

Christmas Facts

1) Introduction:

It is a historical event that God came as a Son to save us from sins, central to Christianity, is the coming, life, crucifixion and resurrection of **Jesus Christ**.

2) Historical evidence:

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem. (Matthew 2:1)

Herod I or Herod the Great (Luke 1:5) was a Roman-Jewish client king of the Herodian kingdom of Judea. (72BC–4 BC)

3) Place of Birth :

The Church of the Nativity, or Basilica of the Nativity, is a basilica located in Bethlehem lies 10 kilometers in the fertile limestone hill country of the Holy Land, West Bank, Palestine. The grotto holds a prominent religious significance. Since at least the 2nd century AD people have believed that the place where the Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem, now stands is where Jesus was born. Justin Martyr stated that Jesus had been born in a cave outside the town,

4) Birth of Jesus :

Scholars cite hundreds of prophecies, with some focusing on birth-related ones, like the virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14), from Bethlehem (Micah 5:2) and miraculous conception, pointing to dozens or even hundreds of predictive verses pointing to the Messiah's coming and birth.

By the fourth century, however, we find references to two dates that were widely recognized—and now also celebrated - as Jesus' birthday: December 25 in the Western Roman Empire and January 6 in the East (especially in Egypt and Asia Minor). The modern Armenian Church continues to celebrate Christmas on January 6; for most Christians, however, December 25 would prevail, while January 6 eventually came to be known as the Feast of the Epiphany, commemorating the arrival of the Magi in Bethlehem. The period between became the holiday season later known as the 12 days of Christmas.

5) Incarnation:

i) The church has been memorializing the incarnation for nearly 2,000 years. Christmas celebrates the fact that Jesus took on flesh and entered in our world as an infant. We don't need to know the exact date this happened to observe this remarkable event.

ii) Number 4 usually referred for world (such as-North, South, East & West or so).

In this world, birth of human beings made by 4 ways;

a) Adam - without parents, b) Eve - from Adam,

c) We humans - from father and mother,

d) Jesus - from Mary [completing 4th way as of human being made].

Jesus is Perfect Man and at the same time Perfect God.

iii) First Adam – mortal, second Adam (Jesus) - immortal – (1 Corinthians 15:45-52).

Like Adam we human beings are also have mortal bodies. Like Jesus after crucifixion He got immortal/resurrected body, similarly in new Heaven we will also have resurrected bodies.

6) About Birth Date:

i) Many famous people were born on December 25th; Pius VI (1717-1799), Clara Barton (1821-1912), Marie Krogh (1874-1943) and many more sharing a Christmas birthday.

ii) Dates fixed but sometime varies:

Jewish Passover celebrated in two dates (due to some reasons)

And they kept the Passover in the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month;

In the second month on the fourteenth day at twilight they shall keep it. They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. (Numbers 9:5,11)

Jews feast ‘Purim’ celebrated with two optional days

But the Jews who were in Susa gathered on the thirteenth day and on the fourteenth, and rested on the fifteenth day, making that a day of feasting and gladness.; the Jews of the villages, who live in the rural towns, hold the fourteenth day of the month of Adar as a day for gladness and feasting. (Esther 9:18-19)

iii) Birth date of Mohammed Ali Jinnah (1876-1948) point to October 20, 1875 according to old records of Pakistan Govt. but celebrated as being born on December 25, 1876, coinciding with Christmas birthday.

iv) Sometimes we celebrate our kids' birthdays on weekends instead of actual dates.

7) December 25 :

a) First Christians started this day later Roman king made :

In the first few centuries AD, the persecuted Christian minority was greatly concerned with distancing itself from the larger, public pagan religious observances, such as sacrifices, games and holidays. This was still true as late as the violent persecutions of the Christians conducted by the Roman emperor Diocletian between 303 and 312 AD. We know about (250–300) come in a period when Christians were not borrowing heavily from pagan traditions of such an obvious character.

The December 25 feast seems to have existed before 312, earlier than Constantine and his conversion, at least. As we have seen, the Donatist Christians in North Africa seem to have known it from before that time.

Augustine writes: “For he [Jesus] is believed to have been conceived on the 25th of March, upon which day also he suffered.”

Around 200 AD. Tertullian of Carthage reported the calculation that the 14th of Nisan, equivalent to March 25 is, of course, nine months before December 25, it was later recognized as the Feast of the Annunciation - the commemoration of Jesus' conception. Exactly nine months later, Jesus was born, on December 25.

8) Son of God:

Jesus came in this world and after his crucifixion we are also called sons of God. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being.

For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. (Isaiah 9:6)

God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, so that we might receive the divine adoption as sons. (Galatians 4:4-5)

9) Prophecies Fulfilled:

Now I declare new events; I announce them to you before they occur. (Isaiah 42:9). Only I can tell you the future before it even happens. Everything I plan will come to pass. (Isaiah 46:9-10)

i) Old Testament - Prophecies

The virgin will conceive; to us a Child is born. (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6)-800 BC [≈ 800 years before]

But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah. (Micah 5:2) written 735-700 BC [≈ 700 years before]

Your king comes to you. (Zechariah 9:9) written 480-470 BC [≈ 500 years before]

Probability of fulfillment:

We find that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled all Jesus' birth prophecies is 1 in 10^{17} means one in one hundred quadrillion (100, 000,000,000,000,000) is an extraordinarily rare event, essentially near impossible in the scope of human experience.

The analogy that a probability of 1 in 10^{17} is like that imagine picking one specific atom out of roughly 100 quadrillion (10^{17}) atoms. This is a massive scale. Your single specific atom would be like finding one specific grain of sand among all the sand in the world.

ii) New Testament -Life witnesses

For no word from God will ever fail. (Luke 1:37)

Matthew, Luke and John witnessed; 80-100 AD

Give Him the name Jesus; Will be called the Son of God; song of Mary; placed him in a manger; Savior has been born; Angels' song; Became flesh; His one and only Son.

(Matthew 1:21; Luke 1:35, 46-55; 2:7, 11, 14; John 1:14; 3:16)

Paul witnessed; 48-66 AD

The gift of God; He became like a human; Jesus came into the world; the love of our Savior appeared.

(Romans 6:23; Philippians 2:7; 1Timothy 1:15; Titus 3:4)

Less attention to Christ's birth comparing importance around his death:

It's obvious that the gospel writers didn't think it was too important to communicate the day that Jesus was born. In fact, we don't see a lot of attention paid to Christ's birth in the first couple of centuries. Paul doesn't talk about it, and we don't see a lot of interest from early church fathers through the second century.

Jesus' death and resurrection are another matter entirely - the gospels offer important details around Christ's death. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all place the crucifixion adjacent to Passover. And it was important for them to communicate to us that he was raised in three days.

Communicating the timing of Jesus' birth just wasn't the priority for biblical writers like the death and resurrection was, and that should help us to emphasize it accurately.

Conclusion - Celebrating birth of Jesus is important, irrespective of the date.

God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. (1 John 4:9)

Prayer – I thank Oh Lord Jesus, you came in this world to save us, I accept you as my personal Lord and Saviour. **AMEN**

-Ross Nazirullah