

Study of Acts 12
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In *Acts 12* we see the persecution of YHVH's Assembly by Herod and by the religious leaders of the day. Herod had James the brother of John killed and he realized that it pleased the religious leaders, he had Peter arrested also..

In *verse 3*, as in many other verses the word used is Jews. When that word is used in this context it means the religious leaders, and **NOT** the Qahal, the Assembly of Elohim translated as the church, even though they were mostly Jews also.

These kind of verses or the use of the word Jew here in this context, although it means the religious leaders, has been used as an antisemitic condemnation of all Jews for what a few religious leaders did. That only shows the ignorance of the people that have and teach these false ideas, and it is religion, man's religion that teaches these ideas contrary to the Word of Elohim.

Because Herod was encouraged by the religious leaders of the day for having James, the brother of John put to death, he proceeded to arrest Peter also, and put him in prison, in chains. In the King James version of this verse it says it was the time of **EASTER**, which of course is absolutely false, and is an attempt to deceive Christian believers into believing that there was such a feast as Easter during the time of Messiah, when that **IS** absolutely false. The truth is that it was the time of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the time of slaying the Lamb of Elohim, the Passover Lamb, a time to remember and reflect on Messiah's sacrifice for our salvation, and since these Christian leaders over the years wanted to do away with anything that is Jewish, they tried to do away with the Feasts of YHVH, which they believe is for the Jews only, by **FALSELY** renaming Elohim's Feast of Passover as Easter.

The Scriptures go on to say that Peter was delivered to **four** quaternions of soldiers who in turn brought him to Jail. Once incarcerated we are told that Peter slept between **two** soldiers that evening and that he was bound with **two** chains in a locked cell with other soldiers guarding the cell door.

The number **four** in Scripture represents the fourth day of creation where the Sun was created and put in the heavens by YHVH as **LIGHT** for His Created beings, and the fourth millennium also represents the Millennium in which Messiah, the **LIGHT** of the World came to earth. The number **two** in Scripture represents witness and I believe that it is used twice here to emphasize that there is something important that we are going to be witnesses to.

We are told that Elohim's assembly prayed without ceasing. Since Scripture tells us of the power of prayer and intercession, I believe that **IF** prayer had **NOT BEEN** offered on Peter's behalf that he would have remained in prison. Prayer my friends **IS** a **NECESSARY PART** or element of every believer's Life, because without prayer, we distance ourselves from YHVH our Elohim and when we are separated from YHVH **BY OUR OWN CHOOSING**, we are doomed to do things on our own without the benefit of His wisdom, and Scripture tells us that we will perish because of it.

Verse 7 says, behold the messenger of YHVH came upon Peter and a light shined in the prison and the messenger of Elohim touched Peter on his right side to wake him up. I believe that that light, the

messenger of Light, is our Messiah, the Living Word of the Father, the Light of the world, who came to rescue Peter.

The messenger told Peter to put on his garment, and follow him, which of course indicates that they were about to leave the prison, even though Peter was heavily guarded. I believe that the garment that Peter was asked to put on is a metaphor for **PUTTING ON** Messiah, **PUTTING ON** YHVH's inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, His Torah of Life as our protection. The messenger said follow Me, which of course are the exact same words that Messiah told His disciples, **FOLLOW ME**, the Living Word of Elohim, Elohim's Truth manifested in the flesh, and I will lead you into eternal freedom! Scripture tells us that when the disciples willingly and lovingly followed Messiah, they witnessed and experienced many miracles.

We are told that at that time Peter's chains fell off of Him, please understand that the chains were **NOT** unlocked with a key, they simply **FELL OFF** of Peter by the power of the Holy Spirit of YHVH. At the beginning of this ordeal, Peter thought that it was a vision that appeared to him, however when the chains **FELL OFF** and the cell door opened supernaturally, Peter finally realized that this was **NOT** a vision or a dream and that it was really happening and that it was YHVH that was delivering him out of the hands of Herod and sure death. This I believe **IS** a picture of Messiah dying in our stead, since this event happened at Passover, which of course **IS** when the Lamb of Elohim was slain for our sin, the **SIN** of the world.

Now Peter goes to the house of Mary the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many of the people of **THE WAY**, the followers of Messiah's Doctrine, His Gospel, were gathered together to pray for Peter. Peter knocks on the door of the gate, and we are told that a young woman by the name of Rhoda came to the door and when she realized that it was Peter at the door, she was so excited that she forgot to open the door to let Peter in, but instead she left him standing there, and ran to tell the others of the good news that Peter was freed from jail, and that he was standing at the door. Peter on the other hand continues to knock on the door **NOT** knowing that someone has already heard him.

Now I want you to understand what happened next, because it is very important and speaks to our attitude when we pray to Elohim for His help. These people were earnestly praying to Elohim for Peter's release, and when they are presented with the **FACT** that their prayers have been answered and that Peter **IS NOT** only free from jail, but that he is standing at their door, they **DID NOT BELIEVE the REPORT**.

Now it is very important that we get a picture of this event **BECAUSE WE** subconsciously **DO THE SAME THING** all the time. These people prayed to our heavenly Father that Peter would be saved or delivered out of his problems, his dilemma, and when their prayers **ARE ANSWERED**, they can't believe it, and they need **PROOF**, physical proof that their prayers have indeed been answered. This tells me that although they were praying for Peter's release, they really didn't believe that their prayers would be answered. Oh, we can rest assured that they **HOPED** that their prayers would be answered **BUT** they **DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THEIR PRAYERS WOULD BE ANSWERED**.

May I suggest that the opposite view **IS** the **VIEW** that we should all adopt when we pray to our heavenly Father. First of all whenever we pray for something we should be praying that the Father's will be done in whatever situation or circumstance that we are praying for, for the very best outcome for **ANY AND ALL OF US IS** that the Father's **WILL** be done in our lives and in everybody else's

life also, and therefore we should **NOT** be surprised as believers **WHEN** our prayers are answered, when the Father who hears our prayers actually does what we asked of Him. We simply have to learn to believe that when we pray that our heavenly Father's **WILL BE DONE** in any and every situation, that the Father **WILL** indeed answer that prayer because Scripture tells us that it will indeed happen. *1John 5:14-15 And this **IS THE CONFIDENCE** that we have in Him, that, **IF** we ask anything according to His Will, **HE HEARS US**: 15 And **IF WE KNOW** that **HE HEAR US**, whatsoever we ask, **WE KNOW** that **WE HAVE THE PETITIONS THAT WE DESIRED OF HIM**.*

In these verses we can see that there is absolutely no doubt in John's mind that when he prays that the Father's **WILL BE DONE** in any given situation, that the Father's will, does indeed come to pass. Therefore we too should believe as John believes, and know in our hearts **THAT** YHVH does indeed hear our prayers, and when we pray according to His will, then we can rest assured that He answers each and every one of them, in His Timing, **BECAUSE** He said He would. Amen

When they finally opened the door and saw Peter there they were astonished, and we are told that Peter gave glory to Elohim right away for his release from prison. He then told them to go and tell James of what had just happened to him, as an encouragement for **ALL** the followers of the Way, that YHVH was with them, and that He was still working Miracles.

Now the focus shifts and we are told what king Herod did. Apparently king Herod was not at all pleased with Peter's escape and he ordered that the guards be put to death for letting Peter escape. We are told that Herod searched for Peter but **DID NOT** find him. That tells me that while we are doing the work of Elohim, He will protect us from the enemy and He will empower us to do whatever is needed in order to get His Salvation Plan completed.

Herod then went from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there and it says that he was very displeased with the fact that Peter had escaped, and he was also extremely displeased with the people of Tyre and Sidon and the soldiers that had somehow let him go.

Then we are told that the people from Tyre and Sidon came to visit Herod in Caesarea to make amends with him regarding Peter's escape, because they knew that most of the supplies for their sustenance came from Herod.

Next we read that Herod set a day apart to meet with these people and when he sat down on his throne, in all his glorious kingly apparel, he gave a great speech to the people that feared him, people that were afraid of losing their supplies and maybe even their lives because of Herod's displeasure with them, so they paid tribute to him, saying, when Herod spoke, **IT IS** the voice of a god and not a man. They obviously said those things to be in Herod's good graces.

Because of these feigned accolades, Herod was all puffed up and filled with pride, and he took the glory that belongs to Elohim and heaped it upon himself. And we know that our heavenly Father tells us that He is a jealous Elohim and that He will **NOT** share His glory with anyone, therefore when a selfish, proud, and egotistical bragger like Herod tried to take YHVH's glory away from Him and heap it upon Himself, the Scripture tells us that immediately, Herod was smitten by the angel or messenger of Elohim and he was eaten by **WORMS** while he was sitting on his throne, and he died a miserable and painful death.

The lesson that **WE** are to learn from all of this **IS THAT** we are to **ALWAYS** give YHVH the glory, for anything and everything that happens to us in our lives, for Scripture plainly states that apart from Messiah, apart from the Living Word of our heavenly Father, apart from His inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, His Torah of Life made flesh, **WE CAN DO NOTHING..**

Herod chose to go against the Word of YHVH and flaunt His riches in front of His subjects and brag about **HOW HE** had done all of this by himself, and Scripture tells us in *Deuteronomy 8:18 that it IS YHVH that gives us power to get wealth*, therefore whether we are in want or whether we are in plenty, we are to praise our heavenly Father, for He **IS** testing us, so that our strength and our belief in Him and our own self confidence can grow stronger and stronger.

I believe that **IT IS** imperative that we as human beings must turn over total control of our lives to our heavenly Father, and His Servant our Messiah who of course **IS** YHVH and especially when it comes to the area of our finances, our possessions. In *Deuteronomy 8:18* which I quoted above we are told that **IT IS** YHVH that gives us power to **GET WEALTH** and accumulate possessions. In *James 1:17* we are told that *Every **GOOD GIFT** and every **PERFECT GIFT IS** from above, and **COMES DOWN FROM** the Father of Lights, with whom there **IS** no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*

These words in James tell us that our heavenly Father, the Father of Lights **DOES NOT CHANGE**, He **IS** steadfast in everything that He says and does, therefore, **ALL** people from Adam to the people of Today, you and me, can rest assured that **HE DOES NOT CHANGE THE RULES** halfway through the game, therefore what He commanded Adam, Abraham, Moses, David, the Prophets, Messiah and His disciples **TO DO, IS EXACTLY** what He commands **US TO DO** and that **IS, KEEP, FOLLOW, OBEY** and **DO ALL** of My inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, My Torah of Life, My directives for everlasting Life, and **YOU WILL BE BLESSED.**

In other words our heavenly Father and His Son, our Messiah, are the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. *Malachi 3:6 For I am YHVH, I DO NOT CHANGE; therefore you sons of Jacob are NOT consumed; and Hebrews 13:8 Yeshua Messiah, THE SAME YESTERDAY, and TODAY, and FOR EVER.*

Since all of what we have does indeed come from our heavenly Father, the Father of Lights, we absolutely need to get into the habit of praising and honouring Him for everything that we have, for according to Scripture it **IS** He that has given it to us. Amein

If we can learn to be generous and have a giving heart with the wealth, the possession and the abilities that our heavenly Father has blessed us with, **THEN** we are well on our way to having a pure surrendered loving heart to YHVH and we are open and willing to **DO ALL** of His Commandments, **BUT IF** our heart **IS** somehow hardened, **IF IT IS** miserly, and **IF** our possessions are more important to us than our Elohim, **THEN** our hearts **WILL** be closed to His everlasting **TRUTH**, His Torah of Life, which **GIVES US LIFE**, and we will eventually perish because of it. A person **MUST**, and this definitely bares repeating, a person **MUST** believe that YHVH **IS** the provider of **ALL** things and that He blesses us with His gifts in order that we can bless other people with them, and by our giving example, we silently invite all people to come and experience YHVH's provisional powers with us also.

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Without a giving heart it is impossible to please our heavenly Father. Amein

Studying and keeping Torah together as a community.

*Have a great Elohim blessed week and may Yahweh bless your every thought,
and your every deed. Until we meet again, שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵיכֶם, Shalom Aleykem. Amein*