

GLAD TIDINGS

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

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God ought to be pleased

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Many in the religious world today are “celebrating Easter”. If you are a true Christian, why would you not celebrate Easter? After all, this is the principle celebration of all Christianity. The Catholic Church understands Easter to be more important than Christmas, for Christmas is merely leading up to Easter. Surely, God is pleased today as many will assemble and publicly honor the resurrection of God’s son Jesus Christ.

These are the thoughts of many as they think about the celebration of Easter. However, we need to understand the following distinction: “Celebrate” can refer to “honoring”, or “praising” something. It also can mean to “commemorate (an anniversary, holiday, etc.) with ceremony or festivity”. There is a difference between praising God for the resurrection of Christ and commemorating the resurrection in some liturgical anniversary service called “Easter”. The former is authorized, the later is not.

We praise God for Jesus’ resurrection because it gives us confident hope for the inheritance of heaven (I Peter 1:3-4). We

know that if Jesus were not raised, then our faith would be vain. We would still be in our sins, and would perish in the grave (I Corinthians 15:16-18). Jesus’ resurrection from the dead unto a new life, is what we are to copy in our lives by living a new life unto God, free from sin’s bondage after we have died to sin in baptism (Romans 6:4-11). Celebrating the resurrection is a constant experience among true Christians.

But where do you find in God’s word that God is pleased with “celebrating Easter”. Once a year Easter is considered a holy celebration. One might reason: “Surely God ought to be pleased in people remembering the resurrection of Christ!”. But is He?

God ought to be pleased that Uzzah attempted to steady the teetering ark of the covenant as it was being carried on a cart pulled by oxen. But he wasn’t. He struck Uzzah dead immediately. No one was to touch the ark, and it was to be carried by the staves through the rings of the ark upon the shoulders of the sons of Kohath 2 (2 Samuel 6:6-7, Numbers 4:15, Exodus 24:14) That day they did not seek God “according to the ordinance” (I Chron. 15:13). Where is

the ordinance of God for anyone to “celebrate Easter”? God is never pleased when we do not act according to His ordinance.

Someone might say, “God did not say we couldn’t celebrate Easter!”. God authorized the priests to take their fire for offering up incense from the burning altar (Leviticus 16:12). He did not say they could not get it from another place. God ought to be pleased then when Nadab and Abihu offered up incense. But He wasn’t. God cast fire from heaven and devoured both priests for they “offered strange fire before Jehovah, which he had not commanded them” (Leviticus 10:1). God is not pleased when people worship presumptuously without God’s commandment.

“Easter” is a celebrative worship started by man, not God. God ought to be pleased with all worship offered up to him in his honor. But He isn’t. Jesus’ instructive warning needs to be heeded today: “In vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men” (Matthew 15:9). Praise God for the resurrection, but we have no authority to celebrate “Easter”. Consider the difference.