



UNIT 32 | SESSION 4

PETER WAS RESCUED FROM PRISON

ACTS 12

CHRIST CONNECTION

God had a plan for Peter and the church, and He rescued Peter from his enemies.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

What is the church? The church is all Christians everywhere.

MEMORY VERSE

1 Corinthians 12:12

PREPARE



Take time to reflect
on today's lesson

LEADER BIBLE STUDY

Acts 12 tells the story of God's divine and miraculous rescue of His apostle Peter. While King Herod sought to make an example of Peter, it was God alone who was able to showcase His power and might amidst the persecution of the church. This passage highlights the power of prayer amidst hardship and how God's purposes for His church will prevail despite the futile attempts of the enemy.

What can we learn about God's plans despite persecution and suffering? What can we learn about living on mission even during our most difficult circumstances?

God's plan for the good of His church, even during persecution, includes the fervent prayers of the saints. The intercession of these faithful believers revealed that their only hope was in the Lord, and it was their prayers that were used by God to rescue Peter from prison. As God answered their prayers, He showcased His power to thwart the evil plans of those who wish to harm His church. Peter's incredible escape from prison reflects the same hope that those who have trusted in Jesus receive as the chains of sin fall off, and we are set free from condemnation. God's purpose for His church was by no means coming to an end in that prison cell; rather the word of God spread and multiplied. (Acts 12:24)

The consequence of declaring the gospel of Jesus Christ was costly for Peter and for James, who was executed by Herod. Though Herod's sentence for James was death, to die would mean this disciple's gain. Peter knew the consequences of sharing the gospel, yet he also believed that Jesus was worth giving his life to, trusting that the salvation of others was worth the risk. Even still, God granted Peter salvation from this prison cell so that he could continue living on mission for Him.

May we be aware God has done more than send an angel to rescue us from earthly hardship. He sent His Son to rescue us from the eternal consequence of our sins. Christ's sacrifice on our behalf offers the hope we need to endure difficulties and the boldness we need to share His divine hope with others.

TERMS TO KNOW

Prayer: talking to God and listening to Him. Prayer makes a difference in what happens (James 4:2), and faith is a condition for answered petitions (Mark 11:24).



PETER WAS RESCUED FROM PRISON

King Herod Agrippa was persecuting believers in the church. He killed James, one of Jesus' apostles. 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 trial, 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.

WELCOME



Connect with kids as they arrive

OPENING ACTIVITIES

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to build relationships and help new kids connect to your group.

Before heading to Large Group, kids can work on the provided coloring or activity pages. You can also do the Memory Verse Activity below as a class!

MEMORY VERSE

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

- 1 Corinthians 12:12, ESV

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY

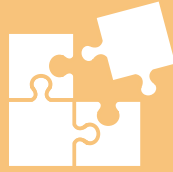
It's Bible Bucks Day!

Today, kids can share the scripture(s) they've memorized with our Bible Bucks leader. This can be the memory verse you've been working on with them in the classroom or other scripture they have memorized at home on their own.

The Bible Bucks Leader will come to each classroom throughout the morning.



ACTIVITIES



Do crafts and games with kids after Large Group

ACTIVITY

Prompt kids to think about how the church prayed for Peter in our story today.

Ask kids to think about different prayers they want to ask God about/for. Give each kid at least one index card they can write or draw their prayer request on.

Encourage kids to remember that God hears our prayers, then have kids exchange cards with each other so they can pray for others in their class!

CONNECT THE DOTS



God loves it when we come to Him in prayer. It can be hard to find the right words to pray when we are overwhelmed or worried, but God understands us. He knows our hearts and we can ask Him for help with anything. We can trust God to answer our prayers in ways that are for our good and His glory.



CLOSING ACTIVITIES



Continue to engage kids while they wait to be picked up

BIBLE STORY REVIEW

After Large Group, ask the following questions and lead your class to discuss.

1. How was Peter able to courageously face prison and even the chance of death?
2. Can you think of other people in the Bible who trusted in God and were saved from dangerous situations? (e.g., *Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, David, etc.*)
3. Why do we pray? What if God does not answer our prayers as we hope?
4. The church was amazed by Peter's rescue. Has there ever been a time when you were amazed by something God has done?

HAVE EXTRA TIME?

Spend some time praying together as a class or in smaller groups!

You can pray for Northwest, the city of Dallas, Pastor Neil, the Community Center, missionaries, etc.



BEFORE YOU GO...

Please clean up by doing the following:

1. Put all extra supplies and binders back in the curriculum bins (Kinder leaders: Curriculum bins go back inside the bottom cabinet)
2. Clean all trash off the tables
3. Put all crayons, markers, etc. back in the appropriate containers and cubbies
4. Erase the whiteboards and put markers/erasers back in holder
5. Turn off TVs as you leave

THANK YOU FOR SERVING WITH US!