

An Litir Bheag

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An Litir Bheag is a shortened and simplified version of Ruairidh's Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh (also available on the BBC website), designed for those who are at an earlier stage of learning Gaelic. The topic each week is the same as Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh so that, once the Litir Bheag is mastered, a student of the language might wish to try the full Litir. This is Litir Bheag 876 (which corresponds to Litir 1,180). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

I was telling you about Saint Finan. He was a Gael. He was a Bishop in Lindisfarne. I was also telling you about the Synod of Whitby in 664. At the Synod, the King of Northumbria made a decision on when exactly the Church would celebrate Easter.

I want to explain the situation, as [well as] I can. In the 7th century, the people of Northumbria were gradually adopting [accepting] the Christian religion. Missionaries had gone there. But they belonged to two different 'schools'. Some were loyal to Roman practices. But the 'Celts' – the Gaels, or a lot of them – were loyal to the practices connected to Iona.

In the Bible, in the Book of John Chapter 19, Jesus has been captured by Pilate. In Verse 14 there is this: And it was the day of preparation of Passover ... That was the day that Jesus was crucified. But what does latha ullachaidh na Càisge mean?

In the English language versions of the Bible, there is this: 'the day of preparation of the Passover'. In Gaelic we call Passover 'Càisg nan Iùdhach'.

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Naomh Fìonan. 'S e Gàidheal a bha ann. Bha e na Easbaig ann an Lindisfarne. Bha mi cuideachd ag innse dhuibh mu Sheanadh Whitby ann an sia ceud, seasgad 's a ceithir (664). Aig an t-Seanadh, rinn Rìgh Northumbria co-dhùnadh air cuin dìreach a bhiodh an Eaglais a' comharrachadh na Càisge.

Tha mi airson a' chùis a mhìneachadh, mar as urrainn dhomh. Anns an t-seachdamh linn, bha muinntir Northumbria a' gabhail ris a' chreideamh Chrìosdail mean air mhean. Bha miseanaraidhean air a dhol ann. Ach bhuineadh iad do dhà dhiofar 'sgoil'. Bha feadhainn dìleas do chleachdaidhean na Ròimhe. Ach bha na 'Ceiltich' – na Gàidheil, no gu leòr dhiubh – dìleas do na cleachdaidhean co-cheangailte ri Eilean Ì.

Anns a' Bhioball, ann an Leabhar Eòin Caibideil 19, tha Ìosa ann an grèim aig Pileat. Ann an Rann 14 tha seo: Agus b' e latha ullachaidh na Càisge e ... B' e sin an latha a chaidh Ìosa a cheusadh. Ach dè tha latha ullachaidh na Càisge a' ciallachadh?

Anns na dreachan Beurla dhen Bhioball, tha seo: 'the day of preparation of the Passover'. Ann an Gàidhlig 's e 'Càisg nan Iùdhach' a chanas sinn airson Passover. Bha daoine a' comharrachadh

People were marking Jesus's crucifixion day according to a Jewish festival. And the Jews were working out when that would be according to the state of the moon.

In the calendar of the Jews, each month begins with a new moon. A fortnight after that, the moon is full. Passover begins on the day of the full moon in the first month of Spring.

The Christians were not wanting to celebrate Easter on the same day as Passover. And they wanted it always to be on a Sunday.

Thus, at Nicaea, near Constantinople, a conference was held in the year 325. The bishops made a decision as to exactly when Easter would be held. Next time, we'll see what their decision was. And we'll see what happened at the Synod of Whitby.

latha-ceusaidh Ìosa a rèir fèill Iùdhach. Agus bha na h-Iùdhaich a' tomhas cuin a bhiodh sin ann a rèir staid na gealaich.

Ann am mìosachan nan Iùdhach, bidh gach mìos a' tòiseachadh leis a' ghealaich ùir. Ceala-deug an dèidh sin bidh a' ghealach làn. Bidh Càisg nan Iùdhach a' tòiseachadh air latha na gealaich làn anns a' chiad mhìos dhen Earrach.

Cha robh na Crìosdaidhean ag iarraidh a' Chàisg a chomharrachadh air an aon latha ri Càisg nan Iùdhach. Agus bha iad airson 's gum biodh i an-còmhnaidh air Didòmhnaich.

Mar sin, aig Nicaea, faisg air Constantinople, bha co-labhairt air a cumail anns a' bhliadhna trì cheud, fichead 's a còig (325). Rinn na h-easbaigean co-dhùnadh air cuin dìreach a bhiodh a' Chàisg air a cumail. An ath thuras, chì sinn dè an co-dhùnadh a bha aca. Agus chì sinn dè thachair aig Seanadh Whitby.