

# UNSTOPPABLE POWER

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS

## “PERSECUTION, PRISON, AND PRAYER”

ACTS 12:1-25

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JANUARY 30, 2022

**Introduction:** Acts 12 not only represents a shifting of focus from the Apostle Peter to the Apostle Paul, but it relates one of the most powerful -- and humorous -- stories in the Bible about the power of prayer.

### I. The Church Is Persecuted (Acts 12:1-2)

Acts 12:1-2 <sup>1</sup>“Now about that time Herod the king laid hands on some who belonged to the church in order to mistreat them. <sup>2</sup> And he had James the brother of John put to death with a sword.”

### II. Peter Is Imprisoned By Herod (Acts 12:3-4)

Acts 12:3 “When he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. Now it was during the days of Unleavened Bread.”

### III. The Church Prays For Peter’s Release (Acts 12:5)

Acts 12:5 “So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God.”

#### A. The Church Prayed to God

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## B. The Church Prayed Earnestly

## C. The Church Prayed Specifically

### IV. Peter Is Released From Prison (Acts 12:6-17)

#### A. Peter Is Freed (Acts 12:6-12)

Acts 12:6 “On the very night when Herod was about to bring him forward, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and guards in front of the door were watching over the prison.”

Acts 12:7 “And behold, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared and a light shone in the cell; and he struck Peter’s side and woke him up, saying, ‘Get up quickly.’ And his chains fell off his hands.”

Acts 12:8-9 <sup>8</sup> “And the angel said to him, ‘Gird yourself and put on your sandals.’ And he did so. And he said to him, ‘Wrap your cloak around you and follow me.’ <sup>9</sup> And he went out and continued to follow and he did not know that what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision.”

#### B. The Church Is Dismayed (Acts 12:13-17)

Acts 12:13-14 <sup>13</sup> “When he knocked at the door of the gate, a servant-girl named Rhoda came to answer. <sup>14</sup> When she recognized Peter’s voice, because of her joy she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter was standing in front of the gate.”

Acts 12:15 “They said to her, ‘You are out of your mind!’ But she kept insisting that it was so. They kept saying, ‘It is his angel.’”

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## V. Herod Is Enraged (Acts 12:18-25)

Acts 12:18-19 <sup>18</sup> “Now when day came, there was no small disturbance among the soldiers as to what could have become of Peter. <sup>19</sup> When Herod had searched for him and had not found him he examined the guards and ordered that they be led away to execution. Then he went down from Judea to Caesarea and was spending time there.”

Acts 12:21-22 <sup>21</sup> “On an appointed day Herod, having put on his royal apparel, took his seat on the rostrum and began delivering an address to them. <sup>22</sup> The people kept crying out, ‘The voice of a god and not of a man!’”

## VI. Two Transforming Truths To Live By

A. No Person Can Prevail Against the Purpose of God

B. No Circumstance Can Prevail Against the Power of Prayer

Conclusion