

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. XX

June 13, 2010

No. 24

Absurd Defense of King James Version

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The 1611 King James Version is a good word-for-word translation of the entire Bible. There is no doubt that one can read the pages of the 1611 English translation and learn what to do to be saved and how to live before the one true God. To say it is a good translation, does not mean it is a “perfect” translation. One of the examples given for its weakness is Acts 12:4, where the King James Version has translated the Greek word “pascha” as “Easter.”

“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.” The word “pascha” is found 29 times in the New Testament and 28 times the King James Version translates the word as “Passover” except here in Acts 12:4. In verse 3, the context to time is revealed: “Then were the days of unleavened bread.” Since the week long feast of unleavened bread is in verse three, it seems reasonable to translate the word “pascha” “Passover” as it occurs in the other places in the King James Version.

Some who defend the King James Version do not accept

the translation of “Easter” in Acts 12:4 as error. In fact they assert it is the only true translation because it uses “Easter” in the translation. They point out the Passover and Unleavened bread were distinguished from each other in the Old Testament. For example: “On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the Lord’s Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord; seven days you must eat unleavened bread” (Leviticus 23:5-6). Proponents of the accuracy of “Easter” reason that the Passover occurs on the fourteenth day, and since Peter was imprisoned in the days of Unleavened Bread, the Passover had already occurred. Therefore, Herod must have been planning to bring Peter before the people after the pagan festival of “Easter”.

Yes, the Passover was distinguished from unleavened bread in that on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight the Passover Lamb was to be sacrificed, but they fail to see that it was to be eaten that night after sunset which would be the 15th. day, thus entering the feast of Unleavened Bread. (Exodus 12:6,8) Also, they apparently do not consider that even on the fourteenth day,

on the very day of the Passover lamb being killed, only unleavened bread was to be eaten, thus tying the Passover with the feast of Unleavened Bread (Exodus 12:18). In some passages the Passover is included under the heading of the Feast of Unleavened bread (cf. 2 Chron. 8:13).

In the New Testament we see clearly that the Passover and Unleavened Bread were connected inseparably. “Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread when they killed the Passover lamb,” Jesus’ disciples ask Him where they were to eat the Passover (Mark 14:12). Luke writes, “the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew nigh which is called Passover” (Luke 22:1).

Like other translations, the King James is not perfect, but it is a good translation. We can have confidence in its faithfulness to reveal the doctrine of Christ. It does not need this shallow and silly argument to prop it up before its critics. The Anglo-Saxon word “Easter” may have communicated a concept accepted by the 1611 world of English speaking people, but it does not communicate what was in place in the first century world of Herod.