

## Notes on Acts 12-13

Acts 12:1-5 – In Jerusalem, James martyred, Peter imprisoned

Herod the king – this is Herod Agrippa I, the grandson of Herod the Great (Matt. 2:1), the nephew of Antipas, who put Jesus to death

Why the outbreak of violence against the Church after peace (9:31)? See 12:3.

Executed James the brother of John (cf. Mark 10:35-40)

Peter imprisoned for the third time (cf. Acts 4:3, 5:18)

A trial during the Feast of Unleavened Bread?? (cf. Luke 22-23)

Acts 12:6-17 – Peter's Rescue and Departure (cf. Acts 5:17ff.)

An angel of the Lord (cf. 5:19; 10:3; 12:23, 27:23)

On the eve of his apparent martyrdom, how stressed out is Peter? (12:6, 8)

It is his angel! (guardian angel? usually connected to Matt. 18:10)

The house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark (12:25) – sometimes suggested as the site of the Last Supper or Acts 1:13

Peter being freed is an answer to prayer or is it? (12:16, cf. 12:5) – the news is too good to be true (not unlike the account of Jesus' resurrection (John 20))

Tell James and the brothers – James is regarded as Jesus' brother (Mark 6:3), the "head" of the Jerusalem believers (see Acts 15; Gal. 1:19, 2:9; 1 Cor. 15:7)

Peter departed (to another city/to a place of hiding?) – Luke doesn't tell us more, but Peter will be back in Acts 15

Acts 12:18-23 – Herod's powerlessness against God's Work and the end of Herod Agrippa I

Herod had the guards executed! – Have the words of Gamaliel been forgotten? (Acts 5:38-39)

Herod retreats to his palace in Caesarea

Tyre and Sidon – port cities, which were powerful but not agriculturally productive (remember the mention of famines in Acts 11:28-30!)

This episode is also recorded in Josephus' writings – it was a day celebrating Emperor Claudius Herod wore a silver, shining robe, and was greeted as a god by the people

According to Josephus, this was the year A.D. 44, not necessarily the same year James was executed

Acts 12:24 – But the Word of God increased and multiplied!

The Word of God increased... (6:7, 9:31, 12:24, 16:5, 19:20, 28:31)

## Notes on Acts 12-13

The kingdoms of Herod and Caesar have been in upheaval, but God's Kingdom continues

Acts 12:25 – Barnabas and Saul (and John Mark) return to Antioch from Jerusalem

The stories of Barnabas and Saul are now resumed. The timeline of events here is a little bit fuzzy. Luke seems more interested in the thematic story than a chronological one. In all likelihood the persecution of the church in Jerusalem took place first, Herod returned to Caesarea, then we hear about famine, at which time it's likely that Saul and Barnabas also brought aid to Jerusalem and then around this time we hear about the entreaties of Tyre and Sidon and Herod's death in A.D. 44.

Acts 13:1-3 – Barnabas and Saul went on First Missionary Journey

Prophets and teachers – more positions in the church? (cf. 12:27, 30)

- Some connect Simeon (Niger) with Simon of Cyrene (Luke 23:26, connecting with Acts 11:20)
- Manaen, a member of the court of Herod the Tetrarch (that is, Antipas), but now a leader in the church!

“The Holy Spirit said...” – to whom and how? – Does the church send (13:3) or does the Holy Spirit send (13:2, 4)? – “the Divine Call”

Acts 13:4-12 – At Cyprus (Home of Barnabas)

From Antioch to Cyprus via Seleucia (Antioch's port city) – this is Barnabas's home island (4:36)

First proclaimed the Word of God in the synagogues of the Jews (a pattern that will follow)

Paphos – on the southwest corner of Cyprus, the seat of the government

- A magician (*magos*, cf. Simon 8:9ff.), a Jewish (!) false prophet named Bar-Jesus (means, Son of Salvation) – who is “son of the devil” (!) (13:10) making crooked the straight paths (cf. Luke 3:5, Isa. 40)
- Sergius Paulus – proconsul (like a governor) – a man of intelligence and at last a believer (13:12)

John (Mark) (12:12, 25, a cousin of Barnabas, Col. 4:10) is also there (he leaves to go back to Jerusalem in 13:13 which becomes a contentious point in 13:37ff. leading to Paul and Barnabas going in different directions)

Saul magically becomes Paul (13:9) – note this is not a name change at the time of his conversion (Acts 9) – usually explained that Saul is his “Jewish” name and Paul is his Roman name, cf. John Mark,

Acts 13:13-52 – In Antioch of Pisidia (Near Paul's home in Tarsus)