

IGNITE

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS

Fearless

September 3, 2023

Acts 12:19-25

Have you ever read a passage in the Bible and wondered, “Why is this included in the text?” Well, today’s text is just one of those stories. At first glance, one may think Acts 12:20-23 has little obvious connection to the main point of the narrative in the chapter. But the account of Herod’s death completes the narrative begun in Acts 12:1. For some time, Herod had been trying to stop God’s plan and provision of the gospel. In this passage, Herod had beheaded James and wanted to murder Peter, but the angel of the Lord intervened. In Acts 12:20-25, we see how Herod’s demise gave the early church the confidence to live fearlessly.

Key thought: You can fearlessly live for Jesus Christ, knowing God’s plans and purposes will be fulfilled.

In the passage we are reminded...

1. Be confident in the greatness of God. (vs. 20-23)

- God executes His judgment in the world.
- God’s judgment and His ways can seem mysterious.

2. Be careful to give God all glory and praise. (v. 23)

The Jewish historian, Josephus, says the King arrayed himself in a garment woven with silver threads. When the sun’s rays fell upon that robe it glittered and shone with a resplendence that dazzled the crowds packed into the theatre. Some believe it was on the occasion of his 54th birthday and the 7th year of his reign.

John Phillips: “Herod had gone too far. He had exhausted the patience of God. He had crossed the hidden boundary between God’s mercy and God’s wrath.”

Isaiah 42:8 (NASB95) “I am the Lord, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, Nor My praise to graven images.”

3. Be confident in the gospel of Jesus Christ. (vs. 24-25)

God's purposes will not be thwarted. If You Oppose Jesus, You Lose.

Matthew 16:18 (NASB95) "I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it."

Take away:

- Trust God and pray persistently (vs. 5, 12)
- Trust God and preach passionately (v. 24)
- Trust God and persevere patiently (vs. 2, 6-17)