

Paganism in Christmas¹

by Roy A. Reinhold

Isn't it amazing that Christians will fight tooth and nail to defend practices rooted in the pagan religions? In this article we will present the pagan aspects of Christmas, identify where they came from, when they were implemented, and prove from the scriptures that Yeshua (Jesus) was born in the fall of the year in September-October. The purpose is to show that Christmas is a completely false holiday that Christians today should not be involved in. Did you know that the Pilgrims and Puritans outlawed the celebration of Christmas in the early years, because they knew then, what you are about to read? In Revelation 3:14-22, the portion applying to the Laodiceans is appropriate for discussion, and applicable to the end-times church. An end-times church that says they are rich and neither hot nor cold, while in reality the Lord says they are "wretched and miserable and poor (spiritually) and blind and naked." The Lord's rebuke is due to their lukewarmness.

When was Yeshua (Jesus) born?

Does it surprise you that we can assert conclusive evidence that Yeshua was born in the fall of the year? First, we need to show when John the Baptizer was conceived and when he was born. Then we can identify when Yeshua was conceived and when He was born. Zacharias (z'kharyah), John's father was a priest who served at the Temple in Jerusalem, and he was married to Elizabeth (elisheva), who was the daughter of a priestly line. Zacharias was assigned to Temple duties in the course of Abijah (abiyah) [Luke 1:5]. We know that there are 24 courses of priests and they have specific assignments for the weeks they serve at the Temple.

1 Chronicles 24:3, 10, 18 And David, with Zadok of the sons of Eleazar and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, divided them according to their offices for their ministry.....
.....the seventh for Hakkoz and the eighth for Abijah.
.....the twenty-third for Delaiah, and the twenty-fourth for Maaziah.

From the time of king David, there were 24 courses of priests assigned to the Temple, and the course of Abijah was the 8th course as a permanent assignment. Each course of priests served for 7 days (1 Chronicles 9:25), twice a year. Their week long service at the Temple began and ended on the Sabbath (2 Chronicles 23:8). 3 times a year all Israel was required to appear before the Lord at the Temple, and during those 3 weeks, all priests from all courses served at the Temple. The 3 times were the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), and the Feast of Tabernacles (Succoth) [Deuteronomy 16:16]. Therefore, all priests served 5 weeks a year; during the two weeks their course served at the Temple, and the 3 weeks where all priests were present.

The year for priest's courses began on the first of Nisan (Abib) in the spring of the year. Therefore we can count to the exact time for the service of Zacharias at the Temple. We don't count the week for the Feast of Unleavened Bread and for the week of Pentecost, because all priests served at that time. Therefore, Zacharias' first week of service would have been the 10th week of the year from approximately Sivan 12-18. His second week of service would have been the 35th week of the year from approximately Kislev 10-16. Sivan is the 3rd month in the Jewish calendar and occurs in May/June; while Kislev is the 9th month of the year and occurs in November/December.

Zacharias was serving in the Temple at the time appointed for his division of priests, and he was chosen by lot to enter the Temple Holy Place and burn incense (Luke 1:8-13). The angel of the Lord, Gabriel, appeared to Zacharias, standing next to the altar of incense, and told him that he and Elizabeth would have a son and they will name him John (Yochanan). He was unable to speak until John was born, because he didn't believe Gabriel. The scriptures record that after Zacharias' week of service at the Temple was over, he went home. Elizabeth became pregnant immediately afterwards (Luke 1:23-24). We can assume that Elizabeth conceived the week after Zacharias' service at the Temple, which would make it approximately Sivan 19-25. Luke 1:57 states that Elizabeth bore John at the appointed time, which we know is 9 months long. Therefore, if John was conceived in the 3rd week of the 3rd month Sivan, then he was born some time around the first of Nisan of the next year. Some people have tried to pinpoint John's birth to Passover on 14 Nisan, and while that is possible, I guess the best can say is that it was somewhere in the first couple of weeks of Nisan.

After Elizabeth was pregnant for about 6 months, the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary in Nazareth and announced that she would conceive a child supernaturally by God and will name Him Yeshua (Jesus) [Luke 1:26-39]. The scriptures record that immediately afterwards, Mary went hurriedly to visit and stay with Elizabeth and Zacharias. She stayed with Elizabeth for about 3 months and left before John was born. Also, when Mary conceived, Elizabeth was in her 6th month of pregnancy, which would have been somewhere around the middle of the month of Kislev. Some writers have placed the conception of Mary as occurring on Hanukkah which is Kislev 25. We know it was somewhere around there so perhaps it did occur exactly on Hanukkah (Feast of Lights). Hanukkah falls somewhere in December, although not very often on December 25 like it does in the year 2000, and can be early in December.

We know that John the Baptizer was born somewhere from Nisan 1-15, and he was 6 months older than Yeshua (Jesus). Therefore, Yeshua was born somewhere in the Tishri 1-20 timeframe. Tishri is the 7th month in the Jewish calendar and occurs in September/October, in the fall of the year. Some writers have tried to place Yeshua's birth exactly on Tishri 15, the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles (Succoth), and I can go along with it.

¹ C:\My Documents\SCHOOLofLocalChurch\Lessons\33PaganHolidays\Articles\PaganChristmas01.doc

After all, John 1:14 states, "And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us". The veiled reference to tabernacling among us points to Yeshua's birth at the Feast of Tabernacles. For these reasons I can agree with those who want to pinpoint John the Baptizer's birth date to Passover, and Yeshua's birth to the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles on 15 Tishri.

Also, Luke 2:1-8 records that Joseph and Mary stayed in a succah because there was no room at the inn. The Feast of Tabernacles is called Succoth, which is the plural for succah, because Jewish people are required to build temporary flimsy shelters to stay in during the Feast. The circumstantial evidence is that there was no room anywhere, because during the Feast of Tabernacles, all Jews had to appear at the Temple and the population of Jerusalem swelled from about 120,000 to over 2,000,000. Since Bethlehem is only about 4 miles south of Jerusalem, there was no room anywhere near Jerusalem because of the crowds there for the Feast of Tabernacles. There is compelling evidence to support the birth of Jesus at the time of Succoth or the Feast of Tabernacles.

Likewise, Luke 2:8 states that there were shepherds in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night, when Yeshua was born. If the 8th course of Abijah, where Zacharias was visited by Gabriel, was the 2nd week for their course in the year, then Yeshua would have been born in mid-January to early February. Since that is winter and the rainy season there in Israel, the flocks are not out and the shepherds wouldn't be out in the fields at night. Just another piece of the puzzle that shows Yeshua was born in the fall of the year.

Why do you think God put all these details in the scriptures? Surely not just for entertainment purposes, or to use as filler material. That's why proving that Yeshua was born in the fall of the year IS important, because it is harmonious with the scriptures and explains the scriptures. Some of you will say, "so what". Well, that attitude arises out of a lack of desire for truth and an intention to maintain pagan customs regardless of the evidence. You have the right to believe whatever you want to, but don't tell me that has anything to do with Christmas being Christian in any way. Let's go on to see where Christmas customs were developed and when were they first practiced. Oh how people love to participate in all the man-made aspects of Christmas; the glittering lights, the evergreen tree, the giving of presents, and the entire merchant push for their biggest sales period of the year. While some Christians will say that "we ought not commercialize Christmas", or "let's put Christ back in Christmas", those are just slogans to perpetuate what is a pagan festival.

When Did Christmas Originate?

One prolific writer in the early church fathers was Irenaeus, the bishop over all the churches of Asia Minor. He was designated a saint by the Roman Catholic church, and was the bishop following John the apostle and Polycarp. Irenaeus was bishop in about 170-180 AD, and wrote about all the church observances. Nowhere is Christmas mentioned or the observance of a day for the supposed birth of Yeshua. You can read Irenaeus' writings in English at the Wheaton University website, and check it out for yourself.

The Catholic encyclopedia states that shortly after the Council of Nicea in 325 AD, a pope assigned December 25th as the day for observing the birth of Yeshua. Then in the 5th century AD, another pope made it church law, that all Christians would observe December 25 as Christmas, forever. Think about it, the date of December 25 was chosen over 300 years after the death of Yeshua, as the date of His birth; and 400 years afterwards it was institutionalized as a mandatory church observance. The same bunch who changed the Sabbath from the 7th day of the week to the first, also decided to create Christmas.

Emperor Constantine was the ringleader in this process, using Christianity to gain greater political power over the people. The following edict is his exact decree on March 7, 321 AD, formalizing Sunday in place of the Sabbath. "On the venerable Day of the Sun let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country, however, persons engaged in agriculture may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits; because it often happens that another day is not so suitable for grain-sowing or for vine-planting; lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations, the bounty of heaven should be lost."

There was a dual observance of Saturday and Sunday for a while, but the Council of Laodicea in 364 AD institutionalized Sunday observances with the following edict: "Christians shall not Judaize and be idle on Saturday, but shall work on that day; but the Lord's Day they shall honor, and as being Christians, shall, if possible, do no work on that day. If however, they are found Judaizing, they shall be shut out from Christ."

The Eastern Orthodox bishop of Alexandria also instituted these practices in concert with the Roman Catholic church, laying the groundwork for the Eastern Orthodox also observing Sunday. They (Rome) later excommunicated any who were keeping the Sabbath on Saturday. I won't even dwell on the anti-semitism institutionalized in the church at that time, because pope John Paul II has recognized it and apologized for that and other mistakes through the centuries. Why am I bringing up changing the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday in this discussion of Christmas? Because they are tied together. The popes ordered Christmas to be instituted on the birthday of Sol the sun-god, because the Roman pagans already observed Sunday to honor Sol and the winter solstice period was already observed as Sol's birthday. This was an overt means to convince the people that Sol and Yeshua were the same person. The winter solstice occurs on December 21, and Saturnalia was kept from December 17-24. Then on December 25, Brumalia was the celebration of the rebirth of the sun-god. This is called Mithraism.

Who was Sol the sun-god? It was a continuation of the Baal worship from ancient days. It was present in Egypt and back to ancient Babylon. December 25 is the birth day of Tammuz, the son of Semiramis, and the rebirth of Nimrod. The ancient legend is that a green tree sprang up on Brumalia, with the stump symbolizing

Nimrod (Baal) and the green tree Tammuz. This festival is nothing more than witchcraft institutionalized in the church today as Christmas. It is Baal worship. Many Christians hold up their noses over ancient Israel who worshiped YHVH and also worshiped the baals. They think they would never do such things themselves. However, they are practicing the same Baal worship that people were criticized in the scriptures for, over 2500 years ago.

Jeremiah 10:3-4 For the customs of the people are a delusion; because it is wood cut from the forest, the work of the hands of the craftsman with a cutting tool. They decorate it with silver and gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers so that it will not totter.

The northern Europeans worshiped the same gods from ancient Babylon, but under the name Odin. The evergreen fir tree was sacred to Odin and people decorated it during the festival of Saturnalia. Legend has it that Odin would bestow yuletide gifts to those who approached the sacred fir tree on Brumalia. The giving of presents on December 25 happened long before Rome arbitrarily chose December 25 as the supposed birth day of Yeshua. The stories about St. Nicholas being the origination of giving presents is merely church spin to try and put a christian face on what was a pagan custom done for hundreds of years. Throughout the scriptures, the worship with the green tree is condemned, and we know this refers to the evergreen tree, because every tree is green part of the year. It is the evergreen tree that is green all year round. In ancient pagan Rome, the fir tree also was sacred and they decorated it with red berries and silver and gold during the festival of Saturnalia.

Yes, you can give presents to people, it is your right to spend your money as you choose. However, it is somewhat strange that you would do it on December 25 to perpetuate the ancient customs on Brumalia. Why not do it at the fall of the year when Yeshua was actually born? Is it because you love the pagan practices? You say you do these things because you choose to, and yet what you do in celebrating Christmas is to perpetuate the ancient Babylonian customs. What part of Christmas did you think up? or is it some sort of defensiveness, that you object in your mind to this article because it exposes your love for the pagan practices? What about sparkly spherical balls hung on the evergreen tree to symbolize the sun? What about the silver and gold tinsel with which you lovingly decorate your evergreen tree? And you wonder when reading Revelation 17 and 18 about Mystery Babylon, where it could be located today?

Where did the mistletoe come from? It is from ancient Babylon, Rome, northern European pagan practices, and from the Druids of England and Ireland. The mistletoe is thought to give magical healing powers to pagan practitioners on December 25. What about the yuletide log? It too came from Odin worship and back to ancient Babylon. The yuletide log symbolizes the stump for Nimrod (Baal) and the evergreen tree his rebirth through Tammuz on December 25. Isn't it amazing that when the Spanish conquerors invaded Central America, that they discovered that the pagans already observed Saturnalia and Brumalia at the winter solstice, and recognized the madonna and child? That's because Baal worship from ancient times pictured Semiramis and Tammuz as madonna and child on Brumalia, December 25. These pagan people in Central America also kept a 40 day fast in the spring (Lent) leading up to the spring fertility festival at the spring equinox festival to honor Semiramis.

There is nothing Christian about Christmas except man-made overlays to the ancient pagan practices condemned throughout the scriptures. Can you honestly defend these practices with a straight face? I doubt it. Or do you want to defend the practices of Mystery Babylon? Your call.

If you are Catholic, you might feel compelled to defend the practice of Christmas because it is ordered by the church. Did you know that Tertullian omitted Christmas from his list of church observances and condemned the creeping methods employed by some to make Sol (sun-god) practices part of the church? Did you know that Augustine bitterly denounced the identification of Jesus with Sol, the sun-god? Did you know that pope Leo I denounced solar survivals, where Christians on the very steps of the Apostles basilica, turned to adore the rising sun?

Or maybe you're Lutheran, and gaze fondly at the Advent wreath hung so lovingly at the front of the church. It's craft is apparent with the evergreen boughs and red berries from the ancient pagan practices. Solemnly, you light a new candle every week during the weeks leading up to the Advent of the rising sun with the candles representing the new light of the sun. Then on Christmas, the birth day of the Sun God, you light the central candle and celebrate the risen Sun god Sol (Baal). Who do you think you're kidding? We know that Yeshua was born in the fall of the year.

Let's face it, the practices of Christmas are thoroughly pagan. Yeshua was born in the fall of the year at approximately Tishri 15, the beginning of the Feast of Tabernacles (Succoth). The leading early church fathers denounced these things. Do you want to defend your practices based on later edicts of the Catholic church designed to control and tax the peasantry? Hello!!! Are you by choice deciding to be the controlled peasantry today? I won't even go into the effect that lying about Santa Claus has on children. It is certainly repeated in families all over the world, where after children find out that Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny are lies, that they realize their parents cannot be trusted. It introduces a breaking of the bond between child and parent, and after all, isn't Satan's objective to divide and conquer?

Christmas is paganism plain and simple, and no amount of arguing to defend it will change the facts. You can have and love your pagan mythic practices, but don't tell me or anyone else this is from God our Father.