

Never Alone

Key Verse: “Behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands.”
—Acts 12:7

Selected Scripture:
Acts 12:1-17

AT THE TIME OF OUR LES-

son the church was receiving much persecution. Herod Agrippa, son of Herod the great, killed James the brother of John, and because it pleased the Jews, put Peter in prison. Four quaternion of soldiers were dispatched to keep watch over him. A quaternion is a squad of four soldiers each. This means sixteen soldiers were watching over Peter in the prison.—Acts 12:4

Prayer was made by the church for the safety of Peter. How important is this matter

of prayer. We are told, “Pray without ceasing” (I Thess. 5:17)—that is, keep up our prayers, always looking for an answer. Again, “The effectual [active, powerful] fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” (James 5:16) Christians find that prayer is a lifeline between themselves and God. Again we are told, “Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all [human] understanding will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”—Phil. 4:6,7, *Revised Standard Version*

With this in mind we find the Holy Spirit intervening in the life of Peter. Peter was asleep in the prison, bound with chains between two soldiers. In this we see that Herod wanted to make sure that Peter would not get away. Besides the two soldiers on each side of Peter, two more were at the door of the prison.—Acts 12:6

At this time of the night, an angel of God came into the prison. A light shined forth, the angel smote Peter on his side awakening him, raising him up and saying, ‘Arise up quickly.’ His chains fell off from his hands. The angel then told him to put on his sandals, put a garment around himself, and to follow him.—vss. 7,8

In this account we see how important it is to follow instructions. Get up, put on your shoes, take your garment and follow. “Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.” (Prov. 8:33) Again, “Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge.”—chap. 23:12

Peter was obedient, not hesitating. Thinking he was dreaming, he followed the angel’s instructions and went past the first and second wards. It seemed like a dream to Peter to go past all the guards without being seen. Now he comes to an iron gate leading out of the prison into the city. This gate opened by itself—another miracle. Through all this we trace the overruling of Almighty God. Prayer by the brethren was being answered. Peter now knew of a surety that God had sent his angel to deliver him out of King Herod’s hands.

Peter came to the home of Mary, John Mark’s mother, where many were gathered in prayer. Knocking on the door, a damsel named Rhoda answered. Knowing Peter’s voice she was afraid to answer the door. Rhoda went and told those in the home but they believed not. Finally, they opened the door letting Peter in. He told them his story and said to tell James and the brethren. Prayer is a mighty tool in the life of a Christian. ■