

**Acts 12: Authority of the Prayers of the Church****I. James Is Martyred (vv. 1–3)**

- A. A ministry of martyrdom
- B. The testimony of blood — the result of political and religious persecution

**II. The Authority of the Prayers of the Church (vv. 4–18)**

- A. Peter was imprisoned — the enemy strictly guarded him and planned to execute him
  - 1. Soldiers took shifts to guard him
  - 2. He was bound with two chains
- B. The church was earnestly praying to God for him
- C. The intervention of heaven — angels represent authority from heaven; Peter lived under the intervention of heaven all his life
  - 1. A light shone in the cell — the glorious light of the saints who suffered for the Lord
  - 2. Rest in affliction and danger — Peter's great victory in being full of faith
  - 3. There was composure in leaving — he put on his clothes, sandals, and cloak
  - 4. Experiencing the faithful protection of God's hand
- D. Special prayer — prayer at Mark's house during the night
  - 1. A family that dearly loved the Lord
  - 2. A group of saints with a special burden of prayer
  - 3. Earnest and persistent prayer — did not stop until there was peace
  - 4. Peter's leaving the prison was an answer to prayer
- E. "Tell James" (v. 17) — the Lord's earthly brother, a representative character of the law
  - 1. "Tell ... about this" — it is the Lord who rules over all
  - 2. The church is not a matter of words or doctrine but is under the free leading of the Holy Spirit

**III. Judgment Comes upon Herod — Prayer Brings Forth Judgment (vv. 19–23)**

- A. The result of not giving praise to God
- B. All authority on earth is under the rule of heaven

**IV. The Word of God Continues to Increase and Spread — Prayer Causes the Work to Progress (v. 24)****V. Barnabas and Saul Are the Beneficiaries (v. 25)**

- A. They witnessed all that had happened
- B. Caused a great impact in their lives and ministries
- C. They took Mark to serve with them