



Finding the Truth

Outlaw Christmas? Bah Humbug!

*By Daniel Rendelman
ravemet@comast.net*

Can you imagine America without Christmas? The idea seems preposterous as the jolly holiday has become engrained in the American culture. A recent poll shows that 92% of Americans, including atheists and Muslims, celebrate Christmas. This holiday brings people together with the hope of love and peace on earth. Right? Well, history records a different perspective.

The first settlers understood the dangers of Christmas. The yuletide was actually outlawed in America during the 1600s. In Boston from 1659 to 1661 those who exhibited the Christmas spirit were fined five shillings. In England Sir Oliver Cromwell led the ban as a means to rid the society of mistletoe, nativity scenes, and eggnog. Why ban Christmas? Beside the obvious lies about Santa Clause, is there something wrong with the holiday?

“The traditional customs connected with Christmas have developed from several sources as a result of the celebration of the birth of Christ mixed with the pagan agricultural and solar observations at midwinter. In the Roman world Saturnalia was a time of merrymaking and exchange of gifts. December 25 was also regarded as the birth date of the Iranian mystery god Mithras, the Sun of Righteousness,” Encyclopedia Britannica. Mithras worship started before Christ was born and continues unchanged to this day.

"Do not learn the practices of the heathen... 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 gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not," Jeremiah 10:2-4.

Followers of the Savior have been called to be "in the world but not of the world." 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil." The principle is that one should abstain from all practices of evil origin. This would include Christmas.

However, there is a winter holiday for believers who want to follow the example set by the Savior.

The world celebrates Christmas. The Messiah celebrated Chanukah in John 10:22-23, "And it was at Jerusalem during the Feast of Dedication, and it was winter. And the Messiah walked in the temple in Solomon's porch." Chanukah isn't just a Jewish holiday. It is a set apart time of rejoicing and reflection for all followers of the Bible. Believers are to follow the Savior's every example. Remember that the Savior was a Hebrew-speaking Jew. What Jew would be at the Temple during Chanukah and not join the celebration? John 10 clearly indicates that He rejoiced at Chanukah and thus put his seal of approval upon this day.

The Hebrew word "Chanukah" literally means "dedication." Chanukah is an eight day celebration that commemorates the dedication of the Temple, after it was desecrated by the Greek army. Christmas has pagan past but account of Chanukah is historical fact. Chanukah is based upon an actual military battle won by a small group of Hebrews. The Maccabee family led victory over the Syrian tyrant, Antiochus Epiphanies, in the 2nd century B.C. Chanukah is NOT the "Jewish Christmas," but an altogether separate celebration of victory over paganism. There are games, songs, and traditions that recall the miracle of Chanukah without pagan roots.

Today, some organizations seek to ban Christmas as a means of political correctness. Perhaps the founding fathers were right when they outlawed Christmas for spiritual correctness. To learn more about Christmas or local Chanukah celebrations visit www.emetministries.com