

Acts 12 shape and keywords

[King Herod imprisons Peter]

About that time King Herod thrust his hands violently upon some from the church. He had James, the brother of John, killed with the sword. After he saw that it pleased the Judeans, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. (This was during the festival of Unleavened Bread.) When he had seized him, he put him in prison and handed him over to four sets of four soldiers to guard him, planning to bring him out to the people after the Passover. While Peter was kept in prison, the church was in prayer continuously to God for him.

[Peter's angelic-assisted escape from prison]

The very night before Herod was going to bring him out, Peter, bound with two chains, was sleeping between two soldiers, while guards in front of the door were keeping watch over the prison. And behold! An angel of the Lord stood near 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. The angel said to him, "Gird yourself and put on your sandals." He did so. Then he said to him, "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me."

[Peter is confused by the experience]

He went out and followed him; he did not know that what was happening through the angel was true; he thought he was seeing a vision. After they had passed the first and the second guard, they came before the iron gate leading into the city. It opened for them of its own accord, and they went outside and walked along a lane, when suddenly the angel left him.

Then Peter became himself and said, "Now I know truly that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hands of Herod and from all that the Judean people were expecting."

[The disciples are confused by the experience]

As soon as he realized this, **he went to the house** of Mary, the mother of John the one being called Mark, where many had gathered and were praying.

When **he knocked** at the outer gate, a slavegirl named Rhoda came to listen. On recognizing Peter's voice, she was so overjoyed that, instead of opening the gate, she ran in and **announced** that Peter was standing at the gate.

They said to her, "You are out of your mind!" But she insisted that it was so. They said, "It is his angel."

[The disciples discover Peter's escape from prison]

Meanwhile Peter **continued knocking**; and when they opened the gate, they saw him and were amazed. He motioned to them with his hand to be silent and told fully for them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he added, "**An-nounce** this to James and to the brothers."

Then **he left and went to another place**.

[Herod discovers Peter's escape from prison]

When morning came, there was no small anxiety among the soldiers over what had become of Peter. When Herod had searched for him and could not find him, he examined the guards and ordered them to be led away. Then he went down from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there.

Now Herod was angry with Tyre and Sidon. So they came to him in a body; and after persuading Blastus, the king's chamberlain, they asked for peace, because their food came through the king's farmland. On an appointed day Herod put on his royal robes, took his seat on the platform, and delivered a public address to them. The people kept shouting, "The voice of a god, and not of a human!" And immediately, because he had not given the glory to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died.

But the word of God continued to grow and multiply. Then after fulfilling their service, Barnabas and Saul returned to Jerusalem and brought with them John, whose other name was Mark.