

Did You Know ...

... that the origin of Easter is found in the Bible? (No, it's not the King James Version's mistranslation of *pascha* in Acts 12:4.) The Old Testament mentions a pagan goddess from which the festival of Easter is derived. This goddess was the goddess of fertility and sexual lust, known as Ashtaroth or Ashtoreth (example: "*And they put his weapons in the temple of Ashtaroth ...*" 1 Samuel 31:10). Each spring, the pagans would set up phallic poles called Asherahs under trees on high hills and celebrate their fertility festival with unbridled sexual perversion. This is how the May Pole originated. When the Israelites incorporated this into their worship, God did not commend them for making it easier for the pagans to convert to Judaism; instead, He was provoked to anger: "*And Jehovah shall strike Israel as the reed waves in the water, and shall pluck up Israel from off this good land that He gave to their fathers. And [He] shall scatter them beyond the River, because they have made their Asherahs, provoking Jehovah to anger ... And Judah did evil in the sight of Jehovah, and they provoked Him to jealousy above all their fathers did by their sins that they had sinned. And they built, they also, high places for themselves, and standing pillars, and Asherahs on every high hill, and under every green tree*" (1 Kings 14:15,22-23). In Exodus 34:13 and Deuteronomy 12:3, the Israelites were commanded to destroy the Asherah poles, and in 2 Kings 23:13, King Josiah carried out demolition of the poles.

The Babylonians carried on the tradition with Ishtar (Astarte to the Phoenicians), their goddess of love and reproduction. Incorporated into this was the egg — both as a sign of fertility and a reminder of the myth that Ishtar was hatched out of a huge egg that fell into the Euphrates River. In Egypt, Isis was the goddess of motherhood and fertility, and rabbits were symbols of birth and life. It is plain as to the origin of eggs and rabbits as symbols of Easter.

The Saxon equivalent of Ashtaroth/Ishtar/Astarte was the goddess Eostre, from which we get the word "oestrus," which refers to an animal in heat. According to the myth, Eostre opened the gates of Valhalla to Baldur, the sun god, who had been killed — thus the sun god was resurrected. This has origins in the Persian vernal equinox celebration of the rebirth/resurrection of Mithra, the sun-god.

The "transformation" from Ishtar/Eostre to Easter is easy to see,

True Gospel Publications
P.O. Box 995
West Rutland, VT 05777
U.S.A.

www.outsidethecamp.org

even from the name of the celebration. When the Roman Catholics, eager to Catholicize the pagans and keep their own converts from celebrating the openly pagan festivals, wanted to choose a day to celebrate the resurrection of the Roman Catholic god-man (whom they call Jesus, which is a different Jesus than the true Jesus), they decided to use an already-existing festival and to make some minor changes. And, unlike Christ-mass, they didn't even significantly change the name of the celebration! So when you think about celebrating "Easter" this year, think Eostre. And think of the abominable worshipers of Ashteroth and Ishtar.

Then we come to the second most sacred day on the Roman Catholic calendar — Christmas. The following should make the point as plain as the nose on your face: The aforementioned sun-god (Mithra), who "rose again" on the vernal equinox, was born on December 25! December 25 was the day of the winter solstice according to the Julian calendar, and the Mithra worshipers designated it as dies natalis Solis Invicti (birthday of the invincible sun). According to the New Catholic Encyclopedia (v.3, 1967: McGraw Hill), "On Dec. 25, 274, Aurelian had proclaimed the sun-god principal patron of the empire and dedicated a temple to him in the Campus Martius. Christmas originated at a time when the cult of the sun was particularly strong in Rome." Thus, the Roman Catholic church, always resourceful, decided to celebrate the birthday of its god on the same day as the birthday of the sun-god and to incorporate elements of paganism into its own worship, so as to woo the pagans away from their "wicked ways" and into the Roman Catholic church and to retain the converts who might be tempted to celebrate the openly pagan festivals. Since many of the pagan festivals centered around equinoxes and solstices, there were other pagan celebrations that the Roman Catholics incorporated into their own celebrations. The pagan winter equinox festival of Saturnalia, characterized by merriment, evergreen trees, and exchanges of gifts, became part of Christmas, as did the occultic practices of the Nordic and Druid pagans that included yule, ivy, mistletoe, and elves.

What will you do with these hybrids of paganism and Roman Catholicism? Totally shunning the practices of the pagans was of such utmost importance that God said this: "*You shall not bow down to their gods, and you shall not serve them. And you shall not do according to their works. But you shall surely tear them down, and*

you shall surely smash their pillars. And you shall serve Jehovah your God, and He will bless your bread and your water. And I will remove sickness from your midst. There shall not be one miscarrying, nor one barren in your land. I will fulfill the number of your days" (Exodus 23:24-26). The command to the people of God to not learn the ways of the pagans and the subsequent ridicule of pagan practices is very much applicable to us today: "*So says Jehovah, You shall not be goaded to the way of the nations ... For the ordinances of the people [are] vanity. For one cuts a tree out of the forest with an axe, the work of the hands of the craftsman. They adorn it with silver and with gold; they fasten them with nails and hammers, so that it will not wobble"* (Jeremiah 10:2-4).

God condemns those who would claim to worship Him but who retain the ways and symbols of the pagans: "*You have set your couch on a lofty and high mountain; yea, you went up there to sacrifice a sacrifice. And you have set up your memorial behind the door and post"* (Isaiah 57:7-8 — "memorial" meaning "pagan symbol"). Would you dare worship God in public and then have the signs of the pagan feasts in your house? Would you dare have these pagan signs in your house of worship? And even if you did not have any of these signs in your house and place of worship, would you dare even celebrate "Christmas" (Christ-mass) and "Easter" (Eostre), which were instituted by the devil's agents as a marriage between the Roman Catholic whore and occultic paganism? Think about it.

- by Marc D. Carpenter