

# Why Passover, Not Easter, Should Be Central To Christianity

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The word *Easter* was inserted erroneously by translators of the 1611 King James Version of the Bible. Easter was used instead of Passover in Acts 12:4, even though the Greek word it was translated from was *pascha* (SGD 3957), which means Passover. This false insertion occurs only once in the New Testament, and the other twenty-nine times the word *pascha* is translated into the English language, it is translated correctly as Passover,

So when he (Herod) had apprehended (arrested) him (Peter), he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after *Easter* (*pascha* – Passover; SGD 3957; KJV; emphasis added).

The translators of the New King James Version of the Holy Bible (NKJV; Copyright 1982, by Thomas Nelson, Inc.) corrected the erroneous insertion of the word *Easter* that was in the 1611 New King James Version by removing it from Acts 12:4. It appears that the translators of the 1611 King James Version of the Bible were influenced to insert the word *Easter* in order to promote a teaching that had been introduced into the religion that refers to itself broadly as Christianity. It is ironic that the historical context of Acts 12:4 had nothing to do with Easter (\*Ishtar – see footnote) because it occurred during the time of Christ's apostles, none of whom acknowledged pagan days of worship except to condemn them (1Cor. 12:2; Col. 3:6-7). As the dominate religion of the early church was Judaism, they would not have tolerated heathen practices such as the worship of Ishtar. Instead, the gradual introduction of Ishtar worship into Christianity occurred after the apostles of Christ had died, and it eventually surfaced as a major holiday in the Roman Catholic system (The Quartodeciman controversy; mid to late 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE. See *Church History*, Eusebius Pamphilius, Book IV Chapter XXIV - The Disagreement in Asia; [http://christianbookshelf.org/pamphilius/church\\_history/chapter\\_xxiv\\_the\\_disagreement\\_in\\_asia.htm](http://christianbookshelf.org/pamphilius/church_history/chapter_xxiv_the_disagreement_in_asia.htm)). By examining some of the beliefs and customs associated with Ishtar worship, a number of similarities can be seen between Christ's death and resurrection, and activities associated with Ishtar. So it should be no surprise that the term *Easter* was substituted, instead of the word *Passover*, in one of the world's major translations of Holy Scripture because Ishtar supposedly descended into the grave as Christ did after his death and she rose from the dead three days and three nights later, as Jesus Christ did. After Christ's resurrection and upon his future return to earth, scripture shows that he will be involved with raising the dead, which is an act also associated with Ishtar (Jn. 6:40, 44, 54),

The powers of the underworld bowed down before her (Ishtar) when she went underground to rescue her son-lover Tammuz, as her Sumerian forerunner Inanna rescued the same son-lover, Dumuzi. She said to the seven gatekeepers: "If thou openest not the gate so that I cannot enter, I will smash the door, I will shatter the bolt, I

will smash the doorpost, I will move the doors, I will raise up the dead" (Hooke, M.E.M., 40; emphasis added).

This descent into Hell was a perilous but necessary part of the sacred drama, lasting three days and culminating in the Day of Joy, when the god (Ishtar) was restored to life (Pritchard, A.N.E. 2, 13; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Like Adonis, Attis came to be worshiped as a god of vegetation, responsible for the death and rebirth of plant life. Each year at the beginning of spring his resurrection was celebrated in a festival. In Roman religion he became a powerful celestial deity (<http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Attis.aspx>; emphasis added).

Now the death and resurrection of Attis were officially celebrated at Rome on the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth of March, the latter being regarded as the spring equinox, and therefore as the most appropriate day for the revival of a god... But according an ancient and widespread tradition Christ suffered on the twenty-fifth of March, and accordingly some Christians regularly celebrated the crucifixion (Easter) on that day... The resurrection of Attis, who combined in himself the characters of the divine Father and the Divine Son, was officially celebrated at Rome on the same day (Fraser; Adonis Attis Osiris: Studies in the History of Oriental Religion; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

So Passover was hijacked and replaced by Easter in the Christian religion as it evolved over the centuries following the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This was a clever way of disguising a number of vital truths about the work of Jesus Christ that can only be understood, and fully appreciated, when the Passover is observed as it was originally intended by Almighty God. In order to restore this correct understanding, it is essential that the first Passover instructions be examined closely. Before covering some of these scriptures, it is important to establish that the first Passover command in the twelfth chapter of Exodus was given to the nation of Israel before they left Egypt and before they received Almighty God's law and commandments, as a nation, at Mt. Sinai.

By the time all of the relevant scriptures have been covered on this subject, the main reason for Christianity replacing the Passover with Easter should become apparent because it is central to the antinomian (against law) position that most of Christianity embraces today,

And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the ordinance of the Passover: No outsider shall eat it. But every man's servant who is bought for money, when you have circumcised him, then he may eat it. A sojourner and a hired servant shall not eat it" (Ex. 12:43-45).

And when a stranger sojourns (stays for awhile) with you and wants to keep the Passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as a native of the land. For no uncircumcised person shall eat it. One law shall be for the native-born and for the stranger who sojourns among you (Ex. 12:48-49; Ed. note in parenthesis).

The ordinance of the Passover involved circumcision in the First Covenant, and this circumcision was not only for the native-born Israelite. If a non-Israelite (Gentile) wanted to obey Almighty God and live in accordance with His will, that

individual could become a member of the nation through the act of circumcision and then partake of the Passover.

Circumcision involved the shedding of blood which figuratively pointed to the forgiveness that the shed blood of Jesus Christ would provide,

And according to the law almost all things are purged (cleansed) with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission (forgiveness) (Heb. 9:22; Ed. notes in parentheses).

However, this ordinance of circumcision was a temporary schoolmaster (cf. Gal. 3:24-25), as was the entire animal sacrificial system, pointing prophetically to the time when a sinless being would offer up his blood once and for all to cover the sins of everyone who has ever lived,

Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified (cleansed) with these (animal sacrifices), but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies (representations) of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; not that he should offer himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with the blood of another (during the Day of Atonement – Covering; cf. Ex. 30:10-16) – He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, he has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for him he will appear a second time, apart from (dealing with) sin, for salvation (Heb. 9:23-28; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Just as the sacrifice of a clean animal at Passover foreshadowed the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, so the circumcision of a stranger pictured a time in the future when non-Israelites could become part of the spiritual nation of Israel through the blood of Jesus Christ,

I (the apostle Paul) say then, have they (the nation of Israel) stumbled that they should fall (in a permanent sense)? Certainly not! But through their fall (trespass – sin), to provoke them to jealousy (get their serious attention), salvation has come to the Gentiles (Rom. 11:11; Ed. notes in parentheses).

And if some of the branches (representing the nation of Israel) were broken off (because of persistent sin), and you (the Gentile nations), being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them (in a spiritual sense), and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness (richness) of the olive tree (Rom. 11:17; Ed. notes in parentheses).

You (the Gentiles nations) will say then, “Branches were broken off (Israel was temporarily cut off) that I might be grafted in (to the spiritual nation of Israel).” Well said. Because of unbelief they (the nation of Israel) were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear (to be disrespectful and disobedient). For if God did not spare the natural branches (because of their persistent disobedience), He may not spare you (Gentiles) either (Rom. 11:19-21; Ed. notes in parentheses).

In the First Covenant Passover, no outsider could partake of it because his sins were not forgiven, which was pictured figuratively by the blood of circumcision.

In the Second Covenant, unless an individual has repented of their sins, with the understanding that Jesus Christ shed his blood as a sacrifice to cover their sins, they can have no part with him which includes imbibing the symbols of the New Testament Passover once a year. If they have repented and been baptized (Ac. 2:38), they are now able to partake of these symbols, which Christ described a number of times, because they are spiritually circumcised,

I (Christ) **am the bread of life** (everlasting).<sup>49</sup> **Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.**<sup>50</sup> **This is the bread; the one who comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die** (in the sense of everlasting death).<sup>51</sup> **I am the living bread, the one having come down from heaven** (proof that Christ pre-existed); **if anyone eats of this bread, he will live into the age** (reference to a future resurrection from the dead); **but the bread which I will give is my flesh; life – for the sake of the world** (Jn. 6:48-51; RNT; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Then Jesus said to them, **“Amen, Amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in yourselves.”**<sup>54</sup> **The one feeding on my flesh and drinking my blood has age-abiding** (everlasting) **life, and I will make him rise in the last day** (upon Christ’s future return to earth; cf. 1Cor. 15:50-58; 1Thes. 4:13-18).<sup>55</sup> **For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink.**<sup>56</sup> **The one feeding on me and drinking my blood abides in me, and I in him**” (Jn. 6:53-56; RNT; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

During the first national observance of Passover in the First Covenant, the nation of Israel sacrificed a lamb without breaking any of its bones (Ex. 12:46, cf. Jn. 19:36), placed its blood on their doorposts and lintels so that the death angel would pass over their sins (in a figurative sense) and spare their physical lives. Then they ate the lamb which pre-figured the lamb of Almighty God who would lay down his life for the sins of everyone who has ever lived (cf. Jn. 1:29). During the Passover of the Second Covenant, those who comprise the spiritual nation of Israel are to eat unleavened bread which reminds them that Christ was willing to lay down his body, which was severely beaten (cf. Isa. 53:3-9), and then they drink some wine which reminds them that Christ was willing to have his blood shed and then die for them in order to cover their sins. If Christians do not follow these instructions, they cannot have any part with Jesus Christ, and as a consequence will not be in the first resurrection (Jn. 6:53-55; cf. Rev. 20:4-6). To claim to be a Christian and not keep the symbols of the Second Covenant Passover, denies what Jesus Christ stated to his disciples when they partook of the symbols of the New Testament Passover,

And having taken bread and given thanks, he (Christ) broke *it* and gave to them (his disciples), saying, **“This is my body, being given on your behalf, do this in remembrance of me** (annually at the Passover).<sup>20</sup> And the cup, likewise, after eating, saying, **“This is the cup of the New Covenant in my blood, being poured out on your behalf”** (Lk. 22:19-20; RNT; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Christ made it abundantly clear that anyone claiming they know him must observe the Passover of the Second Covenant and partake of the ordinances he introduced. Christ had to introduce these new ordinances just prior to the actual sacrifice of the Passover lambs because he had to die at the same time in order

to fulfill the law regarding the sacrifice on the evening of the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month (cf. Ex. 12:6),

Now before the Feast of Passover, Jesus, having known that his hour had come, that he would go out of this world to (God) the Father, having loved his own, the ones in the world, He loved them to *the* fullest.<sup>2</sup> And during supper, the Devil, having already cast into the heart of Judas Iscariot, that he would betray him (Christ),<sup>3</sup> *Jesus*, having known that the Father had given all things into his (Christ's) hands, and that he came out from God (where he originally was – proof of Christ's pre-existence) and to God he departs,<sup>4</sup> he rose up from supper and laid aside his garments; and having taken a towel, he girded himself.<sup>5</sup> Then he poured water into the wash bowl, and began to wash the disciples' feet and wipe them dry in the towel in which he was girded.<sup>6</sup> Then he came to Simon Peter. He said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?"<sup>7</sup> Jesus answered, and said to him, "What I do you do not now know, but you will know after these things."<sup>8</sup> Peter said to him, "Never shall you wash my feet into the age!" Jesus answered him, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me" (Jn. 13:1-8; RNT; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Christ taught by his personal example, and then commanded his followers to do exactly what he had just done for them,

Therefore, when he washed their feet, and took his clothes and reclined again, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you?"<sup>13</sup> You call me Teacher and Lord, and well you say, for I am.<sup>14</sup> If I then, the Lord and Teacher, washed your feet, you also owe (3784 Gk. *opheilō*, to owe, to be indebted) to wash one another's feet.<sup>15</sup> For I gave an example to you, that you should do just as I did to you (Jn. 13:12-15; RNT; emphasis added).

So the Second Covenant Passover ordinances include partaking of unleavened bread, drinking some wine, and washing one another's feet as a reminder that we are all to learn to serve one another,

Amen, Amen, I (Christ) say to you (true Christians), a slave is not greater than his master, nor is the one sent (Christ) greater than the one having sent him (Almighty God).<sup>17</sup> If you know these things, happy are you if you do them (Jn. 13:16-17; RNT; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

True Christians are to do these things; otherwise they are simply paying lip-service to their claims of being a follower of Jesus Christ. In reality, they are not part of the spiritual nation of Israel,

For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was (Jas. 1:23-24).

Just as the Second Covenant Passover is an annual reminder of Christ's sacrifice on behalf of all sinners to free them from slavery to sin, so the Passover of the First Covenant was to remind the nation of Israel annually about their salvation from Egyptian slavery,

And Moses said to the people: "Remember this day in which you went out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage (slaves); for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out of this place. No leavened bread shall be eaten" (Ex. 13:3; Ed. note in parenthesis).

As long as an individual or nation is under the influence of Satan, they are slaves to sin and sin is pictured figuratively by *leaven* during the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread because leaven puffs up whatever it is in and permeates it, just as sin does in our lives,

Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore purge (clean) out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened (because our past sins were forgiven upon repentance and baptism). For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast (of Unleavened Bread; cf. Ex. 13:6-7), not with old leaven (our old sinful way of living), nor with the leaven (sin) of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (1Cor. 5:6-8; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Sin is oppressive because it cuts us off from Almighty God and prevents us from understanding His plan of salvation (Isa. 59:2). By correctly observing the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread, an individual is reminded each year that Christ's sacrifice has reconciled us to Almighty God and opened our minds to understand the purpose of our lives and the future that is now available for those who want to obey God. This is true freedom from slavery, a slavery that is more spiritual in nature than the slavery that ancient Israel was under,

And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, 'This is done (annual observance of the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread) because of what the Lord did for me when I came up from Egypt.' (Ex. 13:8).

The reason that Christ came as the ultimate sacrifice for sin was to fulfill the spiritual intent behind the physical lamb that ancient Israel sacrificed each year at the Passover (Mt. 5:17). This act of love, expressed by Christ's sacrifice, provided the means through which all who have sinned could be freed from the slavery of sin, which is the transgression of God's law and commandments (1Jn. 3:4), and be reconciled to God Almighty. Also, because Christ was willing to lay down his life as a ransom for everyone's sins, he made it possible for a number of prophecies to be fulfilled (cf. Mt. 20:28; Mk. 10:45; 1Tim. 2:6),

Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the (spiritual) house of Israel and with the (spiritual) house of Judah (cf. Rom. 11:19-24; Gal. 3:28-29; 1Pe. 2:9) – not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days (after Christ's death and resurrection), says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity (upon repentance for sins and baptism; cf. Ac. 2:38), and their sin I will remember no more (Jer. 31:31-34).



God's Holy Spirit is the means through which all who have sinned can begin to obey God's will as expressed in His law and commandments. Most of Christianity today does not understand the reason they cannot follow God's law and commandments or why God requires it. It is because they have not truly repented of sin with a deep desire to trust Almighty God and obey Him. The carnal mind, apart from the action of God's Holy Spirit, is hostile towards God's law and commandments. This explains why so many who claim to 'know God' ignore His law and commandments. They prefer to make statements such as, "Christ fulfilled the law so I don't have to do anything." When in fact Christ came and died in order to make it possible to obey the law and commandments of Almighty God,

For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life (everlasting) and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity (hostile toward God and His law); for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be (Rom. 8:6-7; cf. Isa. 30:9-11; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Therefore, anyone who actually has God's Holy Spirit would agree that the law and commandments of Almighty God are applicable in their lives today. If they disagree, it is because they are devoid of God's Holy Spirit despite claims to the contrary. This truth is confirmed by Jesus Christ,

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of the heavens, but he who does the will of my Father, the one in the heavens. <sup>22</sup> "Many will say to me in that day (after the second resurrection because they will not be part of the first resurrection; cf. Rev. 20:4-6), 'Lord, Lord, did we not (in our physical lifetime) prophecy in your name, and in your name cast out demons, and in your name do many powerful works?' <sup>23</sup> "And then I (Christ) will declare to them, 'I never knew you, depart from me you workers of lawlessness (who continue break God's law)!' (cf. 1Jn. 3:4) (Mt. 7:21-23; Ed. notes in parentheses).

As scripture states, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ at Passover provided the means through which all who have sinned can obtain God's Holy Spirit, which is the power that enables true followers of Almighty God to obey His law and commandments. This fact is mentioned prophetically in a scripture that summarizes the main purpose of the First Covenant Passover, which is spiritual more than physical,

It shall be as a sign to you (observance of the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread) on your hand (in everything that you put your hand to do) and as a memorial between your eyes (to keep you in continual remembrance), that the Lord's law may be in your mouth (you can discuss it because you are practicing it); for with a strong hand the Lord brought you out of Egypt (type of this present evil world; cf. Rev. 11:8). You shall therefore keep this ordinance in its season from year to year (Ex. 13:9-10; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Keeping the Second Covenant Passover is a command and a sign between Almighty God and His true followers, reminding them every year that Jesus Christ died in order to make everlasting life available to all who repent of sin and begin living in newness of life as defined by God's law and commandments (cf.

Rom. 6:4; 7:6). In contrast, observing the pagan rites associated with Easter simply confirms that people still seem to think it is acceptable to worship Almighty God through pagan traditions disguised as being somehow Christian,

**Hypocrites! Correctly did Isaiah prophecy concerning you** (including most of this world's Christianity), **saying,**<sup>8</sup> **“This people honors Me** (Almighty God) **with their lips** (speak of religious things), **but their heart** (inner desire) **is far away from me.**<sup>9</sup> **And in vain they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men”** (of which Easter and Christmas are chief doctrines) (Mt. 15:7-9; RNT; Ed. notes in parentheses; words in Bold denote OT quote).

Keeping the Second Covenant Passover fulfills the law pertaining to the First Covenant Passover. The central message of the First Covenant Passover was to explain the means through which everyone would eventually be able to keep God's law and commandments (“... that the Lord's law may be in your mouth”; cf. Ex.13:9). It was only through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, pictured by the death of the lamb during the First Covenant Passover, that everyone could be forgiven of sin (upon repentance and baptism) and then begin living in newness of life in accordance with God's will, having received His spirit.

\*Footnote: Ishtar (pronounced: *ēster*, the “l” is pronounced as an “ē” and the “h” is silent).

Babylonian “Star,” the Great Goddess who appears in the Bible as Ashtoreth, Anath, Asherah, or Esther, the Queen of Heaven (Jeremiah 44:19). She was also the Great Whore described in Revelation 17:5 as Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots. Another of her titles was the Goddess Har, who called herself the compassionate prostitute. Men communed with her through the sexual rites of her harlot-priestesses (Briffault 3, 169).

This document is the collaborative work of individuals who believe God's truth should be given freely (Mt. 10:8; 1Cor. 2:12; 2Cor.11:7; Rom. 10:14-21) and the message of the one true God should be made available to all nations (Mt. 24:14) as a prerequisite to the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings (Mt. 17:10; 19:17; Mk. 9:11; Lk. 1:17; Rev. 19:11-16).

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