

Acts 12:4, the one and only occurrence of Easter in the King James Bible

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A Brief Word Study of G3957 (pascha) and H6453 (pesach) (ironically written on April 4th 2010 “Easter Sunday”)

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Introduction

The Greek word *pascha* (Strong’s number G3957) is found 29 times in the New Testament of the King James bible. It is translated 28 times as Passover and only once as Easter. I like the King James bible for many reasons but the use of Easter in Acts 12:4 could be its most egregious example of a bad translation.

King James Concordance of G3957 *πάσχα* pascha

As you can see below, the concordance lists all 29 occurrences of this Greek word.

Total Occurrences: 29

passover, 28: [Mat 26:2](#), [Mat 26:17-19](#) (3), [Mar 14:1](#), [Mar 14:12](#) (2), [Mar 14:14](#), [Mar 14:16](#), [Luk 2:41](#), [Luk 22:1](#), [Luk 22:7-8](#) (2), [Luk 22:11](#), [Luk 22:13](#), [Luk 22:15](#), [Joh 2:13](#), [Joh 2:23](#), [Joh 6:4](#), [Joh 11:55](#) (2), [Joh 13:1](#) (2), [Joh 18:28](#), [Joh 18:39](#), [Joh 19:14](#), [1Co 5:7](#), [Heb 11:28](#) ;

easter, 1: [Act 12:4](#)

Strong’s Definition for G3957

Of Chaldee origin (compare [[H6453](#)]); the *Passover* (the meal, the day, the festival or the special sacrifices connected with it): - Easter, Passover.

Not having done an extensive etymology of the Greek word “pascha” it would however seem pretty clear that its roots are clearly Hebrew as it is merely a transliteration the Hebrew word pesach (Strong’s number H6453). The one and only Hebrew word cross-referenced in the Septuagint (LXX) for the Greek word pascha is (not surprisingly) this word pesach. The first occurrence of it in the Torah can be seen below.

Exo 12:11 HSB5

ma- te- nei- Chem	it [with] your loins	מִתְּנִיכֶם	o- To	אתוֹ	to- che- Lu	shall ye eat	תֹּאכְלוּ	ve- cha- Chah	And thus	וְכַךְ
be- rag- lei- Chem,	on your feet	בְּרַגְלֵיכֶם	na- 'a- lei- Chem	your shoes	נַעֲלֵיכֶם	cha- gu- Rim,	girded	חֲגָרִים		

va· 'a· chal· Tem and ye shall eat **וְאָכַלְתֶּם** be· yed· Chem; in your hand **בְּיָדְכֶם** u· mak· kel· Chem and your staff **וּמִקְלָכֶם**
 Yah· weh· it [fis] the LORD'S **לִיהוָה** hu it **הוּא** **H6453** Pe· sach **passover** **פֶּסַח** be· chip· pa· Zon, it in haste **בְּחֶפְזוֹן** o· To **אֹתוֹ**
Exo 12:11 KJV And thus shall ye eat it (**אֹתוֹ**) [Mat 26:26, Mar 14:22, 1Co 11:24]; with your loins girded, your shoes on your
 feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it (**אֹתוֹ**) in haste: it is YHVH's Passover (**פֶּסַח** ^{Pe· sach}).^A

Acts 12:4 Redacted

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~~ Passover ^{G3957 pascha, LXX H6453 pesach=passover} to bring him forth to the people.

H6453 *pesach* ^{KJC:49} Passover(s)⁴⁹

פֶּסַח

BDB: 1) passover: 1a) sacrifice of passover; 1b) animal victim of the passover; 1c) festival of the passover

Part of Speech: noun masculine; Strong's: [H6452](#) **TWOT Number:** 1786a

Total KJV Occurrences: 49

passover, 48 [Exo 12:11](#), [Exo 12:21](#), [Exo 12:27](#), [Exo 12:43](#), [Exo 12:48](#), [Exo 34:25](#), [Lev 23:5](#), [Num 9:2](#), [Num 9:4-6](#) (3), [Num 9:10](#), [Num 9:12-14](#) (4), [Num 28:16](#), [Num 33:3](#), [Deu 16:1-2](#) (2), [Deu 16:5-6](#) (2), [Jos 5:10-11](#) (2), [2Ki 23:21-23](#) (3), [2Ch 30:1-2](#) (2), [2Ch 30:5](#), [2Ch 30:15](#), [2Ch 30:18](#), [2Ch 35:1](#) (2), [2Ch 35:6-9](#) (4), [2Ch 35:11](#), [2Ch 35:13](#), [2Ch 35:16-19](#) (5), [Eze 45:19-21](#) (3)

passovers, 1 [2Ch 30:17](#)

WordStudy: A masculine noun meaning Passover, a Passover animal, a sacrifice. The word is used forty-nine times, usually referring to the Passover festival or celebration. It is first used to describe the Passover ritual while Israel was still in Egypt ([Exo 12:11](#), [Exo 12:27](#), [Exo 12:43](#), [Exo 12:48](#); [Exo 34:25](#)). The first Passover ideally was constituted as follows: on the human level, the Israelites killed the Passover sacrifice on the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month, Abib or Nisan (March or April). They then took some of the blood of the slain Passover animal ([Deu 16:2](#), [Deu 16:5](#)) and smeared it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of their houses (cf. [Exo 12:7](#)). The Passover ritual and the Passover animal were directed to and belonged to the Lord ([Exo 12:11](#), [Exo 12:48](#); [Deu 16:1](#)). They then roasted the animal (lamb, kid, young ram, goat-a one-year old without any defect) and ate it with their sandals on their feet and their staffs in their hands, ready to move out in haste at any time. The angel of death passed through Egypt and passed over the Israelites' houses with the blood of the lambs on the doorposts, but the angel struck the firstborn of all the Egyptian households (cf. [Exo 12:12-13](#), [Exo 12:29](#)). Later Passovers were held in commemoration of the historical event of Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage.

The animals eaten were also called the *pesah*, the Passover sacrifice ([Exo 12:21](#); [2Ch 30:15](#); [2Ch 35:1](#)). The Passover was celebrated throughout Israel's history before and after the exile ([Num 9:4](#); [Jos 5:10](#); [2Ki 23:22](#); [Ezr 6:19-20](#)).

^A It's not a Jewish Passover, it's YHVH's Passover.

H6452 *pasach* ^{KJC:7} pass(ed)3, became, halt, lame, leaped

פסח

pass, 2 [Exo 12:13](#), [Exo 12:23](#) [Exo,12:26-27](#) (2)

became, 1 [2Sa 4:4](#) halt, 1 [1Ki 18:21](#) lame, 1 [2Sa 4:4](#) leaped, 1 [1Ki 18:26](#)