Scripture: Acts 12:1-19

Key Scripture Verse: Acts 12:11 Peter now realized what had happened, and he said, “I am certain that the Lord sent this angel to rescue me from Herod and from everything the Jewish leaders planned to do to me.” (Contemporary English Version)

Memory Verse: Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. Philippians 4:6

Concepts:
- God provides help to those who serve and love God
- Peter, who once denied knowing Jesus, went on to become an important preacher of the Gospel and an important follower of Christ
- The church community prays for and takes care of its members

Objectives:
1. Understand that Peter was a man who changed his life from one who lacked faith and made mistakes to being an important leader in the early Christian church.
2. Learn that God can protect those who follow him.
3. Recognize that prayer will call God’s attention to those in need.
4. Children will create a moving scene of Peter’s chains breaking away.

Procedure:
Welcome and Introductions:
Greet the children and introduce yourself. Remember you are interacting with a different group of students each week who may not know you. Take attendance by marking in the folders. Check off if they brought their bibles or not.

2. Start the “lesson time” with prayer. Perhaps: Dear Lord, thank you for listening to our needs and helping us when we are in trouble. Amen.

Bible Lesson:
1. This is another story about Peter. Who remembers when we heard about Peter before?
2. (After the children have recalled previous lessons – Walking on Water, Calming the Storm, Peter’s Denial and The Empty Tomb) Remind them that Peter was a disciple, which means a student of Jesus. When this story takes place, Peter is also an Apostle, a person who teaches Jesus’ message about God. As some of you remember, Jesus changed the name of the fisherman Simon to Peter, which means “rock.” At first Peter was filled with doubts and did not act like a rock that Jesus could build his church on. He was frightened when a storm seemed that it would sink the boat they were in. Once he tried walking on water and Jesus had to save him. When Jesus asked him to stay and watch nearby while Jesus prayed, Peter fell asleep. Then when Jesus was being tried, Peter told three different people that he didn’t know Jesus. Peter doubted the women who told him that Jesus’ tomb was empty. Still, Peter was an important leader in the early church. He went to the city of Antioch and taught that Jesus is the Messiah, our savior. Peter was well known in the Christian community in Jerusalem and at the time of this story, he traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of flat bread, Passover.

3. It was three years after Jesus was crucified, when the ruler of Jerusalem is King Herod. He is the grandnephew of the Herod who ruled when Jesus was born. This Herod was just as cruel and worried about a different “king” replacing him. He ordered that the disciple James be put to death. Now his soldiers had captured Peter in Jerusalem. Peter was put in jail and was probably going to be killed too. Two soldiers stood outside his jail day and night and two were always inside with him. Then an angel sent by God appeared and a light flashed around the cell. He poked Peter in the side and told him to get up. The chains fell off Peter’s hands and the angel told him to get dressed and follow him. They went past the two groups of soldiers and were not stopped. At first Peter thought it was a dream, but when he realized that he was free, he said, “I am certain that the Lord sent this angel to rescue me from Herod and from everything the Jewish leaders planned to do to me.” Peter went to the home of Mary, the mother of John, where many of Jesus’ followers were together praying for Peter’s safety. They were overjoyed to learn that God had answered their prayers.

**Application:**
1. Create! READ the lesson (1-3 above) with expression.

2. Tell the children that they are going to make a shifting picture of Peter chained in jail and then showing the chains breaking away. Show them the samples.

3. Steps: Pass out jail patterns preprinted on cardstock and scissors and markers. First have the children fold the sheet in along the fold line. Next cut out the three noted sections and the notches. Have them write their names on the back. Then pass out the small barred sheet and have them place it topside up inside the folded sheet. They should slide it back and forth a few times to see how the jail bars disappear to show Peter’s chains falling off. Now, they can draw Peter in jail and his chains falling away while a bright light flashes in the cell. Older children may wish to add Roman soldiers outside. Lastly, the indicated areas should be glued in place. Be careful not to use glue outside the proper areas. Some may prefer to use tape for fastening.
4. Clean up! Involve everyone in cleaning up so that you will have time to share
together in the closing. You may want to have a prearranged signal for clean up and tell
them at beginning of art project what that will be - perhaps giving them a 5 minute
warning and then the final clean up notice to allow those who need a bit more warning
that they need to complete whatever they are working on.

**Closing:**
1. Encourage them to remember that we should pray to God when others are in trouble or
danger. Tell them that God will help those who serve and love God.
2. Say the Key Memory Verse together (see above). You may want to have this verse
printed on a banner and hung in the room, write it on the white board in the room, or have
it on slips of paper that each child can take home.
3. Pray! Ask the children if they have any prayer requests. Perhaps: Dear God, thank you
for having faith in Peter and in us. We praise you for showing your love by caring for us
when we are in trouble and helping us to remember to pray for others. Amen

**Teacher preparation in advance:**
1. Read the scripture passage.
2. Practice reading the Bible story (above) with expression.
3. Prepare an opening prayer in case nobody volunteers to pray.
4. Run copies of the patterns on cardstock and paper. Trim the paper to appropriate size.
6. Experiment with what the children will be doing.
7. Prepare all the materials you will need for the creation process. Have the materials
ready to go. There will be limited time for the creation process, so do everything you can
to conserve time.
8. Decide how you want to close the lesson. Prepare a prayer or ask for suggestions.

**Materials:**
Patterns preprinted on 8 ½” X 11” white cardstock
Trimmed patterns reproduced on paper
Scissors
Markers
Glue sticks and/or cellophane tape
File Sample
Patterns for reproduction on paper

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