

## The Birthday of Jesus & the LDS April 6th Tradition

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**April 6 & Christ's Birthday** Many Latter-day Saints believe April 6th is the official birthday of Jesus Christ, given in a revelation by the Lord Himself to the Prophet Joseph Smith. Evidence does not support this, however. No statement by Joseph Smith, nor other early Church leaders connect April 6 to the Lord's birthday. April 6 in 1830 was not a Hebrew calendar Holy Day, nor a modern Gregorian calendar Sabbath (Sunday). It was instead a Tuesday, two days before the full moon of Passover on the Hebrew calendar this time of year (Passover being **April 8th** in 1830). April 6th was, however, was the day the LDS Church was officially *organized according to the laws of the State of New York*. Both December 25 (the traditional Christian holiday for Christ's birth) and April 6 have become *traditions* for Christ's birth in 2 different modern religions, and without substantive support in connection with Jesus and His true birthday. Where and when did the April 6th tradition as the Lord's birthday in LDS culture originate?

Research in the Joseph Smith Papers project reveals that that verse 1 of D&C 20 is an *introductory head note* written by historian and scribe John Whitmer for the revelation of Joseph Smith that follows it, **not** a statement by the Lord, nor the Prophet Joseph Smith. The verse 1 statement written by Whitmer reads, "The rise of The Church of Christ in these last days, being one thousand eight hundred and thirty years since the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the flesh, it (the church) being regularly organized and established agreeable to the laws of our country, by the will and commandments of God, in the fourth month, and on the sixth day of the month which is called April."

Researchers in the Joseph Smith Papers project believe that Elder James E. Talmage read verse 1 of D&C 20 **as if the Lord was speaking**, revealing that He was born on this date 1,830 years before, **and** that the revelation was given on April 6, 1830. **Research indicates that both assumptions by Talmage are incorrect.** Steven C. Harper, volume editor of the Joseph Smith Papers project and a BYU assistant professor of church history, stated that verse 1 of D&C 20 was simply an introductory head note written by John Whitmer, not a statement by Jesus Christ nor Joseph Smith. This is evident in the recent discovery of the Book of Commandments and Revelations manuscript of D&C 20, published as part of the Joseph Smith Papers project.

Whitmer was an early church historian and scribe to Joseph Smith at the time D&C 20 was recorded. Whitmer's *addition* of the *introductory head note* preceding the revelation, "was something he did for **many** of the revelations," according to Harper. "**So those are separate from the texts** that Joseph produces by revelation." John Whitmer used similar language in other writings. In another headnote example, Whitmer stated, "It is now **June the twelfth**, one thousand eight hundred and thirty one years, since the coming of our Lord and Savior in the flesh." His language is the same there as for verse 1 of D&C 20 (excepting the June 12 date) and was simply a common 19th-century way of expressing **the current date**.

According to Harper, the Book of Commandments and Revelations manuscript for D&C 20 also shows that **this particular revelation was given on April 10** [a Saturday that year] *not April 6* [a Tuesday]. Verse 1 references the organization date of the church a few days earlier, but has nothing to do with the birth date of Christ. Harper stated that the introductory verse to Section 20 "shouldn't be read as if it is a revelation of the birth date of Jesus Christ." See Michael De Groote, What was the real date of Jesus' birth? Deseret News, Dec. 24, 2010.

Early dedications of LDS temples did occur on April 6 (Nauvoo, Salt Lake, St. George & Palmyra). This was done to commemorate *the organization date of the LDS church*, **not** the Savior's birthday. The first LDS temple at Kirtland Ohio, the one in which the Savior visited, was dedicated one week after the spring equinox (Mar. 20, 1836) on **March 27, 1836**. Two weeks after this date *near* full moon, the Lord accepted the temple on **April 3rd in a personal visit** (*Sunday* that year). **April 3rd** in 1836 was **Nisan 16** on the Hebrew Calendar, **His resurrection day**, the Hebrew Holy Day known as **Firstfruits!**

Early Church leaders said nothing about the Lord's birthday being April 6th. It is a modern *tradition* believed to have begun when Apostle James E. Talmage made the following statement in his book "Jesus the Christ" (1915). He wrote, "**We believe** that Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judea, April 6, B.C. 1." Elder Talmage based his belief on an assumption tied to verse 1 of D&C 20 - his **assumption** that Whitmer's statement was made by the Lord Himself to the Prophet Joseph Smith on April 6th. Neither assumption has been proven to be correct.

*Passover* (spring equinox) was the time Christ *died* and was *resurrected*, **not** the time of His birth (believed by this author to be the New Moon of 3 BC, Rosh Hashanah, New Year's Day). Joseph Smith did choose April 6th for the laying of the original Nauvoo Temple cornerstones in 1841, doing so to celebrate the day the LDS Church was officially organized in 1830 according to the laws of the state of New York.

Pres. Gordon B. Hinckley, Pres. Spencer W. Kimball, and Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles have expressed support for the April 6th date *as the Lord's birthday*, whereas Pres. J. Reuben Clark Jr., a counselor in the First Presidency of the LDS Church, wrote that Christ's birth was may have been December of 5 B.C.

or early 4 B.C. (1954). Elder Bruce R. McConkie, also an LDS Apostle, favored December 5 B.C. as well as alternative dates in 4 B.C. (1979). There is thus no consensus among LDS leadership on the Lord's birthday, even though beliefs and opinions are heartfelt and sincere.

The significance of early April lies with Passover - Christ's *death* at the full moon (which was **April 8th** in 1830, not April 6th). There is also the statement made by Joseph Smith in early April, where he said, "We obtained of him [Jesus Christ] the following by the spirit of prophecy and revelation [the revelation given **on April 10th**]; which not only gave us much information, but also pointed out to us *the precise day* upon which, *according to his will and commandment*, we should proceed to **organize his Church** [a few days earlier on **April 6th**] once more here upon the earth" (HC 1:64-70, April 1830, current heading for D&C 20).

We should remember that **no** statements exist by Joseph Smith nor other early Church leaders tying April 6 to Christ's birthday. The question then is, why would the Lord draw attention to early April for the organization date of the Church in 1830? The answer seems to be to focus our attention on the whole reason for our Savior's descent here, **to redeem us from sin, death, and hell** - *out of love* - in the *Atonement* and the *Resurrection*. Joseph Smith said, "the fundamental principles of our religion are the testimony of the Apostles and Prophets, concerning Jesus Christ, that **He died, was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven**; and all other things which pertain to our religion *are only appendages to it*" (TPJS, p. 121). These events took place near *the full moon* of the Hebrew month of Nisan (two weeks after the spring equinox). On our imperfect calendar, which no longer uses the phases of the moon as did the Lord's Bible calendar, this was in early April in 1830. His *birth*, however, was most likely near the other equinox in the fall, on **the New Moon of New Year's Day** coinciding with *the coming of the king* - the Holy Day Rosh Hashanah (Hebrew for "head of the year").

**Modern Sun Worship Idolatry** Besides *control* and *dominion* under Nimrod in Genesis 10, there was great *sexual perversion* and *idolatry*, both practiced together. This was typical among the Nicolaitans of Revelation 2:6, 14-15, and early polygamists in the LDS Church in D&C 117:11. Both sexual perversion and idolatry are tied together in the sin of the Nicolaitans with idolatrous sun worship throughout the world, a false light replacing "*the light of the world*" Jesus. Nimrod had sex with his mother Semiramis and then married her. Their son was a type for Horus, son of the Egyptian gods Osiris and Isis. All 3 were worshipped in Egypt. Nimrod was deified as the sun god.

Note all the false, pagan gods of various religions of the earth that are focused on sun worship; *Baal, Ra, Osiris, Zeus, Marduk, Dagon, Tammuz, Moloch, Saturn, Shamash, Mithra*, and others. Our so-called modern (Catholic) Gregorian calendar is based on sun worship today, tied to the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the week Sunday (a Sabbath for most Christian religious today) and the birth of the sun after the winter solstice! This was the birthday of Nimrod.

The *sign* established between Jehovah-Jesus, the Creator - and His people, is the 7<sup>th</sup> **Day Sabbath** of *rest* (Ex. 31:17). It is marked by the moon phase (the first 7% crescent of sunlight on the right side of the moon) in connection with (or closest to) the fall equinox. This is *Rosh Hashanah* or *Trumpets* on the original Bible calendar. Our LORD's birthday **is** the Revelation 12 *sign* in the heavens, marked at *Rosh Hashanah* by *trumpeting* (*the day of the coming of the King* - the day King Solomon was washed and anointed to become king). On our corrupted Gregorian calendar, this sign in the heavens is September 11 of 3 BC (see my paper, *The Birthday of Jesus*).