

## Holidays: Scriptural or Pagan?

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Christianity claims to worship the God of the Bible also known as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (aka *Adonai*) and His son Jesus, or *Y'shua*. This God gave His people holidays and festivals clearly outlined in Leviticus 23. However we see elements of pagan practices introduced into the modern holidays celebrated by a majority of Christians. Is this how He wants to be worshipped? Have millions of Christians all around the world been intending to obey the God of the Bible, when really they have been taught a lie? As we look at the roots of Halloween, Easter, and Christmas, we see that pagan ideas and customs have been blended into the modern-day religion called Christianity. The purpose of this paper is to show the pagan origins of these so-called holy days, so as to save others from lies that have been handed down for hundreds of years.

Around the year 320 AD Emperor Constantine I was trying to make a religion that would please the many religions in his vast Empire. He also was trying to save his nation from persecution because of the many Hebrews in the country. So in the year 325 AD at the First Council of Nicaea, Emperor Constantine said,

“It was, in the first place, declared improper to follow the custom of the Jews in the celebration of this holy festival, because, their hands having been stained with crime, the minds of these wretched men are necessarily blinded. ... Let us, then, have nothing in common with the Jews, who are our adversaries. ... Avoiding all contact with that evil way. ... Who, after having compassed the death of the Lord, being out of their minds, are guided not by sound reason, but by an unrestrained passion, wherever their innate madness carries them. ... A people so utterly depraved. ... Therefore, this irregularity must be corrected, in order that we may no more have any thing in common with those parricides and the murderers of our Lord. ... No single point in common with the perjury of the Jews.”<sup>1</sup>

By saying this, Constantine disposed of the holy days established by the God of the Bible and ‘replaced’ them with the other pagan and Greek holidays and forced others to do the same.

Encyclopedia Britannica vol. 4 says the following: “Unlike the cycle of feasts of the Jewish Law, the ‘Christian’ year has never been based upon a divine revelation. It is rather a tradition that is always subject to change, by ecclesiastical law.”

Jeremiah 10:2 says, “Here is what *Adonai* says! Do not learn the way of the *Goyim*”, [Gentiles] do not be frightened by astrological signs, even if the heathen are afraid of them.” This is just the beginning.

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<sup>1</sup> Encyclopedia Britannica, pg. 603

# Halloween

Halloween is a popular festival, especially in the pagan culture. The word Halloween is a common name for the night otherwise called ‘all hallowed even.’ Halloween has been kept on October 31 or on November 1 due to different cultures and calendars. For the early Catholic Church, Halloween was allegedly a night when the spirits of the deceased saints would roam the earth. Halloween really is just a Christianized version of the Celtic New Year called Samhain (pronounced sow-eeen). Samhain was a dreaded time in the Celtic world, very contrary to the common celebrations.

“... at this time the cattle were brought down to the Winter pastures, which could not support all of them, so many were slaughtered and salted to preserve as Winter food. A time for inviting the spirits of dead friends to be present. Folk traditions for this festival were so powerful the Church had to Christianize it as All Saints; but the traditions survived, even in a ‘trick or treat’ form. Pagans still observe it in the old terms.”<sup>2</sup>

The old terms include many forms of heathen worship. Digging through the roots of this ‘festival’ one might take a deeper look at what all of this means.

“These pre-Christian Druids had the barbarians doing ghastly things. It was a dreaded occasion, since it was thought that time stood still, and the souls of the dead walked the land. Gifts, especially food, were left outside for these roaming ghosts, with the hope that no harm would come to the households. The Druids chose certain children to be burned alive on ‘bone-fires’ as offerings to the sun. Parents tied yellow ribbons around oak trees as prayers to the sun to have their children spared. The fat left over from the child was fashioned into a candle, and placed into a carved-out pumpkin, or a hollowed out vegetable with a round (sun-shaped) design.”<sup>3</sup>

In early England other sources say that the ‘treat’ would be perhaps a girl to be given to the roaming priests of the sun. The Druid priests would then take their victim to Stonehenge to be raped, killed, and then burned to honor the sun. Once the Druids killed their victim, they would carve a face in a pumpkin and the victim would be called ‘jack of the lantern.’ It is said that the person who carved their face on the pumpkin was to have cooperated with the devil, by giving him a sacrifice. To top it off the townspeople were expected to use the embers of the poor cremated victim to warm and heat their homes.

Truly this is a ‘hollowed even’ not a good and harmless holiday. It is a special time for worshippers of Satan. Halloween is not a special time for the true worshippers of the only God!

# Easter and Lent

Easter has come to be known as the weekend to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus the Christ *Yeshua*, but is that what it is really about? Around the time of the Spring Equinox, Easter is very popular to the church and to non-churchgoing people. Lent, although not as widely

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<sup>2</sup> The Pagan Path Pg. 97

<sup>3</sup> Fossilized customs Pg. 39

celebrated, is still commonly practiced by many Christians, especially Catholics and is the forty day period prior to Easter.

In celebrating Lent, it is customary to derive oneself of a pleasure (usually meat) for a forty day period of weeping, leading to Easter. Also, as a sign of weeping many people have a “cross” drawn on their head in ash. Early Easter morning finds many people at an “Easter sunrise service,” where ministers preach about the resurrection of the ‘Son,’ until the sun has risen, then it is off to the church to have a feast of roast (non-kosher) ham. After this, it is a time of games and a most common favorite, the Easter egg hunt, where parents hide the pre-colored eggs and tell their children to search for them. What is wrong with this? Can there really be pagan influences on one of the church's most acclaimed days? Yes.

Ishtar (also called Sumeris) was a Babylonian queen and the goddess of fertility known as the ‘mother of harlots.’

“She taught that the moon was a goddess that went through a 28-day cycle and ovulated when full. She further claimed that she came down from the moon in a giant egg that fell into the Euphrates River, and turned a bird into an egg-laying rabbit. This was to have happened at the time of the first full moon after the spring equinox.”<sup>4</sup>

Ishtar was married to a man named Kush and they had a son called Nimrod. Genesis 10:8-9 mentions Nimrod.

8 Kush fathered Nimrod, who was the first powerful ruler on the earth.

9 He was a mighty hunter before the *Adonai*-this is why the people say “Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before *Adonai*.”

The word *before* in this verse means against as in rebelling against Adonai. When his father died Nimrod married his own mother and claimed that he was god. Nimrod was slain by an enemy, and his body parts deposited across his empire. His queen, Ishtar ordered that his body parts be found thinking she could just piece him back together. She found all of his parts except for his reproductive organ. Ishtar then claimed that Nimrod had ascended to the sky and was now the ‘Sun’. She also claimed that the rays of sun had caused her to immaculately conceive a son, whom she named Tammuz. Tammuz was born on December 25. When Tammuz was born, it was called the rebirth of the sun. Tammuz as it turns out was especially fond of rabbits. When Tammuz was forty years old, he was killed by a wild boar. Then after Tammuz’s death, Ishtar proclaimed a time of weeping, one day for every year of his life or forty days. Worshippers of Ishtar would write a ‘T’ on their heads in ash to remember the death of Tammuz, and eat ham, as if to eat the boar which killed Tammuz. Many years after Tammuz’s death, occult priests and common people would still carry out all sorts of ghastly practices in honor of this pagan god.

“...the occult priest would impregnate virgins on the altar for Easter on the Easter sunrise service, and a year later they sacrificed those year-old infants on the same altar, and died Easter eggs in the blood of those sacrificed babies. To this very day, one denomination allows their Easter eggs to be dyed only one color: blood

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<sup>4</sup><http://www.lasttrumpetministries.org/tracts/tract1.html>

red! When you ask them why, they have no idea how it started or what is rehearses...but now you know!”<sup>5</sup>

To add to all of that, the tradition of carrying Easter lilies comes from the lily’s resemblance to the male genitals. Clearly Easter is a holiday that has no Biblical significance at all. This holiday, deeply rooted in the celebration of Ishtar’s fertility, is not what Adonai wants us to celebrate. In fact a hint of ‘sunrise services’ is mentioned in Deuteronomy 12:2, “You must destroy all the places where the nations you are dispossessing serve their gods, whether on high hills...”

## Christmas

Christmas is a very special time for many. Christmas is a time to give each other gifts, and according to the church, to honor the birth of the Christ child. In honoring His birthday, it is customary to decorate ones house with green and red in all different forms. There is usually a wreath on each door and window, and outside some people elaborately place all manner of lighted yard décor on their lawn. Inside there is at least one ‘Christmas’ tree in the most common living area decorated with many little balls, and lots of tinsel. On the hearth, there are red and white stockings tacked up so that when Santa Claus comes at midnight, he will fill the stockings with gifts if the children were good throughout the year. He will allegedly place other presents under the tree and then leave. Early the next morning, children will awaken and open their many presents. All of this has been given as the celebration of His birth. ‘It’s the most wonderful time of the year.’ What could be wrong with this?

Christmas has been deemed ‘the birthday of Jesus. The word Christmas comes from two words, *Christos* meaning anointed in Greek, and *mesa* which means depart in Latin. So literally, Christmas means anointed depart.<sup>6</sup> Even the logic of the name dose not make sense, because Christmas is supposed to be the time when we celebrate Jesus’ birthday, when He came to live with us. However, there is no commandment to celebrate birthdays in the Bible. Is this what Adonai wants his followers to keep? And how do we get this world-wide ‘holy day’?

As it turns out, Christmas is a big mess of pagan traditions from different religions, and cultures. Throughout the month of December, there are many dates and heathen celebrations, such as Yule (otherwise known as Sol Invictios), the Saturnalia, Mithras, and many more. December 25<sup>th</sup> is the birthday of various pagan gods, such as Tammuz, Zeus, Mithra, and Ra. December 25<sup>th</sup> is the birthday of sun gods! Today, December 25 is a ‘biblical’ holiday. What an incredible coincidence!

December 25<sup>th</sup> is close to the winter equinox, so the amount of light per day is shorter, but after the equinox, the days get longer. So in many cultures it was believed that the sun was a god and was victorious over night. This holiday is called Sol Invictios, or the unconquered sun. The Encyclopedia Britannica quotes:

“It is commonly supposed that emperor Constantine was influential in the institution of a Christian feast of “the birthday of the Sun of Righteousness”

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<sup>5</sup>. The Pagan-Christian Connection Exposed p.59, by Michel Rood

<sup>6</sup>. Fossilized Customs p.30 by Lew White

(Malachi 4:3) as a revival to the popular pagan festival of the Unconquered Sun (Sol Invictus) at the winter solstice.”<sup>7</sup>

Again we see the effects of the counsel of Nicea in the church’s most anticipated holidays. Even pagans know that the ancient ‘church’ took their pagan holiday of Yule, and turned it into Christmas.

“Throughout the Northern hemisphere, the Winter solstice has been celebrated as the rebirth of the Sun, a tradition so naturally entrenched that the church in 273 AD named it as the birthday of Jesus, undated in the Gospels. Pagan Yule reenacts the Sun’s rebirth, though as Christmas has become for most people a family celebration and an occasion for exchange of presents, with many surviving pagan elements (such as the Christmas tree, which is pure pagan ritual magic, decorating an evergreen tree with symbolic flowers and fruit), and most pagans tend to join in that as well—and why not?”<sup>8</sup>

The saturnalia was celebrated in honor of Saturn around December 17-23. The Romans were decorating their houses with all sorts of apparel.

“The Saturnalia was a large and important public festival in Rome. It involved the conventional sacrifices, a couch (*lectisternium*) set out in front of the temple of Saturn and the untying of the ropes that bound the statue of Saturn during the rest of the year. Besides the public rites there was a series of holidays and customs celebrated privately. The celebrations included a school holiday, the making and giving of small presents (*saturnalia et sigillaria*) and a special market (*sigillaria*). Gambling was allowed for all, even slaves; however, although it was officially condoned only during this period, one should not assume that it was rare or much remarked upon during the rest of the year. It was a time to eat, drink, and be merry”<sup>9</sup>

Now that there are confirmed pagan origins to Christmas, here is a closer look at some of the gross traditions involved in this holiday.

## Santa Claus

Santa is a nickname for the ever-beloved St. Nicolas. There really was a man called Saint Nicholas, (also called the Bishop of Maria) who died on December 6, 343 AD. Mr. Nick was famous for giving gifts to people in need. Although giving gifts is certainly a very good thing to do, there is no scriptural blessing for patronizing a person no matter what they did. Instantly then, we may assume there are pagan influences in this tradition. Santa actually comes from a mispronunciation of St. Nicolas, ‘santini-colas’. Ever since then, Santa Claus has been his name. The red hat and suit vary from country to country. In fact, until Coca-Cola used him as an advertising tool, Santa wore green! Santa is a purely fictitious character who allegedly watches all children throughout the year to judge how they behave. If the children were good, Santa would bring gifts. If they were bad, he would give them nothing, except in Holland, where

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<sup>7</sup>. Encyclopedia Britannica pg. 603

<sup>8</sup>. The Pagan Path Pg. 97

<sup>9</sup>. Wikipedia.com-under Saturnalia

he would put a piece of coal in your stocking. In order to bring gifts, he loads a sleigh with all of the presents, and then harnesses the sleigh to ten flying reindeer. Once the sleigh is loaded and ready, Santa goes to every child's home (except for the bad ones), climbs down the chimney, distributes presents, goes back up the chimney, and proceeds to the next house. This continues all through Christmas Eve, based from his home in the North Pole. [Religioustolerance.org](http://www.religioustolerance.org)<sup>10</sup> says that the total number of houses to visit per second would be 1398! This would give him 715 microseconds in which to decelerate the sleigh, land on the roof, walk to the chimney, and slide down the chimney, distribute the presents, and retrace his steps!

All across the globe children ask questions about Santa, and parents answer them, further instilling this lie into their children. Giving false hopes and lies to naive children, just for 'holiday spirit' can be setting them up for disappointment and doubt later on. As all of those children who were lied to grow to maturity, they one day realize how badly they were deceived. Tears flood their eyes and they begin to wonder what else is true, and may even doubt that there is a God who is just and full of truth. How much crueler can society get? Yet, many people say that this encourages children to be good. What is wrong with telling kids a story which encourages good morals? Well, first off, Santa does not define 'good,' and what kind of morals can you get from a lie? Disguising evil with 'good' is just what the enemy has as his plan! Sadly however, this story goes on generation after generation. Is this not what the master deceiver wants?

Santa is a form of the ancient god—Molekh. Some sources say that Molekh is also called Chemrosh, which is where we get the word chimney. Molekh is a god of a particular human sacrifice. Worshipers of Molekh placed infants in a pot-bellied stove that resembled the enthroned Molekh, and asked their god for presents for the upcoming year. The stove would be heated so hot that it would turn red. In modern day society, every year around Christmas, parents place their children in the lap of a red, pot-bellied god, to ask for presents. As if Santa's wizard hat was not enough, God mentioned this evil personage in the laws of the Bible in Leviticus 18:21, and 20:2.

18:21 "You are not to let any of your children be sacrificed to Molekh, thereby profaning the name of your God; I am *Adonai*."

20:2 "Say to the people of Isra'el, 'If someone from the people of Isra'el or one of the foreigners living in Isra'el sacrifices one of his children to Molekh, he must be put to death; the people of the land are to stone him to death.'"

Although not many people are sacrificing their children today, traditions can be a form of worship. Deuteronomy 12:31 says, "You must not worship the LORD your God the way the other nations worship their gods, for they perform for their gods **every** detestable act that the LORD hates. They even burn their sons and daughters as sacrifices to their gods."<sup>11</sup>

## Christmas Tree

Christmas trees are one of the most popular Christmas traditions. A Christmas tree can be made out of any tree, but pine, fir, and evergreen trees are the most popular, although fake trees are an inexpensive alternative. Once the tree is chosen, it is cut from the woods and taken

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<sup>10</sup>. <http://www.religioustolerance.org/santa2.htm>

<sup>11</sup>. New Living Translation

home. In the house, the tree is erected with a tree stand, and decorated with lights, tinsel, and lots of little balls, with a star or an angel on top. On Christmas day, or on the days leading to Christmas, presents will be placed under the tree, so that you need to bend down to reach under the branches to get to the gifts. Is this what God wants?

The custom of having Christmas trees comes from ancient Germany. Many sources claim that Christmas trees and the like are just a Christianization of ancient pagan tree worship. Digging deeper in the roots of this tradition shows that Christmas trees are in fact a phallic symbol.

“Among the earliest Germanic tribe the Yule traditions was celebrated by sacrificing male animals and slaves by suspending them on trees.”<sup>12</sup>

Other sources suggest that this is where putting garland around the tree comes from, because of its resemblance to the human large intestine. Christmas trees, etc., go back even further than early Europe.

“...The Hivite, Amorite, Perizite, Philistines and other, worshiped under the “groves. Sometimes, the trees were stripped of their branches and limbs, though left upright in the soil with their roots undisturbed. Then weird characters of their “gods” would be carved on the trunks and the trees left upright, as phallic symbols and objects of worship.”<sup>13</sup>

Looking through the Bible it is hard not to notice the similarities wrote about, and the custom of Christmas trees and Yule logs.

“He goes to chop down cedars; he takes an evergreen and an oak; he especially tends one tree in the forest, plants a pine for the rain to nourish. In time, when it’s ready for use as fuel, he takes some of it to keep himself warm, and burn some more to bake bread. Then he makes a god and worships it, carves it into an idol and falls down before it. So half of it he burns in the fire; with that he roasts meat and eats his fill; he warms himself; says “It feels so good, getting warm while watching the flames!” With the rest of the log he fashions a god, a carved image, and falls down before it; he worships it and prays to it. “Save me,” he says, “for you are my god!” Such people know nothing, understand nothing. Their eyes are sealed shut, so they can’t see; their hearts too, so they can’t understand.” Isaiah 44:14-18

The scripture reference “...half of it he burns in the fire...” suggests note of Yule logs. Yule logs are a worship tool to the north-European god of frolic, intoxicating drink, and all around good feelings, called Odin. Odin is also the ‘god’ of death. So Christmas trees do have pagan origins, and are, in fact, a phallic symbol. To not come to that conclusion is blasphemy. Many sources claim that the pointedness of the tree and the little balls originate from their resemblance to the male genitalia. The many wreaths that can be seen are just little Christmas trees bent into a circle. The circle in this time of year to the pagan has great significance because the sun is going through the yearly equinox. The red and white holly is also indeed phallic symbols. The red symbolizes the female monthly period, and the white berries are drops of

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<sup>12</sup>. Wikipedia.com under Christmas trees as of January 2007

<sup>13</sup>. The Restored Church of God ([www.thercg.org](http://www.thercg.org))

semen from the sun. To top it off millions of children and adults 'bow' to the tree to get presents! It is no wonder that God told his people not to do these things.

## Conclusion

It is clear to see that there are, in fact, pagan roots and elements to Easter, Halloween, Christmas, and many other holidays that the church has established. Many people when they hear this will say, "that's not what it means to me!" This is the wrong question. We should not ask what the observance of pagan practices means to us, but rather what it means to Him. All throughout the Bible, God says "Do not worship me in the way of the heathen," and curses people who do. For example; Exodus 12:14-20, 20:3-6, 23:24, 34:14, Leviticus 20:23, Deuteronomy 4:19, 7:26, 8:19, 11:16, 12:2-5, 7:5, 7:25, 12:31, 16:21-22, 17:3, 27:15, Is 2:8, 2:20, 44:15, 44:17, Jeremiah 1:16, 10:1-5 13:10, 16:11, 25:6, Ephesians 5:5-16, 1 Corinthians 5:1-8, Psalm 24:4, and there are many more! These references are just a portion of how Adonai hates these hybrid 'holy-days'! So, how then does Adonai want to be worshipped? What are His Holy Days?

His Holy Days are clearly outlined in Leviticus 23. They are the Sabbath, Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, Feast of Weeks, Feast of Trumpets or the Head of the Year, the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles, and the New Moon. Keeping these Holy Days is honoring and a form of pure worship to the One who established them! Here is a brief summary of His Holy Days.

- The Sabbath is a weekly Holy Day from Friday night to Saturday evening. Sabbath is a time to rest, as God did in Genesis after completing His work of creation.
- Passover is a permanent Holy Day that remembers the day God delivered his people out of Egyptian slavery and is a permanent holiday to remember when in the Exodus from Egypt, the death angel 'passed-over' the houses that had the blood of the Passover lamb on the door.
- Unleavened bread is a permanent Holy Day to obey the commandment to eat food without leavening. We do this to remind us of when God brought our armies out of the land of Egypt.
- First Fruits is a permanent Holy Day when we are commanded to give a wave offering to Adonai of the first fruits of the harvest.
- The Feast of Weeks is when we count seven Sabbaths from the Sabbath in the week of unleavened bread, giving us forty-nine days. On the fiftieth day we are commanded to give certain sacrifices to Adonai. It is impossible to do this part of the holiday now because there is no active altar in Jerusalem.
- The Feast of Trumpets or the Head of the Year is when we look for the new moon over a two-day period, to signal the starting of the New Year. When the moon is sighted, we blow trumpets.
- On The Day of Atonement when the temple was still active, the High Priest would go into the Holy of Holies to atone for the whole nation of Israel's sins. It is a day of prayer and fasting.
- The Feast of Tabernacles or the Feast of Booths is without a doubt the most fun biblical holiday there is! Tabernacles is a holiday to remind us of when God brought his people out of the land of Egypt, and made them live in booths. To do this we live in a *sukkah* (tabernacle) for a week!
- The new moon is a monthly Holy Day that was commanded to remind us that He is God.

These Holy Days are what the God of the Bible wants His worshippers to keep. In celebrating these holidays there are many fun and exciting traditions. God knows that humans are party animals! He would not make holidays that would not be enjoyable! As important, His Holy Days teach us more about Him and His perfectly divine plan of redemption. His Holy Days are much better than any that man could make! This is how He wants to be worshipped. These are His Holy Days.

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