

**10.31.2022 SHOW NOTES:**

**The Origins of Halloween**

# Bet Yeshurun Messianic Assembly

## The Pagan Roots of Halloween

### The Biblical Prophets Struggle with the Roots of our American Holiday

#### BAAL WORSHIP

The priests of the Celtic religion (*who were also civil authorities*) were called Druids, which means, “knowing the oak tree.” They maintained the popular pagan belief that the soul was immortal and at the time of death had the ability to pass from a dead body into another living body. Julius Caesar wrote extensively of Celtic human sacrifices and the philosopher Poseidonius reported that the Druids would place victims in hollowed-out oak trees to be sacrificed to their god “Bel.” In this way they eliminated the deathly ill and social undesirables. The Jack-o-Lantern is a symbolic representation of those images of hollowed-out oak trees burning with people inside. The Roman emperors Tiberius and Claudius forbade such human sacrifices (Ancient European Religions, vol.18, p.895).

What has been said so far here is relatively well-known, but the ancient roots of this pagan festival surprisingly go back even farther in time to the land of the Bible. The prophets of early Israel struggled with their people’s acceptance of the pagan rites of the Canaanites, close relatives of the Phoenicians who dwelt on the Mediterranean coast. These pagan peoples worshipped Baal (or *Bel*), and their evil religion included such practices as the fiery sacrifice of infants and children. An alarming number of the Israelite priests and people had adopted some or all of the Canaanite practices.

Even more unfortunate, the false Canaanite religion was to spread far beyond Palestine. The Bible records that Phoenician and Israelite mariners in the time of Solomon together sailed the coasts of the Mediterranean in trading expeditions as far as Tarshish, or Spain. (I Ki.9:26-27; 10:22; Isa. 60:9) The Phoenician and Hebrew languages were virtually identical, and Israelite Kings David and Solomon had close economic ties with Phoenician Kings such as Hiram of Tyre. Carthage and Utica in North Africa, as well as Greece, Italy, and Crete were also regular ports of call for

their sailing ships. Historians record that these sea voyages regularly extended even to the British Isles for products such as silver, iron, tin and lead.\*

With mercantile contact came cultural influence and settlements, and historians have written that the early Britons and their Druidic priesthood worshipped “Bel,” the Phoenician Baal, and practiced Canaanite rites including sacrificing human victims in fire to the pagan god. This Bel-fire rite in early Celtic Britain, known as Beltaine (or *Baal-tinnes*), is evidence that the pagan roots of Celtic rituals go back farther in time to the wicked Canaanite religion that was denounced so vociferously by the prophets of Israel.

The Prophet Elijah's challenge of the Hebrew priests of Baal is one of the most moving Biblical accounts. (I Ki. 18:18-40) At this early period the Bible indicates that a majority of Hebrew priests and people followed the rituals of Baal worship. Noted antiquarian Sir William Betham made an exhaustive study of the ancient Celtic peoples, and states in his book, “The Gael and Cimbri,” ***“Baal... has the precise meaning in Gaelic as in Phoenician — the lord of heaven.”*** (p. 226) Many customs harken back to Palestine, as well; ***“even the cakes which the idolatrous Jews, in imitation of the Phoenicians, made in honour of the queen of heaven are still the most popular cake in Ireland under the old name of the barn-brack, or speckled cake.”*** (p. 236) Ancient customs and rituals are persistent among mankind, and therefore provide tangible evidence of a people's origins, even where no written proof survives. Betham comments, ***“Thus we see at this day, fires lighted up in Ireland, on the eve of the summer solstice and the equinoxes, to the Phoenician god, Baal, and even called Baal's fire, baaltinnes, though the object of veneration be forgotten...”*** (p. 222-223) Betham relates, “On an altar-stone, dug up near Kirby Thore, in Westmorland, England, is this inscription:”

**“DEO BEL ATUCADRO LIB[ERUM] VOTUM. FECIT IOLUS.”**

The text translates as follows: ***“To the god Baal, the friend of man, Iolus made his free vow.”***

Numerous other stone altars to Phoenician gods, which have been discovered in Britain, Ireland, and Gaul, are discussed and translated in Betham's work. Some of

the principal finds include altar-stones found in Northumbria and other parts of Britain. He states that these ancient monuments to ***“Baal, by the ancient British... are unanswerable evidences of the identity of the people of the two islands [i.e., Britain and Ireland] and Gaul, which the most unwilling and incredulous caviler at etymologies, can scarcely refuse to receive as conclusive. It proves more, for it shows an identity of the deities of the Celtae and the Phoenicians...”*** (p. 228-229)

Numerous other parallels exist between Celtic and Canaanite worship, including mystic well-worship, worship of sacred stones, and the veneration of the autumnal equinoxes. In fact, both the Canaanites and Celts practiced autumnal sacrifices to Baal, which the Celts called, “Baal-tinnes,” as previously mentioned.

## **AVEN**

Aven was another of the deities of the Phoenician Canaanites, and temples to this god were called, '**Beth-Aven,**' or '**house of Aven.**' The idolatrous Israelites also had adopted worship of this false god, as we see in **Hoseh 4:15-17**: ***“...come not ye unto Gilgal, neither go ye up to Bethaven [i.e. “The House of Aven”], nor swear, Yahuah liveth. For Israel slideth back as a backsliding heifer...Ephraim is joined to idols...”*** Israelite worship of this god was so pervasive, that the prophet Isaiah used the word, "Aven," to signify an idol in general: ***“...he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol [Hebrew, "Aven"].”*** All idols are vanity, and **Aven** itself came to have a secondary meaning of **vanity**. Since this so-called god was no god at all, the idolaters were literally worshipping nothing! The Apostle Paul picks up on this theme in **First Corinthians 4:8**, ***“We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other Elohim but One.”***

There are five rivers **Avon** in Britain, of which three pass through Gloucestershire, where Celtic worship of this god was centered. In the same English district is an old town named **Avening**. The 'ing' suffix means the place of, so Avening is the place of Aven. Historian Samuel Lysons, in "**Our British Ancestors**" says, ***“The worship at Beth-Aven, in Canaan, and that of Avening in Gloucestershire, and that of Aven, Heliopolis, or Baal bec, were all identical. The stone altars, the high place, the calves' bones discovered there, mark the similarity.”*** (p.123)

## MOLOCH AND CHIUN

Still another Canaanite god and goddess, Moloch and Chiun, are mentioned in connection with Israel's worship by the prophet **Amos (5:25)**, ***"But ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves. Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity..."***

At Windmill Hill, near Avebury, Wiltshire, England, there are evidences of Druidical worship, but no windmill. 'Win' is the Celtic word for 'eye,' and 'Win-Melk' is the 'eye of Moloch.' Dr. Maurice, in "Indian Antiquities," says, ***"the Druids worshipped the sun under the title of Moloch, so we are certain that worship was derived to them from their Eastern ancestors."*** The British towns **Melch-bourne** in Bedfordshire, and **Melc-combe** in Dorset, both retain evidence of the worship of Moloch in early times.

Similarly, the goddess **Chiun** was worshipped by the idolatrous Canaanites and the Israelites who followed their custom. Chiun was the moon goddess, and was considered so important that she was called the queen of heaven. In fact, it is from this word, Chiun, that we derive our English word, **queen**. The Prophet Jeremiah mentions worship of this goddess several times. He laments Israel's worship of her, saying, ***"The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger."*** (**Jer. 7:18; compare 44:17-25**) The goddess Chiun had her adherents in Britain also, as seen in the name of the famous king, Cuno-bel-inus, whose name combines the worship of both **Chiun and Bel**. Similarly, Chiun is seen in the early British names Cunedag, Cingetorix, Conan, and Maglo-cunus.

## SUN WORSHIP: AL

The Hebrew word, **Al**, signifies the sun, and is equivalent to the Phoenician **Hal**, Greek **Halios**, Babylonian **Il**, and Celto-British **Heaul**. Mallet's "Northern Antiquities," (vol.2, p.68) states, ***"All Celtic nations have been accustomed to the worship of the sun...It was a custom that everywhere prevailed in ancient times to celebrate a feast at the winter solstice, by which men testified their joy at seeing this great luminary return again to this part of the heavens. This was the***

**greatest solemnity of the year. They called it, in many places, Yole or Yuul, from the word Hiaul, which even at this day signifies the sun in the languages of the Bas-Bretagne and Cornwall."** Christmas is still called **Yule**. A Christmas holiday beer, **Ale**, may be from the same root. **Holly** and **Holy** come from the word, **heaul**, meaning 'to hallow, to deem sacred,' with roots to the Hebrew, **'El,** God. The German words, **'heilig'** and **'ale'** mean 'to swear, to call on the name of Elohim.' The words **'all,' "whole,'** and **'heal,'** may be related to this.

The Hebrew name for the sun appears in many places in Britain with names beginning with 'Al,' 'Ail,' 'Ayl,' 'Hal,' 'Hayl,' and the like. There are many examples, including Albury, Albourne, Alcester, Alby, Althorp, Alton, Allington, Allerton, Alford, Allenby, Alsop, and dozens more.

## FURTHER EVIDENCES

British antiquarian, Aylett Sammes, writing in 1676, noted that **"the customs, religion, idols, offices, and dignities of the ancient Britons are all clearly Phoenician."** John Pinkerton, in his **"Enquiry Into The History Of Scotland"** (1789), also stated that Druidism was directly descended from the Phoenicians, while British antiquarian William Stukely, in the book, **"Stonehenge,"** believed that it had the marks of Israelite worship and culture.

Stukely pointed out Old Testament references to oaks, which gave these trees symbolic or mystical attributes. Abraham's altar of sacrifice was prepared by the oak of Moreh. **"And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain (lit: "oak") of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. And Yahuah appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto Yahuah, who appeared unto him."** (**Gen. 12:6-7**) We are further told in **Hoseh 4:13,** **"They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills, under oaks..."** The importance of worship under oaks in Druidism is well known.

## THE HEBREW SACRED NAME FOUND AMONG THE CELTS

In early alphabets, letters represented ideas. In Hebrew, **aleph**, the first letter, stood for an ox; **bet** symbolized a house, **gimel** was a camel, **dalet** a door, and so on. Similarly, in Celtic the letter "I" stood for 'the future.' "A" represented 'the

present', and "O" stood for 'the past'. Thus, the Druidic name for Elohim, "IAO," literally meant **"the Everliving,"** a being in existence past, present, and future. This is the exact definition given by scholars for the name of the Hebrew Divinity. In fact, the Ferrar Fenton Bible consistently translates the name of Elohim as "the Everliving." Celtic scholar, John Daniel, in his book, "The Druidic Idea of God," says **"there can hardly be a question that the three letters were originally no other name than IAO, the Latinized form... of the Hebrew [Yao]; and that such was the rendering of that name, we have the authority of several ancient writers. Diodorus Siculus says it was related amongst the Jews, that Moses attributed the framing of the laws to the God called IAO; and Theodoret states that God was by the Jews called IAO."** (p.12)

Hebrew language scholars inform us that the Sacred Name was "Yahuah" or "Yahu" in Judah and "Yao" in the Northern Hebrew of Ephraim.\*\* Celtic scholar John Daniels states, **"So to the Druids there was a secret name for the Deity, which was unutterable ("Aflafar") to all but the most privileged of their order, and was symbolized by the three Bardic characters representing the vowels IAO."** (ibid., p. 11)

The Druidic priests, like the Levitical priests of the Bible, were exempt from military service. The Druidic and Levitical priests were both divided into three classes. Even the Druidic ceremonial robes remind one of the Mosaic priests, with their breastplates of gold and jewels. The Druidic rituals, like the Old Testament Levitical, included the sacrifice of sheep, oxen, and goats, but no idol worship.

Perhaps we can do no better in summing up our study than to quote the venerable Sir William Betham: **"The connection of this [Hebrew-Phoenician] worship with the historical traditions of the Pagan Irish is so evident, and so extensive, that it ...strongly illustrates the [Biblical] account of the progress of population from the plains of Sennaar [i.e., in the Middle-East] to the western extremities..."** (p. 242)

\* Mining in Britain was extensive in ancient times, as verified in the writings of Julius Caesar (Betham, ibid. p.40)

\*\* Further information on the Divine Sacred Name: [www.sacred-name.info](http://www.sacred-name.info)

## CELEBRATE PAGAN HOLIDAYS

### Is Halloween A Pagan Holiday?

Halloween is a day we celebrate candy, dress up in costumes, and play tricks on our neighbors. Is Halloween just a holiday to celebrate fun, frolicking, and making Hershey incredibly wealthy?

Halloween actually has a deep dark past and a rich history that was celebrated by Celtic cultures in Great Britain and Northern Europe. It is yet another holiday appropriated from pagans in order to convert them.

### **Are Halloween and Samhain the Same Thing?**

**No, they are separate holidays although they share a common history. Halloween is a secular holiday and Samhain is a religious holiday.**

Halloween has become a secular folk holiday that is considered a fun night out with trick-or-treating and haunted houses. Halloween emphasizes the make-believe and fantasy aspect of witches, fairies, and ghouls.

[Samhain](#) is a religious holiday that focuses on connections and communication with our ancestors. Death is part of the natural cycle and during this time of moving into a darker colder season, we reflect on what that means.

Check out our blog [SAMHAIN: CONNECTING WITH THE SPIRIT WORLD](#)

Many modern pagans celebrate both Halloween and Samhain. Some celebrate one or the other for their own reasons. It's what is right for you.

### **The History of Halloween or Samhain**

In modern Irish the word Samhain means November. This is the reason that All Souls Day occurs on November 1st. Also known as Eve of All Hallows Day which was shortened to Halloween.

Modern Irish refer to "Halloween" as *Oiche Shamhna* or *the Eve of November*.

Samhain dates back to the Neolithic period. Archaeologists have located monuments and historical sites which align with the sunrise during this time period. These sites have revealed bones intertwined, suggesting a religious devotion to the dead.

Ireland as with many other Celtic areas did not become Christianized overnight as many people assume. The conversion took hundreds of years. Many pagan traditions were blended into Christianity to make it palatable for the people.

## From Spirits To Ghosts

Samhain was all about connecting with the ancestors and seeking their guidance. As the church gained a foothold they change the way we view the dead. Instead of communicating with the dead spirits, people were taught to fear them.

Ghosts become something scary and were used to frighten and control people. The idea of ghosts was often merged with the idea of demons, beings that tormented mere mortals.

The joy of trick or treating!

## Origins of Halloween Traditions

### Trick or Treat

During Samhain, people left out food and set a place at the table for their ancestors.

Historically it was quite acceptable for children to go out on All Souls Eve to play tricks and wreak havoc. Written accounts of asking for treats go back to the 1500s.

In fact, it was even adults who went around to houses offering a bit of entertainment in exchange for food. The church encouraged households to make "soul cakes" to give to less fortunate members of their community. Thus doing away with the tradition of leaving food out for the dead.

This form of door-to-door begging was written about by William Shakespeare in 1593 in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

In the 1800s we see the “trick” come into play. Soaping windows, throwing eggs at houses, and putting molasses on chairs were some fun tricks of that era.

## Jack O Lanterns

Fall vegetables figure prominently in both Samhain and Halloween.

The original Jack O Lantern was a turnip carved out to hold a candle inside. It was felt that the light would scare away unwanted spirits.

The idea of putting a light inside a turnip comes from the legend of Stingy Jack. Stingy Jack captured the devil and only released him on the devil’s promise to not send Stingy Jack to (*the Christian*) hell.

However, Stingy Jack still didn’t get into heaven and wandered Purgatory with a lump of coal that was resting inside of a carved-out turnip. This eventually led to carving scary faces on turnips and later pumpkins to protect humans from ghosts or the devil himself.

## Bobbing For Apples

The traditional activity of bobbing for apples is actually connected with divination and the Roman [goddess Pomona](#). Another tradition from the celebration of Pomona is candied apples.

Bobbing for apples is a tradition based on love and romance and originates in the divination and spells young ladies would perform to find a male suitor.

## Costumes

Before Christendom, the Druids would dress in animal skins to lead religious activities during Samhain. They would often communicate with their ancestors.

After the church developed the attitude that the ghosts were scary and evil, people began to wear masks if they went out at night. They felt it fooled the ghosts so they could travel safely in the dark nights of winter.

## Bats

Pre-electricity meant nighttime was scary and full of the unknown.

Bats have long been feared because they are nocturnal animals that fly. Author and Scientist from Ancient Rome, Pliny the Elder, wrote that you should catch a bat and circle your house with it three times to ward off bad luck.

Sadly, many people today are still frightened of bats when in fact they contribute greatly to our environment by eating insects such as mosquitos.

## **Black Cats**

Cats have a long history as pagan familiars. The Ancient [Egyptian Goddess Bastet](#) was herself portrayed as a cat.

During the Middle Ages when the church whipped fury against witches at its height, it was a common belief that witches turned into black cats in order to avoid persecution. This also led to the persecution of older single women who befriended stray cats.

Black cats were also seen as the devil.

## **Coming to America**

Halloween was actually slow to catch on in America. The Puritans frowned upon such frivolity and it went against their strict religious beliefs.

Colonies in the south celebrated more of an autumn harvest festival.

It was an influx of immigrants, particularly the Irish, during the later 1800s that brought trick-or-treat celebrations to the states. Communities began to have Halloween parties where people dressed in costumes, played games, and ate seasonal foods.

Author, Ame Vanorio, is a lifelong pagan, [environmental educator](#), and the founder of CPH.

# ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA

## Halloween

**Halloween**, contraction of **All Hallows' Eve**, a holiday observed on October 31, the evening before All Saints' (or All Hallows') Day. The celebration marks the day before the Western Christian feast of All Saints and initiates the season of Allhallowtide, which lasts three days and concludes with All Souls' Day. In much of Europe and most of North America, observance of Halloween is largely nonreligious. Halloween is celebrated on Monday, October 31, 2022.

Halloween had its origins in the festival of Samhain among the Celts of ancient Britain and Ireland. On the day corresponding to November 1 on contemporary calendars, the new year was believed to begin. That date was considered the beginning of the winter period, the date on which the herds were returned from pasture and land tenures were renewed. During the Samhain festival the souls of those who had died were believed to return to visit their homes, and those who had died during the year were believed to journey to the otherworld. People set bonfires on hilltops for relighting their hearth fires for the winter and to frighten away evil spirits, and they sometimes wore masks and other disguises to avoid being recognized by the ghosts thought to be present. It was in those ways that beings such as witches, hobgoblins, fairies, and demons came to be associated with the day. The period was also thought to be favourable for divination on matters such as marriage, health, and death. When the Romans conquered the Celts in the 1st century ce, they added their own festivals of Feralia, commemorating the passing of the dead, and of Pomona, the goddess of the harvest.

### [Britannica Quiz](#)

#### [Halloween](#)

[Trick-or-treat! Halloween is so much more than candy. How much do you really know about this holiday?](#)

*Discover the origin of the holiday of Halloween*

[See all videos for this article](#)

In the 7th century ce Pope [Boniface IV](#) established [All Saints' Day](#), originally on May 13, and in the following century, perhaps in an effort to supplant the pagan holiday with a Christian observance, it was moved to November 1. The evening before All Saints' Day became a holy, or hallowed, eve and thus Halloween. By the end of the [Middle Ages](#), the [secular](#) and the sacred days had merged. The [Reformation](#) essentially put an end to the religious holiday among Protestants, although in Britain especially Halloween continued to be celebrated as a secular holiday. Along with other festivities, the celebration of Halloween was largely forbidden among the early American colonists, although in the 1800s there developed festivals that marked the harvest and incorporated elements of Halloween. When large numbers of immigrants, including the Irish, went to the [United States](#) beginning in the mid 19th century, they took their Halloween customs with them, and in the 20th century Halloween became one of the principal U.S. holidays, particularly among children.

***Learn how pumpkin carving came to be a Halloween tradition forged by Celtic and Roman Catholic roots***

***[See all videos for this article](#)***

### ***[Halloween: jack-o'-lantern](#)***

As a secular holiday, Halloween has come to be associated with a number of activities. One is the practice of pulling usually harmless [pranks](#). Celebrants wear masks and costumes for parties and for trick-or-treating, thought to have derived from the British practice of allowing the poor to beg for food, called "soul cakes." Trick-or-treaters go from house to house with the threat that they will pull a trick if they do not receive a treat, usually candy. Halloween parties often include games such as bobbing for apples, perhaps derived from the Roman celebration of Pomona. Along with skeletons and black cats, the holiday has incorporated scary beings such as [ghosts](#), witches, and [vampires](#) into the celebration. Another [symbol](#) is the [jack-o'-lantern](#), a hollowed-out [pumpkin](#), originally a [turnip](#), carved into a demonic face and lit with a candle inside. Since the mid-20th century the United Nations Children's Fund ([UNICEF](#)) has attempted to make the collection of money for its programs a part of Halloween.

*See also* the Britannica Classic article on [Halloween](#), which appeared in the 13th edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

## [10 Reasons Why You Should NEVER Celebrate Halloween](#)

*(The ten points derived from Richard Ramirez, a former Satanist.)*

## [Take It from Someone Who Used to Talk to Satan: Halloween Is a Bad Idea](#)

*(Short version)*

## [Ex-Warlock Reacts to Christians Celebrating Halloween](#)

*(Longer, later version with the same man)*

## [THE REAL MEANING OF HALLOWEEN | The Truth Behind Halloween Holidays \(Must Watch!\)](#)

*(This is a video produced by and for Muslims!!! The funny part here is that Halloween is very likely connected to Ba'al worship, and Ba'al can be traced to Bel, who is also known as Allah! And now you know why I included it in this PDF*

 )