

2010 ACTS #14 CHAPTER12 AN ENEMY OF GOD - HEROD

Acts 12:20-25

There is a big concerns on the school playgrounds,
In the news media, on facebook and twitters about the problem of Bullies.

In fact schools are setting policies and taking stands.
Even the government is getting involved.
Those who bully can affect a person for life.

A man named Eric E. Rofes said;

"When I was a young boy, the bully called me names, stole my bicycle, forced me off the playground. He made fun of me in front of other children, forced me to turn over my lunch money each day, threatened to give me a black eye if I told adult authority figures. At different times I was subject to a wide range of degradation and abuse -- de-pantsing, spit in my face, forced to eat the playground dirt....To this day, their handprints, like a slap on the face, remain stark and defined on my soul."

Bullying is not just for kids, but adults as well.

We have even laws that began to deal with adult bullies called hate crimes
But what is more prevalent is people
Turning to violence to take out their frustration, and displeasure on others.
It can be triggered by a bad work review, loss of tenure,
Taxes, loss of employment benefits, divorce, sickness, or jealousy

Acts 7:9 These sons of Jacob were very jealous of their brother Joseph, and they sold him to be a slave in Egypt. But God was with him

Sometimes violence and bullying is fueled by alcohol, or drugs,
Money and even religion.

It makes one stop and think.
Do I have any enemies?
Are there people who are upset with me?
Am I on some list?

I. BULLYING IS A SIN

I always believed and was raised with the fact that
if you didn't hurt people you wouldn't have enemies.
If you just treated others with love and care,
They would return the treatment to you.
But that's not always true.

What did the families of 9/11 do to their murderers?
What did the 11 people shot at Fort Hood deserve?
Or those killed at the post office, or colleges campuses,
Or even the church attenders.
Having enemies and people who hate us,
doesn't necessarily mean we did something to deserve it.
Matter of fact, we probably didn't.

Personally, I have found that enemies can be acquired from
simply standing up for what we believe to be right Biblically based.

If you don't already have enemies, you probably will.
if you are a Christian.

If people hate us because we are a Christian, we are truly blessed!

Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Matthew 5:11

Jesus had plenty of enemies and never harmed anyone.
He was crucified and hung on a cross.

II. A BIBLE BULLY

So, How to Deal with our Enemies?

Herod had James killed

He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword. When he saw that this pleased the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. Acts 12:2-3

They had done nothing personally to Herod.

But Herod was a bully

Herod killed and arrested just because he could,
just so the Jews would stroke his ego.

How do we and God deal with bullies?

If the account had ended with Peter's departure from prison

We would find ourselves wondering

What happened to Herod and the prison guards?"

We do not know at what time the angel delivered Peter,

But we do know that if a prisoner escaped,

the guard would receive the same punishment

Even if it was death.

Acts 16:27 27:42

However this law did not strictly apply in Herod's jurisdiction,

He was not forced to kill the guards,

But being a Bully, and being Herod

He did it anyway.

Note his cruelty.

Instead of killing one man to please the Jews.

It says

After Herod had a thorough search made for him and did not find him, he cross-examined the guard and ordered that they be executed. Acts 12:19

Did he kill only the four or did he kill all 16?

The violence in our world doesn't make sense.

Did Herod stop to think about their families?

Their widowed wives,

Their orphaned children left without a father?

The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead. Proverbs 11:8

Does a terrorist, shooter, or bomber think about their victims?

At first it seems that the Jews and Herod
 Got away with bullying.
 But don't let that fool you.
 God is still in control.
 He is still omnipotent.

Isa. 59:18. "According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay fury to his adversaries."

Herod thought he was on the top side of the cake
 Things were going his way.
 But this frosting was melting on his cake.

But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. I Peter 3:12

But Herod didn't know it and he took a little vacation
 To his time share on the Mediterranean sea.

²⁰Then Herod went from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there a while. Acts 12:19

Do a little sun bathing, swimming
 Little gambling. And partying
 The world plays
 While the Christian prays.

Herod didn't know how deceived he really was,
 How hard his heart had become.

Ephesians 4:17 They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.

Do we know how hard our hearts have become in America?
 The World's smile is more dangerous than its frown.

Having lost all sensitivity they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more. Ephesians 4:19

Turn on the TV, go to a movie watch our culture and see just how much father can we go
 Into sensuality and indulging in every kind of impurity?

What Herod didn't know was that things were already out of his control.

He had been quarreling with the people of Tyre and Sidon; they now joined together and sought an audience with him. Acts 12:20

The people of Tyre and Sidon
 Depended on Herod for food.
 They had in some way displeased Herod.
 They were in danger of losing their assistance.
 In true political fashion they bribed Blastus

Having secured the support of Blastus, a trusted personal servant of the king, they asked for peace, because they depended on the king's country for their food supply. Acts 12:20

Blastus was Herod's chamberlain.
 His most personal attendant.
 He tucked the King in Bed.
 He convince the king to meet the delegation.
 And the scene is set for destruction.

III. THE DEMISE OF OUR BULLIES

The biblical principle of what you sow you shall reap is put into play

Vengeance is Mine, and retribution, in due time their foot will slip; For the day of their calamity is near, and the impending things are hastening upon them.

Deuteronomy 32:35

What Herod didn't know was the principle of the demise of an Evil MAN

"In Due time their foot will slip.

Perhaps we understand that better since we have had so much ice this winter.
So many persons have fallen.

God is saying that when we play out in the world with evil and sin,
We are walking on ice.

FIRST: the evil man is exposed to danger.

when one walks on ice or a slippery place.

He is exposed to falling.

This is represented by our foot slipping and sliding.

If your walking on the edge of the world and

Close to living a sinful worldly life beware.

"Surely thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castest them down into destruction." Psalm 73:18

SECOND: when we walk on ice the slip is sudden, unexpected.

Every moment is dangerous.

We can't for see what happens next.

One moment you're standing and
the next your on your bottom.

We fall at once

And without warning.

21 Fear the LORD and the king, my son, and do not join with the rebellious, 22 for those two will send sudden destruction upon them, and who knows what calamities they can bring? Proverbs 24:21-22

THIRD we create our own fall.

Nobody pushed or shoves us.

The sinner is always whining about poor me,

How unjust and cruel life is.

They get a bad wrap,

We get into a self pitying mode.

Distorts our thinking.

We're like the son of a young mother who

Informed her little boy one day;

"Brian, I'm going to step outside to get a little sun."

The little boy was startled and a tear formed.

And he gulped and said: "But Mommy, you already have a son -- me!"

But no it is our own weight that throws us down,

Our own choices and lifestyles.

The only reason we have not already fallen is that

God's appointed time has not yet come.

In Due time.

Vengeance is Mine, and retribution, In due time their foot will slip. Deuteronomy 32:35a

God holds evil men up only so long, in these slippery places
but will let them go; and then, at that very instant,
they shall fall into destruction and become lost.

Jonathan Edwards said:

"There is nothing that keeps wicked men at any one moment out of hell, but the mere pleasure of God."

How long has God been playing along with you?
How long has he been tolerating your sinful behavior,
Your rebellious attitude and lifestyle.
Friends, he is a Jealous God.
And you're walking on thin ice.

All the king was thinking about was a party.
His ego was being stroked.
He picked a day to flaunt his bullying power.
during a festival honoring Claudius Caesar,

²¹On the appointed day Herod, wearing his royal robes, sat on his throne and delivered a public address to the people. Acts 12:21

the unique thing about his royal robes
The historian Josephus tell us
was that it was made of all silver
And his wardrobe had been planned.
The rock stars of today have nothing on King Herod.
He had planned the time and the way in which
The morning sun would shine off his silver robes,
The people were awed and thought he was a God.
'Be thou merciful to us, for although we have hitherto revered thee only as a *man*,
yet shall we henceforth own thee as *superior to mortal nature*.

Luke's Gospel says:

²²They shouted, "This is the voice of a god, not of a man."

Herod could have rebuked them,
And rejected their flattery.
But he loved every minute of it.
So this whole scene was nothing but idolatry.
And he offended the most high God.

"I am the Lord, that is My name: and My glory I will not give to another. Isaiah 42:8 48:11

What is interesting here is that in Josephus's account
Says: Herod looked up and didn't see an angel,
He thought the angel was an owl on a rope over his head,

²³Immediately, because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died. Acts 12:23

Stuck down ,

Eaten by worms,
 It took him 5 painful days to die of severe bowel destruction.
 Josephus, *Ant.* lib. xix. cap. 8, sect.

I believe this is a warning to every leader today.
 To give Glory and honor to God who put him in office.
 To recognize that there is only one God.
 And he is just and his judgments are sure.
 Now we don't always see retribution quickly,
 Or even in this life,
 But we can be sure that the
Judge of all the earth will do what is right. Genesis 18:25

The same angel who delivered Peter from Prison,
 Smote the king
 The world suffers today because of leaders
 Who do not give God the glory for their powerful positions.

The family suffer today because father and mothers
 Husband and wives don't give God the glory in their homes and health,

The youth suffer today because they don't give God the glory
 In their hearts and lifestyles.

The church suffers today,
 Because they don't give God his Glory,
 And they use their position of authority to oppose the truth
 Of Gods word, and of his holy commandments.

But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. I Peter 3:12c
 Dr. Alan Redpath said: 'Let's keep our chins up and our knees down...we're on the
 victory side.

But when we believe, and live right
 And do right , and are obedient,
 Then God blesses us. God blesses the church
 God blesses our community and the world
 just as the early church experienced,
The word of God grew and multiplied Acts 12:24