



Children's Lesson – May 20, 2020

GOD LISTENS TO OUR PRAYERS

BACKGROUND FOR CAREGIVERS

Bible Passage – Acts 12:1-19 (Peter Freed From Prison)

After the stoning of Stephen in Acts 7, the Bible tells us that a great wave of persecution swept over the church in Jerusalem. This persecution caused the followers of Jesus to scatter all over Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:1). As they fled, they took with them the good news of Jesus Christ to the Jews and the Gentiles all over the region. The growth of the church angered Jewish zealots, and they tried desperately to squash the flourishing movement.

Around this time, Herod Agrippa took the throne. Many commentators believe that Herod was possibly a Jewish convert as he was zealous for the Mosaic Law. In Acts 12:2–3 he killed James (brother of John). He saw how pleased the Jewish people were by this action and responded by arresting Peter. According to the law, it would have been illegal for Peter to be tried during the Passover celebration. Knowing this, Herod had him placed in chains to await trial and the death sentence.

Herod went to great lengths to ensure that escape would be impossible. Peter was bound by two chains, placed between two guards, locked behind prison doors, and further guarded with men outside of the prison gates. Herod failed to understand that God was with Peter. When all hope seemed lost, the church committed to round-the-clock prayer. Prayer was their weapon in the fight against Herod's plans to execute Peter.

In a time of great difficulty, the church turned to God. Only God would be able to deliver Peter from the chains of Herod's prison. While the difficulties we face may vary, two things remain the same—God is with us, and He is listening. No matter what we face, prayer is always our most powerful weapon.

This week, set aside an extended block of time for prayer. Begin by praising God for who He is—our Rock, our Salvation, the one true God. Thank Him for the blessings He has bestowed upon you. Confess to Him the areas of your life where you struggle, and ask Him to show His power in your life. He is with you.

God listens to our prayers!

KEY VERSE

The Lord (point both hands to heaven)
is ready to help all those (extend two helping hands)
who call out to him. (cup your hands around mouth)

Psalm 145:18

BIBLE STORY

Today we are going to talk about how God always hears us when we pray because **God listens to our prayers!**

In our Bible story today, the good news of Jesus was spreading – and spreading fast! A man named Peter (and other friends of Jesus) were sharing that Jesus is the good news!

They told everyone that Jesus had come to wipe away our sin, He died and came to life again. They said that Jesus is our King!

But there was someone who did not like hearing this news. His name was King Herod. (show picture #1 of Herod). He did not want anyone to be more powerful than he was. So – King Herod threw a BIG fit. He arrested Peter and put him in jail, so he could not spread the news any more (show picture #2 of Peter in prison).

Peter had handcuffs and chains on in jail, so it was impossible for him to escape on his own (show picture #3 of Peter and guards). But – God's people were praying for him and soon everyone would see that God is strong and mighty (flex muscles) and He would set Peter free (show picture #4 of people praying). What do YOU think will happen next? Will God hear the people's prayers?

The guards stood in the jail and saw nothing – until a bright light shone. God had sent an angel to the jail (show picture #5 of angel in prison). The chains fell from Peter and he followed the angel out of the prison! God had heard and answered the people's prayers! **God listens to our prayers** too!

Peter knew that he was free and God's power was strong (flex muscles)! He went to the house of his friends, who had been praying. He knocked on the door. Can you make a knocking sound (knock on hard surface)?

When his friends saw Peter standing in front of them, they were so surprised and excited! Can you show me a surprised face?

Peter told his friends that God had freed Him and that God could be trusted. **God listens to our prayers!** He always hears us when we pray.

PRAYER

Let's pray and thank God that He is always with us:

Dear God,

Thank you that you **listen to our prayers!**

Thank you for how much you care for us all.

Help us to pray to you and to trust you, God.

We love you!

AMEN

WORSHIP SONGS

- I Will Pray
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ZmpWgzlZtY>
- Everywhere I Go
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f_tS-g6z7l0
- Thank You God!
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HBZvU4oy_8k
- Prayer is Like a Telephone
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7rw4pQKOgWw>

CRAFT

JAIL BREAK PICTURE

Supplies Needed:

- Download and print Peter in Jail picture templates
- Crayons/Markers
- Scissors
- Stapler/Tape
- White glue
- Popsicle sticks (regular size) or paper strips cut the size of popsicle sticks

Parents:

Print the template – one picture of Peter in jail and one picture of angel (cut pages at middle point – the template gives you enough for 2 crafts).

Help children to staple/tape one page on top of the other page – so when they lift up the jail bars, they can see Peter escaping with the angel.

Children:

Colour the pictures.

Place glue on the page where the popsicle sticks go and place the sticks on the page (or glue paper 'sticks' on).

When you show your craft to others, say:

“GOD LISTENS TO OUR PRAYERS”!



















