

# YAIY NEWS



## Christmas Tradition

As truth is sometimes stranger than fiction, so is the history behind the Christmas tradition. Going back about 1700 years ago, we find something happening at an accelerated pace called "syncretism." It is a mixing of true worship with pagan or false worship. Some things were mixed in before 3 C.E. and some afterwards. In the case of Christmas, the history books are full of examples of how it was adopted and utilized in worship to the Heavenly Father, Yahweh.

Some things that were mixed in, and accepted for a while, were eventually dropped over time. These included, but were not limited to, "the Feast of Fools," "the Feast of Boy Bishop," and "the Feast of the Donkey." (Vol. 1: *The Encyclopedia of Christianity* (455) by Fahlbusch, E., & Bromiley, G. W.).

While not all of the days initially accepted in the early centuries after the Messiah Yahshua's death and resurrection were pagan, many were. "Indeed, the background of many observances such as Christmas, Epiphany, and Ember is pagan," *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* (1069) by Myers, A. C.

Does it really matter, though, if we worship on days that we are able to attribute to Father Yahweh or His Son, Yahshua? The answer, which was explained thousands of years ago, can be found in Scripture:



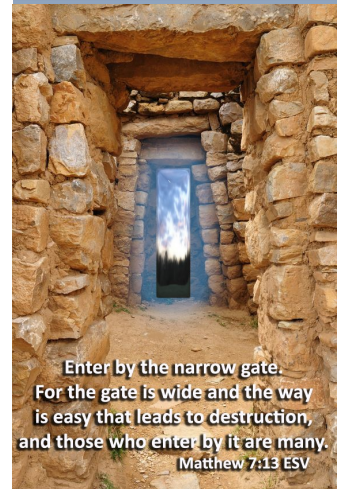
*Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou inquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto Yahweh thy Elohim: for every abomination to Yahweh, which He hateth, have*

*they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods. What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it, Deuteronomy 12:30-32.*

While some may reason away that this is just "Old Testament," it should be pointed out that Yahweh tells us He doesn't change (Mal. 3:6) and the same is said of the Son (Heb. 13:8). Many times we find confirmation of the unity of the Bible when comparing what is written from Genesis (the beginning) and what is written in the letters referred to as the "New Testament." In none of the pages from Genesis to Revelation will we find instructions to observe tra-

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts.

Isaiah 55:9 NASB



Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. Matthew 7:13 ESV

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## Christmas Tradition ...,cont.

ditions, such as Christmas.

### American Tradition

As we look at some of the origins of the Christmas story, it may surprise some that Christmas was not even originally an American holiday.

"...when the Pilgrims came to America, they refused to celebrate Christmas in any special way, regarding it merely as another workday of the year," *The New American Commentary* (317), by George, T.

The history of not observing Christmas in America has been contributed to the idea of the Pilgrims, specifically Puritans, not wanting to observe the papal calendar, as they were separating themselves from the corruption of false worship and the mentality of the Church of England. (*Christian History Magazine* - Issue 41: "The American Puritans," by *Christianity Today*)

America did receive Christmas into the churches after it was presented into the schools to the children, who then proceeded to present it to their families, who then brought it into the realm of worship to the Father. (*The Unwrapping of Christmas, Its History, Myths, and Traditions*, 2005 Jeremiah Films, INC.)

While there is no good reason to worship Father Yahweh with adopted pagan means, and in fact was prohibited, it has happened nonetheless. Tradition has brought it down to us as true worship, but nothing could be farther from the truth. In America, and going back to England, specifically Germany, one can see the pagan connection and parallels between sacred oaks and the Christmas tree. (Vol. 1: *The Encyclopedia of Christianity* (455), by Wm. B. Eerdmans; Brill).

The tree has also been used in various fertility rites of pagans in the past, but the use of trees in worship goes back even to Old Testament times. Yahweh forbids such practices, but people have forgotten their Creator and have replaced the truth with lies:

*Thus saith Yahweh, "Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not, Jeremiah 10:2-4.*

### Tradition of Men

While some traditions of men are not necessarily bad, when considering pure worship to the Father, we must not be complacent just accepting tradition that connects pagan ways with true worship. There has to be a distinction between the two, not a combining of them, and certainly not reasoning them away as many have and still do today:

"In the church we have many traditions, too. Some of them, such as the special ways in which a congregation celebrates Christmas or Easter, help us draw closer to [Elohim] even though we may not be able to define or support the practices from Scripture. By using the words traditional and contemporary to talk about types of worship, we acknowledge that a good bit of what we do has developed from years of practice," Vol. 5: Acts. *Holman New Testament Commentary; Holman Reference* (245) by Gangel, K. O.

The tradition of men, when it comes to covering up Yahweh's Word or effectively causing false worship, is something that the Messiah was, and still is, against. It is also something Yahweh does not desire of us, but rather affirms He hates it (read again, Deuteronomy 12:30-32). Remember how They do not change and how the Bible is one Book that is united in its presentation.

Religious leaders of the time said, "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don't wash their hands before they eat!" Yahshua replied, "And why do you break the command of Yahweh for the sake of your tradition? For Yahweh said, 'Honor your father and mother' and 'anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.' But you say that if a man says to his father or mother, 'Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is a gift devoted to Elohim,' he is not to 'honor his father' with it. Thus you nullify the Word of Yahweh for the sake of your tradition. You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: 'These people honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me. They worship Me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men,'" Matthew 15:2-9 NIV.

Elder David Brett

## Question and Answer

**Q.** Will you please comment on Isaiah 1:13-14?

**A.** This passage is sometimes used in claiming that the Feasts are no longer necessary. Here is how it reads:

*Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto Me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with it; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates: they are a trouble unto Me; I am weary to bear them.*

First, if Isaiah is nullifying the Feasts and Sabbath, then he is violating Yahweh's very command to observe the Feasts and Sabbath as a statute "forever" (Lev. 23:14, 21, 31, 41). In addition, he would be contradicting what he himself wrote in the book of Isaiah about the necessity of the new moons and Sabbaths (Isa. 66:23, 56:4; 58:10, as well as Yahweh's ways and laws, which include His Feasts (Isaiah 2:3).

For the proper understanding, we need to know the reason Isaiah wrote the passage. The context is found in verse 2 of the chapter. Judah was in rebellion against Yahweh. Isaiah calls them a sinful nation, evildoers that have corrupted The Way (Pro. 10:29; Acts 18:25-26) and forsaken Yahweh and gone backward (Isa. 1:4).

Then in verse 10, he issues a scathing denunciation of Judah's ruler, comparing them to those of Sodom and Gomorrah. He invokes the law of Yahweh, as he does 12 times in the book. The law included the proper 7th day Sabbath and Feasts of Yahweh. So we see that Judah is apostatizing and in rebellion against the laws of Yahweh. They had debased themselves and polluted True Worship.

Now in verse 1:13-14 Isaiah says that because their hearts aren't right and their sins have separated them from Yahweh, that even their worship is polluted. Notice in verse 14 he says "your" new moons and "your" appointed feasts My soul hates. We are to strive to be blameless so we do not suffer the same accusations.

## New Moon Reports

As a service to brethren and those who are willing to look for the new moon each month, we have three ways of sending in and receiving reports:

**1. Website at [newmoonreport.org](http://newmoonreport.org) 2. New moon APP 3. Call-in**

In order first, the website gives the most information and may be the easiest to use. Secondly, the APP is for Android phones only, at this time, but can be downloaded from the [newmoonreport.org](http://newmoonreport.org) site or from the Google Play store. And third, the call-in reporting can be done by calling us at the office (573) 642-4100, but is ONLY for the North American Region. You will be able to sign up for confirmations and non-confirmations each month via a call center service. Call us with your phone number, to be added to this service. It is free to you, as well as the other services already mentioned.



## Bible Correspondence Course



The Bible Correspondence Course is available both online and in hard copy form. A passing grade of 70% will move one forward through the course which covers Yahweh's Assembly in Yahshua's *Fundamentals of Faith* in great detail.

A certificate of completion will be given to all who complete the course which is made of twenty one lessons, three of which cover two subjects each.

Yahweh's written Word is a lifelong study and none of us will fully comprehend in this life all that there is to know within its pages, but with Yahweh's Spirit involved we can grow to the level and maturity of Yahshua the

Messiah and live a blameless life as those for which before us have striven: "...as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless" (Phil. 3:6).

The Bible Correspondence Course goes forth, as does all the other literature from Yahweh's Assembly in Yahshua, to prepare a people who are seeking after Yahweh's own heart to rule with the King of kings and Sovereign of sovereigns. Contact us to get started or you can start online today.



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“Have you gotten all the gifts on your lists? If you need a loan, we can help. Upon loan approval, we can assist you with a loan of up to \$4,000.00. Why in the world would you go anywhere else?” read the seasonal solicitation come from the local branch of a national finance company.

But we have a question ourselves. “Why in the world would you finance ‘running to an excess’” (1 Pet. 4:4) with a loan of up to \$4,000.00 to get all the gifts on your Holiday Shopping lists?”

Indeed, “why in the world” would any subject themselves to the company’s usual high interest credit underwriting policies to get all the gifts on their Holiday Shopping lists? And who started this Holiday Shopping mania anyway?

Its roots retire to ancient Rome’s observance of Saturnalia ... the worship of Tammuz as the sun-deity, Mithras – a creation of the ancient, pagan mystery religions of Egypt and Persia – and gift-giving (the annual greed-fest) is but one component of a pagan tradition that has rewarded retailers a commercial bonanza which prompts yet another question: “Why in the world would anyone professing faith in Yahweh, learn, and then perpetuate the vain customs of the heathen in their service to their Elohim?” (Jer. 10:2-3; Deut. 12:30).

Connect with YAIY.org to help life go right at the intersection of faith and culture.

## Prayer List

Dolores Parker, David & Barbara Creel, Charlie Pelton, Robert Dorchester, Karen van Schalkwyk, Elder Lionel and Sandra Gets, Diana Murphy, Stella Rogers, Sean Rogers and Family, Loretta Reyes and Family, Michael Hutchinson, Al J. Pagano, Heidi Fleischmann, Chauncey Hargrove, Winifred Marie, Charles Scott Jr. and Sr., David & Nancy Wilson Family/Friends, Terryn Willard, Jerry Castle, Marilyn Montague, Jordan Vira and Family, Ryan C. Irving, Leny Richa, Gary Deerwester, Cody J. Malone, Edward Napper, Larry Skinner, Israel Omotayo family, Mike Coffey, Eric Perkins, Dustin Spears Family/Friends, Kaoru Higa, David Miller, Michelle Williams, Mary Giles Family, Laurie Hernandez, Thomas Herndon Family, Danny O’Connor Family, David Clay, Karl Russel, Ricardo Marta, and Mari Orteg, Joe Norman, Charlene Jeffries, Marilyn Patterson, Kenneth Faulkner, Linda Roberson Family, Troy Fenton, Rakesh (Ruel) and Rajeshri (Ruth) Awale, Lucas Bentley Family, Kenya Washington, Ron Jernigam, John Cedillo Family, Daniel Montoya Family, Ron Levan Family, Dalten Mason, Alison Roberts, Sharon Norris, Morgan and Diane Brown, Sarah Anees, Michael Johnson and Family, Bob Covey and Family. Also include in your prayers individuals seeking Yahweh from within prison facilities and for their families; plus overseas brethren and especially for the peace of Jerusalem (Psa. 122:6). The world’s leaders could also use our prayers (Jer. 29:7; 1 Tim. 2:2).



*And give Him no rest, till He establish, and till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth, Isaiah 62:7.*