

4 MYSTERIOUS HOLIDAYS:

THE REST OF THE STORY!

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WARNING: Contains extreme violence and disturbing content. May not be appropriate for children. Parental discretion is advised.

4 MYSTERIOUS HOLIDAYS

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1.

A Most Mysterious Holiday

To tell this story, it's necessary to include the violent and disturbing parts. This is a story of Satanic worship and how Satan tricked modern society into adopting it. The mainstream Christian world has not shunned it, but has actually helped to spread it! How did this come to be? And why?

Our story begins in the land of Canaan nearly 3,500 years ago. The people of Canaan had plummeted to such depths of depravity and wickedness that God commanded His people, the Israelites, to destroy them all — men, women, children, everyone polluted by that society.

Like the Aztecs of later infamy, who ripped the hearts out of live human beings and offered those still-beating hearts to the sun god, the Canaanites slaughtered human beings in sacrifice to their gods. Not just any human beings, either, but young children in particular.

The Worship of Molech and Baal

Among other deities, the Canaanites worshiped a

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monstrosity known as Molech, a name that's now synonymous with child sacrifice. As the Israelites prepared to invade Canaan, God warned them about this demonic deity and its worshipers:

- 1 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,
- 2 “Again, you shall say to the children of Israel:
‘Whoever of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell in Israel, who gives any of his descendants to Molech, he shall surely be put to death. The people of the land shall stone him with stones.
- 3 ‘I will set My face against that man, and will cut him off from his people, because he has given some of his descendants to Molech, to defile My sanctuary and profane My holy name.
- 4 ‘And if the people of the land should in any way hide their eyes from the man, when he gives some of his descendants to Molech, and they do not kill him,
- 5 ‘then I will set My face against that man and against his family; and I will cut him off from his people, and all who prostitute themselves with him to commit harlotry with Molech’” (Lev. 20:1-5).

However, the Israelites disobeyed. They spared many of the Canaanites from destruction. The Canaanite religion proved so seductive that, with worshipers still

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alive and living among the Israelites, generations of Israelites turned away to the Canaanite gods, even practicing child sacrifice.

In later times, long after Israel divided into Israel and Judah, King Manasseh of Judah proved himself worse than the Canaanites (2 Chron. 33:9). Not only did he worship “the Baals,” but, “Also he caused his sons to pass through the fire in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom; he practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft and sorcery, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger” (2 Chron. 33:6).

It’s worth noting here that “Baal” simply means lord or master (Strong’s # H1168), and applied to many pagan deities. Hence the Bible often refers, not to any specific deity, but to “the Baals.”

But when God punished King Manasseh, this man, arguably the most evil man in the Bible, actually humbled himself, repented, and turned from his sins (2 Chron. 33:10-17)! God then showed him mercy, for God is merciful to all who forsake their sins and seek Him with their whole hearts.

Despite the king’s repentance, though, Baal-worship persisted in Judah. After Manasseh’s reign, God spoke through Jeremiah the prophet and condemned Judah: “They have also built the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings to Baal, which I did not command or speak, nor did it come into

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My mind” (Jer. 19:5).

As for the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, in which King Manasseh had sacrificed his children to the Baals, Jer. 7:30-33 adds,

30 “For the children of Judah have done evil in My sight,” says the LORD. “They have set their abominations in the house which is called by My name, to pollute it.

31 “And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, nor did it come into My heart.

32 “Therefore behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “when it will no more be called Tophet, or the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter; for they will bury in Tophet until there is no room.

33 “The corpses of this people will be food for the birds of the heaven and for the beasts of the earth. And no one will frighten them away.”

Now we see Baal, the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, and Tophet all linked together for the murder of the innocent. But there’s another piece of the puzzle.

A couple years after King Manasseh died, his righteous grandson Josiah came to the throne. King Josiah purged the kingdom of every trace of idolatry he

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could find, and “he defiled Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire to Molech” (2 Kings 23:10).

That brings us full circle back to Molech. The Bible connects Tophet in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom with worshiping both the Baals and Molech.

What exactly was Molech? Was it connected to the Baals somehow? As far as we know, ancient records outside the Bible never mention a deity called Molech, though they mention Baals frequently.

However, ancient peoples such as the Israelites and their Phoenician neighbors wrote without vowels, so Molech would’ve been written as “*m l kh*” or *mlk*. And that, interestingly, is a Phoenician word for sacrifices, including human sacrifices. Considering this, and the fact the Bible doesn’t necessarily dignify pagan deities with their proper names, it seems likely that Molech is the Bible’s description of one of the Baals.

The Cancer Spreads

Now the Phoenicians and the Israelites did not stay in one place, but also traveled to other places, often on ships and sometimes in league with one another, as 1 Kings 10:22 and 2 Chron. 9:21 indicate. Wherever they went, they carried their paganism with them. As Ezek. 36:19-23 tells us, wherever the Israelites went among the

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nations, they profaned God's name with their words and their idolatry.

The greatest Phoenician colony, which may have included Israelites as well, was the North African city-state of Carthage, a city that grew to about 500,000 residents. The Carthaginians burned infants and small children in sacrifice (*mlk*) to a hideous deity called Baal Hammon, whom they worshiped in the fashion of Molech. Idols of Baal Hammon generally portrayed him as an old man with a beard and two horns.

The Greeks identified Baal Hammon with their own god Kronos or Cronus, the god of time and harvests, who, in Greek mythology, castrated his father and ate his own children. The Greeks traditionally represented Kronos as an old man with a long, white beard and carrying a sickle.

Sound familiar? It should. Today, we know Kronos as "Father Time" and the "Grim Reaper."

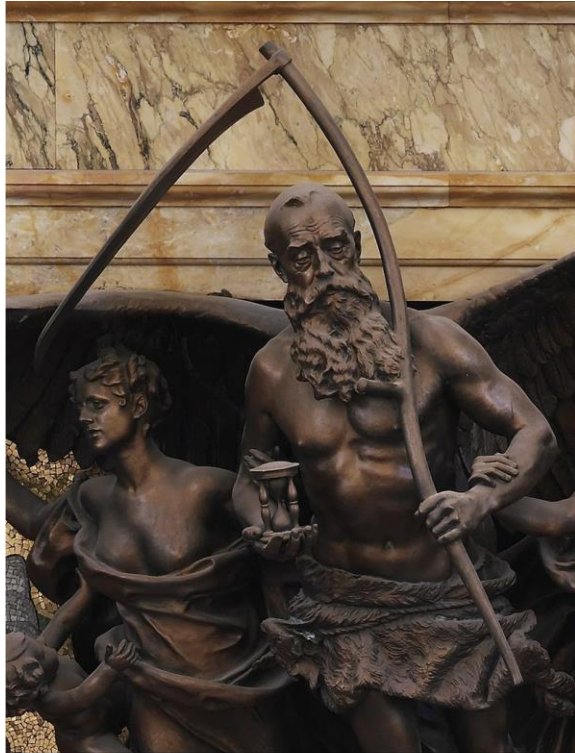
As for the worship of this demonic deity, we find some horrific passages among the Greek histories of Carthage. Bear in mind that Kronos is the Greek name for Baal Hammon, who was worshiped in the fashion of Molech.

Cleitarchus wrote about Carthaginians sacrificing their children, "There stands in their midst a bronze statue of Kronos, its hands extended over a bronze brazier, the flames of which engulf the child. When the flames fall upon the body, the limbs contract and the

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open mouth seems almost to be laughing until the contracted body slips quietly into the brazier.”¹

Diodorus Siculus’s account differs only in minor details: “There was in their city a bronze image of Kronos extending its hands, palms up and sloping toward the ground, so that each of the children when placed thereon rolled down and fell



Statue of Kronos as Father Time.

¹ Roger Pearse, “Sacrifices of children at Carthage – the sources,” May 31, 2012. Accessed 12/18/2022 at <https://www.roger-pearse.com/weblog/2012/05/31/sacrifices-of-children-at-carthage-the-sources/>

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into a sort of gaping pit filled with fire.”²

The Jewish scholar Rashi (11th century AD) elaborated on the connection between Baal Hammon and Molech, writing, “Moloch... was made of brass; and they heated him from his lower parts; and his hands being stretched out, and made hot, they put the child between his hands, and it was burnt; when it vehemently cried out; but the priests beat a drum, that the father might not hear the voice of his son, and his heart might not be moved.”

Sickening! Some, wanting to believe humans incapable of such things, have doubted the ancient accounts. But archaeologists have uncovered, around the ruins of Carthage, fields filled with urns containing the charred bone fragments of infants and small children.³ Often, these bone fragments are mixed in with the bone fragments of animals sacrificed in the same ceremony.

Isn't it remarkable how Satan and his followers prey upon children? Satan preys on the weak and vulnerable, prowling “about like a roaring lion, seeking whom

² Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History*, book 20, chapter 14, accessed 12/18/2022 at https://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Diodorus_Siculus/20A*.html#3

³ Maev Kennedy, “Carthaginians Sacrificed Own Children, Scientists Say,” *The Guardian*, Jan. 21, 2014. Accessed 12/12/2022 at <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2014/jan/21/carthaginians-sacrificed-own-children-study>

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he may devour” (1 Pet. 5:8). His followers are no different. Sometimes they blatantly and openly prey upon children — through such things as abortion, pedophilia, transgenderism, and forced “gender reassignment” mutilation — while other times they’re much more subtle. Those predators today are no better than the ancients butchering their children on the altar of Molech! By any means necessary, Satan wants to destroy humanity, especially innocent children.

Satan and his demons rejoice at the shedding of innocent blood — the blood of children and of God’s servants. In addition to what we’ve already read about the reign of King Manasseh, 2 Kings 21:16 adds this: “Moreover Manasseh shed very much innocent blood, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, besides his sin by which he made Judah sin, in doing evil in the sight of the LORD.”

According to Diodorus Siculus, Carthaginian nobles, reluctant to sacrifice their own children, often bought children from the poor and raised them for sacrifice. After a defeat by the king of Syracuse, however, the Carthaginian nobles blamed their defeat on neglecting to sacrifice their own children. Accordingly, they tried to appease their demonic “gods” by sacrificing 200 of their own children, along with 300 other children.⁴

⁴ Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History*, book 20, chapter 14, accessed 12/18/2022 at <https://penelope.uchi->

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Plutarch described this senseless slaughter of innocent life as follows:

“...but with full knowledge and understanding they themselves offered up their own children, and those who had no children would buy little ones from poor people and cut their throats as if they were so many lambs or young birds; meanwhile the mother stood by without a tear or moan; but should she utter a single moan or let fall a single tear, she had to forfeit the money, and her child was sacrificed nevertheless; and the whole area before the statue was filled with a loud noise of flutes and drums so that the cries of wailing should not reach the ears of the people.”⁵

Perhaps now we’re seeing the historical context of Biblical passages about idolatry. We can certainly see why God commanded that worshipers of Molech and Baal be destroyed, even entire societies! In time, Carthage, too, would meet its just end.

cago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Diodorus_Siculus/20A*.html#3

⁵ Plutarch, *Moralia: On Superstition*, sect. 13. Accessed 12/18/2022 at <https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A2008.01.0189%3Asection%3D13>

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Judgment on the Wicked

Before that happened, though, Carthage fought three wars with Rome for control of the Mediterranean. During the second war, the legendary Hannibal led a Carthaginian army across the Alps into Italy and began mauling every Roman army sent against him. At the Battle of Cannae, Hannibal's troops, though out-numbered nearly 2-1, encircled the Romans and hacked 50,000 of them to death in hand-to-hand combat, capturing 20,000 more. Hannibal lost less than 6,000 of his own men.

News of this disaster threw Rome into a panic. Supposing that their gods had deserted them, the Romans seized two Gauls and two Greeks within the city and buried them alive as a sacrifice to the gods. The Roman historian Livy described this sacrifice as “wholly alien to the Roman spirit.”⁶

The Romans generally frowned upon human sacrifice, or so they said. On one hand, many years after this, they outlawed human sacrifice and attempted to stamp it out throughout their empire, going so far as to crucify pagan priests who sacrificed children.⁷ On the

⁶ Titus Livius, *The History of Rome*, book 22, chap. 57. Accessed 12/18/2022 at <https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hop-per/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0152%3Abook%3D22%3Achapter%3D57>

⁷ Tertullian, *The Apology*, chap. 9, sect. 2. Accessed 12/18/2022 at <https://www.tertullian.org/anf/anf03/anf03->

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other hand, they continued to practice it under other names. More on that later.

Though Hannibal continually defeated the Romans on the battlefield, he never managed to deal a truly decisive blow. Rome would ultimately weather the storm and prevail.

Seventy years after Hannibal's great victory at Cannae, Carthage fell. The Romans slaughtered most of the city's half million inhabitants — men, women, and children alike — sparing only 50,000 whom they sold into slavery. They also burned the city and sowed the ground with salt. The Carthaginians would no longer burn their children in sacrifice to Baal Hammon, as they themselves perished in the flames or by the swords of the Romans. It was a just end to a violently wicked city.

Murder For Worship and Entertainment

But the worship of Molech, aka Baal Hammon, aka Kronos, continued. The Romans identified Baal Hammon of the Carthaginians and Kronos of the Greeks with their own Saturn, the god of time, wealth, and agriculture. They often portrayed Saturn as an old man with a long white beard and a sickle, like the Greek Kronos.

As noted above, the Romans outlawed human

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sacrifice and recognized it as murder. Yet Saturn / Kronos / Baal / Molech thirsted for human blood.

What do I mean by this? Surely the pagan “gods” were just lifeless idols, right? Yes and no. The idols themselves were worthless, “idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk” (Rev. 9:20).

But as the Apostle Paul explained to the Corinthians, the pagan “gods” were none other than Satan and his demons: “The things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord’s table and of the table of demons” (1 Cor. 10:20-21).

And when God executed “judgment against all the gods of Egypt” (Ex. 12:12), He executed judgment, not against the lifeless idols, but against Satan and his demons.

This is why all the pagans worshiped similar gods in similar ways. Satan authored all of the pagan religions, and all the pagans worshiped him, even without realizing it. As Rev. 12:9 tells us, Satan “deceives the whole world.”

So how did the Romans worship Satan and his demons? How did they offer them human blood after banning human sacrifice? Simple. They offered human sacrifice and called it something different: gladiator combat.

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You see, the gladiator games weren't just a public spectacle; they were meant to honor the Roman gods. Gladiator games began with sacrifices to the gods, and the organizers brought images of the gods into the arena to "witness" the proceedings, as if idols could do such a thing! The Romans considered gladiators who died in the arena to be an offering to Saturn, believing also that he received their souls. Ten gladiator games happened in December during the Saturnalia season, which, as the name implies, celebrated Saturn.

If gladiators, who were generally slaves or war captives, refused to fight, their masters whipped or prodded them with red-hot pokers until they did. Thousands of cheering Romans packed the Colosseum to watch gladiators kill each other, men kill exotic animals, animals tear each other in pieces, and condemned men be torn apart by wild beasts. Undoubtedly, the glee of the Roman spectators was exceeded only by that of Satan and his demons.

More Than Human Sacrifice

But human blood wasn't the only way for the Romans to worship Saturn. Satan desires many other forms of wickedness as well — drunkenness, sexual immorality, and every vice imaginable. So it should come as no surprise that the pagans practiced these things in their religious ceremonies.

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When Moses came down from Mt. Sinai and saw the Israelites worshipping the golden calf, he noted that they were “unrestrained” (Ex. 32:25), which in Hebrew can also mean naked or bare (Strong’s # H6544). Again later, when many Israelites worshiped Baal Peor, the shameful incident involved fornicating with Moabite women (Num. 25). Over and over again, the Bible records the existence of “perverted persons” in pagan worship, that is, sodomites and temple prostitutes (1 Kings 14:24; 15:12; 22:46; 2 Kings 23:7).

Secular history confirms that pagan worship all over the world involved prostitution and sexual orgies, from Babylon and Canaan to Greece and Rome, and from India and China to the Aztecs and Mayans. Strabo wrote that, in Corinth, the temple of Aphrodite (called Venus by the Romans) had over 1,000 temple prostitutes.⁸ Herodotus wrote that Babylon required young women to serve as prostitutes in the temple of Ishtar (Venus / Aphrodite) at some point in their lives.⁹

The Roman festival of Saturnalia carried on in the normal pagan tradition of drunken whore fests. During

⁸ Strabo, *Geography*, Book 8, Chapter 6, Section 20. Accessed 12/19/2022 at https://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Strabo/8F*.html

⁹ Herodotus, *The History*, Book 1, Chapter 192. Accessed 12/19/2022 at <https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Hdt.+1.199>

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the 7 days of Saturnalia, December 17-23, ancient historians wrote that it was rare to see a sober person.¹⁰

Drunken revelers stumbled through the streets, often naked, singing Saturnalia songs and greeting passersby with a lusty “Io Saturnalia!”

The normal social order and laws were suspended. Courts, schools, and shops closed. Slaves and masters shared equal status. Men dressed as women, and women as men. Romans of all classes set aside their normal attire in favor of gaudy colors and pointed felt hats called “freedmen’s caps.”

Romans brought fir trees into their houses and temples, and adorned their houses with wreaths and all sorts of greenery. They also turned these, the shortest days of the year, into a festival of lights, lighting multitudes of candles.

Though the Romans no longer burned human beings as sacrifices, murdering them by other means instead, there were reminders everywhere. On all the shrines, the Romans hung small wooden dolls as offerings to the gods. Throughout the festival, too, the Romans gifted one another small wax or clay dolls called *sigillaria*. And, of course, the Romans slaughtered hu-

¹⁰ Cato the Elder, *De agricultura* 57; Aulus Gellius 2.24.3; Martial 14.70.1 and 14.1.9; Horace, *Satire* 2.3.5; Lucian, *Saturnalia* 13; *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, Alexander Severus 37.6

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man beings in the Colosseum during the Saturnalia season.

Naturally, Saturnalia involved lavish feasting as well, especially roasted pork. God had forbidden His people to either eat or sacrifice pigs (Lev. 11:7; Deut. 14:8), so of course the heathens did both.

When the Apostle Paul instructed the Corinthians not to allow in their congregation anyone “who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner” (1 Cor. 5:11), bear in mind that the pagans not only did those things, but did so to honor their gods, Satan and his demons! As God said of the heathen, “every abomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods” (Deut. 12:31).

During Saturnalia, the Romans lavished one another with gifts, for Saturn was the god of wealth and prosperity. And accompanying the gifts, the Romans also gave one another cards with Saturnalia greetings, often in the form of poems.¹¹

If the revelry, candles, Saturnalia songs, gift-giving, wreaths, fir trees, and holiday greetings remind you of something else, they should. If not, don’t worry; we’ll get there.

¹¹ Nicole Budrovich, *Getty.edu*, “The Wild Holiday That Turned Ancient Rome Upside Down,” Dec. 17, 2020. Accessed 12/20/2022 at <https://www.getty.edu/news/the-wild-holiday-that-turned-ancient-rome-upside-down/>

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It's no wonder the Apostle Paul wrote to Roman converts in Rom. 13:12-13, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy."

In 1 Pet. 4:3-4, the Apostle Peter added, "For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you."

Indeed, how strange must the pagans have thought the Christians, who refused to partake in the Saturnalia celebrations! The Christians may have been the only sober people on the streets of Rome during that week of wickedness. And when the pagans shouted out "Io Saturnalia" and the Christians didn't return the greeting, or when the Christians refused to join in singing the drunken Saturnalia songs, how strange it must have seemed.

New Ingredients in the Poison Stew

Though Saturnalia was already a poison stew of murder, drunkenness, idolatry, and whoredom, it was

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about to get some new ingredients, too. Or, more accurately, old ingredients repackaged as new ones.

In the first century AD, or perhaps earlier, an eastern mystery religion called Mithraism began to spread through the Roman Empire, taking root especially in the Roman army. Reminiscent of Freemasons, Mithraists shrouded their beliefs in secrecy, adhered to grades or degrees of initiation into the religion's mysteries, and called one another *syndexioi* (those united by the handshake).

The Mithraists worshiped the Indo-Iranian sun god Mithra or Mithras, prayed to the sun, and revered Sunday as their day of worship. Mithraism merged with the worship of the Roman sun god Sol and led to a renewed fervor for the sun god.

In this relief of Mithra slaying a bull, notice, in the upper left corner, the image of the sun god driving the “chariot of the sun.” This belief the Mithraists held in common with the Greeks, who held that the sun god Helios “traveled across the sky in a flaming chariot pulled by four fiery, winged horses.”¹² But other pagans believed this, too. In 2 Kings 23:11, we learn that King Josiah, as he purged idolatry from his kingdom, “removed

¹² Jaime McLeod, *Farmer's Almanac*, “Chariot of the Sun: A Weather Folklore,” May 9, 2021. Accessed 12/17/2022 at <https://www.farmersalmanac.com/weather-ology-chariot-of-the-sun-12276>

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the horses that the kings of Judah had dedicated to the sun, at the entrance to the house of the LORD, and he burned the chariots of the sun with fire.”

The Mithraists celebrated their sun god’s birthday each year

at the winter solstice, which on the Julian calendar fell on December 25th. On this, the shortest day of the year, Roman sun worshipers believed that Sol Invictus, “the unconquered sun,” was reborn. They called this day *Dies Natalis Solis Invicti*, or “Birthday of the Unconquered Sun.” In AD 274, the Roman Emperor Aurelian reaffirmed December 25th as Sol’s birthday.



Color-restored relief of “Mithra Slaying the Bull.”

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A New Festival?

It must be noted here that the pagans venerated the supposed birthdays of their gods. In contrast, Jews and early Christians rejected any celebration of birthdays.

First century Jewish historian Josephus wrote, “Nay, indeed, the law does not permit us to make festivals at the birth of our children, and thereby afford occasion of drinking to excess” (*Against Apion*, 2:26).

The Bible mentions not one birthday of any of God’s servants. As King Solomon wrote, “A good name is better than precious ointment, and the day of death than the day of one’s birth” (Eccl. 7:1). For the righteous, death is the conclusion of a life well-lived, a life of service and accomplishment. The day of one’s birth, on the other hand, bears no mark of accomplishment or good character.

Accordingly, the Bible tells us to commemorate Jesus’ death (1 Cor. 11:26), but never His birth. It tells us when He died, the preparation day for the Passover (John 19:14, 31), which was Abib 14th (Ex. 12:6), but never when He was born. It mentions not one follower of Jesus ever commemorating His birthday.

Famed preacher Charles H. Spurgeon commented, “We find no Scriptural warrant whatever for observing any day as the birthday of the Saviour; and, consequently, its observance is a superstition, because [it’s]

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not of divine authority. Superstition has fixed most positively the day of our Saviour's birth, although there is no possibility of discovering when it occurred."¹³ He added, "We venture to assert, that if there be any day in the year, of which we may be pretty sure that it was not the day on which the Saviour was born, it is the twenty-fifth of December."¹⁴

The Catholic Encyclopedia observes,

Christmas was not among the earliest festivals of the Church. Irenaeus and Tertullian omit it from their lists of feasts; Origen, glancing perhaps at the discreditable imperial Natalitia, asserts (in Lev. Hom. viii in Migne, P.G., XII, 495) that in the Scriptures sinners alone, not saints, celebrate their birthday; Arnobius (VII, 32 in P.L., V, 1264) can still ridicule the "birthdays" of the gods.¹⁵

So when, how, and why did Christmas, the supposed birthday of Christ, come into the churches? Was it

¹³ Charles H. Spurgeon, *A Joy Born at Bethlehem*, Dec. 24, 1871. Accessed 12/12/2022 at <https://ccel.org/ccel/spurgeon/sermons17/sermons17.lix.html>

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, "Christmas." Accessed 12/12/2022 at <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03724b.htm>

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genuinely because of Jesus, or did it simply continue pagan traditions under a different name?

Paganism Evolves

Remember, the Saturnalia and Sol Invictus celebrations honored Saturn and Sol, the Roman gods of time and the sun. Saturn corresponded to Kronos of the Greeks, Baal Hammon of Carthage, and Baal and Molech of the Canaanites. Ultimately, devotees of these pagan gods worshiped and sacrificed to Satan and his demons (1 Cor. 10:20-21). In honor of their Satanic, demonic gods, the pagans engaged in ritual murder, adultery, prostitution, sodomy, pedophilia, bestiality, theft, vandalism, drunkenness, and every other form of wickedness that God condemned.

Because the Canaanites practiced these things, God commanded the Israelites to destroy the Canaanite society in its entirety, and to kill every Canaanite. He commanded them to wipe that evil off the face of the earth.

But did the Israelites obey? No, they did not. Instead, they adopted that wickedness and facilitated its spread.

Now, the early Christians lived in a Roman society similarly bathed in bloodshed and debauchery. In the blood-drenched arena of the Colosseum, the Romans murdered countless thousands, including thousands of

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Christians, in honor of their gods. During the days of Saturnalia and Sol, in honor of those gods, the Romans engaged in every vice known to man.

Did the “Christians” learn from the Israelites? Did they shun this evil and stamp it out as soon as they got the opportunity?

Why, no. No, they did not.

Eventually, many decades after the Romans officially converted to “Christianity,” they finally got around to abolishing the gladiator games. But the rest of the pagan worship? It continued unabated.

The church often found converts reluctant or unwilling to give up their pagan traditions. So it came up with a novel solution: it would adopt the pagan customs and relabel them. It must be noted that relabeling paganism as “Christianity” doesn’t make it Christian. Slapping a Ford logo on a Chevy doesn’t make it a Ford.

In fact, God commanded the Israelites not to do that, and they, as usual, disobeyed Him. We read in Deut. 12:29-32,

29 “When the LORD your God cuts off from before you the nations which you go to dispossess, and you displace them and dwell in their land,

30 “take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.’

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31 “You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way; for every abomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods.

32 “Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.”

Like the Israelites, the church, too, disobeyed God and inquired after the pagans. From the Mithraists, the church adopted Sunday instead of the seventh-day Sabbath as the day of worship. The rays of the sun glowing around the head of Sol magically transformed into a halo around the head of Christ.

How far the church had strayed from the days of

Christ
and His
apostles!
They “ex-
changed
the truth
of God
for the
lie”
(Rom.
1:25).
The
Apostle



Relief of the sun god Sol with the sun's rays (a halo) behind his head.

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Paul had predicted mass apostasy, warning, “But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived” (2 Tim. 3:13).

For a time, the church still shunned the Saturnalia and Sol Invictus celebrations. After all, how could any Christian participate in drunken, murderous, whore-fests set aside for the worship of Satan and his demons?

In the 3rd century AD, Tertullian warned Christians not to celebrate Saturnalia or the birthdays of the gods, observing that they involved “every pomp of the devil.”¹⁶ And, as *The Catholic Encyclopedia* noted above, church writers of this era didn’t list Christmas among the church festivals, not at this or any other time of year.

But the church eventually compromised here, too. In the 4th century AD, some 60 years after Emperor Aurelian had affirmed December 25th as the birthday of Sol, Christmas finally appears among the church festivals — on December 25th.

A certain Scriptor Syrus, in the 4th century AD, noted on a church calendar, “It was a custom of the pagans to celebrate on the same 25 December the birthday of the Sun, at which they kindled lights in token of festivity. In these solemnities and revelries the Christians also took part. Accordingly, when the doctors of the

¹⁶ Tertullian, *On Idolatry*, chapter 10. Accessed 12/12/2022 at <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0302.htm>

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Church perceived that the Christians had a leaning to this festival, they took counsel and resolved that the true Nativity should be solemnized on that day.”

As Benjamin Franklin would write centuries later, “How many observe Christ’s Birth-day! How few, his Precepts! O! ’tis easier to keep Holidays than Commandments.”¹⁷

Yet slapping Christian labels on pagan customs didn’t stop pagan worship. Even in the 5th century AD, Pope Leo I complained that church-goers worshiped the sun on the very steps of his church:

From such a system of teaching proceeds also the ungodly practice of certain foolish folk who worship the sun as it rises at the beginning of daylight from elevated positions: even some Christians think it is so proper to do this that, before entering the blessed Apostle Peter’s basilica, which is dedicated to the One Living and true God, when they have mounted the steps which lead to the raised platform, they turn round and bow themselves towards the rising sun and with bent neck do homage to its brilliant orb.¹⁸

¹⁷ Benjamin Franklin, *Poor Richard’s Almanack* (1743)

¹⁸ Leo I, *Sermon 27: On the Feast of the Nativity, VII* (Pt. IV). Accessed 12/12/2022 at <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/360327.htm>

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The irony of condemning sun worship while worshipping on the days set aside by sun-worshippers, Sunday and December 25th, seems to have been lost on the man.

Mixing Christianity and Paganism

As King Solomon wrote, “That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun” (Eccl. 1:9). Thus the parallels between Israel’s backsliding away from God and the church’s backsliding away from God should come as no surprise.

There’s still another parallel from the Old Testament. Weary of Israel’s wickedness, God allowed her to fall to the brutal and sadistic Assyrians, who carried the northern ten tribes away captive out of their own land and resettled other peoples in their place (2 Kings 17).

The new inhabitants, later called Samaritans, also worshiped idols and proved themselves no better than the Israelites, “therefore the LORD sent lions among them, which killed some of them” (2 Kings 17:25). The Samaritans begged the Assyrian king to send an Israelite priest to teach them “the rituals of the God of the land” (v. 26), and he obliged. The result, as we read in 2 Kings 17:33, was that the Samaritans learned a new religion: “they feared the LORD, yet served their own gods.” They mixed truth with paganism.

And so it was with the early church. The revelry,

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drunkenness, and debauchery of Saturnalia continued, but now in Christ's name. Sunday worship continued in place of the seventh-day Sabbath, but now in Christ's name. The celebration of the sun god's birthday on December 25th continued, but now in Christ's name. Even blatant sun worship continued alongside the worship of Christ!

As far as the church was concerned, the strategy paid off. During the 4th century AD, nearly the whole Roman Empire adopted Christianity as its official religion. Rome itself became the headquarters of the future Roman Catholic Church.

Yet something seems rather hollow about this victory, doesn't it? As one fellow observed, "When the church feels it must become like the world to win the world, it has not won the world. The world has won it."

New Conquests

Even as the church celebrated its hollow victory over Rome, the Roman Empire hurtled to its doom. The empire fragmented and, in the west, succumbed to its foes. Goths, Franks, Lombards, Anglo-Saxons, and other Germanic tribes overran western Europe and founded the modern European nations.

Most of these tribes, especially the Franks and Anglo-Saxons, followed their own pagan religion and had scarcely heard of Christianity. Like their Viking

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cousins who burst onto the scene a few centuries later, these Germanic peoples worshiped the gods Odin and Thor, the goddess Freya, and other deities.

Like most other pagans, the Germanic tribes celebrated a mid-winter festival, too, this one called Yule. In addition to sacrifices, it included bonfires, ale-drinking, and feasting on animal flesh, especially pork. Reminiscent of the Canaanites, ancient Israelites, Celts, and others, the Germanic peoples held religious rites and festivals in groves of green trees.

The church's method of converting these pagans differed little from its method of converting the old Roman pagans. Both the Franks and Anglo-Saxons accepted the church's brand of Christianity in fairly short order. The Yule celebrations, along with the Anglo-Saxons' own "Mother's Night" on Christmas Eve, morphed into Christmas celebrations.

In the 10th century, the Norwegian king Haakon "the Good" adopted Christianity alongside his own Norse paganism and thenceforth practiced both. Icelandic chronicler Snorri Sturluson wrote,

King Hakon was a good Christian when he came to Norway; but as the whole country was heathen, with much heathenish sacrifice, and as many great people, as well as the favour of the common people, were to be conciliated, he resolved to practice his Christianity in private. But he kept Sundays, and

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the Friday fasts, and some token of the greatest holy-days. **He made a law that the festival of Yule should begin at the same time as Christian people held it**, and that every man, under penalty, should brew a meal of malt into ale, and **therewith keep the Yule holy** as long as it lasted.¹⁹

And thus Christmas and Yule merged into one feast, with many Yule traditions, such as the Yule goat, the Yule ham, Yule singing (or wassailing), and the Yule log, being added to the Roman Saturnalia traditions.

Notice how seamlessly the pagan traditions all blend together, for Satan is the author of them all. Molech, Baal, Saturnalia, Yule — they all blend together into one poisonous stew! And into this stew, Satan has poured today's obsession with consumerism and greed.

Medieval and Modern Feasting

So far, we've seen how paganism gave birth to much of modern "Christianity," especially Christmas. To its credit, the church put an end to human sacrifice. But Christmas continued to be celebrated in much the same manner as Saturnalia and Yule. Even the vestiges of human sacrifice remain, albeit not acted upon. More on that shortly.

¹⁹ Snorri Sturluson, *Hakon the Good's Saga*, 15. Accessed 12/13/2022 at <https://www.sacred-texts.com/neu/heim/05hakon.htm>

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It must be noted that Christmas was, and is, more than just a single day. Like Saturnalia and Yule, it encompasses the whole “Christmas season,” especially the period between Christmas and New Year’s, but often extending to January 6th. This has been traditionally called “the twelve days of Christmas.”

At each Saturnalia, the Romans elected a “King of the Saturnalia” to preside over the festivities. In England and France, revelers elected a “Lord of Misrule” each Christmas season to preside over the “Feast of Fools,” celebrated by church clergy and lay members alike.

The Sunday Mail noted,

Until the mid-19th century, Christmas was a time for drunkenness and debauchery.

Men dressed like women, women dressed like men, servants dressed like masters, boys dressed like bishops, everyone else either dressed as animals or wore blackface — all to subvert the godly order in the safety of anonymity.

Christmas was a carnival of drink, cross-dressing, violence and lust during which Christians were unshackled from the ethical norms expected of them the rest of the year.

In early modern England, it was common practice to elect a “Lord of Misrule” to oversee Christmas celebrations. Revellers under the auspices of the “Lord” marched the streets dressed in costume,

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drinking ale, singing carols, playing instruments, fornicating and causing damage to property.

The 16th century bishop Hugh Latimer lamented that many Christians “dishonoured Christ more in the 12 days of Christmas than in all the 12 months besides.”²⁰

What better description of Satan the Devil than the “Lord of Misrule”? Or what better feast for his worshipers than the Feast of Fools?

King Solomon wrote, “The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth. It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise than for a man to hear the song of fools. For like the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool. This also is vanity” (Eccl. 7:4-6).

In 1687, Puritan clergyman Increase Mather noted that December was called “the voluptuous month” for a reason, as the drunken revelry of the Christmas season included much fornicating and out-of-wedlock pregnancies, which led to a good many shotgun weddings and September and October births.²¹

Ancient Romans sang Saturnalia songs while stumbling drunk and often naked through the streets.

²⁰ James A. T. Lancaster, *The Sunday Mail*, “The Sordid Underbelly of Christmas Past,” Dec. 24, 2021. Accessed 12/17/2022 at <https://www.sundaymail.co.zw/new-the-sordid-underbelly-of-christmas-past>

²¹ Ibid.

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This, of course, became Christmas caroling. This custom has had some variations over the centuries.

English peasants merged traditions from both Yule and Saturnalia to create wassailing, best described as a mix of Halloween trick-or-treating and Christmas caroling. Peasants went door to door among the wealthy and the nobility, singing carols in exchange for food and drink. As the practice evolved over the centuries, if the wealthy didn't allow carolers into their homes or give them free food and drink, the carolers often vandalized their homes and threw rocks through their windows.

Paganism and You

Today, the face of Christmas is Santa Claus, a fat fellow dressed in scarlet with a long white beard. The name Santa Claus itself is a corruption of the words "Saint Nicholas," though the appearance and character of Santa Claus has nothing to do with St. Nicholas.

The appearance and character of Santa Claus has more to do with the Germanic god Odin, who was often portrayed as an old man with a long white beard, like Baal Hammon, Kronos, and Saturn. In an ironic twist, Kronos, the child murderer, is still associated with children, but now as a bringer of gifts!

Every year at Yule, the Germanic peoples believed that Odin, riding an eight-legged steed, flew through the skies to lead the Wild Hunt, a procession of

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ghosts and departed spirits, for Odin, among many other things, was the god of the dead. To the good, Odin would bring gifts; to the bad, he would bring misfortune or even death. In this form, Odin again resembles the Greek Kronos, from whom comes the character of the Grim Reaper. The gift-bringer Odin employed elves and dwarves to make gifts.

Like Satan the Devil, whom the pagans have worshiped under many different names and disguises, Odin was a god with dozens of names and disguises. Small wonder, for Odin, of course, IS Satan. Among his many names was *Jolfaer*, that is, “Yule Father.” Or, as generations of British children have known him, “Father Christmas.”



Odin disguised as a traveler, one of his favorite disguises. Satan, when asked by God where he came from, replied, “From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it” (Job 1:7; 2:2).

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At this point, it shouldn't surprise anyone that Odin's worshipers occasionally honored him with human sacrifice. Recounting the fate of a Swedish king who failed to properly honor the Norse gods, Snorri Sturluson wrote,

The Swedes took it amiss that Olaf was sparing in his sacrifices, and believed the [famine] must proceed from this cause. The Swedes therefore gathered together troops, made an expedition against King Olaf, surrounded his house and burnt him in it, giving him to Odin as a sacrifice for good crops.²²

The very similarity between the names "Santa" and "Satan" has, on occasion, resulted in children mistakenly addressing their Christmas letters to Satan rather than Santa. Further, the modern depiction of a red-dressed Santa evokes Rev. 12:3, where Satan is described as "a great, fiery red dragon." Even "Old St. Nick," another name for Santa Claus, evokes Satan, who is occasionally called "Old Nick."

Santa is, of course, a lie and the object of lies. Parents the world over, for no sensible reason, lie to their children that Santa Claus is real and that he is the source of gifts. As Jesus rebuked His enemies, "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does

²² Snorri Sturluson, *The Ynglinga Saga*, 47. Accessed 12/18/2022 at <https://www.sacred-texts.com/neu/heim/02ynglga.htm>

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not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it” (John 8:44).

God cannot lie (Tit. 1:2), but Satan is the father of lies and has no truth in him. “Every good gift and every perfect gift” comes from Almighty God (Jam. 1:17), but Satan would have you believe they come from him instead. That parents lie to their children for no reason, like Satan does, shows that they themselves have been tricked and deceived by Satan.

Where parents once placed their children in the hands of Molech/Baal, they now place them in the laps of strangers pretending to be Santa Claus. And how bizarre is that? Why do parents put their children in the laps of strangers? In Seattle, parents learned to their horror, after twenty-six years, that they’d put their children in the lap of a mall Santa who turned out to be a child molester!²³

And what about the elves associated with Santa Claus and frequently used as Christmas decorations? Remember, Satan has helpers, too; they’re called demons. In Germanic mythology, elves were considered supernat-

²³ *The Lewiston Tribune*, “‘I was Satan,’ not Santa, molester says; Ex-shopping mall Santa gets 26-year jail term for child rape,” Feb. 28, 1998. Accessed 12/16/2022 at https://lmtribune.com/nation/world/i-was-satan-not-santa-molester-says-ex-shopping-mall/article_0376e0ec-8ebe-5105-9a53-eba072bd0f4f.html

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ural beings and associated with magic, mischief, and seduction. Just as Santa is Satan, so the elves are demons.

On par with Santa Claus and the elves, the item most associated with Christmas is the Christmas tree. Christmas-keepers go out to the woods, select an evergreen tree, cut it down, bring it into their house, stand it upright, decorate it with lights and all sorts of trinkets and baubles, and put their Christmas gifts under it.

Putting gifts underneath the Christmas tree stems from the pagans of old offering incense and sacrifices to their gods under every green tree, as the Bible mentions repeatedly: “Are not ye children of transgression? A false seed? Who are inflamed among oaks, under every green tree, slaughtering the children in valleys, under clefts of the rocks” (Isa. 57:4-5; YLT).

Worshippers today adorn the Christmas tree with all sorts of trinkets and baubles, just as the pagans once adorned the shrines and images of their gods. At Saturnalia, the Romans decorated the shrines of their gods with wooden dolls as tokens of human sacrifice.

The prophet Jeremiah wrote in Jer. 10:1-5,

1 Hear the word which the LORD speaks to you, O house of Israel.

2 Thus says the LORD: “Do not learn the way of the Gentiles; do not be dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the Gentiles are dismayed at them.

3 “For the customs of the peoples are futile; for one

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cuts a tree from the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the ax.

4 “They decorate it with silver and gold; they fasten it with nails and hammers so that it will not topple.

5 “They are upright, like a palm tree, and they cannot speak; they must be carried, because they cannot go by themselves. Do not be afraid of them, for they cannot do evil, nor can they do any good.”

Does that sound like what people today do with their Christmas trees? Of course it does! It describes a Christmas tree down to the last detail, for the heathens have practiced this custom for millennia.

“But I don’t worship my Christmas tree!” someone might exclaim, as he kneels, bows down, and places the Christmas presents beneath it, softly singing, “O



Relief of Indo-Iranian sun god Mithra adorning an evergreen tree.

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Christmas tree, O Christmas tree....” And the next morning, his children likewise kneel before the green tree and remove their presents. But they don’t worship the Christmas tree!

Be that as it may, a Christmas tree is part of a religious festival, part of religious worship, and comes straight from the devil worship of the pagans.

The next key ingredient of Satan’s poison stew, of course, is the lights. They’re so pretty; people drive around neighborhoods just to ooh and ah over all the pretty Christmas lights. Remember, the pagans worshiped the sun god around the winter solstice, along with all sorts of other devilish deities. In honor of the sun’s rebirth during the shortest days of the year, the pagans celebrated with lights. Festivals of light exist in every pagan culture around the world. The Romans lit candles for Saturnalia; the Germanic peoples lit bonfires for Yule. Today, of course, many folks light Yule logs along with all their Christmas lights.

Yes, the lights are pretty, even alluring to many. Satan designed it that way. “For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light” (2 Cor. 11:14). Satan wants pagan worship to be as sparkling and alluring as possible.

Now, every great lie has a few grains of truth mixed in, and Satan is the greatest of all liars. Therefore, he made sure Christmas had some truth in it, so that people could point to it and use it to excuse all the paganism.

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For Christmas, the truth is that Jesus Christ came to earth in the flesh, was born in Bethlehem, and that his parents Joseph and Mary put him in a manger. That's it. That's the full extent of the truth in Christmas. Everything else is a pagan lie.

Jesus was not born on December 25th, or in winter at all. He was born at a time of year when the shepherds lived out in the fields watching over their flocks (Luke 2). Some may protest that the date isn't important; it's just the intent of celebrating Christ's birth that matters. If the date isn't important, then why not celebrate at some other time of year, in some altogether different manner? The fact is, the date and the manner of celebration IS important — to Satan and his demons!

And another fact also remains: there is no Biblical tradition of celebrating anyone's birthday; that comes from paganism. God's Word could've easily told us what day Jesus was born, but it didn't — likely because God doesn't want us celebrating it! God's Word told us, not to celebrate Christ's birth, but to commemorate His death.

There's one more Christmas tradition to cover. No Christmas would be complete without a Christmas dinner, a dinner which usually involves a ham or stuffed pig.

The Romans ate roasted pork at Saturnalia; the Germanic peoples did the same at Yule. In Deut. 14:8, God told all His people, Israelites and non-Israelites

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alike, “Also the swine is unclean for you, because it has cloven hooves, yet does not chew the cud; you shall not eat their flesh or touch their dead carcasses.” Basically, Satan encouraged his worshipers to eat pork because God said not to.

In Dan. 11:31, Daniel the prophet foretold that the Greeks under Antiochus IV would defile God’s temple in Jerusalem and “place there the abomination of desolation.” History records that Daniel’s prophecy came true. Antiochus IV, who blasphemously took the title “Epiphanes,” or “God manifest,” set up an idol of Zeus in the temple and sacrificed pigs on the altar of God.²⁴ This offering of swine was part of the abomination of desolation.

When the Romans ate pork at Saturnalia, it was part of their pagan worship. When the church followed suit in eating pork at Christmas, it yet again followed the customs of the pagans and disobeyed God’s Word.

Everything about Christmas is pagan. Every major Christmas tradition stems from the heathen traditions of Yule and Saturnalia. Those in turn stem from the religion of the child-murdering Canaanites, the worship of Baal and Molech.

“But I would never dream of burning my children in the fire to Molech!”, someone will say. No, but they

²⁴ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 12, Chapter 5, Section 4. Also 1 Maccabees 1:47.

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decorate their homes with Satan and his demons in various disguises, and unwittingly invite him into their homes. Satan is a predator who wants to be near your children; he'll get to them any way he can; he wants their souls!

Come Out From Among Them

Considering, then, that Christmas is steeped in paganism; that both its date and manner of celebration stem from the most disgusting and sickening forms of devil worship, including child sacrifice; that the Bible nowhere mentions the date of Christ's birth, or anyone else's; that the very celebration of birthdays is pagan; and that God's Word commands us to commemorate Christ's death, not His birth, what should we do with the celebration of Christmas? God's Word is clear!

Jesus Christ said that those who worship God "must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:24). Christmas isn't truth; it's a festival of lies.

God commanded the Israelites in Deut. 12:2-4:

2 You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations which you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree.

3 And you shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars, and burn their wooden images with fire; you shall cut down the carved images of their

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gods and destroy their names from that place.

4 You shall not worship the LORD your God with such things.

The Israelites didn't obey, the early church didn't obey, but we can. If you have a Christmas tree, take it out and burn it! Take down the lights, the wreaths, the ornaments, the elf demons, and the images of Satan, I mean Santa, and destroy them.

Let no one follow the example of Israel in adopting the ways of the Canaanites. "Are not ye children of transgression? A false seed? Who are inflamed among oaks, under every green tree, slaughtering the children in valleys, under clefts of the rocks" (Isa. 57:4-5; YLT).

Let no follower of Christ indulge in the customs of the heathen. As the Apostle Paul wrote in 2 Cor. 6:14-17,

14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?

16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people."

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17 Therefore, “Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.”

Come out from among the heathen and be separate! Paganism isn't cute; it isn't fun or nostalgic; it isn't edgy; it's demonic and evil. It's wickedness wrapped up in a shiny bow.

Cast off the “aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers” (1 Pet. 1:18). Remember the example of King Manasseh. No matter what you've done before now, it's not too late to repent and change. God's mercy to the repentant knows no bounds.

Instead of following the example of the pagans, let's follow the example of righteous King Josiah, who stamped out every trace of paganism he could find. Let's follow the example of Nehemiah, governor of the Jews, who “cleansed them of everything pagan” (Neh. 13:30). Let's stamp out every trace of paganism in our lives and cleanse ourselves and our families of everything pagan.

Conclusion

There is no “putting Christ back in Christmas” because He was never there. Christ is not now, nor has He ever been, “the reason for the season.” If He was, it wouldn't even be necessary to repeat it over and over, because it would be self-evident!

Christmas is a commemoration of child sacrifice,

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sun worship, and debauchery, melded with the modern tradition of consumerism. It's the crown jewel of paganism, idolatry, and wickedness. It's Satan's finest work: paganism disguised as worship of Christ.

Nearly everyone knows Halloween is pagan and demonic, yet many choose to celebrate it anyway. That's a choice everyone must make. Christmas is no less pagan than Halloween, yet many try to convince themselves otherwise.

It's not just that Christmas is pagan; it's that Christmas is a demonic and Satanic holiday masquerading as a good one. In that way, it's more insidious and cunning than a holiday such as Halloween. During this festival season of lights, remember that "Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light." Don't be fooled!

2.

The Story of New Year's Day

In our examination of Christmas, we saw that the holiday began as a church attempt to sanitize the devil worship of the heathens, and that nearly every modern Christmas tradition stems from the pagan celebrations of Saturnalia and Yule. The modern face of Christmas, Santa Claus, is a repackaging of false gods such as Odin, Saturn, and Kronos — nothing less than Satan the Devil in disguise.

So what about New Year's Day, eight days after Christmas? New Year's Day is just the first day of a new year, right? How could there be anything wrong with that?

You may recall that Christmas embraces the whole “Christmas season,” and that it often encompasses 12 days from December 25th to January 6th. New Year's



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Day is not only part of the Christmas season but, like Christmas itself, is steeped in paganism.

A common theme around New Year's Day is "Father Time" holding an hourglass, a sickle, and the baby new year, as you can see in these two illustrations. Father



Time, as we saw in the previous section, is the Greek god Kronos, who castrated his father and ate his own children. The Greek Kronos paralleled the Roman Saturn, the Carthaginian Baal Hammon, and the Canaanite Molech.

To the Greeks and Romans, Kronos/Father Time holding the baby new year, as if about to devour it, too, represented time devouring all things. Famed Roman writer and statesman Cicero philosophized, "The Latin designation 'Saturn' on the other hand is due to the fact that he is 'saturated' or 'satiated with years' (*anni*); the fable is that he was in the habit of devouring his sons — meaning that Time devours the ages and gorges himself insatiably with the years that are past" (*De Natura Deorum*, 2:24).

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New Year's Day also continues the heathen tradition of holding festivals of light during the short days and long nights around the winter solstice. Nearly everyone's home is still lit up with Christmas lights, and the new year itself is ushered in with fireworks lighting up the night sky.

In a throwback to the drunken revelry of the ancients at their winter solstice festivals, New Year's represents the biggest drinking holiday of the whole year. In the United States, drunk driving on New Year's Eve causes far more car accidents than on perhaps any other night.

Like so many other pagan winter holidays, New Year's commonly includes gift-giving, though less so than in past centuries. In the 7th century AD, a missionary named Eligius, attempting to proselytize the early Dutch heathens, urged them to stop making figures of "little deer," leaving out food at night for the elves or spirits, exchanging New Year's gifts, and getting drunk. He added, "Nothing is ominous... about the Calends [first day] of January."²⁵

Many New Year's Eve traditions, in fact, originate from pagan superstitions, for heathens the world over are superstitious and fearful. As God inspired King

²⁵ Ouen of Rouen, *The Life of Saint Eligius*, Book II, Section 16. Accessed 12/29/2022 at <https://web.archive.org/web/20090820234709/http://www.catholic-forum.com/saints/sto09001.htm>

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Solomon to write in Prov. 28:1, “The wicked flee when no one pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion.” And in Jer. 10:2-3, we find, “Do not be dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the Gentiles are dismayed at them. For the customs of the peoples are futile.”

To the pagans, evil spirits lurk in the darkness and shadows of night, so the dark days of winter, of course, also bring danger. Thus, according to pagan tradition, many people hold a night vigil for the new year and spend time with their loved ones or kiss them. Since at least the 1700s, many churches have joined in this tradition, holding “watchnight services” on New Year’s Eve until midnight or well past midnight.

Many also bang on drums and make loud noises to frighten away evil spirits. Fireworks double as light and noisemakers. Others engage in many foolish traditions to bring “good luck” for the new year, such as jumping off of chairs, hopping on one foot, dropping whipped cream on the floor, or wearing colored underwear!

Some may point out, rightly, that the Bible itself uses darkness as a type of sin, but the dark itself is not something to fear. King David wrote that God’s presence is with us just as much at night as at any other time: “If I say, ‘Surely the darkness shall fall on me,’ even the night shall be light about me; indeed, the darkness shall not

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hide from You, but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You” (Psa. 139:11-12).

So what about the date? Why does the new year today start on January 1st?

It may come as a surprise to many, as it did to me also, that Great Britain and the British colonies recognized March 25th as the start of the new year until 1752. Only then was New Year’s Day changed to January 1st.²⁶

Before the change, the English-speaking peoples were closer to the truth, for God’s calendar, of course, starts in the spring. In Ex. 12:2, God instructed Moses concerning the month for Passover, in the spring, “This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.” The Bible reiterates this over and over, as God continually tells us that Abib or Nisan is the first month of the year.

As a side note, just as many businesses today have a fiscal year apart from the civil year, God also established a fiscal or agricultural year that began in the 7th month. He instructed His people to count the Jubilees and Sabbatical years from this date, as we read in Lev. 25:9-10: “Then you shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement you shall make the trumpet to sound

²⁶ “Calendar (New Style) Act 1750.” Accessed 12/30/2022 at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/apgb/Geo2/24/23/1991-02-01?timeline=false>

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throughout all your land. And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants.”

Much more could be written about the civil year and the fiscal year on God’s calendar, but that’s a topic for another time. Suffice to say, the winter new year is found nowhere in the Bible! It’s an invention of the pagans.

By the time of Julius Caesar, several decades before Christ’s birth, the Romans had changed their New Year’s Day from March 1st to January 1st, close to the winter solstice. Accordingly, the Julian calendar preserved January 1st as the day of the new year, a day which the Romans celebrated by giving gifts, decorating their homes with laurels, and offering sacrifices to their gods, especially Janus, the deity for which January is named.

Not only is the day not the true new year, but days also don’t begin or end at midnight. Biblical days begin and end at sunset, not midnight. Starting and ending days at midnight is a manmade tradition, not a Godly one.

Yes folks, the New Year celebrations are pagan! God neither begins years on January 1st, nor days at midnight. The depictions of “Father Time,” the lights, the drunkenness, the midnight vigils, and all the other pagan superstitions of the day mark it as an invention of paganism, not of God.

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Of course, we live in an ungodly world and have little choice but to use the Roman calendar, with the pagan names of the months, in everyday life. But that's certainly no cause for celebration! We do not have to celebrate the heathen holidays, nor should we.

3.

The Sordid History of Valentine's Day

Today, much of the world marks February 14th as St. Valentine's Day, the "Hallmark holiday" of love, roses, chocolates, and poems. Oh, and don't forget Cupid, the winged baby who shoots arrows into the hearts of men and women, causing them to fall in love.

But where did this holiday come from?

The name comes from three fellows the Catholic Church dubbed "St. Valentine," all of whom are thought to have been beheaded. Legends and folktales notwithstanding, *The Catholic Encyclopedia* confesses that virtually nothing is known about any of them.

Clearly, the name has nothing to do with the day. It's a disguise for something else.

As for the February date, the ancient Romans celebrated a fertility festival called Lupercalia about the same time, on February 15th, at which they honored their deities Juno and Faunus. Cupid, one of the chief symbols of Valentine's Day, was the Roman god of erotic love

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and sexual attraction, a counterpart of the Greek Eros (from which comes the word “erotic”).

At Lupercalia, two orders of Roman priests gathered at a cave, butchered a dog along with some goats, and burned them on the altars of Juno and Faunus. The priests, standing naked, smeared each other with the red blood and washed it off with white milk. The Vestal Virgins participated in the ceremony by offering meal cakes to Juno.

Following this wicked ceremony, the Roman priests cut the goat’s hide into strips called *februa*, from which comes the name February, and ran naked through the streets. Plutarch observed, “At this time many of the noble youths and of the magistrates run up and down through the city naked, for sport and laughter striking those they meet with shaggy thongs. And many women of rank also purposely get in their way, and like children at school present their hands to be struck, believing that the pregnant will thus be helped to an easy delivery, and the barren to pregnancy” (Plutarch, *The Life of Julius Caesar*, 61:2-3).

The Roman goddess Juno paralleled the Greek Hera, the queen of the gods. Like other deities, Juno wore a goatskin. In fact, goats permeated Lupercalia ceremonies, but more on that in a moment.

Now, as we’ve previously observed, pagan religions all over the world resemble each other, for Satan authored them all. Thus, when God’s Word condemns

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the heathen practices of the Canaanites and the Israelites, it condemns rituals that mirror Greek and Roman mythology.

In the Book of Jeremiah, God rebuked the Jews for making cakes to the queen of heaven: “The children gather wood, the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead dough, to make cakes for the queen of heaven; and they pour out drink offerings to other gods, that they may provoke Me to anger” (Jer. 7:18).

As for Faunus, the other Roman deity honored at Lupercalia, he was a horned goat deity like the Greek Pan. The Greeks and Romans considered Pan/Faunus to be the patron deity of shepherds and flocks, and portrayed him as half man, half goat. In addition, the Romans associated Faunus with demonic creatures called fauns or satyrs, which were also half man, half goat.

What of these goat deities? God’s Word warned us about them, too. In Lev. 17:7, God commanded His people, “No longer shall they sacrifice their sacrifices to hairy goat-demons after whom they have been prostituting” (*Concordant Literal Version*). Yet centuries later, when King Jeroboam led Israel into idolatry, he offered sacrifices to these same goat-demons (2 Chron. 11:15; Strong’s # H8163).

Like the Israelites, many “Christians” found heathen customs very alluring. Centuries after Rome had supposedly converted to Christianity, “Christians” continued to celebrate Lupercalia. Toward the end of the 5th

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century AD, Pope Gelausius I finally persuaded the Roman Senate to stop sanctioning it. About the same time, he proclaimed February 14th to be “St. Valentine’s Day” instead.

After this, we’re left with a gap in the historical record. Lupercalia disappears from the records of medieval festivals, and nothing seems to be known of early Valentine’s Day customs. Yet, when Valentine’s Day re-surfaces, it appears to preserve much of the Lupercalia tradition.

In the 14th century AD, Geoffrey Chaucer and three other English poets wrote poems associating Valentine’s Day with love. Chaucer’s poem in particular, the “Parliament of Fowls,” speaks as if the association of Valentine’s Day with love was already common knowledge.

The animal sacrifices of Lupercalia had, of course, ceased by this time. But the association of the day with romantic and sexual love harkens back to the old Roman fertility rites. Even the colors of Valentine’s Day, red and white, harken back to the red blood and white milk of the Lupercalia ceremony.

And remember Cupid, the Valentine’s Day mascot? The Roman god of erotic love and sexual attraction? The winged child or baby armed with a bow and arrows? He’s scarcely changed from Roman days.

Like so many modern holidays, Valentine’s Day preserves old pagan ways God condemned, wrapped up

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in modern hedonism and consumerism. The date of Valentine's Day, its association with romantic love and sexual desire, and all its symbolism stem from paganism. It's a holiday presided over, even to this day, by a pagan Roman deity.

Is Valentine's Day something that God's people should celebrate? Should we indulge in the customs of the heathen? Should we honor the pagan gods, Satan and his demons, as long as we do so in a playful manner? I think not!

“What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. Therefore, come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you” (2 Cor. 6:15-16, 17).

4.

The Easter Bunny and... Feminism?!

The world has gone mad. Men pretend to be women, and women to be men, going so far as to mutilate themselves and get their own genitals chopped off. Sick, twisted perverts in the public school system convince innocent children that they were born the wrong gender, and pressure them to be castrated and mutilated.

These abominations are the natural outcome of the feminist movement. From the beginning, Satan has sought to blur the lines between men and women, to pervert the gender roles that God created, to convince men to be feminine and women to be masculine.

When God finished creating the world, He looked on “everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good” (Gen. 1:31). But Satan’s goal is, and always has been, to pervert and destroy God’s good creation.

Thus, the cancer of perversion killing our society today has been around awhile. Neither human nature nor Satan’s nature ever really change. As King Solomon wrote in Eccl. 1:9, “That which has been is what will be,

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that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.”

But what does any of this have to do with the Easter bunny, Easter eggs, or anything else about Easter? Hold onto your hats, folks, because this ride is going to get wild. The story you’re about to read will shock many.

Divine Feminine?

In the New Age wing of the feminist movement, it’s common to hear such terms as “divine feminine,” “Mother Earth,” “Mother Nature,” “mother goddess,” “God the Mother,” etc. It’s common, too, for them to speak of God Himself as a “she,” even though God’s Word never speaks of Him that way.

Where did this idea of a “goddess” come from?

It goes back to very ancient times, and we can read about it in the Bible. In Jer. 7:18, God spoke through Jeremiah the prophet, saying, “The children gather wood, the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead dough, to make cakes for the queen of heaven; and they pour out drink offerings to other gods, that they may provoke Me to anger.”

Because the people of Judah worshiped the “queen of heaven” (and committed plenty of other sins, too), God brought the Babylonians against Judah in the 6th century BC. The Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem and carried thousands of Jews away to Babylon. But in

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the midst of this calamity, the people refused to learn their lesson.

Those who remained in Judah fled to Egypt, where they clung to the “queen of heaven” and spurned their Creator God. We read in Jer. 44:15-19 (LITV),

15 Then all the men who knew that their wives had burned incense to other gods, and all the women who stood by, a great assembly, even all the people who lived in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah saying,

16 As for the word that you have spoken to us in the name of Jehovah, we will not listen to you.

17 But we will certainly do whatever thing goes out of our own mouth, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings to her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings, and our rulers, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. And we had plenty of food, and were well, and saw no evil.

18 But when we stopped burning incense to the queen of heaven, and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have lacked all things, and have been devoured by the sword and by the famine.

19 And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven and poured out drink offerings to her, did we make her cakes to worship her, and pour out drink offerings to her, without our men?

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So who was this false deity, this so-called queen of heaven? How did modern, “enlightened” people come to believe in such a thing?

The “Queen of Heaven” and Her Consort

Again and again, God rebuked the Israelites for worshipping “the Baals and the Ashtoreths” (Judg. 2:13; 10:6; 1 Sam. 7:4; 12:10). Persuaded by his pagan wives, even King Solomon, the wisest man who had ever lived and “who was beloved of his God” (Neh. 13:26), built high places to worship Ashtoreth (1 Kings 11:5, 33; 2 Kings 23:13).

1 Kings 11:5 adds that Ashtoreth was “the goddess of the Sidonians.” Ancient records describe Ashtoreth (“Astarte” in Greek) as the queen of heaven.

Now, as we’ve seen before, all the world’s pagan religions bear striking similarities, for Satan authored them all. So it shouldn’t surprise anyone that pagans all over the world worshiped this “queen of heaven,” albeit under different aliases.

To the Assyrians and Babylonians, she was Ishtar or Inanna. To the Egyptians, Isis. To the Greeks, Aphrodite. To the people of Asia Minor, Cybele. The Romans, Chinese, and others, too, worshiped similar female deities.

The Book of Acts records that the Ephesians worshiped Artemis (or Diana), and that her worshipers rioted

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against Paul and the other apostles (Acts 19). But more on that later.

God's Word often mentions Ashtoreth together with Baal, suggesting a link between the two. In secular history, we find that the pagans believed them to be lovers.

This theme, too, crossed many cultures. In Babylon, the "queen of heaven" loved Tammuz. In Egypt, Osiris. In Greece, Adonis.

As we've already glimpsed, worshiping the "queen of heaven" and her consort continues in the modern age. But we've only glimpsed a sliver so far.

Greater Abominations Than These

In Ezekiel 8, God exposed a series of abominations committed by His people, each one greater than the one before it. Let's pick up the story in vv. 13-16. Ezekiel reported,

13 And He said to me, "Turn again, and you will see greater abominations that they are doing."

14 So He brought me to the door of the north gate of the LORD's house; and to my dismay, women were sitting there weeping for Tammuz.

15 Then He said to me, "Have you seen this, O son of man? Turn again, you will see greater abominations than these."

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16 So He brought me into the inner court of the LORD's house; and there, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about twenty-five men with their backs toward the temple of the LORD and their faces toward the east, and they were worshiping the sun toward the east.

Weeping for Tammuz is well-documented in ancient records, across many cultures. It dismayed Ezekiel, and the reality of it is indeed shocking! Like Ezekiel, we're about to see many abominations, each one greater than the one before it.

Babylon

First, a little background. The Babylonians viewed Ishtar not only as the queen of heaven, but also as the goddess of love, war, beauty, and fertility. In a theme common to fertility deities, they often portrayed her as naked, wearing not a single thread.

As we read earlier in the Book of Jeremiah, women baked cakes for the queen of heaven. For Ishtar, they baked the cakes in ashes. Archaeologists have discovered many such cake molds shaped like naked women.

The Babylonians associated Ishtar with such symbols as a lion, a dove, and a six-pointed or eight-pointed star. They also identified her with the planet Venus — a fact that will later prove vital.

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As one might expect of a naked fertility goddess, her worship included prostitution and unspeakable sexual perversions. The Greek historian Herodotus wrote that Babylon required young women to prostitute themselves in the temple of Ishtar at least once.²⁷

God's Word adds that pagan worship involved "every abomination to the LORD which He hates" (Deut. 12:31). We find this to be true in every pagan culture.

God forbade prostitution and sodomy: "There shall be no prostitute among the daughters of Israel, nor shall there be a homosexual among the sons of Israel. You shall not bring the hire of a prostitute, or the price of a dog [sodomite], into the house of Jehovah your God for any vow; for even both of these are an abomination to Jehovah your God" (Deut. 23:17-18; LITV).

But worshipers of the queen of heaven honored her with both.

God forbade castration: "He who is emasculated by crushing or mutilation shall not enter the assembly of the LORD" (Deut. 23:1).

But worshipers of the queen of heaven sometimes mutilated themselves and offered their own genitals to her.

God forbade cross-dressing: "A woman shall not wear anything that pertains to a man, nor shall a man put

²⁷ Herodotus, *The History*, Book 1, Chapter 192. Accessed 12/19/2022 at <https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Hdt.+1.199>

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on a woman's garment, for all who do so are an abomination to the LORD your God” (Deut. 22:5).

But priests of the queen of heaven often dressed as women, especially if they were also eunuchs or sodomite prostitutes, as were some.

God forbade cutting and disfiguring oneself: “You shall not shave around the sides of your head, nor shall you disfigure the edges of your beard. You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor tattoo any marks on you: I am the LORD” (Lev. 19:27-28).

But worshipers of the queen of heaven shaved their heads, cut their flesh, and flogged each other with whips in ceremonies of ritual mourning.

Such abominations weren't unique to Canaan or Babylon, but transcended nations and cultures. In fact, heathens not only honored their gods and goddesses with such abominations, they boasted of these things in writing and portrayed them in artwork!

In a striking parallel to ancient goddess worship, modern-day feminism came hand-in-hand with the 20th-century Sexual Revolution and all its abominations: rampant fornication and “free love,” sodomy, transgenderism, pornography, no-fault divorce, abortion, and more.

Now, we come to the weeping for Tammuz witnessed by Ezekiel.

In Babylonian myth, Ishtar married Tammuz, a shepherd and fertility god. Eventually, the underworld queen, Ishtar's sister, killed her and confined her to the

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underworld. But at the pleading of other gods, Ishtar's sister restored her life on one condition: that she find someone else to take her place in the underworld.

Searching heaven and earth, Ishtar discovered her husband Tammuz seemed unbothered by her death and chose him to take her place in the underworld.

As the underworld demons tortured Tammuz, however, Ishtar experienced a change of heart and began weeping over his death. Eventually, it's determined that Tammuz, too, will be restored to life — with a catch. For half of each year, Tammuz will live with Ishtar in heaven while his sister takes his place in the underworld, and for the other half, he will live in the underworld.

It takes little imagination to see in this myth a Satanic counterfeit of God's plan. Tammuz was a false messiah, even described as “the dead anointed one” in one Babylonian poem.²⁸ “Anointed one” in Hebrew is *mashiach*, from which we get our English word “messiah.”

God the Father and Jesus Christ had planned Jesus' death and resurrection even before creating mankind, “before the foundation of the world” (1 Pet. 1:20), and Satan evidently knew this. So he sold human beings a lie, his own counterfeit.

²⁸ Thorkild Jacobsen, *The Harps That Once....: Sumerian Poetry in Translation*, p. 64.

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Every summer, when Tammuz supposedly died, women mourned and wept over his death. As late as the 10th century AD, an Arab chronicler mentioned women weeping for Tammuz. He added that, in one version of the myth, Tammuz's bones were ground in a mill and scattered to the wind, so women abstained from ground foods while mourning his death.²⁹

The myth of Ishtar and Tammuz spread throughout the world, and many cultures had their own version. The Egyptian version was the myth of Isis and Osiris. So the Babylonians wept for Tammuz; the Egyptians for Osiris. Most of these myths add nothing vital to this study, except to show that Satan tried his best to twist and pervert God's truth.

Greece

There are some noteworthy things about the Greek version. Though more than one Greek goddess shared traits with Ishtar, the primary counterpart was Aphrodite, the goddess of love, sex, and beauty. The Greeks imagined Aphrodite as the queen of heaven, portrayed her naked, called the planet Venus by her name, and often identified her with a dove. Additional symbols for her included a rabbit or hare, dolphin, sparrow, swan, goose, and more.

²⁹ Quoted by James Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, p. 338

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The Greeks chose Friday as her special day; this day is now named for the equivalent Germanic goddess Freya. They viewed Aphrodite as a warrior goddess like Ishtar, though not a goddess of war, per se. Sometimes Aphrodite took the form of a virgin to seduce human men, but the Greeks linked virginity more with her sister Artemis, whom they deemed a perpetual virgin and, somewhat confusingly, also the goddess of childbirth.

According to the Greek philosopher Plato, in his *Symposium*, Aphrodite patronized all sorts of perversions and abominations, including sodomy and pedophilia. In addition, Greeks worshiped what might be described as a “transgender” counterpart of hers called Aphroditus. A disgusting and obscene image of it survives to this day, depicting a bearded figure wearing female clothing and possessing both male and female anatomy.

As observed earlier, Satan’s goal is to twist, pervert, and destroy everything God created. He strives to destroy masculinity and femininity; he encourages every sexual perversion.

As for Tammuz, the Greeks called him Adonis and said he was a man born of incest who became Aphrodite’s primary human lover. They fancied him to be extraordinarily handsome and a lover of various gods and goddesses in addition to Aphrodite. In their version of Tammuz’s death story, they said a wild boar fatally wounded Adonis and he bled to death in Aphrodite’s arms, later being restored to life by their chief god.

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Every midsummer, as the Babylonians wept for Tammuz, the Greeks wept for Adonis. Greek women planted small gardens on their rooftops, then watched the plants wither and die in the hot sun as a tribute to Adonis's death. Afterward, they held a funeral procession for him, tearing their clothes, beating their breasts, and wailing aloud.

In the 3rd century AD, church writer Origen commented on these Greek and Babylonian traditions, observing, "For they seem to perform certain mystic rites yearly: first, they mourn for him as though he is dead; second, they rejoice over him as though he has risen from the dead."³⁰

Asia Minor and Syria

In Asia Minor, the people of Ephesus worshiped a goddess called Diana by the Romans, Artemis by the Greeks, and Cybele by other peoples of Asia Minor. There in Ephesus stood a temple to this goddess, a temple revered in the ancient world.

When the Apostle Paul and other servants of God preached in Ephesus, many repented and turned from idolatry. But Demetrius, a silversmith and idol-maker,

³⁰ Origen, *Homilies on Ezekiel*, 8.143. Accessed 3/26/2023 at https://archive.org/stream/OrigenHomiliesOnEzekielEdHooker2014/Origen-Homilies_on_Ezekiel-ed_Hooker-2014_djvu.txt

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saw the apostles as a threat to his income. In Acts 19, he assembled his fellow craftsmen and said,

25 “Men, you know that we have our prosperity by this trade.

26 “Moreover you see and hear that not only at Ephesus, but throughout almost all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away many people, saying that they are not gods which are made with hands.

27 “So not only is this trade of ours in danger of falling into disrepute, but also the temple of the great goddess Diana may be despised and her magnificence destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worship.”

28 Now when they heard this, they were full of wrath and cried out, saying, “Great is Diana of the Ephesians!”

This sparked a riot, and for two hours an unruly mob chanted “Great is Diana of the Ephesians!” (Acts 19:34). At last, the city clerk pacified the mob with a short speech and a reminder that riots invited Roman crackdowns (vv. 35-41).

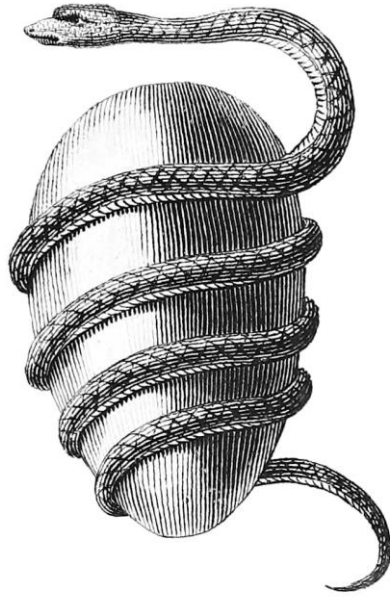
In his speech, the clerk made an interesting comment: “the city of the Ephesians is a devotee of the great goddess Artemis [Diana], and of that which fell down from Zeus” (Acts 19:35; YLT).

“That which fell down from Zeus” references regional myths. The peoples of Asia Minor thought the

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queen of heaven, whom they called Cybele, fell from heaven as a meteor. The Syrians believed the queen of heaven, in this case Aphrodite, fell from heaven as a giant egg and landed in the Euphrates River. Fish rolled the egg onto land, where the goddess hatched in the form of doves.

That last version parallels a Babylonian tale, in which the Assyrian queen Semiramis fell from heaven as an egg. According to the *World History Encyclopedia*, the ancients linked Semiramis to the Babylonian Ishtar and the Canaanite Ashtoreth.³¹ And, of course, Semiramis had a lover, Ara the Handsome, who died and whom she later claimed had been resurrected.



The Orphic egg, or world egg, of pagan mythology

³¹ Joshua J. Mark, "Sammu-Ramat and Semiramis: The Inspiration and the Myth," *World History Encyclopedia*. Accessed 3/28/2023 at <https://www.worldhistory.org/article/743/sammu-ramat-and-semiramis-the-inspiration-and-the/>

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Eggs played a prominent role in ancient religions. The ancients claimed several deities hatched from eggs. Many believed the universe itself hatched from an egg, such as the Orphic egg pictured here. Cultures scattered from the Pacific islands and China to Egypt and Canaan to West Africa believed such foolishness.

Returning now to Artemis (or Diana) of Ephesus, let's quickly note just a few more facts. The Greeks and Romans considered her the goddess of hunting, child-birth, the dawn, the countryside, virginity, fertility, and the moon. They further viewed her as a "triple goddess," a goddess with three different forms.

Even though the ancients imagined that Diana had love affairs, and even children, they considered her a perpetual virgin. Accordingly, her priests in Ephesus were eunuchs; her priestesses, young virgin girls.³²

Being also a fertility goddess, the image of Ephesian Diana featured a multitude of breasts, or perhaps eggs.

Rome

In 205 BC, Rome found itself locked in a death-struggle with its arch-rival North African city-state, Carthage. For thirteen years, the Carthaginians, led by their renowned general Hannibal, had occupied large portions

³² "Artemis," *Holman Bible Dictionary*. Accessed 3/28/2023 at <https://www.studylight.org/dictionaries/eng/hbd/a/artemis.html>

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of Italy. Every Roman attempt to drive Hannibal out of Italy had met with disaster.

So now, the Romans looked abroad to find a foreign god that might deliver them. The one they chose was Cybele, the mother goddess and “queen of heaven” worshiped in Asia Minor. They even brought her “image,” a fallen meteorite, to Rome. From then on, the Romans observed a spring festival in honor of Cybele and her lover, Attis.

Now, as an aside, the Romans also worshiped their own queen of heaven, Venus. Like the Babylonians and Greeks, the Romans named the planet Venus after their queen of heaven and fertility goddess. And, just as the Babylonians and Greeks had done, the Romans portrayed her as stark naked.

The Romans still viewed Cybele and Venus as separate deities, though. The Romans called Cybele simply Magna Mater, or “Great Mother.”

Like Ishtar, Cybele was accompanied by lions. And like the Canaanite Asherah (distinct from Ashtoreth), her worship involved sacred trees and groves.

As for Cybele’s lover Attis, an agriculture deity, the ancients fancied that he’d castrated himself. Various myths claim that he bled to death from this self-mutilation, or else that a wild boar killed him, like Adonis.

So the ancients worshiped a eunuch as a fertility god, much as they also worshiped the perpetual virgin Diana as a fertility goddess. What foolishness!

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To honor Attis the eunuch, the priests of Cybele castrated themselves, like the priests of Ephesian Diana. These eunuch priests, called *galli*, wore women's clothing, makeup, and jewelry.

The Romans portrayed Attis as a shepherd, like Tammuz. In at least one statue, he's portrayed with a hare, like the Greek goddess Aphrodite. Hares were commonly seen as fertility symbols, as humans from ancient times till now have marveled over their ability to "multiply like rabbits."

Whereas the Babylonians wept for Tammuz and the Greeks for Adonis during mid-summer every year, the Romans wept for Attis during the spring. Some sources say March, some say April.

Worshipers cut down a pine tree, wrapped it with wool, and decorated it with violets. This supposedly represented Attis dying in the embrace of Cybele. They abstained from bread and other foods, paralleling a similar "fast" among the women weeping for Tammuz.

The priests scourged themselves with whips and cut their arms and legs to shed their own blood, danced about in a wild frenzy, wailed aloud, and beat their breasts. Caught up in the frenzy, some worshipers even castrated themselves as Attis had supposedly done.

The same ritual took place in Syria and Mesopotamia. In northern Mesopotamia, at Edessa, a certain

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King Abgar is credited with stopping this practice by ordering that every man who castrated himself would be punished by having his hand cut off.³³

Minus the self-castration, the whole episode calls to mind what the Bible recorded about the priests of Baal and Asherah. In 1 Kings 18:26-28, we read,

26 So they took the bull which was given them, and they prepared it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even till noon, saying, “O Baal, hear us!” But there was no voice; no one answered. Then they leaped about the altar which they had made.

27 And so it was, at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, “Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is meditating, or he is busy, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened.”

28 So they cried aloud, and cut themselves, as was their custom, with knives and lances, until the blood gushed out on them.

Paganism Reborn

In this ancient world of wickedness, this world of false gods and false messiahs, Christianity began to spread in the years after the death and resurrection of the true Messiah, Jesus Christ. As they traveled throughout

³³ Bardesan, *The Book of the Laws of Various Countries*, section on Syria and Edessa. Accessed 3/29/2023 at <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0862.htm>

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the heathen world, Christ's apostles preached God's way of life and condemned the paganism and wickedness around them.

This often wasn't well-received. In Ephesus, as we've already seen, the locals rioted against the Apostle Paul. In Philippi, the angry pagans threw Paul and Silas into prison for delivering a young girl from demon-possession (Acts 16:11-40).

But Jesus had warned His disciples that all this would happen. In John 15:18-20, He told them,

18 "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.

19 "If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

20 "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also."

Eventually, most of Jesus' original disciples suffered violent deaths at the hands of their persecutors.

This has always been a risk of following God. In Heb. 11:35-38, we read about God's servants of old,

35 Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.

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36 Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment.

37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—

38 of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

Yet, faced with social shame, mockery from their friends and family, loss of livelihood, and even the prospect of torture and death, it's small wonder that many early Christians looked for an easier way. Such is human nature. Many tried to compromise with evil, they tried not to stand out too much, not to seem "too odd."

So, they kept the trappings of paganism and appropriated pagan traditions in their worship of God. They also found that pagans would more cheerfully accept Christ if they didn't have to give up all their pagan ways!

Centuries later, around AD 600, Christian missionaries traveled to England to convert the heathen Anglo-Saxons. Pope Gregory I wrote them a letter with these instructions:

Tell Augustine that he should by no means destroy the temples of the gods but rather the idols within those temples. Let him, after he has purified them with holy water, place altars and relics of the saints

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in them. For, if those temples are well built, they should be converted from the worship of demons to the service of the true God. Thus, seeing that their places of worship are not destroyed, the people will banish error from their hearts and come to places familiar and dear to them in acknowledgement and worship of the true God.

Further, since it has been their custom to slaughter oxen in sacrifice, they should receive some solemnity in exchange. Let them therefore, on the day of the dedication of their churches, or on the feast of the martyrs whose relics are preserved in them, build themselves huts around their one-time temples and celebrate the occasion with religious feasting.³⁴

This blatantly contradicted God's instructions in the Bible, but by that time, the church had centuries of experience. Pagan temples would become churches, pagan gods and goddesses would be replaced with saints, pagan holidays would become "Christian" holidays.

They borrowed the less odious forms of pagan worship and incorporated them into their worship of God. Rituals for worshipping Tammuz and Ishtar transformed into worship of Jesus and His mother Mary.

Fasting for Attis or Tammuz morphed into the 40-day fast of Lent, a concept found nowhere in the Bible.

³⁴ Gregory I, Letter to Abbot Mellitus, Epsitola 76, PL 77: 1215-1216. Accessed 3/29/2023 at <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/source/greg1-mellitus.txt>

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Of course, they tried to find Scriptural justification, citing examples of 40-day fasts by Moses, Elijah, and Jesus Christ. But God's Word never commanded any such observance, nor associated any of them with Jesus' death.

As the pagans whipped themselves and punished their own bodies, many monks and hermits would do the same for centuries afterward. Again, a custom found nowhere in the Bible.

Weeping for Tammuz transformed into weeping for Jesus. Good Friday, the imagined day of Jesus' crucifixion, became the chosen day of mourning.

In reality, Jesus Christ died on Nisan 14, "the Preparation Day of the Passover" (John 19:14). God's Word commands us to remember His death and to partake of Him as our Passover Lamb, but does it command us to mourn and weep on the anniversary of His death? No, it does not! Why would we mourn Him when He is alive? On the contrary, His death and resurrection are our deliverance from death.

To the apostate Christians, though, celebrating Tammuz/Adonis's mythical resurrection turned to celebrating Jesus' resurrection. For weeks after Easter Sunday, the day they chose for Jesus' resurrection, Christians greeted one another with the words, "He is risen!" And responded, "He is risen indeed!" These customs, too, are found nowhere in the Bible.

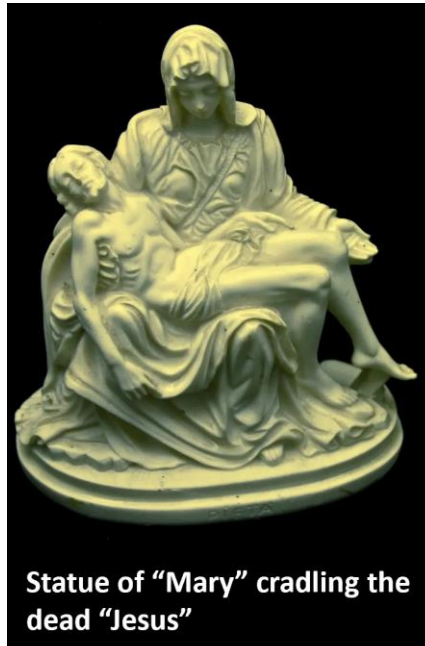
To this day, Catholics, Anglicans, Lutherans, and Eastern Orthodox call Jesus' mother Mary "the queen of

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heaven,” shamelessly stealing that title from the heathens! To Mary, they give the honor once given to Ishtar, Ashtoreth, Cybele, and countless other pagan goddesses. And the very act of praying to Mary is blatant idolatry, for only God the Father and Jesus Christ are worthy of worship.

But these churches aren't the only ones that still worship the old queen of heaven under a new name. Mormons blasphemously assert that God the Father has a wife, an idea found nowhere in God's Word!

Furthermore, Mary-worshippers call her “the virgin Mary,” as if she was a perpetual virgin and not a married woman! Mary was a wife and mother who had several other children after Jesus (Mark 6:3). The Bible never again speaks of Mary as a virgin after Jesus' birth. But the early Christians used her to replace pagan goddesses, including the perpetual virgins Artemis and Diana.



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Through the centuries, Christian artwork has depicted Mary cradling Jesus' dead body in her arms, much as Aphrodite supposedly cradled the dying Adonis in her arms, and Cybele the dying Attis. This, too, is a wholly unbiblical tradition.

The Christians incorporated other aspects of paganism into their traditions about Jesus' death and resurrection, too.

The cakes once baked for the queen of heaven transformed into Easter pastries, such as hot cross buns. The ashes in which the cakes were baked gave rise, perhaps, to Ash Wednesday. Yet God commanded that unleavened bread, not pastries, be eaten during the Feast of Unleavened Bread following Jesus' Passover sacrifice (Ex. 12:15-20; Num. 28:16-17; 1 Cor. 5:7-8).

The cosmic egg of Venus and Semiramis, and the eggs used all over the world as fertility symbols, morphed into Easter eggs. No longer did they represent the birth of pagan gods; now they represented the rebirth of Jesus. And yet nowhere in the Bible did God command or approve the use of eggs in ANY manner of worship!

The hare or rabbit, itself a fertility symbol associated with Aphrodite (the Greek queen of heaven), became the Easter bunny. Nowhere in the Bible are hares or rabbits associated with any manner of Godly worship.

In addition, Christians used a symbol of three rabbits to represent the "holy trinity," which, as we've seen before, is yet another unbiblical idea. The trinity bears

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The Three Hares, a pagan symbol of the trinity, on a cathedral in Germany

striking similarities to the trinities of the pagans, such as the “triple goddess” Diana.

The boar that killed Adonis or Attis, the Greco-Roman Tammuz, perhaps inspired the tradition of eating ham on Easter. (The pagans used hogs in numerous religious rites, though.) Yet God specifically commanded His people not to eat swine: “Also the swine is unclean for you, because it has cloven hooves, yet does not chew the cud; you shall not eat their flesh or touch their dead carcasses” (Deut. 14:8).

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As we've seen before, Jesus Christ did not die on Friday, nor did He rise on Sunday. It's mathematically impossible. He was first seen by His disciples on Sunday, but He rose from the grave on the seventh-day Sabbath.

But the apostate Christians insisted that Jesus died on Friday — the day of the Greco-Roman queen of heaven, Venus/Aphrodite. They further insisted that He rose from the grave on Sunday, the “esteemed day of the sun,” as the Roman Emperor Constantine would later describe it.

In the Book of Ezekiel, as we've already read, the prophet witnessed women weeping for Tammuz. After this, he continued in his vision, “So He brought me into the inner court of the LORD's house; and there, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about twenty-five men with their backs toward the temple of the LORD and their faces toward the east, and they were worshiping the sun toward the east” (Ezek. 8:16).

Today, millions of Christians follow the exact sequence of events described by Ezekiel. First is the day of mourning, Good Friday. And on its heels, on Easter Sunday, those same Christians turn their faces toward the east, watching the sunrise, and as the sun bursts over the horizon, they exclaim, “He is risen!”

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In the 5th century AD, Pope Leo I complained that church-goers worshiped the sun on the very steps of his church:

From such a system of teaching proceeds also the ungodly practice of certain foolish folk who worship the sun as it rises at the beginning of daylight from elevated positions: even some Christians think it is so proper to do this that, before entering the blessed Apostle Peter's basilica, which is dedicated to the One Living and true God, when they have mounted the steps which lead to the raised platform, they turn round and bow themselves towards the rising sun and with bent neck do homage to its brilliant orb.³⁵

From Ezekiel's day to the 5th century AD to the present, the Easter sunrise service continues unabated.

Now, why is Easter called "Easter"? Most nations call it by some variation of *Pascha*, after the Hebrew *pesach*, or Passover. But in Germanic languages, it's Easter, or variations thereof.

Around AD 725, the English monk Bede, a renowned and careful writer of history who lived just a few

³⁵ Leo I, *Sermon 27: On the Feast of the Nativity, VII* (Pt. IV). Accessed 12/12/2022 at <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/360327.htm>

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decades after his people converted from paganism to Catholicism, explained in his work *The Reckoning of Time*,

In olden time the English people... calculated their months according to the course of the moon. Hence, after the manner of the Greeks and the Romans (the months) take their name from the Moon, for the Moon is called *mona* and the month *monath*.

The first month, which the Latins call January, is Giuli; February is called Solmonath; March Hrethmonath; **April, Eosturmonath**; May, Thrimilchi; June, Litha; July, also Litha; August, Weodmonath; September, Halegmonath; October, Winterfilleth; November, Blodmonath; December, Giuli, the same name by which January is called....

Hrethmonath is named for their goddess Hretha, to whom they sacrificed at this time. Eosturmonath has a name which is now translated “Paschal month”, and which was once called after a goddess of theirs named Eostre, in whose honour feasts were celebrated in that month. Now they designate that Paschal season by her name, calling the joys of the new rite by the time-honoured name of the old observance.³⁶

³⁶ *Bede, The Reckoning of Time*, tr. Faith Wallis, Liverpool University Press 1988, pp.53-54. Quoted at https://www.tertulian.org/rpearse/bede_on_eostre.htm

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Thus, the Easter, or paschal, season derives its name from an old Anglo-Saxon goddess called Eostre. This same season, the Anglo-Saxons dubbed “Eostre-month.” The Anglo-Saxons’ cousins in Germany once had a similarly-named “Oster-month,” and “Easter” in German is “Ostern.”

Was Eostre the goddess of the dawn and/or the sunrise? Was she another incarnation of Ishtar, the queen of heaven? We can speculate, but have no concrete way of knowing. But we do know that they both came from the same source: the twisted mind of Satan the Devil.

The “Goddesses” Unmasked

There’s one final piece to this story, a final plot twist. What exactly were the goddesses of the ancient world?

Remember that a number of pagan goddesses were imagined as goddesses of the dawn. Others, such as Ishtar, Aphrodite, and Venus, were associated with the planet Venus, the brightest star in the night sky. The ancients identified this planet as both the evening star and the morning star.

They also considered both the goddesses of the dawn and the goddesses of the morning star to be light-bringers or light-bearers. In Latin, “light-bringer” or “light-bearer” is *lucifer*! The dawn goddess Diana was sometimes known as Diana Lucifera.

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Furthermore, the Romans believed Lucifer to be a male incarnation of Venus, and they sometimes called the planet Venus “Lucifer.” Some of the goddesses, including Cybele and Venus of Syria, were said to have fallen from heaven.

In Isa. 14:12-15, we read,

12 How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations!

13 For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north;

14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.’

15 Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit.

Again, we find in 2 Cor. 11:14, “For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.”

Now, in Isa. 14:12, the name “Lucifer” has been imposed by the translators. In Hebrew, the word used is *helel* (Strong’s # H1966), which means “shining one, bright star.” The Septuagint translated *helel* into Greek as *eosphoros*, which equates to the Latin *lucifer*. Eosphoros was a Greek deity parallel to the Roman Lucifer, and is also the modern Greek name for Lucifer.

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So the pagan goddesses of the ancient world were none other than Satan himself. Easter, named after a pagan Anglo-Saxon goddess, is really named after Satan the Devil!

Why, you might ask, would Satan disguise himself as a goddess? It appears to go back to a primary reason he fell from heaven. In Ezek. 28, God delivered a message to “the king of Tyre,” another name for Satan. As we read in vv. 15 & 17, “You were

perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor.”

So Satan became puffed up because of his beauty, and lost his place in heaven. Cast down to the earth, he disguised himself not only as various gods, but also as beautiful goddesses of love, sex, and light.

When feminists exalt the “divine feminine” or the “mother goddess,” they’re worshipping Satan. When they



Lucifer, a Roman god and male Venus

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try to overturn the gender roles God created, they're worshipping Satan. When transgenders mutilate themselves and try to blur the lines between men and women, they're worshipping Satan.

But Easter, feminism, transgenderism, and many other societal evils are all, sadly, different branches of the same tree. They go back to the same roots.

Satan truly "deceives the whole world" (Rev. 12:9). And among his victims are the billions of well-meaning Christians who blindly follow the traditions of men and celebrate the pagan holidays that Satan established!

Conclusion

Over and over again, God warned His people to cut off the demonic gods of the heathen. Again and again, He warned them against pagan ways. We read in Deut. 12:2-4:

2 You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations which you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree.

3 And you shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars, and burn their wooden images with fire; you shall cut down the carved images of their gods and destroy their names from that place.

4 You shall not worship the LORD your God with

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such things.

God gave us His instructions for our own good (Deut. 10:13). Satan and his demons — the real gods of the heathen — work diligently to deceive and destroy us. Satan “walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Pet. 5:8).

Therefore, God said in Deut. 12:29-32,

29 “When the LORD your God cuts off from before you the nations which you go to dispossess, and you displace them and dwell in their land,

30 “take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.’

31 “You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way; for every abomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods.

32 “Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; **you shall not add to it nor take away from it.**”

So here’s the truth.

Roughly 2,000 years ago, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came to earth as a human being. As John 1:14 tells us, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

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and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

At the appointed time, on Nisan 14th, He willingly yielded Himself up to His enemies. Beaten, cursed, and spit upon, “His visage was marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men” (Isa. 52:14). He endured the Roman cat-o-nine-tails tearing the flesh from His bones, and was at last nailed to a stake or cross, hanging there in agony until He died six hours later.

Yet He did it all for us. Because He loved us, Yeshua/Jesus took on Himself the penalty for our sins and died in our place. Heb. 12:2 tells us that He “for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross.”

At His death, shortly before Nisan 14 ended and the First Day of Unleavened Bread commenced, some of His disciples took His body down from the cross, wrapped it in linen, and buried it. At the end of three days and three nights, He rose from the dead. He triumphed over the grave, “because it was not possible that He should be held by it” (Acts 2:24), and in His resurrection, we, too, have hope of resurrection to eternal life.

That’s the truth of Jesus’ death and resurrection, albeit abbreviated. There was no 40-day “fast” leading up to any of this. There was no Easter bunny, no Easter eggs, and no Easter sunrise service.

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So let's stop mixing good and evil, truth and lies, paganism and Christianity. Let's heed and obey our Creator's instructions, and forsake the traditions of men. Have no more to do with the Easter bunny, Easter eggs, Easter sunrise services, or any other part of Easter.

There's no compromise to be had with evil, no deal to be made with the devil.

Let no follower of Christ indulge in the customs of the heathen. As the Apostle Paul wrote in 2 Cor. 6:14-17,

14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?

16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people."

17 Therefore, "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you."

Come out from among the heathen and be separate! Paganism isn't cute; it isn't fun or nostalgic; it isn't edgy; it's demonic and evil.

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This upcoming Passover season, let's remember Jesus Christ's sacrifice in the way God commanded. Let's observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread and rejoice in God's deliverance.