

## Did the King James Translators Mistranslate "Easter" in Acts 12:4?<sup>1</sup>

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. – *Acts 12:4*

In the King James Bible, the word translated as "Easter" in Acts 12:4 is the Greek word *pascha*. This word is found 29 times in the New Testament and it's always translated as "Passover," except in this one instance. But why the sudden departure?

All modern versions of the Bible translate *pascha* in Acts 12:4 as "Passover" whereas the KJB translates it as "Easter." So if it can be proven that *pascha* should be translated as "Passover," then we should be reading from one of the newer more modern versions of the Bible and not the KJB. But if it can be proven that it should've been translated as "Easter," then we should be reading from the KJB and not one of the newer more modern versions. Two Bibles that read differently can't both be correct, and so one is right and the other is wrong; therefore, a side *must* be chosen. This isn't just about who translated *pascha* correctly, it's about which version of the Bible we should be reading from: one of the newer more modern versions or the KJB. But let's have a closer look.

As a holiday, Easter began many centuries ago as a hedonistic fertility rite honoring the goddess Astarte (Ishtar).<sup>2</sup> The rabbit and the egg are symbols of fertility and this is why we have Easter eggs and the Easter (Playboy) bunny. Suffice it to say that Easter and Passover have nothing to do with one another. Passover is Christian and Easter is pagan. Easter is celebrated in the morning (Eze. 8:13-16) and Passover at night (Dt. 16:6). These two are diametrically opposed as are the two sets of manuscripts used in making the modern versions and the King James Bible.<sup>3</sup> The only thing they do share in common is that they both occur during the same Jewish month of Nisan (March\April). But the question remains, is Acts 12:4 referring to Passover or Easter? The answer is found in the beginning verses of Acts 12:

**Acts 12:1** Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth *his* hands to vex certain of the church. <sup>2</sup>And he killed James the brother of John with the sword. <sup>3</sup>And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (**Then** were the days of unleavened bread [in which Peter was arrested].) <sup>4</sup>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** [**Passover?**]to bring him forth to the people [to kill him].

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<sup>1</sup> Article based on an article written by Dr. Samuel C. Gipp entitled, *Isn't "Easter" in Acts 12:4 a Mistranslation?*

<sup>2</sup> A.k.a. the "queen of heaven" (Jer. 7:18; 44:15-27) or Diana (Acts 19:23-41 [Gr. *Artemis*]).

<sup>3</sup> All modern versions are derived from the Septuagint and the KJB is derived from the Hebrew Masoretic Texts and the Textus Receptus.

(over)

Passover is on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan which is immediately followed by the Feast of Unleavened Bread which begins on the 15<sup>th</sup> and ends on the 21<sup>st</sup>.<sup>4</sup> Easter occurs a few days afterward. But from vv. 3-4, Peter is arrested *during* the Feast of Unleavened Bread which means that Passover had already passed and that Easter hadn't yet arrived, so it would make no sense for Herod to say that he's going to kill Peter after the Passover because the Passover had *already* passed. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was already underway!

In other words, Herod is speaking of the Passover as if it hadn't happened yet, but was going to happen soon. But v. 3 has Peter being arrested during the Feast of Unleavened Bread which always follows Passover. Thus Herod can't be referring to the Passover as the modern versions suggest because Passover occurs before the Feast of Unleavened Bread and not after – unless of course he was referring to the next Passover which was a full year away! But this is unlikely as the context of the passage is that of Peter needing quick deliverance (Acts 12:5-19).

In addition, "Passover" in Scripture is never used to refer to the entire 8-day celebration of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, although it is true that the Feast of Unleavened Bread often includes the idea of the Passover, but not vice versa.<sup>5</sup> Passover was a unique event that occurred during one evening and not over the course of an entire week; so to translate Acts 12:4 as "Passover" would have contradicted common practice and usage of the term thus adding to the confusion, of which God is not the author (1 Cor. 14:33).

Herod's remarks *would* have made sense had he arrested Peter *before* the Passover – intending to kill him afterwards; but it was too late as they were already in the middle of the Feast (3). But again, he didn't because *pascha* either refers to Passover or Easter, but not the Feast. So to render *pascha* as "Passover" really makes no sense: it had already passed. The translators of the KJB saw this problem and rendered it "Easter" instead. But why?

Logic dictates that *pascha* in Acts 12:4 isn't referring to the Passover, but another holiday that occurs later in Nisan – and that is Easter. So in this instance, *pascha* has been used to refer to *the time* of the Passover instead of *the specific day* of the Passover. Easter and Passover occur near to one another, but on different days. And similar to what he'd done with John during a birthday party (Mt. 14:6-12; Mk. 6:21-29), Herod would've been happy to offer up a human sacrifice like Peter – especially during a major pagan holiday. So the King James translators had it right. They correctly rendered *pascha* in Acts 12:4 as "Easter" because the Passover day had already passed. Thus the superiority of the KJB has been proven. Christians should therefore be reading from the KJB and not one of the modern versions that introduce this error. Again, two "versions" that read so differently can't both be true: the translators of the KJB have ended the confusion whereas the modernists – those who prefer the newer more "modern" versions of the Bible – have added to it. Selah.

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<sup>4</sup> Ex. 12:12-18; Num. 28:16-18; Dt. 16:1-8

<sup>5</sup> Mt. 26:17; Mk. 14:12; Lu. 22:7