

IT TAKES COURAGE

Part 7

It Takes Courage to Face Prison and Death

Acts 12:1-19

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My Creed leads me to think that prayer is efficacious, and surely a day's asking God to overrule all events for good is not lost. Still there is a great feeling that when a man is praying he is doing nothing, and this feeling makes us give undue importance to work, sometimes even to the hurrying over or even to the neglect of prayer. (James Gilmour)

The more praying there is in the world the better the world will be, the mightier the forces against evil everywhere. Prayer, in one phase of its operation, is a disinfectant and a preventive. It purifies the air; it destroys the contagion of evil.

God expects us to see His hand even in the night of our experience. Often, we must descend into darkness in order to see the light. To those who have faith, God's fingerprint can often be spotted in the most unlikely places. (Erwin Lutzer)

- **A Great Story Requires a Great Crisis (Acts 12:1-3).**

By all appearances, his life was on the verge of being cut short. God put Peter in a corner with no known way of escape. His future was to be determined by forces beyond his control. Like a driver whose steering wheel becomes disconnected, there are times when our fate is quite literally out of our hands. (Erwin Lutzer)

- **Prayer is Always the Right Response to Calamity (Acts 12:5).**

Three Prayer “Suppressants”

- Lack of empathy

- An infantile faith
 - ✓ Infantile faith – Tells God what is right, demands what we want

 - ✓ Adolescent faith – Doesn’t know what is right or what we want

 - ✓ Mature faith – Tells God what we want, trusts in Him with what is right

- Theological baggage – If God is sovereign, does prayer matter?

- **Supernatural Intervention is Always Hard to Believe (Acts 12:14, 15).**

- **Tomorrow's Trouble Does Not Negate Today's Triumph (John 21:18, 19).**

QUESTIONS

- Do you believe God answers prayer?
- If God were to positively answer your recent prayers, what spiritual difference would they make?
- What do you need to bring to God today?