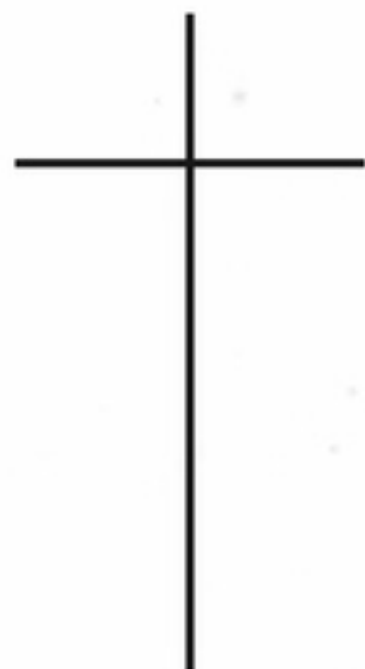


# **WHY THE CHURCH PRAYS**

## **Acts 12:1-17**





***Pray boldly because...***

- **God breaks through impossible BARRIERS! (Acts 12:1-11)**

- **Persecution (1-3, 21-24)**

**1** Now about that time Herod the king laid hands on some who belonged to the church in order to mistreat them.

**2** And he had James the brother of John put to death with a sword. **3** When he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. Now it was during the days of Unleavened Bread.





## - Persecution

Acts 12:21 On an appointed day Herod, having put on his royal apparel, took his seat on the rostrum and *began* delivering an address to them. 22 The people kept crying out, “The voice of a god and not of a man!” 23 And immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died.

24 But the word of the Lord continued to grow and to be multiplied.



***Pray boldly because...***

- **God breaks through impossible BARRIERS! (Acts 12:1-11)**

- **Sixteen prison guards (4-5)**

**4** When he had seized him, he put him in prison, delivering him to **four squads of soldiers** to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out before the people.

**5** So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God.



- **God breaks through impossible BARRIERS! (Acts 12:1-11)**

- **Peter's fears (6)**

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.

Psalm 4:8 In peace I will both lie down and sleep,  
For You alone, O Lord, make me to dwell in safety.



- **God breaks through impossible BARRIERS! (Acts 12:1-11)**

- **Prison chains (7)**

7 And behold, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared and a light shone in the cell; and he struck Peter's side and woke him up, saying, "Get up quickly." **And his chains fell off his hands.**

Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to **bring good news** to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, **to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners;**



- **God breaks through impossible BARRIERS! (Acts 12:1-11)**

- **Iron gate (8-10)**

8 And the angel said to him, “Gird yourself and put on your sandals.” And he did so. And he said to him, “Wrap your cloak around you and follow me.” 9 And he went out and continued to follow, and he did not know that what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. 10 When they had passed the first and second guard, they came to the iron gate that leads into the city, which opened for them by itself; and they went out and went along one street, and immediately the angel departed from him.



## ***Pray boldly because...***


- **God breaks through impossible BARRIERS! (Acts 12:1-11)**
- **Through the church's BOLD PRAYERS (Acts 12:5,12)**

**5 So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God. (NASB)**

**5 Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him." (KJV)**

**5 So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him." (NIV)**

**5 "While Peter was locked in prison, the church was locked in prayer."(anonymous paraphrase)**





Acts 12:12 And when he realized *this*, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.

**“The angel fetched Peter out of prison,  
but it was prayer fetched the angel.” -Thomas Watson**



***Pray boldly because...***

- **God breaks through impossible BARRIERS! (Acts 12:1-11)**
- **Through the church's BOLD PRAYERS (Acts 12:5,12)**
- **Despite our sleepy BROKENNESS (Acts 12:9,11-17)**
  - **Peter was too sleepy to comprehend what God was doing, but God rescued him anyways. (9,11-12)**

**9** And he went out and continued to follow, and he did not know that what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision.



- **Despite our sleepy BROKENNESS (Acts 12:9,11-17)**

**11 When Peter came to himself, he said, “Now I know for sure that the Lord has sent forth His angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting.”**



- **Despite our sleepy BROKENNESS (Acts 12:9,11-17)**
  - **Rhoda had a hard time convincing the church that God had answered their prayers. (13-16)**

**13** When he knocked at the door of the gate, a servant-girl named Rhoda came to answer. **14** When she recognized Peter's voice, because of her joy she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter was standing in front of the gate.

**15** They said to her, "You are out of your mind!" But she kept insisting that it was so. They kept saying, "It is his angel."

**16** But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened *the door*, they saw him and were amazed. and went to another place.



- **Despite our sleepy BROKENNESS (Acts 12:9,11-17)**

- **The church was slow to believe that God had answered their prayers. (15-17)**

**15** They said to her, “You are out of your mind!” But she kept insisting that it was so. They kept saying, “It is his angel.” **16** But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened *the door*, they saw him and were amazed.

**17** But motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he described to them how the Lord had led him out of the prison. And he said, “Report these things to James and the brethren.” Then he left and went to another place.



- **God breaks through impossible BARRIERS! (Acts 12:1-11)**
- ***Through the church's BOLD PRAYERS (Acts 12:5,12)***
- **Despite our sleepy BROKENNESS (Acts 12:9,11-17)**
- **So, PRAY BOLDLY with a growing BELIEF!**
  - **Pray for something that would be shocking!**

*It was said of Desert Storm, "the air war won the ground war." The fervent, faithful praying of a few in a well-developed prayer center can win the ground war for the troops of Christians going out into their places of work and neighborhoods to bear witness to Jesus Christ. -Terry Teyki*





GO IN PEACE

HAVE A  
GREAT WEEK