

# THE SABBATH SCOOP

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## Celebrating the Sun-God's Birth

**Most people in this world think Christmas celebrates the birth of the Son of God. Do a little research and we find it is not the Son of God but the sun-god who is being worshiped with pagan rites and symbols!**

**By Gregory Dullum**

Longtime readers of the *Sabbath Scoop* know Christmas came from paganism and should not be celebrated by true Christians. However, it is good to refresh our memories as to why we don't celebrate this world's major "Christian" holiday.

### Christ Not Born on Christmas

It is NOT a secret that Jesus Christ was NOT born on Christmas, A.D. 0, as some would have us believe.

Today, we need only surf the Internet to find the pagan origins of this day. The Internet wasn't around when I was born in 1956. But even back then, the origins of this day were published in that red-bound encyclopedia with the blue stripe and gold letters: *The World Book Encyclopedia*, a staple in many American schools and homes.

Notice what the 1956 edition of *the World Book Encyclopedia* says about Christmas: "Christmas is celebrated in all Christian countries as the birthday of Christ. ... No one knows definitely when the Christmas festival was first celebrated. ... Other dates were often celebrated as the day of the Nativity, but in the year 354, by order of Bishop Liberius of Rome, December 25 was adopted. It was noted later that this date would fall within the rainy season in Palestine, so that the shepherds would hardly have been in the fields at night as they were when Jesus was born" ("Christmas," vol. 3, p. 1425).

The word "Christmas" does NOT appear in the Holy Bible. There is NO command to celebrate Christ's birth. The early church has no record of celebrating Christmas in the book of Acts or in the epistles. The earliest record we have of the day is in the writings of Clement of Alexandria in the 400s.

"The early Church Fathers probably



NAPS photo

Most people think Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus. Dec. 25 is the birthday of many pagan sun-gods, but it cannot be the birthday of Christ. All of the customs associated with Christmas also came from paganism.

chose December 25 because the feast of the sun, or winter solstice, was a familiar Roman feast celebrating the victory of light over darkness. This idea was easily turned from a pagan to a Christian one, since Christians consider Christ as the light of life" (*World Book Encyclopedia*, p. 1425).

Christmas is of PAGAN origin! It is NOT a Christian day at all!

### Pagan Origins

In *The Pagan Book of Days* by self-professed pagan Nigel Pennick, the pagan significance of each day of the year is explained. For Dec. 25, Pennick writes, "The observance of Christmas contains many elements from a number of different sources. The many ceremonies and religious

sources of the day make it the most important festival of the year" (1992, p. 141). The author says Christmas is *the most important* PAGAN celebration!

"In several major religions, the birth of the chief god, identified with the sun, has been celebrated at this time. The Egyptian sky goddess Nut was said to give birth to the sun at the winter solstice, and the birthday of the sun-god in many religions, including Horus, Helios, Dionysos, Mithras, and Jesus, has been celebrated on 25 December, the old date of the winter solstice. The common feature of these midwinter divinities is that they are all associated with the concepts of rebirth and eternal life" (Pennick, p. 20).

By celebrating Jesus' birthday on Dec. 25, professing Christians relegate the Son of God to *the same status* as pagan sun-gods!

Jesus was not born on Christmas! (For more proof, see the December 2016 *Sabbath Scoop*.) The DAY's origins are in paganism. And its CUSTOMS are not Christian either.

### The Christmas Tree

One of the most visible signs of Christmas is the Christmas tree. Does anyone ever stop to ask what an evergreen decorated with dangling tinsel, shiny balls and colored lights has to do with this world's Savior? Obviously not. There is no connection. The custom is pure paganism.

"Several scholars believe the Christmas tree began in early Rome. It appears in Germany in literature in 1604. Tree worship was common in Scandinavian countries. ... When the pagans of northern Europe became Christians, they

**XMAS**

Continued on Page 2

## Xmas

Continued from Page 1

made their sacred evergreen trees part of the Christian festival, and decorated the trees with gilded nuts, candles (a carry-over from pagan sun worship) and apples to stand for the stars, moon and sun” (*World Book Encyclopedia*, p. 1425).

There is NOTHING Christian about this symbol! The lights and balls used to decorate this tree were symbols of pagan ASTROLOGY!

God is NOT silent about the Christmas tree. He attacks idolatry in the book of Jeremiah. Notice how well this description of these wooden idols fits the modern Christmas tree:

“Thus says the LORD: Do not learn the way of the Gentiles; Do not be dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the Gentiles are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are futile; for one cuts a tree from the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the ax. They decorate it with silver and gold; they fasten it with nails and hammers so that it will not topple. They are upright, like a palm tree, and they cannot speak; they must be carried, because they cannot go themselves. Do not be afraid of them, for they cannot do evil, nor can they do any good” (Jer. 10:2-5).

The Christmas tree is not an idol in a literal sense, but people bow before it as they put presents under it. Its origins are pagan and it is associated with the “signs of the heavens.” God says the customs of the Gentiles (or heathen, or pagans) are futile (worthless). They do NOT add to TRUE worship. Christmas trees are a WORTHLESS holdover from paganism!

### The Yule Log

Christmas is called the “Yuletide” season and one of its customs is the yule log.

The origins of the yule log are not known. It is known that the pagan Druids blessed the yule log with great ceremony in their winter feast (*World Book Encyclopedia*, p. 1426).

The word “yule” means yoke. Yuletide depicts the “yoke” of the year, “the balance point across which travels the lowest ebb of sunlight. Even at its lowest ebb, however, it contains within itself the promise of lengthening days once more” (Pennick, pp. 19-20).

### Christmas Greens

Christmas is closely tied to green plants: the tree, holly, wreaths and custom of “the hanging of the greens.” NONE of these customs has to do with the birth of Christ. They all *pre-date Christian times*:

“The greens of course stem from the Druidic groves and signify the eternal aspects of life,” writes Hans Holzer in *Star in the East*.

In “The Old Religion” of Druidic paganism, “the white-gowned priests went to the sacred groves where they worshiped the invisible deity among the oak trees that symbolized his powers. Their church had no roof except the sky above. Wearing sprigs of holly in their hair, the priests then proceeded to cut the mistletoe found in the trees. The plant was a symbol of fertility and power to them. ...

“The holly tree, incidentally, because of its evergreen nature, symbolized eternal life to them, and it is true that even today’s ‘white witches’ are firmly convinced that reincarnation is the way of life. Since Christianity also accepts eternal life as a fact, the holly tradition was transferred into the new religion without qualms.

“But the fact remains that the use of any forms of greens in the Christmas service is entirely pre-Christian and has nothing to do with the nativity” (Holzer, 1973, pp. 22-25).

### Caroling

Christmas has its own music. Traditionally, people went house to house singing these Christmas carols. Holzer says Druids “sang chants to create a harmonious atmosphere among the celebrants” and these chants “entered into the Christian traditions and became caroling, the singing of the songs of the season” (Holzer, p. 26).

### Merry Making

“Merry Christmas” is the oft-heard phrase at this time of year. People are supposed to get into a “Christmas spirit” and be merry. They express their joy by giving gifts to one another and even go so far as to observe “cease fires” when warring with their neighbors. Surely *this* has its origins in the birth of the Prince of Peace.

Nope.

These customs originated in pagan Rome: “In ancient Rome, the festival of Saturnalia, honoring the agricultural deity Saturn, also took place during the winter solstice at the end of December. ... The Saturnalia were thus also festivals of renewal, marking the dying year and hope for a new spring. But since they often ended in merrymaking of a carnal kind, they were hardly of a higher religious connotation” (Holzer, p. 26). This has continued down through history, especially among English-speaking people. “Excesses in food, drink, and love-mak-

ing were part and parcel of the holiday ‘spirit’ ” (Holzer, p. 25).

It is assumed by many that Christmas gifts have their origin in the gifts that wise men gave Christ. But the wise men arrived sometime *after* Christ was born—NOT on his birthday. Their gifts were NOT *birthday* presents. They were gifts to show *honor to a King!* It is still the custom today to bring presents when *coming before royalty*. How insulting it must be to Jesus Christ to have people think they are honoring Him “on his birthday” with presents, but they give their presents *to each other* and give Him ABSOLUTELY NOTHING!

### Santa Claus

Santa Claus and his reindeer have NOTHING to do with Christ’s birth. The name is a corrupted form of Saint Nicholas, a Catholic monk who lived in the fourth century. The attributes of Santa Claus come from the paganism:

“In northern Europe, St. Nicholas absorbed Pagan attributes from Woden (Odin), chief of the wild hunt, who rides through the sky with reindeer and forty-two supernatural huntsmen. Since the Reformation, this saint has become merged with the Father Christmas of Yuletide. The modern Santa Claus also has elements of Thor... traditionally depicted riding a goat and carrying a wassail bowl” (Pennick, p. 136).

Santa’s true origins lie with those of Woden or Odin, *chief of the wild hunt*. What is the TRUE origin of this god? Who, in the Bible, was “a *mighty hunter* before [or instead of] the LORD”? None other than Nimrod, the founder of Babylon and its mystery religion. He was evil

### XMAS

Continued on Page 5

## The SABBATH SCOOP

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# THE SABBATH COMMAND

Why is the Sabbath Command worded differently in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5?

By Gregory Dullum

Have you ever compared the 10 commandments listed in Exodus 20 to those listed in Deuteronomy 5? Seven are *identical* in wording. Two are worded differently but *mean the same thing*. One is *very different*. Every wonder WHY?

The first commandment is found in Ex. 20:2-3 and Deut. 5:6-7. They are identical.

The second commandment is found in Ex. 20:4-6 and Deut. 5:8-10. They are also identical.

The third commandment is in Ex. 20:7 and Deut. 5:7. Again, the wording is identical.

The fifth commandment is in Ex. 20:12 and Deut. 5:16. The words are slightly different but the meaning is the same.

The sixth commandment: Ex. 20:13; Deut. 5:17. Identical.

The seventh commandment: Ex. 20:14; Deut. 5:18. Identical.

The eighth commandment: Ex. 20:15; Deut. 5:19. Identical.

The ninth commandment: Ex. 20:16; Deut. 5:20. Identical.

The 10th commandment is found in Ex. 20:17 and Deut. 5:21. The first two phrases were switched, but otherwise the two verses are identical.

## Fourth Command Is Different

Now, let's look at the fourth commandment. It is the longest commandment. And notice the differences:

Ex. 20:8-11 states, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the



Photo by Gregory Dullum

The Sabbath is a day for God's people to cease from work. In the winter, it's nice to relax in front of a fire.

seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work; you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it."

In Deut. 5:12-15, the Sabbath command is given this way: "Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: You, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day."

Let's examine the differences in these two Sabbath commands.

## Remember the Sabbath Day

Ex. 20:8 says "Remember the Sabbath Day." Jamieson, Fausset and Brown, in their *Commentary on the Whole Bible*

write: "Remember the Sabbath day—implying it was already known, and recognized as a season of rest. The first four commandments comprise our duties to God—the other six our duties to our fellow men; and as interpreted by Christ, they reach to the government of the heart as well as to the lip (Mt. 5:17) 'If a man do them he shall live in them.'" (1964, p. 71).

This commentary says the Exodus account points *backward*. It begins with "Remember," focusing our attention *in the past*.

(It is interesting to note that this commentary does NOT say the commandments were done away in the New Testament! It says we must give *more than lip service*; we must *obey from the heart*, even by the COMMAND of Christ!)

## Keep the Sabbath...

On Deut. 5:12, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown comment: "**Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee**—i.e., keep it in mind as a sacred institution of former enactment and *perpetual* obligation." (p. 145, emphasis added). The wording in Deuteronomy implies that the Sabbath is to be *KEPT forever!*

The *last part* of the commandment tells us *WHY* to keep it. In Ex. 20:11, we keep the Sabbath *because* God rested on the seventh day at creation and blessed and hallowed the seventh day.

In Deut. 5:15 we read that we keep the Sabbath *because* we were slaves in Egypt and God saved us by bringing us out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm.

Why are these two descriptions DIFFERENT? *Do they contradict?*

## Sabbath Explains Who God Is

To find the answer, we let's turn to Exodus 31:12-18, where the Sabbath is further discussed:

"And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: "Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you. You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone

## Know Your Bible

By Charles Nenninger

1. What does the Feast of Trumpets picture?
2. How long was Moses on the mountain when he received the 10 commandments?
3. What is another name for Mt. Sinai?
4. In the *King James Version*, what is the clothing called that Adam and Eve made from fig leaves?
5. Who replaced Elijah?

(Answers on page 5)

SABBATH

Continued on Page 4

## Sabbath

Continued from Page 3

who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is a Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Therefore, the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever, for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.”

Notice *carefully* the words in verse 13: “It is a *sign* between Me and you throughout your generations, that *you* may know that *I am the LORD* who sanctifies you.”

Keeping the Sabbath reminds us that *we are God's people*. It reminds us of who we are. And it reminds us of who our God is. What does the Sabbath teach us about God?

### World Doesn't Know God

The world does not keep the Sabbath. Therefore, the world does not know the TRUE God.

Evolution teaches the lie that there is no God at all; that mankind has evolved from lower life forms and just made up the idea of a God. According to evolutionists, we, in effect, have created God in our own image and after our own likeness.

Romans 1 tells how mankind's foolish hearts were darkened, professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, exchanging the truth for the lie of evolution; they worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator.

Pagans have created a pantheon of gods but *they were not really gods*. They were just figments of their imaginations with images carved in wood or stone.

### God Describes Himself

Let's read some scriptures in which God reveals Himself. As we do, watch for these three things: What does God say about idols? And in what TWO WAYS does God describe Himself?

“I am the LORD, that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to carved images” (Isa. 42:8).

“‘You are My witnesses,’ says the LORD, and My servants whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He. Before Me there was no

God formed, Nor shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the LORD, and beside Me there is no savior. I have declared and saved, I have proclaimed, and there was no foreign god among you; therefore you are My witnesses,’ says the LORD God, ‘that I am He; and there is no one who can deliver out of My hand; I work, and who shall reverse it?’” (Isa 43:10-13).

“Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the LORD of Hosts: ‘I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God. ... Do not fear, nor be afraid; have I not told you from that time, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? Indeed there is no other Rock; I know not one.’ Those who make an image, all of them are useless, And their precious things shall not profit; they are their own witnesses” (Ch. 44:6, 8-9).

“I am the LORD, and there is no other; there is no God besides Me. I will gird you, though you have not known Me, that they may know from the rising of the sun to its setting that there is none besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other; I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create calamity; I, the LORD, do all these things” (Ch. 45:5-7).

“Truly You are God, who hide Yourself, O God of Israel, the Savior! They shall be ashamed and also disgraced, all of them; They shall go in confusion together, who are makers of idols. But Israel shall be saved by the LORD with an everlasting salvation; You shall not be ashamed or disgraced forever and ever. ... For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens, who is God, who formed the earth and made it, who has established it, who did not create it in vain, who formed it to be inhabited: ‘I am the LORD, and there is no other. ... Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, you who have escaped from the nations. They have no knowledge, who carry the wood of their carved image, and pray to a god that cannot save. Tell and bring forth your case; yes, let them take counsel together. Who has declared this from ancient time? Who has told it from that time? Have not I, the LORD? And there is no other God beside Me, a just God and a Savior; there is none beside Me’” (Ch. 45:15-16, 18, 20-21).

*Over and over* God describes Himself as the CREATOR and SAVIOR.

God *created* EVERYTHING. Therefore, He is deserving of all worship, honor, praise and glory.

God also is our *Savior*. Therefore, He is deserving of all worship, honor, praise and glory.

In EXODUS, we *keep the Sabbath* to honor God as our CREATOR.

In DEUTERONOMY, we *keep the Sabbath*

to honor God as our SAVIOR.

God delivered *physical* Israel out of *physical* Egypt. God has delivered *us—spiritual* Israel—out of *spiritual* Egypt (sin). We celebrate that every year at the time of the spring holy days.

Notice what *Jamieson, Fausset & Brown* have to say about Deuteronomy's Sabbath commandment:

“This is a different reason for the observance of the Sabbath from what is assigned in Exodus 20, where that day is stated to be an appointed memorial of the creation. But the addition of another motive for the observance does not imply any necessary contrariety to the other; and it has been thought probable that, the commemorative design of the institution being well known, the other reason was specially mentioned on this repetition of the law, to secure the privilege of sabbatic rest to servants, of which, in some Hebrew families, they had been deprived” (p. 145).

The Sabbath is a sign between God and his people. By keeping this day holy, we have more time to build our relationship with God through prayer, study, meditation, worship services, fellowship, singing of praises. By keeping the Sabbath we proclaim that the true God is *our* Creator. Or, looking at it another way, we proclaim that the Creator is *OUR* GOD. Ours is not a god of wood or stone. Our God has taken an *active* part *in our lives* by being our Savior. He has saved us from trials and He has saved us from our sins.

### Sabbath Breaking Is Idolatry

When we fail to keep the Sabbath, we commit IDOLATRY. We *reject* God as our CREATOR and SAVIOR.

Notice what God tells us about ancient Israel through the prophet Ezekiel:

“On that day I raised My hand in an oath to them, to bring them out of the land of Egypt into a land that I had searched out for them, flowing with milk and honey, the glory of all lands. Then I said to them, ‘Each of you, throw away the abominations which are before his eyes, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.’ But they rebelled against Me and would not obey Me. They did not all cast away the abominations which were before their eyes, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt. Then I said, ‘I will pour out My fury on them and fulfill My anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.’ But I acted for My name's sake, that it should not be profaned before the Gentiles among whom they were, in whose sight I had made Myself known to them, to

## SABBATH

Continued on Page 6



NAPS drawing

Santa Claus is depicted with God-like qualities: he's a wise old man who lives in the North; he sees all and knows all; and he brings good gifts from above.

## Xmas

Continued from Page 2

and myths based upon his life are evil.

"Nimrod is represented as the establisher of Babylon (Gen 10:8-12), which is invariably outlined in Scripture both in type and prophecy as a religiously and morally evil system (Isa. 21:9; Jer. 50:24; 51:64; Rev. 16:19; 17:5; 18:2-3). ...

"Nimrod's name 'no doubt suggested to the Israelites the idea of 'rebel'... against God' (A. Dillmann, *Genesis* [1897], 1:350). The name *Nimrod* in the divine account is definitely meant to suggest the concept of rebellion as descriptive of the character of this first world empire-builder. ...

"Then too, Nimrod is said to have been 'a mighty hunter before the Lord' (Gen. 10:9). The simple meaning of this statement is that Nimrod was the exact opposite of the divine ideal of a king—that of a shepherd (cf. 2 Sam. 5:2; 7:7; 1 Pet. 5:4). Whereas a hunter gratifies himself at the expense of his victim, the shepherd expends himself for the good of the subjects of his care... Others imagine that Nimrod is the Babylonian Merodach (Marduk) in human form" ("Nimrod" *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, 1988, pp. 923-924).

Merodach (or Marduk) was the "head god of the Babylonian pantheon" and was the same god that was called "Baal" by the Canaanites ("Gods, False" *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, pp. 485, 486).

Pennick, remember, said Saint Nicholas "absorbed the pagan attributes" of Woden or Odin. Who were these gods?

Woden (for whom Wednesday is named) is the Anglo-Saxon name for the

Norse god, Odin. Odin is the same god as Jupiter of the Romans, Zeus of Greeks, Amen of the Egyptians and Baal of the Phoenicians. All of these are different names for the chief god (*The Lincoln Library of Essential Information*, "Mythology," 1959, pp. 323, 324, 340, 335). All of these false gods represent Nimrod, who started the great false religion.

Santa Claus is little more than a modern representation of Nimrod. Even in a so-called "Christian" festival, he draws attention away from Christ. Just as Nimrod did, Santa Claus draws people AWAY from God.

## What Does God Think?

Although this day and its customs began in paganism, the churches of this world have assigned new "Christian" meaning to them. The "Christians" of this world see nothing wrong with honoring God this way. What does God think?

God told the Israelites as they were entering into the Promised Land which was inhabited by pagans: "... and after they have been destroyed before you, be careful not to be ensnared by inquiring about their gods, saying, 'How do these nations serve their gods? We will do the same.' You must not worship the LORD your God in their way, because in worshiping their gods, they do all kinds of detestable things the LORD hates. .... See that you do all I command you; do not add to it or take away from it" (Deut. 12:30-32, *New International Version*).

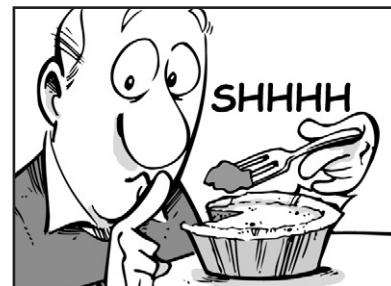
The Apostle Paul lets us know this principle is still in effect in the Church of God. True Christians will not mix their religion with paganism.: "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.' 'Therefore come out from them and be separate,' says the Lord. 'Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.' 'I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters,' says the Lord Almighty'" (2 Cor. 6:14-18, *NIV*).

## Know Your Bible Answers

1) Christ's return. 2) 40 days. 3) Horeb. 4) Aprons. 5) Elisha.

## Fun Fact

of creation, history, holidays & the Bible



Drawing and Fun Fact are courtesy of NAPS

In Britain, eating mince pies at Christmas dates back to the 16th century. It is still believed that to eat a mince pie on each of the Twelve Days of Christmas will bring 12 happy months in the year to follow. Also, they should be eaten in silence.

## Witerature

Wit and wisdom to complement the truths of the Holy Bible can be found in secular writings. Here is this month's selection:

*Remembering Roy E. Disney* by David A. Bossert, Disney Editions, 2013, p. 187.

## Be Meek & Humble

"Leslie DeMeuse Disney in her own words:

"In spite of his last name, wealth, and accomplishments, Roy was the most down to earth and humble 'human being' that I have ever known in my entire life.

"What made him so lovable and admirable was that he sincerely thought of himself as 'just a regular guy,' which seemed surprising, but it was probably one of his most endearing qualities, because he made others feel so comfortable being around him. Roy treated everyone with equal kindness, consideration, and respect, no matter who it was or where one came from. It didn't matter. He loved people and would never put himself above someone else because of his name or power." Eph. 4:2, Col. 3:12, 1 Tim 6:11, Titus 3:2

## Memory Scripture

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

—Mat. 5:5

## Sabbath

Continued from Page 4

bring them out of the land of Egypt.

“Therefore I made them go out of the land of Egypt and brought them into the wilderness. And I gave them My statutes and showed them My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them. Moreover, I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies them. Yet the house of Israel rebelled against Me in the wilderness; they did not walk in My statutes; they despised My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them; and they greatly defiled My Sabbaths. Then I said I would pour out My fury on them in the wilderness to consume them. ... because they despised My judgments and did not walk in My statutes, but profaned My Sabbaths; for their heart went after their idols. ...

“But I said to their children in the wilderness, ‘Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers, nor observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols. I am the LORD your God: Walk in My statutes, keep My judgments, and do them; hallow My Sabbaths, and they will be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I am the LORD your God.’

“Notwithstanding, the children rebelled against Me; they did not walk in My statutes, and they were not careful to observe My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them; but they profaned My Sabbaths. Then I said I will pour out My fury on them and fulfill My anger against them in the wilderness. ... because they had not executed My judgments, but had despised My statutes, profaned My Sabbaths, and their eyes were fixed on their fathers’ idols” (Ezek. 20:6-13, 16, 18-20, 21, 24).

Over and over, God LINKS Sabbath-breaking with idolatry. Why? Because the Sabbath IS A SIGN between God and his people. Not everyone who keeps the Sabbath is one of God’s people. *But every one of God’s people will keep the Sabbath.* If they don’t keep the Sabbath, they don’t know the TRUE God. Through the Sabbath, God reveals who He is. He is the CREATOR and SAVIOR. This is evident because the commandments in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5 point to these two great characteristics of God.

There is no contradiction between Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5. The two scriptures complement each other. When we look at them both together, we get a bigger picture of who is our God. Our God is not a dead tree stump or chunk of rock. He is our living CREATOR and SAVIOR.



### Gunman Kills at Least 26 in Attack on Church

“A gunman clad in all black, with a ballistic vest strapped to his chest and a military-style rifle in his hands, opened fire on parishioners at a Sunday service [Nov. 5] in a small Baptist church in rural Texas, killing at least 26 people and turning this tiny town east of San Antonio [Sutherland Springs] into the scene of the country’s newest mass horror.

“The gunman was identified by the Texas Department of Public Safety as David Patrick Kelley, 26. ...

“He had served in the Air Force at a base in New Mexico but was court-martialed in 2012 on charges of assaulting his wife and child. He was sentenced to 12 months’ confinement and received a ‘bad conduct’ discharge in 2014, according to Ann Stefanek, the chief of Air Force media operations.

“The motive for the attack was unclear on Sunday, but the grisly nature of it could not have been clearer. Families gathered in pews, clutching Bibles and praying to the Lord, were murdered in cold blood on the spot” (“Gunman Kills at Least 26 in Attack on Rural Texas Church” by David Montgomery, Christopher Mele and Manny Fernandez, *The New York Times*, www.nytimes.com, Nov. 5, 2017, p. 1).

This type of attack can be expected in these last days before Christ returns. “But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: for men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self control, brutal, despisers of good” (2 Tim. 3:1-3).

### Japan Told to Protect Itself with U.S. Arms

“President Trump said on Monday [Nov. 6] that Japan could protect itself from a nuclear-armed North Korea by buying billions of dollars of American military equipment” (“Trump Tells Japan It Can Protect Itself by Buying U.S. Arms” by Mark Landler and Julie Hirschfeld Davis,

*The New York Times*, www.nytimes.com, Nov. 6, 2017, p. 1).

Arming Japan with military weapons could help it become one of the “kings from the east” that will attack European forces in the Mideast before Christ returns (Dan. 11:40-44, Rev. 16:12-14, 16).

### Saudi Arabia Charges Iran With ‘Act of War’

“Saudi Arabia charged Monday [Nov. 6] that a missile fired at its capital from Yemen over the weekend was an ‘act of war’ by Iran, in the sharpest escalation in nearly three decades of mounting hostility between the two regional rivals. ...

“The accusation, which Iran denied, came a day after a wave of arrests in Saudi Arabia that appeared to complete the consolidation of power by the crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, 32. Taken together, the two actions signaled a new aggressiveness by the prince both at home and abroad, as well as a new and more dangerous stage in the Saudi cold war with Iran for dominance in the region” (“Saudi Arabia Charges Iran With ‘Act of War,’ Raising Threat of Military Clash” by David D. Kirkpatrick, *The New York Times*, www.nytimes.com, Nov. 6, 2017, p. 1).

This is another example of “rumors of war” prophesied to lead up to the end time (Mat. 24:3, 6).

### Quake Hits Iran-Iraq

“Rescuers dug with their bare hands Monday [Nov. 13] through the debris of buildings brought down by a powerful earthquake that killed more than 400 people in the once-contested mountainous border region between Iraq and Iran ...

“Sunday night’s magnitude-7.3 earthquake struck about 19 miles outside the eastern Iraqi city of Halabja” (“Over 400 dead after Iran-Iraq border quake,” by Nasser Karimi and Amir Vahdat, Associated Press, *Southeast Missourian*, Nov. 14, 2017, p. 5A).

“Earthquakes in various places” are a sign we are in the “beginning of sorrows” leading up to Christ’s return (Mat. 24:3, 7-8).