

Who is the King?

Scripture Reading — Acts 12:1-24

Peter . . . said, “Now I know . . . that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from Herod’s clutches...” — Acts 12:11

The church was facing a hard time of persecution. James, the brother of John and one of the disciples closest to Jesus, was put to death by King Herod. And now, it seemed, Peter would be next. Herod was trying to show that he was in charge. His political allies, the Jewish authorities, didn’t want the followers of Jesus around, so Herod began persecuting them. And he liked how this improved his ratings! But at night in Peter’s prison cell, an angel woke Peter up, released him from his chains, and led him outside. Peter had no idea what was going on. He thought it was a dream. Even the believers who were praying for his release were stunned when he showed up at their door. But God’s work through Peter was not finished, so God gave more time to serve. This prison-break story closes with Herod’s deadly anger at the prison guards—and then we hear of Herod’s self-satisfaction when political allies from Tyre and Sidon praise him. So God strikes Herod down. His body becomes a meal for worms, but the Word of God continues to spread and flourish. I have been privileged to see believers serving behind prison walls. Did you know that God still shows up inside prisons and other places to set hearts free? After all, he is the true King.

Prayer

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we praise you. We confess that we are like Herod more often than we like to think. May we always see you as Lord, no matter the circumstances. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

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