

Surrendering to the Present Moment

November 12, 2023

Holly Fuqua, Associate Minister



Acts 12: 1-11

1About that time King Herod laid violent hands upon some who belonged to the church. 2He had James, the brother of John, killed with the sword. 3After he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. (This was during the festival of Unleavened Bread.) 4When he had seized him, he put him in prison and handed him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending to bring him out to the people after the Passover. 5While Peter was kept in prison, the church prayed fervently to God for him.

6 The very night before Herod was going to bring him out, Peter, bound with two chains, was sleeping between two soldiers, while guards in front of the door were keeping watch over the prison. 7Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He tapped Peter on the side and woke him, saying, 'Get up quickly.' And the chains fell off his wrists. 8The angel said to

him, 'Fasten your belt and put on your sandals.' He did so. Then he said to him, 'Wrap your cloak around you and follow me.' 9Peter went out and followed him; he did not realize that what was happening with the angel's help was real; he thought he was seeing a vision. 10After they had passed the first and the second guard, they came before the iron gate leading into the city. It opened for them of its own accord, and they went outside and walked along a lane, when suddenly the angel left him. 11Then Peter came to himself and said, 'Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hands of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting.'

REFLECT & DISCUSS

1. Read the passage slowly. Then take a deep breath and read it again. What word, phrase or image stands out to you?
2. Let's talk about King Herod. The Bible has several King Herod's and sometimes that can be confusing. We have Herod the Great (Ruled during birth of Jesus), Herod Antipas (Ruled during Jesus' ministry), and Herod Agrippa (The Herod in today's passage who persecuted Christians and was the Grandson of Herod the Great). And this is just three King Herods! Yes, there are more. Talk about these Kings and what they did during their leadership.
3. Why was King Herod trying to please the Jews with the arrest of Jesus' Disciples? The scripture says his

South Elkhorn Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

4343 Harrodsburg Road, Lexington KY 40513

859-223-1433 southelkhorncc.org

ratings went up after he killed James.
Why do you think that is?

4. Why do you believe King Herod had so many guards surrounding Peter in prison? Why was that so important to King Herod?
5. How did Peter sleep so peacefully after losing his friend to murder, Peter being arrested, shackled in chains, surrounded by guards, and knowing he might be killed the next day? Would you sleep peacefully? Explain.
6. What gives you sleepless nights? What chains are holding you back from living in this moment? Does our mind ever hold us hostage and make us feel we are in prison with our thoughts?
7. An angel rescues Peter and helps him escape prison and death. Have you had angel moments where people have saved you or led you in a new direction of life? Explain.