

April 28, 2024

The Gospel Project; Adult Daily Guide; Volume 6, Unit 32; Session 4;
IMPRISONED FOR THE GOSPEL

Opening Riddle:

Question: Paul and Silas were imprisoned during the second missionary journey, but in what city did this happen??

Answer: Philippi

PRAY

Today's lesson is the **Imprisoned for the Gospel**

Would **XXX** please read the **Setting Section** on page 84.

A year had passed since Peter's appeal to the Jerusalem church to accept God's salvation of the Gentiles. Luke provided a few details of this time, including the fact that the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch (Acts 11:26). The stoning of Stephen caused many Christ-followers to scatter to avoid persecution. Their relocation served as a catalyst to spread the gospel message beyond the mostly Jewish regions surrounding Jerusalem. But persecution continued. Yet God remained faithful in delivering His people.

According to what was just read ~

1. This reading seems mostly to be a recap of what we have studied for the last few week.
 - A year since Gentiles became Christians.
 - ✓ How was that working out for the Body of Christ?
 - Those of the WAY were giving a new Mantle, which is what? **Christian**
 - Christians were still being persecuted, even unto what? **Death**
 - The persecution was causing them to do what? **Scatter**
 - What was the positive that came behind the persecution & scattering?
The gospel was being spread through out the area.
2. What is the author attempting to get across to us, by stating "**God remained faithful in delivering His people**"? **Grace (?)**

The **Session in a Sentence** page 84:

God responded to the church's prayers and delivered Peter from prison.

**THE 1ST SECTION IS TITLED: PRAYING TO THE LORD FOR DELIVERANCE:
ACTS 12:1-5 ~ It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. 2 He had James, the**

brother of John, put to death with the sword. **3** When he saw that this met with approval among the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This happened during the Festival of Unleavened Bread. **4** After arresting him, he put him in prison, handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the Passover. **5** So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him.

1. This starts off with the words 'It was about this time' do you know what time he is referring? That preface usually means something that is remembered by the people of this day, just as we remember hurricane names. There was a drought in Judea, and the church at Antioch was active in the relief effort.
2. What is King Herod doing mixing church business with government business? He had a reciprocal relationship with the Sanhedrin. The new Christians movement threatened these temple leaders, and any action Herod took that pleased the Jews was a win for him.
3. Is this the same King Herod that wanted to kill the Baby Jesus, or who kill John the Baptist? No, the grandson of the one at Jesus's Birth.
4. Who had King Herod already killed? Killed James, brother of John v2
5. How did the Jewish Leaders feel about the killing of James? Approved v3
6. Now who was King Herod after? Peter during the Feast of Unleavened Bread
7. What is some significant point about this timing?
 - The 3rd of the spring feasts, contiguous with Passover.
 - Same basic time as Jesus captured
 - Because of the 2 Feasts neither allowed for public trial.
8. This action was a power play on King Herod's part. Because of the large crowds during Passover, what was Herod able to do with Peter? Put him in prison with 4 squads of soldiers as guards. v4
9. While Peter was in prison, what was the church doing? Earnestly praying v5
10. Explain EARNESTLY PRAYING? The same word was used by Luke in **22:44**
And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.

THE 2ND SECTION IS TITLED:

FOLLOWING THE LORD FOR DELIVERANCE:

ACTS 12:6-10 ~ 6 The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance. **7** Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up!" he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists. **8** Then the angel said to him, "Put on your clothes and sandals." And Peter did so. "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me," the angel told him. **9** Peter followed him out of the prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision. **10** They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It

opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him..

1. Did Herod have cause to secure Peter in this manner? Yes, Acts 5:17-20
He had already been in jail before, with John, and they escaped.
2. The picture is: 2 guards standing over him at the door, and laying between 2 other guards bound with chains to each of them. Sound about right?
Yep, Herod had cause to pause.
3. What do you think Peter had been doing the last few days in captivity?
Hoping & praying. Maybe wondering if he would follow James in Death
4. What truths about God do you think Peter clung to while he awaited his trial?
God is sovereign; suffering for Christ was expected; man can kill the body but not the soul; Christ was worth suffering; God is always victorious.
5. We know Passover has ended, and a light shined in the cell, and Peter was being kicked in the side. What did the angel tell him to do?
Get up, Put on your cloths & sandals, wrap your cloak around you & follow me.
6. As they started their journey, what happened without any commands?
chains fell off, and iron gate opened by itself.
7. When Peter started this escape, was he fully conscious of the events?
Peter followed him out of the prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision.
8. Since we were baby Christians, what have we always been taught?
Obedience is better than sacrifice. 1 Sam 15:22. **Was Peter being obedient?**

The 3rd Section: THE CHURCH CELEBRATES WHEN PEOPLE BELIEVE THE GOSPEL:
ACTS 12:11-19 ~11 Then Peter came to himself and said, "Now I know without a doubt that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's clutches and from everything the Jewish people were hoping would happen." 12 When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying. 13 Peter knocked at the outer entrance, and a servant named Rhoda came to answer the door. 14 When she recognized Peter's voice, she was so overjoyed she ran back without opening it and exclaimed, "Peter is at the door!" 15 "You're out of your mind," they told her. When she kept insisting that it was so, they said, "It must be his angel." 16 But Peter kept on knocking, and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished. 17 Peter motioned with his hand for them to be quiet and described how the Lord had brought him out of prison. "Tell James and the other brothers and sisters about this," he said, and then he left for another place. 18 In the morning, there was no small commotion among the soldiers as to what had become of Peter. 19 After Herod had a thorough search made for him and did not find him, he cross-examined the

guards and ordered that they be executed. Then Herod went from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there.

1. When Peter was free and thinking clearly, what did he realize:
 - a) About the Lord? **Angel sent to rescue him from Herod v11**
 - b) about his environment. **Jewish people also wanted him dead v11**
2. Is that the same scenario as with Jesus?
3. When the church didn't believe the servant girl, does that mean they doubted God?
NO, when any of us are surprised, that does not translate to doubt.
4. Could it have been their superstition that cause them to say it is his angel?
5. When they did see him, how did they react? **Astonished & surprised v16**
6. Peter shared the events and how the Lord got him out of prison. Before he left the house, what did he ask them to do?
Tell James and the other brothers and sisters that God had freed him. v17
7. We read in verse 2 that James had been killed by King Herod. Who is this James that he wants information passed to?
Jesus Half Brother, who became the Head of the 1st Christian Church.
8. What happened to Roman soldiers that lost a prisoner?
They took t the punishment of the accused.
9. Why is this important enough to be in the Bible? **Points that the soldiers had everything to loose, and nothing to gain. So no one will be able to say the soldiers release Peter. Their execution further points to the validity of God's miraculous intervention to free Peter.**

Herod, then went to Caesarea and was being praised as a god by the people. AMBER, what did God do to Herod?

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

God responded to the church's prayers and delivered Peter from prison.

Thank You for letting me study with you today.

PRAY