Peter Escapes from Prison

*Prepared to Accept A Lift from God*

Dr. Goodluck Ofoegbu

Prof. Oby Ofoegbu

Banking Blessings Ministry

San Antonio, Texas

USA
What We Will Learn

- Angel guides Peter’s escape
- From Herod’s maximum security prison
- Peter gives testimony
- And left so Herod’s men could not find him
- Two principles on human interactions
  - Giving testimony to the concerned
  - Being prepared to accept a lift from God
- Acts 12 and James 2:18
Peter Arrested and Held in Prison

- Persecution of Christians in Jerusalem
- King Herod killed James, brother of John
- To the delight of Jews
- Arrested Peter
- Held him in maximum security prison
- Awaiting public trial after Passover feast
- Acts 12:1–5
Acts 12 (NIV)

1  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 pleased the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This happened during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
Acts 12 (NIV)

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.
Angel Guides Peter Out of Prison

- Angel appeared to Peter in prison
- The night before his scheduled public trial
- Removed his chains
- Told Peter to dress up and follow him
- Guided him through the gate
- And out through length of one street
- Then left Peter

Acts 12:6–11
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.
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.

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.
Acts 12 (NIV)

11 Then Peter came to himself and said, "Now I know without a doubt that the Lord sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's clutches and from everything the Jewish people were anticipating."
Peter Testifies to Brethren that Prayed for Him

- Peter went to the house of Mary
- Where people were praying for him
- They were surprised and delighted
- Described how God brought him out
- From Herod’s prison
- Acts 12:12–17
Acts 12 (NIV)

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 girl named Rhoda came to answer the door.
Acts 12 (NIV)

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."
Acts 12 (NIV)

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 brothers about this," he said, and then he left for another place.
Peter Completes the Escape

- Peter left for another undisclosed place
- Herod’s men searched in the morning
- But could not find Peter
- Acts 12:17–19
Acts 12 (NIV)

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 brothers about this," he said, and then he left for another place.
Acts 12 (NIV)

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 a while.
Peter’s Situation

- In prison
- Will face public trial and likely execution
- Needed to get out of prison
- And get away from Herod
- Cannot get out of jail by human effort
- Church family gathered
- To hold prayer vigil for him
Peter’s Situation

- Angel released Peter from prison
- Guided him to a distance outside
- Peter completed the escape
- Moved beyond reach of Herod’s squad
- God gave him a lift
- Peter took advantage of the lift
- Completed the journey to his destination
A Lift from God

• God may offer you a lift
• But will choose
  • Where
  • When
  • and how far
• Along your path through any life journey
• Be prepared to accept the lift
• And take advantage to complete the journey
Accepting and Utilizing
A Lift from God

- Bring yourself to the lift start point
- Prepare to complete your journey
- From drop-off point to your destination
- Do or prepare to do everything you can do
- Evaluate options for things you cannot do
- Be committed and diligent to your task
- Pray and have faith
- God will provide a lift according to his will
Faith and Deeds

- Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do [James 2:18]
- Apply human effort diligently
- Because you have faith in God
- To step in when it counts
Testimony

- Peter went straight to his faith family
- After the angel dropped him off
- To testify that God granted their prayer
- Testify to your success
- Before people that prayed for you
- Or contributed to your effort in any way
- Even if your success is not yet complete
What We Learned: Be Prepared for a Lift from God

- God will assist
- But expects us to apply human effort
- Work hard and diligently on every task
- Because you have faith
- God will assist you according to his will
- So you will be prepared
- To accept and utilize his assistance
What We Learned: Give Testimony

- Testify before the concerned
- To show them appreciation
- And glorify God before them
- So others may learn
- About his mercy and grace