

# Common Modern Holidays & Their Origins

## Why Some Believers Choose Not to Celebrate Them

### Gentle Introduction for Beginners

This is not about judging anyone.

Many people celebrate holidays sincerely, with good intentions, and without knowing their historical background.

The goal here is not condemnation it is understanding.

When someone begins learning the Torah of YAHUAH, they naturally start asking:

- Where did these traditions come from?
- Are they commanded in Scripture?
- Do they align with covenant instruction?

The Torah teaches us to examine origins carefully.

## What the Torah Actually Says

### Deuteronomy 12:30–31

#### Simple Meaning:

YAHUAH warns Israel not to copy how other nations worship their gods even if it looks meaningful or beautiful.

He says:

Do not ask, “How did they worship? Let me do the same.”

The issue is not celebration itself

The issue is mixing covenant worship with foreign worship systems.

### Deuteronomy 12:32

#### Simple Meaning:

Do not add to or remove from what YAHUAH commanded.

If something is not instructed by Him, we must be careful about attaching it to His name.

## **Jeremiah 10:2**

### **Simple Meaning:**

“Learn not the way of the nations.”

This is about identity.

Israel was called to be distinct not to blend into surrounding cultures spiritually.

## **Why This Matters**

In the Torah:

Worship is not based on intention alone.  
It is based on obedience.

YAHUAH already gave appointed times (moedim) in Leviticus 23.

So many believers ask:

If He already gave holy days, why would we replace them with days rooted in other systems

Instead of saying:

“These holidays are evil.”

Say:

“Let’s study their origins and compare them with Torah instruction.”

Instead of:

“You’re wrong for celebrating.”

Say:

“When we learn where things come from, we can make informed covenant decisions.”

This is about alignment not superiority.

It is about returning to what YAHUAH actually commanded, rather than following traditions passed down through culture.

When we grow in knowledge, we grow in responsibility.

# January

The modern January 1 New Year comes from ancient Rome.

It was connected to **Janus**, a Roman deity associated with:

- Beginnings
- Transitions
- Gates and doorways

The month of January is named after him.

This does not mean everyone celebrating today worships Janus. It simply shows the cultural origin of the date.

## Common Modern Practices

- Midnight countdown
- Fireworks
- Making resolutions
- “New year, new me” symbolism

These are cultural traditions, not biblical instructions.

## What the Torah Says About the Beginning of the Year

### Exodus 12:2

“This month shall be unto you the beginning of months...”

### Short Explanation:

YAHUAH told Israel that the year begins in the month of Aviv (spring), not in mid-winter.

In the Torah:

- The year begins around the time of Passover.
- It is connected to redemption and covenant not Roman civil calendars.

## Why Some Choose Not to Celebrate It

For those seeking Torah alignment:

The question becomes:

If YAHUAH established a beginning of the year, should we replace it with a calendar rooted in another system?

This is not about attacking people.

It is about deciding:

Do I follow the biblical calendar, or the Roman civil calendar?

January 1 is a civil calendar reset.

Aviv (spring) is the biblical covenant reset.

Understanding the difference allows believers to make informed decisions.

# February

## Valentine's Day (February 14)

Valentine's Day developed over time in Europe.

Some historians connect it to:

- **Lupercalia**, an ancient Roman mid-February festival
- A later church tradition honoring "Saint Valentine"

Lupercalia included themes of:

- Fertility
- Pairing rituals
- Romantic symbolism

Over time, these themes evolved into modern traditions of romance and gift-giving.

This does not mean modern participants are practicing Roman religion. It simply explains where certain customs historically developed.

### Common Modern Practices

- Giving cards, flowers, chocolates
- Romantic dinners
- Emphasis on passion and attraction
- Symbolism like Cupid and hearts

These are cultural traditions not commands found in the Torah.

## What the Torah Says About Following Other Nations

### Leviticus 18:3

"You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt... and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan..."

### Short Explanation:

YAHUAH instructed Israel not to copy the customs and religious practices of surrounding nations.

This chapter focuses especially on:

- Sexual morality
- Covenant boundaries
- Distinct identity

The issue was imitation not love itself.

## **Important Clarification for Beginners**

The Torah does not forbid love.

In fact, love is commanded:

- Love your neighbor (Leviticus 19:18)
- Husbands and wives are to be faithful and joyful together

The question is not:  
“Is love wrong?”

The question is:  
Should love be expressed through traditions rooted in other worship systems?

Valentine’s Day is a cultural holiday centered on romance.

The Torah teaches:  
Love should be expressed within covenant not through borrowed ritual traditions.

Some believers choose to celebrate love privately in a Torah-aligned way, rather than adopting a day shaped by non-biblical origins.

# March–April

## Easter

Easter is a Christian holiday celebrating the resurrection of the Messiah.

Its timing is connected to spring, and over time, cultural symbols became attached to it, including:

- Eggs (symbol of new life)
- Rabbits (symbol of fertility)
- Sunrise services

Some scholars connect certain spring customs to older European and Near Eastern seasonal traditions.

Others argue the connection is indirect or cultural rather than religious.

The key point is this:

Easter is not found in the Torah.

## What the Torah Commands Instead

### Exodus 12

YAHUAH commands Passover (Pesach).

#### Short Explanation:

Passover was established as a covenant memorial:

- Deliverance from Egypt
- Blood of the lamb
- Beginning of the biblical year
- Unleavened bread for seven days

It is a commanded appointed time (moed).

## Why Some See Conflict

For Torah-observant believers, the concern is not resurrection

The concern is replacement.

The Torah commands:

- Passover
- Unleavened Bread

Easter developed later and includes traditions not commanded in Scripture.

The question becomes:

Should a commanded feast be replaced by a later tradition with added symbolism?

## **Jeremiah 7:18**

This verse describes people baking cakes to the “queen of heaven.”

The broader warning in Jeremiah is about adopting surrounding religious practices and attaching them to worship.

The principle:

Do not mix covenant worship with outside systems.

## **Important Beginner Clarification**

The issue is not celebrating the Messiah.

The issue is:

- What did YAHUAH command?
- What did He not command?

Passover is biblical.

Easter is traditional.

Some believers choose to return to Passover instead of celebrating Easter because they desire alignment with Torah instruction.

Easter is a spring tradition rooted in later church history.

Passover is a covenant appointment established by YAHUAH Himself.

Understanding both allows a believer to choose intentionally.

# May

## Mother's Day

Modern Mother's Day (in the United States) began in the early 1900s.

It was promoted by Anna Jarvis as a national day to honor mothers for their sacrifice and care.

Ancient cultures did have festivals honoring mother goddesses such as:

- Cybele
- Rhea
- Ishtar

However, modern Mother's Day is primarily a civil holiday, not an organized religious ritual.

### Common Modern Practices

- Giving flowers or gifts
- Special meals
- Public appreciation
- Social media tributes

These are cultural traditions, not Torah commands.

## What the Torah Actually Commands

### Exodus 20:12

“Honor your father and your mother...”

#### Short Explanation:

This command is one of the Ten Words (Commandments).

It does not assign one specific day.

It commands lifelong honor, respect, and care.

In the Torah:

- Honoring parents is daily.
- It is a covenant responsibility.
- It is not seasonal or symbolic.

## • **Why Some Question the Holiday**

For Torah-aligned believers, the question is not:

“Is honoring mothers good?”  
(It absolutely is.)

The question is:

Should honor be concentrated into one cultural holiday,  
or should it be practiced consistently as commanded?

Some also prefer to avoid patterns that resemble ritualized veneration, even if modern intent is innocent.

## **Important Beginner Clarification**

The Torah strongly supports:

- Respecting mothers
- Caring for parents
- Speaking well of them

The concern for some believers is not love  
It is alignment with what YAHUAH actually commanded.

Mother’s Day is a modern civil holiday.

The Torah commands honoring parents every day not just once a year.

Some believers choose daily obedience over symbolic observance.

# June

## Father's Day

Modern Father's Day began in the early 1900s in the United States.

It was created to honor fathers and recognize their role in the family.

It is structured similarly to Mother's Day and is primarily a civil holiday, not a biblical command.

While ancient cultures had festivals honoring male deities or patriarchal figures, modern Father's Day is not directly tied to organized religious worship.

### Common Modern Practices

- Giving gifts
- Special meals
- Public appreciation
- Recognizing fatherhood

These are cultural customs.

## What the Torah Commands

### Leviticus 19:3

“Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father...”

#### Short Explanation:

The Torah commands reverence (deep respect) for both parents.

This instruction:

- Is ongoing
- Is not limited to a specific date
- Is part of covenant living

Honor is not seasonal it is a lifestyle.

## **Why Some Torah-Observant Believers Question It**

The issue is not honoring fathers.

The Torah clearly commands that.

The question becomes:

Should honor be concentrated into a single cultural holiday, or should it be practiced continually as instructed?

Some believers prefer to:

- Live the command daily
- Avoid elevating civil traditions to spiritual significance

## **Important Beginner Clarification**

The Torah supports:

- Strong fatherhood
- Respect for parents
- Family responsibility

The discussion is not about rejecting appreciation.

It is about distinguishing between:  
Covenant command vs cultural observance.

Father's Day is a modern appreciation holiday.

The Torah commands reverence for parents as an ongoing way of life.

Some believers choose daily obedience over symbolic observance.

# July

## Independence Day (July 4)

Independence Day commemorates the founding of the United States and the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

It is a national holiday focused on:

- Political freedom
- National identity
- Patriotic celebration

It is not rooted in pagan deity worship.  
It is a civil-national observance.

### Common Modern Practices

- Fireworks
- Flags
- Patriotic songs
- Military honor
- National pride emphasis

These are civic traditions centered on nationhood.

## What the Torah Teaches About Allegiance

The Torah does not forbid living within nations.

However, it does consistently warn Israel about misplaced trust and divided loyalty.

### Exodus 23:2

“You shall not follow the majority to do evil...”

### Short Explanation:

Israel was warned not to follow cultural or national pressure if it conflicted with righteousness.

Truth is not determined by the crowd.

## **Psalm 20:7**

“Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the Name of YAHUAH...”

### **Short Explanation:**

This verse contrasts military or national strength with trust in YAHUAH.

The principle:

Security ultimately comes from covenant, not from national power.

## **Why Some Torah Observant Believers Reflect Carefully**

The issue is not appreciating where you live.

The question becomes:

Does my primary identity come from my nation  
or from covenant with YAHUAH?

Some believers are cautious about:

- Excessive nationalism
- Equating a country with divine favor
- Elevating patriotism to spiritual devotion

The Torah does not command hostility toward nations.

It commands:

- Covenant loyalty first
- Obedience above politics
- Trust in YAHUAH above systems

You can respect civil order while keeping covenant identity primary.

Independence Day is a national civil celebration.

The Torah teaches that covenant allegiance must always come before national identity.

Some believers choose to celebrate responsibly  
Others choose to step back  
But the core concern is allegiance hierarchy.

# October

## Halloween

Halloween developed from ancient European traditions, especially a Celtic festival called **Samhain**.

Samhain marked the end of the harvest season and was associated with beliefs that:

- The boundary between the living and the dead was thin
- Spirits could roam freely
- Rituals were performed to ward off or interact with spirits

Over time, these traditions blended with later church observances and evolved into modern Halloween customs.

### Common Modern Practices

- Costumes (often supernatural or dark themes)
- Ghosts, skeletons, witches
- Haunted houses
- Horror themes
- Trick-or-treating

Many people today view it as harmless fun.

However, the symbolism centers around death, spirits, and the supernatural.

## What the Torah Says About Spirit Practices

This is where Scripture becomes very clear.

### Deuteronomy 18:10–12

This passage forbids:

- Divination
- Witchcraft
- Sorcery
- Consulting mediums
- Speaking to the dead

### Short Explanation:

YAHUAH calls these practices detestable and commands Israel to avoid them completely.

There is no blending allowed.

### **Leviticus 19:31**

“Do not turn to mediums or seek out spiritists...”

#### **Short Explanation:**

Israel was commanded not to engage with spiritual intermediaries or attempt contact with the unseen realm.

The reason:  
It defiles covenant identity.

## **Why Many Torah-Observant Believers Reject Halloween**

Unlike some civil holidays, Halloween centers around:

- Death imagery
- Spirit themes
- Occult symbolism

Even if modern participants treat it as entertainment, its themes directly overlap with practices the Torah forbids.

For many believers, that connection is too direct to ignore.

This is not about condemning children for candy.

It is about recognizing:

The Torah draws a very strong boundary around occult and spirit-related practices.

Where Scripture speaks clearly, covenant obedience becomes simple.

Halloween is rooted in traditions connected to the spirit world.

The Torah explicitly forbids occult and dead-related practices.

Because of that clarity, many Torah-aligned believers choose not to participate.

# November

## Thanksgiving

American Thanksgiving traces back to early 17th-century colonial harvest meals.

It became a national holiday in the United States in the 1800s.

It is primarily:

- A civil holiday
- Focused on gratitude
- Centered around food and family

While ancient cultures had harvest festivals (as nearly all agricultural societies did), modern Thanksgiving is not an organized pagan worship ritual.

### Common Modern Practices

- Large shared meal
- Expressing gratitude
- Family gatherings
- National reflection

These are cultural traditions.

## What the Torah Already Established

The Torah includes an appointed harvest festival.

### Leviticus 23:39–43

This passage describes the Feast of Ingathering (Sukkot).

#### Short Explanation:

Sukkot is:

- A commanded feast
- A harvest celebration
- A time of rejoicing before YAHUAH
- A reminder of dwelling in booths during the wilderness journey

It is thanksgiving but covenant-based.

## **Why Some Torah-Observant Believers Reflect on Thanksgiving**

The issue is not gratitude.

Gratitude is righteous.

The question becomes:

If YAHUAH already appointed a harvest thanksgiving (Sukkot), should we treat a national holiday as spiritually equivalent?

Some believers choose to:

- Celebrate Sukkot as their primary thanksgiving
- Keep national Thanksgiving as a civil family meal only
- Or step away entirely

The Torah encourages gratitude daily.

There is no command forbidding giving thanks.

The concern for some believers is about:

Replacing commanded appointed times with national observances.

Thanksgiving is a national gratitude holiday.

Sukkot is a commanded covenant harvest celebration.

Understanding the difference helps believers decide how they want to align their observance.

# December

## Christmas

Christmas developed in the early centuries of Christianity.

December 25 was chosen centuries after the Messiah's life. Some historians connect the timing to:

- Roman winter festivals (like Saturnalia)
- Solstice celebrations
- The celebration of Sol Invictus ("Unconquered Sun")

Over time, cultural elements were added, including:

- Decorated evergreen trees
- Gift-giving
- Lights
- Seasonal symbolism

Christmas, as practiced today, is a mixture of:

- Church tradition
- Cultural customs
- Seasonal celebration

It is not a feast commanded in the Torah.

### Common Modern Practices

- Decorating a tree
- Exchanging gifts
- Seasonal lights
- Nativity scenes
- Celebration of the Messiah's birth

These are traditional, not scriptural commands.

## What the Torah Says About Worship Practices

The Torah does not record or command a celebration of the Messiah's birth.

The appointed times given by YAHUAH are found in Leviticus 23 and Christmas is not among them.

## **Deuteronomy 12:4**

“You shall not worship YAHUAH your Elohim in that way.”

### **Short Explanation:**

YAHUAH warns Israel not to adopt worship patterns from surrounding nations and redirect them toward Him.

The principle:

Worship must be according to His instruction not borrowed formats.

## **Jeremiah 10:2–4**

This passage describes cutting a tree, decorating it with silver and gold, and fastening it upright.

### **Important Clarification:**

In context, Jeremiah is describing idol-making practices.

Some believers see a symbolic parallel to modern decorated trees.

Others argue the passage refers strictly to carved wooden idols.

The broader principle remains:

Do not adopt the religious customs of the nations.

## **Why Many Torah-Observant Believers Reject Christmas**

The concern is not the Messiah.

The concern is:

- The date is not biblical
- The celebration is not commanded
- Many elements developed from cultural traditions outside Torah

The question becomes:

If YAHUAH gave specific appointed times, should believers create additional worship celebrations not instructed by Him?

The Torah does not forbid rejoicing.

It does not forbid gratitude.

It does not forbid remembering the Messiah.

The concern is about:

- Adding new holy days
- Mixing covenant worship with outside tradition
- Elevating tradition to commanded status

Christmas is a later church tradition with cultural additions.

The Torah establishes specific appointed times and Christmas is not one of them.

Many Torah-aligned believers choose to observe the commanded feasts instead of participating in Christmas.

# Celebrating Birthdays

Birthday celebrations existed in ancient cultures such as:

- Egypt
- Greece
- Rome

Some early birthday celebrations were connected to:

- Astrology
- Protective spirits
- Offerings to deities

However, modern birthday parties are generally cultural and family-centered, not religious rituals.

## Are Birthdays Commanded in the Torah

No.

The Torah does not command believers to celebrate their birth date.

It also does not establish a ritual day for personal elevation.

The appointed times given by YAHUAH focus on:

- Covenant events
- Redemption
- National remembrance

Not individual self-celebration.

## Biblical Mentions of Birthdays

Interestingly, the only explicit birthday celebrations mentioned in Scripture are:

- Pharaoh's birthday (Genesis 40:20)
- Herod's birthday (Matthew 14:6)

Both accounts involve rulers and both are connected to executions.

This does not automatically make birthdays sinful.

But it shows they are not presented as covenant celebrations.

The Torah emphasizes:

- Gratitude for life
- Humility
- Giving thanks to YAHUAH
- Counting days wisely

Life is seen as a gift from YAHUAH not something to glorify self over.

## **Why Some Torah-Observant Believers Avoid Birthdays**

Some believers feel that:

- Elevating oneself annually feels self-centered
- The practice has historical pagan connections
- The Torah does not instruct it

So they may choose to:

- Offer private gratitude to YAHUAH instead
- Avoid ritual-style celebration

The Torah does not contain a direct command saying:  
“You shall not celebrate your birthday.”

This becomes a matter of:

Conviction  
Conscience  
Alignment  
Intent

If someone celebrates with gratitude to YAHUAH and without pagan ritual, some see it as cultural.

Others prefer to abstain entirely.

Birthdays are cultural, not covenant.

The Torah focuses on honoring YAHUAH’s appointed times — not personal annual celebrations.

Each believer must decide carefully, with humility and awareness.

# Can You Celebrate Your Birthday to YAHUAH

The Torah does not command birthday celebrations.  
It also does not directly forbid acknowledging the day you were born.

So the real question becomes:

## What is the focus of the day?

Is it:

- Self-exaltation?
- Ritual tradition?
- Or gratitude to YAHUAH for life?

The heart posture matters.

## What the Torah Emphasizes

The Torah consistently teaches:

- Humility
- Gratitude
- Reverence
- Numbering our days wisely (Psalm 90:12)

Life is a gift from YAHUAH.  
Acknowledging that gift is not wrong.

The danger is turning the day into self-glory instead of thankfulness.

## What Can a Beginner Do on Their Birthday

If someone wants to acknowledge the day without turning it into ritual or ego celebration, here are simple, covenant-centered ideas:

### Give Thanks to YAHUAH

Spend time in prayer.  
Thank Him for:

- Life

- Protection
- Lessons learned
- Growth

Make it about Him not you.

## **Reflect, Don't Exalt**

Ask yourself:

- Did I grow this year?
- Am I walking closer in obedience?
- Where do I need correction?

Turn it into a self-examination day.

## **Do an Act of Righteousness**

Instead of receiving all day, consider:

- Helping someone
- Giving charity (tzedakah)
- Feeding someone
- Encouraging someone

Shift the focus outward.

## **Keep It Simple**

If family gathers:

- Eat together
- Share gratitude
- Avoid ritualistic or mystical elements

No astrology.

No "manifestation."

No spirit themes.

No self-worship language.

Just gratitude

## **What to Avoid**

- Avoid horoscopes or zodiac themes

- Avoid rituals tied to “guardian spirits”
- Avoid making yourself the center of glory

The Torah consistently redirects glory to YAHUAH.

Birthday celebration is not a commanded feast.

It is not listed among YAHUAH’s appointed times.

So it should never be treated as sacred or covenant-required.

But a day of gratitude to YAHUAH for life?

That aligns with humility and thankfulness if done correctly.

You don’t need a birthday ritual.

But you can turn your birthday into:

A gratitude day

A reflection day

A repentance day

A rededication day

Make it about YAHUAH not ego.

## **KEY TORAH PRINCIPLE**

This is not about the label of a holiday.

It is about:

- Its origin
- Its meaning
- Its spiritual purpose
- Whether YAHUAH commanded it

The Torah repeatedly warns Israel about adopting customs from surrounding nations — especially when those customs were connected to worship.

### **Exodus 23:13**

“Make no mention of the name of other gods...”

**Short Explanation:**

YAHUAH instructed Israel to avoid normalizing the names of other deities.

The principle:

Do not keep foreign worship systems alive through repetition or participation.

This teaches spiritual separation not paranoia.

**Leviticus 18:3**

“You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt... nor in the land of Canaan...”

**Short Explanation:**

Israel was commanded not to copy the cultural and religious customs of surrounding nations.

The issue was imitation.

Covenant identity requires distinction.

Many people observe modern holidays without knowing their historical background.

This teaching is not about condemning people.

It is about:

Understanding

Discernment

Alignment

Return

**Deuteronomy 30:1–2**

This passage speaks of returning to YAHUAH after understanding.

**Short Explanation:**

When people gain knowledge, they have the opportunity to turn back in obedience.

The goal of learning is restoration not shame.

# Why This Teaching Helps People

- Removes fear by explaining clearly
- Separates history from emotional reaction
- Centers Torah instead of opinion
- Encourages informed obedience
- Helps people transition thoughtfully
- Replaces guilt with understanding

The Torah is not about isolation.

It is about alignment.

When we learn the origin of things, we can make conscious covenant decisions instead of inherited cultural ones.

The goal is always:

Return to YAHUAH.

Walk in obedience.

Grow in understanding.