



## Acts Chapter 12 Continued

Last week we discussed who King Herod Agrippa was, and we talked about how the people thought of Herod as a Jewish king who always kept the Jewish feast days, even though King Herod was not a Jew at all.

We talked about King Herod Agrippa's grandfather King Herod the Great who was of Idumean, and Nabatean roots.

We also talked about Idumea being formerly known as “Edom”, and the Edomites were by in large the offspring of Esau. Herod the Great's mother was also a Nabatean, who came from Ishmael.

So even though King Herod Agrippa himself seemed to follow after the Jewish faith, and kept the Jewish feast days.. he actually had no Hebrew blood in him at all. However.. the fictional story about his being a Jew helped the Jewish people to accept him as their Jewish King.

King Herod was also much like the Pharisees and the temple authorities who hated the gospel message of Yahshua and the followers of “The Way”.

We can see in Acts chapter 12 verse 2 that King Herod murdered James the brother of John, and we can also see that he then proceeded to arrest Peter and put him in Prison until after the Passover because he knew that his subjects would not think highly of a king who would put someone to death during the Feast of Passover.. which again we know through the scripture is not a one day event.. but an eight day event that includes the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and First Fruits.

And for those of you who have never considered Passover as being an 8 day event you can read Luke 22 verse 1, and also Ezekiel 45:21.

We also spoke about why the word “Easter” is wrongly translated in the King James Version of our Bibles.

We spoke about the Greek word “Pascha” being used 29 times in the New Testament and only once was it wrongly translated as “Easter”. We also learned that the Greek word “Pascha” is the

translation of the Hebrew word “Pesach” which can only mean “Passover” it can never mean anything else, and never has meant anything else.

We spoke about why the translators of the King James version of the Bible may have planted the word “Easter” with in it's pages and although we can't know for sure.. we can certainly speculate that they were not ignorant of what they were doing. The only question is then... why did they do it, and we spoke about that possibility as well.

We spoke about how all four gospels.. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all agree that our Messiah died on “Passover Day” not “Good Friday” and we also spoke about the only sign given by our Messiah which was that just like Jonah was in the belly of the whale for three days and three nights.. so too the son of man would be in the Earth for three days and for three nights.

And for those of you who do not know where to find that scripture, you can turn to Matthew chapter 12 verse 40. So unless we believe that our Messiah was just kidding, or that he was just drunk on to much wine perhaps.. or that he was just plane lying... we who read our Bibles for ourselves already know that he was indeed in the Earth for three days and for three nights just like he said he would be.

And just for those of us who have at least a first grade education.. we already know that you can not mathematically get three days and three nights out of Friday evening to Sunday morning.

But with all of that being said.. we should not be surprised. After all.. most of today's modern day Christendom has been teaching these lies and deceptions for generation upon generation.

And we also know that out of the almost 5000 different Christian denominational charters of men out there today... most of them still follow after their mother church of Catholicism and her Roman Catholic Pope.. even though they all claim to be separate and apart from her.

They still keep her first day of the week Sunday Sabbath not commanded anywhere in the Bible.. they keep her Lent, and her Easter, and her Good Friday not commanded anywhere in the Bible... they keep her Advent, and Christmas, and All Saints Day also known as Halloween, her New Years and Valentines Day and most of the rest of her man made, man created, man fabricated Pagan Holidays and appointments while completely ignoring our Fathers commanded Feast Days, Commandments, Precepts, and his Appointments.

And this is exactly why we're studying the book of Acts here today... to uncover the lies and the deceptions of Catholicism and her wicked and perverse attempt to manipulate the Word of God our Father for her own wretched, and twisted gain of power and glory.

And make no mistake about it my friends.. Catholicism does not only spread her web of

deception through out her own church... but she also spreads her cancerous deceptions through out our Protestant churches today as well... many of whom are nothing more than her daughter churches.

The glory and the authority of God belongs to God and God alone... and not a man who sits on a golden throne demanding that we bow the knee to him and that we kiss his golden Pagan ring.

Make no mistake about it my friends... we will not pull any punches here. It's past time that the covers be pulled back and the lies and the wicked deception that evil men have been feeding us and our children for generations.. be drug out into the daylight for all to see.

And we have every confidence that those who have eyes will see... and those who have ears... will indeed hear.

So with all of that information under our belts... lets move back into the second part of our study on the book of Acts chapter 12.

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Before we move forward I want to make sure that we understand that King Herod the Great.. nor king Herod Agrippa were Jewish.. even though they claimed to be.

Once again they were Idumean or Edomite stock on Herod's fathers side, and Nabatean stock on Herod's mothers side.

So lets go ahead and re-read chapter 12 since we only got to verse 5 last time.

*Act 12:1 About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church.*

*Act 12:2 He killed James the brother of John with the sword,*

*Act 12:3 and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. This was during the days of Unleavened Bread.*

*Act 12:4 And when he had seized him, he put him in prison, delivering him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out to the people.*

*Act 12:5 So Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church.*

*Act 12:6 Now when Herod was about to bring him out, on that very night, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries before the door were guarding the prison.*

*Act 12:7 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood next to him, and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him, saying, "Get up quickly." And the chains fell off his hands.*

*Act 12:8 And the angel said to him, "Dress yourself and put on your sandals." And he did so. And he said to him, "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me."*

*Act 12:9 And he went out and followed him. He did not know that what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision.*

*Act 12:10 When they had passed the first and the second guard, they came to the iron gate leading into the city. It opened for them of its own accord, and they went out and went along one street, and immediately the angel left him.*

*Act 12:11 When Peter came to himself, he said, "Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting."*

*Act 12:12 When he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.*

*Act 12:13 And when he knocked at the door of the gateway, a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer.*

*Act 12:14 Recognizing Peter's voice, in her joy she did not open the gate but ran in and reported that Peter was standing at the gate.*

*Act 12:15 They said to her, "You are out of your mind." But she kept insisting that it was so, and they kept saying, "It is his angel!"*

*Act 12:16 But Peter continued knocking, and when they opened, they saw him and were amazed.*

*Act 12:17 But motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he described to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Tell these things to James and to the brothers." Then he departed and went to another place.*

*Act 12:18 Now when day came, there was no little disturbance among the soldiers over what had become of Peter.*

*Act 12:19 And after Herod searched for him and did not find him, he examined the sentries and ordered that they should be put to death. Then he went down from Judea to Caesarea and spent time there.*

*Act 12:20 Now Herod was angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon, and they came to him with one accord, and having persuaded Blastus, the king's chamberlain, they asked for peace, because their country depended on the king's country for food.*

*Act 12:21 On an appointed day Herod put on his royal robes, took his seat upon the throne, and delivered an oration to them.*

*Act 12:22 And the people were shouting, "The voice of a god, and not of a man!"*

*Act 12:23 Immediately an angel of the Lord struck him down, because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and breathed his last.*

*Act 12:24 But the word of God increased and multiplied.*

*Act 12:25 And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had completed their service, bringing with them John, whose other name was Mark.*

Now I want us to notice what it says in verse 2 and 3:

*Act 12:2 He killed James the brother of John with the sword,*

*Act 12:3 and when he saw that **it pleased the Jews**, he proceeded to arrest Peter also.*

We have to remember that this took place in Judea and the power structure of Jerusalem was in Judea because this is where the political power players and the temple authorities resided, so this was the hub of the power structure if you will.

So most of the “Jews” in Judea were well indoctrinated by the Pharisees and the Scribes of the Synagogues, and their hybrid religious system... they same hybrid religious system that our Messiah hated by the way.

Another point that I'd like to make is found in verse 5:

*Act 12:5 So Peter was kept in prison, but **earnest prayer** for him was made to God by the church.*

Most of us pray when we get into a spot of trouble.. because it's at these times when we're forced to remember that there are things that are out of our control, and beyond our fixing.

And it's times like this that bring us to our knees, and times like these that cause us to pause and to reflect on what we already know deep with in our Spirit... and that is that only God our Father has the power to fix the things that we can not.

Only he can reach into the heart of a man, only he can cause and effectual difference in our situations, and in our trials, and in our tribulations.

Peter was in jail, and King Herod was sure to murder him just like he had done to James the brother of John. Bound in shackles and with a guard on either side of him there was nothing that a man could do to save him from what was about to happen to him.

Nothing short of the power of prayer was going to free Peter from those shackles and nothing short of the power of prayer was going to make those centurion guards on either side of him allow him to escape.

As human beings we often times like to think that we're in control.. we like to think that we can fix anything that comes our way. We like to think that we're are our own gods some times.. and yet our Father always has a way to remind us... that he and he alone... is in control... not always us.

*Jas 5:16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. **The prayer of a righteous person** has great power as it is working.*

*Php 4:6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*

*Php 4:7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

*Php 4:8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.*

*Php 4:9 What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.*

So when we see that the church was praying earnestly for the rescue of Peter, it should be no surprise that God would send an Angel to rescue him from his oppressor... but notice what happens in verses 13 through 17:

*Act 12:13 And when he knocked at the door of the gateway, a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer.*

*Act 12:14 Recognizing Peter's voice, in her joy she did not open the gate but ran in and reported that Peter was standing at the gate.*

*Act 12:15 They said to her, "You are out of your mind." But she kept insisting that it was so, and they kept saying, "It is his angel!"*

*Act 12:16 But Peter continued knocking, and when they opened, they saw him and were amazed.*

*Act 12:17 But motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he described to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Tell these things to James and to the brothers." Then he departed and went to another place.*

Notice how surprised they all were. Even though they had doubt in their hearts... God our Father heard the prayers of that church that day and answered their request for Peters safe return.

You know when I was a young man I would always pray when I got into trouble... and then when he would answer my prayers I was so surprised that things worked out the way that they did... and I would almost always forget to even look up and say "thank you".

But you can bet that the next time that I got into trouble that I was back on my knees again. Why is it that we are always so surprised when he answers our prayers? And why is it that we so often forget that we even asked him to handle the situation in the first place?

I can tell you from personal experience my friends... that the power of prayer is immeasurable. And I can also tell you that often times today when people get into trouble or when life takes a

wrong turn... to many people in these last days won't even consider bowing their knee before God to pray.

I want us to understand what James the brother of our Messiah had to say about prayer and why God does not answer so many of our prayers in these last days:

*Jas 4:2 You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask.*

*Jas 4:3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.*

Clearly this church that was praying for Peter did not desire anything for themselves, but for their brother Peter. They were asking with the right intentions, and their prayers were not about their own desires or passions, but rather the safety of their brother Peter... and so it was that our Father heard their cry for help and he intervened.

My friends I can tell you that I've been to hospitals to pray for people with their families to be healed... and I've seen people who were on their death beds and expected to die that very night.. and all their families wanted, was just a little more time to spend with their loved one.. and through the power of prayer... I've seen people get up out of their death beds who were supposed to die that very night before the morning sunrise... and who walked right out of that hospital the very next morning.

And it's often times when I am called to go and to pray for someone that I wished that I would have been more righteous in my walk with God so that my prayers would have been more powerful in the eyes of my Father than what they were.

And it's times like these that we look back and we can only wish that we would have been walking closer to him than we were. It's times like these that make a difference in our prayer life, and in our communication with him.

And some he heals and some he does not... but I can tell you one thing for sure. I've never prayed with a family before who he did not give his peace to.

Prayer has that effect on those who believe. No matter how desperate the situation, our Father has the power to fill our hearts with a peace... a shalom... that can only come from him. And no matter how desperate the situation is... if we have that shalom... that peace, that only he can provide... we know that we'll be able to weather the storm that we're in no matter what.

And it's this kind of peace... this kind of shalom... that calm that enters into our hearts and minds, that allows us to know that no matter what happens... he is in control.

Just to know that we have stopped trying to fix the problem on our own, and that we have laid

our burdens at his feet and turned it all over to him... is often times all we need to do in order for him to give us the endurance that we need to overcome the storms in our lives.

Why did God allow James to be murdered by Herod but chose to save Peter through an angelic rescue mission? Was one man better than the other? .. Was one man worth more than the other?.. Was one life more precious than the other?

What we need to always remember and be aware of... is that our Fathers plans are not our plans, and his purpose is often times not known by those who can not see the bigger picture.

Why did my son have to die before me, or why did my daughter have to go through this and I did not... these are never going to be questions that we can answer until we get to where we're going.

The Bible tell us that we see through a glass darkly.. and then face to face.

Thats why they call it.. faith.

It's our Father who decides who lives and who dies, and it's our Father who decides whats best for his people and what trials and tribulations that we must suffer in order to refine us and to bronze our feet in the fire of suffering so that our souls may be preserved.

Often times we pray for what we want rather than what he wants for us.. Often times it's all about us.. and the demands that we make on our Father rather than laying our troubles at his feet and praying that his will be done and not ours.

And so I just want us to know and understand how prayer works. A prayer should never be made for what we want or what we demand. He already knows what you want before you ask it.

Asking that his will be done, is what is important... and then knowing that you've done all that you possibly can do, and that you have now put it in his hands... and preparing your heart to know that his decision will be the correct decision no matter what we think the right outcome should be. .. this is the most important factor in any prayer.

If you're not ready to accept his answer.. then don't ask.

When we ask that his will be done... mean what you ask.. and be prepared for the decision to be handed down, and know that what ever happens.. that it was God that made the final decision and that it was with out a doubt... the right decision.

When we lay our burdens at his feet.. he will remove them. Sometimes the way he removes them is not easy for us to understand.. but he he will remove them.

Here's what the Apostle Paul had to say about the matter:

*Rom 9:15 For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."*

*Rom 9:16 So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.*

*Rom 9:17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth."*

*Rom 9:18 So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.*

*Rom 9:19 You will say to me then, "Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?"*

*Rom 9:20 But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, "Why have you made me like this?"*

*Rom 9:21 Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use?*

*Rom 9:22 What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction,*

*Rom 9:23 in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory—*

*Rom 9:24 even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?*

In the end my friends what we need to always remember... is that God is God... and we are not (and thank God for that).

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## **THE REALITY OF ANGLES:**

Another thing that I'd like us to notice is the reality of the Angle that rescued Peter. This was a very real.. very living.. very powerful Angle that rescued Peter. This was no dream even though even Peter clearly thought that it was a dream at first.

This Angle nudged Peter and gave him instructions to follow, and this Angle was with him in real time right there with Peter as these events were going on.

You know it often times amazes me how people will believe in demons but will flat out refuse to believe in God.

They will believe that their dead relatives are speaking to them... they will believe in necromancers, and fortune tellers and people who talk to the dead... they will believe in television shows that show people interacting with spirits from the spirit world.. but they will flat out refuse to believe in the one true God of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob.

I was once talking with a young women who said that she loved to watch a program on TV called "Ghost Hunters" and she spoke about how she really believed in the spirits that they were

talking to, and she even mentioned how these unseen spirits would actually move things, or leave scratches on the investigators.

But this same young women had no real belief or understanding of the one who had created her. She had no room for a God that she needed to pray to, or that could give her everlasting life... and yet she was all in for these spirits from another dimension that could move things and scratch people and demonize the people that the TV investigators were trying to help.

People in our society today are all about their dead relatives reaching back out of the grave to try and communicate with them. They're all in when it comes to brother Billy-bob or uncle Frank trying to communicate with them from beyond the grave... and I won't even touch on the zombie apocalypse sscenario... and yet God is completely out of the question.

People are lead by their own passions, and by what they think are their own thoughts.. never suspecting that what has been written in their Bibles thousands of years ago... is they key to the only truth that man has concerning these kinds of supernatural things.

It's right in front of them, and in plan sight the whole time... and yet they will refuse to pick it up and read it for themselves.

Angles my friends are just as real as demons. And there is a whole teaching on this subject that we don't have time for here today... but with that being said.. let there be no doubt in your heart.. that our Fathers Angles are constantly at work doing the will of our Father, and we need to be thankful for them.

And I don't want to get to entrenched in this topic here today but I will say this much..

This reminds me of the servant of Elijah who was scared to death when the armies of the king of Syria surrounded them and wanted to kill them. Listen to what happened to Elijah's servant:

*2Ki 6:14 So he sent there horses and chariots and a great army, and they came by night and surrounded the city.*

*2Ki 6:15 When the servant of the man of God rose early in the morning and went out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was all around the city. And the servant said, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?"*

*2Ki 6:16 He said, "Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them."*

*2Ki 6:17 Then Elisha prayed and said, "O LORD, please open his eyes that he may see." So the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.*

My friends if we think that Gods angles are not encamped all around us.. then we need to pray

for more faith.

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## **THE DEATH OF HEROD:**

Speaking of Angles who rescue and protect Gods people... it should be obvious that it's not a good idea to be on the wrong side of one of our Fathers Angles.

King Herod learns this the hard way when he makes himself out to be God in verses 21 through 23:

*Act 12:21 On an appointed day Herod put on his royal robes, took his seat upon the throne, and delivered an oration to them.*

*Act 12:22 And the people were shouting, "The voice of a god, and not of a man!"*

*Act 12:23 Immediately an angel of the Lord struck him down, because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and breathed his last.*

Remember that King Herod was playing the part of a Jew by keeping all of the Feast Days and the traditions of the elders of the Synagogues. So some of the people looked at him because of his stature and his authority on Earth as God like... and they began to think of him as God on Earth.. and when Herod accepted this acknowledgment of being "God on Earth".. instead of rebuking it, he was cut down by an Angel.

And this is not a good way to go either I might ad.

And once again God had removed the obstacle that kept his Sons Gospel Message silent. And once again the words of the wise old Pharisee Gamliel come to mind. Gamliel tried to warn them to leave the Apostles alone and that if their message was not from God then it would fall apart on its own... but if the message they carried was true.. they might find themselves fighting against God. And so just like the Pharisees and the Temple authorities.. Herod found himself not only fighting against God.. but trying to be... God.