

Bible Study Group Notes

Acts 12.1–25

THE BIG PICTURE

Acts 12 is not a neat chapter. James is killed. Peter is rescued. The church prays, yet seems surprised when God answers. A powerful ruler appears untouchable, yet suddenly falls under God's judgement. The chapter reminds us that following Christ does not guarantee an easy life. Sometimes God's people suffer. Sometimes God rescues. But throughout it all, one thing remains certain: the word of God continues to increase and multiply (12.24). The key question is not whether life is predictable, but whether Christ can be trusted.

INVESTIGATE

Read Acts 12.1–25.

1. What does Herod do to the church in 12.1–4?
2. How does the church respond to Peter's imprisonment in 12.5?
3. What stands out to you about Peter's rescue in 12.6–11?
4. What do we learn from the reaction of Rhoda and the praying church in 12.12–17?
5. What contrast does Luke draw between Peter and Herod in this chapter?
6. Why is Herod judged in 12.20–23?
7. What is the significance of the statement in 12.24: "the word of God increased and multiplied"?
8. How does this chapter help us understand both suffering and God's sovereignty?

REFLECT & APPLY

9. Acts 12 contains both James's death and Peter's rescue. Why can it be difficult when God seems to act differently in similar situations?

10. What does this passage teach us about prayer? What encourages you about the church's imperfect but earnest praying?

11. Are there situations in your life, family, church, or wider world where you need to keep praying even though circumstances seem impossible?

12. The sermon highlighted believers facing pressure and persecution around the world. How can we grow in praying more regularly for the global church?

13. Herod sought glory for himself rather than giving glory to God. Where might Christians today be tempted to seek approval, recognition, or status?

14. Verse 24 reminds us that God's word continues to advance despite opposition. How does that encourage you when church life, evangelism, or discipleship feels difficult?

15. Which of the three themes speaks most powerfully to you at present: suffering, rescue, or God's word prevailing?

PRAY

- Thank God that Jesus Christ is risen, reigning, and building his church.
- Pray for Christians facing pressure and persecution around the world.
- Pray for those being baptised and those exploring faith.
- Ask God to help us trust him in suffering, pray earnestly, and remain confident that his word will continue to increase and multiply.

NB The Church Prayer Pointers for next month are available in church or on the WhatsApp group.