



# HALLOWEEN:

- 1) **ITS ORIGIN: WHEN DID IT START?**
- 2) **WHO FIRST CELEBRATED IT?**



- 3) **THE CUSTOMS: FROM WHERE?**



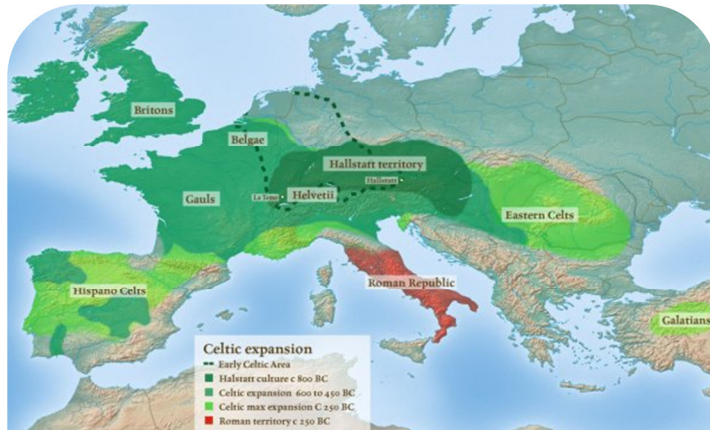
- 4) **SHOULD YOU CELEBRATE IT?**



# HALLOWEEN – BELIEFS HANDED DOWN IN HISTORY

## I. Celtic Celebration

Many centuries ago, a people called the Celts (pronounced KELTS) lived in the territories of Europe shown on the map below:



On the full moon nearest November first, the Celts celebrated a festival called Samhain (pronounced Sow-WEN). Samhain was a religious ceremony lead by Celtic priests called Druids (pronounced DROO-id). The Celts believed that as the days shortened, it was necessary to refresh the sun through various rituals and sacrifices.



One of the rituals involved putting out old fires, and starting new large fires called “bonfires”. The Celts thought that these fires would frighten away evil spirits

The Celts believed that on the festival of Samhain, the human and the supernatural worlds would meet— and spirits, both good and evil, roamed the earth. The souls of the dead were thought to return to their homes, and families would put out food and drink for their ghostly “visitors” as a gesture of peace, so that no harm would come to the household.



## A FESTIVAL FOR THOSE THAT DIED IN THE FLOOD?

There is a connection between the festival of Samhain and the Flood of Noah's day... According to the writer J. Garnier, celebrations of suffering and death can be traced back to the ancient destruction of all of Satan's human followers—as well as the sons of fallen angels, at the time of the Flood. Cultures all over the world have festivals for the dead, and they are all held on or about the very day the Flood took place, that is, according to the Bible, on the seventeenth day of the second month—the month corresponding with our November.”—

*The Worship of the Dead, by J. Garnier.*

[illegible]

**Knowing this historical background, it would make sense that the worldwide holiday coinciding with Halloween would be an important sacred day for modern pagans, wiccans, and Satanists. It would also make sense that the emphasis on demonic images, ghosts, monsters, and gruesome themes might also appeal to the wicked spirits, for whom the beginning of the flood meant the death of their hybrid (half human, half angel) children, the Nephilim.**

## II. Roman Traditions

In the 1st Century of our Common Era, the Roman Empire had conquered the majority of Celtic territory. Over the next four hundred years, two Roman festivals were combined with the Celtic Samhain. 1) Feralia, a day in late October when Romans traditionally honored the dead. 2) A day to honor Pomona, the Roman goddess of fruit and trees.

### III. All Saints Day

**In the 2nd century, Christendom honored those who died for their faith (called martyrs). A regular memorial began in May, the year 609 C.E., Pope Boniface IV dedicated the Pantheon—the Roman temple of all the gods—to Mary and all the martyrs.**

**Between 731 & 741 C.E., Pope Gregory III dedicated a chapel in Rome to all the saints and ordered that they be honored on November 1. Samhain was still popular festival among the Celtic people. The church added the Christian celebration to the calendar on the same date as Samhain, to try to take away the focus of the celebration of Samhain.**

**The church, unable to remove pagan beliefs from the hearts of the people, hid them behind a “Christian” mask. The Encyclopedia of Religion says: “The Christian festival, the Feast of All Saints, commemorates the known and unknown saints of the Christian religion just as Samhain had acknowledged and paid tribute to the Celtic gods.”**

## IV. THE TRADITIONS DEVELOP

- Eventually, many people moved from European countries to North America, and brought the traditions of Samhain with them.
- The tradition of dressing in costume for Halloween has both European and Celtic roots. Hundreds of years ago, winter was a frightening time. Many people were afraid of the dark, and on Halloween, when people thought ghosts came back to the earthly world, people were afraid to see ghosts if they left their homes. People would wear masks when they left their homes after dark so that the ghosts would mistake them for fellow spirits. On Halloween, to keep ghosts away from their houses, people would place bowls of food outside their homes to appease the ghosts and prevent them from attempting to enter.
- Eventually, Americans began to dress up in costumes and go house to house asking for food or money, a practice that eventually became today's "trick-or-treat" tradition.
- By the 1950s, Halloween became a holiday directed mainly at the young.

## V. What does it mean?



**Black Cats:** Often used as symbols of bad luck, the black cat's bad reputation dates back to the Dark Ages, when witch hunts were commonplace. Elderly, solitary women were often accused of witchcraft, and their pet cats were said to be their "familiars," or demonic animals that had been given to them by the devil.



**Jack-O-Lanterns:** Celtic myth tells the tale of a drunken farmer named Jack who tricked the devil, but his trickery resulted in him being turned away from both the gates of heaven and hell after he died. Having no choice but to wander around the darkness of purgatory, Jack made a lantern from a turnip and a burning lump of coal that the devil had tossed him from hell.

Jack, the story goes, used the lantern to guide his lost soul; as such, the Celts believed that placing Jack-o'-lanterns outside would help guide lost spirits home when they wander the streets on Halloween. Originally made using a hollowed-out turnip with a small candle inside, Jack-o'-lanterns' frightening carved faces also served to scare evil spirits away. When the Irish potato famine of 1846 forced Irish families to flee to North America, the tradition came with them. Since turnips were hard to come by in the states at the time, pumpkins were used as a substitute.



**WITCHES:** The image of the haggard witch with a pointy black hat and warty nose stirring a magical potion in her cauldron actually stems from a pagan goddess known as "the crone," who was honored during Samhain. The crone was also known as "the old one" and the "Earth mother," who symbolized wisdom, change, and the turning of the seasons. Today, the kind, all-knowing old crone has morphed into the menacing, cackling witch.



**The witch's broomstick** is another superstition that has its roots in medieval myths. The elderly, introverted women that were accused of witchcraft were often poor and could not afford horses, so they navigated through the woods on foot with the help of walking sticks, which were sometimes substituted by brooms.

English folklore tells that during night-time ceremonies, witches rubbed a "flying" potion on their bodies, closed their eyes and felt as though they were flying. The hallucinogenic ointment, which caused numbness, rapid heartbeat and confusion, gave them the illusion that they were soaring through the sky.



**Bobbing for apples:** In ancient times, the apple was viewed as a sacred fruit that could be used to predict the future. Bobbing for apples is one of the traditional games used for fortune-telling on Halloween night. It was believed that the first person to pluck an apple from the water-filled bucket without using their hands would be the first to marry. If the bobber "lucked out" and caught an apple on the first try, it meant that they would experience true love, while those who got an apple after many tries would be uncertain in their romantic efforts.



## QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

<p><b>Halloween is said to be “pagan”. Someone who is pagan is a person holding religious beliefs other than those of the main world religions. Halloween is a favorite holiday of witches, and Satan worshippers.</b></p>	<p><b>WHAT DO YOU THINK?</b> If Halloween is favored by modern day witches and Satan worshippers, what should that tell us about the holiday?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p><b>Read Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10 and Psalm 146:3, 4.</b></p>	<p><b>What does the Bible teach about what happens to us when we die?</b></p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p><b>WHAT DO YOU THINK?</b> How should you feel about celebrations that promote the belief that people continue to live in spirit form after they die?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
<p><b>Read 1 Corinthians 10:20-22 and 2 Corinthians 6:14-16.</b></p>	<p><b>What point do these scriptures make?</b></p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p><b>WHAT DO YOU THINK?</b> If we were to celebrate Halloween, how would the scriptures above in Corinthians apply to us?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	

## THINK CAREFULLY :

What are the fun things associated with Halloween? \_\_\_\_\_

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How is Halloween dangerous? \_\_\_\_\_

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Should YOU celebrate Halloween? \_\_\_\_\_

Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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What should you do if you have a desire to participate in Halloween activities?

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What are some things we can do to have fun instead of celebrating Halloween?

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If people ask you why you do not celebrate Halloween, what will you say to them?

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