

## A Prayer Answered

### Scripture Reading — Acts 12:1-17

*"You're out of your mind," they told her... "It must be his angel." Acts 12:15 —*

The Bible encourages us to pray without ceasing. So we pray in the morning, at noon, and at night. We pray and pray and pray...

But sometimes--as with anything we do regularly--prayer can become a routine. Our prayers can become pious religious rites with little meaning and impact.

The first community of believers was not much different from us in that way. When the local Roman ruler, Herod, put Peter in prison, the church organized a prayer vigil on his behalf. During the night, an angel of the Lord helped Peter escape, and he soon knocked at the door where the believers were praying.

At first they couldn't believe it was him. How could it be possible? God doesn't answer prayers so quickly! But, as those early believers learned, God really does do amazing things.

Do we really believe that God answers prayer? Of course he does, we say. But do we pray expectantly? Or have we become so disappointed with prayer that it has become a routine, almost hopeless exercise?

We need to ask whether James 4:3 applies: "When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives ..." Expectant prayer breaks out of the confining box of self-centered motives and desires to pursue the wide horizons of God's will.

### Prayer

*Lord, please teach me to pray in line with your will. Teach me to expect answers that reflect your will and to be humble enough to receive them by faith. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

Devotion topics: [Bible](#), [Books of the Bible](#), [Acts](#)

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