



# Christmas

Wayne Stewart

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# His Birth – reckoned from the birth of John the Baptist



### III. "THE COURSE OF ABIA" (Luke 1:5).

This was the *eighth* of the priestly courses of ministration in the Temple (1 Chronicles 24:10), and occurred, as did the others, twice in the year.

The "Courses" were changed every week, beginning each with a Sabbath. The reckoning commenced on the 22nd day of Tisri or Ethanim (Appendix 51. 5). This was the eighth and last day of the Feast of Tabernacles = the "Great Day of the Feast" (John 7:37), and was a Sabbath (Leviticus 23:39).

The first course fell by lot to Jehoiarib, and the eighth to Abia or Abijah (1 Chronicles 24:10).

Bearing in mind that *all* the courses served together at the three Great Feasts, the dates for the two yearly "ministrations" of Abiah will be seen to fall as follows:

The first <sup>9</sup> ministration was from 12-18 Chisleu = December 6-12.

The second ministration was from 12-18 Sivan = June 13-19.

The announcement therefore to Zacharias in the Temple as to the conception of John the Baptist took place between 12-18 SIVAN (June 13-19), in the year 5 B.C. After finishing his "ministration", the aged priest "departed to his own house" (Luke 1:23), which was in a city<sup>10</sup> in "the hill country" of Juda (verse 39).

The day following the end of the "Course of Abia" being a Sabbath (Sivan 19), he would not be able to leave Jerusalem before the 20th.

The conception of John  
Baptist

on or about 23rd SIVAN =  
June 24

in the year 5  
B.C.

The *Gennesis* (Begetting) of  
our Lord

on or about 1st TEBETH =  
December 25

in the year 5  
B.C.

The birth of John Baptist

on or about 4th-7th NISAN  
= March 25-28

in the year 4  
B.C.

The birth of our Lord

on or about 15th TISRI =  
September 29

in the year 4  
B.C.