**Acts 12:1-2**

\*Barnabas and Saul were back in Jerusalem, and the churches had rest since the conversion of the hateful Pharisee Saul (cf. 9:31). Presumably they had prayed quiet and peace (I Tim. 2:2).

\*However, Satan had another foil—Herod Agrippa I (11 BC-AD 44), grandson of Herod the Great! The former, the Jewish sycophant, wanted to favor those in Jerusalem with the execution of the leaders of the *“sect”* (Acts 28:22). He wanted to *vex* (*kakoo* [“do evil”]) certain leaders of the Jerusalem Baptists.

\*The third Christian martyrdom (John the Baptist, Stephen the deacon) fell on the Apostle James of the inner circle of the Lord (cf. Mt. 17:1 ff.), probably to please the Sanhedrin! The Apostles knew their danger and ultimate end (Mk. 10:38-39). James was promised of the “Guide” unto death (Ps. 48:14).

**Acts 12:3-4**

\*Herod wanted to please the Jews again so he captured former Pastor and the Apostle Peter. Luke wanted to instruct the Gentile Theophilus specifically about the Jewish holydays.

\*With parenthesis, he gave important and exact details, coming from Lev. 23:4-6 in the *Torah*. *“The days of unleavened bread”* came on the 15th day and following for the next seven days of the first month Nisan. Prior to this was the Passover Lamb slain and eaten on the 14th day (Passover and then Feast). \*The Jewish *pascha* had already occurred. Herod’s *pascha* (i.e., *“Easter”* > worship of *Ishtar*) would occur after *“the days of unleavened bread”*!! The *KJV* translators derived much of the phraseology of the NT from the *Tyndale* NT (1534). As *Tyndale* translated the Greek *pascha* as *“Ester”* (28x) including Acts 12:4, the *KJV* rendering followed *Tyndale* **only** on this one verse as *“Easter.”*

\*Herod’s *“Easter”* became foundational for the RCC celebration of *Ishtar* the goddess of fertility with rabbits, bunnies, eggs, etc. In AD 325, the dimly-illuminated RCC required that Easter could not fall on the same day as the Jewish Passover, and so the calendar shifts the date of Easter accordingly to the lunar calendar of Judaism. Christians celebrate the resurrection of Christ on every Sunday and attempt to avoid the paganism of Easter!

\*Apparently, both James and Peter were easy captures, since they learned the futility of the sword (Lk. 22:36-38 and 50-51). Deep into the Fortress of Antonia with 16 guards, Peter had no human possibility of escape. Herod wanted to celebrate his *Ishtar* holyday with the execution of Peter!

**Acts 12:5-6**

\*Former Pastor Peter had a problem and the Baptist assembly at Jerusalem had prayer! In the providential plan of Jehovah, the ministry of the Apostle James was over. Peter had no *“blessed hope”* (Tit. 2:13), since the Lord prophesied that Peter, when he was *“old”* (now, probably in his middle forties), would stretch forth his hands, be girded, and carried away, probably for beheading by sword (Jn 21:18). Nevertheless, the Baptists prayed *“without ceasing”* (Rom. 1:9; I Thes. 5:17), having an all night prayer meeting in the Baptist house church of Mary, John Mark’s mother (Acts 12:12).

\*Herod secured Peter between two soldiers with two chains and with keepers of the doors, making it absolutely impossible for him to escape, since earlier the high priest attempted to secure the apostles including Peter in the common prison, but somehow they all escaped (Acts 5:17-25)!

\*But there was Peter, asleep at crucial times (Lk. 22:45-46)! Now, Peter was sound asleep the night before his execution! (*“was sleeping”* > *periphrastic* construction indicating he had been and was still sleeping. The best place to receive a good night’s sleep is in the will of God (cf. Pss. 3:5; 4:8)!

\*Human impossibility was no hindrance for the God of the impossible! Peter had *Epistles* yet to write!