

Halloween

All Hallows' Eve



The Unmasking of Halloween

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For the Awakening Remnant

Walking the Ancient Path of Torah Obedience
Calling out Deception – Calling out Truth

Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! (Yeshayahu/Isaiah 5:20)

And no wonder! For even Satan disguises himself as a messenger of light. (II Cor. 11:14)

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Introduction: Is this a holy celebration —or a masquerade of the dead?

Today, millions dress up, decorate with skeletons and spirits, and call it “just harmless fun.” But the roots of Halloween are neither harmless nor holy. Before there was candy, costumes, or carved pumpkins, there was Samhain—a pagan festival of death, sacrifice, and communication with the dead. And when the church came into power, it didn’t abolish this unholy night—it baptized it.

Let us peel back the disguise and uncover the chilling truth behind Halloween. Where did it come from? What spirits were being honored? And how did this night of darkness creep its way into church calendars and Christian homes?

What Was Halloween Originally Called?

Before it was ever pumpkins and candy, Halloween was known as Samhain (pronounced SOW-in), an ancient Celtic festival marking the end of the harvest season and the beginning of the darker half of the year—what they saw as the time when the veil between the living and the dead was thinnest.

It was a night of death, spirits, and ritual offerings.

Samhain was deeply spiritual—but not holy. It honored the dead, ancestors, and “otherworldly beings.”

Bonfires were lit. Crops and animals were sacrificed. People dressed in animal skins or disguises to either hide from or appease wandering spirits.

Divination and fortune-telling were common. This was a night of magic, fear, and honoring death.

This was not a children’s holiday.

It was not lighthearted.

It was not from Scripture.

II. How Did It Become “Halloween”?

As the Roman Empire expanded into Celtic regions, the pagan festivals were not abolished—but absorbed.

The Catholic Church, under Pope Gregory III (8th century), declared November 1 as All Saints Day—a day to honor “holy” martyrs and saints.

The night before was called All Hallows’ Eve, eventually shortened to Halloween.

But the traditions of Samhain never went away.

Instead, they merged—Christian labels on pagan practices.

Costumes? From disguises to fool spirits.

Jack-o’-lanterns? From carved turnips to ward off evil.

Trick-or-treating? From soul cakes offered to the dead, or spirits threatening mischief unless appeased.

Haunted houses? Echoes of spirit-world obsession.

The Church attempted to baptize the unclean, rename the unholy, and rebrand darkness with a cross.

♦ **The True Name: All Hallows’ Eve**

"Hallow" is an old English word meaning holy or saint.

So “All Hallows’ Day” meant All Saints’ Day—a day the Catholic Church set aside to honor saints and martyrs (Nov. 1).

The night before, October 31, was called “All Hallows’ Eve” (or E’en), meaning the evening before the holy day.

Over time, “All Hallows’ Eve” was contracted in the English tongue to become “Halloween.”

The “Eve” of something, in old religious tradition, was often considered sacred or solemn—like Christmas Eve or Passover Eve—but this one had a very dark twist.

So where does Samhain fit in?

The Celtic festival of Samhain already existed long before the Church inserted All Saints’ Day.

What the Church did was overlay their new “holy day” onto an ancient pagan celebration of death, spirits, and sacrifice. This tactic was common—called syncretism—where they tried to merge or christianize pagan customs to make conversion easier.

So...

Samhain → All Hallows’ Eve → Halloween

(Pagan death festival → "Christianized" vigil → Modern costume party)

What About the Word “Eve?”

The word “Eve” in “All Hallows’ Eve” is not originally Celtic. It comes from Old English, where “eve” is short for “evening”—the time before a holy day (like Christmas Eve or Passover Eve). It traces to the Old English word *æfen*, which means evening, and later became “even” or “eve”.

So, no—“Eve” itself is not a Celtic word. BUT... here's the twist:

What is Celtic—with a dark twist—is the whole context of what “Eve” came to represent. “All Hallows’ Eve” was the Christianized cloak draped over the ancient Celtic Samhain, which fell on October 31—the same night.

The word “Halloween” is a corrupted contraction of:

All Hallows’ Eve → Hallowe’en → Halloween

Hallow = Holy / Saint (Old English hālig)

E’en = Even / Evening

So, while the word “eve” is innocent in origin, the application in this case—Halloween—carries the residue of paganism and death culture, because it was tied directly to the night of Samhain.

And here’s where it gets sobering:

Even though the church tried to claim the evening as “holy,” the people kept their Celtic customs, their masks, their ritual fires, and their spirit lore. The church didn’t cleanse it—it co-opted it.

In short:

***"Eve" is not a Celtic word. But “All Hallows’ Eve” was a church label laid over a Celtic night of death. And that cloak never covered the bones.**

Origins of Halloween: The Festival of Samhain
Ancient Celtic celebration

The thinning of the veil between the living and the dead

Bonfires, sacrifices, and the honoring of spirits

Druids and divination

What’s in a Name? “Eve” and Its Twisted Legacy

Many assume the word “Eve” is harmless—just another way to say “the night before.” But in its Celtic and ecclesiastical usage, “Eve” (or “Even” / “E’en”) was far more than a date reference. It denoted a sacred vigil, a spiritual observance laden with ritual and darkness.

In the case of All Hallows’ Eve, it was the ritual prelude to a “Christianized” feast of dead saints, which itself was built atop the ashes of Samhain—a night of necromancy, sacrifice, and spiritual masquerade. The name “Eve” in this context became a mask—an attempt to wrap shadow in light.

And thus, with a few linguistic sleights of hand, the most unholy of nights was baptized in religious terminology and slipped quietly into the church calendar.

Outline: From Shadows to Sanctuaries

Here's how we'll walk through this truth together:

- The Festival of Samhain – its practices, purpose, and pagan power
- Rome's Strategy – how the early church replaced and renamed the pagan with the religious
- From Samhain to All Hallows – blending saints with spirits
- The Rise of Halloween – costumes, candy, and commercialization
- The Spiritual Cost – What does YHWH say about these things?
- Modern Church Compromise – How Halloween crept back in the doors of faith
- Truth vs. Tradition – Are we willing to be different?
- A Call to Come Out – Rejecting participation and walking the Ancient Path

♦ A Word Before We Begin

Let us now begin together
a walk through the veil history has drawn,
and see what spirits still linger behind the mask.

The Festival of Samhain

Its Practices, Purpose, and Pagan Power

Long before Halloween found its way into suburban streets, glowing in porch lights and plastic masks, it burned with a darker fire. That fire was Samhain (pronounced SOW-in)—a solemn and sinister observance kept by the ancient Celts.

The Sacred Night of the Dead

Samhain marked the end of the harvest and the beginning of the dark half of the year. It was not merely a seasonal festival—it was spiritual. The Celts believed that on this night, the veil between the worlds—between the living and the dead—grew thin.

Spirits, ancestors, and “otherworldly beings” were thought to cross into the land of the living. And so, people:

- Lit massive bonfires to honor the dead and keep evil spirits away
- Offered animal and crop sacrifices to appease the spirits and seek protection
- Dressed in costumes and masks, often of animal skins, to disguise themselves or become one with the spirit realm
- Engaged in divination and fortune-telling, believing this night held supernatural insight

It was a night of power... but it was not a holy power.

This was not a celebration rooted in light, life, or truth—but in fear, mystery, and necromantic ritual.

The Role of the Druids

At the heart of Samhain were the Druids—Celtic spiritual leaders who acted as priests, judges, and diviners. They led the ceremonies, offered the sacrifices, and interpreted omens. Samhain was their high holy day, and through its rituals, they channeled the unseen.

These leaders practiced divination by examining entrails, reading signs in nature, and invoking spirits for prophecy. Samhain was not about make-believe—it was about contact with the dead.

This was real spiritual darkness, not symbolic fun.

Rome's Strategy

— Replacing and Renaming the Pagan with the Religious

When the early church, backed by the power of the Roman Empire, expanded into Celtic and Germanic lands, it was met not just with people—but with deeply embedded pagan traditions.

And rather than purge these practices, the Church took a different route:

- Don't destroy it. Rebrand it.
- Don't challenge it. Christen it.
- Don't cast it out. Cloak it.

This strategy was called syncretism—the merging of different religious beliefs and practices into one.

Paganism Under a New Label

Instead of confronting Samhain and forbidding its rituals, the Church laid a “holy day” directly over top of it.

Pope Gregory III (731–741 CE) moved the feast of “All Saints” (also called All Hallows' Day) to November 1—the day after Samhain.

The night before became All Hallows' Eve, later known as Halloween.

This was not a coincidence.

This was deliberate.

By placing a religious holiday on the same day as a pagan one, the Church hoped to absorb the culture without conflict. They thought the people would gradually trade their spirits for saints, their bonfires for candles, their sacrifices for prayers.

But the people didn't change—they simply kept the old ways under new names.

It was they who changed the church—not the other way around.

The church didn't purify the darkness; it absorbed it.

And in doing so, it became darker still.

The stain of paganism didn't wash away—it became indelible. Paganism didn't die. It just learned to morph—putting on robes and crosses—while still serving its old gods.

From Samhain to All Hallows: Saints Meet Spirits

The Church didn't abolish Samhain—it cloaked it.

Or rather, it cloaked the Church.

As Christianity crept into Celtic lands, Church leaders faced a dilemma: how do you convert a people so intimately bound to the rhythms of Samhain—its spirits, its fires, its fear?

Instead of cutting off the root, they watered it with holy water.

Pope Gregory III, in the 8th century, moved “All Saints’ Day” to November 1—a day to honor the “holy” dead. The night before became All Hallows’ Eve, later whispered down through the centuries as Halloween.

The goal? Shift the focus from pagan spirits to Christian saints.

But the effect?

The costumes remained. The bonfires stayed lit. The reverence for the dead only changed labels.

The ancestral spirits were traded for canonized martyrs.

Sacrifices became "vigils."

Masks didn't come off—they became more sophisticated.

The Church didn't redeem the night.

The night rebranded the Church.

Samhain didn't vanish—it *baptized the saints and danced on in disguise*.

Masks stayed on. Fires still burned. And the spirits still lingered.

Instead of spiritual purification, there was syncretism—a merging of truth with error. The saints took the place of ancestral spirits. “Vigils” replaced sacrifices. Costumes, offerings, and fear-based traditions never disappeared.

The soul of Samhain still beat in the cross.

A Mask on Darkness

Even with its new title, All Hallows’ Eve was still...

- A night of masks and disguises

- A night of fires and spirits
- A night of fear and appeasement

The traditions of Samhain lived on—just dressed in more acceptable clothing. Saints replaced ancestors. Prayers replaced spells. But the spirit of the celebration remained the same.

This was not light triumphing over darkness.

This was darkness wearing a cross.

And to this day, many do not realize that what they celebrate is not the triumph of holiness—but the survival of shadow.

The Rise of Halloween: Costumes, Candy, and Commercialization

What began as pagan holiday—for both pagans and priests—has now become one of the most commercialized and celebrated nights in the modern world.

Costumes:

In ancient times, disguises were worn to trick or hide from malevolent spirits thought to walk the earth during Samhain. Today, costumes remain—but the reason has been forgotten. What was once protection from spirits is now play. But is it harmless?

Jack-o'-Lanterns:

Originally carved from turnips, not pumpkins, these ghoulish faces were placed in windows or doorways to ward off evil spirits. They were spiritual amulets—burning with fear and superstition. The pumpkin is new. The root is old.

Trick-or-Treating:

In medieval times, “soulers” would go door to door on All Hallows’ Eve, offering prayers for the dead in exchange for “soul cakes.” Before that, it was food offerings to spirits. The masks. The fear. The expectation. Today’s candy hunt is a faded echo of those ancient rites.

Haunted Houses and Horror:

Death, fear, gore, and terror are sold as entertainment—paraded in front of children and sanctified with laughter. But death was never meant to be a joke.

A Shift in Culture:

What once walked in shadows now struts in the open. Halloween is no longer a hidden or religious observance—it’s an economic giant. Billions are spent annually on costumes, décor, candy, and haunted attractions. The holy and the harrowing have become a brand.

The Spiritual Cost: What Does YHWH Say About These Things?

Can we take part in a night born of fear, death, and darkness—and still claim to walk in the light?

What does YHWH say?

Do not learn the way of the nations. (Yirmeyahu / Jeremiah 10:2)

*There shall not be found among you... one who practices divination
or tells fortunes or interprets omens.*
(Devarim / Deuteronomy 18:10)

*What partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? What
fellowship has light with darkness?* (2 Corinthians 6:14)

He has not changed. His standard has not shifted.

Costumes do not cover compromise. Candy does not cleanse paganism.

YHWH is clear: His people are to be set apart—holy, undefiled, and unentangled with the unclean things of this world. He does not share worship. He does not wink at borrowed rituals from the gods of old.

Modern Church Compromise: When Darkness Walked In

The truth is devastating:

- Churches now host “Trunk or Treat” events in their parking lots.
- Children dress as witches and demons... inside buildings meant to be sacred.
- Skeletons and cobwebs adorn pulpits and pews in the name of “fun.”

But what kind of light dims itself to match the dark?

This is not reclaiming culture—it’s relinquishing holiness.

In its attempt to “relate” to the world, the modern church has opened its doors to its oldest enemies. Not in name, perhaps—but in practice.

What was once condemned is now celebrated.

What was once rebuked is now redeemed by costume and candy.

But can you cast out darkness while dancing with it?

Truth vs. Tradition: Are We Willing to Be Different?

This is where the road divides.

Will we walk the broad path of tradition—or return to the narrow way of Torah?

Many will say, “It’s just for fun.”

Many will say, “It doesn’t mean what it used to.”

But our King does not judge by cultural reinterpretation—He judges by obedience.

Are we willing to be misunderstood?

Are we willing to be different?

To be called “legalistic,” “weird,” or “extreme”?

Because true obedience has always cost something.

It cost Avraham his homeland.

It cost Moshe his palace.

It cost the prophets their lives.

Are we willing to lose a holiday for the sake of holiness?

A Call to Come Out

Come out from her, My people...

That you may not share in her sins. (Revelation 18:4)

The night is far gone. The masquerade has run its course.

Let us not dress our children in darkness or hand them the fruit of compromise.

Let us teach them to love what is holy, to cling to what is clean, to revere the One who called light from the void.

Let the veil be lifted.

Let the mask be torn.

And let those who love truth walk boldly once more on the Ancient Path.

Conclusion: When Light Stands Apart

Halloween is not just a holiday. It is a haunting echo of ancient rituals that still walk among us in new robes.

It was never about candy.

It was always about compromise.

A festival of fear became a celebration of fun—at the cost of truth.

But YHWH never changes.

He is still set-apart. His people must be too.

To walk in the light means to turn from the shadows—even when they come with costumes and smiles.

To honor YHWH is to reject what He rejects—even when the world calls it harmless.

So, choose, this day, whom you will serve—not just in belief, but in practice.

Come out from among them. And let your light be unmixed, unmasked, and unafraid.

Questions to Ponder

What are the true roots of Halloween, and are they compatible with Torah?

Answer → Halloween traces directly to Samhain, a pagan festival of death, spirits, and sacrifice. Torah commands us not to adopt the customs of the nations. The roots are unclean—and the fruit is no different.

Did the early Church cleanse the holiday—or cloak it?

Answer → It cloaked it. Samhain was renamed, not removed. It was absorbed and given a cross, but the spirits still danced beneath the surface.

What does YHWH say about mixing worship with pagan customs?

Answer → YHWH calls it abominable (Deut. 12:30–31). He warns us not to say, “I will worship Him this way.” He desires obedience, not adaptation.

Is it possible to celebrate Halloween “just for fun” and still remain set-apart?

Answer → Not without compromise. Participation—even if playful—makes light of spiritual darkness. Being set-apart means stepping away, even when it’s unpopular or misunderstood.

What message are we sending our children when we join in these customs?

Answer → That it’s okay to touch the unclean as long as it’s dressed in fun. But YHWH says to teach them His ways—not the ways of the nations (Deut. 6:6–7).

If we don’t participate, what can we do instead?

Answer → We can teach truth, celebrate YHWH’s appointed times, and raise a generation that honors light without shadow. Offer alternatives rooted in Scripture, not syncretism.

Am I willing to lose tradition for the sake of obedience?

Answer → That is the real test. True love for YHWH is measured not in belief alone, but in our willingness to give up what He never approved of.

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