



# Bible Studies

## Prayer Study Eight

### Prayer for those in prison

#### Key Scripture

**Hebrews 13: 3** Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

#### Case study – a believer in prison

#### Read Acts 12:1-19

#### The conditions

Peter in prison

- v2 An unfriendly environment - James had been put to death for his faith.
- v4-6 The odds were against him. Peter was guarded by 4 squads of 4 soldiers each. He slept between two soldiers, chained to them. There were 2 sentries at the door. He was definitely imprisoned.

But Scripture demonstrates the power of prayer. God is bigger than negative circumstances. When his people pray he acts, even in impossible circumstances (see v5, v12) the church was earnestly praying to God for him. Many people had gathered.

#### The release

v 8-11 Peter was released from his chains and taken past all the guards. Earnest corporate prayer can release people from chains. It can overcome the 'guards at the door'.

#### The reaction

v13-15 Even after his release, people still acted as if he was imprisoned.  
v16 Peter kept on knocking ... God acted beyond their expectations.

#### Other examples in Scripture

#### Paul had similar experiences:

2 Cor 1:10-11 He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favour granted us in answer to the prayers of many.

#### Peter and John

Acts 5:18 -23 Peter and John were also miraculously delivered from prison.



*Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.*

*Hebrews 13: 3*





### Some personal applications:

V 8-11 We can be released from things in our lives which stop us coming into freedom. Prayer can release these things.

V 13-15 Don't let anyone put you back where you were. You are set free. Stand firm in that freedom. Gal 5:1 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

### Lessons

- Pray together
- Be in agreement
- Expect an answer
- Be prepared for a miracle

### A recent story

Rev Carlos Lamelas, an evangelical pastor who served as national president of his denomination in Cuba, was arrested on Feb 20 on charges of aiding illegal emigrants. The charges were completely false. Local Christians believed that his arrest was part of an harassment campaign to silence this dynamic Christian leader.

Christians worldwide were mobilised through Open Doors to pray for Carlos and his family. On 26 June, after more than 4 months in jail he was released. He said he was allowed Bibles and Christian literature in prison and said, "every day I would proclaim the favour and grace over myself and the other detainees."

Carlos said, "My family and I will be eternally grateful to the people of God who from every continent sent us cards expressing their support and solidarity with our ordeal. I am absolutely convinced that in those moments when I most needed renewed strength it was the hundreds of prayers that reached the cell where I found myself.

The prayers of God's people were effective in bringing about liberation for Carlos.

### What can you do?

Connect with others to pray for those who are persecuted for their faith. At Open Doors Australia there are many groups who meet to pray together regularly for those who suffer persecution because they believe in Jesus.

Why not start your own Women to Women Prayer group? As well as our regular month by month prayer calendars, we provide up to date prayer items and a short DVD every 2 months for our prayer groups so you can pray effectively.

Contact Jeanette on [jeanettem@od.org](mailto:jeanettem@od.org)

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