

CHRISTMAS

Traditions, Beliefs and Truths

What do you know about what you celebrate?

CHRISTMAS QUIZ

- Following you will find various topics, words, traditions, myths, etc. surrounding the Christmas season. Take the test and see for yourself what you know or may not know about this most blessed time of the year.

1) MARY AND JOSEPH WERE MARRIED
WHEN MARY BECAME PREGNANT.

A) TRUE

B) FALSE.

2) WHEN JOSEPH FOUND OUT MARY WAS PREGNANT WITH JESUS WHAT HAPPENED?

- A) THEY GOT MARRIED
- B) JOSEPH WANTED TO BREAK THE ENGAGEMENT
- C) MARY LEFT TOWN FOR THREE MONTHS
- D) AN ANGEL TOLD THEM TO GO TO BETHLEHEM
- E) B & C
- F) A & D...

3) HOW DID MARY AND JOSEPH TRAVEL TO BETHLEHEM?

- A) CAMEL
- B) DONKEY
- C) WALKED
- D) HE WALKED AND SHE RODE A DONKEY
- E) WHO KNOWS...

4) MARY AND JOSEPH WERE MARRIED
WHEN JESUS WAS BORN.

- A) TRUE
- B) FALSE

5) WHAT DID THE INKEEPER TELL MARY AND JOSEPH?

- A) THERE IS NO ROOM IN THE INN.
- B) I HAVE A STABLE YOU CAN USE.
- C) COME BACK AFTER THE CHRISTMAS RUSH.
- D) BOTH A AND B
- E) NONE OF THE ABOVE...

6) WHICH ANIMALS DOES THE BIBLE SAY WERE PRESENT WHEN JESUS WAS BORN?

- A) COWS, SHEEP & GOATS
- B) COWS, SHEEP AND A DOKEY
- C) SHEEP & GOATS ONLY
- D) MISCELLANEOUS BARNYARD ANIMALS
- E) NONE OF THE ABOVE...

7) WHO SAW THE STAR IN THE EAST?

- A) MARY AND JOSEPH
- B) HEROD
- C) SHEPHERDS
- D) KINGS
- E) BOTH C & D...

8) HOW MANY ANGELS SPOKE TO THE SHEPHERDS?

- A) ONE
- B) THREE
- C) A MULTITUDE
- E) NONE OF THESE...

9) HOW MANY WISEMEN CAME
TO VISIT JESUS?

10) THE WISEMEN STOPPED IN JERUSALEM TO:

- A) INFORM HEROD ABOUT JESUS
- B) FIND OUT WHERE JESUS WAS
- C) ASK ABOUT THE STAR THEY SAW
- D) ASK DIRECTIONS...

11) THE WISEMEN FOUND JESUS IN A:

- A) MANGER
- B) STABLE
- C) HOUSE
- D) INN...

12) WHERE DO WE FIND THE CHRISTMAS STORY IN ORDER TO CHECK OUR ANSWERS?

- A) ALL FOUR GOSPELS
- B) LUKE
- C) MARK
- D) MATTHEW & LUKE
- E) JOHN
- F) LUKE & JOHN...

- **ANSWERS TO QUIZ**

1) MARY AND JOSEPH WERE MARRIED
WHEN MARY BECAME PREGNANT.

A) TRUE

B) FALSE.....

C) FALSE

2) WHEN JOSEPH FOUND OUT MARY WAS PREGNANT WITH JESUS WHAT HAPPENED?

- A) THEY GOT MARRIED
- B) JOSEPH WANTED TO BREAK THE ENGAGEMENT
- C) MARY LEFT TOWN FOR THREE MONTHS
- D) AN ANGEL TOLD THEM TO GO TO BETHLEHEM
- E) B & C
- F) A & D
- **E**

3) HOW DID MARY AND JOSEPH TRAVEL TO BETHLEHEM?

- A) CAMEL
- B) DONKEY
- C) WALKED
- D) HE WALKED AND SHE RODE A DONKEY
- E) WHO KNOWS.....
- E (Though not stated, custom and prophecy might dictate D)

4) MARY AND JOSEPH WERE MARRIED
WHEN JESUS WAS BORN.

- A) TRUE
- B) FALSE....
- TRUE

5) WHAT DID THE INKEEPER TELL MARY AND JOSEPH?

- A) THERE IS NO ROOM IN THE INN.
- B) I HAVE A STABLE YOU CAN USE.
- C) COME BACK AFTER THE CHRISTMAS RUSH.
- D) BOTH A AND B
- E) NONE OF THE ABOVE.....
- E THERE IS NO MENTION OF AN
INKEEPER IN THE SCRIPTURE

6) WHICH ANIMALS DOES THE BIBLE SAY WERE PRESENT WHEN JESUS WAS BORN?

- A) COWS, SHEEP & GOATS
- B) COWS, SHEEP AND A DOKEY
- C) SHEEP & GOATS ONLY
- D) MISCELLANEOUS BARNYARD ANIMALS
- E) NONE OF THE ABOVE.....
- E

7) WHO SAW THE STAR IN THE EAST?

- A) MARY AND JOSEPH
- B) HEROD
- C) SHEPHERDS
- D) KINGS
- E) BOTH C & D....
- E

8) HOW MANY ANGELS SPOKE TO THE SHEPHERDS?

- A) ONE
- B) THREE
- C) A MULTITUDE
- E) NONE OF THESE...
- A

9) HOW MANY WISEMEN CAME TO VISIT JESUS?

- WE DO NOT KNOW. BECAUSE
TO THE THREE GIFTS OF
GOLD, FRANKINCENSE AND
MYRRH TRADITION HAS LED
US TO COUNT THE NUMBER AS
3.

10) THE WISEMEN STOPPED IN JERUSALEM TO:

- A) INFORM HEROD ABOUT JESUS
- B) FIND OUT WHERE JESUS WAS
- C) ASK ABOUT THE STAR THEY SAW
- D) ASK DIRECTIONS....
- B SEE MATTHEW 2:2

11) THE WISEMEN FOUND JESUS IN A:

- A) MANGER
- B) STABLE
- C) HOUSE
- D) INN....

• C- A HOUSE. TIME HAD ELAPSED SINCE THE SIGHTING OF THE STAR AND JESUS WAS PROBABLY 2+ YEARS OLD. SEE MATTHEW 2:11

12) WHERE DO WE FIND THE CHRISTMAS STORY IN ORDER TO CHECK OUR ANSWERS?

- A) ALL FOUR GOSPELS
- B) LUKE
- C) MARK
- D) MATTHEW & LUKE
- E) JOHN
- F) LUKE & JOHN.....
- D

SYMBOLS AND TRADITIONS “COLORS”

- RED- SYMBOLIC OF CHRIST’S SHED BLOOD. HE WORE A SCARLET ROBE “HAIL KING OF THE JEWS”
- GREEN- THE COLOR OF GROWTH. THE ONE WHO SITS ON THE THRONE SPARKLES LIKE JASPER (OFTEN GREEN)
- GOLD- ALWAYS USED TO SYMBOLIZE ROYALTY.

GOLD, FRANKINCENSE & MYRRH

- GOLD WAS ALWAYS USED TO SIGNIFY OR HONOR ROYALTY
- FRANKINCENSE WAS MADE FOR WORSHIP FROM A TREE. IT WAS USED IN THE TABERNACLE AND THUS DEMONSTRATES CHRIST'S PRIESTLY ROLE.
- MYRRH WAS USED FOR EMBALMING BODIES. IT SIGNIFIED CHRIST'S ATONING DEATH.

WISEMEN

- BASED ON BIBLICAL AND HISTORICAL DATA THEY WERE A COMBINATION OF KINGS, ASTROLOGERS, MAGI. ACTUALLY THEY WERE VERY LEARNED MEN IN ALL AREAS OF KNOWLEDGE. THUS “WISEMEN” IS A MOST APPROPRIATE TERM.

ORNAMENTS & WREATHS

- ORIGINALLY CALLED CHRISMONS WHICH MEANS CHRIST'S MONOGRAM. SO WHEN YOU HANG ORNAMENTS ON YOUR TREE YOU ARE MOST APPROPRIATE AS YOU PUT CHRIST'S MONOGRAM ON YOUR TREE.
- THESE ARE CIRCULAR , HAVE NO BEGINNING AND NO END REPRESENTING GOD'S NEVER ENDING LOVE FOR US.

BELLS

- EACH SHEEP IN A SHEPHERD'S FOLD WORE A BELL SO THE SHEPHERD COULD TELL WHERE IT WAS, IF THE SHEEP WANDERED OFF. THE RINGING OF THE BELLS ARE TO GUIDE LOST SHEEP BACK TO THE FOLD, SIGNIFYING THAT ALL ARE PRECIOUS IN HIS EYES.

HOLLY & MISTLETOE

- MISTLETOE WAS USED BY THE DRUIDS 200 YEARS BEFORE CHRIST TO CELEBRATE THE COMING OF WINTER. GODS OF FERTILITY AND LOVE WERE SYMBOLIZED BY MISTLETOE. KISSING UNDER THE MISTLETOE WAS CONSIDERED HONORING TO THE PAGAN GODS. THE EARLY CHURCH BANNED THE USE OF MISTLETOE AND REPLACED IT WITH HOLLY AS A

HOLLY & MISTLETOE

BETTER CHOICE FOR CHRISTMAS
GREENERY. THE POINTED HOLLY LEAVES
SERVE TO REMIND US OF THE CROWN OF
THORNS WORN ON THE CROSS BY CHRIST
AND THE RED BERRIES ARE SYMBOLIC OF
HIS SHED BLOOD.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS & STARS

- SHINING BRIGHTLY AND IN GREAT NUMBERS THROUGHOUT THE CHRISTMAS SEASON THE LIGHTS AND STARS SEEN IN TRADITIONAL DECORATIONS SERVE TO REMIND US OF THE STAR THE WISE MEN FOLLOWED TO FIND JESUS AND THE MULTITUDE OF ANGELS THAT LIT UP THE FIELDS WHERE THE SHEPHERDS HEARD THE GLORIOUS PROCLAMATION OF JESUS BIRTH.

THE CANDY CANE

- STICK CANDY HAS BEEN AROUND A LONG TIME BUT IN THE EARLY 1900'S THEY WERE DECORATED WITH RED STRIPES AND BENT INTO THE SHAPE OF A SHEPHERD'S STAFF. PEPPERMINT HAS A FLAVOR SIMILAR TO HYSSOP WHICH SYMBOLIZES PURIFICATION AND SACRIFICE. THEREFORE IT IS A GOOD CHRISTMAS SYMBOL WHICH SHOULD REMIND US AGAIN OF CHRIST.

THE CANDLES

- CANDELS ARE USED AS A MIRROR OF STARTLIGHT, REFLECTING OUR THANKS FOR THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM.

THE GIFT BOW

- TIED AS WE SHOULD ALL BE TIED TOGETHER IN BONDS OF LOVE FOR GOD, OUR FAMILY AND OUR FELLOW MAN.

STOCKINGS & ADVENT

- CHRIST'S FEET WERE NAILED TO THE CROSS IN THE CRUCIFIXION, THUS SUPPLYING OUR "GIFT"
- ADVENT- THE FOUR (4) WEEKS BEFORE CHRISTMAS. THE WORD "ADVENT" COMES FROM THE LATIN WORD "ADVENTUS" WHICH MEANS "TO COME"

THE CHRISTMAS TREE

- IT ORIGINATED IN GERMANY IN THE 19TH. CENTURY. IT IS BELIEVED MARTIN LUTHER WAS THE FIRST TO LIGHT A TREE WITH CANDLES. WHILE COMING HOME ONE DARK NIGHT NEAR CHRISTMAS DAY, HE WAS STRUCK BY THE BEAUTY OF THE STARLIGHT SHINING THROUGH

THE CHRISTMAS TREE cont'd

The branches of a small fir tree outside his home.

He duplicated the starlight by using candles attached to the branches of his indoor Christmas tree. This tradition was brought to America by Pennsylvania Germans in the 1820's. Shaped and formed into a triangular shape, the tree is a reminder to us of the Trinity. Evergreens stay green all year and serve to remind us that we can abide with Jesus all the time and forever in eternity.

SANTA CLAUS

- ORIGINALLY 4TH. CENTURY SAINT NICHOLAS OF TURKEY. VERY PIOUS AND DEDICATED HIS LIFE TO CHRISIANITY AT AN EARLY AGE. HE BACAME BISHOP OF MYRA, A TOWN IN LYCIA. HE WAS NOTED FOR HIS GENEROSITY TO THE POOR AND ACCOUNTS SAY HE WAS IMPRISONED FOR HIS FAITH BY ROMAN EMPEROR DIOCLETIAN, YET FAITHFULLY SERVED THE LORD HIS ENTIRE LIFE. HE IS ESPECIALLY NOTED FOR HIS LOVE OF CHILDREN AND FOR HIS GENEROSITY.

SANTA CLAUS cont'd.

- AFTER HIS DEATH HE BECAME A SYMBOL OF SELFLESS GIVING & BY THE 1400'S BECAME ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR NON-CHRISTIAN FIGURES IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH. MUSIC, ART AND PLAYS CELEBRATED HIS UNSELFISH LIFE, AND STORIES CONTINUED TO GROW OUT OF THE PART HE PLAYED IN HISTORY. UNFORTUNATELY THE LIFE OF A HUMBLE BISHOP GREW INTO A LEGENDARY "SUPER HERO", AND ST. NICHOLAS LEGACY BECAME SECULARIZED.

SANTA CLAUS cont'd.

- THROUGH THE CENTURIES , HE CONTINUED TO EVOLVE INTO THE POPULAR CARICATURE WE KNOW TODAY.
- THE DUTCH KEPT THE LEGEND OF SAINT NICHOLAS ALIVE. IN 16TH CENTURY HOLLAND CHILDREN WOULD PLACE THEIR WOODEN SHOES BY THE HEARTH IN HOPES THEY WOULD BE FILLED WITH A TREAT. THE DUTCH SPELLED IT SINT NIKOLAAS, WHICH BECAME CORRUPTED TO SINTERKLAAS, AND FINALLY, IN ANGLICAN, TO SANTA CLAUS.

SANTA CLAUS cont'd.

- IN 1822 “A VISIT FROM ST. NICK” WAS WRITTEN. IT WAS LATER CHANGED TO “T’WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS”, WHICH IS CREDITED WITH OUR MODERN DAY DESCRIPTION OF SANTA CLAUS (“*OLD SAINT NICK*”), CONTINUING THE SAGA OF A SAINT EXPRESSING LOVE AND SHOWING KINDNESS TO LITTLE CHILDREN AS SAINT NICHOLAS HAD.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS

- IT BEGINS WITH GOD'S GREATEST GIFT, "A SAVIOUR, CHRIST THE LORD"
- WISEMEN GAVE GIFTS
- CHRIST GAVE GIFTS HIS ENTIRE EARTHLY LIFE: WINE AT WEDDING, FISH & BREAD TO THE MASSES, SIGHT TO THE BLIND, HEALING TO THE SICK, WALKING TO THE LAME, SIGHT TO THE BLIND, LIFE TO THE DEAD, ETC. AND LIFE ETERNAL TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE!

HANDEL'S MESSIAH

- *.....AND HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED, WONDERFUL COUNSELOR, THE MIGHTY GOD, THE EVERLASTING FATHER, THE PRINCE OF PEACE ...AND HE SHALL REIGN FOREVER AND EVER, FOREVER AND EVER, ALLELUAH, ALLELUAH, ALLELUAH*
- *BASED ON ISAIAH 9:6 IT IS ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL AND MOVING OF THE TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS SONGS & HAS MORE MEANING THAN WE MAY REALIZE.*

WHATS IN A NAME?

- ANCIENT HEBREWS VIEWED THE Hebrew alphabet as sacred and full of wisdom. Each letter radiated symbolism and meaning for life and thought. “Sacred mysteries”, as the Hebrews called them were ascribed to each of the four Hebrew letters in the name “Yeshua” (Jesus)- *yod*, *shin*, *vav*, and *ayin*. Let’s look at them.

yod

- The first letter symbolizes humility because it is the smallest of the letters. It relates to Jesus' incarnation. Phill. 2:6 states "*Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross.*" Yeshua is God's earthly name related to His coming in humility as a servant.

shin

- The second letter stands high among the sacred letters because it represents two names for God: Almighty (El Shaddai) and Peace (Shalom). Thus, *shin* points to the fact that Jesus is Almighty God; Is. 9: *“For unto us a child is born...and He will be called....Mighty God...It also points to His being our peace, who, by His shed blood, removes the barrier that separates man from God, and Jews from Gentiles: “He Himself is our peace, who has made the two one and destroyed the barrier.” Eph. 2:14*

vav

- The third letter vav represents redemption (usually the Passover imagery) through anguish. The former Pharisee Paul said under inspiration: “*Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed (violently slain)*”
1 Cor. 5:7 Redemption from sin has come to us through the anguish of His suffering, death, and majestic resurrection.

ayin

- The fourth letter , ayin, symbolizes a spring of water as in Gen. 16:7. During His final celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem, Jesus shouted that “*whoever believed in Him would have streams of living water flowing from within him .*” John. 7:37-38
- Indeed, He is the true source of living water, and anyone who comes to Him will be eternally satisfied.

WHATS IN A NAME?

- TO OTHER GREAT NAMES, THE WORLD MAY STAND AND APPLAUD. BUT IT WILL KNEEL AND BOW IN WORSHIP TO THE NAME THAT IS ABOVE ALL NAMES---THE ONE GIVEN TO THE CHRIST CHILD OF BETHLEHEM OVER 2,000 YEARS AGO.....THE INCOMPARABLE NAME OF JESUS!

MERRY CHRISTMAS

- THE MEANING IS HOW JOYOUS THIS TIME BECAUSE OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST OF LORD.
- NOT HAPPY HOLIDAYS!
- IMPORTANT POINT “*WISEMEN STILL SEEK HIM!*”