



Divine Judgment On Evil

"And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost" (Acts 12:23).

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"But the word of God grew and multiplied" (Acts 12:24).

"And when Herod had sought for him, and found him not, he examined the keepers, and commanded that they should be put to death. And he went down from Judaea to Caesarea, and there abode. 20 And Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon: but they came with one accord to him, and, having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace; because their country was nourished by the king's country. 21 And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. 22 And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. 23 And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost. 24 But the word of God grew and multiplied. 25 And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark" (Acts 12:19-25).

Writing to encourage the early believers, the beloved apostle admonished "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. 8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that **the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.** 10 **But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you**" (1 Peter 5:7-10). It is encouraging to know that the persecution and suffering of Christians does not last for ever. A time always come, when God steps in, in His power and intervenes. It has happened many times, and it will still happen again.

In this story, we note that:

1) Herod was a serious threat to the church, at an entirely new level. His failure to kill Peter, had infuriated him, causing him to move to Caesarea, probably to hatch out further strategies to employ, to avoid a repeat of a similar embarrassment, as happened in the case of Peter.

- 2) God is never blind to what His children are going through. As Herod was plotting his next move, God also decided it was time to act, not only to frustrate Herod's plans but also to establish His purpose through the church by applying justice and judgment on Herod.
- 3) Those of Tyre and Sidon came to appease Herod, who was highly displeased with them, so as to continue getting his favour. It was a great occasion as Herod arrayed in royal apparel and sat upon his throne to receive their accolades.
- 4) Little did Herod know that his time was running out to appease the God of heaven whom he had also highly displeased through his persecution of the believers.
- 5) In response to his oration, the people applauded, "... saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man" (vs 22). Herod was probably very pleased with the accolades from the people, and completely unaware of the impending doom of divine judgment - "immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost" (vs 23).
- 6) Just within a stroke of God's finger, his terrorism was over "But the word of God grew and multiplied" (vs 24). God will always prevail over every evil plot of the devil against His plan and people. Therefore, **keep your focus on God, irrespective of the storms you may be passing through.**
- 7) Saul and Barnabas having completed their mission returned from Jerusalem bringing along with them John Mark.

Your perfection, establishment peace and progress are on the way, as you remain faithful and steadfast to God's call for your life.