

# O TANNENBAUM – O CHRISTMAS TREE

*How many of us haven't heard the song dedicated to the Christmas tree. It was originated in German and then translated into the English language. In German, the word Christmas tree is tannenbaum. The song goes:*

*O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree,  
Your branches green delight us.  
They're green when summer days are bright:  
They're green when winter snow is white.  
O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree,  
Your branches green delight us.*

*O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree,  
You give us so much pleasure!  
How oft at Christmas tide the sight,  
O green fir tree, gives us delight!  
O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree,  
You give us so much pleasure!*

In the German-speaking countries the Christmas tree is part of the **pre-Christian tradition** of the "12 Rauhnächte" (12 harsh or wild nights), which later became the "Twelve Nights of Christmas." The tree is put up on December 24 and taken down after New Years or on January 6, known as "Twelfth Night." A part of the tradition of taking down the tree is the "Plündern," raiding the tree of cookies and sugar plums, an event, anxiously awaited by the children. January 6 is also known as "[Three Kings](#)." On that evening carolers, three of them dressed as the three kings or Magi, stroll from house to house. In some areas the old trees will be brought to a public place and burnt in a big bon-fire. January 7 ushers in the pre-Lenten Fasching or Carnival season.

**Winter in the northern countries was harsh. As the early Germans observed Fall with the gradual dying of nature, when plants and leaves of trees began to change color, shriveled up and fell to the ground, followed by Winter with ice and snow, they blamed evil spirits for the "killing." Only a few trees stayed "alive," the evergreens, and to them they became a symbol of immortality. Good spirits and the magic power of the evergreen were believed to resist the life-threatening powers of darkness and cold. They believed in the special powers of these trees and wherever they were, evil spirits could not go, so they brought the greenery into their homes.**

**First reports of people bringing holly and pine branches into their homes at Christmas-time date from the late Middle Ages. Live green branches, symbols of life in the cold and dead of winter, were placed on windows, mirrors, and in vases, and may have served to keep evil spirits away. Over time, this mythical function of the greens became simply decorative. Evergreen ropes (garlands) were draped over staircase railings, mantels, picture frames and along ceilings. Fearful that dry branches would catch fire from oil lamps or sparks from the fireplace or heating stove, families waited until almost Christmas eve to hang the garlands.**

**The decorated tree was originally a pagan tradition in Germany's upper Rhine region. A decorated holly tree was brought into the house and even placed in the village square. We know this because in 14th-century Alsace laws**

were written which forbade farmers to cut down evergreens for Christmas uses.

**In the 15th or 16th century, the church gave new meaning to the customary symbol of life by decorating trees during the holiday season with apples to symbolize Adam and Eve's expulsion from Eden. Greens were incorporated into medieval miracle plays and into a Christmas play, honoring Adam and Eve, that was traditionally presented. An evergreen hung with apples, the fruit of knowledge, was the stage prop. (Information from the Internet.)**

Are you getting all of this? The Christmas tree is part of PRE-CHRISTIAN TRADITION! The PRE-CHRISTIANS blamed evil spirits for killing all vegetation during the winter. The evergreen trees, to them, were symbols of immortality. The evergreens had the power to keep evil spirits away! The decorated tree was originally a PAGAN TRADITION!

But the church itself gave new meaning to the customary symbol of life by decorating with apples which symbolized Adam and Eve's expulsion from Eden! Furthermore, the apples symbolize the FRUIT OF KNOWLEDGE!

### **WORSHIPPING TREES**

Evergreens were a symbol of rebirth from ancient times. Egyptians brought green palm branches into their homes on the winter solstice as a symbol of life's triumph over death. The Romans decorated with evergreens during Saturnalia, a winter festival in honor of their god of agriculture. In Northern Europe the pagans observed the Soltice festival of Jul (Yule) - a two month feast beginning in November with prickly pine branches hung around doorways and windows to keep away demonic spirits. But the sacred trees of the druids and norsemen were deciduous oaks, not evergreen conifers.

It is generally acknowledged that the Christmas tree is of German origin. In the pre-Christian era the oak was the sacred tree for the Germanic peoples. Legend has it that the missionary to the Germans, St. Boniface, in order to stop sacrifices at their sacred Donar oak near Geismar, chopped the tree down [725 A.D.]. He is said to have replaced the oak by a fir tree, adorned in tribute to the new-born Christ. Ironically, the evergreen tree had been ascribed magical power by the Germanic peoples as a representation of fertility. Today, the fir and its next of kin enjoy the highest degree of popularity. The Christmas tree custom has spread across large parts of the world. (*Christmas Customs and Their Pagan Origins*)

What a wondrous thing it is that the so-called St. Boniface did! He cut down one sacred tree and substituted another in its place. The problem is that the ancient heathens and pagans worshipped just about everything in existence. If one is going to teach the worship of the Father and the Son, then he must not substitute one physical thing for another. St. Boniface accomplished nothing more than transferring worship from one tree to another.

Another thing that so called St. Boniface accomplished is he substituted another tree that had magical powers ascribed to it, as well as being a fertility symbol. This fits in quite well with the birth of the little sun-god who is later transferred to the Messiah.

### **THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE**

As already touched on, religious plays called "Mystery Plays" included the popular Paradise Play depicting the story

of Adam and Eve, their sin and banishment from the Garden of Eden. An evergreen tree was the logical choice for a lush garden tree on this winter festival, and it was decorated with **apples symbolizing the forbidden fruit**. It ended with the promise of the coming Savior and his incarnation, so gradually flat wafers symbolizing the forgiveness of sins in communion were added to the paradise tree, **making it now not just the tree of knowledge but also the tree of life**. This resulted in a very old European custom of decorating a fir tree in the home with apples and small white wafers representing the Holy Eucharist at Christmas time. These wafers were later replaced by little pieces of pastry cut in the shapes of stars, angels, hearts, flowers, and bells. (*Legends of the First Christmas Tree*)

When the article quoted says "LEGENDS" that is exactly what they are: LEGENDS AND MYTHS, FALSEHOODS AND LIES!

The fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil brought about sin, corruption and death, not life! "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," Gen. 2:17.

If you will notice, the references of all articles quoted will call the tree the tree of knowledge and the fruit is the fruit of knowledge. The simple fact of the matter is that it was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the fruit was the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil. The tree and its fruit brought forth death!

However, man, in his own limited knowledge and reasoning has now turned the fruit into a fruit of essential and life-giving knowledge and the tree is now presented as the tree of life. There is a Scripture that condemns such practices, "Woe unto 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!" Isa. 5:20.

## **BON-FIRES & YULE LOGS**

In Scandinavia, the Norse celebrated Yule from December 21, the winter solstice, through January. In recognition of the return of the sun, fathers and sons would bring home large logs, which they would set on fire. The people would feast until the log burned out, which could take as many as 12 days. The Norse believed that each spark from the fire represented a new pig or calf that would be born during the coming year. (*History.com*)

There was some dispute about the proper date of the birth of Christ and not everyone agrees even to this day. It was not until A.D. 350, that December 25 was declared the official date for celebrating Christmas by Pope Julius I. When the fathers of the church decided to settle upon a date to celebrate the event, they wisely chose the day of the winter solstice, since it coincided with some rival religions' celebrations and **the rebirth of the sun, symbolized by bon-fires and yule logs**. December 25 was a festival long before the conversion of the Germanic peoples to Christianity, it seemed fitting that the time of their winter festival would also be the time to celebrate the birth of Christ. The darkness that had frightened and threatened to defeat the ancient pagans, was forever defeated by the coming of Christ.

Because of changes in man-made calendars, the time of the solstice and the date of Christmas vary by a few days.

As Christianity spread among the peoples of pagan lands, many of the practices of the winter solstice were blended with those of Christianity. In the dead of winter a celebration of rebirth of life was symbolized in the birth of Christ. The time of the winter solstice, when days grew longer again--the return of the light--became the hope of the world in the birth of Christ, "the light of the world." (*Christmas*)

Candles replaced bon-fires as a symbol for the returning sun. The imitative magic of the illuminated Christmas tree,

as did the bon-fires, was to assure a steady supply of light and heat from the sun, and it had as a second aim the purification or destruction of the forces of evil (Symbols, p. 101). In the Christian tradition, candles represented Christ as the Light of the World. (*O Tannenbaum-O Christmas Tree*)

From these excerpts we learn that bon-fires and yule logs originally represented the re-birth of the sun. Candles on the Christmas tree became the replacement symbol for the bon-fires and yule logs, which the church changed to typify the birth of the Messiah. Today, the Christmas trees are enshrouded with the electric lights, but the symbols remain the same. They are celebrating the birth of the sun-god, not the birth of the true Messiah.

## **THE BRANCH**

Legends about the first Christmas tree abound. One of these tells about a woodcutter who helps a small hungry child. The next morning, the child appears to the woodcutter and his wife, and is none other than the Christchild. The child breaks a branch from a fir tree and tells the couple that it will be a tree that, at Christmas time, will bear fruit. As foretold the tree is laden with apples of gold and nuts of silver. (*O Tannenbaum-O Christmas Tree*)

This is an outright blatant attempt to associate the pagan sun-god with the true Messiah Yahshua as the Prophet Zechariah is inspired to write, "Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH," Zech. 3:8.

Furthermore, Isaiah is inspired to prophesy, "In that day shall the branch of Yahweh be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel," Isa. 4:2.

Notice that he talks of the fruit of the earth being excellent, but he certainly doesn't refer to any apples of gold, nor nuts of silver.

Jeremiah is inspired to write, "Hear ye the word which Yahweh speaketh unto you, O house of Israel: 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. 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," Jer. 10:1-4.

These Scriptures can be applied in two ways. One goes out to the forest to cut a Christmas tree, fasten it with nails and deck it with gold and silver. (At least that is the way it was done in the old days.)

But in another instance, the woodsman can carve the wood into idols which they cover with gold (to represent the sun gods) and silver (to represent the moon gods and goddesses).

Both activities are acts of idolatry, heathenism and outright paganism.

The idolators want their branch to bring forth gold and silver. Yahweh's branch will bring forth the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).

## **YAHWEH'S WARNING**

Yahweh cautioned Israel, "These are the statutes and judgments, which ye shall observe to do in the land, which Yahweh Elohim of thy fathers giveth thee to possess it, all the days that ye live upon the earth. **Ye shall utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree:** And ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place. Ye shall not do so unto Yahweh your Elohim....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; **Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise.** Thou shalt not do so unto Yahweh thy Elohim: for every abomination to Yahweh, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods. What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it," Dt. 12:1-4, 29-32.

Christianity has been deceived to do the very things that Yahweh had forbidden Israel to do. We are supposed to forsake every false thing, idol, name and practice that He considers to be an abomination.

The heathens, pagans, idolaters, etc., had been serving their false deities with trees of every sort, especially evergreen trees before the Messiah was born. The winter solstice was the birthday of their sun-god.

The Christmas tree symbolizes the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, not the tree of life. How long will people continue to serve the tree of death and its false messiah? We encourage repentance now, for all who read this article.

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