

Stephen's Defense and Victory

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References: Acts 7, Acts 6:14; Acts 7:1-60

The Pattern of Rebellion

Welcome again to those who just joined and are just joining. Tonight we are studying in the Book of Acts, chapter seven. Roy keeps track of where we are. I would forget on my own, so thank you, Roy. So, Acts chapter seven.

再次欢迎刚刚加入的朋友。今晚我们将一起学习《使徒行传》第七章。罗伊帮我记录进度，如果靠我自己肯定会忘记，所以谢谢罗伊。那么，使徒行传第七章。

The story of Acts chapter seven, as you probably know, is the sermon that Stephen preached in his own defense before they took him out and stoned him. And as such, it's a bit of a disappointing story. He did defend himself very well, but the audience rebelled against what he had said. You'll remember from chapter six that the reason he was accused was that they said he was teaching against Moses, and he was teaching against the temple.

大家可能知道，《使徒行传》第七章的故事是司提反在被他们拉出去用石头打死之前，为自己辩护所作的一篇讲道。就其本身而言，这是一个令人感到有些难过的故事。他为自己作了非常出色的辩护，但是听众却抗拒他所说的话。大家会记得在第六章里，他们指控他的原因，是说他的教导反对摩西，反对圣殿。

I've often studied this passage and found it a little bit difficult to understand as we were going along. So I'm going to give you maybe a conclusion, and then we'll go back and read it and see if we can follow the logic. First, if we study the conclusion, we'll maybe find it easier to follow the argument before that. This is the conclusion, and it's his accusation:

我常常研读这段经文，发现一边读一边理解其中的逻辑是有点困难的。所以，我先给大家看结论，然后我们再回头去读，看看是否能跟上他的逻辑。如果我们先了解结论，或许会更容易跟上前面的论述。这就是结论，也是他的指控：

[Acts 7:51-53 NKJV]

⁵¹ "You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you. ⁵² Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just

One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, ⁵³ who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it."

So he's saying to them, "You are just like your fathers." They rejected the prophets; they rejected Abraham, Joseph, and Moses; and you rejected Jesus in the same way.

所以他们对他们说：“你们跟你们的祖宗一模一样。”他们的祖宗拒绝了先知，拒绝了亚伯拉罕、约瑟和摩西，而你们也以同样的方式拒绝了耶稣。

Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One—that's Jesus—of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it. So that is the argument that he is raising against them, and it summarizes, if you like, all that has gone before in his long sermon.

哪一个先知不是你们祖宗逼迫的呢？他们把那些预先宣告那义者——也就是主耶稣——要来的人杀了；如今你们又把那义者卖了，杀了。你们受了天使所传的律法，竟不遵守。这就是他针对他们提出的论点，也可以说是对他前面整篇长篇讲道的一个总结。

God's Promise to Abraham

Let's go back now to chapter seven, verse one, and pick up what he says. We've got a rough idea of the implication of what he says. The accusation is verse fourteen of chapter six:

现在让我们回到第七章第一节，来看看他是怎么说的。我们对这篇讲道的含义已经有了大致的了解。对他的指控见于第六章十四节：

[Acts 6:14 NKJV]

for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs which Moses delivered to us."

That was their accusation. So chapter seven and verse one says:

这就是他们对他的指控。因此第七章第一节说：

[Acts 7:1-3 NKJV]

¹ Then the high priest said, "Are these things so?" ² And he said, "Brethren and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in

Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, ³ and said to him, 'Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.'

The question is: who is he addressing now? The answer is he's addressing "men, brethren, and fathers." That's the respect that he had for his accusers. It's amazing to me how humble this man Stephen was. He calls his accusers "brethren," and those who led them, he calls them "fathers." And then he starts his argument off by going all the way back to Abraham.

问题是：他现在是在对谁说话呢？答案是他在对“先生们、弟兄们、父老们”说话。这是他对指控他的人所抱有的尊重。对我来说，司提反是如此谦卑，实在令人赞叹。他称指控他人为“弟兄”，称领头的人为“父老”。接着，他追溯到亚伯拉罕，以此展开他的论述。

It's interesting that God basically is saying to Abraham, "Abraham, I've got a special plan for the future. You're part of that plan. You must follow Me; you do what I tell you to do." The argument of Jesus is similar. He said, "You're not to be following Moses anymore. You must follow Me, and I will save you, I'll change your life, I'll do all these things. But there's a change: you can't stay in the Old Testament Pharisaical religion; you've got to trust Jesus as your Savior." And frankly, they didn't like the prospect of that change.

很有意思的是，神基本上是在对亚伯拉罕说：“亚伯拉罕，我对将来有一个特别的计划。你是这个计划的一部分。你必须跟从我，遵行我吩咐你的事。”主耶稣的呼召也是类似的。祂说：“你们不再只是跟从摩西了，你们必须跟从我。我会拯救你们，改变你们的生命，做成这一切的事。但这是一个改变：你们不能停留在旧约法利赛式的宗教里，你们必须信靠耶稣为救主。”坦白讲，他们并不喜欢面对这种改变。

[Acts 7:4-5 NKJV]

⁴ Then he came out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, when his father was dead, He moved him to this land in which you now dwell. ⁵ And God gave him no inheritance in it, not even enough to set his foot on. But even when Abraham had no child, He promised to give it to him for a possession, and to his descendants after him.

This whole theme now is that God is going to give a great blessing to Abraham and to his descendants, but not necessarily simply to him now.

这里整个主题表明，神要将极大的赐福给亚伯拉罕和他的后裔，但并不一定是在当时立刻完全赐给他个人。

[Acts 7:6-7 NKJV]

⁶ But God spoke in this way: that his descendants would dwell in a foreign land, and that they would bring them into bondage and oppress them four hundred years. ⁷ 'And the nation to whom they will be in bondage I will judge,' said God, 'and after that they shall come out and serve Me in this place.'

The scribes, the Pharisees, and the priests listening to him would acknowledge at this point that indeed the problem that befell Abraham's descendants was that Abraham's descendants did not follow Abraham.

在场的文士、法利赛人和祭司听到这里也不得不承认，临到亚伯拉罕后裔的苦难，根源正是在于亚伯拉罕的后裔没有效法亚伯拉罕。

Joseph and the Patriarchs

Then he talks about giving them the covenant of circumcision in verse eight:

然后第八节谈到了神赐给他们割礼的约：

[Acts 7:8-10 NKJV]

⁸ Then He gave him the covenant of circumcision; and so Abraham begot Isaac and circumcised him on the eighth day; and Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot the twelve patriarchs. ⁹ "And the patriarchs, becoming envious, sold Joseph into Egypt. But God was with him ¹⁰ and delivered him out of all his troubles, and gave him favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house.

These patriarchs, these children of Jacob, with all the promises of God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob behind them, and knowing all those promises, still sold Joseph into Egypt. What a terrible thing! The fathers of the children of Israel were not good men. They rejected the truths of God in spite of all the blessings of God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But in the mercy of God, God was with Joseph.

这些先祖，雅各的众子，在明知神赐给亚伯拉罕、以撒和雅各的所有应许的情况下，仍然出于嫉妒把约瑟卖到了埃及。这是多么可怕的事！以色列人的祖宗并不是完全良善的人。尽管神赐给亚伯拉罕、以撒和雅各丰盛的福分，他们却拒绝了神的真理。然而因着神的怜悯，神与约瑟同在。

So what is this story so far? God loved Joseph, God loved Abraham, and God was good to those men. But the descendants of Abraham and the brothers of Joseph were not good men. God blessed Joseph anyway! And now the story shows the good hand of God upon the children of Israel:

那么到目前为止，这个故事说明了什么？神爱约瑟，神爱亚伯拉罕，神厚待他们；但是亚伯拉罕的后裔和约瑟的弟兄们却不是良善的人。然而神依然赐福给约瑟！接下来的故事展现了神美善的手如何临到以色列人身上：

[Acts 7:11-16 NKJV]

¹¹ Now a famine and great trouble came over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and our fathers found no sustenance. ¹² But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first. ¹³ And the second time Joseph was made known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to the Pharaoh. ¹⁴ Then Joseph sent and called his father Jacob and all his relatives to him, seventy-five people. ¹⁵ So Jacob went down to Egypt; and he died, he and our fathers. ¹⁶ And they were carried back to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham bought for a sum of money from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem.

The goodness of God to the fathers of the Israelites in spite of the fact that they were not good—that is the story here. The goodness of God, and their lack of love toward the Lord and His people. Jacob and possibly others were carried back to the land of Israel for burial.

故事的核心在于：尽管以色列人的祖宗并不良善，神依然向他们显明恩惠。神显出祂的美善，而他们却缺少对主和对神子民的爱。雅各以及可能其他先祖，最终都被带回以色列地安葬。

Moses: The Rejected Deliverer

They were there in Egypt for a long time:

他们后来在埃及住了很长的时间：

[Acts 7:17-22 NKJV]

¹⁷ "But when the time of the promise drew near which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt ¹⁸ till another king arose who did not know Joseph. ¹⁹ This man dealt treacherously with our people, and oppressed our forefathers, making them expose their babies, so that they might not live. ²⁰ At this

time Moses was born, and was well pleasing to God; and he was brought up in his father's house for three months. ²¹ But when he was set out, Pharaoh's daughter took him away and brought him up as her own son. ²² And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds.

What Stephen is doing is recounting the story of the children of Israel with two emphases: number one, the promises that God made to Abraham and to others; and number two, the rebellion of the people against God and those promises.

司提反正在做的事情，就是带着两个重点重新述说以色列人的历史：第一，神赐给亚伯拉罕和其他先祖的应许；第二，百姓对神及这些应许的叛逆。

Here again is a reference to the miraculous intervention of God in the life of Moses, and the elevation of Moses to a high position by Pharaoh. Amazing! What a miracle!

这里再次提到神在摩西生命中奇迹般的介入，以及法老将摩西提升至高位。这是何等奇妙的神迹！

[Acts 7:23-25 NKJV]

²³ "Now when he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel. ²⁴ And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended and avenged him who was oppressed, and struck down the Egyptian. ²⁵ For he supposed that his brethren would have understood that God would deliver them by his hand, but they did not understand.

God was working. Moses was beginning to lead the children of Israel. And the question is: are they going to believe Moses? They believed Abraham and Joseph in part, but only in part, and ultimately turned against them both. Now here is Moses: are they going to believe Moses?

神在作工，摩西开始要带领以色列人。问题是：他们会相信摩西吗？他们对亚伯拉罕和约瑟只是部分相信，最终却悖逆了他们。现在摩西来了，他们会相信摩西吗？

There is a sense in which verse twenty-five is a key summary verse to what he is saying. He is saying they should have understood that Moses was the answer to their prayers. They should have been humbled before him, but in fact they resisted him. They rejected him who was to be their savior. And the key is: they did not understand. They should have understood, but they would not understand.

从某种意义上说，第二十五节是他所讲内容的关键总结。他的意思是，他们本该明白摩西正是神对他们祷告的回应。他们本该在他面前谦卑，然而事实上他们却阻挡他。他们拒绝了那位原本要作他们拯救者的人。关键就在于：*他们却不明白*。他们本应当明白，他们却不肯明白。

So the story goes on:

故事继续往下发展：

[Acts 7:26-28 NKJV]

²⁶ And the next day he appeared to two of them as they were fighting, and tried to reconcile them, saying, 'Men, you are brethren; why do you wrong one another?' ²⁷ But he who did his neighbor wrong pushed him away, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge over us?' ²⁸ Do you want to kill me as you did the Egyptian yesterday?'

So they not only rejected Moses, but they accused him. The problem is God was sending them a savior; they said, "No, we don't want that savior, and we accuse that savior. He is not God's man at all."

他们不仅拒绝了摩西，还指控他。问题在于，神为他们差派了一位拯救者，他们却说：“不，我们不要这位拯救者，我们还要控告他。他根本不是神所差来的人。”

[Acts 7:29-30 NKJV]

²⁹ Then, at this saying, Moses fled and became a dweller in the land of Midian, where he had two sons. ³⁰ "And when forty years had passed, an Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire in a bush, in the wilderness of Mount Sinai.

It is interesting to note the frequent use of the word "forty years" in this story. How long was Moses in the land of Midian? Forty years. How old was Moses when he was sent to deliver Israel? Forty years, that is what verse twenty-three says. So God was forty years preparing Moses for his job, and another forty years preparing Israel to receive Moses.

在这个故事中，“四十年”这个词频繁出现，非常有意思。摩西在米甸地住了多久？四十年。摩西当初起意去拯救以色列人的时候是多大年纪？四十岁，正如第二十三节所说。所以神花了四十年装备摩西去承担使命，又花了四十年预备以色列人去接纳摩西。

It is foolish to reject God's salvation and God's offer. You may end up spending just as long afterwards before you get to the blessing of God. How foolish these fathers were, rejecting Moses!

拒绝神的救恩和预备是极其愚昧的。你可能最终要在旷野多耗费同样漫长的时间，才能进入神的福分之中。那些祖宗拒绝摩西，是何等的愚昧！

[Acts 7:31 NKJV]

³¹ When Moses saw it, he marveled at the sight; and as he drew near to observe, the voice of the Lord came to him,

Moses saw the evidence of the miracle of God in the burning bush, and he turned aside to look. By contrast, the children of Israel saw the miracle of God in Moses forty years earlier, and instead of turning aside to look, they rejected him and betrayed him.

摩西在荆棘火焰中看见了神迹的明证，他就近前观看。相比之下，以色列人在四十年前就在摩西身上看见了神的作为，他们不仅没有留心观看，反而拒绝并背弃了他。

[Acts 7:32-34 NKJV]

³² saying, 'I am the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses trembled and dared not look. ³³ 'Then the LORD said to him, "Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground. ³⁴ I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt; I have heard their groaning and have come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send you to Egypt.'"

God spoke to Moses, and Moses was humbled. But when God spoke to the fathers, they were not humbled. How good and how gracious God is!

神向摩西说话，摩西便存心谦卑。然而神向以色列的先祖们说话时，他们却毫无谦卑之心。神是何等良善、何等满有恩典！

[Acts 7:35-37 NKJV]

³⁵ "This Moses whom they rejected, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge?' is the one God sent to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the Angel who appeared to him in the bush. ³⁶ He brought them out, after he had shown wonders

and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red Sea, and in the wilderness forty years. ³⁷ "This is that Moses who said to the children of Israel, 'The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear.'

This again is a key verse: "This Moses whom they rejected... is the one God sent to be a ruler and a deliverer." He is going to argue at the end of this that they rejected Jesus after God had sent Him to be the Deliverer.

这又是一处关键经文：“这摩西，就是他们所弃绝说‘谁立你作首领和审判官’的，神却藉着天使的手，差派他作首领、作拯救者。”在整篇讲道的最后，司提反正是要借此论证：神差派了耶稣作拯救者，他们同样弃绝了祂。

Did God give the children of Israel evidence that Moses was their savior? Yes. How did He do that? Over and over and over again, God gave them miracles to authenticate that Moses was the deliverer. These people who are accusing Stephen were basically saying, "Moses was the deliverer. We believe in Moses; our fathers didn't, but we believe in Moses!" And so Stephen says to them in verse thirty-seven: "This is that Moses who said to the children of Israel, 'The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear.'"

神有没有给以色列人足够的证据，证明摩西就是他们的拯救者？有的。祂是如何证明的？神一次又一次显出神迹奇事，来证实摩西就是那位拯救者。那些控告司提反的人基本是在宣称：“摩西是拯救者，我们信奉摩西！我们的祖宗或许没有信，但我们信摩西！”因此司提反在第三十七节对他们说：“那曾对以色列人说‘神要从你们弟兄中间给你们兴起一位先知像我’的，正是这位摩西；你们要听从祂。”

The argument now is that Moses said, "God is going to send you another Prophet; you must listen to Him." And of course, that other Prophet was Jesus. And the children of Israel rejected Him; these very men had put Him to death.

此时的论点在于：摩西早已指出“神要为你们兴起另一位先知，你们必须听从祂”。当然，那另一位先知就是主耶稣。然而以色列人却弃绝了祂，正是眼前这批人亲手把祂处死了。

The Idolatry of the Heart

[Acts 7:38-41 NKJV]

³⁸ "This is he who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the Angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers, the one who received the living oracles to give to us, ³⁹ whom our fathers would not obey, but rejected. And in their

hearts they turned back to Egypt, ⁴⁰ saying to Aaron, 'Make us gods to go before us; as for this Moses who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.' ⁴¹ And they made a calf in those days, offered sacrifices to the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands.

Their fathers rejected Moses, and in their hearts they turned back to Egypt. They basically said, "We don't want to follow Moses; we're going back to Egypt. This wilderness life is no good for us; we don't want that."

他们的祖宗弃绝了摩西，心里归向埃及。他们基本是在说：“我们不想再跟着摩西了，我们要回埃及去。这种旷野的生活对我们毫无益处，我们不要。”

So what were their sins? Number one: they rejected Moses. Number two: they made a calf and worshiped it instead. And then verse forty-one ends with the amazing line: "and rejoiced in the works of their own hands." They were happier with the calf that they made than they were with the God who did all those miracles in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness. Many, many miracles—they didn't rejoice in them; they rejoiced in the calf that they had made.

那么他们的罪是什么？第一，他们弃绝了摩西；第二，他们造了牛犊并去拜它。第四十一节以一句发人深省的话作结：“欢喜自己手中的工作。”他们对自己造的金牛犊感到欢喜，胜过那位在埃及、红海和旷野行了无数神迹奇事的神。那么多奇妙的作为，他们不以为喜乐，反而欢喜自己亲手造的牛犊。

Is that typical of people in the world today? Yes! We reject God. We don't honor Him; we don't glorify Him as we should. But the world around us loves what they have made themselves, and they worship that.

这是否也是当今世人的真实写照？是的！世人弃绝神，不尊祂为大，没有归荣耀给祂。周围的世人深爱自己亲手所造的事物，并且去拜那些东西。

And so God's response is just and predictable:

因此，神公义且必然的审判临到了：

[Acts 7:42-43 NKJV]

⁴² Then God turned and gave them up to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the Prophets:

'Did you offer Me slaughtered animals and sacrifices during forty years in the wilderness,

O house of Israel?

⁴³ You also took up the tabernacle of Moloch,
And the star of your god Remphan,
Images which you made to worship;
And I will carry you away beyond Babylon.'

The fathers of the people who had taken Stephen captive had so completely rejected God and His mercy that God was going to carry them away into Babylon—which, of course, He did! This is how the fathers treated Abraham, Joseph, and Moses. The fathers rejected them all.

这些捉拿司提反之人的祖宗，如此决绝地离弃了神和祂的恩慈，以至于神任凭他们，甚至要把他们迁到巴比伦外去——而神确实这样做了！这就是他们的祖宗对待亚伯拉罕、约瑟和摩西的方式：祖宗们将他们全都弃绝了。

The True Temple and the Final Accusation

Now Stephen is going to turn his thoughts toward the holy place. Remember, the accusation against Stephen was that he spoke against Moses and against the temple.

现在司提反要把视线转向圣地和圣所。大家记得，对司提反的控告正是说他亵渎摩西和圣殿。

[Acts 7:44-47 NKJV]

⁴⁴ "Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as He appointed, instructing Moses to make it according to the pattern that he had seen, ⁴⁵ which our fathers, having received it in turn, also brought with Joshua into the land possessed by the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers until the days of David, ⁴⁶ who found favor before God and asked to find a dwelling for the God of Jacob. ⁴⁷ But Solomon built Him a house.

The fathers built the tabernacle, and then they carried it into the promised land, and it was there until the days of David. But Stephen says:

以色列人的先祖制造了帐幕，随后把它带进了应许之地，一直存留到大卫的日子。然而司提反接着说：

[Acts 7:48-50 NKJV]

⁴⁸ "However, the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands, as the prophet says:

⁴⁹ 'Heaven is My throne,
And earth is My footstool.
What house will you build for Me? says the LORD,
Or what is the place of My rest?
⁵⁰ Has My hand not made all these things?'

These people had accepted the temple, but they had rejected the God of the temple. And when, in accordance with the prophets, the Lord Jesus came as God to the temple, they respected the temple building, but they killed the Lord Jesus.

这些人接纳了圣殿，却弃绝了圣殿的神。当主耶稣照着先知的预言以神的身份临到圣殿时，他们尊崇物质的殿宇，却杀害了主耶稣。

So Stephen's argument culminates in the summary we read earlier in verse fifty-one:

因此，司提反的论证最终达到了高潮，也就是我们前面在第五十一节所读到的总结：

[Acts 7:51-53 NKJV]

⁵¹ "You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you. ⁵² Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, ⁵³ who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it."

As Christians today, we look back at what happened in biblical history, and we say, "Yes, the people of the world today are rejecting God just as they did then." And even in the church, many are rejecting God as they did then.

今天我们作为基督徒，回顾圣经历史，不得不承认：“是的，今天世上的人弃绝神，正如当年的人一样。”甚至在教会内部，也有很多人像当年那样抗拒神。

Here are their problems in verse fifty-one: number one, they were stiff-necked. Number two, they were uncircumcised in heart and ears. They may have gone through a physical operation, but it didn't change their heart. Number three, verse fifty-two: which of the

prophets did your fathers not persecute? Our fathers rejected the truth of God as well. Number four: they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One.

第五十一节列出了他们的问题：第一，他们硬着颈项；第二，心与耳未受割礼。他们肉体上或许受过割礼的手术，但内心却未蒙改变；第三，五十二节所说：哪一个先知不是他们祖宗逼迫的呢？他们的祖宗同样拒绝神的真理；第四，他们杀害了预言义者要来的人。

The fathers killed the prophets. And we look back in our history, and we say our fathers killed prophets too. I've told you that our family has history in Scotland. Four or five hundred years ago, the men of Scotland took prophets of God, preachers of the Lord Jesus Christ, and pushed them over the cliff and killed them.

他们的祖宗杀害先知。回顾历史，我们也会发现世世代代的人都在杀害先知。我曾跟你们提过，我们家族在苏格兰有很深的渊源。四五百年前，苏格兰的一些人就把神的先知、传扬主耶稣基督的传道人推下悬崖杀害了。

So verse fifty-two is the culmination of Stephen's accusation against them: "Whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers." You were the ones who killed the Lord Jesus. It's just like rejecting Moses, Joseph, and Abraham: you killed the prophets. And verse fifty-three: "who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it."

因此，第五十二节是司提反对他们指控的高潮：“如今你们又把那义者卖了，杀了。”正是你们亲手杀害了主耶稣。这与昔日弃绝摩西、约瑟和亚伯拉罕如出一辙：你们杀害了先知。第五十三节又说：“你们受了天使所传的律法，竟不遵守。”

The fathers had rejected the message of God all down through the Old Testament. The priests who were accusing Stephen had also rejected that same message. When their argument was destroyed and the accusation was leveled against them, instead of saying, "We are sorry; yes, we were wrong!"—instead of that:

纵观整个旧约历史，他们的祖宗一贯抗拒神的信息；如今指控司提反的祭司们，同样拒绝了这同出一源的信息。当他们的错谬被驳倒、严厉的指责临到他们身上时，他们非但没有承认“我们错了，我们愿意悔改”，反而正如经上所记：

[Acts 7:54 NKJV]

⁵⁴ When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with their teeth.

Have you noticed that most people today, when rebuked by the gospel, instead of repenting become angry and turn away? That was true repeatedly in the Gospels. When the Lord Jesus exposed their hypocrisy, instead of repenting, they took counsel to kill Him. That is the typical response of men. You and I have got to say, "By the grace of God, we are not going to be like that! By the grace of God, I am not going to be like those fathers."

你是否注意到，今天大多数人在被福音责备时，往往不会选择悔改，反而恼羞成怒、转身离去？这在四福音书中屡见不鲜。当主耶稣揭露他们的假冒伪善时，他们不但不悔改，反而商议要杀害祂。这就是罪人典型的反应。你我必须立定心志说：“靠着神的恩典，我们决不可那样行！靠着神的恩典，我绝不要效法那些悖逆的先祖。”

The First Martyr and His Falling Asleep

Instead of getting angry at them, as would have been the normal human reaction, we read about Stephen's reaction in verse fifty-five:

面对这般光景，出于常人的反应往往是愤怒相向；然而第五十五节却记载了司提反极其反常而尊贵的反应：

[Acts 7:55-56 NKJV]

⁵⁵ But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, ⁵⁶ and said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!"

How gracious of Stephen! How good of God to reveal that to Stephen! Stephen not only saw it, but he spoke of it. He saw it, he explained it, and they rebelled against him.

司提反展现出何等丰盛的恩慈！神将这异象显给司提反看，又是何等美善！司提反不仅看见了，更当场宣告了出来。他看见了，也解释了，众人却越发悖逆他。

[Acts 7:57-58 NKJV]

⁵⁷ Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; ⁵⁸ and they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

A terrible scene—very like the scene when the Lord Jesus Christ was crucified. And verse fifty-eight ends with what we call an aside: "and the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul." Saul of Tarsus, who ultimately became Paul the apostle,

was part of the group that stoned Stephen. What a heartache that fact must have been when Paul became a mighty man of God and realized that he had been responsible in part for the death of this wonderful man, Stephen!

那是极其惨烈的一幕——正如主耶稣基督被钉十字架时的场景。第五十八节以一句看似从旁的叙述结束：“作见证的人把衣裳放在一个名叫扫罗的青年人脚前。”大数的扫罗，也就是后来的使徒保罗，当时也是参与用石头打死司提反的一员。当保罗后来被神大大使用、意识到自己曾对司提反这样一位圣徒的殉道负有不可推卸的责任时，他的内心该是何等的痛悔！

[Acts 7:59-60 NKJV]

⁵⁹ And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." ⁶⁰ Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Did he believe in Jesus? Yes! And as he was dying, he prayed to the Lord Jesus. I marvel at the humility and grace of this man. He's being killed by these wicked people, and he cries to the Lord and says, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." Other sins would have had to be laid to their charge, but he said, "Lord, please don't lay this sin to their charge."

他信靠耶稣吗？是的！在他临死之际，他向主耶稣祷告。我由衷惊叹于这个人身上所彰显的谦卑与恩典。他正遭受这群恶人的残害，却呼求主说：“主啊，不要将这罪归于他们！”他们身上背负着诸多罪孽，但他却祈求说：“主啊，求祢不要把杀害我的罪归在他们头上。”

That's similar to what the Lord Jesus said when He was crucified, isn't it? Did Jesus love those who killed Him? Yes. Did Stephen love those who killed him? Yes. Does the Lord Jesus love you and me? Yes. Hallelujah!

这与主耶稣被钉十字架时所说的话何其相似！耶稣爱那些杀害祂的人吗？是的。司提反爱那些杀害他的人吗？是的。主耶稣爱你和我吗？是的。哈利路亚！

That's where our story ends, with this one line at the very end: "And when he had said this, he fell asleep." Why the word "asleep"? Why didn't it simply say, "Then Stephen died"? The answer is because when a Christian leaves this life, the body dies, but in a spiritual sense the person does not perish; he goes to heaven. The body is dead for a while, but it is going to be resurrected. Therefore, the physical state is described as being asleep—not dead, but asleep.

故事在最末尾以这样一句话划上句号：“说了这话，就睡了。”为什么圣经要用“睡了”这个词？为什么不直接说“司提反死了”？答案是：当基督徒离世时，虽然肉体停止了呼吸，但灵魂并未消亡，而是归入了天

家。身体虽暂时安歇，将来却必要复活。因此圣经将信徒身体的死亡描述为“睡了”——不是灭亡，而是睡了。

When I was a child, I would often notice that my father went to sleep, but he got up in the morning. Many years later, I was with my father and holding his hand. I knew my father was dying. There were only three of us in the room: my father, my sister, and I. I was holding his hand. After a few minutes, I said to myself, "Something is wrong; my father's hand is cold." I reached out and touched his arm, and his arm was cold. I said to my sister, "He's gone, Norma. He's gone to heaven."

童年时，我常见到父亲入睡，但他清晨总会醒来。很多年以后，我陪伴在父亲身旁，握着他的手。我知道他即将离世。当时房间里只有三个人：我的父亲、我的姐姐和我。我紧紧握着父亲的手。过了几分钟，我心头一惊：“有些不对劲，父亲的手凉了。”我伸手摸他的手臂，整条手臂也冰凉了。我对姐姐说：“诺玛，父亲走了。他去天家了。”

What is the biblical word to describe that? The biblical word is: he went to sleep. What is going to happen in the morning? We're going to see him in the morning! He'll have a new body, and it's not going to be cold. The great hope of the Christian is that the believer doesn't truly die; he falls asleep. In the resurrection morning, he is going to wake up with a new body, and he will be wide awake. When the Lord Jesus returns, I think I'm going to spend some time with my father right at the beginning, because I was with him right at the end.

圣经用什么话来形容这一刻？圣经的用词是：**他睡了**。到那复活的清晨会发生什么？在清晨我们要与他重逢！他将拥有一具崭新的身体，那身体不再冰冷。基督徒最大的盼望就在于信徒并不是真正死亡，而是安然睡去。在复活的清晨醒来时，必带着荣耀的新身体全然苏醒。我想，当主耶稣再来的时候，我一定要从一开始就去见我的父亲，因为在他人生的终点是我陪伴在他身边，在复活的那天我也要第一时间与他同在。

Victory out of Defeat

That's the story of this great man, Stephen. It's the story of the foolish, wicked fathers, and the wicked men who killed Stephen just like their fathers. But the grace of God is that the Lord saved Saul out of this particular mess. If the Lord can save Saul, then He can save you and me and the others we tell about the gospel of Jesus Christ. Praise the Lord, it's not hopeless; it's full of hope.

这就是关于司提反这位伟大圣徒的记载。这也是一个关于愚妄邪恶的祖宗、以及那些效法其祖宗杀害司提反之恶人的故事。然而神的奇妙恩典在于，主正是在这看似混乱绝望的境地中，拯救了扫罗。如果主能拯救扫罗这样的人，祂同样能拯救你、我和所有听闻基督福音的人。赞美主，这不是绝望的结局，而是充满盼望的见证！

That's our study for tonight; we're going to leave it there. Next week, Lord willing, we will be in chapter eight. This was a key time in the life of the New Testament church. Stephen was the first of many martyrs, but he was martyred in a victorious way. Is this a sign of doom to follow, or is this the foundation of something wonderful to come? By the grace of God, this is not the sound of doom; this is the shout of victory. Stephen has gone to heaven; he did not die in vain.

这就是我们今晚的学习，我们就停在这里。下周如果主许可，我们将进入第八章。这是新约教会历史上的关键时刻。司提反是众多殉道者中的第一位，但他却是在极大的得胜中殉道。这是毁灭的先兆，还是未来丰盛荣美的奠基？靠着神的恩典，这绝非毁灭的丧钟，而是胜利的凯歌！司提反已归入天家，他的血决没有白流。

Let's have a word of prayer:

让我们同心祷告：

Lord, we thank You that out of defeat, You are the God who brings forth victory. We thank You for this great man, Stephen. We pray that we might be strong in the face of adversity as he was. We thank You that out of the difficulties that he suffered, the church grew stronger. May that be true of our lives as well.

主啊，我们感谢祢，因为在看似失败的境遇中，祢是带来完全得胜的神。我们为着司提反这位伟大的仆人向祢献上感恩。求祢使我们在艰难逆境面前，也能像他一样刚强站立。我们感谢祢，因着他所经历的苦难，教会反而越发兴旺坚固。愿这样的恩典同样彰显在我们每一个人的生命之中。

We give thanks now for all Your kindness to us, and pray Your blessing upon us. We pray that You will watch over us for good and build Your church. Build 16th Avenue Gospel Chapel, we pray! We give thanks now in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

我们为祢向我们所施的一切慈爱献上感恩，求祢厚赐恩福与我们。求祢保守看顾我们，建立祢自己的教会。我们恳求祢亲自建立第十六街福音堂！我们献上感恩祈求，是奉靠主耶稣基督的尊名。阿们。

Thank you to all of you tonight. Good to see you, especially those from far away. May the Lord bless us all.

谢谢大家今晚的参与。很高兴见到各位，特别是远道而来的弟兄姊妹。愿主赐福我们众人！