"Christmas"

The Word "Christmas" comes from Christ's Mass, referring to the Catholic practice of Mass. This is the Catholic mass in celebration of Christ's birth. There is no evidence that any Christians celebrated Christ's birth until 200 A.D. with Clement of Alexandria (and it was May 20, not December 25). The date was changed by Pope Julius I in 350 A.D. to December 25th. Comparatively, we know with great precision the exact date of Christ's death, but why would God not likewise tell us of the date of his birth? Probably so that we would not try to worship it is some as most Christians do today in Christmas. The belief that the date of birth (under the zodiac) controlling the life and destiny of a person also might enter here.

When was Jesus born?

It is very doubtable that Jesus was born in December. From Luke 2:8, the pastors were taking care of their sheep in open fields which indicates this was not winter, because in winter the shepherds were in shelters with their sheep because of the cold. Feed was collected all year for the sheep to spend the cold winter in shelters, not open fields. In the winter there is no food for the sheep, so it is doubtable it was winter.

The Prohibition of Christmas

During the Protestant reformation (1647) in England, this celebration was prohibited until the Catholics won control anew with the restoration in 1660. Moreover, the celebration has always been distinctly Catholic, and there is no biblical principle putting the emphasis in celebrating the birth of people. The Jews strictly prohibited[1] the celebration of birthdays.

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[1] Josephus, in Against Apion, Book II, Chapter 26. Also in the Jewish Encyclopedia it says that celebration was without mention or example among the Jews.

The Jews prohibited the celebration of birthdays. This came about from the belief that the celebration (to give good wishes to the person in their birthday) had to do with witchcraft, having to do with the belief that one was very vulnerable to spells on the date of their birthday, and a birthday celebration was to help protect the friend from these spells. Satanist Anthony LaVey wrote in his book, _The Satanic Bible_, "_The most high of all holy days in the satanic religion is the day of one's birth. This is in contradiction to the holy days in other religions which deem one day of a particular god… The Satanist says, 'Why are you not honest with yourself? If you are going to make a god in your own image, why don't you make yourself this god? Each man is a god that decides to recognize himself as one. Then the Satanist is celebrating his own birthday as the most important holy day of the whole year.'_"

Equally there are religions (astrology[2], zodiac, etc) which strongly link the date of one's birth with powers that control his life. Catholics believe that each day of the year is identified with one of their saints. They began in the 12th century to associate the name of one of their saints with a specific day of the year, and the child born on that date had his "saint." Many times the child took that saint's name. His saint would be his guardian through life, and to celebrate his birthday was the same as to "_celebrate his saint_." It is interesting that the Hebrew calendar was so designed as to miss 11 days in each year. This through the year to year relation of a special day off, and they had to add an extra month 7 times in every 19 year cycle. This setup threw all the signs of the zodiac out of alignment constantly, making the zodiac sign different for a person from year to year (which destroys the whole zodiac concept – your birth month controls your destiny

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[2] Compare the mention of astrology and birthdays in Gen 40.20-22, Deu. 18:10-12, Isa 47:13-14. There are various places that curse (not bless) the day of one's birth (Job 3:1-5; Jer 20:14-18).

and life). It seems as if God wanted to make it impossible for the Hebrews to use the zodiac to influence their life.

The Celebration of Birthdays

In contraposition to all of this, we observe that the birth of children of very important people was always celebrated, but ONLY IN THE YEAR OF THEIR BIRTH. In such a case, Jesus was received into the world with great joy as any newly born king was, but this was always a unique celebration never again to be repeated any other year of his life. Likewise we see neither biblical example nor mention of anyone ever celebrating Christ's birth after that first year of his life. We also note that God could have told us the month and day of his birth but obviously didn't, so He didn't want us to know it. If it was in God's will for us to yearly celebrate Christ's birth, He would have made the date clear for us. The fathers of the early church[3] likewise never mention the celebration of his birth, but made note of the lack of such a celebration. It wasn't until the fourth century when the heresy of infant baptism entered into the practices of the church that the celebration of birthdays became a very important custom. In the fourth century, the church united with the Roman Empire under Constantine, and it was the custom of the emperors to celebrate their birthdays. Wikipedia comments that the celebration of birthdays was made popular and extended for the Roman soldiers who worshiped the Mitras sect, where the birthdays were important (December 25 was the celebration of the birthday of this god Mitras). Equally Catholicism pushed the date of December 25 when in 354 A.D. the Bishop Liberius of Roman ordered his people to celebrate it. It was a "coincidence" that these Roman people already celebrated in for the feast of Saturn, the birth of the sun god.

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[3] Origen observed that Queen Natalicia was celebrating her birthday and said, "in the Scriptures, sinners only, not the saints, are who celebrate their birthdays."

The Pagan Roots of Christmas

The date of December 25 has many pagan celebrations associated with it. In Greece and Rome, there were the celebration of Apolos and Helios (the birth of the Invincible Sun), in Persia, Mithra, etc. Historically December 25 has been identified as the shortest day of the year, and from that point on, the days grow longer. The first time it was celebrated as "Christmas" (birth of Jesus Christ) was in 440 A.D. by the Catholic Church. It is important to notice that the Catholic Church presents Christ in basically two images, an indefensible baby protected by his mother, and hanging on a cross dying, again impotent.

The Christmas Tree

This custom came from the worship of Adonis, which after being killed, arose from the dead by the power of the serpent Aesculapus. According to tradition, they put a thick piece of wood (a Yule) in the chimney on Christmas Eve, and in the morning they arose to see it all in green and glory, with streams of decoration around it like a snake twisting around it (Aesculapius). Jer 10:2-5 speaks of the pagan customs of cutting a treat and decorating it with silver and gold for worship. All the elements are in the Christmas tree.

Santa Claus, and Father Noel

There actually was a priest in Mira in Asia Minor, called San Nicolas, who began the tradition of Santa Claus. The idea of a fat Santa was probably from the Egyptian God Bes, who was the god of the children which lived in the North pole making presents for obedient children. The modern image of (the American) Santa comes from a Coca Cola promotional run from 1931 to 1964 which proposed Santa with a Coke in hand.

What does the concept of Santa communicate? This deals with Santa as if he is God the Father. Both seem to be eternal (**Rev. 1:8**). Santa lives in the North pole, and **Psa 48:2** says God lives in the North. Santa returns with gift giving as does

Jesus (**Acts 1; Eph 4:7-8; Rom 6:23**). There is an anticipation of his coming in the air (1Thes 4:16), and he knows every life of everyone in the world (Pro 5:21). Santa rewards people according to their good or evil works (Rev 2:23). Santa also passes through closed doors (John 20:19, 26). Now, who takes Santa Claus as real? Nobody. He is a myth, a piece of foolishness that only innocent children believe in, and when they "grow up" they understand that it is all myth. But this myth makes fun of God, because Santa comes in the same mold as God is. Does this promote faith or disbelief in God and His Word?

The proper Christian attitude

Jer 10:2 *Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen…*

Christians should not follow the pagan traditions to pattern their life and worship around them. We should be different, and witness to them of Christ.

Gifts – It is normal for parents to give good gives to their children (James 1:17), and it is commanded that we should give gifts to others (Heb 13:16; Eph 4:28). So there is no problem with a parent giving his kids gifts, although it would be better to disassociate it with Christmas by giving them things anytime except Christmas. Christians should also not fall into seasonal traps and cause themselves economic problems.

Meals and Get-Togethers – Equally Christians can have meals with family and friends anytime as long as there are no excesses, and of course, never alcoholic beverages. **Rom 13:13; Gal 5:21; 1Pet 4:3** prohibit gluttonous, drunken activity.

Celebrating the Birth of Jesus – The birth of Jesus is biblical, and we can teach and preach about this any time of the year, but there is no command to celebrate it except the year that Christ actually came. This has been a means for Satan to corrupt the church with idolatry and image worship (nativity scenes are images which "help" us worship, just like Catholics do all year long).

Christmas
Is it for Christians?

By David Cox

Jer 10:2 *Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen…*

Coming to the end of the year, many people begin to think about Christmas. There are many traditions around Christmas, and it is important that we analyze all these traditions and customs in the light of the Bible so we do blindly follow ignorant people into pagan traditions.