

SPREAD THE WORD

A SERIES IN ACTS

The Great Escape
Acts 12:1-24

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 **bethel community**
CHURCH

The Great Escape

The Great Escape

Acts 12:1-24 About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church. 2 He killed James the brother of John with the sword, 3 and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. This was during the days of Unleavened Bread. 4 And when he had seized him, 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. -

The Great Escape

6 Now when Herod was about to bring him 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." -

The Great Escape

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.” -

The Great Escape

12 When he 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!" -

The Great Escape

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

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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. 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. -

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22 And the people were shouting, “The voice of a god, and not of a man!” 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. 24 But the word of God increased and multiplied. (ESV)

The Great Escape

The Great Escape

I. There will always be those who oppose the gospel.

A. Through violence.

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

- *2 Corinthians 11:23-28 with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. 24 Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. -*

The Great Escape

I. There will always be those who oppose the gospel.

A. Through violence.

- *25 Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; 26 on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from -*

The Great Escape

I. There will always be those who oppose the gospel.

A. Through violence.

- *false brothers; 27 in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. 28 And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.*

The Great Escape

I. There will always be those who oppose the gospel.

B. Through murder.

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

- *Matthew 14:3-12 For Herod had seized John and bound him and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, 4 because John had been saying to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." 5 And though he wanted to put him to death, he feared the people, -*

The Great Escape

I. There will always be those who oppose the gospel.

B. Through murder.

- *because they held him to be a prophet. 6 But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced before the company and pleased Herod, 7 so that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask. 8 Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter." -*

The Great Escape

I. There will always be those who oppose the gospel.

B. Through murder.

- *9 And the king was sorry, but because of his oaths and his guests he commanded it to be given. 10 He sent and had John beheaded in the prison, 11 and his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. 12 And his disciples came and took the body and buried it, and they went and told Jesus.*

The Great Escape

I. There will always be those who oppose the gospel.

C. Through imprisonment.

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 Great Escape

I. There will always be those who oppose the gospel.

D. Through harassment and public humiliation.

4 And when he had seized him, 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.

The Great Escape

II. When we face opposition we should:

A. Remain prayerful.

5 So Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church.

- *1 John 5:14-15 And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.*

The Great Escape

II. When we face opposition we should:

A. Remain prayerful.

- *Ephesians 6:18 praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,*

The Great Escape

II. When we face opposition we should:

A. Remain prayerful.

- *Philippians 4:6-7 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*
- *1 Thessalonians 5:17 pray without ceasing,*

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II. When we face opposition we should:

B. Remain obedient.

6 Now when Herod was about to bring him 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. -

The Great Escape

II. When we face opposition we should:

B. Remain obedient.

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.

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II. When we face opposition we should:

C. Acknowledge God's work in our lives.

*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.**”*

The Great Escape

II. When we face opposition we should:

C. Acknowledge God's work in our lives.

- *Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.*
- *Matthew 10:32-33 So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, 33 but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.*

The Great Escape

II. When we face opposition we should:

D. Trust God for the impossible.

12 When he 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. -

The Great Escape

II. When we face opposition we should:

D. Trust God for the impossible.

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!" 16 But Peter continued knocking, and when they opened, they saw him and were amazed. 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. -

The Great Escape

II. When we face opposition we should:

D. Trust God for the impossible.

And he said, "Tell these things to James and to the brothers." Then he departed and went to another place.

- *Psalm 37:3-4 Trust in the Lord, and do good; dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness. 4 Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.*

The Great Escape

III. Opposition to God brings:

A. Chaos and confusion.

18 Now when day came, there was no little disturbance among the soldiers over what had become of Peter.

The Great Escape

III. Opposition to God brings:

B. Destruction.

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 Great Escape

III. Opposition to God brings:

C. Anger and conflict.

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.

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III. Opposition to God brings:

D. Arrogance.

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!"

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III. Opposition to God brings:

D. Arrogance.

- *Philippians 2:3-4 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

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III. Opposition to God brings:

E. Death.

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.

- *Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

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IV. God's purposes will always prevail.

24 But the word of God increased and multiplied.

- *Proverbs 19:21 Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand.*
- *Job 23:3 But he is unchangeable, and who can turn him back? What he desires, that he does.*
- *Matthew 6:10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*

The Great Escape

The Great Escape

- I. There will always be those who oppose the gospel.
- II. When we face opposition, we need to remain prayerful and obedient, acknowledging God's work in our lives as we trust God for the impossible.
- III. Opposition to God will always bring chaos, confusion, anger, arrogance, conflict, destruction, and death.
- IV. We need to remember that God's purposes for His people will always prevail.

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