

## **Why do Some Christians Choose not to Celebrate Easter?**

There are many Christians in the US who choose not to celebrate “Easter” because, as they say, “it is a heathen holiday”. Is there any truth behind this claim? They do believe in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, yet they still choose not to join the Christian World in celebrating Jesus’ Resurrection Day because of its name “Easter Sunday”.

If we go back in History to the ancient civilizations we will discover that the beginning of spring, which is associated with Easter, was celebrated as a day to honor the fertility goddesses.

The ancient Egyptians celebrated the Equinox (when the day and the night are of equal length) and called it “shemu”. This word accompanied that celebration and was adopted by the Coptic Orthodox Church, the largest Christian denomination in Egypt, and has been celebrated over the ages until today and years to follow. The word “Shemu” turned into “sham” which means “to breathe the gentle breeze (Nassim) of the first day of spring”. So, the word “Nassim” was added to it making the complete name of this holiday “Sham-ennassim”. The interesting fact about this celebration is that it is not on Resurrection Sunday rather on the next day, Monday.

All Egyptians, regardless of religion or denomination, celebrate that day by going out on picnics and having special foods, like colored hard boiled eggs, salted fish ... etc.

In the Western World, the word “Easter” comes from Estre, an ancient Anglo-Saxon goddess of spring. If we go to the Near East we find that the origin of the word “Easter” comes from the fertility goddess “Ishtar”.

Why are English speakers the only ones who choose to give a name derived from heathen deities to the most important event on which Christianity stands, i.e. Jesus’ resurrection from the death? What would happen if English speakers started using the name “Resurrection Sunday” rather than “Easter Sunday”?

Doesn’t Jesus deserve to be honored by his triumph over death rather than being mixed up with heathen deities, on the day of His decisive and final victory over sin and death?