

My Reason Differs

"But that's not the reason I celebrate the holiday." This is the phrase many give in reply to the obvious facts of the pagan origin of Christmas. The true facts are, this IS the reason people celebrate the holiday whether or not they wish to accept it. Had it not been for the origin of pagan worship and the festivals in honor of false gods, the customs would not have begun and continued down through the centuries. We should not take something holy, as

Thou shalt not learn to do after the abomination of those nations. Deut. 18:9

the birth of Christ, and attempt to mix something unholy within it (Haggai 2:11-14).

RESOURCES

WWW.HISTORYCHANNEL.COM "CHRISTMAS"

WWW.NEWADVENT.ORG "CHRISTMAS"

WWW.ENCARTA.MSN.COM "CHRISTMAS"

The Christmas Encyclopedia, by William D. Crump

Encyclopedia of Christmas, by Tanya Gulevich

FOR MORE INFO

We have barely scratched the surface in this small piece of literature. For those desiring more in-depth study material, please contact us for free literature, CD's, or an in-home Bible study on the subject. We would be glad to sit down and discuss the issue with those desiring, as well as answer any questions one may have.

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KEYS TO KNOWLEDGE

The Birth Of Christ

Was it on Christmas Day?



What's the Purpose?

Have you ever asked yourself why you celebrate Christmas? Everything we do is based upon a reason whether we realize this or not. We should also be aware that the reason we think we celebrate a festival,



may not actually be the real reason. It may surprise you to find out that the birth of the Christ was *not* on Christmas Day.

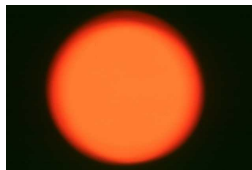
The origins of this winter holiday will not be

Is it Biblical? Jeremiah 10:1-5

found in the pages of your Bible, but rather in the customs, practices, and religious festivals of heathen peoples, devoting their worship to other gods. Even the Catholic Encyclopedia admits "Christmas was not among the earliest festivals of the church." Nowhere do we find Christians in Scripture celebrating a festival known by the name "Christmas."

Pagan Origin

The origin of many of the customs during this season of the year stem from the worship of the sun god Mithra, an ancient Indo-Iranian god. The 25 of December was observed as his birthday, the re-birth of the winter sun. During the days of December 17—24 the custom of erecting evergreen trees, plants, etc. to appeal to this god to "come back" were observed. This was because during



Should we worship as the heathens? Deut. 4:15-19

this season the night is the longest in comparison to the daylight hours. It was believed by heathens that the sun god had deserted them, and they desired his return.

The Roman Festival

In Rome at the time of Christ a festival called "Saturnalia" was observed. Beginning with December 17 the Romans honored "Saturn" the ancient god of agriculture. In this festival the Romans feasted, postponed all business, exchanged gifts, and temporarily freed their slaves. We should note that in observance of this heathen festival statues of Saturn as well as homes where decorated with holly, sacred to this god. Evergreen wreaths (symbolic of the sun) and evergreen garlands (symbolic of the renewal of life) were among the most popular items used to appease Saturn. These customs were never observed by the early Christians.

The earliest believers in Christ argued against pagan celebrations in strict opposition. Appeal can be made to Deuteronomy 12:29-32 and 20:16-18 which teach that believers should not inquire after other nations, desiring to serve the true Almighty in the way the pagans served their gods. However, by the fourth century A.D. the Roman Catholic Church adopted the traditions of the pagan Saturnalia festival, accepting the unholy, and attempting to mix it in with the story of Christ's birth. December 25th was chosen seeing that this date was one already fixed in the minds of the pagans. The myth that Christ was born on December 25th has been promoted ever since. Churches have "hanging of the green," and "candlelight" services, all of which find no support in the Bible. We can be thankful that there have been a few righteous people throughout history that have chosen to oppose such celebration. The Puritans of the early 17th century recognized the falsity in trying to mix the unholy with the holy. Resulting from this, early America did not recognize Christmas from 1659—1681. Its celebration had been outlawed. The time had then come for the true church to gain adherents by teaching from the Bible alone, not by compromising their faith. "Learn not the way of the heathen. (Jeremiah 10:2)" We would do well to follow the Puritan or *Biblical* example.

