

Happy New Year!

(USPS 042-340)

10 REASONS WHY CHRISTMAS IS UNSCRIPTURAL

REASON No. 1—

"Christmas" is a word unknown in the Bible. It is no private interpretation, it is no prophecy of the scriptures "...holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Pet. 1:20, 21). "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." (II Tim. 3:16). Christmas is excluded from all the scriptures. "But though we or an angel

from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8).

Christmas belongs to that "other gospel," for Paul did not know of a gospel called Christmas. — and what does John say about adding to the scriptures? (Rev. 22:18).

REASON No. 2—

Historical records in en-

cyclopedias, which are available in any city library, and are noted for their authenticity and reliability, give us these facts that Christmas is of heathen origin. It is traced back to sun worshippers and observed among the pagan nations. Many such pagan leaders' birthdays were celebrated by the ancient Babylonians. All these pagan festivals originated in heathen-

dom.

Centuries later the birth of Christ was blended into this — called Christmas. We are warned by the scriptures to "Learn not the way of the heathen." (Jer. 10:2). But through ignorance, the church has learned it.

REASON NO. 3—

Various records show us that the blending of Christ's birth

with Christmas came about through Catholicism. The Catholic Church claims authorship of choosing the name "Christ" to connect with their "mass."

Here we see that Christmas is of human invention, therefore not scriptural nor spiritual. Why will Christians follow the path of Catholicism? This church is

(Continued on Page 3 Column 2)

WHAT IS X-MAS?

by E. G. Cook
Birmingham, Ala.

I recall that we ran this tract last November. But we have some on our mailing list now who were not receiving Scripture Notes then. So if we can succeed in getting just one person to see the heathenism in this

MISSIONARY

PREMILLENNIAL

BIBLICAL

BAPTISTIC

MERRY X-MAS

by Roy W. Snell
Charleston, W. Va.

The time is almost upon us again when the bulk of this world's unchurched millions will join hands with Christendom to celebrate and observe an annual Saturnalia, ostensibly in the name of Deity. What follows will be a paganistic reveling, the roots of which can be readily traced to forms of "religious" worship in ancient Babylon — an epitome of everything and all that that is godless and perverse.

Anyone with the ability to read can, with a modicum of effort and research, trace this time called X-Mas back to those Babylonian "mysteries" and pagan religious practices. These ancient and godless people all focused the attention of their "worshippers" on a mother goddess and the birth of her child. The names applied varied in different lands and different cultures, but the concept remained uniformly the same. In Babylon this goddess mother was the Queen of Heaven and her son Tammuz came into being by virtue of a "miraculous" birth, being conceived by the sun. His birthday? Why naturally at the time of the

(Continued on Page 5 Column 4)

THE CHRISTIAN AND X-MAS

We have nothing to say in this message to the world, nor to anyone who does not belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. Our appeal is to those who love Him and desire to please Him in all things. To such devoted persons we would like to point out some important facts about the holiday known in the world as "Christmas," keeping in mind that the Word of God is the only true and sufficient guide for the child of God. (Read 2 Tim. 3:16-17).

The fact that God has not commanded the celebration of the birth of His son is sufficient reason for any child of God NOT to have any part in such practice. There are many other reasons that may be stated for the true believer having no part in such unfruitful works of darkness, but this is enough: "MY LORD HAS NOT TOLD ME TO DO IT!"

As for the word "Christ-mass," we prefer not even to take it on our lips. Think of associating the title of our blessed Lord with the abominable, Romanized, heathen mass! The modification

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The Baptist Examiner

Baptist Is Our Middle Name

Paid Circulation in All States and in Many Foreign Countries

"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them"—Isaiah 8:20.

WHOLE NUMBER 2358

ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, JANUARY 2, 1982

VOL. 53, NO. 1

CHRISTMAS IS A PAGAN HOLIDAY

Merrel E. Kaley
Simi Valley, California

"Christmas." Year by year we hear the same old tired arguments both for and against the celebration of the same. Any serious Bible student would be hard pressed indeed to justify the propagation of this holiday. On the other hand, reams upon reams of evidence is available to prove that this is a pagan holiday through and through.

As to the contention that the Christmas tree is barely 200 years' old, a simple reading of Jeremiah 10:1-5 which is well over 3,000 years old should be convincing to any reader. Matthew 2:11, I believe, is abundantly clear that the wise men arrived at a time when Jesus was a "young child." And they worshipped Him in a "house," not a stable. The Greek word for baby and young child are two decidedly different words and so rendered in the original. The

"fact" that He was about two years old is clear by the rest of the chapter.

One can never be right, by doing wrong, to attain right. Just two days ago, while in Toledo, Ohio, a man told me that as a

BRIEF NOTE

No paper next week. Following our long standing custom, you will not receive a paper under date of January 9. Best wishes for the coming new year and may it be the best you have ever known in the service of your Lord.

youth he lost confidence in Christ after his parents told him that there was no Santa. Why? He said he figured that if they lied to him about Santa they probably lied about Jesus too. He said for many years they had not understood that he harbored

these feelings.

As for the use of words such as "cruel," "cruelly robbing," "innocent" "three-year-old," and lastly the admonition, "for her child's sake," is a psychological ploy to heap guilt upon a mother who wishes to be honest with her child and who is trying to do right by that child. In my particular fellowship of churches, almost all "do not celebrate" Christmas. The abuse heaped upon us would be beyond your wildest dreams. And "always" the children are the main instruments used. One railroad man went so far as to get 32 of his friends to send Christmas cards to my friend's (a fellow pastor) children in which they were instructed to castigate the child's parents and let the children know how cruel their daddy and mommy were (sound familiar?).

Even when I celebrated

(Continued on Page 6 Column 2)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon By Willard Willis

CHRISTMAS

by Willard Willis

An article appearing in the Middletown (Ohio) Journal under the date of December 17, 1978, read, in part, as follows:

"When it comes to fighting, shooting and stabbing, Christmas is anything but a silent night. In fact, the entire month of December is the worst in terms of violent crime."

"Oh tidings of comfort and joy..."

"More people are murdered in the month of December than any other month, according to the FBI. And not only are more people killed, but the majority of them are killed by the family and friends they spend the holidays with."

"Oh there's no place like home for the holidays..."

"Of the 821 murders committed in Ohio last year, nearly 500 were committed by friends or relatives of the victim, according to the Bureau of Criminal Investigation."

"Faithful friends who are dear to us gather near to us once more..."

It was against the law in early America and at the same time in England to observe Christmas. The main reason for their action was that it had been celebrated by the Catholics as Christ's mass. An article appearing in the National Enquirer under the date of December 26, 1978, read, in part, as follows:

"Because it had long been observed as Christ's Mass, the Puritans claimed that Christmas was a Roman Catholic holy day

— and, therefore, detestable. Sermons and speeches labeled it 'antichrist-mass, and idolatry.'"

"And many of the rituals of Christmas were nothing more than leftover pagan practices associated with old Roman holidays, according to the Puritans."

You will note that the above quotation ends by stating, "according to the Puritans." I desire, however, to point out that even the Catholics admit that it was not the custom of the early churches to observe Christmas. The Catholic encyclopedia, which is published by the Catholic church, reads:

"Christmas was not among the early festivals of the

(Continued on Page 2 Column 1)



E. G. Cook

infamous, notorious holiday that has been foisted upon an unsuspecting Christian society, it will be well worth our effort. We are reprinting a tract that has gone over a great part of the world. And it is sent free for free distribution.

In the light of God's Word, how can anything with a Christian name be popular with the world? In John 7:7 Jesus said the world hates Him, and in

(Continued on Page 6 Column 4)

XMAS

by Charles H. Spurgeon
(Now in Glory)

The following extract is from the late C.H. Spurgeon's exposition of Psalm 81 in the Treasury of David. "Blow ye the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day" (V. 3).

Obedience is to direct our worship, not whim and sentiment: God's appointment gives a solemnity to rites and times which no ceremonial pomp or hierarchial ordinance could confer. The Jews not only observed the ordained month, but that part of the month which had been Divinely set apart. The Lord's people in the olden times appointed for worship; let us feel the same exultation; and never speak of the Lord's Day as though it could be other than a "delight" and "honorable": Those who plead this passage as an authority for their man-appointed feasts and fasts must be moon-struck. We will keep such feasts as the Lord appoints, but not those which Rome or Canterbury may ordain.

"For this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of

(Continued on Page 4 Column 5)

The Baptist Examiner

THE BAPTIST PAPER FOR
THE BAPTIST PEOPLE

JOHN R. GILPIN, Jr.
Acting Editor

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1978, in the post office of Ashland, Kentucky,
under the Act of March 3, 1879.

CHRISTMAS

(Continued from Page 1)

church... the first evidence of
the feast is from Egypt. Pagan
customs centering around the
January calendar gravitated to
Christmas... in the scriptures,
sinners alone, not saints,
celebrated their birthday."

We may add, then, that it was
not only "according to the
Puritans," but also according to
the Catholics that Christmas
was and is of pagan origin.

The Schaff-Herzog En-
cyclopedia also stands behind
the action taken by the early
Puritans. It reads as follows:

"How much the date of the
festival depended upon the
pagan Brumalia (Dec. 25)
following the Saturnalia (Dec.
17-24), and celebrating the
shortest day of the year and the
new sun... cannot be accurately
determined. The pagan
Brumalia and Saturnalia were
too deeply entrenched in
popular custom to be set aside
by Christian influence... The
Pagan festival with its riot and
merrymaking was so popular
that Christians were glad of an
excuse to continue its celebra-
tion with little change in spirit
and in manner. Christian
preachers of the west and near
east protested against the
unseemly frivolity with which
Christ's birthday was
celebrated, while the Christians
of Mesopotamia accused their
western brethren of sun-worship
for adopting as Christian this
pagan festival."

May we state again that the
action taken by our early
forefathers here in America, had
a solid foundation.

The following article taken
from the Middletown (Ohio)
Journal, under the date of
December 18, 1977, shows that
the early Americans were cor-
rect in their conviction relative
to Christmas. The following ar-
ticle was marked — Chicago
(AP).

"A near-sacrifice to a pagan
god; a gentle bishop of Asia
Minor; a poisonous plant under

which foes could gather in
peace, if only briefly. They are
the bizarre but mostly forgotten
origins of three of the most
popular symbols of Christmas:
the fir tree, Santa Claus and
mistletoe... the English mis-
sionary Winnefred, who later
became Saint Boniface, is said
to have come upon some Druids
who were about to slay a young
prince as an offering to their god
Thor. Winnefred called a halt to
the proceedings and cut down
the sacred oak tree against



Willard Willis

which the human sacrifice was
to have taken place. Legend has
it that a young fir sprang up
where the oak had stood. The
missionary told the Druids to
adopt the fir as their new holy
tree and explained to them that
it was the tree of peace and of
Christ."

"The belief that Santa
delivered his gifts to the home
via the chimney stems from an
old Norse legend, according to
the encyclopedia. The Norse
believed that the goddess Her-
tha would bring good luck to a
home if she appeared in the
fireplace."

"It was from the Norse also
that the mistletoe so commonly
found in homes at Christmas
time gained its wonderful
'kissing' properties."

"A parasitic and poisonous
plant which grows on the trunks
of trees, mistletoe had been used
ceremoniously by early Euro-
peans. The ancient Celts used it
as a charm, and northern
mythology has it that an arrow
made of mistletoe killed one of
their gods. But it was perhaps
the Scandinavians who gave the
plant its social qualities. They
considered it a plant of peace.
Warring factions would declare
a truce if they met under it. It is
thought that the modern custom
of kissing under it began here,
according to the world book."

"The Scandinavians are also
believed to have bequeathed to
us the yule log and the term
'yule' to describe the holiday
season."

"The pagan festivities includ-
ed the burning of the huge log in
honor of the god Thor. With the
arrival of Christianity the
custom of burning the log
spread throughout Europe and
included dragging the log into
the home. Using an unburned
portion of it to light next year's
yule log would bring good
luck."

Those who want to see can
clearly see from the above
quotations that the people of
early America were correct in
their refusal to observe
Christmas.

The following article from the
Middletown (Ohio) Journal
under the date of November 23,
1961, shows that Christmas was
even illegal in early America.

"Colonial New England did
not celebrate Christmas, ac-
cording to the researchers, because
the stern Puritan colonists
believed that such activities
were wholly pagan and forbade

them by law. Christmas came to
the American colonies while it
was the subject of strenuous
controversy in England. English
Puritans condemned it as
'popish' and the secular celebra-
tion as a 'wanton bacchanalian
feast.'"

"Opposition of the English
Puritans to the festival
culminated in the act of parlia-
ment in 1647 which abolished
the observance of Christmas,
Easter and Whitsuntide. This
was echoed in the American col-
onies in 1659 when Puritans
enacted a law in the general
court of Massachusetts to
punish those who 'kept
Christmas.'"

"The law read 'whosoever
shall be found observing any
such day as Christmas or the
like, either by forbearing of
labor, feasting, or in any other
way... shall be subject to a fine
of five shillings.'"

"The law was repealed in
1681 but many of the Puritans
were not reconciled to this ac-
tion. Secular revelling at
Christmas had often interfered
with religious devotions and of-
fended the Puritan's moral
sense. This intensified their sec-
tarian hostility to the religious
observance of Christmas — an
attitude they maintained for the
better part of two centuries in
parts of New England."

"The latter half of the eigh-
teenth century saw a swing of at-
tention to the realm of
economics and politics and
religious controversies
became of less importance..."

"Denominational opposi-
tion to the ecclesiastical
observance of Christmas,
however, continued into the
second half of the nineteenth
century. An account in the New
York Daily Times for December
26, 1855, read:"

"The churches of the
Presbyterians, Baptists and
Methodists were not open on
December 25 except where some
mission schools had a celebra-
tion. They do not accept the
day as a holy one..."

Scholars are not agreed regar-
ding the exact date of our Lord's
birth. One thing, however,
which they do agree on is that it
was not on December 25 or even
close to this date.

We know from the biblical
record that the shepherds were
abiding in the field, keeping
watch over their flock by night.
This could never have occurred
on December 25, since the
shepherds always brought their
sheep from the mountain side
and coralled them no later than
October 15. They did so in order
to protect them from the cold
rainy season which followed.
Volume five and page 386 of
Adam Clark's commentary
states:

"It was an ancient custom
among the Jews of those days to
send out their sheep to the fields
and deserts about the Passover
(early spring) and bring them
home at the commencement of
the first rains."

An article appearing in the
Middletown Journal in 1961,
read:

"True date of Christ's birth a
mystery... the exact date of
Jesus' birth has been disputed
by scholars for centuries. In
fact, about all they agree on is

that it is not December the
25th... most scholars estimate
that the true date falls in late
August or early September. It is
not even certain why December
25 was chosen, though there is
generally one accepted reason.
Saturnalia was the great Roman
holiday and it came the third
week of December. Christian
leaders hoped that celebrating
Christmas at this time would
lessen the impact of the pagan
festival. Also, December in all
civilized lands in the early cen-
turies was the time of many
winter festivities."

It becomes more and more
obvious, as we proceed, that the
early Americans and the people
in England were correct in their
condemnation of Christmas.

One Christmas party,
however, was of great value to
America. It was the celebration
that occurred on December 25,
1776. You will recall that this
was the night in which General
Washington and his troops
crossed the Delaware to surprise
and defeat the Hessian troops
who were stationed at Trenton,
N.J. It is believed by many that
Washington's bold venture suc-
ceeded because the Hessians
were enjoying their customary
Christmas revels and failed to
maintain the usual watch and
patrols.

Christmas is intended to
celebrate the birthday of Him
who is the truth; yet it is difficult
to find any truth in the entire
Christmas program. We, for ex-
ample, have already shown that
the date is wrong. This fact,
however, is only one of the false
planks in the Christmas plat-
form. We could go on and on
with the other false planks in the
Christmas platform. These in-
clude, among other things, San-
ta Claus, the reindeers, the story
that Santa enters the house via
the chimney, etc. There would
be no Christmas if one were to
remove all of these false planks.
It is difficult for me to unders-
tand how one can place the Lord
Jesus Christ on this kind of plat-
form.

One of the false ideas relating
to Christmas, which I have not
mentioned, is the one which
states that three wise men
followed a star to Bethlehem on
the night in which our Lord was
born. The Bible, in fact, does
not say how many wise men
there were, and neither does it
state that a star guided them to
Bethlehem. The wise men did
not need a star to guide them to
Bethlehem, since they were
wise regarding the Scripture —
the Scripture which prophesied
that He would be born in
Bethlehem.

The truth of the matter is that
the wise men did not visit Jesus
on the night of His birth. A
thorough study of Matthew,
chapter two, will show that the
wise men visited Jesus after He
and His family had moved into a
house. It was at this time that
the star, which they had
previously seen, guides them to
His abiding place. The fact that
His abiding place at this time
was a house is confirmed by the
following passage.

"And when they were come
into the house, they saw the
young child with Mary His
mother, and fell down, and
worshipped Him; and when

they had opened their
treasures, they presented un-
to Him gifts; gold,
frankincense, and myrrh."

You will observe that the
above passage of Scripture
speaks of our Lord Jesus as a
"young child" and that is what
He was at that time, rather than
a babe in a manger. This fact is
confirmed further by verse 14
where we learn that Mary was
able to travel. This fact, of
course, would not have been
true if the visit of the wise men
had been on the night in which
the Lord Jesus was born. I'm
convinced that our Lord was liv-
ing in Nazareth and not in
Bethlehem when the wise men
found Him. Joseph and Mary
had already gone to Bethlehem
to pay their taxes. They,
however, returned home to their
house in Nazareth soon
thereafter. I'm also convinced
that Joseph and Mary had
already taken their new son to
Jerusalem before the wise men
visited Him. The visit to
Jerusalem occurred when He
was forty-one days old. The visit
to Jerusalem, in fact, had to
have occurred before they fled
into Egypt. I draw this conclu-
sion because Luke 2:39 states
that they performed all things
according to the law. Luke 2:39
reads as follows:

"And when they had per-
formed all things according
to the law of the Lord, they
returned to Galilee, to their
own city Nazareth."

The question now arises as to
what the law required. Our
answer is found in Leviticus
12:1-4:

"And the Lord spake unto
Moses, saying, Speak unto the
children of Israel, saying, If a
woman have conceived seed,
and born a man child; then
she shall be unclean seven
days; according to the days of
the separation for her infirmi-
ty shall she be unclean. And
in the eighth day the flesh of
his foreskin shall be circum-
cised and she shall then con-
tinue in the blood of her puri-
fying three and thirty days;
she shall touch no hallowed
thing, nor come into the sanc-
tuary, until the days of her

(Continued on Page 3 Column 1)

BRIEF NOTES

The Redeemer's Baptist
Church would like to announce
the calling and acceptance of a
new pastor, Elder Mike
Mullins.

He and his wife, Annette, are
both graduates of the Lexington
Baptist College and he was
recently ordained by the South
Lexington Baptist Church.

The church is located at 4912
Summit Street, Toledo, Ohio.
The schedule for their services
are Sunday School 10:00 a.m.;
Morning worship 11:00 a.m.
and Sunday evening at 6:00
p.m. For further information
you may call the pastor direct at
419/531-2680.

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER FINANCIAL REPORT NOVEMBER, 1981

Beginning Balance,
Oct. 31 \$1,649.06
Receipts 4,491.69
\$6,140.75

Expenses:
Labor \$ 902.17
Printing 1,891.74
Postage 507.08
Supplies
(addresser parts) 74.55
Taxes (FICA-
Labor) 317.66
Total Expenses 3,693.20
Ending Balance,
Nov. 30 \$2,447.55

RECIPE FOR UNLEAVENED BREAD

1 cup flour
¼ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon sugar
3 tablespoons shortening
Mix shortening and flour, add enough water (½ cup) to
make easy to handle. Roll thin, prick with fork and bake very
slowly at low heat. Do not brown.

CHRISTMAS

(Continued from Page 2)

purifying be fulfilled."

We know from Luke 2:39 (above) that Joseph and Mary did exactly as Leviticus 12:1-4 (above) required them to do. This fact means that the Lord Jesus was at least 41 days old when the wise men saw Him. I say this because He was living in a house, and according to Luke 2:39, He did not abide in their house in Nazareth until after they had performed all things according to the law.

The second chapter of Luke shows that the shepherds rather than the wise men visited our Lord on that glorious night of His birth. They did not follow a star, since they didn't even see the one which the wise men saw. We know from Luke 2:10 that the angel informed the shepherds of His birth.

We are never to accept a teaching or a custom simply because a man or a group of people say that it is so. We, according to the following passages, are to "Prove all things."

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil" (I Thess. 5:21, 22).

We are also admonished in Exodus 23:2 not to follow a multitude to do evil.

There are many who conclude that Christmas is good because it has been a means of drawing the heathen and their customs to Christ. The Scriptures, however, in Jeremiah 10:2 and many other places, admonish us not to learn the way of the heathen.

Christmas, in fact, does not draw people to Christ. It only draws them to the shopping centers where they incur large debts which haunt them, in many cases, for years.

I do not believe that Christmas draws people to Christ, but only to the bright lights, the whiskey bottle, the Christmas tree, mistletoe, presents and Santa Claus.

Our Lord, when He was here in person, had many who followed Him, not because they loved Him, but in order to obtain a free meal. It was as stated in the following passage:

"Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled" (John 6:26).

The rapist, the thief, the murderer, and scores of other Christ rejectors are all drawn to Christmas, not because of the Lord Jesus Christ, but because of the drinking, feasting and gaiety.

We should never resort to worldly means in drawing people to the Lord Jesus Christ. The only way, in fact, that people are truly drawn to Christ is by God the Spirit. It is as stated in the following passage:

"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:44).

May all carefully ponder that which you have read. May you consider that which you have read in the light of the following passage:

"And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:2).

Christmas was wrong in early America, even in 1881 (100

Happiness lives next door to a complete acquiescence to the will of God.

years ago) in parts of New England. When did it become right? Who made the decision that Christmas is to be observed? I'm positive that the decision was not made in Heaven, but on earth.

May our Lord bless you with the message He has set before us!

10 REASONS

(Continued from Page 1)

portrayed in Revelation 17:5 where it says: "Upon her forehead was the name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth."

God brands this church as a mother of harlots.

Will Christians follow such examples?

REASON No. 4—

We have no scriptural record that the disciples ever celebrated the birth of Christ. So we wonder why shall we?

However history reveals that about the fourth century (A.D. 440) the Church at Jerusalem commenced to celebrate this day — following Catholicism. When it also became more defiled with the pagan world, when this mother of harlots attached the name Christ to it and called it Christmas, and placed it in the month of December which has now for centuries been the traditional month of the year.

Adam Clark in his commentary writes: "We find that the sheep were kept out in the open country during the whole of the summer and as these shepherds had not yet brought home their flocks, it is a presumptive argument that October had not yet commenced and that consequently our Lord was not born on December 25th when no flocks were out in the fields; nor could He have been born later than September as the flocks were still in the fields by night. On this very ground the nativity in December should be given up."

Clark's reasoning on this subject sounds true and sensible.

REASON No. 5—

Nowhere in scripture are we commanded to commemorate the birth of our Lord, and God the Father evidently deemed it unwise to make the date known. Hence it will always remain unknown and is not to be remembered and celebrated. Paul says (II Cor. 5:16) "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." We understand Paul to mean that we are to know Christ spiritually and not according to the letter, or after the flesh, or as an infant, for this is of no value to us as spiritual life.

But notice — we are commanded to remember Him in His death, but no special day of the year is specified for this. he said: "Take eat, this is my body which is broken for you, this DO in remembrance of me." (Luke 22:19 — I Cor. 11:24).

To commemorate His death is scriptural, any day of the year will do — to commemorate His birth is non-scriptural whether you choose any day or the day December 25th.

Paul the apostle says: "God forbid that I should glory in anything except in the cross (not the birth) of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal. 6:14). (Weymouth trans). We find no salvation in the birth of our Lord, for Salvation was only made possible through His death. Our faith is in the cross, not in the birth.

REASON No. 6 —



The Baptist Examiner

BIBLE STUDY LESSON

By WILLARD PYLE

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Psalm 20:1-9

Intro. The saints, praying with expectation intermingled with thanksgiving at the door of the tabernacle, as they look to their high priest and the captain of their salvation, who faithfully performs his duties; all of this prophetically looks forward to the Lord Jesus Christ as Prophet, Priest, and King. So the psalmist as penman and songster, sets forth this truth as the spokesman for the saints.

VERSE 1

"The Lord hear thee." The Psalmist expects the heart cry of the saints and looks for an answer from the throne of grace. However, he realizes, many times, the saints fail to use the resource of prayer, and therefore turn to other sources for their help; but we can rejoice that there is One Who perfectly and fully sent up petitions to the Father (John 17:1) and He was heard (Heb. 5:7). He is still being heard (Rom. 8:34).

"In the day of trouble." It is well known there are days of trouble for all Christians and it is important to know how to meet these days. We have a good example by the apostles in

The fact that there are only two incidents of birthday celebrations recorded in the Bible is evidently given for our warning and our learning, that we may know that the Lord has no pleasure in birthday celebrations or anniversaries.

One of these above was Pharaoh's big ado and the final result was that the chief baker got hung. Thus ended the tragedy of a big special day (Gen. 40:20, 22).

The other incident was a big day for Herod and his celebration ended up in the beheading of John the Baptist (Mark 6:21-27).

And now for centuries this modern special day, called Christmas, is a similar day with numerous fatalities which usually ends the day in thousands of homes with untold misery, sorrow and grief.

REASON No. 7—

By searching the Word of God we find that the birth of Christ, the shepherds, and the wise men have no connection with the day called Christmas whatever. Christmas is human invention, but Christ came into the world to save sinners. It has no comparison.

The wise men from the far East came and gave their gifts to Jesus or rather to His mother for Him, not to one another as is being done by the unwise to this day. And this gift giving was not even on His birthday but a number of days afterwards. Also not in the stable, but in the house. It is often quoted that Jesus was born in a manger. This is not true. He was born in a stable and laid in a manger. This story is so greatly misconstrued and a mass of conglomeration has accumulated in the minds of the people.

Annually the Yuletide season is overflowed with literature and greeting cards of untrue

(Continued on Page 5 Column 1)

Acts 5:41, 42, and by the saints in Acts 4:29-31; also by Paul in Acts 20:24; 21:13. Moreover we have the perfect example by Christ in His day of trouble (Matt. 26:42). There will be one more day of trouble for Israel (Dan. 12:1), as well as perilous times for the churches (II Tim. 3:1) at the end of this age (Matt. 28:20).

"The Name of the God of Jacob defend thee." That Name which is "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" and is above every Name and by which we are saved. (Isa. 9:6; Philip. 2:9; Matt. 1:21). Could there be a greater defense? The God of Jacob is the Covenant God Who is faithful.

VERSE 2

"Send thee help from the sanctuary." To know that our help has come, is coming, and will come from above, brings true contentment (Ps. 121:1, 2; James 1:17; Philip. 4:11). That sanctuary in which is the throne of grace, and in which and from which our Redeemer now manifests Himself (Acts 7:55; Heb. 8:1, 2).

"And strengthen thee out of Zion." The heavenly city from which flows all spiritual blessings provided by the Heavenly King (Heb. 12:22), and which is described by John in Revelation 21:2. May we ever remember our citizenship is in Heaven (Philip 3:20). Just as the Lord stood with Paul and strengthened him (II Tim. 4:17), even so, our sufficiency is from Him (II Cor. 3:5).

VERSE 3

"Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice." Before the battle, many times, kings came before God with offerings seeking God's blessings, and then after the victory, they offered up sacrifices of thanksgiving. Our King Priest offered up prayers before His battle (Heb. 5:7) and offered up Himself as a burnt offering to God on the behalf of His people (Eph. 5:2; Heb. 7:27). These offerings were accepted and therefore we are accepted in the Beloved (Eph. 1:6). Now we are to offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God by Jesus Christ (I Pet. 2:5; Heb. 13:15).

VERSE 4

"Grant thee according to thine own heart." Since we know that David had hid God's Word in his heart (Psa. 119:11), we realize his heart's desire was for the glory of God to be manifested in the blessing of His people with salvation. The desire of the Apostle Paul was for the salvation of sinners (Rom. 10:1), and above all, the desire of the Lord Jesus Christ was to glorify His Father (John 17:4) in completing His Work in presenting the elect perfect before the throne of grace (Jude 24, 25; John 17:24).

"And fulfil all thy counsel." How wonderful, when the counsel of the king is according to the Holy Scriptures. When the King orders his armies and subjects to march to Heaven's Bandmaster we can know it will be honored. The

Head of the church has given heavenly counsel and we can pray in faith, knowing it will be honored. In fact, God works all things after the counsel of His own will (Eph. 1:11).

VERSE 5

"We will rejoice in Thy salvation." The armies of David had confidence that the victory would be obtained, and entered the battle with blessed assurance. In a far greater sense, the people of God can know "we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us" (Rom. 8:37), and can know "we have the victory" (I Cor. 15:57).

"And in the Name of our God we will set up our banners." Praise God, the banners of the Lord will be raised in victory, and even now we can march under the banner of the Lord. May we ever spiritually wave the banner of the cross.

"The Lord fulfill all thy petitions." Again, we can rejoice as we know not one jot or tittle will fail of all of the good things the Lord has spoken (Luke 16:17).

VERSE 6

"Now know I that the Lord saveth His anointed." He, like Peter, found out God sends His angel to deliver (Acts 12:11). Christ is the anointed of God, and in a spiritual sense, so are all His saints.

"He will hear him for His holy heaven with the saving strength of His right hand." The right hand of God is significant of His glorious power (Eph. 1:18; 3:20; Col. 1:11).

VERSE 7

"Some trust in chariots, and some trust in horses." Fallen man looks to the material and physical to find help in time of need, thinking earthly help is enough.

"But we will remember the Name of the Lord our God." We need to notice the pre-eminence of the Name of the Lord. One can only remember the Name of the Lord Who has first trusted in Him, and has realized the meaning of that Holy Name.

VERSE 8

"They are brought down and fallen." The high and mighty of this world are quickly de-throned.

"But we are risen, and stand upright." The Lord has raised us from the miry clay and has placed us on solid ground, and we, like the healed lame man, can stand upright (Acts. 3:7, 9; 4:14).

VERSE 9

"Save Lord: let the king hear us when we call." As Jesus was delivered from the day of trouble and from the grave, He can, and will hear us when we call.

Conclusion: This truly is a heavenly Psalm for a heavenly people.

(EDITORS NOTE: If you would like to write to Bro. Pyle expressing your appreciation for the lessons or ask him questions about his exposition of the Scripture his address is Rt. 22, Box 1198, Fort Myers, Fla. 33908).

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JANUARY 2, 1982
PAGE THREE

Man could not have written the Bible if he would and would not if he could.

The Baptist Examiner Forum

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER — P.O. BOX 71 — ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41101

In I Corinthians 13:8 some gifts are said to pass away and one to cease. When did that happen?

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We are told in I Corinthians 12:12-27; Romans 12:3-8; and Ephesians 4:11-12 that the gifts were given by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of perfecting and edifying the members of the church. Some of these gifts were of a temporary nature. They were to fill the gap between the time that Christ left His church when He ascended in to Heaven (Acts 1:11) and the time the New Testament would be completed. During the time the New Testament was being written, God revealed Himself and His truth through these gifts. On completion of the New Testament there was no longer a need for the gifts which had to do with authority and the giving and discerning of revelation (apostleship, prophecy, miracles, healing, tongues, interpretation of tongues). Therefore, these gifts were no longer given. "That which is perfect is come" (verse 10) refers to the completion of the New Testament.

Prophecy is the receiving and proclaiming of divine truths as revealed by God. Knowledge is that which deals with the mind and will of God, which He imparts to man through revelation. God has revealed Himself to different men at different times in different ways concerning truth about Himself and His ways (Heb. 1:1). Each book of the Bible as it was written became only a part of the whole. When the book of Revelation was completed God's revelation to man was complete, therefore, these gifts of revelation ceased at this time. "Whether there be tongues, they shall cease." That gift ceased in the apostolic age. This can be seen from the fact that in the second century and the following centuries there is no record where it ever occurred. If the gift was to be of a permanent nature it would have been given in every generation in every century.

Although the gift or the act of speaking in tongues and prophesying ended when the Bible was completed, the content or message of the speaking did not. The content, being a divine revelation, is now contained in the written revelation, the Word of God.

In Revelation 22:18 man is warned not to add anything to the "Prophecy of this Book." Modern day prophets and those of the so-called tongue movement should take warning. They should realize that their gift(?) does not come from the Holy Spirit.

In regard to cessation, the affirmed prophecy is: "Whether there be tongues, they shall cease" (I Cor. 13:8).

This cessation of tongues (languages) is not temporary, as pertaining only to the saints between the death and resurrection of the saints, when, in the resurrection, the use of tongues will be restored to be everlastingly employed in celebrating the perfections of God, in singing the hallelujahs of the Lamb, and in joining with the angels and other saints in the praise of the Trinity.

But, rather, the reference relates that the gift of speaking with divers tongues (languages) will cease; indeed it has already ceased, since Pentecost, as a special gift. Also, neither will there be any use for such an extraordinary gift in the other world, because, even during the millennial age, there will be but one language, just as there was one language, the Hebrew, before the confusion at Babel. In fact, in relating to the millennial age, it is affirmed that "then will I turn to the peoples a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." (Zeph. 3:9). This one language will, perhaps be the same language which God gave to Adam when He created Him and gave him a "pure language" with knowledge of how to use it without having to learn it, as all presently have to do, in studying languages. Since that language, which God gave to Adam, was in use until the time of Babel and was identified as Hebrew, it will probably be the same language, Hebrew, when God renders to the peoples of the earth, during the millennial age, "a pure language."

Now, as relating to knowledge, it is confirmed by prophecy that "whether there be knowledge it shall vanish (pass) away" (I Cor. 13:8); that is, the word of knowledge, in the manner that it is peculiarly given to some persons only, as in inspiring them to write Scriptures, as in the case of the epistles; also, as the peculiar gift of knowledge of Divine things, by which some are specially qualified to be instructors of others.

But, on the other hand, the present means of obtaining knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, speaks of obtaining and increasing that knowledge by reading and by the preaching and hearing of the Word of God, which means, later, will no longer be necessary. Also, then, imperfect knowledge of every sort will pass away, in being dispensed with by being perfected. Yes, that imperfect

knowledge, which is knowledge in part, will be done away, in being replaced by perfect knowledge during the millennial age. This, then, will be especially true with the resurrected saints, as living in sinless bodies like that of the body of Christ. But, presently, "we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away" (I Cor. 13:9, 10).

However, in the category of this perspective, it must be understood that the over-riding factor in the gifts of the grace of God is the love of God as the guiding principle. So, in the final analysis, when knowledge in part will be dispensed with in favor of full and perfect knowledge of the grace of God, all will be to the glory of God.

But, in the meantime, present knowledge "in part" is progressive, "till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). Too, presently, we are to be concerned only with "speaking the truth in love," that we "may grow up into Him in all things. Who is the Head, even Christ" (Eph. 4:15).

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"Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away" (I Cor. 13:8).

I take the position that 'knowledge' here is supernatural knowledge, as a miraculous gift from God, and not as knowledge gained through study of the Word of God. Before the Bible was completed, there were men who had this supernatural knowledge as a gift. Nine gifts are mentioned in I Corinthians 12:8-10. In the early church, many had one or more of these gifts. These gifts were given for a purpose and for a time. The purpose was to authenticate the New Testament message as yet the Bible was not completed. The time was until the Biblical revelation was completed.

The three gifts mentioned in I Corinthians 13:8 were not the only gifts which were to cease. They are representative of the total number of miraculous gifts. All these gifts mentioned in I Corinthians 12:8-10 together with any other miraculous gifts mentioned in the Epistles or elsewhere in the New Testament have long since passed away. There are no believers today who have any of these gifts. Those who pretend to have them are deceived, are liars, pretenders and hypocrites. It is no use to seek any of these

gifts today, for they have passed away. Is it not strange that all these folk who pretend to have these gifts are heretics. Does it not look like — if God was going to give these gifts — He would give them to His true Baptist churches and to promote truth?

"But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away" (I Cor. 13:10). This Scripture tells us when the miraculous gifts were done away. "That which is perfect" referred to here is the Word of God in its completed condition. When the Word of God was completed, the gifts were all done away. They had fulfilled their purpose. There was no longer any need of them. They ceased to be.

False teaching on the gifts is very dangerous and hurtful. It opens the door for demons to come in, deceiving some into believing they have these gifts. This promotes great confusion where practiced, and is used by the devil to aid in promoting false doctrine. Let us beware of all such pretences, stand strongly against such lest we be deceived thereby.

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I Corinthians 13:9 says that the gifts of knowledge and prophecy were partial, that is, for a given period of time. They were special gifts, but were of a temporary nature. These two gifts (knowledge and prophecy) were to be phased out or superseded by and at the time "when that which is perfect is come" (I Cor. 13:10). Tongues were a sign gift, "not to them that believe, but to them that believe not" (I Cor. 14:22). Tongues were to remain in the church during its infancy period, but with the coming of maturity, tongues would cease. This is what Paul had reference to when he said, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (I Cor. 13:11).

The church realized maturity while as yet Paul was alive, and long ere the death of the Apostle John. The Mediterranean world had already been evangelized, and churches planted throughout the Roman Empire. God had brought the church to maturity, therefore, there was no further need for the gift of tongues, and they ceased about as readily as they were given. The gifts of knowledge and prophecy are spoken of as vanishing away, that is, they would gradually cease as the need for them diminished, and that need, while extending beyond the need for the gift of tongues, would in due season ("when that which is perfect is come") be non-existent.

I Cor. 13:10, "But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." The word "perfect" in this text means mature or complete, and is a reference to the written revelation of Jesus Christ. Knowledge and prophecy were in part or incomplete, previous to the writing of the book of Revelation by the Apostle John around 96 A.D. The Book of Revelation

was the final installment, making the knowledge which God has determined for this age complete, and the need for the gifts of knowledge and prophecy vanished away.

The remaining question to be considered is, What is "that which is perfect" in I Corinthians 13:10? It is not a reference to the person of Jesus Christ because the term "that which" is in the neuter gender. A close study of the context will reveal that the "perfect" of verse 10 is a reference to the plenary and infallible Book.

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The latter part of this chapter is teaching us that God gave special gifts because He had not yet given us the complete Word. "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away" (Vs. 9, 10).

Those gifts were necessary to teach men what God was teaching them. The last prophecy became the last book of the Bible, the book of Revelation. There is no need for prophecy today because God has given us His revealed Word, the Bible, which tells us all about the future.

Actually it says that these gifts "vanish away." When something is no longer needed it just vanishes away. Speaking in tongues is the one that is said to cease. As people began to go to different nations they began to learn the languages. It was no longer necessary for God to give a man miraculous knowledge of those tongues. Actually, He gives men today the ability to learn other tongues, languages.

X-MAS

(Continued from Page 1)

Jacob" (V. 4). It was a precept binding upon all the tribes that a sacred season should be set apart to commemorate the Lord's mercy, and truly it was but the Lord's due. He had a right and a claim to such special homage. When it can be proved that the observance of Christmas, Whitsuntide and other Popish festivals were ever instituted by a divine decree, we will observe them, but not till then. It is as much our duty to reject the tradition of men as to observe the ordinances of the Lord."

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10 REASONS

(Continued from Page 3)

representations. We can observe pictures with the parents in the stable and three wise men in their presence giving gifts. The Bible is silent as to how many wise men there were. — Then we also see these Yuletide cards with the shepherds out with their flocks and a star in the distance. Again the Bible has nothing to mention of a star among the shepherds.

Then again we see other scenes with snow to beautify the scenery and that mystical god. "The Santa Claus lie," connected with it and thousands of people are confused by such false literature, simply because such cards and pictures are made to sell.

Let the children of God have nothing to do with it.

REASON No. 8—

Then we think of the untold sum of the Lord's money (Haggai 2:8) that is being spent for such foolishness of worthless and useless trinkets and toys of every description, in connection with the eating and over-eating of nuts and candies, feasting on roast turkey and chicken, and all kinds of dainties. Much of it results in headaches and stomach disorders and other ailments which go with it. All this is outright heathendom and an insult to the Master and has no connection with the scriptural story of the Saviour's birth.

REASON No. 9—

The partiality which is even exercised in the giving of gifts is another sign in failing to harmonize with spiritual principles. We do not object to the spirit of giving gifts, but why wait until the traditional month of December when often times other seasons of the year would be more practical. Also too often the method of giving fails to reveal the spirit of charity. The major method of giving is to those whom we expect to receive again in return. This is also entirely beside the scriptures, and all such already have their rewards. Listen:

The greatest gift that ever was given to the world was Jesus Christ Himself. NOT as a babe but as a sacrificed lamb, a crucified Saviour in the redemptive work to salvation.

This is by far the greater gift than His birth, and the Lord God revealed a much greater concern in this redemption on the cross than as an infant in a manger. Nevertheless we do not belittle His birth for it "was on this wise."

The most essential part of our giving a gift is our all to Him in consecration, holiness and service.

How foolish and even embarrassing does our method of giving look to the Lord Jesus? For instance, think of the inconsistency of us, giving Henry Jones a gift because John Brown has a birthday. But that is the way we use Christ when this special pagan feast day comes, when we give every Tom, Dick and Harry a present and our feeble mind is stirred, thinking we have done something great. Who gets the glory for all this? Certainly Christ does not. "Think on these things."

REASON No. 10—

Why do we celebrate holidays, when the tenor of the scriptures seems to be against it. Let's notice that Galatians 4:9-11 and Colossians 2:16 are absolute Scriptures pointing to the disapproval of all special holidays or new moons or sabbaths. Paul reproved the Gala-

tians for turning back again to the weak and beggarly elements." He says, "Ye observe days, months, times and years, I am afraid of you..." No doubt Paul had a vision of the inconsistencies of observing such special holidays by what the prophet Amos had in view of God's displeasure of Israel's festivals when He said: "I hate, I despise your feast days and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies" (Amos 5:21). It is our firm belief that God saw fit to annul all these special holidays with the ceremonial laws since Israel, also the Galatians, and now in our day and age the people will blend so much traditions and idols to these holidays.

To this day God has not told us one jot to observe any special days except one: The Lord's Day.

How could any Christian Bible reader harbor the thought that Paul was encouraging any special days with the above reference? He writes that they were only a "shadow of things to come." Let's not worship the shadow, since we can worship, in "Spirit and in Truth" the real sacrifice. God placed one day in seven as a "rest day" for us and to "keep it holy."

Why do Christians still desire to celebrate the shadow a day called Christ-mass? Christ had nothing to do with it. Paul had nothing to do with it, neither any of the Apostles.

The only record we have is that the Catholic Church has done this, and let the Church of God be free from Catholicism.

Our chief text is: "LEARN NOT THE WAY OF THE HEATHEN" (Jer. 10:2-3) — But many Christians have learned it.

"BUT FROM THE BEGINNING IT WAS NOT SO" (Matt. 19:8). "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so." (Ps. 107:2).

CHRISTIAN

(Continued from Page 1)

with the Greek initial (Xmas) is preferable to us, for it at least leaves the precious name of our Savior out of the shameful affair.

Some will ask: "Do not Christians the world over observe this holiday?" To which we would say: "It is more generally practiced by the world and by nominal professors than by true Christians. And whatever the world practices ought to be held in suspicion by the believer in Christ, for 'all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.' And 'we know that we are of God, and the world lieth in wickedness.'" (1 John 2:16 and 5:19).

We regretfully admit that many Christians, whose salvation we could not doubt, are too badly misled by men's traditions and too blind to the importance of taking guidance solely from God's Word, to take any godly stand against this Xmas monstrosity. But all who acknowledge the supreme authority of the Holy Scriptures to direct in such matters, will most certainly have no more to do with this unholy holiday after their attention has been called to it.

As to its origin, Xmas was originally a Roman heathen celebration of the birthday of the sun god. It was taken over by the Catholics, with such changes as suited their abominable idolatry. And then the Protestant daughters follow-

ed the "Mother of Harlots" (Rev. 17:5), and modified it a little more till they think they are now honoring the Lord by its observance.

The Xmas tree, the mistletoe, the holly wreaths, candles, and the child-deceiving tradition of Santa Claus, are all of heathen origin. There is not one word in Holy Writ in favor of any of them. But listen to what the Word of God does say about it: "Thus saith the Lord, learn not the way 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 with gold: they fasten it with nails and with hammers that it move not." (Jer. 10:2-4).

God has not told us to observe any special days. Instead, He has warned us about getting entangled with them. To the Galatians, who had been led off by such traditions, He said: "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years; I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain." (Gal. 4:10). To the Christian there should be no special holy days; every day should be alike holy unto the Lord, though it is the believer's blessed privilege by divine order and precedent to meet together on the first day of the week for fellowship and remembrance of the Lord's death on the cross.

The fact that the world joins in the celebration of Xmas is a proof that it is not according to the will of God, "For the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Romans 8:7).

If they would not link the name of our blessed Lord with their heathen ceremonies, then we would hold our peace. If it were like the 4th of July celebration we would have nothing to say. We see pictures of elaborate mangers on billboards and magazines, and the whole world glories in its shame — that the eternal Son of God came into the world and the best it would give Him was a cow-barn to be born in! But for the believer, not one possible argument has any weight, since "MY LORD HAS NOT TOLD ME TO DO IT."

God has not allowed us to know the time of the birth of His Son. It is not His birth that we are asked to remember. It is His death on the cross, His precious blood that paid for our sins, that we are told to remember. And that is what the world tries to soft pedal. "The preaching of the cross is foolishness to them that perish." (1 Cor. 1:18).

What may be said of Xmas may also be said of Easter, just another religious heathen celebration, in which religious professors have joined the rest of this Christ-rejecting world in putting our Lord to an open shame, associating eggs and bunnies and fancy hats with the solemn spectacle of the cross, the empty tomb, and His resurrection! Let every genuine believer in Christ hang his head for any part he ever had in such unholy business. Also think of a child of God stealing one of the Lord's days and calling it "Mother's Day," or "Father's Day," or "Children's Day"!

The most notable birthday celebrations in the Bible are Pharaoh's and Herod's, both accompanied by murder. The most outstanding merry-making and gift-sending part in the Bible is in Revelation 11:10, where God's two faithful witnesses are finally slain and people rejoice and send gifts to each other because they will not have to

NEW YEAR QUESTIONS

It is customary at this time to make resolutions pertaining to things which one will, and will not, do during the new year.

We are aware that resolutions made in the energy of the flesh, and resolutions dependent on one's own strength for their fulfillment are soon forgotten, broken or neglected.

But when the Spirit of God exercises one, and when the strength of the Lord is relied upon, definite progress in the spiritual life will be made.

Since the Lord exhorts believers to buy up the opportunities, why not ask ourselves the following questions with a view to purchasing at least some of the golden opportunities which the new year holds in store, if our Lord be not come:

1. Am I determined to read the precious Word of God more eagerly? (Job 23:12; Jer. 15:16).

2. Am I resolved to attempt to commit more Scripture verses to memory? (Ps. 119:11; Col. 3:16).

3. Am I purposing in my heart to put into practice what I learn from Holy Scriptures? (John 13:7; James 1:22).

4. Am I going to improve, if possible, my record of attendance at services? (Mt. 18:20; Heb. 10:25).

5. Am I going to do more than usual in the important matter of spreading the gospel of Christ by using a larger number of tracts? (Ps. 126:6; Eccles. 11:6).

6. Am I going to be more faithful in the exercise of the stewardship of my time, money, talents and influence? (Luke 16:10; II Cor. 9:6-8).

7. Am I going to be a better witness for the Lord Jesus Christ? (Acts 1:8; Rev. 2:13).

8. Am I determined to be a more fruitful winner of souls for Him who saved me by His grace, and who is soon coming to take me to Himself? (Matt. 4:19; I Cor. 9:19-23).

9. Am I resolving to be more helpful to the household of faith by commending more and condemning less, by giving more and expecting less, by working more and shirking less, by remembering more and forgetting less, and by loving more and despising less? (Eph. 4:31, 32; I Pet. 1:22; I John 3:16).

10. Am I going to learn more about freedom from worry by taking everything in prayer and supplication with thanksgiving to God and making my request known to Him? (Phil. 4:6; I Pet. 5:7; Luke 18:1).

listen to God's message any longer! Let every true Christian take his stand openly on the Lord's side, by having nothing to do with these festivities which are the inventions of modern Babylon.

"For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities" (Rev. 18:5). "Earnestly contend for the faith." "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Jude 3, Eph. 5:11).

MERRY XMAS

(Continued from Page 1)

winter Solstice, the day, December 25. The Babylonian name for a child or infant was "Yule," and so "Yule Day" was celebrated on December 25 centuries before the birth of Jesus. If you are skeptical, you may check your encyclopedias or your ancient histories. If you are intellectually honest, you can verify these facts plus a myriad of others which prove, beyond a doubt, that your holiday (holy day) is directly derived from a practice which our Bible condemns, and is an abomination to our Sovereign Lord.

You will discover, for your trouble, that even the giving of gifts had its origin in pagan antiquity. You don't think it is ridiculous and dishonoring to our Saviour for professing Christians to practice this thing in the name of Christ? Well, suppose you had a birthday and untold thousands "observed" it. But they all gave the gifts to someone else. If one of my Lord's attributes in Heaven is to experience grief and hurt at the antics of his children, then His Immaculate heart must break at the time of X-Mas.

Yes, my people, I purposely and deliberately spelled the day with an "X" because our Lord Jesus Christ was never in the matter. And when your minister decrys the commercial aspect of the season and says to put Christ "back" into X-Mas, you inform

him that your precious Lord was never "in" a time originating in a pagan tradition.

And some of you Baptists who are forced to listen to this liturgy as we near the end of December every year, may be wondering how this "leaven" happened to enter your own assembly. Keep in mind that man loves and fears to break with tradition and that keeping of "times" and "days" has been so ingrained in mankind that the New Testament writers specifically warned against this practice. (Galatians 4:10). Know also that the early Christians would have no part of such a holiday and, as late as 1640, the Puritans so influenced the General Court of Massachusetts that anyone who observed, in any way, this throwback from Babylon, would be punished.

A word of enlightenment as to how this idol worship managed to infiltrate our Lord's assemblies. In the third century Constantine "decreed" that all and sundry were to be Christians. In bringing all these unregenerated pagans into the fold he must, of course have to follow his own version and brand of a moral majority — in a measure attempting to legislate a religious facade which could only serve to cover depraved hearts. Knowing nothing of the quickening power of our Sovereign Lord and being absolute strangers to the indwelling Holy Spirit, there was quite naturally nothing palatable or to feed upon in Constantine's version of Christianity. Consequently, it became necessary to incorporate some of the old abominations into this new religiosity in order to keep the masses in a state of reasonable content. The natural bent of the Romish mind made this arrangement tailor-made for their blinded followers, and so, the practice has continued

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QUESTION:—What Hebrew king's head was mounted in the temple of the Philistine fish-god?

ANSWER:—Saul's First Chronicles 10:10 — "And they put his (Saul's) armour in the house of their gods, and fastened his head in the temple of Dagon." See also First Samuel 31:7-10. Dagon was the Philistine fish-god, and his image is somewhat described in First Samuel 5:1-5, which tells how it was mutilated until (verse 4) "only the stump of Dagon was left to him." The margin gives as an alternate to "the stump" the phrase "the fishy part."

MERRY XMAS

(Continued from Page 5)

and proliferated until this very day.

God's elect people with strong Baptist principles have never been drawn into such an observance, but bear in mind, that the Reformers were not in that select group. For all that Calvin and Luther and others may have contributed to the cause of Christianity, they never actually broke clean from the Roman Catholic Church. From these gentlemen have come the Protestant masses of today, so you need not find it strange that so much of Christendom is so thoroughly saturated with unscriptural practices. It is not at all unusual for a daughter to resemble her mother. And it is rare thing today to find an assembly which is not clinging to some vestige dear to the heart of that old harlot.

We realize that if we contend to keep the leaven out of the New Testament assembly we shall be accused of Phariseism, of creating a mountain out of a molehill, of straining at a gnat while swallowing a camel and various and sundry other charges. We are sure to be reminded that it is an unimportant and surely an inconsequential matter, so it is well to bear in mind that it is the little foxes that spoil the vines (Cant. 2:15) and a relatively infinitesimal "lump" can permeate and leaven the whole.

If you are spiritually perceptive enough to know what it costs for a faithful man of God to declare the whole counsel of God and His absolute Sovereignty, then you have an idea of what it takes to speak out against the world's favorite and most observed holiday. When the deacon's wives get through with their husbands at home, the odds are that such holy boldness will get you run out of town.

We are admonished not to conform to this world, we are referred to as being "in" the world but not "of" the world. With the scope and magnitude of this celebration in the world today, it is physically impossible for the earnest Christian to re-

main altogether aloof. When your congenial neighbor wishes you a Merry Christmas, you will not want to frown and say "Bah humbug." Common courtesy and decency will dictate that certain facets should be accepted. However, those who will, can give all diligence to keep this pagan/Romish observance out of the assembly of our Lord's bride. Simply turn a deaf ear to any and all overtures and with Christian kindness say that you want no part of such an observance in the church. And be prepared to pay — it will cost you!

In closing allow me to repeat a little story which you may have heard. A doting mother was raising her young son in the Santa Claus mystique, complete with the "better be good or else" threat. One day as he grew older another playmate put him wise as to the existence of old Nick (oops, St. Nick). When the young fellow confronted his mom, she had no recourse but to tell him the truth. So far, so good — but then the boy looked at his mother and said; "Now I am wondering about this Jesus, too." Get the idea?

PAGAN

(Continued from Page 1)

Christmas, I never resorted to the Santa syndrome. Now, with four of my five children adults, they have each on their own come to us and thanked us for not lying to them on this issue. Not one has "suffered" because of the truth and none has ever faulted us on this.

It is said in truth that the "celebration of Christmas as the birth of Christ began 1,600 years ago." Yet Christianity dates itself to 2,000 years ago. Does it not seem strange indeed that for four centuries our early Christian fathers abstained from this practice? Only upon the occasion of the "marriage" of the Rome Church with the "state" under the auspices of the questionable "conversion" of the Emperor Constantine could such have come about.

This "marriage" caused considerable power to be held by the Roman Church and close to the year 400 a "counsel" was held in which the birth of Christ was to be celebrated on the date of December 25 for the express purpose of absorbing the heathen into the church by using their (the heathen) great feast day, Saturnalia (Dec. 25) — a day given over to the worship of the sun (not Son of God) a practice so vile and evil that it included the sacrifice of children by burning to death on their altars.

Into this human garbage marched the Roman Church to placate and pacify by using this heathen "Holy Day" and incorporate the birth of the matchless Son of God into it. A day, by the way "all" knew could not be the birthdate of Jesus. Speaking of this pagan holiday, the new Americanized Encyclopedia Britannica, 1900, Vol. IX, page 5,236 reads: "gambling and dice at other times illegal was now practiced. All classes exchanged gifts, the commonest being tapers and clay dolls. These dolls were especially given to children. Varro thought that these dolls represented their original sacrifice of human beings to the 'infernal God' (Sun God, Sol)."

In conclusion, to the blood-bought child of God, I say, nowhere in the Word of God are we told to remember the birth of Jesus. Christians are command-

ed to remember His death (Luke 22:18, 19; I Cor. 11:26-29). Here is one thing which, if it were the only thing, that Christmas celebrating is not of God. It is this; the world which hates Christ and His blood atonement for sin, respond as one man at that time to revel, and feast and celebrate. Witness how the world does not regard the Lord's day (weekly day of worship) which is of God. But the world "does" regard and love Christmas, therefore it is not of God. Those who know nothing of God's grace will go to any length to celebrate a false tradition about His Son's birth. Those who hate the doctrine of forgiveness through the blood of Jesus alone, are filled with great zeal to promote programs, to play Santa Claus, to adorn their dwellings with wreaths and trees and say "Merry Christmas" to everyone they meet. Proud sinners, self-righteous sinners, immoral sinners with a character as black as midnight, morally virtuous sinners, with hard impenitent hearts, refined and well educated sinners seeming to know everything but Christ as Saviour, religious sinners with a lofty head profession (but not of the heart), all, all with one accord join hands in gay hilarity of Christmas, ignorantly imagining they are doing honor to a Saviour they neither love, nor know, nor care to know.

I realize fully that I am not in the mainstream. Neither was Jesus. I am not in the majority either. Jesus was crucified by the majority. I stand guilty of being narrow. Jesus said, "Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction and narrow is the way that leadeth to life eternal." It is not a popular stand I take, but Jesus said; woe unto you when all men speak well of you. To be set upon by the ungodly I can understand; "for the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God (I Cor. 2:14)." But for Christians and pastors, especially fundamental men to oppose in these matters is hurt indeed. May God cause all to prayerfully consider these truths.

ANNUAL THANKSGIVING CONFERENCE HELD AT CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH

The 1981 annual Thanksgiving Bible Conference of Calvary Baptist Church was held on Wednesday and Thursday, November 25 and 26, and a great time of fellowship with good preaching of eleven ministers on the program was enjoyed by both church and guests attending.

On Wednesday evening Elder Willard Willis, pastor of the Northland Missionary Baptist Church of Columbus, Ohio spoke on "The Effectual Calling," followed by James Hobbs, pastor of the Kings Addition Baptist Church of South Shore, Kentucky, showing pictures of his recent trip to visit Elder Fred T. Halliman, missionary to New Guinea.

Thursday morning services began at 9:30 with Elder James Grace, pastor of the Bethel Baptist Church of Ft. Mitchell, Kentucky, preaching on the "Second Coming," followed by Oscar Mink, pastor of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, Mansfield, Ohio, delivering a wonderful message on "Absolute Predestination and Foreknowledge." Next, was Elder Joe Wilson, pastor of the Grace Baptist Church, Stanleyville, N.C., preaching on "The Love Of Jesus for a True Baptist Church."

After a break for dinner, the afternoon session began at 2:00 with Elder Don Mikitta, pastor of the Landmark Missionary Baptist Church, Redwing, Minnesota, bringing a good message entitled "God's Foundation." Then, Elder Sam Wilson, pastor of the Grace Baptist Church, Gladwin, Michigan brought a wonderful message entitled "Standing By the Cross of Jesus" and then Elder Ray Brown, pastor of the Indore Baptist Church, Indore, West Virginia, brought a wonderful message on "Unfaithfulness." Following the afternoon break, Elder Ron Boswell, pastor of the Calvary Baptist Church at Hagerstown, Maryland, filled everyone's cup to running over with a message entitled "Then Came Amalek." Following him, Bro. Bob Belanger, a member of the Landmark Missionary Baptist Church of Goosecreek, S.C., brought a message on "Salvation" and closing out the conference, Elder Jon Rule, pastor of the Zion Missionary Baptist Church of Taylor, Michigan, spoke on "Reverence of God."

A great time of rejoicing and sweet fellowship was evident by all in attendance and we of Calvary Baptist Church in Ashland, are already looking forward to next year's conference.

WHAT IS?

(Continued from Page 1)

John 15:19 He said the world hates His people. But, in spite of all that everybody loves Christmas. The vilest sinner in town will run over you if necessary to celebrate his Christmas. If you have any doubts as to whether the world loves Christmas or not, just go into one of our large department stores, or ten cent stores during the last few frantic hours of Christmas shopping and see if the sinners don't elbow you just as quickly, and tackle you just as hard as the saints do.

As I meditated upon that question the thought came to me that if I would make a feast everyone would love, I must give everyone what he wanted. If I wanted Orientals to come to my feast I would serve rice. If I wanted the Italians to be there I would serve spaghetti. For the Russians I would be sure to serve plenty of Vodka. In other words, if I wanted everyone to come and enjoy my feast, I must give everyone what he wants. Then the thought came to me that maybe that is just what has happened to Christmas. So I began to search the reference books to see if that were true.

I had to go to the secular books, because I was unable to find it in my Bible. It was truly amazing what I found, and what you can find, if you will only look for it concerning the most loved of all seasons of the year. According to the most authentic sources available, and I will even throw in the Catholic reference works, because on this point they all agree there never was a Christmas before the middle of the fourth century, even in Rome. In Jerusalem it was first observed in the fifth century. And then it caused rioting in the streets.

I searched through at least a dozen of the world's leading reference works on the subject, and they all agree that no one knew the date of Christ's birth, and some of them say we cannot be sure as to the actual year in which He was born. But in order for the Catholic Church to

have a big feast day, it was necessary for some date to be set for His birthday. The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia says that in order for the shepherds to have been out that night with their flocks it would have been necessary for His birth to have occurred sometime between March and September. But the Catholic Church could not celebrate Christmas at that time of the year as we shall see later. It must be in December whether there were any shepherds and sheep out that night or not. It became really interesting when I began searching for the reason why it must be in December.

First, however, let us consider some of the things which were put into Christmas to make it so universally loved. In Babylon, that great heathen Chaldean city, pagan religion reached its peak so far as ancient history was concerned. Here in Babylon the queen of heaven and her son had their beginnings in the persons of Semeramis and her son, Tammuz. When Belshazzar was slain (Daniel 5:30) and the Chaldeans defeated by Darius the Mede, it seems the capital of the pagan religious world was moved from Babylon to Pergamos. Later, at the death of Attalus III, Phrygia was given to the Roman Empire in 133 B.C. The Babylonian pagan worship was then removed to Rome where Semeramis and Tammuz became Fortuna and Jupiter. This queen of heaven and her son became the very heart of pagan, or idol worship throughout the world. They were called by different names in different countries. In Egypt they were Isis and Osiris. In India they were Isi and Iswara. In other parts of Asia they were Cybele and Deoious. In Greece they were Ceres and Plutus. But they were all the same queen of heaven and her son. All of these were dumped into Christmas under the new name of Mary and Jesus. This did not affect the pagan world too much, for no matter what you call a dish of tender fried chicken it is still a very tasty dish.

I learned that the more religion the Catholic Church put into Christmas the more popular it became. The world is a great lover of religion so long as the Christ of Calvary, and His shed blood are left out of it.

Now with all the ingredients in Christmas, it is time to look for the reason why Christmas must be in December. Even back in ancient Babylon the birth of Tammuz was celebrated in our December. The heathen sun worshippers throughout the northern hemisphere all celebrated the rebirth of the sun at the time of its turning back toward the North, that is, about December 25th. Tammuz, Osiris, Iswara, Deoious, Plutus and Jupiter were all representatives of the sun in their respective countries. These heathen people had been brought into the Catholic Church, mainly through the efforts of Constantine the great. They were still just as heathen as they were incorporated into the Catholic Church. And they were going to continue celebrating this great feast at this same time. It did not matter too much what their god was called. It was still a representative of their sacred

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"WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD TODAY"

MIAMI (EP)—Two Episcopal priests were convicted November 20 of violating federal law by transporting 411 undocumented Cubans to Florida in the 1980 "Freedom Flotilla." A third clergyman was acquitted of all charges by the 12-member jury, and a woman who served as a nurse-interpreter on the clergymen's ship, God's Mercy, was cleared by the judge before jury deliberations began.

Mr. Joe Morris Doss, rector of Grace Episcopal Church in New Orleans, and his Cuban-born assistant, Mr. Leopold Frade, were convicted of "trading with the enemy" but were acquitted on a conspiracy charge. A Methodist minister from Miami, Mr. Roberto Perez, was found not guilty on both charges.

The priests face a maximum jail term of 10 years and \$50,000 in fines for the convictions.

DORFWEIL, West Germany (EP)—The outgoing leader of the European Baptist Federation council warned his colleagues here that "a paralyzing fear" of nuclear war pervades the continent, and the need for immediate disarmament must be impressed upon governments, according to a Religious News Service report.

Dr. David S. Russell, secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, said that "the future of Europe and indeed of mankind is at stake. This is something bigger than politics and ideologies. It is a matter of human survival. Disarmament on a world scale — and quickly — is a priority for both prayer and action."

The Baptist leaders from most of the countries of Europe who met here adopted a resolution saying they shared his concern. They also expressed the hope that the United States and the Soviet Union will reach accommodation on the problem of nuclear mid-range weapons in Europe in talks to begin Nov. 30. "It is our hope that these discussions by both world powers may be conducted not from a position of military strength, but rather in a spirit of understanding and with a readiness and desire for detente," they stated.

WASHINGTON (EP)—Southern Baptist leaders reacted with hope but caution to President Reagan's dramatic Nov. 18 proposals for peace in Europe and future strategic weapons talks with the Soviet Union. Reagan's plan, announced during a speech televised to many parts of the world, called for cancellation of 572 new medium-range American missiles now planned for installation in Western Europe, provided the Soviets agree to dismantle some 600 of their medium-range missiles aimed at Western Europe.

Such a step, the President declared in his first major foreign policy pronouncement since taking office 10 months ago, would be a "historic step." By agreeing to the reductions, he went on, the U.S. and the Soviet Union "could together reduce the dread threat of nuclear war which hangs over

the people of Europe."

W.A. Criswell, pastor of the Southern Baptist Convention's largest congregation, First Baptist Church of Dallas, termed the president's appeal "one of the finest national and international statements made in recent years." Reagan, he said, "showed a real genius of political statecraft when he challenged the Russians to disarm with us and to renounce all nuclear weapons on European soil."

A. Carman Sharp, a Louisville, Ky., pastor who has become a leader of a new group of Southern Baptists concerned about peace issues, said that "any word about slowing down the arms race, any movement toward peace, is very positive. I am thankful to God for it." But Sharp also expressed reservations: "I have a deep-down question about why he (Reagan) waited so long and about his apparent motive of putting pressure on the Soviets." Sharp expressed hope that Reagan's speech will be followed by "an effort genuinely to reach out to the Soviets, to start talking, to start moving."

Foy Valentine, executive director of the SBC Christian Life Commission, said he finds "some small comfort in the change in rhetoric."

The veteran Southern Baptist ethicist said further: "peace is better than war; and talk about peace is better than talk about war. Even if the offer was designed partly as a public relations effort to help the President's steadily sagging foreign policy image, to placate our European allies, and to propose something he knew the Kremlin would not accept, still I hope and pray that it signals a start toward some new initiatives to harness the runaway nuclear arms race and to do the things that make for peace."

TUPELO, Miss. (EP)—The head of the Coalition for Better Television has criticized NBC for airing a Christmas special featuring the Playboy Playmates. Donald E. Wildmon, a United Methodist minister, says the inclusion of the Playmates in the George Burns Christmas Special is an insult to every Christian in America and is indicative of the continuing by the networks against Christians, Christian values and Christian culture.

"To take a holiday which is uniquely Christian, one of the most sacred of the Christian holy days, and to run a special program featuring the Playboy Playmates shows the anti-Christian bias of the networks. Playboy represents everything the Christian faith is not. It is a hedonistic philosophy. To add more insult to the bigotry NBC had them to sing 'My Body Keeps Changing My Mind.' All of this was done under the name of a very special day for Christians," Wildmon said. "The networks will bring us plenty of Christmas specials, but I doubt if any of them will deal with the real meaning of Christmas — the birth of Jesus Christ and what it means for the world."

The minister last week stated that if the networks did not give concrete evidence that they

would stop their discrimination against Christian characters, culture and values by February 1, 1982, he would ask for a boycott of their products and products of companies helping promote the anti-Christian bigotry.

VALLEY FORGE, Pa. (EP)—The Southern Baptist Press has reported the election of the "first woman in the history of the Southern Baptist Convention... to a full term as president of a convention, which is aligned only with the Southern Baptist Convention."

Beverly McLeroy, 38 the wife of Jim McLeroy, pastor of the Southern Baptist Church of Las Vegas, Nev., was elected first vice president of the Nevada Baptist Convention at the 1980 state convention. She became president in December when the elected president, Adrian Hall, resigned to accept a position on the state staff Mrs. McLeroy was re-elected president for a full term when the convention met in October in Carson City.

HAMBURG, Germany (EP)—In his speech at the beginning of the 30th conference of the West German Christian Democratic Party, held in Hamburg November 3 to 5, party leader Helmut Kohl stated, "When major sections of a nation turn from God and lose the ability to believe, that nation will inevitably find itself questioning the meaning of life. Loss of faith does not increase freedom, it leads to growing fear of life."

This was Kohl's explanation of the situation that had led up to the current peace movement in West Germany, according to a report from the German Evangelical Alliance. Political discussion of the questions of peace and nuclear energy was so difficult, he said, because the fear was so deep-rooted. It was particularly bad when theologians confirm the doubts of the people and even claim to understand their fear, or even to share it. Therefore, according to Kohl, the debate had to involve not those who "are afraid, but those who seek to profit politically from these fears."

Kohl made several references to the peace movement and the reasons for it. He stated, for example, "In the case of many of its adherents, the so-called peace movement is an eruption from the depths of insecurity and fear of life in a world that wants to dispense with God and faith as old-fashioned..." Political activity based on Christian responsibility should therefore create security and arouse courage and hope.

WASHINGTON (EP)—The U.S. Senate has overwhelmingly approved an amendment which would restrict the Justice Department from using its funds to interfere with "voluntary school prayer and meditation." But the practical impact of the action appears insignificant since the Justice Department does not use its funds to do what the amendment forbids.

By a 70-12 vote, the Senate restored a House rider which the Senate's appropriations committee earlier had struck from the \$8.6 billion funding bill for the Departments of Commerce, Justice and State.

After the vote, U.S. Sen. Lowell P. Weicker Jr., R-Conn., presented an amendment which would prevent Justice Department action only against "constitutional" pro-

grams of school prayer and meditation. The subject produced heated debate over what the First Amendment religion clauses allow and what they forbid, as well as over what constitutes "voluntary" school prayer. Weicker's amendment was rejected 51-34.

After the votes, Weicker said he will filibuster the entire appropriations bill, adding he believes the inclusion is unconstitutional. "This bill will not get off the floor of the U.S. Senate," Weicker said.

WASHINGTON (EP)—Americans United for Separation of Church and State today denounced the Walker school prayer rider for "provoking religious disharmony" in the U.S. Congress which ultimately could extend to school districts throughout the nation.

Reacting to the acrimonious debate the Walker amendment provoked on the floor of the Senate November 16, American United Executive Director R.G. Puckett, said, "The unfortunate exchange among our Senators shows exactly the kind of religious disputes and disharmony that will result in school districts across America if the Congress tries to tamper with the Supreme Court's decisions on prayer in the public schools. Surely in this day when we are trying to get the government off people's backs, we will not allow bureaucrats to make that kind of deeply personal decision involving our children's religious upbringing. That is a decision for each family to make."

WASHINGTON (EP)—Church-state questions continued to command the attention of the U.S. Supreme Court in its new term as the justices announced they will hear arguments on whether church-related elementary and secondary schools must pay unemployment compensation to their employees. In a case complicated by suits and counter-suits involving several Christian schools in California and the state and federal governments, the high court agreed to decide if a lower federal tribunal erred when it held earlier this year that such schools are exempt from federal and state laws governing unemployment compensation.

Three California churches which run Christian schools, including Scott Memorial Baptist Church in San Diego, took both the state and federal governments to court after unemployment compensation laws were applied to the church-related institutions. The Long Beach congregation's pastor is the well-known author and conservative activist Tim LaHaye. The churches were joined in their suit by two associations of Christian schools, based in San Diego and Castro Valley, Calif. Last April a U.S. District Court in California ruled for the schools, holding that the laws as applied excessively entangled state officials in church affairs.

Federal and state laws in California exempt churches, conventions and associations of churches, and separately formed corporations set up by churches from paying unemployment compensation taxes. Such exemptions do not apply, however, to religious schools not affiliated with a church or a convention or association of churches.

WASHINGTON (EP)—The Supreme Court will decide if

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states may forbid sexual performances by children in legally non-obscene films and magazines. Without comment the justices agreed to review the constitutionality of a 1977 New York law making it a felony to promote any sexual performance by a child under age 16. A separate section of the law prohibits the promotion of sexually obscene performances by children.

Paul Ferber, operator of a Manhattan book shop selling sexual materials, was convicted under the law three years ago after an undercover police officer purchased two films featuring children in sexual roles. Ferber's conviction came under the portion of the New York statute banning the promotion of any sexual performance by children. Although one state court later affirmed the conviction, the New York Court of Appeals overturned it on grounds that the law is too broad and should be limited to legally defined obscene materials.

WILMORE, Ky. (EP)—DR. DAVID L. MCKENNA, President of Seattle Pacific University since 1968 has been named president-elect of Asbury Theological Seminary. McKenna will become the 58-year-old institution's fourth president. The new president-elect will succeed DR. FRANK BATEMAN STANGER, 67, president of Asbury Theological Seminary since 1962.

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WHAT IS?

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god, the sun. But the time of their feast could not be changed, because the sun starts on his return toward the North at only one time of the year. Even old Satan with the help of all his able, efficient coworkers could not change the time. Therefore, Christmas had to be December 25th, whether the shepherds were out that night with their flocks or not.

As much as the head of the Catholic Church likes to boast of his God-like power and authority, this was one time he was completely helpless. He had absolutely no choice in the matter. His problem was clear. If he wanted to make good Catholics out of his host of heathens he must give their queen of heaven and their god Christian names. So Mary and Jesus had to be their names, and December 25th had to be the date. Had Bishop Julian, I, been really and truly interested in setting the real date of Christ's birth the month of December would not have been considered at all, because anyone who is at all familiar with the climate conditions which prevail in Palestine during the month of December would know there were no shepherds and sheep out in the field at this time of the year.

With Christmas literally loaded down with the world's religion it is easy to see why the

world loves Christmas. But we see people observing this feast who should not be lured into the feast of the pagan gods. Even the Baptists themselves seem to be trying to out spend, out shine and out do the world in the world's own feast. If you ask why they are at this feast, some would unthinkingly say it is because Mary and Jesus are in it. But that statement won't stand when we turn the light of God's Word upon it. Jesus, Himself said the world hates Him, and He is not a liar. So it is easy to see that if He were in Christmas that would completely ruin it for the world. The world would care no more for Christmas than they do for His Church, if Christ were really in it. I can just see him platting that whip again. When I see posters which read, "Let's put Christ back in Christmas," I always think of the story of the boy from a back-woods family who went away to college. Upon his return home he wanted to improve the family's grammar. So when his younger brother said pass the lasses, he said, don't say lasses, say molasses. His brother retorted, how can I say molasses when I ain't had no lasses? So, how can we put Christ back in Christmas when He has never been in it? Maybe we should let God tell us why we Baptists are so deeply in love with Christmas. If we read Jeremiah 5:30-31 in our everyday language it says, the preachers preach false things,

and the priests run things their own way, and my people love to have it so. The Baptist people run after the false gods and false religion connected with Christmas when they can find nothing in the Bible, nor in authentic secular history, to justify what they teach and preach?

With everybody, including the Baptist, partaking of Christmas it was time to give it that good old Christmas spirit. You know, that spirit that makes you feel that it is perfectly all right for you to do things you could not afford to do at any other time of the year. If the drunkard refused to drink on Christmas, and the harlot became virtuous for the day, we might be able to say that the Christmas spirit is the Spirit of Christ. But it is an undeniable fact that untold thousands of people drink at Christmas without any compunction of conscience, who would not drink at all any other time of the year. All manner of evil and God-provoking things are done at this season of the year, because this is Christmas.

Do you believe it is the Spirit of Christ that causes thousands of people to line up in the saloons of the land at Christmas, who never go near them at any other time? I know there are people who will say that is not the real Christmas spirit. But I wonder if this is not a weak effort on our part to try to justify our participation in this ungodly thing called Christmas. Certainly it is not the Spirit of Christ that gives us all that freedom, but rather it is the spirit of Saturnalia. In ancient Rome a week of feasting and merry-making was observed in the latter part of December. During this feast everyone, even the slaves, were permitted to do just as they pleased. Things like gambling etc. which were prohibited at other times were winked at during Saturnalia. This feast was brought over from ancient pagan Rome by modern pagan Rome, and dumped into Christmas to give it that tangy flavor and make people look forward to it with great anticipation.

The beauty of the Tabernacle was hidden from the world, but not so with Christmas. The beauty of Christmas is on the outside in plain view of everyone, but on the inside are dead men's bones. All manner of drinking, debauchery and unclean living is covered over with the beautiful cloak of Christmas. But in Revelation 17 and 18 we have a ghastly picture of the Catholic Church, including her Christmas and fabulous Christmas trade which will cause all that weeping and wailing when it is finally cut off. In Revelation 19:4 Christ says, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." It is not an easy thing to do. No one wants to be a kill-joy, or an old Scrooge. Christmas has become a part of our American life. It has become no doubt, as much a part of our way of life as idolatry had in the Jews way of life. And as I recall, it took the destruction of their land and their enslavement to tear them loose from their idols.

If anyone has any evidence to justify our participation in Christmas, please let it be known, I have searched in vain for it.

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