

# ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

## Lesson #11 -Herod's Three-fold Mistake

### Scripture Reading: Acts 12:1-4

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#### Introduction:

1. All those who have ever sought to fight against the church fails, for they are fighting God!
2. All of Herod's actions came to nothing when he came against the Lord!
3. We observe his actions in three different manifestations:

## **I. HE ATTACKED THE CHURCH**

### **A. DEATH OF JAMES**

1. He is the brother of John; they were known as “the sons of thunder” -Mk 3:17
2. They requested seats in the kingdom of Christ -Mk 10:35-40
  - a. Jesus stated that they would drink of the same cup as He, and they would be baptized with the same baptism as He -vs. 39
  - b. This is fulfilled -Ac 12:2; Re 1:9

### **B. THE ARREST OF PETER**

1. Because the Jews were pleased with the death of James, Peter was arrested
  - a. This Herod Agrippa 1 was the most successful at pleasing the Jews
    - i. He kept their laws
    - ii. He studied their customs
  - b. Peter was not tried or put to death immediately. During the Feast of Unleavened Bread no trials could be held. Herod honored this.
  - c. Peter was placed under heavy guard; chained between two Roman guards. (He was perhaps aware that the apostles escaped prison earlier (Ac 5:17-23), therefore he did not want to take any chances that Peter would escape this time).
2. Herod believes he is winning in the fight against the preaching of Jesus.
  - a. This was no more true for him than it was for Saul when he persecuted the church.
  - b. Application: When we feel like we are losing, we must remember that God is still in control and He never loses!

## **II. HE COULD NOT HOLD PETER**

### **A. God is not challenged by Herod's guards**

1. He sends an angel to set Peter free
2. The angel awakens Peter and has him get dressed
3. He leads Peter through the guards and the iron gate that leads to the city.
4. NOTE: This is all done without arousing the attention of the guards!

### **B. Peter goes to the home of Mary**

1. Mary is the mother of John Mark
  - a. He is the brother of Barnabas -Co 4:10
  - b. He is the author of the Gospel according to Mark
  - c. He is the one Paul and Barnabas had a split over -Ac 15:36-41
  - d. He is the one Peter later call his son in the faith -1Pe 5:13
  - e. He is the one Paul said was useful for the ministry -2Ti 4:11

2. Upon his arrival
  - a. A girl named Rhoda went to the door and she recognizes Peter's voice.
  - b. She comes back and announces that Peter is at the gate and no one believes her
  - c. When they finally let him in, they hear of his grand escape made possible by God's grace.
  - d. Peter departs to another place (this place is not known to us)
3. When Herod learns of Peter's escape, he has his guards examined and put to death
4. This teaches us two valuable lessons:
  - a. The power of prayer
  - b. Man cannot stop God's will from being done

### **III. HE DIED VIOLENTLY BEFORE THE LORD**

#### **A. HEROD'S MISTAKE**

1. It began with his quarrel with the people of Tyre and Sidon
  - a. Since they depended upon him for food, they sought to make peace with him
  - b. He comes before them dressed in royal apparel and sat on his throne
2. The people flatter him by saying his voice is the voice of a god and not a man.
  - a. Because he accepted this praise from the people and did not give glory to God, he was destroyed.
  - b. An angel of the Lord struck him so he was eaten by worms and died

#### **B. THE APPLICATION**

1. Herod thought he could destroy the church, but he was destroyed by the Lord
2. The church grew and prospered while his body withered and decayed.
3. The Lord is still in control today!

#### **Conclusion:**

1. Fighting against the Lord will always end in defeat. It may not happen immediately, but it will occur.
2. Let us take courage that we are on the winning side! We are the church of the NT. The church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.