

Acts 12:1-24



- 1 During the Passover holiday feast, King Herod Agrippa arrested some of the Christians in Jerusalem. Among them was James, the brother of John. Herod gave orders to execute James with the sword. Many Jews supported Herod's actions against the Christians.



- 2 Next, Herod Agrippa had Peter arrested and put in prison. After the Passover Feast Herod intended to put him on trial before the public. Peter was guarded around the clock by four squads of four soldiers.



- 3 While Peter was in prison, the church met together to pray for him.



- 4 The night before Peter's trial, he was fast asleep chained between two soldiers with guards by the entrance. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared, lighting up the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. 'Quick, get up!' he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists.



- 5 'Put on your clothes and sandals,' The angel said. Peter did so. 'Wrap your cloak around you and follow me,' the angel told him.



- 6 Peter followed the angel, thinking he was seeing a vision. They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it.



- 7 When they had walked the length of one street, the angel left him. Peter suddenly realised he had been freed from King Herod's clutches. He went to the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where many had gathered to pray.



- 8 Peter knocked at the outer entrance, and a servant named Rhoda came to answer the door. She recognised Peter's voice and was so overjoyed she ran back without opening it shouting, 'Peter is at the door!'



- 9 'You're out of your mind,' they told her. She insisted she had heard Peter's voice. Peter kept on knocking.



10 When they opened the door and saw Peter they were astonished. Peter motioned them to be quiet and described how the Lord had brought him out of prison. 'Tell James and the other brothers and



11 In the morning there was a commotion in the prison when the soldiers realised Peter was missing. Herod cross-examined the guards and ordered that they be executed.



12 Some time later, Herod Agrippa went to Caesarea and, wearing his royal robes, gave a public address. The crowd listening shouted, 'This is the voice of a god, not of a man.' King Herod Agrippa enjoyed the flattery. Immediately an angel of the Lord struck him down and he died.



God's message continued to spread and reach more and more people. After Barnabas and Saul finished their task in Jerusalem, they returned to Antioch. John, also called Mark, was with them.

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