

**HOPE OF  
ISRAEL  
MINISTRIES**

# **BIBLE**

**CORRESPONDENCE COURSE**

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**Witches are a Common Part of Halloween Observance**

**The Pagan Origins of Easter and Halloween**

**Lesson 3**

## An Open Letter from the Staff...

WHY do people all over the world observe so many different days of worship? So many different customs?

Where did this world's holidays come from? Were they established by the SUPREME AUTHORITY of YEHOVAH God Almighty? What BIBLE AUTHORITY is there for the holidays observed by most of modern so-called Christianity?

Very few know WHY they observe the days they do! Where did Easter -- with its hot cross buns, bunnies and Easter eggs -- originate? And Halloween -- with its ghosts, witches and trick-or-treat?

Satan's pagan holidays have become such a traditional part of professing Christianity that many, though acknowledging their pagan origin, STILL OBSERVE THEM!

What about you?

The very same pagan practices YEHOVAH God condemned in Old Testament times have crept into modern "Christianity" and are being celebrated today. Every tribe, every nation, every religion singles out certain times of worship. It is a manifestation of the basic "urge to religion" that the Creator God placed within human nature.

But YEHOVAH God has not left it to human nature -- or human whim dependent upon human ideas or traditions -- to determine either the time or the manner of the worship acceptable to Him. And without YEHOVAH's own instruction, man could not know which days YEHOVAH Himself MADE HOLY.

Did you know YEHOVAH God Almighty, in His Word, condemns humanly devised worship -- such as Easter -- as VAIN? Also the Messiah said, "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (**Matthew 15:9**).

How about YOU -- are you worshipping YEHOVAH God and His Messiah in vain?



## HOPE OF ISRAEL MINISTRIES BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE LESSON 3

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## About Our Cover...

Witches lose their repulsiveness and communicating with the dead seems less horrifying when they become familiar -- a very real danger indeed!

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## The Pagan Origins of Easter and Halloween

### LESSON 3

#### Israel Warned

Since the time of Babel -- and continuing into our modern twentieth-first century -- the false religion of Nimrod has dominated the world!

After YEHOVAH God scattered the nations at Babel (**Gen. 11:8**) and especially after the death of Nimrod, his followers continued their rebellion in secret. They developed an intricate symbolism called the “mysteries.” This pagan system hinged on the careful re-naming of all phases of their worship. In order to deceive the people, the priests of Nimrod began calling their wicked customs by names which seemed to honor YEHOVAH God Himself!

Nimrod took the name “Lord,” which translated into Hebrew became “Baal” and into Greek became “Adonis.”

Nimrod’s wicked mother, known to historians as Semiramis, took the name of the “Mother of God,” and was worshipped as Ishtar -- the mother goddess of dawn or light (*Lempriere’s Classical Dictionary*, article, “Adonis”). Her new name, “Ishtar,” was pronounced just as we pronounce the word “Easter” in English! She was worshipped in the spring -- her feast day a rite of fertility! You will want to read all about the origin of Easter in our free article, *Where Did Easter Come From?*

Notice how widespread the worship of Nimrod and Semiramis had become in the time of Moses -- and what YEHOVAH God says about it.

1. Did YEHOVAH God warn His people to avoid the ways of Egypt -- a land rife with pagan customs and traditions? **Leviticus 18:3**, first part. Did He also warn them not to adopt the customs of Canaan? **Same verse**.

2. Why was YEHOVAH God against the practices of the heathen? Had they defiled the very land they lived in? **Leviticus 18:26-30**.

3. Did YEHOVAH God therefore punish the heathen by casting them from their land? **Verse 28**. See also **Leviticus 20:23**.

**COMMENT:** YEHOVAH God is no respecter of persons. Whichever people practice pagan customs and defile themselves by observing pagan holidays He punishes! Notice what He told Israel in **Deuteronomy 8:19-20**.

4. What was the penalty for observing the customs of the heathen? **Leviticus 20:1-2**. Isn’t the penalty for sin still the same today? **Romans 6:23**.

**COMMENT:** YEHOVAH God says “I change NOT!” (**Malachi 3:6**.) He still exacts the death penalty for those who WILLFULLY continue to disobey Him and observe pagan customs after they have learned the truth.

In Old Testament Israel the civil government of the nation executed sinners. Today YEHOVAH Himself places the guilty person under the spiritual penalty of eternal death until he REPENTS of his past sins and begins to KEEP YEHOVAH God’s commandments.

5. Were YEHOVAH’s people commanded to keep His statutes? **Leviticus 18:5**.

**COMMENT:** Among the statutes YEHOVAH God has given for His people are His HOLY DAYS (**Leviticus 23**, especially **verses 14, 21, 31, and 41**) -- days which reveal the way to eternal life to those who KEEP THEM.

#### Israel Adopted Pagan Rites

1. Does YEHOVAH God promise to bless His people abundantly if they will keep His Holy Days? Read **Leviticus 26:1-13**, especially

verses 2 and 3. But would they suffer punishments if they broke YEHOVAH God's Commandments? Read **Leviticus 26:14-39**.

2. Was it within the heart of Israel to always obey YEHOVAH God? **Deuteronomy 5:29**. What does Jeremiah remind us about the



Children look forward to Easter with its bunny rabbits, jelly beans, and colored eggs -- not knowing the real origin and meaning of these symbols.

human heart? **Jeremiah 17:9**.

3. When Israel came into the land of Moab, what did they do? **Numbers 25:1-3**. What did YEHOVAH God instruct Moses to do with those who polluted themselves by worshipping Baal-Peor, the god of the Moabites? **Verses 4-5**. Who was this Baal-Peor?

**COMMENT:** Baal-Peor was another name for Nimrod. The compound name Baal-Peor had special significance to the Moabites who worshipped Nimrod as a child.

Today, in mid-winter, the "sacred child" is still worshipped! The familiar mother and child theme at Christmas is a cleverly disguised pagan "mystery" which dates back to Nimrod and his mother Semiramis! The "New Year's baby," once worshipped in ancient Greece as Dionysus or Adonis -- "the lord" -- is now welcomed in the churches of modern Christianity!

No wonder YEHOVAH God Almighty was angry when Israel began to observe the wild, licentious rites of Baal among the Moabites!

4. When YEHOVAH's people approached the promised land, did He specifically warn them against transferring pagan customs to the worship of the true God? **Deuteronomy 12:29-31**. Did YEHOVAH God warn them not to add any pagan rites to His commands? **Verse 32**. Why did YEHOVAH HATE the hideous rites of these pagan religions? **Verse 31**, last part.

### Israel Punished for Baalism

1. After Joshua and all his generation died (**Judges 2:8-10**), did Israel adopt the religious customs of Canaan? **Judges 2:11-13**.

**COMMENT:** The Baalim were the many gods named Baal that each tribe of Canaan worshipped. Just as there are many religious customs today, so in the time of the Judges everyone did what he thought was best instead of obeying YEHOVAH God! (**Judges 21:25**.)

2. Who were the principal pagan gods worshipped by rebellious Israelites? **Judges 2:13**.

**COMMENT:** Baal -- Nimrod -- and his wicked mother Semiramis were both worshipped! Ashtaroth was another name for Semiramis. In Greece she was called Venus and Astarte. In Babylon she was called Ishtar (pronounced **Easter**).

3. Did YEHOVAH God bring punishment upon those who corrupted themselves in pagan worship as He had warned? **Verses 14-15**.

4. When they were punished did they repent of their idolatry? **Verses 16-19.**

**COMMENT:** The book of Judges is a chronicle of the repeated rebellions of ancient Israel after they entered the land of Canaan. Each time they forgot YEHOUVAH's Law, lost sight of His Holy Days and began to worship heathen gods on pagan holidays. When they did, YEHOUVAH God chastened them by allowing them to be conquered by the Canaanites.

### **Kings Continued Pagan Worship**

After the reign of Saul, YEHOUVAH established the dynasty of David -- a man after His own heart (**Acts 13:22**). But soon after David was dead, his son Solomon forsook YEHOUVAH's Law, and introduced pagan religions into Israel! Notice the events that led up to the division of his kingdom.

1. After the Temple was finished, did YEHOUVAH God renew His covenant with Solomon? Read **I Kings 9:1-9**. Were the conditions of the covenant the same as before -- had YEHOUVAH changed? **Verses 4-5**. Did YEHOUVAH warn Solomon not to worship other gods -- not to pollute the land with paganism? **Verses 6-7**.

2. What punishment did YEHOUVAH God promise to send if Solomon adopted pagan ways? **Verses 8-9**.

3. Did Solomon introduce pagan worship into Israel in spite of YEHOUVAH's warning? Read **I Kings 11:1-8**. Did Solomon worship Semiramis -- **Easter**? **Verse 5**. Did he also worship Nimrod -- the first despot? **Verses 5 and 7**.

**COMMENT:** Nimrod was called Milcom and Molech by the Ammonites, and Chemosh by the Moabites. The word "molech" is derived from the Hebrew word "melek," which meant "king." The heathen nations worshipped Nimrod as the "king of kings" because he was the world's first tyrant!

Ashtaroth or Semiramis was worshipped as the "queen of heaven" and as the "mother of

god" (Nimrod) by the ancient pagan world.

Today a "queen of heaven" and "mother of god" is worshipped by modern Christianity. Is there any connection? Some assume she is Yeshua the Messiah's own mother Mary, who some teach has ascended bodily into heaven. Prayers are repeated to HER! But the Bible shows the Messiah's mother is yet in her grave awaiting the resurrection -- just as King David is yet in his grave! (**Acts 2:29, 34**.) It nowhere teaches that Mary was taken up into heaven!

How clear that the ancient PAGAN "mother and child" concept has been perpetuated in the guise of "Christianity"!

4. How did YEHOUVAH God look upon Solomon's idolatry? **Verses 6, 9-10**. Did YEHOUVAH warn Solomon that punishment for his sins would surely come? **Verse 11**. Who would reign in Solomon's place? **Verses 12:13**. Read also **verses 26-40**.

5. Was Jeroboam also offered YEHOUVAH's blessing for obedience, and warned not to copy the customs of paganism? **Verse 38**. How many of the tribes of Israel would Jeroboam rule? **Verse 35**.

6. When Solomon died and his son Rehoboam took the throne in Judah, did YEHOUVAH God take 10 tribes of Israel from him and give them to Jeroboam, the servant, as He had promised? Read the entire **12th chapter of I Kings**.

**COMMENT:** The nation of Israel was divided for adopting pagan worship! Adopting the customs of the heathen makes a difference indeed! Jeroboam ruled the northern 10 tribes -- known as the House of Israel, and Rehoboam ruled only the remaining tribes of Judah, most of Levi, and Benjamin -- called the House of Judah.

### **Israel Institutes Pagan Holidays**

Now that the 10 tribes of Israel had separated from Judah, they began to develop their own form of paganism. It was a blending of YEHOUVAH's worship with the poison of pagan error.

1. Did Jeroboam think that in order to maintain control of the 10 tribes of Israel he must stop their worship on YEHOVAH's Holy Days? **I Kings 12:26-27**. Did he tell them it was too much trouble to go all the way to where YEHOVAH God had placed his name, just to keep the Holy Days? **Verse 28**.

2. Which of YEHOVAH's Holy Days did Jeroboam counterfeit and corrupt with pagan customs? **Verses 32-33**.

**COMMENT:** The Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day were held in the seventh month (**Leviticus 23:33-39**). That corresponds to about the time between the middle of September and the middle of October.

3. When was Jeroboam's idolatrous feast held? **I Kings 12:32**. This eighth month corresponds to about the time between the middle of October and the middle of November.

**COMMENT:** The Latin word for eighth is "octo." The eighth month is called October. What worldly holiday occurs around this time today? **HALLOWEEN IS** celebrated at the very



Children dressed up like demons and goblins, and accompanied by parents, go from house to house on Halloween demanding treats. Halloween is also a night of destruction. Tens of thousands of dollars worth of damage is done each year by young pranksters on this "hallowed" night of religious observance.

end of October and the beginning of November! It pictures a macabre scene of disinterment of the dead as ghosts and goblins.

Halloween is COMPLETELY PAGAN! It is nowhere commanded in YEHOVAH's Word. So why observe it? You will want to learn all about Halloween from our free article, *Hallowe'en -- Trick? or Treat?*

### **YEHOVAH God Versus Baal**

After the division of the kingdom, the northern 10-tribe House of Israel went deeper and deeper into Baal worship. Read about it in **I Kings 16:28-33**.

1. How did Ahab introduce Baal worship into Samaria, the capital city of Israel? **I Kings 16:31-33**. Did Ahab follow the ways of Jeroboam? **Verse 31**. What was YEHOVAH's reaction to Ahab's sin? **Verse 33**.

2. Did YEHOVAH God send Elijah to Ahab? **I Kings 18:1-2**.

3. Did Jezebel, Ahab's wife, murder YEHOVAH's prophets in Israel? **Verse 4**.

4. What did Elijah tell Ahab? **Verses 17-18**. Did Elijah challenge Ahab and his false ministers to a test? **Verse 19**.

5. What did Elijah say when the people gathered to witness the test of Baal at Mount Carmel? **Verses 21-24**. Did the people of Israel any longer even know which "god" IS YEHOVAH God? **Verse 21**.

**COMMENT:** The people did not feel it was necessary to prove anything for themselves. They just sat on the sidelines and watched the contest between Elijah and the prophets of Baal. They had probably convinced themselves it didn't make any difference which customs they observed. But by not choosing to follow YEHOVAH God, they were automatically REBELLING against Him!

6. In the contest which followed, how did the prophets of Baal call upon their false god? **Verses 25-29**. Did they whip themselves into an emotional frenzy? **Verse 26**. Did they torture themselves with cruel penance, assuming they

could force Baal to hear them? **Verse 28**. But could Baal answer them? **Verses 26, 29**.

7. While the priests of Baal were involved in their superstitious rigamarole of pagan religion, what did Elijah do? **Verse 27**.

**COMMENT:** Elijah taunted them by asking why Baal didn't answer. Was Baal out walking? Was he away from Carmel on a trip? Was Baal sleeping? Elijah used biting sarcasm.

Today YEHOVAH God has promised to send His prophets in the spirit and power of Elijah (**Malachi 4:5-6**). Is it wrong for YEHOVAH's true ministers to use some fitting sarcasm to show how foolish the pagan customs of the false ministers of this world are? Certainly not! One of the reasons YEHOVAH God sends His ministers is to expose the evil of false religion in this world, so that people will know the difference and choose the good. Sometimes a barbed statement makes the point much better than it could otherwise be made.

8. Did Elijah pray fervently that YEHOVAH God would hear him and consume his offering? **I Kings 18:36**.

9. Did YEHOVAH God answer when Elijah prayed? **I Kings 18:37-38**. Were the people convinced? **Verse 39**. What did they then do with the false ministers of Baal? **Verse 40**.

**COMMENT:** Israel had a CHOICE. Elijah told them to either follow YEHOVAH God all the way, or follow Baal. The SAME CHOICE must be made today!

What about you? Are you, in effect, worshipping Nimrod -- or Baal -- by observing his pagan holidays which YEHOVAH God condemns? Or do YOU CHOOSE TO serve YEHOVAH wholeheartedly, and keep the days HE made HOLY?

10. But did Ahab and Jezebel repent? **I Kings 19:1-2**. What did YEHOVAH say of Ahab? **I Kings 21:25-26**.

11. Did Ahab's son, Ahaziah, continue to worship Baal when he took the throne? **I Kings 22:51-53**. Did he follow the sins of Jeroboam? **Verse 52**.

### Why the Fall of Israel

Israel's idolatry continued for many years. Each succeeding king perpetuated pagan holidays for the people to observe in honor of pagan gods. Finally Israel's sins completely cut them off from YEHOVAH's protection, and they were carried away captive into Assyria. Read about it in **II Kings 17**.

1. Did Israel continue to sin against YEHOVAH God? **II Kings 17:7**. Did their idolatry increase even after the time of Jeroboam? **Verse 8** -- note the word "kings" is plural. See also **verse 16**.

2. Did Israel worship paganism openly -- or did they try to keep it secret? **Verse 9**. Did they carry on customs like the heathen? **Verses 10-12**.

3. Did YEHOVAH God diligently send His ministers to show the people their sins, and plead with them to repent and keep His commandments and statutes? **Verse 13**. Remember that YEHOVAH's Holy Days are statutes. Did Israel repent? **Verses 14-17**.

4. Which tribe was left in the land? -- the House of Judah only? **Verse 18**. Was Judah faithful, or did the Jews also follow the pagan ways Israel had introduced? **Verse 19**.

5. Some of Judah's kings uprooted the worship of Baal -- Nimrod -- and restored YEHOVAH's law. Among them was Josiah.



Hotcross buns are mentioned in **Jeremiah 7:18**. The word "cakes" is translated from the Hebrew word "kavan" and should be rendered "buns"!

Had Josiah been prophesied by name to restore the true worship of YEHOVAH God? **I Kings 13:2-3**. Compare with **II Kings 22:1-2**.

6. What did Josiah do? Read thoroughly the **23rd chapter of II Kings**. Compare it with **II Chronicles 34-35**.

**COMMENT:** When the pagan holidays Israel and Judah had observed were done away, Josiah re-instituted the keeping of YEHOVAH's Holy Days, according to YEHOVAH's Law.

### **YEHOVAH God's Prophets Expose Paganism**

1. Was Josiah able to stamp out pagan rites completely during his reign? **II Chronicles 34:33**. Did the people also serve YEHOVAH God during Josiah's lifetime? Same verse. Nevertheless, did YEHOVAH's wrath remain against Judah because of the sins of Manasseh? **II Kings 23:26-27**.

2. Did Josiah's sons obey YEHOVAH God as he had done, or did they do evil? Read **II Kings 23:30-37**. Note **verses 32 and 37**. What did YEHOVAH God say through Jeremiah about the pagan religion of the cities of Judah? **Jeremiah 1:15-16**.

3. Did He say they offered incense to Baal? **Jeremiah 7:9-10**. What was the excuse the people offered for their paganism? **Verse 10**.

**COMMENT:** The people thought they were "delivered" or permitted to worship in whatever way they pleased. They thought they were, in today's terminology, "under grace"!

4. Did the people of Judah worship the "queen of heaven" -- Semiramis? **Jeremiah 7:17-18**.

**COMMENT:** Even today modern Christianity continues the worship of **Easter**, and little "cakes," called "**hot cross buns**," are baked for the false "queen of heaven." The fertility symbols of this ancient pagan goddess are perpetuated today as lies told to modern children. **Rabbits**, known as a symbol of reproduction in all pagan religions, are said to "deliver" **Easter eggs** to modern boys and girls.

These customs come directly from ancient paganism -- the worship of Nimrod and his mother -- to our world today. Now they are encouraged by professing "Christian" churches!

5. Did these Judahites look upon this pagan feast as a happy occasion when the whole family could participate? **Verse 18**. But what did YEHOVAH God say about it? **Verses 19-20**.

6. Did YEHOVAH God, through Jeremiah, warn His people not to adopt the customs of the heathen? **Jeremiah 10:1-2**. Does YEHOVAH God condone the custom of preparing "Christmas trees"? **Verses 3-4**. What does He say concerning the false ministers who teach these pagan customs? **Verse 21**.

7. YEHOVAH God also used Isaiah to speak to His people. What did YEHOVAH think of Israel's pagan feasts and sacrifices? **Isaiah 1:13-14**. Would YEHOVAH hear their prayers while they were worshipping on days of their own invention? **Verse 15**. What did He command them? **Verses 16-17**.

**COMMENT:** YEHOVAH God refers to the pagan feasts the people invented as "your appointed feasts." In contrast He calls the Holy Days He commanded, "My Holy Days" (**Isaiah 58:13, Leviticus 23:2**).

8. Notice what Hosea says concerning Israel's feasts of Baal. Did Israel use the bountiful crops YEHOVAH had given her for the worship of Baal? **Hosea 2:8**. Did YEHOVAH God say He would stop the revelry of Israel's pagan feast days? **Verse 11**. Which days were these -- YEHOVAH's Holy Days, or the counterfeit feast days of Nimrod? **Verse 13**.

**COMMENT:** The Revised Standard Version translates the beginning of **verse 13**, "And I will punish her for the FEAST DAYS of the Baals ...."

9. Does the prophecy of **Hosea 2:16-23** apply to OUR day?

**COMMENT:** This prophecy is for our day and the near future -- the time YEHOVAH God will intervene in world affairs, remove pagan names from people's lips, and bring true peace and righteousness!

The expression “in that day” (**Verses 16, 18, 21**) always refers to OUR day and the INTERVENTION of YEHOVAH God in world affairs -- when Yeshua the Messiah -- and YEHOVAH God Himself -- will return to this earth and set up YEHOVAH’s Kingdom.

**10.** YEHOVAH God inspired Ezekiel to direct prophecies specifically to the ten tribes of Israel after they were ALREADY in captivity in the land of Assyria. He foretold still another possible future captivity -- a captivity to come in our day! Why must YEHOVAH’s people today face the likely prospect of captivity? Do they still serve pagan gods on pagan holidays? **Ezekiel 8:14-18.** Do people still hold sunrise services, and weep for Tammuz? **Verses 14, 16.**

**COMMENT:** Tammuz was one of Nimrod’s many names. One of the festivals celebrated in Greece, where Nimrod was called Adonis, was a memorial of his fabled resurrection. Notice the testimony of *Lempriere’s Classical Dictionary* under the article “Adonia”: “Adonis was the same deity with the Syrian Tammuz, whose festival was celebrated even by the Jews, when they degenerated into idolatry (**Ezekiel 8:14**).”

The ancient weeping for Tammuz or Nimrod is carried over today in the world’s “Lenten season.” Write for our free article *The 40 Days of Weeping for Tammuz?*

The ancient sunrise services -- when men faced the east (where the sun is when rising) and worshipped Nimrod -- are carried over today in the world’s **EASTER** sunrise services!

**11.** Who does YEHOVAH God hold responsible to teach His people the truth? **Malachi 2:7.** Aren’t today’s ministers failing to teach the law of YEHOVAH God’s lunar Sabbath and His Holy Days? What do they teach instead -- that it is not necessary to keep YEHOVAH’s law today? **Verse 8.**

**12.** Did Daniel prophesy of a power that would speak against YEHOVAH God -- persecute His faithful servants -- and attempt to change times and laws? **Daniel 7:25.**

### What About St. Valentine’s Day?

Every February 14 we see an “angelic” infant with a bow and arrow aiming for the heart of his “valentine.”

Cupids are everywhere with bows and arrows, heart shapes, paper lace, birds and flowers. All these are associated with St. Valentine’s Day. But just WHERE did these symbols and celebration of the 14th of February come from? Most of all, should we be celebrating this seemingly innocent day on which so many remember sweethearts and lovers?

The origin of this day is not clear, as there is more than one explanation. The most accepted legend is that a Roman priest named Valentine had a special feeling for young people.

When the Roman Empire needed soldiers, Emperor Claudius II decreed that no one could marry or become engaged. Claudius believed that marriage made men want to stay at home instead of fighting wars.

The kindly Valentine defied the Emperor’s decree and secretly performed weddings for a number of young couples. He was arrested, imprisoned, and put to death. According to legend, he was beheaded on February the fourteenth -- the evening of Rome’s feast of LUPERCALIA.

It was on our February 15 that the **Luperci priest** would gather at the cave of **Lupercal**, where, according to legend Romulus and Remus, the co-founders of Rome, were nursed by a mother wolf. Afterwards two young men of noble birth were brought before the priest. After a ceremony the young men ran through the Roman streets, lashing at the young women, who believed that just one lash of the goatskin thongs would increase their chances of bearing children.

The goatskin thongs were called **februa** and the lashing the **februatio**. Both these terms come from a Latin term meaning to purify. Understandably, this is how we get our calendar month **February**.



**A mosaic of St. Valentine of Rome**

Every place the Romans conquered they took with them many Pagan Customs -- including the LUPERCALIA. While the Church of Rome sought to stamp out the Pagan Practices brought in by various pagan worshipping groups, they were unsuccessful in doing so. Since the church was unsuccessful in stamping out these pagan practices -- loved by the general populous -- the Catholic Church simply GAVE IN and GAVE THESE PAGAN FESTIVALS CHRISTIAN NAMES!

Valentine's Day is immortalized by manufacturers of greeting cards and candy, florists and clothiers. Merchants see the chance to induce customers, through yet one more holiday, to part with their money. "If you don't give a gift at Valentine's Day you don't love others" is the subtle message.

The big problem with involvement in worldly holidays and special days of man is their RANK Pagan Origins that have NOTHING to do with worshipping the TRUE Creator God! Not only that, these days have REPLACED the

true Biblical observances commanded by YEHOVAH God. Paganism has always sought to replace True Worship. As we have already seen, the one condemnation YEHOVAH God repeatedly leveled against Israel was their desire to participate in the HEATHENISM of those around them and worship OTHER DEITIES in place of YEHOVAH.

If we are to please YEHOVAH God we must NEVER place anything before YEHOVAH and His way of life.

1. Notice what the apostle Paul says in **2 Corinthians 6:17**. We must GIVE UP the ways of a DECEIVED world that has no love of YEHOVAH.

**COMMENT:** It is amazing how much our world is steeped in HEATHEN, truth-supplanting tradition! The days of LUPERCALIA are with us even in subtle ways. As one writer observed, "Today we still refer to one who fancies himself with the ladies as something of a 'wolf,' and when a pretty girl walks down the street young men give a 'wolf whistle,' which shows that the spirit of the Lupercalia is still with us."

2. Consider **1 Corinthians 10:1-11**.

**COMMENT:** To observe St. Valentine's Day is nothing less than IDOLATRY! See **verse 7** above.

3. What does the apostle Peter say in **1 Peter 4:17**?

**COMMENT:** Those who have deeply repented, been baptized into the name of Yeshua the Messiah for the remission of sins and have had hands laid upon them for the gift of the holy spirit, are being judged NOW!

### **Baalism "CHRISTened" by Catholic Church**

Let's understand who is responsible for accepting the rites and practices, the customs and traditions, the Pagan holidays and festivals of Nimrod into modern so-called Christianity.

1. Were men creeping into the true

church of YEHOVAH God in the time of Jude -- men who were turning the grace of YEHOVAH God into "lasciviousness" -- licence to disobey YEHOVAH? **Jude 4.**

2. Had some in Pergamos accepted the doctrine of the Nicolaitans? **Revelation 2:15.** Were the FALSE MINISTERS of Satan organized into a church or synagogue? **Verse 9.** Did some in Pergamos adopt the doctrine of Balaam? **Verse 14.**



**St. Peter's Basilica in Rome -- Headquarters of this world's pagan religious holidays.**

**COMMENT:** The doctrine of Balaam was a doctrine of COMPROMISE with paganism. Read about it in **Numbers 25.** Notice there how the Israelites compromised by attending the worship service of the Midianites who worshipped Baal-Peor.

3. Did Christians of Thyatira follow this theme of compromise and allow a "woman," whose character was like that of Jezebel, to commit sin in their midst? **Revelation 2:20.**

4. Who is this modern Jezebel? Isn't the great false church pictured as a woman? **Revelation 17:1-2, 5.** Didn't Jezebel have CHILDREN -- more than one? **Revelation 2:23.** Compare **Isaiah 47:8-9** with **Revelation 18:7-8.** These are DAUGHTER CHURCHES who came out of Rome PROTESTING, but still have the

character of their mother! For a specific case send for our article, *Ellen G. White -- Messenger or Medium?*

5. Was it not the ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH which compromised with the paganism of the old world and adopted it as "Christian"? Read the answer in the comment below.

**COMMENT:** Notice the testimony of Walter Johnson, British archaeologist: "...by the edict of Theodosius (A.D. 392), pagan shrines were to be dedicated as Christian churches. Later, the edict of Honorius (A.D. 408) definitely forbade the demolition of heathen temples...." Johnson continues, "Again, pagan festivals were converted into Christian holy days [holidays]. The yuletide merrymakings in honor of Thor -- revels which have also been connected by some writers equally with the gods Adonis, Dionysus, and Mithra -- became the festival celebration of the birth of Christ.... Thus, by the retention of holy oaks, of idolatrous feasts, of pagan symbols and ceremonies, of the heathen names for the days of the week, the new religion gained entrance."

Johnson concludes: "Christian and pagan ideas were blended. Following ... the only practical method -- that of peaceful permeation -- the church often retained the forms of heathen ceremonies, while actually investing these with new meanings" (*Byways In British Archaeology*, by Walter Johnson, pages 25, 27).

6. Were these adopted pagan holidays and ceremonies passed on to the "protesting" daughters of the Roman Church -- the Protestant

Churches? See comment for the answer.

**COMMENT:** Webster, in *Rest Days*, p. 306 writes, "...The feast of All Souls [Hallowe'en] in November is a continuation of an old heathen feast of the dead; and that the Nativity of Christ himself was assigned to the winter solstice in December because that day was deemed the Nativity of the Sun....Many of the holy days in the religious calendar of Christendom were BORROWED, as is well known, FROM THE FESTIVALS OF ancient PAGANISM."

The holidays of this world are inseparably linked to the worship of Nimrod -- and Nimrod worship to SUNDAY OBSERVANCE. And all have been inspired by Satan the Devil!

All these doctrines are espoused and promulgated by the Roman Catholic Church and her "protestant" daughter churches!

YEHOVAH God plainly shows that anyone who accepts and observes these pagan holidays has linked himself to Satan's Babylonish system, and has accepted its "MARK"!

### **Punishment for Compromise!**

1. What does YEHOVAH God say will befall those who follow the way of Babylon and worship according to this ancient pagan mystery system? **Revelation 18:1-8.**

2. Who is her Judge? **Verse 8.** Will she receive double punishment for her iniquities -- the doctrines of lawlessness -- she has committed? **Verses 5-6.**

3. What is YEHOVAH's command to those who have not yet forsaken her pagan ways? **Verse 4.**

4. Will the apostles who fought her pernicious lies and the prophets who lamented her wicked sins, rejoice when this mother of paganism is destroyed? **Verse 20.**

### **What About You?**

Will you be a partaker of YEHOVAH's plagues upon modern Babylon? (**Revelation 18:4.**) Are you still partaking of her sins -- compromising by keeping this world's holidays?

Does it make a difference? Does it really matter what days you observe? It certainly does!

It makes ALL the difference in the world -- to YEHOVAH GOD! And He is the one who will JUDGE us and reward us according to our "works"!

What about it? What about you? What days are you going to observe, and keep? What CHOICE will you make?

YEHOVAH God has put the decision to you, just as He did to Israel in the days of Elijah. "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him" (I Kings 18:21). The answer is up to you!

### **Additional Reading Material**

A New Look at Easter

Is Easter *Still* Pagan?

Mysteries of Hallowe'en -- Should You Keep It?

Let's Pull the Mask from Hallowe'en

In Search of Christmas

Is Christmas Really "Christian"?

### **Books That Deal with These Subjects**

The Two Babylons, by Alexander Hislop

Babylon Mystery Religion, by Ralph Woodrow

See page 2 for mailing address

**NOTES:****Answers to Questions in Lesson 2**

1. c. Abram 2. b. Eber 3. They were not descendants of Eber. 4. e. Jacob 5. They were not descendants of Jacob 6. a, b, c, and d 7. He was of the House of Levi and therefore a descendant of Jacob 8. Yes 9. Yes 10. c. Israelite 11. He was a descendant of Eber but NOT of Jacob 12. Those from Eber to Abram 13. NONE of them were descended from Jacob 14. Yes

## Check Your Progress...

**Question 1:** Nimrod's MOTHER is known to historians as \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 2:** What part of the nation of Israel was taken into captivity by the Assyrians?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Question 3:** TAMMUZ was one of \_\_\_\_\_ many names.

**Question 4:** Which of YEHOVAH's Holy Days did Jeroboam counterfeit and corrupt with pagan customs? \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 5:** SEMIRAMIS was known by what name in Babylon? \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 6:** \_\_\_\_\_ was the god of the Moabites.

**Question 7:** Who was the ORIGINAL "mother of god"? \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 8:** St. Valentine's Day is based on the Roman \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 9:** What did King Solomon introduce into Israel in spite of YEHOVAH's warning? \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 10:** Which church compromised with paganism and adopted it as "Christian"?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Question 11:** The Jezebel in Revelation 2:20 pictures \_\_\_\_\_ churches.

**Question 12:** LENT is based on the ancient weeping for \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 13:** Little "cakes," known today as **hot cross buns**, were baked for the false \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 14:** YEHOVAH's ministers are supposed to expose the evil of \_\_\_\_\_ in the world.

**Question 15:** Did Israel worship paganism openly? \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 16:** All the pagan holidays of this world have been inspired by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The answers will be found in the next lesson. Approximately 3 weeks after receiving Lessons 1-4, you will receive a mail-in test that covers these four lessons. The test will be returned to you after grading. Following the completion of the Hope of Israel Bible Correspondence Course you will receive a **Certificate of Completion**. If you complete the course with a grade of 75% or better you will also receive an **Outstanding Student Award**.

