



Series on the Acts of the Apostles #24
Is Your God Big Enough?

Acts 12:1-19
Pastor Jim Efaw
Sunday Morning, September 13, 2009

Introduction:

Chapter 11 – Peter had just preached to a Gentile, Roman centurion named Cornelius, who was the first Gentile convert in the book of Acts. (10:48)

Chapter 12 is a pivotal chapter in the book of Acts.

- *Shifts from Jerusalem as the center of activity to Antioch. Antioch was the center of early missionary activity. Paul was sent out from there.*
- *Shifts from Peter as the central character to Paul.*
- *Shifts from an emphasis on the Jews to the Gentiles and “whosoever will.”*

- I. God is sovereign and in charge.
 - A. In allowing James to be martyred. (12:1-2)
 1. God knows exactly what He is doing.
 2. If God does not deliver, it is not because He cannot deliver. It is because He chooses not to do so.
 3. Our trust in God is not dependent upon what He does or what we understand. It is based upon who He is and His once-for-all display of love on Calvary.

- B. In delivering Peter from prison. (12:5-19)
(God sees the big picture. We do not and cannot.)
 1. God will not take us to Heaven until His purposes are accomplished through us.
 2. God delights in working in desperate situations.

II. God is omnipotent.

- A. He still responds to our prayers. (12:5)
 1. Fervently – with agony.
 2. Continuously – still praying when he arrived.
 3. Doubtingly. (12:12-16)

“Prayer is first of all not a means of obtaining things from God, but rather a means of increasing our close fellowship with Him.”

- B. His power assures ultimate victory.

God will allow us to be in situations where our only resource is prayer. He wants us to abandon our strength, our resources, our control. “Your will be done.”

Conclusion:

Thoughts to ponder . . .

1. *Why do we worry and fret if we really believe God is sovereign?*
2. *Do we still trust and believe God when life hurts badly or deeply?*
3. *Have you ever thought that James was delivered just as dramatically as Peter?*
4. *Can we adjust our view of praying so that our main goal is to increase our fellowship with God rather than simply obtaining favor from Him?*