

## A Study of Acts: Chapter 12

### **INTRODUCTION.**

- A. In our study of Acts eleven, we saw three important events:
  - 1. Salvation to the Gentiles was accepted by the brethren.
  - 2. The disciples of Jesus Christ were first called Christians in Antioch.
  - 3. The warning of the famine and the subsequent aid sent by the disciples shows that benevolence towards other saints can exist beyond the local congregation.
- B. Let us begin our examination of Acts twelve.

### **I. PETER'S IMPRISONMENT AND RELEASE.**

- A. King Herod stretched out his hand against the church. He killed James and put Peter in prison. (Acts 12:1-4)
- B. Peter prayed to God. The Lord sent an angel to deliver Peter from prison. (Acts 12:5-11)
- C. Peter goes to the house of Mary, the mother of John. The disciples in the house were reluctant to believe Peter was at the door. (Acts 12:12-17)
- D. Herod ordered the guards be put to death. (Acts 12:18-19)

### **II. HEROD'S DEATH.**

- A. The people of Tyre and Sidon made peace with Herod. Herod spoke to the people and they praised him as a God. (Acts 12:20-22)
- B. An angel of the Lord struck Herod because he did not give glory to God. (Acts 12:23)
- C. After the death of Herod, the word of God grew and multiplied. (Acts 12:24)
- D. Barnabas and Paul returned from Jerusalem, taking John Mark with them. (Acts 12:25; cf. 11:27-30)

### **III. KEY EVENT:**

- A. Second persecution of the church. (Acts 12:1-4 )
  - 1. In Acts 8, we saw what could be considered the first persecution of the church. (Acts 8:1-3)
  - 2. In Acts 12, we see a brief persecution brought about by King Herod. This

persecution resulted in the death of James and the imprisonment of Peter. This persecution subsided with Herod's death, allowing the church to have peace. (Acts 12:23-24)

- B. James, the brother of John, was the first apostle to be martyred. (Acts 12:2)
  - 1. James, John, and Peter, three of the apostles, went alone with Jesus on occasions.
    - a. Peter, James, and John went to the mountain when Jesus appeared with Moses and Elijah. (Matthew 17:1-3)
    - b. Peter, James, and John went in with Jesus when He healed Jairius's daughter. (Mark 5:35-37)
    - c. Jesus took Peter, James, and John when He went to pray. (Mark 14:32-35)
  - 2. James, while not the first martyr for the name of Christ, was the first apostles to die in his service to Christ. (Judas Iscariot killed himself because of his guilt.)
- C. The church prayed for Peter while he was in prison. (Acts 12:5, 12)
  - 1. While the disciples had met and prayed on other occasions, this serves as an example of Christians praying for another brother who was in trouble.
  - 2. Such prayers of the faithful are always effective. (James 5:14-18)
- D. Herod was struck dead by the Lord. (Acts 12:20-23)
  - 1. This is not the first display of the Lord's power against the unrighteous. (Ananias and Sapphira was struck dead by the Lord. See Acts 5:1-11)
  - 2. However, Herod was a ruler and a man of influence. His death gave peace to the church for a time.

## CONCLUSION.

- A. Remember the key point seen in our study:
  - 1. Second persecution of the church.
  - 2. James, the brother of John, was the first apostle to be martyred.
  - 3. The church prayed for Peter while he was in prison.
  - 4. Herod was struck dead by the Lord.
- B. In chapter 13, we will see the church in Antioch sending out Paul and Barnabas to preach the word.

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by John M. Duvall - Lawton, OK