

Christianized Pagan Practices

Watchman Report

There is a way that seems right to a man,
but its end is the way of death.

Proverbs 14:12



Compiled By
Karen Connell

EXTENDED LIFE Christian Training Ministry

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Karen E. Connell

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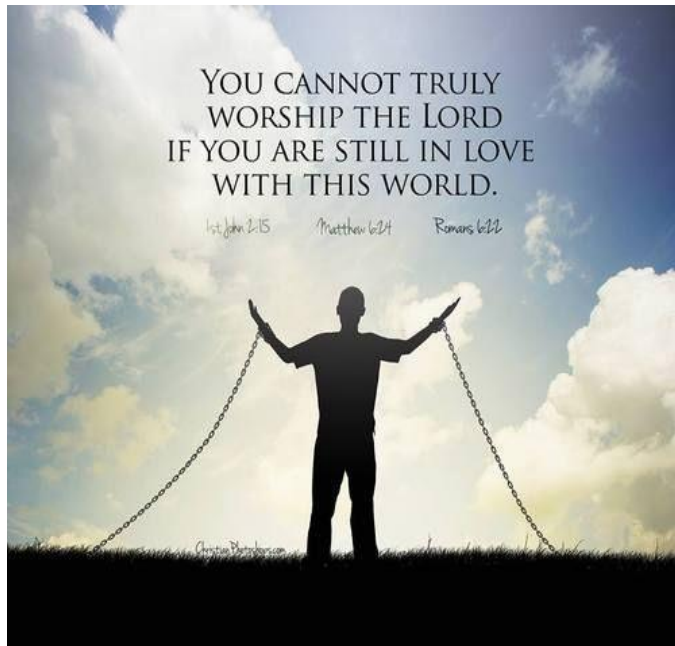
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Introduction

By

Karen Connell

*All Scripture is from the KJV or NKJV unless otherwise specified—all numbers are from the Strong's Concordance and the Hebrew Greek Complete Word Studies Dictionary (CWSD).



Love for this this world and all that it has to offer, is something Christians are **COMMANDED** to abstain from participating in and embracing. This world is ruled by the “god of this world”—Satan (also called Lucifer)—and it has been corrupted by his vile hatred for God and all that He loves.

In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not... (2 Cor. 4:4)

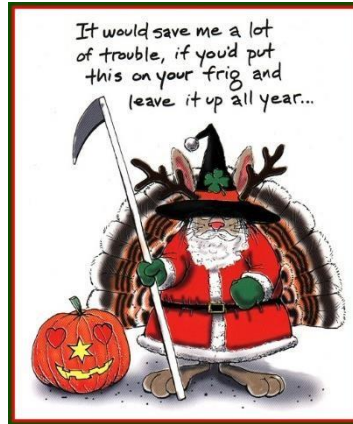
participate in what this world has to offer in the way of pleasure, possessions and achievements—the Bible says that God’s love is not residing in them, which means God’s love is not part of their personal experience. This also means those who love this world cannot say they love God. You love either the world and its ways or God—but never both! Lovers of this world’s ways and what it has to offer have chosen Lucifer as their god—despite what they may otherwise say or think.

Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you... For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world... And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever. (1 John 2:15-17) (Emphasis mine)

Tragically, professing Christians who love this world and its ways celebrate and embrace numerous holidays, festivals and practices that are actually pagan and mock the very God these pagan things purport to honor. Everything about these holidays, festivals and practices goes contrary to God’s law and instead embraces traditions that are clearly

condemned in the scriptures. These words may sound harsh but the Biblical evidence to back them up is unimpeachable.

SILLY CHRISTIAN!
 Christmas was the Winter Solstice
 Easter was Ostara (the Spring Equinox)
 Halloween was Samhain
 Valentine's Day was Imbolc
 May Day was Beltane
 Tuesday was Tyr's (Tiw's) Day
 Wednesday was Woden's (Odin's) Day
 Thursday was Thor's Day
 Friday was Freya's Day
 Saturday was Saturn's Day
 Sunday was the sun's day
 Monday was the moon's day
YOUR CALENDAR IS PAGAN!



Every year millions of professing Christians around the world celebrate what they believe to be the birth of their Lord and Savior of the world. Sadly, I find that many professing Christians do not want to know about or refuse to take seriously—what the

Bible teaches on the subjects addressed in this report, simply because God's truth interferes with their carnal desires to please themselves rather God. On the other hand, many are like I was for so many years as a Christian—ignorant of what the Bible did have to say about these things. I am therefore, blowing the trumpet to challenge you who confess to follow Christ—to become informed, if you are not already, in order to see the truth for yourself and avoid dishonoring the very God that you are professing to be your Lord and Savior.

**"But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say?
 (Luke 6:46-47)**

Over nine hundred years before the birth of Jesus Christ, King Solomon of Israel gave what is arguably the greatest single piece of advice in human history. If mankind heeded it all wars would cease. Hunger would vanish. Poverty would become a distant memory. Sickness and disease would be nonexistent. In essence, all human suffering would end. Everything that brings about the pain of life would evaporate. And in its place would be prosperity and fulfillment.

The advice given by this son of David is not complicated. On the contrary it is quite simple. Yet it goes ignored by virtually all mankind. Even professing Christians, who claim to live by the Holy Scriptures quietly walk by this one. Oh, they might claim to live by it, but it is clear by their behavior that they reject its message.

What is this priceless treasure spoken of by a great king whom God Himself blessed with extraordinary wisdom? What is this key that unlocks human happiness? It is recorded in (Proverbs 3:5) and stands as the greatest "I-told-you-so" ever put in print. Here it is.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not unto your own understanding.”
(Emphasis mine)

These fifteen words (13 of which are only one syllable long) constitute the perfect formula for human happiness. Additionally, they identify the cause of all human suffering. In a very real sense this great moral law was expressed by God Almighty at the very beginning.



Two Trees and a Garden

When God placed Adam and Eve in a wonderful garden paradise, He presented them with a choice. They could eat of the tree of life and have access to His wisdom and virtue forever. Or, they could lean upon their own understanding and choose to eat of the tree of forbidden knowledge from Satan and the fallen angels, concerning what was to be accepted as good and evil. God even instructed them concerning

what tree was best for them. Notice His words.

And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it: for in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die.” (Gen. 2:16-17)

As a loving Father, God was committed to protecting his newly created earthly family. For this reason, He gave specific instructions concerning their very survival. These instructions identified the source of happiness as well as the source of misery and death. It is hard to imagine how anyone would decline to heed God’s warning. Sadly, Adam and Eve did exactly that. Unfortunately we are born with a fallen human nature that has the same tendency. This is why we must be born again and receive the Nature of Jesus Christ so we can choose to override our sinful tendencies defined in Scripture as INIQUITY.

What Were the Two Trees?

Today there are numerous theories concerning the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Clearly, the tree of life would have been preferable to eat, but tragically, man declined the invitation to do so. On the other hand, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil should have been avoided at all costs. Yet that is not what happened. Why? Is it possible to know what these trees truly were? And will such an understanding provide greater insight into why mankind today makes choices that weak

havoc on human happiness? To better understand these two trees, it is critical to understand something about mankind and the way we are made.

The Moral Judgments of Men

The Bible states—without any possibility of more than one interpretation—that man was never designed to be the moral authority in his own life. As difficult as this might be to believe, humanity simply does not have the proper equipment to navigate its own moral and ethical path. King Solomon clearly understood this vital truth. When writing the



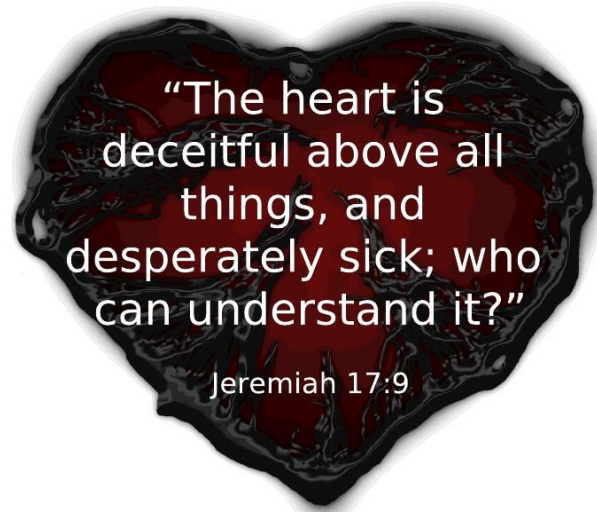
book of Proverbs, he made a profound observation about people and the moral choices they makes.

There is a way that seems right to a man, but the ends thereof are the ways of death. (Pro. 14:12)

Virtually all mankind has witnessed Solomon's words in action. We have seen good intentions play out to catastrophic results. Even Solomon's own life and the choices he made reflect this great moral law. Solomon was not the only one to draw the conclusion that man was incapable of successfully managing his own ethical path. The great prophet Jeremiah also pondered man's qualifications to rightly preside over his moral decisions. He concluded that mankind would invariably fall victim to their own moral and ethical devices. Notice his words...

The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. (Jer. 17:9)

Here, Jeremiah is stating that man cannot trust his own judgment because the seat of that judgment (the heart) is not trustworthy. But there is more. King David, who the Bible describes as **"a man after God's heart"** (Acts 13:22), expressed a profound truth about man's inability to grasp "right" and "wrong."



Who can understand his own error? (Ps. 19:12)

The question David asked in this verse is rhetorical. The truth of the matter is that no one can understand his own error. That is why man makes so many errors (sin). The point

here is that man's capacity to navigate his own moral path is nonexistent. Despite his assertions to the contrary, man was never designed to be the moral authority in his own life. The great prophet Jeremiah conveyed this absolute truth in words that couldn't be clearer.

O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walks to direct his own steps. (Jer. 10:23)

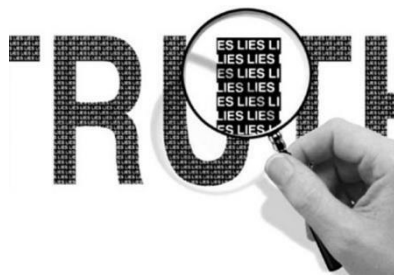
The words of Jeremiah state a truth that this world has rejected since the Garden of Eden. Simply put, man left to his own moral devices will invariably choose the wrong path. Jesus Christ himself understood this absolute moral law, and His life reflected this understanding. The Bible states that when Jesus walked as a man on the earth, He refused to direct His own moral steps. That's right! Even the Messiah did not rely on his own wisdom. Notice His words.

I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just: because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which has sent me. (Jn. 5:30)

The Bible categorically asserts that the Great God, who made the heavens and the earth and all things, stands as the one and only unimpeachable Moral Authority of the universe. It is He who decides what is right and what is wrong, what is just and what is unjust, what is good and what is evil. Jesus understood this principle perfectly, and because of this, He totally surrendered His moral will to God as His Father. He did so because He absolutely knew that His Father was the source of all that possesses virtue and goodness.

What was the forbidden fruit? It was and is MORAL SELF-DETERMINATION. It is man placing himself as the great moral judge in his own life. Man does not possess such authority because he was never given it by the one who had it to give in the first place.

When God placed the first family in the Garden of Eden and taught them how to flourish in it, His formula was simple. Trust in the Lord with all your heart (the tree of life) and lean not unto your own understanding (the tree of the knowledge of good and evil).



Popular arguments defending pagan holidays, festivals and practices

Regrettably, man continues to think he can navigate his own moral path, and even do so with God's blessing. Nothing more graphically demonstrates this truth than the festivals he celebrates. Consider Christmas, for example. This day is hands down the most

popular celebration in professing Christianity.

Unfortunately, there isn't a hint in the scriptures that God approves of it. On the contrary, the Bible condemns every part of such festivals. Furthermore, almost all professing Christian ministers are aware of this fact. Some will even reluctantly acknowledge the pagan roots of this day.

However, hot on the heels of this acknowledgement is a

steady stream of **human arguments** advanced in defense of this worldwide celebration.

The fallacy of Christmas is easy to detect for those who have come out of this world's religions and its pagan festivals. Not only do the scriptures expose these days as false, but the arguments presented by their adherents also reveal how worthless these days are. Because there is no Biblical justification for them, professing Christianity either twists God's word to defend these holidays or, they spin a tale of humanly contrived arguments designed to excuse the inexcusable. Either way the result is a lie.

What follows are five of the most popular arguments employed by the defenders of Christmas. As you read each one ask yourself if these points reflect the wisdom of God or the wisdom of men. The answer should be obvious.

Argument I: Manipulating the Truth

One of the most popular examples for manipulating the truth is given frequently by the proponents of Christmas, which is that the Bible actually condones this holiday. They offer as proof the synoptic Gospels' record of Jesus' birth. According to this reasoning, because the Bible spends several chapters describing the events surrounding the Messiah's birth and infancy, His followers can now celebrate a holiday they claim has been dedicated to this event. What they fail to grasp is that nowhere in the Bible is there even a hint that early Christians ever engaged in this celebration. **This is because the apostolic church did not keep such festivals. They rightly saw such things as idolatrous.** Furthermore, professing Christian leaders today disguise the fact that the timing, as well as the

traditions that are so much a part of the Christmas season, come directly from pagan practices—NOT the Bible.

Cloaking Christmas or any other pagan holiday or practice, in some Biblical way, such as the story of Jesus' birth, or any other thing, is one of the greatest cons ever perpetrated by the church. It is not driven by a desire to seek out God's wisdom, but rather by a desire to justify what is not Biblical. To those who are truly honest with themselves, Christmas and other pagan practices are nothing more than a fable pretending to have meaning. Actually, if one looks at it closely, it is hard to imagine why any Bible believer would ever want to have anything to do with pagan practices. Despite this truth, Christmas not only dominates the secular world but the professing Christian world as well. Why? Because it appeals to everything that is human. Those who advance the argument that because the scriptures describe Jesus' birth, have wrapped it up in paganism and to celebrate it is simply wrong. They may be well intended, but this stream of logic flies directly in the face of Proverbs 3:5.

Argument II: Proclaiming the Benefits of Sin

One of the greatest arguments offered in defense of Christmas and Easter for instance, is that it brings families together. For many this is unquestionably true. During these holiday seasons virtually millions of celebrants come together with friends and relatives and enjoy great moments with those they love most. To many around the world it seems inconceivable that anyone, let alone God, would discourage such holidays. Although this reasoning may resonate with millions of "believers," **it is not biblical**. On the contrary it



is driven by the belief that the way something makes you feel determines its standing with God.

In the words of a famous Debbie Boone, Grammy winning Christian song of the 70's, Called **You Light Up My Life**—the song ended with the line...

"It can't be wrong if it feels so right." As hard as this might be to believe this is simply not true.¹

Subjective spirituality has invaded Christianity...

which means, it must FEEL right to be right, but God warns His people:

¹ How could a song like "You Light UP My Life" be considered to be a "Christian song" when it was written by Joseph Brooks, born Joseph Kaplan (a Jew) who was an ungodly man and said to have had narcissistic personality disorder, who was also accused of a series of casting-couch rapes (He was indicted in 2009), but committed suicide on May 22, 2011, before his trial. Because a professing Christian sang it and tried to Christianize it—many called it a "worship song." However, the lyrics, *"It can't be wrong if it feels so right"* clearly depicts the Satan's lie—causing Christians embrace his deception concerning "feelings" ... This song glorifies Lucifer (the evil light bringer) not our eternal God who is the true light!

"...seek not after your own heart (feelings) and your own eyes (understanding), which you use to go a whoring... remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God."(Num 15:39-40)

Throughout the Bible, God warns against judging things based on their appearance. Unfortunately, man has rejected this instruction since the beginning. The Bible even records that Eve was enticed to eat the forbidden fruit because it was **"pleasant to the eye" (Gen 3:6).**

The belief that good is beautiful and that evil is ugly goes contrary to God's word. But it is totally consistent with man's thinking and Satan knows this. It is for this reason that he transforms himself into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14). In other words, he looks good and so do his religions, practices and his festivals.

The fact that so many pagan practices & holidays and seem so beautiful and heartwarming is something that is not lost on this great deceiver... **And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives**

the whole world. (Rev 12:9).



In a very real sense its beauty disguises what it really is—paganism dressed up in bright colors and wonderful feelings, which is not a legitimate way to honor the True God of Heaven. God is not the slightest bit impressed with practices or festivals that come from the pagan world no matter how beautiful they seem.

Take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.' 31 You shall not worship the Lord your God in that way; for every abomination to the Lord which He hates they have done for their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. "Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it. (Deut 12:30-32)

Argument III: Rehabilitating Evil

Trying to rehabilitate evil is what the Prophet Isaiah was talking about when he said:

Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! (Isa 5:20-21)

As an example, Santa Claus is arguably the most recognizable figure in the entire world. His connection to Christmas is acknowledged by both professing Christians and nonbelievers alike. He has even taken on mythical attributes. In a very real sense he is a



godlike figure. A recent survey even indicated that more people pray to him than any other Biblical figure with the exception of Jesus Christ and Mary. Imagine that!

What Christianity fails to do is to tell the real story behind this tradition and its symbols, each of which comes from the pagan world. Somehow mankind believes that godless practices can be given a facelift and everything is then acceptable with the

God of heaven. To illustrate this point consider the following: A leading evangelical minister once acknowledged in a sermon about Christmas that although this day and its symbols came from paganism they were now "holy" because they had been **"confiscated for Christ."**

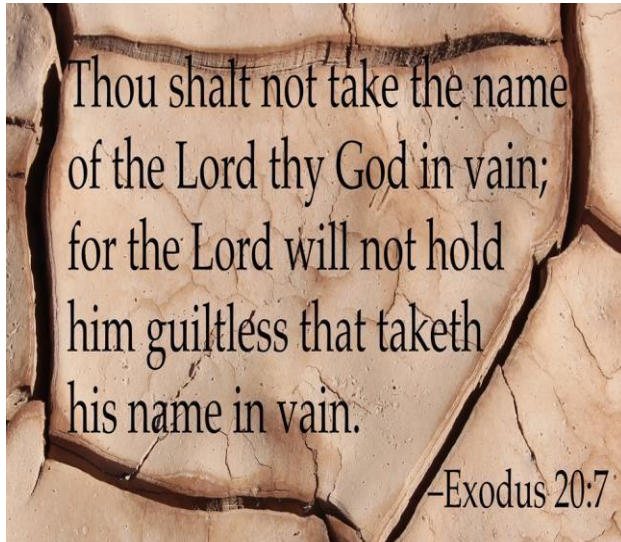
This is not the first time such a claim has been made. Fifteen centuries before the birth of the Messiah, the children of Israel were led out of Egypt with a high hand. No sooner were they free from bondage than they wanted to return to the pagan practices they had just left.

As a result they persuaded Aaron to fashion a golden calf just like they had in Egypt (Ex. 32:1). Aaron consented to their request and instructed the children of Israel to gather their jewelry so that he could fashion it into an idol (Ex. 32:2-3). He then made a molten calf and declared, **"These be your gods, O Israel, which brought you up out of the land of Egypt"** (Ex. 32:4).

Aaron then made a proclamation that seems unimaginable in light of the great miracles Israel witnessed



in their deliverance. After making this idol, Aaron proclaimed make "a feast to the Eternal." God was so angry at this behavior that He actually suggested to Moses that the children of Israel be wiped out (Ex. 32:10). How many professing Christians think they can do the same?



Many believe God doesn't care if we practice pagan ways and then try to call on God and worship Him as the only "Eternal God." The idea that man can decide for himself how he will worship the God of the Bible goes contrary to every word in the scriptures. Despite this fact, professing Christians continue to engage in this practice. In essence they lean to their own understanding, and ignore the very Word of God, and chooses to believe that God will not hold them accountable for these things. This is using His Name in vain!

You shall not take (use) the name of the Lord your God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.(Ex 20:7)

Argument IV: Defining the opposition

One of the most difficult times of the year for those who refrain for celebrating the traditional holidays, is Christmas. Its influence is everywhere. You can't escape it. Even worse is how professing Christianity views those who reject this celebration. For the most part they are regarded as extremists and fanatics. Some leaders have even characterized such people as "enemies of the gospel." If you doubt this assessment just try telling your "Christian" family that you won't be keeping Easter, Halloween or Christmas anymore and watch the sparks fly! Abstaining from Easter, Halloween or Christmas is so far out of the religious mainstream that those who subscribe to this practice are often treated like pariahs. Even worse are the labels assigned to those with children that refrain from taking part in these festive seasons. By not participating in Christmas, Easter or Halloween, is considered by much of the western world to actually be an act of abuse. To deprive children of Santa Claus (and all those presents), or the Easter Bunny and Halloween is considered by many as nothing short of being a religious extremist.

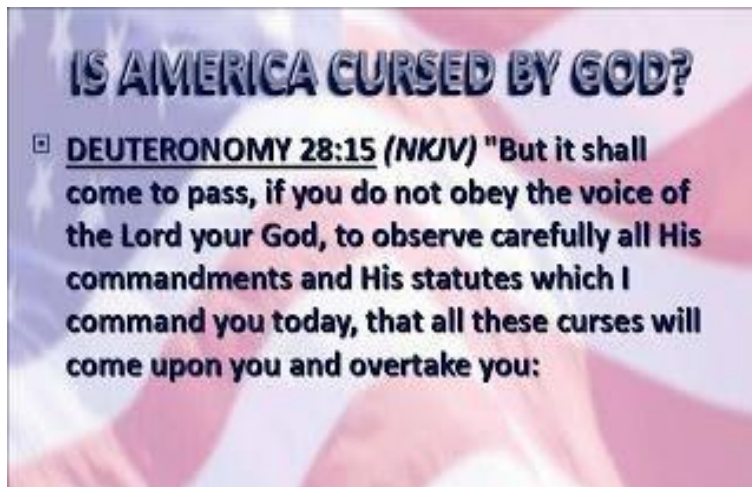
However, those who refuse to participate in these customs are actually more like Jesus and His apostles than those who embrace this festival. The founding fathers of the Christian faith never kept anything remotely close to in Christmas, Easter or Halloween, and for good reason. Throughout the scriptures such celebrations are condemned as idolatrous. Despite this fact, those who do embrace these seasons are prone to attack anyone who questions it.



Argument V: Relying on Technical Points

One of the more prominent arguments advanced by those who embrace pagan holidays and practices is that Jeremiah 10, which is often cited by opponents of Christmas, is not really referring to the Christmas tree at all. This chapter does indeed stand as an indictment of this tree festival. In verse two God warns His people to **“Learn not the way of the heathen.”** With this said, Christmas is unmistakably a heathen practice containing numerous symbols taken directly from pagan religions. Tragically, this fact is dismissed as irrelevant by millions of professing Christians in America and around the world. They have somehow concluded that as long as one knows where this celebration originated (the pagan world) it is acceptable with God to try and Christianize it and integrate it into His worship. However, as already stated the Bible says something quite different in (Dt. 12:30-32.)

Why Multitudes of AMERICAN Christians are Cursed!



Most AMERICAN Christians have strayed so far away from God and His ways of holiness that they do not realize what blessings could be theirs if they would serve only Him, and what doom is soon to strike because they reject Him, while professing to worship Him! The Majority of Christians in this nation today do not know that to serve God is to

OBEY His Word and walk in His ways. Those who fear God honor His Word, will and ways. This is the ONLY way that leads to increasing and perpetual righteousness, peace, and joy. This is what God calls true prosperity.

"...these are your servants and your people, whom you have redeemed by your great power, and by your strong hand... O Lord, I beseech you, let now your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servants, who desire to fear your name and prosper..." (Neh 1:10-11)

They do not know that God's Laws are for OUR GOOD and for OUR PROTECTION. A majority of America's false shepherds teach the people that God's Laws are legalistic and that we are not under the law as New Testament believers. It is true we have been redeemed from the LAW of sin and death, but nowhere in the Scriptures are we told we are to no longer serve or obey God's holy laws that command righteousness and holiness.

I thank God — through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin... For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. (Rom 7:25, 8:2)

The law cannot give us eternal life, but once we have eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ, the law becomes our safeguard and establishes the boundaries to keep us protected. Therefore, these false preachers who preach lawlessness are leading God's people into unhappiness, discontent, suffering, chaos and DOOM!

The Great Apostasy

God said this to His people: **"O that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments ALWAYS, THAT IT MIGHT BE WELL WITH THEM AND WITH THEIR CHILDREN FOREVER!" (Deut. 5:29).**

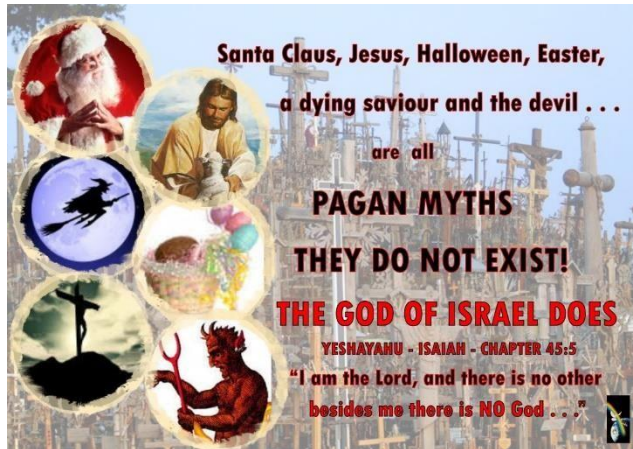


Then God commanded Moses—who represents a true leader, to send the people to their tents, while he stood alone before God. Listen to what God told him (and is still telling true leaders of the true faith):

"and I will speak unto you all the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which you shall teach them ... You shall walk in all the ways which the Eternal God hath commanded you, THAT YOU MAY LIVE, AND THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU" (Deut. 5:31-33).

"Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the Eternal your God commanded to teach YOU, that you might do them (Deut. 6:1).

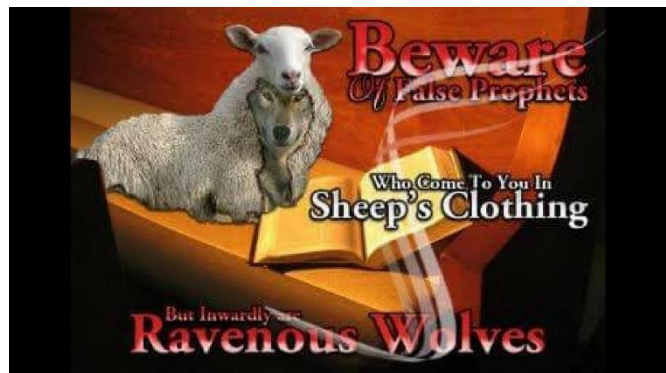
Throughout the Bible are written the commandments, statutes and judgments that reveal God's ways, which He promised if obeyed, would produce corporate and individual BLESSINGS, and corporate and individual CURSES if neglected, ignored, or disobeyed.



The commands of God that were given to Moses, which the original true Christian Church, in the days of the twelve apostles and of the apostle Paul, were diligently observed. The record of the New Testament Church is almost a blank for almost a hundred years after the death of the apostles, except for rays of historic light from a small number of faithful

Christian writers and historians. They give us glimpses into the activities of the Church, and we find a Christian Church that had VASTLY CHANGED after the death of the founding apostles.

As the Gentiles came into the Church, especially in the second, third, and fourth generations, they brought with them their pagan customs, ways, and beliefs. Thus paganism began mixing into Christianity. Soon pagans who were professing Christianity, greatly outnumbered those who were a small remnant that held fast to the original TRUTH of Jesus Christ, as taught by the apostles, and by Paul.



And it is from THIS paganized apostasy that today's so-called "Christianity," of organized religion has degenerated. People born into today's perverted world, who are reared in churches PROFESSING to be true New Testament churches, are mainly ignorant of what happened in those early years, and suppose, erroneously, that the churches of this day are the true churches of Jesus Christ! But PROPHECY says that long before our day they would turn away their ears from the TRUTH, and be turned to FABLES! This has happened.

Our land is filled with FALSE PREACHERS, today, just as Jesus foretold. Many of them, themselves, are deceived -- and many are sincere, but sincerely DECEIVED!

A majority of America's professing Christians are deceived and don't even know it. They are embracing a religion falsely called "Christianity" which in true fact embodies the

essential beliefs, philosophies, customs, and ways of the religions of the pagan gods of Moses day! God says this to His people:

"If you hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them ... you shall be blessed above all people ... and the Eternal will take away from you all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt upon you" (Deut. 7:12,14-15).

"Therefore shall you keep all the commandments which I command you this day, that you may be strong ... There shall no man be able to stand before you: for the Eternal your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all ... Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; a blessing IF you obey which I command you this day" (Deut. 11:8, 25-28).

"You shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man WHATSOEVER IS RIGHT IN HIS OWN EYES" (Deut. 12:8).

Apostate preachers lure the people AWAY from the laws and commands and ways of God, and teach them not to be "legalistic" and to do WHAT IS RIGHT IN THEIR OWN EYES. That which God condemns, is made to appear to be righteousness, and Christian looking. But by condemning the laws of God, they make God's true ways appear to be evil! This is America's apostate Christian RELIGION today! AND AMERICA'S CHRISTIANS ARE UNDER A DIVINE CURSE!

Once we see these things thru God's perspective (His Word), the sins and ways and customs of professing Christians today become shocking and APPALLING! That's how they appear to God. His people are insolent, stiff-necked, rebellious, going their OWN way, and like dumb sheep are being led to the slaughter.

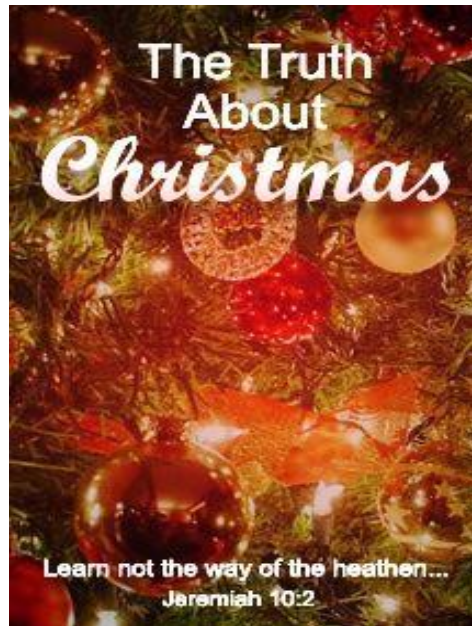
God will help his Holy nation to UNDERSTAND... Are YOU --one whose eyes God has opened? -- if so, will YOU remain true to God, by forsaking your own way and the ways and customs of the people, and repent, and seek God thru Jesus Christ. Are you one of the end remnant who is giving your very self to HIM, dedicating your life to Him, and to live by every word of the Bible -- If you are... You WILL DELIVER YOUR OWN SOUL FROM THE TRIBULATIONS AND THE PLAGUES TO COME!

Christ died to deliver us from the curse of the law! He paid the penalty of our sins. Now you can receive His promised BLESSINGS if you continue in obedience!

"WATCH you therefore" -- WATCH world events fulfill prophecy -- "and PRAY ALWAYS, that you may be accounted worthy to ESCAPE ALL THESE THINGS that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke 21:36). So warned AND PROMISED, the one true God—Jesus Christ!

“I Hate Christmas!”

These are words I had uttered for many years, during a season that is considered by many Christians to be HOLY. But now I must share with you why I said this—without really understanding at the time why I felt this way. I even felt condemned for feeling this way—until God opened my eyes and showed me—He felt the same way! I came to the realization that my carnal nature loved Christmas, (and other pagan practices) but my born again spirit hated it, and now I know why! The information contained in the article below, is undeniable proof from the Word of God and from historical research as to why this is so. Please read on and let the truth set you free as it has me!—*Karen Connell*



LEARN NOT THE WAY OF THE HEATHEN

Have you ever wondered about Christmas? From the time you first found out there really was no Santa Claus, did you ever question other aspects of this incredible holiday – one that so much of the world takes for granted? Did you ever wonder where Christmas came from? Is it in the Bible? From where do all the unusual symbols surrounding the celebration of this day come? Why a Christmas tree? Where did the idea of Santa Claus originate? Why does Santa wear a red suit with fur? Why does he supposedly come down the chimney? Why are stockings left on the fireplace? Why is this day celebrated on the 25th of December? Where did the Christmas wreath come from, or the Yule log? How

about the exchanging of gifts? What about mistletoe? What do all these symbols and festivities really mean? What does the Bible say about this holiday? And what is God's perspective on these things? If you were surprised when you first discovered the truth about Santa Claus, you will be even more surprised by the rest of the story.

Childhood Memories

From our earliest childhood, most of us looked forward to Christmas more than any other holiday. We were given time off from school. Stores were decorated and downtown city streets were brightly lit.



Additionally, many neighborhood homes would put up lights and other decorations. For weeks, we would anticipate and fantasize about all the presents we would receive. Then the whole family would go out looking for just the right tree. Once found, it was brought home and showered with

tinsel, balls, and lights. The family would work together to decorate the tree to everyone's delight. Then, as the great day arrived, we hung our stockings up and went to bed, hardly able to sleep because of our excitement about what the morning would bring. When morning came, we would run to the tree, and there we would kneel down before it and receive our gifts according to whether we had been "bad" or "good."

This was the experience of so many of us as we grew up. None of us ever questioned any of these things deeply. We simply took all of it for granted.

When told that we celebrated all this to honor Christ, we did not study the Bible to find if any of it were true. Perhaps as some of us found out the truth about Santa Claus, we were somewhat disillusioned, but most of us did not question these practices any further.

Now, however, it is time! We need to make informed choices about this issue because it affects our worship of God and as such, our very salvation. It is time to follow the Bible's admonition and **"prove all things, and hold fast to that which is good" (1Thess. 5:21).**

The Business of Christmas

Recently, Hallmark, one of the nation's top three wrapping paper manufacturers announced that during the Christmas season, it will produce over 24,000 miles of wrapping paper.

Additionally, the number of Christmas trees sold in Los Angeles alone will top 1.1 million. Further, Americans will spend over seven billion dollars on children's toys during the Christmas season. Collectively, agencies and photo studios suit up and ship out as many as 20,000 Santa Clauses to malls, parades, and parties. It has been estimated that retail stores can generate \$35,000 in additional income simply by having a photographer and a rented Santa Claus for the season. Further, it is estimated that mall traffic increases by 15% when Santa Claus is in one of the big stores.



The city of Los Angeles alone consumes over ten million kilowatt hours of electricity to support its Christmas lights. This is the average monthly usage for many third world countries. The average American family will receive 26 cards while 3000 letters addressed to Santa Claus will go through the Los Angeles Post Office alone.

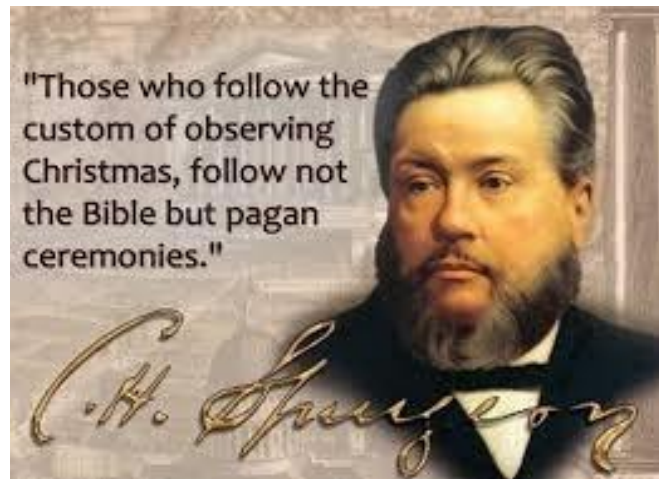
Additionally, 650 million Christmas packages will be sent to friends and loved ones through the mail during this season. The city of Beverly Hills will spend over one million dollars on their holiday decorations while See's Candy will sell over 12 million pounds of candy. Tragically, however, 35% to 40% of Americans will become so depressed they will use alcohol or drugs to simply cope with the emptiness they feel at this "joyous" time of the year.

In this light, many religious leaders, reacting to the gross commercialism of Christmas have been heard to exclaim: "We ought to put Christ back in Christmas." **The truth is Christ was NEVER in Christmas and He never will be!**

As shocking as this may sound, Jesus Christ was not born on or near December 25. Further, the original apostles who knew Jesus personally never celebrated this holiday. Additionally, the Bible nowhere encourages the celebration of Christmas, but rather condemns such observances. **SURPRISE... Christmas Is Not Christian!**

The word "Christmas" comes from the term "Mass of Christ." Shortened, the term simply became "Christ-mass." The celebration of this holiday actually existed centuries before Jesus was born and did not enter Christianity until centuries after His death.

This fact is confirmed by the testimony of both religious and secular authorities. The 1911 edition of the Catholic Encyclopedia illustrates that Christmas did not originate in Palestine but rather in Egypt.



Christmas was not among the earliest festivals of the Church...the first evidence of the feast is from Egypt... Pagan customs centering around the January calendars gravitated to Christmas.

Origen (A.D. 186-238), a leading third century theologian and the man regarded by some to be the "father of Biblical criticism," wrote:

...In the Scriptures, no one is recorded to have kept a feast or held a great banquet on his birthday. It is only sinners [like Pharaoh and Herod] who make great rejoicings over the day in which they were born into this world. (1911 Catholic Encyclopedia, article Natal Day)

The celebration of Christmas was not embraced during the days of the apostles or the early New Testament church. Consider the words of the **Encyclopedia Americana**, 1944 edition which states:

Christmas... was, according to many authorities, not celebrated in the first centuries of the Christian church, as the Christian usage in general was to celebrate the death of remarkable persons rather than their birth.

The Origin of Christmas

Virtually all Biblical authorities and secular historians agree that the celebration of Christ's birth did not enter the church until hundreds of years after Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. In the 4th century CE, Christianity imported the Saturnalia festival hoping to take the pagan masses in with it. Christian leaders succeeded in converting to Christianity large numbers of pagans by promising them that they could continue to celebrate the Saturnalia as Christians, and renamed as Christ's-mass i.e. Christmas. The connection between Christmas and a variety of pagan practices is thoroughly documented. Not only the day, but its symbols, are intimately connected to religious practices embraced by the pagan world. William Walsh, a recognized authority on Christmas, writes:



*...the Christmas festival...is a gradual evolution from times that long antedated the Christian period... It was overlaid upon heathen festivals, and many of its observances are only adaptations of pagan to Christian Ceremonies. (**The Story of Santa Klaus** p. 58)*

Walsh went on to explain that... the celebration of Christmas was intimately connected to the Greek veneration of their god

Dionysus (also called Bacchus). The Greeks paid homage to Bacchus with drunken celebrations bearing his name (Bacchanalia).

It was on or about December 21st that the ancient Greeks celebrated what are known to us as the Bacchanalia or festivities in honor of Bacchus, the god of wine. In these festivities the people gave themselves up to songs, dances and other revels which frequently passed the limits of decency and order. (p. 65)

According to Walsh *...the Romans celebrated the Bacchanalia as well as the Saturnalia during the same period as today's celebration of Christmas ...the Saturnalia, held in honor of Saturn, the god of time, began on December 17th and continued for seven days. These also often ended in riot and disorder. Hence the words Bacchanalia and Saturnalia acquired an evil reputation in later times. (p. 65)*

The excesses and decadence practiced during this festival were legendary. Gerard and Patricia Del Re document this:

*At its most decadent and barbaric, Saturnalia may have been the excuse among Roman soldiers in the East for the human sacrifice of the king of the revels. (**The Christmas Almanac**, p.16)*

Why December 25?

Today, most of the world celebrates Christmas on the twenty-fifth of December. However, the actual date of Christ's birth cannot be determined with absolute certainty. There is, however, strong biblical evidence that suggests Jesus was born in the fall. As for the celebration of December 25, this too, traces its roots directly to the pagan world.

Werner Keller writes in **The Bible as History**:

December 25 is referred to in documents as Christmas day in A.D. 324 for the first time. Under the Roman emperor Justinian [in the 500's] it was recognized as an official holiday. An old Roman festival played a major part in the choice of this particular day. December 25 in ancient Rome was the 'Dies Natali Invictus,' 'the birthday of the unconquered,' the day of the winter solstice and at the same time, in Rome, the last day of the Saturnalia, which had long since degenerated into a week of unbridled carnival... (p. 331)

The Encyclopedia Britannica adds some interesting insights with respect to the December 25th celebration of Christmas. Not only did the day coincide with the Roman celebration of Saturnalia, but other pagan deities are directly connected to this date:



Saturnalia—A Roman Solstice Romp

and lights, symbols of warmth and lasting life have always been associated with the winter festival, both pagan and Christian. (Vol. II, 1973)

...In the Roman world, the Saturnalia was a time of merrymaking and exchanging of gifts. December 25th was also regarded as the birth date of the Iranian Mystery god, Mithra, the Sun of Righteousness. On the Roman New Year houses were decorated with greenery and lights and gifts were given to children. To these observances were added the German and Celtic Yule rites...Food and good fellowship, the Yule log and Yule cakes, greenery and fir tree, gifts and greetings all commemorated different aspects of this festive season. Fires

Christmas is so inextricably linked to celebrations practiced by the ancient Roman world that if a Roman citizen of that day were somehow raised from the dead to live in our age,

unexplainedmysteriesoftheworld.com

The Mystery Of The Pagan Origin Of Christmas: Jesus Was Not Born On December 25th But A Whole Bunch Of...

Pagan Gods Were!

he would immediately recognize Christmas today as the same holiday celebrated so many centuries ago.

It is clear from the record of history that Christmas originated during pre-Christian times and was celebrated by the pagan world for centuries after the death of Christ. This day then became embraced by the Roman Catholic Church in the fifth century. However, one very important question remains. Where did the pagans get their ideas regarding such a celebration?

The Tower of Babel

Virtually all pagan practices had their beginnings in the city of Babylon during the time of Nimrod. Nimrod was the grandson of Ham, the son of Noah (Gen. 10:6-8). He was the founder of Babylon (v. 10). Nimrod formed cities instead of going out and replenishing the earth as God had commanded Noah to do.



One of Nimrod's accomplishments was building the tower of Babel. Some believe he did this to protect people from the potential threat of another flood from God. The scriptures reveal that Nimrod was "a mighty hunter before the Lord" (Genesis 10:9). The word "before" is better translated "against" and it is clear that he became the first post-flood dictator.

The name "Nimrod" is translated from the Hebrew word "Marad" and literally means "he rebelled". Ancient traditions regarding this apostate leader show that he rebelled against God, and in so doing, created a worldwide apostasy. According to tradition, Nimrod married his own mother, Semiramis.

The origin of Allat the triple Goddess is Semiramis, notice the crescent moon on

Aphrodite and Eros end of 4th century BC



Are really:

Semiramis and Tammuz



her later form, Ishtar:



Then, upon his death, Semiramis began to teach that her son had been reincarnated in the form of a full-grown evergreen tree which supposedly sprang up from a dead tree stump. On each anniversary of Nimrod's birthday, December 25, Semiramis would visit this evergreen tree, claiming that Nimrod would leave gifts for her there.

Through her politics and the use of her son's name, Semiramis became the queen of Babylon, the home of the Chaldean Mysteries.

She was also regarded as the "queen of Heaven" and "the mother of the divine son." After generations of these idolatrous practices and traditions, Nimrod came to be considered the son of Baal, the sun god. He and his mother became the chief entities of worship as a Madonna and child.

This belief and practice spread to Egypt, where the names of the gods were Isis and Osiris. The son Osiris was born December 25. In Asia it was Cybele and Deonius. In Rome they were called Fortuna and Jupiter. Throughout the world we still find the remnants of mother and child worship to this day. It is no surprise that this same system still exists at the end of the age. It is called "Mystery Babylon" (Revelation 17:5). Shockingly, it is disguised as Christianity and is still practiced in the celebration of Christmas.

From Paganism to Christianity

The great historian Will Durant described how paganism actually took upon itself Christianity and converted it to pagan purposes.

Christianity did not destroy paganism; it adopted it... From Egypt came the idea of a divine trinity... and the adoration of the Mother and Child... From Phrygia came the worship of the Great Mother... The Mithraic ritual so closely resembled the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Mass that Christian fathers charged the Devil with inventing these similarities to mislead frail minds. [Modern day] Christianity was the last great creation of the ancient pagan world. (The Story of Civilization, p. 595)

It is clear that a wide range of pagan practices became assimilated into the Roman Catholic Church. It began with embracing the birthday of the sun god and establishing the date of this celebration as December 25.

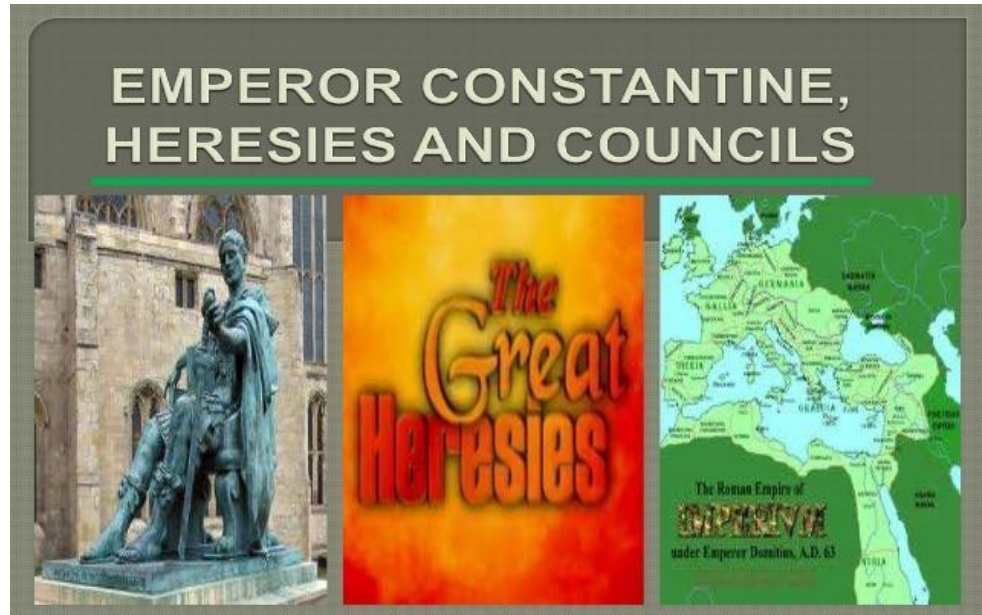
It is interesting to note that the practice of sun worship began in early Egypt. There the priests would make a round wafer to represent the sun. The celebrants would eat the wafer, symbolizing the sun god's life and the nourishment of man's soul. Clearly, the church was embracing paganism in an attempt to increase its numbers and draw in a nonbelieving world. In reality, it was the church being absorbed by those who practiced beliefs totally contrary to Christianity. Alexander Hislop, in his book, **The Two Babylons** characterized it this way:

Long before the fourth century, and long before the Christian era itself, a festival was celebrated among the heathen at that precise time of the year, in honor of the birth of the son of the Babylonian queen of heaven; and it may fairly be presumed that, in order to conciliate the heathen, and to swell the number of the nominal adherents of Christianity, the same festival was adopted by the Roman Church, giving it only the name of Christ. This tendency on the part of Christians to meet paganism half-way was very early developed... (p. 93)

The church eventually adopted and merged several different pagan ceremonies to eventually end up with the modern day practice of Christmas and the New Year celebrations we witness today.

Christmas throughout History

During the latter part of the third century, Deus Sol Invictus became the official deity of the Roman Empire. At that time, a great temple was built in honor of the sun and the sun's birthday was officially set as December 25.



This date was chosen because it was the accepted date of the winter solstice. Less than 100 years later, Emperor Constantine came to power in Rome. At the beginning of Constantine's rule, it was a violation of Roman law to practice Christianity. Christians were hated by the state and were subjected to great persecution which included torture and even burning at the stake.

However, Constantine saw something in Christianity he believed could be very valuable in holding the empire together. Despite great persecution, Christians remained dedicated to their faith. This commitment so impressed Constantine that he issued "The Edict of Toleration" in 313 A.D. and made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire. As a result, state persecution of Christians stopped.

However, the news was not all good. Because Christianity became the state religion, the church became very political and the doctrines embraced by the church were watered down and seriously compromised. Jesse Hurlbut describes this period in his book, **The Story of the Christian Church:**



Constantine: Christian
or Opportunist?

...the establishment of Christianity as the state religion became a curse... Everybody sought membership in the church, and nearly everybody was received. Both good and bad, sincere seekers after God and hypocritical seekers after gain, rushed into the communion. Ambitious, worldly, unscrupulous men sought office in the church for social and political influence...

The services of worship increased in splendor, but were less spiritual and hearty than those of former times. The forms and ceremonies of paganism gradually crept into the worship. Some of the old heathen feasts became church festivals with change of name and of worship.

The emergence of pagan practices in the church is well chronicled in history. Historian John Romer characterizes this subtle incursion this way:

Subtly, so subtly that the bishops themselves had not seen them, the old gods had entered their churches like the air of the Mediterranean. And they live still in Christian ritual, in the iconography and the festivals of Christianity. When Julian arrived in Antioch in 362... the great Christian city was in mourning, bewailing in the Levantine manner the annual death of Adonis, Venus's beautiful lover. At Ephesus, though the sanctuary of Diana, goddess of the city, was taken down... her statues were carefully buried in dry sand. And when the Third Council of the church assembly at Ephesus solemnly voted that henceforth the Virgin Mary should be honored with the title of Theotokos, the God-bearer, Ephesus, itself for centuries the city of the virgin hunter Diana, became the city of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God. In Egypt, too, the ancient sign of life, the ankh, which the gods had carried in their sculptures for thousands of years, was easily transformed into the Christian cross; the figure of Isis nursing her child Horus, Isis Lactans, became the figure of the Virgin with Jesus at her breast.

*At Rome, Romulus and Remus were swapped for the biblical saints Peter and Paul. And still in the fifth century, the Pope had to stop the early morning congregation of St. Peter's from walking up the church steps backwards so as not to offend Sol, the rising sun god. Similarly, 25 December, now Christ's birthday, was also the day of Sol Invictus' festival and Constantine's birthday. This festival was celebrated by cutting green branches and hanging little lights on them, and presents were given out in the god's name. Sol's weekly festival Sol-day – Sunday – became the Christian Sabbath. Just as Apollo of Delphi had made a beautiful transformation to become the Roman Sol Invictus, so later he became a Christ of the sun. All three of them are sometimes pictured in their fiery chariots... with... radiant haloes. (**Testament: The Bible and History**, pp. 230-231)*

Legalizing Christianity solved one problem for the church, but it caused another. Millions of pagans were suddenly made "Christians" literally overnight. These pagans had no desire to give up their pagan practices, however. Try as it would, the church could not prevail on the people to give up the paganism that they embraced. The church's answer was to finally "Christianize" numerous pagan practices. Charles Guignebert, in his 1927 book, **The Early History of Christianity**, gave the following explanation:

There is a great mystery here, in how this happened.... That we begin with Jesus who is executed by the Romans as a public criminal... and somehow we wind up three centuries later with Jesus being hailed as... the God of the new Christian Roman Empire.

Now at the beginning of the fifth century, the ignorant and the semi-Christians thronged into the church in numbers... They had forgotten none of their pagan customs... The bishops of that period had to content themselves with redressing, as best they could, and in experimental fashion, the shocking malformations of the Christian faith which they perceived around them... [To properly teach new converts]

was out of the question; they had to be content with teaching them no more than the symbol of baptism and then baptizing them en masse, postponing until a later date the task of eradicating their superstitions, which they preserved intact... This "later date" never arrived, and the church adapted to herself, as well as she could, them and their customs and beliefs. On their side, [converts] were content to dress their paganism in a Christian cloak. (pp. 208-210)

This adopting of pagan festivals was not without opposition however. While many professing Christians welcomed the liberty to celebrate these pagan practices, others objected. Many at the time understood that such practices were rankly pagan, ungodly practices which should never have been brought into the church. **The New SchaffHerzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge** states the following:

The pagan Saturnalia and Brumailia were too deeply entrenched in popular custom to be set aside by Christian influence...

The pagan festival with its riot and merrymaking was so popular that Christians were glad of an excuse to continue its celebration with little change in the spirit and in manner. Christian preachers of the West and the Near East protested against the unseemly frivolity with which Christ's birthday was celebrated, while Christians of Mesopotamia accused their Western brethren of idolatry and sun worship for adopting as Christian this pagan festival.



Despite opposition by Christians committed to pursuing the teachings in scripture, pagan influence simply overwhelmed the church, transforming it into something far different from that raised up by Jesus through Peter and the apostles. This fact is confirmed by **The Encyclopedia Americana** which states:

Christmas... according to many authorities, was not celebrated in the first centuries of the Christian Church... In the fifth century the Western Church ordered it to be celebrated forever on the day of the old Roman Feast of the birth of Sol.

As you can see, ancient rites practiced by the pagan world were eventually grafted into Christianity. Rome had been pagan centuries before the birth of Christianity and it simply was not going to abandon its false religion. When Emperor Constantine ordered Christianity placed on equal footing with paganism, people preferred their old ways. They enjoyed those things they had always known, and simply adapted the old to appear to conform to the new. They changed from worshiping the "sun" to worshiping the "Son" and this was done retaining all their old practices.



Most people today know little or nothing of the pagan origin of Christmas. They are unaware that faithful Christians first opposed these heretical practices. Additionally, most Christians today don't understand that believers dedicated to keeping the truth of God

were forced to go underground, some suffering martyrdom rather than allowing themselves to participate in such things.

Christmas: Its Symbols and Customs



The symbols and customs of Christmas convey powerful images of this holiday. Consider the Christmas tree, mistletoe, the holly wreath, and Santa Claus, just to name a few. These symbols stand as a constant reminder of the season of which they are so much a part. Religions have used symbols and

traditions as a means by which to perpetuate their beliefs. Symbols are designed to add meaning to seasons and events.

The symbols of Christmas have great appeal to this holiday's celebrants. However, after careful examination of these symbols and traditions, a much darker picture emerges. The truth is that Christianity has embraced as holy that which has its roots in religions totally contrary to the faith of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the apostles. Consider the following symbols and beliefs.

The Christmas Tree

The Christmas tree is arguably the most prominent symbol of this season. Millions of people bring an evergreen tree into their homes and decorate it with beautiful glass balls, tinsel, and lights. These same millions would never think of the Christmas tree as an idol which God abhors.



"Have you seen that which backsliding Israel has done? She is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot... For the customs of the peoples are futile; For one cuts a tree from the forest, The work of the hands of the workman, with the ax... They decorate it with silver and gold; They fasten it with nails and hammers So that it will not topple." (Jer. 3:6, 10:3-4)



The presence of tree worship is woven throughout history. Even the ancient people of Palestine engaged in this practice. They would often tie the tops of trees together in groves and make a shrine to nature. On certain occasions, they would cut an image such as a phallic symbol in the tree and worship before it.





It is important to understand that such practices are abhorrent to God. The tenth chapter of the book of Jeremiah illustrates this point.

Here, God commands his people to **"learn not the way of the heathen."** He then goes into great detail describing a tradition in which the heathen cut a tree out of the forest and decorate it. God goes on to characterize this tree as a graven image.

What God revealed through Jeremiah is that His children are to avoid practices that resemble those embraced by the pagan world. He did not say that it was appropriate to modify their practices and call them Christian. The Christmas tree is clearly a symbol of a faith that was

vastly different from anything advocated by the scriptures and its origin in paganism is thoroughly supported by the testimony of history. History reveals that the worship of trees and nature was a common practice among pagans and continues to this very day. Many people in the New Age movement believe that trees actually have feelings. Some even believe that trees have the ability to reason. This belief is not new at all. Socrates and Plato are both credited with embracing the same beliefs.

Consider the words of Alexander Hislop: *The Christmas tree, now so common among us, was equally common in Pagan Rome and Pagan Egypt. In Egypt that tree was the palm tree; in Rome it was the fir; the palm tree denoting the Pagan Messiah, as Baal-Tamar, the fir referring to him as Baal-Berith. The mother of Adonis, the Sun-God and great mediatorial divinity, was mystically said to have been changed into a tree, the son must have been recognized as the 'Man the Branch.'* (*The Two Babylons*, p. 97)

Other credible works on the tradition of Christmas dramatically declare that the Christmas tree is intimately connected to faiths practiced by the pagan world. The book **Christmas Folklore** reveals the following:

Most people have heard that the Christmas tree originates in the tannenbaum and is some sort of vestige of Teutonic vegetation worship. This is partially true. However, the custom of using pine and other evergreens ceremonially was well established at the Roman Saturnalia, even earlier in Egypt. (p. 209)

The book *Festivals, Holy Days, and Saints' Days* confirms that the origin of the Christmas tree can be traced to people who knew absolutely nothing about the Bible.



Winter solstice sunrise over Stonehenge—Druid Revelers watch druidic ceremonies near the Key

The Christmas tree... recapitulates the idea of tree worship...gilded nuts and balls symbolizing the sun...all the festivities of the winter solstice have been absorbed into Christmas day...the use of holly and mistletoe to the Druidic ceremonies; the Christmas tree [today reflects] the honors paid to Odin's sacred fir... (p. 236)

It is clear that the Christmas tree is a powerful symbol and conjures many images concerning the celebration it pictures. However, there is one thing the Christmas tree is NOT – it is not Christian. Everything about the Christmas tree can be traced to beliefs that are strongly condemned in scripture. There is no connection between the Christmas tree and the birth of Christ. It is a pagan symbol that God condemns.

Today, millions of Christian homes around the world are adorned with evergreen trees every Christmas. Tragically, people fail to understand what these trees picture because they simply don't ask. God's people were indicted for engaging in practices that included the veneration of trees.

And the children of Israel did secretly those things that were not right against the LORD their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city. And they set them up images and groves in every high hill, and under every green tree: And there they burnt incense in all the high places, as [did] the heathen whom the LORD carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger: For they served idols, whereof the LORD had said unto them, You shall not do this thing. (2Kings 17:9-12)

Santa Claus



One of the most prominent images associated with Christmas is that of Santa Claus. Every year, children around the world long for his arrival, for he is the giver of gifts. Today, Santa Claus is depicted as a lover of children and a true giver. During the Christmas season, people are even encouraged to join his great army of elves so that children around the world can be touched by his goodness.

So popular is Santa Claus that adults tell children stories of his exploits. These stories are conveyed with such conviction that children believe them without question. But who is Santa Claus? And where did his story begin?

Many articles and books have been written to explain that Santa Claus was a bishop by the name of Nicholas who lived in Asia Minor during the fourth century. It is true that such a bishop did exist but much of what is attributed to him is untrue. The second Vatican council formally acknowledged that many concepts associated with him actually came from pagan sources. William Walsh wrote:

Santa Claus comes from Saint Nicholas, the saint whose festival was celebrated in December and the one who in other respects was most nearly in accord with the dim traditions of Saturn as the hero of the Saturnalia. (The Story of Santa Klaus, p.70)

Tony Van Renterghem writes the following in his book, When Santa Was a Shaman: The Ancient Origins of Santa Claus & the Christmas tree:

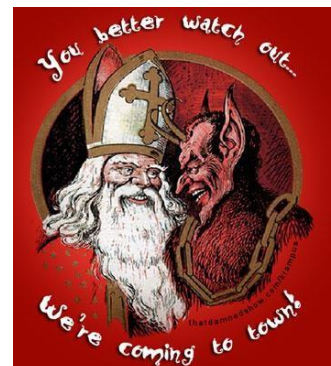
In the newly Christianized areas where the pagan Celtic and Germanic cults remained strong, legends of the god Wodan were blended with those of various Christian saints; Saint Nicholas was one of these. There were Christian areas where Saint Nicholas ruled alone; in other locations, he was assisted by the pagan Dark Helper. In other remote areas... ancient pockets of the Olde Religion controlled traditions.



Here the Dark Helper ruled alone. Sometimes in a most confusing manner, using the cover name of Saint Nicholas or 'Klaus,' without in any way changing his threatening, Herne/Pan, fur-clad appearance.

By absorbing such pagan feasts and traditions, the Christian Church turned Herne into Saint Nicholas' captive, chained Dark Helper; none other than Satan the Dark One, symbolic of all evil...

In Holland and several other European countries, the Saint Nicholas figure is still highly esteemed. He appears as a tall, dignified, bearded, white-haired old man, dressed as a Catholic bishop, complete with a bizarre, quite un-saintly habit of riding through the skies on a white horse, followed by his Dark Helper. It seems that our Catholic saint inherited some of these customs from the pagan god Wodan, who has also been a bearded, white haired old man, also dressed in a hat and cloak, carried a staff, rode a white horse, and dragged along the same dark slave/helper on a chain. (pp. 96-97)



Renterghem continues to explain that in Holland, "Sinterklaas" was believed to reward good children with gifts, while "Zwarte Pier" carried a sinister rod and punished bad children. Renterghem stated that in Germany, Saint Nicholas' Dark Helper was a frightening, horned little man brandishing a besom (broom).

The World book Encyclopedia provides some interesting insights into some of the traditions regarding Santa Claus: *Some of Santa Claus's characteristics date back many centuries. For example, the belief that Santa enters the house through the chimney developed from an old Norse legend. The Norse believed that the goddess Hertha appeared in the fireplace and brought good luck to the home.*

Other traditions from the Druidic time suggest that Santa's red suit is a leftover from the times when ancient peoples worshiped the god of fire. Tradition has it that this fire god came down the chimney. Consider too, that in ancient times, Druid homeowners would leave a treat consisting of milk and pastries to appease this god who came down the chimney into their fireplace. This is how the tradition of leaving milk and cookies



out for Santa began. The idea of placing stockings on the fireplace mantel also comes from this legendary pagan practice.

It is clear that the modern Santa traces his origins back to ancient pagan traditions. Over the centuries, names and customs may evolve. It is interesting that by rearranging the letters in the name "Santa," the name becomes "Satan." In light of the history of this character, it is hard to imagine that the author of this modern day figure we call Santa could be anyone other than Satan.



Lie to Our Children?

Every year millions of professing Christians around the world celebrate what they believe to be the birth of the Messiah—the Savior of the world. Tragically, this celebration actually mocks the very God it purports to honor. Everything about Christmas goes contrary to God’s law and instead embraces a tradition that is clearly condemned in the scriptures. These words may sound severe but the evidence to back them up is unimpeachable. I will now Blow

the Trumpet to challenge you to see for yourself.

Recently, a Christmas story appeared on the Internet in which the PAGAN symbols of Christmas were attempted to be Christianized by giving them allegorical Biblical meanings. According to the storyteller the images so commonly associated with this season now declare a great Christian spiritual message. No longer do they come from the pagan world—a place where the True God is mocked. Today they are made to seem holy—declared so by people (not God)—people who believe they can decide for themselves how they will worship the Savior of the world.

In this modern era of holiday pagan Christianity things like understanding the Temple or the Ark of the Covenant symbolism, and how it represents Jesus Christ and His atoning ministry, or what the prophets proclaimed from God requiring moral purity, are not being taught to our children (or most adults for that matter). Today these things have been replaced with Christmas trees, candy canes and a jolly old man who only asks for milk and cookies. We have come a long way from the time when Jeremiah cried out, “Learn not the way of the heathen.” Now the message is reflected in words like “Dancing around the Christmas tree” and Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer.” No longer are the ministers of God’s people warning that there are serious consequences for ignoring or disobeying God’s commandments, instead the warning is “Santa Claus is coming to town.”



However, one of the most blasphemous things about the practice of millions of “professing Christians” today is their attempt to put “Christ back into Christmas”—which

is a place He never was in to begin with. Satan has enlisted Pastors to help Christianize his pagan lies, holidays and practices.

As you read the story below consider that not one syllable of it is true. It is nothing less than a brazen attempt to rehabilitate evil and to dress it up to look like something good (just as the prophet Isaiah warned about in (Isa 5:20): "calling evil good and good evil"). Can you imagine Paul or Peter blaspheming God this way?

In a very real sense Baal is being invited into many churches and given a seat of prominence, and he has gladly accepted the invitation. In ancient times the Israelites offered their children to Moloch. Today they have Santa Claus a new god, but it's the same pagan practice of children becoming a sacrificial offering to demons. The following story is a popular internet FABLE viewed by multitudes...

"TEACHING THE CHILDREN"...A Modern Christmas FABLE

This is how it happened...I just finished the household chores for the night and was preparing to go to bed, when I heard a noise in the front of the house. I opened the door to the front room and to my surprise, Santa himself stepped out from behind the Christmas tree. He placed his finger over his mouth so I would not cry out. "What are you doing?" I started to ask. The words choked up in my throat, and I saw he had tears in his eyes. His usual jolly manner was gone. Gone was the boisterous soul we all know. He then answered me with a simple statement. "TEACH THE CHILDREN!" I was puzzled; what did he mean? He anticipated my question, and with one quick movement brought forth a miniature toy bag from behind the tree. As I stood bewildered, Santa said:

"Teach the children! Teach them the old meaning of Christmas. The meaning that nowadays Christmas has forgotten." Santa then reached in his bag and pulled out a FIR TREE and placed it before the mantle.

"Teach the children that the pure green color of the stately fir tree remains green all year round, depicting the everlasting hope of mankind, all the needles point heavenward, making it a symbol of man's thoughts turning toward heaven."

"Teach the children that the star was the heavenly sign of promises long ago. God promised a Savior for the world, and the star was the sign of fulfillment of His promise."

"Teach the children that the candle symbolizes that Christ is the light of the world, and when we see this great light we are reminded of He who displaces the darkness."

"Teach the children that the wreath symbolizes the real nature of love. Real love never ceases. Love is one continuous round of affection."

"Teach the children that I, Santa Claus symbolize the generosity and good will we feel during the month of December."

"Teach the children that the holly plant represents immortality. It represents the crown of thorns worn by our Savior. The red holly represents the blood shed by Him." Next he pulled from his bag a GIFT and said... "Teach the children that God so loved the world that HE gave HIS only begotten SON..." "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.

"Teach the children that the wise men bowed before the Holy BABE and presented HIM with gold, frankincense and myrrh. We should always give gifts in the same spirit of the wise men." Santa then reached in his bag and pulled out a CANDY CANE and hung it on the tree.



"Teach the children that the candy cane represents the shepherds' crook. The crook on the staff helps to bring back strayed sheep to the flock. The candy cane is the symbol that we are our brother's keeper." Then he reached in again and pulled out an ANGEL and said:

"Teach the children that it was the angels that heralded in the glorious news of the Savior's birth. The angels sang 'Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace and good will toward men.'" Suddenly I heard a soft twinkling sound, and from his bag he pulled out a BELL.

"Teach the children that as the lost sheep are found by the sound of the bell, it should ring mankind to the fold. The bell symbolizes guidance and return." Santa looked back and was pleased. He looked back at me and I saw that the twinkle was back in his eyes. He said, "Remember:

"Teach the children the true meaning of Christmas and do not put me in the center, for I am but a humble servant of the One that is, and I bow down to worship HIM, our LORD, our GOD." (End of Fable)

Yes, we must teach the children, but we must teach them what God's Word says and not what Santa Says!! I pray the dangerous deceptions are evident to all who read this FABLE. It is a good example of trying to Christianize what is purely pagan. May the Most High God open the eyes His people!

Christmas Presents

Most people believe the tradition of giving Christmas presents comes from the Bible. The assumption is that the wise men gave gifts to Jesus, therefore it is appropriate for us to give gifts to each other. However, careful examination of this tradition will reveal that gift giving has nothing to do with Magi or the gifts they presented to Christ. Both religious and secular history reveal a clear connection between giving gifts during the Christmas season and pagan practices. Consider the following insights concerning this practice.



The interchange of presents between friends is a like characteristic of Christmas and the Saturnalia, and has been adopted by Christians from the Pagans, as the admonition of Tertullian plainly shows. (The Bibliotheca Sacra, vol. 12, p. 153)

Tertullian wrote in his work, **On Idolatry**: "during the pagan feast of the Saturnalia, which was celebrated in December, gifts were "carried to and fro." According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, exchanging gifts at this time of the year may have been influenced by similar customs practiced by the pagans on January 1.

Gifts are exchanged by the French on January 1, by the Spanish and Italians on January 6, and by other nationalities on December 25. In most parts of Europe it was the Christ Child who brought the gifts. After the Reformation, the day itself was personified, and the figure of Father Christmas was later combined with St. Nicholas, [who later became] Santa Claus." (p. 659)

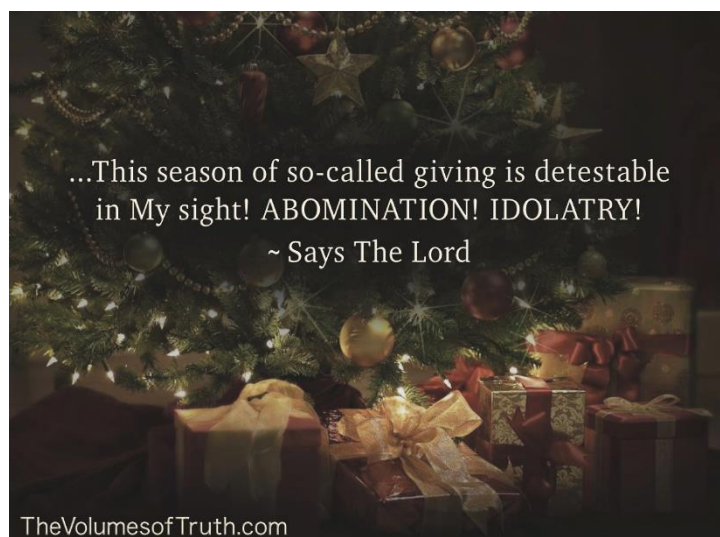
William Walsh provides additional insights into the tradition of exchanging presents: *Christmas gifts themselves remind us of the presents that were exchanged in Rome during the Saturnalia. In Rome, it might be added, the presents usually took the form of wax tapers and dolls – the latter being in their turn a survival of the human sacrifices once offered to Saturn. It is a queer thought that in our Christmas presents we are preserving under another form one of the most savage customs of our barbarian ancestors. (The Story of Santa Klaus, p.67)*

Gifts to a King

It is important to understand that the wise men did not give gifts to each other. Additionally, the gifts they brought to Christ were not birthday presents. Jesus did not receive toys from these visitors, but rather unusual offerings that many believe carry great significance. It has been suggested that gold is a gift given to a king, frankincense a gift given to a priest, and myrrh a gift given to a condemned man. The latter because myrrh was used in preparing a body for burial. It is clear that the wise men presented gifts to Jesus because they understood Him to be a great King. The protocol at that time was to never approach the presence of kings or dignitaries without bearing a gift. Adam Clark's commentary expresses it this way:

"The people of the east never approach the presence of kings and great personages without a present in their hands." (Vol. 5, p. 46)

The truth is that gift giving at this time of year is not scriptural and has no basis in the story of the wise men. The giving of gifts at this time of year came from the practice of the ancient Saturnalia.



Commercialism, Not Christianity

In the United States, retailers have glamorized Christmas as no other holiday. They lavishly decorate their stores, pipe in special music, and hire "Santa Clauses" all for one purpose: to lure shoppers into a spirit of consuming. So important is Christmas to the economy of the United States that the absence of such a holiday could literally paralyze the country. It has been suggested that 50% of annual profits enjoyed by retailers is generated by Christmas-related sales.

Recently, an executive of one of America's largest retail chains suggested that 75% of their profits were generated between Thanksgiving and Christmas.



Regardless of how Christmas has been packaged, it is a day dedicated to materialism wrapped in colorful paper, dressed up in a red suit, and swathed in soft fuzzy angel hair. People tell themselves they are worshiping Christ but this holiday is really about materialism and has nothing to do with Jesus Christ!

The Yule Log, Holly, Wreaths, and Mistletoe

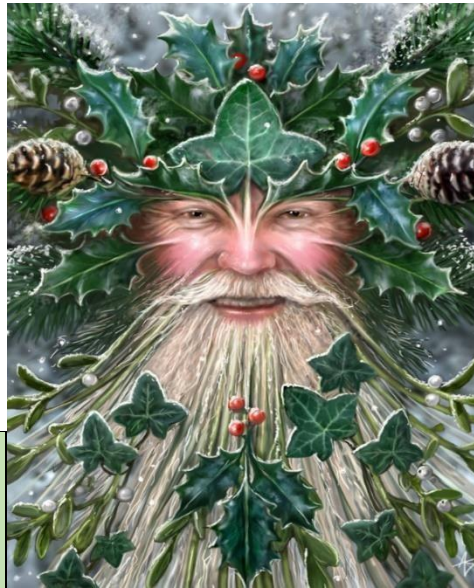


Today, most people think the word "Yule" refers to the time of Christmas. However, this word is actually a derivative of the Nordic word *geol*. The Nordic people pronounced their "g" with our "y" sound. The word *geol* has two meanings. It can mean "noise and revelry" or it can mean "wheel." According to the Encyclopedia Britannica 11th Edition: *The translation "wheel" reflected the shape of the sun and pictured the turn of the year. In essence, "Yule tide" defines a period of one month before and one month after the winter solstice which was a time of great revelry at year's end.*

Alexander Hislop explains the assimilation of the Yule log into the Christmas tradition: *As Christianity spread to northern Europe, it met with the observance of another pagan festival held in December in honor of the sun. This time it was the Yule-feast of the Norsemen, which lasted for twelve days. During this time log-fires were burnt to assist the revival of the sun. Shrines and other sacred places were decorated with such greenery as holly, ivy, and bay, and it was an occasion for feasting and drinking.*

Equally old was the practice of of priests among the Celts of Britain and Ireland to decorate mistletoe, the fruit of the oak-tree considered sacred. Among the oak-tree was sacred to Odin, their god of war. (The

European Holly was sacred to druids who associated it with the winter solstice, and for Romans, holly was considered the plant of Saturn.



the Druids, the cast ancient France, their temples with which they German tribes the

Christian Calendar, p. 22)

Gerard and Patricia Del Re

explain that in the pagan world, fertility played a major part in worship and that winter vegetation was used to reflect this belief.

In midwinter, the idea of rebirth and fertility was tremendously important. In the snows of winter, the evergreen was a symbol of the life that would return...

Evergreens were used for decoration... Light was important in dispelling the growing darkness of the solstice, so a Yule log was lighted with the remains of the previous year's log. (The Christmas Almanac, p. 18)

The book *Christmas Folklore* explains that the symbols of holly and mistletoe were borrowed from the Romans who used them to depict reproduction.

Many of the plants used at Christmas are symbols of fertility. Certainly any evergreen with its ability to return verdure in the barren months is appropriate, but by far the most interesting are the holly, the ivy, and the mistletoe.

Holly, with its pricking leaves, white flowers, and red berries symbolizes the male reproductive urge... holly is the male and the ivy is the female. This use of the plants was... borrowed by the Christians along with other customs of the Roman Saturnalia." (pp. 22-23)

The pagan custom of kissing under the mistletoe was part of the first steps in the revelry of the ancient Saturnalia. It came from the Druid superstition in the winter solstice that only good could pass by the parasitic plant.

As benign as these symbols may appear, make no mistake about it: they are deeply rooted in practices God condemns throughout the scriptures. God does not need the Yule log, holly, mistletoe, or any other form of vegetation used in the worship of false gods. The Bible records that while speaking to a woman from Samaria, Jesus said that God must be worshiped in spirit and in truth (Jn. 4:24). The belief that these symbols are legitimately connected to Christ's birth is totally false. They are pagan to the core and should be forsaken.

The Birth of the Messiah

The belief that Jesus was born on or near December 25 has no basis in fact. Actually, this date has a very sullied past. It was the birthday of the sun god Mithra and of Nimrod and is connected with many vile practices associated with paganism. Virtually all credible records indicate that the early Church did not even celebrate birthdays. The *World Book Encyclopedia* reveals the following:



The exact date of Christ's birth is not known. The early Christians did not celebrate His birth, because they considered the celebration of anyone's birth to be a pagan custom. The first mention of the observance of Christ's birthday appears about A.D. 200. For many years, several dates were used. December 25 was first mentioned in 336. According to the Catholic

Encyclopedia, it is impossible to identify the date of Christ's birth. However, despite this, Catholic scholars have set that date as December 25.

Jesus Was Not Born in Winter

The scriptures reveal that at the time of Jesus' birth, shepherds were **"abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night" (Lk. 2:8)**. This could never occur in Judea during the dead of winter. At that time, shepherds brought their flocks in from the mountains and fields corralling them around October 15. This was done to protect the sheep from the cold wet weather during this time of year. Adam Clarke relates in his commentary that it was the custom of shepherds to send their sheep out in the spring, around the time of the Passover, and to bring them back at the beginning of the first rains (Vol. 5, p. 370). Werner Keller, in his book *The Bible as History*, provides some clear insight regarding this issue.

At Christmas-time Bethlehem is in the grip of frost, and in the Promised Land no cattle would have been in the fields in that temperature. This fact is borne out by a remark in the Talmud to the effect that in that neighborhood the flocks were put out to grass in March and brought in again at the beginning of November. (pp. 331-332)



When Was Jesus Born? The Bible not only rejects a winter birth of the Messiah, but actually presents a strong case that Jesus was born in the autumn. This is because the scriptures provide benchmarks that can assist in determining when Jesus was conceived. The gospel of Luke (Lk. 1:5-17) records an event in which the angel Gabriel visited a priest named

Zacharias and informed him that his wife Elizabeth would give birth to a son (John the Baptist). Gabriel made this announcement while Zacharias was serving in the temple. Luke indicates that Zacharias performed this service during "the course of Abia" (or Abijah). According to First Chronicles, Abijah served during "the eighth course" (1Chron. 24:10). The great Jewish historian Josephus wrote that each course was one week long with priests rotating so that each would serve twice during the year. In this case, Zacharias would have served from Iyar 27 through Sivan 5. This period would coincide with late May or early June.

Luke's gospel goes on to state that Zacharias returned home immediately after his days of service were complete (Lk. 1:23). Shortly after his return, his wife Elizabeth conceived. This would mean her conception would have taken place during June or perhaps July at the latest. The birth of John the Baptist would therefore have taken place in the spring (March - April), probably during the time of the Days of Unleavened Bread.

But what does this have to do with the birth of Jesus? Luke's gospel indicates that Gabriel also spoke to Mary and informed her that she would give birth to the Messiah (Lk. 1:26-36). When Mary asked how she would know this was true, Gabriel explained that her cousin Elizabeth was in her sixth month of pregnancy.

**And, behold, your cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.
(Luke 1:36)**

Mary then left her home to seek Elizabeth. When she arrived, Elizabeth confirmed that Christ had already been conceived in Mary (Lk 1:39-42). The time of this visit was during the winter, probably December or January. This being the case, Jesus would have been born nine months later – in other words, in the fall.

It is interesting to note that Jewish tradition believes the world was created on the first day of the civil year, the Feast of Trumpets, which occurs in mid-September or early October. Although the Bible does not specifically identify the exact date of Jesus' birth, some authorities have suggested that He, too, was born on this day. Clearly, however, Jesus was not born on or near December 25 and any representation to the contrary is completely false.

The Wise Men

One of the most popular scenes depicted during the Christmas season is that of three wise men offering gifts to Jesus while He is in a manger. Some have suggested that these men were magicians or perhaps astrologers. However, this is simply not true. **Halley's Bible Handbook** provides a credible explanation regarding the identity of these visitors.

These wise men came from Babylon, or the country beyond the land where the human race had its origin, the land of Abraham, land of the Jewish Captivity, where many Jews still lived. They belonged to the learned class, advisers of kings. Perhaps they were familiar with the

Jewish Scriptures, and knew of the expectation of a coming Messianic King. It was the land of Daniel, and no doubt they knew of Daniel's 70 weeks' prophecy; and also Balaam's prophecy about "A Star out of Jacob" (Numbers 24:17). They were men of high standing, for they had access to Herod. They are commonly spoken of as the "three Wise-men." But, the Scripture does not say how many. (pp. 418-419)

The traditional view is that there were three magi, or wise men. This view is held because of the number of gifts (gold, frankincense, and myrrh) mentioned in the scriptures. However, the gospels make no mention of a specific number of visitors. It has even been suggested that there may have been twelve, one representing each of the tribes of Israel. According to Halley, there may also have been a significant number accompanying the magi.

There were probably more, or at least they were with an entourage of scores or hundreds, for it would not be safe for a small group to travel a thousand miles over desert wastes that were infested with bandits (especially carrying gold). Their arrival in Jerusalem was of sufficient show of importance to stir the whole city.



Halley also explains: *these wise men had four functions. The first was to pay homage to Christ as representatives from distant lands. It has been suggested that these men may have been the first Gentiles to worship the Messiah. The second function was to call attention to Jerusalem of the Messiah's arrival. The third was to provide financial resources (the gifts) that would be used to pay for Joseph and Mary's flight to Egypt with Jesus. And fourth, these wise men may have laid the groundwork in their country*

*for the future preaching of the gospel. (**Halley's Bible Handbook**, p.419)*

It is also important to understand that contrary to most nativity scenes which show the wise men visiting Jesus in a manger, they actually visited Him in a home. Matthew's gospel proves this conclusively.

And when they were come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down, and worshiped Him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. (Mt. 2:11)

Additionally, this visit may not have taken place until Jesus was several months old. According to the scriptures, the magi first visited Herod and explained the reason for their visit (Mt. 2:2). When Herod heard that the magi had come to visit the King of the Jews, he instructed them to return and inform him where this king might be found (Mt. 2:8). This was done because Herod feared such a king and wanted to have Him destroyed.

When the magi failed to return to inform Herod of the Messiah's location, this evil ruler became enraged. He then ordered the murder of all male children two years old and younger in Judea and its surrounding areas (Mt. 2:16). Herod probably concluded, based on the discussions with the magi that several months had passed since Jesus' birth. Therefore, he conservatively estimated that Jesus would be younger than two years old. Thus the order was given.

The First Noel

One of the most popular Christmas carols is the song "The First Noel." This song begins with the words "The first noel the angels did say..." Many Christians assume that noel refers to Christmas. However, this is not true. The word noel is of Celtic origin and comes from novo and hel. The word simply means "new sun," and again finds its roots in sun worship and ancient



pagan religious practices based on the winter solstice. Once again, something that seems so beautiful on the outside has its roots in religious practices that go totally contrary to true Christianity.

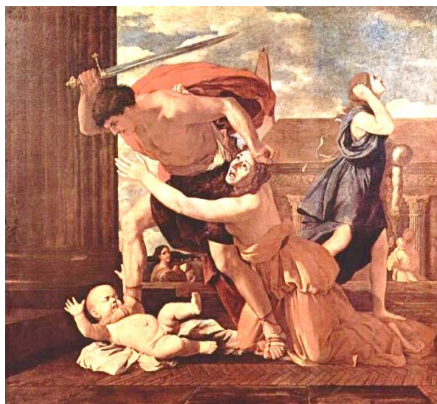
Peace on Earth, Good Will toward Men

Millions of Christians around the world believe that Christ came to bring peace on earth and good will toward men. This belief is based on the words found in Luke 2:14. There, an angel informs shepherds that the Messiah was born. At that moment, the shepherds heard an angelic chorus praising God with the words **"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men."**

These words appear to be conveying that Christ was bringing peace to the world. However, this is not true; Jesus' own words contradict the idea that His intent was to bring peace to mankind. Jesus clearly stated that His life produced conflict. This is because the truth that He taught compelled people to take sides – either they were for Him or against Him. Notice what He said.

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that loved son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. (Mt. 10:34-37)

It is ironic that even as a result of His birth, an act of great violence occurred. In response to Jesus' birth, King Herod committed one of the most violent and bloody acts recorded in scripture. He conspired and carried out a plan to murder innocent children.



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. (Mt. 2:16)

With this understanding, how should Luke 2:14 be translated? When this verse is carefully examined, it is clear that the angels' anthem was two-fold. First, it exalted God who reigns over everything. Second, the angels speak of peace, but a peace that comes only to men who seek God and on whom His favor rests.

Jesus spoke of this peace to His apostles' just hours before His death. On the eve of His crucifixion, Jesus said:

Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (Jn. 14:27)

With these words, Jesus was stating that there would be a special peace to those who followed Him. That peace is the peace of mind that comes from knowing God is actively involved in the lives of His children and that He will never forsake them. With this understanding, Luke 2:14 is better rendered "Peace on earth to men of good will." This is similar to the Knox Translation which states "And peace on earth to men that are God's friends."

However, there are those who do not love God or His way. To those there can be no true peace, but only conflict. Jesus' birth brought with it the potential for great peace as well as Great War. It is interesting that when Christ returns to this earth to set up His millennial Kingdom, the world will be engaged in the greatest war in the history of this world. However, once the earth is conquered by the Messiah, there *will be* the great world peace ever known to mankind.

Should Christians Celebrate Christmas?



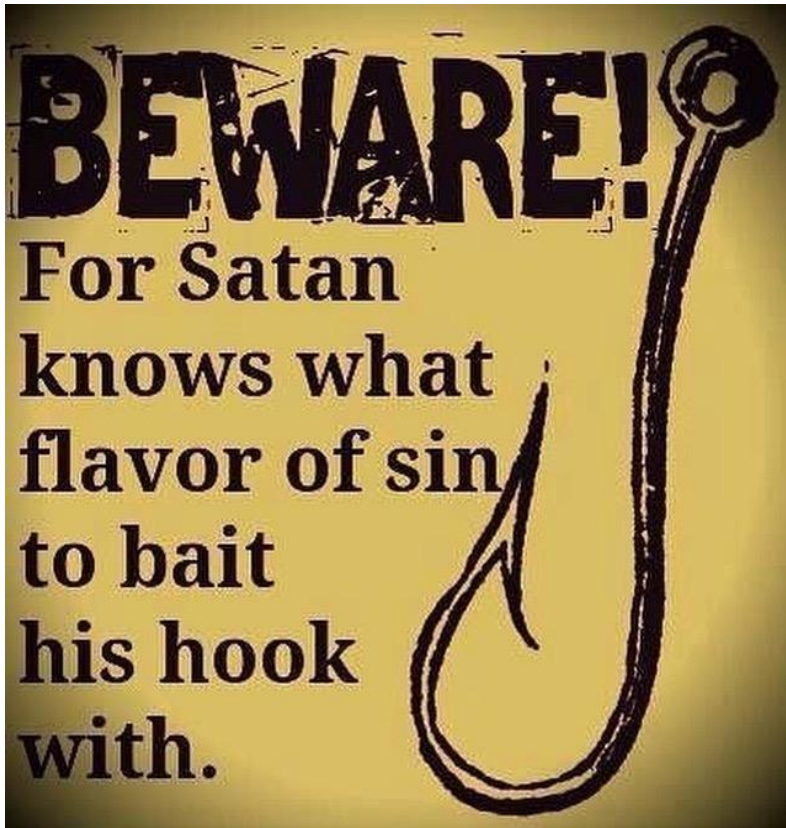
It is undeniable that Christmas is the most anticipated time of the year for millions of Christians. It is a time of beautiful music, delicious food, bright colors, and family reunions. However, there is one thing Christmas is not; it is not now, nor has it ever been, Christian. The Puritans understood this vital point. William Prynne wrote the following during the time of King Charles:

Our Christmas lords of Misrule... were derived from the Roman Saturnalia and Bacchanalian festivals; which should cause all pious Christians eternally to abominate them. (Book of Christian Folklore, p. 8)

As innocent and appealing as this day may appear, it has at its very roots a dark and godless origin. Tom Flynn, in his book, *The Problem with Christmas*, provides a very interesting observation about the message Christmas sends.

If His purpose in coming was anything like what is supposed, then in celebrating His birthday each year Christians do violence, not honor, to his memory. For in celebrating a birthday at all, we sustain exactly the kind of tradition His coming is thought to have been designed to cast down. (p.42)

It is absolutely essential to understand that God hates a lie, no matter what form it takes. Satan himself was characterized as the father of lies (Jn. 8:44) and the deceiver of the whole world (Rev. 12:9).

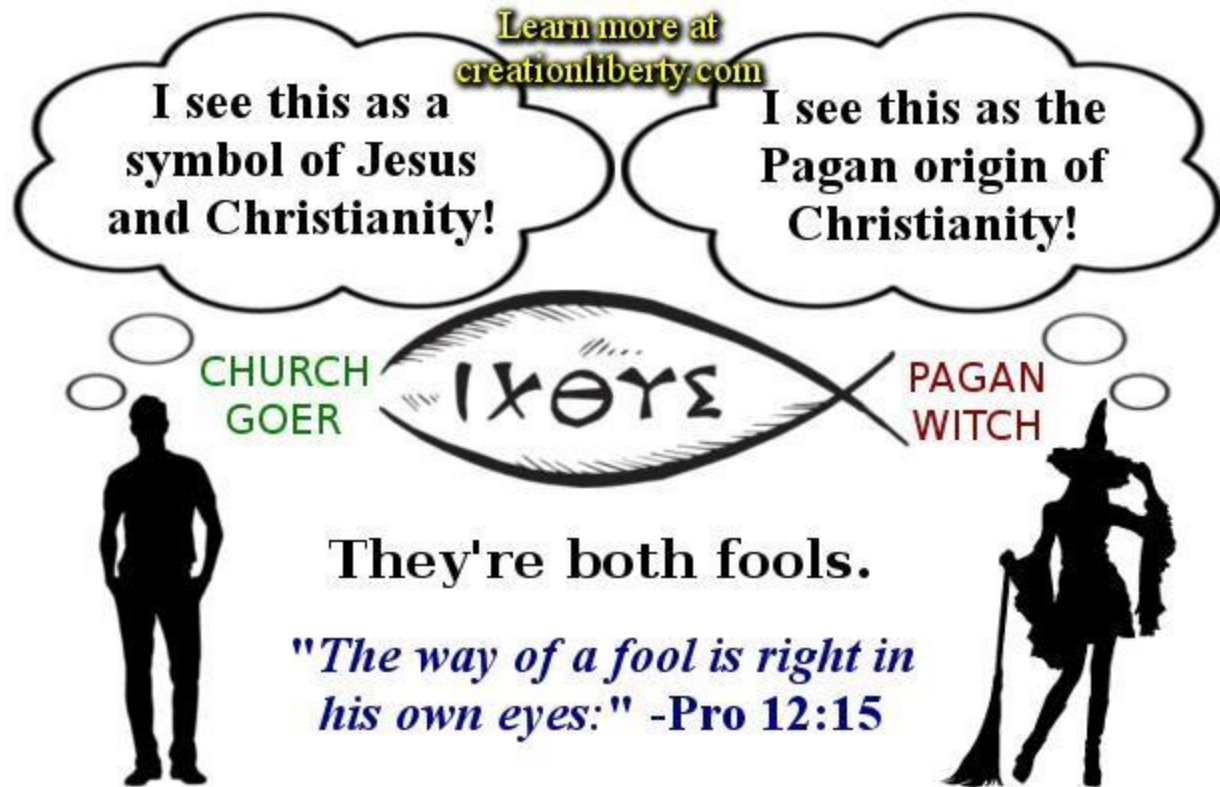


The scriptures also reveal that Satan appears as an angel of light. Is it any wonder that festivals honoring him would possess great beauty and appeal? He has deceived Christians into thinking that his symbols can be Christianized.

For instance, the Pagan Fish is yet another symbol that has been plagiarized by Christians. The 'fish symbol' is today instantly recognized as a "Christian symbol" but this symbol was in use by Pagans for many generations before Christianity.

The fish is a symbol of female sexuality. The most common

interpretation is its derivation from a simplified image of a woman's womb or vagina. The fish symbol was often drawn by overlapping two thin crescent moons, signifying a woman's monthly cycle.



Some would argue that although symbols are pagan, they have been stripped from the hands of paganism and offered to God. A leading evangelical minister once characterized these pagan symbols as "confiscated for Christ." This is not the first time such a claim has been made.

Fifteen centuries before the birth of Christ, the children of Israel were led out of Egypt with a high hand. No sooner were they free from bondage than they wanted to return to the pagan practices they had just left. While Moses was receiving the Ten Commandments from God, the children of Israel appealed to Aaron to fashion a golden calf just like the idols of Egypt.

...the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, "**Up, make us gods, which shall go before us...**" (Ex. 32:1)

Aaron consented to their request and instructed the children of Israel to gather their jewelry so that he could fashion it into an idol (Ex. 32:2-3). Aaron then made a molten calf and declared...

These be your gods, O Israel, which brought you up out of the land of Egypt. (Ex. 32:4)

Aaron then made a proclamation and seems unimaginable in light of the great miracles Israel witnessed in their deliverance. After making this idol, Aaron proclaimed "a feast to the Eternal." God was so angry at this behavior that He actually suggested to Moses that the children of Israel be wiped out.

Now therefore let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of you a great nation.

(Ex. 32:10)



It is clear God was furious with the Israelites for trying to "confiscate" the pagan religious practices of Egypt for use in worshiping Him. As the scriptures repeatedly demonstrate, God despises the perverse religions of man.

Therefore Consider this...

For a Christian to embrace the world's customs around December 25, is the same betrayal as someone making love to their spouse while also embracing another lover, or keeping and displaying treasured mementos of that other lover, or practicing pleasurable acts that please that lover. If you think this is extreme or harsh, read chapters Ezekiel 16 and 23 carefully. This is called ADULTERY!

You adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. (James 4:4)

Adultery is horrible. When a spouse gives their self and their love to another for pleasures, this is a terrible betrayal to their mate, who is defrauded by having their most personal and prized object treacherously shared with a competitor.

1. Adultery is outrageously wicked (Lev 20:10; Num 5:11-31; Job 31:9-12; 6:32-35).

Pr.

2. Jealousy is the result. It is the anger, envy, and pain when something dear to you is given to another. It occurs intensely in a spouse, when their mate gives their body and love to others. Adultery causes great jealousy, as Scripture and nature show (Num 5:11-31; Prov. 6:32-35).
3. God is Jealous. He created and saved His people from serving the devil to be His very own bride. He expects total adoration and complete faithfulness. The first and great commandment is to love Him with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength. He will not share your love or interest with anything. His name is Jealous, and He burns in jealous rage when His people even flirt with anything else (Ex 20:3-5; 34:14; Deut 4:24; 6:15; 29:20; 32:16; Josh 24:19; Is 42:8; 48:11; I Cor. 10:22).
4. God hates idols and icons. God condemned all idols, any graven image or likeness of anything, and any devotion given to them, because He is jealous of any flirting or distraction by His chosen bride with the false gods of paganism. Their gods are bugs, trees, stones, and stars and creation itself. He is the invisible Spirit of eternity. He does not want any other object getting even indirect attention. He even hated Moses' brass serpent (Ex 20:3-5; Deut 4:15-26; 5:8; II Kgs 18:3-4; Isa 40:25).
5. False religion is spiritual adultery. The Old Testament condemned association with false religion as spiritual adultery with false gods in the most graphic terms. Due to the ignorance of most Christians, they are unaware of these awful charges and descriptions in the word of God: (Ex 34:10-17; Lev 17:1-9; 20:1-8; Num 14:33; 15:37-41; Deut 31:14-21; Judges 2:17; 8:27,33; II Kings 9:22; I Chron. 5:25; II Chron. 21:12-15; Psalm 73:25-28; 106:34-43; Jer. 3:15,9; 13:25-27; Ezek. 6:8-10; 16:15-38; 20:28-32; 23:1-49; 43:7-10; Hosea 1:1-3; 2:1-5; 4:12-19; 5:1-7; 6:4-11; 9:1; Nah 3:1-7, James 4:8).

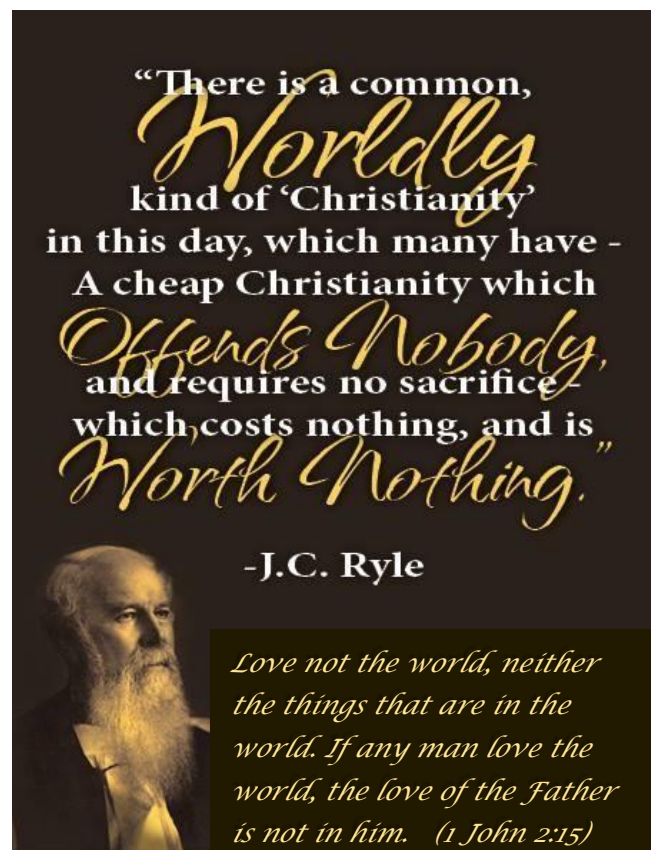
**“I, the LORD
Your God,
am a Jealous God.”**
(Exodus 20:5)

**Cheating on
the Lord**

James 4:4-5

***Am I committing
spiritual adultery?***

6. Props to worship God are condemned. The Lord knew His people would be intrigued by the customs of pagan religion, including the use of green trees. So He condemned any flirting with false gods by His people using their customs in worshipping Him. Their intentions or motives toward Him did not matter! He was extremely jealous of their use of traditions and/or objects from His competitors while professing to love Him only (Ex32:1-6, 26-29; Deut 12:1-4; 12:29-32).
7. Christians cannot flirt with the world. Our blessed God plainly condemns friendship with this world as spiritual adultery. If you love the world, then you have betrayed and cheated on the Lord. He hates everything the world loves, and He demands His people to come out from them and not even touch their things, including Christmas, which is the world's favorite religious and commercial festival (II Cor. 6:14-17; Luke 16:15; James 4:4; I John 2:15-17; Rev 18:4).
8. True saints are chaste virgins. Paul's ministerial work, based in godly jealousy and fear, was to present churches and saints as chaste virgins to Christ, pure from fornication with another Jesus, spirit, or gospel. There is another Jesus presented by Satan, but loyal saints will have nothing to do with this pretending seducer. Neither will they be moved by the Christmas spirit that infects so many during the final weeks of the year (II Cor. 11:1-4; Eph. 5:27; Col 1:28; I John 4:1-6).
9. Compromise is adultery against Christ. We are living in the perilous times of the last days, when an effeminate and compromising brand of Christianity threatens the true saints and churches of Jesus. Most so-called Christians today love the world and pleasure more than holy living and doctrinal preaching. They have no heart for earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. They prefer fables of Santa and Christmas dramas at church rather than hard preaching of God's inspired Scriptures. They have turned from the Lover of their soul to entertainers and seducers (II Tim 3:1 - 4:5; Jude 1:3).



10. Only total rejection will work. God is jealous. He will not let you flirt with His competitors. He will not let you keep mementos from lovers, like an evergreen tree. He will not let you remember and keep the important dates of intimacy with paganism, like December 25. He will not let you blaspheme His name. He demands that you separate totally from your lovers, called the world, and false religion (Rom 12:1-2; 16:17-18; II Cor. 6:14-17; II Thess. 3:6; I Tim 6:3-5; II Tim 3:1-5; Titus 3:10-11; Rev 18:4).

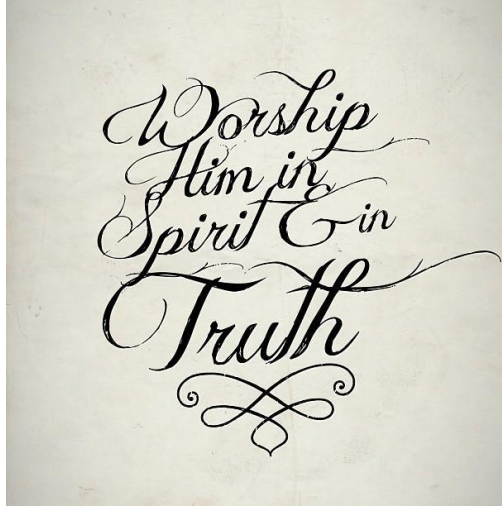
The Bible clearly condemns observing Christmas and other holy days of Rome's whitewashed paganism. We must be Bible Christians, and our religion must be based squarely on the word of God without any regard for human tradition, popular opinion, warm and fuzzy feelings, or the countless compromises and inventions of our modern day Christianity.

Conclusion

Is Christmas Christian? The simple answer is "no;" it is an *emphatic* "no!" Christmas is not Christian; it is pagan to the core. Its images and symbols were embraced from pagan practices and should be abandoned by all true believers. While speaking to the children of Israel, God gave a strong admonition concerning the assimilation of false religions into the worshiping of Him.

Take heed to yourself that you be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before you; and that you enquire not after their gods, saying, "How did these nations serve their gods? Even so I will I do likewise. You shall not do so unto the Eternal your God: for every abomination to the Eternal, which He hates, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods. Whatsoever thing I command you, observe to do it: you shall not add thereto, nor diminish from it. (Deut. 12:30-32)

The Bible reveals that Jesus Christ will return to this earth and establish His millennial Kingdom. When He comes, will He find His children have returned to Egypt? And what about you? Will you accept the teachings of a worldly Christianity that embraces pagan practices and dresses them up as Christian, or will you...



The Origin of Easter

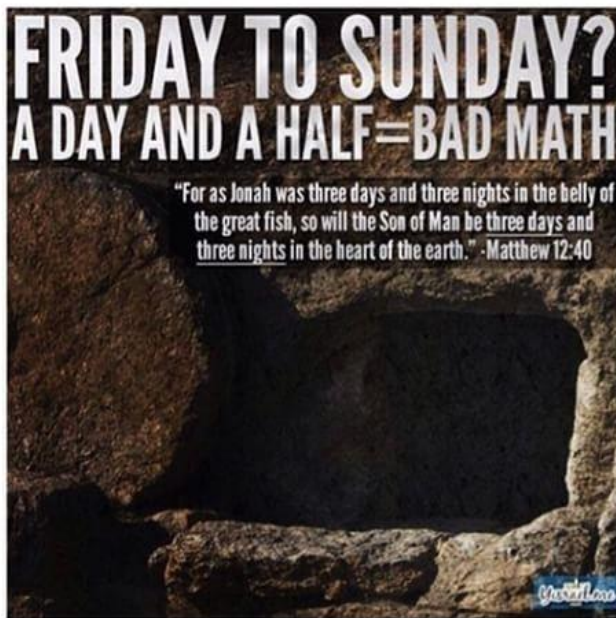
Every year, millions of professing Christians around the world participate in a celebration they believe honors the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This celebration is called Easter and it is arguably the most important observance in modern Christianity. But when did this day originate? And from where did it come? What about its symbols and customs? Are they mentioned in the Bible? Why is Easter celebrated at sunrise? What is the origin of the Easter egg? What about bunnies? What do these symbols have to do with the

resurrection of Jesus Christ? What about the traditional foods such as Easter ham or hot cross buns? Why is it called "Easter"? Is this term mentioned in the Bible and what does it mean? Is there a story behind this "most holy" time of the year? Does the God of the Bible respect this observance? This booklet examines the tradition of Easter in light of the historical record and the scriptures. What you read in these pages may surprise you. It might even shock you, but the words are incontrovertible. They express without apology the truth about Easter.

Although most professing Christians believe Easter celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ, its roots can be traced to ancient civilizations that existed long before Jesus' birth, let alone His death and resurrection. The ancient civilizations of Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, and Greece as well as that of Rome itself all embraced religious rites that greatly resemble the holiday we call Easter.

The term Easter does not come from the Bible, but rather from the name of an ancient goddess of spring. Consider the words of Compton's Pictured Encyclopedia:

The name Easter comes from the ancient Anglo-Saxon goddess of spring. Eostre or Ostara, in whose honor an annual spring festival was held. Some of our Easter customs have come from this and other pre-Christian spring festivals. (Vol. 4, p. 140)



The famous historian Alexander Hislop clearly indicates that the term "Easter" is not Christian, but rather Chaldean in origin:

It is not a Christian name. It bears its Chaldean origin on its very forehead. Easter is nothing else than Astarte, one of the titles of Beltis, the queen of heaven, whose name, as pronounced by the people of Nineveh, was evidently identical with that now in common use in this country. That name, as found by Layard on the Assyrian monuments, is Ishtar. (The Two Babylons, Hislop, p.103)

The connection between Easter and

the celebration of the goddess of spring is undeniable. Other highly credible reference works acknowledge that the roots of Easter are deeply woven into the pagan world. Consider the words of Funk and Wagnalls Standard Reference Encyclopedia:

Easter embodies traditions of an ancient time antedating the rise of Christianity. The origin of its name is lost in the dim past; some scholars believe it probably is derived from Eostre, the Anglo-Saxon name of a Teutonic goddess of spring and fertility. (Vol. 8, p. 2940)

Tragically, despite having its roots in paganism, Easter was a festival that later professing Christian leaders came to embrace as their own. According to Grolier's Encyclopedia, the leaders of the church became more than willing to adopt ancient pagan customs into their worship.



Satan is not fighting churches; he is joining them. He does more harm by sowing tares than by pulling up wheat. He accomplishes more by imitation than by outright opposition.

The name of this holiday and the time it is celebrated have led people to believe that an earlier holiday existed on this day before the Christian observance. For many ancient nations joyously celebrated the end of winter and the resurrection of the sun at this season of the year; and some devoted this festival to Eostre, Germanic goddess of spring. The church fathers turned this heathen holiday into the Christian celebration of the resurrection. (1966,

Vol. 17)

Many believe that these "church fathers" embraced the symbols of Easter for strategic reasons. In essence, these religious leaders believed the only way they could persuade the pagan world to accept Christianity was by adopting many of the rituals these new "converts" held dear. Consider the words of

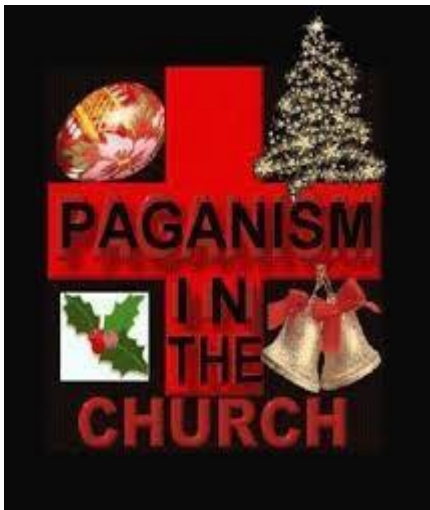
Reader's Digest.

By a stroke of tactical genius, the church, while intolerant of pagan beliefs, was able to harness the powerful emotions generated by pagan worship. Often, churches were sited where temples had stood before, and many heathen festivals were added to the Christians calendar. Easter, for instance, a time of sacrifice and rebirth in the Christian year, takes its

name from the Norse goddess Eostre, in whose honor rites were held every spring. She in turn was simply a northern version of the Phoenician earth-mother Astarte, goddess of fertility. (The Last Two Million Years by the Reader's Digest Association, 1981, p. 215)

In essence, apostate Christianity has proclaimed as "holy" that which the Bible declares "profane." God once issued a scathing indictment against the priests of Israel because they did the very same thing. Consider the words of the prophet Ezekiel.

Her priests have violated My law, and have profaned Mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from My Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. (Ezek. 22:26)



These words should stand as a powerful reminder that God takes very seriously the way in which He is worshiped. When man takes upon himself the right to determine how he will honor God, he assumes a right that he does not have. God alone will determine what honors or dishonors Him.

Throughout the Bible, God specifically outlines the terms and conditions of His worship. Still, man believes that he has a better way and as a result, has created symbols that define a faith that is abhorrent to God and is condemned in the scriptures.

An Ancient Easter Celebration

Today, Easter is regarded as the chief of Christian holidays. However, it is anything but Christian. Many ancient civilizations celebrated festivals centering around the death and resurrection of a man-god. In Assyria, it was Semeramis and Ninus. In Babylon, it was Ishtar and Tammuz. In Syria, it was Astarte and Baal. In Greece, it was Aphrodite and Adonis. The Interpreter's Dictionary provides some very interesting insight concerning how ancient civilizations embraced a belief strangely familiar to that of Easter.

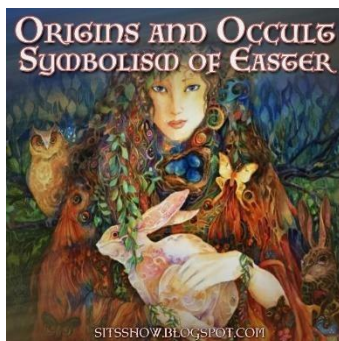
The oldest common feature of the religions of the ancient Near East was the worship of a great mother goddess, the personification of fertility. Associated with her, usually as a

consort, was a young god who died and came to life again, like the vegetation which quickly withers but blooms again... His absence produced infertility of the earth, of man, and of beast. His consort mourned and searched for him. His return brought renewed fertility and rejoicing. In Mesopotamia, the divine couple appear as Ishtar and Tammuz, in Egypt, as Isis and Osiris. (Vol. 2, p. 265)

An Ancient Egyptian Easter

Consider the Easter story as it originated in Egypt. According to tradition, the goddess Isis was married to her brother Osiris. Osiris was killed and pieces of his body were scattered over the land of Egypt. When Isis received word of the death of her brotherhusband, she set out on a journey to retrieve the pieces. Once she found them, Isis began casting spells in an attempt to bring Osiris back to life. According to the legend, she partly succeeded and appealed for one last night with Osiris. During that evening, she conceived a son named Horus; however, Osiris departed to take his place in the heavens along with his father, Ra, the sun god.

Tradition holds that Osiris was raised from the dead and ascended to heaven during the time of the vernal (spring) equinox. It was at this time that the death and resurrection of pagan gods were claimed to have taken place. This is only one of several legends concerning the resurrection of a man who had joined the ranks of the gods but it stands as a model which has been used throughout the Christian world. Tragically, such Pagan myths are the truly miraculous story of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, especially when their symbols and customs are promoted by professing Christian ministers and their churches.



Easter – It's Symbols and Customs

The symbols and customs of Easter convey powerful images of this holiday. Consider the Easter egg, bunnies, hot cross buns and sunrise services, just to name a few. These symbols stand as a constant reminder of the Easter season. Throughout history, religions have used symbols and traditions as a means by which to perpetuate their beliefs. Symbols are designed to add both meaning and appeal to seasons and events. The symbols associated with Easter have great appeal to this holiday's celebrants. However, after careful examination of these symbols and traditions, a much different picture emerges. As unbelievable as it may seem,

these symbols can be traced to the pagan world and were used extensively in the worship of false gods. Consider the words of Compton's Encyclopedia:

Many Easter customs come from the Old World... colored eggs and rabbits have come from pagan antiquity as symbols of new life... Our name "Easter" comes from Eostre, an ancient Anglo-Saxon goddess, originally of the dawn. (Vol. 4)

The symbols of Easter, as appealing as they may be, have nothing to do with the resurrection of Jesus Christ but rather find their roots in religions that reject the God of the Bible. Consider the following symbols associated with the celebration of Easter.

The Easter Egg



One of the most prominent symbols associated with Easter is the egg. Every year, eggs unsuspecting children are taught to decorate this symbol with bright colors and designs. Sometimes, the eggs are hidden and everyone is encouraged to seek out these "treasures" and place them in baskets. Even the White House hosts an annual Easter egg hunt. But from where did this custom originate? And what does it have to do with the resurrection of Jesus Christ? It is important to understand that Easter eggs have absolutely nothing to do with biblical Christianity but rather trace their origin to the pagan world. This fact is confirmed by the Encyclopedia Britannica.

Handmade Ancient Egypt, Nagada II Easter

...at Easter, popular customs reflect many ancient pagan survivals connected with spring fertility rites, such as the symbols of the Easter egg and the Easter hare or rabbit. (Vo. IV, p. 605)

The Encyclopedia of Religion states that the Easter egg was used prominently in pagan fertility rites:



... the egg is a powerful symbol of fertility, purity and rebirth. It is used in magical rituals to promote fertility and restore virility; to look into the future, to bring good weather; to encourage the growth of crops and to protect both cattle and children against misfortune. All over the world it represents life and creation, fertility and resurrection... (and) was linked with Easter. (1987, p. 37)

The egg has been a sacred symbol to numerous pagan civilizations and was used prolifically in religious ceremonies in Egypt. Alexander Hislop, in his book **The Two Babylons**, relates an interesting chronicle of its use in religious practices.

From Egypt these sacred eggs can be distinctly traced to the banks of the Euphrates. The classic poets are full of the fable of the mystic egg of the Babylonians; and thus its tale is told by Hyginus, the Egyptian, the learned keeper of the Palatine Library at Rome, in the time of Augustus, who was skilled in all the wisdom of his native country: "An egg of wondrous size is said to have fallen from heaven into the river Euphrates. The fishes rolled it to the bank, where the doves having settled upon it, hatched it, and out came Venus, who afterwards was called the Syrian Goddess" (Astarte). (p. 109)

In addition to its use in the religious ceremonies in Egypt, the egg was also a powerful religious symbol throughout Asia and Europe.

The mystic egg of Babylon, hatching the Venus Ishtar, fell from heaven to the Euphrates. Dye eggs were sacred Easter offerings in Egypt, as they are still in China and Europe. Easter, or spring, was the season of birth, terrestrial and celestial." (Egyptian Belief and Modern Thought, pp. 211-212)

Tragically, despite knowing of its pagan origin, the church at Rome willingly adopted the egg as its own symbol of the resurrection.

The church did not oppose this, though many egg customs were pre-Christian in origin, because the egg provided a fresh and powerful symbol of the resurrection and the transformation of death into life.

(The Encyclopedia of Religion, 1987, p.



www.AlephTavScriptures.com

37)

Hislop, in his work *The Two Babylons*, explains that it was the normal practice of the Catholic Church to integrate paganism into its liturgy. This was done to attract pagan converts.

To conciliate the pagans to nominal Christianity, Rome, pursuing its usual policy, took measures to get the Christian and Pagan festivals amalgamated, and, by a complicated but skillful adjustment of the calendar, it was found no difficult matter, in general, to get Paganism and Christianity - now sunk far in idolatry - in this as in so many other things, to shake hands. (p. 105)

It is clear that the Church of Rome did not find it difficult to embrace pagan practices and integrate them into their own worship. But God warns against such a practice. The great prophet Jeremiah wrote, **"Learn not the way of the heathen" (Jer. 10:2)**. Even Jesus warned that it was possible to worship God in vain.

In vain do they worship Me, seeking after doctrines the commandments of men. (Mk. 7:7)

Jesus went on to say, "You make the law of God of none effect through your tradition" (Mt. 15:6). The point to this is that God never instructed man to gather eggs and decorate them. As fun as this activity may be to children and parents alike, its origins are pagan and this God hates.

The Easter Bunny

The bunny is one of the most cherished symbols of Easter. These cuddly creatures are included in numerous bedtime stories and have endeared themselves to children around the world. But how did the bunny become such an integral part of a holiday designed to celebrate the resurrection of the Savior of the world? This question is answered reluctantly by the Catholic Encyclopedia.

The custom may have its origin in paganism, for a great many pagan customs, celebrating the return of spring (and therefore directly related to SUN-worship), gravitated to Easter. The egg is the emblem of the germinating life of early spring... the Easter rabbit lays the eggs, for which reason they are hidden in a nest or in the garden. The rabbit is a pagan symbol and has always been an emblem of fertility. (p. 227)



Other credible sources openly acknowledge that the Easter bunny has absolutely nothing to do with Christianity but rather the pagan world. That world worshiped fertility and rebirth and the rabbit played a critical part in this worship.

The Easter bunny had its origins in pre-Christian fertility lore. Hares and rabbits were the most fertile animals our

forefathers knew, serving as symbols of abundant new life in the spring season. (Handbook of Christian Feasts and Customs, 1958, p. 233-6)

The Encyclopedia Britannica indicates that the bunny was associated with the beginning of life and was a symbol of fertility:

Like the Easter egg, the Easter hare came to Christianity from antiquity. The hare is associated with the moon in the legends of ancient Egypt and other peoples... The hare came to be associated with... the beginning of new life in both the young man and young woman, and so is a symbol of fertility and the renewal of life. ("Easter Bunny")

According to **Reader's Digest**, the rabbit has been depicted in Christian art as representing fertility and lust because they are so prolific:

Children's stories in many countries tell how Easter eggs are brought not by a chicken but by hares and rabbits. These long-eared hopping mammals have represented fertility in many cultures because they breed so quickly. In traditional Christian art the hare represents lust, and paintings sometimes show a hare at the Virgin Mary's feet to signify her triumph over temptations of the flesh. Yet as a symbol of life reawakening in the spring – often portrayed as the innocent and cuddly Easter bunny – the rabbit co-exists in many places with the solemn Christian rites of Easter. (Readers' Digest Book of Facts, 1987, p. 122)

It is interesting to note that rabbits do not lay eggs. This fact escapes children because they are misled by adults more committed to perpetuating a tradition than to teaching God's truth.

Hot Cross Buns

Hot cross
tradition
where did
to
food is also
world.



buns have been a long-standing during the Easter season. But from this tradition originate? According Alexander Hislop, this traditional inextricably linked to the pagan

The hot cross buns of Good Friday, and the dyed eggs of Pasch or Easter Sunday, figured in the Chaldean (Babylonian) rites just as they do now. The "buns" known too by that identical name, were used in the worship of the queen of heaven, the goddess Easter, as early as the days of Cecrops, the founder of Athens – that is, 1500 years before the Christian era. One species of sacred bread which used to be offered to the gods, was of great antiquity, and called Boun. (Hislop, The Two Babylons, p. 108)

Semiramis proclaimed during the anniversary of the death of Tammuz, Worshippers were to meditate upon the sacred mysteries of Baal and Tammuz, and to make the sign of the "T" in front of their hearts as they worshipped. They also ate sacred cakes with the marking of a "T" or cross on the top. Every year, on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox, a celebration was made. It was Ishtar's Sunday and was celebrated with rabbits and eggs.

Hislop later explains that the sign of the cross placed on these pastries has nothing to do with Christianity or the resurrection but rather was prominent in the Babylonian Mysteries.

...the so-called "sign of the cross" and the worship bestowed on it, never came from Jesus or His apostles. The same sign of the cross that Rome now worships was used in the Babylonian Mysteries... That which is now called the Christian Cross was originally no Christian emblem at all, but was the mystic Tau of the Chaldeans and Egyptians. (ibid, p. 199-200)

The great prophet Jeremiah was inspired to write a scathing indictment against the nation of Judah. In this indictment, God warned His people that their ongoing practice of

pagan rites would not go unpunished. Notice these abominations included the making of this special bread to the queen of heaven.

See you not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke Me to anger. Do they provoke Me to anger? saith the Lord: do they not provoke themselves to the confusion of their own faces? Therefore, thus saith the Lord God; Behold, Mine anger and My fury shall be poured out upon this place, upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched. (Jeremiah 7:17-20)

With these words, God is declaring that He is serious about idolatry. No matter how well intended this practice may seem, God condemns it.

The Easter Lily

One of the most prominent symbols associated with Easter is the lily. This beautiful flower adorns the altars of virtually thousands of Christian churches every Easter. But what does this symbol have to do with the resurrection of Jesus Christ and when did the custom



of using this flower as an ornament of faith originate? As surprising as it may seem, this too has its roots in the pagan world. According to **Grolier's Encyclopedia**, the Easter lily is a symbol of spring, when everything becomes new:

On Easter people go to church services and delight in the sight of great masses of Easter lilies that decorate the altars. For the Chinese the peony is the king of flowers and symbol of spring. But to the people in church on Easter Day, the fragrant lily with its trumpet shaped blossoms is the symbol of purity and the welcome harbinger of spring. (1966, Vol. 17)

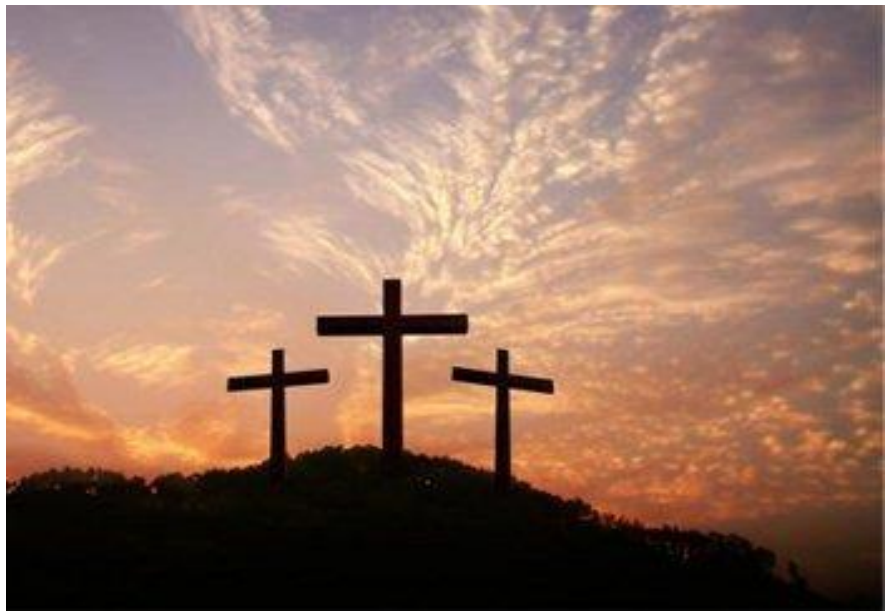
But from where did this symbol come and when was it embraced as a symbol of worship? **Unger's Bible Dictionary** provides some extraordinary insight concerning this question. It characterizes this symbol as typical of that which was embraced by pagan worshipers in the Canaanite world:

Characteristically Canaanite, the lily symbolizes grace and sex appeal and the serpent fecundity. (p. 412)

It is important to understand that this flower has no place in the worship of the risen Christ. It was borrowed from the pagan world. Despite its beauty, it is a symbol embraced by a God-rejecting culture and its image of sex and fertility have no place in the worship of the Savior of the world.

Sunrise Service

One of the most common practices associated with Easter is the sunrise service. Every year, millions of professing Christians come together before sunrise and participate in what they believe is the worship of the risen Christ. Generally, Easter sunrise services are filled with great pageantry and drama. Choirs provide beautiful music declaring "He is risen" while ministers give moving messages about the atoning sacrifice of



Jesus Christ. For many, sunrise services are regarded as a religious experience and many well-intended Christians find participation in these services inspiring.

Most believe the Easter sunrise service has its origin in the scriptures. The common belief is that Jesus was risen before dawn on "Easter Sunday." This, however, is not true as will be explained later in this booklet. Further, it is important to understand that nowhere in the scriptures are Christians instructed to worship at sunrise in celebration of the risen Christ.

The Third Day

The most common belief concerning Easter centers around the day of Jesus' crucifixion and that of His resurrection. The popular view is that Jesus was crucified on "Good Friday" and rose on "Easter Sunday" at dawn. Virtually all major Protestant denominations as well as the Catholic Church embrace this belief. But is it the truth? Or, is this just another fable that has gone unchecked by millions of professing Christians?

The Only Sign



The gospel of Matthew describes an event in which Jesus was challenged by the religious leaders of His day to give a sign that would prove He was the Messiah. **Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from you. (Mt. 12:38)**

Jesus responded to these religious leaders by providing the only sign He said would be given.

But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seek after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. (Mt. 12:39-40)

Notice that Jesus Himself clearly stated that the only sign He would give to prove He was the promised Messiah was that He would be in the grave "three days and three nights." With this understanding, how could Jesus have been crucified on "Good Friday"

and resurrected on "Easter Sunday"? It is virtually impossible to get three days and three nights between Friday afternoon and Sunday at dawn.



Furthermore, how could Jesus have been raised at sunrise when He died near sunset? Once again, if Jesus was buried toward the end of the day as virtually all authorities admit, and He was in the grave three days and three nights, then He would have risen toward the end of the day, 72 hours, or three days later. Otherwise, His words are false and He is not the Messiah. If Jesus' words are true, then the vast majority of professing Christians are worshiping Him in vain because He was not resurrected early Easter Sunday as so many believe. Some argue that the Bible says Jesus was raised Sunday morning before daylight. This is based on the gospels' account of certain women visiting Jesus' tomb **"early on the first day of the week" (Mk. 16:1-4)**. However, when they arrived, the tomb was empty. They were then informed by an angel, **"He is risen" (Mk. 16:6)**.

Notice, however, the angel did not say when Jesus rose, only that He had risen. Consider for a moment: if the women had not visited the tomb until Monday or Tuesday, the angel's declaration would have been no different: "He is risen." This angelic being is only announcing what has taken place, not when it took place. Remember Jesus Himself already said how long He would be in the grave: "three days and three nights," exactly 72 hours (Mt. 12:40).

Three Days and Three Nights Not an Idiom

There are some who contend that Jesus' words in Matthew 12:40 are a Hebrew idiom and can mean "any part of a day." Therefore, a late Friday burial and an early Sunday resurrection would be consistent with the scriptures.

However, this argument is simply not true. Although the Bible does contain idiomatic phrases, this is not one of them. Virtually all credible scholars acknowledge that when the number of nights is included as well as the number of days, it is no longer an idiom but a statement of fact. Consider the words of E. W. Bullinger.

The fact that "three days" is used by Hebrew idiom for any part of three days and three nights is not disputed; because that was the common way of reckoning... But, when the number of "nights" is stated as well as the number of "days," then the expression ceases to be an idiom, and becomes a literal statement of fact. (The Companion Bible, Appendix 144)

The plain truth is that Jesus was never crucified on "Good Friday" or resurrected on "Easter Sunday." This belief is not driven by the scriptures but rather by the traditions of men.

When Was Jesus Crucified?



Every year, millions of Christians honor the crucifixion of Jesus Christ on what has come to be known as "Good Friday." On this day, many cultures actually re-enact the crucifixion. But how could Jesus have been crucified on a Friday when the scriptures declare he was resurrected before the women visited His tomb Sunday morning? Remember Jesus' own words that state how long He would be in the grave.

For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. (Mt. 12:39-40)

There are some who will argue that the scriptures themselves prove Jesus was crucified on a Friday. They invoke Mark 15:42-47, which states that Jesus was crucified the day before the Sabbath and Luke 23:50-54 which states that His crucifixion took place "as the Sabbath drew on." However, the Sabbath being referred to in these scriptures was not the weekly Sabbath, but rather a high Sabbath. Notice the words of the apostle John.

The Jews, therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. (Jn 19:31).

The Bible indicates that there are seven "high days." These days are described in Leviticus 23 and were kept by the Jews in Jerusalem at the time of Jesus' death. The specific Sabbath being referred to in Mark 15, Luke 23, and John 19:31 was the First Day of Unleavened Bread. This Holy Day took place in the first month on the fifteenth day of the month of the Hebrew calendar. In the year Jesus was crucified this day took place on Thursday. This being the case, Jesus would have been crucified on a Wednesday and buried at the end of the day. It is important to understand that this particular week, there were two Sabbaths - a high Sabbath (Thursday) and the weekly Sabbath (Saturday). Both these Sabbaths come into play during the time of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection - but how?

The Key Is In the Spices



The gospel of Mark reveals that spices were bought by certain women who planned to visit Jesus' grave and anoint His body. **And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint Him. (Mk. 16:1)**

Notice the spices were purchased "when the Sabbath was past." However, the gospel of Luke indicates that the spices were prepared by these women prior to the Sabbath. **And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment. (Lk 23:56)**

Notice that these two verses indicate that there was a Sabbath prior to the spices being bought (Mk. 16:1) and a Sabbath following the preparation of the spices (Lk 23:56). With this in mind, the following chronology outlines the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is crucified Wednesday afternoon, the eve of the First Day of Unleavened Bread, a high Sabbath. (Mk. 15:42; Jn. 19:31) **Certain women see where Jesus is buried. (Mk. 15:47)**

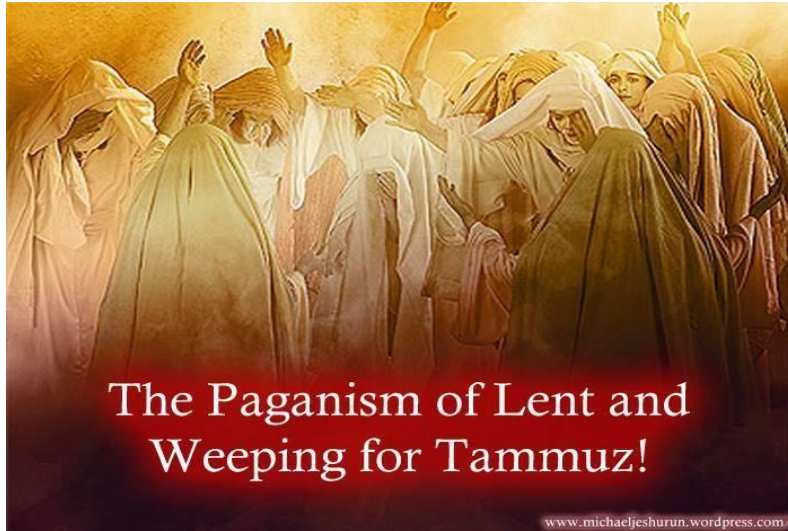
These women return home and keep the high Sabbath Wednesday evening to Thursday evening. **When the Sabbath is past, the women purchase spices and prepare them. This took place on Friday. (Mk. 16:1)**



Friday evening, the women rested on the weekly Sabbath, according to (Lk. 23:56).

Early Sunday morning, they went to the grave to find

Jesus had risen, just as He said. That resurrection took place late Saturday afternoon, exactly 72 hours after He was laid in the grave (Lk. 24:1-3). As much as the professing Christian world wants to believe in a Friday crucifixion, it simply isn't true. The Biblical record as well as the very words of Jesus Christ state otherwise. **For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. (Mt. 12:39-40)**



The Truth about Lent

For many professing Christians, the Lenten season is a period of great significance. This period lasts forty days and pictures a time of self-denial and sacrifice. Many professing Christians believe Lent derives its roots from the story of Jesus fasting forty days and forty nights in the wilderness when

being tempted by Satan the devil (Mt. 4:1-2). However,

Semiramis also proclaimed a forty day period of time of sorrow each

Jesus' fast did not take place year prior to the anniversary of the death of Tammuz. During this

time, no meat was to be eaten. Worshippers were to meditate upon during the pre-Easter season the sacred mysteries of Baal and Tammuz, and to make the sign of (late winter, early spring) but the "T" in front of their hearts as they worshipped. rather in the late summer and early fall.

Additionally, nowhere does the Bible command such a practice. This being the case, where did Lent originate? Alexander Hislop, in his book *The Two Babylons*, provides some extraordinary insight into this custom:

The forty days' abstinence of Lent was directly borrowed from the worshipers of the Babylonian goddess. Such a Lent of forty days, "in the spring of the year," is still observed by the Youzidis or pagan devil-worshippers of Koordistan, who have inherited it from their early masters, the Babylonians. Such a Lent of forty days was held in the spring by the pagan Mexicans, for thus we read in Humboldt [Mexican Researches, v.i. p. 404] where he gives account of Mexican observances: "Three days after the vernal equinox... began a solemn fast of forty days in honor of the sun." Such a Lent of forty days was observed in Egypt, as may be seen on consulting Wilkinson's Egyptians. This Egyptian Lent of forty days, we are informed by Landseer, in his Sabeen Researches, was held expressly in commemoration of Adonis or Osiris, the great mediatorial god." (p. 105)

Clearly, Lent is not a season enjoined by the scriptures but rather a time connected to devil worship. Once again, something that appears so pious actually mocks the very God it claims to worship.

How Could So Many Be Wrong?

The most common question concerning the legitimacy of Easter is "how can all the hundreds of Christian denominations with their millions of members be wrong?" The answer to this question is painful to swallow but true. They are deceived by a devil that is more cunning than man can possibly imagine. Notice what the Bible says about the Satan's power to deceive.

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (Rev. 12:9)

Notice that Satan has deceived the whole world – not some of the world, not most of the world, but the whole world. Perhaps his greatest deception is that he has convinced man that he is not deceived. In the world today, most people don't even believe Satan exists. How's that for deception?

Satan: An Angel of Light



At this point it is important to understand that Satan does not look evil. He is not ugly or dark as many assume. Satan is bright and very appealing. Notice the words of the apostle Paul in his letter to the Church at Corinth.

And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works. (1Cor. 11:14-15)

Satan appears to be beautiful. His ministers appear to be beautiful. His festivals and seasons appear to be beautiful. They appeal to all the physical and emotional senses. But the truth is they are abhorrent to God because they reject His truth and embrace a lie. These holidays call the holy "profane" and the profane "holy."

Today, Christianity rejects God's Sabbaths and festivals. These days have great meaning and outline God's plan of salvation. Tragically, they have been maligned as "burdensome." They are called "Jewish feasts," or "those Old Testament feasts." However, it is important to understand that nowhere in the scriptures are God's Sabbaths and Holy Days done away. The New Testament declares that God's Church kept His Holy Days (see Acts 12:4; 20:4-6; 1Cor. 5:7). The early Church never kept Easter. Notice the striking words of the Encyclopedia Britannica:

There is no indication of the observance of the Easter festival in the New Testament, or in the writings of the apostolic Fathers. The first Christians continued to observe the Jewish festivals, though in a new spirit, as commemorations of events which those festivals had foreshadowed. Thus, the Passover, with a new conception added to it, of Christ as the true Paschal Lamb and the first fruits from the dead, continued to be observed. (p. 828, Eleventh Edition)

Christianity's Greatest Deception

One of Christianity's greatest deceptions is the belief that man can choose for himself how he will worship God. The common belief is that somehow, God has such respect for the attitude in which something is done that the action becomes irrelevant.



Most professing Christian ministers ARE fully aware of the true origin of the tradition we call Easter. However, they believe that even though this tradition was once deeply rooted in paganism, it now experiences a "newness of life" in Christ. This is simply not true. Jesus' own words declare that although man can choose whether or not he will worship God, he cannot choose how he will worship Him. The gospel of John records an event

in which Jesus spoke to a woman of Samaria and explained a profound truth about the worship of His Father.

God is a spirit and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. (Jn. 4:24)

Easter is not the truth! Further, Jesus also indicated that God could be worshiped in vain when man's traditions enter into our worship of God.

He answered and said unto them, "Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. Howbeit in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.'" (Mk. 7:6-7)



While giving the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus also explained that it was possible to practice a false Christianity. He then stated that those who engaged in such a practice would not be permitted to enter into God's Kingdom.

Not everyone that says unto Me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father Which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, "Lord, Lord, have we not

prophesied in Your name? And in Your name have cast out devils? And in Your name done many wonderful works?" And then will I profess unto them, "I never knew you: depart from Me, you that work lawlessness." (Mt. 7:21-23)

Consider the reaction of those who were not permitted entrance into God's Kingdom. They were stunned because they thought they could ignore God's laws and choose how God was to be worshiped.

A Final Thought

The question must be asked, "is Easter Christian?" The simple answer is "no." Despite all its beauty and pageantry, Easter is pagan to the core. Its symbols and traditions do not honor Christ or His sacrifice. On the contrary, they actually mock it. The apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Galatians, issued a stern warning which every true Christian should take very seriously.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap. (Gal. 6:7)

The God of the Bible takes very seriously the way He is worshiped. Those who believe it is ok to borrow from the traditions of the pagan world and incorporate such things into the worship of God or His Son should consider Jesus' admonition on this subject: **"God is a spirit and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (Jn. 4:24).**

It is important to understand that nowhere in the New Testament do we find God's Church celebrating Easter. God's people throughout the Bible honored "His" festivals. The New Testament Church kept the Feast of the Lord's supper (1 Cor. 5:7-8). This feast replaced Passover and takes on greater meaning. Man's attempt to replace God's festivals and Holy Days with feasts that have been fulfilled by Jesus Christ or with pagan customs that come directly from the pagan world represents "old leaven."

Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us... Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (1 Cor 5:7-8)

"...Therefore let us keep the feast..."

What feast? Not the feast of the Passover, which has now ceased, or the feast of pagan Easter but rather the feast of the Lord's Supper is meant here, **"for he is our Passover."** The whole course of a Christian's life, is to be lived by exercising spiritual joy and faith in Christ our "Passover," which gives true believers a merry heart among all people in the world, because we... **"have a continual feast"** of spiritual joy and pleasures, rejoicing always in Christ—as believers in the Lord should continually be experiencing.

The heart of him that hath understanding seeks knowledge: but the mouth of fools feeds on foolishness... All the days of the AFFLICTED are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast. (Prov 15:14-15)

A MORE LITERAL TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE TEXT READS: "The heart of him that hath understanding (discernment) seeks knowledge (i.e. from the true God): but the mouths of

the fool (who does not fear God) feeds on foolishness (i.e. falsehood). Evil (bad) are All the days of the "**AFFLICTED**" (which is the Hebrew word (OT:6041 *`aniy* (aw-nee')). This word² refers to those who are suffering (especially referring to the saintly), who are in a state of misery from various causes: creating unfortunate circumstances for them. Those in this place who are in need, cry out for help for their needs (Ps 9:12-13; 12:5-6; 37:14). Their Hope for deliverance is from the Lord (Ps 69:29-30) who dispenses grace (Prov. 3:34; 14:21)... **(i.e. all the days of the "afflicted" may be) evil (bad) but merry (joyful) are their hearts that feast or drink continually God's blessings.**"

As (1 Cor. 5:8) says, **the feast of the Lord's supper is to be kept "not with old leaven"** (with feasts that have been fulfilled by Jesus Christ or with pagan customs that come directly from the pagan world): **neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness;** (not in malice to any man, or one another, nor in any sort of wrong doing, or not living in known sin, or allowing of it) **but with the unleavened bread of sincerity;** (no hypocrisy... but having sincere love for Christ our God, and for his people) **and of truth** (having true Gospel doctrine, discipline, and manner of life).

A Lesson from Ancient Israel

Fifteen centuries before Jesus was born, the children of Israel were led out of Egypt with a high hand. At that time, God knew they would ultimately enter lands occupied by pagans such as the Amalekites, the Hivites, Perizzites, and Jebusites. These pagan people practiced forms of worship that were abhorrent to God and were light years from the faith God was going to give to His once-enslaved people. Therefore, God issued a stern warning concerning the assimilation of false religions among our worship of the one true God.

Take heed to yourself that you be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before you; and that you enquire not after their gods, saying, "How did these nations serve their gods? Even so I will do likewise." You shall not do unto the Eternal your God: for every abomination to the Eternal God, which He hates, they have done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods. Whatsoever thing I command you, observe to do it: you shall not add thereto, nor diminish from it. (Deut. 12:30-32)

² According to The Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament Copyright © 2003 by AMG Publishers.

This admonition by God is as binding today as it was when our Eternal God (Jehovah) first gave it. It is not up to man to decide for himself how God is to be worshiped. That is God's job. The decision He gave to us is whether or not we would obey.

WHAT IS YOUR DECISION?

"How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him."
(1 Kings 18:21)



Halloween: Fellowship with Devils

Every year, millions of children throughout the world celebrate the custom of Halloween. During this celebration, they dress up in costumes, parade through neighborhoods knocking on doors, and declare the words "trick or treat," expecting to receive candy or

some sort of gift. But is Halloween something Christians should celebrate? Is this the kind of festival Jesus Christ would want us to observe?

First, understand that Halloween is anything but Christian. This custom was celebrated by the pagan world centuries before the New Testament Church was ever founded and it was not introduced into the professing Christian world until centuries after the deaths of the apostles.

In fact, if you search the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, you will not find a single line advocating the observance of this holiday or anything like it. On the contrary, God condemns such practices throughout the scriptures.

A Strange Superstition

Halloween is one of the strangest holidays mankind celebrates. It is an amazing paradox, an unusual mixture of Christian terms and ancient pagan religious rites. Moreover, despite the technological and intellectual advancements our society has made, it still clings to ignorance of the past. As a result, we celebrate ancient superstitions by partaking in pagan rites, dressing up as witches, goblins, ghosts, skeletons, and demons.



What is this holiday? Where did it come from and why is it celebrated? It certainly did not come from the Bible or the early Christian Church raised up by Jesus Christ and the apostles (Mt. 16:13-17). Consider what authorities say regarding the origin and practice of Halloween.

Ralph Linton, on page four of his book, **Halloween through Twenty**

Centuries, explains the connection between the current practice of Halloween and a pagan rite practiced by the ancient Druids.

The American celebration rests upon Scottish and Irish folk customs which can be traced in direct line from pre-Christian times. Although Halloween has become a night of rollicking fun, superstitious spells, and eerie games that people take only half seriously,

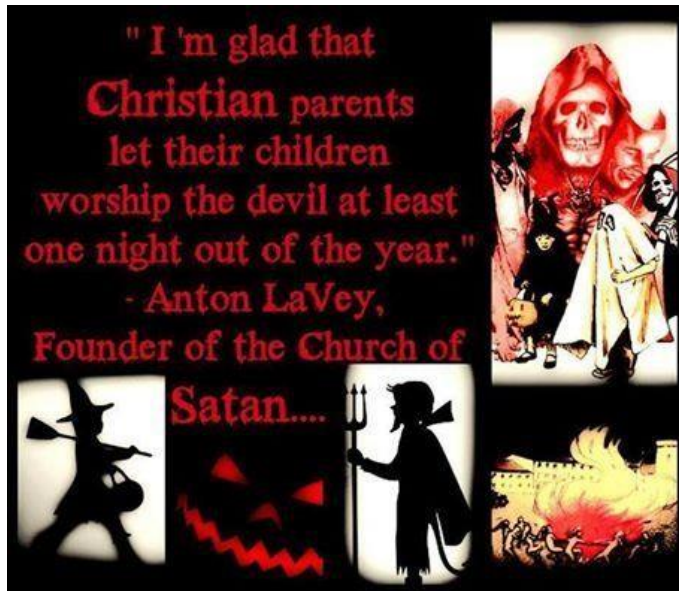
its beginnings were quite otherwise. The earliest Halloween celebrations were held by the Druids in honor of Samhain, Lord of the Dead, whose festival fell on November 1.

Furthermore, the **Encyclopedia Britannica**, 11th edition, Volume 12 says:

It was a Druidic belief that on the eve of this festival, Saman, lord of death, called together the wicked souls that within the past 12 months had been condemned to inhabit the bodies of animals... (pp. 847-858)

The Yearbook of English Festivals by Dorothy Gladys Spicer adds the following:

All Hallows' Eve or All Hallow E'en, with its tradition of witches, ghosts, hobgoblins and spirits, its games and incantations, still is a gay time for pranks and parties in many North country homes. Fun-loving Americans have borrowed from their British ancestors many Hallow E'en games such as apple-bobbing, nut roasting and tossing of apple parings. Transplanted to the New World soil, the old practices have become revitalized, and currently are observed with more enthusiasm than in the country of their birth.



To ancient Druids, the end of October commemorated the festival of the waning year, when the sun began its downward course and ripened grain was garnered from the fields." "Samhain, or 'Summer's End,' as this feast to the dying sun was called, was celebrated with human sacrifice, augury and prayers; for at this season spirits walked, and evil had power over souls of men.

Not until the fourth century did the pagan vigil for the god of light give way

to All Hallows, the mass for Christian saints; and not until the tenth, did the Druids' death feast become All Souls' the day of prayer for souls that had entered rest. Cakes for the dead were substituted for human sacrifice, fortune-telling for heathen augury, lighted candles for the old Baal fires.

Far from being Christian, Halloween is an old pagan holiday masquerading as though it were one of the customs of the Church. Despite this, professing Christians encourage their children to get into the spirit of this pagan custom! The celebration of Halloween is clearly a relic of pagan times and superstitious tradition. Notice what the authoritative Encyclopedia Britannica says about this holiday. It long antedates Christianity. The two chief characteristics of ancient Halloween were the lighting of bonfires and the belief that this is the one night in the year during which ghosts and witches are most likely to wander about. History shows that the main celebrations of Halloween were purely 'Druidical,' and this is further proved by the fact that in parts of Ireland October 31 is still known as Oidhch Shamhna, 'Vigil of Saman'.

Saman or Samhain was the pagan lord of the dead among the Druids. However, this pagan holiday was not celebrated among the Druids alone. It has been and is currently celebrated around the world in different forms, but always with the same general pattern and meaning.

Halloween was also a Roman festival. Consider the words of the Encyclopedia Britannica regarding this celebration:

*On the Druidic ceremonies were grafted some of the characteristics of the Roman festival in honor of Pomona held about November 1, in which nuts and apples, representing the winter store of fruits, played an important part. Halloween can be identified in various forms all around the world. It is found in both Christian and non-Christian countries. This is because its origins predate Christianity. Marie Trevelyan, in her book **Folk Stories of Wales**, writes the following... "In Wales it was firmly believed that on All Hallows' Eve the spirit of a departed person was to be seen at midnight on every crossroad and every stile." (p. 254)*

The practices involved in Halloween are also found in Mexico. In the book **Adonis** by Frazer, the practice of Halloween is clearly identified, not only by its date, but also by its symbolism and rituals:



The Miztecs of Mexico believed that the dead came back in the twelfth month of the year, which corresponded to our November. On this day of All Souls the houses were decked out to welcome the spirits. Jars of food and drink were set on a table in the principal room, and the family went out with the torches to meet the ghosts and invite them to enter. Then, returning to the house they knelt around the table, and with their eyes bent on the ground, prayed the souls to accept the offerings. (p. 244)

The elements of this holiday are also found in Cambodia. According to E. Aymonier in the work **Notice sur le Cambodge**: “people would chant, “O all your ancestors, who are departed, deign to come and eat what we have prepared for you, and to bless your posterity and to make it happy.” (p. 59)

It is clear that the trappings of Halloween have covered nations around the world. It is equally clear that the practices embraced by this holiday are not Christian at all.

Its Symbols and Superstitions

Understand the shocking truth from history as to why this holiday was celebrated! Ruth Kelly, a recognized authority on Halloween, wrote:

“...because the Druids believed in the immortality of the soul, they concluded that a person’s spirit would pass from them at death and seek out another body in which to reside. [The pagan Druid priests] . . . taught the immortality of the soul, that it passed from one body to another at death . . . They believed that on the last night of the old year the lord of death gathered together the souls of all those who had died in the passing year and had been condemned to live in the bodies of animals, to decree what forms they should inhabit for the next twelve months. He could be coaxed to give the lighter sentence by gifts and prayers.”
(The Book of Halloween, p. 10)



Many Druids believed that black cats were in fact reincarnated human beings, and that the Priest had the ability to divine the future through them. If any crossed your path, however, it would mean they might possess you, a very bad omen. Halloween was celebrated to preserve in the minds of the people the false doctrine that the soul is immortal and that the dead are not really dead. The Celtic peoples believed that the souls of good men went to paradise while the souls of those who did evil were reincarnated in the form of animals for a year. The only chance these disembodied souls had for

a decent afterlife was to return on this day of Samhain, and find a human body to possess. It is important to understand that November was regarded by the Celtic people as the beginning of the New Year. Therefore, it was a perfect time for their priests to remember and celebrate the dead.

All Saints Day

Today, Halloween is celebrated on the evening of All Hallows or All Saints Day. Because days were customarily reckoned as beginning at sunset, Halloween was celebrated in anticipation of November 1, which was dedicated to the Lord of the Dead. Halloween is founded on a fear of the spirits of the dead possessing those who are alive. Demon spirits can possess a human as seen clearly in the Bible, but there is nothing in Scripture that says a human spirit can possess another human being.

Who is the Lord of the Dead?

Shortly before his crucifixion, Jesus was questioned by the Sadducees about the concept of a resurrection. In order to demonstrate that there will be a future resurrection from the dead, Jesus told them:

But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have you not read that which was spoken to you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. (Mt. 22:31-32)



It is important to understand what Jesus meant by these profound words "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." The Sadducees to whom Jesus was speaking did not believe in a resurrection. They also accepted only the Torah as Holy Scripture. With this in mind, Jesus quoted the Torah (Ex. 3:6) to prove that a resurrection would one day occur. He did this by illustrating that long

after the death of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, God continued to refer to Himself as their God: "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," not "I was the God..."

The point Jesus was making was that although these patriarchs were dead (Heb. 11:13), they will live again in the resurrection, as will all of God's people (Dan. 12:2; Lk 14:14; Jn 5:28; Rev. 20:4-6). Although these men were dead, they were alive at that moment because the soul of man is immortal and God's promise of a resurrection for all humans, whether it be eternally with Jesus Christ in His kingdom or eternally in hell, is a truth that is immutable (Rom. 4:17). With this understanding, Jesus' words take on greater meaning. The God of the Bible is the GOD OF THE LIVING, not the God of the dead! To worship the true God, we should not celebrate rites dedicated to the dead. However, among the heathen Druids, Samhain or Saman, is their lord of the dead and that lord is

none other than Satan himself! Therefore, when people celebrate the dead, they unknowingly honor the devil!

Is Ignorance an Excuse?

What if people don't know who it is they serve when they celebrate Halloween? Is it alright to keep this holiday if you do not know what it represents? The resounding answer to this question is NO! When writing to the Church at Galatia, the apostle Paul indicated it was possible to worship something that didn't even exist.

Howbeit then, when you knew not God, you did service unto them which by nature are no gods. (Galatians 4:8).

The heathen who thought they were worshiping the true God were actually serving demons. Young people today who dress up in weird costumes and demand "trick or treat" are not serving the true God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Rather, they are unwittingly serving the god of this world who has blinded them (2 Cor. 4:4). Do you want to serve the lord of the dead? Halloween is a holiday dedicated to worshiping the lord of the dead. The true God is the God of the living.

Trick or Treat

Do you know where the practice of children knocking on doors and shouting "trick or treat" originated? At this special time of the year, it was believed that there was a very thin line between the living and the dead. During the time of Samhain, people believed ghosts of the dead were able to mingle with the living. It was feared that the dead would come back in search of bodies to possess the next year. This was the only means for these spirits to have an after-life. Fearing possession, the townsfolk did many things to trick the spirits or scare them away.

At this time, Druid priests wore masks so they would not be recognized and attacked by evil spirits. Some believed that the spirits would leave you alone if you tricked them by dressing up to look like them. Others thought the wearing of frightening costumes would scare the evil spirits away. Many people even carved demonic faces in turnips or potatoes and put candles inside them, an early Jack-o-lantern, to frighten the spirits.



The "treat" part of this holiday came from attempts by some to "buy off" these evil spirits by giving them gifts. Some believed these spirits imprisoned the bodies of animals and could be released by giving gifts or tribute to the lord of the dead. James Napier, in his book **Folklore**, wrote about this practice:



There was a prevailing belief among all nations that at death the souls of good men were taken possession of by good spirits and carried to paradise, but the souls of the wicked men were left to wander in the space between the earth and moon, or consigned to the unseen world. These wandering spirits were in the habit of haunting the living... But there were means by which these ghosts might be exorcized. (p. 11)

The idea that spirits possessed animals was just one belief. Others believed that the souls of the dead returned to their original homes and were to be entertained there with food and drink. If they were not given the things they desired, these spirits would cast spells and cause absolute havoc to the inhabitants of the home. Alexander MacGregor, in his book **Highland Superstitions**, writes,

It was the night for the universal walking about of all sorts of spirits, fairies, and ghosts, all of whom had liberty on that night. (p. 44)

In an effort to exorcize these ghosts, people were encouraged to set out food as a form of treat. If the demons were satisfied, they would leave the individual in peace. If not, they would leave an evil spell.

Ralph Linton (**Halloween Through Twenty Centuries**) concludes that the practice of leaving gifts for spirits is the origin of today's practice of trick or treat when he states *"...certainly it comes from pagan times." In Ireland up to the turn of the century, it was customary to have a procession "led by a man in a white robe wearing a horse-head mask... The horse was sacred to the Sun God," says Linton, which indicated that this custom was a survival of a Druid rite. "The procession levied a contribution from the farmers in the perverted name of what probably was an old Druid god. Unless the procession was "treated liberally with gifts," the farmers were "tricked" with the threat of a curse that would ruin next year's crops! The present day practice of "trick or treat" is nothing less than a continuation of these degenerate and absurd customs which came out of paganism.*

How Did Halloween Become Christian?

The first of November, celebrated among pagans in honor of Samhain, is celebrated today in thousands of Christian churches around the world. **The Catholic Encyclopedia**



states that the purpose of this day is to "honor all the saints, known and unknown." Additionally, according to Pope Urban IV, this day was designed to address "any deficiencies in the faithful's celebration of saints' feasts during the year."

But how did the veneration of saints, supposedly alive in heaven, come to be celebrated on the same day used by pagans to honor evil spirits? According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, the Church believed that every martyr should be honored and it appointed a common day for all of them.

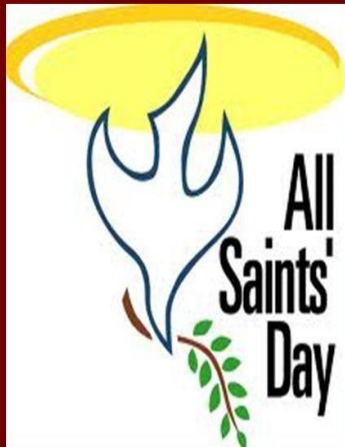
At this point, it is important to understand that the general practice of the Christianized Roman Empire was to convert pagans as quickly as possible. From the time of Constantine who made Christianity the state religion, pagan religion and practices were appropriated for use in order to encourage conversion by those who were deeply tied to paganism. To do this, the names of pagan gods were changed to those of Christ, Mary, and the saints.

The book, **The Mysteries of All Nations** by Grant, records the story of how the pagan celebration we call Halloween became a Christian practice. Grant explains that the Emperor Hadrian rebuilt the Pantheon about 100 A.D. and dedicated it to the goddess Cybele and other Roman gods. The Pantheon became the central edifice for worship. However, before the sixth century, Rome was invaded and controlled by barbaric tribes. After the defeat of the Barbarians by Emperor Phocas, the Pantheon was retaken and given to Pope Boniface IV as a gift. As a result, this great temple now became "holy" and was dedicated to the Virgin Mary and all the saints. It became a shrine where Christians could pay homage to Mary and others who had died in the faith. An annual holiday was commemorated to this end. May 13 was first chosen and this day became known as "All Saints Day." Later, the date was changed to November 1 and the name changed to "All Hallows," and ultimately to "Halloween." The book, **Strange Stories, Amazing Facts**, by the Readers Digest Association explains how pagan practices became a part of Christian worship:

Although Christianity has swept the world in a relatively short time, as the histories of great religions go, the early missionaries faced an up-hill task. The pagans were reluctant to give up their false gods and ancient practices. So the missionaries, unable to convert them easily to an entirely new code of worship, did the next best thing. They took the pagan festivals as they were, and gradually grafted the observances of the new faith onto these festivals and rites and customs surrounding them.

HOW DID SAMHAIN BECOME HALLOWEEN?

- October 31 came to be called Halloween when Christians conquered England, Ireland, and Scotland
- Samhain was so popular and well-known, the new Christian rulers were not able to stop the pagan ritual
- The Christians turned Samhain into a day to celebrate saints who had no day of their own. The night before All Saints Day, or All Hallows' Eve, was later shortened to Halloween



Like Christmas and Easter, the festival of Halloween originated in a pagan celebration, even though its name is derived from the Christian festival of All Hallows' or All Saints' Eve.

It was introduced in the seventh century to commemorate all those saints and martyrs who had no special day to themselves and was held on May 13th. But in the eighth century, All Hallows' day was

moved to November 1, to counteract the pagan celebrations held on that date. Only since the late 18th and early 19th centuries has Halloween developed into a festive time for children, with costumes, lanterns, and games. Before then it was regarded as a night of fear, and wise men, respectful of hobgoblins and wandering demons, stayed indoors.

On page 6 of his book, Ralph Linton explains how All Saints' Day became a Christian practice.

*All Saints Day was introduced into the church calendar because the year was not long enough to make it possible to dedicate a special day for each spirit of the Catholic Church.. The day chosen was one already associated in the popular mind with a thronging of spirits of the dead, which was quite in line with church policy of incorporating harmless pagan folk ideas... Gregory III (731-741) consecrated a chapel in the basilica of St. Peter to all the saints and fixed the anniversary [honoring them] on November 1. (**Halloween Through Twenty Centuries**)*

Notice what once was a memorial for each martyr on different days became a general day in honor of the dead who were believed to be alive in heaven. Protestants have continued the celebration of Halloween in part because, *"it was on this day in 1517, that Martin Luther posted his epoch-making ninety-five theses on the door of the castle church at Wittenberg" which started the Protestant Reformation. "He chose Halloween night because he knew that the townsfolk would be coming to the church that night."* (**Halloween Through Twenty Centuries**, Ralph Linton, pp 9-10).

Because the leaders of the Reformation did not believe in Saints, there could be no "All Saints Day." No "All Saints Day" meant no "Halloween." Therefore, to please those who still wanted to celebrate these festivities, the Halloween revelries were moved to November fifth and renamed "Guy Fawkes Day." Guy Fawkes was one of a group who plotted to blow up the Protestant English Parliament. Guy Fawkes Day celebrated the failure of this plot. Still it was Halloween in spirit; bon fires were lit, lanterns were carved in turnips, and children went begging for money. Halloween survived the Protestant reformation to live on with all its ancient and pagan traditions.

Should Christians Celebrate Halloween?

When the average person thinks of Halloween, there are visions of jack-o-lanterns with candles inside to make the jeering faces look even more eerie. There are thoughts of skeletons and ghosts, goblins and devils. Black is a favorite color of Halloween and rooms are made to be dark and scary.



If you don't worship satan
then why do Christians
celebrate Halloween?

Consider for a moment the symbolism of Halloween. What has that symbolism to do with the true God or Christianity? The symbols of Halloween are blackness and darkness. These are symbols of Satan. **God is light and there is no darkness in Him (1 John 1:5).**

Does the symbolism surrounding this holiday reflect what God would appreciate? Does this holiday, with its dark symbolism, seem like something God would accept from us? Would Jesus Christ celebrate Halloween, considering its symbolism and images?

What about the whole concept of "trick or treat"? In principle, this is no less than simple extortion. Halloween encourages wrong by suggesting that if you don't get what you demand, you are justified in causing harm or damage. Such a belief goes totally contrary to the scriptures.

Halloween is the very antithesis of Christianity. Jesus Christ tells us in **(John 8:12) "I am the light of the world: he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."** God further tells us, **"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" (Isaiah 5:20).**

There is nothing connected to Halloween that is even remotely Christian. Its images are of death, demons, the spirit world, ghosts, goblins and mysticism. All this is totally contrary to God's word. Halloween is pagan in origin and its symbols and practices are not of God. Halloween is about the dead. God is the God of the living.

Furthermore, we need to understand that Halloween is not just an ancient pagan festival of the past. It is still celebrated by the occult in our land today. One practicing witch writes the following in the **Leaves of Wonder Website**:

"Samhain... is the most important of the Wiccan Sabbaths... The deities are in their darkest, most fearsome aspects... Though fearsome, he [the Lord of Death] is also comforter and teacher of the dead, preparing them for the next lifetime."

Speaking through the prophet Jeremiah, God admonished Israel to refrain from learning pagan practices and indicated that there would be severe consequences for failing to obey.

Hear you the word which the Lord speaks unto you, O house of Israel: Thus says the Lord, "Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. (Jer. 10:1-2)

But the Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting king: at His wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide His indignation. Thus shall you say unto them, "These gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens... (Jer. 10:10-11)

God's word is clear. Pagan practices, including Halloween, are to be rejected by His children. He not only forbids inquiring after false gods and practicing their ways, but He outlines the consequences for violating His command.

A Final Thought

Understand the truth about Halloween: it is a spiritual counterfeit! It is a pagan holiday. It is based on the worship of the dead. In short, Halloween is the trick, not the treat. It is the trick that has been played on an unsuspecting world. Fortunately, the Bible declares that the time will come when Jesus Christ will rule the entire world and the knowledge of God will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea (Isa. 11:9). In that day, people will honor God and His laws. Once people begin to celebrate God's ways, Halloween will begin to look "hollow" instead of "hallow."



"And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods ... in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord... Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods..." (Josh 24:15-16)



The Truth behind St. Valentine's Day

St. Valentine's Day is the world's "holiday of love." Since the Bible states that God is love (I John 4:8, 16), does He approve of the celebration of this day? Does He want His people—sincere Christians—partaking of the candy and cards, or any customs associated with this day?

When God says He wants you to live life abundantly (**John 10:10**), does that include celebrating a festive, seemingly harmless holiday like Valentine's Day? The God who gives us everything—life, food, drink, the ability to think for ourselves, etc.—surely approves of St. Valentine's Day, the holiday for lovers to exchange gifts—right?

Do not be so certain. Never assume anything. Don't even take this article's word for it. Do your own research by going to history books and encyclopedias, and most importantly go to the Bible. Then you will know the *real truth* behind St. Valentine's Day and find out what God expects you to do about it!

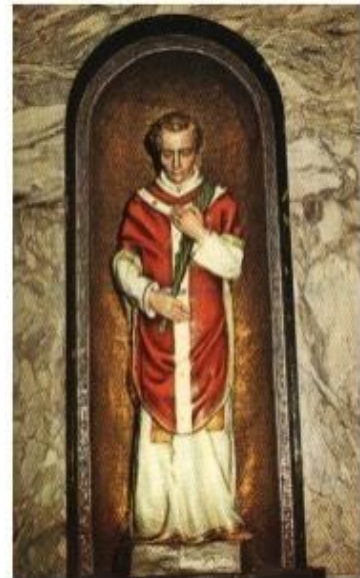
Valentine's Past

Like Christmas, Easter, Halloween, New Year's and other holidays of this world, St. Valentine's Day is another attempt to "whitewash" perverted customs and observances of pagan gods and idols by "Christianizing" them.

As innocent and harmless as St. Valentine's Day may appear, its traditions and customs originate from two of the most sexually perverted pagan festivals of ancient history: **Lupercalia** and the feast day of **Juno Februata**.

Christianizing Februata's Festival

- To get rid of the **feast of Juno Februata**, Pope Gelasius instead **changed** it from February 15 to the 14th and called it **St. Valentine's Day**.
- It was then associated with various martyrs by the name of Valentine.
- Different stories and legends were attributed to these saints.

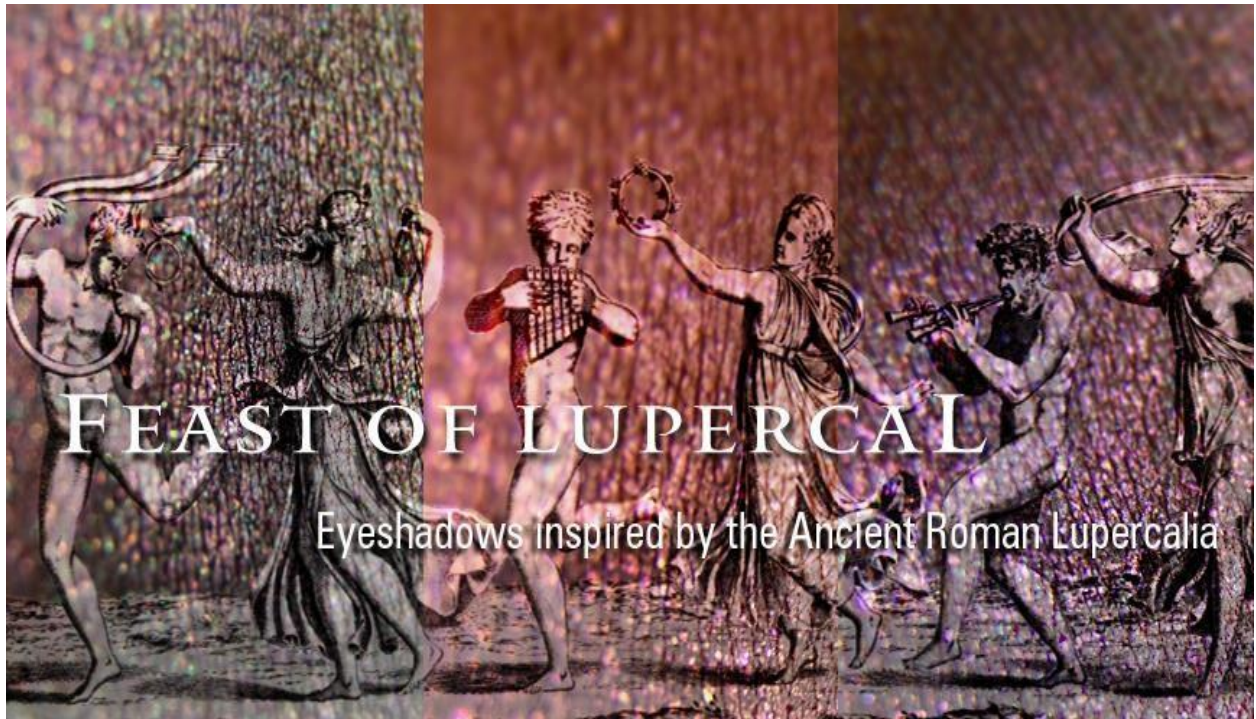


Again this was the way the Catholic Church incorporated pagan based festivals into apostate Christianity.

Originally celebrated on February 15, Lupercalia (known as the "festival of sexual license") was held by the ancient pagan Romans in honor of Lupercus, the god of fertility and husbandry, protector of herds and crops, and a mighty hunter—especially of wolves. The Romans believed that Lupercus would protect Rome from roving bands of wolves, which devoured livestock and people. Assisted by Vestal Virgins, the Luperci (male priests) conducted purification rites by sacrificing goats and a dog in the Lupercal cave on Palatine Hill, where the Romans believed the twins Romulus and Remus had been sheltered and nursed by a she-wolf before they eventually founded Rome. Clothed in loincloths made from sacrificed goats and smeared in their blood, the Luperci would run about Rome, striking women with *februa*, thongs made from skins of the sacrificed goats. The Luperci believed that the floggings purified women and

guaranteed their fertility and ease of childbirth. *February* derives from *februa* or “means of purification.”

To the Romans, February was also sacred to Juno Februata, the goddess of febris (“fever”) of love, and of women and marriage. On February 14, billets (small pieces of paper, each of which had the name of a teen-aged girl written on it) were put into a



container. Teen-aged boys would then choose one billet at random. The boy and the girl whose name was drawn would become a “couple,” joining in erotic games at feasts and parties celebrated throughout Rome. After the festival, they would remain sexual partners for the rest of the year. This custom was observed in the Roman Empire for centuries.

Whitewashing Perversion

In A.D. 494, Pope Gelasius renamed the festival of Juno Februata as the “Feast of the Purification of the Virgin Mary.” The date of its observance was later changed from February 14 to February 2, then changed back to the 14th. It is also known by Catholics as Candlemas, the Presentation of the Lord, the Purification of the Blessed Virgin and the Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple.



After Constantine had made the Roman church brand of Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire (in A.D. 325), church leaders wanted to do away with the pagan festivals of the people. Lupercalia was high on their list. But the Roman citizens thought otherwise.

It was not until A.D. 496 that the church at Rome was able to do anything about Lupercalia. Powerless to get rid of it, Pope Gelasius instead changed it from February 15 to the 14th and called it St. Valentine's Day. It was named after one of that church's saints, who, in A.D. 270, was executed by the emperor for his beliefs.

According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, "At least three different Saint Valentines, all of them martyrs, are mentioned in early martyrologies under the date of 14 February. One is described as a priest at Rome, another as bishop of Interamna (modern Terni), and these two seem both to have suffered in the second half of the third century and to have been buried on the Flaminian Way, but at different distances from the city...Of the third Saint Valentine, who suffered in Africa with a number of companions, nothing is further known." Several biographies of different men named Valentine were merged into one "official" St. Valentine.

The church whitewashed Lupercalia even further. Instead of putting the names of girls into a box, the names of "saints" were drawn by both boys and girls. It was then each person's duty to emulate the life of the saint whose name he or she had drawn. This was Rome's vain attempt to "whitewash" a pagan observance by "Christianizing" it,

which God has not given man the power or authority to do. Though the church at Rome had banned the sexual lottery, young men still practiced a much toned-down version, sending women whom they desired handwritten romantic messages containing St. Valentine's name.

Over the centuries, St. Valentine's Day cards became popular, especially by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. These cards were painted with pictures of Cupid and hearts, and meticulously decorated with lace, silk or flowers.

First Man Called Valentine

But who was the original Valentine?
What does the name Valentine mean?
Valentine comes from the Latin *Valentinus*, which derives from *valens*—"to be strong, powerful, **mighty**." Interestingly enough this describes a man in the Bible with a similar title: "And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a **mighty one** in the earth. He was a *mighty hunter* before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the *mighty hunter* before the LORD. He was said to have hunted with bow and arrow.



And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth... He was a mighty hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. (Gen 10:8-9)

As mentioned, the Romans celebrated Lupercalia to honor the hunter god Lupercus. To the Greeks, from whom the Romans had copied most of their mythology, Lupercus was known as Pan, the god of light. The Phoenicians worshipped the same deity as Baal, the sun god. Baal was one of many names or titles for Nimrod, a mighty hunter, especially of wolves. He was also the founder and first lord of Babel (**Gen. 10:10-12**). Defying God, Nimrod was the originator of the Babylonian Mystery Religion, whose mythologies have been copied by the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans and a multitude of other ancient peoples. Under different names or titles—Pan, Lupercus, Saturn, Osiris—Nimrod is the strong man and hunter-warrior god of the ancients.



But what does the heart symbol have to do with a day honoring Nimrod/Valentine?

The title *Baal* means “lord” or “master,” and is mentioned throughout the Bible as the god of pagans. God warned His people not to worship or even tolerate the ways of Baal (Nimrod). In ancient Chaldean (the language of the

Babylonians), *bal*, which is similar to *Baal*, meant, “heart.” This is where the Valentine heart symbol originated.

Now notice the name *Cupid*. It comes from the Latin verb *cupere*, meaning “to desire.” Cupid was the son of Venus, Roman goddess of beauty and love. Also known as Eros in ancient Greece, he was the son of Aphrodite. According to myth, he was responsible for impregnating numerous goddesses and mortals. Cupid was a child-like archer (remember, Nimrod was a skilled archer).

Mythology describes Cupid as having both a cruel and happy personality. He would use his invisible arrows, tipped with gold, to strike unsuspecting men and women, causing them to fall madly in love. He did not do this for their benefit, but to drive them crazy with intense passion, to make their lives miserable, and to laugh at the results.

Many of the gods of the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Assyrians and others were modeled after one man—Nimrod.

But what does this have to do with us today? Why should we be concerned with what happened in the past?

What God Thinks

Read what God commands His people concerning pagan customs and traditions: **“Learn not the way of the heathen...For the customs of the people are vain” (Jer. 10:2-3).** Also notice Christ’s words in **(Matthew 15:9) “...in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”**



Throughout the Bible, God describes "heathens" as those who worship things that He had created (animals, the sun, the moon, stars, trees, etc.), or man-made idols, or *anything but* the one true God. He calls such people and their practices pagan. True Christians understand that God hates any customs, practices and traditions that are rooted in paganism.

But just how serious is God about paganism?

When He rescued the twelve tribes of Israel from brutal slavery and led them out of Egypt, He commanded them: **"After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein you dwelt, shall you not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, where I bring you, shall you not do: neither shall you walk in their ordinances" (Lev. 18:3).** God demanded the Israelites not to defile themselves with the pagan practices and customs of surrounding nations (**vs. 24-30**) **"Therefore shall you keep Mine ordinance, that you commit not any one of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that you defile not yourselves therein: I am the LORD your God."**

God cursed Egypt—a nation of nature-worshippers—with ten plagues and freed Israel from slavery. He rescued Israel from Pharaoh’s army by parting the Red Sea and leading His people to safety. He fed the Israelites manna—special bread made by God—from heaven. He protected them from battle-tested Gentile armies, delivered them into the Promised Land and drove out their enemies. How did Israel treat God in return?

“Our fathers understood not Your wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of Your mercies; but provoked Him at the sea, even at the Red Sea...They soon forgot His works; they waited not for His counsel: But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert...They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image. Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eats grass. They forgot God their Savior, which had done great things in Egypt; wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red Sea...they despised the pleasant land, they believed not His word: But murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the LORD ...They joined themselves also unto Baal-peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead. Thus they provoked Him to anger with their intentions” (Psa. 106:7, 13-14, 19-22, 24-25, 28-29).

God explicitly commanded Israel to cast out and utterly destroy all nations that occupied the Promised Land (Canaan). Above all, His people were not to make political alliances with them or marry into their families (**Deut. 7:1-3, 5, 16**). **“For they will turn away your sons from following Me, that they may serve other gods” (vs. 4).** But the Israelites thought they knew better than God. They decided to do things their own way.

“They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the LORD commanded them: But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them. Yes, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils [demons], and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood. Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions” (Psa. 106:34-39).



To wake His people up and get them back on track as the model nation He had originally intended, God gave Israel over to their enemies. Israel repented and cried out to God. God rescued them.

With their bellies full and lives protected, the Israelites went back to pursuing other gods. God punished Israel again. Israel repented and cried out to God. And so went the deliverance-idolatry-punishment-repentance cycle (**vs. 40-46**), until finally, God had no other choice but to divorce unfaithful Israel (**Jer. 3:6-11**).

The Israelites were severely punished because they lusted after pagan customs, rituals, traditions and practices. As you can see, God does not take paganism lightly.

Why Is Paganism Wrong?

Just why does God hate anything that resembles pagan customs? Is it possible to “whitewash” or “Christianize” pagan practices and make them clean? Is it okay to practice pagan customs as long as you “worship God”?

Notice what God says in **Leviticus chapter 18**. After rescuing Israel from slavery, God warned them not to practice the customs they had picked up in Egypt, or learn the ways, customs and traditions of the Gentile nations that they would encounter in the Promised Land (**vs. 1-3**). Instead, God commanded Israel to follow His ways (**vs. 4-5**).



God then describes the pagan ways of these ungodly nations in great detail. In **verses 7-20**, He condemns all kinds of heterosexual sex relations that fall outside the holy boundaries of marriage—incest, fornication, adultery, etc. In **verses 22-23**, God condemns homosexuality and bestiality. Together, these sins break down and

destroy the family unit that God had so lovingly created and instituted.

Notice what God links to these perversions: **“And you shall not let any of your seed [children] pass through the fire to Molech, neither shall you profane the name of your God: I am the LORD” (vs. 21)**. God ties in the perverse sexual practices of ungodly, pagan nations with human sacrifices—parents offering the lives of their children to pagan gods!

The Bible shows that Israel not only disobeyed God and wholeheartedly embraced the sexual immorality of the Gentiles, they even went a step further.

“And they have turned unto Me the back, and not the face: though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction. But they set their abominations in the house [the temple at Jerusalem], which is called by My name, to defile it. And they built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Molech; which I commanded them not, neither came it into My mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin” (Jer. 32:33-35).

Imagine. Israel committed a sin so vile, so disgusting, that it even shocked God! But that was then. What about today? Surely, parents do not sacrifice their children to pagan gods today—or do they? Perhaps their physical *lives* are not being sacrificed—but what about their spiritual lives and *innocence*?

Satan Is The god Of This World

“Satan, who is the god of this world,

has blinded the minds of those
who don't believe.”(God's truth)
2 Corinthians 4:4a NLT

**We live in
enemy territory**



www.PrayerThoughts.com

Parents today expect their little ones to “fall in love” and have boyfriends and girlfriends. They think it is “cute” when little boys and girls hold hands and act like a couple, sneaking a kiss or two when no one is watching. Some parents get worried when their kids do not show romantic interest in or are not popular with the opposite sex. They ask them, “Do you have a boyfriend yet?” or “Who’s your girlfriend?” Yet these same parents are surprised when their teen-aged “little girl” gets pregnant. Or catches a sexually transmitted disease. Or gets an abortion behind their back.

St. Valentine’s Day is just one of many tools the **“god of this world” (II Cor. 4:4)** uses to get parents to *sacrifice their children to him*.



When little boys and girls draw each other’s names in a lottery and send Valentine cards and gifts to each other, declaring their “love,” they are learning the first stages of intimate relations that the Creator God designed specifically for emotionally mature adults. Instead of

embracing the carefree innocence of youth, growing up without the headaches and heartaches of adulthood (finding a job, paying bills, marriage, raising a family, etc.), children today are taught to lust after each other. They are caught up in a daily drama of “If-you-loved-me-you’d-sleep-with-me; I’m-pregnant; It’s-not-mine, she-had-an-abortion.” By the time they reach adulthood, virtually every shred of innocence, sincerity and moral decency has been stripped from them. Emotionally drained, they have world-weary, “been there, done that” attitudes. And their lives are just beginning.

This is why we live in a world where a teen-aged virgin is a rare find. Where what used to be called “shacking up” and “living in sin” is now simply “living together with my significant other.” Where sex is nothing more than a meaningless physical recreation—no emotional attachments, no cares, no concerns and absolutely NO COMMITMENT! Where people change sex partners as conveniently as they change clothes—Where unmarried twenty- or thirty-somethings have had at least *five* sexual partners—and that is considered a low number, especially in the United States. Where men are not referred to as “my husband,” or “my fiancé,” but as “my second baby’s father. How pathetic!

Satan has deceived the whole world (**Rev. 12:9**) in multiple ways—especially when it comes to intimate relationships. St. Valentine’s Day is just one of his tools for deception.

“Come Out of Her, My People”

Concerning the near future, when man’s Satan-influenced world is about to collapse, God declares:

“Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils [demons], and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed [increased] rich through the abundance of her delicacies” (Rev. 18:2-3).

Concerning this pagan, satanic system, God commands true Christians, **“Come out of her, My people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues” (vs. 4).**



St. Valentine's Day originates from the ancient paganism of this Satan-influenced world. It is designed to deceive mankind by appealing to fleshly, carnal desires—or, as the Bible calls them, *the works of the flesh*.

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest [made obvious], which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry...drunkenness, reveling, and such like... they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” (Gal. 5:19-21).

Do any of these sound like Lupercalia to you?

Final Conclusion

Ultimately, A true Christian is focused on God's soon-coming kingdom (**Matt. 6:33**) and the world to come—not on the carnal cravings and desires of this world. A true Christian must strive to **“put off the old man”** and actively imitate the perfect, righteous example of Jesus Christ. A genuine Christian knows that he must actively come out of this world, out of its pagan-infested customs, practices and traditions. They do not celebrate St. Valentine's Day, or any other pagan holiday or custom!

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap... For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap... For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life... And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. (Gal 6:7-9)