



Where To From Here

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Acts 12:4-10 4 And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him (this was 4 teams of four, or 16 soldiers altogether); intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people. 5 Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him. 6 And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison. 7 And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands. 8 And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. 9 And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision. 10 When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him.

- There are many different facets in our walk with the Lord. I think a real quick over-view of our lives would reveal a lot of different peaks and valleys along the way.
- Although we all have a “race” to run, and each “race” has its own circumstances.
- Yet, I think that we all face similar things in our lives. One thing is for sure, and that is the fact that there is “no temptation taken us, but such as is common to man.”
- By this, we know that we all face things that are common to “someone... somewhere.” We all have mountains to climb that may have their own unique rocks and terrain, but we all are “mountain-climbers” nonetheless.
- With that established, we can look throughout the word of God and find circumstances that seemingly mirror where we are, or where we have been at some point in our lives.
- As we consider this particular passage, I want us to look at the similarities between this and the places that we have been with the Lord.
- Our passage mentions the fact that Simon Peter was in prison and awaiting his execution, but there is probably not anyone here tonight that fits that particular profile.
- Yet despite the differences, I believe there are enough familiarities that we can all sense a real message of hope that will serve us all.
- One very interesting point of this passage of scripture is the fact that Peter did not have to make any decisions for himself because the angel of the Lord was making them for him.

There are seasons of our lives that are spent much the same way.

- It just looks as though God is opening all the right doors and going before us and just completely taking care of everything.

We see just that in the opening passage here that we read as a text:

Acts 12:7-10

7 And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands.

8 And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.

9 And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision.

10 When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him.

NOTE – The angel brought unassailable direction:

1. He brought light first
2. Told him to arise quickly
3. He removed the chains
4. Gird thyself
5. Bind on your sandals
6. Put on your garments
7. “Follow me” = direction
8. Opened the right doors

- All of this opens to us as a situation where Simon was not having to make any decisions at all...he was just along for the ride!
- He was just minding his own business whenever the angel of the Lord tapped him on the shoulder and lead him every step of the way...to a certain point!
- It is this “certain point” that I want to point out tonight.
- I want you to pay close attention to what the Bible says about this particular point.

Acts 12:10

When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him.

Acts 12:10

When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him.

- The point is very clear that God was going to lead Simon Peter out of the line of danger and he was going to lead him to a place of freedom and deliverance.
- However, if Peter was ever going to experience total victory and get to the place that he needed to be in order to be totally restored, he was going to have to walk a few miles of his own volition.
- He was NOT all the way to the place that God was going to lead him or even where God wanted him to be. If he was ever going to experience the whole of this matter, he was going to have to walk a few miles of his own will.
- You see, there was a church prayer meeting that was taking place and THAT is where the Lord was leading him, so it wasn't enough to just get out of the prison, he had to walk on where the Lord wanted him to go... The point of this passage is the fact that the angel of the Lord could lead Peter's life, but not live his life.
- He walked with him a certain distance and opened many doors (literally), but at a certain point, Peter was left to make the last part of the journey on his own...
 - There are some miles of our walk with God that we have to make faith.

Acts 12:10

- The angel departed from him.
- Having brought him into a place in which he no longer needed his assistance. What is proper to God he always does: what is proper to man he requires him to perform.
- God has to let us go on our own so that we can learn to trust in him and so that we can learn His voice and learn His ways...
- Let's look into the following scriptures to see what happens next in this story.

Acts 12:11-16

11 And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

12 And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying.

13 And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda.

14 And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood

before the gate.

15 And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel.

16 But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished.

- Peter goes from a situation where everything is opening without any effort or even any thought, to where he has to find his own way and even has to stand at the door and KNOCK.
- There is nothing supernatural going on here...there is no angel leading...and there is no one there to open the doors and remove the obstacles...
- If he is to experience the whole victory that was destined to be his...he was going to have to be willing to not only following the Lord wholly, but he was going to have to be willing to walk a few miles own his own and knock on some doors for himself.
- That is no less than what God is expecting of us in our relationship with him.