

# Let us Return to the Lord

## : Experiencing the Power of Prayer, Together!!



### 1. Praise

'Give thanks' <https://youtu.be/blbslHDgceY>

### 2. Prayer (by the leader or a member)

### 3. Scripture Reading Acts 12:1-12

<sup>1</sup> It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. <sup>2</sup> He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword. <sup>3</sup> When he saw that this met with approval among the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This happened during the Festival of Unleavened Bread. <sup>4</sup> After arresting him, he put him in prison, handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the Passover. <sup>5</sup> So, Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him. <sup>6</sup> The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance. <sup>7</sup> Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared, and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up!" he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists. <sup>8</sup> Then the angel said to him, "Put on your clothes and sandals." And Peter did so. "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me," the angel told him. <sup>9</sup> Peter followed him out of the prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision. <sup>10</sup> They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him. <sup>11</sup> Then Peter came to himself and said, "Now I know without a doubt that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's clutches and from everything the Jewish people were hoping would happen." <sup>12</sup> When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying.

### 4. Sharing

Was there anyone who prayed for me in a difficult situation? Also, have you ever prayed for someone other than me and received answer to the prayer? Let's share experiences when we prayed together.

### 5. The Power of Corporate Prayer

Andrew Murray, a 19th century saint from South Africa who knew well the power of prayer, famously said, "the man who mobilizes the Christian church to pray will make the greatest contribution to world evangelization in history." The power of church is indeed the power of prayer. The Early Church experienced the great power of prayer through "earnestly praying together", not by political or worldly means, in the face of unjust oppression. Let us come with expectation to experience the power of the Spirit as we pray together in our small group today. As John Wesley once said, "God does nothing but in answer to prayer." (Ref. Gaining by Losing by J. D. Greear, Ch. 12 on prayer)

## 6. Background

Luke, the author of the Book of Acts, records the successful ministry of the church in Antioch centered around Barnabas and Paul (Ch. 11). But unlike the growing churches outside, the church in Jerusalem faced challenges as some of the Apostles were either executed (James) or imprisoned (Peter) under Herod Agrippa I's merciless treatment of the Christians. And the more the Gospel spread among the Gentiles the more critical many Jews became. They grew more hostile when Peter preached the Gospel to a Gentile named Cornelius (Ch. 10) and as the church leaders in Jerusalem approved Peter's pro-Gentile behavior. And Herod intensified his persecution of the church as a political means of gaining favor among the Jews. But Luke records the result of all this in Acts 12:24, "But the word of God continued to spread and flourish." Eventually, both the political grip of Herod and the expectation of many Jews failed completely before the will of God. It is when the church prays together earnestly the believers can experience God's miraculous power even in impossible situations.

## 7. Dive into the Scripture

- 1) What did the Jerusalem church do after hearing the news of Peter's imprisonment? (Verse 5)
- 2) Let's summarize the process of Peter's imprisonment and jailbreak. (Verse 4, 6-7)

Process of imprisonment (by Herod)		Church	Process of jailbreak (by God)	
Verse 4	To be guarded by _____ squads of four soldiers each.	Verse 5	Verse 7	Angel of the Lord appeared and a _____ shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the _____ and woke him up. The _____ fell off Peter's wrists.
Verse 6	Peter was sleeping between two _____. bound with two _____. _____ stood guard at the entrance.	Earnestly Praying to _____	Verse 10	They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city, and it opened for them by _____.
An _____ escape situation			Experience God who makes the impossible _____ and pushes all the bounds one after another through prayer of the church	

- 3) The night before Herod tried to capture Peter, Peter was able to sleep between two soldiers, bound with two chains. (verse 6). How did Peter feel at that time? (1 Peter 5:7)
- 4) What did Peter eventually find out when he escaped from prison with the help of the angel of the Lord? (Verse 11)

## 8. Applying into our lives

- 1) What are some obstacles in my life that make it difficult to pray together?
- 2) Is the peace of Peter, who was bound with chains in prison, but was able to sleep, in me?  
(Let's pray together for all the chain of problems to fall off)

## 9. Chodae Community Church Prayer Ministry

- Prayer Ministry Department (Every Thursday 10am)
- Prayer for mission field and support.  
(Starting 4/8, Every Thursday 10:30am)

### Pray together

- 1) Let's pray for the mission field and the missionary that our church is sponsoring.
- 2) Let's pray together for the sponsored missionaries assigned to us through mission EXPO.