



Unmasking Halloween



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As Labor Day ends the world draws a bead on its major year-end holidays. The first of which is the strangest of all, Halloween. Candy and costume makers love it. Discount retailers make a huge “killing” on everything Halloween, their promotions driven by a lust for profits helping to keep the sinister observance near the top of the secular holiday charts.

Until recently it was mostly a childhood affair, but Halloween has grown up. Adults are joining the celebration by the droves as they head off to work dressed in adult-size costumes sporting red or green hair and painted faces, later in the evening they will paint the town red with costume parties. It seems that everyone is getting into the spirit.

But what spirit are they getting into? Is all of this just harmless fun? One look at the displays and costumes and it is clear that Halloween is in a contest with itself to be scarier and more sinister than ever. Murder and mayhem are the core themes, which prompts one to ask whether glorifying evil is wholesome and enriching to anyone, let alone innocent children. Consider the message being sent to children when society gives its sanction to the forces of darkness.

Then there is the rite of trick-or-treating, which introduces the twin ideas of threat and extortion to impressionable young minds. The other side of “trick” is the “treat,” where children are encouraged to don the masks of the dark side for the questionable “reward” of massive quantities of unhealthy candies! It leads one to wonder – who is really getting tricked?

Real Fears and Superstitions

One must ask what Yahweh the Heavenly Father thinks of all of this. Can a Bible believer celebrate with a clear conscience an observance that revels in the occult and evil?

Halloween is an intensely superstitious observance deeply rooted in ancient Celtic mystery worship. It was originally the Druidic Feast of Samhain until the Roman



church came along and morphed it into a holiday called “All Hallows Eve” or Halloween.

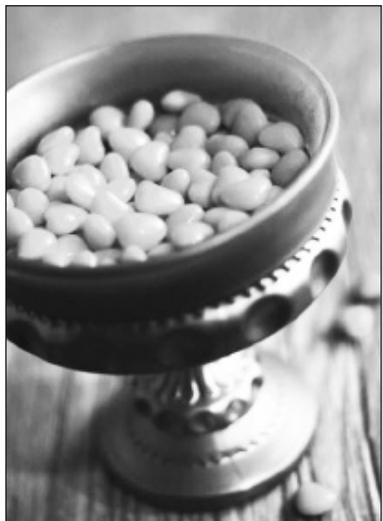
The Celts and their priests, the Druids, were nature worshipers who dreaded winter’s darkness. With the end of the harvest season and the approaching of winter, the Celts believed that the veil separating the living from the dead was at its thinnest on October 31, the last day of the Celtic year.

Enter the Many Spirits

These people believed all laws of space and time were suspended on this night, allowing the spirit world to intermingle with the living. On October 31 the disembodied spirits of all those who had died during the preceding year would come back in search of living bodies to possess for the next year. It was believed to be the spirits’ only hope for the afterlife.

Joining this mix were evil phantoms in the form of fairies revisiting the earth and tormented the living. The fairies were often considered hostile and dangerous to humans because they were thought to be resentful of human takeover of their lands. Consequently on this night they would sometimes trick people into becoming lost in fairy mounds where they would be trapped forever. There was great apprehension for other dangers as well. Crops were in jeopardy, babies could be stolen, farm animals killed, food and milk spoiled – all because of this open doorway for evil spirits. It was a frightening time for these ancients.

To protect themselves and prevent harm, the Celts would leave treats for the spirits outside their homes. The idea was that a spirit looking for a person to possess would be sidetracked by a bowl of fruit, nuts, and other treats. The spirit would then leave in peace. Spirits were believed to assume grotesque appearances this night. To avoid being recognized by them people would wear

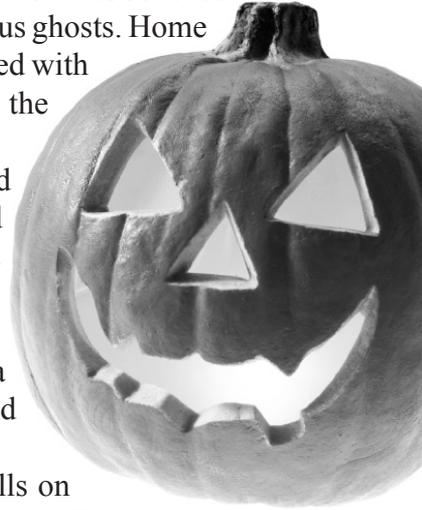


masks when they left their homes after dark so that the ghosts would mistake them for fellow spirits and not plague them. The trick-or-treat custom reflects this superstition.

Other Defensive Measures

Fire symbolized the power of the sun deity while it was believed that it offered protection against mischievous ghosts. Home fires were allowed to go out and be rekindled with protective sacred fires at the end of this, the pagan year.

Some believed spirits could be warded off by carving a grotesque face into a gourd or root vegetable like a turnip and placing a candle inside. Because ghosts and witches feared fire, the candle within the jack-o-lantern along with the scary face became a weapon against evil influences when placed in front of the home.



It was believed that witches used skulls on Halloween to communicate better with the dead. It was also believed that witches derived from black cats their power to invoke evil spirits. The Celts were particularly fearful of black cats because they thought the animals were originally humans who had been transformed by sinister powers.

Halloween an Occultic Synthesis

Since this night belonged neither to one year nor the other, Celtic peoples thought that chaos reigned, and so the masses would engage in horseplay and practical jokes. Hence we see some of the original “trick” in trick-or-treating.

Other ancient superstitions survive today. Ducking or bobbing for apples was a marriage divination. The first person to bite an apple would be the first to marry in the coming year. Apple peeling was a tool to predict how long your life would be. The longer you could make the apple peel come off unbroken, the longer your life was destined to be.

Why apples? In the course of the four hundred years that the Romans ruled Celtic lands, two festivals of Roman origin were combined with the traditional Celtic celebration of Samhain. The first was Feralia, a day in late October when the Romans traditionally commemorated the passing of the dead. The second was a day to honor Pomona, the Roman goddess of fruit and trees and whose symbol was the apple.

Yahweh's true Holy Days revolve around three harvest times in the year. The Celts also had three harvests: August 1, or Lammas, was the first harvest when the first fruits were offered to the gods in thanks. The fall equinox coming in the third week of September was the "true harvest." This was when the bulk of the crops would be brought in. The third, Samhain at the end of October, was the final harvest of the year.

No one blended profane practices with their own beliefs more than the Roman Church, which typically baptized paganism in order to draw heathen converts into the fold. In 1000 C.E. this church would make November 2 All Souls' Day and November 1 All Saints Day in honor of the dead. It was celebrated similarly to Samhain, with big bonfires, parades, and dressing up in costumes as saints, angels, and devils. When Christianity spread through Europe the November 1 holiday was merged with All Saints' Day, also called All Hallows' Day. The evening before was referred to as All Hallows' Evening or the contraction we know as Hallowe'en. Together, the three celebrations—the eve of All Saints', All Saints', and All Souls'—were called Hallowmass.

A Righteous Creator vs. the Unrighteous

Halloween is a holiday with a dark past that is only thinly masked by the addition of a few later traditions. What does Yahweh think about observing it? Is Halloween okay because "it's just harmless fun for the children"—as if Yahweh sighs passively and says to Himself, "Oh well, let them have their fun reveling in ancient rites of the occult and deceived. I'll just look the other way." That is how many must reason if their consciences ever start to tug at them.

The masses just drift along letting society shape their personal

beliefs and practices, not stopping to question anything the world observes but blindly joining in. Most have never tried to learn what Yahweh their Creator thinks about what they do and how they live out their lives, and Halloween is no exception.

Can we mix light with darkness? Is a little compromise with idolatry acceptable to a sovereign Heavenly Father? Will He reward such behavior?

In 1 Corinthians 10:20-21 is a message for those who want it both ways, thinking that no harm is done so long as they give lip service to the Bible, too: “But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to Elohim: and I would not that you should have fellowship with devils. You cannot drink the cup of the Savior and the cup of devils: you cannot be partakers of the Savior’s table, and of the table of devils.”

If there is no Heavenly Father then it doesn’t matter one way or the other what we observe. But because there is a Mighty One who demands that we follow Him in complete Truth, then we have a problem with the world’s days rooted in ancient mystery practices that glorify the dark side as well as the Evil One himself.

Imagine Yahweh giving a passive nod as He sees all kinds of symbols of witchcraft being pandered to and glorified at Halloween. Imagine this in light of Exodus 22:18, where He thunders in His law: “You shall not suffer a witch to live.”

Or consider what we find in Deuteronomy 18:10-14: “There shall not be found among you any one that makes his son or his daughter



to pass through the fire, or that uses divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto Yahweh: and because of these abominations Yahweh your Elohim does drive them out from before you. You shall

be perfect with Yahweh your Elohim. For these nations, which you shall possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for you, Yahweh your Elohim has not suffered [allowed] you so to do.”

Participating in the practices of rank heathens as one does in the observance of Halloween is expressly forbidden in the Scriptures. Read Deuteronomy 12:29-32: “When Yahweh your Elohim shall cut off the nations from before you, whither you go to possess them, and you succeed them, and dwell in their land; Take heed to yourself that you be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before you; and that you enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. You shall not do so unto Yahweh your Elohim: for every abomination to Yahweh, which he hates, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods. What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: you shall not add thereto, nor diminish from it.”

How can a True Worshiper allow his son or daughter to dress up like a witch or warlock, knowing that Yahweh condemns witchcraft? In 1Thessalonians 5:22 we are told to avoid even the appearance of evil. Halloween celebrates and revels in a vast array of evil appearances! And is it any wonder that all this glorification of evilness is a nighttime activity? In John 3:19-20 Yahshua said that evil loves the darkness.



One of the biggest problems of Old Testament Israel was their inability to keep their worship pure. The Apostle Paul in 1Corinthians 10:6 tells us that their experiences are an example for us “that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.” Yahweh does not accept compromise with any other belief system, let alone practices that spring from the darkness of rank heathen religion and superstition.

Trying to put a positive spin on Halloween, the chorus of the world will say, “Oh, come on, Halloween is just harmless fun. How can you deprive the children?”

Keep in mind that what children practice they also learn from. How can a parent seek to promote healthy, wholesome values in a child who is allowed to don masks of vile creatures or deformed humans with the underlying theme of murder, mayhem and evil? Should a caring parent wanting to teach truth to his or her child introduce that child to sinister, pagan falsehoods that Yahweh repeatedly condemns?

Nothing But the Truth

As we have seen, a Bible believer cannot follow Truth while dabbling in the exact opposite and still be acceptable to the True Father. Jeremiah 10:2 says very clearly, “Learn not the way of the heathen.”

The sincere worshiper can’t live a lie. Halloween is filled with lies born in the depths of rank ignorance in one of history’s most pagan and superstitious cultures. In fact, virtually all of the world’s major holidays revel in lies, from Santa and Rudolph of Xmas customs to Easter’s egg-laying bunny.

The true man and woman of Yahweh must make conscious, deliberate choices. The true faith is not a passive banality that just goes along with whatever society does.

In 2Corinthians 6:14-18 we are admonished to separate from all forms of evil and darkness. “Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion has light with darkness? And what concord has Messiah with Belial? or what part has he that believes with an infidel? And what agreement has the temple of Elohim with idols? for you are the temple of the living Elohim; as Elohim has said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their Elohim, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be separate, says Yahweh, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says Yahweh Almighty.”

One of the biggest mistakes Israel made upon entering the Promised Land was in not completely removing the false worship

they found there. Our fallen natures have an attraction for what is wrong and sinful. It takes conscious, proactive efforts to overcome it. Wickedness pulls at us like a magnet drawing iron. We constantly struggle with iniquity.

Why are most children attracted to horror movies? What is it that draws the human spirit to the dark side? It's a natural human



attraction. And it is this pull, this desire that could lead to sin, that carnal human beings must overcome daily. Jeremiah 17:9 says about the natural man, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I Yahweh search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.”

Why continue being involved in the abominable, which your Creator hates and condemns? Where's the reward in keeping dead-end holidays? Begin pleasing Him and start reaping the blessings! Let the world have its fruitless, empty observances. Say with the patriarch Joshua, “As for me and my family, we will serve Yahweh.”

Resolve today to observe with Yahweh's true saints the inspired holy days commanded in the Word. If you do that you will be most richly blessed when the Messiah Yahshua returns to reward those few truly faithful who followed a different path – one that leads to life everlasting.

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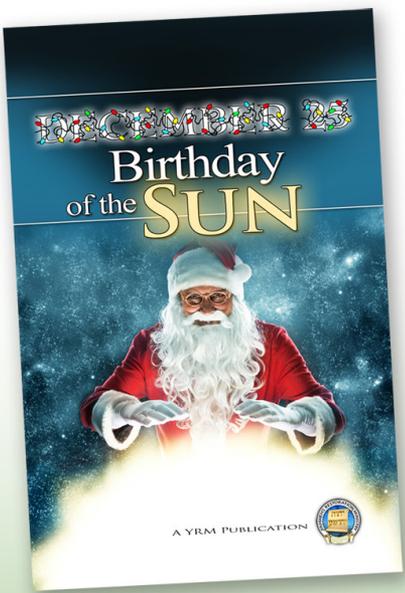
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What do a jolly fat man, a pine tree and mistletoe have to do with the Messiah?



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