

## **"ORIGIN OF EASTER"**

*By Dr. Hoyt W. Allen, Jr.*

Often, someone asks how our Easter holiday originated. Sometimes the historians point to Acts 12:4 KJV where the word "Easter" is used. It is here translated from the Greek word "Pascha" and is generally translated "Passover." (Note such in newer translations).

There is a **weekly** celebration of Christ's resurrection (worshipping Him on Sunday) but there is not an **annual** celebration of the resurrection of Christ recorded in the New Testament. The Jewish Christians linked it with the Passover and so observed it on the 14th day of Nisan (April) regardless of the day of the week. However, Gentile believers later celebrated the annual resurrection on the Lord's Day (Sunday).

In the year 325 at the Council of Nicea, it was decided that Easter would be observed on the First Sunday after the full moon following the vernal equinox (the time when the sun crosses the equator approximately March 21 and September 22). This is still our method of determining the date for Easter. It will always fall between March 22 and April 25.

The name "Easter" comes from a pagan holiday which fell during that time of the year. It was a very joyful holiday with much brightness and tradition observed. From this, we get some of our tradition (Easter outfits, decorating of baskets, etc.).

But **the important thing about Easter**, Resurrection Sunday, is this: Are we really "in Christ"? Are we living daily for Jesus? If we say we believe, then we will show it by our spiritual fruits. This is not done by worshipping only on special holidays.

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1541 S. 7th Street \* Ironton, OH 45638-2175  
Web Page: [kyowva.com](http://kyowva.com)