

Peter Escaped from Prison

Parent Devo & Bible Study

BIBLE PASSAGE: Acts 12

STORY POINT: God rescued Peter from Prison

MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 28:19-20

- **REVIEW MEMORY VERSE:** 1 Chronicles 16:31

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What is our mission as Christians? Our mission is to make disciples of all nations by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Parent Devotional

Peter had witnessed the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on Gentile believers. God made it clear: the gospel is for all because Jesus is Lord of all. Peter returned to Jerusalem and told the believers there what had happened. At this time, other believers who had scattered amid persecution were preaching the gospel. By God's grace, people believed and the church grew.

Before long, King Herod Agrippa attacked the believers. He arrested Peter and killed James, the brother of John. Herod put Peter in prison and planned to kill him too. While Peter was in prison, the other believers prayed earnestly for him. God answered their prayers. Guided by an angel late one night, Peter walked right out of the prison. He escaped to the house of Mary and told the believers gathered there what God had done.

Then Peter left Jerusalem for a while because his life was in danger. Consider emphasizing one or more of the following points as you teach this Bible story. First, prayer is powerful. God answered the people's prayers for Peter. When we pray, God hears us, and we can trust that He is good and will act according to His will. Prayer shouldn't be a last resort for people who feel powerless about their circumstances. Prayer is powerful; we can call on the Lord of the universe at any time! Second, God is in control.

God had a plan for Peter and the church. Herod couldn't stop God's plan. God rescued Peter from his enemies. Even when our own plans fall apart, God is in control. Finally, following Jesus is risky—but worth it. Peter knew he would face death because He believed in Jesus. Many believers were killed because of their faith. But Peter didn't hide or give up. He kept going so he could share the good news of the gospel. Jesus is worth living—and dying—for.

Peter Escaped from Prison

Acts 12

King Herod Agrippa was persecuting believers in the church. He killed James, one of Jesus' disciples. When the king saw how happy this made the Jews, he arrested Peter too. The king put Peter into prison and assigned groups of soldiers to keep guard. While Peter was in prison, other believers in the church prayed and asked God to help him.

The king planned for Peter to be killed. The night before his execution, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers. He was in chains, and other soldiers stood guard at the gate of the prison. All of a sudden, an angel of the Lord appeared and a bright light shone in Peter's prison cell.

The angel struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up!" the angel said. The chains fell off of Peter's wrists. The angel told Peter to get dressed, so Peter put on his sandals and his cloak. Then he followed the angel. Peter wasn't sure what was happening; he thought he was seeing a vision. The angel led Peter out of the prison, past the guards, through the gate, and onto the streets.

Then the angel left. When Peter looked around, he realized the Lord had rescued him from prison and from certain death! Peter hurried to the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where the believers had gathered to pray. When Peter knocked at the door, a servant named Rhoda answered. She heard Peter's voice and she was so happy she rushed back inside, leaving Peter standing outside. "Peter is here! He is at the door!" she announced.

But the others didn't believe her. "You're crazy!" they said. Peter kept knocking, and when they opened the door, they could hardly believe it. Peter motioned to them to be quiet, and he told them how the Lord had rescued him from prison. "Tell James, Jesus' half-brother, and the other brothers about this," Peter said. Then he left. When the sun came up, the soldiers at the prison couldn't figure out what happened to Peter, and the king punished the soldiers because Peter had escaped.

Christ Connection: God answered the people's prayers for Peter. God had a plan for Peter and the church, and He rescued Peter from his enemies. Peter knew he would face death because he believed in Jesus, but he kept going so he could share the good news of the gospel.

MEMORY VERSE: Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in^[b] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20

REVIEW MEMORY VERSE: Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice, and let them say among the nations, "The LORD reigns! 1 Chronicles 16:31

