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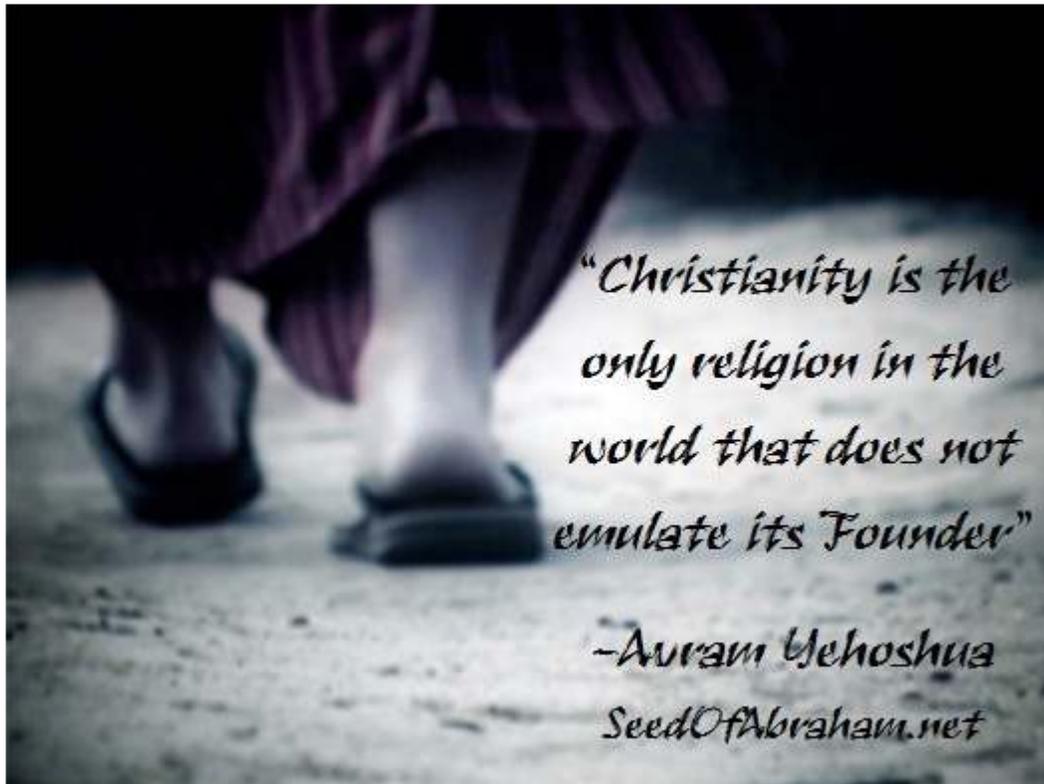
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## Articles

### Christianity and Its Founder by Avram Yehoshua (Flagstaff, Arizona)



Christianity is the only religion in the world that does NOT emulate its Founder. Yeshua/Jesus rebuked Satan's first temptation, to change the rocks into bread, by saying to the Devil: "Man does not live by bread alone, but by EVERY WORD that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Dt. 8:3; Mt. 4:4; Lk. 4:4). When did that change? When were Christians supposed to stop living according to the words of God that Yeshua lived His life by? Isn't Yeshua our Example in all matters of faith and practice?

The author of Hebrews says that, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever" (Heb. 13:8). This means that Yeshua is still a Sabbath keeping, Passover observing and pork abstaining Savior.

Another thing it means is that what was sin for Jesus is sin for His Body (1st Cor. 12:27; Eph. 5:30; Col. 1:18). How could something have been sin for our Lord, but not sin for us?

'Every word' of God includes all the rules, statutes, and laws of Moses because they were first given to Moses and Israel verbally by God and then they were written down. Did it change with the crucifixion or with Paul, as Christianity teaches? No. The Apostle Paul makes it clear that Mosaic Law would teach Timothy 'wisdom for salvation in Christ' (2nd Tim. 3:10-17) and would make Timothy 'fully equipped for every good work.' Without Mosaic Law Christians are not fully equipped. They do not realize what the full extent of sin is in God's eyes, and so, they sin against Jesus and themselves in ignorance, having been deceived about Mosaic Law by the Roman Catholic Church, even though they are not Roman Catholics.

Jesus kept all the laws and rules of Moses that applied to Him, but the Church teaches that Jesus 'did away with Mosaic Law at the cross,' not understanding that what was done away with at the cross was our sin indebtedness to God

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(Col. 2:14), not God’s holy Law (Rom. 7:7, 12, 14). Christians have been wrongly taught that they do not have to keep things like Passover, the 7th day Sabbath and the Mosaic dietary laws. Yet, the Apostle to the Gentiles, 23 years after the resurrection, said that Mosaic Law reveals what sin is:

- “Therefore, by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the Law is the KNOWLEDGE OF SIN.” (Romans 3:20)

Without the knowledge of Mosaic Law, Christians miss many things that God wants them to walk in and are sinning against the Lord and not even realizing it. Great is the Deceiver and his deception!

The God of Israel is wanting Christians to correct that and to walk out their faith in Yeshua the same way He did. Doesn’t that make sense? The Apostle John, 60 years after the resurrection, wrote, “He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked” (1st John 2:6 NKJV). \*1\*

When we open the Gospels, we read that Yeshua kept all the laws of Moses that applied to Him. If He had not, He would have been a sinner, and His sacrifice of no consequence for us. We are to follow Him, not the Pope, in how we are to walk out our faith in Messiah Yeshua.

Both Luke and Paul use the Feasts of Israel as time markers, telling us when an event would happen. This reveals that the Feasts of Israel were being kept by Christians for at least 34 years after the resurrection. \*2\* In other words, Mosaic Law was still God’s holy Standard that determined both what sin was and how to walk out a Christian’s faith in Jesus. The Holy Spirit is speaking to every Christian today and saying:

- “Come out of her, My people! Lest you share in her sins and receive of her plagues!” (Revelation 18:4)

The ‘her’ is the Roman Catholic Church (Dan. 7:25; Rev. 17:9; 19:2), the Harlot of New Testament Babylon, and all her Protestant daughter churches who have drunk deeply from her perverse anti-Mosaic Law theology and her foul anti-Semitic waters. Christians cause the Jewish people to stumble against their own Messiah, with their teaching against Mosaic Law and the Roman Catholic pagan practice of illicit SEX (Sunday, Easter, and Xmas) and the eating of pig, shrimp, catfish and other biblically unclean animals. This heretical teaching causes Christians to sin against their Savior by keeping days that Jesus has not authorized (illicit SEX) and eating foods which God calls unclean and an abomination (Lev. 11:1f.; 1st Tim. 4:4-5).

With its anti-Mosaic Law theology the Church hides the Jewish Savior from His own Jewish people (Lk. 1:30-33; Rom. 11:25-29; Rev. 22:16), having made the Mosaic-Law-keeping Yeshua (Mt. 5:17-19) to be anti-Mosaic Law—a pig eating, Sunday keeping, Xmas gift-giving, Easter sunrise service attending Gentile pagan Christ. This is not the Jesus of the New Testament who never once intimated, let alone taught, that Christians would not keep Mosaic Law after the resurrection. As a matter of biblical fact, Jesus taught just the opposite (Mt. 5:17-19; 22:35-40; 24:20; Mk. 2:27-28; Luke 16:17).

The Roman Catholic Church is not a Christian church, \*3\* and the conundrum for biblical Christians who walk in Roman Catholic anti-Mosaic Law theology and practices is that they cannot justify (support) those pagan practices from New Testament Scripture. Yes, they have Scripture which they think validates their not keeping of Mosaic Law, but when properly understood, those Scriptures don’t mean that. The enormity of the problem is seen when the Roman Catholic Church is compared to ancient paganism, revealing no character or personality difference between the two except for the names of Adonis and Diana being exchanged for Jesus and Mary. Yes, it is that perverse. The Roman Catholic Church is the Babylon of the New Testament, as all the Reformers knew and taught (Rev. 14:8; 16:19; 17:5). \*4\*

True biblical Christianity was changed by the nascent Roman Catholic Church in 120 A.D., when it threw out Mosaic Law and brought in illicit SEX, anti-Mosaic Law theology and anti-Semitism. Yes, Christian churches today have their interpretations of Paul’s phrases about the Law that they think come against Mosaic Law (e.g. you are ‘not under the Law,’ Gal. 5:18),\*5\* but a true reading of the New Testament cites dealing with Mosaic Law reveal that Mosaic Law is still valid for Christians because it is God’s holy Standard that reveals both the full extent of sin (Rom. 3:20) and what love is (Mt. 22:35-40). Most Christians do not realize that they are walking out their faith in Jesus through Catholic theology that nullifies New Testament Scripture concerning Mosaic Law.

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By 120 A.D., due to the Roman Empire’s persecution of the Jewish people; both believing Jews and non-believing Jews, and all Gentile Christians (because they walked like Jesus had; keeping the 7th day Sabbath, the Feasts of Israel and the Mosaic dietary laws, etc.), the Bishop of Rome (whose office would later become that of the Pope), not wanting to be persecuted ‘as a Jew,’ threw out Mosaic Law and replaced it with pagan days and pagan ways. This stripped his Christians of their biblical heritage. Many Christians fought back, but when Constantine made Catholicism his state religion (323 AD), the Popes were able to use murderous force to destroy her enemies (i.e. true Christians).

Today, God is calling Christians back to His way of walking out their faith in Messiah Yeshua; through all the rules, laws and statutes of Moses that apply to them. \*6\*

My doctrine is not mine, but His who sent me. If anyone seeks to do His will, he will know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from the Lord Yeshua or whether I speak on my own authority (cf. John 7:16-17).

We are not to bend God’s Word to our lives, but to bend our lives to God’s Word.

\*1\* Compare Dt. 4:5-8; Psalm 119:142, 151, 160; Isaiah 2:3; 66:22-23; Jer. 31:31-34 (where the English word for ‘law’ is Torah, which is Mosaic Law); Ezk. 11:19-20; 36:25-27; 43:7-9, 18-20, 25-27; 44:2-5, 23-24; 45:16, 21-22; Zech. 14:10-20; Mt. 5:17-19; 22:35-40; Acts 21:20-21; 22:12; 25:7-8; 26:19-23; 28:17-23; Rom. 3:31; 7:12, 14; 8:7; Heb. 4:9; 8:10; 13:8; James 2:9; 4:11-12; 1st Jn. 3:4; 5:2-3; Rev. 12:17; 14:12.

\*2\* Luke wrote Acts about 64 A.D. For a fascinating biblical study, see The Feasts of Israel as Time Markers After the Resurrection at <http://seedofabraham.net/The-Feasts-of-Israel-as-Time-Markers.pdf>.

\*3\* See The Ultimate Enigma at <http://seedofabraham.net/The-Ultimate-Enigma.pdf> and Sunday—The Catholic Sabbath at <http://seedofabraham.net/Sunday-The-Catholic-Sabbath.pdf>.

\*4\* For two excellent and complementary Christian books on why the Roman Catholic Church is not a Christian church, read The Two Babylons—The Full Hislop at <http://seedofabraham.net/The-Two-Babylons.pdf> and Dave Hunt’s, A Woman Rides the Beast (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1994).

\*5\* See No Longer Under the Law? at <http://seedofabraham.net/No-Longer-Under-the-Law.pdf>, Law 102 at <http://seedofabraham.net/Law-102.pdf> and Law and Grace at <http://seedofabraham.net/Law-and-Grace.pdf>.

\*6\* See Seven Ways Yeshua Fulfilled the Law at <http://seedofabraham.net/Seven-Ways-Yeshua-Fulfilled-Law.pdf>, Take the Quiz! Five Quick Questions about the New Testament at <http://seedofabraham.net/Take-the-Quiz.pdf>, and The Lifting of the Veil—Acts 15:20-21 at <http://seedofabraham.net/The-Lifting-of-the-Veil.pdf>.

## **Christmas, Easter, Halloween & Other Non-Biblical Holidays**

**by B. L. Cocherell (Nevada)**

Easter, Halloween, Christmas, and the national Thanksgiving holiday in the United States are among the most commonly observed religious and secular observances which many people believe are a part of the Christian God’s worship system; however, basic research into the origin of these observances shows these observances to be unacceptable to God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Anyone who wishes to worship the true God and his Son correctly should understand the seriousness of celebrating these religious and secular observances, because their origin and practice involved fertility rites, sexual licentiousness, and the worship of false gods as the central focus of their celebration.

The Sovereign God and the Creator God (Jesus Christ) give this instruction to those who are serious about following their way of life and serving them:

- *“Do not follow other gods, the gods of the peoples around you” (Deut.6:14 NIV).*

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- *"Be careful not to be ensnared by inquiring about their gods, saying, 'How do these nations serve their gods? We will do the same.' You must not worship the Lord your God in their way, . . ." (Deut.12:30-31 NIV).*
- *"Do not learn the ways of the nations [heathens] . . ." (Jer.10:2 NIV).*
- *"Do not follow other gods to serve and worship them; . . ." (Jer.25:6 NIV).*

The following will review some of the more popular religious and secular observances which are observed around the world by professing Christians and will show these non-biblical observances to be in violation of God's law and should not be celebrated by individuals seeking to worship and serve the Sovereign God and his son the Savior of mankind.

### **THE TRUTH ABOUT EASTER**

Each year in the spring, masses of worshipers celebrate Easter. Around the world, Easter Sunrise Worship services are held on the tops of hills and mountains, while priests chant and utter incantations, devotees kneel and bow in worship towards the east as the sun crests the horizon.

The places of worship overflow with people dressed in their new Easter clothes. Bells ring from cathedrals and stirring hymns fill the air to inspire and uplift the worshipers. Ministers and priests announce the resurrection of Jesus Christ with great acclaim and joy. And, after the religious rites are over, the children are treated to an Easter egg hunt.

This is a description of a modern-day celebration of Easter. But, as strange as it may seem, a similar description applies to the Easter celebrations in Babylon over 4,000 years ago, in Asia Minor over 2,500 years ago, and in pagan Rome in 100 A.D...

This section presents several studies into the celebration of Easter, which prove that Easter originated from the worship of false gods, and it should not be observed by anyone who wishes to honor and worship God the Father.

### **Easter Eggs Ancient and Modern**

"The origin of the Pasch [Easter] eggs is just as clear [as the origin of Easter]. The ancient druids bore an egg, as the sacred emblem of their order. In the Dionysiaca, or mysteries of Bacchus, as celebrated in Athens, one part of the nocturnal ceremony consisted in the consecration of an egg. The Hindu fables celebrate their mundane egg as of a golden color. The people of Japan make their sacred egg to have been brazen. In China, at this hour, dyed or painted eggs are used on sacred festivals, even as in this country [England]. In ancient times eggs were used in the religious rites of the Egyptians and the Greeks and were hung up for mystic purposes in their temples. From Egypt these sacred eggs can be distinctly traced to the banks of the Euphrates. The classic poets are full of the fable of the mystic egg of the Babylonians.'

"An egg of wondrous size is said to have fallen from heaven into the River Euphrates. The fishes rolled it to the bank, where the doves having settled upon it, and hatched it, out came Venus, who afterwards was called the Syrian Goddess—that is, Astarte. Hence the egg became one of the symbols of Astarte or Easter; and accordingly, in Cyprus, one of the chosen seats of the worship of Venus, or Astarte, the egg of wondrous size was represented on a grand scale." (The Two Babylons, p.108-109).

### **The True Origin of Easter**

"What means the term Easter itself? It is not a Christian name. It bears its Chaldean [Babylonian] origin on its very forehead. Easter is nothing else than Astarte [Isthar], one of the titles of Beltis, the queen of heaven." (The Two Babylons, p.103).

"The religious solemnities of April, as now practiced, are called by the name of Easter—that month, among our Pagan [British] ancestors, having been called Easter month. The festival, of which we read in Church history under the name of Easter, in the third or fourth centuries, was quite a different festival from that now observed in the Romish Church, and at that time was not known by any such name as Easter. It was called Pasch, or the Passover, and though not of Apostolic institution, was very early observed by many professing Christians; in commemoration of the death and resurrection of Christ" (ibid. p.104).

The Passover was instituted by the Creator God when he brought the children of Israel out of Egypt. Moreover, one of the main reasons for killing the Egyptians' firstborn children and animals was God's judgment against the gods of the

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Egyptians: *"For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord"* (Ex.12:12).

The God who went to those lengths to show his power and might over the gods of the Egyptians would never sanction the worship of him by the means of the pagan religious ceremonies or pagan observances:

"That festival agreed originally with the time of the Jewish Passover, when Christ was crucified. . . that festival [of the Passover and feast of Unleavened Bread] was not idolatrous, and was preceded by no Lent . . .' (The Two Babylons, p.104).

"The forty days' abstinence of Lent was directly borrowed from the worshipers of the Babylonian goddess [the queen of heaven]. Such a Lent of forty days, 'in the spring of the year,' is still observed by the Yezidis or Pagan Devil worshipers of Koordistan, who have inherited it from their early masters, the Babylonians" (Ibid., p.104). Moreover, the pagan Mexican Baal sun worshipers observed a solemn fast like Lent for forty days in honor of the sun beginning three days after the vernal equinox.'

"Such a Lent of forty days was observed in Egypt . . . was held expressly in commemoration of Adonis or Osiris, the great mediatorial god. . . among the Pagans this Lent seems to have been an indispensable preliminary to the great annual festival in commemoration of the [supposed] death and resurrection of Tammuz [Babylonian name for Adonis or Osiris], which was celebrated by alternate weeping and rejoicing . . ." (Ibid., p.105).

**The Death and Resurrection for Adonis—The Pagan Savior**

The pagan counterfeit, which was inspired by Satan, has been substituted for the true Christian Passover and has been accepted as the authentic Christian observance. There are variations in the rituals from country to country, but the death on a Friday and a resurrection on Sunday is a consistent theme.

"We have seen that the rites of Tammuz or Adonis were commonly celebrated in the gardens of Adonis are still sown in spring, as well as in summer, from which we may perhaps infer that Sicily, as well as Syria celebrated of old a vernal festival of the dead and risen god. At the approach of Easter, Sicilian women sow wheat, lentils, and canary seed in plates, the plants soon shoot up; the stalks are tied together with red ribbons, and the plates containing them are placed on the sepulchers which, with the effigies of the dead Christ, are made up in Catholic and Greek churches on Good Friday, just as the gardens of Adonis were placed on the grave for the dead Adonis.'

"The practice is not confined to Sicily . . . The whole custom—the sepulchers, as well as plates of sprouting grain—may be nothing but a continuation, under a different name, [the name of Jesus Christ], of the worship of Adonis' (The Golden Bough, p.400).

"During the whole of Good Friday, a waxen effigy of the dead Christ is exposed to view in the middle of the Greek churches and is covered with fervent kisses by the thronging crowd, while the whole church rings with melancholy, monotonous dirges. Late in the evening, when it has grown quite dark, this waxen image is carried by the priests into the street on a bier . . .' (Ibid., p.401).

"This is followed by the ritual mourning by the whole town as the priests slowly carry the wax image, and a great multitude follows. Thus, the community solemnly buries its Christ as if he had just died. At last, the waxen image is again deposited in the church, and the same lugubrious chants echo anew.'

"These lamentations, accompanied by a strict fast, continue till midnight on Saturday. As the clock strikes twelve, the bishop appears and announces the glad tidings that 'Christ is risen,' to which the crowd replies, 'He is risen indeed' . . . in the same hour people plunge from the extremity of the fast into the enjoyment of the Easter lamb and neat wine' (Ibid., p.401).

This mockery of the true death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is an example of how far paganism has penetrated professing Christianity. Only the names were changed, not the religion. Yet, this Babylonian religion with some variations has been embraced as the universal Christianity by the world—Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant. They all observe Easter, which was previously a day of worship and celebration in commemoration of false gods.

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**The Myth and Ritual of Attis**

"Another of those gods whose supposed death and resurrection struck such deep roots into the faith and ritual of Western Asia is Attis. He was to Phrygia what Adonis was to Syria . . . Attis was said to have been a fair young shepherd or herdsman beloved by Cybele, the Mother of the Gods, a great Asiatic goddess of fertility, who had her chief home in Phrygia. Some held that Attis was her son. His birth, like that of many other heroes, is said to have been miraculous" (Ibid., p.407).

The worship of the mother and son along with its religious rites were deeply entrenched within ancient historical tradition as the established religion. People everywhere in the civilized world believed this was the way to worship God.

**God's Teachings About Pagan Practices**

*"Take heed to yourself that you be not snared by following them . . . and that you inquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so I will do likewise. You shall not do to the Lord your God: for every abomination to the Lord, which he hates, have they done to their gods . . . What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: you shall not add thereto, nor diminish from it"* (Deut.12:30-32).

When the apostle Paul and Barnabas preached to the Gentiles who practiced the religion of Diana, Adonis, Attis, and Jupiter, their message was not acceptance and union of these religions with true Christianity. Theirs was a call for these Gentiles to repent and to renounce these worship systems.

*"Sirs, why do you these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach to you that you should turn from these vanities to the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: Who in times past allowed the nations to walk in their own ways And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commands all men every where to repent!"* (Acts 14:15-16; 17:30 KJV Para.).

The biblical record shows that the early church opposed the pagan religious practices and the blending of these pagan practices with the worship of the true God.

*"But I say, the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God: and I would not that you should have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. "* (1.Cor.10:20-21 KJV Para.).

The Sovereign God has never given his followers any authority to accept and assimilate pagan religious practices as a means of worshiping him. Any person, organization, or church which does this, rejects the word of God and teaches doctrines that are contrary to God's truth and way of truth. Therefore, anyone who teaches and preaches such practices is teaching a false savior, and a counterfeit Christianity.

**Catholic Admissions and Practices**

The Catholic church has always used its power and authority to enforce the acceptance of teachings that are contrary to biblical teachings.

"In like manner the Catholic Church has been accustomed to bring before its followers in a visible form the death and resurrection of the Redeemer . . . When we reflect how often the Church has skillfully contrived to plant the seeds of the new faith on the stock of paganism, we may surmise that the Easter celebration of the dead and risen Christ was grafted upon the similar celebration of the dead and risen Adonis " (The Golden Bough, p.401).

"To conciliate the Pagans to nominal Christianity, Rome, pursuing its usual policy, took measures to get the Christian and Pagan festivals amalgamated, and, by a complicated but skillful adjustment of the calendar, it was found no difficult matter, in general, to get Paganism and Christianity—now far sunk in idolatry—in this as in so many other areas, to shake hands" (The Two Babylons, p.105).

"Taken altogether, the coincidences of the Christian with the heathen festivals are too close and too numerous to be accidental. They mark the compromise which the [Catholic] Church in the hour of its triumph was compelled to make with its vanquished yet still dangerous rivals. The inflexible Protestantism of the primitive missionaries, with their fiery

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denunciations of heathendom, had been exchanged for the supple policy, the easy tolerance, the comprehensive charity of shrewd ecclesiastics, who clearly perceived that if Christianity was to conquer the world it could do so only by relaxing the too rigid principles of its Founder, by widening a little the narrow gate which leads to salvation" (The Golden Bough, p.419).

Granting the practice of pagan beliefs in direct opposition to the clear commandments of God has always been the policy of the Catholic Church.

"In the history of the Church we find that she often christened pagan festivals, making use of dates and ceremonies, and endowing them with an entirely new and Christian significance" (My Catholic Faith, p.416).

"Today the entire of Christendom celebrates Easter Sunday in memory of the Resurrection. It is the Feast of feasts . . . Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday following the first full moon of spring; the feast is moveable and can fall between March 22 and April 25" (Ibid., p.81).

This variance in the date of Easter was devised to more closely counterfeit the dates of the true Christian Passover and make it easier to replace the Passover with Easter. Also, the observance of the Passover ceremony, as commanded by Jesus Christ himself, was substituted with the Catholic holy eucharist (communion), which is of pagan derivation, by edict of the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D.

Attendance and taking of the Mass on Easter Sunday is obligatory for all Catholics. Even though the leaders of the Catholic Church have the Holy Bible and claim to teach it, they insist that "under pain of grievous sin" all are to observe this holiday. However, God Almighty commands Christians not to observe such feasts.

"We are obligated to receive Holy Communion during Easter time each year . . . The Church enforces this command by requiring us under pain of grievous sin to communicate [take communion] at least at Easter time" (My Catholic Faith, p.311).

#### **God's Indictment and Condemnation of Pagan Practices**

Throughout the biblical record, God shows that he has never allowed his people to worship him by means of pagan ceremonies and rituals. The biblical record shows that the Israelites cut themselves off from God whenever they left his worship system. Today, the same applies for the Father's elect who are to worship him in spirit and truth (Jn.4:23-24). If, as Jesus Christ commands, the elect are worshipping their heavenly Father in spirit and truth and are sanctified by this truth, (Jn.15:16;17:17), why would he accept any form of worship other than the one he has established?

The apostle Peter wrote the following to the elect condemning pagan practices and false prophets: *"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty . . . But there were false prophets, also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious way; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of"* (2 Pet.1:16; 2:1-2 KJV).

God's truth was buried under an avalanche of propaganda which denounced his worship system as being Jewish. Hence, Jesus' castigation of Judaism—a form of Jewish rejection of God's truth—was cleverly and deceptively used to attack true Christianity. The seventh day Sabbath (on Saturday), the true Christian Passover, and the annual festivals of God were labeled Jewish. The truth is that the Passover, the Sabbath, and the annual festivals were instituted by the Creator God, not the Jews.

It is true that, during the days of Jesus Christ, only the Jews were observing these days; however, it does not mean that the Jews originated these commanded days of worship. They were originally commanded by God in the holy scriptures in Exodus, chapters 12, 16, 20, 23, 32; Leviticus chapter 23; Numbers 9, 28; Deuteronomy 5, 16. Moreover, they were observed by Jesus Christ and the apostles in the New Testament. The true Festivals of God are found in the Bible, not pagan religions. In fact, history shows that many times the Israelites and Jews were just as paganized with Babylonian religions and forms of worship as professing Christians are today. God's condemnation of these practices is still valid today:

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*"Do you not see what they are doing in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem? The Children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead dough to make cakes [the hot cross buns of Easter] for the queen of heaven [the great mother goddess of fertility]; and they pour out drink offerings to other gods in order to spite Me. Do they spite Me? declares the Lord. Is it not themselves they spite to their own shame? Therefore, thus saying the Lord God, Behold My anger and My wrath will be poured out on this place, on man and on beast and on the trees of the field and on the fruit of the ground; and it will burn and not be quenched" (Jer.7:17-20, NASB).*

These idolatrous practices are violations of the first and second commandments. The New Testament also reveals that idolaters will not be in the Kingdom of God (Rev.21:8).

Ezekiel, chapter 8, contains God's indictment and stinging rebuke against idolatry and pagan religions.

*"Then said he to me, Son of man, lift up your eyes now the way toward the north. So, I lifted up my eyes the way toward the north, and behold the northward gate of the altar this image of jealousy in the entry. He said furthermore to me, Son of man, do you see what they are doing? even the great abominations that the house of Israel commits here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary? . . ." (Ezk.8:5-6 Para.).*

The same is true today. Even churches that claim to be Christian, have driven God away by their idolatry.

#### **Greater Abominations**

*"Then he said to me, Son of man, have you seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The Lord sees us not; the Lord has forsaken the earth. He said also to me, Turn you yet again, and you shall see greater abominations that they do. Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord's house which was toward the north; and behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz!" (Ezk.8:12-14 KJV Para.).*

Tammuz was the Babylonian name for Adonis, who was also called Attis and Osiris. All such heathen practices are considered abominable to God the Father.

#### **Sunrise Worship Condemned**

*"Then he said to me, Have you seen this, O son of man? turn you yet again, and you shall see greater abominations than these. And he brought me into the inner court of the Lord's house, and behold, at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord [symbolic of rejecting God], and their faces toward the east; and they worshiped the sun toward the east" (Ezk.8:15-16 KJV Para.).*

This is exactly what people are doing when they participate in Easter sunrise services. They think that they are worshiping and honoring God, but in reality, they are dishonoring him.

Because most people have been deceived into observing the pseudo Christian pagan observances, they believe they are doing what is right. They believe they are serving God and are convinced they are true Christians:

*"Woe to them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe to them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight. Woe to them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink" (Isa.5:20-22 KJV).*

*"Come here; I will show you the judgment of the great whore that sits on many waters [peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages]: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have made drunk with the wine of her fornication . . . and I saw a woman sit on a scarlet-colored beast, full of the names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. (Rev.17:1-3 KJV).*

*"And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, and having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written Mystery, Babylon The Great, Mother Of Harlots [all the religions of the world, except the true religion of God] And The Abominations Of The Earth [all the pagan religious observances and practices]" (Rev.17:4-5 KJV).*

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This is the same evil religious system that God condemns throughout the entire biblical record; it is the same satanic system which has rejected the laws of God.

*"Which justify the wicked for reward and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him! Therefore, as the fire devours the stubble, and the flame consumes the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel" (Isa.5:23-24 KJV).*

#### **They Put the Golden Bough to Their Nose**

*"Then he said to me, Have you seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations that they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose" (Ezk.8:17).* The branch or golden bough is the symbol of pagan religions.

#### **SUMMARY**

The historical record and the word of God clearly show the following things about the practice of Easter:

- Easter celebrations did not begin when Christianity began.
- The Bible does not command Easter observance.
- Early New Testament Christians did not celebrate Easter.
- Easter was celebrated by pagans in their worship of evil spirits thousands of years before Jesus Christ was born.
- God condemns the practice of Easter-type worship and calls it an abomination.
- True Christians are commanded to observe the Passover, not Easter.

Many of the leaders of the Christian world know the truth about the pagan practice of Easter, but they refuse to repent. Those who practice this abomination will suffer the wrath of Almighty God as prophesied in Ezekiel 8 and in the Book of Revelation: *"Therefore, will I also deal in fury: my eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in my ears with a loud voice, yet I will not hear them" (Ezk.8:18 KJV).*

**To Be Continued in Issue #9**

## **A Blast from the Past**

### **Passover**

**by Arlan Weight (Bismarck, North Dakota)**

**Continued from Issue #7**

#### **Passover Defined**

Is the Passover a feast or is it the memorial of the death of Jesus Christ? Or is it both? Traditional observance has tried to separate these two. The church has used Leviticus 23:5-6 and Numbers 28:16-17 to separate the **Passover** from the **Feast** day. Let us take a close look at these two references.

- "In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the **Lord's passover**. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the **feast of unleavened bread** unto the Lord..." (Lev. 23:5-6)
- "And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the **passover of the Lord**. And in the fifteenth day of this month is the **feast**..." (Num. 28:16-17)

How do these squares with Exodus 12:8-11? Here it indicates the passover lamb was eaten the night of the 15th. **"It is the Lord's passover."** (verse 11) Is there a conflict here? How can this be explained?

Throughout the old and new testaments, the term passover has been applied sometimes to a feast and sometimes to denote the killing of the lambs. Let's look at just a few cases.

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- "Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families and **kill the passover**" (lamb). (Ex. 12:21)
- "Then **they killed the passover**" (lamb) "on the fourteenth day of the second month" ... (2 Chron. 30:15)
- "Then came the day of unleavened bread when **the passover**" (lamb) "**must be killed**" ... (Luke 22:7)
- "And thus, shall you **eat** it;" (the lamb) "with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it" (the lamb) "in haste; **it is the Lord's passover.**" (Ex. 12:11)
- "And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a **feast**" (eating the lamb on the 15th) "to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a **feast**" (eating the lamb on the 15th) "by an ordinance forever." (Ex. 12:14)
- "Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to **eat the passover**" (lamb)? (Mat. 26:17)

There are many more examples like those above where sometimes the term 'passover' is used in conjunction with killing the lamb and sometimes it is used in eating it. Such is the case with Leviticus 23:5-6 and Numbers 28:16-17. In each of these two places we are simply talking about doing two different things. The fourteenth day is the day for killing and preparing the lamb, the fifteenth day is for eating it.

The main thing to remember in this context is that Jesus (the Lamb of God) fulfilled the killing of the lamb on the fourteenth. The eating of the symbols representing his flesh and blood were to be eaten on the fifteenth. This he observed like all the Jews for the first 32 of his 33 years.

#### **What day did the Israelites leave Egypt?**

So, when did the Israelites leave Egypt? In Deut. 16:1 it says, "God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night." So, did the Israelites leave their homes the night of the 15th? No. It is plain to see that the people could not have left that night. Notice the instruction Moses gave the people. "none of you shall go out at the door of his house **until the morning.**" (Ex. 12:22) So what is the answer to this seemingly contradiction?

In Deuteronomy 16:1 it says God brought them out **of Egypt** by night. But does it say here what day of the month? In Numbers 33:3 it says "And they departed from Rameses in the first month on the fifteenth day of the first month; **on the morrow after the Passover...**" This says plainly that they did not leave Egypt the night of the 15th. The word '**morrow**' comes from the Hebrew word '**mochorath**' which simply means the next day. And of course, it fits because the Israelites were to remain in their houses all night.

So, if they didn't leave Egypt the night of the 15th, what night was it that they actually left? Continuing on in Numbers 33 it says "they removed from Rameses and pitched in Succoth. And they departed from Succoth and pitched in Etham... And they removed from Etham, and turned again unto Pihahiroth, which is before Bassizephon: and they pitched before Migdol." At each of the places mentioned it says they pitched, meaning they encamped. It does not say how long they stayed at each location, but one might assume they encamped at least one night at each place. So, it was at least three days journey till they reached the point where they had to cross the sea.

#### **Summary**

All of the difficulty in answering the questions about the old testament Passover and the new testament Passover stem from starting out on a wrong premise. That premise is that we must keep the Passover on the night beginning the 14th because Jesus kept it that night. But, as was explained before, Jesus had to keep it early that year because he knew it was his last and to fulfill the prophesy that he was to be that Passover Lamb, he could not keep it as he did before, on the 15th with the rest of the Jews.

The **church** has taken its cue from 1 Corinthians 11:23-24 where it says "for I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you that the Lord Jesus the Same night in which he was betrayed took bread" ... Here it says Jesus observed the Passover the **same night** he was betrayed, but does it clearly say we are to do so as well? Rather shouldn't his first 32 years of keeping the Passover prove to the contrary, especially when his command is to keep the Passover as the Scribes and Pharisees were doing it? (Mat. 23:2-3) Could it be that the **church** has erred in viewing 1 Corinthians 11:23-24 as a command to keep the Passover at the same time, when it should only be viewed as a statement of historical record?

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The most important thing to remember is that Jesus **fulfilled** the sacrifice and shedding of his blood at the Same time as the original lambs were killed, on the afternoon of the 14th of Abib. Jesus observed the eating of the lamb and the 'night to be observed' the same as all of the Jews of his day, the night of the 15th, which is the first Day of Unleavened Bread. This he did first as a boy with his parents and then during his ministry. Furthermore, he told us to follow the Scribes and Pharisees in this example (Mat. 23:2-3). He didn't change the day of its observance.

When we look closely at the Exodus account, we are able to see the step by step of events that transpired that first Passover. We are able to see that there is no separation with the event of Passover and the first day of Unleavened Bread. Rather these occurred the same day. The night to be much observed is also the same night. So, all three, the Passover, Night to be Observed, and the First Day of Unleavened Bread are all one and the same day.

True, the Passover lambs were killed on the fourteenth, the preparation day, but the actual Passover, the night to observe when the death angel passed over, occurred on the night of the 15th, The First Day of Unleavened Bread. It is no wonder then that the Passover is called a Feast in some places. For indeed it did occur on the Feast Day. It also explains why there can only be seven days of unleavened bread, not eight, because the first day the Israelites ate unleavened bread was the same night, they ate the lamb roasted with fire, the night of the 15th.

Then there is the matter of tradition. Can we tell from scripture what day the Apostles continued to observe the Passover? If they did what Jesus commanded them, they kept it on the 15th. 1 Corinthians 11 only says "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread..." It accurately tells what day Jesus kept it the year he was killed. It does not say he changed it to that day, nor does Paul tell you to keep it at that same time.

Once we begin to realize the words Jesus said that he came to fulfill what Moses said are true, everything fits. We then begin to understand that you **must start** with Exodus 12 and go forward. This is the starting place. You cannot start with the New testament and fit the events of Exodus into the evening Jesus observed his last Passover. This is starting with a wrong premise. It appears that the only reason Jesus kept his last Passover at the beginning of the 14th that year, is that it was impossible to do it later. He most certainly would have if he could have.

Finally, it comes down to this. Jesus said he did not come to do away with what Moses instructed. He said the Scribes and Pharisees, were keeping these days properly and that we need to observe them as they taught because they "sat in Moses' seat" (Mat. 23:2-3). Furthermore Jesus, himself observed the keeping of these days from boyhood as he was taught by the leaders of his day. Should we then scrap all that in favor of observing the passover on the beginning of the 14th simply because Jesus kept it at that time, that year?

Jesus said he desired to eat that passover 'before he suffered'. This was his last passover. Could he have eaten it after he suffered? Pretty obvious it couldn't have been done, unless he would have done it after the resurrection, and that would have completely been out of the sequence of events in Exodus.

No, the answer should be quite apparent that Jesus **fulfilled** the scripture exactly as he said. His command to keep it as he fulfilled it is still valid. If tradition chooses to observe it at a different time than what he says, should we follow that? I think not. If tradition is to be our guide, we might well start observing Sunday as the Sabbath instead of the 7th day along with a host of other observances, but this is not what we are supposed to do.

Jesus last instruction is as important for us today as it was to his disciples just before he left this earth. "Go ye therefore and teach all nations... teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have **commanded** you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Mat. 28:19-20)

If his command is to keep the passover as the Scribes and Pharisees observed it, as he observed it for 32 of his 33 years, shouldn't we listen to that? If it means breaking with tradition shouldn't we do it? What should be our response?

**(This article has been updated and re-printed from “The Church of God Messenger” May/June 2001—Issue No. 3.)**

### **Holy Days 2021**

**Passover - March 28, 2021 (Observed at Sunset the Evening Before)**

**Unleavened Bread - March 28, 2021 to April 3, 2021**

**Pentecost - May 17, 2021**

**Trumpets - September 7, 2021**

**Atonement - September 16, 2021**

**Tabernacles - September 21 to 27, 2021**

**Last Great Day - September 28, 2021**