

Herod Agrippa I Executes James (c. 43)

Acts 12:1–2

1 Now about that time Herod the king laid hands on some who belonged to the church in order to mistreat them.

2 And he had James the brother of John put to death with a sword.

Peter Imprisoned by Herod Agrippa I (April of 43 or 44)

Acts 12:3–19

Peter Arrested and Imprisoned

3 When he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. Now it was during the days of Unleavened Bread.

4 When he had seized him, he put him in prison, delivering him to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out before the people.

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

Peter Rescued by an Angel

6 On the very night when Herod was about to bring him forward, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and guards in front of the door were watching over the prison.

7 And behold, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared and a light shone in the cell; and he struck Peter's side and woke him up, saying, "Get up quickly." And his chains fell off his hands.

8 And the angel said to him, "Gird 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 continued to follow, and 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 second guard, they came to the iron gate that leads into the city, which opened for them by itself; and they went out and went along one street, and immediately the angel departed from him.

11 When Peter came to himself, he said, "Now I know for sure that the Lord has sent forth His angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting."

Peter Goes to Mary's House, Then Leaves for a Safe Hiding Place

12 And when he realized *this*, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.

13 When he knocked at the door of the gate, a servant-girl named Rhoda came to answer.

14 When she recognized Peter's voice, because of her joy she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter was standing in front of the gate.

15 They said to her, "You are out of your mind!" But she kept insisting that it was so. They kept saying, "It is his angel."

16 But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened *the door*, 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 led him out of the prison. And he said, "Report these things to James and the brethren." Then he left and went to another place.

Herod Executes the Guards

18 Now when day came, there was no small disturbance among the soldiers *as to* what could have become of Peter.

19 When Herod had searched for him and had not found him, he examined the guards and ordered that they be led away *to execution*. Then he went down from Judea to Caesarea and was spending time there.

The Death of Herod Agrippa I (44)

Acts 12:20–23

20 Now he was very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon; and with one accord they came to him, and having won over Blastus the king's chamberlain, they were asking for peace, because their country was fed by the king's country.

21 On an appointed day Herod, having put on his royal apparel, took his seat on the rostrum and *began* delivering an address to them.

22 The people kept crying out, "The voice of a god and not of a man!"

23 And immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died.

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Chronological Notes

- 1) Concerning the death of Herod Agrippa I, I side with the majority (represented by Kostenberger) against Steinmann¹ and Schwartz,² and affirm that Herod's death took place in the first half of 44.³

¹ Andrew E. Steinmann, *From Abraham to Paul*, 303–304. Steinmann follows Schwartz's view of Herod's death.

² Daniel R. Schwartz, *Agrippa I: the Last King of Judea*, (Tubingen: Mohr, 1990): 109–111, 203–207. For an excellent critique of Schwartz's view see Nina L. Collins, "Review: *Agrippa I* by Daniel R. Schwartz," *Novum Testamentum* 34.1 (Jan 1992): 90–101.

³ Andreas J. Kostenberger, L. Scott Kellum, Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown* (B&H Academic, 2009): 62.