

Comments About Acts 12

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BIG SANDY, Texas—Recently, I began a series of brief articles to discuss chapters in the book of Acts. This week, we will talk about chapter 12.

May this project encourage you to review the valuable history found in the book of Acts.

Good things in Antioch

As you recall in Acts 11, good things were happening among the disciples.

- The hand of the Lord was with the preaching of the Lord Jesus in Antioch, and many believed (Acts 11:21).
- The disciples in Antioch decided to send help to the disciples in Judea, who were suffering from a drought (verses 29-30).

Herod killed James

Chapter 12 begins by showing some negative events happening among the disciples. The record shows that Herod killed James.

- King Herod stretched forth his hand to harass some from the church (verse 1).
- King Herod killed James (the brother of John) with the sword (verse 2).

References to James

This is the James who is mentioned throughout the Gospel accounts. Notice a few places.

- James and John were the sons of Zebedee, who followed the Son of God (Matthew 4:21-22).
- James and John were called the sons of thunder (Mark 3:17).
- Christ took Peter, James and John up the mountain to witness a vision (Luke 9:28-36).
- Christ corrected James and John for their desire to call down fire from heaven (Luke 9:51-56).
- When Luke wrote the book of Acts, he listed James and John among the disciples in Jerusalem awaiting the receiving of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:13).

Days of Unleavened Bread

Back to the story, we see that Herod did much of his evil to please people.

- King Herod seized Peter to please the Jews (verses 3-4).
- This occurred during the Days of Unleavened Bread.

Do a little research

Acts 12:4 is one of the places in the Bible that demonstrates how Bible students cannot trust all the English words found in the King James Version of the Bible.

The King James Version in Acts 12:4 mentions the English word *Easter*. The New King James correctly uses the English word *Passover*.

Bible students should have two goals.

- First—Even without being an expert in Hebrew or Greek, Bible students can check the English words with a concordance or lexicon.
- Second—Bible students should compare passages in various translations.

Peter escaped

After Peter was captured, he escaped.

- An angel helped Peter to escape (verses 5-11).
- Peter went to the house of Mary (the mother of John) to tell the other disciples about his escape (verses 12-17).
- Peter suggested that the disciples pass along the news of his escape to another James (verse 17). The new James is also mentioned in Acts 15:13-21.
- Herod commanded that the soldiers who allowed Peter to escape should be put to death (verses 18-19).

Herod was killed

Shortly thereafter, King Herod died.

- An angel of the Lord struck King Herod (verses 20-23).
- The Word of God grew and multiplied (verse 24).