

The Altar of Prayer

Acts 12:1-12

Acts 12:1-6

- Now about that time Herod the king stretched out *his* hand to harass some from the church. ² Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword. ³ And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was *during* the Days of Unleavened Bread.

Acts 12:1-6

- **4** So when he had arrested him, he put *him* in prison, and delivered *him* to four squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover. **5** Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church. **6** And when Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping, bound with two chains between two soldiers; and the guards before the door were keeping the prison.

- “Any sermon that does not lead people to the throne of grace has missed the mark.” – Jim Cymbala
- “The thing that is supposed to distinguish the Christian Church and the Christian people is the aroma and atmosphere of prayer” – Jim Cymbala

- **Isaiah 56:7 - 7 Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices *will be* accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.”**

- **Psalm 116:1-2 - I love the Lord because he hears my voice and my prayer for mercy. ² Because he bends down to listen, I will pray as long as I have breath!**
(NLT)

God In All His Mercy Will Bring Us to A Place Where All We Have Is Him

- Psalm 121:1-2 - I will lift up my eyes to the hills—From whence comes my help? ² My help *comes* from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

- **We can do nothing to make the church successful if we do not pray.**
- **There is never anyone else but God!**

God Will Always Respond When We Pray

- For God not to do so would be to go against His Word and His very nature.
- Prayer is the barometer for desperation and relationship

- **Isaiah 65:24 - ²⁴I will answer them before they even call to me. While they are still talking about their needs, I will go ahead and answer their prayers! (NLT)**
- **Psalm 91:15 – He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I *will be* with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him.**

- “The reason why many are still troubled, still seeking, still making little forward progress is because they haven't yet come to the end of themselves. We're still trying to give orders, and interfering with God's work within us.” — A. W. Tozer

Chains Fall Off – Acts 12:7-10

•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.”

Chains Fall Off – Acts 12:7-10

• ⁹So 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. ¹⁰When 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.

- **Isaiah 10:28** – It shall come to pass in that day
that his burden will be taken away from your shoulder, and his yoke from your neck, and the yoke will be destroyed because of the anointing oil.

What is Our Expectation?

- You might not always get what you want, but you always get what you expect. – Spurgeon
- My actions, including my thoughts, show my level of expectation.
- What are we expecting?

- **“If you can beat the devil on the prayer meeting night, you can beat him on every other level” – Jim Cymbala**