



# Opening Iron Gates

## Acts 12:1-12

## Acts 12:1-4

Now about that time Herod the king stretched out *his* hand to harass some from the church. <sup>2</sup> Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword. <sup>3</sup> And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was *during* the Days of Unleavened Bread. <sup>4</sup> So when he had arrested him, he put *him* in prison, and delivered *him* to four squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover.

## Acts 12:4-10

Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church. <sup>6</sup> And when Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping, bound with two chains between two soldiers; and the guards before the door were <sup>[c]</sup>keeping the prison. <sup>7</sup> Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by *him*, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, “Arise quickly!” And his chains fell off *his* hands. <sup>8</sup> Then the angel said to him, “Gird yourself and tie on your sandals”; and so he did. And he said to him, “Put on your garment and follow me.” <sup>9</sup> So he went out and followed him, and did not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. <sup>10</sup> When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him.

## Acts 12:11-12

And when Peter had come to himself, he said, “Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel, and has delivered me from the hand of Herod and *from* all the expectation of the Jewish people.”

<sup>12</sup> So, when he had considered *this*, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying.

# The Church Gathered and Prayed

- While the carefully guarded apostle slept, members of the church gathered in the house of John Mark and his mother, Mary, for prayer.
- No doubt, they were praying for Peter's release.
- **Acts 12:5** – Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church.
- **Acts 12:12** - So, when he had considered *this*, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying.

# The Iron Gate

Exit appears impossible . . . has he come this far for nothing?

1. Has he been given a false hope? The answer is no . . . he hasn't.
2. Then the gate opens of its own accord.
3. No key.
4. No human force is exerted.
5. The Greek word for this opening is means "automati" "self moved."
6. The gates that had been securely closed and locked by the human exertion of the soldiers and the key . . . now open without them.

# Peter Slept

- **Acts 12:6** - And when Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping, bound with two chains between two soldiers; and the guards before the door were keeping the prison.

# Fiduciary Relationships

- The word “fiduciary” was first made popular in religion.
  - It comes from the Latin word that means faith.
  - Fiduciary is the Latin word for personal trust.
  - Webster’s II New Riverside Dictionary defines fiduciary, in part, as:

“Relating to or involving one that holds something in trust for another.

# Our Fiduciary Relationship with God

- A faith in God is our fiduciary relationship with Him.
- It means two things:

One: We invest ourselves in Him.

Two: We trust Him completely with that investment.

# Have You Given Your Life to God?

- Have you invested your life with God . . . all of it?
  1. Have you given Him your job?
  2. Have you given Him your family?
  3. Have you given Him your finances?
  4. Have you given Him your health?
  5. Have you given Him your broken relationships?

❖ Peter had that kind of faith . . . Peter was banking on God.

# While Peter Slept the Church Prayed

- **Acts 12:5** - Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church.
- **Acts 12:12** - So, when he had considered *this*, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying.

❖ **The Prayers of the Church are Powerful!**

# Peter Obeyed God and Was Delivered by an Angel

- The angel told Peter:
  1. “Quick, get up.” Peter could do that.
  2. “Put on your clothes and sandals.” Peter could do that.
  3. “Wrap your cloak around you.” Peter could do that.
  4. “Follow me.” Peter could do that.

# Obedience Requires Action

- **John 3:5** - “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”
- Man utilizes the water available.
- God makes the Spirit available.

# Obedience Requires Action

- **Luke 13:5** - “I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.”
- Forgiveness of past sins demands repentance.
- Man repents in heart.
- God sees and accepts that repentance.

# Obedience Requires Action

- **Acts 2:38** - “Then Peter said to them, Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”
- Man can be baptized.
- Only God can provide the remission of man’s sins.

# Remember James

- **Acts 12:1-3** - Now about that time Herod the king stretched out *his* hand to harass some from the church. <sup>2</sup> Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword. <sup>3</sup> And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was *during* the Days of Unleavened Bread.

# James was Beheaded

- This draws us to two very solemn truths:
  1. Sometimes God does not deliver us as we understand deliverance.
  2. Sometimes He leaves us where we are and stays there with us.

# God Has Better Things in Mind for Us

- **Romans 8:28** - And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

# Iron Gates

- Iron Gates are:
  - Tough.
  - They are strong.
  - They seem impossible.
- But God is stronger than any iron gate of man.

❖ We just never forget that regardless of the iron gate which confronts us, God will open it and lead us into a brighter day.