

Today, we’d like to see the title of “Peter in Prison” in the book of Acts 12:1-25

To Online Word’s people on the earth, we’d like to suggest 3 Questions.

Q1. In verse 2, “Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword,” why did God allow James to be killed but next Peter to release from prison? And here, what is our attitude to God?

Q2. In verse 5, “Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church,” what can we learn from here?

Q3. In verse 15, “But they said to her, “You are beside yourself!” Yet she kept insisting that it was so. So they said, “It is his angel,”” how was their faith? And what should we learn from their faith?

(Background)

Author: Luke

(Acts 1:1-3) The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, ² until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, ³ to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

(Text)

¹ Now about that time Herod the king stretched out *his* hand to harass some from the church.

¹= Herod (Herod Agrippa I, called as “King Agrippa,” who was the grandson of Herod the Great. His sister was Herodias, married with Herod Philip 1st time and Herod Antipas 2nd time and liable for John the Baptist’s death ¹Mark 6:24-25; He was appointed to rule over most of Palestine – Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and Perea. He pleased most Jews who were Judaists, persecuting Christians.)

¹ Mark 6:24-25 So she went out and said to her mother, “What shall I ask?” And she said, “The head of John the Baptist!” ²⁵ Immediately she came in with haste to the king and asked, saying, “I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.

<p>² Then <u>he killed James</u> the brother of John with the sword.</p>	<p>2=Q1 he killed James (brother of John – one of the 3 inner circle of His 12 disciples, i.e., Peter, James, and John, e.g. transfiguration, rising from Jairus' dead daughter, Gethsemane prayer ² <i>Mat 17:1-2</i>; <i>Mark 5:35-37</i>; <i>Mat 26:37</i>; Why did God allow James to be killed but Peter to be alive? We don't know on this earth because we don't see all that God sees, but we know all things work together for Good & evil ultimately is destroyed in the great white throne judgment ³ <i>Romans 8:28</i>; <i>Revelation 20:14</i>)</p>
<p>³ And because he saw <u>that it pleased the Jews</u>, he <u>proceeded further to seize Peter also</u>. Now it was <u>during the Days of Unleavened Bread</u>.</p>	<p>3= it (this James' martyrdom) pleased the Jews... proceeded further to seize Peter also (for execution, see verse 19); the Days of Unleavened Bread (the 7 Days of Unleavened Bread following the Lord's Passover the 1 day, so Passover season has total 8 days ⁴ <i>Lev 23:5-6</i>)</p>
<p>⁴ So when he had arrested him, he put <u>him in prison</u>, and delivered <u>him to four squads</u> of soldiers to keep him, <u>intending to bring him before the people after Passover</u>.</p>	<p>4= him in prison (Peter in prison); four squads (a squad or quaternion is 4. So, 4 shifts consist of 6 hours per day in which the 4 groups of 4 people – 16 soldiers - then would be shifted for one another.) ; intending to bring him before the people after Passover (bring Peter before the people on trail after the Passover season for execution)</p>
<p>⁵ <u>Peter was therefore kept in prison</u>, but <u>constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church</u>.</p>	<p>5=Q2 Peter was ... kept in prison (Peter's safety issue)... constant prayer [prayer without ceasing] ... to God for him (peter's safety – here they didn't know how the safety issue would be resolved) by the church (not a physical building but the group of Christians at the house of Mary, verse 12--- intercessional prayer! when someone is in a trouble, we should pray fervently for him ⁵ <i>James 5:16</i>)</p>
<p>⁶ And <u>when Herod was about to bring him out</u>, <u>that night Peter was sleeping</u>, bound with <u>two chains between two soldiers</u>; and <u>the guards before the door</u> were keeping the prison.</p>	<p>6= When Herod was about to bring him out, that night (at the end of the Passover season, the 8th day --- Because the Passover season is a big holiday, Jews don't try a suspect before people for execution); two chain between two soldiers (2 soldiers! Here); the guards before the door (the guards must have been 2 soldiers because one shift for 6 hours was 4 soldiers)</p>

² *Mat 17:1-2* Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; ² and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.; *Mark 5:35-37* While He was still speaking, *some* came from the ruler of the synagogue's *house* who said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?"³⁶ As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, He said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not be afraid; only believe."³⁷ And He permitted no one to follow Him except Peter, James, and John the brother of James; *Mat 26:37* And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed.

³ *Romans 8:28* And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.; *Revelation 20:14* Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

⁴ *Lev 23:5-6* On the fourteenth *day* of the first month at twilight *is* the LORD's Passover. ⁶ And on the fifteenth day of the same month *is* the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread.

⁵ *James 5:16* Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

⁷ 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. ⁸ 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." ⁹ 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.

7= an angel of the Lord (an angel is a creature of spiritual being, servant of God)

¹⁰ 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.

9= thought he was seeing a vision (was not real)

10= 2nd guard posts (among 2 guards at that time)

¹¹ 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."

11= Now I know for certain... delivered me from the hand of Herod and from all the expectation (hope) of the Jewish people (God's works in diversity, not in a certain way, Paul & Silas in prison through an earthquake, so go to flexibility, basics, and purity! New Wine in new wineskins ⁶Mat 9:17)

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. ¹³ And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a girl named Rhoda came to

12= the house of Mary, the mother John whose surname was Mark (Mary's house -- the last supper at an upper room of her house; Mark - the author of gospel Mark including his description of naked body; Peter's spiritual son; Barnabas' cousin; Barnabas and Saul made 1st missionary trip with Mark from the church of Antioch the Gentile church, but on the 2nd, they separated themselves -- Barnabas & Mark to Cyprus; Paul & Silas to Asia Minor; ⁷Luke 22:8; Mark 14:51; 1 Peter 5:13; Col 4:10; Acts 13:13; 15:39-40; 2 Tim 4:11)

⁶ Mat 9:17 Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."

⁷ Luke 22:8 And He sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat.": Mark 14:51 Now a certain young man followed Him, having a linen cloth thrown around *his* naked *body*. And the young men laid hold of him.: 1 Peter 5:13 She who is in Babylon, elect together with *you*, greets *you*; and so does Mark my son.; Col 4:10 Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets *you*, with Mark the cousin of Barnabas (about whom *you* received instructions: if he comes to *you*, welcome him).: Acts 13:13 Now when Paul and his party set sail from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia; and John, departing from them, returned to Jerusalem.: 15:39-40 Then the contention became so sharp that they parted from one another. And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus: ⁴⁰ but Paul chose Silas and departed, being commended by the brethren to the grace of God; 2 Tim 4:11 Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry.

answer.

¹⁴ When she recognized Peter's voice, because of her gladness she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter stood before the gate.

¹⁵ But they said to her, "You are beside yourself!" Yet she kept insisting that it was so. So they said, "It is his angel."

¹⁶ Now Peter continued knocking; and when they opened *the door* and saw him, they were astonished.

¹⁷ But motioning to them with his hand to keep silent, he declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Go, tell these things to James and to the brethren." And he departed and went to another place.

¹⁸ Then, as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers about what had become of Peter.

¹⁹ But when Herod had searched for him and not found him, he examined the guards and commanded that they should be put to death.

And he went down from Judea to Caesarea, and stayed *there*.

14= her gladness she did not open the gate (she was so excited she forgot to open the gate)

15=Q3 But they said to her, "You are beside yourself! (you are out of your mind, or you are insane).. kept insisting that it was so (it was Peter); they said, "It is his angel." (it is Peter's angel – no faith of the answer of their prayer – their infirmity/ weakness – (1) those who pray to God must believe His answer, obviously many ways of Him, ⁸Heb 11:6; (2) God uses imperfect humans to accomplish His purpose, encouraging us ⁹James 5:17)

17= tell these things to James (James is the half brother of Jesus who did not believe Jesus Christ until resurrection ¹⁰Acts 1:14, the leader in the Church of Jerusalem; the author of the book of James) ... went to another place (we don't know where Peter went in Acts; in Acts 15, he testified salvation upon grace to Gentiles as well as Jews at the church counsel; James as the representative made a decision ¹¹Acts 15:11,20)

19= he examined the guards and commanded that *they* should be put to death (Under Roman law, guards who escaped even by mistake a prisoner were liable for the same penalty of the prisoner. So, 16 soldiers were killed.); Caesarea (the headquarters of the Palestine were ruled by Roman empire, although Jerusalem was the capital city of the Jews)

⁸ Heb 11:6 But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*. for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

⁹ James 5:17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months.

¹⁰ Acts 1:14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

¹¹ Acts 15:11,20 ¹¹But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they." ²⁰but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, *from* sexual immorality, *from* things strangled, and *from* blood.

<p>²⁰ Now Herod had been very angry with <u>the people of Tyre and Sidon</u>; but they came to him with one accord, and having made Blastus the king's personal aide their friend, they asked <u>for peace</u>, because <u>their country was supplied with food by the king's country</u>.</p> <p>²¹ So on a set day Herod, <u>arrayed in royal apparel</u>, sat on his throne and gave an oration to them.</p> <p>²² And the people kept shouting, "<u>The voice of a god and not of a man!</u>"</p> <p>²³ Then <u>immediately an angel of the Lord struck him</u>, because <u>he did not give glory to God</u>. And he was eaten by worms and died.</p> <p>²⁴ But <u>the word of God grew and multiplied</u>.</p> <p>²⁵ And <u>Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem</u> when they had fulfilled <u>their ministry</u>, and <u>they also took</u> with them John whose surname was <u>Mark</u>.</p>	<p>20= the people of Tyre and Sidon (where Phoenicians resided, the north bound of Caesarea); their country was supplied with food by the king's <i>country</i> (the Jews' country supplied their country with food)</p> <p>21= arrayed in royal apparel (in Josephus' record, he who wore a robe made of silver made a speech in an open theater in Caesarea. His robe was glistened in the sun)</p> <p>22= The voice of a god and not of man (he took all glory by himself, not giving to God)</p> <p>23= immediately an angel of the Lord struck him (in Josephus' record, he got stomach cramps and 5 days later died.); he did not give glory to God (God's nature – against the proud, for the humble ¹²James 4:6)</p> <p>24= the word of God grew and multiplied (even if Herod killed James and tried to kill Peter, the major disciples, the word of God spread out. This prove up Jesus' word to Peter upon his confession of faith, "... I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." ¹³Mat 16:18)</p> <p>25= Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem (to Antioch); their ministry (their delivering the benevolent fund relief to the poor in Jerusalem church ¹⁴Acts 11:29-30); they also took... Mark (So, Barnabas and Saul was able to go to 1st missionary trip with Mark from the church of Antioch the Gentile church, but not on the 2nd missionary trip, see above).</p>
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¹² James 4:6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

¹³ Mat 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

¹⁴ Acts 11:29-30 Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. ³⁰ This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.