

HALLOWEEN: A CELEBRATION OF EVIL

Halloween personifies all that is evil. I once rented a fine video tape entitled, *Halloween, Trick or Treat*, from a Bible book store. I was very touched by an interview shown in the video of a man whose parents were Satan worshipers. He was raised in that way of life, but he found Christ. He told of once having a little girl playmate whom they had marked for sacrifice. One Halloween night they drugged her, tied her naked little body upon an altar, slashed her wrists and the soles of her feet, and drank her blood until it had all drained from her body. During that interview he makes a very moving appeal, and a very persuasive plea for Christians to distance themselves completely from Halloween and everything about it.

The word “Halloween” itself comes from Roman Catholic tradition. It is related to a Mass, celebrated on November 1, called Allhallowmas or All Saints’ Day. The day before that is thus called, All Hallows’ Eve, or All Hallow e’en. But the celebration of those days is much older than Christianity. Ralph Linton, who wrote *Halloween Through Twenty Centuries* said in his book: “The earliest Halloween celebrations were held by the Druids in honor of Samhain, Lord of the Dead, whose festival fell on November 1. This day was also the Celtic New Year’s Day, the beginning of winter and of the time of ‘the light that loses, the night that wins.’”¹

Druids are a cult of soothsayers and believers in magic. Linton writes that on the night of November 1, Samhain, Lord of the Dead [see addendum], “...assembled the souls of all those who had died during the previous year. For their sins these souls had been confined in the bodies of lower animals; on the New Year, their sins being expiated, they were released to go to the Druid heaven. Horses and human beings were sacrificed at this time.”²

As Christianity grew in Great Britain, there was an effort to combat this evil. Eventually, the Roman Catholic church attempted to transform it into a Christian festival. Thus, in 834

1. Ralph and Adelin Linton, *Halloween Through Twenty Centuries* (New York: Henry Schuman, 1950) 5.

2. Linton 5.

AD Pope Gregory IV moved the Roman Catholic festival of All Saints' Day from spring to November 1. However, "all saints" means, in this regard, all *dead* saints, both known and unknown. Later, the Catholic church began to honor all of the dead on November 2. This day is called All Souls' Day. In this way the association of these days with the dead was continued, only this time it was supposed to be a Christian celebration. As usually happens, instead of transforming the pagan celebration, it simply created another one of a different kind. As Linten writes,

"Outside the church, the belief in Halloween as a gathering time for unsanctified as well as sanctified spirits seems to have continued with little change. To the ghosts originally assembled by the Lord of the Dead were added troops of goblins and fairies. This was logical enough, for the fairy folk had their beginnings in an exceedingly ancient, even pre-Celtic, cult of the dead...They were ghosts of ancient kings and heroes mingled with elder gods...Even more characteristic than the inclusion of goblins and fairies in the Halloween picture was the association of the festival with witchcraft...In the later Middle Ages, the church began to take a stronger stand against [the practices of magic], and with the Reformation they were classed as heresy.

The result was the emergence of witchcraft as a more or less organized cult in opposition to the church. Much of its ritual was a travesty of Christian rites, but it also incorporated many of the ancient beliefs and practices, among them the ancient sacred days. Halloween became the great witch night. The Prince of Darkness and his cohorts, the witches and warlocks, gathered to mock the church's festival of All Saints by unholy revels of their own."¹

The whole history of Halloween has been about evil, superstition, and destructiveness. All of the popular elements associated with the modern celebration of Halloween can be traced to its evil pagan roots: ghosts, goblins, demons, witches. Those broomsticks they wrap their legs around are phallic symbols. Turn one of those pictures upside down, and it becomes more apparent. Jack-o'-lanterns are lamps lit by coals from hell carried by a man named Jack, who was a worthless drunk of long ago who used to make deals with the devil, so the story goes. He

1. Linton 7, 8.

tricked the devil so often Satan refused to take him into Hell, and he was too worthless to go to Heaven. So now he roams the earth as a ghost carrying his lantern lit by a coal from hell.

Another symbol of Halloween is the black cat. Black cats have a long history of association with evil. They were considered to be animals inhabited by the spirits of witches. They are often portrayed as perched on the broomstick of a flying witch. The old witches brew was actually a concoction containing potent psychoactive drugs, under the influence of which its celebrants probably thought they were flying in the air. A few days ago my wife told me she saw a television announcement from the Searcy Animal Shelter warning residents of Searcy and White county about the coming Halloween celebration. The announcement said for owners of black cats and dogs (especially puppies) to keep them securely penned up, because Satanists, who consider Halloween a sacred night, round these up to use as sacrifices in order to indulge their unholy lust for blood and death. Many places in today's America, and indeed, throughout the world, also sacrifice human lives, usually babies and young children. Their blood is either smeared on their often naked bodies, or drunk in mock imitation of the Lord's supper.

These ghastly acts are the outcome of frequent exposure to morbid and perverse things. The excitement which they arouse in the body becomes appealing. Like all who indulge the baser appetites, these people become desensitized to the milder stimuli, and begin to use ever more extreme things in order to arouse the excitement they crave. For many it reaches the stage of Satan worship with all their diabolical practices. Indulging in entertainment with symbols of evil and death is no different from indulging in social drinking. Not all who drink sink to the lowest level. But, apart from the very evil itself, do we want to expose ourselves and our children to that kind of risk?

The world scoffs at such warnings. Halloween, they say, is just a cute, innocent way to have a little fun. But there is nothing cute or innocent about Halloween. Even if most people no longer take them seriously, all the old symbols of evil remain. Taking innocent young children around to cry, "Trick or treat" in order to get good things to eat, is wrong for many reasons. The fact is, the very words "Trick or treat" are words of extortion, meaning, "Either you give me a treat, or I will bring evil upon you and your property." It too can be traced back in history. It is a variation of

the practice of leaving food outside for the ghosts and spirits that were let loose to wander on this “Night of the Dead”. Is this what Christians should be indulging with their young children?

Whether or not most people consider it to be an innocent game, makes no difference. Should we bow down and worship an idol as part of a game, and then justify what we are doing by saying, “Oh, I know it is not really a god, but it so much fun, and the children love it”? Is there no other decent, wholesome way to share pleasant things to eat with our children without paying homage to crime, darkness, and death? It is not possible to put one foot on the side of the devil, and the other foot on the side of God.

I offer for your consideration a few scriptures from the Word of God concerning our need to keep separate from evil and darkness:

Ye are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness (1 Thessalonians 5:5).

Who rescued us out of the power of darkness, and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of his love (Colossians 1:13).

...for what partnership has righteousness and lawlessness? And what fellowship has light with darkness? (2 Corinthians 6:14).

...to open their eyes to turn about from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God... (Acts 26:18).

...I do not want you to become partakers of demons. Ye cannot drink the cup of Lord, and the cup of demons. Ye cannot be partakers of a table of Lord, and of a table of demons (1 Corinthians 10:20-21).

And he cried out in a mighty voice, saying, Babylon the great has fallen, has fallen, and became a habitation of demons, and a hold of every unclean spirit, and a hold of every unclean and hated bird (Revelation 18:2).

Note: All Scripture verses quoted in this essay are from A Conservative Version Bible.

Addendum

I [Ralph Linton] have received some feedback claiming that the idea Samhain was a god is false, a myth perpetrated by conservative Christians. Having spent several hours looking at many websites that discuss Samhain, I found that almost all of

those making that claim are by pagans, especially witches and their supporters, who scoff at any criticism of Halloween. What they say is that Samhain refers only to the celebration, and not to any god. However, there are respected scholars and respected publications, including *Encyclopedia Americana* and *Colliers Encyclopedia* that claim he was. Therefore, their accusation that the idea is an error perpetrated only by conservative Christians is quite false. Nevertheless, the issue of whether Samhain was a god or not is irrelevant to the fact that Halloween is an evil celebration.

Most of the information about Halloween and Samhain in this essay was taken from Ralph Linton's book. But in order for you to judge for yourself whether Linton was a credible scholar qualified to write about the subject I have reproduced below a copy of his biography taken from the Minnesota State University's website at http://emuseum.mnsu.edu/information/biography/klmno/linton_ralph.html.

Ralph Linton

1893-1953

About Ralph Linton

Ralph Linton was born on February 27, 1893 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to Isaiah Waterman Linton and Mary Elizabeth Gillingham. His father owned a chain of restaurants and both his parents were Quakers. He gained his secondary education at Friends High School and went on to attend Swarthmore College in 1911. He majored in biology and attended his first archeological trip.

He spent the next few years alternating between his studies and archeological trips to Guatemala and to the Southwest. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Swarthmore with a Bachelors Degree in 1915. He married Josephine Foster, and went on to attend the University of Pennsylvania where he earned his Masters Degree in Anthropology in 1916. He went on to study at Columbia University, while there he enlisted in the 42 division and served in France during WWI. He left the Army as a liaison corporal.

After the war, Linton returned to the US and married Margaret McIntosh. They had one child. Linton entered Harvard University, and received his Ph.D. from there in 1925. He then

spent the next two and a half years in Madagascar and in East Africa. He published his accounts in the *Atlantic Monthly*. A book also resulted from his studies in Madagascar entitled *The Tanala: a Hill Tribe of Madagascar*.

Linton started his teaching career at the University of Wisconsin in 1928. In 1934 Linton's marriage failed and in 1935, he married Adelin Sumner Briggs. In 1936, he wrote a book called *The Study of Mans* which he regards as his "magnum opus." In 1937 he taught at Columbia University and stayed there until 1946. While at Columbia he became interested in the study of personality and culture.

During WWII Linton taught at Columbia's School of Military Government and Administration. The purpose of the school was to provide future military administrators with some education about culture. While there, he published *The Cultural Background of Personality*. He disagreed with one of his colleagues Dri Abram Kardiner, and decided to leave Columbia.

In 1946, Linton took an opportunity to become Sterling Professor of Anthropology at Yale University. In the same year, he was also the President of the American Anthropological Association. While at Yale, Linton became a serious collector of African art. Yale was going to display his art collection, but he missed this event by about three months. Ralph Linton succumbed to a heart attack on Christmas Eve of 1953.

Ralph Linton was working on a book of great anthropological scope at the time of his death. The lectures he gave while at Yale were the basis for this book. Several year's worth of lectures were transcribed. He was nearly two thirds finished at the time of his death, and he made sure his wife would be able to finish his book in case of his death. His wife, Adelin Linton, did finish his book, *The Tree of Culture*.

Ralph Linton was a member of the National Academy of Sciences, and in 1939-1944 was the editor of the *American Anthropologist*.

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Saintsbury, Lee. *World Authors*. New York: The H.W. Wilson Company. 1996.

Winters, Christopher. *International Dictionary of Anthropologists*. New York: Garland Publishing. 1991.

“Linton, Ralph.” Infoplease.com. www.infoplease.com 7 Dec. 1999.

“Linton, Ralph,” Biography.com www.biography.com 7 Dec. 1999.

“Linton, Ralph.” Britannica.com www.britannica.com 7 Dec. 1999.

Written by Ryan Peck

There are many websites that have excellent material on the evils of Halloween. I have listed below a few of them that agree with what Linton wrote about Samhain, a couple of which are clearly not Christian.

www.hope-of-israel.org/halloween.htm

www.sounddoctrine.com/ptimes/samhain.htm

www.holidayinsights.com/halloween/samhain.htm

www.cornerstone1.org/b-halloween.htm

www.viewfromthewall.com/ccch3.htm

www.irishfestivals.net/samhain.htm

http://nisbett.com/holidays/halloween_celebration_evil.htm

<http://home.computer.net/~cya/cy00061.html>

www.bibleteacher.org/Dm074.htm

<http://got.net/~seasons/halloween.html>

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