

Beyond the Da Vinci Code – The *Mystery Babylon* CODE

The “Da Vinci Code” once gripped the world’s interest, to the consternation of Christian and Catholic authorities and religious leaders. Of course, the book is mostly fiction and fantasy. But it touches on a reality which is much more surreptitious and dangerous to all Christians everywhere. Could BILLIONS be deceived by an enormous ANCIENT SECRET CONSPIRACY by false, posturing priests and ministers who have usurped the authority of Christ, rejected the true message of Jesus, and subverted the Christian churches as a whole? Has there been an ages-old PLOT to destroy true Christianity, by stealth? Here is the shocking, mind-boggling TRUE story, and the evidence to back it up!

William F. Dankenbring

Some years ago the world’s attention was caught by an explosive new movie and book, called “The Da Vinci Code.” Multiple millions have read the book and seen the movie, starring Tom Hanks, which was a smash hit around the world. The movie and book, in novel form, powerfully contends that Christianity itself is a fraud, and that the Catholic Church in particular has been guilty of covering up the supposed “truth” that Jesus Christ was married, had children, and that vast evidence has been covered up and hidden which allegedly “proves” this to be the case – that Jesus Christ was not the “Son of God,” but rather a great human teacher and prophet. The book suggests that many other “gospels” were written which show this, contrary to the gospels in the authorized canon of the New Testament.

Many of these claims are pure bunkum. Yet for the uninformed, they throw great clouds of dust in the air, creating doubt as to the authenticity of God's Word, particularly the New Testament!

Historically, the canon of the New Testament, as we have it today, is absolutely accurate and was the accepted canon of books *used in the early centuries of the church*. In the days of Jesus Christ, there was a body of literature called "The Scriptures" which was commonly regarded by the Jews as having come from God. They called it the Word of God, and Christ Himself acknowledged it (John 10:35; 5:39). As the first century writings of the apostles appeared, they were added to these Jewish Scriptures and held in the same sacred regard throughout the new scattered churches. By widespread and common acceptance, they came to be regarded as inspired Scripture as well. They were put together into a "canon," or list of original and authorized list of books, by the apostle Paul, and finally by the apostle John, that last remaining apostle who died around the 90's A.D. Any writings by any Christians after that date were automatically excluded.

While the apostles were yet living, they had begun under their own supervision collecting their writings to be made use of by the churches. Paul claimed his teaching was inspired by God (I Cor.2:7-13; 14:37; I Thess.2:13). Peter accepted Paul's writings as inspired "Scripture" (II Pet.3:15-16). John also claimed the book of Revelation was "revealed" to him by Christ (Rev.1:1-2). These writings were intended to be read in the churches (Col.4:16; I Thess.5:27; II Thess.2:15), including after their "departure" (II Pet.3:15; 3:1-2). Paul quoted as "Scripture", the declaration, "The laborer is worthy of his hire" (I Tim.5:18), a statement found only in Matthew 10:10 and Luke 10:7, thus categorizing those two gospels as inspired Scripture.

For more discussion and insight, I refer you to *Halley's Pocket Bible Handbook*, and various Bible Dictionaries, and F. F. Bruce's books, *The Books and the Parchments: How We Got Our English Bible*, and *The Canon of Scripture*.

In the fourth century and thereabouts, various Gnostic sects arose, claiming other "inspired" books and made up their own "list" or "canon" of inspired writings, their own "New Testaments," as it were. As a result, at that time, to maintain order and to refute the Gnostic canons, the visible Church had to make up its own official "canon" of Scriptures. It was based on all the commonly accepted New Testament books which were then in use by the Christian churches throughout the Mediterranean region. It was because of these spurious "canons" coming on the scene, devised by heretics like Marcion (circa A.D. 140), and others, which compelled the Church at that time to designate and put its stamp of approval upon all those New Testament books which were already in common use in the Churches.

The canonization of the New Testament, itself, was no Catholic "conspiracy." This was a simple step of prudence – to make a final stamp of approval and authenticity upon those books already in common usage at that time. A formal decree recognizing the Christian canon was not made until 405 A.D. – long after Constantine's time.

The principle contention and focus of the novel is the supposed "marriage" of Jesus Christ to Mary Magdalene, and alleged descendants from that marriage called the Merovingians,

and a mysterious group called the Priory of Zion, whose supposed task is to safeguard this “bombshell” knowledge and protect the alleged “heirs.” Allegedly, Isaac Newton, Victor Hugo, and Leonardo Da Vinci were among its members. However, there is no real evidence to support this fantasy. The truth is, the Priory of Zion documents were proven conclusively to have been an elaborate HOAX in the 1990’s. The society, as Dan Brown the novel’s author depicted it, never existed!

Was Jesus married, as the novel claims? The four gospels and New Testament clearly would have stated it if Christ has been married to a woman. But they do not. The Jewish historian Josephus plainly states that while most Jewish men of the first century married, certain ones who were holy men did not. This would include John the Baptist, Jeremiah, an earlier figure, and even the apostle Paul (I Cor.7:1-8). Knowing in advance that He was going to die for our sins a horrible death on a cross, Yeshua would not have married a woman. His real bride is the CHURCH itself! (Matt.25:1-13; see also Rev.19:8).

The story that Christ had a “companion” is mentioned in a pseudo-gospel account called the Gospel of Philip, a work of Gnosticism which arose in the second century. However, the Greek word for “companion” is the same one used to denote a “co-worker,” “business associate,” or a “companion in faith.” The true canonical gospels Matthew and Luke mention no marriage, and they date from the first century and are testified to by the apostle Paul himself as to their being inspired Scripture, as I mentioned previously. As the gospel writers show, it was not the purpose of Christ to marry and have physical children, but to come, preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God, and to give His life on the cross, deliberately, and knowingly, and thereby to pay the penalty for the sins of mankind, dying in our stead (John 3:16).

A Darker Plot

However, another part of the Da Vinci Code is remarkably on target, pinpointing the outline of a vast conspiracy which did occur over hundreds of years, especially during the fourth century, the time of Constantine! When we separate the facts from the fiction, we find the Da Vinci Code touches briefly on the outline of a real, true “vast conspiracy” which occurred in the Christian church about that time, which if fully understood would shock and stun every Sunday-going Christian and church member of the mainstream churches, today!

Huge Christian churches may huff and puff, and remain in total denial, but the facts of history are salient and irrefutable. The Da Vinci Code is not all nonsense, as major Christian organizations claim. Portions of the Da Vinci code are absolutely “right on,” concerning the great changes made in the fourth century, during the time of Roman emperor Constantine. The novel gives an intriguing glimpse into this other “mystery,” which it nails.

Dan Brown has one of his antagonists point out that Emperor Constantine was a wily, clever man, whose empire was threatened with open revolt and division, because of warring religious interests. The character says, “Constantine converted the sun-worshipping pagans to Christianity. By fusing pagan symbols, dates, and rituals into the growing Christian tradition, he created a *kind of hybrid religion* that was acceptable to both parties” (p.252). The character goes on, “The vestiges of pagan religion in Christian symbology are undeniable. Egyptian sun disks

became the halos of Catholic saints. Pictograms of Isis nursing her miraculously conceived son Horus became the blueprint for our modern images of the Virgin Mary nursing Baby Jesus. And virtually all the elements of the Catholic ritual – the miter, the altar, the doxology, and communion, the act of ‘God-eating’ – were taken directly from pagan mystery religions.”

Is this really true? The character continues, “The pre-Christian god Mithras – called the Son of God and the Light of the World – was born on December 25, died, was buried in a rock tomb, and then resurrected in three days. By the way, December 25 is also the birthday of Osiris, Adonis, and Dionysus. The newborn Krishna was presented with gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Even Christianity’s weekly holy day was stolen from the pagans. . . Originally . . . Christianity honored the Jewish Sabbath of Saturday, but Constantine shifted it to coincide with the pagans’ veneration day of the sun. . . . To this day, most churchgoers attend church on Sunday morning with no idea that they are there on account of the pagan sun god’s weekly tribute – *Sunday*” (*ibid.*).

This should certainly be “shocking,” if true? Is it really true? The answer is an overwhelming, thundering *YES!* It is absolutely TRUE!

The history of this “Great Deception,” or “Great Conspiracy,” is fascinating, and well documented. Far, far, far beyond and above the speculations of the *Da Vinci Code* and its “conspiracy theory,” there is a far more ancient, vast and fundamental conspiracy which has been “covered up” and hidden from view by the professing Christian and Catholic churches. This cover-up involves the very origins of the vast professing Christian churches around us, today!

Dan Brown’s “conspiracy” only goes back to the fourth century, after Christ, but the true facts show that a tremendous, horrendous, awesome conspiracy concerning the church goes back much further than that – back to at least 2,000 years before Christ walked upon the planet earth!

The mind-blowing truth is that author Dan Brown touched tangentially on a far vaster conspiracy which HAS deceived the entire world. It foreshadowed the Messiahship of Christ and subsequently hi-jacked the infant, toddling Christian Church, subverting it from the inside out, cloaking itself with “Christian” code words!

This plot should have astounded the world – but the world is still BLIND to its existence, power, scope, and diabolical purpose and goal – the destruction of all humanity.

The “Christianity” we see all around us today, celebrating Easter, Christmas, Valentine’s Day, and which parades itself as the true Church of Christ, is anything but “Christian.” Millions of people have been deceived – blind-sided – and have no idea of the truth!

Religious Deception Foretold

The plot was foretold long ago. In the Bible itself we read of “that serpent of old, called the Devil, and Satan, *who deceives the whole world*” (Rev.12:9). This vast, global and ancient conspiracy began in the earliest days of the human race, when that old serpent beguiled Eve in the garden of Eden, leading her to question God, His motives, His authority, and appealing to her

desire for wisdom, tricked her into disobeying the commandment of God, and her husband with her (Gen.3:1-7). At that time, God promised Adam and Eve that one day there would be a “Seed” from the woman who would “bruise” the head of the devil (the deceiver), and deliver mankind from his deceptive clutches – the first promise of a future Deliverer or Messiah (Gen.3:15). The Hebrew word for “bruise” here is *shuwph*, meaning “to gape, i.e. snap at, fig. to overwhelm: -- break, bruise, cover.” To “break” his head means to destroy him (Heb.2:14). When that would be fulfilled was not mentioned at that time.

From the beginning the devil tried to palm himself off as the true “God” and invented many religions to lead mankind to worship him in various guises and forms. He inspired men to begin different religions, to counterfeit the truth of God, to lead them away from the true God. Before the Flood, he used Adam’s son Cain to begin his diabolical apostasy and false religion. In this religion, the “cross” began to be worshiped and used as a talisman or good luck charm (supposedly the “mark” God placed on Cain to prevent men from killing him, after he had killed Abel his brother).

Cain saw himself as the “promised Messiah” and began his own religion, a religion of gross sensuality and wickedness, eventually leading the whole world before the Deluge into a time of corruption and violence, the end-result of religious perversion (Gen.6:11-12). This false religion was called “the way of Cain” (Jude 11). This is in contrast to “the Way” of the Christian, the “Way” which the world calls “a sect,” or “heresy” (Acts 24:14).

Cupid-Nimrod

This evil, seductive religious “way” manifested itself this side of the Flood, through the agency of Cush, the son of Ham, the son of Noah, and Cush’s son Nimrod and his wife Semiramis. Nimrod became the first “mighty man” after the Flood – the first world ruling tyrant and oppressor (Gen.10:8-10). He led the building of the Tower of Babel, to “emancipate” mankind from the rulership of the God of heaven. He became the world’s first “Messiah” figure this side of the Flood, and became worshipped in many nations around the world of that time, under different names in different nations and languages.

One of his many names was “Cupid.” The origin of Cupid and his prominence in pagan religion is discussed in Hislop’s *Two Babylons*. He mentions that the ancient poet Aristophanes declared “we are informed that he from whom both ‘mighty ones’ and gods derived their origin, was none other than the winged boy Cupid.” In a footnote Hislop declares, “Aristophanes says that Eros or Cupid produced the ‘birds’ and ‘gods’ by ‘mingling all things.’ This evidently points to the meaning of the name Bel, which signifies at once ‘the mingler’ and ‘the confounder.’ This name properly belonged to the father of Nimrod, but, as the son is represented as identified with the father, we have evidence that the name descended to the son and others by inheritance” (page 40).

Cupid occupied the very same position as Ninus the “son” did to Rhea, the mother of the gods. Nimrod was the first of the “mighty ones” after the Flood, as we read in Genesis, “Cush

became the father of *Nimrod*; he was the first on earth to become a mighty warrior. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD” (Gen.10:8-9).

Thus Cupid, the god of love, was none other than the infant NIMROD, the one who taught rebellion against the LORD, Yehovah, after the Flood – the one who led the revolt against God’s laws, and who attempted to build the tower of Babel, to strike against heaven and the heavenly host! Cupid is pictured as a child hunter, with bow and arrows, and grew up to be “the mighty hunter before [i.e. *against*] the LORD.”

Among the pagans, “The ‘Heart’ was one of the sacred symbols of Osiris when he was born again, and appeared as Harpocrates, or the infant divinity, borne in the arms of his mother Isis” (*ibid.*, p.188). The fruit of the Egyptian perseia plant was sacred to him as it resembled the human heart in shape. He was frequently represented with a heart, or the heart-shaped fruit of the perseia, much as Cupid is often represented with a “heart.”

Says Hislop, “Thus the boy-god came to be regarded as the ‘god of the heart,’ in other words, as Cupid, or the god of love. To identify this infant divinity, with his father ‘the mighty hunter,’ he was equipped with ‘bow and arrows.’ In the hands of the poets, this sportive boy-god was celebrated as taking aim with his gold-tipped shafts at the hearts of mankind. His real character, however, as the above statement shows . . . was far higher and of a very different kind. He was the woman’s seed. Venus and her son Cupid, then, were none other than the Madonna and the child” (*ibid.*).

“The heart,” in Chaldee, is “Bel.” The worship of the “sacred Heart” is the worship of the “Sacred Bel,” the mighty one out of Babylon, or Nimrod! In time this became the “Sacred Heart” so prominent in the Roman Catholic Church.

Semiramis = Venus = Nemesis

Rhea, the mother of Ninus [Nimrod], was Semiramis, “the mother of the gods.” Semiramis also became Nimrod’s wife. Says Alexander Hislop, “The Chaldean Mysteries can be traced up to the days of Semiramis, who lived only a few centuries after the flood, and who is known to have impressed upon them the image of her own depraved and polluted mind. That beautiful but abandoned queen of Babylon was not only herself a paragon of unbridled lust and licentiousness, but in the Mysteries which she had a chief hand in forming, she was worshiped as Rhea, the great ‘MOTHER’ of the gods, with such atrocious rites as identified her with Venus, the MOTHER of all impurity, and raised the very city where she had reigned to a bad eminence among the nations, as the grand seat at once of idolatry and consecrated prostitution” (*Two Babylons*, p.5).

Cupid’s mother, Venus, is also called “Nemesis” by the ancients. Nemesis was the “goddess of revenge.” Pausanius comments on the stature of Nemesis, saying, “Among the Smyrneans, however, who possess the most holy images of Nemesis, I perceived afterwards that these statues had wings. For, as this goddess principally pertains to lovers, on this account they may be supposed to have given wings to Nemesis, as well as to love,” – that is, Cupid (Hislop, “Appendix,” page 291).

Hislop asserts, “Though a goddess of love and a goddess of revenge might seem very remote in their characters from one another, yet it is not difficult to see how this might have come about. The goddess who was revealed to the initiated in the Mysteries, in the most alluring manner, was also known to be most unmerciful and unrelenting in taking vengeance upon those who revealed these Mysteries; for every such one who was discovered was unsparingly put to death” (p.291).

Says Hislop, “Thus, then, the cup-bearing goddess was at once Venus, the goddess of licentiousness, and Nemesis, the stern and unmerciful one to all who rebelled against her authority. How remarkable a type of the woman, whom John saw, described in one aspect as the ‘Mother of harlots,’ and in another as ‘Drunken with the blood of the saints’” (*ibid.*; compare Rev.17:5-6).

Mother and Child

Therefore we see that the Mother of the gods, Venus-Nemesis-Rhea-Semiramis, was also the mother of Nimrod-Ninus-Cupid. This “mother-and-child” worship was a pagan perversion of the true Messiah, Yeshua or Jesus, the son of Mary. Mary was not a god or goddess, but a chosen vehicle to bear the Christ-child, and therefore highly favored and blessed among mankind. But she was not divine, nor was her conception “immaculate.” She was merely a human being, blessed of God to be the physical parent of Christ, when He came into human flesh (Matt.1:18-21; Luke 1:28-35).

But the arrogance and conceit of Nimrod and Semiramis knew no boundaries. Says Hislop, “The Babylonians, in their popular religion, supremely worshiped a goddess Mother and a Son, who was represented in pictures and in images as an infant or child in his mother’s arms. From Babylon this worship of the Mother and the Child spread to the ends of the earth. In Egypt, the Mother and the Child were worshiped under the names of Isis and Osiris. In India even to this day as Isi and Iswara; in Asia as Cybele and Deoius; in Pagan Rome as Fortuna and Jupiter-puer, or Jupiter, the boy; in Greece, as Ceres, the Great Mother, with the babe at her breast, or as Irene, the goddess of Peace, with the boy Plutus in her arms; and even in Tibet, in China, and Japan, the Jesuit missionaries were astonished to find the counterpart of Madonna and her child as devoutly worshiped as in Pagan Rome itself; Shing Moo, the Holy Mother in China, being represented with a child in her arms” (Hislop, p.20-21).

Semiramis was worshiped by the Babylonians and other eastern nations as Rhea, the great Goddess “Mother.” However, she derived her own glory from her son, as well as her claims to deification and divinity. Her son, Nimrod, or Cupid, was a person of great stature and immense powers, as well as personality and charisma – great personal magnetism. He was widely admired, and worshipped, and among the pagans was also known as Tammuz, and Bacchus, that is to say, “The Lamented One.” Thus Ninus-Nimrod-Cupid, the son of Semiramis, was a counterfeit “Son of God.” Women adored him. In the book of Daniel we read of an end-time world ruler who “shall pay no respect to the gods of his ancestors, *or to the one beloved by women*” (Dan.11:37, NRSV) – or “the desire of women” (NKJV) – that is, Nimrod! He provoked many women to jealousy, so much so that one idolatrous image of him was called “this

image of jealousy.” This image stood in the gateway entrance north of the Temple of God, right in God’s face, as it were. God brought Ezekiel to this north gateway, “to the seat of the image of jealousy, which provokes to jealousy,” “this image of jealousy,” where the people behaved by doing “great abominations” (Ezekiel 8:3, 5).

Some scholars think it was the image of Baal, others believe it was an image of Mars, and others Adonis or Tammuz. In reality, they were all at times representations of Nimrod! The image name agrees perfectly, however, with Adonis-Tammuz, or Cupid, represented as a beautiful youth, beloved by Venus (his mother and later wife!). In one myth, Mars, the paramour of Venus, was so jealous of Adonis that he sent a wild boar to attack him, which killed him with his two tusks. Hence it was the image of him who fell a victim to jealousy.

Ezekiel 8:14 speaks of women “weeping for Tammuz,” the idol-god who had been slain. All scholars agree that Tammuz signifies Adonis. Says Adam Clarke, it is Adonis who is likely the one called “The dead” (Lev.19:27-28; Deut.14:1), because he is worshiped as one dead. The women represented as worshiping him were probably adulteresses, and had suffered the jealousies of their husbands. And the outrageous image of this sexual apostate and seducer provoked God Himself to jealousy over His people who were straying from the right path.

Notice how this whole pagan panoply of gods and traditions were a Satanic COUNTERFEIT of the coming of the TRUE CHRIST, Yeshua the Messiah, who came and died for our sins on the stake in 30 A.D. Christ was the true “woman’s seed” who would one day defeat Satan the devil (Gen.3:15). But the pagans projected this great prophecy upon their own “Messiah”-“Saviour”, Nimrod, in his many forms and guises! They claimed he was the true “Christ”, a title which means “Anointed One.”

When in the fullness of time, the true Christ came on the scene, as recorded in the gospels of the New Testament, the old pagan Messiahs had preceded him, and even “died” in a counterfeit of the death of Christ, and were supposedly “resurrected”, in the pagan religious beliefs.

What very few people realize is how these ancient pagan beliefs, customs, and even religious holidays later became BLENDED in with the “Christianity” of the world, over the centuries, beginning most pronouncedly in the days of Constantine, emperor of Rome circa 325. A.D.!

Tracing the Subversion

The early apostles foretold it would occur. The apostle Peter wrote, warning, “There will be false teachers among you, who will SECRETLY bring in destructive heresies” (II Pet.2:1). He said, “Many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the WAY of TRUTH will be blasphemed” (v.2). The word translated “secretly” here is *pareisago* and means “to lead in aside,” “introduce surreptitiously.”

Jude also wrote, “For certain men have crept in UNNOTICED, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness

and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ” (Jude 4). The Greek word for “unnoticed” here is *pareisduno*, meaning “to settle in alongside,” “lodge stealthily,” “creep in unawares.”

It began happening during the first century itself. Paul warned the Galatian church, “I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a DIFFERENT GOSPEL” (Gal.1:6). He warned the church at Ephesus, “For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves” (Acts 20:29-30).

Soon whole churches began falling away from the truth and going astray. Paul warned, “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned to fables” (II Tim.4:3-4). The apostasy spread quickly, so much so that Paul wrote to Timothy saying, “This you know, that all those in Asia have turned away from me” (II Tim.1:15).

It had begun to happen, just as Paul had predicted. He described the process this way – “For the *MYSTERY* [“hidden truth,” margin] of lawlessness is already at work” (II Thess.2:7). The word for “mystery,” *musterion*, literally means “to shut the mouth,” “a secret or mystery (through the idea of silence imposed by initiation into religious rites).”

This age-old conspiracy is called here the “MYSTERY of lawlessness,” or “the mystery of iniquity” (KJV), “secret power of lawlessness” (NIV), “Mysterious Wickedness” (Good News Bible), “The *Amplified Bible* describes it as “that hidden principle of rebellion against constituted authority.”

It infiltrated the church. It wormed its way inside and gradually “took over” the reins of the visible churches. It did this covertly, so that almost no one was the wiser. Only a few caught on to the destruction and corruption that was occurring in the church around the Mediterranean world. The ancient PAGAN gods were incorporated into the church as “saints,” their festivals as “Christian” festivals, renamed, and their rites and ceremonies were now “baptized” and sprinkled with “holy water” to make them acceptable to naïve and unsuspecting church members.

For example, today’s Easter celebration is universally believed to be “Christian” in origin. But it has its roots deep in ancient paganism – centuries before the birth of Christ – and its rites have scarcely changed.

Says Ralph Woodrow in *Babylon Mystery Religion*:

“The word itself, as the dictionaries and encyclopedias explain, comes from the name of a Pagan Goddess – the goddess of Spring. Easter is but a more modern form of Ishtar, Eostre, Oostre, or Astarte. Ishtar, another name for Semiramis of Babylon, was pronounced as we pronounce ‘Easter’ today! And so the name of the Spring Festival, ‘Easter,’ is definitely paganistic, the name being taken from the name of the Goddess” (p. 152).

The Easter “egg” was a sacred symbol of the ancient Babylonians. They believed an old fable about a huge egg which supposedly fell from heaven into the Euphrates River. From this egg, says the legend, the goddess Astarte (Easter) was hatched. From Babylon the idea of the mystic, sacred egg spread abroad to many nations.

Admits the *Encyclopedia Britannica*:

“The egg as a symbol of fertility and of renewed life goes back to the ancient Egyptians and Persians, who had also the custom of colouring and eating eggs during their spring festival” (article, “Easter”).

Says Alexander Hislop regarding the festival of Easter:

“Then look at Easter. What means the term Easter itself? It is not a Christian name. It bears its Chaldean origin on its very forehead. Easter is nothing else than Astarte, one of the titles of Beltis, the queen of heaven, whose name, as pronounced by the people of Nineveh, was evidently identical with that now in common use in this country. That name, as found by Layard on the Assyrian monuments, is Ishtar” (*The Two Babylons*, p. 103).

Adds Hislop:

“Such is the history of Easter. The popular observances that still attend the period of its celebration amply confirm the testimony of history as to its Babylonian character. The hot cross buns of Good Friday, and the dyed eggs of Pasch or Easter Sunday, figured in the Chaldean rites just as they do now. The ‘buns,’ known too by that identical name, were used in the worship of the queen of heaven, the goddess Easter, as early as the days of Cecrops, the founder of Athens – that is, 1500 years before the Christian era” (p.108).

Says Woodrow:

“Now since the true saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ, *in reality* did rise (not merely in nature, plants, etc.); and since his resurrection was in the *spring* of the year – though slightly earlier than the pagan festival of olden times – it was not too hard for the church of the fourth century (now greatly departed from the true faith anyway) to merge the pagan spring festival into Christianity – attaching the various phases of it to Christ. In this way, it would appear to be a *Christian* festival, yet at the same time, it would retain many of its ancient customs” (*op. cit.*, p. 157).

There is no record in the New Testament of the early Christians ever observing Easter. But there is evidence that, as Christ commanded, they continued observing the Passover each spring, *on the 15th of Nisan*, commemorating Christ’s sacrifice for our sins! How, then, did Easter creep into the professing Christian Church?

How Easter Replaced Passover

Says historian and scholar Alexander Hislop:

“The difference, in point of time, betwixt the Christian Pasch, as observed in Britain by the native Christians, and the Pagan Easter enforced by Rome, at the time of its enforcement, was *a whole month*; and it was *only by violence and bloodshed*, at last, that the Festival of the Anglo-Saxon or Chaldean goddess came to supersede that which had been held in honour of Christ” (*The Two Babylons*, p. 107).

After the New Testament was completely written and after all the original apostles had died, a change occurred. Church historian Jesse Lyman Hurlbut describes the age that followed as “the Age of Shadows.”

Says Hurlbut: “For fifty years after. . . Paul’s life *a curtain hangs over the church*, through which we strive vainly to look; and when at last it rises, about 120 A.D. with the writings of the earliest church-fathers, we find a church *in many aspects very different* from that in the days of St. Peter and St. Paul” (*The Story of the Christian Church*, p. 41).

Says Alan W. Watts in *Easter, Its Story and Meaning*: “It would be tedious to describe in detail all that has been handed down to us about the various rites of Tammuz, Adonis, Kore, Dionysus, and many others. . . . Some of them were celebrated at the vernal equinox, or thereabouts, and some at midsummer. But their universal theme – the drama of death and resurrection – makes them the forerunners of the Christian Easter, and thus the *first ‘Easter services’*” (p. 58).

By the early fourth century A.D. nominal Christianity became established as a state religion of the Roman Empire. Almost everybody sought membership in the new Church and almost nobody was rejected. Says Hurlbut of this period: “The services of worship increased in splendor, but were less spiritual and hearty than those of former times. The forms and ceremonies of paganism gradually crept into the worship. *Some of the old heathen feasts became church festivals with change of name and of worship*” (*ibid.*, p. 79).

The church leaders of that day felt that for “Christianity” to conquer the world, it would be wise to compromise with pagans throughout the Empire. Since the common people were habituated to their pagan customs and revelled in their pagan holidays, church leaders devised a method to reconcile paganism and nominal Christianity. They simply “baptized” pagan customs, thereby making them “Christian” in appearance and name. The result? Pagans began to flock into the Church in droves. They kept the same days and performed the same rituals, but now they did it to “Christ” instead of to Astarte or Tammuz!

The Pagan Connection

The professing church, to build its membership, adopted paganism wholesale. Pagan spring religious customs were adopted by the Church. At the approach of Easter, women in Sicily sow wheat, lentils, and canary-seed in plates, which they keep in the dark and water every two days. The plants soon shoot up, the stalks are tied with red ribbons, and the plates are

placed on sepulchres, with effigies of the dead Christ – “just as the gardens of Adonis were placed on the dead Adonis.” Says Sir James George Frazer, “The whole custom – sepulchres as well as plates of sprouting grain-may be *nothing but a continuation, under a different name, of the worship of Adonis*” (Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, p.400).

Writes Sir James George Frazer in *The Golden Bough*,

“Now the death and resurrection of Attis were officially celebrated at Rome on the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth of March, the latter being regarded as the spring equinox, and therefore as the most appropriate day for the revival of a god of vegetation who had been dead or sleeping throughout the winter. But according to an ancient and widespread tradition Christ suffered on the twenty-fifth of March, and accordingly some Christians regularly celebrated the Crucifixion on that day without any regard to the state of the moon. This custom was certainly observed in Phrygia, Cappadocia, and Gaul, and there seem to be grounds for thinking that at one time it was followed also in Rome. Thus the tradition which placed the death of Christ on the twenty-fifth of March was ancient and deeply rooted. *It is all the more remarkable because astronomical considerations prove that it can have had no historical foundation.* The inference appears to be inevitable that the passion of Christ must have been arbitrarily referred to that date *in order to harmonize with an older festival of the spring equinox*” (page 417-418).

How Easter Entered the Church

Before Easter was universally adopted, there was a bitter and protracted controversy. In the days of Emperor Commodus (A.D. 180-192), when Victor became bishop at Rome (A.D. 190), the dispute became severe. Declared the historian Eusebius:

“There was a considerable discussion raised about this time, in consequence of a difference of opinion respecting the observance of the paschal season. The churches of all Asia, guided by a remoter tradition, supposed that they ought to keep the *fourteenth day of the moon* for the festival of the *Saviour’s Passover*, in which day the Jews were commanded to kill the paschal lamb But . . . *it was not the custom to celebrate it in this manner in the churches throughout the rest of the world . . .*” (*Eccl. Hist.*, Book.V, chap.23).

Even at this late date, the Churches of God in Asia dissented from the majority viewpoint. Polycrates, their leader, wrote to Victor, bishop at Rome, saying: “We, therefore, observe *the genuine day, neither adding thereto nor taking therefrom*” (chap. XXIV). He cited New Testament Christians, including Philip and the apostle John and asserted: “All these observed the fourteenth day of the Passover according to the gospel deviating in no respect, but following the rule of faith” (*ibid.*).

Upon receiving this letter, Victor, bishop at Rome, became furious. Reports Eusebius: “Upon this, Victor the bishop of the church of Rome, forthwith endeavoured to cut off the churches of all Asia, together with the neighbouring churches, a heterodox, from the common unity. And he published abroad by letters, and proclaims, that all the brethren there are wholly

excommunicated” (*ibid.*).

Although at that time Victor was restrained from carrying out this threat, the controversy continued until as late as the fourth century.

And so it is, today! Nothing much has changed! The visible church all around us, what is called “Mainstream” Christianity, from the Roman Catholic Church to the Lutherans, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, and practically all others are BURIED AND MIRED IN PAGAN RITUALS, PRACTICES, AND FESTIVALS, including Easter itself!

Origin of Christmas

What about Christmas? Christians claim it celebrates the birth of Christ. But is this really true?

Although the whole world celebrates Christmas as a “Christian” holiday, including millions of non-Christians, Christmas is not really “Christian” at all! Satan has pulled the wool over the eyes of MILLIONS!

Consider this fact: Look high and low throughout the pages of the Bible, and you will find not *one single solitary word* of “Christmas” being celebrated by any of God’s people! It is not even mentioned once! Neither Christ nor any of His apostles ever observed this holiday, nor the New Testament Church!

Yet on the other hand the pagan, heathen world observed this day for thousands of years BEFORE Christ was even born!

We read in Werner Keller’s book *The Bible as History* the following admission:

“December 25 is referred to in documents as Christmas Day in A.D. 324 for the first time. Under the Roman emperor Justinian [A.D. 527-565] it was recognized as an official holiday. *An old Roman festival played a major part in the choice of this particular day. December 25 in ancient Rome was the ‘Dies Natali Invictus’ ‘the birthday of the unconquered,’ the day of the winter solstice* and at the same time, in Rome, *the last day of the Saturnalia*, which had long since degenerated into a week of *unbridled carnival . . .*” (p.331).

Writes Ralph Woodrow in *Babylon Mystery Religion*, December 25 “was the very day and season on which the pagans for centuries had celebrated the birth of the *Sun-god!*” He goes on, “In pagan days, this birth of the sun-god was especially popular among that branch of the ‘Mysteries’ known as Mithraism. . . . And not only was Mithra, the sun-god of Mithraism, said to be born at this time of the year, but Osiris, Horus, Hercules, Bacchus, Adonis, Jupiter, Tammuz, and other sun-gods were also supposedly born at what is today called the ‘Christmas’ season – the winter solstice!” (page 163).

Says Woodrow, “Now the fact that the various sun-gods that were worshiped in different

countries were all believed to be born at the same season (in the old fables), would seem to indicate that they were but different forms (under different names) of the original son of the sun-god, Tammuz, of Babylon, the land from which sun-worship originally spread” (*ibid.*).

Woodrow asserts, “In Babylon, the birthday of Tammuz was celebrated at the time of the winter solstice with great feasts, revelry, and drunkenness – the same way many celebrate it today! The ancient celebration spread and became so much an established custom that ‘in pagan Rome and Greece, in the days of the Teutonic barbarians, in the remote times of ancient Egyptian civilization, in the infancy of the race East and West and North and South, the period of the winter solstice was ever a period of rejoicing and festivity.’”

“When this mid-winter festival came to Rome, it was known as the Saturnalia – Saturn being but another name of Nimrod or Tammuz as ‘the hidden god.’ This feast was the most vile, immoral feast that ever disgraced pagan Rome. It was a season of license, drunkenness, and debauchery where all restraints of law were laid aside. And it was from this very feast at Rome that that the merry-making of this season passed into the Roman Catholic Church and on down to our present civilization!” (p.163-164).

In the book *History of Rome*, by Michael Grant, we read this startling revelation:

“Yet there was also another pagan belief during this same epoch, that much more nearly competed with Christ for the control of the Western world. This was the cult of the Sun, which was revered by millions of the inhabitants of the Roman Empire, and its religion for a time even became the state worship. . . .

“In Rome, the divinity of the Sun came very early on; and then, centuries afterwards, in the superb dome of Hadrian’s Pantheon, the central opening, surrounded by star-like rosettes, represented the solar orb. . . . Before long, the emperor Aurelian established a massive temple of the Unconquerable Sun as the central and focal point of the entire religious system of the state (A.D. 274). *The birthday of the god was to be on DECEMBER 25, AND THIS, TRANSFORMED INTO CHRISTMAS DAY, WAS ONE OF THE HERITAGES THAT CHRISTIANITY OWED TO HIS CULT*” (p.391-392, emphasis mine).

Notice! The world’s version of “Christianity” took over the birthday of the sun god, the cult of the sun, and by sleight of hand and devious “magic” transformed it into “CHRISTMAS,” the “birthday” of Jesus Christ! It was in reality the birth day of the pagan sun god, worshipped by millions throughout the Roman Empire! Our article, “The Shocking Origin of Christmas,” and “When Was Jesus Really Born?” show conclusively that Christ was born nowhere near December 25th or “Christmas.”

So why does the great and universal Christian religion observe this pagan day?

Historian Jack Finegan, in *Myth & Mystery: An Introduction to the Pagan Religions of the Biblical World*, writes:

“. . . But the worship of the sun-god continued widely throughout the empire, and under Aurelian (A.D. 270-275) the cult was restored to its former high estate. In the

deity

year A.D. 274 Aurelian declared the god – now called Deus Sol Invictus – the official deity of the Roman Empire; he built a splendid temple of the sun in Rome . . . *and set the sun's birthday celebration (naturalis solis invicti) ON DECEMBER 25, the date then accepted for the winter solstice (also in his solar character the BIRTHDAY OF MITHRAS).* In the time of Constantine the cult of Deus Sol Invictus was still at its height, and the portrait of the sun-god was on the coins of Constantine Likewise it must have been in this time and with the intent to transform the significance of *AN EXISTING SACRED DATE that the birthday of Jesus,* which had been celebrated in the East on January 6 . . . *was placed in Rome ON DECEMBER 25, THE DATE OF THE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF SOL INVICTUS.* This date appears in a list of dates probably compiled in A.D. 336 and published in the Roman city calendar, edited by Filocalus, for the year 354” (Finegan, p.211-212, emphasis mine).

Thus another diabolical deed was done. The Church threw away the divine Holy Days which God commands to be observed, and replaced them with pagan-originated festivals which were used in the worship of ancient Nimrod and Semiramis, the pagan Messiah and his whore mother!

Sir James Frazer, in his authoritative book *The Golden Bough*, discusses how the pagan celebration of the birth of the sun-god on December 25 weaved its way into the professing Roman Catholic “Christian” Church. Frazer points out that the contest for supremacy between the early Christians and the worshipers of Mithra was hanging in the balance in the early centuries of the church. Both religions were fighting for the hearts and minds of men. Frazer asserts that “there can be no doubt that the Mithraic religion proved a formidable rival to Christianity.”

Says Frazer:

“Indeed the issue of the conflict between the two faiths appears for a time to have hung in the balance. An instructive relic of the long struggle is preserved in our *festival of Christmas, which the Church seems to have borrowed directly from its heathen rival.* In the Julian calendar the twenty-fifth of December was reckoned the winter solstice, and it was regarded as the Nativity of the Sun, because the day begins to lengthen and the power of the sun to increase from that turning-point of the year. The ritual of the nativity, as it appears to have been celebrated in *Syria and Egypt,* was remarkable. The celebrants retired into certain inner shrines, from which at midnight they issued with a loud cry, ‘*The Virgin has brought forth! The light is waxing!*’ The Egyptians even represented the new-born sun by the *image of an infant which on his birthday, the winter solstice, they brought forth* and exhibited to his worshippers. No doubt the Virgin who thus conceived and bore a son on the twenty-fifth of December was the *great Oriental goddess whom the Semites called the Heavenly Virgin or simply the Heavenly Goddess; in Semitic lands she was a form of Astarte.* Now Mithra was regularly identified by his worshippers with the Sun, the Unconquered Sun, as they called him; hence his nativity also fell on the twenty-fifth of December. The Gospels say nothing as to the day of Christ’s birth, and accordingly the early Church did not celebrate it. In time, however, the Christians of Egypt came to

regard the sixth of January as the date of the Nativity, and the custom of commemorating the birth of the Saviour on that day gradually spread until by the fourth century it was universally established in the East. But at the end of the third or the beginning of the fourth century the *Western Church*, which had never recognized the sixth of January as the day of the Nativity, *adopted the twenty-fifth of December* as the true date, and in time its decision was accepted also by the Eastern Church. At Antioch the change was not introduced till about the year 375 A.D.” (*The Golden Bough*, page 416).

What were the real motives for the church leaders to incorporate Christmas into the church’s calendar of festivals? States Frazer, again:

“What considerations led the ecclesiastical authorities to institute the festival of Christmas? The motives for the innovation are stated with great frankness by a Syrian writer, himself a Christian. ‘The reason,’ he tells us, ‘why the fathers transferred the celebration of the sixth of January to the twenty-fifth of December was this. It was a custom of the heathen to celebrate on the same twenty-fifth of December the birthday of the Sun, at which they kindled lights in token of festivity. In these solemnities and festivities the Christians also took part. Accordingly *when the doctors of the Church perceived that the Christians had a leaning to this festival*, they took counsel and resolved that the true Nativity should be solemnized on that day and the festival of the Epiphany on the sixth of January. Accordingly, along with this custom, the practice has prevailed of kindling fires till the sixth.’ The heathen origin of Christmas is plainly hinted at, if not tacitly admitted, by Augustine when he exhorts his Christian brethren not to celebrate that solemn day like the heathen on account of the sun, but on account of him who made the sun. In like manner Leo the Great rebuked the pestilent belief that Christmas was solemnized because of the birth of the new sun, as it was called, and not because of the nativity of Christ.”

The “Mass” in Christmas

Alexander Hislop in his remarkable book *The Two Babylons*, points out that the “mass” is something that definitely goes back to ancient PAGAN customs and rites! He declares in plain and clear language:

“Therefore we find the women of Judah represented as simply ‘burning incense, pouring out drink-offerings, and offering *CAKES to the queen of heaven*’ (Jer. 44:19). The cakes were the ‘unbloody sacrifice’ she required. . . . *In the FOURTH CENTURY, when the queen of heaven, under the name of Mary, was beginning to be worshipped in the Christian Church, this ‘unbloody sacrifice’ also was brought in.* Epiphanius states that the practice of offering and eating it began among women of Arabia; and *at that time it was well known to have been ADOPTED FROM THE PAGANS.* The very shape of the unbloody sacrifice of Rome may indicate whence it came. It is a small thin, *round* wafer; and on its *roundness* the Church of Rome lays so much stress The importance, however, which Rome attaches to the *roundness* of the wafer, must have a reason; and that reason will be found, if we look at the altars of EGYPT. ‘The thin, *round* cake,’ says Wilkinson, ‘occurs on all altars.’ Almost every jot or tittle in the Egyptian worship had a

symbolical meaning. The *round disk*, so frequent in the sacred emblems of Egypt, symbolized the *sun*" (*The Two Babylons*, p.159-160).

The "sun-god" in ancient Egypt was Osiris, another name for NIMROD. The round disk of the Egyptian "mass" symbolized the sun, and was an offering symbolizing the sun-god. He was considered the life and nourishment of the souls of men!

The "Christ-mass" therefore is nothing more than a spin-off of the old pagan "mysteries." It is the celebration of the birth of the "sun-god" himself, the False Messiah, the False "Saviour" of the world, and the "mass" itself also represents the offering or "cakes" made to the queen of heaven, the "Mother" of the pagan Saviour, the "Queen of heaven."

Truth Replaced by Superstition

Says Alexander Hislop, further:

"Indeed, it is admitted by the most learned and candid writers of all parties that the day of our Lord's birth cannot be determined, and that within the Christian Church *no such festival as Christmas was ever heard of till the third century, and that not till the fourth century was far advanced did it gain much observance.* How, then, did the Romish Church fix on December the 25th as Christmas-day? Why, thus: Long before the fourth century, and long before the Christian era itself, a festival was celebrated among the heathen, at that precise time of the year, in honour of the birth of the son of the Babylonian queen of heaven; and it may fairly be presumed that, *in order to conciliate the heathen, and to swell the number of the nominal adherents of Christianity, the SAME FESTIVAL WAS ADOPTED by the Roman Church, giving it only the name of Christ.* This tendency on the part of Christians to MEET PAGANISM HALF-WAY was very early developed. . . . Upright men strove to stem the tide, but in spite of all their efforts, *the apostasy went on, till the Church, with the exception of a small remnant, was SUBMERGED under PAGAN SUPERSTITION*" (p.93).

Hislop goes on,

"*That Christmas was originally a Pagan festival, is beyond all doubt.* The time of the year, and the ceremonies with which it is still celebrated, prove its origin. In Egypt, the son of Isis, the Egyptian title for the queen of heaven, was born at this very time, 'about the time of the winter solstice.' The very name by which Christmas is popularly known among ourselves – Yule-day – proves at once its Pagan and Babylonian origin. 'Yule' is the Chaldee name for an 'infant' or 'little child;' and as the 25th of December was called by our Pagan Anglo-Saxon ancestors, 'Yule-day,' or the 'Child's day,' and the night that preceded it, 'Mother-night,' long BEFORE they came in contact with Christianity, that sufficiently proves its real character" (pp.93-94).

It is a fact that December 25 was celebrated for thousands of years before the birth of Christ as the birth day of an ancient pagan god – THE SUN GOD!

The Great Conspiracy

Asserts James George Frazer in *The Golden Bough*,

“Taken altogether, the coincidences of the Christian with the *heathen festivals are too close and too numerous to be accidental*. They mark the *compromise* which the Church in the hour of its triumph was compelled to make with its vanquished yet still dangerous rivals. The inflexible Protestantism of the primitive missionaries, with their fiery denunciations of heathendom, had been exchanged for the supple policy, the easy tolerance, the comprehensive charity of *shrewd ecclesiastics, who clearly perceived that if Christianity was to conquer the world it could do so only by relaxing the too rigid principles of its Founder*, by widening a little the narrow gate which leads to salvation” (page 419).

It is just absolutely amazing how ancient paganism has wrapped its tentacles around “Christianity,” so that the modern church is much more pagan than Christian.

As historian Will Durant wrote in *The Story of Civilization*, volume 3, “Caesar and Christ,” not long after the church began, the pagans began their onslaught to infiltrate it, subvert it, and destroy it. Says Durant,

“Christ was assimilated to the religious and philosophical traditions of the Hellenistic mind. Now the pagan world – even the ant-Semitic world – could accept him as its own. Christianity did not destroy paganism; it adopted it. The Greek mind, dying, came to a transmigrated life in the theology and liturgy of the Church . . . The Greek mysteries passed down into the impressive mystery of the Mass. Other pagan cultures contributed to the syncretist result. From Egypt came the idea of a divine trinity . . . From Egypt the adoration of the Mother and Child, and the mystic theosophy that made Neoplatonism and Gnosticism, and obscured the Christian creed. . . . From Phrygia came the worship of the Great Mother; from Syria the resurrection drama of Adonis; from Thrace, perhaps, the cult of Dionysus, the dying and saving god” (page 595).

In fact, says Durant,

“The Mithraic ritual so closely resembled the eucharistic sacrifice of the Mass that Christian fathers charged the Devil with inventing these similarities to mislead frail minds. **CHRISTIANITY WAS THE LAST GREAT CREATION OF THE ANCIENT PAGAN WORLD**” (*ibid.*).

This should be astonishing – shocking. Yet the evidence is irrefutable. What happened? What was the real significance of the submergence of Christian doctrine with pagan practices? What was the purpose and aim?

The “Mystery Babylon Code”

It was all part of Satan's Great Deception! He instilled "Christian" code words to mask over ancient PAGAN observances! Instead of the foolishness of the Da Vinci Code, we see a REAL conspiracy, through the ages, of the ancient "Mystery-Babylon" Code!

The ancient "Mysteries" of the Chaldeans, have been incorporated into the far-flung "Christian" church to deceive millions into THINKING they are worshipping Christ, but are in reality worshipping the way of Satan the arch-deceiver of mankind!

Says Sir James George Frazer in *The Golden Bough*:

"When we reflect how often the Church has skillfully contrived to plant the seeds of the new faith *on the old stock of paganism*, we may surmise that the Easter celebration of the dead and risen Christ was grafted upon a similar celebration of the dead and risen Adonis, which, as we have seen reason to believe, was celebrated in Syria at the same season. The type, created by Greek artists, of the sorrowful goddess with her dying lover in her arms, resembles and may have been the model of the *Pieta* of Christian art, the Virgin with the dead body of her divine Son in her lap, of which the most celebrated example is the one by Michael Angelo in St. Peters" (page 401).

Notice those words again. He declares, "When we reflect how often the Church has skillfully contrived to plant the seeds of the new faith on the *OLD STOCK OF PAGANISM*, we may surmise that the Eastern celebration of the dead and risen Christ was *grafted upon a similar celebration of the dead and risen Adonis*, which . . . was celebrated in Syria at the same season" (p. 401).

Astounding! Clearly paganism grew inside the professing Christian church like LEAVEN, until the whole lump was thoroughly leavened and saturated with SIN! The whole chemistry of the Church was changed with the yeast of PAGANISM! The body of the church became riddled with the infection of spiritual CANCER!

Ancient PAGANISM has now been COLOR-CODED AS "CHRISTIAN"! But it is still the beating, thumping, pumping heart of rebellion against God – the same PAGAN RELIGION BEGUN BY NIMROD AND SEMIRAMIS!

Only the "names" were changed. Thus paganism crept in and hi-jacked the Christian church as a whole. Names were changed to hide the disgusting, despicable truth. For example:

Pagan Name	Christian Name
Saturnalia	"Christmas"
Lupercalia	St. Valentine's Day
Floralia	Pentecost
Festival of Tammuz	St. John's Day
Worship of Rhea, Venus	Worship of Mary
Tammuz, Bacchus, Adonis	"Christ"
Samhain	Halloween
Pagan Trinity	"Christian" Trinity

Birth of Sol Invictus	Birth of Christ
Baal-Berith	Christmas Tree
Day of Cybele (mother of Babylonian messiah)	Annunciation Day
Ishtar, Astarte	“Easter”
Chaldean Lent	“Lent”
Apotheosis of Ariadne	Feast of the Assumption
Madonna of Babylon	Madonna of Rome
Pagan “Mass”	Sacrifice of the “Mass”
Pagan “Cross”	Veneration of the “Cross”
Pontifex Maximus	Pope, Pontiff
Pagan College of Pontiffs	College of Cardinals
Keys of Janus and Cybele	“Peter’s keys” (worn by Pope since 431 A.D.)

Says Alexander Hislop, in *The Two Babylons*, the pope laid claim to Peter’s keys in A.D. 431 and thereafter. “Some time was allowed to pass away, and then, when the secret working of the Mystery of iniquity had prepared the way for it, for the first time did the Pope publicly assert his eminence, as founded on the keys given to Peter. About 378 was he raised to the position which gave him, in Pagan estimation, the power of the keys referred to. In 431, and not before, did he publicly lay claim to the possession of Peter’s keys” (p.207).

Anciently there was a “Peter” at Rome who occupied the highest place in the pagan priesthood. In primitive Chaldee, his title was pronounced “Peter” – which meant, “the interpreter.” As the revealer of hidden things, he was decorated with the two keys of the divinities whose mysteries he unfolded. Thus the keys of Janus and Cybele came to be known as the “keys of Peter” – but not the Peter of the New Testament! This ancient “Peter” was Hermes Trismegistus, the great “Interpreter of the gods.”

Thus a pagan “Peter” came to be transformed into the apostle Peter – and the ancient Pagan Mysteries broadened and survived under new names.

Declares Hislop, “Hence, from the *mere jingle of words*, persons and things essentially different were CONFOUNDED; and Paganism and Christianity *jumbled together*, that the towering ambition of a wicked priest might be gratified; and so, to the BLINDED Christians of the APOSTACY, the Pope was the representative of Peter the apostle, while to the initiated Pagans, he was only the representative of Peter, the interpreter of their well-known Mysteries. Thus was the Pope the express counterpart of ‘Janus the double-faced.’ Oh! what an emphasis of meaning in the Scriptural expression, as applied to the Papacy, ‘The Mystery of Iniquity!’” (*Two Babylons*, page 210).

In analyzing the strange customs of the pagans and their astonishing similarity to certain “Christian” customs today, Alan W. Watts was moved to write,

“At first sight it is surprising to find so many of these stories and symbols of death-and-resurrection in so many different places. The points of resemblance between the Christ story, on the one hand, and the myth and ritual of ancient

and ‘pagan’ cults, on the other, is at times *startling enough to look like a CONSPIRACY*” (*op. cit.* p. 22).

A “conspiracy”! Who would engineer such a conspiracy? The apostle John tells us in plain language:

“And the huge dragon was cast down and out – that age-old serpent who is called the Devil and Satan, he who is the *seducer (deceiver)* of ALL HUMANITY THE WORLD OVER . . .” (Rev.12:9, Amplified Parallel Bible).

What had happened? The answer is in the Bible – a conspiracy to introduce pagan customs under the name “Christian” had been formed in the days of the apostle Paul (see Gal.1:6-9; II Cor.11:13-15; II Tim. 4:3-4). By the last days of the apostle John, this conspiracy had grown so great that in some areas, *true* Christians were being cast out of the established local churches! (III John 9, 10). A few centuries later, the universal church was no longer observing the Biblical holidays, but replacing them with pagan holidays.

Time to Repent and Obey GOD!

What does the Word of God itself say about this matter? It is a very serious question. Is it all right in the sight of God for men to take pagan customs and traditions, and to observe them, calling them “Christian”? Is it all right to merge and combine *PAGAN* practices with the truth of God?

According to the prophet Malachi, God does not change (Mal.3:6). His laws and commandments are eternal (Psa.111:7-8). Does God say it is all right to observe the traditions and customs of the pagans?

God commanded ancient Israel, “I am the Lord your God. You must *NOT DO AS THEY DO IN EGYPT*, where you used to live, and you must *NOT DO AS THEY DO IN THE LAND OF CANAAN*, where I am bringing you. *DO NOT FOLLOW THEIR PRACTICES*. You must obey my laws, and be careful to follow my decrees” (Lev.18:2-4).

God hates idolatry! He detests it with vehement passion. He tells us, “. . . Be careful not to be ensnared by inquiring about their gods, saying, ‘How do these nations serve their gods? We will do the same.’ YOU must NOT WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD IN *THEIR WAY*, because in worshipping their gods, they do all kinds of DETESTABLE THINGS the LORD HATES” (Deut.12:29-31).

Because of pagan idolatrous practices, God cast the Canaanites out of the Promised Land. They were worshippers of Baal, or Nimrod, Tammuz, the sun god, the pagan Messiah, the god of wine and revelry. Their whole religious system stemmed from ancient Babylon, the fount of all heresy and apostasy.

Truly, the whole world has been deceived by Satan the devil and his clever masquerades and machinations (Rev.12:9). God Almighty thunders: “Therefore say to the house of Israel,

Thus says the Lord GOD: Will you defile yourselves after the manner of your ancestors and go astray after their detestable things? As I entered into judgment with your ancestors in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you, says the Lord GOD. . . I will PURGE OUT THE REBELS among you, and those who transgress against me. . . . As for you, O house of Israel, thus says the Lord GOD: Go serve your idols, everyone of you now and hereafter, if you will not listen to me; but MY HOLY NAME you shall NO MORE PROFANE with your gifts and your idols” (Ezek.20:30-39, NRSV).

Jesus Christ said to His disciples, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will KNOW THE TRUTH, and the *truth will set you FREE*” – free from the shackles of error, superstition, mythology, and pagan deception! (John 8:32, NIV).

Observing pagan-originated holidays may seem so innocent and spiritual, on the surface. What could be wrong in sending Christmas gifts, hunting for Easter eggs, or sending valentines and gifts of candy, chocolates, or other things on these ancient pagan days? They have been given Christian sounding “CODE” names, to hide their despicable PAGAN origin, heart, and nature!

Should a true Christian have anything to do with such practices?

The simple answer is – GOD SAYS DON’T OBSERVE THEM! They act like a *snare* and a *trap* to lead people off into following the path way of Satan the devil, the architect of these pagan days and their supposed Christian transformation!

God says to His people, ‘Learn NOT the way of the heathen’ (Jeremiah 10:1). He says to His people today, “What fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial [Baal, Nimrod, Bel, or Satan]? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the Temple of God with IDOLS? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: ‘I will dwell in them, and walk among them. I will be their God, and they will be My people.’

“COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM AND BE SEPARATE, says the LORD. *DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN, and I will receive you.*’ I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty” (II Cor.6:14-18, NKJV).

God Almighty thunders: “You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you” (Deut.4:2).

In the last book of the Bible, the book of Revelation, God warns and commands His true people, that this wicked, all-pervasive “Babylon the Great” world system and religion which surrounds us today is coming to a bitter, devastating end. The apostle John declares, “And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, *COME OUT OF HER, my people, lest you share in her SINS, and lest you receive of her PLAGUES.* For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities” (Rev.18:4-5).

What should you do? Come OUT of this false, paganized, duplicitous, poisonous blending of false religion – this pernicious, volatile, lethal pagan religious cocktail! Don't drink of it! Cast it aside! Flee far from it! (I Cor.6:18, Jer.50:28, 51:45).