

STUDY GUIDE

for the week of 8/18 thru 8/25
Acts 12:1-19



WHATS THE STORY?

After the murder of James, Peter is arrested and thrown in prison. After diligent prayer from the early church community, an angel rescues Peter from his bonds, much to the shock of the gathered Christians. Once again, God makes a way for his people.

LECTIO DEVINA

Prepare: Find a calm and quiet place to read and absorb the passage.

Read: Read through the passage. Listen for any words or phrases that jump out and listen for what God has to say.

Reflect: Try to understand what God could be saying to you through this passage.

Respond: Journal or pray to God, communicating about what you think God was telling you through Scripture.

Rest: Spend time contemplating, allowing God to work.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How does worldly power contrast with Godly power?
- Why might have the fates of James and Peter been different?
- What does trusting God through prayer look like?

Discuss: Why was King Herod arresting Christians?

Why was Peter arrested?

Recount times in which your prayers were answered.

A Deeper Look

Luke tells us in chapter 12 that the growth of the Way was beginning to alarm the Roman authorities, as King Herod joined the persecution arresting “some who belonged to the church”(v1). This first state-sponsored persecution led to the death of one of the Twelve, James the brother of John. The response from the Jewish people to this led to Herod arresting Peter, having him guarded by 16 Roman soldiers while in prison. The new Church went to God for help and the night before the trial an angel of the Lord came to break Peter out.

The angel woke Peter up with a swift punch and unchained him. Seemingly still half asleep, Peter followed the angel’s orders and went past the guards. The city gate opened by itself and the angel continued with Peter for another block before leaving him. When Peter was fully awake he realized that God came to his aid and kept him from safe from harm. He went straight to a house in which many were gathered to pray, and he knocked on the door. A servant heard Peter’s voice and ran back to the crowd in excitement without opening the door. The people praying thought she was crazy and said, “It must be his angel”(v15) an almost comical response for people who had been praying for this very thing to happen. They went to check and, to their shock, it was him. He recounted the miraculous events and told them to tell others about it.(v17) There was a big commotion when they realized Peter was gone, and Herod sent out a search for him, but they were unable to find him. God in his answer to prayer frustrated and threatened Herod’s illusion of power.