

Easter

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"We're gonna have an Easter Sunrise Service; then we'll have an Easter Egg hunt for the kiddies! Won't that be great?" exclaimed the excited Sunday School Teacher. So, Easter is coming. There is much ado about this time of year. It is spring; and many believe they are doing right in a special Easter celebration of the resurrection of our Lord.

The Lord's churches have continuously celebrated His resurrection each and every first day of the week since the first century. The fact that we meet together for worship on the first day of the week reminds us of Jesus' resurrection for he had come forth from the grave, alive forevermore, when the first women came early in the morning on the first day of the week.

What is Easter? The English word "Easter" is found once and only once in our King James Bible. We read from Acts 12:1-4 where we find the use of the word "Easter" in verse 3:

Acts 12:1-4 *Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James the brother of John with the sword. And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.) And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.*

This verse tells us that it was during the days of unleavened bread. Those were the days which followed the Jewish Passover. The Greek word which is translated Easter in verse 3, is always translated as "Passover" in all the other instances of the New Testament. Did the translators of the King James Bible make a terrible mistake? No, they certainly did not. Herod, the

king was a wicked man who would not have had the slightest interest in Passover. He would, however, have been very interested in Easter which was celebrated by the heathen at this time of year. The translators of the KJV knew that fact very well. Let us delve into this a bit.

The translators of Good News for Modern Man, Living New Testament, Catholic Confraternity Version, Revised Standard Version, New American Standard Version, The New International Version and the Amplified New Testament (to name a few) have taken the liberty to use the word Passover instead of Easter because the Greek word pascha was rendered Passover in all other places. This is, of course, the real issue. Did the translators err in translating pascha as Easter? Should they have used the word Passover as it was used everywhere else in the New Testament?

There are no mistakes in the AV of 1611 for it is God's preserved Word in English. The time when Herod proceeded to take Peter and lock him up is fixed in Acts 12:3b - "Then were the days of unleavened bread." Watch this now. The days of unleavened bread followed the Passover (Mk. 14:12; Lk. 22:7; 1Co. 5:7-8). "And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover of the Lord. And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast: seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten." - Num. 28:16-17.

"Strictly speaking the Passover only applied to the paschal supper and the feast of unleavened bread which followed." (*Peloubet's Bible Dictionary*, p. 486.)

So Herod put Peter in prison after the Passover and during the days of unleavened bread which followed. Herod did not intend to bring Peter forth to the people after the days of unleavened bread but after pascha. Since the Jewish Passover was already passed, he must have been looking toward another date - Easter!

The word, Easter, is translated from the Greek word pascha which is - as all honest people can know - the Greek word for Passover and has no connection with the English, Easter. However, it is the firm conviction of this

writer that the King James Translators chose to use the word Easter because it was a pagan festival observed at this time of year. The word Easter comes from the name of a pagan goddess—the goddess of the rising light of day and spring. Easter is a modern form of Eostre, Oстера, Astarte, or Ishtar, the latter, according to Alexander Hislop in his book *The Two Babylons*, was pronounced as we pronounce Easter today.

“. . . The great annual festival in commemoration of the death and resurrection of Tammuz, which was celebrated by alternate weeping and rejoicing and which, in many countries was considerably later than the Christian festival, being observed in Palestine and Assyria in June." (*The Two Babylons*, Alexander Hislop, p. 105).

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the noun Easter as follows: "One of the great festivals of the Christian Church, commemorating the resurrection of Christ, and corresponding to the Jewish Passover . . ." Any Bible believer knows that the Lord's churches do not have "great festivals" of any kind. This is an invention of the Roman Catholic Church – the whore of Babylon. (Rev.17 & 18) The apostles did not celebrate Easter in special remembrance of the Lord's resurrection. The early church did not celebrate an Easter. The Lord Jesus did not command His church to celebrate this "great festival."

What about eggs, rabbits, and such like? These are pagan references to the fertility festivals held by the Babylonians and others. It has been adapted into the "so called" Christian Church. Baptist church were never a part of the Roman Catholic System. Nor were they part of the "reformed religions" of the protestant reformation. Roman Catholicism arose in the early fourth century under Emperor Constantine. Easter Parade clothing finery is merely another excuse by professing Christian women to wear expensive and ornate clothing.

We remember the Lord's resurrection each and every first day of the week as we gather to worship. The Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist

Church does not celebrate the "great festival" of the "Christian Church" called Easter.

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