

Even So

Real Christianity: How it Flourished, Part 9 of 11 (Latham Campus)

Sunday, March 1, 2025 | Paolino Curto

Text: Acts 12:1-24

Big Idea: God's Purposes are never thwarted, just often misunderstood from our human perspective. Whether in persecution or peace, God never stops working.



Acts 12:1-6 (ESV), "About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church. He killed James the brother of John with the sword, and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. This was during the days of Unleavened Bread. 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. So Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church. 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."

I. Persecution should be expected, but never debilitating.

Acts 12:6a (ESV), "Now when Herod was about to bring him out, on that very night, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers."

II. Prayer must be made, but God's answer may surprise us.

Acts 12:7-8a, 9, 11-15 (ESV), "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. And the angel said to him, "Dress yourself and put on your sandals."..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...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." 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. And when he knocked at the door of the gateway, a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer. 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. 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!" But Peter continued knocking, and when they opened, they saw him and were amazed."

III. Pride may be elevated, but God will bring it low.

Acts 12:21-23 (ESV), "On an appointed day Herod put on his royal robes, took his seat upon the throne, and delivered an oration to them. And the people were shouting, "The

voice of a god, and not of a man!” 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.”

Luke 18:10-14 (ESV), “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”