



God and Circumstances

Acts 12:1-24

Summary of Today

- **Often, it feels like God is not present in our circumstances**
- **God is often miraculous, and mysterious, in our circumstances**
- **Despite circumstances, God's purposes will be accomplished**

12:1-4 Herod and Violence

- **Herod's Family**
 - *Herod the Great*
 - The Herod of Jesus' birth (Luke 1,2)
 - *Herod Antipas*
 - The Herod of Jesus' death (Luke 23)
 - *Herod Agrippa I*
 - Today (Acts 12)
 - *Herod Agrippa II*
 - The Herod of Paul's trial (Acts 25-26)

12:1-4 Herod and Violence

- **Herod's Victim**
 - James
 - One of the original 12 disciples
 - One of Jesus' inner circle (with John and Peter)
 - Not James, Jesus' brother (12:16-17)

12:1-4 Herod and Violence

- **Herod's Motivation**
 - Politics – pleasing the Jews (12:3)
 - Was Peter especially hated by the religious leaders at this time due to his contact with the Gentiles?

12:1-4 Herod and Violence

- **Herod's Incarceration**
 - Twenty-four hour armed guards (12:4, 6)
 - Would you say this is a bit much for a prisoner of conscience?

President Aung San Sui Kyi – Myanmar



12:1-4 Herod and Violence

Proverbs 21:30 – “There is no wisdom or understanding or counsel against the Lord”

Often, it feels like God is not present in our circumstances

12:5-17 Peter and Freedom

- **Peter's Mood**
 - Sleep!
 - Third visit to prison (Acts 4:2, 5:19, 12)
- **Peter's Move**
 - The angel; following the angel, discerning the angel

12:5-17 Peter and Freedom

- **The Church's Prayer**
 - Earnest (12:5)
 - In Unity (12:12)
 - Despite Adversity (Psalm 109:4)
 - “Prayer is the slender nerve that moves the muscles of omnipotence”
– John MacArthur

12:5-17 Peter and Freedom

- **The Church and Peter**
 - Gladness (12:14)
 - Disbelief (12:15)
 - Astonishment (12:16)

**God is often miraculous, and mysterious, in
our circumstances**

12:18-24 Violence and Herod

- **Herod and Death** (18-19)
- **Herod and Politics** (20)
- **Herod and Idolatry** (21)
 - Isaiah 49:5 – “Woe to Him who strives with his Maker!”
- **Death and Herod**
 - Like Peter, he is struck by an angel, but...

12:18-24 Violence and Herod

- **The Church after Herod**
 - Growth
 - Matthew 16:17-18

**Despite circumstances, God's purposes will
be accomplished**