

## Since you do not believe me...

Shane Santiago

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I have given seminars and written articles about the paganism in nearly every American/Christian holiday. I have also commented on the ridiculous whining concerning how commercialism has taken "Christ" out of "Christmas". (That is, using terms such as Xmas and happy holidays.) Though I know that most Christians will find it offensive; these are amazingly hypocritical. Simply put, typically the people asserting these positions are the same people that will quote Romans 14 when confronted with Sabbath keeping. I sincerely pray that each Christian using Romans 14 as cause for Sabbath disobedience can see the incredible irony and hypocrisy in complaining; society does not care about Christmas. Why do you care? You claim that Romans 14 means everyone is free to make their own days. This would apply to those of us that find Christ's Mass a detestable practice. Remember, reasoning is a double-edged sword ("it cuts both ways"), not a one-sided butcher knife.

Those Christians that do keep His Sabbaths as He commanded should continue in this obedience and purge paganism from their practice. Out of love for His mercy, we should be a people set-apart, Holy unto Him and separate from the nations. If we are The Temple, as Scripture teaches, then we should strive to keep paganism and worldly influences far from His Temple.

“Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with Elohim? Whoever therefore intends to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of Elohim.  
(James 4:4 The Scriptures '98)

Since I have in the past failed to convincingly communicate the pagan origins of Christian holidays and the way in which these days blaspheme Elohim (God) I am hoping that the words of an admitted pagan can better achieve this goal.

The following excerpts are taken from *The Everything Paganism Book* (Adams Media 2004) by Selena Silverwind. This book is written in support of paganism's rituals, traditions and festivals. It is not a book meant to educate or rebut Christians.

“**About the author:** "Selena Silverwind is a practicing pagan and came to the faith after an extended search. A graduate of Loyola Marymount University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in communications, she has written several articles on paganism and frequently lectures on the subject. She also authored three books: *Once Upon a Beltane Eve*, *Magic for Lovers*, and *Field of Jonquils*. She is the president of Pagan Pride Los Angeles, an organization dedicated to educating the public about modern paganism."  
-- Taken from back cover.

### **Yule: The Winter Solstice**

"The placement of Yule corresponds with the beginning of the god's mythological cycle, his birth."  
-- Taken from page 44.

“Yule is celebrated on the Winter solstice, which falls between December 20 and 23rd. The traditional Yule season is 13 nights long, the Weihnachten, observe from December 20 -31.

Yule is the longest night of the year, and it marks the astrological start of the sign Capricorn to God is reborn on this day and fires are lit to welcome him and the strengthening son. Following the god's birth, the goddess goes into a deep slumber and becomes crone while she recovers. This is a night to honor the goddess for her gift.

A second traditional myth is the battle between the holy king and the Oak King. At Yule, the Oak King wins and will rule until Midsummer. The tradition of reenacting the battle may also be observed at Samhain and Beltane.”

### **Yule Traditions**

“Many of the traditional Judeo-Christian Winter holiday activities have pagan roots, and this is particularly true of Christmas, which coincides with Yule. Traditions like decorating a wintergreen tree with fruit and flowers, burning the Yule log, and hanging wreaths are now Christmas traditions, but they had other, pagan meanings. Decorating the tree meant looking forward to spring and the fruit it would bring; burning the Yule log was done to give strength to the sun, and a wreath served as a symbol of the Wheel of the Year and the Sun's passage through the sky. Tradition states that the ashes of a burned Yule log should be saved for a year as a protection amulet, and a piece of this year's log should be kept to start the next year's log.

### **Fact:**

The date of Christmas is based on the European celebration of the birth of the god Mithras. The Mithraic faith of Iran, Syria, Persia, and Egypt observed the birth of Mithras on December 25, the date of the solstice on the Roman Julian calendar.

Gift giving comes from the Roman celebration of Saturnalia, which was a weeklong event at the end of the year honoring the god of death. Friends and family members give each other tokens as expressions of love.”

### **Yule Associations**

“Yule is associated with reindeer, mistletoe, pine, holly, and the fox. Its colors are red, green, silver, and gold. Gold is the color of the god and silver is the color of the goddess. Mithras, the Sun King, the Baby Sun god, Apollo, or the Great Mother can be invited. Usually the deities invoked are limited to two: a god and a goddess. Those who best suit the worshiper's purpose should be called. The altar can be decorated with rubies, garnets, or other reddish stones and surrounded by poinsettias. A bowl of pine cones, a stag symbol, and a sun symbol are all appropriate additions to the altar.”

*--Taken from pages 47 through 48.*

## “Ostara: The Spring Equinox

“Ostara (pronounced oh-star-ah) marks the official start of spring. Lady Day, as it is also called, falls sometime between March 20 and 23rd. It marks the astrological start of the sign Aries. It is honored on the day when night and day are of equal length. It is a day for lightheartedness and joy.

The goddess is still maiden. Whether or not she has had any physical relations with the God, she remains free and unencumbered. She holds no ties to any man or child. (This is the true meaning of “maiden”, not simply *virgin*.) Popular goddesses to invite to ritual would be Kore (or Persephone), Hathor, Flora (goddess of flowers), or Inanna. Or the goddess can simply be welcomed as Lady of the Earth.

At this point in the cycle, the god is still growing. He is the laughing Lord of the Greenwood, young, carefree, still coming fully into his power. He maintains the wild spirit of youth and nature. He is often represented by Pan, Cernunnos, Ra, or Osiris.”

### **Ostara Practices.**

“The name Ostara comes from Eostre, an Eastern European moon goddess whose power peaks at this time of the year. This is also where the word Easter comes from, and there are many similarities between the symbolism of Easter and Ostara, including decorating and hunting eggs. According to legend, Eostre is closely connected to rabbits. Ostara colors are pastels, especially blue, yellow, pink and green. Popular flowers are daffodil and hyacinth, both of which bloom early in this season.

The tradition of decorating eggs comes from the ancient Egyptians and Persians who dyed them in pastel colors and exchanged them as gifts. In ancient Rome, eggs were given as prizes during spring races. The bunny was first associated with eggs in Germany in the 1500s, and Eostre sometimes takes the shape of an egg laying bunny.”

-- Taken from pages 50 through 51.

The most common arguments given by Christians when confronted with these pagan origins resemble the following:

- 1.) “But that's not what it means to me.”
- 2.) “Yes, but we've taken something bad and turned it into something good to give glory to God.”
- 3.) “It is a chance to evangelize at a time when those who rarely come to church will attend.”
- 4.) “There's nothing wrong with setting aside a day to remember God and give thanks.”

While the arguments shown are definitely heartfelt; they are based purely in emotion and are neither thought through nor based in Scripture.

In reply to argument number one I must respectfully and lovingly admonish, I do not worship you, I worship Elohim (God) and He says how and when to worship Him. I do not care what it means to you, I care what it means to Him and His word says that He hates it.

When the children of Yisra'El were at the base of Sinai, they had this same opinion. They created an image of Elohim (God), not a foreign god, and declared a feast day to Adonai (The Lord) as they felt inclined. In the Exodus account, neither Mosheh (Moses) nor Elohim checked to see what the gold calf or the feast day meant to the rebellious men and women that chose to worship Elohim in their own personal way. Rather, Adonai's wrath burned against His people because, "They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them." It seems odd that priests of today would claim that they, "the church", possess the authority to institute practices forbidden to Aharon (Aaron) who would be a priest to this congregation.

Turning to argument number two, I simply point out the following Scripture and reiterate that this is the very thing that God hates.

Thus said YHVH, "Do not learn the way of the gentiles, and do not be awed by the signs of the heavens, for the gentiles are awed by them. "For the prescribed customs of these peoples are worthless, for one cuts a tree from the forest, work for the hands of a craftsman with a cutting tool. "They adorn it with silver and gold, they fasten it with nails and hammers so that it does not topple.

(Jeremiah 10:2-4 The Scriptures '98)

*\* Please note that this verse is not specifically about a "christmas tree", it is speaking about pagan idols. Though one must ask, what does adorning a pine tree with pagan Yule colors have to do with any commandment Yeshua (Jesus) gave?*

Argument number three is simply one of the worst arguments. Not only does Scripture state that we are to worship Elohim in truth, but that the truth will set us free. How can evangelizing based on a lie set anyone free? The book of Revelation teaches those outside the gates are those that practice falsehood.

“**You worship what you do not know**; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and **those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.**”

(John 4:22-24 ESV)

Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and **everyone who loves and practices falsehood.**

(Revelation 22:14-15 ESV)

O YHVH my strength and my stronghold and my refuge, in the day of distress **the gentiles shall come to You from the ends of the earth and say, "Our fathers have inherited only falsehood, futility, and there is no value in them."**

(Jeremiah 16:19 The Scriptures '98)

Quite simply, I have never been in one church that uses Christian holidays only for "evangelism". If that were really true, the first thing an evangelical would have to say is, "Okay, I realize we used that whole nativity and candle-lighting service to get you in here, but let's talk about sun-god worship, how Rome has tricked you and why we as a church observe days set aside by man rather than The LORD." The excuse, and it is nothing more than a poor one, only rears its head when a Christian is trapped by verses and context that their "pastor" never bothered to disclose at sun-day service. Suddenly it's, "Yeah, I can see what you are saying but..." Again, if this evangelism lie were really true, nobody would be arguing about taking the Christ out of Christmas. There would be no call to boycott stores that greet you with "Happy Holidays" instead of "Merry Christmas".

Moreover since the argument is evangelism, why not observe a tradition that Yeshua (Jesus) actually observed, to evangelize? This would be infinitely more sensible juxtapose to a Roman invention/assimilation/amalgamation that is never mentioned in Scripture. W.W.J.D.? Hanukkah!

“ At that time the Feast of Dedication [Hanukkah] took place at Jerusalem. It was winter, and **Jesus was walking in the temple**, in the colonnade of Solomon.  
(John 10:22-23 ESV)

I must say that it is completely bizarre that the account of Hanukkah seems to vanish from Scripture whenever "the church" speaks of emulating Messiah. It was Sha'ul (Paul) that advised us to emulate him as he emulated the Messiah. We have no example for Christmas or Easter shown to us by Yeshua or Sha'ul. The whole idea of using church days and "holidays" to evangelize is truly a heart issue; an issue of rebellion. We have example after example of Yeshua and the apostles going to Synagogues on Sabbath, observing Sukkot (Festival of booths), Pesach (Passover), Hanukkah, Shavu'ot (Pentecost), etc. What churches fight to guard them? Where are the churches using them to evangelize?

There is a ridiculous claim that these occurrences (observing Holy Days) recorded in Scripture were only used to evangelize to the lost or unbelieving. While I completely disagree with this baseless claim, I will concede simply to ask; can you see the replacement theology hypocrisy? You cannot use an argument of evangelism to continue pagan Easter and Christmas; then refuse to keep the true Holy Days, with an excuse that Yeshua and His Apostles were evangelizing! How exactly is "the church" imitating Sha'ul or Yeshua by forgoing the observance of *His* Moed'im (Appointed Times) that they observed? Why isn't the church, at the very least, evangelizing in the same manner as Yeshua and His disciples? Lastly, what example do we have of Yeshua or any Apostle keeping pagan feast days for the glory of Elohim?

The truth of the matter is that we are conditioned to follow the norm. We grew up knowing traditional Christian holidays and have fond memories attached to them. The notion that anything is wrong with the traditions that define us, threatens us and we just do not like that *feeling*. That is just the type of experiential brainwashing that perpetuated this mess. We have been conditioned to believe that the way we feel about something or if we have had an experience; these things are somehow indicative of truth. The truth is always the truth; the way you feel about it is a non sequitur.

Particularly in the Church, there is an unspoken ideology that anything that stands out from the rest is cultish and should be rejected. The irony is that the chosen people of Elohim, Yeshua's disciples, The Assembly have *always* been built on the premise of being separate from the rest of the world. This is what being Holy is at its very essence; different, set apart to Adonai. Another underlying reluctance is one the church cannot admit; that is the feeling that these things just "feel too Jewish". It is ignorance and an arrogance that plagues the church and it is backwards. These matters of Elohim *seem* Jewish because it is the Jews that have kept them. Leviticus 23 makes it very clear that the calendar defined by Adonai contains the appointed times of Adonai. Adonai does not call them "Jewish Days", He says they are *My* appointed times.

As for the fourth argument, I am in total agreement. The irony of this is that God appointed days are to be set aside for him and asked that we do them forever; throughout all of our generations.

“ And YHVH spoke to Mosheh, saying, “Speak to the children of Yisra’El, and say to them, ‘**The appointed times of YHVH**, which you are to proclaim as set-apart gatherings, **My appointed times**, are these:  
(Lev 23:1-2 The Scriptures '98)

“ ‘One law is for you of the assembly and **for the stranger** who sojourns with you – a **law forever throughout your generations**. As you are, so is the stranger before YHVH. **‘One Torah and one right-ruling is for you and for the stranger** who sojourns with you.’ ”  
(Num 15:15-16 The Scriptures '98)

“ ‘Guard, and obey all these words which I command you, that it might be well with you and your children after you **forever**, when you do what is good and right in the eyes of YHVH your Elohim. “When YHVH your Elohim does cut off from before you the nations which you go to dispossess, and you dispossess them and dwell in their land, **guard yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them**, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you **do not inquire about their mighty ones, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their mighty ones? And let me do so too.’ “Do not do so to YHVH your Elohim**, for **every abomination which YHVH hates they have done to their mighty ones**, for they even burn their sons and daughters in the fire to their mighty ones. “All the words I am commanding you, guard to do it – **do not add to it nor take away from it**.  
(Deu 12:28-32 The Scriptures '98)

This is not a teaching that is isolated to the Tanakh ("old testament") or "legalism". This is not to be twisted into a teaching where the "Law of Liberty" is perverted into a liberty *from* Law. Sha'ul (Paul) in fact reiterates and supports this commandment against perverting our old gentile/pagan practices towards Adonai, in the B'rit Chadashah ("new testament"). Thank you Sha'ul!

“ But then, indeed, **not knowing Elohim**, you served those which by nature are not mighty ones. But now after you have known Elohim, or rather are known by Elohim, **how do you turn again** to the **weak and poor elementary matters**, to which you wish to be enslaved again? **You observe days and months and seasons and years**. I fear for you, lest by any means I have laboured for you in vain.  
(Gal 4:8-11 The Scriptures '98)

Sha'ul indeed is speaking of pagan days being observed; "not knowing Elohim". These are not the Moed'im of Elohim as His appointed times were never called "weak and poor elementary matters". If Sha'ul were speaking of Holy Days, he would be a liar as he clearly stated that he has never offended The Law (Act 28:17) which would include the Moed'im.

The Appointed Times of Adonai are the very days that the church has forgotten and replaced with "weak and poor elementary matters". The church fights to keep days of pagan observance, thus becoming enslaved to them as Sha'ul admonished. But to His testimony, to the Truth in God's Word; this was predicted in the book of Daniel.

“ ... it speaks words against the Most High, and it wears out the set-apart ones of the Most High, and it **intends to change appointed times and law...**  
(Dan 7:25 The Scriptures '98)

In closing, please consider this:

“ **And pray that your flight does not take place in winter or on the Sabbath.**”  
(Mat 24:20 The Scriptures '98)

Why would anyone pray that their flight would not be on Sabbath when Yeshua would clearly know that He was going to change this appointed time to the pagan day of sun god worship, sun-day?



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Version 1.2 – 1/19/2007