

Should Messianic Yisrael Celebrate Easter?

By Rabbi Edward Levi Nydle-Revised 8-2-03

“So when they had seized him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads of soldiers to watch over him, intending to bring him before the people after EASTER (KJV) “Acts **12:4 KJV**

אתו ויתנהו במשמר וימסרהו לארבע מחלקות של ארבעה אנשי צבא לשמרו כי אמר להעלותו אחרי הפסח לפני העם:

⁴When he had Kefa seized, he put him in the beis hasohar, having handed him over to four squads of chaiyalim to guard him, intending after Pesach to bring him before the people-**OJBC**

Many Yisraelites accept the word “Easter” in this verse as the correct translation in the KJV and therefore believe it justifies Messianics participating the pagan rites of the spring celebration of the Queen of Heaven –Ishtar/Venus/Aphrodite/Astarte/ Isis/Semiramis! I first want to show you the MISTRANSLATION of this verse as in the beloved K.J.V.

- The word is # 3957 in **Strong’s** and means PASCHA from the Hebrew #6453 PASACH or Passover.
- In **Strong’s** #6453 *xsp* PASACH; to hop over, skip over, exemption, to spare, show mercy, peace offering
- G3957 *pascha* **Thayer Definition:** 1) the paschal sacrifice (which was accustomed to be offered for the people’s deliverance of old from Egypt) 2) the paschal lamb, i.e. the lamb the Israelites were accustomed to slay and eat on the fourteenth day of the month of Nisan (the first month of their year) in memory of the day on which their fathers, preparing to depart from Egypt, were bidden by Elohim to slay and eat a lamb, and to sprinkle their door posts with its blood, that the destroying angel, seeing the blood, might pass over their dwellings; Messiah crucified is likened to the slain paschal lamb 3) the paschal supper 4) the paschal feast, the feast of the Passover, extending from the 14th to the 20th day of the month Nisan

According to all my sources this word can ONLY refer to Passover, the feast or the offering and not the pagan EASTER! These sources reveal to us the lying pens of translators in the KJV who took it upon themselves to CHANGE and INTERPRET the original Greek word to support their false teachings involving the observance of “Easter”. It gives the impression that the early assemblies of Messiah participated in these orgies dedicated to the Queen of heaven, now personified by Mary worship! Let us continue to explore the origins of this pagan feast.

- **Funk and Wagnall’s Standard Reference Encyclopedia:** “EASTRE, Anglo-Saxon name of a Teutonic goddess of spring and fertility to who was dedicated the Eastre month, corresponding to April.”
- **Collier’s Encyclopedia:** “The Ishtar Festivals were symbolic of Ishtar as the goddess of love or generation. As the daughter of SIN, the moon god, she was the MOTHER GODDESS who presided over child birth; women, in her honor, sacrificed their VIRGINITY on the feast day or became TEMPLE PROSTITUTES...”
- **Collier’s Encyclopedia:** “ISHTAR, the goddess of love and war, was the most important goddess of the Sumerian-Akkadian pantheon. Her name in Sumerian is Inanna (LADY of HEAVEN). She was the sister of the Sun god Shamash and the daughter of the moon god Sin. Ishtar was equated with the planet VENUS. Her symbol was a star inscribed in a circle.”
- **Watson’s Biblical and Archeological Dictionary:** “Ashtaroth... She was also called the Queen of heaven; and sometimes her worship is said to be that of the host of heaven. She was certainly represented in the same manner as Isis, with cow’s horns on her head, to denote the increase and decrease of the moon. Cicero calls her the fourth VENUS of the Syrians. She is almost always joined with Baal (lord), and is called a god. The moon was adored in this idol.”

- Easter *ēs'tēr* (*pāscha*, from Aramaic **פֶּסַח**, *pašḥa'* and Hebrew **פֶּסַח**, *pešah*, the Passover festival): The English word comes from the Anglo-Saxon *Eastre* or *Estera*, a Teutonic goddess to whom sacrifice was offered in April, so the name was transferred to the paschal feast. The word does not properly occur in Scripture, although the King James Version has it in Act 12:4 where it stands for Passover, as it is rightly rendered in the Revised Version (British and American). **ISBE**
- There is no trace of Easter celebration in the New Testament, though some would see an intimation of it in 1Co 5:7. The Jewish Christians in the early church continued to celebrate the Passover, regarding [Messiah] as the true paschal lamb, and this naturally passed over into a commemoration of the death and resurrection of our Master, or an Easter feast. This was preceded by a fast, which was considered by one party as ending at the hour of the crucifixion, i.e. at 3 o'clock on Friday, by another as continuing until the hour of the resurrection before dawn on Easter morning. Differences arose as to the time of the Easter celebration, the Jewish Christians naturally fixing it at the time of the Passover feast which was regulated by the paschal moon. According to this reckoning it began on the evening of the 14th day of the moon of the month of *Nīḗn* without regard to the day of the week, while the Gentile Christians identified it with the first day of the week, i.e. the Sunday of the resurrection, irrespective of the day of the month. This latter practice finally prevailed in the church, and those who followed the other reckoning were stigmatized as heretics. But differences arose as to the proper Sunday for the Easter celebration which led to long and bitter controversies. The Council of Nice, 325 AD, decreed that it should be on Sunday, but did not fix the particular Sunday. It was left to the bishop of Alexandria to determine, since that city was regarded as the authority in astronomical matters and he was to communicate the result of his determination to the other bishops. But this was not satisfactory, especially to the western churches, and a definite rule for the determination of Easter was needed. By some it was kept as early as March 21, and by others as late as April 25, and others followed dates between. The rule was finally adopted, in the 7th century, to celebrate Easter on the Sunday following the 14th day of the calendar moon which comes on, or after, the vernal equinox which was fixed for March 21. This is not always the astronomical moon, but near enough for practical purposes, and is determined without astronomical calculation by certain intricate rules adopted by ecclesiastical authority. These rules involve the Dominical Letters, or the first seven of the alphabet, representing the days of the week, a standing for the first day of the year and the one on which Sunday falls being called the Dominical for that year. There are also involved the Golden Numbers and the Epacts, the first being the numbers from 1 to 19, the cycle of the moon when its phases recur on the same days of the year, the first of the cycle being that in which the new moon falls on January 1. The Epacts indicate the moon's age at the beginning of each year. Easter was thus fixed by these rules, but another difficulty arose when the Gregorian calendar was adopted in 1582, the difference between it and the Julian being then 10 days. This of course affected the determination of Easter, and its celebration by the Greek Church, which has never admitted the Gregorian calendar, occurs usually at a different time from that followed by the western churches. This difference may be as much as five weeks and it may occur as late as April 30, while in the West it cannot occur later than April 25 nor earlier than March 22. Occasionally the two come together but this is rare, since the difference between the two calendars is now 13 days. The Easter feast has been and still is regarded as the greatest in the Christian church, since it commemorates the most important event in the life of its Founder. **ISBE**
- Easter Originally a Saxon word (*Eostre*), denoting a goddess of the Saxons, in honor of who sacrifices were offered about the time of the Passover. Hence the name came to be given to the festival of the Resurrection of [Messiah], which occurred at the time of the Passover. In the early English versions this word was frequently used as the translation of the Greek *pascha* (the Passover). When the Authorized Version (1611) was formed, the word "Passover" was used in all passages in which this word *pascha* occurred, except in Acts 12:4. In the Revised Version the proper word, "Passover," is always used. **EASTON Bible Dic.**
- **EASTER (A.V.):** -(Should be translated "Passover," as in R. V. and most other translations)
#Ac 12:4! **Naves**

- **ASTARTE:** Asht-tart, "the woman that made towers". Tart comes from the Hebrew verb tr, "to go around", or "to be round", "to surround", or "encompass". The masculine form of the word, tor, used for "a border, or row of jewels round the head". The feminine, turis, is Greek form of turit, with the "t" in Greek converted to an "s". In Hebrew, Ashtoreth, "the woman that made the encompassing wall." The name Astarte also signified, "maker of investigations. **2 Babylons**

In Ephesus she was called the MOTHER GODDESS and had been called "Diana". The pagans worshipped her as the goddess of VIRGINITY and MOTHERHOOD. She was represented as a many-breasted woman with a tower shaped crown on her head. The mother goddess worship spread from Babylon to the entire world. This mother goddess was known by many different names, but the form of her worship remained the same.

It was finally established at Rome and spread throughout all the Roman Empire. And it is now known as the Easter celebration. All its trappings of eggs, bunnies, hot-cross buns, and Sunrise services speak of the pagan fertility rites that took place in her temples long ago! Just as Yisrael of old succumbed to idolatry, so the last days Yisrael (Ephraim) has been guilty of paganism and idolatry!

I could go on for pages with sources confirming the pagan origins of the "kirch's" Ishtar celebration. It are well documented and a proven FACT. I would suggest you read "**The Two Babylons**" by Alexander Hislop, "**Come OUT of Her My People**" by Dr.C.J. Koster, or get Lew White's fantastic book "**Fossilized Customs**" to learn more and to be informed!

My question to you as Messianic Yisraelite is this-Why would anyone who loves Yahweh want to participate in something as pagan and downright obscene as Ishtar/Easter? Why would you want this pagan festival to be taught to your children? Why would you want to substitute Easter for the feast Yahweh has given us as Yisrael, the Passover?

May Yahweh bless you as you search your heart to find TRUTH