

HOLLY DAYS OR HOLY DAYS?

Traditions of Men
Verses
The Commandments of God

Most people are unaware that the original Puritan Blue-Laws of New England, published in New Haven, Connecticut. They had within its 45 Laws, a Law prohibiting the celebration of Christmas! It did not matter whether this observance was religious or secular in nature. So fervent was their intent to eliminate Christmas that they even outlawed mince pie, due to its close association (at that time) with the celebration of Christmas.

Today however, the term “Blue-Law” is most often used only in reference to the Sunday Blue-Laws, which required businesses to be closed on Sunday. In most parts of the U.S. they were still in effect until the mid (and in some places even latter) part of the 20th Century. The name “Blue-Laws” came from the small book with a blue cover, which contained the set of 45 Puritan Laws, which were first enacted into Law in New England in the 17th century.

In England the Puritans had previously enacted a Parliamentary Law, in 1643, also doing away with the observance of Christmas and made its celebration illegal in Britain.

It is interesting that most of the historical sources regarding the Puritans, which are generally available today, have been sanitized and/or altered when it comes to many of the actual facts surrounding their religious observances. So much so that for the past two centuries, professors, writers, theologians, as well as religious historians and secular frequently tend to “**overlook**” many of these facts. Normally they portray this important segment of American History, as though this “**Christian anti-Christmas**” prohibition had never been in existence.

Why ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

What was the primary reason these devout Christians (the Puritans) banned the observance of Christmas? Perhaps, it may be because the doctrine of the Nativity, as taught by most Christian denominations, using December 25th as being the day on which

Jesus was born, cannot be found in the New Testament! No doubt, this must have had something to do with it. So the next obvious question we should ask is: **“Where did the date originate?”**

In The Encyclopedia Americana International Edition under the subject of **Christmas**, which starts on page **666** the following excerpts can be found:

Origins of Christmas. The reason for establishing December 25 as Christmas is somewhat obscure, but it is usually held that the day was chosen to correspond to *pagan festivals* that took place around the time of the winter solstice, when the days begin to lengthen, to celebrate the **“rebirth of the sun.”** Northern European tribes celebrated their chief festival of *Yule* at the winter solstice to commemorate the *rebirth of the sun* as the giver of light and warmth. The Romans Saturnalia (a festival dedicated to Saturn, the god of agriculture, and to the renewed power of the sun), also took place at this time and some Christmas customs are thought to be rooted in this ancient *pagan* celebration. It is held by some scholars that the birth of Christ as “Light of the World” was made analogous to the *rebirth of the sun* in order to make Christianity more meaningful to *pagan* converts.

Many early Christians decried the gaiety and festive spirit introduced into the Christian celebration as a *pagan* survival, particularly of the Roman Saturnalia. They considered the birth of Christ a solemn occasion. But almost from the first, Christians have generally regarded Christmas as both a holy day and a holiday. For Christ’s birth brought a new spirit of joy into the world, and from the first recounting of the story of the Nativity, man has fashioned endless variations - not only in words, but in art, song dance, and drama - and has even created special symbolic holiday foods. Customs of all lands have been added through the centuries, making Christmas today the greatest folk festival in the world.

Development of Customs. The English adapted many older folk festivals to the Christmas. In the Middle Ages, English Christmases were times of great hilarity and good cheer, and vast banquets and pageantry celebrated the occasion. It was in this period that the idea of the Lord of Misrule reached its greatest expression. A common person or a servant of a great lord was chosen to rule with absolute authority during the Christmas season, and often his “rule” resulted in uncontrolled frivolity. This tradition may have originated during the Saturnalia, when the slaves became the equals of the masters.

Burning the Yule log was adapted to English custom from the ancient Scandinavian practice of kindling huge bonfires in honor of the winter solstice. The idea of using evergreen at Christmas time also came

to England from **pre-Christian** northern European beliefs. Celtic and Teutonic tribes honored these plants at their winter solstice festivals as symbolic of eternal life, and the Druids ascribed magical properties to the mistletoe in particular. The evergreen holly was *worshipped* as a promise of the sun's return, and some say that Christ's crown of thorns was made of holly. Legend tells that the berries were once white, but when the crown was pressed upon Jesus brow, the drops of blood turned the berries bright red. The Christmas wreath is thought by some to have originated from this legend....

Christmas has not always been remembered with gaiety and good cheer. Excessive frivolity had always been frowned upon by some, and Christmas was not celebrated by the Puritans or Calvinists. When the Puritans came to power in England under Oliver Cromwell in 1642 Christmas celebrations were banned as evidence of anti-religious, Royalist sentiments. Penalties were exacted for celebrating Christmas day. The Puritan tradition was brought to New England, where Christmas did not become a legal holiday until 1856. Nevertheless in other areas of the United States, the festive season was celebrated with joyousness by immigrants, who brought their holiday traditions from their homeland. It is this tradition of "*joy to the world*" that marks the spirit of Christmas nearly everywhere in the world....

This practice of celebrating a paganized Christmas has been handed down from parent to child, from denomination to denomination, from seminary to seminary for hundreds of years. A legacy that can accurately be called a "**tradition of man**"; it is this identical form of contemporary hypocrisy, which we see being addressed in **Matthew chapter 15**.

Matthew 15:3,6 & 9

- (3) "...And why do you yourselves transgress the **COMMANDMENTS OF GOD** FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR **TRADITION**?"
- (6) "...And thus you invalidate the **Laws of God** FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR **TRADITION**."
- (9) "But in **VAIN** do they worship Me, **Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.**"

This attitude which God has toward this is reconfirmed in **Mark 7:6-9**, which is a quote from Isaiah Chapter 29. Even though the Amplified version is not always the best translation, in this verse the Amplified translation is emphatically more descriptive.

Mark 7:6-9 (Amplified)

- (6) But He said to them, excellently and truly—so that there will be no room for blame—did Isaiah prophesy of you, the pretenders and hypocrites, as it stands written: This people (constantly) honor Me with their lips, but their heart holds itself off and is far distant from Me.
- (7) In vain—fruitlessly and without profit—do they worship Me, ordering and teaching to be obeyed as doctrines the commandments and precepts of men.
- (8) **You disregard and give up and bid depart from you The Commandments of God, and cling to the Tradition of men—keeping it carefully and faithfully.**
- (9) And He said to them, **you have a fine way of rejecting** (thus thwarting and nullifying and doing away with) **The Commandments of God**, in order to keep your tradition—your own human regulations!

We have seen that when **most** (but not all) of the “**Early Church**” decided to change the Biblical Holy Days that were ordained by God, it was in order to make compromises with Constantine and become a part of the “**New State Religion**”. This would in turn give them and their **new centralized religion**, a dynamic amount of power and authority throughout the entire Roman Empire; and in order to achieve this, every Feast Day and Holy Day ordained by God was changed. Pagan holidays were substituted for some of them, while others were simply done away with. The two most important of these substitutions, of course, were **Christmas** and **Easter**. Neither one of them are even remotely Scriptural in the manner in which they are practiced. On the contrary both of these holidays (as well as the ‘**Sunday**’ Sabbath) **have their roots firmly established in paganism, mythology, witchcraft, and the occult**. They were simply presented to the unlearned masses as “**Christian Holy-Days**” by the “**Early Church Fathers**” who sought to secure power and control for Rome, through their newly formed Hellenized religion, which would continue divesting itself further and further from its Jewish roots.

All of this seems to fit rather well with a prophesy found in **Daniel 7:25**.

Daniel 7:25 (Amplified)

- (25) And he will speak words against the Most High [God], and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to **change the time [of sacred feasts and holy days] and the law**; and the saints shall be given into his hand for a time...

Throughout the course of history, the Roman Church assessed the death penalty for anyone (except high ranking Church Officials) to have in their possession copies of the Scriptures. Bear in mind that the average person could not read and had to depend on someone else to read and translate Biblical writings for them anyway. But when it came to those few individuals who could read, they still needed control over them as well. This then, made it necessary for those in power to keep any and all portion of the Bible out of the hands of those that could read, who were not in total allegiance to the Roman Church. This scenario makes it a bit easier to see how as the Roman Empire began to collapse, that the “**Dark Ages**” could have spread throughout the remnants of the Roman Empire and how it could have lasted so long. As time passed other events continued to reinforce this. Anyone not familiar with the Crusades or of the Spanish, French, Irish and Latin American Inquisitions, should put them on top of your study list. The last vestiges of the Inquisition, was in South America, and only “**officially ceased**” in the late 1960’s.

Returning to the topic of Christmas, if you have an older unabridged Webster’s dictionary (and even in some of the newer ones), you can find out exactly what is being celebrated on December 25th, even though the names have been changed, to protect the Idolatry!

By researching the dates given in the New Testament, IE: Luke 3:23, when The Messiah became thirty years of age, He began His ministry. Since there is little dissention concerning the historical records that state He taught only 3 ½ years, and was crucified at Passover. By simply referencing a Jewish calendar, one can see the most likely period for the Messianic Birth, by counting back approximately 6 months from the general season of Passover would put His birth date either in late September or early October according to the Roman calendar. This means in all likelihood, it would have fallen some time during the most important set of Biblical High Holy Days. Which are **Rosh HaShannah** (Feast of Trumpet), **Yom Kippur** (Day of Atonement), **Sukkot** (Feast of Tabernacles)(Plus - Hoshanah Rabbah, Shemini Atzeret, or Simchat Torah) all of which normally fall between September and October on the Roman calendar. Should this turn out to be true, it would mean that **ONLY** those who observe the Biblically mandated Holy Days, (which is predominantly the observant Jews) have annually been celebrating the **ACTUAL** birthday of the Real Biblical Messiah of the New Testament.

There are several other means for determining the approximant date, including reliable extra-Biblical documentation. Which **ANYONE** including the so-called early “**Church Fathers**” could have, would have, should have and probably did **KNOW** the truth, at the time that they chose to “change the time [of sacred feasts and holy days] and the law”. Some in the hierarchy of Roman and Protestant Churches have known the truth throughout all these many centuries, and many, if not most, even **KNOW** today, but simply choose to ignore it for various reasons.

Unfortunately most of today’s Christians ignorantly continue to celebrate **Pagan Holidays** that have no real connection to God or Jesus. Yet God decreed that His Holy

Days and Festivals were to be kept by those who sought to serve and honor Him. And they were **not** to learn the way of the Pagans!

Even today, when someone asked “**why**” the date of December 25th was chosen, most Pastors, Teachers, Evangelists, etc. will simply reply that no one could know the real date!?! So it was just picked at random, as a good time to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Others make the excuse that Christian Holidays were picked precisely because of their **Pagan** counterparts, in order to neutralize (or compete with) the **Pagan Festivals**. Christmas, as has been shown earlier, is a very easy topic to check historically in many different sources and reference material. As was shown earlier; most of these sources define it as being derived from “**Saturnalia**”. Webster’s dictionary defines the word “**Saturnalia**” as being of Latin origin, for the Roman festival of Saturn. It begins on December 17th, and ends on December 24th (Christmas Eve); with an unrestrained celebration, or orgy, and **the exchange of gifts that were blessed** by first being left, for a short time, at the “**foot of an Idol**” made of wood (usually a decorated pine tree). Yet, God said specifically, **NOT TO LEARN THE WAYS OF THE HEATHEN**, in Jeremiah as well as other Scriptures!

Now what about the most ‘**sacred**’ symbol of Christmas? The **CHRISTMAS TREE!** Yes, even the **CHRISTMAS TREE** is mentioned in Scripture. So if the ancient Bible scholars knew the Word of God, they knew exactly what they were doing by putting a **CHRISTMAS TREE** in their home. It is clearly described in Jeremiah 10 and is most accurately expressed in the King James Version:

Jeremiah 10:1-4 (KJV)

- (1) Hear Ye the word which the LORD speaketh unto you, O house of Israel:
- (2) Thus saith the LORD,
Learn not the way of the heathen,
and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven,
for the heathen are dismayed at them. (Winter Solstice?)
- (3) For the customs of the people are vain:
for one cutteth a tree out of the forest,
the work of the hands of workman, with the axe.
- (4) **THEY DECK IT WITH SILVER AND GOLD;**
THEY FASTEN IT WITH NAILS AND WITH HAMMERS,
THAT IT MAY NOT FALL!

A few months following the celebration of Christmas, we find the second most sacred time of the year for most “**Christians**”, the holiday of “**Easter**”. Was this day instituted truly in honor of the Resurrection of Jesus? According to Mr. Webster we find the current definition of “**Easter**” to be a festival commemorating the resurrection of Jesus, celebrated by Christianity. However the word history states this: “**...it originated in pagan times... originally the name of a Germanic goddess who was worshiped at a**

festival at the Spring equinox. Her name is closely related to the Latin Aurora and Greek Eos or Eostur.” This was the Teutonic goddess of the dawn, as well as of fertility. She was also called Astarta, Ostare, Ostara, Eostra, Eostre, Eostur, Eastra, Eastur and Easter. The worship of this goddess of dawn and fertility included both rabbits and eggs. Isn’t it interesting that the trappings for the celebration of Easter are “**Easter bunnies and eggs**” they have managed to remain an integral part, of this so-called Christian, celebration of Easter? *Notice:* that the Pagan “Name” **has never even been changed!**

Does this mean that Christians should not honor the resurrection of the Messiah? Of course not! God did not leave the commemoration of this event to time and chance. The Passover celebration is meant to be observed, as recorded in **Exodus 12:24** “**And you shall observe this event as an ordinance for you and your children forever!**” Would this command also apply to Christians? *Not unless they believe there is only ONE God, and that He was and is the Ultimate Authority and Primary Author of His Word. And only if they believe the words of their Messiah are true when He answered the question “what must I do to obtain eternal life?”* When He consistently answered “**Keep the Commandments of God**”; He also said, (Matthew 5:17) “**Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill... For truly I say unto you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished!**” *It seems as though heaven and earth are still intact?* And actually, they must remain intact a while longer, since the prophesied “**world to come**”, of the Messianic Era, has not yet begun, ergo “**ALL has not yet accomplished!**”

Yes, Easter is another historical enigma. Good Friday was **NOT** Good Friday, and the Resurrection did **NOT** occur on Sunday morning! The alterations of these dates could appropriately be considered to be a well-controlled conspiracy, which has successfully traversed the majority of two millennia’s of Church History.

And now, the big question is:

What will you choose to do?

Will you worship and serve God in the manner He said to?

Or will you worship God in vain;

Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men?