

Contending for Prophetic Destiny
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Acts 12

I. Text – Read It

A. Background

1. **Early CHURCH in FORMATIVE YEARS**
2. **Thousands are being SAVED including the Gentiles**
3. **Each DAY there are NEW REVELATIONS about Jesus and the KINGDOM**
4. **Believers are MATURING in the WAYS of GOD**
 - a. **Spiritual GROWTH is on the RISE**
 - b. **Believers (not just the apostles) are performing MIRACLES**
5. **The FIRST KINGDOM CENTER – *Antioch* – is ESTABLISHED**

B. The SIGNIFICANCE of this in the SPIRIT REALM

1. **In the SPIRIT REALM there had COME a DISPLACEMENT**

The KINGDOM of GOD was GROWING and GAINING INFLUENCE in Jerusalem and the SURROUNDING REGIONS

2. **The ORDER of SPIRITUAL GOVERNMENT was SHIFTING**

KINGDOM of GOD government was DISPLACING the SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY of the PRINCIPALITY which influenced the region through ROMAN RULE and JUDAISM

3. **As the CHURCH GREW in INFLUENCE, KINGDOM AUTHORITY began to RULE the HEAVENS**

The KINGDOM of GOD was DISPLACING the EVIL PRINCIPALITY INFLUENCE

C. Because of this, the PRINCIPALITY HITS BACK

EVIL CIVIL GOVERNMENT and the APOSTATE CHURCH TEAM UP AGAIN to DESTROY the Father's CHURCH

1. **Herod** enacts **EVIL** upon **CHURCH**
 - a. **Arrests** and **KILLS JAMES**, so then **ARRESTED PETER**
 1. He **SAW** that it **PLEASED** the Jews
 - a. *Mistreat – entreat EVIL or HARM*
 - b. *Pleased – Agreeable*

ONCE AGAIN, the **AGREEMENT** of **EVIL CIVIL RULERS** and **RELIGIOUS JEWS** were **USED** by the **PRICIPALITY** to **BRING DESTRUCTION**

They **TRIED** and **FAILED** to **KILL JESUS**, **NOW** they are **GOING AFTER HIS CHURCH**

II. Clearly, the **MESSAGE** of *ACTS 12* is **CONTENDING** for **Prophetic Destiny**

A. So, **WHAT DOES** that **LOOK LIKE?**

1. **CHURCH** Immediately goes into **EARNEST PRAYER**

V 5 ...*BUT PRAYER for him was being made FERVENTLY by the CHIURCH to God*

- a. **Look at the Words**
 1. *Prayer – Worshipful prayer*
 2. *Fervently - stretch out / Unceasing and intent*

NOTICE, the **WEAPON** of **CHOICE** was **NOT BINDING** or **LOOSING** nor was it **DIRECT WARFARE ASSAULT** to **UNSEAT** the **PRINCIPALITY**

The EFFECTIVE WEAPON was **WORSHIP!!!**

2. The **CHURCH** was given opportunity to **STRETCH THEMSELVES** and **CONTEND** for **TWO DESTINIES** – *Church and Peter*
 - a. **Herod** was **LOOKING** to **STOP** the **MOMENTUM** of the **Church**
 - b. **Father** was **LOOKING** for the **CHURCH** to **COME** into a **NEW PLACE** of **GROWTH** and **MATURITY**

- c. **Father answered their WORSHIPFUL PRAYERS and SET PETER FREE at the MOST OPPORTUNE TIME to GLORIFY HIMSELF**

NOTHING IS MORE FAITH BUILDING or GENERATES MORE MOMENTUM THAN ANSWERED PRAYER and to SEE GOD HIMSELF ENGAGE our COMMON ENEMIES

Story of Jay Swallow – Was CALLED to come and PRAY at a place called STANDING ROCK. There were huge numbers of young people on the RESERVATION who were committing suicide. They wanted Jay to PRAY over the situation to STOP IT. But before he would come, he COMMISSIONED a large group of intercessors to WORSHIP and PRAY continually until he sensed the RELEASE to GO and SEAL it IN THE SPIRIT. After he did, there were no suicides at Standing Rock for two years.

- B. **RESPONDING to an Engaging principality requires a GROUP EFFORT – Too big for ONE**
 - 1. **Strong INTERCESSORS are NEEDED when you are ENGAGED by a PRINCIPALITY**
 - 2. **The MANNER of INTERCESSION is also IMPORTANT**
 - a. **WORSHIP is KEY – Worship OPENS HEAVEN to EARTH**
 - b. **Declaring the OPPOSITE of what you see NATURALLY**
 - c. **Declaring the REDEMPTIVE PURPOSES of GOD be MANIFESTED in the MIDST of the ENGAGEMENT**
 - 3. **Remember that the KINGDOM is NOT POLITICAL; It is SPIRITUAL**

The CONTENDING is OVER the ISSUE of DOMINION – RULE, NOT POLITICAL POWER

The CHURCH was not FIGHTING to DETHRONE the PRINCIPALITY.

They were CONTENDING to ENFORCE the WILL of KING JESUS in the MATTER of the GROWTH and EXPANSION of HIS KINGDOM INFLUENCE in the ASSIGNED REGIONS through the CHURCH!

- C. **MAKE no MISTAKE – There was NO THOUGHT of DEFEAT!**

Jude 3 (TPT) we must *CONTEND EARNESTLY for the BELIEFS that we CHERISH*

Paul exhorts Timothy (1Tim 6:12) *So, fight with faith for the winner's prize! Lay hands on eternal life, for this is your calling...*

Our **MISSIONS** through the **YEARS** with **GOVERNMENTAL PRAYER TEAM** are another **EXAMPLE** of **HOW** we have **ENFORCED** the **DOMINION** of **GOD'S KINGDOM** in the **EARTH** in the **FACE** of **EVIL CIVIL GOVERNMENTS** and **APOSTATE RELIGIONS**

III. What ELSE does **CONTENDING** for our **Prophetic Destiny** **LOOK LIKE?**

A. OWNING WITHIN the **PROPHETIC PROMISE ITSELF**

1. **While** the **CHURCH** is **PRAYING** without **CEASING**, Peter is **ASLEEP**
2. He is in **TOTAL PEACE**

V 6 *On the very night when Herod was about to bring him forward, Peter was SLEEPING between two soldiers, bound with two chains; and guards in front of the door were watching over the prison.*

- a. He is **SOUND ASLEEP**
- b. **Angel** has to **STRIKE HIM** to **AWAKEN HIM** and then **HELP HIM** to **WAKE UP** and **GET DRESSED**

Vs 7-8 *...Get up quickly... Gird yourself and put on your sandals... Wrap your cloak around you and follow me*

3. The **ANGEL** leads Peter out of the **PRISON**
4. Prison **DOOR** opens on its **OWN**
5. **Peter** and the **Angel** **WALKED OUT** to the street and then the **ANGEL VANISHED**
6. **Peter** heads to *Mary's House of Prayer*
3. **Question** – How could Peter be so **CALM** and **PEACEFUL?**
 - a. **Maybe** he doesn't **FEAR DEATH**
 - b. **Maybe** he had **GREAT RAW FAITH**
 - c. Or, **MAYBE** he **REMEMBERED** a **Prophetic Promise** from **JESUS**

John 21:18 *Truly, truly I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wished; but when you GROW OLD, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go.*

4. **SO**, why is **THAT IMPORTANT**
 - a. **Peter wasn't OLD**
 - b. He could **STILL** dress and care for himself and could **WALK** on his own **POWER**
 - c. He **KNEW** this was **NOT HIS DAY TO DIE!!!**

He was in **TOTAL PEACE** and **CONFIDENCE** in **HIS DESTINED FUTURE**

He has an **APPOINTED DESTINY** to **FEED** the **LAMBS** of Jesus and **HIS ASSIGNMENT** was **NOT FINISHED!**

HEROD did **NOT HAVE PERMISSION** to **SHORT CIRCUIT** Peter's **DESTINY**

B. Remember David and Goliath INCIDENT

1. **Goliath** was a **MASSIVE OMINOUS INTIMIDATING FIGURE**
 - a. He was a **TRAINED WARRIOR**
 - b. He had **ONE AGENDA** – to **DESTROY** a **NATION**
2. **David** is a **TEENAGER** – A **SHEEP HERDER**
3. Yet while the **ARMY** of **ISRAEL** is **TREMBLING**, **David** is **STOKED**

1 Sam 17:26, 32 For who **IS** this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should taunt the armies of the living God.... Let no man's heart fail on account of him, your servant will go out and fight with him.

4. He **ADVANCES** toward the **GIANT** and has **NO FEAR**

V 46 *The Lord will deliver you up into my hands, and I will strike you down and remove your head from you; and I will give the dead bodies of the Army of the Philistines this day to birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth, that all the **EARTH** may know that there is a **GOD IN ISRAEL***

- a. This **WASN'T POLITICAL**; this was **KINGDOM DOMINION**
- b. So, was **DAVID** just a **NAÏVE TEENAGER**
- c. Was he simply **ANNOYED** and **FEARLESS**

NO. David had a PROPHETIC PROMISE that ONE DAY he would SIT as KING over all Israel

THAT DAY HAD NOT YET COME – So TODAY was NOT HIS DAY to DIE!!!

He was IN TOTAL PEACE!!

It was GOLIATH'S DAY TO DIE – He did not have FATHER'S PERMSIISION to KILL HIS SON

David was SIMPLY CONTENDING for HIS PROPHETIC PROMISE – NOT ONLY to BE KING of ISRAEL but to also be the SEED LINE for JESUS HIMSELF

So, HE RAN TO THE BATTLE and TOOK OUT the GIANT and RELEASED the LIFE of KINGDOM DOMINION throughout the nation of ISRAEL!

IV. We will ALL CONTEND for our PROPHETIC PROMISES

A. Individually and Corporately

B. The KEY to VICTORY is to NEVER LET GO of the PROMISE

1. We DO NOT GET DRAWN into a HEAD to HEAD CONFLICT with the Prince of the Principality (Molech, Python, Leviathon)

a. Remain FOCUSED on the PROPHETIC PROMISE of GOD, DIG IN YOUR HEELS, and KEEP MOVING FORWARD

2. Cursing and Binding the Prince is NON-PRODUCTIVE

3. Worshipping and DECLARING our REDEMPTIVE PROMISES ARE!

C. We NEVER ENGAGE a PRINCIPALITY ALONE – STRONG TRAINED INERCESSION necessary to BREAK the HOLD

D. We ALWAYS REMEMBER that we CONTEND from the POSITION of ASSURED VICORY in GOD!!

V. Summation – GOD’S GOT THIS!!!

In the **END**, Herod was **EATEN BY WORMS!** Peter fulfilled **PROPHETIC PROMISE**