



APRIL, 2024

Acts 12: GOD Delivers (From, To, or Through)

Introductory Statement: We continue our study of the Actions of the Holy Spirit in and through the lives of the Apostles, as directed by Jesus, the Christ. Before His ascension, Jesus left instructions for His followers to wait until the promised advocate arrived to empower them, so that they could effectively fulfill His commission for them. In this chapter, we further experience Luke's witness concerning the evidence of the Holy Spirit's empowerment, in testimony to the Lordship of Jesus, the Christ.

Summary Points:

- Who are the Major characters in this narrative?
- Who are the minor characters in this narrative?
- What was the result of the persecution on the church?
- How do the occurrences in this chapter align with Jesus' preparation of His disciples?
- What do you and I gain from this chapter?

Objectives: As a result of our time of study today each Believer in JESUS will better grasp the intention of this scripture passage and understand ways to personally apply these truths in daily living.

THE WARM-UP

- **From His Lectures (teachings) to His Labs (demonstrations), Jesus prepared His followers for the times that they were now facing.**
 - Matthew 10:5-8 (NLT)
 - Announce the Kingdom of Heaven is Near
 - Heal the Sick
 - Cure the lepers
 - Cast / Drive Out demons
 - Give freely as you've received
 - Matthew 10:16-28 (NLT)
- **Jesus emphasized the importance of perseverance and endurance through the periods of opposition, using his own life as a template.**
 - Matthew 10:24-28

THE WORKOUT

- **Let's look closer at the characters noted in Acts 12.**
 - Major Characters
 - Herod (Agrippa I) [aka King Herod]
 - Grandson of Herod the Great
 - (rebuilt 2nd temple in Jerusalem
 - Tried to kill infant Jesus (children under age 2)
 - Son of Herod Antipas (responsible for murdering John the Baptist [beheading])
 - Corrupt; imprisoned at one time, but restored by Caligula
 - Client of Rome appointed to keep the peace
 - Persuaded Caligula to not place an image of himself in the Jewish temple
 - Respected by Sadducees and Pharisees to remain in good standing with Jewish community
 - Imprisoned James and Peter
 - Peter
 - One of the first two disciples to follow Jesus
 - Brother of Andrew

- Fisherman by trade
- 1/3 of Jesus' inner circle
- Received revelation of Jesus being the Christ
- Rebuked by Jesus for opposing God's plan for Jesus to die
- Denied Jesus publicly
- Restored by Jesus (Feed by Sheep/Lambs)
- Leader among the Apostles and ministry to the Jewish community
- James
 - Son of Zebedee (hot tempered)
 - Brother of John
 - Among the first 4 disciples
 - 1/3 of Jesus' inner circle
- Un-named Angel
- Minor Characters
 - Un-named Soldiers
 - Rhoda
 - Young girl who answered door at Mary's (John-Mark's mother) house
 - Mary
 - Mother of John-Mark
 - Aunt of Barnabas (sold land; gave proceeds to Apostles; brought Saul/Paul to the other Apostles;
 - Mark (John-Mark)
 - Author of Gospel according to Mark
 - Disciple of Jesus
 - Cousin of Barnabus
 - Unwanted by Paul to travel with Barnabus and himself
 - James
 - Eldest of Jesus' younger brothers
 - Leader of church in Jerusalem (instructions to Gentile Believers)
 - Author of Epistle of James
 - Martyr for the cause of Jesus, the Christ (beheading was 3rd in order of execution modes: stoning, burning, decapitation, strangulation)
 - Un-named prayer group
 - Blastus

- Superintendent of Herod's domestic affairs; handled his money (chamberlain)
 - Mediator of royal problems
- Why did Herod (Agrippa I) kill James and intend to kill Peter?
 - Acts 12:1-5 (AMP)
 - Although a King, Herod was a politician who desired to stay in good standing with the people
 - The Jewish Christians were creating tensions in His jurisdiction: Jerusalem, and Herod wanted none of this.
- **Peter's Deliverance .**
Acts 12:6-17 (AMP)
 - Peter was imprisoned
 - Peter was bound (multiple chains)
 - Peter was oppressed (Sentry – one who watches against intrusion)
 - He was heavily guarded because of prior, miraculous releases from prison
 - Acts 5:17-26 (AMP)
 - Persistent Prayers were made to God on Peter's behalf
 - Peter displayed peace through the process (he was asleep)
 - Peter followed in Faith and with obedience to instructions he received from the Angel (he didn't know what was going to happen)
 - Peter's miracle lasted enough to perform that which he could not do
 - Peter testified of the miracle and wonder, giving Glory to God
 - Peter resumed his assignment (commission)
- **Amid the Grace and Mercy which flowed at this time, God, again, shows his hand of judgement.**
 - Acts 12:20-23 (AMP)

- You shall have no other god before me
Exodus 20:2-3 (AMP)
- God has judged rulers before for taking credit which belongs to Him,
as their own
Daniel 4:19-37 (NLT)

THE COOL DOWN

- We see that God Still Delivers, sometimes From, sometime through, and sometimes unto
- Why didn't God deliver James as He did Peter?
 - Jesus forewarned the disciples that people would seek to kill them, thinking they were honoring God
 - Jesus instructed those who would follow Him to Count the Cost of discipleship, knowing that it may require losing your life.
 - James did not renounce his faith in the moment of adversity. His ultimate deliverance is the same as all who believe on and call upon the Lord Jesus, the Christ.
 - God is sovereign. He works things according to the counsel of His own will.
- In the face of all the persecution, the Bible declares this: (Acts 12:24 AMP)
 - ^{12:24} But the word of the Lord [the good news about salvation through Christ] continued to grow and spread [increasing in effectiveness].
- Do you know this Jesus? Are you a citizen of God's Kingdom?
 - Jesus declared that you must be Born Again to enter the Kingdom.
- Are you ready to anchor your soul in Jesus and solidify your place in eternity?