

ASSIGNMENT FOR CLASS #7: CONVERSION & PERSECUTION (ACTS 11:19-12:25)

This class we reconvene on January 24th & 25th!

SESSION #1: THE CHURCH IN ANTIOCH (Acts 11:19-30)

- Keep in mind that the Gospel thus far is being preached to primarily Jews. It is truly breaking into the lands and cultures of the Gentiles now! (See Acts 11:19).
- When the church found out there was to be a famine, we read that “everyone one of the disciples determined to send relief according to his ability” to those who were poor and hard-pressed in Judea (11:29). What sort of gifts is God asking us to send to others “according to our ability”? Who might those people be?

SESSION #2: THE GREAT PERSECUTION BEGINS (Acts 12:1-5)

- Keep in mind that this is Herod Agrippa we are reading about and not Herod the Great. Herod Agrippa was actually a very observant Jew – observant of the law – and that is why he likely began persecuting the Christians. This persecution was likely around 41 or 42 A.D.
- “So Peter was kept in prison; but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the Church (12:5).” The early church battled persecution on their knees. What do we feel about our prayers having the power to alter the social and political world?

SESSION #3: ANGELIC RESCUE OF ST. PETER FROM PRISON (Acts 12:6-19)

- Scripture is clear that Peter seemed to think he was dreaming during this dramatic rescue. Have we ever experienced a kind of miracle that seemed almost unreal? Have we experienced any “divine rescues” that we should perhaps remind ourselves about in order to make this passage more real to us?

SESSION #4: THE DEATH OF HEROD (Acts 12:1-18)

- Herod’s death seems rather graphic and even harsh. But so were the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira, as well as the correction of Simon the Magician, etc. How do we reconcile the mercy of God with some of these rather harsh narratives? Can we reconcile them at all? This would be a good thing to bring to prayer!