

# O'Christmas Tree; O'Christmas Tree

## The Christmas Tree Heresy

**Jeremiah 10:1** Hear ye the word which YHWH speaketh to you, O house of Israel: 2 Thus saith YHWH, **Learn not the way of the nations,** and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the nations 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 axe. {customs...: Heb. statutes, or, ordinances are vanity} 4 **They (The People of Israel) deck it (The Tree) with silver and with gold; they fasten it (The Tree) with nails and with hammers, that it may not move.** 5 **They (these Trees) [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.**

### Have You Worshiped Your Christmas Tree Today?

**Easton's Bible Dictionary Topics: Tree of the knowledge of good and evil.** Text: stood in the midst of the garden of Eden, beside the tree of life (Gen. 2, 3). Adam and Eve were forbidden to take of the fruit which grew upon it. But they disobeyed the divine injunction, and so sin and death by sin entered our world and became the heritage of Adam's posterity.

**Topics: Tree of life.** Text: stood also in the midst of the garden of Eden (Gen. 2:9; 3:22). Some writers have advanced the opinion that this tree had some secret virtue, which was fitted to preserve life. Probably the lesson conveyed was that life was to be sought by man, not in himself or in his own power, but from without, from Him who is emphatically the Life (John 1:4; 14:6). Wisdom is compared to the tree of life (Prov. 3:18). The "tree of life" spoken of in the Book of Revelation (Rev. 2:7; 22:2, 14) is an emblem of the joys of the celestial paradise. **Note:- The tree of Life is Jesus Christ**

### Christmas Tree (From the Encyclopaedia Britannica) (With Emphasis and Comments by Brother Bill)

Christmas tree: an evergreen, usually a balsam or douglas fir, decorated with lights and ornaments as a part of Christmas festivities. **The use of evergreen trees, wreaths, and garlands as a symbol of eternal life was an ancient custom of the Egyptians, Chinese, and Hebrews.**

**Ezekiel 6:13** Then shall ye know that I [am] YHWH, when their slain [men] shall be among their idols all around their altars, upon every high hill, on all the tops of the mountains, **and under every green tree, and under every thick oak, the place where they offered sweet savour to all their idols.**

**Tree worship,** common among the pagan Europeans, survived after their conversion to Christianity in the Scandinavian customs of decorating the house and barn with evergreens at the New Year to scare away the devil and of setting up a tree for the birds during Christmastime; it survived further in the custom, also observed in Germany, of placing a Yule tree at an entrance or inside the house in the midwinter holidays.

The modern Christmas tree, though, originated in western Germany. The main prop of a popular medieval play about Adam and Eve was a fir tree hung with apples (paradise tree) representing the Garden of Eden. The Germans set up a paradise tree in their homes on December 24, the religious feast day of Adam and Eve. They hung wafers on it (symbolizing the host, the Christian sign of redemption); in a later tradition, the wafers were replaced by cookies of various shapes. Candles, too, were often added as the symbol of Christ. In the same room, during the Christmas season, was the Christmas pyramid, a triangular construction of wood, with shelves to hold Christmas figurines, decorated with evergreens, candles, and a star. By the 16th century, the Christmas pyramid and paradise tree had merged, becoming the Christmas tree.

The custom was widespread among the German Lutherans by the 18th century, but it was not until the following century that the Christmas tree became a deep-rooted German tradition. Introduced into England in the early 19th century, the Christmas tree was popularized in the mid-19th century by the German Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria. The Victorian tree was decorated with candles, candies, and fancy cakes hung from the branches by ribbon and by paper chains. Brought to North America by German settlers as early as the 17th century, Christmas trees were **the height of fashion** by the 19th century. They were also popular in Austria, Switzerland, Poland, and The Netherlands. In China and Japan, Christmas trees, introduced by western missionaries in the 19th and 20th centuries, were decorated with intricate paper designs.

**Christmas** The word Christmas is derived from the Old English Cristes maesse, "Christ's Mass." There is no certain tradition of the date of Christ's birth. Christian chronographers of the 3rd century believed that the creation of the world took place at the spring equinox, then reckoned as March 25; hence the new creation in the incarnation (i.e., the conception) and death of Christ must therefore have occurred on the same day, with his birth following nine months later at the winter solstice, December 25. The oldest extant notice of a feast of Christ's Nativity occurs in a Roman almanac (the Chronographer of 354, or Philocalian Calendar), which indicates that the festival was observed by the church in Rome by the year 336. **Note:** They considered **life to begin at conception.**

Many have posited the theory that the feast of Christ's Nativity, the birthday of "the sun of righteousness" (Malachi 4:2), was instituted in Rome, or possibly North Africa, **as a Christian rival to the pagan festival of the Unconquered Sun at the winter solstice.** This syncretistic cult that leaned toward monotheism had been given official recognition by the emperor Aurelian in 274. It was popular in the armies of the Illyrian (Balkan) emperors of the late 3rd century, including Constantine's father. Constantine himself was an adherent before his conversion to Christianity in 312. There is, however, no evidence of any intervention by him to promote the Christian festival. The exact circumstances of the beginning of Christmas Day remain obscure. From Rome the feast spread to other churches of the West and East, the last to adopt it being the Church of Jerusalem in the time of Bishop Juvenal (reigned 424-458). Coordinated with Epiphany, a feast of Eastern origin commemorating the manifestation of Christ to the world, the celebration of the incarnation of Christ as Redeemer and Light of the world was favoured by the intense concern of the church of the 4th and 5th centuries in formulating creeds and dogmatic definitions relating to Christ's divine and human natures.

Christmas is the most popular of all festivals among Christians and many non-Christians alike, and its observance combines many strands of tradition. **From the ancient Roman pagan festivals of Saturnalia (December 17) and New Year's**

come the merrymaking and exchange of presents. Old Germanic midwinter customs have contributed the lighting of the Yule log and decorations with evergreens. The Christmas tree comes from medieval German mystery plays centred in representations of the Tree of Paradise (Genesis 2:9). Francis of Assisi popularized the Christmas crib, or crèche, in his celebration at Greccio, Italy, in 1223. Another popular medieval feast was that of St. Nicholas of Myra (c. 340) on December 6, when the saint was believed to visit children with admonitions and gifts, in preparation for the gift of the Christ child at Christmas. Through the Dutch the tradition of St. Nicholas (Sinterklaas, hence "Santa Claus") was brought to America in their colony of New Amsterdam, now New York. The sending of greeting cards at Christmas began in Britain in the 1840s and was introduced to the United States in the 1870s.

**Wooster, Ohio** Wooster city, seat (1811) of Wayne county, north-central Ohio, U.S., on Killbuck Creek, 28 miles (45 km) southwest of Akron. The site was laid out in 1808 by John Bever, William Henry, and Joseph Larwill and named for the American Revolutionary War general David Wooster. The community claims to have had the first Christmas tree in America, introduced (1847) by a German immigrant, August Imgard.

#### More Tree Verses

**Genesis Chapter 2:9** And out of the ground made YHWH God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

**Genesis 3:1 - 6 - The Fall of Adam** 1. Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which YHWH God had made. And he said to the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? {Yea...: Heb. Yea, because, etc.} 2 And the woman said to the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 But of the fruit of the tree which [is] in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. 4 And the serpent said to the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat of it, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil. 6. And when the woman saw that the tree [was] good for food, and that it [was] pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make [one] wise, she took of its fruit, and ate, and gave also to her husband with her; and he ate. {pleasant: Heb. a desire}

**Revelation 2:7** He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

**Revelation 22:2** In the midst of its street, and on each side of the river, [was there] the tree of life, which bore twelve [kinds of] fruits, [and] yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree [were] for the healing of the nations. **Question?** Are the 12 fruits the 12 tribes of Israel?

**Answer: REV 22:14** Blessed [are] they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

**REV 22:19** And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and [from] the things which are written in this book. {out of the book...: or, from the tree of life}

**Have You Worshipped Your Christmas Tree Today? Just how Christian is Christmas? Not as much as you think. In fact, not much at all. The Tree:** In connection with the customs of the "Christmas" season, we will mention the Christmas tree. An old Babylonish fable went like this: Semiramis, the mother of Tammuz, claimed that overnight an evergreen tree sprang up from a dead tree stump. The dead stump supposedly symbolized her dead husband Nimrod; the new evergreen tree was the symbol that Nimrod had come to life again in the person of Tammuz!

This idea spread and developed to such a degree that the various nations all have had their legends about sacred trees! Among the Druids, the oak was sacred; among the Egyptians, it was the palm; and in Rome, it was the fir, which was decorated with red berries during the Saturnalia!<sup>Note 1</sup> Among the Scandinavians, the fir tree was sacred to their god Odin. "The Scandinavian god Woden or Odin was believed to bestow special gifts at Yuletide to those who honored him by approaching his sacred FIR TREE."<sup>Note 2</sup> And even as other rites of the Yuletide season were absorbed into "Christianity", so also is the widespread use of the tree at this season a carry over of an ancient practice! "The Christmas tree recapitulates the idea of tree worship, with the gilded nuts and balls symbolizing the sun. The festivities of the pagan winter solstice have been absorbed into the celebration of Christmas. The use of holly and mistletoe come from the pagan, Druidic ceremonies, the use of the Christmas tree from the worship paid to Odin's sacred fir."<sup>Note 3</sup>

In at least ten Biblical references, the "green" tree is associated with idolatry and false worship.<sup>Note 4</sup> The "green" tree refers to trees that are green all year round, since, of course, all trees are green at one time or another. So the "green" trees that the scriptures are talking about are the evergreen trees or trees within that family! Taking all of this into consideration, it is interesting to notice the reading of Jeremiah 10:1-5 and compare it with today's custom of decorating a tree :

"The customs of the people are vain: for one cuts a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman with the axe." "They fasten it with nails and hammers. They deck it with silver and with gold."

Now of course the people in the days of Jeremiah, as the context goes on to show, were actually making an idol out of the tree. We are not inferring that people today who put trees in their homes during the Christmas season are worshipping the tree, but that the use of the tree is plainly and totally a carry over from paganism. Whatever the difference may be between the ancient use of the tree as compared with present day customs, no one can deny that these things of which we have been speaking are customs of men. And God says: "The customs of the people are vain" (Jeremiah 10:3) and "the temple of idols have nothing in common with the temple of God."(II Corinthians 6:16)

1. Curiosities of Popular Customs, p.242.
2. Festivals, Holy Days, and Saints' Days, p.222.
3. Ibid, p.238.
4. Dt.12:2; I Kings 14:23; II Kings 16:4,17:10; Ez. 6:13.