

## **SANTA AND OTHER COUNTERFEITS OF SATAN**

Many of you have probably read examples of dumb criminals who've done some of the most idiotic things trying to pull off various crimes. I'd like to share with one of my very favourites. There is one apparently true story of how police in Wichita, Kansas, arrested a 22-year-old man at an airport hotel after he tried to pass two (counterfeit) \$16 bills. How could anyone be dumb enough to think that he could truly get away with passing a couple of counterfeit \$16 notes? Stupidity truly has no limits.

Counterfeiting is a huge problem all over the world. In 1998 a total of \$120 million counterfeit dollar bills were confiscated in America. Some of you probably saw the 60 minutes report a couple of months ago of the counterfeiting problem in China. It has been estimated that 30% of all goods made in China for overseas companies are counterfeited.

Who is the biggest counterfeiter of all? In his book "The Ultimate Source of All Supernatural Phenomena" Ronald Wlodyga writes the following:

"Satan has tried his best to be like God, and in effect has counterfeited or substituted everything God has revealed to him. But everything Satan has changed is inferior, perverted and twisted-just like him. The following are some of the Great Counterfeiter's accomplishments:

- "1) He counterfeited the Messiah for mankind through Nimrod and the Messiah's mother through Semiramis.
- 2) He counterfeited Christ's birthday for Nimrod's.
- 3) He counterfeited God's plan in the stars with astrology.
- 4) He counterfeited God's throne with UFO's.
- 5) He counterfeited God's church with a false church that masquerades as the true church.
- 6) He counterfeited God's ministers with his false ministers.
- 7) He counterfeited God's doctrines by changing: a) The Sabbath for Sunday. b) Easter for Passover.
- c) God's family with a trinity. d) The truth about heaven and hell and instituted the concept of purgatory.
- 8) He counterfeited God's millennial reign on the earth through Hitler...
- 11) He counterfeited God's Holy Spirit with his spirit that works through "the spirit in man." He can produce similar fruits of the Holy Spirit such as healing, dreams, visions and superhuman powers as witnessed by occult phenomena.
- 12) He will counterfeit God's prophets in the end time (the two witnesses) with a false prophet.

Satan always mixes a little bit of truth with a lot of lies and...copies, duplicates, impersonates, - imitates, COUNTERFEITS God's truth!" (p.334-335).

What are counterfeits? Counterfeits are things of little or no value that are made to look like and pass for things which really do have value. In other words they are cheap, worthless substitutes for the real thing.

In this article I would like to focus on one particular counterfeit that he has foisted upon children who we see a lot around this time of year. I refer to Santa Claus. Most of us are quite familiar with the pagan background of many Christmas customs. Recently I was quite amazed by an article a friend gave me that showed just how much of a counterfeit Santa is of God the Father and Jesus Christ which had many points that I had never heard before. I'd like to share some of those with you.

In **Isaiah 14:14** we read that Satan's stated intention at the time that he rebelled against God was to be "like the Most High". Let's have a look at how he has done that through the counterfeit of Santa Claus. First of all, let's look at Santa's appearance.

Santa's head and hairs are white as snow. Who else has head and hairs that are white as snow. In **Revelation 1:14** we read a little of what Jesus Christ looks like. It says: "His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow".

Santa's clothes are red. Who else has clothes that are red? In **Revelation 19:13** we read the following about the returning Jesus Christ: "And he was clothed with a vesture [or clothing] dipped in blood; and his name is called The Word of God." A similar reference is found in **Isaiah 63:1-2**.

**Revelation 1:15** says that Jesus' feet were "as if they burned in a furnace". It's interesting that Santa comes down through people's furnace or chimneys.

Jesus is traditionally believed to have been a carpenter (**Mark 6:3**). Santa is also known as a carpenter who makes children's toys.

Where does Santa live? Of course, everyone knows Santa lives at the North Pole but why the north pole? Nobody lives at the North Pole. Why did they pick the NORTH Pole? To understand why we need to understand a little about the pagan gods of the ancient world.

William F. Warren, in his book "Paradise Found" identified the north celestial pole as the home of the supreme god of ancient races. He wrote: "The religions of ALL ancient nations...associate the abode of the supreme God with the North Pole, the centre of heaven; or with the celestial space immediately surrounding it."

Atum-Ra of Egypt and Shamash of Babylon are both identified in ancient texts as a sun of night located at the north celestial pole. This is why Santa Claus comes from the north pole. In Rome this ancient sun-god was known as Saturn and the Saturnalia, which became Christmas, celebrated the death of the old sun-god Saturn. It's also interesting to note that both Saturn (from which we get Saturday) and sabbath both mean rest.

The Saturnalia was a seven-day festival that celebrated the death of the old sun-god. Similar to the way that the Last Great Day follows Tabernacles, the day after the Saturnalia is a separate festival called the Brumalia which falls on December 25 and celebrated the resurrection of the old sun-god. This festival goes back to the legend of Nimrod being resurrected through his son Tammuz that was foisted upon the ancient world by Nimrod's wife Semiramis after Nimrod's death – a counterfeit of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Part of the reason why the ancient pagan gods were said to dwell at the north celestial pole is that this is an echo of God Himself being located there. In **Isaiah 14:13** we read: "For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north.'"

Santa rides upon the heavens in his sleigh pulled along his flying reindeer. In **Deuteronomy 33:26** we read the following about God: "*There is no one like the God of Jeshurun, who rides the heavens to help you, and in His excellency on the clouds.*"

Santa's little helpers are called elves. Where are elves? According to Webster's Dictionary an elf is defined the following way: "1. A wandering spirit; a fairy; a hobgoblin; an imaginary being which our rude ancestors supposed to inhabit unfrequented places...2. An evil spirit; a devil." According to "The Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft" (p. 117) notes that some elves will grant peoples' wish and give them gifts if that person will only deny their Christian faith!

Santa cries out ho, ho, ho. Who else has used this expression? In **Zechariah 2:6** in the King James Version we read: "Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north, saith the LORD."

Is there anyone like Santa Claus? According to the Christmas rhyme: "He sees you when you're sleeping, He knows when you're awake, He knows if you've been bad or good, So be good for goodness sake, 'cause Santa Claus is Coming to Town, He's making a list, He's checking it twice, He's gonna find out, Who's naughty or nice

Like God Santa is All Knowing, he's Omniscient (**Matthew 28:18**). He says to children "Ask, and it shall be given you" (**Matthew 7:7**)

Take a trip to the local mall at Christmas time. Go watch Santa sitting on his royal throne. Kids are lined up to sit on his lap of judgment. What does Santa ask them, "Have you been a good little boy?" "Have you been a good little girl?" Like God (**Revelation 20:12**) Santa judges who's good and who's bad.

In **Psalms 11:4** we read: "The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men" (KJV).

In a moment, "in the twinkling of an eye" (**1 Corinthians 15:52**) Santa appears all over the world! He just quietly "tip-toes" in and "tip-toes" out. You hear nothing. You see nothing. He appears like a "thief in the night" (**1 Thessalonians 5:2**).

In one night, the all-powerful, Santa delivers millions and millions of gifts to children all around the world. Who could do that? Now, who REALLY believes that? Well, most little children who've been preached to about Santa. Nothing's too hard for their Santa. If the professing Christian world had, even a small drop of the faith the average child has in Santa we'd have a revival overnight! Satan's ultimate goal is worship. And millions of children are lovingly giving him their God-given child-like faith. They love their Santa! Like God's spirit (**Acts 2:17**) Santa has his own spirit - the Christmas "Spirit"?

Have you noticed how easy it is to transform "Satan" from "Santa"? Just move the "n" to the end. And presto! "Satan" appears. He is also referred to as Father Christmas (**Matthew 23:9**) and Jolly Old St. Nick. Nick is a nickname (no pun intended) for Satan.

In 1994, the satire magazine *The Onion* carried a parody of Santa Claus titled "Ho! Ho! Ho! I Am God". Even though, it was written as a blasphemous parody much truth rings from the article. The article says:

"I love visiting each and every one of your homes, stuffing your stockings with toys, and enjoying the milk and cookies you leave for me. But mostly I love Christmas because it's the celebration of the birth of my son, Jesus the Christ. You see, I'm God...Don't I look familiar? I'm old, I have a white beard, I love everyone. I'm the same God as the one you and your mommy and daddy worship on Sundays...Okay, I admit it. I'm not God. But I'm better than God. I'm jollier, and I give you real toys, not boring old psalms and empty promises you can only collect on when you die. Worship me, not Him! Worship Santa! I am God!" (Santa Claus, "Ho! Ho! Ho! I Am God!" *The Onion*, 29 Nov. - 5 Dec., 1994, p. 7)

Two young boys were once talking about Jesus Christ. They were beyond the age of Santa Claus. As they were talking, one boy asks the other, "What do you think of all this Jesus Christ stuff"? The other boy replied, "It all sounds like another Santa Claus to me – probably just another lie".

The gospel of Santa is a counterfeit of the "blessed hope" of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ designed to draw children away and put doubt in their minds from having faith in God and Jesus Christ.

For those of us in the Church of God Santa and Christmas are blatant counterfeits. Before I close I would just like to remind us of the need to be careful of more subtle counterfeits.

Some subtle counterfeits that are pushed onto us by our left-wing media include humanism and political correctness. They are some surface similarities to the Judeo-Christian ethics of the Bible but have upon closer examination there are also some major differences such as the acceptance of homosexuality and every religion under the sun.

While we may not be fooled by the major doctrines where we differ from mainstream christianity there are more subtle doctrines that do the rounds in the Church of God. One recent example I've heard is the idea that America is the beast and New York is Babylon. There are some surface similarities. **Revelation 13:4** says who is able to make war on the beast and America is by far the strongest military nation the world has ever seen and New York is the world's major financial city. When we look a little deeper, though, there are some major differences. The beast power has had many resurrections and clearly has deep historical roots in Europe and the Roman Empire as brought out by the church in its publications on prophecy.

In conclusion we need to properly "discern both good and evil" (**Hebrews 4:14**) and "prove all things" (**1 Thessalonians 5:21**) using God's word, the Bible, which is Truth (**John 17:17**). We need to be on guard not to fall for any of Satan's worthless counterfeits and hold fast to God's truth and promises which are precious and truly are the real thing.