

as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter v. 8). There is no number here mentioned of these keepers; the other causes preventing escape are all limited. Surely this is designedly so. We read of the number of devils that took possession of the madman in *Mark v.* to try and ensnare his soul; and that they afterwards went into *two thousand* swine; their name was *Legion*, a word denoting *six thousand* soldiers: hence we may justly conclude there were at least *two* if not *six thousand* devils in possession of this man.

We are also told that we wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places (*Ephesians vi. 12*). Surely these expressions denote the exceeding number of our spiritual enemies, and well may they be unlimited in being keepers before the door. Could a soul break from the chains and escape from the soldiers, here would be an innumerable company of keepers to pass through, an impassable barrier of itself.

*Verse 7.* We come now to the brighter and more glorious part of this narrative; hitherto all has been gloom, now comes deliverance and light.

It will be observed that immediately the Angel appears on the scene, then there is light; it must be so, as we see *John viii. 12*. He smites Peter on the side, and urges him to rise up *quickly*. What a blessed picture is here of Christ, our Deliverer from prison and bondage. How truly does this accord with *Ephesians v. 14*. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. But first he smote Peter on the side. What does this signify but a call to awaken?—for he was sleeping.

Is not this the way God calls the unwashed sinners now? Does He not send some affliction, some trial, some illness or bereavement it may be, some smiting on the side, in kindness, in love, anxious to draw