

Acts 12:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.)

Analysis

Seeing his persecution 'pleased the Jews,' Herod proceeded to arrest Peter during Passover. Political calculation drove his actions - currying favor through religious persecution. That this occurred during 'the days of unleavened bread' shows the irony: while celebrating deliverance from Egypt, Jews endorsed persecution of God's messengers. Herod intended to execute Peter after Passover (v.4). Reformed theology sees the world's alliance against Christ and His church (Psalm 2) - religious and political powers unite against the gospel despite claiming to serve God.

Historical Context

This occurred circa AD 42-43 during Passover season. Herod's delay until after Passover may reflect reluctance to execute during the feast (avoiding defilement or riot) or desire to execute publicly after the feast for maximum effect.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How do political leaders sometimes use religious persecution to gain popular support?
2. What irony exists in persecuting God's servants while observing religious festivals?
3. Why do religious and political powers often unite against genuine Christianity?

Interlinear Text

καὶ οἱδὼν ὅτι ἀρεστόν ἐστιν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις
And because he saw it G701 pleased G3588 the Jews
G2532 G1492 G3754 G2076 G2453

προσέθετο συλλαβεῖν καὶ Πέτρον ἦσαν δὲ ἡμέραι
he proceeded further to take And Peter were (Then the days
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τῶν ἀζύμων
G3588 of unleavened bread
G106

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 23:15 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: (thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee, in the time appointed of the month Abib; for in it thou camest out from Egypt: and none shall appear before me empty:)

John 12:43 (Parallel theme): For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

Acts 24:27 (Parallel theme): But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix' room: and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound.

Acts 25:9 (Parallel theme): But Festus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul, and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me?

Acts 20:6 (Parallel theme): And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.

Galatians 1:10 (Parallel theme): For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

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