

# The Keavy Encourager

*1 Thessalonians 5:14 (GW)-We encourage you, brothers and sisters, to instruct those who are not living right, cheer up those who are discouraged, help the weak, and be patient with everyone.*

December 24, 2023

(For Any Corrections Or Updates To The Bulletin, Please Contact brother Mark Tabata  
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## WELCOME TO THE KEAVY CHURCH OF CHRIST!

- If you are visiting with us, you are our welcomed and honored guest. We are so thankful that you came to be with us today! PLEASE remember to pick up one of our “Visitor Packages” before you go! PLEASE also leave your name and address with us so that we can get you a “thank you” card in the mail. If we can help you in any way, PLEASE let us know!
- If you would like to participate in our Communion service, you will find Lord’s Supper packets in the Foyer (the area where you first enter the church building).
- Visit us online for Bible studies, live streaming, and other resources! Our website is: [www.keavychurchofchrist.com](http://www.keavychurchofchrist.com), and our email address is [keavychurchofchrist@outlook.com](mailto:keavychurchofchrist@outlook.com) Please also share with your family, friends, and social media!

## December Prayer List

Kurt And Joanne Martin, Sanders Family, Eddie Craft (Cancer), Jimmy Brooks (Tammy’s cousin, cancer), Kathy Mingus (cancer), Anne Baker (Cancer), Larry and Sandi Tabata, Josh and Holly Baker, Violet (Ivy’s sister), Bill and Mary Ruth Browning, James And LeAnne Day, Terry and Rita Wooten, Kandace Scalf, Robin McDonald, Theresa H And Family, Tim Williams, Leland Marsee, Herman Helton (Uncle of sister Kristina Helton), Wesley and Sarah Henson, Bill Peterson, Lisa Rainwater, Dean Lisle, Kate Ray, Jyce Smith And Family, Gary Fleming And Family, Fred And Mary Martin, Sheila, Micheal, Sarah, James, Patty, Kasey And Family, James Morgan, Cleveland Thorpe Family (we’d 12-2 Vanburke Funeral Home, Sister Bessie Young, Hunter, Jordan, and Mason Henson, , Sandra Frazier’s

Mother, Cynthia Johnson, Cassidy Hubbard, Linda Lewis, ) is sick today. Enoch Williams Family, Lisa Warren

### What The Apostle John Teaches Us About The Birthday Of Jesus

(More Bible Studies Available @ [www.marktabata.com](http://www.marktabata.com))

The question of the date of Jesus' birth has always been a subject of great interest in the world. While many teach that Jesus was born on December 25th (Christmas), the evidence of Scripture clearly disagrees with this position. Several passages confirm this to us.

First, we are able to see from the timing of the birth of John the Baptist that Jesus was not born in December. We are told about the father of John the Baptist, Zacharias, that he was of the course of Abijah (Luke 1:5). According to the Old Testament, the priests of the temple were separated into several divisions. These divisions determined when the priests ministered before the Lord 1 Chronicles 24:3). The division of Abijah was listed as the eighth course (1 Chronicles 24:10). The Temple was destroyed on August 5, 70 A.D., and the first order of the priests had begun. Using this information, Missler points out:

“The announcement therefore to Zacharias in the Temple as to the conception of John the Baptist (Luke 1:11-13) must have taken place between Sivan 12-18-June 13-19, in the year 5 B.C., since the further activities of Zacharias demonstrate by tabulation this conclusion. Observe carefully the record: After finishing his priestly service, he departed to his own house (vs. 23), which was in a city of the hill country of Judah (vs. 39)...Luke records the begetting of our Lord to be six months after the conception of John the Baptist (vss. 26, 36). It is therefore only a matter of simple calculation to arrive at Tisri 1-December 25 concerning the date of Christ's conception. Note also that John was born just exactly three months later (vss.56-57). Hence, the conception of John was on Sivan 23-June 24, 5 B.C., whereas the begetting of our Lord was on Tisri 1-December 25, B.C. Just so, the birth of John was Nisan 7-March 28, 4.B.C., and the nativity, the birth of our Lord, was on Tisri 15-September 29, 4 B.C. (C.E. McLain, *The True Birthdate Of Jesus*, 7-8; Bethany, OK; Southwest Radio Church Ministries).

While the exact date from these calculations is somewhat speculative, we can see that the timing of the birth of John the Baptist suggests that Jesus was born sometime in September.

A second clue that shows us Jesus Christ was not born in December comes from the statement of Luke regarding the shepherds, that they were living out in the fields when Christ was born (Luke 2:8). The famous commentator Albert Barnes wrote of this passage:

“Remaining out of doors, under the open sky, with their flocks. This was commonly done. The climate was mild, and, to keep their flocks from straying, they spent the night with them. It is also a fact that the Jews sent out their flocks into the mountainous and desert regions during the summer months, and took them up in the latter part of October or the first of November, when the cold weather commenced. While away in these deserts and mountainous regions, it was proper that there should be someone to attend them to keep them from straying, and from the ravages of wolves and other wild beasts. It is probable from this that our Saviour was born before the 25th of December, or before what we call “Christmas.” At that time it is cold, and especially in the high and mountainous regions about Bethlehem.”

We therefore have good evidence that Jesus was not born in December.

The Book of Revelation gives us valuable information about the birth of Jesus.

*Revelation 12:1-5-Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. 2 Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth. 3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. 4 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born.5 She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne.*

The first thing that we need to realize is that this “sign” which John is beholding is composed of star constellations. The language of the passage demands this interpretation, especially in light of how this same vocabulary had been used by Jews for centuries before John wrote to refer to stellar phenomena.

“In this section the author skillfully introduces the protagonist and the antagonist of this mythological narrative in a parallel manner by presenting them as two astrological signs or constellations. The woman and the dragon are each introduced as a σημεῖον, “constellation,” that “appeared in heaven”; each is described using a

rich and complex set of traditional symbols.” (David E. Aune, Word Biblical Commentary: 52B-Revelation 6-16), 13699 (Kindle Edition); Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan)

The star constellations correspond with Old and New Testament references. For example, Revelation 12 tells us about a “woman.” By using the language of the text, and by comparing this with the Old Testament, we can see that the “woman” has reference to the people of God. In the Old Testament, this is identified as the faithful Jews who were the physical descendants of Abraham, ie, the Jews Genesis 37:9-10)

The Child is also here identified as Jesus Christ (Revelation 12:5). This is a reference to Psalm 2, a Messianic prophecy. It is also a reference to the fact that Jesus was caught up to His throne (more on that later), which is recorded in Acts 1.

In the Old Testament, we are told about a creature known as “leviathan” (Job 41:18-21). The same word is translated as “dragon” here in this passage. We see that the dragon/leviathan is often a reference to Satan (Psalm 74:13-16; Isaiah 27:1-2).

With these things in mind, Heisler tells us:

“The idea that the woman is a constellation is made plausible when one looks closely at the text. The description that the woman was “clothed” with the sun is stock astronomical language for the sun being in the midst of a constellation. While the sun is in the woman, the moon is at her feet. For this situation to occur, the constellation of the woman must be, in astronomical language, on the ecliptic, the imaginary line in the sky that the sun and moon follow in their journey through the zodiac constellations....The detail that the moon was located under the feet of the woman (Virgo) must not be forgotten in all this. The sun must be in the Virgin constellation while the moon is simultaneously at her feet for John’s vision to be accurately interpreted astronomically. Because of the moon’s “behavior” relative to the ecliptic and Virgo in any given year, the twenty-day window narrows to a roughly ninety-minute period in which to astronomically pinpoint the birth of the child....The preceding signs are those described by John. Their occurrence together is not rare, though there were only a handful of dates in real time that can accommodate the events of New Testament chronology for the birth of Jesus. Those dates narrow to one date once other astronomical events that occurred at the same time—but which are not noted in Revelation 12—are added to the celestial profile. One of these extra events is the leading candidate for explaining the

movement of the star seen by the Magi in Matthew 2....This combination of astronomical signs produces a unique set of circumstances that can only be accounted for by one date (and in point of fact, a ninety-minute window on that date). This date, as we will see momentarily, has dramatic significance in the Jewish calendar. According to these signs in the heavens, the date of Jesus' birth was September 11, 3 B.C.[ 116] Jupiter is also important because it is the best explanation for the "star" whose movement was tracked by the Magi. Jupiter is well known for "retrograde motion," the appearance of movement back and forth in the night sky. Jupiter's first conjunction with Regulus began on September 14, 3 B.C., and continued through September 11, 3 B.C. On December 1, 3 B.C., Jupiter stopped its normal course through the fixed stars and began its annual retrogression or "backward motion." In doing so, it once again headed toward the star Regulus. Then on February 17, 2 B.C., the two were reunited. Jupiter continued on in its motion (still in retrogression) another forty days and then it reverted to its normal motion through the stars.[ 117] The timing is right, as the Magi embarked on their journey a year or so after Jesus was actually born....The astronomical context of John's description of what he saw in the heavens in Revelation 12 puts the birth of Jesus on September 11, 3 B.C....Incredibly, the astronomical reconstruction of the circumstances of Revelation 12: 1–7 that produces a birth date for the Messiah of September 11, 3 B.C., was also the beginning of the Jewish New Year in 3 B.C. (Rosh ha-Shanah)—Tishri 1, the Day of Trumpets....The Feast of Trumpets/ Tishri 1 was also the day that many of the ancient kings and rulers of Judah reckoned as their inauguration day of rule. This procedure was followed consistently in the time of Solomon, Jeremiah, and Ezra.[ 120] This is a powerful piece of evidence for the astronomical reading of Revelation 12: 1–7 as celestial signs of the birth of the messianic king. Jewish tradition also held that the Day of Trumpets commemorated the beginning of the world—the very first "first day" of the human calendar. As Jewish historian Theodor H. Gaster writes, "Judaism regards New Year's Day not merely as an anniversary of creation— but more importantly— as a renewal of it. This is when the world is reborn." [ 121] Although it might sound odd, this tradition is part of a matrix of ideas that link Tishri 1 to the sin of the Watchers, the Flood of Noah, and the Nephilim....The math is transparent. Barely over a year after the Flood began, Noah and his family left the ark in the second month of the year. Noah had turned 601 by the time he left the ark. Why is this noteworthy? Because Jewish tradition took this chronology to mean that Noah's birthday was Tishri 1. This is the same day as the birth of the Messiah, Jesus, if we take Revelation 12 as indicating the celestial signs present at his birth. A messiah born on Tishri 1 would inevitably have created mental and theological associations between Noah and Jesus. There are other details about the chronology of the Flood that, given the idea that Jesus and Noah shared a birthday, would have moved ancient Jewish readers to

associate the Messiah with the prologue to the Flood story, Genesis 6: 1–4....The theological messaging is startling. A messiah whose birth on Tishri 1 was followed in the next month by the rising of the Pleiades-Orion would have signaled the arrival of Yahweh's shepherd-king. The following month, the second month of the year when Noah and his family emerged from the ark, marked the judgment of God upon the Nephilim. But we know from Genesis 6: 4 and other passages that the Flood wasn't the permanent cure for the Nephilim and the effect of the sin of the Watchers in human history. What was needed was a new Noah. And so on Tishri 1, the traditional birthday of Noah, the heavens telegraphed the identity of the better Noah, Jesus of Nazareth, born as He was from Noah's own bloodline (Luke 3: 36). The permanent reversal of the ancient pact sealed on Mount Hermon had begun." (Dr. Michael Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, The Watchers, & The Forgotten Mission Of Jesus Christ*, 1031-1218 (Kindle Edition))

The evidence strongly suggests that Christ was born on September 11, 3 B.C.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

### Announcements

- *Foundations Bible Class*: No Bible class today. We will resume next week!
- *Keavy Homeless Ministry*: Starting January 13, 2024, we will begin having a monthly homeless ministry. Our first menu will be potato soup and rolls. Any other food ideas would of course be welcomed. We are going to try and see if we can serve it at a local flea market. If that location is unavailable, we will try elsewhere. If all goes well we may even have opportunity to do some preaching and teaching! Would anyone like to help? Food? Volunteers to serve? Other suggestions? All are gratefully welcomed, and especially prayers. There is a Volunteer Sign Up Sheet on the bulletin board in the lobby, and also any suggestions can be made via our church Discord server.
- If you would like to be added to our church social media forum (available through the free app known as Discord), please let brother Mark Tabata know.

### Sunday Lessons

Adult Bible Class: Through The Gospels

Teenage Bible Class: Taking A Look At Christian Evidences

Middle School Class: Heroes Of The Bible

A.M. Sermon: The Greatest Gift

P.M. Sermon: The First Real Christmas Announcement (Genesis 3:15)

Bible Class And Sermon Notes