

# IS THE RESURRECTION A “ONCE A YEAR” EVENT?

By Keith Greer

If you look on your calendar today you will see the words "**Easter Sunday**". Many people will attend church that day because of this "special day". Easter eggs, Easter bunnies, Easter clothes and Easter dinner are events associated with this day. By the way, it is the day of our Lord's resurrection from the grave. Is it really?

What does the term "Easter" mean? (It comes from the Greek word "pascha" from the Hebrew word "pesah"). If one goes back to the original language, the word is correctly translated "Passover."

Is this word used in the Bible? Yes. "So when he had arrested him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover." {Acts 12:4} In the King James Version the word "Easter" is used instead of Passover. Some say the word was used in the King James Version to relate to the English reader the time frame of the events of Acts twelve.

Where did it come from? When did it begin?

The term Easter was derived from the Anglo-Saxon "*Eostre*", the name of the goddess of spring. Sacrifices were offered to her. By the eighth century the term came to be applied to the anniversary of Christ's resurrection.

For many years this debate raged between the Jewish and Gentile Christians as to the date of the "festival". The Jewish Christians determined the date of observance by the date of the Hebrew Passover. Gentile Christians, however, tended to celebrate the resurrection on Sunday. Who was right? Neither! Why argue over something that cannot be determined?

The Council of Nicea, in 325 AD. took steps to settle the dispute. The Council unanimously decided the resurrection was to be celebrated by all churches on the same Sunday, but which Sunday? It was suggested that the church leaders in Alexandria could determine the date each year.

By the seventh century the practice had become reasonably uniform. Time agreed upon? The first Sunday following the full moon that comes after the vernal equinox. Equinox was set at March twenty-first. This allowed for variation in Easter dates from March twenty-second to April twenty-fifth.

It should be very obvious that in this whole scenario, God's voice is not uttered or considered. This "holiday" was fixed and decided upon by men and never commanded by God.

Should we remember the Lord's resurrection? Do we know the exact date when it occurred? Do we need to know? The answers to the questions are of course no. Yet, we do need to remember our Lord's resurrection.

"...and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." {Romans 1: 4}

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," {1 Peter 1:3}

"And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! "{1 Corinthians 15:17} " ... and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." {Hebrews 2:15} **Once a year?** I think not. The resurrection MUST have more meaning than that! \*\*\*