

WEEKLY GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Week of Sunday July 19, 2026

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INTRODUCTION

In **Acts 12:1–24**, God is not promising that life will always unfold the way we hope or that every prayer will have the outcome we expect. Instead, He invites His people to trust His sovereign rule, pray with confidence, and faithfully obey Him regardless of the circumstances. We all experience moments where we wonder if God is listening or if our prayers make a difference. This passage encourages us to become people who seek God first, trust Him completely, and continue following Him even while we wait.

Main Passage:

Acts 12:1–24

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

But Prayer

READ ALOUD

Acts 12:1–24

Opening Question: What is something you've had to wait on that required patience and trust?

- What stands out to you most in this passage?
- What do you notice about the different responses of Peter, the church, and Herod?
- Why do you think Luke chose to highlight both the church's prayers and God's response in this story?
- Where might this passage challenge the way you normally respond when life feels uncertain or out of your control?

APPLY

- What is one situation in your life where God is inviting you to pray more intentionally instead of trying to control the outcome?
- Where do you find it hardest to trust God's sovereignty when His answer looks different than you hoped?
- What is one practical way you can partner with God this week instead of waiting passively for Him to act?

RESPOND

- What is one specific prayer you'll commit to bringing before God this week?
- Who is one person you can encourage, pray for, or invite into a conversation about following Jesus this week?

DIGGING DEEPER *(optional)*

Acts 11:19–30

- How does Acts 11 help prepare us for what happens in Acts 12?
- What similarities do you see between the church in Acts 11 and the believers gathered to pray in Acts 12?
- What do these chapters teach us about how God grows His church during both peaceful and difficult seasons?

PRAY

Invite everyone to quietly reflect on where they need to trust God more deeply. Pray for faith to seek God first, courage to obey Him even while waiting, and confidence that He is always at work—even when His answers look different than expected. Thank Jesus that His kingdom continues to advance and that He invites us to participate in His work.

QUESTIONS FOR FAMILIES

Acts 12:1–24

- What happened when the church prayed for Peter?
- Why is prayer important when we're worried or afraid?
- What is something our family can pray about together this week?
- How can we trust God even when we don't know what will happen?

For younger children: Remind your child that Jesus always hears our prayers and we can trust Him no matter what happens.

For older kids or students: Where do you need to trust God more instead of trying to handle everything on your own?

BIBLE READING PLAN (OPTIONAL)

Scripture to read as you pray this week:

- **Day 1:** Acts 13:1–12
- **Day 2:** Acts 13:13–25
- **Day 3:** Acts 13:26–37
- **Day 4:** Acts 13:38–43
- **Day 5:** Acts 13:44–52

What's Going On?

Acts 12 marks an important turning point in the book of Acts. Herod attempts to stop the spread of the gospel by executing James and imprisoning Peter, but God demonstrates that no earthly ruler can stop His mission.

While James is martyred and Peter is miraculously rescued, both events remind us that God remains sovereign over every outcome. The chapter closes with Herod's death and a powerful reminder that "the word of God continued to spread and multiply." The focus isn't simply Peter's rescue—it is God's unstoppable kingdom.

A Bit of Background

Herod Agrippa I ruled Judea under the Roman Empire and sought favor with the Jewish religious leaders by opposing the growing church. Peter was arrested during the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover), making his rescue a powerful reminder of God's history of delivering His people.

Luke intentionally highlights the church's united prayer alongside God's sovereign action, showing that while believers cannot control outcomes, they are invited to participate in God's work through faithful prayer and obedience.