



Midweek Study

Rev. Clayton Carnall • Senior Associate Pastor



The Night Prayer Shook a Kingdom...Acts 12

As one man put it:

“The one concern of the devil is to keep Christians from praying.... He laughs at our hard work, mocks at our wisdom, but trembles when we pray.”

1. The Enemy May INTERFERE 12:1-4 (*The God who sees*)

“1 About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church...”

- ***Motivated because of Pressure***

- Herod Agrippa I, politically driven, targeted the church to gain favor (v.3).
- James is executed; Peter is arrested during Passover. (vv. 2-3)

- ***Sovereignly Limited***

- Herod planned Peter's death, but God planned Peter's deliverance.
- Sixteen soldiers, chains, and gates could not hinder God's timing.

Warren Wiersbe:

“It was the throne in heaven that was in control, not the throne on earth.”

Key Truths

- *The enemy's interference is always on a leash.*
- *When the enemy interferes, God's people respond in prayer.*

2. The Church Must INTERCEDE 12:5 (*The God who hears*)

“5 Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer was offered to God for him by the church.”

- ***Their Prayer was United***

- The church gathered in corporate prayer.
- The book of Acts is practically a prayer journal.

- ***Their Prayer was Persistent***
 - o “**Earnest**” (ektenōs) describes intense, stretched-out perseverance, like muscles straining in an athletic contest, fully extended
- ***Their Prayer was Imperfect***
 - o When they finally open the door, they are amazed (v.16)
 - o *God answers not because our faith is perfect, but because our God is gracious.*

3. The Master Will INTERVENE 12:6-16 (*The God who Acts*)

- ***The Power Was Released***
 - o Peter Sleeping (v. 6)...reveals the spiritual temperature of Peter’s heart. Peter slept, not because he was safe, but because God is sovereign

Faith is not the absence of danger; it is the presence of trust.

 - o Peter Obeying (vv. 7-11)...God delights in involving His people in His work. God opens the door, but we must walk through.
 - o Peter Knocking (vv. 12-16)... Weak faith in a strong God is still effective.
 - o Peter Declaring (v. 17)...Every miracle is an opportunity for testimony of God.
- ***The Opposition Ceased***
 - o Acts 12 ends with a sobering contrast: God not only delivers His people, He deals with His enemies. The same chapter that displays the tenderness of God toward Peter shows the terror of God toward Herod (vs. 20-23).
 - o Do not fear those who oppose the gospel, God will deal with them.
- ***The Kingdom Increased (v. 24)***
 - o The gospel is unstoppable because God Himself is advancing it. Opposition does not hinder His work, it ignites it.

The Great Reversal

At the Beginning of the Chapter:

- Herod strong
- Peter chained
- Church weak
- James dead

At the End of the Chapter:

- Herod dead
- Peter free
- Church alive
- **The word of God increased and multiplied. (v. 24)**

When the enemy interferes...PRAY.

When the church intercedes...God intervenes.

When God intervenes...the kingdom increases.