

## Acts Chapter 12

### 1. Now about that time Herod the king stretched out *his* hand to harass some from the church.

#### A. **time-** Gr. **kairos-** *season*

1. *That is, during the time that the famine existed, or the time when Barnabas and Saul went up to Jerusalem. This was probably about the fifth or sixth year of the reign of Claudius, not far from 47 ad.*  
-Barnes Commentary

#### B. **Herod-** means *heroic*

1. *This was Herod Agrippa, the son of Aristobulus, and grandson of Herod the Great; he was nephew to Herod Antipas, who beheaded John the Baptist, and brother to Herodias. He was made king by the Emperor Caligula, and was put in possession of all the territories formerly held by his uncle Philip and by Lysanias; viz. Iturea, Trachonitis, Abilene, with Gaulonitis, Batanaea, and Penias. To these the Emperor Claudius afterwards added Judea and Samaria; which were nearly all the dominions possessed by his grandfather, Herod the Great.* -Clarke Commentary

#### C. **king-** Gr. **basileus**

#### D. **stretched out-** Gr. **epiballo-** *to throw upon*

1. In the last chapter we saw that the hand of the Lord was with Barnabas and Paul in ministering to the Gentiles. In this chapter we see the hand of the enemy rise up against the church.

#### E. **hand-** Gr. **cheir**

1. There seems to be a corresponding relationship between the hand of the Lord and the enemies' hand. When the Lord's hand blesses, then the enemies' hand will come in for harm to counteract it. This will lead in turn for the Lord's hand to be revealed to bless and the process is repeated.

#### F. **harass-** Gr. **kakoo-** *to harm, mistreat, cause evil to, oppress*

- a. The enemy cannot stop or eradicate the church. All he can do is harass the church. He does this best by using people.

#### G. **church-** Gr. **ekklesia**

- a. This particular persecution was localized to those leading the Jerusalem church.

**2. Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword.**

A. **killed**- Gr. **anaireo**

B. **James**- means *supplanter*

1. *This was the son of Zebedee, [Mat 4:21](#). He is commonly called James the Greater, in contradistinction from James, the son of Alpheus, who is called James the Less, [Mat 10:3](#).*

*-Barnes Commentary*

2. This James, the brother of John, should not be confused with James, the Lord's brother, and the author of the book of the same name.

3. Stephen was the first recorded martyr of the Christian faith, but James was the first of the original 12 disciples of Jesus to be martyred for their faith.

4. James probably was selected first because of his overt witness of Christ. He was one of the sons of thunder. He probably made too much "noise" for the Romans to ignore.

C. **brother**- Gr. **adelphos**

D. **John**

1. James and John were called the sons of Zebedee and also the sons of thunder. [Mar 10:35](#), [Mark 3:17](#)

E. **sword**- Gr. **machaira**

1. This was the short double-sided sword of the Roman soldiers. No doubt, the king had James killed by a Roman soldier.

**3. And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was *during* the Days of Unleavened Bread.**

A. **And because he saw that it pleased the Jews,**

1. **saw**- Gr. **eido**

2. **pleased**- Gr. **esti arestos**- *was agreeable, pleasing*

a. Herod was a politician of his day. He went with public opinion. Most of our leaders today do the same. As Christians, we are called to proclaim God's word, no matter what the public opinion is at the time.

3. **Jews**

B. **he proceeded further to seize Peter also**

1. **proceeded**- Gr. **prostithemi**- *to add on further*

2. **seize**- Gr. **sullambano**- *to take with*

### 3. Peter

- a. Peter was seen as the leader among the disciples.

### C. Now it was during the Days of Unleavened Bread

1. **during**- Gr. **en**- in

2. **Days**- Gr. **hemera**

3. **Unleavened Bread**- Gr. **azumos**- *without leaven*

- a. *The Passover, or the seven days immediately succeeding the Passover, during which the Jews were required to eat bread without leaven, [Exo 12:15-18](#). It was some time during this period that Herod chose to apprehend Peter. Why this time was selected is not known. As it was, however, a season of religious solemnity, and as Herod was desirous of showing his attachment to the religious rites of the nation (Josephus, *Antiq.*, [Exo 19:7](#), [Exo 19:3](#)), it is probable that he chose this period to show to them more impressively his purpose to oppose all false religions, and to maintain the existing establishments of the nation. -Barnes Commentary*

### 4. So when he had arrested him, he put *him* in prison, and delivered *him* to four squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover.

#### A. So when he had arrested him,

1. **arrested**- Gr. **piazo**- *to squeeze, that is, seize*

#### B. he put him in prison,

1. **put**- Gr. **tithemi**
2. **prison**- Gr. **phulake**

#### C. and delivered him to four squads of soldiers to keep him,

1. **delivered**- Gr. **paradidomi** - *to give over*
2. **four**- Gr. **tessares**
3. **squads**- Gr. **tetradion**- *a set of four; a detachment of four men*
4. **soldiers**- Gr. **stratiotes**

- a. *A "quaternion" was a company of "four"; consequently the whole number employed here was sixteen. The Romans divided the night into four watches so that the guards could be relieved; those who were on guard occupying three hours, and being then relieved. Of the four who were on guard, two were with Peter in the prison [Act 12:6](#), and two*

*kept watch before the door of the prison. The utmost precaution was taken that he should not escape; and Herod thus gave the most ample assurance to the Jews of his intention to secure Peter, and to bring him to trial.*

-Barnes Commentary

5. **keep-** Gr. **phulasso**

- a. This is not the first time Peter had been in prison and had miraculously been set free by an angel. Herod wanted maximum security put on his case.

D. **intending to bring him before the people after Passover**

1. **intending-** Gr. **boulomai-** *to resolve*

2. **bring-** Gr. **anago-** *bring up*

3. **people-** Gr. **laos**

- a. This is the Jewish people.
- b. Jesus was brought before the people and then scourged and crucified. No doubt it entered into Peter's mind about the possibility of him following in Jesus' footsteps with a cruel roman scourging and a horribly painful crucifixion. No doubt, the thought of that was not pleasant. However, I believe Peter knew that this was not his time to die because of what Jesus told him on the beach before He went up into heaven. He told Peter when he was old he would die. [John 21:18](#) He was not old yet. I believe this held him steady through this trial. We are to war a good warfare by the prophecies that we have received. [1 Tim. 1:18](#)

4. **Passover-** Gr. **pascha**

- a. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was connected to the Passover. Herod was waiting until this feast was over to bring Peter before the people. Herod probably wanted to wait until most of the crowds had dispersed, before he dealt with Peter, as he did not want a riot on his hands.

5. **Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church.**

A. **Peter was therefore kept in prison,**

1. **kept-** Gr. **tereo**

- a. The length of this incarceration is unknown.

2. **prison-** Gr. **phulake**

B. **but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church**

1. **constant-** Gr. **ektenes-** *extended; met. intense, earnest, fervent*

a. This emphasizes that we need each other. We need prayer from time to time from other believers. The shield that faith is likened to in Eph. 6, was the roman shield that had hooks on either side, so it could interlock with other shields. We need to link our faith together in prayer for each other.

b. Paul recognized his need for prayer and asked for it.

[Rom 15:30](#), [2Co 1:11](#), [Eph 6:19](#), [Php 1:19](#), [1Th 5:25](#), [Phm 1:22](#) If Paul needed prayer and had the humility to ask for it, we should as well.

2. **prayer-** Gr. **proseuche**

a. There is a mystery to prayer, but one thing is clear, that we must ask God to intervene in our lives and in the natural realm because He has given us authority over our own will, lives, and the earth. [Ps. 115:16](#)

b. There is power released through prayer. [Jas 5:16](#)

3. **offered-** Gr. **ginomai-** *happened or made*

4. **church-** Gr. **ekklesia**

6. **And when Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping, bound with two chains between two soldiers; and the guards before the door were keeping the prison.**

A. **And when Herod was about to bring him out,**

1. **bring out-** Gr. **proago-** *to lead forth*

B. **that night Peter was sleeping,**

1. **night-** Gr. **nux**

2. **sleeping-** Gr. **koimao**

a. This is an amazing thing. Herod was about to bring out Peter for his trial, and Peter was sleeping soundly, that the angel had to strike him to wake him up! Most people would be up worrying and wringing their hands in fear if they were going to be killed the next day. Peter could fall asleep because of the prophecy Jesus gave him about him being old when he died. He was not old yet and knew he would not be put to death right then.

**C. bound with two chains between two soldiers,**

1. **bound-** Gr. **deo**

a. You can rest in faith no matter what is going on around you or to you.

2. **two chains-** Gr. **duo halusis**

a. One chain was connected to the soldier on his right and the other to the soldier on his left.

3. **two soldiers-** Gr. **duo stratiotes**

**D. and the guards before the door were keeping the prison**

1. **guards-** Gr. **phulax**

a. Four guards watched over Peter at any given time. Two in his cell and two outside his prison door.

b. For Peter to get out of prison with this level of security was an undeniable miracle.

2. **door-** Gr. **thura**

3. **keeping-** Gr. **tereo**

4. **prison-** Gr. **phulake**

**7. Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by *him*, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, "Arise quickly!" And his chains fell off *his* hands.**

**A. Now behold,**

1. **behold-** Gr. **idou-** look!

**B. an angel of the Lord stood by him,**

1. **angel-** Gr. **aggelos-** *messenger*

2. **Lord-** Gr. **kurios**

3. **stood-** Gr. **histemi**

**C. and a light shone in the prison,**

1. **light-** Gr. **phos**

a. Angels are ministers of light and fire, and are illuminous. They shine with the glory of God.

2. **shone**

a. God can make His light shine in your darkest situation. Praise God! You just need to rest in God's promise, just like Peter did.

**D. and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up,**

1. **struck-** Gr. **patasso-** to strike

- a. This word is in the aorist tense, so he struck him once. However, I think it is important to see that the angel had to strike Peter to wake him up. Why is that significant? It is because Peter was in a deep sleep! He was not awake worrying or having fitful sleep.

2. **side-** Gr. **pleura**

3. **raised up-** Gr. **egeiro-** *to rouse*

- a. This means the angel roused him out of sleep by striking him.

E. **saying**

F. **Arise quickly**

1. **Arise**

2. **quickly-** Gr. **en tachos-** *in speed, in haste*

- a. No doubt the angel had caused the men guarding Peter to fall asleep or pass out. Even though the angel had disarmed all four men guarding him in some fashion and was in control of this miracle, the angel still said arise **quickly**. This means we are required to offer quick obedience to God. This is needed to cooperate with God and the miracle He is doing in your life.

G. **And his chains fell off his hands**

1. **chains**

2. **fell off**

- a. Notice, Peter was told to arise first before the chains fell off. It does not say the chains fell off and Peter was told to arise. It was when Peter acted on what he was told to do that is when his chains fell off. Acting on the Word of God will set you free and set things into motion for your deliverance!
- b. This would not be the only time prison chains would fall off in a miraculous way. [Act 16:26](#)

3. **hands**

- a. Notice, Peter was responsible for what he could do- arise quickly, but the Lord did what he could not do- his chains fell off. We must cooperate with the miracle working power of God.

8. Then the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and tie on your sandals"; and so he did. And he said to him, "Put on your garment and follow me."

A. Then the angel said to him,

1. **angel**- Gr. **aggelos**
2. **said**- Gr. **epo**

B. **Gird yourself and tie on your sandals**

1. **gird yourself**- Gr. **perizonnumi**- *to bind around with a girdle, gird; in NT mid. to gird one's self in preparation for bodily motion and exertion*

a. *When they slept the outer garment was thrown off, and the girdle with which they bound their inner garment, or tunic, was loosed. He was directed now to gird up that inner garment as they usually wore it; that is, to dress himself, and prepare to follow him.* -Barnes Commentary

b. Notice, that the angel told Peter to gird himself, tie his own shoes [sandals], put on his own outer garment, and follow. These were all things Peter could do for himself. The Lord will not do the natural things for you that you can do. He will do what you cannot do. You will see the angel causing the prison doors to open, all the way, through the prison out to the street. Peter could not do that.

2. **tie**- Gr. **hupodeo**- *to bind under*

a. This is something he could do himself.

3. **sandals**- Gr. **sandalion**

C. **and so he did**

1. **did**- Gr. **poieo**

D. **And he said to him,**

1. **said**- Gr. **lego**

E. **Put on your garment and follow me**

1. **put on**-Gr. **periballo**- *to throw around*

a. This is something he could do himself.

2. **garment**- Gr. **himation**

a. This was the outward garment that was worn.

3. **follow**- Gr. **akoloutheo**

a. Peter had to choose to do this in faith. No one could have done it for him.



9. **So he went out and followed him, and did not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision.**

A. **So he went out and followed him,**

1. **went out-** Gr. **exerchomai**

a. Apparently, the angel had walked out of his prison cell and now, Peter had to, as well, in order to follow him.

b. The Lord is leading you and I out of our own prison, but we must choose to walk out and follow. Many will not do this. Their confinement seems safer and more familiar to them, than change and freedom.

2. **followed-** Gr. **akoloutheo**

B. **and did not know that what was done by the angel was real,**

1. **did not know-** Gr. **eido ou**

2. **done-** Gr. **poieo**

3. **real-** Gr. **alethes- true**

a. Peter must have still been in a slumber because this was not the first time an angel actually sprung him from prison.

See [Acts 5](#)

C. **but thought he was seeing a vision**

1. **thought-** Gr. **dokeo- to suppose**

2. **seeing-** Gr. **blepo**

3. **vision-** Gr. **horama**

a. This implies that Peter had experience with visions that were so vivid that they appeared to be happening in the natural.

10. **When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him.**

A. **When they were past the first and second guard posts,**

1. **past-** Gr. **dierchomai- to come through**

2. **first-** Gr. **protos**

3. **second-** Gr. **deuteros**

4. **guard posts-** Gr. **phulake**

a. *Or watch, which were set within the prison, and might be some of the quaternions of soldiers to whom Peter was*

*delivered; two of them were with him, and others might be placed at these two wards for further security; and these circumstances make the deliverance the more wonderful and remarkable; the watch must either be asleep, or their eyes were holden, or the angel and Peter passed by so swiftly that they were unobserved: -Barnes Commentary*

**B. they came to the iron gate that leads to the city,**

1. **came-** Gr. **erchomai**
2. **iron-** Gr. **sidereos-** *made of iron*
  - a. We all will face an iron gate which only God can open for us.
3. **gate-** Gr. **phule**
4. **leads-** Gr. **phero**
5. **city-** Gr. **polis**
  - a. The iron gate that held Peter in prison led to the city. What does this mean for us? It means that when God sets us free, it will lead us to our city- or in other words, we are to use our testimony to see others set free as well. Our miracle is not just for us, but for others [our city]!

**C. which opened to them of its own accord,**

1. **opened-** Gr. **anoigo**
2. **own accord-** Gr. **automatos**
  - a. Peter did not need a key. The door opened by itself. When we are following God in faith, that iron gate standing between us and freedom will open up of itself. God did for Peter what he could not do- open the iron gate.

**D. and they went out and went down one street,**

1. **went out-** Gr. **exerchomai**
2. **went down-** Gr. **proerchomai**
3. **street-** Gr. **rhume-** *a narrow street, lane, alley*
  - a. The angel led Peter down one street and then left him to continue on from there. The Lord will set us in the right direction, but expects us to continue from there. This miracle is interwoven with God, doing for Peter what he could not do, but Peter having to do what he could do. This same will be for the miracle we need in our life. We need to cooperate with God.

**E. and immediately the angel departed from him**

1. **departed**- Gr. **aphistemi**

- a. Angels come for a specific purpose and then leave. It is unscriptural for us to have an ongoing relationship with any angel.

11. **And when Peter had come to himself, he said, "Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel, and has delivered me from the hand of Herod and *from* all the expectation of the Jewish people."**

A. **And when Peter had come to himself,**

1. **come to himself**- Gr. **ginomai en heautou**

- a. *For upon his being awaked out of sleep, what with the uncommon light, which shone around him, and with the appearance of the angel, and the chains dropping from his hands, and his surprising escape through the several wards, together with the iron gate opening of itself, he was so filled with amazement, that he was not himself; he could scarcely tell whether he was in the body or not, and whether he was in a dream or a trance, or whether he saw a vision or not; but upon the angel's leaving him he came to himself, the amazement wore off, and he found himself thoroughly awake, and perfectly in his senses, and that the deliverance was real: -Gill Commentary*

B. **he said,**

1. **said**- Gr. **epo**

C. **Now I know for a certain that the Lord has sent His angel,**

1. **know**- Gr. **eido**

- a. Sometimes Peter could be "Captain Obvious". This was one case. It did not take a PHD to know that the angel had delivered him.

2. **Lord**- Gr. **kurios**

- a. The Lord Jesus.

3. **sent**- Gr. **exapostello**- *to send forth or out*

D. **and has delivered me from the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the Jewish people**

1. **delivered**- Gr. **exaireo**- *to take out of; to pluck out, tear out*

- a. The Lord loves to tear out his children from the hand of the enemy. [2Co 1:8-10](#), [2Ti 4:17](#); [2Ti 4:18](#), [2Pe 2:9](#)

2. **hand-** Gr. **cheir**
3. **expectation-** Gr. **prosdokia-** *a looking for, expectation, anticipation*
  - a. God will utterly disappoint all our enemy's expectation of victory over us.
4. **Jewish people-** Gr. **laos loudaios**

12. **So, when he had considered *this*, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying.**

A. **So,**

B. **when he had considered this,**

1. **considered-** Gr. **suneido-** *to perceive, understand, comprehend*

C. **he came to the house of Mary,**

1. **came-** Gr. **erchomai**
2. **house-** Gr. **oikos**

- a. The early church mainly met in homes. This is not because it is God's pattern for the church for all time, but for the fact there were no public buildings for purchase or lease like we have now for such gatherings.

- b. It is not where we assemble that is important, but that we do assemble. [Heb. 10:25](#)

3. **Mary-** means *bitter*

- a. *This good woman seems to be a widow, no mention being made of her husband, and was sister to Barnabas, [Col 4:10](#).*  
-Gill Commentary

D. **the mother of John whose surname was Mark,**

1. **mother-** Gr. **meter**
2. **John-** means *gift of God*
3. **surname-** Gr. **epikaleomai**
4. **Mark-** means *a defense*

- a. This is the writer of the gospel of Mark.

- b. This is the Mark who accompanied Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey but left them mid-way. Paul would not consider taking him again on his second missionary journey. Later, Paul would call for Mark, saying he was useful for the ministry.

**E. where many were gathered together praying**

**1. many-** Gr. **polus**

a. This speaks to the wealth of Mary. She had a large home in which many could gather.

**2. gathered together-** Gr. **sunathroizo-** *convene*

**3. praying-** Gr. **proseuchomai**

a. They were praying for Peter's release.

**13. And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a girl named Rhoda came to answer.**

**A. And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate,**

**1. knocked-** Gr. **krouo**

**2. door-** Gr. **thura**

**3. gate-** Gr. **pulon**

a. *Rather the door of the vestibule, or principal entrance into the house. The house was entered through such a porch or vestibule, and it was the door opening into this which is here intended.* -Barnes Commentary

**B. a girl named Rhoda came to answer**

**1. girl-** Gr. **paidiske-** *a girl, damsel, maiden; a female slave or servant*

a. It is possible that this girl was a servant.

**2. named-** Gr. **onoma**

**3. Rhoda-** means *rose*

a. *Rhoda signifies a rose; and it appears to have been customary with the Jews, as Grotius and others remark, to give the names of flowers and trees to their daughters: thus Susannah signifies a lily, Hadassah, a myrtle, Tamar, a palm tree, etc., etc.* -Clarke Commentary

b. We do not know anything of this young girl after this incident.

**4. came-** Gr. **proserchomai**

**5. answer-** Gr. **hupakouo-** *to hearken, obey*

a. It is often that it is a young person who is the most sensitive to hearken and obey God without any tinge of doubt.

**14. When she recognized Peter's voice, because of *her* gladness she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter stood before the gate.**

**A. When she recognized Peter's voice,**

1. **recognized-** Gr. **epiginosko-** *to become thoroughly acquainted with, to know thoroughly*

a. This shows that Peter had spent much time over at Mary's house so that Rhoda was thoroughly acquainted with his voice.

2. **voice-** Gr. **phone**

a. Rhoda believed that Peter had been released because she heard and knew his voice. The others inside did not believe because they did not hear his voice. People do not believe what we believe because we hear and know the Lord's voice and they do not. Faith is based on relationship.

**B. because of her gladness she did not open the gate,**

1. **gladness-** Gr. **chara**

2. **open-** Gr. **anoigo**

3. **gate-** Gr. **pulon**

a. I am sure Peter said to himself, "Really!"

**C. but ran in and announced that Peter stood before the gate**

1. **ran in-** Gr. **eistrecho**

2. **announced-** Gr. **epaggello**

a. I am sure some were irritated by this announcement because it was interrupting their prayers for Peter.

3. **stood-** Gr. **hisemi**

4. **gate-** Gr. **pulon**

a. This verse begins one of the funniest stories of the bible.

**15. But they said to her, "You are beside yourself!" Yet she kept insisting that it was so. So they said, "It is his angel."**

**A. But they said to her,**

1. **said-** Gr. **epo**

**B. You are besides yourself**

1. **besides yourself-** Gr. **mainomai-** *to be mad, to rave, used intrans. of persons who speak and act in such a way that they appear to others as being out of their mind or senses*

a. These saints were gathered for the express purpose for Peter to be delivered from the Roman authorities and death. Now, Peter is delivered and is outside, and no one

believes it! How often do we pray with little or no expectation of them really being answered? They all should have shouted and said, "Praise God, He has heard and answered our prayers!" Instead, they call this poor girl nuts!

**C. Yet she kept insisting that it was so**

1. **kept insisting-** Gr. **diischurizomai-** *to affirm or assert strongly or vehemently*

- a. Way to go Rose [Rhoda]! Way to stick to your guns! These saints were in unbelief, but she was dogged if they would cause her to doubt too!
- b. It makes me laugh to think that Rhoda is having a continued argument with those inside about Peter being outside. All she needed to do was open up the door and let him in! But no, she stays in fray and refuses to be called crazy by these fanatic Christians who are praying for Peter's release. Rose stands her ground with the crowd until they are interrupted by Peter knocking again.

**D. So they said,**

1. **said-** Gr. **lego**

**E. It is his angel**

1. **angel-** Gr. **aggelos**

- a. Instead of believing the possibility that God answered their prayers, they believed it was an angel instead of Peter! I think we have hope today if these DA-disciples back then could be so dull.
- b. This verse backs up what Jesus said, which is that each of us have an angel assigned to us. [Mat 18:10](#)
- c. Notice, that they said it was an angel, but none of them jumped up to go see the angel. Angels appeared much more often in the early church and must have been somewhat common. I believe as we get closer to the coming of Jesus we will start seeing more angels.

**16. Now Peter continued knocking; and when they opened *the door* and saw him, they were astonished.**

**A. Now Peter continued knocking,**

1. **continued knocking-** Gr. **epimeno krouo**

a. It was easier for Peter to get out of prison than to get in with these saints! However, Peter would not be denied! He presses on! I am so glad this story was added to the scripture. It is quite amusing!

**B. and when they opened the door and saw him,**

1. **opened-** Gr. **anoigo**
2. **door-** Gr. *not in Greek- omit*
3. **saw-** Gr. **eido**

**C. they were astonished**

1. **astonished-** Gr. **exisemi-** *besides themselves, out of one's mind*
  - a. They had said Rhoda was beside herself and out of her mind, but now they were the ones beside themselves and out of their minds. You are out of your mind if you doubt that God hears and answers your prayers!
  - b. How often are we astonished and surprised that God answered our prayers?

17. **But motioning to them with his hand to keep silent, he declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Go, tell these things to James and to the brethren." And he departed and went to another place.**

**A. But motioning to them with his hands to keep silent,**

1. **motioning-** Gr. **kateiso-** *to shake downward, that is, make a signal with the hands*
  - a. Peter made a hand gesture to keep the volume down, as he did not want the whole neighborhood to know that he was there.
2. **hands-** Gr. **cheir**
3. **keep silent-** Gr. **sigao**
  - a. Although Peter had been delivered out of prison twice by an angel, he was not up for tempting the Lord by being indiscreet. He would take natural precautions not to alert the authorities. This is wisdom. [Pro 22:3](#)

**B. he declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison,**

1. **declared-** Gr. **diegeomai-** *to lead through thoroughly*
2. **Lord-** Gr. **kurios**
3. **brought out-** Gr. **exago**



4. **prison-** Gr. **phulake**
  - C. **And he said,**
    1. **said-** Gr. **epo**
  - D. **Go tell James and to the brethren-**
    1. **Go tell-** Gr. **apaggello-** *announce*
    2. **James**
      - a. This is the Lord's brother and the author of the book of James. James had taken over leadership of the church at Jerusalem. James, the brother of John had already been killed by Herod.
    3. **brethren-** Gr. **adelphos**
      - a. The other 10 disciples. One of the original twelve, James, was killed by Herod.
  - F. **And he departed and went to another place**
    1. **departed-** Gr. **exerchomai**
    2. **went-** Gr. **poreuomai-** *to journey or travel*
    2. **place-** Gr. **topos**
      - a. No doubt, this was because a great deal of noise had been generated by his knocking and now all the people were coming out to see him and excitedly greet him. It was no longer safe for him to stay there lest the authorities be summoned. Also, he might have thought to himself, "I do not want to be around all these unbelieving Christians!"
18. **Then, as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers about what had become of Peter.**
- A. **Then**
  - B. **as soon as it was day,**
    1. **day-** Gr. **hemera**
  - C. **there was no small stir among the soldiers about what had become of Peter**
    1. **small-** Gr. **oligos**
    2. **stir-** Gr. **tarachos-** *agitation, commotion; consternation, terror*
      - a. This is an understatement! The soldiers' lives were at stake over this matter.
    3. **soldiers-** Gr. **stratiotes**
    4. **become-** Gr. **ginomai**

19. **But when Herod had searched for him and not found him, he examined the guards and commanded that *they* should be put to death. And he went down from Judea to Caesarea and stayed *there*.**

A. **But when Herod had searched for him and not found him,**

1. **searched-** Gr. **epizeteo-** *to seek with care and anxiety*
2. **found-** Gr. **heurisko**

a. Peter had hidden himself. We are not told where.

B. **he examined the guards and commanded that they should be put to death**

1. **examined-** Gr. **anakrino-** *to sift; to examine closely*
2. **guards-** Gr. **phulax**
3. **commanded-** Gr. **keleuo**
4. **put to death-** Gr. **epago-** *to be led away [to death]*

a. This was not some unusual punishment. According to Justinian's Code (ix. [Act 4:4](#)), a guard who allowed a prisoner to escape would suffer the same fatal penalty that awaited the prisoner. -MacArthur Commentary

b. Herod had these men executed, not knowing that soon the Lord would execute him!

c. How was it that Peter escaped out of the two chains of the two guards in his prison cell and also escaped the two guards watching his prison cell outside? It was a miracle, but Herod did not take that to heart. This should have turned him to the faith. Instead, he was hardened in his sin and his own pride. Because of this, he would die not long after.

C. **And he went down from Judea to Caesarea,**

1. **went down-** Gr. **katerchomai**
2. **Judea**
3. **Caesarea**

a. *It was situated on the coast of Palestine, on the line of the great road from Tyre to Egypt, and about halfway between Joppa and Dora. The distance from Jerusalem was about 70 miles; Josephus states it in round numbers as 600 stadia. It was the official residence of the Herodian kings, and of Festus, Felix and the other Roman procurators of Judea.*

-Smith Bible Dictionary

b. This was a popular vacation spot. Herod went on vacation.

**D. and stayed there**

1. **stayed-** Gr. **diatribo-** *rub away- so as to pass or spend time, to remain, stay, tarry, continue*

20. **Now Herod had been very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon; but they came to him with one accord, and having made Blastus the king's personal aide their friend, they asked for peace, because their country was supplied with food by the king's *country*.**

**A. Now Herod had been very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon,**

1. **very angry-** Gr. **thumomacheo-** *to meditate war; to purpose war in the mind, to be warmly hostile to, be enraged against*
  - a. There is no historical record of what this displeasure was caused by. It might have been as small as a personal slight.
2. **people-** *not in Greek, omit*
3. **Tyre-** *means a rock*
  - a. *A celebrated commercial city of Phoenicia, on the coast of the Mediterranean. Its Hebrew name, **Tzor**, signifies a rock; which well agrees with the site of Sur, the modern town, on a rocky peninsula, formerly an island. There is no doubt that, previous to the siege of the city by Alexander the Great, Tyre was situated on an island; but, according to the tradition of the inhabitants, there was a city on the mainland, before there was a city on the island; and the tradition receives some color from the name of Palaetyrus, or Old Tyre, which was borne in Greek times, by a city on the continent, thirty stadia to the south. -Smith Bible Dictionary*
4. **Sidon-** *means fishing*
  - a. *An ancient mercantile city of Phoenicia, in the narrow plain between Lebanon and the Mediterranean, where the mountains recede two miles from the sea; 20 miles N. of Tyre. Now Saida. Old Sidon stands on the northern slope of a promontory projecting a few hundred yards into the sea, having thus "a fine naturally formed harbour" (Strabo). The citadel occupies the hill behind on the south. Sidon is called ([Gen 10:15](#)) the firstborn of Canaan, and "great Sidon" or the metropolis ([Jos 11:8](#)). Sidonians is the generic name of the Phoenicians or Canaanites ([Jos 13:6](#); [Jdg 18:7](#)); in*

Jdg 18:28 Laish is said to be "far from Sidon," whereas Tyre, 20 miles nearer, would have been specified if it had then been a city of leading importance. - Faucett Dictionary

**B. but they came to him with one accord,**

1. **came-** Gr. **pareimi**
2. **one accord-** Gr. **homothumadon-** *with one passion*

**C. and having made Blastus the king's personal aid their friend,**

1. **made their friend-** Gr. **peitho-** *to persuade*
  - a. They persuaded Blastus to ask Herod for peace for them.
2. **Blastus-** means *sprout*
3. **king's-** Gr. **basileus**
4. **personal aid-** Gr. **epi koiton-** *the officer who is over the bed chamber, the chamberlain*
  - a. This might imply that he had an inappropriate relationship with the king. What is clear is that he had very close dealings with Herod.

**D. they asked for peace,**

1. **asked-** Gr. **aiteo**
2. **peace-** Gr. **eirene**

**E. because their country was supplied with food by the king's country**

1. **country-** Gr. **chora**
2. **supplied-** Gr. **trephe**
  - a. *They were supplied by the territories of Herod. The country of Tyre and Sidon included a narrow strip of land on the coast of the Mediterranean. Of course they were dependent for provisions, and for articles of commerce, on the interior country; but this belonged to the kingdom of Herod; and as they were entirely dependent on his country, as he had power to dry up the sources of their support and commerce, they were the more urgent to secure his favor.*  
-Barnes Commentary
3. **food-** *not in Greek- omit*

**21. So on a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat on his throne and gave an oration to them.**

**A. So on a set day Herod,**

1. **set day-** Gr. **taktos hemera-** *arranged; fixed, appointed, set day*

a. *This was the second day of the sports and games which Herod celebrated in Caesarea in honor of Claudius Caesar. Josephus has given an account of this occurrence, which coincides remarkably with the narrative here. The account is contained in his "Antiquities of the Jews," book 19, chapter 8, section 2, and is as follows: "Now when Agrippa had reigned three years over all Judea, he came to the city Caesarea, which was formerly called Strato's Tower; and there he exhibited shows in honor of Caesar, upon his being informed that there was a certain festival celebrated to make vows for his safety. At which festival a great multitude was gotten together of the principal persons, and such as were of dignity throughout his province. On the second day of which shows he put on a garment made wholly of silver," etc. -Barnes Commentary*

**B. arrayed in royal apparel,**

1. **arrayed-** Gr. **enduo**

2. **royal apparel-** Gr. **basilikos esthes**

a. *Josephus thus describes the dress which Herod wore on that occasion. "He put on a garment made wholly of silver, and of wonderful contexture, and early in the morning came into the theater place of the shows and games, at which time the silver of his garment, being illuminated by the first reflection of the sun's rays upon it, shone after a surprising manner, and was so resplendent as to spread a horror over those that looked intently on him." -Barnes Commentary*

b. Silver represents redemption. Herod had rejected Jesus Christ as the Redeemer and set himself up as God and the people's redeemer and judge. For this he was struck down in judgment.

**C. sat on his throne and gave an oration to them**

1. **sat-** Gr. **kathizo**

2. **throne-** Gr. **bema-** *judge's seat*

3. **gave an oration-** Gr. **demegoreo-** *to address a public assembly, to deliver a public oration*

**22. And the people kept shouting, "The voice of a god and not of a man!"**

**A. And the people kept shouting,**

1. **people-** Gr. **demos**
2. **kept shouting-** Gr. **epiphoneo-** *to cry aloud, raise a shout at a speaker*

a. Undoubtedly, the people were faking admiration for Herod to placate him.

**B. the voice of a god and not a man**

1. **voice-** Gr. **phone**
2. **god-** Gr. **theos**

a. They ascribed divinity to Herod, but he did not resist or rebuke them for this. He accepted this title and praise. This no doubt greatly pleased Herod.

b. Flattery can kill! Herod would die because of it very shortly.

3. **man-** Gr. **anthropos**

**23. Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died.**

**A. Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him,**

1. **angel-** Gr. **aggelos**
2. **of the Lord**

a. This was an angel of God, not a fallen angel of Satan.

b. Herod was an unbeliever; therefore he was judged and struck down.

3. **struck-** Gr. **patasso-** *to strike, beat upon; to smite, wound, by impl. to kill, slay, to smite with disease, plagues, etc.*

**B. because he did not give glory to God**

1. **glory-** Gr. **doxa**

a. God will not give His glory to another. [Isa 48:11](#)

**C. And he was eaten by worms and died**

1. **eaten by worms-** Gr. **skolekobrotos-** *worm eaten, that is, diseased with maggots*

a. *The word used here is not found elsewhere in the New Testament. A similar disease is recorded of Antiochus Epiphanes, in the Apocrypha, 2 Macc. 9:5, "But the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, smote him with an invisible and incurable plague; for a pain in the bowels that was remediless came upon him, and sore torments of the inner*

parts [Act 12:9](#), so that worms rose up out of the body of this wicked man," etc. Probably this was the disease known as *morbus pedicularis*. It is loathsome, offensive, and most painful. See the death of Antiochus Epiphanes described in 2 Macc. 9. With this disease also Herod the Great, grandfather of Herod Agrippa, died. -Barnes Commentary

2. **died**- Gr. **ekpsucho**- *to expire, to breath out one's last breath*
  - a. That is, he died of the disorder by which he was then seized, after having lingered, in excruciating torments, for five days, as Josephus has stated. - Clarke Commentary
  - b. We are worm food after we die, but I would hate to be worm food while I am alive! I can think of better ways to die!

**24. But the word of God grew and multiplied.**

A. **word**- Gr. **logos**

B. **grew**- Gr. **axuano**

1. The hater and persecutor of Christ and His church died, but God's Word lived on and prospered. Many have tried to stamp out God's Word and Christianity, but they are gone and the Word abides forever!

C. **multiplied**- Gr. **plethuno**

**25. And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled *their* ministry, and they also took with them John whose surname was Mark.**

A. **And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled their ministry,**

1. **Barnabas and Saul**

a. Now the narrative returns to Barnabas and Saul [Paul].

2. **returned**- Gr. **hupostrepho**- *to turn back*

a. It appears that Barnabas and Paul were in Jerusalem when Herod was killed by the angel. It is unknown if they were there while Peter was in prison or had heard of his release from prison by the angel.

3. **fulfilled**- Gr. **pleroo**- *to complete*

4. **ministry**- Gr. **diakonia**- *service*

a. They had gone to Jerusalem with aid for the poor there.

**B. and they also took with them John whose surname was Mark**

1. **took-** Gr. **sumparalambano-** *to take with alongside*

2. **John**

a. This is not to be confused with John the disciple of Jesus.

This is Barnabas' nephew.

3. **surname-** Gr. **epikaleomai-** *to place a name on*

4. **Mark**

a. Later, Mark would work with Peter from which he received the information for his gospel that bears his name.