

An Angel Rescues Peter from Prison and Death

About 5 minutes, from Acts 12:1-19.

Participants (*No need to memorize lines; the aim is to relive sacred events, not to perform*)

Sarah

John

Angel

Rhoda

Prompter Shout a brief line and Echoes repeat it.

Echoes Children and all adults who want to take part. Echoes need no script.

Sarah John! Listen! I've come from the temple with terrible news.  
King Herod has had your brother James slain;  
they ran him through with a sword.

John Oh, no! Sarah! How could they?  
My brother James! Oh! Why did they murder him, Sarah?

Sarah Herod did it to please the Jewish leaders that oppose us believers.

Prompter & Echoes Wicked king!

Sarah That is not all, John. Herod arrested Peter; he is in jail.  
Herod will let a mob do the same to Peter as they did to James.

John Oh, no! Rhoda, run and tell the disciples to gather and pray.

Prompter & Echoes Quickly!

Rhoda I run and bring the disciples.  
We pray fervently for Peter's release from jail.

Prompter & Echoes Free him, Lord!

Rhoda Sarah, you have been to the temple again.  
Did you hear anything new?

Sarah Yes, and it is very, very bad; tonight Herod will bring Peter to trial.  
It will be a farce.

Prompter & Echoes A mock trial!

Peter I am Peter. They have chained me between two soldiers,  
and guards are watching the door;  
Herod is taking no chances of my escape.  
The night is long, and I am weary.

Prompter & Echoes He falls asleep!

Peter Hey! Who hit me on the side? A light is blinding me!  
It must be an angel!

Angel Get up quickly, Peter.

Peter What is happening? The chains fall off my hands!

Angel Quick! Get dressed. Put on your sandals. Now follow me.

Peter Is it a dream? We pass by the guards; they are blind to our passing.  
Oh! This heavy iron gate is opening all by itself!

We are in the street now, and the angel leaves me.  
Finally I come to my senses. I really am out of jail!

Prompter & Echoes Free! Free!

Peter I hurry to the house of Mark's mother where the disciples are gathered.  
I hear them praying for me. I knock at the high gate but no one comes.  
Hey! It is I! Peter!

Prompter & Echoes Let me in!

Rhoda My brothers, someone is pounding on the gate.

Sarah It may be Herod's soldiers, Rhoda. What shall we do?

Rhoda Keep praying, Sarah. Listen. They keep knocking.  
Someone had better go, or whoever it is might break the gate down.  
I will go.

Prompter & Echoes Let me in!

Rhoda It is Peter! I'm so surprised by joy that I forget to open the gate;  
I run back in to announce that Peter is standing out in front!

Sarah You are out of your mind, girl!

Rhoda No, no, Sarah! It is true. It is Peter.

Sarah It is his spirit. A ghost! They have killed him.

Rhoda No. It is Peter. Listen. He is still pounding!

Peter Well, they finally let me in, and they rejoice.

Prompter & Echoes God heard our prayers!

Rhoda Sarah, you went to the temple again this morning.  
What is happening now?

Sarah There is a huge stir among the soldiers due to Peter's escape.  
Herod had his soldiers execute Peter's guards.  
Now they are searching for Peter everywhere.

Prompter & Echoes Guard him, Lord!

Peter By God's grace, several days pass, and they have not found me.  
Sarah brings the latest news from the temple.

Sarah Herod was wearing his royal robes to address the people,  
and they kept crying out, "The voice of a god and not of a man!"

Prompter & Echoes Voice of a god!

Sarah An angel of the Lord struck Herod because he did not  
give God the glory. It was gruesome!  
Worms grew in him, and he died a ghastly death.

Rhoda We believers keep multiplying, in spite of every effort  
by the authorities to stop us.

Prompter & Echoes We still multiply today!