

What Encyclopedias Say About The Origins of Christmas

The word "Christmas" means "Mass of Christ," or, as it came to be shortened, "Christ- Mass." It came to non-Christians and Protestants from the Roman Catholic Church. And where did they get it? NOT from the New Testament--NOT from the Bible--NOT from the original apostles who were personally instructed by Christ--but it gravitated in the fourth century into the Roman Church from paganism. Since the celebration of Christmas has come to the world from the Roman Catholic Church, and has no authority but that of the Roman Catholic Church, let us examine the Catholic Encyclopedia. 1911 edition, published by that church. Under the heading "Christmas," you will find: "Christmas was not among the earliest festivals of the Church ... the first evidence of the feast is from Egypt." "Pagan customs centering around the January calends gravitated to Christmas. .. And in the same encyclopedia. under the heading "Natal Day," we find that the early Catholic father, Origen, acknowledged this truth: " ... In the Scriptures, no one [who obeyed God] is recorded to have kept a feast or held a great banquet on his birthday. It is only sinners [like Pharaoh and Herod] who make great rejoicings over the day in which they were born into this world .. (emphasis ours). Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1946 edition, has this: "Christmas (i.e., the Mass of Christ). ... Christmas was not among the earliest festivals of the church " It was not instituted by Christ or the apostles, or by Bible authority. It was picked up afterward from paganism. The Encyclopedia Americana, 1944 edition, says: "Christmas It was, according to many authorities, not celebrated in the first centuries of the Christian church, as the Christian usage in general was to celebrate the death of remarkable persons rather than their birth " (The "Communion," which is instituted by New Testament Bible authority, is a memorial of the death of Christ.) " ... A feast was established in memory of this event [Christ's birth] in the fourth century. In the fifth century the Western Church ordered it to be celebrated forever on the day of the old Roman feast of the birth of Sol, as no certain knowledge of the day of Christ's birth existed." Now notice! These recognized historical authorities show Christmas was not observed by Christians for the first two or three hundred years--a period longer than the entire history of the United States as a nation! It got into the Western, or Roman, Church, by the fourth century AD. It was not until the fifth century that the Roman Church ordered it to be celebrated as an official Christian festival!

The Real Origin of Christmas

But if we got Christmas from the Roman Catholics, and they got it from paganism, where did the pagans get it? Where, when, and what was its real origin? It originated in ancient Egypt in the days of King Osiris and Queen Isis, and their son Horus, about 3,000 B.C. Yes, it stems from roots whose beginning was long before the Flood! From many ancient writings, considerable is learned of this man, who started in Egypt a great organized worldly apostasy from God that has dominated this world until now. After the untimely death of King Osiris, his wife, Isis, propagated the doctrine of the survival of Osiris as a spirit being. She claimed a full-grown evergreen tree sprang overnight from a dead tree stump, which symbolized the springing forth unto new life of the dead Osiris. On each anniversary of his birth, she claimed, Osiris would visit the evergreen tree and leave gifts upon it. December 25th was the birthday of King Osiris reborn as the son Horus. This is the real origin of the Christmas tree. Through her scheming and designing, Isis became the "Queen of Heaven, " and Osiris under various names, became the reborn "divine son of heaven. " Through the generations, in this idolatrous worship, Osiris also became, among the later Phoenicians, Baal the Sun-god. In this false system, reintroduced at Babylon, after the Flood, by Nimrod (see Genesis 10 and 11), the "Mother and Child" (Isis and Osiris reborn) became chief objects of worship. This worship of "Mother and Child" spread over the world. The names varied in different countries and languages. In Asia the worship passed under the names of Cybele and Deoious. In Rome, Fortuna and Jupiterpuer. Even in Greece, China, Japan and Tibet is to be found the counterpart of the Madonna, long before the birth of Christ! Thus, during the fourth and fifth centuries, when the pagans of the Roman world were "accepting" the new popular "Christianity" by the hundreds of thousands, carrying their old pagan customs and beliefs along with them, merely cloaking them with Christian-sounding names, the Madonna and "Mother and Child" idea also became popularized, especially at Christmas time.

Every Christmas season you'll hear sung and chanted dozens of times the hymn "Silent Night, Holy Night," with its familiar "Mother and Child" theme. We, who have been born in such a world, reared and steeped in these things all our lives, have been taught to revere these things as holy and sacred. We never questioned to see where they came from--whether they came from the Bible, or from pagan idolatry! We are shocked to learn the truth-- some, unfortunately, take offense at the plain truth! But God commands His faithful ministers, "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression!" Shocking as these facts are, they are the plain facts of history and the Bible! The origin of Christmas goes back to ancient times. It is bound up in the apostasy which has gripped a deceived world these many centuries! In Egypt, it was always believed that the husband of Isis (Egyptian name for "Queen of Heaven ") was reborn as the son Horus on December 25th. Through the influence of Egypt and, later, Babylon over civilization, the nations celebrated this famous birthday over most of the known world for centuries before the birth of Christ. December 25th is not the birthday of Jesus the true Christ! The apostles and early true Church never celebrated Christ's birthday at any time. There is no command or instruction to celebrate it in the Bible-- rather, the celebrating of birthdays is a pagan, not a Christian custom.

How This Pagan Custom Got into the Church

Then how did this pagan custom creep into the Western Christian world? The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge explains it clearly, in its article on "Christmas": "How much the date of the festival depended upon the pagan Brumalia (Dec. 25) following the Saturnalia (Dec. 17-24), and celebrating the shortest day of the year and the 'new sun' ... cannot be accurately determined. The pagan Saturnalia and Brumalia were too deeply entrenched in popular custom to be set aside by Christian influence The pagan festival with its riot and merrymaking was so popular that Christians were glad of an excuse to continue its celebration with little change in spirit and in manner. Christian preachers of the West and the Near East protested against the unseemly frivolity with which Christ's birthday was celebrated, while Christians of Mesopotamia accused their Western brethren of idolatry and sun worship for adopting as Christian this pagan festival. Remember, the Roman world had been pagan. Prior to the fourth century, Christians were few in number, though increasing, and were persecuted by the government and by pagans. But, with the advent of Constantine as emperor, who made his profession of Christianity in the fourth century, placing Christianity on an equal footing with paganism, people of the Roman world began to accept this now-popular Christianity by the hundreds of thousands. But remember, these people had grown up in pagan customs, chief of which was this idolatrous festival of December 25th. It was a festival of merrymaking, with its special spirit. They enjoyed it! They didn't want to give it up! Now this same article in the New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge explains how the recognition by Constantine of Sunday, which had been the day of pagan sun worship, and how the influence of the pagan Manichaeism, which identified the SON of God with the physical SUN, gave these pagans of the fourth century, now turning over wholesale to "Christianity," their excuse for calling their pagan festival date of December 25th (birthday of the SUN-god), the birthday of the SON of God. And that is how "Christmas" became fastened on our Western world! We may call it by another name, but it's the same old pagan sun-worshipping festival still! The only change is in what we call it ! You can call a rabbit a "lion," but it's still a rabbit, just the same. Again from the Encyclopaedia Britannica: "Certain Latins, as early as 354, may have transferred the birthday from January 6th to December 25, which was then a Mithraic feast. ... or birthday of the Unconquered SUN ... The Syrians and Armenians, who clung to January 6th, accused the Romans of sun worship and idolatry, contending ... that the feast of December 25th, had been invented by disciples of Cerinthus "