

## Saturnalia

The following quote gives the definition of Saturnalia:  
*"a Roman festival commemorating the happy period under Saturn, when freedom and equality reigned and violence and oppression were unknown. It probably began as a harvest celebration, but this connection was later lost. Originally it was marked on December 17, but it's length was later extended. During the Saturnalia, public business ceased, master and slaves changed places, and some moral codes were relaxed. Feasting prevailed, and gifts were exchanged, usually candles and small clay dolls. It was similar to the Christian festival of Christmas. The statue of Saturn, bandaged the rest of the year, was unwrapped." ~Encyclopedia Americana International Edition 1991*

The following chart shows some of the numerous similarities between the way the Saturnalia was celebrated and the way Christmas is celebrated today.

Similarities		
	Saturnalia	Christmas
Religious holiday	✓	✓
Celebrated in December	✓	✓
Gifts exchanged	✓	✓
Parties	✓	✓
Best of days/Favorite time of year for many	✓	✓
Major holiday of the year	✓	✓
Most Businesses Closed	✓	✓
Government offices closed	✓	✓
Children out of school	✓	✓
A time of peace/goodwill towards others	✓	✓
Indulgence/Feasting	✓	✓
Candles/Lights	✓	✓
Poor elevated	✓	✓

## The Kalends

The following quote gives the definition of the Kalends:  
*"Kalends, the Roman new year festival... The Romans celebrated Kalends in much the same way they did Saturnalia. Early Christian writers condemned the carousing crowds. Nevertheless, some of the customs associated with Kalends were eventually absorbed into the celebration of Christmas. ...In 45 B.C. the Roman emperor Julius Caesar introduced a new calendar (called the Julian calendar) which shifted the date of the Roman new year from March 25 to January 1. The Romans called the festival that began on this day 'kalends' (or 'calends'). ... The Romans celebrated Kalends by decorating their homes and temples with lights and greenery. They exchanged gifts with one another as well. A sprig of greenery taken from the groves dedicated to the goddess Strenia was considered a very traditional gift. Later the Romans added cakes and honey (symbolizing a 'sweet' new year), and coins (symbolizing wealth) to the roster of traditional new year gifts. ... Feasting, drinking, and merrymaking rounded out the festival. Kalend's Eve celebrations resembled our own New Year's Eve festivities."*

~<http://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/Kalends>

## Samhain

The following quote gives the definition of the Samhain:  
*"Samhain is also a time of new beginnings. It is the Celtic New Year celebration and it carries with it many of the traditions more commonly associated with the Julian calendar's New Year's Eve on December 31."*

~ Wicca for Men: A Handbook for Male Pagans Seeking a Spiritual Path by A. J. Drew p. 103  
 The main traditions that Christmas borrows from Samhain are those dealing with yule and some customs involving corn. Feast days can be a good thing, in fact God instituted certain feast days as the Bible tells us. However, the people of God have often tried to co-mingle the worship of God with the rituals of paganism in these feasts resulting in Bible verses like these: *Amo 5:21 I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Amo 5:22 Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Amo 5:23 Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. Amo 5:26 But ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves.*

Please visit the website for more information.

## Feast of Origin

The Natalis Sol Invicti is now referred to by the Christian name Christmas. Did the holiday take on a new Christian nature, or is it still celebrated pretty much the way it always has been? According to all serious studies of paganism, the exact meaning behind pagan customs, rituals and traditions has always changed overtime as new influences from different cultures combined. Therefore the meaning of each ritual or custom can mean one thing at one point in time and something different at another point in time. This is the case with the rituals and traditions surrounding Christmas as well. As we will see, all widely observed Christmas traditions and rituals are of pagan origin. Those rituals and customs come from three main pagan feasts. Those feasts are the Saturnalia, the Kalends (new year) and Samhain, which is more commonly now known as Halloween. The rituals and traditions surrounding Christmas were brought into the church at Rome, when it was busy trying to convert pagans to Christianity. Here is a short overview of each of the three pagan holidays that most of the traditions surrounding Christmas are derived from.

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## The Feasts of Origin

*Christmas*  
Ch 4 Feast of Origin

**This informational pamphlet gives the reader a basic understanding of the three main festivals from which Christmas tradition comes.**

