



*Christmas* PAST  
PRESENT  
FUTURE

A three-part study looking at the truth behind the tradition



- Christmas Past
  - The History & Origin of Christmas
- Christmas Present
  - The Ultimate Gift
- Christmas Future
  - Through the Lens of Prophecy

A three-part study looking at the truth behind the tradition



- Christmas Past
  - The History & Origin of Christmas
  - When was the first Christmas?
  - Why is Christmas on the 25<sup>th</sup> December?
  - The Birth of Christmas

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## Christmas Past

# When was the 1st Christmas?

- Tertullian (born about 160 A.D.) stated that Augustus began to rule 41 years before the birth of Jesus and died 15 years after that event. *Tert. adv. Judaeos c.8.*
- Augustus died on August 19, 14 A.D., placing Jesus' birth at 2 B.C.
- Tertullian also notes that Jesus was born 28 years after the death of Cleopatra in 30 B.C., which is consistent with a date of 2 B.C.

## Christmas Past

# When was the 1st Christmas?

- Since Augustus began his reign in the autumn of 43 B.C., this also appears to substantiate the birth in 2 B.C...
- Eusebius (264-340 A.D.), the “Father of Church History,” ascribes it to the 42nd year of the reign of Augustus and the 28th from the subjection of Egypt on the death of Anthony and Cleopatra.

Eccle. Hist. i.5.

## Christmas Past

# When was the 1<sup>st</sup> Christmas?

- The 42<sup>nd</sup> year of Augustus ran from the autumn of 2 B.C. to the autumn of 1 B.C.
- The subjugation of Egypt into the Roman Empire occurred in the autumn of 30 B.C.
- The 28th year extended from the autumn of 3 B.C. to the autumn of 2 B.C.
- The only date that would meet both of these constraints would be the autumn of 2 B.C.

## Christmas Past

# When was the 1st Christmas?

- Elisabeth, John's mother, was a cousin of Mary and the wife of a priest named Zacharias who was of the "course" of Abijah.

Luke 1:5, 8-13, 23-24

- (Priests were divided into 24 courses and each course officiated in the Temple for one week, from sabbath to sabbath.)

1 Chr 24:7-19

- The course of Abijah was the 8<sup>th</sup> course

1 Chr 24:10

## Christmas Past

# When was the 1st Christmas?

- The Temple was destroyed by Titus on August 5, 70 AD, the first course of priests had just taken office Talmud & Josephus
- Tracking backwards, Zacharias would have ended his duties on July 13, 3 BC
- If the birth of John took place 280 days later, it would have been on April 19-20, 2 BC  
– (on Passover of that year).

## Christmas Past

# When was the 1st Christmas?

- If John was born on April 19-20, 2 BC, his 30th birthday would have been April 19-20, 29 AD, in the 15th year of Tiberius
- The minimum age for the ministry was 30  
Num 4:3
- John began his ministry in the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar, 28 AD  
Luke 3:1
  - As Augustus died on August 19, 14 AD, that was the accession year for Tiberius

## Christmas Past

# When was the 1<sup>st</sup> Christmas?

- This seems to confirm the 2 B.C. date and, since John was 5 months older, this also suggests an autumn birth date for Jesus.
- (John's repeated introduction of Jesus as "The Lamb of God" [John 1:29, 36](#) is particularly interesting if John was indeed born on Passover.)

19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

**Matthew 24:19-21**

## Christmas Past

# When was the 1<sup>st</sup> Christmas?

- The flocks were in open field **Luke 2:8**
  - Not after October
- No competent Roman administrator would require registration involving travel during the season when Judea was generally impassable **Matt 24:20**

## Christmas Past

# When was the 1<sup>st</sup> Christmas?

- *“...no doubt, the climate of Palestine is not so severe as the climate of this country, but even there, though the heat of the day be considerable, the cold of the night, from December to February, is very piercing and it was not the custom for the shepherds of Judea to watch their flocks in the open fields later than about the end of October” – Rev Alexander Hislop*

## Christmas Past

# When was the 1st Christmas?

- *“At the birth of Christ every woman and child was to go to be taxed at the city whereto they belonged, whither some had long journeys, but the middle of winter was not fitting for such a business, especially for women with child, and children to travel in. Therefore, Christ could not be born in the depth of winter” – Joseph Mede*

Christmas Past

# When was the 1<sup>st</sup> Christmas?

- *“It is in the last degree incredible, then, that the birth of Christ could have taken place at the end of December. There is great unanimity among commentators on this point.”* – Rev Alexander Hislop

## Christmas Past

# When was the 1<sup>st</sup> Christmas?

- Elisabeth hid herself for 5 months and then the Angel Gabriel announced to Mary both Elisabeth's condition and that Mary also would bear a son who would be called Jesus.
- Mary went "with haste" to visit Elisabeth, who was then in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of her 6<sup>th</sup> month, or the 4<sup>th</sup> week of December, 3 B.C. [Luke 1:36](#)
- If Jesus was born 280 days later it would place the date of his birth on September 29, 2 BC (on the Feast of Trumpets that year)



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# Christmas Past

## Why the 25<sup>th</sup> December?

- Why Celebrate Christmas at all?
- *“...within the Christian Church no such festival as Christmas was ever heard of until the third century, and that not until the fourth century was far advanced did it gain much observance”* – Rev Alexander Hislop

# Christmas Past

## Why the 25<sup>th</sup> December?

- The first recorded mention of December 25 is in the Calendar of Philocalus (354 AD) which assumed Jesus' birth to be Friday, December 25, 1 AD
- After the Edict of Toleration (312 AD) When the Emperor Constantine legalised Christianity
- *“the persecuted Christians exchanged the rags of hiding for the silks of the court”*

– Chuck Missler

# Christmas Past

## Why the 25<sup>th</sup> December?

- Many of the previous pagan rituals were adapted to fit their new “Christian” surroundings – supposedly in an attempt at unity
- Tertullian, even in his day, about the year 230 AD, bitterly lamenting the inconsistency of the church...

# Christmas Past

## Why the 25<sup>th</sup> December?

- *“By us who are strangers to Sabbaths, and new moons, and festivals, once acceptable to God, the Saturnalia, the feasts of January, the Brumalia and Matronalia, are now frequented; gifts are carried to and fro, new year’s day presents are made with din, and sports and banquets are celebrated with uproar; oh how much more faithful are the heathen to their religion, who take special care to adopt no solemnity from the Christians!”* Tertullian, *De Idolatria*, c. 14, vol. i. p. 682

Christmas Past

## Why the 25<sup>th</sup> December?

- The date of December 25th, was officially proclaimed by the church fathers in 440 AD



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Christmas Past

# The Birth of Christmas

- *“Long before the fourth century, and long before the Christian era itself, a festival was celebrated among the heathen at that precise time of the year, in honour of the birth of the son of the Babylonian queen of heaven...the same festival was adopted by the Roman Church, giving it only the name of Christ.” – Rev Alexander Hislop*

Christmas Past

# The Birth of Christmas

- *“That Christmas was originally a Pagan festival is beyond all doubt. The time of the year and the ceremonies with which it is still celebrated prove its origin.”*

– Rev Alexander Hislop

Christmas Past

# The Birth of Christmas

- *“Celebrated from a vestige of the Roman holiday of Saturnalia, observed near the winter solstice, which itself was among the many pagan traditions inherited from the earlier Babylonian priesthood.”*

– Chuck Missler

Christmas Past

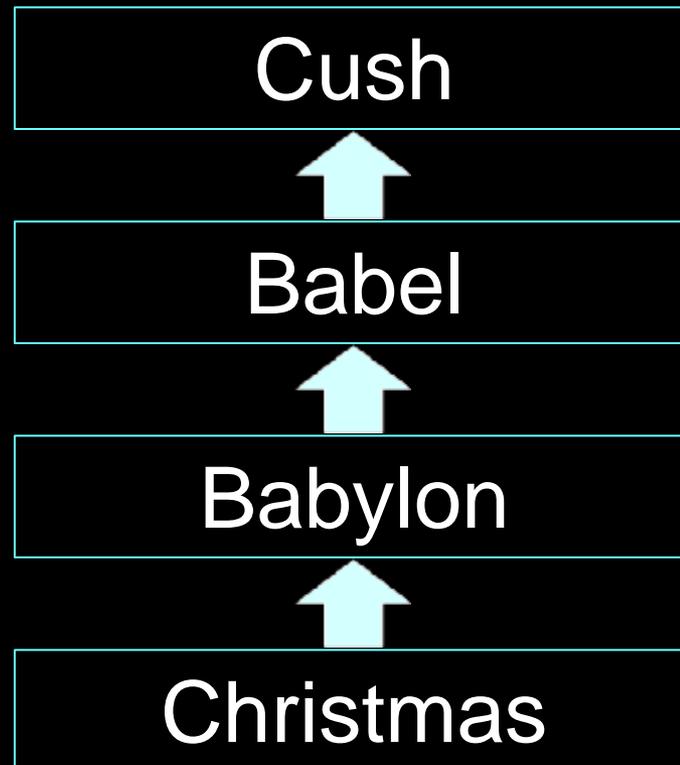
# The Birth of Christmas

- All occultic practices have their origins in the original city of Babylon. **Isaiah 47**
- The same is true of almost all false religion
  - “THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH” **Rev 17:5**

Christmas Past

# The Birth of Christmas

- Babylon was the city built out of the 'ashes' of the Tower of Babel – Gen 10/11



# Christmas Past

## The Birth of Christmas

- Cush was the son of Ham and grandson of Noah, but he became the mastermind behind 'Project Babel'
- *“Cush, ‘the son of Ham,’ was the ‘divider of the speeches of men.’ He, it would seem, had been the ringleader in the scheme for building the great city and tower of Babel”*

– Rev Alexander Hislop

Christmas Past

# The Birth of Christmas

- *“Cush, as the son of Ham, was Her-mes or Mercury, for Hermes is just an Egyptian synonym for the ‘son of Ham.’ Hermes was the great original prophet of idolatry, for he was recognised by the pagans as the author of their religious rites and the interpreter of the gods”*

– Rev Alexander Hislop

# Christmas Past

## The Birth of Christmas

- *“The distinguished Gesenius identifies him with the Babylonian Nebo, as the prophetic god, and a statement of Hyginus shows that he was known as the grand agent in that movement, which produced the division of tongues”.*
- *“His words are these...”*

# Christmas Past

## The Birth of Christmas

- *“For many ages men lived under the government of Jove [evidently not the Roman Jupiter, but the Jehovah of the Hebrews], without cities and without laws, and all speaking one language, but after that Mercury interpreted the speeches of men (whence an interpreter is called Hermeneutes), the same individual distributed the nations. Then discord began.”*

– Hyginus, *Fabulae*, 143, p. 114.

Christmas Past

# The Birth of Christmas

- *“...and as the well known title of Hermes—‘the interpreter of the gods,’ would indicate, had encouraged them, in the name of God, to proceed in their presumptuous enterprise, and so, had caused the language of men to be divided and themselves to be scattered abroad on the face of the earth”.*

– Rev Alexander Hislop

# Christmas Past

## The Birth of Christmas

- *“The name Meni, ‘the numberer,’ seems just a synonym for the name of Cush or Chus, which while it signifies ‘to cover’ or ‘hide,’ signifies also ‘to count or number.’ The true proper meaning of the name Cush is, I have no doubt, ‘The numberer’ or ‘Arithmetician,’ for while Nimrod his son, as the ‘mighty’ one, was the grand propagator of the Babylonian system of idolatry, by force and power, he, as Hermes was the real concocter of that system...*

# Christmas Past

## The Birth of Christmas

- *“...for he is said to have ‘taught men the proper mode of approaching the Deity with prayers and sacrifice’ and seeing idolatry and astronomy were intimately combined, to enable him to do so with effect, it was indispensable that he should be pre-eminently skilled in the science of numbers. Now Hermes (that is Cush) is said to have ‘first discovered numbers and the art of reckoning, geometry, and astronomy’”*

- Rev Alexander Hislop

# Christmas Past

## The Birth of Christmas

- Cush was also known to Pagan antiquity under the character of 'Bel' & 'Merodach'

2 Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces.

Jeremiah 50:2

# Christmas Past

## The Birth of Christmas

- Hislop quotes Ovid:
- *“The statement to which I refer is that in which Janus ‘the god of gods,’ from whom all the other gods had their origin, is made to say of himself: ‘The ancients...called me Chaos’.* — Rev Alexander Hislop

Christmas Past

# The Birth of Christmas

- *“First, this decisively shows that Chaos was known not merely as a state of confusion, but as the ‘god of Confusion,’ but, secondly, who that is at all acquainted with the laws of Chaldaic pronunciation, does not know that Chaos is just one of the established forms of the name of Chus or Cush?”*

— Rev Alexander Hislop

Christmas Past

# The Birth of Christmas

Noah

Shem

Ham

Japheth

Cush  
aka

Mercury

Hermes (son of Ham)

Bel

Janus

Chaos

Christmas Past

# The Birth of Christmas

Noah

Shem

Ham

Japheth

Cush  
aka

Mercury    Hermes (son of Ham)    Bel    Janus    Chaos

Nebo    Hephaistos    Vulcan 'The father of the gods'    Merodach

Christmas Past

# The Birth of Christmas

Noah

Shem

Ham

Japheth

Cush  
aka

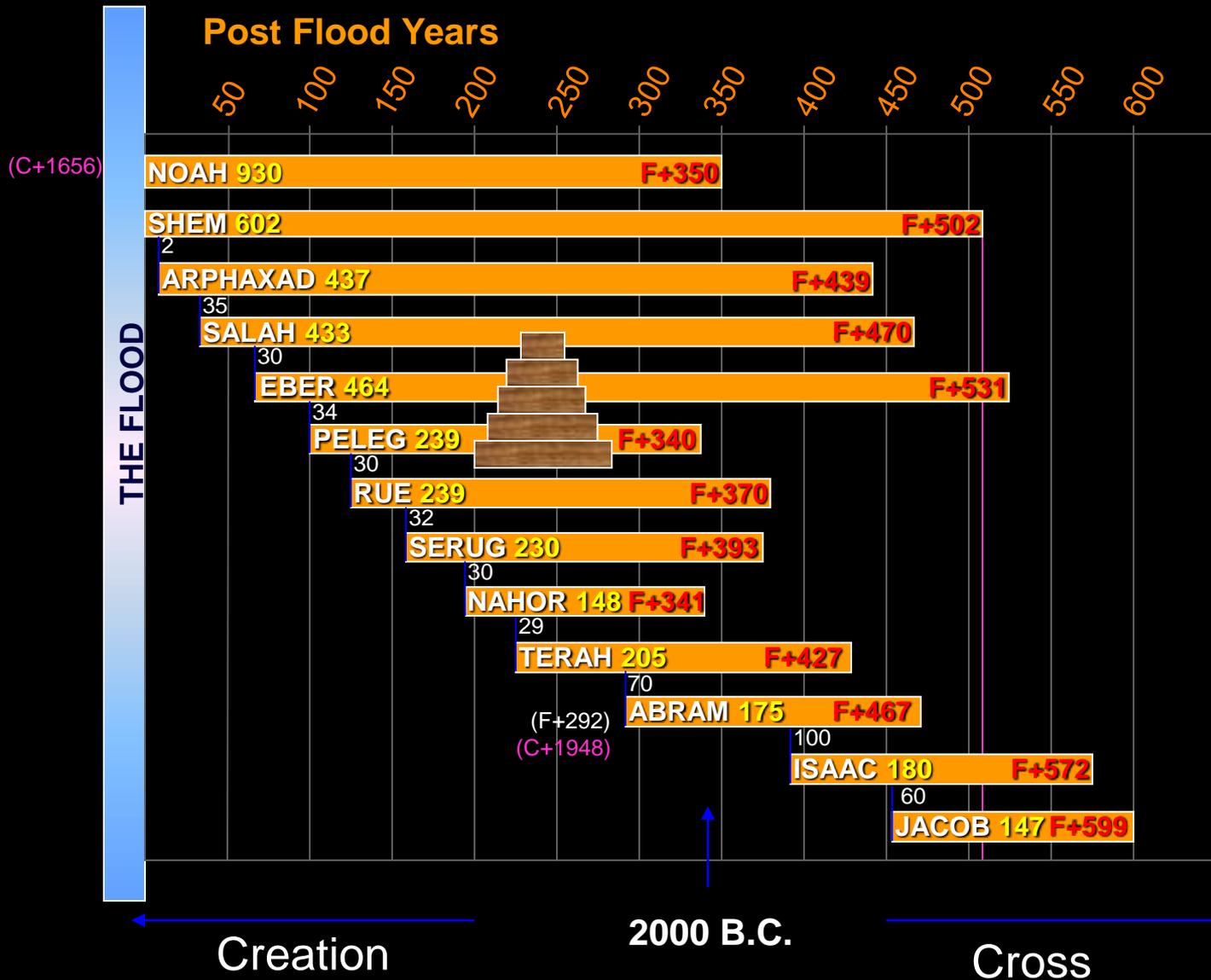
Mercury    Hermes (son of Ham)    Bel    Janus    Chaos

Nebo    Hephaistos    Vulcan 'The father of the gods'    Merodach

Nimrod

Ninus    Bacchus (son of Cush)    Belus    Orion    Osiris

# Post Flood Lifetimes



Jacob could have known Shem for 50 Years!

Christmas Past

# The Birth of Christmas

- 8 And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth.
- 9 He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD.
- 10 And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.

**Genesis 10:8-10**

Christmas Past

# The Birth of Christmas

- *“Nimrod, whose general character was that of the sun-god, for he was the first grand warrior, and under the name Phoroneus he was celebrated for having first gathered mankind into social communities”*

- Rev Alexander Hislop

# Christmas Past

## The Birth of Christmas

- Nimrod become the first 'world ruler'
- He is spoken of as 'a mighty hunter' Gen 10:9
  - How did he become so powerful?
  - What was he hunting?
  - Could it have been the Nephalim?
  - History is replete with such legends!
- Regardless, he introduced apostasy like never before...
- Shem to the rescue!

# Christmas Past

## The Birth of Christmas

- Various historical references and ancient legends strongly suggest that Shem killed Nimrod
- *“If Shem was at that time alive, as beyond question he was, who so likely as he?”*
  - Rev Alexander Hislop
- *“In exact accordance with this deduction we find that one of the names of the primitive Hercules in Egypt was ‘Sem.’”*
  - Rev Alexander Hislop

Christmas Past

## The Birth of Christmas

*“If there was one who was more deeply concerned in the tragic death of Nimrod than another, it was his wife Semiramis, who from an originally humble position, had been raised to share with him the throne of Babylon. What, in this emergency shall she do? Shall she quietly forego the pomp and pride to which she has been raised?”*

*Rev Alexander Hislop – The Two Babylons (p58)*

Christmas Past

# The Birth of Christmas

*“No. Though the death of her husband has given a rude shock to her power, yet her resolution and unbounded ambition were in flight. In life her husband had been honoured as a hero; in death she will have him worshipped as a god, yea as the woman’s promised seed ‘Zoro-ashta’.”*

*Rev Alexander Hislop – The Two Babylons (p58)*

Christmas Past

# The Birth of Christmas

- Rather than give up her throne, Semiramis told the story that her husband Nimrod, though dead, had been brought back to life as her baby son!
- And so began the worship of Mother and Child.

Christmas Past

# The Birth of Christmas

- Both Nimrod (supposedly now reincarnated as his own son) and Semiramis became worshipped as gods
- She being known as the 'Queen of Heaven'
- Her son (who she named Tammuz) was hailed as 'the promised Seed'
- Almost all false religion came from this origin.

# Christmas Past

## The Birth of Christmas

- Thousands of years before the birth of the real Seed – Jesus Christ – false religions worshipping the ‘Mother and Child’ were spreading out all around the world.
  - In Egypt the Mother and Child were worshipped under the names of Isis and Osiris.
  - In India, even to this day as Isi and Iswara;
  - In Asia as Cybele and Deoious;
  - In pagan Rome as Fortuna and Jupiter
  - In Greece as Irene and Plutus;

Christmas Past

# The Birth of Christmas

- Easter, Lent, Lady Day, the Rosary, the sign of the cross (from the 'T' in Tammuz), worship of relics, the doctrine of purgatory, an elite priesthood, the sacrifice of the mass and so many other things all had their origin in Babylon.

Christmas Past

# The Birth of Christmas

*“Even in Thibet, in China and Japan, the Jesuit missionaries were astonished to find the counterpart of [the Roman Catholic] Madonna and her child as devoutly worshipped as in Papal Rome itself; Shing Moo, the Holy Mother in China, being represented with a child in her arms, and a glory around her, exactly as if a Roman Catholic artist had been employed to set her up”*

*Rev Alexander Hislop – The Two Babylons*

# Christmas Past

## The Birth of Christmas

- Tammuz, the son of Nimrod and his queen, Semiramis, was identified with the Babylonian Sun God and worshipped following the winter solstice, ~ December 22-23
  - As the days became shorter and shorter through the winter, they become the shortest at the winter solstice
  - Tammuz was thought to have died, memorialised by burning a [*yule*] log in the fireplace.
- His “rebirth” was celebrated by replacing the log with a trimmed tree the following morning.
- Ezekiel records that the women of Jerusalem were found weeping for Tammuz! (Ezek 8:14)

# Christmas Past

## The Birth of Christmas

- *“On the 24th [of December], the Arabians celebrated the birthday of the Lord—that is the Moon... it commemorated not merely the figurative birth-day of the sun in the renewal of its course, but the birth-day of the grand Deliverer. Among the Sabeans of Arabia, who regarded the moon, and not the sun, as the visible symbol of the favourite object of their idolatry, the same period was observed as the birth festival”.*

# Christmas Past

## The Birth of Christmas

- *“The Lord Moon was the great object of Arabian worship, and that Lord Moon, according to them, was born on the 24th of December, which clearly shows that the birth which they celebrated had no necessary connection with the course of the sun”.*

*– Rev Alexander Hislop*

# Christmas Past

## The Birth of Christmas

- *“The name of the Lord Moon in the East seems to have been Meni”* see Isaiah 65:11
- *“Meni or Manai, signifies ‘The Numberer,’ and it is by the changes of the moon that the Egyptian priests pretended that the birth of the divine son of Isis, at the end of December, was premature, but this is evidently just the counterpart of the classic story of Bacchus, who, when his mother Semelé was consumed by the fire of Jove, was said to have been rescued in his embryo state from the flames that consumed her”.* – Rev Alexander Hislop

# Christmas Past

## The Birth of Christmas

- *“That it was the birth of the ‘Lord Moon’ that was celebrated among our ancestors at Christmas, we have remarkable evidence in the name that is still given in the lowlands of Scotland to the feast on the last day of the year, which seems to be a remnant of the old birth festival for the cakes then made are called NurCakes or Birth-cakes. That name is Hogmanay.*
- *‘Hog-Manai’ in Chaldee signifies ‘The feast of the Numberer,’ in other words, the festival of the Man of the Moon”*

– Rev Alexander Hislop

# Christmas Past

## The Birth of Christmas

- *“The very name by which Christmas is popularly known among ourselves—Yule-day—proves at once its Pagan and Babylonian origin. ‘Yule’ is the Chaldee name for an ‘infant’ or ‘little child,’ and the 25th of December was called by our Pagan Anglo-Saxon ancestors, ‘Yule-day,’ or the ‘Child’s day,’ and the night that preceded it, ‘Mother-night,’ long before they came in contact with Christianity”*

- Rev Alexander Hislop

# Christmas Past

## Candles

- *“The candles in some parts of England, lighted on Christmas-eve, and used so long as the festive season lasts, were equally lighted by the Pagans on the eve of the festival of the Babylonian god, to do honour to him, for it was one of the distinguishing peculiarities of his worship to have lighted wax-candles on his altars”*

# Christmas Past

## The Christmas Tree

- *“The Christmas tree, now so common among us, was equally common in Pagan Rome and Pagan Egypt. In Egypt that tree was the palm-tree; in Rome it was the fir, the palm-tree denoting the Pagan Messiah as Baal-Tamar, the fir referring to him as Baal-Berith. The mother of Adonis, the Sun-God and great mediatorial divinity, was mystically said to have been changed into a tree, and when in that state to have brought forth her divine son”.*

# Christmas Past

## The Christmas Tree

- *“If the mother was a tree, the son must have been recognised as the ‘Man the branch,’ and this entirely accounts for the putting of the Yule Log into the fire on Christmas-eve, and the appearance of the Christmas tree the next morning”.*

# Christmas Past

## The Christmas Tree

- *“it may be asked, does he enter the fire under the symbol of a Log? To understand this, it must be remembered that the divine child born at the winter solstice was born as a new incarnation of the great god [Nimrod], after that god had been cut in pieces,*
- *“Now the great god, cut off in the midst of his power and glory, was symbolised as a huge tree, stripped of all its branches, and cut down almost to the ground... and lo, at its side up sprouts a young tree—a tree of an entirely different kind that is destined never to be cut down by hostile power”*

# Christmas Past

## The Christmas Tree

- *“Now the Yule Log is the dead stock of Nimrod, deified as the sun-god, but cut down by his enemies—the Christmas-tree is Nimrod brought back to life —the slain god come to life again”.*

Christmas Past

# 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 axe.

**Jeremiah 10:2,3**

Christmas Past

# The Christmas Tree

They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not.

They *are* upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also *is it* in them to do good.

Jeremiah 10:4,5

# Christmas Past

## The Mistletoe

- *“That mistletoe bough in the Druidic superstition, which as we have seen was derived from Babylon, was a representation of the Messiah, ‘The man—the branch.’ The mistletoe was regarded as a divine branch—a branch that came from heaven and grew upon a tree that sprung out of the earth. Thus, by the engrafting of the celestial branch into the earthly tree, heaven and earth, that sin had severed, were joined together, and thus, the mistletoe bough became the token of divine reconciliation to man, the kiss being the well-known token of pardon and reconciliation”.*

# Christmas Past

## The Mistletoe

- *“Whence could such an idea have come? May it not have come from Psalm 85:10-11?”*

10 Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

11 Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

**Psalm 85:10-11**

# Christmas Past

## The Mistletoe

- *“Thus, the very customs of Christmas still existent cast surprising light at once on the revelations of grace made to all the earth, and the efforts made by Satan and his emissaries to materialise, carnalise, and degrade them”*

– Rev Alexander Hislop

Christmas Past

# The HOPE of Christmas!

19 And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God?

20 But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.

**Genesis 50:19-20**

- God has taken the wicked intentions of man and turned it into an opportunity to save much people alive!



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