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SHOULD A NEW TESTAMENT BELIEVER OBSERVE

# EASTER OR PASSOVER?

*The preponderance of those who embrace the New Testament Scriptures and the Messiah of that New Testament observe Easter during March or April of each year. A minority of believers, however, observe the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread. Which is right? Which is truly according to Scripture?*

*By Jerry Healan*

During the Easter observance, the Scriptural account of the resurrection of the Savior is the supreme focus. However, why is this period called Easter and where did this term Easter come from? "The English term, according to the Ven. Bede (*De temporum ratione*, I, v), relates to Estre, a Teutonic goddess of the rising light of day and spring..." (*The Catholic Encyclopedia Electronic Version*) "The name Easter comes from the Anglo-Saxon Eostre, a goddess of light or spring whose festival was celebrated in April." (*The World Book Encyclopedia*, p. 2088) "The name Easter, like the names of the days of the week, is a survival from the old Teutonic mythology. According to Bede (*De Temp. Rat. C. xv.*) It is derived from *Eostre*, or *Ostâra*, the Anglo-Saxon goddess of spring, to whom the month answering to our April, and called *Eostur-monath*, was dedicated." (*Encyclopedia Britannica* 14th edition, vol. 7, p. 858) "Then look at Easter. What means the term Easter itself? It is not a Christian name. It bears its Chaldean origin on its very forehead. Easter is nothing else than Astarte, one of the titles of Beltis, the queen of heaven, whose name, as pronounced by the people of Nineveh, was evidently identical with that now in common use in this country. That name was found by Layard on the Assyrian monuments, is Ishtar. The worship of Bel and Astarte was very early introduced into Britain, along with the Druids, 'the priests of the groves'." (**The Two Babylons** by Alexander Hislop, p. 103)

Do you get the impact of all of these statements? Easter is a name associated with a pagan goddess! It is a name which is associated with Teutonic mythology which reaches further back

to Nineveh and Babylon! It is the name of the "Queen of heaven!"

## ISHTAR

The name "Easter" comes from the name of the Babylonian and Assyrian goddess Ishtar. Here is what the *Encyclopedia Britannica* says about Ishtar, "...the chief goddess of Babylonia and Assyria, the counterpart of the Phoenician Astarte (q.v.) The earliest written form of the name is *Ash-dar*, an Accadian rendering of the older Sumerian *Innîni*, 'Lady of Heaven.' Ishtar was the Semitic deity identified with the Sumerian Venus. For this reason Asdar, Ishtar, is undoubtedly the same deity as the south Arabian Athtar, god of the planet Venus. At all events it is now generally recognized that the name is Semitic in its origin. Where the name originated is likewise uncertain, but the indications point to Erech, where we find the worship of a great Sumerian mother-goddess having no association with a male counterpart flourishing in the oldest period of Babylonian history. She appears under various names, among which are *Nanâ*, *Innanna*, *Ninâ* and *annuit*. As early as the days of Khammurabi we find these various names which represented originally different goddesses, though all manifest as the chief trait the life-giving power united in Ishtar. Even when the older names are employed it is always the great mother-goddess who is meant. Ishtar is the one goddess in the pantheon who retains her independent position despite and throughout all changes that the Babylonian-Assyrian religion undergoes." (14th edition, vol. 12, p. 707)

Since Astarte is the same principal goddess,



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let's see what is said about her under this name, "A Semitic goddess whose name appears in the Bible as Ashtoreth. She is everywhere the great female principle answering to the Baal of the Canaanites and Phoenicians and to the Dagon of the Philistines. She had temples at Sidon and at Tyre (whence her worship was transplanted to Carthage), and the Philistines probably venerated her at Ascalon (1 Sam. Xxxi. 10). Solomon built a high-place for her at Jerusalem which lasted until the days of King Josiah (I. Kings xi. 5; II. Kings xxiii. 13), and the extent of her cult among the Israelites is proved as much by the numerous biblical references as by the frequent representations of the deity turned up on Palestinian soil. The Moabites formed a compound deity, Ashtar-Chemosh and the absence of the feminine termination occurs similarly in the Babylonian and Assyrian prototype Ishtar. The old South Arabian phonetic equivalent 'Athtar' is, however, a male deity. Another compound, properly of mixed sex, appears in the Aramaean Atargatis ('At[t]ar-'athe), worn down to Derketo, who is specifically associated with sacred pools and fish (Ascalon, Hierapolis-Mabog).

"As the great nature-goddess, the attributes of fertility and reproduction are characteristically hers, as also the accompanying immorality which originally, perhaps, was often nothing more than primitive magic. As patroness of the hunt, later identification with **Artemis** was inevitable. Hence the consequent fusion with **Aphrodite**, **Artemis**, **Diana**, **Juno** and **Venus**, and the action and reaction of one upon the other in myth and legend. Her star was the planet Venus, and classical writers give her the epithet Caelestis and Urania. Robertson Smith argues that Astarte was originally a sheep-goddess, and the points to the interesting use of 'Astartes of the flocks' (Deut. Vii. 13) to denote the offspring. To nomads, Astarte may well have been a sheep-goddess, but this, if her earliest, was not her only type, as it clear from the sacred fish of Atargatis, the doves of Ascalon (and of the Phoenician sanctuary of Eryx), and the gazelle or antelope of the goddess of love (associated with the Arabian Athtar). (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 14th Edition, Vol. 2, pp. 570-571)

### WORSHIPPING OTHER ELOHIM

Ishtar or Easter was equivalent to Astaroth, Ashtoreth and Astarte. Let's see what Yahweh's word has to say about the worship of these pagan deities, "And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of Yahweh, and served Baalim: and they forsook Yahweh Elohim of their fathers, Which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other elohim, of the elohim of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked Yahweh to anger. And they forsook Yahweh, and served Baal and Ashtaroth," Judg. 2:11-13.

"And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of Yahweh, and served Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and the elohim of Syria, and the elohim of Zidon, and the elohim of Moab, and the elohim of the children of Ammon, and the elohim of the Philistines, and forsook Yahweh, and served not Him," Judg. 10:6.

Notice it! The worship of Baal and Ashtaroth (Ishtar) has to do with the worship of all of the deities of the other nations. Isn't that the gist of the idea that we get from reading the articles in the Encyclopedias, etc.? Ishtar was found to be equivalent to all the other goddesses and certain male gods.

When the deities of the other nations are served, Yahweh is forsaken and not being served. It is also the committing of evil in the sight of Yahweh.

"But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; of the nations concerning which Yahweh said unto the children of Israel, 'Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their elohim:.' Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other elohim: and his heart was not perfect with Yahweh his Elohim, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon



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did evil in the sight of Yahweh, and went not fully after Yahweh, as did David his father. Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their elohim," 1 Ki. 11:1-8.

Even the great king Solomon fell prey to the worship of these pagan foreign deities. He no longer was serving Yahweh his Elohim, but was serving the deities of the other nations. Such worship is shown to be an abomination to Yahweh. It stirs up His anger. Time after time He sold Israel into the hands of their enemies because of their worship of these forbidden deities.

### THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN

Ishtar was also known as the "Lady or Queen of Heaven." Yahweh told Jeremiah, "Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other elohim, that they may provoke me to anger. Do they provoke Me to anger? Saith Yahweh: do they not provoke themselves to the confusion of their own faces?" Jer. 7:17-19.

Alexander Hislop has this to say, "The hot cross buns of Good Friday, and the dyed eggs of Pasch or Easter Sunday, figured in the Chaldean rites just as they do now. The 'buns,' known too by that identical name, were used in the worship of the queen of heaven, the goddess Easter, as early as the days of Cecrops, the founder of Athens—that is, 1500 years before the Christian era. 'One species of sacred bread,' says Bryant, 'which used to be offered to the gods, was of great antiquity, and called Boun.' Diogenes Laertius, speaking of this offering being made by Empedocles, describes the chief ingredients of which it was composed, saying, 'He offered one of the sacred cakes called Boun, which was made of fine flour and honey.'" (*The Two Babylons*, pp. 107-108)

"Then all the men which knew that their wives

had burned incense unto other elohim and all the women that stood by, a great multitude, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying, *As for* the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of Yahweh, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, **to burn incense unto the queen of heaven**, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for *then* had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. But since we left off to burn incense to **the queen of heaven**, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all *things*, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine. And when we burned incense to **the queen of heaven**, and poured out drink offerings unto her, **did we make her cakes to worship her**, and pour out drink offerings unto her, without our men? Then Jeremiah said unto all the people, to the men, and to the women, and to all the people which had given him *that* answer, saying, The incense that ye burned in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, ye, and your fathers, your kings, and your princes, and the people of the land, did not Yahweh remember them, and came it *not* into his mind? So that **Yahweh could no longer bear, because of the evil of your doings, and because of the abominations which ye have committed; therefore is your land a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without an inhabitant, as at this day. Because ye have burned incense, and because ye have sinned against Yahweh, and have not obeyed the voice of Yahweh, nor walked in his law, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies; therefore this evil is happened unto you, as at this day.** Moreover Jeremiah said unto all the people, and to all the women, Hear the word of Yahweh, all Judah that *are* in the land of Egypt: Thus saith Yahweh of hosts, the Elohim of Israel, saying; Ye and your wives have both spoken with your mouths, and fulfilled with your hand, saying, We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to **the queen of heaven**, and to pour out drink offerings unto her: ye will surely accomplish your vows, and



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surely perform your vows. Therefore hear ye the word of Yahweh, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt; Behold, I have sworn by my great name, saith Yahweh, that **my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt**, saying, the Sovereign Yahweh liveth. Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good: and all the men of Judah that *are* in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them," Jer. 44:15-27.

Why have the Jewish people suffered so much down through the ages? Why are they suffering so much today? Why do they have the name of their Elohim taken out of their mouth? However, they are not the only ones who have suffered down through the ages. They are not the only ones who have had the name of the Creator Yahweh taken out of their mouth. They are not the only ones who have gone back into Egypt. There are many groups and movements which exist today who can prove that the Anglo-Saxon, Celtic peoples have descended from the ten northern tribes of Israel. Both Israel and Judah were cast of the promised land of Canaan because they turned back to the elohim of Egypt and also turned to the elohim of the nations around them.

Easter, the goddess of the Teutonic peoples, is none other than Ishtar, the Queen of Heaven! The descendants of Israel are still hopelessly caught up in the worship of the deities of the nations that were around them. Yahweh, their Creator and Elohim is still not being served. Do you think His attitude of anger and wrath has changed? Doesn't He promise to pour out His wrath on the nations in the latter days? "For the wrath of Yahweh is revealed from heaven against all impiety, and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness," Ro. 1:18. Why will He do so? "Because that which may be known of Yahweh is manifest in them; for Yahweh hath shewed *it* unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Headship; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew Yahweh, they glorified *him* not as Elohim, neither were thankful;

but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible Elohim into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things," Ro. 1:19-23. Because of Israel's, Judah's and the world's unrepentant attitude!

### EGGS AND RABBITS

Easter is observed with the tradition of Easter eggs, Peter Rabbit, etc. Where did this tradition come from? "The sending of Easter eggs is a custom thought to have originated with the Persians, the eggs being symbols of new life. Coloring them red typifies the blood of redemption; other colors have no special significance. Another custom, the presence of the Easter 'rabbit' in the festivities, may be traced to the old belief that rabbits lay eggs on Easter Eve. This superstition is thought by some authorities to be of Teutonic origin, and is the basis of many stories for children." (*The World Book Encyclopedia*, article "Easter", p. 2088)

"Because the use of eggs was forbidden during Lent, they were brought to the table on Easter Day, coloured red to symbolize the Easter joy. This custom is found not only in the Latin but also in the Oriental Churches. **The symbolic meaning of a new creation of mankind by Jesus risen from the dead was probably an invention of later times. The custom may have its origin in paganism, for a great many pagan customs, celebrating the return of spring, gravitated to Easter.** The egg is the emblem of the germinating life of early spring. Easter eggs, the children are told, come from Rome with the bells which on Thursday go to Rome and return Saturday morning. The sponsors in some countries give Easter eggs to their god-children. Coloured eggs are used by children at Easter in a sort of game which consists in testing the strength of the shells (Kraus, *Real-Encyklop die*, s. v. Ei). Both coloured and uncoloured eggs are used in some parts of the United States for this game, known as "egg-picking". Another practice is the "egg-rolling" by children on Easter Monday on the lawn of the White House in Washington." (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Electronic



version)

“The Easter Rabbit lays the eggs, for which reason they are hidden in a nest or in the garden. **The rabbit is a pagan symbol and has always been an emblem of fertility** (Simrock, *Mythologie*, 551). ” (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Electronic version)

“Easter, a Christian festival, embodies many pre-Christian traditions. The origin of its name is unknown. Scholars, however, accepting the derivation proposed by the 8th-century English scholar St. Bede, believe it probably comes from Eastre, the Anglo-Saxon name of a Teutonic goddess of spring and fertility, to whom was dedicated a month corresponding to April. Her festival was celebrated on the day of the vernal equinox; **traditions associated with the festival survive in the Easter rabbit, a symbol of fertility, and in colored easter eggs, originally painted with bright colors to represent the sunlight.**” (*Funk & Wagnells New Encyclopedia* 1988 Edition, pp. 432-434)

“The origin of the Pasch eggs is just as clear. The ancient Druids bore an egg, as the sacred emblem of their order. In the Dionysiaca, or mysteries of Bacchus, as celebrated in Athens, one part of the nocturnal ceremony consisted in the consecration of an egg. The Hindoo fables celebrate their mundane egg as of a golden colour. The people of Japan make their sacred egg to have been brazen. In China, at this hour, dyed or painted eggs are used on sacred festivals, even as in this country. In ancient times eggs were used in the religious rites of the Egyptians and the Greeks, and were hung up for mystic purposes in their temples. From Egypt these sacred eggs can be distinctly traced to the banks of the Euphrates. The classic poets are full of the fable of the mystic egg of the Babylonians; and thus its tale is told by Hyginus, the Egyptian, the learned keeper of the Palatine library at Rome, in the time of Augustus, who was skilled in all wisdom of his native country: ‘An egg of wondrous size is said to have fallen from heaven into the river Euphrates. The fishes rolled it to the bank, where the doves having settled upon it, and hatched it, out came Venus, who afterwards was called the Syrian Goddess’ — that is, Astar-

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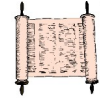


te. Hence the egg became one of the symbols of Astarte or Easter; and accordingly, in Cyprus, one of the chosen seats of the worship of Venus, or Astarte, the egg of wondrous size was represented on a grand scale.

“The occult meaning of this mystic egg of Astarte, in one of its aspects (for it had a twofold significance), had reference to the ark during the time of the flood, in which the whole human race were shut up, as the chick is enclosed in the egg before it is hatched. If any be inclined to ask, how can it ever enter the minds of men to employ such an extraordinary symbol for such a purpose, the answer is, first, The sacred egg of Paganism, as already indicated (p. 108), is well known as the ‘mundane egg,’ that is, the egg in which the *world* was shut up. Now the *world* has two distinct meanings—it means either the material earth, or the *inhabitants* of the earth. The latter meaning of the term is seen in Gen. xi. 1, ‘The whole earth was of one language and of one speech,’ where the meaning is that the whole people of the world were so. If then the *world* is seen shut up in an egg, and floating on the waters, it may not be difficult to believe, however the idea of the *egg* may have come, that the egg thus floating on the wide universal sea might be Noah’s family that contained the whole world in its bosom. Then the application of the word *egg* to the ark comes thus: — The Hebrew name for an egg is Baitz, or in the feminine (for there are both genders), Baitza. This, in Chaldee and Phenician, becomes Baith or Baitha, which in these languages is also the usual way in which the name of a *house* is pronounced. The *egg* floating on the waters that contained the *world*, was the *house* floating on the waters of the deluge, with the elements of the new world in its bosom. The coming of the egg from heaven evidently refers to the preparation of the ark by express appointment of God; and the same thing seems clearly implied in the Egyptian story of the mundane egg which was said to have come out of the *mouth* of the great god. The doves resting on the egg need no explanation. This, then, was the meaning of the mystic egg in one aspect. As, however, everything that was good or beneficial to mankind was represented in the Chaldean mysteries, as in some way connected with the Babylonian goddess, so



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the greatest blessing to the human race, which the ark contained in its bosom, was held to be Astarte, who was the great civiliser and benefactor of the world. Though the deified queen, whom Astarte represented, had no actual existence till some centuries after the flood, yet through the doctrine of metempsychosis, which was firmly established in Babylon, it was easy for her worshippers to be made to believe that, in a previous incarnation, she had lived in the Antediluvian world, and passed in safety through the waters of the flood. Now the Romish Church adopted this mystic egg of Astarte, and consecrated it as a symbol of Christ's resurrection. A form of prayer was even appointed to be used in connection with it, Pope Paul V. teaching his superstitious votaries thus to pray at Easter: — 'Bless, O Lord, we beseech thee, this thy creature of eggs, that it may become a wholesome sustenance unto thy servants, eating it in remembrance of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.'" (*The Two Babylons*, pp. 109-110)

There you have it! The admission of the Catholic Church and secular scholars is that the rabbits and eggs associated with Easter come directly from paganism. Isn't it amazing that the two most important feast observations of Christianity (Christmas and Easter) are not only associated with paganism, but are observed with lies! The fact of the matter is that the Savior WAS NOT born on Dec. 25th (order our free tract entitled "*Just Whose Birthday Is Dec. 25th?*"). It is also a fact that there is no such creature as Santa Claus (Order our free tract entitled "*Just Who Is Santa Claus?*"). The truth of the matter concerning Easter is that it is associated with paganistic idolatry. The truth of the matter is that the Savior WAS NOT resurrected on Easter Sunday morning. The other outright lie is that rabbits lay eggs.

Shame on parents for continuing traditional lies to their children. When parents raise their children taking delight in lying to them, even though it seems like fun and the right thing to do (but lies are not right) the result is children who are raised in a world of lies who feel that they are always expect to lie and justify themselves in doing so.

### ISHTAR AND TAMMUZ

Yahweh took Ezekiel in a vision to Jerusalem in order to show him the abominations that were going on there (Ez. 8:1-12). Ezekiel writes, "He said also unto me, 'Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do.' Then He brought me to the door of the gate of Yahweh's house which was toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz," Ez. 8:13-14.

Ishtar and Tammuz were very closely related in paganism. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* reveals, "Aphrodite, known as the Greek goddess of love and beauty, the counterpart of the Roman Venus. Although her myth and cult were essentially Semitic, she soon became hellenized and was admitted to a place among the deities of Olympus....Among the Semitic peoples (with the notable exception of the Hebrews) a supreme female deity was worshipped under different names—the Assyrian **Ishtar**, the Phoenician Ashtoreth (Astarte), the Syrian Atargatis (Derketo), the Babylonian Belit (Myllitta), the Arabian Ilat (Al-ilat)...She is connected with the lower world, and came to be looked upon as one of its divinities. Thus, **Ishtar** descends to the kingdom of Ilat the queen of the dead, **to find the means of restoring her favourite Tammuz** (Adon, Adonis) to life. During her stay, all animals and vegetable productivity ceases, to begin again with her return to earth. This legend, which strikingly resembles that of Persephone, probably refers to the decay of vegetation in winter, and the re-awakening of nature in spring." (14th edition, vol. 2, pp. 97-98)

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* has this to say about Tammuz, "...Sumerian, Babylonian and Assyrian god, who died and rose annually with dying and reviving vegetation, originally *Dummu-zi*, 'the son who rises, goes forth (from the nether world),' but generally interpreted 'faithful son.' Philologically both interpretations are correct, and no Accadian commentary exists to explain which meaning was accepted by them. The interpretation as 'the son who rises,' 'the resurrected child,' accepted in this article, is new and differs from all views held in the standard works on



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this cult. It is clear, however, that the main principle of this cult is the resurrection of the dying god and the verb *zi* stands for the root *zig* to rise up, not *zid*, to be faithful (See s. Langdon, *Sumerian Liturgies and Psalms*, p. 287, 17, *ušubba-za uziga-za*, 'In thy fall and in thy resurrection.')

"There are many titles of the youthful god, loved by his sister, the earth and heaven goddess, Innini (**Ishtar**), who descends yearly into Aralū (under-world) at the time of his death to bring him back to earth in her bosom....The liturgical wailings for Tammuz during the period of his sojourn in Aralū are numerous and describe every aspect of the theological doctrines concerning him. They are invariably composed in Sumerian, rarely with Accadian interlinear translation....He is described as the shepherd who left his flocks, as the shepherds sat in the fields wailing for Tammuz....There is a strange inconsistency in the hymns of these wailings concerning the relation of the mother goddess to her lover, Tammuz. In the early Sumerian texts she is his sister, but soon the Semitic view that she is his mother prevails. The two theories appear inconsistently together throughout the entire history of the cult. He is, however, invariably the husband and lover of the otherwise consistently described virgin goddess of love, Innini, Gestiana, *Bêlit-sêri* (queen of the field of the lower world), and the cult is particularly associated with the great city Erech, home of the cult of Anu, the heaven god, and Innini....No great temple was built to him, and a few casual references to a temple of Tammuz at Umma, Ur, Lagash, Agade, clearly refer to shrines in the temple of the local deity reserved for the wailings and mystic ceremonies of the cult. Worship of Tammuz spread far beyond the lands to which the Sumerian religion was principally confined. Ezekiel speaks of it as firmly installed at Jerusalem in his time; it is mentioned in the Christian era in Mandaean and Syriac literature, and survived among the Sabeans at Harran as late as the middle ages. At Byblus, in Syria, he was identified with the West Semitic Adonis....He was held to be a god of healing, bestower of health, and one who, like all other deities, had power over the demons.

"It is obvious that a cult which is based upon

the death and resurrection of a propitiating god, and upon the love of a divine mother who wails for her son, has direct connection with the facts and the theological views based upon them, which gave birth to Christianity. But the form of the cult which apparently most directly affected the origins of Christianity is that in which Marduk of Babylon was identified with Tammuz. At the Nisan or new year festival at Babylon, **Bêl** (Marduk) was said to have been imprisoned in the lower world, and a priestess weeps at his sepulchre. A malefactor was slain with **Bêl** and they descend together to the land of darkness. Beltis, his wife, descends to hell to seek him, and Bêl's garments are given **Ishtar** (mother of Tammuz). Bêl was laid in a sepulchre, from which he soon comes forth." (14th edition, vol. 21, pp. 776-777)

Notice the wailings which took place for a period of 40 days (revealed elsewhere). This has been passed down to Christianity as the 40 days of Lent. This was the wailing that was going on at Jerusalem when Ezekiel was taken there in the vision.

Ishtar (pronounced like Easter) and Tammuz were closely linked! She was his sister, wife, mother, etc. The modern day Christian Easter observance with its Easter eggs, bunny rabbits, etc. has been taken directly from paganism!

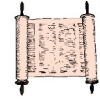
### SUNRISE SERVICES

Ezekiel continues, "Then said He unto me, 'Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these.' And He brought me into the inner court of Yahweh's house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of Yahweh, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of Yahweh, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east," 8:15-16.

This is nothing more than Easter (Ishtar) sunrise services! These pagan rites are the rites of earth and vegetation worship. Ishtar was the goddess of spring. Spring is when the earth springs back to life after the dead of winter. Ishtar, like Persephone, was a goddess who was in the under world for six months and in the upper



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world for six months.

The dying of vegetation in the fall was a type of the death of Tammuz. He went into the underworld for 6 months (fall and winter). Ishtar descended into the underworld to bring him back to the upper world. On the day appointed in the spring (usually in April), the goddess would come back bringing Tammuz with her. This was represented by the sun rise of that particular day! There was much joy and rejoicing exhibited in the people as they celebrated the return of spring as well as the return of their pagan goddess Ishtar and pagan god Tammuz.

Modern day Christianity has been deceived into following the ways of the pagans rather than the very word of Yahweh, Himself! This fact is admitted by the *Encyclopedia Britannica's* article on Tammuz.

The question is, Is it alright to commemorate Easter sunrise services to the true Messiah, the resurrected Yahshua? Is it possible for paganism and the worship of the true Creator to go hand in hand? The answer is found in the book of acts (of course it is found throughout the Scriptures).

Yahweh told Ezekiel, "Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? For they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke Me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their (should be My) nose. Therefore will I also deal in fury: Mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in Mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them," vv. 17-18.

This has happened to the Jewish people! Actually it has happened twice and will happen a third time according to Scripture (see our corresponding article on Jerusalem). But it is also going to happen to the non-Jewish world! Paul writes that Yahweh pours his wrath on the Jew first and then on the Gentile (Ro. 2:9). Yahweh's wrath is coming on a world that is as involved in paganism today as ancient Israel and Judah were and even are presently!

## DIANA/ARTEMIS

The name Diana was shown in one of the excerpts that we referred to as just another name for Ishtar. We have the account of a confrontation between the worshippers of Diana (Artemis) and the New Testament Assembly in the book of Acts, chapter 19.

"And the same time there arose no small stir about that way. For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen; whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, 'Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth. Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no elohim which are made by hands: so that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth,'" vv. 23-27.

Who is it that delights in the continual observance of the pagan festivals? It is the merchants, of course! The merchants of the world are greatly enriched by the observance of all of the pagan festivals. If people followed the truth, the observance of the pagan festivals would be overthrown and destroyed. The merchants would have to close their doors because of lack of sales. When great Babylon falls, the merchants of the earth are going to weep and mourn over her because no man will buy their merchandise any more (Rev. 18:11).

The book of Revelation reveals that not only will the merchants of the earth mourn, but so will the kings (leaders) of the earth (Rev. 18:9). It is the leaders and merchants of this world who are continually promoting pagan Babylon. Why? Because they are able to live deliciously through the great power and wealth that is generated by the system.

When the New Testament Assembly was doing its great works publishing the message of truth and Yahweh's kingdom, the position of the leaders and merchants of the world were threat-





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ened. So was the position of the pagan priest-hoods. Their temples and false elohim were being overthrown and destroyed. Here is New Testament proof that the ways of paganism and the ways of Yahweh cannot be syncretized, they cannot be blended together! The real truth will turn one away from the paganistic observances of this world in favor of the observance of the Scriptures.

The merchants, leaders and pagan priesthoods of this world delight in the observance of Jan. 1st. (New Year's Day), Valentine's day, Easter, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas and Sunday worship. These are all non-Scriptural observances! But the observance of these days creates power and wealth for them. Thus, they are just like Demetrius the silversmith and the craftsmen or merchants of that day.

### THE IMAGE THAT FELL

Acts 19:35 says, "And when the townclerk had appeased the people, he said, 'Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana (*Artemis*), and of the *image* which fell down from Jupiter?'"

The interesting thing about the phrase "*image* which fell down from Jupiter" is that it is translated from one Greek word *diopetes* (Diopetou/j). *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* reveals that this Greek word *diopetes* is translated from two other Greek words. The first word is #2203—Zeuj Zeus dzyooce; of uncertain affinity; in the oblique cases there is used instead of it a (probably cognate) name Dij, Dis, deece, which is otherwise obsolete; Zeus or Dis (among the Latins, Jupiter or Jove), the supreme deity of the Greeks.

The second word is #4098 piptw pipto, pip'-to, which is defined as: probably akin to 4072 through the idea of alighting; to fall (literally or figuratively).

The *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 14th edition has this to say about Zeus, "The Greek counterpart of the Roman god, Jupiter....To appreciate the Homeric Zeus, we must distinguish the lower mythologic aspect of him, in which he appears

as an amorous and capricious deity lacking often in dignity and real power, and the higher religious aspect in which he is conceived as the all-father. In fact, later Greek religion did not advance much above the high-water mark of the Homeric, although the poets and philosophers deepened certain of its nobler traits. But Homer we now know to be a relatively late witness in this matter. Yet traces of a pre-deistic and animistic period survived here and there; for instance, **in Arcadia we find the thunder itself called Zeus (Zeuj Keraunos)** in a Mantinean inscription, and **the stone near Gythium in Laconia, on which Orestes sat and was cured of his madness, evidently a thunder-stone, was named itself Zeuj kappwtaj, which must be interpreted as "Zeus that fell from heaven"** (Pausan iii. Ww. I.); we here observe that the personal god does not yet seem to have emerged from the divine thing or divine phenomenon....**He is the spirit of the world**, the law of the universe, the universal reason, and all other gods are only parts or manifestations of him (*cf.* Diog. Laert. vii. 147). Moreover, as we may see from the 'hymn' of Cleanthes (frag. 48), and from St. Paul's quotation from it or Aratus (Acts xvii., 28—Arat., phaen. 5), he was conceived by the Stoics as the father of the human race, who 'alone of mortal things that live and move upon the earth' were created in his image." (vol. 23, pp. 948-949)

Isn't it interesting that Diana, Artemis, Ishtar, etc. is associated with a god that fell from heaven!

The International Standard Bible Dictionary (fully revised) has this to day about the Greek word *diopetes*: "**Sacred Stone.** Greek diopetēs (lit. 'fallen from heaven'; see Bauer, rev., p. 199) is rendered by the RSV 'sacred stone that fell from the sky' (*cf.* AV 'image which fell down from Jupiter'; NEB 'symbol...which fell from heaven'). It probably denotes a meteorite that was worshipped as an image of Artemis. For other examples of meteorites that were worshipped as images of gods or goddesses, see F. F. Bruce, *Acts of the Apostles* (2nd. ed. 1952, repr. 1970), p. 367.

Without belaboring the point any longer, who



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was it that had “fallen from heaven?” Yahshua said, “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven,” Lk. 10:18.

### THE FALLEN ONE

When did this event occur? It had to have happened before the flood! We know that the serpent Satan was in the garden of Eden. The prophet Ezekiel was inspired to write, “Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, ‘Thus saith the Sovereign Yahweh; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of Elohim; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of Elohim; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of Elohim: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thy heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground (Heb. = eretz = earth), I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more,’” 28:12-19.

Notice that this being is a cherub. Cherubim are winged angelic beings. This being was in the garden of Eden. The only individuals spoken of as being in the garden were Adam, Eve, Yahweh and the serpent. Yahweh is inspiring Ezekiel

to write this against the cherub so it can’t possibly be Him. Adam and Eve were both dead by the time of Ezekiel so why write this prophecy to or about them? There is only one other being mentioned and that is the serpent.

The serpent is shown to still be around at the end time as revealed in the book of Revelation, “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth and his angels were cast out with him,” 12:9.

Notice that this being was perfect on the day of his creation, but corruption set in because of his beauty. Yahweh speaks of his sanctuaries. This word comes from the Hebrew word “מִקְדָּשׁ / miqdash” which can be translated as holy place (s) or even holiness (es).

It is obvious that Satan has been cast out of heaven at least once before and maybe even more than once. It is apparent that each time he is cast down, through his subtlety he is able to rise up and exalt himself into heaven again. How does he do this? Through deceiving man, angels, etc. into serving and worshipping him. How can he deceive man so easily? Didn’t he quickly deceive Eve in the garden of Eden? Hasn’t man been deceived through the various heathen and pagan religions of the world? And yes, what about Diana, Artemis, Aphrodite, the Queen of Heaven, Ishtar and Easter? What about Zeus, Jupiter, Baal, Bel, etc.? He is able to deceive man because Man takes his eyes off of the truth and turns them to myths, fables, lies and falsehoods. How about you? Have you fallen for his subtle deceptions?

### THE PASSOVER

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* admits, “**There is no indication of the observance of the Easter festival in the New Testament, or in the writings of the apostolic Fathers.** The sanctity of special times was an idea absent from the minds of the first Christians, **who continued to observe the Jewish festivals, though in a new spirit, as commemorations of events which those festivals had foreshadowed.**” (14th edition, vol. 7, p. 859)



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That's absolutely right! The apostles were commanded to observe the Passover. Here is what Paul writes, "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even **the Messiah our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast**, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth," 1 Cor. 5:7-8.

Yahweh had originally delivered Israel out of pagan Egypt through the sacrifice of the passover lamb. The blood of the lamb had to be on the side posts and upper post of the door of the house or the death angel would come into the home and destroy all of the firstborn (Ex. 12:6-13).

On the night before Yahshua's death, He replaced the ritual of sacrificing the lamb, which has always portrayed His death which was to come, with another ritual. This new ritual was to be in remembrance of His death which did occur at the appointed time. He set the example for His Disciples and for all Believers to follow in remembrance of Him being the true **Passover Lamb** of Yahweh. In the night that He was betrayed, He took bread, blessed it and broke it and gave to His disciples saying, "Take, eat; this is My body." (Mt. 26:26). Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of it; for this is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (v. 27).

The Apostle Paul also writes, "For I have received of the Sovereign, that which I also delivered unto you, that the Sovereign Yahshua the same night in which He was betrayed took bread: and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, 'Take, eat, this is My body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me.' After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, 'This cup is the new testament in My blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Sovereign's death till He come,' 1 Cor. 11:23-26.

Notice that carefully. We show His death till He come. Of course, we delight in His resurrec-

tion, but we are commanded to observe the Passover in the same manner that He observed it.

We no longer have to kill a lamb. Yahshua is the Passover Lamb of the New Covenant. We are to continue to eat of the unleavened bread and to drink of the cup which are symbols of His broken body and His blood that was poured out.

We must come out of this present evil world through our Passover Lamb, Yahshua, just as Israel was delivered from the evil world of their day through the sacrifice of their passover lamb.

### THE REMEMBRANCE

Passover observance was to be a memorial for the children of Israel, "And this day shall be unto you for a **memorial**; and ye shall keep it a feast to Yahweh throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever," Ex. 12:14.

The Hebrew word for memorial is "zikrown" (זִכְרוֹן). Zikrown is defined as; from 2142; a *memento* (or memorable thing, day or writing) in *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*. The root word #2142 is "zakar" and is defined as; a primitive root; properly, to *mark* (so as to be recognized), i.e. to *remember*; by implication, to *mention*; also (as denominative from 2145) to *be male* (Ibid).

A memorial is the same thing as a remembrance. According to Luke (Lk. 22:19) and Paul (1 Cor. 11:24-25), when Yahshua administered the Passover to His disciples He said to do it in "remembrance" of Him. Yahshua would have been speaking Hebrew and would have utilized the very same Hebrew word as employed in Exodus 12.

The original Passover Lamb was a type, a foreshadow of the true Passover that was to come into the world. The Apostle Paul wrote, "Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is **perfect** is come, then that which is in part shall be done away," 1 Cor. 13:8-10.



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The word “perfect” is taken from the Greek word “telios” which is #5046 in *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance*. Its definition is given as; from 5056; *complete* (in various applications of labor, growth, mental and moral character, etc.); neuter (as noun, with 3588) *completeness*.

The root word (#5056) is “telos” and is defined thusly; from a primary tello (to *set out* for a definite point or *goal*); properly, the point aimed at as a *limit*, i.e. (by implication) the *conclusion* of an act or state (*termination* (literally, figuratively or indefinitely), *result* (immediate, ultimate or prophetic), *purpose*); specially, an *impost* or *levy* (as paid).

These definitions are extremely important to understand for elsewhere Paul writes, “For the Messiah is the **end** of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth,” Ro. 10:4.

The word “end” is translated from the very same word that “perfect” is translated from in 1 Cor. 13:10. Yahshua didn’t come to destroy the law or the prophets, rather He came to fulfill it (Mt. 5:17-18).

Looking at the definitions, the root word “telos” has to do with an impost or levy (as paid). What was the impost or levy? Wasn’t it death? (Ro. 5:12-14 & 6:23, first part).

Israel had been enslaved to the Egyptians. The

Passover that they observed set them free from that slavery. But they and all mankind were still in subjection and slavery to a much greater master, sin and death. Yahshua, the true Passover Lamb was the goal, the point aimed at. He is the termination of the law of sin and death to everyone who believes and follows Him. How much greater is Yahshua’s Passover! The original Passover was only given in part until the true Passover could be initiated. It delivered Israel from slavery to Egypt, but it didn’t change their hearts. Witness the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. Witness their every attempt to return to Egypt and even when they were delivered into the land of promise, they still turned to the deities of the nations around them and had to be overthrown and destroyed later.

The Apostle Paul warns, “Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry,” 1 Cor. 10:14. A resounding YES!!!! Let us flee from the idolatry of Easter and all of the idolatrous paganism that it portrays. Let us remember, let us memorialize the true Passover of Yahshua the Messiah. Let us do away with that which is in part and look to and remember that which is perfect and complete, to wit; Yahshua the Messiah, our Passover and Deliverer. HalleluYAH!!!!

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