

KING HEROD'S DEATH

Acts 12:20-23

STRUCTURE

Key-person: King Herod

Key-location: Caesarea

Key-repetitions:

- King Herod's power: imprisoned believers (Ac 12:1); killed James (Ac 12:2); imprisoned Peter (Ac 12:3); two towns depended upon him for food (Ac 12:20); he wore royal robes and sat on his throne (Ac 12:21); he accepted credit for being a god (Ac 12:22).
- God's power: liberated Peter from prison (Ac 12:7-10); punished King Herod, made Herod sick and caused his death (Ac 12:23); God's word spread and won followers (Ac 12:24).

Key-attitudes:

- King Herod's arrogance when he allowed men to call him a god.
- Desperation of the people of Tyre and Sidon to gain a peace treaty with King Herod.
- God's superiority.

Initial-situation:

King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church and executed James, the brother of John. King Herod put Peter in prison, but an angel enabled him to walk out of the prison.

Initial-problem:

King Herod was angry with the people from the towns of Tyre and Sidon.

Final-situation:

King Herod died; however, the word of God continued to spread and win many followers of Jesus.

BIBLE STORY

King Herod moved from Judea to Caesarea. King Herod was angry with the people from the towns of Tyre and Sidon. The two towns joined together and sent a delegation to negotiate a peace treaty with King Herod. They sought a peace treaty because the two towns depended upon King Herod's country for their food supply.

The appointed day came. King Herod wore his royal robes, sat on his throne, and made a speech. The delegates from Tyre and Sidon shouted, "This is the voice of a god, not of a man." Immediately, an angel of the Lord made King Herod sick because he did not give praise to God. King Herod was eaten by worms, and he died (Ac 12:20-23).

King Herod died; however, the word of God continued to spread and win many followers of Jesus (Ac 12:24).

GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

1. What catches your attention in the story?
2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand?
3. Who are the main characters in the story?
4. What problems did the characters face?
5. How did the characters face their problems?
6. How have you faced similar problems?
7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you?
8. What does the story tell about God?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why did King Herod's anger concern the people from the towns of Tyre and Sidon?
2. How did the towns of Tyre and Sidon seek peace with King Herod?
3. What does King Herod's death reveal about the contrast between political power and God's power?
4. Why did God strike King Herod dead?
5. When are you in danger of taking credit for yourself, when truly the praise belongs to God?
6. How does King Herod's experience put into perspective the forces that appear to be too powerful for you?
7. What is significant about the fact that King Herod died, yet God's word spread?

LIFE-LESSONS

1. **God is jealous; he desires that people worship only him and consider him the only God.** He punishes those who receive worship for themselves. King Herod allowed the people to call him a god, and the Lord God struck him and he died (Ac 12:20-23).
2. **A person cannot struggle against God and win.** King Herod struggled against God, persecuting the Lord's servants (Ac 12:1-3). He was eaten by worms sent from God (Ac 12:23).
3. **The growth of the Kingdom of God does not depend upon political stability.** King Herod jailed church members and persecuted church leaders (Ac 12:1-5). King Herod was afflicted and died; however, the word of God continued to increase and spread (Ac 12:24).
4. **God's power is far superior to people who have temporary power.** King Herod died (Ac 12:23), but God's word continued to increase and spread (Ac 12:24). King Herod sought to kill Peter; however, God orchestrated Peter's release from prison (Ac 12:6-10). King Herod sought to crush the church; however, God crushed King Herod, the church flourished, and God's word spread (Ac 12:24).

5. **Pride is a serious sin and will be judged.** God punished evil King Herod who took praises for himself that only belonged to God (Ac 12:22-23). King Herod's pride ended when God's wrath struck. God does not immediately punish all sins; however, he will bring all to judgment (Heb 9:27).

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Pantomime Retelling of the Story:

The storyteller tells the story one time. Then the storyteller:

- Asks for a volunteer to pantomime the story as the storyteller tells it a second time. The storyteller retells the story while the volunteer pantomimes it.
- Invites a listener to retell the story.
- Asks listeners if the one who retold the story left out or added anything to the story.