

LESSON 7

GOD DELIVERS PETER

BEFORE YOU TEACH

King Herod Agrippa I

During the Apostolic time, the king of Judea was King Herod Agrippa I. He was the grandson of Herod the Great, who was the king during Jesus' infancy (Mt 2:1). Herod the Great had six sons: Herod Philip II, Archelau, Aristobulus, Herod Antipas, Herod Philip I and Antipater. King Herod Agrippa I was the son of Aristobulus and the nephew of Herod Antipas.

Herod Antipas inherited the throne from Herod the Great. Herod Antipas beheaded John the Baptist because he condemned Herod Antipas for marrying Herodias, the wife of Herod Philip I, his brother (Mt 14:3-12) and tried Jesus before His death (Lk 23:8-12). Herod Agrippa I accused Antipas of rebelling against the Roman emperor and exiled Antipas to Gaul and became king of Judea. It included the territories of Galilee, Perea, Judea, and Samaria. Upon seeing the success and support of the Jews after beheading James, King Herod Agrippa I also arrested Peter in hopes of gaining more favor. King Herod Agrippa I died suddenly in AD 44 (Acts 12:20-23).

Passover

The Passover celebrates God delivering the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. Passover originated from the Hebrew word, "*Pesah*," meaning "to pass over." It recounts how God passed over the Israelites' houses while entering the Egyptian homes and killing their firstborns.

In accordance with Mosaic Law, there were specific rituals and restrictions to celebrating the Passover (Ex 12:1-27, 43-49; Dt 16:1-8). Each family was to sacrifice an unblemished, one-year-old, male lamb. It was to be roasted in fire. The Israelites were to eat the meat with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Any remaining meat was to be burned. The Israelites ate the Passover quickly in a state of readiness, before their departure from the land of slavery. If a household was too small, it was allowed to eat the lamb with another family.

The day of Passover was followed by a seven-day festival called the Festival of the Unleavened Bread. Eventually, the entire week came to be called the Passover.

BIBLE TEXT

Acts 12:1-17

BIBLE TRUTH

God delivered Peter from the hands of King Herod.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To teach students about the importance of intercession.
2. To encourage students to pray for others in need.
3. To demonstrate the importance of entrusting all to God.

MEMORY VERSE

"Praying always for you."

(Colossians 1:3b)

PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus, we pray. Lord, You are the almighty and loving God. We know that You listen and answer our prayers whether we are happy or in need and that nothing is impossible for You. Lord, You want us to show love by praying for others, such as our family, our church brothers or sisters and our friends. Please bless them and help them experience You in their lives, too. Thank You, Lord Jesus. Hallelujah! Amen.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

King Herod Agrippa I imprisoned Peter and planned to execute him the next day. When the believers learned of this, they gathered and prayed for God to rescue Peter. God answered their prayers. He sent His angel to lead Peter out of the heavily guarded prison.

Your students are always encouraged to pray, but they may not understand the power of prayer. Through prayer, we ask God to help us or other people. The believers' prayers led to Peter being saved from the prison. Remind

your students to pray to God in good times and in bad. Pray to give thanks during prosperity or to ask for help during need. God is always listening. In addition, tell your students to pray with confidence. Jesus said, "And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive" (Mt 21:22). Encourage your students to include daily prayer in their lives. It will strengthen their spirituality and help their Christian life.

VOCABULARY

execute: to put to death

Passover: a Jewish festival remembering the deliverance of the Israelites out of Egypt

persecution: the practice of treating others badly because of their beliefs

intercession: the act of praying for others

REVIEW

Last week, we learned about how Peter worked mightily for God. During his ministry, Peter traveled to many places. In Lydda, he met a lame man named Aeneas. Peter had compassion on Aeneas and healed him in the name of the Lord Jesus. In Joppa, Peter also met Dorcas, a woman who loved and cared for those around her, and whom many mourned upon her death. Through God's power, Peter resurrected Dorcas, causing many who heard to believe in God! Lastly, we learned about Cornelius, a generous man who gave to the poor and prayed to God regularly. What was different about Cornelius? Yes! He was a Gentile. But through him, God taught Peter that the gospel was not only for Jews. Cornelius and those gathered with him received the Holy Spirit as Peter preached to them about Jesus. How great God's mercy is!

BIBLE STORY

Peter Is Put in Prison

After Jesus ascended to heaven, many people believed in the gospel. Those who believed in the Lord were called Christians, just like today. Many of the Jewish leaders did not like the Christians. The leaders persecuted them and treated them badly. At the time, King Herod Agrippa ruled Judea. He wanted to please the leaders, so he arrested many Christians and put them into prison. He even killed the apostle James, the brother of John. When Herod saw that James' execution pleased the Jewish leaders, he began arresting more apostles. He had heard that Peter was one of the leaders of the Christians. Peter preached bravely and turned many hearts to Jesus. So, Herod sent men to have Peter arrested. Herod wanted to kill Peter immediately, but because it was a special festival called the Passover, he had to wait a week for the festival to be over.

What is it like in a prison? Do you think it would be warm and cozy? Are you able to do whatever you want? [Allow students to answer.] King Herod put Peter inside a prison cell under very tight security to make sure that Peter could not escape. He ordered four soldiers to watch Peter

every minute of the day and night. In addition, Peter was chained and two soldiers were in the cell with him. It was impossible for Peter to escape!

The Believers Pray for Peter

When the believers heard of Peter's imprisonment, they became very concerned. Herod Agrippa had just killed James, and he would kill Peter, too. The believers knew that Peter required their help, but he was too well guarded for them to rescue him. If you were the believers, what would you have done to save Peter? [Hand out paper and allow students time to draw or write down their answers. Share students' answers.]

The believers realized that only God could save Peter. Thus, the believers gathered in a house and prayed earnestly for God to save Peter.

Peter's Miraculous Escape

The Passover week was about to end. The next day, Peter was to be executed. The believers prayed together through the night. Though God had not yet answered

their prayers, the believers' faith remained strong and they continued to pray for Peter.

While the believers were praying, Peter slept peacefully between the two guards in his cell. Do you believe Peter was frightened? No, he was not. Peter was not frightened because he knew that God loved him and would do what was best for him.

As Peter slept soundly, an angel suddenly appeared and lit up the jail cell. He struck Peter on the side and told him to wake up.

"Get up quickly!" said the angel. As Peter rose to move, the heavy chains on his hands just fell off. The two soldiers in the cell with him did not know that anything was happening.

"Put on your belt, your sandals, and your coat," the angel said, "and follow me."

Peter did as the angel told him. He did not know that the angel was real because he thought that he was dreaming. Peter walked by each soldier that was guarding him. They did not see the angel nor Peter. The angel took Peter to the great iron gate that led outside into the city. This was tightly secured and locked but amazingly, the great iron gate opened on its own. Peter and the angel walked out and along the road away from the prison. Then the angel left Peter. Peter realized he was standing alone on the road outside of the prison. He now knew that he had not been dreaming, but that God had sent His angel to rescue him from the evil hands of Herod. Peter quickly walked to the house where the believers were praying.

Peter Knocks on the Door

Arriving at the house, Peter knocked on the door. A young

servant girl called Rhoda answered the door. Who could it be at such a late hour?

She heard a voice say, "It's Peter." Rhoda recognized Peter's voice. She was so happy that she forgot to open the door, and instead ran inside to tell the believers that Peter was at the gate.

"It's Peter!" Rhoda shouted. "Peter's outside at the door!"

The people wondered how it could be Peter. Wasn't he still in prison?

"You're imagining things! You're out of our mind!" they said. "Maybe you saw his angel."

"But it's true," insisted Rhoda. "It is Peter!"

Again they heard knocking at the door. Together, they went out to see who was at the door.

The Believers Praise God

When they opened the door, there was Peter standing before them. Rhoda was right! Everyone was so excited and amazed that they all tried to talk at once. But Peter motioned them to be silent. They all went into the house and Peter told them how God had sent an angel to rescue him. God had truly answered their prayers. He also told them to tell the other apostles and believers that he was safe. After praying together to thank God, Peter left the house and Jerusalem. He wanted to get away from Herod and also tell other people about Jesus. Peter lived for a long time after this incident. Everywhere he went, he preached about Jesus. And he never forgot how God miraculously saved him from King Herod. Yes, God was a God who answered prayers!

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. King Herod had killed _____ (James) before arresting Peter.
2. The believers _____ (prayed) to God to deliver Peter.
3. An _____ (angel) rescued Peter from prison.
4. God is pleased when we _____ (pray) for others.
5. After being freed, Peter went to the house where the believers were praying. True.
6. Peter testified to all the believers about how God had saved him. True.
7. The believers believed Rhoda when she told them that Peter was at the door. False; they thought maybe she had seen Peter's angel.
8. When Peter was in prison, he was not afraid because he had faith that God loved him and would take care of him. True.

MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

"Praying always for you." (Colossians 1:3b)

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. King Herod
2. The believers
3. Peter
4. The angel
5. Rhoda
6. B
7. A
8. C
9. Answers may vary.

SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

A. For You I Am Praying

From today's story, we learned how the church prayed earnestly for Peter. Because of their prayers, God freed Peter from prison. God did not need to use a single key to free Peter from prison. Instead, He sent an angel to rescue Peter. Miraculously, the chains that bound Peter fell off his hands and the doors unlocked and opened on their own. This story demonstrates to us that God listens to our prayers, especially if we pray for others. Praying for others, or interceding, is a way to demonstrate our love for others. We pray that God will help and bless that person. And, because of our love, God will bless us, too.

[Hand out Worksheet A on page 59 for the students to complete, then go over the answers as a class. The answers are provided below.]

Worksheet: Connect each person to the person for whom he/she prayed. Look up the Bible verses to help you.

- a. Isaac (Gen 25:21) prayed for...Rebekah (so that she could have children)
- b. Paul (Eph 1:16; Phil 1:14; Col 1:3) prayed for...The church
- c. Lord Jesus (Luke 22:31-32) prayed for...Peter (that he will have faith)
- d. Peter (Acts 9:36-37, 40) prayed for...Dorcas (to resurrect)

B. For Whom Can I Pray?

There are many people who need our prayers. God is pleased when we pray for others. We can pray for our family members, for the brothers, sisters, teachers, or pastors in our church, and for our friends at school. But we should not forget to pray for ourselves.

[After the introduction, hand out Worksheet B on page 60 and give the students some time to fill it out. After they have finished, invite some students to share their charts with the class.]

Worksheet: In the space below, write the name of someone in your family, in church, and among your friends that you will pray for this week. What is it that you want God to help them with?

ACTIVITY

1

The Lord Sent His Angel

Objective: To remind students that God sent an angel to help Peter because of intercessory prayers.

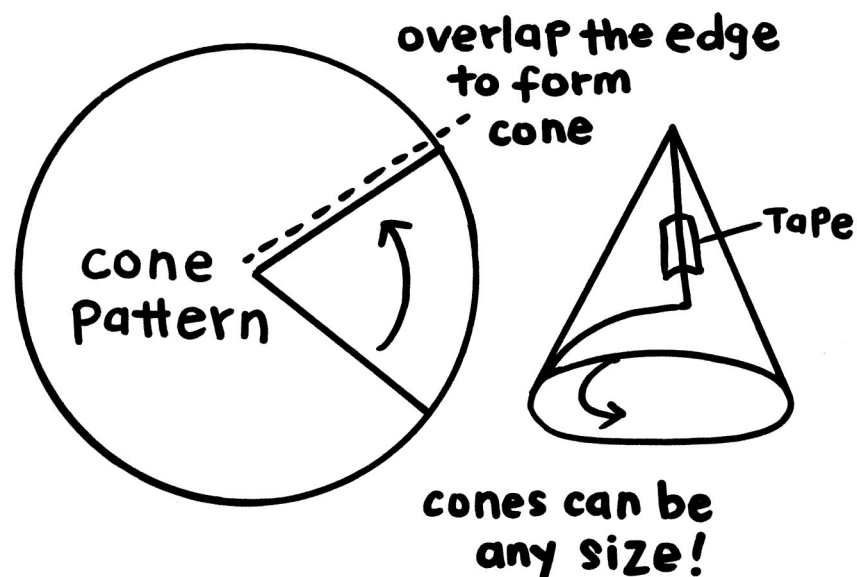
Materials

- Construction paper of various colors
- Paper doilies
- Glitter and sequins
- Markers or crayons
- Glue or tape
- Compass for drawing circles (optional)

Instructions

1. Using colored construction paper, cut out a large circle to make a cone for the angel's body and two small circles for the head. If desired, the teacher may use a compass to trace out the circles for the student to cut out.
2. Cut out a triangle from the large circle by making two cuts to the center of the circle as shown. The triangle should be one quarter of the circle.
3. Orient the large circle such that the curved side is toward the bottom and the opening is at the top.
4. Have students write "God will send His angel to protect you." in the center of the circle. Allow them to decorate the circle.
5. Fold the circle such that the two edges overlap to form a cone. Glue or tape the adjacent sides of the circle to secure the cone.
6. To make the angel's wings, fold a doily in half and glue the edges together to form a semicircle. Attach the semicircle to the back of the cone horizontally with the flat side up, making sure to evenly space the "wings."
7. To make the angel's head, start by gluing one of the small circles onto the tip of the cone, making sure it is at the front of the cone where the head should be. Glue the second circle onto the backside of the first circle, making sure to glue part of it onto the tip of the cone like the first.

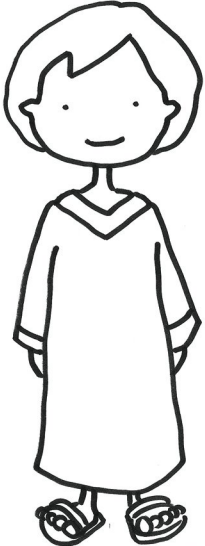
When the students have finished their angels, tell them that when they look at their angels, they can remember that because of the believers' intercession, God heard their prayers and sent an angel to free Peter from prison. They should follow the believers' example and always remember to always pray for others that are in need.



For Whom Did They Pray?

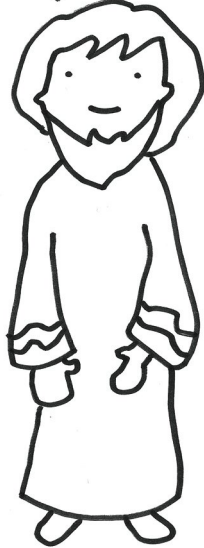
Connect each person on the top to the person on the bottom for whom he prayed.
Look up the Bible verses to help you.

Isaac



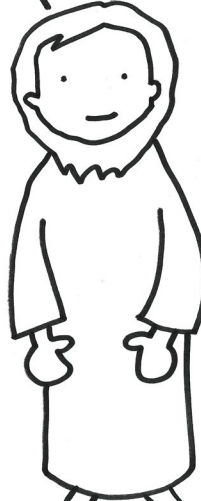
(Gen 25: 21)

Peter



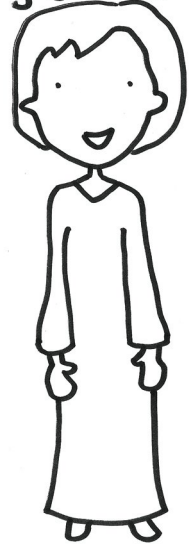
(Ac 9:36-37,
9:40)

Paul



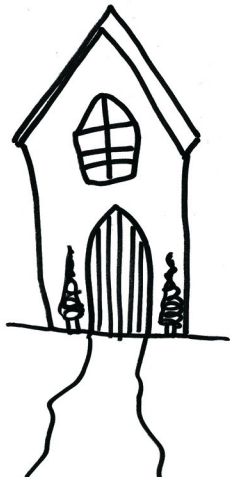
(Eph 1:16)
(Phil 1:14)
(Col 1:3)

Lord
Jesus



(Lk 22:31,32)

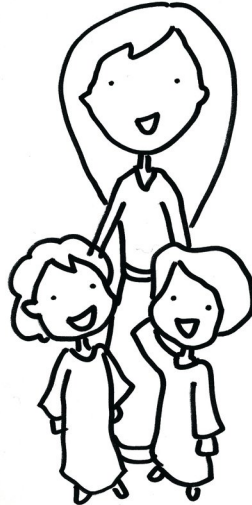
Church



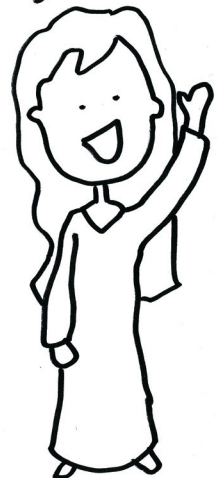
Peter



Rebekah



Dorcas



For Whom Can I Pray?

In the space below, write the name of someone in your family, in church,
and among your friends that you will pray for this week.

What is it that you want God to help them with?

family

friends



church

me

E1 Year 3 Book 3 Lesson 7—God Delivers Peter

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Bible Truth: God delivered Peter from the hands of King Herod.

- Lesson Objectives:**
1. To teach students about the importance of intercession.
 2. To encourage students to pray for others in need.
 3. To demonstrate the importance of entrusting all to God.

Bible Reading: Please put a check mark in the space when you complete the reading each day.

Prayer: Please put a check mark in the space on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(Colossians 1:3b)

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Homework Assignment

Understanding What You Have Learned

Who Said What?

The angel	King Herod	Peter	Rhoda	The believers
-----------	------------	-------	-------	---------------

1. _____ "The Jews were pleased when I killed James. I will please them further by arresting and killing Peter."
2. _____ "Oh, almighty God. Please save Peter from the hands of King Herod."
3. _____ "The Lord sent His angel to rescue me from prison and then he led me out of the city."
4. _____ "Arise quickly! Put on your garments and follow me."
5. _____ "It's Peter! He's at the door knocking!"

Multiple Choice

6. _____ : In the prison, Peter was _____.
 - a. Crying because he was afraid
 - b. Sleeping peacefully
 - c. Shouting to the guards to let him out

7. _____ : Peter was not afraid even though he was about to be killed because _____.
 - a. He knew that God loved him and would take care of him
 - b. He had a good escape plan
 - c. He and King Herod were friends

8. _____ : When the believers learned that Peter was in prison, _____.
 - a. They gave up because there was no way to free him
 - b. They went to beg King Herod to let Peter go
 - c. They prayed and asked God to deliver Peter

Short Answer

9. Think of someone who needs your prayers at this time. Write a short prayer to God to ask God to help him/her.
