



# An Angel Frees Peter From Jail

Acts 12:1-18

First- and second-graders may be starting to show some signs of independence, but they still need plenty of guidance. Whenever possible, let kids accomplish tasks without help—and remember to praise them accordingly. But always be ready to offer help when you see a child struggling with a task. Knowing that your classroom is a safe place to practice new skills, and also knowing that help is at hand, will make church a safe and satisfying experience.



### ► Bible Point


Angels protect and help God's people.

### Key Verse

“For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways” (Psalm 91:11).


### Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will thank God for protecting them.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<b>1</b> Getting Started	<b>Protection Pairs</b> <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Play a fun game of Tag to learn about protection.		
<b>2</b> Bible Exploration	<b>Out Free!</b> <i>(about 20 min.)</i> Examine the Bible passage while performing various parts of it.	Bible, ½x5-inch construction paper strips, tape, flashlight, masking tape, crepe paper, scissors <b>Teacher Pack:</b> “An Angel Frees Peter” poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack), Bible Timeline 	Use masking tape to mark a large square in the center of your floor. Make sure it's large enough for the whole group. This will be your “jail.” Along a 2-foot stretch of the ceiling near one corner of your room, hang lengths of crepe paper almost long enough to touch the floor.

*Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.*



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p><b>3</b> Weaving Faith Into Life</p>	<p><b>In All Your Ways</b> <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Learn how angels can protect them.</p>	<p>Bible, My Bible Fun, crayons, markers, light-colored construction paper, glue, paper chains made earlier <b>Teacher Pack:</b> “Heart, Smile, and Angel” stickers</p> 	<p>Tear out the Lesson 9 pages from each My Bible Fun student book.</p>
<p><b>4</b> Lasting Impressions</p>	<p><b>Daily Challenges</b> <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God’s Word.</p>	<p>My Bible Fun</p>	
	<p><b>Weaving Faith at Home</b> <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.</p>		

**Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.



# An Angel Frees Peter From Jail

Acts 12:1-18

BIBLE BACKGROUND  
FOR LEADERS

## Herod Imprisons Peter and Intends to Kill Him

Herod wanted to make sure that Christian sympathizers would not be able to release Peter. Herod assigned four groups of four soldiers each to take turns guarding Peter—one soldier on each side of Peter and two at his cell door. These measures were extraordinary for such a prisoner.

Acts 12:5 describes something of a competition: Peter was securely in prison, guarded by 16 of Rome’s finest, handcuffed to a guard on each side of him. But on the other hand, God’s people were praying earnestly for Peter on the night that Herod intended to be Peter’s last night on earth.

## An Angel Helps Peter Escape

From the text, we know that Peter thought he was having a vision as he was released from prison. He had been awakened from sleep and suspected that he was only dreaming. Only after Peter’s chains had fallen off, after he and the angel had walked through the gates to the street, and after the angel had led him down the first street, did Peter come to the realization that he was really free and that God had worked a series of miracles to free him.

## Peter Surprises Those Praying for Him

The scene that unfolded when Peter arrived at Mark’s mother’s house is somewhat comical. Rhoda, the servant girl, came to see who was knocking at the door in the middle of the night. When she realized it was Peter, she was so excited that she ran back to tell the others without unlocking the door! And then the people who had been earnestly praying for Peter refused to believe that he could really be at the gate. Instead, they may have jumped to the conclusion that

Peter was already dead and that his guardian angel had come to tell them the news. And all the while, Peter was standing outside knocking. When they went to the door to see for themselves, they were astonished by the truth.

## The Jesus Connection

Find courage. You’re in a relationship with Jesus, a great defender who knows all and cannot be conquered.

Flex your muscle—your prayer muscle. God moves and works miracles for those who pray in accordance with his will. What do you need to pray about right now? You can write your prayer here.

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## 1 GETTING STARTED

### Protection Pairs

#### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Gather everyone together.

Say: **Today we're going to play a game of Tag, but it will be a little different from the way we normally play.**

Have kids form groups of four. Two kids in each group will be "guards" and should join hands and encircle a third child, who will be the "prisoner." The fourth child will be the "rescuer." Designate an area of your classroom as a "free" area for prisoners to run to once they've been freed.

Say: **Guards, you need to keep your prisoners from being freed by the rescuers. You'll do this by trying to capture the rescuers when they try to free your prisoner. To capture a rescuer, you need to put your arms around him or her, without letting go of each other's hands.**

**Rescuers, you need to free the prisoners by touching their hands. But you need to be careful not to get caught by the guards.**

**Prisoners, once a rescuer has touched your hand, you are free, and you must run to the "free" area.**

After kids have played for two minutes, have them switch roles so that one of the guards becomes a prisoner and the other a rescuer. The kids who have been prisoners and rescuers will now become guards. After playing for another two minutes, have kids sit together in a large group.

#### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- How did you feel when you were a prisoner?
- How did you feel when the rescuer freed you?
- If your rescuer was captured before he or she could free you, how did you feel when your guards captured your rescuer?





Say: Today we'll hear about how an angel of the Lord helped free a man named Peter from prison. Peter had to trust the angel because Peter didn't know where the angel was taking him. We'll also learn that ► **ANGELS PROTECT AND HELP GOD'S PEOPLE.**



## 2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

### Out Free!

#### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have kids stand together in the center of the room.

Show the Bible Timeline and point out the "An Angel Frees Peter" picture. Say: **I'm going to tell you today's Bible story, and you will all have a part in it. The story is found in Acts 12:1-18.** Open your Bible, and show kids the passage. **Today our story is all about something that happened to Peter. As I tell the story, each of you will pretend to be Peter, okay? I'll tell you what to do during the story. Let's get started!**

**There was a man named Herod who was king of Israel. Herod was a bad king who was very cruel to Christians. He would throw them in jail if he found them telling anyone about Jesus. It was during the Passover celebration that Herod had our main character, Peter, arrested and put in jail. Peter had been telling others about Jesus, and that made Herod very angry.**

Tell everyone to step inside your masking-tape jail. Set out the strips of construction paper. Have kids create paper loops from the strips and then tape the links together to make chains long enough to go around their wrists. Help kids tape the chains around their wrists.

Have kids turn to partners to answer the following questions. After each question, ask partners to share their answers with the rest of the class.

Ask:

- **How do you think Peter felt being put in jail for telling people about Jesus?**
- **Have you ever had anyone get mad at you because you did something you knew was right? Tell your partner about it.**

Say: **When Peter was in jail, Herod made sure Peter couldn't escape by having him guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. That's 16 guards for one man!**

Set classroom chairs around the perimeter of your masking-tape jail. Make sure you leave an opening for the "door."

Say: **The church, hearing about Peter's arrest, began praying very hard for Peter. They believed and trusted God to answer their prayers for Peter, even though the situation seemed hopeless.**

#### Out Free! Supplies

- Bible
- ½x5-inch construction paper strips
- tape
- flashlight
- masking tape
- crepe paper
- scissors

#### Teacher Pack

- "An Angel Frees Peter" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)
- Bible Timeline

#### Out Free! Easy Prep

Use masking tape to mark a large square in the center of your floor. Make sure it's large enough for the whole group. This will be your "jail." Along a 2-foot stretch of the ceiling near one corner of your room, hang lengths of crepe paper almost long enough to touch the floor.





Peter was being kept in prison until his trial and possible death, which Herod wanted to have after the Passover celebration. While Peter was in prison, the church kept praying very hard for him.

**The night before his trial, Peter was sleeping between two guards.**

Have kids lie down inside the jail as you turn out the classroom lights.

Show the “An Angel Frees Peter” poster, and say: **While Peter was sleeping, an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell in which Peter was sleeping. The angel struck Peter on the side and woke him up. “Quick, get up!” the angel said, and the chains fell off Peter’s wrists.**

Using a flashlight, shine a light on each “Peter.” As you shine the light on each child in turn, touch him or her on the shoulder. Have children stand up and break the chains on their wrists by pulling them apart. Have kids keep their chains with them.

Say: **Then the angel told Peter to put on his clothes and sandals.** Have kids pretend to hurriedly get dressed.

**The angel told Peter to wrap himself in his cloak.** Have kids pretend to wrap cloaks around themselves.

Say: **Then the angel told Peter to follow. So Peter followed. Let’s pretend we’re following the angel.** Have kids follow you once around the room, then stop. Be sure to avoid the “iron gate” made of crepe paper streamers until you’re instructed to go through it.

**The angel led Peter past the first prison guards.** Lead kids around the room again, this time pretending to sneak very quietly.

Then the angel led Peter past the second prison guards. Lead kids in sneaking around the room again.

**Then the angel and Peter came to the iron gate leading to the city. The iron gate opened for them by itself.**

Lead kids in sneaking around the room again, this time letting each child go through the iron gate made of streamers. Then have kids sit together on the floor.

Ask:

- **How do you think Peter felt when the angel was leading him out of the prison?**
- **What would you have said to the angel if you were Peter?**
- **Why do you think Peter followed the angel so willingly?**

Say: **Peter and the angel walked to the end of one street, and then suddenly the angel was gone! Peter realized that the Lord had sent the angel to help him!**



**Peter then went to the house where all the people were praying for him. He knocked on the outer door. Let's knock on the door with Peter.**

Lead kids in knocking on the floor.

Say: **Peter knocked and knocked on the door. He even called out to the people inside.**

Lead kids in calling, "Hello! Anybody home? It's Peter!"

Say: **Then a funny thing happened. A servant girl named Rhoda came to answer the door, and she got so excited when she heard Peter's voice that she ran inside to tell everyone he was out of prison. But she forgot to open the door for Peter!**

Lead kids in knocking and calling out again.

Say: **Finally, someone came to the door and let Peter in. He told all the people how God had sent an angel to let him out of jail.**

Have kids turn to partners to answer the following questions. After each question, let partners share their answers with the rest of the class.

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- How do you think the people who had been praying for Peter felt?
- How would you feel if someone told you an angel had helped him or her out of a bad situation?
- What do you think angels do?

Say: **Our Bible Point tells us that ► ANGELS PROTECT AND HELP GOD'S PEOPLE. Our Key Verse is about angels and what they do. Let's look at it.**

## 3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

### In All Your Ways

#### What You'll Do ■■■■

Open your Bible, and show kids Psalm 91:11.

Say: **Our Key Verse is found in Psalm 91:11. Listen while I read it to you: "For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways" (Psalm 91:11).**



#### In All Your Ways Supplies

- Bible
- My Bible Fun
- crayons
- markers
- light-colored
- construction paper
- glue
- paper chains made earlier

**Teacher Pack**  
"Heart, Smile, and Angel" stickers

#### In All Your Ways Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 9 pages from each My Bible Fun student book.





Have kids repeat the verse with you two or three times. Then have kids form new pairs to answer the following questions. Invite volunteers to share their answers with the rest of the class.

Ask:

- **Why do you think God commands his angels to guard us?**
- **When might you need God's angels to guard you?**

Distribute today's My Bible Fun pages. Direct kids' attention to the "An Army of Angels" activity.

**Say: Look at your My Bible Fun page. Draw circles around all the parts of the picture in which an angel could be guarding someone.**

Give kids a few minutes to study and identify parts of the picture. Then have kids form pairs and compare their discoveries. Go around the room, summarizing kids' findings for the class. Then give each child a sheet of light-colored construction paper. Set out crayons and markers. Help kids fold the papers in half horizontally so they stand like tents.

**Say: On half of your paper, draw a picture of a time you'd be glad to have an angel guarding you. Maybe you're scared of the dark, so you could draw your bedroom at night. Or maybe you get scared when you have to get on the school bus, so you could draw a bus.**

Give kids several minutes to draw. When kids have finished drawing, remove the angel stickers from your Teacher Pack, and give each child a sticker. Have kids repeat the Key Verse with you, and remind them that God sends angels to guard us in all our ways—even the situations they drew pictures about! Then tell kids to place the angel stickers on their pictures where they think the angel would be.

**Say: Now I want you to take the chains you were wearing earlier and glue them to the outside of your picture to form a border. This will help remind you of our Bible story and how the angel helped Peter and guarded him in all his ways as he was led out of the prison.**

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## 4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

### Daily Challenges

#### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

**Say: Let's think about how ► ANGELS PROTECT AND HELP GOD'S PEOPLE.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges in their My Bible Fun pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

#### Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Fun





- Ask your mom or dad to take you on a walk to a place you've never been before. Pray together before you go, asking God's angels to protect you on your walk.
- The next time you hear a dog barking to protect its owners, thank God for sending his angels to protect you!
- Say a prayer for each of your family members, and then remind them that they can trust God to take care of them all day, every day!

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: This week, remember that ► ANGELS PROTECT AND HELP GOD'S PEOPLE as you follow through on our Daily Challenges.

## Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about how angels protect them. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their My Bible Fun pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at [group.com/digital](http://group.com/digital).

Close in prayer. Pray: **Lord, thank you for sending your angels to guard us. Please help us to always trust you to help, just as you helped Peter. In Jesus' name, amen.**



