

God's Invisible Creation

Angels – Part 2

Sermon Discussion Guide

May 17, 2020

New Life
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STUDY NOTES

King Herod (Acts 12:1). King Herod in Acts 12:1 is Herod Agrippa I. He was the grandson of Herod the Great, who had tried to murder the infant Jesus. Since A.D. 41, Herod Agrippa had ruled Judea and Jerusalem as a vassal king of Rome.

James (Acts 2:2). James was the first apostle to be martyred. This James was the brother of John and the son of Zebedee. He is to be distinguished from the James who later led the Jerusalem church and who (probably) wrote the New Testament book of James. The events in Acts 12 took place about ten years after Jesus' death and resurrection.



1. Describe a time when you or someone you know was protected from harm in a remarkable way.

One of the most wonderful ministries of angels is their protective care over believers in Jesus Christ. Usually that care is exercised in quiet, almost unnoticeable ways, but sometimes it can be astonishing. In his message, Matt taught that angels do interact with you and me and that in some aspect there are angels who guard us like Clarence from "It's a Wonderful Life."

In this study we will look at how the apostle Peter learned to appreciate the protection of angels – and how we can also appreciate their ministry to us!

Read Acts 12:1 – 17.

2. What indications can you find in the text that Peter was calm even when he was under arrest?
3. What thoughts might have crossed Peter's mind when he was awakened by an angel? (v.6 – 7)
4. What do the angel's actions tell you about the nature and ministry of angels? (v.6 – 11)
5. Why did God send an angel – personal being – to lead Peter out rather than just instantly removing him from the prison?
6. Men and women just as faithful to God as Peter have been arrested and have died in prison. God allowed James to be executed (v.2), but rescued Peter. Why doesn't God always deliver his people?
7. Twice we are told that the Christians were praying for Peter (v.5, 12). If a Christian is in danger or trouble, should that Christian (or his friends) ask God to send an angel for deliverance or protection? Explain.

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Light shone (Acts 12:7). Peter was constantly guarded by four soldiers on six-hour shifts (v.4,6). Two soldiers were in the cell with Peter changed to their wrists, while the other two stood guard at the door. The description of the light, a common symbol of divine glory, underscores that this was a miraculous intervention by God.

Mary the mother of John, also called Mark (Acts 12:12). This is the Mark who later wrote the Gospel bearing that name (v.25; 13:5).

His Angel (Acts 12:15). The popular belief was that a person's "guardian angel" looked exactly like the person he protected. These Christians apparently believed that Peter had been executed and his angel had come to give them the news. It makes you wonder exactly what they had been praying for!

8. What strikes you as unusual about the response of the Christians who were praying when Peter appeared at the gate of Mary's house? (v.12- 17)

How do you think Peter felt as he stood at the gate?

9. These Christians obviously were not expecting God to work like he did. In what ways do we "limit" God when we ask him to work in a particular situation?

10. What problem might seem less intimidating if you asked God for His help and intervention?

11. In what ways will this study about angels increase or change the following:

- Your prayer life.
- Your actions when all alone.
- How you treat strangers (even strangers driving erratically through The Village's traffic circles).
- Protection through unsafe circumstances.