



Father's Day

Acts 12:1-25 | Al Williams | June 21, 2026

Acts 12:1-25 NIV

It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. 2 He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword. 3 When he saw that this met with approval among the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This happened during the Festival of Unleavened Bread. 4 After arresting him, he put him in prison, handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the Passover. 5 So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him. 6 The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance. 7 Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up!" he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists. 8 Then the angel said to him, "Put on your clothes and sandals." And Peter did so. "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me," the angel told him. 9 Peter followed him out of the prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision. 10 They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him. 11 Then Peter came to himself and said, "Now I know without a doubt that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's clutches and from everything the Jewish people were hoping would happen." 12 When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying. 13 Peter knocked at the outer entrance, and a servant named Rhoda came to answer the door. 14 When she recognized Peter's voice, she was so overjoyed she ran back without opening it and exclaimed, "Peter is at the door!" 15 "You're out of your mind," they told her. When she kept insisting that it was so, they said, "It must be his angel." 16 But Peter kept on knocking, and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished. 17 Peter motioned with his hand for them to be quiet and described how the Lord had brought him out of prison. "Tell James and the other brothers and sisters about this," he said, and then he left for another place. 18 In the morning, there was no small commotion among the soldiers as to what had become of Peter. 19 After Herod had a thorough search made for him and did not find him, he cross-examined the guards and ordered that they be executed.

Then Herod went from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there. 20 He had been quarreling with the people of Tyre and Sidon; they now joined together and sought an audience with him. After securing the support of Blastus, a trusted personal servant of the king, they asked for peace, because they depended on the king's country for their food supply. 21 On the appointed day Herod, wearing his royal robes, sat on his throne and delivered a public address to the people. 22 They shouted, "This is the voice of a god, not of a man." 23 Immediately, because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died. 24 But the word of God continued to spread and flourish.

25 When Barnabas and Saul had finished their mission, they returned from Jerusalem, taking with them John, also called Mark.

- The Sovereignty of God Over All

1. God is Sovereign over Prayer (vv.1-19a)
2. God is Sovereign over His Glory (vv.19b-23)
3. God is Sovereign over His Story (vv.24) (our)

Edits

Concise and clear - God has control over all

God is on the move through Prayer

God is on the move over his Glory -

God is on the move over his Story

-come back to God is on the move (what does that have to do with me - focus on Lucy)

Eaten and died ... but he can

Is God on the move in your life -

Script.

S

Acts 12:24

24 But the word of God continued to spread and flourish.

God is on The Move

S

Do we have any movie lovers in the house ? I grew up with creatives so we are a big music and movie house. ... lion witch and wardrobe... aslan is on the move ... just like that God is always moving in our world and our lives today.

God is on the move in every area of life

How do I know what are the indicators that show me he is on the move ... that's what we are going to find out today , write this down as point number 1.

1. God is on the move through prayer (vv.1-19a)

Matthew Henry comm vv. 1-5

Those make themselves an easy prey to Satan, who make it their business to please men. Thus James finished his course. But Peter, being designed for further services, was safe; though he seemed now marked out for a speedy sacrifice. We that live in a cold, prayerless generation, can hardly form an idea of the earnestness of these holy men of old. But if the Lord should bring on the church an awful persecution like this of Herod, the faithful in Christ would learn what soul-felt prayer is.

Placed his hands cast his hands to do evil and killed James brother of John with sword - vv. 3 he saw that it pleased the Judeans not just Jews (there were Jews who died and Jews who were praying for him and recently we are seeing that many Gentiles are coming to faith but in Jerusalem the believers are Jews - he speaking of those who followed the tradition of the elders the oral law) vv. 4 why did he wait until after Passover so that Peter could not be released like during the time of the Christ when they exchanged Jesus for Barrabas. The church was earnestly praying for Peter's release. - compound Greek word ek-tino - out of and to stretch - stretched to the max to reach out with intensity — picture of a runner who leans forward or a muscle being stretched to the Max — they earnestly do it !

Peter sleeping between two soldiers and two chains the number always points out different opinions, Gods and Herods. Vv. 7 - no defiant article in the Greek it's an angel. This angel strikes which is a word normally meant to strike a blow to kill. This guy shows up and Peter is asleep so good he had to strike him and tell him quickly get up and his chains fell off and he said gird yourself. Get ready for action.

Vv. 10 iron gate realize he is chained to 2 soldiers. 2 soldiers at the door and a group of soldiers outside then this iron gate = auto mate for them. By itself it just opened. And then the angel got him a block away and went on to the next assignment.

Vv. 12 the word gathered is the picture of growing so the group is getting bigger and bigger people are praying around the clock. This young girl goes to check on the knock (marks mom got money and why did the guys send this girl to get the door haha) from joy she didn't open the gate she got excited and ran back in and told everyone. They are praying for an angel to deliver him and when she said this they called her insane and they begin to argue and they settle on fact that God does give each person their own angel and they just said it's his angel (not totally biblical but the roots of that thought run deep). Vv. 16 - scripture is showing it was harder for Peter to get into the people of God then it was for him to get out of bondage (this is a smack to us to often we are harsh and judge the broken and making it harder for them to join then it was for them to be freed! Vv. 16, 17 - his hands down meaning be quiet and tell James who is head of the church the brother of Jesus.

Vv. 21 - Herod has an appointed day and Herod went opposite of God on his appointed day now God would do the same to him. He gave a public speech and invited all the big wigs for his great day.

Vv. 24 - flourished - strengthen in the people not just to grow stronger but it grew stronger in the people they believed him even more at his word that they were willing to give their life for it! They believed him so much so that they told it everywhere they went!

12:1 "Herod" This refers to Herod Agrippa I. He reigned over different areas of Palestine from a.d. 37–44. He was raised in Rome and became friends with Gaius, who followed Emperor Tiberius and who later became the Emperor Caligula. The

Jews readily accepted Herod as a leader because his grandmother (Mariamne) was a Hasmonean/Maccabean (i.e. Jewish patriot) princess. He was a strict follower of Judaism (but possibly for political reasons). For a full discussion of this Herod, see Josephus' *Antiq.* 19.7.3; 19.8.2.

“church” See full note at 5:11.

“in order to mistreat them” Herod did this to gain support and approval from the Jewish leadership (cf. vv. 3, 11). Roman leaders did the same thing (cf. 24:27; 25:9).

Luke uses this term several times (cf. 7:6, 19; 12:1; 14:2; 18:10). It was a common term in the Septuagint for ill-treatment. Luke's vocabulary is greatly influenced by the Septuagint.

12:2 “James, the brother of John, put to death with a sword” This refers to the Apostle James, who was the brother of John (cf. Luke 5:10; 6:14; 8:51; 9:28, 54). He was a member of the inner circle of disciples (cf. Matt. 17:1; 26:37; Mark 5:37; 9:2; 14:33; Luke 9:28). Why James should die and Peter be spared is a mystery of God. Beheading with a sword was the normal method of capital punishment for Roman citizens, but it apparently was odious to Jews.

It is interesting that at this time the early church did not sense the need to replace James as they had Judas (cf. 1:15–20). The reasons are unclear, but possibly it was Judas' treachery, not death, that caused the replacement (cf. 1:15–26).

Some may assert that Paul calling James, the half brother of Jesus and leader of the Jerusalem church, an apostle (cf. Gal. 1:19) constitutes a replacement. The question relates to the official position of the original Twelve versus the ongoing gift of apostleship (cf. Eph. 4:11).

12:3 “arrest Peter” This is Peter's third arrest (cf. 4:3; 5:18). Christians are not spared from persecution.

“during the days of Unleavened Bread” This refers to the Passover Feast (cf. v. 4), combined with the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which lasted eight days (cf. Exod. 12:18; 23:15; Luke 22:1). Both celebrated Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage. It was celebrated on Nisan 14–21, which would be our March or April, depending on the Jewish lunar calendar.

12:4 “four squads of soldiers” This would mean four squads of soldiers four times a day, or sixteen men. The number shows Herod's concern over Peter's possible escape (cf. 5:19).

12:5 “prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God” The church is praying (cf. v. 12), but will be surprised when God answers! “Fervently” is a very intense ADVERB (cf. Luke 22:44). It is used only three times in the NT (cf. 1 Pet. 1:22).

12:6 “On the very night” Luke's writings are characterized by time indicators (cf. vv. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 18).

“between two soldiers” This verse shows the impossibility of Peter's escape. It is almost as if they expected an attempt to release him (cf. 5:19).

12:7 “an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared” It is unusual that the supernatural interventions of the angel of the Lord (cf. 5:19; 7:30, 35, 38, 53; 8:26; 10:3, 7, 22) and the Holy Spirit (cf. 8:29, 39; 10:19) are interchanged throughout the book of Acts. Apparently the Spirit speaks intuitively, but the angel is an outward physical manifestation. It is interesting to see the combination of the natural and the supernatural in this account (similar to the plagues of the Exodus).

Shows Peter's trust in God – proverbs 3:5,6 ; rom. 15:13

“Get up quickly” This is an AORIST ACTIVE IMPERATIVE which denotes urgency. Why is the angel in a hurry? Is he not in control of events?

12:8 “Gird yourself and put on your sandals” These are both AORIST MIDDLE IMPERATIVES.

“Wrap your cloak around you and follow me” This is an AORIST MIDDLE IMPERATIVE followed by a PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. The angel was really in a hurry to perform this task! This was one nervous angel!

12:9 Peter was uncertain whether this was a vision, dream, or reality (cf. v. 11–12; 10:17, 19; 11:5).

12:11 “When Peter came to himself” Luke uses a similar phrase in describing the Prodigal Son (cf. Luke 15:17). Suddenly the reality of the experience and its implications dawned on him (cf. v. 12).

12:12 “the house of Mary” Mary was a very common name. There are several Marys mentioned in the Gospels.

1. the mother of Jesus (cf. Luke 1:27)
2. Mary of Magdala, a disciple from Galilee (cf. Luke 8:2; 24:10)
3. mother of James and John (cf. Luke 24:10)
4. sister of Martha and Lazarus (cf. Luke 10:39, 42)

5. wife of Cleophas (cf. John 19:25)
6. mother of John Mark (here)

“the mother of John” This refers to John Mark’s mother. The early church met in this family’s house in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 12:12). It was also the site of the Lord’s three post resurrection appearances and the coming of the Spirit.

John Mark accompanied Paul and his cousin Barnabas (cf. Col. 4:10) on the first missionary journey (cf. Acts 12:25–13:13). For some reason he deserted the team and returned home (cf. Acts 15:38). Barnabas wanted to include him on the second missionary journey, but Paul refused (cf. Acts 15:36–41). This resulted in Paul and Barnabas separating. Barnabas took John Mark to Cyprus (cf. Acts 15:39). Later, while Paul was in prison, he mentions John Mark in a positive way (cf. Col. 4:10) and still later in Paul’s second imprisonment at Rome, just before his death, he mentions John Mark again (cf. 2 Tim. 4:11).

Apparently John Mark became part of Peter’s missionary team (cf. 1 Pet. 5:13). Eusebius’ *Eccl. His.* 3:39:12 gives us an interesting account of John Mark’s relation to Peter.

“In his own book Papias gives us accounts of the Lord’s sayings obtained from Aristion or learnt direct from the presbyter John. Having brought these to the attention of scholars, I must now follow up the statements already quoted from him with a piece of information which he sets out regarding Mark, the writer of the gospel:

This, too, the presbyter used to say. ‘Mark, who had been Peter’s interpreter, wrote down carefully, but not in order, all that he remembered of the Lord’s sayings and doings. For he had not heard the Lord or been one of His followers, but later, as I said, one of Peter’s. Peter used to adapt his teaching to the occasion, without making a systematic arrangement of the Lord’s sayings, so that Mark was quite justified in writing down some things just as he remembered them. For he had one purpose only—to leave out nothing that he had heard, and to make no misstatement about it’ ” (p. 152).

In this quote Papias refers to “John the elder”; in *Against Heresies* 5:33:4, Irenaeus says “and these things are borne witness to in writing by Papias, the hearer of John, and a companion of Polycarp.” This implies Papias heard it from John the Apostle.

“many were gathered together and were praying” The grammatical forms of these words reveal that the church had gathered and intended to remain in prayer (PERFECT PASSIVE PARTICIPLE followed by a PRESENT MIDDLE (deponent) PARTICIPLE).

12:13 “door of the gate” This was a small door on the street. There was a larger door upstairs.

“Rhoda” Her name means rose. It is uncertain whether she worked for the homeowners or was a member of the prayer meeting.

12:15 “You are out of your mind” The church was praying for God to act, but they were extremely surprised (cf. v. 16) when He did.

“They kept saying” There are two IMPERFECT ACTIVE INDICATIVES in this context, which implies that Rhoda’s affirmation and that of those in the prayer meeting in the upper room’s response happened more than once.

“It is his angel” Angels play a prominent role in Luke’s writings. Apparently the Jews believed that one’s guardian angel could take their physical shape (for a good discussion of Jewish sources and beliefs about guardian angels, see *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 2, p. 963). There is no scriptural basis for this belief. This development of angelology may have come from the concept of *fravashi* in Zoroastrianism. Much of rabbinical angelology can be traced to this Persian influence. There is some scriptural evidence for guardian angels for new believers (cf. Matt. 18:10).

12:17 “motioning to them with his hand to be silent” This is obviously an eyewitness detail (cf. 13:16). Luke records this gesture several times (cf. 13:16; 19:33; 21:40).

“Report these things to James and the brethren” This shows that James, the half-brother of Jesus, was already the leader of the Jerusalem church (cf. 15:13–21).

Story about sister jackson

2. God is on the move for His Glory (vv.19b-23)

Pastor Bob edit - they are ripping off glorifying God by not trusting in Him — he could

12:20 “Now he was very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon” Herod was very angry and continued to be so (PERIPHRASTIC IMPERFECT). The particular historic incident that is mentioned is not known, but the region of Tyre and Sidon depended on the agricultural produce from the area of Galilee (cf. 1 Kgs. 5:11; Ezra 3:7; and possibly Ezek. 27:17).

12:21 “On an appointed day Herod, having put on his royal apparel” This occurred in a.d. 44. For a more complete account of this event see Josephus’ *Antiq.* 19.8.2 (translated by William Whiston, Kregal).

“At which festival, a great multitude was gotten together of the principal persons, and such as were of dignity through his province. On the second day of which shows he put on a garment made wholly of silver, and of a contexture truly wonderful, and came into the theatre early in the morning; at which time the silver of his garment being illuminated by the fresh reflection of the sun’s rays upon it, shone out after a surprising manner, and was so resplendent as to spread a horror over those that looked intently upon him: and presently his flatterers cried out, one from one place, and another from another, (though not for his good,) that he was a god: and they added,—‘Be thou merciful to us; for although we have hitherto revered thee only as a man, yet shall we henceforth own thee as superior to mortal nature.’ Upon this the king did neither rebuke them, nor reject their impious flattery. But, as he presently afterwards looked up, he saw an owl sitting on a certain rope over his head, and immediately understood that this bird was the messenger of ill tidings, as it had once been the messenger of good tidings to him; and fell into the deepest sorrow. A severe pain also arose in his belly, and began in a most violent manner. He therefore looked upon his friends, and said,— ‘I, whom you call a god, am commanded presently to depart this life; while Providence thus reproves the lying words you just now said to me; and I, who was by you called immortal, am immediately to be hurried away by death’ ” (p. 412).

Herod’s temper and the physical condition which accompanied it are also described in gruesome detail in *Antiq.* 17:6:5.

12:23 “the angel of the Lord” This refers to the Death Angel (cf. Exod. 12:23; 2 Sam. 24:16; 2 Kgs. 19:35). Death is in the hands of God, not Satan. This is an example of temporal judgment.

3. God is on the move in our story (vv. 24)

12:24 This is a characteristic summary statement (cf. 6:7; 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20; 28:31). - there is a difference between addition and multiplication. God is in the business of multiplication he added two to my family but both of my daughters can go on and tell many of the gospel and those people can go on and tell the Gospel causing it to spread quicker and faster.

Pastor Bob edit — Acts 4 house shook pastor Ryan talked about it

Psalm 2:1-9

Wrap up message invite band out then say in a moment —

Call to Faith — raise your hand and stand

Set an alarm for 12 noon

pray

praise

pursue