



MIDWEEK FILLUP | THE STUDY OF ACTS

ACTS 12

OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

1. To note the martyrdom of James, and the miraculous release of Peter from prison.
2. To review the untimely death of Herod, and the continued success of the word of God.

SUMMARY

This chapter records the efforts by King Herod to harass the church in Jerusalem. This Herod was Agrippa I, son of Herod Antipas (who beheaded John the Baptist, Mt 14:1-12), and grandson of Herod the Great (who slew the infants at Bethlehem, Mt 2:1-16). Successfully killing James the brother of John with the sword, Herod had Peter arrested and imprisoned, intending to bring Peter before the people after the Passover. Herod's plans were thwarted when an angel of the Lord freed Peter from prison. After meeting with brethren at the home of Mary, mother of John Mark, Peter sent word to James and the brethren of his miraculous release. When Peter was not found in the prison, Herod had the guards examined and executed. Herod then went down to Caesarea (1-19).

While at Caesarea, the people of Tyre and Sidon came to Herod to appeal for peace. When he gave them an oration, the people praised his speech as "the voice of a god and not of a man." Failing to give glory to God, an angel of the Lord struck Herod and he died. The word of God, however, grew and multiplied. Barnabas and Saul, having completed their ministry to the saints in Judea (cf. 11:29-30), returned from Jerusalem to Antioch accompanied by John Mark. At this point in Luke's narrative of the history of the church, the focus turns from the ministry of Peter to the ministry of Paul (20-24).

OUTLINE

1. THE PERSECUTION BY HEROD THE KING (1-19)

a. JAMES KILLED WITH THE SWORD (1-2)

- i. Herod begins to harass some from the church.
- ii. He killed James the brother the John.

b. PETER ARRESTED, FREED BY AN ANGEL (3-19)

- i. *Peter seized during the days of Unleavened Bread*
 1. Since Herod saw that it pleased the Jews
 2. Intending to bring Peter before the people after Passover
- ii. *Peter released by an angel*
 1. Constant prayer was being offered by the church

2. Though bound with chains between two guards, with more before the door
 3. An angel stands before Peter, along with a shining light
 4. The angel strikes Peter on the side, and raises him; chains fell off
 5. Told to gird himself, tie his sandals, put on his garments, and follow
 6. Thinking it was a vision, Peter follows the angel past the guards and into the city
- iii. Peter rejoined with his brethren*
1. He realizes that the angel has delivered him from Herod
 2. He comes to the house of Mary, mother of John Mark, where many are praying
 3. He is first left standing at the door by Rhoda, then astonishes the brethren when they come to the door
 4. He relates what happened, sends word to James and the brethren, and departs
- iv. Peter's release causes a stir*
1. Herod is unable to find Peter
 2. Herod examines the soldiers and has them put to death
 3. Herod leaves Judea and goes to Caesarea

2. THE DEATH OF HEROD THE KING (20-25)

a. HIS LAST ORATION (20-22)

- i. The people of Tyre and Sidon appeal for peace to Herod through Blastus, the king's aide
- ii. On a set day, in royal apparel and on his throne, Herod gives them an oration
- iii. The people praise him as having the voice of a god and not of a man

b. STRUCK DOWN BY AN ANGEL (23)

- i. An angel of the Lord strikes him immediately because he did not give glory to God
- ii. He is eaten of worms and dies

c. WORD OF GOD CONTINUES (24-25)

- i. The word of God grows and multiplies
- ii. Barnabas and Saul return from Jerusalem with John Mark, fulfilling their ministry