

Christmas: The Truth or The Lie

Should Believers Celebrate Christmas?

Christmas is not a Scriptural Doctrine. If our blessed Yahshuah/Yahoshua had wanted us to celebrate His birthday, He would have told us when to celebrate it and how to celebrate it. But Yahshuah/Yahoshua never told anyone to celebrate His birthday. Furthermore, we know from Scriptural history that the Apostles and the early Congregation never celebrated Mashiach's birthday.

The Scripture is Yahuah's/Yahweh's complete and final revelation to man, and it tells us everything we need to know for our spiritual lives. We don't have to go outside the Scriptures for anything. Yahuah's/Yahweh's Word tells us how we're to walk in all aspects of our daily lives. But not once in the Scripture does Yahuah/Yahweh tell us to celebrate christmas! We're told to remember Yahshuah's/Yahoshua's death, but nowhere are we told to celebrate His birth.

2Ti 3: 12-17

And indeed, all those wishing to live reverently in Messiah יהושע, shall be persecuted. But evil men and impostors shall go on to the worse, leading astray and being led astray. But you, stay in what you have learned and trusted, having known from whom you have learned, and that from a babe you have known the Set-apart Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for deliverance through belief in Messiah יהושע. All Scripture is breathed by Elohim and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for setting straight, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of Elohim might be fitted, equipped for every good work.

Yahuah's/Yahweh's Set-Apart Ones are supposed to be Scripturally correct. They are supposed to live according to the teachings of Yahuah's/Yahweh's Holy Word. So the very fact that christmas is never mentioned in the Scriptures is sufficient reason for us not to have anything to do with it. But that's not all.

Mashiach Was Not born on December 25

Don't miss the point: the shepherds were in the fields taking care of their flocks on the night Yahshuah/Yahoshua was born. As the shepherds were watching their sheep, the message came to them of the birth of Yahshuah/Yahoshua:

Luk 2: 8

And in the same country there were shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

It's a well known fact that December falls in the middle of the rainy season in Palestine, and the sheep were kept in the fold at that time of the year. The shepherds always corralled their flocks from October to April. They brought their sheep from the mountainsides and the fields no later than October 15th to protect them from the cold, rainy seasons that followed that date. So the birth of Mashiach could not have taken place at the end of December.

Also Scripture tells us that at the time of the birth of Yahshuah/Yahoshua it was decreed that, "all the world would be taxed...And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city."¹ This couldn't have taken place in the winter. Caesar Augustus, the ruler of Rome, would certainly not call for such a taxing in the depth of winter. Travel at this time of the year is extremely difficult; hence, it would be virtually impossible for everyone to comply with the decree if it had been given then. Yahshuah/Yahoshua Himself testified to the rigors of traveling in winter, for He told the people to pray that their flight at the end of this age would not be in winter.²

Footnote: 1

Luk 2: 1-3

And it came to be in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus for all the world to be registered.

This took place as a first registration while Quirinius was governing Syria.

And all were going to be registered, each one to his own city.

Footnote: 2

Mat 24: 2

"And pray that your flight does not take place in winter or on the Sabbath.

No one knows the exact day when Yahshuah/Yahoshua was born, but in all probability He was born sometime during the first part of October. We can be reasonably sure of this because His earthly ministry lasted 3 1/2 years, and He was crucified on the 15th day of the month of Aviv, which corresponds to our March or April. If we go back 3 1/2 years to the time when Yahshuah/Yahoshua would have been 30 years old – we can determine when He began His public ministry and we come to the month of October.

Let's remember that it's not the date of Yahshuah's/Yahoshua's birth that's important. The important thing is that He was born and that He died for our crookedness (sins). We're not worshipping a helpless infant lying in a manger. We are worshipping a risen and exalted Mashiach who has all power in heaven and in earth.

Where do you suppose christmas originated? Certainly not with Yahuah/Yahweh! christmas started with the sun worshipers in the time of nimrod, the man who supervised the building of the tower of Babel. And that's another reason why not to celebrate christmas.

Here are the ones who have tried to deceive the many:

Hundreds of years before Yahshuah/Yahoshua was born, heathens in every country observed December 25th as the birthday of a god who was called the sun-god. Semiramis, the widow of nimrod, was his mother. She claimed to be the queen of heaven. And she had a son who was supposed to have been born on December 25th; his name was tammuz.

According to all the heathen religions of that time, tammuz had a miraculous birth; and for centuries his birthday was celebrated with feasts, revelry and drunken orgies. The heathen celebrated tammuz' birthday according to the very example he set for them. He was the world's greatest lover of women, strong drink, dirty jokes and other sensual fun. It is said that he loved everybody and that everybody loved him. And it was on December 25th that all the pagan religions celebrated the birthday of tammuz, the sun-god.

Horus was born on December 25th of the virgin isis-meri. His birth was accompanied by a star in the east, which in turn, three kings followed to locate and adorn the newborn savior. At the age of 12, he was a prodigal child teacher, and at the age of 30 he was baptized by a figure known as anup and thus began his ministry. Horus had 12 disciples he traveled about with, performing miracles such as healing the sick and walking on water. Horus was known by many gestural names such as "the truth," "the light," "god's anointed son," "the good shepherd," "the lamb of god," and many others. After being betrayed by typhon, horus was crucified, buried for three days, and thus, resurrected. ...

Attis, of Phrygia, born of the virgin nana on December 25th, crucified, placed in a tomb and after three days, was resurrected.

Krishna, of India, born of the virgin devaki with a star in the east signaling his coming, performed miracles with his disciples, and upon his death was resurrected.

Dionysus of Greece, born of a virgin on December 25th, was a traveling teacher who performed miracles such as turning water into wine, he was referred to as the "king of kings," "god's only begotten son," "the alpha and omega," and many others, and upon his death, he was resurrected.

Mithra, of Persia, born of a virgin on December 25th, he had 12 disciples and performed miracles, and upon his death was buried for three days and thus resurrected, he was also referred to as "the truth," "the light," and many others. Interestingly, the sacred day of worship of mithra was Sunday.

It's evident to see, that christmas is a pagan holiday not a Hebrew Holyday that came out of paganism. Born-again Set-Apart Ones should have nothing to do with it.

Christmas: A Catholic Holiday

The celebration of christmas was started as a Catholic holiday. Why should we steal christmas from the Catholics? They got it from the pagans, and we should be happy to let them keep it.

Encyclopedia Americana:

"Christmas – it was according to many authorities not celebrated in the first centuries of the christian churches as the christian usage in general was to celebrate the death of remarkable persons rather than their birth.¹ A feast was established in memory of the birth of the Saviour in the fourth century. In the fifth century the Western church (Roman Catholic) ordered it to be celebrated forever on the day of the old Roman feast of the birth of Sol. The holly, mistletoe, the yule log and the wassail bowl are of pre-christian times."

Footnote: 1

This concept of not celebrating birthdays actually goes back to earlier times of the Hebrews.

Encyclopedia Britannica has this to say about christmas:

"Christmas (i.e., the Mass of christ) was not among the earliest festivals of the church."

After Constantine became the Emperor of Rome, he forced all the pagans of his empire to be baptized into the Roman Catholic church. Thus pagans far outnumbered true Set-Apart Ones.

Since the Roman Catholic church worshiped the lord jesus as the son of god, when the 25th of December rolled around and the pagans wanted to worship tammuz, their sun-god, Constantine knew that he would have to do something. So he had the Roman Catholic church combine the worship of tammuz with the supposed birthday of christ, and a special mass was declared to keep everyone happy. Thus more paganism was brought into the Roman Catholic church and was called "christ-mass."

The World and Christmas

The next reason not to celebrate christmas: christmas is of the world. The very fact that the world which hates the Mashiach and His blood atonement for crookedness (sin) makes more fuss about christmas than any other holiday which proves that christmas is not of Yahuah/Yahweh.¹ If December 25th were truly the birthday of the blessed Son of Yahuah/Yahweh, the world would have nothing to do with it!

Footnote: 1

1Jn 2: 15-16

Have no love for the world or for the things which are in the world. If any man has love for the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Because everything in the world, the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father but of the world.

People throughout the world, who for the most part have no awareness of the Scriptures or Yahshuah/Yahoshua Mashiach, eat up the christmas celebration. To take christmas from the world would be harder than taking candy from a child.

Let's face it, the world is married to the idol of christmas. In fact, more people get drunk at christmas than at virtually any other time of the year. There are more big parties and more selfish spending than any other season. Doesn't that prove that it's not of Yahuah/Yahweh?

The world loves christmas, but it hates Mashiach.

Unscriptural Traditions

Why celebrate christmas which is filled with unscriptural tradition? The exchanging of gifts, the christmas tree, the singing of carols and santa claus are all pagan in their origins. These all crept into the Roman Catholic church during or after the Fourth Century.

There are many unscriptural traditions that have cluttered up the story of the birth of our wonderful Saviour. For instance, many people believe that the wise men of the East and the shepherds were together in Bethlehem at the time our Saviour was born. But nothing could be further from the truth. The Scriptures say nothing about three wise men, nor does it say that

they were kings. The fact is the Scriptures do not give their number at all but merely states that they were wise men.

Perhaps the worst part of the christmas celebration is thousands of parents will teach their children the falsehood of santa claus. Children are taught that santa claus makes his home at the north pole and is a magical, mystical elf being and once each year he fills his sled with toys for the boys and girls who have been good throughout the year. If they are good, he brings them toys on christmas eve, and if they are bad, he passes them by.

Is it any wonder that many times when children grow up and learn the truth, they question whether Mashiach is also a myth?

Scripture says:

Col 3: 9

Do not lie to each other, since you have put off the old man with his practices,

Eph 4: 20-25

But you have not so learned Messiah,

if indeed you have heard Him and were taught by Him, as truth is in יהושע:

that you put off – with regard to your former way of life – the old man, being corrupted according to the desires of the deceit,

and to be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

and that you put on the renewed man which was created according to Elohim, in righteousness and set-apartness of the truth.

Therefore, having put off the false, speak truth, each one with his neighbour, for we are members of one another.

Some of you loving mothers are saying, "Don't you think we should give the children a good time? They don't understand all the paganism behind christmas?"

Ask yourself this question, mother. Is it necessary to drag the Holy Name of our Blessed Yahshuah/Yahoshua down to the low level of fleshly gratification and drunkenness to show the kiddies a good time? A thousand times, no! Let's teach our children the truth about christmas. Yahuah's/Yahweh's Word says that we should bring up children up in the nurture and admonition of Elohim.¹ Why should we dishonor the name of Mashiach in such a manner under the pretense of showing the children a good time? There are 364 more days in the year during which we can give gifts to our children.

Eph 6: 4

And you, fathers, do not provoke your children, but bring them up in the instruction and admonition of the Master.

Merrymaking and Exchanging Gifts

Without question, the most important part of christmas for most people is buying and exchanging gifts. We should not celebrate christmas because exchanging gifts has nothing to do with Mashiach's birth date.

Perhaps some of you are asking, "Didn't the wise men give gifts to Yahshuah/Yahoshua?" They certainly did, but they didn't give them to one another. The shepherds came to visit Yahshuah/Yahoshua at His birth.

Did you know that giving gifts to a king was common custom in the Far East? That's the reason why the wise men brought gifts to Yahshuah/Yahoshua – because He was born to be King of Yahudah. But they were not birthday gifts. So there is no connection between Christmas and the birth date of Yahshuah/Yahoshua in this respect.

One final word before leaving the matter of exchanging gifts. Let me point out that even this is a part of Satan's anti-Mashiach program. The greatest celebration yet to come will be during the awful days of the tribulation. During the anti-Mashiach's reign all hell will be loosed. The two witnesses whom Yahuah/Yahweh shall send to the people of the earth will be killed when their mission is finished. Can you guess who will kill them? The anti-Mashiach will put them to death. As a result of the death of these prophets of Yahuah/Yahweh, the world will be so delighted and thrilled that they will exchange gifts with one another. Here is what the Scripture says:

Rev 11: 7-10

And when they have ended their witness, the beast coming up out of the pit of the deep shall fight against them, and overcome them, and kill them, and their dead bodies *lie* in the street of the great city which spiritually is called and some of the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations see their dead bodies for three and a half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be placed into tombs, and those dwelling on the earth rejoice over them and exult. And they shall send gifts to each other, because these two prophets tortured those dwelling on the earth.

What further proof do we need that Christmas celebration is not of Yahuah/Yahweh? Truly Elohim's people should not celebrate Christmas. It is anti-Yahuah/Yahweh, anti-Mashiach, satanic, and unscriptural. The call of Yahuah/Yahweh is:

2Co 6: 15-18

And what agreement has Messiah with Beliya'al? Or what part does a believer have with an unbeliever?

And what union has the Dwelling Place of Elohim with idols? For you are a Dwelling Place of the living Elohim, as Elohim has said, "I shall dwell in them and walk among them, and I shall be their Elohim, and they shall be My people."

Therefore, "Come out from among them and be separate, says יהוה, and do not touch what is unclean, and I shall receive you.

"And I shall be a Father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me, says יהוה the Almighty."

Eph 5: 11-17

And have no fellowship with the fruitless works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

For it is a shame even to speak of what is done by them in secret.

But all *matters* being reprov'd are manifested by the light, for whatever is manifested is light.

That is why He says, "Wake up, you who sleep, and arise from the dead, and Messiah shall shine on you."

See then that you walk exactly, not as unwise, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are wicked.

So then do not be foolish, but understand what the desire of יהוה is.

Puritans Condemned Christmas

The pagan history of christmas has been well known throughout history. In fact, at one time the celebration of this pagan custom was forbidden by law in England. In 1644, Parliament declared christmas to be unlawful; and, consequently, it was abolished. The English Puritans looked upon the celebration of christmas as the work of satan.

At one time in early American history, the observance of christmas was illegal. A law was adopted in the general court of Massachusetts about 1650, which required that those who celebrated christmas were to be punished. The statute read, "*Whosoever shall be found observing any such day as christmas, or in any other way...shall be subject to fine of 5 shillings.*" The law's preamble explained its purpose was "*for preventing disorders...(by) observing such festivals as were superstitiously kept in other countries to the great dishonor of God and the offense of others.*" After the Mayflower pilgrims landed in 1620, the first December 25th was spent in labor and cutting down trees "*in order to avoid any frivolity on the day sometimes called christmas.*"

Opposition to the observance of christmas continued just past the second half of the Nineteenth Century. An article in the December 26, 1855, edition of the *New York Daily Times* stated,

"The churches of the Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists were not open on December 25 except where some mission schools had a celebration. They do not accept the day as a holy one, but the Episcopalian, Catholic and German churches were all open. Inside they were decked with evergreens."

The Puritans knew the truth about christmas and regarded it as a pagan holiday. It would be good if all believers followed their example.

What About the Christmas Tree?

Another reason not to observe christmas is because the christmas tree is condemned by the Scriptures. Notice:

Jer 10: 2-9

Thus said יהוה, "Do not learn the way of the heathen, and do not be awed by the signs of the heavens, for the gentiles are awed by them.

"For the prescribed customs of these peoples are worthless, for one cuts a tree from the forest, work for the hands of a craftsman with a cutting tool.

"They adorn it with silver and gold, they fasten it with nails and hammers so that it does not topple.

"They are like a rounded post, and they do not speak. They have to be carried, because they do not walk. Do not be afraid of them, for they do no evil, nor is it in them to do any good."

They are both brutish and foolish, an instruction of worthlessness is the tree.

Silver is beaten into plates; it is brought from Tarshish, and gold from Uphaz, the work of the craftsman and of the hands of the smith; draped in blue and purple; all of them are the work of skilled ones.

Here you have a perfect description of the christmas tree, called by Yahweh "*the way of the*

heathen." We are commanded not to learn that way or follow it! The christmas tree is also viewed in this passage as idolatry. The fifth verse says that these trees cannot speak-cannot walk-must be carried. Some people misread this to make it say that there is no harm in having a christmas tree, but that is not what it says at all. Rather, the Prophet Jeremiah tells us that it is vanity and foolishness and says, "*Learn not the way of the heathen.*"

Some people will be up all night to work on an old dead tree. They'll trim it all up and stand off a little ways and admire their handiwork. Then many of them will sit up all night and look at that old christmas tree.

Some of you preachers need to get up in the middle of the night and throw that old tree out of your house and out of your congregation right at satan's head. Some of you will just gnash your teeth and say this is "narrow minded." Well, you can say anything you want, but the Word of Yahuah/Yahweh is clear on this subject.

Did you know that the green tree is mentioned 14 times in the Scriptures, and in every instance it is likened with idolatry? There isn't one place in the Scriptures where Yahuah/Yahweh commands the use of the "green tree" in connection with true worship.

Perhaps you're wondering why people have a christmas tree during the christmas celebration. You can search the Scriptures through and through, but you won't find a reason for it there. The first decorating of any evergreen tree began with the heathen Greeks and their worship of their god adonis, who allegedly was brought back to life by the serpent aesculapius after having been slain. And each christmas multitudes of people will secure an evergreen tree and dress it up with bright glitter, lights and tinsel, not realizing that they are following the tradition of a pagan festival in honor of a false god!

No doubt there are many sincere supposed believers who think that they are honoring Mashiach by having their christmas tree when, in reality, they are dishonoring Him by having anything to do with a heathen festival that Yahuah/Yahweh hates.

As you read these lines perhaps you say, "*I have my christmas tree but I don't worship it, and consequently, I see nothing wrong with it.*" You should be reminded, however, that you don't determine what is right and what is wrong. Yahuah/Yahweh determines what's right and wrong. If the christmas tree is not an idol to you, why are you so reluctant to give it up? What are you doing down on your knees when you place your gifts under it?

From Babylon, Mystery Religion
Ralph Woodrow, 1965

CHRISTMAS – DECEMBER 25 – is the day designated on our calendars as the day of Messiah's birth. But is this really the day upon which Messiah was born? Are today's customs at this season of the year of True Believers? Or is christmas another result of a mixture between paganism and christianity?

A look at the word "christmas" indicates that it is a *mixture*. Though it includes the name of christ, it also mentions the "mass." Now the mass – with its rituals, elaborate ceremony,

pagan prayers for the dead, transubstantiation rites, the mass, is connected with the name of christ in the word "christ-mas", we immediately see an attempt to merge two conflicting systems together! Actually, to attach the name of christ with the word "mass", a pagan and heathenistic ritual, is but to pollute the Holy name of our Yahuah/Yahweh! And Yahuah/Yahweh says:

Eze 20:39

“As for you, O house of Yisra’ël,” thus said the Master יהוה, “Go, serve each of you his idols, and afterwards, if you are not listening to Me. But do not profane My set-apart Name any more with your gifts and your idols.

The word "christmas" is not found anywhere in the Scriptures of course, and – as we shall see – December 25 is definitely not the date on which Messiah was born. It is evident that the Saviour was not born during the middle of winter, for at the time of his birth, the shepherds were living out in the fields with their flocks. As the Scripture says:

Luk 2:8

And in the same country there were shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

As is well known, the shepherds in Palestine do not "abide in the fields" during the winter season. The shepherds always bring their flocks in from the mountain slopes and fields not later than the fifteenth of October!

It is quite evident that Messiah was not actually born in the middle of the winter season. But, on the other hand, do the scriptures tell us what season of the year he was born? Yes, the Scriptures indicate that he was born in the fall of the year. For example, our Messiah's public ministry lasted three and a half years. His ministry came to an end at the time of the Passover; Joh 18:39 **“But you have a habit that I shall release someone to you at the Passover. Do you wish, then, that I release to you the Sovereign of the Yehudim?”** which was in the spring of the year. And so three and a half years before this would mark the beginning of his ministry in the fall of the year. Now when Yahshuah began his ministry, he was about thirty years of age; Luk 3:23 **And when יהושע Himself began, He was about thirty years of age, being, as reckoned by law, son of Yosëph, of Ēli.** This was the recognized age for a priest before he could become an official minister under the Old Testament; Num 4:3 **from thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, all who enter the service to do the work in the Tent of Meeting.** Therefore, since Messiah began his ministry at the age of about 30 – and since this was in the fall season of the year – then thirty years before this would mark his birth date as being in the early fall, not December 25.

While the Scriptures do not tell the exact date of the birth of Yahshuah/Yahoshua, there is a way to figure the approximate time of the birth of John the Baptist; and since John was born six months before Yahshuah/Yahoshua, by comparing the two, we can again determine at least the season in which Messiah was born:

John's father, Zacharias, was a priest in the temple at Jerusalem. During those times, each priest had a definite period of the year in which to serve in the temple. There were 24 such time divisions or "courses" when each priest would serve during the year. The names of these courses are given in (**I Chronicles 24:7-19**). According to Josephus, each of these courses

lasted for one week, the first course began serving in the first month, Aviv, in the very early spring (**I Chronicles 27:1-2**). Each priest in order would serve his course. After six months, this order of courses would be repeated, so that each priest served a week – twice a year. Then three weeks out of the year, all the priests served together – during the periods of the Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles.

With these facts for our foundation, let us notice what *course* it was that Zacharias served: "There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia" – or in Hebrew, Abijah – "And it came to pass, that while he executed the Priest's office before Yahuah/Yahweh in the order of his *course*...there appeared unto him an angel." The angel revealed that to he and his wife Elizabeth – though they were advanced in years – a son would be born. (**Luke 1:5-13**) But what time of the year was it that Zacharias served the course of Abijah? According to (**I Chronicles 24:10**), the course of Abijah was the eighth in order. This would have been Iyar 27 to Sivan 5; that is, June 1 to 8. Following his week of service in the temple, Zacharias was obligated to remain another week, for the following week was Pentecost. But as soon as this ministry was accomplished, he returned to his home in the hill country which was approximately 30 miles south of Jerusalem, and his wife conceived. (**Luke 1:23-24**) This was about the middle of June. By adding nine months then, we arrive at the approximate date of John's birth. According to this, John was born in the early spring of the year.

Now since Yahshuah/Yahoshua was six months younger than John (**Luke 1:26,36**), we simply add these six months to the time of John's birth in the early spring and come to the approximate time of the birth of Messiah. Again, the evidence indicates that our Messiah was born in the fall of the year, not December 25.

Still further proof of this conclusion may be seen from the fact that at the time Yahshuah/Yahoshua was born, Yoseph and Mary had gone to Bethlehem to be taxed (**Luke 2:1-5**). There are no records of this period whatsoever that would indicate that the middle of the winter was the time of taxing. On the other hand, there is evidence that taxes were paid in the fall season of the year. This was the logical time for the taxes to be paid since this was at the end of their harvest. There is also evidence that when Joseph and Mary made this trip, it was the time of a great feast at Jerusalem. This is the most logical reason why Mary went with Yoseph – to attend the feast, as they also did on later occasions (**Luke 2:41**) – for there was no law that required a woman's presence at a taxing.

We know that the time they went to pay taxes was also the time of one of the great feasts at Jerusalem because of the enormous crowd – so enormous in fact, "there was no room in the inn" at Bethlehem (**Luke 2:7**). Jerusalem was normally a city of only 120,000 inhabitants, but – according to Josephus – during the feasts, sometimes as many as two million Jews would gather there. With such vast throngs of people coming to the feast, not only would Jerusalem be filled, but the surrounding towns also, including Bethlehem, which was only five miles to the south. Mere taxation would not cause a crowd this big to be in Bethlehem, for each person returned to his own city to be taxed. And so, taking all of these things into consideration, it seems evident that Yoseph and Mary made the journey, not only to pay their taxes, but also to attend a great feast at Jerusalem. This was at the end of the harvest season that they were taxed and this was also the time of the Feast of Tabernacles. All of this – as well as the evidence already given would mark the birth of Messiah in the fall – not December 25!

Since Messiah was not born on December 25, then how did this particular day come to be a part of supposed believers calendar? History has the answer. Instead of this day being the time of our Saviour's birth, it was the very day and season on which the pagans for centuries had celebrated the birth of the *sun-god*! A study into this shows how far apostate Roman Catholic church leaders went in their effort to merge christianity and paganism into one apostate religion – even to placing the birth of Messiah on a date to harmonize with the pagan birthday celebration of the sun-god! It was in the fifth century that the Roman Catholic church commanded that the birth of christ be observed forever on December 25 – the day of the old Roman feast of the birth of sol – one of the names of the sun-god!

In pagan days, this birth of the sun-god was especially popular among that branch of the "mysteries" known as mithraism. Concerning this we read:

"The largest pagan religious cult which fostered the celebration of December 25 as a holiday though out the Roman and Greek works was the pagan sun worship – mithraism...This winter festival was called 'the Nativity' – the 'nativity of the SUN'."

And not only was mithra, the sun-god of mithraism, said to be born at this time of the year, but osiris, horus, hercules, bacchus, adonis, jupiter, tammuz, and other sun-gods were also supposedly born at what is today called the "christmas" season – the winter solstice!

Says a noted writer:

"The winter solstice (was) the time at which all the sun-gods from osiris to jupiter and mithra had celebrated their (birthdays), the celebration being adorned with the pine tree of adonis, the holly of saturn, and the mistletoe...tapers represented the kindling of the newborn sun-god's fire..."

Now the fact that the various sun-gods that were worshipped in different countries were all believed to have been born at the same season (in the old fables), would seem to indicate that they were but different forms (under different names) of the original son of the sun-god, tammuz, of Babylon, the land from which sun-worship originally spread.

In Babylon, the birthday of tammuz was celebrated at the time of the winter solstice with great feasts, revelry, and drunkenness – the same way many celebrate it today! The ancient celebration spread and became so much an established custom that "in pagan Rome and Greece, in the days of teutonic barbarians, in the remote times of ancient Egyptian civilization, in the infancy of the race east and west and north and south, the period of the winter solstice was ever a period of rejoicing and festivity."

When this mid-winter festival came to Rome, it was known as the saturnalia – saturn being but another name of nimrod or tammuz as the "hidden god." This feast was the most vile, immoral feast that ever disgraced pagan Rome. It was a season license, drunkenness, and debauchery when all restraints of law were laid aside. And it was from this very feast at Rome that the merry-making of this season passed into the Roman Catholic church and on down to our present civilization! *"It is a matter of common knowledge",* says one writer, *"that much of our association with the christmas season – the holidays, the giving of presents and the general*

feeling of geniality – is but the inheritance from the Roman winter festival of the saturnalia...survivals of paganism."

Tertullian mentions that the practice of exchanging gifts at this season was part of the pagan Roman saturnalia. When this mid-winter festival was adopted in the Roman church, this custom was also adopted. As usual, however, apostate leaders tried to find some point of similarity between the pagan and christian religion – to make the merger seem less obvious. In this case, reference was made to the fact that the wise men when they came to see the christ-child presented to him gifts. Some suppose that this is where the custom of exchanging gifts at christmas time came. But not so. The wise men did not exchange gifts among themselves. They presented their gifts to Yahshuah/Yahoshua who was born king of the Jews. (It was an Eastern custom to present gifts when coming into the presence of a King.) But these gifts were not birthday gifts. When the wise men arrived, it was some time *after* the day on which Yahshuah/Yahoshua was born. By this time, he was no longer in a stable, but in a house. (**Matthew 2:9-11**) Obviously, the gifts of the wise men were not *christmas* gifts.

Space here will not allow us to enlarge on the use of the round wreath, kissing under the mistletoe, the use of the yule log, the wassail bowl, holly, red berries, santa claus, the undue commercialism of the season, etc., but all of these things are equally unscriptural and clearly identify our customs of today with the customs of the saturnalia of pagan Rome.

And finally, in connection with the customs of the "christmas" season, we will mention the christmas *tree*. An old Babylonish fable went like this:

Semiramis, the mother of tammuz, claimed that overnight an evergreen tree sprang up from a dead tree stump. The dead stump supposedly symbolized her dead husband nimrod; the new evergreen tree was the symbol that nimrod had come to life again in the person of tammuz!

This idea spread and developed so that the various nations all have their legends about sacred trees! Among the druids, the oak was sacred; among the Egyptians, it was the palm; and in Rome, it was the fir, which was decorated with red berries during saturnalia! Among the Scandinavians, the fir tree was sacred to their god odin. "The Scandinavian god woden or odin was believed to bestow special gifts at yuletide to those who honored him by approaching his sacred fir tree." And even as other rites of the yuletide season were absorbed in by the "Roman Catholic church", so also is the wide-spread use of the tree at this season a carry over of an ancient practice! "The christmas tree...recaptures the idea of tree worship...gilded nuts and balls symbolizing the sun...all of the festivities of the (pagan) winter solstice have been absorbed into christmas day...the use of holly and mistletoe to the druidic ceremonies; the christmas tree to the honors paid to odin's sacred fir..."

In at least ten Biblical references, the "green" tree is associated with idolatry and false worship. Now of course all trees are green at one time or another; apparently then, the references to the "green" tree refer to a tree that is especially noted for being green – the evergreen or tree of that family!



Taking all of this into consideration, it is interesting to notice the reading of (**Jeremiah 10:1-5**) and compare it with today's custom of decorating a tree at the christmas season:

"The customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe."

"They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not."

Now of course the people in the days of Jeremiah, as the context goes on to show, were actually making an idol out of the tree. We do not mean to infer that people who today place christmas trees in their homes and churches are intentionally or consciously worshipping the tree. What we are saying is that today's use of the tree is plainly a carry over from paganism. But whatever the difference may be between the ancient use of the tree as compared with present day customs, no one can deny that these things of which we have been speaking are customs of men. And Yahuah/Yahweh says:

"The customs of the people are vain" – worthless, empty – they add no power to true worship.

Christmas was adopted into the Roman Catholic church during the fifth century. In the sixth century, missionaries were sent through the northern part of Europe to gather pagans into the Roman fold. They found that the 24th of June was a very popular day among these people. In order to induce them into the "church", as was the *usual* custom after the falling away, apostate Roman Catholic church leaders would allow them to continue celebrating their pagan holiday, only they would attempt to associate it with some christian event. But what event could they associate with June 24th? They had already adopted a day to commemorate the birth of christ – December 25th. And this error led to another error. They noticed that June 24th was approximately six months before December 25, and since John the Baptist was born six months before Yahshuah/Yahoshua, why not set June 24 as the day to celebrate John's birthday? And this is what they did. To this day, June 24 is known on the papal calendar as st. John's day or the nativity of st. John! But obviously, such an idea is built upon a false foundation, for John was not born on June 24; and mixing his name with this day was but a cover up, so the old pagan holiday could be continued – now within the "Roman Catholic church."

In ancient times, this day was set aside for baal worship. In Britain, before the entrance of Roman Catholicism there, the 24th of June was celebrated by the druids with blazing fires in honor of baal (the sun-god, nimrod in deified form). The writings of such noted historians as Herodotus, Wilkinson, Layard, and others tell of these ceremonial fires in different countries. When June 24th was adopted into the "church" and renamed as st. John's day, so also were the sacred fires adopted and renamed as "st. John's fires"! I have seen the people running and leaping through the st. John's fires in Ireland...", says one writer of the past century, "proud of passing through unsinged...thinking themselves in a special manner blest by the ceremony." In reading of such rites, we are reminded of similar practices into which the backslidden children of Israel fell when they would "pass through the fire to molech" (**Jeremiah 32:35; Ezekiel 20:31**). Obviously, none of these practices had any connection with John the Baptist.

Besides the fire ceremony that was observed on June 24th, this day was also known among those heathen tribes as the festival of *water*. And had not John the Baptist been especially known as the one that baptized with water? And so this slight similarity helped disguise the continuation of the pagan day, now renamed!

But the real significance that connected this day with water was that it was sacred to oannes, the ancient fish-god! Stemming from another ancient Babylonian fable, as we mentioned earlier, nimrod was supposed to have reappeared in the "Mysteries" after he was slain as oannes. In an article on nimrod, Fausett says: "*oannes the fish-god, Babylon's civilizer, rose out of the red sea,*" etc. And so we see how nimrod, water, and the fish-god oannes were all connected. Now in the Latin language adopted by the Roman Catholic church, John was called joannes. Notice how similar joannes is to oannes! And so by putting emphasis on certain points of similarity between paganism and christianity, another pagan day was smoothly and cunningly adopted into the papal calendar, disguised with the name of John the Baptist!

We have already noticed in an earlier writing how the worship of the ancient mother-goddess was mixed into christianity. The pagans had for centuries prayed to and worshipped the great mother of heathenism. In order to bring these pagans into the fallen church, the ancient worship and rites that had been used to worship the pagan mother were continued – only they were told to use the name of Mary, the Mother of Yahshuah/Yahoshua, instead of the old name of diana, isis, astarte, artemis, etc. And even as other ideas that have been associated with the pagan mother goddess were merged into the "Roman Catholic church" in attempt to make christianity and paganism appear to be one and the same, so also, August 15, the day of the ancient festival of isis or artemis, was simply renamed as the day of the "assumption of the Virgin Mary" and right on up to present times, this very day is still highly honored.

As one writer speaking of this feast day of the assumption of the Virgin says: "*It is celebrated on August 15th; but that was the date of the great festival of diana...with whom isis was identified, and one can see, thus, how Mary had gradually taken the place of the goddess.*" It is evident that the fallen Roman Catholic church cared little about truthfulness as to *when* events actually happened. They appointed celebrations on the very days that were popular among the pagans.

Another day, supposedly in honor of Mary is called the purification of the Virgin Mary or "candle mass day", which is celebrated on February 2. On this day, Catholic priests pronounce blessings on *candles* which are then distributed to the people at mass. And on this day all of the candles to be used during the year in the Catholic rituals are blessed.

But how did the special observance of February come to be set aside as candlemas day or the day of the purification of the Virgin? This, like other days we have mentioned, was instituted in the "Roman Catholic church" to replace a pagan day. And not only did the fallen church adopt this *day, but also its customs!* You see, in the early days of Rome, this festival was observed by the carrying of torches and candles in honor of February, from whose name our month February gets its name! The Greeks held the feast in honor of the goddess ceres, the mother of proserpina, who on this very day was said to have sought her daughter in the lower world with torches! Among the Egyptians, this day was also observed in honor of the goddess neith on the very same day that is known today as "candlemas day" in the Roman Catholic church!

So the observance of candlemas at this time of the year, its association with the mother goddess, and the use of candles are all beliefs that were *unmistakably* adopted from paganism.

These days and times we have mentioned – as well as numerous others which space will not permit us to explain here – were all adopted into the calendar of the Roman Catholic church from paganism. We wonder if the apostle Paul were to be raised up to preach to this generation, if he would not say to the professing Roman Catholic church today, as he did to the Galatians long ago:

Gal 4: 8-11

But then, indeed, not knowing Elohim, you served those which by nature are not mighty ones. But now after you have known Elohim, or rather are known by Elohim, how do you turn again to the weak and poor elementary matters, to which you wish to be enslaved again? You observe days and months and seasons and years. I fear for you, lest by any means I have laboured for you in vain.

To what days did Paul have reference? The context shows that the Galatians had been converted from the pagan worship of the "gods" (vs. 8) and so it is evident that when some of them *went back* to their former worship (vs. 9) the days and times they were observing were those days and times that were set aside to honor these *pagan gods!* And yet, it was these very days that the fallen Roman Catholic church merged into her worship – changing them slightly, disguising them with christian sounding names – and their observance has continued to this day!

IN CONCLUSION:

- (1) Christmas was not ordained by Yahuah/Yahweh and was not celebrated until long after the last Apostle died.
- (2) Christmas is a pagan holiday and was established as a result of Constantine's edict in 313 CE.
- (3) Yahshuah/Yahoshua HaMashiach was not born in the month of December.
- (4) The Scriptures warn us not to participate in pagan festivals.
- (5) The early Puritans outlawed christmas.
- (6) The christmas tree is described in the Book of Jeremiah as a pagan symbol and is a way of the heathen.
- (7) Yahshuah/Yahoshua HaMashiach was in the Temple during the Festival of Hannukah.
- (8) Yahuah/Yahweh has not given the authority to anyone to create and designate holydays.

Finally, we would like to share the following:

Joh 10:22-23

At that time the Hanukkah came to be in Yerushalayim, and it was winter. And יהושע was walking in the Set-apart Place, in the porch of Shelomoh.

There is a winter season in Israel and Yahshuah/Yahoshua was at the Temple during Feast of Dedication or Hanukkah.

HERE ARE FIVE REASONS TO OBSERVE HANUKKAH

1. DID YOU KNOW THAT HANUKKAH IS IN THE GOSPELS?

Hanukkah is not mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures because the story of Hanukkah happened after the last book of the Tanakh (Old Testament) had been written. However, Hanukkah is mentioned in the Apostolic Scriptures, Yahusha went to the Temple for the Feast of Hanukkah.

IF HANUKKAH MATTERS TO YAHSHUAH/YAHOSHUA, SHOULDN'T IT MATTER TO US?

2. DID YOU KNOW THAT HANUKKAH IS A STORY OF RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION?

Hanukkah is a story of religious persecution and standing up for faith in Yahuah/Yahweh. Yahshuah/Yahoshua tells us we can expect persecution, but He also tells us that we must stand firm in our faith.

IF THAT'S WHAT THE STORY OF HANUKKAH IS ABOUT, SHOULDN'T IT MATTER TO US?

3. DID YOU KNOW THAT HANUKKAH IS THE FESTIVAL OF THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD?

Hanukkah is the Festival of Light. It celebrates the relighting of the menorah lamp that burned in Yahuah's/Yahweh's Holy Temple. In rabbinic terminology, the menorah was called the "light of the world." Yahshuah/Yahoshua said, "I am the Light of the world," and another time He told His disciples, "You are the light of the world."

IF HANUKKAH IS THE FESTIVAL OF THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD, SHOULDN'T IT MATTER TO US?

4. DID YOU KNOW THAT YAHSHUAH/YAHOSHUA TALKED ABOUT HANUKKAH?

Yahshuah/Yahoshua talked about Hanukkah. He warned His disciples that the thing that happened in the story of Hanukkah would happen again (**Mark 13:13-16, Matthew 24:15-18**).

TO UNDERSTAND WHAT HE WAS SAYING, HIS DISCIPLES HAD TO KNOW THE STORY OF HANUKKAH, AND HIS DISCIPLES KNEW THE STORY, SHOULDN'T IT MATTER TO US?

5. DID YOU KNOW THAT HANUKKAH COMMEMORATES THE DEDICATION OF YAHUAH'S/YAHWEH'S TEMPLE?

Hanukkah means "dedication." It is a remembrance of when the Jews rededicated Yahuah's/Yahweh's Holy Temple to serve only ELOHIM. The Apostolic Scriptures tell us that we are Yahuah's/Yahweh's Temple.

IF HANUKKAH IS A FESTIVAL ABOUT THE DEDICATION OF YAHUAH'S/YAHWEH'S TEMPLE, AND WE ARE YAHUAH'S/YAHWEH'S TEMPLE, SHOULDN'T IT MATTER TO US?

NOTE: From *Light in the Darkness*, published by FFOZ

1Jn 2:1-6

My little children, I write this to you, so that you do not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Intercessor with the Father, יהושע Messiah, a righteous One.

And He Himself is an atoning offering for our sins, and not for ours only but also for all the world.

And by this we know that we know Him, if we guard His commands.

The one who says, "I know Him," and does not guard His commands, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

But whoever guards His Word, truly the love of Elohim has been perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.

The one who says he stays in Him ought himself also to walk, even as He walked.

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