



September 27, 2024

Why We Don't Participate in Most of the World's Festivals

Warm hellos once again friends, brethren, fellow laborers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God from here on the Gulf Coast of lower Alabama. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

It's a beautiful autumn day here in Lower Alabama on the Gulf Coast, and with the beginning change of seasons comes to mind the annual celebrations the world is immersed in. Although our weather does not change a lot here it seems as I venture out, I still know what time of year it is because the stores and then lawn and home decorations change with each new "holiday" that comes on the calendar.

The Feast of Tabernacles and Last Great Day is just 3 weeks away. Shortly after we return from the Lord's Feast we'll be surrounded by the celebration of Samhain and soon after will witness the celebration of the Saturnalia. (I am using the ancient names for what has been re-labeled as Halloween and Christmas.) Some studies indicate that almost as much money is spent on celebrating Halloween as is spent on celebrating Christmas! What a waste!

It's good to remind ourselves of why we do not participate in observing these festivals. If you still do, perhaps ask yourself why?

There is a lot of information about the unscriptural and pagan background of these and other festivals. One internet source made the following statement about Halloween origins and traditions. ""The name "Halloween" means "hallowed evening". The traditional Celtic name for this night is Samhain (pronounced something like "sow-en"), which may mean "summer's end" or may

be named after Samana, an Aryan death god who is the Grim Reaper and leader of the ghosts of our ancestors. The veil between the worlds of the living and the dead is thinnest on this night. Celtic tradition says that all those who die each year must wait till Samhain before crossing into the spirit world where they will begin their new lives. At this moment of crossing, the spirit of ancestors who still have unfinished business in this world may appear."

Does this sound like something you and I as God's children should be involved in?

In my library I looked at The Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th edition which states: "It was believed by the Druids that during Samhain, the dead would play "tricks on mankind and caused panic and destruction. They had then to be appeased" Part of this appeasement process involved the giving of food to the spirits as they visited the homes. This formed the foundation of the modern practice of "trick or treat."

Halloween celebrations did not become popular in the U.S. until the 1800's. During that period, large numbers of immigrants arrived from Ireland and Scotland and introduced their Halloween customs." (From Worldbook 2000) "In 1848, millions of Irish emigrants poured into America as a result of the potato famine. With this sudden influx of people, the holiday of Druidism found its new home on alien shores. "Proudly Celtic, they called Halloween Oidche Shamhna ('Night of Samhain'), as their ancestors had, and kept the traditional observances" (Common Boundary, Sep./Oct. 1993)

Interestingly Halloween takes place at the time of the eighth month on the Hebrew calendar. What might be significant about that?

Jeroboam (king of Israel) made two calves of gold, and said to the people . . .
"Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt! And he set up one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan." (1 Kings 12:28-29) "He made shrines on the high places, and made priests from every class of people, who were not of the sons of Levi." (v.31) He "ordained a feast on the 15th day of the eighth

month (Heshvan - equivalent to late October early November), like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he offered sacrifices on the altar. So he did at Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made. So he made offerings ...on the 15th day of the eighth month, in the month which he had devised in his own heart. And he ordained a feast for the children of Israel..." (1 Kings 12:26-33) "The Levites left their common-lands and their possessions and came to Judah and Jerusalem, for Jeroboam and his sons had rejected them from serving as priests to the Lord." (2 Chronicles 11:14-15)

One has to wonder how much of this idolatry and corruption made its way to the British Isles and appeared in the religious practices of the Celts?

Just before the Israelites finally were about to enter the promised land of Canaan, the Eternal God - the One True God - was very strong in His condemnation of the practices of the people whom Israel would encounter in the land of Canaan. *"You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations which you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. And you shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars, and burn their wooden images with fire; you shall cut down the carved images of their gods and destroy their names from that place. You shall not worship the LORD your God with such things."* (Deut. 12:2-4) The LORD goes on to repeat these warnings and commands.

"take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.' You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way; for every abomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it." (Deut. 12:30-32)

Leviticus 19 and Deuteronomy 18 get very specific in defining the practices Israel was to reject. Yet here today we have the peoples of modern Israel participating

in a way in the sins of Jeroboam!

Most people in today's society reject God's festivals, and instead adopt these ancient festivals and even some of the rituals and customs. Everyone loves a party as they say!

How blessed we are to see and understand the Truth and hold on to God's instructions that free us from the traditions of men and from the deceptions of the god of this world.

We'll discuss more about Christmas in the weeks ahead after we return from the Feast of Tabernacles.

Arms up friends! Our sincere prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Thanks in advance for your heartfelt prayers for us.



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