

The statement by Libanius makes it clear that the practice of giving gifts has been associated with pagan ritual at this time of year for a very long time. Mr. Miles tells us on page 168 of his book titled "Christmas in Ritual and Tradition" that the giving of gifts can be traced to a time when the people and the Senate in Rome were expected, or in some cases, required to provide gifts and solemn wishes of prosperity for the new year to the Emperor. Though it seems most likely that the current tradition of gift giving at Christmas is descended from the Kalends, it should also be noted that the ancient Romans also had a gift giving tradition at the Sigillaria, which was celebrated on the 23rd of December. Mr. Miles connects the Sigillaria and the Saturnalia on page 113 of his book. Every ritual in paganism is done as a form of worship. The practice of gift giving is no exception. The following quote links the practice directly to the groves so often condemned in our Bibles.

"According to tradition they [Roman strenae or gifts] were originally merely branches plucked from the grove of the goddess Strenia, and the purpose of these may well have been akin to that of the greenery used for decorations, viz., to secure contact with a vegetation-spirit" ~Christmas in Ritual and Tradition by Clement A. Miles

The grove has always been at the very heart of the Christmas gift giving tradition. Today, the representative of the grove is brought into the home in

the form of a Christmas tree, and the presents are then piled high beneath it. The grove has from the very earliest times been a snare to the people of God. There are numerous verses condemning the groves. These next verses connect the grove to other idol worship and also tell us that this is one of the practices that God had warned the people not to do because the heathens around them were doing it.

2Ki 17:15 And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the LORD had charged them, that they should not do like them. 2Ki 17:16 And they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal.

Baal was a sun god, and it was from the worship of the sun being merged with the worship of Christ, that Christmas day was born. We see from the Bible that there is a connection between the groves and Baal. We also see that all the heathens around the people of God were using groves in their service to Baal. This is the same situation that Christians find themselves in today. The world all around is engaging in this practice of setting up a Christmas tree and piling presents beneath it. Does this

in any way glorify God? How does giving a gift to other people who already have more than any other culture that came before us, glorify God? Those who have some extra change, a roof over their head and modern conveniences such as indoor plumbing and electricity already have more than all of those who came before us. Today in the U.S., even the poorest of the poor often have these things or access to them. The average citizen in most modern countries have these things and much, much more. The people exchanging gifts most likely have cars and cell phones and washers and dryers and ovens and the list goes on and on. Every year there are complaints expressed by someone shopping for someone else who "already has everything". How does heaping another trinket on that pile of "everything" glorify God? This is supposedly the season to commemorate the birth of Christ. Does the Bible tell us that people exchanged gifts when Christ was born? No. The Bible tells us that they brought gifts to Christ.

Mat 2:11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

The practice of exchanging gifts with each other at this time of year is of purely pagan origin. There is more about this topic on the website.

Christmas Gifts

Perhaps one of the most widely honored rituals surrounding Christmas is the giving of gifts. According to the online statistics portal statista.com, the 2013 holiday retail sales in the United States amounted to about 592 billion U.S. Dollars. There can be no doubt that a significant amount of money is spent around the world on Christmas presents each year. This is not a new phenomenon. Pagans have been exchanging gifts at this time of year since at least the fourth century. Just as people today save all year in order to have money for Christmas presents, so did the pagans of Rome in the fourth century as we see in the following quote. *"The Kalends is celebrated everywhere as far as the limits of the roman empire extend.... The impulse to spend seizes everyone. He who the whole year through has taken pleasure in saving and piling up his pence, becomes suddenly extravagant... A stream of presents pours itself out on all sides.... As the thousand flowers which burst forth everywhere are the adornment of Spring, so are the thousand presents poured out on all sides, the decoration of the Kalends feast."*~Libanius (4th century Greek sophist) From Christmas in Ritual and Tradition by Clement A. Miles p. 168-169.

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Christmas Gifts



This informational pamphlet gives the reader a basic understanding of the history of exchanging gifts at Christmas.

