ph.D. in a 1981 article in *Ministry Magazine*
 - "The Aramaic Elephantine papyri have also significantly contributed to a better

understanding of the postexilic Jewish calendar and chronology during the Persian period. **From the chronological data presented in the books of Kings and Chronicles we know that the people of the southern kingdom of Judah possessed two calendars before the Babylonian exile. First, they had a religious calendar that began in the spring. In this calendar the months were numbered from one to twelve. 5 Second, they also had a civil calendar, which began in the autumn. New Year's Day of the civil calendar was the first day of the seventh month of the religious year. Thus the months of the civil year were counted first from seven to twelve, and then from one to six. The twelfth month, being the last month of the religious year, thus fell in the middle of the civil year.** We also know that **the preexilic Jews counted the regnal years of foreign kings, including rulers of the neighboring kingdom of Israel, according to their own Jewish civil calendar, even if this meant that their reckoning would differ from the numbering used by the foreign king's own people.** An example is provided by the records dealing with the capture of Jerusalem under King Jehoiachin in 597 B.C. The Babylonians dated this event in their own annals in the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. But the Hebrew compiler of the book of Kings put the same event into Nebuchadnezzar's eighth year (see 2 Kings 24:12). This is by no means a discrepancy between the Babylonian and Hebrew records, but merely reflects the usage of two different calendars and methods of reckoning. 6 In fact, full harmony of all chronological data in the preexilic Biblical records can be obtained only by recognizing and applying this rule.

- "These divergent views have their bearing on the date of Ezra's return from Babylonia in the seventh regnal year of Artaxerxes I (Ezra 7:1-9). From ancient records, primarily dated cuneiform documents, it is established that Artaxerxes' first regnal year began in the spring of 464 B.C. and ended in the spring of 463 B.C. according to the reckoning of the Persians. Consequently, his seventh year was the year 458-457 B.C., spring to spring. If Ezra counted the king's regnal years in this way, he would have returned in the spring of 458 B.C., for it is said that he left Babylonia during the month of Nisan in the seventh year of Artaxerxes and arrived in Jerusalem four months later (see verse 9). Following this reasoning, many commentators date the events described in Ezra 7 to the year 458 B.C. 13. On the other hand, if Ezra used the Jewish autumn-to-autumn calendar, as was apparently the case with his contemporary Nehemiah and also with the Elephantine Jews, the first year of Artaxerxes would have been computed by the Jews as having begun in the autumn of 464 B.C. and ended in the autumn of 463 B.C. Thus his seventh year would have begun in the autumn of 458 B.C. and ended in the autumn of 457 B.C. The month Nisan, a spring month in which Ezra and his group departed from Babylonia, would accordingly have fallen in the spring of 457 B.C., and their arrival in Jerusalem would have occurred in the summer of 457 B.C. Hence, the Elephantine papyri give strong support to our conclusion that the decree of Artaxerxes was issued and carried out in the year 457 B.C."
- It is established that Artaxerxes' first regnal year was from spring of 464 BC to the spring of 463 BC according to the regnal counting of the Persians in the spring. So his seventh year was spring of 458 BC to spring of 457 BC.
- Pre-exile, the Jews had two calendars, the religious from spring to spring as dictated by the statutes given to them by God, and the civil calendar that ran from fall to fall, exactly 6 months apart between the spring and fall. From fall to spring varied due to the lunar-solar calendar having to sync up around the vernal equinox since the beginning of the religious calendar was tied to the firstfruits of the harvest. See the appointed times study.

- The pre-exilic is seen in the capture of Jerusalem in 597 BC, which the Babylonians dated to the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, while the Hebrew reckoning in **1 Kings 24:12** puts it in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign.
- We see this again at the end of the captivity in Nehemiah 1:1-3 where he finds out the state of Jerusalem in the month of Chisleu, or Chislev - the 9th month, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes. Later in Nehemiah 2:1-8 the king notices his sadness at the news of Jerusalem and this is stated to be in the month of Nisan, the 1st month, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes.
- Chislev is 2 months after Tishri, the 7th month. If the twentieth year was reckoned by Persian standards, Nisan would be the start of the twentieth year of Artaxerxes reign and Chislev would be 9 months into his reign. So Nehemiah would have been sad about the state of Jerusalem 9 months before he heard about it. Unless he reckoned Artaxerxes twentieth year according to the Hebrew reckoning for foreign kings as starting in Tishri on the new year for the civil calendar. Then he would have heard about Jerusalem in the 2nd month of Artaxerxes reign according to the Hebrew reckoning and been sad before the king 4 months later in Nisan, in the 6th month of his twentieth year.
- First Decree of Cyrus (539 BC)
- Second Decree of Darius (518 BC)
- Third Decree of Artaxerxes (458 BC)
 - With this in mind, according to the Jewish counting of Gentile kings, Artaxerxes seventh year according to the scriptures we get the number from, began on Tishri 1 458 BC through 457 BC.
 - We aren't told exactly when the third decree was given, but we are told that it is in this seventh year of his reign that Ezra the priest and scribe went from Babylon to Jerusalem with priests and Levites, singers, porters, Nethinims, and ministers of this house of God. Leaving on the first day of the first month of Abib/Nisan (March 9, 457 BC) and arrived in Jerusalem on the first day of the fifth month of Av (July 5, 457 BC). Ezra 7:1-10 So the decree had to be given between Tishri 458 BC and Abib/Nisan 457 BC since in his journey he had a letter of that decree from Artaxerxes to be put into force at his arrival.
 - **Ezra 7:6-10** - "This Ezra went up from Babylon; and he [was] a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the LORD God of Israel had given: and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him. And there went up [some] of the children of Israel, and of the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, unto Jerusalem, **in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king**. And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which [was] in the seventh year of the king. For upon the first [day] of the first month began he to go up from Babylon, and on the first [day] of the fifth month came he to Jerusalem, according to the good hand of his God upon him. For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do [it], and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments."
 - [Artaxerxes I Timeline](#) - "Aratxerxes I 1st regnal year (per Tishri accession year reckoning used by Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah), begins in Tishri of 464 B.C."
 - 7th year of Artaxerxes is Tishri 1, 464 BC - 7 = **Tishri 1, 458 BC through 457 BC**
 - [Did Ezra Come to Jerusalem in 457 BC?](#) Rick Lanser Mdiv - "...the book by Siegfried H. Horn and Lynn H. Wood, *The Chronology of Ezra 7* (1953, revised 1970), presented the case that **the Tishri-based regnal year for Artaxerxes indicated by Nehemiah 1:1 and 2:1 has Ezra depart for Jerusalem in the spring of 457 BC**. This conclusion was based primarily on understanding that these Scriptures, accepted as written, require us to place the months of Kislev (Month 9 of the Jewish calendar) and Nisan (Month 1) in the same 20th regnal year of Artaxerxes I. This is analogous to a single fiscal year today spanning July 1–June

- 30, such that September precedes January in the fiscal year. A secondary—and in my opinion, less important than Scripture—reason for that conclusion was that Horn and Wood (hereafter H&W) discerned extrabiblical evidence to support that inference from Nehemiah in papyri from the Jewish colony at Elephantine, Egypt during the Achaemenid era."
- Tishri is the 7th month, so since Ezra left for Jerusalem on Abib 1, 457 BC (March 26, 457 BC Julian), in the 1st month, and arrived on Av 1, 457 BC (July 22, 457 BC Julian), in the 5th month.
 - The decree is laid out in **Ezra 7:11-26**, but it doesn't define when it was decreed precisely. As far as the solar year, it could have been between September and December of 458 BC, or it could have been between January and March of 457 BC. We know it had to be after Artaxerxes 7th year started and before Ezra departed, with time for preparation to leave. So the decree was most likely in the winter of 458 BC.
 - $458 \text{ BC} + 483 = 26 \text{ AD}$
 - "Going forth" of the commandment
 - If we're going to count precision to the same time of year, the decree would have had to been in the fall for a full year to complete. So it would have had to be at the start of Artaxerxes 7th year that the decree was made for the full 483 years to complete in the fall of 26 AD when Yeshua was baptized and began His ministry.
 - ◆ This isn't too hard to believe as it may have been part of celebration of his 7th year of reign that he would give the decree. Then there would be 6 months to prepare for the journey at the end of March in 457 BC.
 - Alternatively, there is the idea that while the decree would have been made in his seventh year, the prophetic clock may not have started until the decree was actually delivered in the land when Ezra arrived with the letter from Artaxerxes
 - ◆ "Going forth" [H4161](#) - mo-tsaw' - to go out, issue, export, spring, the promulgation of an edict.
 - ◆ There are many cases where this is used in the sense of proceeding from the lips in the sense that the going forth of the commandment would be when it is spoken.
 - ◆ There is also a case to be made that the going forth of the commandment is speaking to the sending out of an edict in order that it be enacted. Since the destination of its enactment was in Jerusalem, the going forth of the commandment could be referring to Ezra's delivery of it for enforcement in Jerusalem.
 - ◆ This is a stretch, but in my limited understanding of the Hebrew I could see it both ways.
 - Or when Ezra instituted the proper following of God's statutes after his arrival in Jerusalem in the summer of 457 BC, fulfilling the decree.
 - ◆ The downside to this view is that the prophecy states that it is from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, not Israel following God's statutes properly.
 - ◆ At the same time, the decree explicitly specified to accomplish the following, none of which is promulgated until Ezra arrives in Jerusalem and carries out the commandments of Artaxerxes.
 - ◇ Offer meat and drink offerings on the altar at the house of the Lord in Jerusalem. (Ezra 7:17)
 - ◇ Deliver the vessels for the service of the house of God to God in Jerusalem. (Ezra 7:19)
 - ◇ According to God's laws, Ezra was to set magistrates and judges to judge those that know God's laws and teach those who don't know

it. (Ezra 7:25-26)

- **Conclusion:** So it would seem that the 7th year of Artaxerxes I began Tishri 1 458 BC. However, there are 2 possible interpretations that give 2 periods for the first 69 weeks
 - Tishri to Nisan 458/7 BC -> Tishri 26 AD (483 years) - "going forth" of the commandment from Artaxerxes when dictated. We aren't told when it was dictated, but would have to be after his 7th year started and before 1 Nisan when Ezra departed Babylon.
 - Nisan to Tishri 457 BC -> Tishri 27 AD (483 years) - "going forth" of the commandment from Artaxerxes when delivered/enacted. It would have to be from 1 Nisan when Ezra departed Babylon, 1 Av when he arrived, or in the intervening months before 1 Tishri 457 BC.

References

- [Elephantine papyri and Daniel 8:14](#) - Was Artaxerxes decree to rebuild Jerusalem given in the year 457 B.C.? Some old papyri, stored in the bottom of a trunk until 1947, provide helpful information regarding the beginning of the 2300 days/years.
- [The Daniel 9:24-27 Project](#) series - Rick Lanser, Mdiv.
 - [Did Ezra Come to Jerusalem in 457 BC?](#) - Rick Lanser takes on the scholarly consensus of 458 BC should be followed.
 - [The First Year of Herod the Great's Reign](#) - a detailed analysis of some arguments offered against its conclusion that the beginning of the reign of Herod the Great should be dated to 37 BC, per the reasons laid out by Emil Schürer in *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ*.
 - [John 2:12-21 and Herodian Chronology](#) - In doing my own examination of *Antiquities* and related extrabiblical histories, I hope to avoid the sort of speculation I fault in others. The reader must judge if I have succeeded.
 - [What was the "Fifteenth Year of Tiberius"?](#) - We are going to look at something Luke reports: the ministry of John the Baptist coincided with the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar (Lk 3:1). This is often cited as evidence the Crucifixion took place in AD 33, but it will be shown it can very reasonably be reconciled with AD 30—for which, we must not forget, the previous studies in this series have already shown strong scriptural support. *Everything* must fit together without depending either on questionable interpretations of Scripture, or requiring us to suppose that extrabiblical historical source materials we depend on are wrong.
- [A Chronology of the Herods](#) - Charles A. Sullivan, Charting the dates and lives of the Herods concerning the birth of Christ and making sense of the differences between competing histories.
- [Detaching the Census: An Alternative Reading of Luke 2:1-7](#) - David J. Armitage, This paper offers an alternative approach to Luke 2:1-7, assuming for argument's sake that Luke's presumed chronology agreed with modern reconstructions in placing Quirinius' census some years after Herod's death. It is proposed that, on this basis, a coherent reading of the text is feasible in which the reference to Quirinius marks 2:1-5 as a digression, bounded by distinct transition markers, describing events several years after Jesus' birth. This digression, which claims that Joseph and Mary registered in Bethlehem in AD 6, despite having resided in Nazareth for several years, emphasises the family connection to Bethlehem and therefore to David.
- [Luke 3:1, the fifteenth year of Tiberius](#) - It may seem strange that Luke assigns the beginning of the Baptist's ministry to the high priesthood not only of Caiaphas but "of Annas and Caiaphas." Annas, after all, was deposed from that office in A.D. 15, long before John's ministry began, whether according to theory (a) or (b). That Luke assigns the beginning of John's ministry to the high priesthood of Caiaphas (A.D. 18-36) we can understand, but why to that of Annas? Nevertheless, Luke is correct. He is thinking of the actual situation, not the merely formal one. The actual situation was that both Annas and Caiaphas were "in the drivers's seat" during the entire period of John's ministry and during the entire length of Christ's ministry; Annas as well – perhaps even more than – Caiaphas. In other words, Luke's perspective on the "reign" of Annas indicates that he would view the reign of Tiberius in a similar manner. That is, viewing his co-regency with

Augustus as functionally reigning.

- [The Lunar Eclipse of Josephus](#) - It is not difficult to know which eclipse Josephus referred to if historians will do two things. First, they must eliminate unqualified lunar eclipses that could not be seen in Palestine from 7 B.C.E. to early 1 B.C.E. After that, the historical, archaeological and chronological evidence must be evaluated that supports the eclipse that can properly conform to the evidence provided in the records. Astronomy is the key to it all. It is a sure guide to any chronology if one has documentation to provide a historical environment to utilize the evidence of astronomy. In the case of Josephus' eclipse, there is considerable historical and archaeological documentation to allow historians to pinpoint the precise lunar eclipse to which Josephus had reference even in that *dark decade* in Roman history.
- [God's Signature of Authenticity](#) - Charles D. Davis
 - [Artaxerxes I - Regnal Years and Timeline](#) - Daniel's prophecy of 69 weeks commences with a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, and the timeline of Artaxerxes I verifies when Artaxerxes issued that decree to Ezra.