

THE ORIGINS OF IDOLOTRY & PAGAN WORSHIP

Easter, Halloween, and Christmas observances are among the most commonly observed religious and secular holidays (a word perverted from [Holy Days](#)) that many people believe are a part of the worship system of the God; however, basic research into the origin of these holidays shows them to be unacceptable to God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Anyone who wishes to worship the true God and his Son correctly should understand the seriousness of celebrating these religious and secular holidays, because their origin and practice involved fertility rites, sexual licentiousness, and the worship of false gods as the central focus of their celebration.

GOD, and HIS Only Begotten Son, the Co-Creator Jesus Christ, gave pointed instructions to those who are SERIOUS about following Jesus' way of life, and serving the True GOD:

"Do not follow other gods, the gods of the peoples around you" (Deut.6:14 NIV).

"Be careful not to be ensnared by inquiring about their gods, saying, "How do these nations serve their gods? We will do the same." You must not worship the Lord your God in their way, . . ." (Deut.12:30-31 NIV).

"Do not learn the ways of the nations [heathens] . . ." (Jer.10:2 NIV).

"Do not follow other gods to serve and worship them; . . ." (Jer.25:6 NIV).

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Heb.13:8 NIV).

The following study will review some of the more popular religious and secular holidays that are observed around the world by professing Christianity and show that these non-biblical observances are a violation of the law of God and should not be celebrated by the elect of God.

THE TRUTH ABOUT [EASTER](#)

Each year in the spring, masses of worshipers celebrate Easter. Around the world, Easter Sunrise Worship services are held on the tops of hills and mountains, while priests chant and utter incantations, devotees kneel and bow in worship towards the east as the sun crests the horizon.

The places of worship overflow with people dressed in their new Easter clothes. Bells ring from cathedrals and stirring hymns fill the air to inspire and uplift the worshipers. Ministers and priests announce the resurrection of Jesus Christ with great acclaim and joy. And, after the religious rites are over, the children are treated to an Easter egg hunt.

This is a description of a modern-day celebration of Easter. But, as strange as it may seem, a similar description applies to the Easter celebrations in Babylon over 4,000 years ago, in Asia Minor over 2,500 years ago, and in pagan Rome in 100 A.D..

This paper presents several studies into the celebration of Easter, which prove that Easter originated from pagan worship of false gods, and it should not be observed by anyone who wishes to honor and worship God the Father.

Easter Eggs: Ancient and Modern

"The origin of the Pasch [Easter] eggs is just as clear [as the origin of Easter]. The ancient druids bore an egg, as the sacred emblem of their order. In the Dionysiaca, or mysteries of Bacchus, as celebrated in Athens, one part of the nocturnal ceremony consisted in the consecration of an egg. The Hindu fables celebrate their mundane egg as of a golden color. The people of Japan make their sacred egg to have been brazen. In China, at this hour, dyed or painted eggs are used on sacred festivals, even as in this country [England]. In ancient times eggs were used in the religious rites of the Egyptians and the Greeks, and were hung up for mystic purposes in their temples. 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.

"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, and hatched it, out came Venus, who afterwards was called the Syrian Goddess—that is, Astarte. Hence the egg became one of the symbols of Astarte or Easter; and accordingly, in Cyprus, one of the chosen seats of the worship of Venus, or Astarte, the egg of wondrous size was represented on a grand scale." (The Two Babylons, pp. 108-109).

The True Origin of Easter

"What means the term Easter itself? It is not a Christian name. It bears its Chaldean [Babylonian] origin on its very forehead. Easter is nothing else than Astarte [Istar], one of the titles of Beltis, the queen of heaven . . ." (The Two Babylons, p. 103).

"The religious solemnities of April, as now practiced, are called by the name of Easter—that month, among our Pagan [British] ancestors, having been called Easter month. The festival, of which we read in Church history under the name of Easter, in the third or fourth centuries, was quite a different festival from that now observed in the Romish Church, and at that time was not known by any such name as Easter. It was called Pasch, or the Passover, and though not of Apostolic institution, was very early observed by many professing Christians; in commemoration of the death and resurrection of Christ" (ibid. p. 104).

The Passover was instituted by God when he brought the children of Israel out of Egypt. Moreover, one of the main reasons for killing the Egyptians' firstborn children and animals was God's judgment against the gods of the Egyptians:

"For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord" (Ex.12:12).

The God who went to those lengths to show his power and might over the gods of the Egyptians would never sanction the worship of him by the means of the pagan religious ceremonies or pagan holidays:

"That festival agreed originally with the time of the Jewish Passover, when Christ was crucified. . . that festival [of the Passover and feast of Unleavened Bread] was not idolatrous, and was preceded by no Lent . . ." (The Two Babylons, p. 104).

"The forty days' abstinence of Lent was directly borrowed from the worshipers of the Babylonian goddess [the queen of heaven]. Such a Lent of forty days, 'in the spring of the year,' is still observed by the Yezidis or Pagan Devil worshipers of Koordistan, who have inherited it from their early masters, the Babylonians" (Ibid., p. 104). Moreover, the pagan Mexican Baal sun-worshipers observed a solemn fast like Lent for forty days in honor of the sun beginning three days after the vernal equinox.

"Such a Lent of forty days was observed in Egypt . . . was held expressly in commemoration of Adonis or Osiris, the great mediatorial god. . . among the Pagans this Lent seems to have been an indispensable preliminary to the great annual festival in commemoration of the [supposed] death and resurrection of Tammuz [Babylonian name for Adonis or Osiris], which was celebrated by alternate weeping and rejoicing . . ." (Ibid., p. 105).

The Death and Resurrection for Adonis—The Pagan Savior

The pagan counterfeit, which was inspired by Satan, has been substituted for the true Christian Passover and has been accepted as the authentic Christian observance. There are variations in the rituals from country to country, but the death on a Friday and a resurrection on Sunday is a consistent theme.

"We have seen that the rites of Tammuz or Adonis were commonly celebrated . . . In the gardens of Adonis are still sown in spring as well as in summer, from which we may perhaps infer that Sicily as well as Syria celebrated of old a vernal festival of the dead and risen god. At the approach of Easter, Sicilian women sow wheat, lentils, and canary seed in plates . . . the plants soon shoot up; the stalks are tied together with red ribbons, and the plates containing them are placed on the sepulchers which, with the effigies of the dead Christ, are made up in Catholic and Greek churches on Good Friday, just as the gardens of Adonis were placed on the grave for the dead Adonis.

"The practice is not confined to Sicily . . . The whole custom—the sepulchers as well as plates of sprouting grain—may be nothing but a continuation, under a different name, [the name of Jesus Christ], of the worship of Adonis" (The Golden Bough, p. 400).

"During the whole of Good Friday a waxen effigy of the dead Christ is exposed to view in the middle of the Greek churches and is covered with fervent kisses by the thronging crowd, while the whole church rings with melancholy, monotonous dirges. Late in the evening, when it has grown quite dark, this waxen image is carried by the priests into the street on a bier . . ."

"This is followed by the ritual mourning by the whole town as the priests slowly carry the wax image, and a great multitude follows. Thus, the community solemnly buries its Christ as if he had just died. At last the waxen image is again deposited in the church, and the same lugubrious chants echo anew.

"These lamentations, accompanied by a strict fast, continue till midnight on Saturday. As the clock strikes twelve, the bishop appears and announces the glad tidings that 'Christ is risen,' to which the crowd replies, 'He is risen indeed' . . . in the same hour people plunge from the extremity of the fast into the enjoyment of the Easter lamb and neat wine'" (Ibid., p. 401).

This kind of vain and idolatrous mockery of the true death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is an example of how far paganism has penetrated Christianity. Only the names were changed, not the religion. Yet, this pagan, Christian, Babylonian religion with some variations has been embraced as the universal Christianity by the world—Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant. They all observe Easter, which was previously a pagan day of worship and celebration in commemoration of false gods.

The Myth and Ritual of Attis

"Another of those gods whose supposed death and resurrection struck such deep roots into the faith and ritual of Western Asia is Attis. He was to Phrygia what Adonis was to Syria . . . Attis was said to have been a fair young shepherd or herdsman beloved by Cybele, the Mother of the Gods, a great Asiatic goddess of fertility, who had her chief home in Phrygia. Some held that Attis was her son. His birth, like that of many other heroes, is said to have been miraculous" (Ibid., p. 407).

The mother and son pagan counterfeit religion along with its rites and worship system was deeply entrenched within ancient historical tradition as the established religion. People everywhere in the civilized world believed this was the way to worship God.

God's Teachings Concerning Pagan Practices

"Take heed to yourself that you be not snared by following them . . . and that you inquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so I will do likewise. You shall not do to the Lord your God: for every abomination to the Lord, which he hates, have they done to their gods . . . What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: you shall not add thereto, nor diminish from it" (Deut.12:30-32).

The New Testament God commands the Gentiles to repent, to turn from, and to renounce such paganism. When the apostle Paul and Barnabas preached to the Gentiles who practiced the religion of Diana, Adonis, Attis, and Jupiter, their message was not acceptance and union of these religions with true Christianity.

"Sirs, why do you these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach to you that you should turn from these vanities to the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: Who in times past allowed the nations to walk in their

own ways . . . And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commands all men every where to repent!" (Acts 14:15-16; 17:30).

The Bible shows that the New Testament church opposed the pagan religious practices and the blending of these pagan practices with the worship of the true God.

"But I say, the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God: and I would not that you should have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. . . ." (1 Cor.10:20-21).

God has never given his church any authority to accept and assimilate pagan religious practices as a means of worshiping him. Any person, organization, or church which does this, rejects the word of God and teaches doctrines that are contrary to the word of God. Therefore, anyone who teaches and preaches such practices is teaching a false savior, and a counterfeit Christianity.

Catholic Admissions and Practices

The Catholic church has always used its power and authority to enforce the acceptance of teachings that are contrary to the Biblical teachings.

"In like manner the Catholic Church has been accustomed to bring before its followers in a visible form the death and resurrection of the Redeemer . . . When we reflect how often the Church has skillfully contrived to plant the seeds of the new faith on the stock of paganism, we may surmise that the Easter celebration of the dead and risen Christ was grafted upon the similar celebration of the dead and risen Adonis . . ." (The Golden Bough, p. 401).

"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 far sunk in idolatry—in this as in so many other areas, to shake hands" (The Two Babylons, p. 105).

"Taken altogether, the coincidences of the Christian with the heathen festivals are too close and too numerous to be accidental. They mark the compromise which the [Catholic] Church in the hour of its triumph was compelled to make with its vanquished yet still dangerous rivals. The inflexible Protestantism of the primitive missionaries, with their fiery denunciations of heathendom, had been exchanged for the supple policy, the easy tolerance, the comprehensive charity of shrewd ecclesiastics, who clearly perceived that if Christianity was to conquer the world it could do so only by relaxing the too rigid principles of its Founder, by widening a little the narrow gate which leads to salvation" (The Golden Bough, p. 419).

Granting the practice of pagan beliefs in direct opposition to the clear commandments of God has always been the policy of the Catholic Church.

"In the history of the Church we find that she often christened pagan festivals, making use of dates and ceremonies, and endowing them with an entirely new and Christian significance" (My Catholic Faith, p. 416).

"Today the entire of Christendom celebrates Easter Sunday in memory of the Resurrection. It is the Feast of feasts . . . Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday following the first full moon of spring; the feast is moveable, and can fall between March 22 and April 25" (Ibid., p.81).

This variance in the date of Easter was devised to more closely counterfeit the dates of the true Christian Passover and make it easier to replace the Passover with Easter. Also, the observance of the Passover ceremony, as commanded by Jesus Christ himself, was substituted with the Catholic holy eucharist (communion), which is of pagan derivation, by edict of the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D.

Attendance and taking of the Mass on Easter Sunday is obligatory for all Catholics. Even though the leaders of the Catholic Church have the Holy Bible and claim to teach it, they insist that "under pain of grievous sin" all are to observe this holiday. However, God Almighty commands Christians not to observe such feasts.

"We are obligated to receive Holy Communion during Easter time each year . . . The Church enforces this command by requiring us under pain of grievous sin to communicate [take communion] at least at Easter time" (My Catholic Faith, p.311).

God's Indictment and Condemnation of Pagan Practices

Throughout the Bible, God shows that he has never allowed his people to worship him by means of pagan ceremonies and rituals. In the Old Testament, the children of Israel cut themselves off from God whenever they left the true worship of God. Today, the same spiritual principle applies for the elect of God who are to worship God the Father in spirit and truth (Jn.4:23-24). If, as Jesus Christ commands, the elect of God worship him in spirit and truth and are sanctified by the truth, which is God's word (Jn.15:16;17:17), why would God accept any pagan form of worship?

The apostle Peter wrote to true Christians and strongly condemned pagan practices and false prophets:

"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty . . . But there were false prophets, also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious way; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of " (2.Pet.1:16; 2:1-2).

The truth of God was buried under an avalanche of propaganda that denounced God's way as Jewish. Hence, Jesus' castigation of Judaism—a form of Jewish rejection of God's truth—was cleverly and deceptively used to attack true Christianity. The seventh day Sabbath (on Saturday),

the true Christian Passover, and the annual festivals of God were labeled Jewish. The truth is that the Passover, the Sabbath, and the annual festivals were instituted by God and not the Jews.

It is true that, during the days of Jesus Christ, only the Jews were observing these days; however, it does not mean that the Jews originated these commanded days of worship. They were originally commanded by God in the holy scriptures in Exodus chapters 12, 16, 20, 23, 32; Leviticus chapter 23; Numbers 9, 28; Deuteronomy 5, 16. Moreover, they were observed by Jesus Christ and the apostles in the New Testament. The true Festivals of God are found in the Bible, not pagan religions. In fact, history shows that many times the Israelites and Jews were just as paganized with Babylonian religions and forms of worship as professing Christians are today. God's condemnation of these practices is still valid today:

"Do you not see what they are doing in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem? The Children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead dough to make cakes [the hot cross buns of Easter] for the queen of heaven [the great mother goddess of fertility]; and they pour out drink offerings to other gods in order to spite Me. Do they spite Me?, declares the Lord. Is it not themselves they spite to their own shame? Therefore thus saying the Lord God, Behold My anger and My wrath will be poured out on this place, on man and on beast and on the trees of the field and on the fruit of the ground; and it will burn and not be quenched"
(Jer.7:17-20, New American Standard Bible).

These idolatrous practices are violations of the first and second commandments. The New Testament, also reveals that idolaters will not be in the kingdom of God (Rev.21:8).

Ezekiel chapter 8 contains God's indictment and stinging rebuke against idolatry and pagan religions.

"Then said he to me, Son of man, lift up your eyes now the way toward the north. So I lifted up my eyes the way toward the north, and behold the northward gate of the altar this image of jealousy in the entry. He said furthermore to me, Son of man, do you see what they are doing? even the great abominations that the house of Israel commits here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary? . . ." (Ezk.8:5-6).

The same is true today. Even the churches that claim to be Christian, have driven God away by their idolatry.

Greater Abominations

"Then he said to me, Son of man, have you seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The Lord sees us not; the Lord has forsaken the earth. He said also to me, Turn you yet again, and you shall see greater abominations that they do. Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord's house which was toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz!" (Ezk.8:12-14).

Tammuz was the Babylonian name for Adonis, who was also called Attis and Osiris. All such heathen practices are considered abominable to God the Father.

Sunrise Worship Condemned

"Then he said to me, Have you seen this, O son of man? turn you yet again, and you shall see greater abominations than these. And he brought me into the inner court of the Lord's house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord [symbolic of rejecting God], and their faces toward the east; and they worshiped the sun toward the east" (Ezk.8:15-16).

This is exactly what people are doing when they participate in Easter sunrise services. They think that they are worshiping and honoring God, but in reality they are dishonoring him.

Because most people have been deceived into observing the pseudo-christian pagan holidays, they believe they are doing what is right. They believe that they are serving God and are convinced that they are true Christians:

"Woe to 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 to them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight. Woe to them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink" (Isa.5:20-22).

"Come here; I will show you the judgment of the great whore that sits upon many waters [peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages]: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have made drunk with the wine of her fornication . . . and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of the names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

"And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, and having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written Mystery, Babylon The Great, Mother Of Harlots [all the religions of the world, except the true religion of God] And The Abominations Of The Earth [all the pagan religious holidays and practices]" (Rev.17:1-5).

This is the same evil religious system that God condemns throughout the entire Bible; it is the same satanic system which has rejected the laws of God.

"Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him! Therefore as the fire devours the stubble, and the flame consumes the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel" (Isa.5:23-24).

They Put the Golden Bough to Their Nose

"Then he said to me, Have you seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations that they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch of their nose" (Ezk.8:17). The Branch or Golden Bough is the symbol of pagan religions.

SUMMARY

The historical record and the word of God clearly show the following things about the practice of Easter:

- Easter celebrations did not begin when Christianity began
 - The Bible does not command Easter observance
 - Early New Testament Christians did not celebrate Easter
- Easter was celebrated by pagans in their worship of evil spirits thousands of years before Jesus Christ was born
 - God condemns the practice of Easter-type worship and calls it an abomination
 - True Christians are commanded to observe the Christian Passover, not Easter

Many of the leaders of the Christian world know the truth about the pagan practice of Easter, but they refuse to repent. Those who practice this abomination will suffer the wrath of Almighty God as prophesied in Ezekiel 8 and in the Book of Revelation:

"Therefore will I also deal in fury: my eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in my ears with a loud voice, yet I will not hear them" (Ezk.8:18).

THE ORIGIN OF HALLOWEEN

Few have taken the time to ask about the origin of Halloween and whether or not Christians should participate in this holiday. The truth is that Halloween is not Christian and should not be celebrated by true Christians:

"The principal fire-festivals of the Celts . . . May Day and the other on Allhallow Even or Hallowe'en, as it is now commonly called, that is, on the thirty-first of October, the day predecing All Saints' or Allhallows Day . . . the feast of all souls. At the beginning of November, which under a thin Christian cloak conceals an ancient pagan festival of the dead . . . in the manner of their celebration and in the superstitions associated with them, and alike, by the antique character impressed upon both, betray a remote and purely pagan origin" (The Golden Bough, p. 733-34).

"Do not pursue after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? I will do likewise. You shall not likewise to the Lord your God: for every abomination that the Lord hates, they have done to their gods. They have even burned their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. Whatever I command you, be sure to do it: you shall not add to it, or take away from it" (Deut.12:30-32 Para.).

God of the Dead

The following sources show that Halloween was originally a holiday celebrated in honor of the god of the dead:

"The earliest Hallowe'en celebrations [in the British Isles] were held by the Druids in honour of Samhain, Lord of the dead, whose festival fell on November 1" (Halloween Through Twenty Centuries).

"It was a Druidical belief that on the eve of this festival [Hallowe'en], Saman, Lord of the Dead, called together the wicked spirits . . . (Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th edition, "Halloween").

In the ancient pagan world, it was believed that the souls of good people would rise to heaven and the souls of evil people would be turned over to the lord of the dead. And once a year, the spirits of the dead people would be let out.

"Hallows' is an old word for a saint and Allhallows' Eve (31 October) is the vigil of All Saints (1 November), the Christian festival corresponding to an ancient feast of the dead. In many European countries it is traditionally a time when the spirits of the departed visit their former homes; a fire, food and drink are put ready for them.

"In Sicily the ghostly visitors bring gifts for the children – toys, sweets and clothes stolen from the shops. The Welch believe that a ghost came and sat on every stile when the clock struck twelve. In some parts of Wales the wandering shades [ghosts] appeared as a white lady, while in north Wales and Scotland people feared the spectral Black Sow" (Encyclopedia of Witchcraft and Magic, Venetia Newal, p. 16).

"In Wales until the eighteenth century it was customary to burn a candle in church to see what the future held. A bright flame meant a prosperous, happy year. An irregular flame foretold trouble, and if it went out this signified one's own death. Hallowe'en divination probably derives from Samhain . . ." (Ibid, p. 16).

Halloween is a purely pagan, occult holiday. The symbols of Halloween tell the true meaning of the day. The Jack-O-lantern is an idol to the Lord of the Dead (Satan). The lighted candle within is a remnant of Halloween Fires to light the way for the returning spirits of the dead. The witch represents the high priestess of Satan worship. The full moon is the Sabat night on which witches perform their ritual worship of the spirits and Satan. The black cat is associated with witchcraft and symbolizes a witches' spirit guide (demon).

The skeleton depicts Ankou, Lord of the Dead who allegedly traveled in the dead of night to claim his victims. Superstitious beliefs portray Ankou as living in an underground palace filled with thousand of candles. Each candle is supposed to represent a human life. He claims his victims by blowing out the candles.

Satan Worship

The truth is that when people observe and commemorate pagan holidays, they actually worship Satan who wants to be worshiped as God:

"Taken altogether, the coincidences of the Christian with the heathen festivals are too close and too numerous to be accidental. They mark the compromise which the church [not the Church of God] in the hour of its triumph was compelled to make . . ." (The Golden Bough, Frazer, p. 419).

The Bible shows what God has commanded his people to do and not do. He commands his children not to learn the way of the Heathen (Jer.10:2). Moreover, God allows no way to sanctify a pagan festival as Christian:

"But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God: and I would not that you should have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons: you cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of demons" (1 Cor.10:20-21 KJV).

Incredible as it may seem, the Catholic church, which professes to worship Christ, admittedly has accepted pagan practices into their worship of God.

"On this day the Church honors the Angels and Saints in heaven. It is a holyday of obligation.

This day is a great family feast. It has its origin in the year 610, when [Pope] Boniface IV dedicated the [pagan] Pantheon of Rome to the Blessed Virgin and all the martyrs. It is in special commemoration of the millions of Saints in heaven who have not been officially canonized by the Church, and thus have no special commemoration during the year.

"This day commemorates all the souls in Purgatory. It is a day for pious remembrance of the dead, and for offering Masses and prayers for them. On this day as on Christmas, priests are allowed to say three Masses, for the souls of the departed, that they may be free from Purgatory.

"From noon of All Saints' Day till midnight of the next day (All Soul's Day), all those who have confessed and received Holy Communion on either of the two days may gain the 'toties quoties' indulgence: a plenary indulgence applicable to the souls in Purgatory every time they visit a church or public chapel, and pray six 'Our Fathers', six 'Hail Marys', and 'six glorias' for the intention of the Holy Father [the Pope]" (My Catholic Faith, 1963, p. 417).

Along with being part of the Catholic system of worship, Halloween is also the high Sabat for witches around the world. And the practices of witchcraft are condemned in the Bible (Deut.18:9-14).

True Christians should have absolutely nothing to do with such evil and abominable satanic practices, customs, and days. Additionally, the children of Christians should not be involved nor participate in these holidays and events.

THE TRUTH ABOUT CHRISTMAS

Most professing Christians believe that Christmas is one of the most important holidays. without question, many people blindly follow its observance. Moreover, they assume that Jesus was actually born on December 25th. Because we look to Christ as our Savior, it is important to take a

deeper look into his birth. We often hear people say, "Let's put Christ back into Christmas!" Perhaps we should investigate just how Christ got into Christmas in the first place.

Most Bible scholars agree that Christmas is of pagan origin. In his book 4000 Years of Christmas, Earl W. Count, Professor of Anthropology at Hamilton College, explains the origin of the Christmas celebration:

"We do not know its beginning . . . we do not really know when the Christ child it venerates was born: or the time and place when Christmas was first celebrated: or exactly how it was that, over the centuries, a bishop saint of Asia Minor, and a pagan god of the Germans merged to become Santa Claus."

"although the Christmas story centers in the Christ child of Bethlehem, it begins so long before his coming that we find its hero arriving on the scene after more than half of the time of the story has gone by. Christmas began over 4000 years ago, as the festival which renewed the world for another year. The 12 days of Christmas, the bright fires and probably the yule log; the giving of presents; the carnivals with their floats; their merry makings and clowning; the mummers who sing and play from house to house, the feasting; the church processions with their lights and song—all these and more began three centuries before Christ was born. And they celebrated the arrival of a new year" (ibid., page 18).

"For that day [25th of December] was sacred, not only to the pagan Romans but to a religion from Persia which, in those days, was one of Christianity's strongest rivals. This Persian religion was Mithraism, whose followers worshiped the sun, and celebrated its return to strength on that day. The church finally succeeded in taking the merriment, the greenery, the lights, and gifts from Saturn and giving them to the "babe of Bethlehem" (ibid., page 27).

"It happened that the date [December 25th] did fall in the midst of the Saturnalia. Far from being an invention to compete against Roman and Persian paganism, the birthday of Christ ran the danger of being swallowed up in pagan merry making. The [church] fathers tried strenuously to keep Christmas strictly a churchly celebration. It was part of their unremitting struggle to break the grip of the pagan gods upon the people. And as they broke, Romans became Christians . . . but the Saturnalia remained" (ibid., page 28).

"When was Jesus born? No one knows. December 25th is no more than the historical date of his birth than is any other" [page 50]. "Christmas, as we have seen, is of the Mediterranean . . . for the Mediterranean world already had not merely centuries, but millennia behind it, when Christ was born; and even the religion which he founded had traveled several centuries before it discovered its need of Christmas" (page 86).

"Renewal and rebirth: After 4000 years, the festival that has grown about the birth of the Christ child remains an affirmation that all things can be made anew" (ibid., page 91).

although no one knows the exact date of Christ's birth, there is evidence that he was not born in the winter: "*And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night*" (Lk.2:8). This never could have occurred in the month of December in

Palestine. The shepherds usually brought their flocks from the mountainsides and fields and corralled them no later than the middle of October to protect them from the cold, rainy season that followed. The Song of Solomon 2:11 and Ezra.10:9, 13 show that winter was a rainy season during which shepherds could not have remained in open fields at night:

"It was an ancient custom among the Jews of those days to send their sheep to the fields, and deserts about Passover [early spring] and bring them home at commencement of the first rain . . . During the time they were out, the shepherds watched them night and day, . . . The first rains began early in the month of Marchesvan, which answers to part of our October and November [begins in the middle of October] we find that the sheep were kept out in the open country during the whole summer, and as these shepherds had not yet brought home their flocks, it is a presumptive argument that October had not yet commenced, and that consequently, our Lord was not born on the 25th of December, when no flocks were out in the fields by night. On this very ground, the nativity in December should be given up. The feeding of the flocks by night in the fields is a chronological fact" (The Adam Clarke Commentary, Volume 5, page 347).

There is no command in the whole Bible that tells us to observe Christmas. Under the inspired teaching of Paul and Peter and the other apostles, the Christians of the first century never observed Christ's birth date. Christmas came to us through the Roman Catholic Church, which is where it gets its authority as a religious holiday. According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, which is published by the Catholic Church: "Christmas was not among the earliest festivals of the church . . . The first evidence of the feast is from Egypt."

We find this truth acknowledged further in the Encyclopedia Britannica: "Christmas [i.e., the Mass of Christ] was not among the earliest festivals of the church."

The Encyclopedia Americana states:

"Christmas, . . . it was, according to many authorities, not celebrated in the first centuries of the Christian church, as the Christian's usage in general was to celebrate the death of remarkable persons rather than their birth . . ." (The communion, which is instituted by New Testament authority, is a memorial of the death of Christ.) " . . . A feast was established in memory of this event (Christ's birth) in the fourth century. 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 no certain knowledge of the day of Christ's birth existed."

How did the pagan custom get into the church? Most recognized authorities agree that Christmas was not observed by the early church for the first two or three hundred years and that its origin began in the western segment of the Roman Church in the fourth century A.D.. However, it was not until the fifth century that the Roman Church ordered it to be celebrated as an official Christian festival.

The Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia:

"How much the date of the festival depended upon the pagan Brumalia (December 25th) following the Saturnalia (December 17-24), and celebrating the shortest day of the year and the

"new sun " . . .cannot be accurately determined. The pagan Saturnalia and Brumalia 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 spirit and manner. Christian teachers of the West and Near East protested against the unseemly frivolity, while Christians of Mesopotamia accused their western brethren of idolatry and sun worship for adopting as Christian the pagan festival."

"The observance of December 25 (as a Christian festival) only dates from the fourth century and is due to assimilation with the Mithraic festival of the birth of the sun" (World Popular Encyclopedia, Volume 3).

"Gradually a number of prevailing practices of the [heathen] nations into which Christ came were assimilated and were combined with the religious ceremonies surrounding Christmas. The assimilation of such practices generally represented efforts by Christians to transform or absorb otherwise pagan practices" (The Zonderian Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, Volume 1, page 805).

"The pagan symbolism was taken over and, in Christian view, elevated. Jesus became the "sun of justice" and the "sun of righteousness" (Celebrations: The Complete Book of American Holidays, Myers, page 310).

"Our annual Christian festival (Christmas) is nothing but a continuation under a different name of this old solar festivity (Saturnalia)" (The New Golden Bough, Frazer and Foster, page 653).

"Christmas was generally celebrated in the West only after the triumph of Constantine when the time of Christ's birth was reckoned with the Day of the Unconquered Sun on 25 December" (From Christ to Constantine, Smith, pages 150-151).

"The assimilation of Christ to the sun god, as sun of righteousness, was widespread in the fourth century and was furthered by Constantine's legislation on Sunday, which is not unrelated to the fact that the sun god was the titular divinity of his family" (A History of the Christian Church: Revised, Walker, Section 13, pages 154-155).

The Myth of Nimrod

Nimrod, the grandson of Ham and the great grandson of Noah, was the real founder of the Babylonian system of worship and government that continues to thrive throughout the world.

Ancient writings speak of Nimrod as the one who started a great, organized world apostasy against God, which still dominates the world. It is said that he was so wicked that he married his own mother, Semiramis. After Nimrod was killed, his mother-wife propagated the doctrine of the survival of Nimrod as a spirit-being. She claimed that a full grown evergreen tree sprang up overnight from a dead tree stump which symbolized the resurrection of Nimrod. On each anniversary of his birth (supposedly December 25th), she claimed Nimrod would visit the evergreen tree and leave gifts upon it.

Mother and Child Theme

Through her scheming and planning, Semiramis became the Babylonian Queen of Heaven, and Nimrod, under many other names, became the Divine Son of Heaven. Through the generations, in this idolatrous worship, Nimrod also became the false messiah, son of Baal, who was the sun-god. In this false Babylonian religious system, the mother and child (Semiramis and the reborn Nimrod) became chief objects of worship. This worship of mother and child spread throughout the world. Only the names varied because of differing languages. In Asia they were known as Cybele and Diorus. In Rome they were Fortuna and Jupiter. In Egypt their names were Isis and Osiris. Long before the birth of Jesus Christ, the counterpart of the Madonna can be found throughout China, Tibet, and Japan.

The following are explanations of the origins of popular practices and symbols of the Christmas celebration.

Yule Logs

The yule log is in reality the *sun log*. Yule means wheel, which is applied as the pagan symbol of the sun. Today, professing Christians speak of the sacred yuletide season. There is nothing sacred about it! The symbols come from the worship of false gods.

The Christmas Tree

The Christmas tree was equally common in pagan Rome and pagan Egypt. In Egypt that tree was the palm tree and in Rome it was the fir tree. The palm tree denotes the pagan messiah, Baal-Tamar (Jdg.20:33), and the fir tree denotes the same pagan messiah under the name Baal-Berith. The mother of Adonis, the sun god and great divine mediator, was said to have been mystically changed into a tree. And when she was in that state, she brought forth her divine son.

Mistletoe

"That mistletoe bough in the Druidic superstition, which was derived from Babylon, was a representative of the Messiah, "the man of the branch." The mistletoe was regarded as a divine branch, a branch that came from heaven, and grew upon a tree that sprang out of the earth. Thus by engrafting the celestial branch into the earthly tree, heaven and earth, which sin had severed, were joined together. Thus the mistletoe bough became the token of divine reconciliation to man, the kiss being the well known token of pardon and reconciliation" (The Two Babylons, Hislop, page 99).

The Encyclopedia Americana says:

"The holly, the mistletoe and the yule log . . . are relics of pre-Christian times."

Gifts

Many exchange gifts because the three wise men presented gifts to the Christ child. Did you know the Bible nowhere states there were three wise men? Did you know those wise men never appeared at the manger on Christ's birth night; they actually arrived many months later? They didn't appear at the manger, they appeared at Christ's house (Matt. 2:11).

although most people believe that the custom of giving gifts at Christmas is associated with the men that brought gifts to the child Jesus, the New Standard Encyclopedia, Christmas, says:

"In reality, at least so far as the English speaking people are concerned, it [gift giving at Christmas] is derived from an old heathen custom."

"The wise men gave their gifts to Christ, but did not exchange gifts with each other. The gifts presented to Christ were to a king, because of his royalty, and not because of his birthday. He was a king, and the people of the East never approached the presence of a king without a present in their hands" (Adam Clarke Commentary, Volume 5, Matt. 2:11, page 34).

The Christmas Wreath

"The use of Christmas wreaths is believed by authorities to be traceable to the pagan customs of decorating buildings and places of worship at the feast which took place at the same time as Christmas. The Christmas tree is from Egypt and its origin dates from a period long anterior to the Christmas era" (Answers to Questions, Frederick gentlemen. Haskins).

Christmas and many other holidays have come directly from paganism, but the annual observances and festivals of Leviticus 23 have come from God and should be observed today by the children of God. See our study papers about the annual festivals and commanded observances of God.

Santa Claus

The name Santa Claus is actually the corruption of the name St. Nicholas, a Roman Catholic bishop who lived in the fifth century.

"St. Nicholas, Bishop of Myra. . .a saint honored by the Greeks and Latins on the 6th of December. . .a legend of his surreptitious bestowal of dowries on the three daughters of an impoverished citizen. . .is said to have originated the old custom of giving presents in secret on the eve of St. Nicholas (December 6) subsequently of Christmas and Santa Claus" (Encyclopedia Brittanica, 11th Edition, Volume 19, pp. 648-649).

Kris Kringle

"From the German people were to come those most universal of Christmas customs: the Christmas tree, and the portly beneficent Kris Kringle, known as Santa Claus.

"Gradually the Presbyterians, Quakers and Puritans accepted such customs as the Christmas tree, the giving of small gifts and the Christmas feast. But they spoke violently against the corruption

of the Christkindl, (the Christ Child) into Kris Kringle. After Kris Kringle was fully assimilated, there was much concern among all religious groups about the non-religious trend of the holiday” (Christmas Day: The Complete Book of American Holidays, Myers, pp. 314-316).

SUMMARY

Easter, Halloween, and Christmas are the three major religious celebrations of professing Christianity today. And all three violate the instructions of God concerning false Gods and false religious practices.

There are many holidays that are national or local in origin and are not forbidden in the Biblical record (e.g., Thanksgiving Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day). If a holiday does not violate God's law and is merely an observance of respect, honor, or gratitude, no spiritual issue is in question. However, if a person chooses to incorporate these days as part of their worship of God, there is an obvious violation of God's law.

The scriptures clearly record that the only worship acceptable to God is worship that conforms to his instructions concerning how he wants to be worshiped. Moreover, God's law imposes the death penalty on all who improperly worship him.

Compiled by: Charles E. Barrett – Date Unknown

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This Information was set in place only to support “the staying away from the “traditions of men,” and “their idolizing immorality and wickedness.” None of these pagan traditions that man has set in motion, does the True GOD over the Heavens and the Earth, either condone, support, or ignore as trivial. The choice of life or death has been set before all men! Choose wisely! Becoming “WISE” in your own eyes,” and always “leaning upon your own understanding,” creates nothing beneficial for you.... but only creates the way that reserves death for you afterwards.