

Church in Prayer: Facing Extermination & Peter's Death (Acts 12:1-17)

- The church continued to grow as the Gospel was preached in Antioch
- King Herod's violence on the church: John's brother James: executed
- Peter was arrested & Herod was seeking to execute him after Passover
- The situation seemed very bleak, even hopeless for the young church

I. The Church Prays Earnestly (12:5)

- V 5 Peter was in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him
- Luke uses same word to describe Jesus' agony in the garden (Luke 22:44)
- Peter uses same word: "love one another earnestly" (1 Peter 1:22)
- The church prayed & God answered miraculously – (James 5:16b)

II. God Answers the Fervent Prayers of His People (12: 6-11)

- Passover complete, Herod was now planning to try Peter & execute him
- Peter in prison, fast asleep- he is woken by an angel, his chains fall off (7)
- Peter still half a sleep, got dressed, sandals on, didn't know if it was real
- Vs 11 indicates, Peter didn't think he would get out of this alive

III. People of God, Surprised & Unprepared at God's Answer (12-17)

- Peter came to Mary's house – many were gathered praying for him
- They didn't believe Rhoda, she told them Peter was at the door (15)
- Peter's deliverance was evidence that God blesses his praying people
- Church was unprepared that God would answer in such a dramatic way
- It's important for us to be praying together & expectant of God's answer