

Sun Worship invades the Church

The first instance in which the day of the sun is plainly mentioned as a day of Christian worship was by Justin in his "First Apology".

"And upon the day called the day of the sun, all that live ...meet together at the same place where the writings of the apostles and prophets are read. . . "

Interesting observation we will make here. Justin, throughout all his writings uses the heathen designations for the day. What we see here is that the Christians are worshipping upon the day of the sun. A very significant fact!

The reasons Justin gives are two fold:

1. The day of the sun is set forth as the first day of light. For on the first day God created light.
2. Christ rose from the grave on the first day. Thus it is the day of light and life.

Later he also develops the "8th" day philosophy, trying to tie it into the sign of circumcision. The eighth day philosophy was later enlarged upon by the gnostics.

In all of Justin's writings nothing is mentioned at all that any divine command was ever given. Nothing is mentioned that Christ instituted the day as the new worship day, or that the apostles instituted the day for that matter. All we see is a man trying to justify himself for worshipping upon the DAY OF THE SUN.

Eusebius (AD 260-340) refers explicitly to the ideas of "the light" "of the sun and of the day of the Sun", to explain the substitution of the Jewish Sabbath to the day of the sun. Phrases like: "celebration of the Sabbath to the rising of the light." "First day of light" "In this day of light" "All things whatsoever that were prescribed for the Sabbath, we have transferred them to the Lord's day...It is also on this day that the Sun of Justice has risen for our souls."

We see the constant theme that Sunday is the day of the Sun. It is the day of light. The commemoration of the creation of light and the resurrection of the Sun of Justice.

Jerome (342-420) wrote, "The Savior, like the rising sun conquered the darkness of the underworld and gleamed in the glory of the resurrection. This is why the same day was called day of the Sun by the pagans, because the Sun of Justice once risen would have illuminated it."

Tertullian also makes it perfectly clear that the Christians were worshipping on the day known as the DAY OF THE SUN. Tertullian is here arguing with the pagans who chided the Christians on keeping Sunday.

He writes: "Others, again with greater regard to good manners, it must be confessed, suppose that the sun is the God of the Christians, because it is a well known fact that we pray toward the east, or because we make Sunday a day of festivity. What then? (What of it?) Do you do less than this? (You do the same?) Do not many among you, with an affectation of sometimes worshipping the heavenly bodies likewise, move your lips in the direction of the sunrise?"

We see striking similarities between the sun worshipers and the Christians outlined.

1. They both celebrated the same day— the day of the sun. And it was recognized as THE DAY OF THE SUN. There is no question about this fact that Sun day was indeed linked to sun worship.
2. They both have one common object of worship — light. Has anyone heard the argument today that now we have the greater light, the 7th day Sabbath was only a lesser light? Christ the Sun of Righteousness?
3. They both had their weekly services at sunrise.
4. They faced toward the east for worship.
5. They are not days given to contemplation of God and helping others, but they are days of celebration.

WITH SUNDAY, THE DAY OF THE SUN, CAME OTHER SUN FESTIVALS

As with most apostasy, one thing leads to another. We see Tertullian lamenting the fact that the Christians are joining the pagans in their heathen anniversaries held in honor of the sun.

Ever wonder what easter bunnies and eggs and chickens have to do with the marvelous sacrifice of our Lord and Savior?

Paganism in the centuries before Christ had a counterfeit yearly holiday celebrating the spring equinox of the sun. It was called "Eostre" meaning goddess of spring. Bede, (672-735 CE.) a Christian scholar, first asserted in his book *De Ratione Temporum* that Easter was named after Eostre (a.k.a. Eastre). She was the Great Mother Goddess of the Saxon people in Northern Europe. Similar "Teutonic dawn goddess of fertility. This "Eostre" was simply another version of the original story of Semiramis of Babylon.

Similar Goddesses were known by other names and were celebrated in the springtime. Most Pagan religions in the Mediterranean area had a major seasonal day of religious celebration at or following the Spring Equinox. Cybele, the Phrygian fertility goddess, had a consort god, who was believed to have been born via a virgin birth. He was Attis, who was believed to have died and been resurrected each year during the period MAR-22 to MAR-25. About 200 B.C. mystery cults began to appear in Rome just as they had earlier in Greece. Most notable was the Cybele cult centered on Vatican hill ...Associated with the Cybele cult was that of her lover, Attis (the older Tammuz, Osiris, Dionysus, or Orpheus under a new name). He was a god of ever-reviving vegetation. Born of a virgin, he died and was reborn annually. The festival began as a day of blood on Black Friday and culminated after three days in a day of rejoicing over the resurrection."

Easter Rabbit and Eggs: Both represented fertility. From these, we have inherited the customs and symbols of the Easter egg and Easter rabbit. Dyed eggs also formed part of the rituals of the Babylonian mystery religions. Eggs "were sacred to many ancient civilizations and formed an integral part of religious ceremonies in Egypt and the Orient. Dyed eggs were hung in Egyptian temples, and the egg was regarded as the emblem of regenerative life proceeding from the mouth of the great Egyptian god."

Easter Sunrise Service: This custom can be traced back to the ancient Pagan custom of welcoming the sun God at the vernal equinox - when daytime is about to exceed the length

of the nighttime. It was a time to "celebrate the return of life and reproduction to animal and plant life as well." Worship of the sun god at sunrise is condemned by God as recorded in:

Ezekiel 8:16-18: "...behold, at the door of the temple of Jehovah, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of Jehovah, and their faces toward the east; and they were worshipping the sun toward the east. Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen (this), O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have turned again to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose. Therefore will I also deal in wrath; mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity; and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them."

Since the resurrection of Christ, a custom developed among the Christians of celebrating this event yearly, though neither Christ nor the New Testament commanded it. This rivaled the pagan spring festival. However the fourteenth day of the month of the Passover was at first observed, not the Sunday festival of Spring.

So why did the church change from the Passover date upon which Christ died, to the Spring Festival date of pagan celebration of the sun and fertility? Toward the close of the second century we find a controversy springing up between the East and the West, as to whether the "Easter" resurrection should be honored on the first day of the week or on the regular Passover day (the fourteenth of Nisan) which fell upon a different day of the week every year. Over in Rome, the bishop Victor (A.D.189-199) threatened to excommunicate the Christian communities in Asia which refused to follow his instruction that the resurrection was to be celebrated on the Sunday following the Passover. Victor I, the bishop of Rome, assembled provincial synods up and down the Mediterranean coasts to come to an agreement on the date of Easter. Clement, at the head of the school of Alexandria, brought decision in favor of Rome's attitude by publishing a summary of traditions he had collected in favor of Sunday observance. At the same time Victor proclaimed the virtues of Sunday to all the nations around the Mediterranean. Uniting the pagan festival with the religious festival he issued his decree ordering the clergy everywhere to observe Easter on the first Sunday following the first full moon after the spring equinox. A lordly command issuing from one bishop over others was something new in the world. Never before Victor I, had any bishop dared to pass over the head of the provincial synods to command other clergy to obey his decrees.

Representatives of the Asian Churches, stood by the Passover date, refusing to be frightened into submission by the threats of Victor of Rome. No, they declared, they would by no means forsake the real Passover date. Then the thunders of excommunication began to be threatened. Victor, stopped communicating with them, and pronounced them unworthy of being part of the church, and excluded them from fellowship with the church at Rome. Thus the gulf began between the east and the west which widened as the years progressed.

It appears by the documents available that people in Rome under Sixtus first began the Sunday Easter custom some 60 years earlier (all changes took their time-Sunday worship did not descend upon the earth in one day or by one person-- it all evolved and then was enforced by the church).

As the west drifted more and more into the Sun Culture, the observance of Easter also became more of a festival rather than a time to reflect on the great gift God gave the world.

The primary motivation for this was an intense desire to get away from anything Jewish.

"It appeared an unworthy thing that in the celebration of this most holy feast we should follow the practice of the Jews...Let us have nothing in common with the detestable Jewish crowd." Wrote Eusebius.

Yet by separating themselves from all things Jewish they united themselves with things pagan. Now Easter is celebrated, not just the Sunday after Passover, but on the Sunday after the full moon following the spring equinox of the sun.

What we have seen is that the bishop of Rome, seeking to outrival pagan pomp, began a campaign to force the resurrection celebration to be held on a Sunday of Easter and making it the high day of Christians. This move led to much controversy among the churches. Excommunication was the weapon Rome used to force the issue. The controversy laid the seeds for the split between the eastern and western church.

Indeed there was a great movement coming from Rome to unit all the people under one worship. With the sun in the center.

THE LAWS FROM ROME LEAD US STRAIGHT INTO SUN WORSHIP--

We have seen two key developments taking place in these early centuries. One was the shift from the Biblical Sabbath into the sun worshipers day of celebration, even to adopting the pagan holidays for their holy days.

The other is the gradual rise to dominance of the Bishop of Rome.

-- The Christians, in their eagerness to be disassociated from Jews were moving from plain "Thus saith the Lord" into pagan sun worshiping ceremonies. The Jews were not looked upon with any favor by the Roman Empire, therefore the Christians did their utmost to divorce themselves from any Jewish identification.

However, this did not render them free from persecution. The emperor before Constantine, Diocletian (A.D. 284-305) launched a fierce campaign against Christians. It was clear to all that this internal strife was not building a strong empire. So when Constantine emerged as the next emperor he sought for a way to unite his empire. There were only two strong religions , Mithraism, the worship of the sun, and Christianity.

So Constantine declared Sun day as a day of celebration for all peoples. Five additional Sunday Laws were to be issued by Constantine to strengthen the first one which asked for people to rest on the Venerable Day of the Sun.

Someone usually asks this question at this point:

Can't you people make up your mind— who changed the Sabbath, the Papacy or Constantine?

Constantine only passed the laws, it was the church that adopted Sunday! One of the so called church fathers, Eusebius, was and advisor to Constantine. It was Eusebius who lobbied with the emperor to legislate Sunday with the recommendation that it would unite the Sun worshipers with the followers of Jesus.

He wrote:

"The Logos (Christ) has transferred by the New Alliance the celebration of the Sabbath to the rising of the light. He has given us a type of the true rest in the saving day of the Lord, the first day of light...In this day of light--first day and true day of the sun...we celebrate the holy and spiritual Sabbaths...All things whatsoever that were prescribed for the (Bible) Sabbath WE have transferred them to the Lord's day, as being more authoritative and more highly regarded and first in rank, and more honorable than the Jewish Sabbath.

Sun worship has rivaled true worship for almost as long as civilization can be traced. It is still the main opponent of true worship. How can one join Sun worship with Christianity? Yet that is exactly what Sunday has done.

Catholic Tradition substituted the venerable day of the sun for the Holy Sabbath day of the Creator God! More laws followed, issued from the church, till the true Sabbath was almost forgotten.

EVIDENCE OF SUN WORSHIP

Images and symbols of the sun are everywhere in Catholic art and churches.

Listen to this:

In Egypt the city of Heliopolis was the center of North African sun worship around the time of Christ. In the center of the city stood a huge red granite obelisk as the symbol of the Sun-god. In A.D. 38, Emperor Caligula of Rome, a devoted Sun-worshiper, ordered that this 83 feet high obelisk be moved to Rome. It was quite an enterprise, but finally Emperor Nero had it erected in Rome and dedicated to Lord Mithra, the Sun-god.

Obelisks of this kind were placed in front of their places of ceremonies to identify them.

One and a half millennia later in 1585, a decree from the "holy" man in the Vatican went out saying that the obelisk that the pagan Emperor Caligula had brought over from Heliopolis, must be brought to the front of St. Peter's and set up in the exact center of the circular court. The decree included a death penalty to the mover, if he accidentally broke the obelisk in moving it.

Finally someone was brave enough — or greedy enough — since the pay was good, to move the immense obelisk. On September 10, 1586 the obelisk was ready to be erected in the circular court. The pope himself was present to pray that the sun-image would not be injured. He also issued a decree that no one in the crowds could speak aloud, on pain of death, lest the workmen be distracted and the solar idol of Heliopolis be shattered. It was a very reverent occasion.

When the job was completed, hundreds of church bells rang out, cannons roared, Pope Sixtus dedicated the idol to the "cross." and held solemn mass in its honor.

The great obelisk of the ancient "City of the Sun" is once more identifying the largest church in the world. It is back at the center of worship—

Then there is the solar wheel

Comes straight from Babylonian sun worshipers . It's an occult symbol! Unquestionable the largest occult solar wheel on earth is located in the court of St. Peter at the Vatican in Rome. It is made of a wheel within a wheel, with eight spokes, a common symbol of cosmic energy in paganism. And right in its center stands the obelisk, the ancient symbol of Osiris, the solar phallic god of Egypt!

You can also see the solar wheel in many other places in Catholic art and architecture. There is a big one in the ceiling at the monastery of Jesuit St Ignatius Loyola in Spain. Another one in the floor tiles in the same monastery. There are pictures of bishops and even the Madonna holding the symbol of solar power!

Pagan symbols of the sun-god. The face of a pagan sun-god, surrounded by straight and wavy blaze lines. These can be seen at the top of one of the giant serpentine pillars in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican.

Solar blazes around the heads of saints is common.

And of course— there is the venerable day of the Sun which the Pope is promoting and asking the people to protect with legal legislation.