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A Short History of "Christmas" Customs

By Thomas "Arkie" Hobbs

The Americana (volume 6, page 623), as copyrighted by the Americana Corporation in 1937, reveals the following:

{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 above quotation is true. While they were under the supervision of the Apostles, they did not observe any day in commemoration of **YAHshua's** birthday. Instead, they obediently observed the commemoration of His death (the 14th day of Nisan). Continuing:

{... In the 5th 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. Among the German and Celtic tribes the winter solstice was considered an important point of the year, and they held their chief festival of Yule to commemorate the return of the burning-wheel [symbol for the sun].}

The World Book Encyclopedia, as copyrighted in 1948 by Field enterprises (vol. 3, page 1425), states the following:

{No one knows definitely when the Christmas festival was first celebrated. It is spoken of in the 400's by Clement of Alexandria. Chrysostom speaks of it in the 380's as a custom of long standing. Other dates were often celebrated as the day of the Nativity, but in the year 354, by order of Bishop Liberius of Rome, December 25 was adopted. The early Church Fathers probably chose December 25 because the feast of the sun, or winter solstice, was a

familiar Roman feast celebrating the victory of the light over darkness. This idea was easily turned from a pagan to a Christian one, since Christians consider Christ as the light of life.}

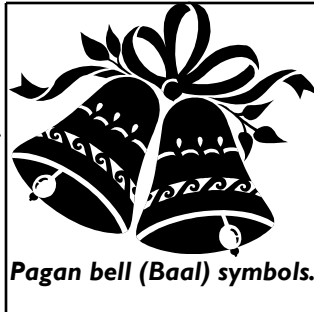
The Compton's Encyclopedia and Fact-Index (Volume 5, page 332 & 333), as copyrighted in 1970 by F. E. Compton Co., Division of Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., reveals the following:

{The Origin of December 25 as Christmas: The exact date of Christ's birth is not known. For the first two centuries, while Christians were being persecuted for their new faith, the Christian church did not celebrate Christmas. Soon after A.D. 200, however, Christmas was being observed, but on various dates-especially January 6, March 25, and December 25. By the middle of the 4th century the church in the

West (the Roman Catholic church) was celebrating Christmas on December 25. Later various branches of the Orthodox Eastern church also accepted December 25 for observing Christ's birthday.}

The clause in the second sentence "while Christians were being persecuted for their new

faith" could be very misleading. Concerning whether or not the Congregation of **YAHshua** observed a day in commemoration of His birthday, persecution was not an issue. As seen in the quotation from the Americana, the true reason was that they commemorated the deaths of remarkable persons instead of their births. Continuing: {In England the festival came to be called Christes Masse (Christ's Mass) because a special Mass was said that day. The French name Noel, the Spanish Natividad, and the Italian Natale mean "birthday."}



Pagan bell (Baal) symbols.



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Germans call the season Weihnachten, "holy nights."}

Many of the customs associated with Christmas came from elements of ancient pagan worship. Continuing:

{Many of the customs now associated with Christmas go back thousands of years when the people of Europe worshipped pagan gods. They celebrated the winter solstice, December 21 or 22, as the birthday of the sun-heralding the beginning of longer days. The early Christian church [not the original Assembly that was under the supervision of YAHshua's Apostles] took the ancient festival time and gave new meaning to it - the religious meaning of Christianity- and made it a holy season.}

The "Church" made the pagan customs and season that are in honor of the sun and other false gods holy by honoring YAHshua (the Son of YAHWEH) and YAHWEH and made it a holy season? Ridiculous! Only YAHWEH, not humans, can make a season holy. One can not keep a season holy that YAHWEH did not make holy. By not polluting them, one can only keep the seasons holy that YAHWEH made holy. Continuing from Compton's Encyclopedia and Fact-Index:

{Many of the customs can be traced back to the pagan midwinter festival of the Teutonic people of northern Europe. It was their gayest time of the year. They called the month Yule, or Jol, from which comes the word "jolly." Closed in by winters of bitter cold and long nights, they rejoiced when the year's shortest day passed, for they knew the sun would then grow stronger and the days longer.}

One should also consider very carefully the origin of the "Yule log" and the traditional "Christmas ham." Continuing:

{The Yule Log and Boar's Head:

Two of their great festival customs were bringing in the yule log and the procession of the boar's head. The great yule log was brought in on Christmas Eve and was lighted with a brand kept from the log of the year before. Its ashes, saved through the year, were supposed to guard the house from fire and lightning. They were also thought to have power to heal wounds and to make animals and fields fertile. The boar's head procession goes back to when the Teutons believed the hog harbored the spirit which made corn grow. At yule time they sacrificed a boar to the "corn spirit" to bring good crops, then ate the meat. In Scandinavia today the boar is represented by little cakes or bread loaves baked in the shape of a pig. In medieval England a boar's head was brought into every Christmas banquet.}

The World Book Encyclopedia, as copyrighted in 1948 by Field enterprises (vol. 3, page 1425) states the following:

{The giving of presents and the use of holly, mistletoe, Yule logs (see Yule), and wassail bowl have all come to us from the days before Christianity...When the pagans of Northern Europe became Christians, they made their sacred ever-

green trees part of the Christian festival, and decorated the trees with gilded nuts, candles (a carry-over from sun worship), and apples to stand for the stars, moon, and sun.}

From The World Book Encyclopedia (volume 18 page 8992) we find this:

{YULE, yool, is an old name for the Christmas season. The term comes from the Anglo-Saxon word for the months of December and January. The Anglo-Saxons called December "the former Yule," and January "the after Yule." The early pagans of Scandinavian countries held Yule festivals near the end of each



The Christmas Tree and Star. Pagan symbols.



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year. After Christianity was introduced into Europe, these festivals became Christmas celebrations. The custom of burning a yule log started in pagan times. The early Norsemen honored Thor, their god of war, by burning a yule log with great ceremony during the yule season.}

The Americana (vol. 6, page 623), as copyrighted by the Americana Corporation in 1937, reveals the following:

{...The holly, the mistletoe, the Yule log and the wassail bowl are relics of pre-Christian times...The custom of making presents at Christmas is derived from ancient usage; but it has become **consecrated by ages**, and contributes greatly to make this festival an interesting event to families.}

"**Consecrated by ages**"? Since when is anything consecrated by ages? Everything to be **consecrated to YAHWEH** can only be **consecrated by the authority of YAHWEH**, not by ages nor tradition!

If one seriously wishes to trace to their Babylonian roots the origin of a great many of the traditions that have been adopted by professing "Christianity," there are many books written on this subject. Two books that are worthy to be mentioned for tracing the history of the so-called "Christian" holidays and customs are: Babylon Mystery Religion-Ancient and Modern by Ralph Woodrow, and The Two Babylons by Alexander Hislop. In both books, there are much deeper discussions on the pagan traditions and customs that have been adapted to Easter and Christmas. These books also reveal many other pagan traditions and customs that have been adapted into "Christianity's" common rituals and acts of public and private worship.

It may seem to be a good idea to see how the pagans worshipped their gods and recruit them by "Christianizing" (changing the names and meanings to things concerning **YAHWEH** and **YAHshua**) their pagan

customs and festivals. Many people think that it is all right to worship with the pagan customs and festivals as long as they worship **YAHWEH** instead of the pagan gods, **BUT---YAHWEH SAYS** through the mouth of Moses and Jeremiah:

Deu. 12 (29) When **YAHWEH** thy **Elohim** shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest to possess them, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their land; (30) Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that THOU INQUIRE NOT AFTER THEIR ELOHIM, SAYING, HOW DID THESE NATIONS SERVE THEIR ELOHIM? EVEN SO WILL I DO LIKEWISE. (31) THOU SHALT NOT DO SO UNTO **YAHWEH THY ELOHIM**: for every abomination to **YAHWEH**, which **HE hateth**, have they done unto their elohim; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their elohim. (32) What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: THOU SHALT NOT ADD THERETO, NOR DIMINISH FROM IT.

Jer. 10 (1) Hear ye the word which **YAHWEH** speaketh unto you, O house of Israel: (2) Thus saith **YAHWEH**, **Learn not the way of the heathen**, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. (3) 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 ax. (4) They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not. (5) 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.

The last sentence in the above quotation does not mean that there is neither harm or nor good in having them. It means that the pagan's wooden idols have no life, and they have no power of their own to do



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good or to do harm to anyone. The description of the wooden idol that Jeremiah was describing is also a perfect description of modern day "Christianity's" Christmas tree. The "christianized" Christmas tree that has been adopted from the pagan custom of using evergreens in their idolatrous winter solstice season is just as lifeless and it is just as abominable to **YAHWEH** as the pagan's wooden idol! Therefore before one chooses to use elements of pagan worship in the worship of **YAHWEH**, one would be wise to carefully consider the following quotation.

Deu. 4 (1) Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do *them*, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which **YAHWEH**, **Elohim** of your fathers giveth you. (2) **Ye shall not add unto** the word which I command you, **neither shall ye diminish ought** from it, that ye may keep the commandments of **YAH-**

WEH your **Elohim** which I command you.

If one wisely chooses to completely replace those pagan customs and practices that have been added to the gospel and build upon the foundation of **YAHshua** with only the TRADITIONS that **YAHWEH** ordained for HIS people, the RUDIMENTS of the KINGDOM of HEAVEN, the COMMANDMENTS of **YAHWEH**, and the CUSTOMS that HE instituted one will be in compliance with the following command.

Deu. 6 (4) Hear, O Israel: **YAHWEH** our **ELOHIM** is one **YAHWEH**: (5) And thou shalt love **YAHWEH** thy **ELOHIM** with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

May **YAHWEH** richly bless all who have read this article and were not offended.

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