

# DEVOTED

## GOING DEEPER- ACTS 12 (Part 1)

### Read Acts 12:1-19

**King Herod was a fickle man, full of violence and anger.** He persecuted the church, and the reason for arresting Peter was because the Jews seem to be pleased with his persecution of the church. In a sense he was a political people pleaser. As the story unfolds it is clear he was also quite pompous and proud.

### **This passage reveals the power of prayer yet again!**

The characteristic of the prayer for Peter was it was earnest (5)! This was no straightforward prison break, there were many obstacles: guards next to Peter; chains; a first and second guard; an iron gate- In other words: it was no easy path to escape! Prayer catalysed this divine miraculous escape for Peter!

**See 2 Corinthians 1:8-11 for more insight into similar prayer.**

It was fascinating that the disciples didn't believe the servant girl that Peter was outside! But that happens to us, we pray and sometimes limit what we believe God can actually do!

### **Questions:**

1. How does Herod's example relate to you in terms of the desire for popularity, people-pleasing or persecution?
2. How does the example of earnest prayer for a persecuted believer in the early church inspire you personally?

*Jesus, thank you that You did nothing for popularity or to please people, but rather to glorify God! Help us follow Your example. Grow in us an earnest and passionate prayer life for the Church!*

# DEVOTED

## GOING DEEPER- ACTS 12 (Part 2)

### Read Acts 12:20-25

**Herod's story continues in this passage to reveal his character.** His death was very sudden in the middle of a public oration to people who were desperate for food (20).

**According to this passage,** the reason Herod died was because he **did not give glory to God** when the people started to revere him, declaring his voice was the voice of a god (23).

**When he did not give glory to God, the angel struck him!**

**In verse 24 it says: "but the word of God increased and multiplied".** The point that Luke is making here is that even though there was increased persecution at the highest level, God was still sovereign over King Herod! Despite the attack on the church and its leaders, the word of God continued to increase and multiply! The gospel and the kingdom are irrepressible!

### **Questions:**

1. What aspects of Herod's life might we need to examine in ourselves? What does it mean to give glory to God?
2. How does this passage embolden you about the power of God's kingdom and gospel in the face of persecution?

*Lord, to You who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to You be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21)*