

-Can you find -

When

Was Christ Born?

There is no place in the Bible telling us that it is God's will that we observe the birthday of His Son, but it does tell us to observe the day of His death by taking the Lord's Supper on the fourteenth day of the Bible month Nisan (1 Corinthians 11:23-30).

You may be interested in other so-called holy days that are observed by church people today, and whether or not they have scriptural authority for observing these days. For example, should Easter Sunday be celebrated every year as the resurrection of Christ when He told us to remember His death? Is Sunday, the first day of the week, listed in the Bible as a rest day, a holy day or a sabbath day? Should the Lord's Supper be taken every Sunday morning, every three months, or once a year?

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the 6th of January, the 25th of March, or the 25th of December."

December 25th was observed centuries before the time of Christ as the birthday of Sol the sun-god. Many of the paganistic customs anciently observed on this day, are still practiced today. For example, the evergreen tree was treated much in the same way then as it is now. It was believed by pagans that at the death of Nimrod a full grown evergreen tree sprang overnight from a dead tree stump, which symbolized the springing forth of Nimrod to a new life, according to his wicked mother Semiramis. She also claimed that he returned each anniversary of his death, to visit the tree and leave gifts thereon. The burning of the yule log, the hanging of the mistletoe, the eating of the boar's head, and the Christmas goose, all had their origin in Babylon.

Listen to the Word of God speak plainly concerning the Christmas tree,

Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. 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 ax. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not (Jeremiah 10:2-4).

When you study this keep in mind Jesus' words in Matthew 15:9,

In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Is December 25 the Birthday of Christ?

We are admonished by Paul to prove all things; hold fast that which is good (1 Thessalonians 5:21); and by John to

Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world (1 John 4:1).

The future welfare of our soul, the preservation of our right to eternal life, is a very serious matter, and we should carefully and prayerfully consider everything that we do, for we are going to give an account for the deeds done in our body according to whether they be good or bad (2 Corinthians 5:10). Especially should we be diligent concerning the days we keep as holy days, attributing their source to the Bible. There are a number of these days observed today without scriptural authority to do so. Let us try to lay aside any prejudice we may have, and candidly examine some of these days, for we are told in Isaiah 1:14.

Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateh: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them.

The holy day we wish to bring to your attention in this study is Christmas. The word Christmas is not found in the Bible. It is formed of two words—Christ and mass. It is celebrated because it is said that our Saviour was born on this day. There is no scriptural proof for this, but we do have proof that He was not born in December, but in October. There are several ways of proving that Christ was not born in December. The first proof that we wish to con-

(1) sider is the fact that Jesus was thirty years old when He entered the ministry (Luke 3:23). He preached for 3½ years, being crucified when He was 33½ years old. The truth for this is established by Daniel-9:27, where we are told that He was to confirm the covenant with many for one week, and in the midst of the week He was to be cut off, or slain. This has a literal as well as a prophetic application. But let us at this time consider the prophetic phase. In prophecy we are to take each day for a year (Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6), and as He was to confirm the covenant for a week of seven days, or seven years, then be cut off in the midst of this period, or at the end of 3½ years, we could readily understand that this would be the period of Jesus' ministry.

It is an established fact that Christ was crucified in the spring of the year, at the time of the Passover, or about our month of April. Count back six months to His 33rd birthday and you will find that Jesus' birth occurred in October.

(2) Another definite proof for the establishment of the truth of Jesus' birth occurring in the month of October is found in Luke 1:5-36. Zacharias was told by an angel that his wife Elisabeth would bear a son, who was to be called John, known to us as John the Baptist. Zacharias was ministering in the course of Abia, and according to 1 Chronicles 24:7-18 this would be the eighth course of the twenty-four that ministered during the entire year. There were two courses to each month, and Zacharias ministering in the eighth course it would fall in the latter part of the fourth month. The Bible month would be July, and Zacharias'

turn to officiate would have been the last two weeks of this month. The first of August would be the time of Elisabeth's conception, and we read in Luke 1:24,

And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein He looked on me, to take away my reproach among men. And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph....

At this time the birth of Christ was announced, and Jesus' birth would take place nine months later.

Let us stop and do a little counting: Six months from the time of the announcement of the conception of Elisabeth to the coming of the angel Gabriel to Mary with that announcement of joy would be January, and nine months later would be October, the birth month of Jesus.

Another proof we might also consider is that the shepherds would not be in the fields in the winter. History tells us that the taxing by Caesar was in the fall of the year. It would not be reasonable to assume that he would summon people to come and be taxed in the month of December. That it was cold at this time of the year can be proved by Jeremiah 36:22.

There have been different dates celebrated as the birth of Christ. The Encyclopædia Britannica says, "Before the fifth century there was no general consensus as to when it should come in the calendar whether on

will be entirely burned up, and become ashes (Mat. 4:14). "To smoke shall they consume away" (Psalm 37:20). The first death to the world was by water, but the second death will be by fire (2 Peter 2:5, 6). You who choose to believe that the serpent and not God, told the truth, must believe in the eternal torment of the wicked. If, when cast into hell-fire, they never die, then Satan told the truth and God's Word is not dependable. Yea, and He is very unmerciful; for we can see no mercy in keeping sinners alive in the flames of fire, throughout all eternity. According to nature the fire would soon consume its victim; but if they are kept alive, God Almighty must do it. Oh! may God help such poor souls to see their own infidelity, and change their school of thought. Our God, truly is a God of mercy, and not a tyrant.

Strange it is, that people really want to believe that evildoers will fry and sizzle in the flames of "hell-fire," throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. Of course, they think their own relatives and friends will escape such torment. But, can Christians be so hardhearted as to wish such endless misery to overtake anyone? Adam's Apple caused death, not everlasting life in misery. "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). God said, "It is appointed unto men once to die..." (Heb. 9:27). This means that all mankind must die once; for all are mortal. Naturally, man is like the beasts that perish, and if he gains pre-eminence above a beast it will be a gift through Jesus Christ our Lord. Read Eccl. 3:18, 19; John 3:16; Rom. 6:23. If the sinner doesn't accept

but that he is asleep. More than a thousand years after David died, the Holy Spirit declared that "David is not ascended into the heavens..." (Acts 2:34). Do you dare to blaspheme the Holy Spirit by denying the written word, and still profess to be a Christian?

Do you dislike that word "sleep"? It suggests a peaceful rest of body and mind. When God says that David fell asleep, I am faithful enough to believe it. Yes, in death he became unconscious: "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything" (Eccl. 9:5). "Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished" (Verse 6). These texts prove the sleep of the dead. "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth: in that very day his thoughts perish" (Psalm 146:4). Death is called a sleep because there will be an awakening. "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness" (Psalm 17:15). "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake..." (Dan. 12:2). The martyr, Stephen, "fell asleep" (Acts 7:60). And Paul says: "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope" (1 Thess. 4:13).

The wicked will be resurrected, but have no hope of immortality: for that comes only through Christ. "Ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (1 John 3:15). Then how could he live always? "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. 18:4, 20). Yes, the sinner must die the second death in fire (Rev. 21:8). They

eternal life, then how can he live in misery always?

But, you say that the serpent told the truth; that man never dies; that it is man's body that dies, the old house in which man lives. Then do you believe God lied? It was God's Holy Spirit which said, that God formed man out of the dust of the ground (Gen. 2:7). Do you deny this? "The first man is of the earth, earthy..." (1 Cor. 15:47). "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:19). Do you dispute these texts, and say that Satan told the truth? O corrupt mythology! Do you say that the spirit of man is the real man; that it is immortal, invisible, and therefore is so small that ten thousand of them could dance on the point of a fine sewing needle? Well, do you realize that this comes from the philosophy of Plato and Socrates, heathen teachers of Greece, and not from God's Word? Satan is the father of this lie. You are, no doubt, honest about this belief, but you are deceived, woefully.

The spirit of man is not man, but the condition of man, and cannot exist separate from man: for God "formed the spirit of man within him" (Zech. 12:1). If He formed it within him, then it is not man himself: for it is in him. Spirit is life: for "the body without the spirit is dead..." (James 2:26). Death is the state or the condition of the being when life (spirit) leaves it, but neither death, nor life is the being. All who believe in real conversion know that one

has a different spirit after conversion. Why? Because his life is changed. Spirit, then, is life or power of action; whether it be mental or physical activities, it is spirit. God gave this to mankind and we retain it according to the law or rule of nature. God is the Author of our life or spirit which reverts to Him, or returns to Him, at our death: but we do not go away.

The spirit of the person is not the person. "And they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David, and gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him drink water; and they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins: and when he had eaten, his spirit came again to him: for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk any water, three days and three nights" (1 Sam. 30:11, 12). This Egyptian was in the field, but his spirit or strength was gone, so he could not move, but after eating and drinking, his vitality, or strength revived as his spirit returned. When Jesus was crucified, He cried with a loud voice and said: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost (spirit)" (Luke 23:46). Christ's spirit, like ours, was commended into God's hands, but Christ did not then leave: for He said that He would be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth (Matt. 12:40) and three days later when risen He said to Mary: "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father..." (John 20:17).

Dear reader, we must believe that Christ died, for He said (in A.D. 96), "I am he that liveth, and was dead: and, behold, I