

LESSON 4

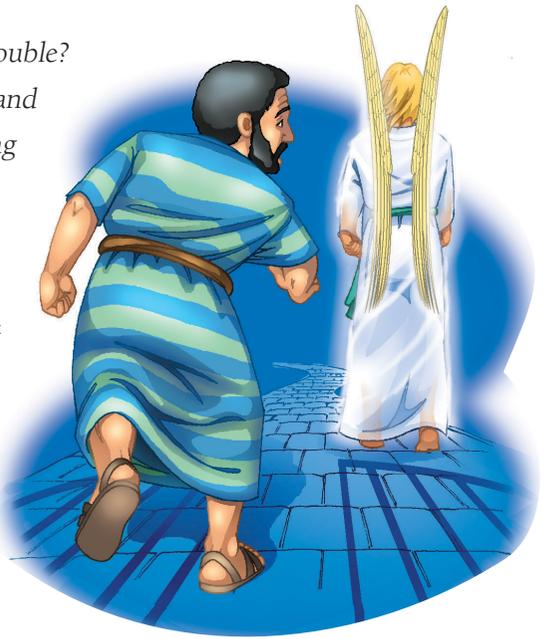
REFERENCES: ACTS 12:1-19; *THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES*, PP. 143-154.

In and Out of Prison

Have you ever known someone who was in trouble? How could you help them? Peter's friends prayed and prayed and prayed for him, and something amazing happened.

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icked King Herod rubbed his hands together and made plans. He would do away with the people who believed in Jesus! He would take care of that preacher Peter next. "Guards!" King Herod shouted. "Guards!"



Peter went quietly with the soldiers who came to arrest him. When they arrived at the prison, Peter was chained to two soldiers—one on each side of him.

The chains pinched Peter's arms. But Peter didn't complain. He sat down on the cold stone floor and leaned against the wall. He closed his eyes and went to sleep.

The news about Peter's arrest spread quickly through the city.

Memory Verse

"The church kept on praying to God for him."

ACTS 12:5, ICB.

The Message

In God's family we pray for one another.

Many of the believers hurried to John Mark's mother's house. They often went there to pray together, so it seemed like the right place to pray for Peter. The believers prayed and prayed. They prayed late into the night.

Back in the prison a bright light suddenly shone in Peter's cell. An angel tapped Peter on the shoulder. "Quick! Get up!" the angel said, and the chains fell off of Peter's wrists. "Put on your sandals. Put on your coat and follow me."

Peter did as he was told. He felt as if he were dreaming.

Peter and the angel passed between two groups of soldiers and came to the iron gate that led to the street. The gate opened by itself, and Peter and the angel walked out of the prison together! Then the angel disappeared.

Peter closed his eyes and opened them again. He really was on the street! "It's true!" he whispered to himself. "The Lord sent an angel to help me!"

Peter hurried to John Mark's mother's house and knocked at the door. Rhoda, a servant girl, came. She heard his voice, but instead of opening the door she ran right back into the house. "Peter is at the door!" she shouted.

Peter's friends looked at Rhoda. "That's crazy!" they said. "It's not possible."

"It's true! It's true!" Rhoda insisted.

Peter began knocking again.

When the people finally opened the door, they were astonished. Someone grabbed Peter and quickly pulled him into the house. They listened eagerly as Peter told how the Lord had sent an angel to lead him out of prison. The believers laughed and cried with joy. And then they prayed some more. They praised the Lord for hearing and answering their prayers.



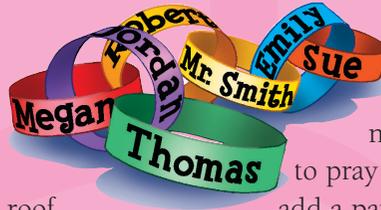
Do and Say



SABBATH

Each day this week, read the lesson story, and review the memory verse:

- The church.** Fingertips together as if a pointed church roof.
- kept on praying.** Fold hands as if in prayer.
- to God** Point upward.
- for him.** Point to others.
- Acts 12:5** Palms together, then open.



Cut two-inch strips of paper. Write on them names of people or situations to pray for. Each day this week, add a paper link to the chain.

SUNDAY

Encourage your child to share the praying hands made in Sabbath School with someone and to pray for that person every day. (Or trace around your child's hands with their thumbs together, cut them out [do not cut thumbs apart], and write "I'm Praying for You" on them.)

MONDAY

Ask your child: For whom (or what) are you praying about today? How many times have you prayed about them (or it) today? Have them count on their fingers.

Help your child trace their hands on a piece of paper. Put it in a place where they will see it often to remind them that they have praying hands.

TUESDAY

Read and discuss together Acts 12:1–19. Ask: Why do you think God sent an angel to Peter? Help your child begin to make a prayer chain.

WEDNESDAY

Let your child pretend to be Peter, knocking on the door of the home where friends are praying for him. Call out his or her name, but do not open the door right away. When you open the door, ask: What do you think Peter thought when the servant girl did not let him in?

THURSDAY

Count the links on the prayer chain started on Tuesday. Pray for the names on the chain again. Look for answers to the prayers.

Share with your child about a time when you prayed earnestly for someone.

FRIDAY

Help your child act out the lesson story for family worship. Let your child dress up. Use a chair or roped-off area for the jail. Shine a flashlight when the angel appears.

Sing a prayer song; then thank God for hearing your prayers.

