

I. Death of James (1-2)

Matt 17:1-8
 20:20-28

II. Delivery of Peter (3-19)

King Herod
 Soldiers
 Prison
 Chains
 Iron Gates

Vs.

{ Christians Praying }

Compare to the release of the apostles in Acts 5:17-25

A God who raised Jesus from the dead would have no trouble opening an iron gate!

They didn't realize that God had answered their prayers

Christians in Antioch of Syria providing assistance for those affected by famine in Judea (11:27-30)

Herod Agrippa I
 - Grandson of Herod the Great & Nephew of Herod Antipas

Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover Week)
 -Exo 12:14-20
 -Lev 23:4-8

Peter slept soundly despite his pending execution.

¹ About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church. (~AD 44)

² He killed **James** the brother of **John** with the sword,
³ and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. This was during the days of **Unleavened Bread**.

⁴ 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.

⁵ So Peter was kept in prison, but **earnest prayer** for him was made to God by the church.

⁶ 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.**

⁷ 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.

⁸ And the angel said to him, "Dress yourself and put on your sandals." And he did so. And he said to him, "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me."

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ When they had passed the first and the second guard, they came to the iron gate leading into the city. It opened for them of its own accord, and they went out and went along one street, and immediately the angel left him.

¹¹ 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."

¹² 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.

¹³ And when he knocked at the door of the gateway, a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer.

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ 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!"

¹⁶ But Peter continued knocking, and when they opened, they saw him and were amazed.

¹⁷ But motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he described to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Tell these things to James and to the brothers." Then he departed and went to another place.

¹⁸ Now when day came, there was no little disturbance among the soldiers over what had become of Peter.

¹⁹ And after Herod searched for him and did not find him, he examined the sentries and ordered that they should be put to death.

Then he went down from Judea to Caesarea and spent time there.

²⁰ Now Herod was angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon, and they came to him with one accord, and having persuaded Blastus, the king's chamberlain, they asked for peace, because their country depended on the king's country for food.

²¹ On an appointed day Herod put on his royal robes, took his seat upon the throne, and delivered an oration to them.

²² And the people were shouting, "**The voice of a god, and not of a man!**"

²³ 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.

²⁴ But the word of God increased and multiplied.

²⁵ And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had completed their service, bringing with them John, whose other name was Mark.

III. Death of Herod
(20-25)

(On the Mediterranean coast in Phoenicia)

Herod received and accepted honor which should be reserved for God

Acts 13:5, 13

Why would God allow these guards to be killed? - Could these be the guards that scourged Jesus?

Either way, God knows what He is doing!

Josephus also records the death of Herod Agrippa (Ant, XIX, viii, 2)

About That Time

Acts 11:27–30 (ESV)

²⁷ Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. ²⁸ And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius). ²⁹ So the disciples determined, every one according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea. ³⁰ And they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

Death of James

This Herod was a grandson of that Herod by whom the infants of Bethlehem were slaughtered, and a nephew of "Herod the Tetrarch," (Antipas) by whom John the Immerser was beheaded. He grew up in Rome, where he wasted what fortune he had inherited in princely extravagance; but while doing so he acquired an intimacy with Caius Cæsar, afterward the famous Caligula of history. When the latter ascended the throne, at the death of Tiberius, he elevated his friend Agrippa, as this Herod was most usually called, to a kingdom, which was subsequently enlarged by Claudius until it embraced all the territory ruled by his grandfather Herod the Great. He was now in the zenith of his power, and living in the utmost magnificence. Why he undertook this persecution it is difficult to tell, unless he was instigated to it by the old enemies of the Church. This appears most probable from Luke's statement below, that he seized Peter because he saw that the death of James pleased the Jews. —Acts of the Apostles – J.W. McGarvey

Matthew 17:1-8 (ESV)

¹ And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. ² And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. ³ And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. ⁴ And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah." ⁵ He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." ⁶ When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. ⁷ But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and have no fear." ⁸ And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

Matthew 20:20-28 (ESV)

²⁰ Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came up to him with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something. ²¹ And he said to her, "What do you want?" She said to him, "Say that these two sons of mine are to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom." ²² Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?" They said to him, "We are

able." ²³ He said to them, "You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father." ²⁴ And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. ²⁵ But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. ²⁶ It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, ²⁸ even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Unleavened Bread

Exodus 12:14-20 (ESV)

¹⁴ "This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast. ¹⁵ Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven out of your houses, for if anyone eats what is leavened, from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. ¹⁶ On the first day you shall hold a holy assembly, and on the seventh day a holy assembly. No work shall be done on those days. But what everyone needs to eat, that alone may be prepared by you. ¹⁷ And you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day, throughout your generations, as a statute forever. ¹⁸ In the first month, from the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. ¹⁹ For seven days no leaven is to be found in your houses. If anyone eats what is leavened, that person will be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a sojourner or a native of the land. ²⁰ You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwelling places you shall eat unleavened bread."

Leviticus 23:4-8 (ESV)

⁴ "These are the appointed feasts of the Lord, the holy convocations, which you shall proclaim at the time appointed for them. ⁵ In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight, is the Lord's Passover. ⁶ And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened bread to the Lord; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. ⁷ On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not do any ordinary work. ⁸ But you shall present a food offering to the Lord for seven days. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; you shall not do any ordinary work."

Release of Peter

Acts 5:17-26 (ESV)

¹⁷ But the high priest rose up, and all who were with him (that is, the party of the Sadducees), and filled with jealousy ¹⁸ they arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison. ¹⁹ But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and

brought them out, and said, ²⁰ "Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life." ²¹ And when they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach. Now when the high priest came, and those who were with him, they called together the council and all the senate of Israel and sent to the prison to have them brought. ²² But when the officers came, they did not find them in the prison, so they returned and reported, ²³ "We found the prison securely locked and the guards standing at the doors, but when we opened them we found no one inside." ²⁴ Now when the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were greatly perplexed about them, wondering what this would come to. ²⁵ And someone came and told them, "Look! The men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people." ²⁶ Then the captain with the officers went and brought them, but not by force, for they were afraid of being stoned by the people.

Death of Herod Agrippa

Ant, XIX, viii, 2

Now when Agrippa had reigned three years over all Judea, he came to the city Cesarea, which was formerly called Strato's Tower; and there he exhibited shows in honor of Caesar, upon his being informed that there was a certain festival celebrated to make vows for his safety. At which festival a great multitude was gotten together of the principal persons, and such as were of dignity through his province. On the second day of which shows he put on a garment made wholly of silver, and of a contexture truly wonderful, and came into the theater early in the morning; at which time the silver of his garment being illuminated by the fresh reflection of the sun's rays upon it, shone out after a surprising manner, and was so resplendent as to spread a horror over those that looked intently upon him; and presently his flatterers cried out, one from one place, and another from another, (though not for his good,) that he was a god; and they added, "Be thou merciful to us; for although we have hitherto revered thee only as a man, yet shall we henceforth own thee as superior to mortal nature." Upon this the king did neither rebuke them, nor reject their impious flattery. But as he presently afterward looked up, he saw an owl sitting on a certain rope over his head, and immediately understood that this bird was the messenger of ill tidings, as it had once been the messenger of good tidings to him; and fell into the deepest sorrow. A severe pain also arose in his belly, and began in a most violent manner. He therefore looked upon his friends, and said, "I, whom you call a god, am commanded presently to depart this life; while Providence thus reproves the lying words you just now said to me; and I, who was by you called immortal, am immediately to be hurried away by death. But I am bound to accept of what Providence allots, as it pleases God; for we have by no means lived ill, but in a splendid and happy manner." When he said this, his pain was become violent. Accordingly he was carried into the palace, and the rumor went abroad every where, that he would certainly die in a little time. But the multitude presently sat in sackcloth, with their wives and children, after the law of their country, and besought God for the king's recovery. All places were also full of mourning and lamentation. Now the king

rested in a high chamber, and as he saw them below lying prostrate on the ground, he could not himself forbear weeping. And when he had been quite worn out by the pain in his belly for five days, he departed this life, being in the fifty-fourth year of his age, and in the seventh year of his reign; for he reigned four years under Caius Caesar, three of them were over Philip's tetrarchy only, and on the fourth he had that of Herod added to it; and he reigned, besides those, three years under the reign of Claudius Caesar; in which time he reigned over the forementioned countries, and also had Judea added to them, as well as Samaria and Cesarea. The revenues that he received out of them were very great, no less than twelve millions of drachme. Yet did he borrow great sums from others; for he was so very liberal that his expenses exceeded his incomes, and his generosity was boundless.^[24]—Complete Works of Josephus.

John Mark

Acts 13:5 (ESV)

⁵ When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them.

Acts 13:13 (ESV)

¹³ Now Paul and his companions set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia. And John left them and returned to Jerusalem,