Easter in Acts 12:4

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Acts 12:1-41

1. Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church.
2. And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.
3. And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.)
4. 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.

Sadly, many are amused or confused by the use of "Easter" in Acts 12:4, and others gloat about it, because they want to find fault with the King James Bible.

They may accuse the King James translators of a mistranslation, especially if they know the underlying Greek word is pascha, for Passover. They may conclude that Herod Agrippa I celebrated pagan Easter. They may twist scripture to make Passover and the feast of unleavened bread two different things.

"Easter" in Acts 12:4 is Passover, which is the feast of unleavened bread, clearly identified in the context (Acts 12:3). This is simple enough by reading the passage, but especially if it is known that Passover and unleavened bread are the same feast and/or that Easter in English and European languages can easily mean Passover.

In English and the languages of Europe … **Easter = Passover** … if not as the first or primary definition, it is as a secondary and significant definition.

The English word "Easter" means the spring Christian festival to commemorate the resurrection of Christ in timing with the spring Jewish celebration of Passover.

Here is part of the entry for "Easter" in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, which is the standard of the English language:

Easter. 1. One of the great festivals of the Christian Church, commemorating the resurrection of Christ, and corresponding to the Jewish Passover, the name of which it bears in most of the European languages. 2. The Jewish Passover.

When quoting a source for an example of definition 2, the *OED* quoted Acts 12:4 in the King James Bible.

The **Passover** and **Feast of Unleavened Bread** are synonyms in the Bible unless context distinguishes the Passover lamb or supper from the week-long celebration.

Ezekiel 45:21 In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall have **the passover, a feast of seven days**; unleavened bread shall be eaten.

Mark 14:1 After two days was **the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread**: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death.

Luke 22:1 Now **the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover**.

There are other similar verses showing the names as synonyms for the same feast.

These verses show that the Passover and feast of unleavened bread are synonyms, when there is no context limiting either one of them, as is the case in Acts 12:3-4.

It is clear in Acts 12:3-4 by reading the verses together that “days of unleavened bread” (12:3) is the same as “Easter” (12:4). There is no reason to seek any other explanation, especially once the facts listed above about English usage of “Easter” and the Bible use of Passover terms as synonyms are understood.

The King James Version is perfectly accurate and consistent for readers that will check the context, confirm Bible use of terms, and check the meaning of the English word “Easter.”

Checking the underlying Greek word pascha is further confirmation to some, but provides no additional proof for those trusting the English words of the KJV.

It should be obvious that Herod was not waiting for the Jews to finish the pagan celebration of Astarte’s Day or the celebration of the Christian Easter Sunday.

He was waiting for the seven-day feast of Passover to end so that his murder of Peter would not draw as much political or social opposition from the Jews, whom he sought to further please after having killed James.

To read another explanation from another source, check out this document.

Let all amusement or confusion about Acts 12:4 end.

Let all criticism of the English King James Bible and its translators end.

Let all wresting of scripture to make Passover and the feast of unleavened bread separate things end.

You may trust the King James Version perfectly – there are no other options as trustworthy – God has stamped the KJV with His approval by 400+ years of spiritual fruit and all the internal and external measures of His divine revelation.