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## Have A Merry, Pagan Christmas! By Raymond Towers

*Thus says the LORD: "Do not learn the way of the Gentiles; Do not be dismayed at the signs of heaven, For the Gentiles are dismayed at them. For the customs of the peoples are futile; For one cuts a tree from the forest, The work of the hands of the workman, with the ax. They decorate it with silver and gold; They fasten it with nails and hammer. So that it will not topple. They are upright, like a palm tree, And they cannot speak; They must be carried, Because they cannot go by themselves. Do not be afraid of them, For they cannot do evil, Nor can they do any good." - Jeremiah, 10:2-5, New King James Version*

The above verses refer to tree reverence or worship in Old Testament times. The divinity of nature and nature gods / spirits goes back a long way, and if you celebrate Christmas, guess what, that's exactly what you're doing in modern times. Read on to learn how this favorite holiday originally came about, you closet pagan, you!

Oh, by the way, Jeremiah might have had Asherah poles in mind when he wrote those verses. You do know who Asherah is, right? That would be God's WIFE, back when he had a wife, before she was scrubbed out of history by Jewish zealots, circa 400 - 500 Before the Common Era. There is a fascinating rumor that Asherah poles are the basis for today's stripper poles, but let's keep to subject, shall we?

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## Introduction

With the winter holidays coming up, I thought it would be nifty if I did research into the pagan origins of Christmas. Blasphemy, you say! Christmas popped up out of thin air, like magic, because God said so! Right, right. I get it. Dogma is the law of the land, unless your particular religion is Rockefeller medicine, Smithsonian history, NASA space exploration, or like Nacho Libre's sidekick used to say: I believe in science!

It was a chore looking for unbiased sources for my research notes. I have included information gathered from Christian, Muslim, Scandinavian and even Spiritual archivists into this report. I do have a couple of PDF books on the subject, but I didn't delve into them because I read SO MUCH, and I write SO MUCH, that I didn't feel like taking the time. It was easier to spend, oh, about 4 hours compiling this information, and an entire morning writing this article, plus reviewing it a few times. I may go into the books and update this report at a later date.

You'll find the source videos for this report listed at the end. I have to say, most of the video narrators were WIMPS, in that they whitewashed history by deliberately leaving out some of the more violent or perverse details of Winter Solstice celebrations in ancient times. I know, I know, some of you will cringe when you find out about child orgies during Saturnalia, or poison-dipped Mistletoe spears, or human sacrifices when the Lord Of Misrule term was over, but hey... History is History. That's the way it happened, so why pull my punches? If you can't handle the Truth, go watch Sesame Street and suck your thumb for the rest of the day. Safe space!

I did not include a whole lot of Mithras in this report, although this Roman sun god, and precursor to Jesus, played a big part in the Winter Solstice. That's because I have a full report on this Indian / Persian / Roman deity that I'll be posting up later. For now, repeat after me: Everything I was taught is a big, fat lie!

## Astrological References

December 25<sup>th</sup> is not the birth date of Jesus, as is popularly thought. Instead, this is the date of the Winter Solstice, when the sun begins to rise higher in the sky and days become longer again. The full period of the Winter Solstice stretches from Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> to Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>. The days got shorter before the 25<sup>th</sup>, and they got longer after that date. In ancient times, without electricity and modern heating methods, this time of year was feared as a time of great cold, disease and darkness. When the sun returned, it was a grand event worthy of celebration. Some cultures believed the sun actually died during the Solstice, stayed in the underworld for a few days, and came back to life. Hint, hint!

Many people believe Jesus was born on December 25th, and hence we have the Christ Mass or Christmas on that date to celebrate his birth. Many Bible apologists and scholars will admit that this is inaccurate. If shepherds were out tending to their flocks,

that means the flocks were outside and the flocks would not have been taken out during the coldest time of the year. That's if you assume Jesus was a real historical figure. (Also, the Catholic Church once set Jesus' birthday as January 6<sup>th</sup>.)

It is likely that the Star of Bethlehem is a reference to the star Sirius. It is also likely that the Three Kings are the three stars on Orion's Belt. Some researchers will say that we don't know for certain that there were Three Kings, or Three Wise Men. We assume that number because they brought three items as gifts: Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh. Interesting that Frankincense and Myrrh have occult / magical powers. Also, in Spanish, *Los Tres Reyes Magos* translates as The Three King Mages (Sorcerers), and we get Mago from the Latin Magus, which forms our modern word Magician.

Frankincense - spirituality, protection, exorcism, consecration

Myrrh - spirituality, healing, protection, exorcism, transformation, consecration

(From the book *The Mystical World Of Ancient Witchcraft*)

Babylon's Naughty Incest Gods

*And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD.* - Genesis 10: 8,9, King James Version

The Bible deliberately omits details on who Nimrod was, other than he was a mighty hunter. If he was so mighty, why aren't we told of the mighty things he did? Well, we are given that Nimrod built the Tower of Babel, so that's a start. For accomplishing that feat, some people would say that Nimrod was a master Mason. (A theory from *The Christ Conspiracy* by Acharya. Nimrod is mentioned in Masonic lore, just like King Solomon. We will get into occult Solomon at a later date.) In the Bible's bloodline genealogy, we see that Noah begat Ham, Ham begat Cush, and Cush begat Nimrod. Remember the name Cush! So, who was Nimrod really?

In the book *Rivers Of Life* by Furlong, Nimrod founded the Kaldian (Chaldean) Empire, and was called the Lord of Nipoor (also Ur or Hoor). This was circa 2234 BCE. The phrase 'mighty hunter,' according to this tome, did not mean that Nimrod hunted animals, but women, as in he was the big ladies' man. Are you ready to go for a loop? This phrase was also used to describe Siva (Shiva from India). There are many clues that tie the origins of Christianity, Islam and Judaism to India, that I have looked into before. The Hebrew Abraham came from Chaldea, and so did the priests of Brahma, so Abram = Brahma. Abraham's wife Saria or Sarah could derive from the Indian River Saraitva. Let's not get too far into that, as it will take us too far off-topic. I do have an article on Abraham and Sarah that I will post later.

For now, this is what I'd like for you to remember. Nimrod was the son of Kush. The word Barchus or Bacchus means son of Kus or Kooth. That's the link with Nimrod and the Greek fertility and wine god being one and the same. We will read about Bacchus a little later from his festival Bacchanalia, which was coincided with Saturnalia. I wonder why the Old Testament writers deliberately hid this link from us?

Let's head over to Early Babylon for some naughtiness. According to the myth, Nimrod was married to Semiramis. When Nimrod died, Semiramis claimed that his spirit

remained and sprouted up as an evergreen tree. On the anniversary of his birth, the spirit would visit the tree and leave gifts. The birth date of Nimrod was... December 25th!

Later, Semiramis had a son named Tammuz. Nimrod had been resurrected as his own son, and Semiramis married him, knowing he was a reincarnation of her deceased husband. When Tammuz died, he was crucified with a lamb at his feet. His body was taken into a cave. A large rock was rolled away from the cave after three days, where, lo and behold, the body of Tammuz was gone. (For more on Nimrod, read the Apocrypha Book of Jasher. This book is not included in the Bible, but it is mentioned by name in Joshua and Second Samuel.)

This is very important: THE HOLY TRINITY OF FATHER, MOTHER AND SON IS A TEACHING FROM THE BABYLONIAN MYSTERY SCHOOLS. This teaching continued in the Egyptian Mystery Schools and is also seen in a truncated way in the Bible. Let me prove it to you.

The Babylonian concept of incest among the gods and of the Immaculate Conception was passed on to Egypt. The god Osiris was married to the goddess Isis. Osiris was killed and dismembered by the god Set. Isis attempted to put her husband's pieces back together, but she couldn't do it. In the end, she took the phallus of Osiris and impregnated herself. Isis begat Horus, and later she married her son, who was the reincarnation of her husband.

The tradition continues in Christianity, but it was deliberately obfuscated. We have the god Yahweh impregnating human Mary, and Mary giving birth to demigod Jesus. As a side note, there are several other unions of gods and humans mentioned in the Greek / Roman and other pantheons, resulting in half-god, half-man demigods such as Gilgamesh and Herakles / Hercules, plus Zeus cavorting often with human women. Getting back to the point, the mother of Jesus was Mary, and who was rumored to have been the wife or consort of Jesus but another Mary, in this case Mary Magdalene. Is it a coincidence that the mother of Jesus and the suspected lover of Jesus had the same name? I don't think it is an accident, not when there is a clear link between the Egyptian Isis and the Roman Catholic Mary, mother of god. In Babylon, we see statues of Semiramis holding baby Tammuz. In Egypt, we have Isis holding baby Horus, and in Christianity we have the Virgin Mary holding baby Jesus. The statues are nearly identical. In Christianity, the hardest part to prove is that mother Mary was the same as lover Mary, but again, this is the part that was deliberately hidden from us.

In the book *Bloodlines Of The Illuminati*, author Springmeier writes that the Holy Trinity of Babylon represented the sun, moon and morning star. Let's add in Egypt and Christianity to that idea.

Holy Trinities - father, mother, son, and also sun, moon, morning star

Nimrod - Semiramis - Tammuz

Osiris - Isis - Horus

Yahweh - Mary - Jesus

*"I Jesus... am the bright and morning star."* - Revelation 21:16

Rome's Ultimate Party: Saturnalia!

Rome had what you would call an extreme party called Saturnalia that would put Mardi Gras in New Orleans to shame. This celebration was first created to promote liberty (more like libertine!). Originally, it was a one-day event held on December 17<sup>th</sup>. As time went on, more days of feasting were added, stretching the party on through December 23<sup>rd</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup>, depending on the source.

During Saturnalia, the normal functioning of society was drastically altered and rules were loosened. Wealthy people put away their expensive clothes and dressed in common tunics. Politicians put away their special uniforms. The three classes of Romans: citizens, free men and slaves, wore Pileus. These were special caps usually used only by the slaves. Courts were closed. Prisoners were freed. Romans would feast and drink like gluttons. They were expected / encouraged to have sex in public with whoever wanted to participate. Different sources give differing details as to how out of the norm things got. Some sources claim that human sacrifices, random raping of women and even orgies with young children was permissible. One source states that houses or even entire villages could be pillaged with no repercussions. Another extreme source said any and all crimes were allowed, including murder. Homosexuals and transvestites could walk and engage in sex out in the open. All sorts of debauchery was allowed.

Here is a breakdown of how a typical Saturnalia went: On the 17<sup>th</sup> of December, a large crowd gathered by the temple of Saturn on Capitoline Hill. (This term is where our modern Capitol Hill comes from.) Saturn was the god of Capitoline Hill, as well as the god of agriculture, liberty and wealth. To officially begin the celebration, Saturn's priests would remove the wrappings from the feet of the Saturn statue inside the temple. The idea may have been that the statue was now figuratively 'able' to walk the streets. A priest would sacrifice an animal (some sources say a human) before the crowd. Senators inside the temple would pick up a second statue of Saturn, this one made of wood. They would carry the wooden statue out of the temple and down the street to the public forum. (Note that many, many cultures still have the custom today of carrying a religious effigy from one place to another, and in many cases the point of origin or destination is a holy site.) The crowd would follow the senators to the forum.

The wooden statue was set on a prepared recliner before a large, open banquet area. The people had a feast and drank wine there. Gladiator games were held right after the banquet. In keeping with the idea of things being turned on their head, women and dwarves would fight in these bloody games. Most people enjoyed the blood sport, but there were critics that abhorred them. Candles and torches lined the streets, allowing revelers to stay out late.

The feasting and drinking would continue after the people went home. Some citizens traded places or clothing with their slaves, or performed slave duties such as preparing food. Slaves were allowed to sit at the table and talk down to their masters, not in an insulting or angry way, but more in keeping with the fun spirit of the festival. One source said the only difference was that the masters and slaves ate dinner together, but that was one of the whitewashed versions.

People gambled, not with money, but with nuts. Small gifts were given, including books, toys and other items. One popular item was a Sigillara, a small wax figure. (Note that this has the word Sigil in it. Sigils are considered magical symbols or inscriptions. So these wax figures may have had some magical significance.) Everybody expected a gift from everybody else. People judged others based on the worth of the gifts they gave.

Records exist of people praising or complaining about the gifts given to them. Cheaper gifts were handed out to strangers that came to the door.

I came across two versions of how a king of the feast was chosen. In one, the members of every household would elect a Saturnalicus Princeps, or King of Saturnalia. This was usually a child or a slave. Whatever this temporary king ordered was done right away and without question. Most orders were simple and given in fun. In the second version, a single Lord Of Misrule was chosen. This person was considered an enemy of Rome, perhaps a slave or criminal. For the duration of Saturnalia, this king was exalted to take part in the festivities of eating, drinking and fornicating. At the end of the festival, the Lord Of Misrule was killed or sacrificed to Saturn. The concept was that by killing this king, an enemy of Rome, Rome would metaphorically get rid of its enemies for a time.

More on Roman customs: Romans ate human-shaped biscuits, kind of like our modern gingerbread men. Holly was hung inside the house to ward off evil. (I wonder, if over time, Holly become Holy, as in Holly Day, to Holy Day, to today's Holiday.) Our modern 12 Days of Christmas comes from the 12 days of the Winter Solstice.

Juvenalia was the Festival of Infants, where children were presented with images (or gifts). The Feast of Opalia was held on Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>. This feast was for Ops, the wife of Saturn. Brumalia and Natalis Invicti were festivals celebrated on the shortest date of the year, Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>. Several Roman gods had birthdays on Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>, including Mithras, who was also called Sol Invictus or the Unconquerable Sun.

In the year 270 BCE, Roman emperor Aurelius officially decreed that gifts could be exchanged on Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> to celebrate the birth of the sun god Mithras.

Early Christians did not decorate their houses during Saturnalia. Christians did not celebrate the birth date of Jesus, either. That came about during the 4<sup>th</sup> century, at the decree of Pope Julius the 1<sup>st</sup>, who wanted to draw more pagans to Christianity during the Saturnalia festivals. A lot of pagan customs and rituals officially became absorbed into Christianity at that time, including the birth date of Mithras becoming the birth date of Jesus. By the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the celebration was no longer called Saturnalia, but Christ's Mass. At that time, sex on the streets, rape and murder (and Druidic rituals, according to one source) were common. This debauchery did not become toned down until much, much later the 1600s.

Roman soldiers introduced Saturnalia to Britain, where it became the Festival of Fools, ruled over by the Lord of Misrule.

Ancient Greece observed the Bacchanalia, in reverence to Bacchus, a god of wine and frolic.

Rome held the Saturnalia festival in honor of their 'sun' god Saturn. Yes, Saturn as a sun god is a valid parallel. There are ancient histories describing Saturn as the original sun of Earth, as seen in the Golden Age of Saturn Mystery School teachings. Research also the Saturn Cube and the Death Cult of Saturn.

The story of Saint Nicholas can be traced back to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE. The monk Nicholas was possibly born in 280 CE, in Patara, Turkey. According to legend, he gave away his possessions and was very pious. He died on December 6<sup>th</sup> possibly in 343 CE. This became a lucky day to make large purchases or get married. For another version of the Saint Nick story, see the Medieval section.

## The Norsemen And The Yule Log

To the Scandinavian Norsemen, the Winter Solstice was a scary time of the year. It was a time of death and darkness. Fires were lit to bring light into that darkness. Another way to view this: the gods of the hearth would watch over the occupants of the home and keep them warm. During certain times of year, some cultures believed the hearth god, dressed in red, would appear to reward the good and punish the evil.

It was believed that evergreen trees such as fir were everlasting, or had everlasting life. People would bring fir trees into their home to drive away death, the same way they drove away darkness with fire. In another interpretation, evergreen trees represent fertility and sex. Bringing evergreen trees into the home was an acknowledgement of the nature spirits that lived inside the trees. Decking the halls with boughs of Holly also acknowledged the power of the gods. People would hang mistletoe over their doors as a charm against evil.

Many cultures celebrated the Winter Solstice as the dying and renewal of the sun. The dates ranged from December 21<sup>st</sup> through the start of January. The Feast of 12 Nights was observed from Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> through Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>. I've come to differing opinions here. In the first, Yule was a god of fertility. During the 12 day festival, a large log, representing a phallic idol, was kept burning for the entire duration of the festival. Each ember from the burning log was believed to be a future new birth, of humans or livestock. Animal or human sacrifices were offered each day, paralleling with how a turkey is sacrificed in our modern Thanksgiving Day. Wild revelry took place.

December 25<sup>th</sup>, Christmas day, was called Hjol by the Nords. The Fresians knew it as, Jole, and the early English called it Geol. Over time, this word has evolved into the modern Yule., which means Wheel. Germanic people saw the year as a wheel, or a cycle of time. The shorter days of December were on the bottom of the wheel. The wheel represents the eternal conflict between the forces of light and dark.

Odin (or Woden) was a Nordic god with many names. Another name for Odin is Jolfadr, which translates as Jole Father or Yule Father. Jole might also become Jolly, as in Jolly Father. All of these similar names give credence to the idea that Odin is the original Father Christmas. Here is a list of what attributes Odin shared in common with early Father Christmas:

- Flying white horse
- Wore a hat and cloak
- Carried a staff or spear
- Had long hair and beard
- Was old and wise
- Was called 'giver of letters'
- Both were part of Germanic tradition
- Both had religious connotations

Notes on Druidic customs: Celts and Druids customarily used mistletoe. One source stated that Druids poisoned their spears with mistletoe and sacrificed their victims under it. Mistletoe was believed to have the power to render a woman helpless, where a man could take advantage of her. This leads to our modern custom of hanging mistletoe over a

doorway. When a woman walks under it, she cannot resist being kissed. Druids also used fir trees in their rituals.

Other notes from this time period: In the tale of Beowulf, the name Nick, Nickel or Nicker referred to the Demon of the North. This name is supposedly associated with Odin, but I could not find the link. Regardless, Nick the demon snatched up bad children and stole them away in his bag. In Germany, the name Pelz Nick means furry devil. This devil had a furry red coat and also came from the North. In Norse mythology, the god Loki kills fellow god Baldur with a staff of mistletoe.

### Medieval St. Nick And The Dreaded Krampus

This shouldn't surprise anyone by now, but it was the Church of Rome that deliberately absorbed the ancient ritual of Saturnalia, in order to attract and eventually convert the pagans. Author Alfred Hottes blamed the European barbarians for mixing things up, but did he acknowledge Emperor Constantine as of those barbarians? Hello! Constantine was one of the primary leaders who helped put this all together!

Do you remember how in Saturnalia people would go from house to house expecting gifts? During the Middle Ages, the poor would walk to the houses of the rich, demanding that food and drink be given to them. If the poor were refused, they would proceed to torment that household. They would even sing songs while doing this, and while walking from house to house. This is how Christmas caroling first came about. Ironically, this is also the origin for our modern Halloween, where strangers would request treats, and give tricks, or torment, to house occupants who refused to cater to them.

We have varying accounts regarding the origin story of Saint Nick. In one, St. Nick was the patron of seafaring men. People believed St. Nick captured the Devil. The Devil was also called Krampus, Beelzebub, Zwarte Pter (Black Peter) and Knecht Ruprecht. Saint Nick showed up on December 25<sup>th</sup> and dropped candy and gifts down a chimney and into children's shoes. This is where the tradition of hanging Christmas stockings comes from. In this dualistic, good and evil contrast, St. Nick brought happiness and gifts, while the demonic Ruprecht carried a switch for beating and a basket for taking away the really bad kids. Interesting that in some customs, Ruprecht was later renamed Santa Claus. Over time, the demon's scary appearance changed into the jolly figure we recognize today. Early Santa Claus was still a disciplinary figure, as he continued to carry the same switch.

In some traditions, and as late as the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the jolly version of Santa Claus brought along his evil sidekick to take care of naughty children. This was the dreaded Krampus! This demon had long horns, shaggy fur, a long face and long tongue. Naughty children were beaten with horsehair and birch sticks. After the beating, they were tossed into the sack and taken to Hell.

The second story of Saint Nicholas is a bit more macabre. This Saint Nick is the patron saint of children. As the story goes, St. Nick was traveling and went into an inn for the night. Magically, or divinely if you will, Nick sensed that three boys had been killed there. He discovered that their bodies were dismembered and pickled for later eating. And so, voila! We have a new saint thanks to that morbid tale.

More on Medieval and Industrial Age customs: A light set at the window during the Winter Solstice meant the residents were observing the burning of the Yule Log. This is

where we get the modern custom of hanging up Christmas lights. Wishing someone Yuletide greetings was in actuality invoking the fertility god Jul, or Yule.

Odin also became Father Christmas in Britain. Father Christmas would go around feasting and getting drunk during the Festival of Fools. A horned goat accompanied him, the same as in the Ruprecht / Krampus tales.

Europeans first brought Christmas trees into their homes starting in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

19<sup>th</sup> century writers such as Charles Dickens, Clement Moore, Washington Irving and others popularized the Christmas holiday into a happy time where families came together and shared gifts. This is how the image of the jolly, red-suited Santa Claus first came about. 12 nice, friendly reindeer replaced the evil horned goat Ruprecht.

In modern times, Wiccans believe that a wreath of Holly set on their heads adds to their magical powers.

The annual Burning Man event is equated with a modern day Saturnalia.

### Odds And Ends

Here is some random stuff that didn't fit into earlier sections, as it pertains to theories that were too difficult to verify, that I thought reached too far, or that encompassed multiple sections.

Another explanation for the tradition of the Yule Log: As the log is burned in the chimney, and the embers die out, people believed that an evergreen tree would appear magically with gifts. The dying embers represent the dying of Nimrod, and the tree is Nimrod resurrected as Tammuz.

The traditional Christmas tree must be an evergreen tree. To some Christians, red Holly berries represent the blood of Christ, and the sharp Holly leaves represent Jesus' Crown of Thorns.

Santa Claus is the resurrected god Tammuz. The red on Santa Claus' suit signifies fire, which parallels the fire of the sun god Nimrod. The green of the Christmas tree signifies Tammuz sprouting back to life. Before I forget, let me also mention this. The red, coned elf hat of Santa Claus is very similar to the Phrygian hat worn by the sun god Mithras.

One researcher claims the name Nicholas comes from Nimrod. The name St. Nick may be an ancient reference to Lucifer.

In one of my research videos, I saw an image of the evolution of sun gods. Here is the gist of it, with one deity evolving into a later deity:

Nimrod - Baal - Osiris - Odin - St. Nicholas - Sinterklaas - Santa Claus

List of gods with December 25<sup>th</sup> birthdays, with approximate eras:

Jesus, Israel - 0 CE

Adonis, Phoenicia - 200 BCE

Hermes, Rome - 200 BCE

Tammuz, Babylon - 400 BCE

Dionysus, Greece - 500 BCE

Buddha, Nepal - 563 BCE

Heracles, Greece - 800 BCE

Zarathustra (Zoroaster), Asia - 800 BCE  
Mithra, Persia - 1200 BCE  
Horus, Egypt - 3000 BCE  
Krishna, India - 3200 BCE

## Conclusion

Catholicism and Christianity, as well as other similarly corrupted Abrahamic religions, are adamant that their god singled their people out and the entire religion sprung out of nothing, in divine magic. Sorry, but that is clearly not the case for anyone with an open mind that takes the time to study it. Just look at this example of Christianity's biggest day of the year, the supposed birth of Jesus on Christ's Mass, that coincidentally fell on the same date as the birth dates of every other important sun god.

The truth is that Christmas is an amalgamation of so many mythologies, cultures, rituals, beliefs and ideas that came before it. Christians and Catholics say they have the inside scoop on God, and that everyone else is a Pagan. That's exactly what the Church of Rome wanted them to say, and the stubborn propaganda has stuck around for nearly two thousand years, ever since emperors and popes such as Constantine implemented the 'new' religion upon the masses.

I say Pagan is as Pagan does. If you celebrate Christmas, good for you, but don't try to weasel your way out of all these traditions with clear Pagan origins, by saying they sprung up out of nowhere thanks to Yahweh or Jesus. You are unwittingly doing Pagan things and revering Pagan gods, but you tell yourself you are doing something new and different because the traditions have been re-labeled. All Abrahamic religions can be traced to so-called Pagan dogmas, primarily from Persia and India, so Christianity, Islam and Judaism are simply collections or re-brandings of what already existed. Tree worship, or animism, for example, as seen in revering the modern Christmas tree, goes back to the beginning of recorded history when people thought spirits inhabited nature in trees, rocks and water.

It's okay to have family reunions and buy gifts for loved ones during Christmas. Why not do it, as long as you don't overextend your finances to impress others? At the same time, I think it is important to remember where these traditions came from, and that is the dying and resurrection of the sun or a sun god during the Winter Solstice. The practice of celebrating a new year goes all the way back to the beginning, when people saw the days getting shorter and things dying in the cold and snow. These people waited and hoped for the winter season to be over, and they marked the signs in the heavens so they could begin to look forward to natural renewal of the world around them. That's the true spirit of Christmas; looking ahead for the resurrected sun to bring life back into our world, and to bring all of us out of darkness.

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