

Theme: Nothing can stand as an obstacle to the proclamation of the gospel; not death, nor prison doors nor prideful kings. God exercises His power either directly through his actions or indirectly through the actions of others, in order to accomplish His purposes and plans.

Introduction: Good writing – always know who the main character is
 Passage today: Who is the main character??

Background: Where does this fit in the "history" of Acts?

-Interruption? Footnote? Or Essential??

I. The Power of

A. Who was he? Herod Agrippa (Not Herod Antipas)

B. His show of Power?

1. Attacks the believers in Jerusalem

-Needs/wants the support of the Jews. Kills James

-Luke 12:4,5

-Moves against Peter

2. Second show of power? – kills the guards who let Peter out.

3. Control over the Phoenicians (3rd display of power)

II. The Church Responds with Power! 12:5,13

A. Faith Expressed in Prayer

-Access to the throne of grace – through Christ's shed blood

Heb.4:14-16; Rom 8:34; John 15:7

NOTE: We are made partakers of *real* power in and through Jesus Christ. Not in and of ourselves.

B. God's power unleashed through prayer!

-Peter is rescued – But How???

-Thru prayers of the church

C. Believers' "doubt" (13-16)

D. Peter disappears for a time (17)

-Tell the rest of the church

III. The Lord Reveals His Power – He, Alone is in Control! (20-23)

A. Herod sees himself as the main character – the central figure.

1. Josephus compliments the biblical account.

2. Phoenicians appeal to his pride James 4:6

-no humility on his part

- B. God will not be mocked
 - 1. Herod accepts the worship of God
 - 2. God acts directly & immediately!
- C. God's Power can be "immediate" – directly from His hand
- D. His power is "Mediated" – accomplished through the hands of others.
- E. Our God Reigns!
 - God, Himself, is clearly the main character through the whole account.
 - It is His will that is being carried out.
 - His church is built up and increased

Conclusion:

- 1. What does it mean for us that God is the *Main Character*?
- 2. He answers prayer – concerted, faithful, united prayer. Will that characterize who we are?
- 3. Who will be the "Main Character" when trials come?
- 4. There is a dire warning in this passage!
- 5. Children – Young people
 - may be very difficult for you – to get out of the spotlight.