



# SOMEBODY'S KNOCKING (backup)

## ACTS OVERVIEW

### Chapter 1

- Jesus Ascends to the Father

### Chapter 2

- Outpouring of Holy Spirit
- Power & Tongues
- Peter preaches - 3000 saved

This is the same Peter than denied Jesus before a servant girl, and twice more to others. He wasn't present at the crucifixion, and now he boldly preaches in public and 3000 people get saved!

Note: 3000 died when the law was given, and here 3000 souls are saved when the grace of Holy Spirit is poured out!

### Chapter 3

- Peter & John heal a beggar
- Peter preaches in public

Again, here's Peter preaching in public. What a transformation!

### Chapter 4

- Peter & John arrested
- Church is Persecuted
- The believers ask God for More Boldness
- Increased unity in the body of Christ

### Chapter 5

- Ananias & Sapphira judged
- Fear of God falls on Church
- Many Signs & Wonders " regularly "
- Persecution
- Apostles Arrested

- Angelic Release
- Apostles Arrested Again and Beaten
- Rejoiced to be Counted Worthy to Suffer for Christ

## Chapter 6

- Church Increases (souls saved)
- Persecution Increases

## Chapter 7

- Stephen is Martyred

## Chapter 8

- Great Persecution by Saul (Paul)
- Many Healings, Miracles, Deliverances
- Many Repent and Saved
- Peter Rebukes Simon (Magus) the Magician (gnosticism)

PERSPECTIVE: Wasn't Peter pretty hard in this guy?! That was my initial thought when I first read this passage of scripture. But most everyone knew him and he was a horrible guy.

Eusebius of Caesarea: Philip, after being "scattered abroad", went down to Samaria and preached the word. "And divine grace worked so mightily with him (Philip) that even Simon Magus with many others was attracted by his words."

Justin Martyr: Simon performed in your imperial city some mighty acts of magic by the art of demons operating in him, and was considered a god, and as a god was honored by you with a statue, which was erected in the river Tiber, between the two bridges, and bore this inscription in the Latin tongue, Simoni Deo Sancto, that is, To Simon the Holy God. And nearly all the Samaritans and a few even of other nations confess and worship him as the first God.

Eusebius: We have understood that Simon was the author of all heresy.

Eusebius: Menander, who succeeded Simon Magus, showed himself in his conduct another instrument of diabolical power, not inferior to the former. He also was a Samaritan and carried his sorceries to no less an extent than his teacher had done, and

at the same time revealed in still more marvelous tales than he. For he said that he was himself the Saviour, who had been sent down from invisible aeons for the salvation of men;

NOTE: Remember the warning that Jesus gave that many will come saying, "I am the Christ" and will mislead many. (Matt 24:5, Mark 13:6, Luke 21:8)

NOTE: Simon Magus historically is the author of what became Gnosticism. Paul was addressing churches about this twisted theology. And we still have it in effect today.

- Philip Evangelizes Ethiopian Eunuch
- Philip is Translated!

## Chapter 9

- Saul (Paul) is Saved (Damascus Road)
- Paul is Persecuted
- Paul Proclaims Jesus in Synagogues
- Healings & Miracles through Paul
- More Persecution to Paul

## Chapter 10

- Peter has the vision - "kill and eat"
- Gentiles Saved and Holy Spirit baptized

## Chapter 11

- Persecution
- Church Scatters and Spreads
- Many Jews and Gentiles getting Saved
- Barnabas brings Paul to Antioch
- The Hand of God was with them
- A great many people were added to the Lord

## Chapter 12

- Persecution thru King Herod
- James (brother of John) is Martyred
- Peter is imprisoned
- Peter is Released by an Angel

- The Death of Herod

## Acts 12 (ESV)

### James Killed and Peter Imprisoned

**1** About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church.

Herod - this is the grandson of "Herod the Great" who tried to kill Jesus as an infant by murdering all male children 2 years and younger in the city of Bethlehem. Matt 2:16-17

**2** He killed James the brother of John with the sword,

The Apostles, brothers James and John known as "the sons of thunder". Mark 3:17 of whom Jesus had prophesied would drink the same cup He drinks (Mark 10:39).

**3** and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. This was during the days of Unleavened Bread.

The days of Unleavened Bread are the seven days following the Passover meal. Herod imprisoned Peter (this was Peter's third time in prison since the day of Pentecost 4:3, 5:18-19)

**4** And when he (Herod) had seized him (Peter), 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.

One squad = four soldiers, and four squads = 16 soldiers. One group of four to cover each of the four three-hour watches of the night.

"Earnest" or "Fervent" prayer = "with sincere and intense conviction, very passionate".

### Peter Is Rescued

**6** Now when Herod was about to bring him (Peter) 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."

PERSPECTIVE: Note that the angel supernaturally looses Peter's chains, and then opens the iron gate, but Peter has to dress himself, to walk, etc.

EXPLAIN: Explain the difference between a vision/trance and the natural realm as to why Peter wasn't sure if this was really happening to him.

**12** When he (Peter) 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!"

PERSPECTIVE: It appears that no-one among this crowd (praying fervently) was truly believing for Peter's release, because as they're praying they tell Rhoda that she's out of her mind! Then told her that it was Peter's angel. Why didn't they at least run to see the angel?

EXPLAIN: Describe what I imagined that prayer meeting looked like.

The phrase, "You are out of your mind" means to think or reason in a completely irrational manner—'to not be in one's right mind, to be insane, to be mad' – Louw &

EXPLAIN: Explain about seeing in the Spirit. Their most likely familiarity with angels.

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

PERSPECTIVE: They were amazed because, although their prayers brought forth Peter's freedom, they didn't yet have the faith that their prayer was going to be answered!

**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 (the brother of Jesus) 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.

## The Death of Herod

**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!"

PERSPECTIVE: The people of Israel were worshiping King Herod as god, and he received it. He never corrected the people and redirected the glory to God.

**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.

The same fate as his grandfather. Generational iniquity, "eaten by worms". The historian Eusebius records the details of his long and extended suffering. (Ecclesiastical History –

Book 1 Chapter 8) It's recorded that even as he breathed out his last breath of life, it was not without "extensive torture".

**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.

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Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. – Matthew 18:19

You do not have because you do not ask. – James 4:2

You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. – James 4:3

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Story from Brazil, praying at the mall for the woman in a wheelchair.  
Willing to pay the cost?

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Persecution is a catalyst for:

- the gospel to be spread
  - the church to be spread
  - greater unity among believers
  - boldness/courage upon believers
  - martyres
  - great signs and wonders
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John 16:33b – in the world you have tribulation, but take courage, I have overcome the world.

Tribulation = pressure or pressing together, affliction, anguish, burden, persecution, trouble.

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1 & 2 Kings and 1 & 2 Chronicles – Kings of Israel & Judah were measured/judged by two things:

1. Did they obey God, walk with Him (relationship)?
2. Did they tear down the high places? (Ephesians 6:12 - spiritual wickedness in high places)

The Old Testament often illustrates spiritual principles on a natural plane.

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