

# The Plain Truth about Christmas

Does Christmas really celebrate the birthday of Jesus? Was He born on December 25th? Did Paul, the apostles, and the early Church of the New Testament celebrate Christmas? Do you know what the BIBLE says about the Christmas tree?

Stop and think! Very few know WHY we do the things we do, or WHERE our customs came from! We were born into a world filled with customs. We grew up practicing them, taking them for granted, but NEVER QUESTIONING WHY!

## A PAGAN, Not Christian Festival

We have supposed CHRISTMAS to be the chief of the Christian holidays. Without asking questions, we have blindly assumed its observance must be one of the principal teachings and commands of the New Testament. We have supposed Jesus was born December 25th, and that the New Testament set this day aside as the chief Christian festival. We have supposed we exchange gifts because the wise men presented gifts to the Christ-child.

But, let's quit supposing, and look into history and the Bible for the FACTS!

The word "Christmas" means "Mass of Christ" or, as it later became shortened, "Christ-Mass." It came to us as a Roman Catholic mass. And where did they get it? From the HEATHEN celebration of December 25th, as the birthday of Sol the SUN GOD! It is, actually, an ancient rite of BAALISM, which the Bible condemns as the most abominable of all idolatrous worship!

It is not so much as MENTIONED anywhere in the New Testament. It was never observed by Paul, the apostles, the early true Christian Church!

The idea that Jesus was born December 25th, is one of the FABLES the Apostle Paul prophesied (II Tim. 4:4) would deceive the world in these latter days.

The plain truth is, Christmas is NOT Christ's birthday at all! And this festival, important as it seems to so many, is not of Christian, but of pagan — Babylonish — origin! But does that make any difference? Isn't it all right to go ahead and observe it anyway? Isn't the "Christmas SPIRIT" a good and splendid thing, regardless of how it got started? WE SHALL SEE!

## Jesus NOT Born December 25th

Now let's look to the interesting PROOF! When was Jesus born?

Jesus was not even born in the winter season! When the Christ-child was born "there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night" (Luke 2:8). This never could have occurred in Palestine in the month of December. The shepherds always brought their flocks from the mountainsides and fields and corralled them not later than October 15, to protect them from the cold, rainy season that followed that date. Notice that the Bible itself proves in Song of Solomon 2:11, and Ezra 10:9, and 13, that winter was a rainy season not permitting shepherds to abide in open fields at night.

It was an ancient custom among Jews of those days to send out their sheep to the fields and deserts about the Passover (early spring), and bring them home at commencement of the first rain, says the Adam Clarke Commentary, Vol. 5, page 386 (and 370).

Continuing, this authority states: "during the time they were out, the shepherds watched them night and day. As . . . the first rain began early in the month of Marchesvan, which answers to part of our October and November [begins mid-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; nor could He have been born later than September, as the flocks were still 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 . . . See the quotations from the Talmudists in Lightfoot."

Any encyclopedia, or any other authority, will tell you that Christ was not born on December 25. The Catholic Encyclopedia frankly states this fact.

The exact date of Jesus' birth is entirely UNKNOWN, as all authorities acknowledge — tho if I had space in this booklet I could show you Scriptures which at least strongly indicate that it was in the early fall — probably September — approximately six months after Passover.

If God had wished us to observe and celebrate Christ's birthday, He would not have so completely hidden the exact date.

## What Encyclopedias Say

There is not one word in the New Testament, or anywhere in the Bible, telling us to observe Christmas. The Christians of the first century, under the inspired teachings of Peter and Paul and the other apostles, never observed it. There is NO BIBLE AUTHORITY for its observance, strange as it may seem.

Then where did we get "Christmas"? Since it has come to us thru the Roman Catholic Church, and has no authority but that of the Roman Catholic Church, let us examine the Catholic Encyclopedia, published by that Church. Under the caption "Christmas," you will find:

"Christmas was not among the earliest festivals of the Church . . . The first evidence of the feast is from Egypt. . . . Pagan customs centering around the January calends gravitated to Christmas." And, further, we find this truth acknowledged: ". . . in the Scripture, sinners alone, not saints, celebrate their birthday.

Encyclopaedia Britannica has this: "Christmas (i.e., the Mass of Christ). Christmas was not among the earliest festivals of the church . . . ." It was not instituted by Christ or the apostles, or by Bible authority — it was picked up afterward from paganism.

The Encyclopedia Americana says: "CHRISTMAS. It was, according to many authorities, not celebrated in the first centuries of the Christian church, as the Christian usage in general was to celebrate the death of remarkable persons rather than their birth . . ." (The "Communion" which is instituted by New Testament Bible 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 This Pagan Custom Got Into The Church

Now notice! These recognized historic authorities show Christmas was NOT observed by Christians for the first two or three hundred years — a period longer than the entire history of the United States as a nation! It got into the Western, or Roman Church, by the FOURTH century A.D. It was not until the FIFTH century that the Roman Church ordered it to be celebrated as an official "Christian" festival!

Then HOW did this heathen custom CREEP INTO a so-called Christianity?

The Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia explains it clearly, in its article on "CHRISTMAS": "How much the date of the festival depended upon the Pagan Brumalia (Dec. 25) following the Saturnalia (Dec. 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 in manner. Christian preachers of the West and the Near East protested against the unseemly frivolity with which Christ's birthday was celebrated, while Christians of Mesopotamia accused their Western brethren of idolatry and sun-worship for adopting as Christian this pagan festival."

Remember, the Roman world had been PAGAN. Prior to the fourth century, Christians were few in number, tho increasing, and were persecuted by the government and by pagans. But, with the advent of Constantine as emperor, who made his profession of Christianity, in the fourth century, placing Christianity on an equal footing with paganism, people of the Roman world began to accept this now popular Christianity by the hundreds of thousands.

But remember, these people had grown up in PAGAN customs, chief of which was this idolatrous festival of December 25th. It was a festival of merrymaking, with its special SPIRIT. They ENJOYED it! They didn't want to give it up! Now this same article in Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia explains how the recognition by Constantine, of Sunday, which had been the day of pagan SUN-worship, and how the influence of the pagan Manichaeism, which identified the SON of God with the physical SUN, gave these pagans of the fourth century, now turning over wholesale to "Christianity," their EXCUSE for calling their pagan-festival date of December 25th (birthday of the SUN god), the birthday of the SON of God.

And that is how "Christmas" got into our so-called Christianity! We may call it by another NAME, but it's the same old pagan sun-worshipping festival still! The only CHANGE is in what we CALL IT! You can call a rabbit a "LION," but it's a RABBIT, just the same.

Again from the Britannica: "Certain Latins, as early as 354, may have transferred the birthday from January 6th to December 25th, which was then a Mithraic feast . . . or birthday of the unconquered SUN . . . The Syrians and Armenians, who clung to January 6th, accused the Romans of SUN-WORSHIP and IDOLATRY, contending that the feast of December 25th, had been invented by disciples of Cerinthus. . . ."

## The Real ORIGIN of Christmas

But if we got Christmas from the Roman Catholics, and they got it from paganism, where did the pagans get it? Where, when, and what was its real origin?

It is a chief custom of the corrupt system denounced all thru Bible prophecies and teachings under the name of BABYLON. And it started and originated in the original Babylon of ancient Nimrod! Yes, it stems from roots whose beginning was shortly this side of the Flood!

Nimrod, grandson of Ham, son of Noah, was the real founder of the Babylonish system that has gripped the world ever since — the system of organized competition — of man-ruled governments and empires, based upon the competitive and profit-making economic system. Nimrod built the tower of Babel, the original Babylon, ancient Nineveh, and many other cities. He organized this world's first kingdom. The name Nimrod, in Hebrew, is derived from "Marad," meaning "he rebelled." (Gen. 10:6, 8-12)

From many ancient writings, considerable is learned of this man, who started the great organized worldly apostasy from God that has dominated this world until now. Nimrod was so evil, it is said he married his own mother, whose name was Semiramis. After Nimrod's untimely death, his so-called mother-wife, Semiramis, propagated the evil doctrine of the survival of Nimrod as a spirit being. She claimed a full-grown evergreen tree sprang overnight from a dead tree stump, which symbolized the springing forth unto new life of the dead Nimrod. On each anniversary of his birth, she claimed, Nimrod would visit the evergreen tree and leave gifts upon it. December 25th, was the birthday of Nimrod. This is the real origin of the Christmas tree.

Thru her scheming and designing, Semiramis became the Babylonian "Queen of Heaven," and Nimrod, under various names, became the "divine son of heaven." Thru the generations, in this idolatrous worship, Nimrod also became the false Messiah, son of Baal the Sun-god. In this false Babylonish system, the "Mother and Child," (Semiramis and Nimrod reborn); became chief objects of worship. This worship of "Mother and Child" spread over the world. The names varied in different countries and languages. In Egypt it was Iris and Osiris. In Asia, Cybele and Deoius. In pagan Rome, Fortuna and Jupiterpuer. Even in Greece, China, Japan, and Tibet, the counterpart of the Madonna is to be found, long before the birth of Christ!

Thus, during the fourth and fifth centuries, when the pagans of the Roman world were "accepting" the new popular "Christianity" by the hundreds of thousands, carrying their old pagan customs and beliefs along with them, merely cloaking them with Christian-sounding NAMES, the Madonna and "Mother and Child" idea also became popularized, especially at Christmas time. Every Christmas season you'll hear sung and chanted dozens of times the hymn "Silent Night, Holy Night," with its familiar "Mother and Child" theme. We, who have been born in such a Babylonish world, reared and steeped in these things all our lives, have been taught to revere these things as holy, and sacred. WE NEVER QUESTIONED TO SEE WHERE THEY CAME FROM — WHETHER THEY CAME FROM THE BIBLE, OR FROM PAGAN IDOLATRY!

We are SHOCKED to learn the TRUTH — some, unfortunately, take offense at the PLAIN TRUTH! But God commands His faithful ministers, "CRY ALOUD, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and SHOW MY PEOPLE THEIR TRANSGRESSIONS!" Isaiah 58:1. Shocking as these facts are, they are the plain facts of history and the Bible!

The real origin of Christmas goes back to the ancient Babylon. It is bound up in the organized apostasy with which Satan has gripped a deceived world these many centuries! In Egypt, it was always believed that the son of Iris (Egyptian name for "Queen of Heaven") was born December 25th. Paganism celebrated this famous birthday over most of the known world for centuries before the birth of Christ.

December 25th, is NOT the birthday of Jesus the true Christ! The apostles and early true Church never celebrated Christ's birthday at any time. There is no command or instruction to celebrate it in the Bible — rather, the celebrating of birthdays is a HEATHEN, not a Christian custom, believe it or not!

Nowhere does the Bible tell us to worship "Mother and Child." The apostles and early true Christians never did it! The Scriptures show an angel saying to Mary, "Hail, thou art highly favored, the Lord is with thee" — the addition "blessed art thou among women," is omitted in the best original manuscripts (in Greek). Elizabeth said to Mary, "Blessed art thou among women." And Mary herself said, "From henceforth all generations shall call me blessed" (Luke 1:28, 42, 48).

She was highly blessed by God, and this has been acknowledged by all generations from that time — but this does not mean she is to be deified, worshiped, made a divine being, when she was merely human. The widespread worship of Mary, as "the Mother of God," the doctrine of the immaculate conception, which refers to her as a counterfeit mediatrix between man and God, is a continuation of this ancient Babylonian idolatry, begun by the clever deceptions of Semiramis, wife of Nimrod! It is inextricably bound up with the "Christmas" idea!

Thus the ancient idolatrous "Chaldean Mysteries," founded by this wife of Nimrod, have been handed down thru the pagan religions into the Catholic Church under new Christian-sounding names, and from there into the Protestant denominations and on to all of us today!

## **Origin of Holly Wreath, Mistletoe, Yule Log**

Now where did we get this MISTLETOE custom? Among the ancient pagans the mistletoe was used at this festival of the winter solstice because it was considered sacred to the SUN, because of its supposed miraculous healing power. The pagan custom of kissing under the mistletoe was an early step in the night of revelry and drunken debauchery — celebrating the death of the "old sun" and the birth of the new at the winter solstice. Mistletoe, sacred in pagan festivals, is a PARASITE!

Holly berries were also considered sacred to the sun-god. The yule log is in reality the "sun log." "Yule" means "wheel," a pagan symbol of the sun. Yet today professing Christians speak of the "sacred YULETIDE season!"

Even the lighting of fires and candles as a Christian ceremony is merely a continuation of the pagan custom, encouraging the waning sun-god as he reached the lowest place in the southern skies!

The Encyclopedia Americana says: "The holly, the mistletoe, the Yule log . . . are relics of pre-Christian times." "PAGANISM!" The book, Answers to Questions, compiled by Frederick J. Haskins, found in public libraries, says: "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 Christian Era."

## **Yes, and Even SANTA CLAUS!**

But surely dear old Santa Claus is not a creature of pagan birth? But he IS, and his real character is not so benevolent and holy as many suppose!

The name "Santa Claus" is a corruption of the name "St. Nicholas," a Roman Catholic bishop who lived in the 5th century. Look in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. 19, pages 648-9, 11th edition, where you'll read: "St. Nicholas, bishop of Myra, . . . a saint honored by the Greeks and Latins on the sixth 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 [Dec. 6], SUBSEQUENTLY TRANSFERRED TO CHRISTMAS DAY. Hence the association of Christmas with Santa Claus . . . ."

Thru the year, parents punish their children for telling falsehoods. Then, at Christmas time, they themselves tell their little children this "Santa Claus" lie! Is it any wonder many of them, when they grow up and learn the truth, begin to believe God is a myth, too?

One little fellow, sadly disillusioned about "Santa Claus," said to a playmate, "Yes, and I'm going to look into this 'Jesus Christ business,' too!" Is it CHRISTIAN to teach children myths and falsehoods? God says, "Thou shalt not bear FALSE WITNESS!" It may seem right, and be justified by human reason, but God says, "There is a way that seemeth RIGHT to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of DEATH!" "Old Nick" also is a term for the devil! Is there a connection? Satan appears as an "angel of LIGHT," to deceive! II Cor. 11:4 and Rev. 12:9.

And so when we examine the facts, we are astonished to learn that the practice of observing Christmas is not, after all, a true Christian practice, but a pagan custom — one of the ways of BABYLON our people have fallen into!

## **What the Bible Says About the Christmas Tree!**

But if the Bible is silent about telling us to observe CHRISTMAS, or recording any such observance by the apostles or early true Church, it does have something to say about the Christmas tree!

This will come as a real surprise to many. But here it is:

Jeremiah 10:2-6 "Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen . . . For 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."

There is a perfect description of the Christmas tree, termed by the Eternal as "the way of the heathen — the custom of the people." We are commanded NOT to learn that way or follow it! It is also viewed in this passage as idolatry. The fifth verse shows that these trees cannot speak — cannot walk — must be carried. "Be not afraid of them; for they (the trees) cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good." They are not gods to be feared. Some people misread this to make it say there is no harm in having a Christmas tree, but that is not what it says.

## **Isn't Exchanging GIFTS Scriptural?**

But when it comes to the most important part of all in this Christmas observance — the Christmas SHOPPING season — the buying and exchanging of GIFTS — many will exclaim triumphantly, "Well, at least the Bible tells us to do THAT! Didn't the wise men give gifts when Christ was born?"

Again, we are due for some SURPRISES, when we learn the PLAIN TRUTH! First, let's look at the historic origin of trading gifts back and forth, then see exactly what the Bible does say about it.

From the Bibliotheca Sacra, Vol. 12, pages 153-155, we quote. "The interchange of presents between friends is alike characteristic of Christmas and the Saturnalia, and must have been adopted by Christians from the Pagans, as the admonition of Tertullian plainly shows."

The fact is, this custom fastened upon people of exchanging gifts with friends and relatives at the Christmas season, has not a single trace of Christianity about it! Strange tho that may seem! This does NOT celebrate Christ's birthday or honor it or Him! Suppose someone you love has a birthday. You want to honor that person on his or her birthday. Would you lavishly buy gifts for everyone else, trading gifts back and forth with all your other friends and loved ones, but IGNORE COMPLETELY any gift for the one whose birthday you are honoring? Rather absurd, when viewed in that light, isn't it?

Yet this is exactly what people the world over are doing! They honor a day that is NOT Christ's birthday by spending every dime they can scrape together in buying presents to trade back and forth among friends and relatives. But I can say by years of experience, as I believe most pastors and ministers can say, that when the month of December rolls around, nearly all professing Christians forget to give gifts to CHRIST and HIS CAUSE almost altogether!

Now consider what the Bible says about giving gifts when Christ was born. It is in Matthew 2:1-11. "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? . . . And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary His mother, and fell down, and worshiped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto HIM gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."

### **WHY Gifts Presented to Christ**

Notice, they inquired for the child Jesus, who was born KING of the Jews! Now WHY did they present gifts to Him? Because it was His birthday? Not at all, because they came several days or weeks after the date of his birth! Was it to set an example for US, today, to trade gifts back and forth among ourselves? No, notice carefully! — they did not exchange gifts among themselves, but "they presented unto HIM gifts." They gave THEIR gifts to CHRIST, not to their friends, relatives, or one another!

WHY? Let me quote from the Adam Clarke Commentary, Vol. 5, page 46: "Verse 11. (They presented unto Him gifts). The people of the east never approach the presence of kings and great personages, without a present in their hands. The custom is often noticed in the Old Testament, and still prevails in the east, and in some of the newly discovered South Sea Islands."

There it is! They were not instituting a NEW Christian custom of exchanging gifts with friends to honor Christ's birthday. They were following an OLD and ANCIENT eastern custom of presenting gifts to a KING when they came into his presence. They were approaching Him, born KING of the Jews, in person. Therefore custom required they present GIFTS — even as the Queen of Sheba brought gifts to Solomon — even as many people today take a gift along when they visit the White House for an appointment with the President.

No, the custom of TRADING GIFTS back and forth does not stem from this Scriptural incident at all, but rather, as quoted from history above, it is the continuance of an ancient PAGAN custom. Instead of honoring Christ, it invariably RETARDS His work, often sets it back, at the Christmas season every year!

### **We're IN BABYLON, and Haven't KNOWN IT!**

Christmas has become a COMMERCIAL season. It's sponsored, kept alive, by the heaviest retail advertising campaign of the year. You see a masqueraded "Santa Claus" in many stores. Ads keep us deluded and deceived about the "beautiful Christmas SPIRIT." The newspapers, who sell the ads, print flowery editorials exalting and eulogizing the pagan season, and its "spirit." Gullible people have become so inoculated, many take offense when told the TRUTH! But the "Christmas SPIRIT" is created each year, not to honor Christ, but to SELL MERCHANDISE! Like all Satan's delusions, it appears as an "angel of LIGHT," is made to appear GOOD. BILLIONS OF DOLLARS are spent in this merchandising spree every year, while the CAUSE OF CHRIST must SUFFER! It's part of the economic system of BABYLON!

We are God's people ISRAEL! Yes, we're IN BABYLON, as Bible prophecy foretold, and we don't know it! Come OUT of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her SINS, and that ye receive not of HER PLAGUES" — now soon to fall — is the warning of Rev. 18:4.

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