FOLLY OF FIGHTING GOD: HEROD AGRIPPA I — ACTS 12

- There was a short period of relief following the persecution of Stephen, but here it comes again led by Herod Agrippa I.
- Herod had been educated in Rome but carefully cultivated the good graces of the Jewish people.
- Herod had Jewish blood in his veins, and He sought to be popular.
- As the Christian Jews became increasingly offensive to their racial brethren (**Ac.11:18**), Herod took advantage of an opportunity to please his subjects by mistreating some believers.
- He executed the Apostle James, the brother of John (**Mt.20:23**). This is the only apostle's death recorded in the New Testament. Herod becomes an example of the folly of fighting against God.



1 God's Power Cannot be Contested

v.1-19

- The strong massive main gate opened of its own accord. You can see all of Herod's power was no contest for God (**v.10**).
- Remember that angels are ministering spirits sent to minister to believers (**He.1:14**).
- We should remember that no prison can hold the servant of God whom God wants free.
- We should be glad that God answers fervent but faithless prayers (**v.15-16**).
- During all of this, they learn that God delivers his own (**v.17**).



- God is more powerful than Herod and all his walls and all his prisons and all his gates and all his chains and all his guards.
- Only a fool fights God because God's power cannot be contested.

2 God's Punishment Cannot be Avoided

v.20-23

- Herod has only suffered the loss of his desire to kill Peter to gain favor of the Jews. He should've just left it alone, and realized you can't fight God.
- A special occasion was set up to be a commemoration for Claudius Caesar's birthday. This is a two-day celebration.
- Herod sat on his throne build by Herod the Great (grandfather). Modesty did not run in the Herod family.
- All the people from Tyre and Sidon and everybody else who wants to be in the good graces tell him he is a God.
- Instead of refusing such profane worship and praise, instead of giving glory to God alone, he accepts it.
- By doing that, he is taking glory from God to himself and thus he is declaring war on God.
- Herod fought against God through (1) persecuting the church and (2) taking glory that only belongs to God.
- "Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died" (**v.23**)
- God brings down this pompous fool from his massive throne by little, tiny worms.



3 God's Purposes Cannot be Frustrated

v.24-25



- The work of God went on. Persecution did not stop it.
- Barnabas and Saul go back to Jerusalem, carry on their mission, and take along with them John Mark.
- It's reminiscent of the words of Jesus, "I'll build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it" (**Mt.16:18**).