



Christmas Day! A time of joy for children as they open the sparkling presents under the tree. A day of reverence as people the world over celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

For some 1600 years Christians have celebrated December 25 as the day that Jesus was born. Bishop Liberius so designated it back in 354 A.D. Yet Bishop Liberius had his reasons. December 25 was already a familiar feast day of the pagans to celebrate the yearly “rebirth” of the sun, and worshippers in Rome and throughout Europe celebrated this triumph of light over darkness. The Romans paid homage to their god of agriculture, Saturn, during this period. Schools, businesses, and courts were closed as merrymakers exchanged gifts, drank wine, and enjoyed music.

It was because of the importance of such celebrations that the Roman government, through Emperor Constantine at the Council of Nicea, eager to convert the pagans to Christianity, found it expedient to adapt some of the pagan rites into the worship of Christ. Thus the feast day became the medieval “Christ-Masse” (feast of Christ) with December celebrations to the sun being changed to honor Christ.

CHRISTMAS: The word “Christmas” means “Mass of Christ” or as it came to be shortened, “Christ-Mass.” It

came to non-Christians from the Church, and where did they get it? Not from the Bible! It was intermingled into the Roman church from paganism by the emperors during the fourth century.

DECEMBER 25: Did you know that Jesus was not even born in the winter season! When Jesus was born “there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night” (Luke 2:8). This could never have occurred in Judea in the month of December. The shepherds brought their flocks from the mountainsides and fields and corralled them by the end of October, to protect them from the cold, rainy season that followed. The Bible itself proves in Song of Solomon 2:11 that winter was a rainy season. How, then, did the church decide on December 25 as a Christmas-day? Long before the fourth century, and long before the Christian era itself, a festival was celebrated among the heathen at that precise time of the year—December 25—in honor of the birth of the son of the Babylonian queen of heaven. The same festival was adopted by the church, only giving it the name of Christ. This was the tendency on the part of Christians to meet paganism half way.

SANTA CLAUS: The name Santa Claus is a corruption of the name “St. Nicholas,” a bishop of the fifth century.

St. Nicholas was honored by the Greeks and Latins on December 6th. 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), and subsequently transferred to Christmas Day. Hence, the association of Christmas with Santa.

CHRISTMAS TREE: The Christmas Tree, now so common among us, was used in Pagan Rome and Pagan Egypt. In Egypt that tree was the palm tree, in Rome it was the fir; the palm tree denoting the pagan messiah as Baal-Tamar, the fir referring to him as Baal-Berith.

“Hear ye the word which the Lord speaketh unto you, *O house of Israel: thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. 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. They are upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good. Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord; Thou art great, and Thy name is great in might.”* Jeremiah 10:1-6.

MISTLETOE: Among the ancient pagans the mistletoe was used at the festival of the winter solstice because it was considered sacred to the sun and 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 sun” at the winter solstice. Mistletoe, sacred at pagan festivals, is a parasite that grows on trees.

CANDLES: The candles were lighted by the pagans on the eve of the festival of the Babylonian god, to do honor to him, for it was one of the distinguishing peculiarities of his worship to light wax candles on his altars.

WREATHS: The use of wreaths at Christmas time is believed by authorities to be traceable to the pagan customs of decorating buildings and places of worship at the feast of the winter solstice.

YULE DAY: Christmas day is also known as Yule day. Yule is the Chaldee (Babylonian) name for an “infant” or “little child.” Semiramis (the Babylonian queen) gave birth to a son, Tammuz (supposedly of Nimrod), on the 25th of December. A great feast followed every year on December 25 in honor of Tammuz as the messiah.

MORE ON CHRISTMAS: And yet after all this, many will continue to celebrate these pagan holidays, and expect God to be in their schools, book centers, and even churches, where they will set up Christmas trees and Christmas decorations.

In Deuteronomy 12:30-31, we are told to take heed that we follow not the customs of the heathen. Not in any way are we to serve our God as do the heathen, for it is an abomination unto God. How can you be celebrating something that perpetuates a lie and be worshipping God acceptably? It is written, “God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.” John 4:24.