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THE PASSOVER COUNTERFEIT CALLED EASTER

Sunrise worship services, bunny rabbits, Easter eggs, Easter ham, hot cross buns, do these things honor the resurrected Savior? If we research into the way Easter is observed today, comparing it with the originally commanded Passover, what do you think we will find? Let's take a look to see.

By Jerry Healan

Should a New Testament believer observe Easter or Passover? We know that the Jews observe the Passover, but that was part of the Old Testament. What does a New Testament believer have to do with the Old Testament? Isn't the Old Testament done away? If such is true, then why did Paul write, "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?" (1 Cor. 5:7)

The evangel accounts reveal that Yahshua died on Passover day, the very day and afternoon that the Passover lambs were being slain. When they took Yahshua to the Judgment Hall to hand Him over to Pilate, the people wouldn't enter into the hall because they didn't want to be defiled and therefore not be able to eat the Passover (Jn. 18:28). Pilate customarily released a prisoner to the Jews on Passover day. He sought to release Yahshua, but the Jews called for His death and wanted one named Barabbas to be released instead (Jn. 18:38-40). When Pilate brought Yahshua forth to the people, it was the preparation day. The fourteenth day of the month was the day of preparation. This was the same day that Israel slew the Passover lambs in Egypt in anticipation of their deliverance out of the house of bondage (Ex. 12).

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

Hmmmm... If we just look at what is written here on the surface, not searching the matter out, then we would have to admit, Sure enough! There it is! But if we go to the Greek word from which Easter has been translated, we find that the Greek word is *pascha*. A little further check will reveal that in every place where **the word Passover** appears in the New Testament, **it is translated from the Greek word *pascha***. Therefore, if you want your

Scriptures to be consistent, you need to change the word Easter in Acts 12:4 to Passover. This was a blatant attempt to justify the observance of Easter by King James and his scholarly interpreters.

Easter is never mentioned in the Scriptures, neither Old Testament, nor New Testament, as a day or time to observe. The name Easter comes from a Germanic pagan goddess named Eostre, which is very similar to the forbidden pagan queen of heaven named Ishtar. Her name is shown to be pronounced as both Ishtar (eashter) and Istar (easter). The latter rendering would be perfectly equivalent to the modern day version Easter.

Ishtar's consort was her son, lover, husband Tammuz who died and rose annually as a vegetation god. (*Encyclopedia Britannica* 14th Edition, Volumes 12 and 21, articles Ishtar and Tammuz)

Yahweh condemned their worship. Yahweh told the Prophet 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 gods, 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.

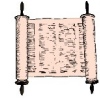
THE SANHEDRIN

Furthermore, Ezekiel, who was among the captives taken to Babylon, was shown in vision what was going on in the Temple of Yahweh at Jerusalem (Ez. 8:1-3). He was shown the image of jealousy at the north gate, and then was taken to the door of the temple where there was a hole in the wall. Ezekiel was told to dig into the wall where he found a door. He was told to go in and behold the wicked abominations that were going on there. (vv. 3-9).

Ezekiel continues, "So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, poured upon the wall round about. And there stood before them **seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel**, and in the midst of



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them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in his hand; and a thick cloud of incense went up. Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? For they say, Yahweh seeth us not; Yahweh hath forsaken the earth," Ez. 8:10-12.

These seventy ancients or elders of the house of Israel are nothing more than the Sanhedrin. They were the ones who were the supreme religious body of Israel. Yahweh had told Moses to choose out seventy men who were to accompany him, Aaron, and Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu into the mount to see the Elohim of Israel (Ex. 24:1, 9-11).

In Numbers 16 Moses had complained about the burden of Israel being on his shoulders, so Yahweh told him to choose seventy elders and bring them before the tabernacle of the congregation. He said that He would take of the spirit of Moses that was on him and also put a portion of it on the seventy elders so they would also bear the burdens of the children of Israel with him. (Num. 16:16-17)

This body of elders had continued down to Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's day making important spiritual, or religious rulings for the kingdom of Judah. These men are shown to have greatly corrupted leading Judah to worship great abominations rather than Yahweh, the Elohim of Israel.

TAMMUZ

Ezekiel continues, "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.

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* has this to say, "Tammuz, a Sumerian, Babylonian and Assyrian god, who died and rose annually... There are many titles of the youthful god, loved by his sister, the earth and heaven goddess, Innini (**Ishtar**), who descends yearly into Aralû (under-world) at the time of his death to bring him back to earth in her bosom... He is described as the shepherd who left his flocks, **as shepherds sat in fields wailing for Tammuz**... 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 Mar-**

duk 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 sepulcher. 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 sepulcher, from which he soon comes forth... **That the cult had direct influence upon the origins of Christianity cannot be denied**, and the Greek cult of Adonis owes its essential content to the Sumerian Tammuz." (14th edition, Vol. 21, pp. 776-777)

It says that this cult is based on a "propitiating god." To propitiate simply means to atone, or the atonement, the covering of sins. The obvious conclusion here is that Satan the devil, that old serpent that has deceived the whole world (Rev. 12:9), has done just that.

The women of Judah were sitting at the door of Yahweh's house weeping for Tammuz. The priesthood and Sanhedrin had become corrupted and were feeding the people falsehoods, false Babylonian religious ideals that venerated Bel of Babylon who is none other than Ba'al of the land of Canaan. Christianity has been deceived to follow these same teachings!

SUNRISE SERVICES

Yahweh continued, "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. Then he said unto me, 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 nose**," Ez. 8:15-17.

The east, of course, is where the sun rises. Yahweh's tabernacle and temple were built so that the entrance into the temple was facing east which forced the worshipper to turn away from the east and face toward the west (typifying repentance). The pagan sun worshippers always faced toward the east to worship because their false pagan religions, while filled with many abominable gods,



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were nothing more than the worship of the host of heaven making the sun and moon the primary objects of adoration. This practice of facing east for early morning prayer is practiced daily by modern day Rabbinic Judaism. The excuse is that they are praying toward Jerusalem, but one could just as easily face west to pray toward Jerusalem. In other words, nothing has changed since the days of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. The appearance is that they are being Torah observant when Yahweh reveals that such is simply not the case.

Notice that it says “they put the branch to their nose.” This is dealt with in the writings of the prophet Isaiah who declares, “In that day shall his strong cities be as a forsaken bough, and an uppermost branch, which they left because of the children of Israel: and there shall be desolation. **Because thou hast forgotten the Elohim of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the rock of thy strength**, therefore shalt thou plant pleasant plants, and **shalt set it with strange slips**: In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish: but the harvest shall be a heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow,” Isa. 17:9-11.

The Hebrew for the word “slips” is the exact same word that has been translated as “branch” in the above quotation from the book of Ezekiel. What Yahweh is saying is that the Israelites were going to serve strange branches of salvation. In the article from the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, look at all of the false pagan deities that represent Tammuz. There is Marduk, Bêl, Adonis. Then there is Ishtar, the female pagan goddess who represents Easter, Isis, Ashtaroth, Astarte, the queen of heaven and many other pagan female deities. Bêl represented the sun while Ishtar represented the moon, which reflects the light of the sun.

The shepherds and the women wailed and wept for Tammuz because of his death. But around the vernal equinox they began to rejoice because the spring brought back the dead vegetation. Tammuz revived and they all faced the east in order to rejoice at the resurrection of Tammuz (Istar/Easter sunrise services).

CONFUSION

Yahweh said that the children of Israel provoked themselves to the confusion of their own faces (Jer. 7:19). The Hebrew word for confusion is *bosheth* (tcb). It comes from another Hebrew word that is utilized in Genesis 2:25 which says, “And they were naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed (*buwsh/cwb*). *Buwsh* is #954 in the He-

brew lexicon of *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* and is defined as: a primitive root; properly, to pale, i.e. by implication to be ashamed; also (by implication) to be disappointed or delayed. *Bosheth* is #1322 and is defined as: **from 954**; shame (the feeling and the condition, as well as its cause); by implication (specifically) an idol.

To practice idolatry brings one to shame. It confounds and confuses a person with half-truths, lies and deceit. You see, Idolatry always falls short of that which is true even though it may look like it is the real thing.

What people need to realize is the Satan is a deceiver. He is very, very subtle. He is able to deceive people into practicing something similar to, a counterfeit of that which is true. They think that they are practicing the truth but his ways are always counterfeit and false.

In the article on Tammuz from the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, a malefactor is slain with Tammuz, but there were two malefactors slain with Yahshua, the true Savior and Redeemer (Mat. 27:38). Satan’s idolatrous paganism has fallen short.

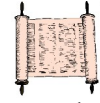
Yahshua said that He would be in the grave three days and three nights, (Mt. 12:40), but the Easter worshippers have been confused to cut that time down to one day and two nights (order our article entitled *The Three Days and Three Nights* for more details). Once again, Satan’s idolatrous paganism has fallen short of the intended goal.

Yahshua died in the afternoon of Passover day, was buried later that evening before sunset because the annual high day was drawing on (the 15th of Abib, which was to be observed by rest in similar fashion to the Sabbath). The day that He died would have been on the fourth day of the week (a Wednesday to the modern day world). His resurrection would have occurred at the end of the Sabbath (in the evening, Hebrew days go from about sunset to sunset) not early in the morning on the first day of the week. This, once again, reveals the confusion of those who have been deceived to serve Tammuz and Ishtar (Easter), rather than the true Savior Yahshua.

Yahshua commanded His disciples to observe His death at the Passover annually as a memorial rather than His resurrection (Mt. 26:17-29; Mk. 14:13-25; Lk. 22:7-20). Since He became our Passover sacrificed for us (1 Cor. 5:7), we should follow the example that He set annually partaking of the unleavened bread and cup which represent His flesh and blood.



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Rabbits and eggs were utilized by the idolatrous pagans to represent fertility. Easter bunnies and eggs are simply items to cause our children to partake in these idolatrous things. There is no place in the Scriptures that encourage, nor justify such practices. Yahweh told Moses, "Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, I am Yahweh your Elohim. After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances...And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation, which I cast out before you: for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them," Lev. 18:2-3; 20:23.

Yahweh, through the Prophet Jeremiah, decreed, "Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain," Jer. 10:2-3.

It is stated, "For I am Yahweh, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed," Mal. 3:6. "Yahshua the Messiah the same yesterday, and today, and forever," Heb. 13:8.

Yahshua came to do the Father's will, "Yahshua saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work...For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me...And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day," Jn. 4:34; 6:38; 6:40.

His followers should be following His example, not the practices of the idolaters.

Are you beginning to see the confusion that the world has been deceived to follow? For those who continue to follow the false idolatrous pagan ways, there is only confusion and shame of face. Satan, the god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4), the prince of the power of the air (Eph. 2:2) has, and is certainly fulfilling the Scriptures written about him! He began to lie and deceive in the Garden of Eden and He continues to fulfill those deceptive practices to this day (Rev. 12:9).

Are you following his deceptive, idolatrous, pagan, heathenistic practices? If you are observing Easter then you certainly are deceived by him, and doing so. We know that the great majority of today's world will deny what is written here and continue to observe his false, deceptive practices because they do not love the truth (2 Thes. 2:1-12, esp. verses 11-12). But this is written for those who will receive the truth and turn and embrace it to everlasting life. For those who continue in those things read the verses in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 again. Remember what happened to the pre-flood world. Remember what happened to Babel. Remember what happened to Sodom and Gomorrah. Remember what happened to Israel, Yahweh's chosen people. We stand at the end of an age when the kingdom of heaven will soon appear. Prepare yourself by turning away from the prince and god of this world and his deceptive practices. Save yourselves from this untoward generation!

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