The Church in Antioch and Peter's Miraculous Deliverance

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References: Acts 11-12, Acts 11:18-30; Jeremiah 17:9; Acts 12:1-19

Good to see everyone tonight. In the Book of Acts, we're studying in chapter 11, Acts chapter 11, and we're going to start our studies in verse number 19.

非常高兴今晚见到大家。在使徒行传中，我们正在学习第十一章，使徒行传第十一章，我们要从第十九节开始我们的研读。

Now remember that the Lord has done a great work, and in particular, the offer of salvation was extended to the Gentiles. Cornelius got saved, and then many of his family got saved, his friends. Then Peter and others went to Jerusalem and basically got the approval and the recognition of the men of God there that salvation should be preached to all the Gentiles.

请大家记住，主成就了奇妙的工作，特别是救恩的恩典延伸到了外邦人。哥尼流得救了，接着他的许多家人、他的朋友也都得救了。然后彼得等人去了耶路撒冷，基本上得到了那里属神之人的认可与接纳，承认救恩应当传给所有的外邦人。

And so since all of us are Gentiles this evening, we are very, very pleased with that result.

因为今晚我们在座的每一位都是外邦人，所以我们对这一结果感到非常非常欣喜。

The Word Spreads to the Gentiles

All right! So just picking up the theme now in verse 18, we read—that is, for those who had said the gospel could not go to the Gentiles:

> [Acts 11:18 NKJV] - 18 When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life."

回到第十八节，对于那些曾经认为福音不能传给外邦人的人，第十八节说：众人听见这话就不言语了，只归荣耀与神，说：“这样看来，神也赐恩给外邦人，叫他们悔改得生命了。”

And that last phrase is a good summary of the gospel.

最后这几个字是对福音的一个极佳的总结。

Excuse me, remember that belief implies a turning from what was wrong to what was right. When one says, "I believe," he is saying, "I have changed, and I no longer believe what I used to believe. Now I am believing what God says."

请记住，“相信”意味着离开错误转向正确。当一个人说“我相信”时，他是在说：“我已经改变了，我不再相信我过去所相信的；现在我相信神所说的话。”

And that lovely phrase, "repentance to life," implies what the Christian life is all about: turning from those things that were wrong, turning to God for salvation, for eternal life, and for blessing in this life as well.

“悔改得生命”这句美妙的话，道出了基督徒生命的全部真谛：离开那些错误的事，归向神得救恩、得永生，并在今生也同样蒙福。

So then verse 19:

> [Acts 11:19 NKJV] - [19] Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only.

第十九节说：“那些因司提反的事遭患难四散的门徒直走到腓尼基和塞浦路斯，并安提阿；他们不向别人讲道，只向犹太人讲。”

What happened after the stoning of Stephen, the death of Stephen? It was very distressing in the life of the Christians, and verse 19 says they were scattered.

在司提反被石头打死、司提反殉道之后发生了什么呢？在基督徒的生活中，这是一段极其痛苦的遭遇，第十九节说他们四散了。

Now it's one thing for people to emigrate from one country to another because they choose to do so; it's another thing if they're driven out. Was that a good thing or a bad thing? If you had been a Christian in Jerusalem, would it have been a good thing or a bad thing for you to have been driven away to some other country, maybe even to Phoenicia, Cyprus, or Antioch? Would that have been good or bad?

人们因为自己的选择从一个国家迁居到另一个国家是一回事；但如果是被迫被驱逐出去，则是完全不同的另一回事。这是件好事还是件坏事呢？如果你当时是耶路撒冷的一名基督徒，被赶逐到其他国家，甚至远至腓尼基、塞浦路斯或安提阿，这对你来说是好事还是坏事？究竟是好是坏？

Many would say, "That's very bad." On the other hand, if you look at it from a monetary point of view, it's probably going to be good.

许多人会说：“那太糟糕了。”但另一方面，如果你从财务的角度来看，这很可能是一件好事。

When the Christians decided they were going to have to leave Jerusalem because persecution was great, they would sell their property and they would go. Probably they'd get a relatively good price for their property that they sold. What would happen if they had stayed another twenty-five years, and Titus had come into the city and completely destroyed it? Their property would be valueless.

当基督徒因逼迫甚大而决定必须离开耶路撒冷时，他们会变卖房产然后离去。他们卖掉房产时，很可能拿到了相当不错的价钱。如果他们再多留二十五年，等到提多将军攻入城内并彻底毁灭了这座城，又会怎样呢？他们的房产将变得一文不值。

So if you owned a property today in Vancouver that was worth a million dollars, you'd say, "That's a good price." But if in twenty-five years the value of the property was zero, you'd say, "I'm glad that I sold out in '27 rather than wait twenty-five years. I got a million; if I had waited, I would have got zero."

如果你今天在温哥华拥有一处价值一百万美元的房产，你会说：“这价钱不错。”但如果二十五年后该房产的价值归零，你会说：“真庆幸我在2027年就卖掉了，而不是白等二十五年。我拿到了一百万；如果当初继续等下去，我将一无所得。”

All of which is a very delightful commentary on the leading of the Spirit of God. What was the good of this persecution? There were many blessings that flowed from it. In the lives of those who were persecuted, they probably grew spiritually very, very well. But to be able to say when it's all over, "Not only was I blessed spiritually, but I got a million dollars." Don't fight the leading of the Spirit of God! Don't fight the persecution of the Spirit of God. Let God lead you and let God bless you!

这一切都是对神圣灵带领的美妙注解。这场逼迫究竟有什么益处呢？从中涌流出许多的福分。在遭受逼迫之人的生命中，他们的灵命很可能因此成长得非常非常健壮。而且到头来他们还能说：“我不仅在属灵上蒙了福，而且还保全了财产。”不要抵挡神圣灵的带领！不要抗拒圣灵所允许的逼迫。让神引导你，让神赐福于你！

Barnabas and Saul in Antioch

All right, so the next item then is verse 20:

> [Acts 11:20 NKJV] - [20] But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus.

第二十节说：“但内中有塞浦路斯和古利奈人，他们到了安提阿也向希腊人传讲主耶稣。”

So many of those who left Jerusalem ended up going here, there, and even from there back to Antioch, where many were preaching the truth of God to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews.

许多离开耶路撒冷的人辗转到了各处，甚至从那里来到了安提阿，在那里许多人不仅向犹太人传讲，也向外邦人传讲神的真理。

Acts chapter 11, verse 21 says:

> [Acts 11:21 NKJV] - [21] And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord.

使徒行传第十一章二十一节说：“主的手与他们同在，信而归主的人就很多了。”

These were wonderful days in the life of Christians because many trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior.

在基督徒的生命中，这是何等美好的岁月，因为有许多人信靠主耶稣基督为救主。

Verse 22:

> [Acts 11:22 NKJV] - [22] Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch.

第二十二节说：“这风声传到耶路撒冷教会人的耳中，他们就打发巴拿巴出去，走到安提阿为止。”

It's true that the saints in Jerusalem had indicated that the Gentiles could hear and understand the gospel, and that they could and should accept the gospel. But the

understanding of that was not clear for all, so the brethren in Jerusalem sent Barnabas to Antioch to clarify this situation.

确实，耶路撒冷的圣徒已经表明犹太人和外邦人都能听见并明白福音，并且他们能够也应当接受福音。但并非所有人对此都有清晰的领会，因此耶路撒冷的弟兄们差遣巴拿巴前往安提阿，去了解并明确这一情况。

You can imagine that the church in Antioch was a peculiar place. It was a big city. There were a lot of Jewish Christians, and now there are a lot of Greek new Christians. What is going to happen to them? How are they going to learn?

你可以想象，安提阿的教会是一个很特别的地方。那是一座大城市，原本就有许多犹太基督徒，如今又添了许多希腊籍的新基督徒。他们将会如何？他们要怎样学习真道呢?

And so Barnabas is sent. Verse 23:

> [Acts 11:23 NKJV] - [23] When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord.

第二十三节说：“他到了那里，看见神所赐的恩就欢喜，劝勉众人，立定心志，恒久靠主。”

What is this central message to those who've just trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior? And the answer is: **continue**. You trusted the Lord, and what you do now is you walk with the Lord. Barnabas said to all these new converts, "Your job is to continue in the truth of God."

对于那些刚刚信靠主耶稣基督为救主的人，这核心的信息是什么呢？答案就是：**持守（continue）**。你信了主，现在你要做的就是与主同行。巴拿巴对所有这些初信者说：“你们的本分就是在神的真理中持守下去。”

And how could he encourage them to do that? By his own character in part. Here is verse 24:

> [Acts 11:24 NKJV] - [24] For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.

第二十四节说：“这巴拿巴原是个好人，被圣灵充满，大有信心。于是有许多人归服了主。”

And a great many people were added to the Lord because of Barnabas. Then Barnabas said, "We've got a big problem here; we've got to resolve it somehow." So verse 25:

> [Acts 11:25 NKJV] - [25] Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul.

因为巴拿巴的缘故，有许多人归服了主。随后巴拿巴意识到：“我们这里面临着繁重的工作，必须妥善解决。”所以第二十五节说：“他又往大数去找扫罗。”

Remember Saul, who is soon going to be called Paul. Saul was a good man. He'd been a Pharisee. He'd been converted. He was a powerful preacher, and Barnabas said, "He's the kind of man we need to teach all these new converts at Antioch!"

大家记得扫罗，他不久之后就要被称为保罗。扫罗是个优秀的人，他曾是法利赛人，后来彻底归信。他是一位大有能力的传道人，巴拿巴说：“他正是我们需要来教导安提阿所有这些新信徒的人选！”

Verse 26 then:

> [Acts 11:26 NKJV] - [26] And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

第二十六节说：“找着了，就带他到安提阿去。他们足有一年的工夫和教会一同聚集，教训了许多人。门徒称为‘基督徒’是从安提阿起首。”

So the question is, what are they going to do? They got to Antioch, and they started teaching, and they taught regularly for one full year. Was that a long time or a short time? In much of the teaching in the Book of Acts, Paul and Barnabas, for example, went to many places and they only stayed there a few weeks. In some places they stayed for a year or two or even more, but usually they stayed only a very short time.

那么问题是，他们打算做什么呢？他们到了安提阿，便开始施教，并且持续定期教导了整整一年。这是一段很长的时间还是短时间呢？在使徒行传所记载的大多数使徒行迹中，比如保罗和巴拿巴前往许多地方，往往只逗留了几个星期。在某些地方他们停留了一两年甚至更久，但在大多数地方，他们只停留很短的一段时间。

All of which is a message to new Christians. Many of you are new Christians. It's a delight for me to get to know you, to see you, and to try to encourage you. When are you supposed

to learn the great truths of God? The answer: as soon as possible. I'm hoping that in your first year of Christian life, you are transformed from what you used to be to what you know and understand.

这一切都是给初信基督徒的信息。你们当中许多人是新基督徒。能够结识你们、见到你们并勉励你们，对我而言是一件喜乐的事。你应当何时去学习神伟大的真理呢？答案是：越快越好。我切望在你们基督徒生命的第一年里，你们能从过去的原样，借着所明白领受的真道得以更新改变。

We've got a lot of meetings at 16th Avenue Gospel Chapel, on Zoom and in person in the week. And the question is, why? The answer is because in the first year of your Christian life, the Lord expects you to learn a lot: get immersed in the Bible, get immersed in the doctrine and the teaching of the church, get immersed in your new Christian fellowship.

我们在第十六大道福音堂（16th Avenue Gospel Chapel）周间安排了许多聚会，有Zoom线上的，也有现场实体的。问题是，为什么呢？答案是：在你作基督徒的第一年里，主期望你多有长进。要沉浸在圣经中，沉浸在教会的真理与教导中，沉浸在崭新的基督徒团契中。

Did the new Christians in Antioch fully understand this? I don't think so. Did they know that Paul and Barnabas would be leaving them in a year and they would no longer be able to benefit from all that blessing? I don't think so. But I'm saying to you all, we've got to spend a lot of time now in the truth of God. Don't say, "I'll learn that later." Paul and Barnabas were only there for one year.

安提阿的新信徒完全明白这一点吗？我想未必。他们事先知道保罗和巴拿巴一年后就会离开他们，以致无法再继续享有这种栽培的恩典吗？我想他们不知道。但我现在对大家说，我们如今必须花大量时间扎根在神的真理中。不要推托说“我以后再学”。保罗和巴拿巴在那里仅仅停留了一年。

Famine and the Relief for Judea

Okay, and now another aside in the story in Acts. Verse 27 says:

> [Acts 11:27-28 NKJV] - [27] And in these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. [28] Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar.

在使徒行传的历史记载中还有另一个插曲。第二十七、二十八节说：“当那些日子，有几位先知从耶路撒冷下到安提阿。内中有一位名叫亚迦布，站起来，借着圣灵指明天下将有大饥荒。这事到克劳第年间果然有了。”

It's interesting, isn't it, that the Christian often understands what's coming in the world, even in his own lifetime, a whole lot better than the rest of the world. And so the prophet says, "Now there's going to be a big famine, and we'd better do something about it."

这很有意思，不是吗？基督徒往往比世上的其他人更清楚知道这个世界将要发生什么，甚至在他自己的有生之年也是如此。因此先知指出：“天下将有大饥荒，我们最好提早预备。”

Verse 29:

> [Acts 11:29-30 NKJV] - 29 Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. 30 This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

第二十九、三十节说：“于是门徒定意照各人的力量捐钱，送去供给住在犹太的弟兄。他们就这样行，把捐项托巴拿巴和扫罗送到众长老那里。”

So it's an interesting thought. Number one, there's going to be famine in the world. Therefore, those in Antioch said, "We'll send funds to Judea and Jerusalem." Why would they send it there rather than to all the rest of the world? There may be two or three answers to that question.

这是一个非常值得深思的问题。首先，普天下都将遭受饥荒，安提阿的信徒却说：“我们要把赈济款送到犹太和耶路撒冷。”他们为何单单送往那里，而不是分给世上其他地方呢？关于这个问题可能有两三个层面的原因。

First of all, they might send to Judea and Jerusalem because that's where their spiritual fathers lived, and they were sending money to their spiritual fathers. Good for them.

首先，他们送往犹太和耶路撒冷，因为那里住着他们属灵的父辈，他们是将爱心款项供应给属灵的长辈。他们做得好。

The second reason might be that those in Jerusalem had suffered persecution. Many of them had probably lost their jobs, probably lost their farms or their income and their houses, and so there was probably greater need in Jerusalem and Judea than elsewhere.

第二个原因可能是，耶路撒冷的信徒经历了长期的迫害。他们当中许多人很可能失去了工作，失去了田地、收入与房屋，因此耶路撒冷和犹太地区的困境比其他地方更为严峻。

And the third reason may very well be that they recognized that the days that were coming were going to be very, very hard in Jerusalem. Jerusalem was a problem in that the Jews had

rejected Jesus, and then they killed the Lord Jesus, and then they rejected the wonderful gospel of the Holy Spirit coming at Pentecost, and then they killed Stephen. And as we'll see in the next verses, they're planning to kill James and Peter.

第三个原因很可能是他们意识到，耶路撒冷即将面临极其艰难的岁月。耶路撒冷当时处在极大的罪孽之中：那里的犹太人弃绝了耶稣，继而杀害了主耶稣；在五旬节圣灵降临之后，他们又抗拒了荣耀的福音；随后他们又杀害了司提反。正如我们在接下来的经文中所看到的，他们还密谋杀害雅各和彼得。

Who are these people anyway? What's the matter with them? They had the whole Old Testament, all the prophets, all the prophecies, and they continued to resist the Lord. And therefore this famine that is on the world is probably worse in Judea and Jerusalem because of the extreme wickedness of the Jews. And therefore dollars were sent to help the Christians in that terrible set of circumstances in their city and in their province.

这些人究竟是怎样的人？他们到底怎么了？他们拥有整部旧约圣经、所有的先知和所有的预言，却执迷不悟地持续抵挡主。因此，这场临到世界的饥荒在犹太和耶路撒冷一带尤为惨重，正是因为那里的犹太人极度刚硬邪恶。信徒们筹集资财，正是为了救助那座城及其所属省份中深陷严酷困境的基督徒。

Herod's Violence and Peter's Arrest

All right. So what happens now in chapter 12? Remember now, these are instances one after another going timewise through the events. Saul and Barnabas have gone up to Jerusalem, and while they're up there, this starts to happen:

> [Acts 12:1-2 NKJV] - [1] Now about that time Herod the king stretched out his hand to harass some from the church. [2] Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword.

第十二章第一、二节说：“那时，希律王下手苦害教会中几个人，用刀杀了约翰的哥哥雅各。”

Just contemplate how wicked that was. The Lord Jesus had been crucified, the blessings of the Holy Spirit had been ignored, the Christians had been persecuted, Stephen had been killed, and these people said, "We are not satisfied with that. We are going to kill James as well." Remember Jeremiah's summary goes like this:

> [Jeremiah 17:9 NKJV] - "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?

请思想一下那是何等的邪恶。主耶稣已经被钉十字架，圣灵赐下的福分被他们漠视，基督徒横遭逼迫，司提反遇害殉道，而这些人竟然说：“我们还不满足，我们还要把雅各杀了。”正如耶利米先知所总结的那样：“人心比万物都诡诈，坏到极处，谁能识透呢？”

What was the attitude of these people? Chapter 12 and verse 3:

> [Acts 12:3 NKJV] - [3] And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was during the Days of Unleavened Bread.

第三节说：“他见犹太人喜欢这事，又去捉拿彼得。那时正是除酵的日子。”

How wicked, how ignorant, how resistant to the truth of God these people were! Now verse 3 ends with, "Now it was during the Days of Unleavened Bread." This was a combined feast of Passover and the Unleavened Bread, both feasts together in Jerusalem. All the Jews from around the world were coming to Jerusalem at this time in accordance with the laws of Moses. And Herod said, "This would be a really good time to kill James and Peter. All of the Jews are here; it's a politically advantageous time." But also remember, it is the anniversary of the killing of the Lord Jesus Christ.

这些人是何等邪恶、何等愚昧、何等冥顽不灵地抵挡神的真理！第三节末尾说：“那时正是除酵的日子。”这是逾越节与除酵节连在一起的节期，两者同在耶路撒冷举行。根据摩西律法，天下各地的犹太人此时都聚集在耶路撒冷。希律盘算着：“这正是除掉雅各和彼得的绝佳时机。犹太人都在这里，在政治上极具收买人心的价值。”但大家不要忘记，这恰恰也是杀害主耶稣基督的一周年祭。

How wicked were these people? You can't believe such wickedness. And frankly, the God of heaven looked out and said, "These people aren't very repentant. I'm going to warn them and warn them, and then I'm going to wipe their city and the people and their province off the map, and leave it barren for 1,800 years." It is true, isn't it? Many people, like the Jews, provoke the God of heaven. And the God of heaven will and must condemn the wicked; He must bring forth judgment; He will be the Judge.

这些人是何等邪恶！你简直不敢相信世间竟有如此罪孽。坦白地说，天上的神鉴察他们，说：“这些人毫无悔改之意。我要一再警告他们，若仍不听，我就要将他们的城邑、百姓和省份从地图上抹去，使它荒凉长达一千八百年之久。”确实如此，不是吗？许多人就像这些犹太人一样，一再惹动天上神的公义忿怒。天上的神必定且必须定罪恶人，祂必施行审判，祂是全地的大审判官。

Verse 4 says:

> [Acts 12:4 NKJV] - 4 So when he had arrested him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover.

第四节说：“希律拿了彼得，收在监里，交付四班兵丁看守，每班四个人，意思要在逾越节后把他提出来，当着百姓办他。”

What would you say about Herod? You'd say he's a wicked politician. He actually pretended to be Jewish—not in parentage, but he pretended to be Jewish in his religious behavior. He was in fact an Edomite, a descendant of Esau, and like his father Esau, he was opposed to anything of God. But remember, sooner or later, judgment will fall from God.

你会如何评价希律？你会说他是一个阴险邪恶的政客。他其实一直在假扮犹太人——并非血统上，而是在宗教礼仪上装模作样。他骨子里是以东人，是以扫的后裔；就像其先祖以扫一样，他仇视反对一切属神的事。但请谨记，迟早有一天，神的审判必将降临。

So verse 4 says that he delivered Peter to prison and to four squads of guards. That would be sixteen people. If someone wanted to take you prisoner and they sent sixteen soldiers to arrest you, do you think you could easily run away? Why do you think Herod sent sixteen soldiers to get Peter? Because if Peter were to escape, it certainly wouldn't be the first time.

第四节说他把彼得收在监里，交给四班守卫看管，那总共是十六个士兵。如果有人要把你关进监牢，派了整整十六名士兵看守你，你觉得自己能轻易逃跑吗？你认为希律为何要派十六名全副武装的士兵去看守彼得？因为彼得若是越监逃走，那绝非第一回了。

Remember, the Jews put Peter in prison one night, intending to bring him out in the morning; and instead of finding him in prison, they found him back in Jerusalem in the temple, preaching first thing in the morning. And if Peter escaped from prison, then it's obvious that God could deliver him again. And so this foolish man Herod says, "I can beat that! I'll bring sixteen soldiers to prove that Peter will not get out of prison again."

记得吗？从前犹太人曾有一夜将彼得收押在监，打算次日清早提审；结果他们没在监房找到他，反而发现他一大清早就在耶路撒冷的圣殿里放胆传道。彼得既然曾奇迹般出监，神显然有能力再次拯救他。于是希律这个愚昧狂妄之人便说：“我偏要胜过这个！我要调动十六个精兵，确保彼得插翅难飞！”

Herod had a few things to learn. He had to learn that there was a God in heaven who was far bigger than Herod.

希律还有几门功课必须学。他必须彻底认清：天上有位真神，比他希律王大得多。

Constant Prayer and Angelic Deliverance

Verse 5:

> [Acts 12:5 NKJV] - [5] Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church.

第五节说：“于是彼得被囚在监里，教会却为他切切地祷告神。”

Hallelujah! Have you noticed that there's more than one kind of prayer in the Bible? There is what I'm going to call casual prayer. You and I often pray casual prayers. We say, "Lord, would You help me today, please? Lord, would You please help me do this? Would You bless that?" And we just make some delightful, simple prayers to the Savior. And that's wonderful, and the Lord hears those prayers.

哈利路亚！你有没有注意到，圣经中的祷告不止一种？有一种我称之为*常态的祷告*。你我日常经常做这类祷告。我们说：“主啊，求祢今天帮助我；主啊，求祢助我办妥此事；主啊，求祢赐福那事。”我们就是这样向救主发出一些真诚而简短的祈求。这很好，主也垂听这些祷告。

But there are times when much more serious issues arise. And in this case, there was constant, fervent prayer offered to God. We're going to learn more about the details of that, but this was not an ordinary prayer meeting. This was very, very serious. They said, "Lord, You must deliver Peter."

但有时会面临严峻得多的生死危机。在本节记载的情形中，教会向神献上的是不住的、迫切的祷告。我们稍后会了解更多细节，但这次绝非普通的祷告会，这是生死攸关的时刻。他们呼吁：“主啊，祢必须拯救彼得！”

And now the delightful description of how the Lord did deliver Peter. Verse 6:

> [Acts 12:6 NKJV] - [6] And when Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping, bound with two chains between two soldiers; and the guards before the door were keeping the prison.

第六节生动地描绘了主是如何施行拯救的：“希律将要提他出来的前那一夜，彼得被两条铁链锁着，睡在两个兵丁当中；看守的人也在门外看守。”

And note that it wasn't the night before; it was that very night, just as he was about to bring him out and kill him, Peter was sleeping. Were they determined that Peter was not going to get away this time? Yes! So what did they do? They put Peter in an inner cell, and then they take two great big soldiers, probably fellows who would be good on a football team, and they chain him to one man on one side, and chain him to the other man on the other side. Do you think Peter is going to get up and pick those two guys up and walk out of the prison, one on each side, carrying them with their chains? The thing is absolutely ridiculous!

请注意，这正是行刑的前夕——就在希律打算次日提审处决他的当夜，彼得竟然安然熟睡。狱卒们是否下定决心不让彼得脱逃？是的！他们采取了什么措施？他们将彼得严密羁押在内监深处，挑选了两名彪悍壮硕的守卫——那种体格在橄榄球队里定是悍将——左右两边各用一条铁链把彼得同他们紧紧锁在一起。难道彼得能一跃而起，左右各拖着一名带锁链的兵丁大摇大摆走出监牢吗？这在人看来是完全不可能的！

And then they locked the doors of that particular cell, and they stationed fourteen other men especially to care for Peter at the next gate, the next door. We don't know where they were, but there were sixteen men. Peter was chained to two of them, and fourteen of them guarded outside—it's absolutely ridiculous.

不仅如此，他们重重锁上那间牢房的大门，还在各层关卡、道道大门外安排了其余十四名守卫严密布防。我们无从确知各岗哨的具体位置，但整整部署了十六名兵丁。两个士兵贴身紧锁着彼得，外围还有十四人层层把守——戒备森严到了极点。

And now the delightful story that follows. Verse number 7:

> [Acts 12:7 NKJV] - 7 Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, "Arise quickly!" And his chains fell off his hands.

紧接着是何等精彩的篇章！第七节说：“忽然，有主的一个使者站在旁边，屋里有光照耀。天使拍彼得的肋旁，拍醒了他，说：‘快快起来！’那铁链就从他手上脱落下来。”

And I will add: but the guards did not awake! How would you find it if you were fast asleep, and the man you were chained to dropped his chain, and it went clank, clank, bang, bang, bang, bang—and you slept through the whole thing?

我还要添上一句：那些看守竟然毫无知觉！试想一下，如果你正熟睡，同你锁在一起的人身上的铁链哗啦啦落地，乒乒乓乓响成一片，你居然还能浑然不觉地一路睡到底吗？

Verse 8:

> [Acts 12:8 NKJV] - [8] Then the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and tie on your sandals"; and so he did. And he said to him, "Put on your garment and follow me."

第八节说：“天使对他说：‘束上带子，穿上鞋。’他就那样做。天使又说：‘披上外衣，跟着我来。’”

Verse 9:

> [Acts 12:9-10 NKJV] - [9] So he went out and followed him, and did not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. [10] When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him.

第九、十节说：“彼得就出来跟着他，不知道天使所做是真的，只当见了异象。过了第一层、第二层监牢，就来到临街的铁门，那门自己开了。他们出来，走过一条街，天使便离开他去了。”

Sometimes you have a bad dream, and you wake up and you say, "Oh, that's wonderful, that was a dream, that wasn't real!" But then you think of it and you say, "That could only be a dream, because there are some things in that dream that, though they felt real, they were totally unrelated to reality." I sometimes dream that I can run. I will run along, and I will jump over a fence, or I will do something else, and then I say to myself, "Harold, this must be a dream. You couldn't even have done that when you were younger, but certainly not now! It's only a dream; you can't do that." And this was so ridiculously impossible that Peter felt it was a dream. He said, "This can't be true."

有时人会做噩梦，醒来时如释重负地说：“哎呀太好了，那只是一场梦，不是真的！”但随后你一琢磨，便知道那只能是梦，因为梦里有些事情虽然感觉真切，却完全违背现实。我有时梦见自己能飞奔，跨过栅栏，健步如飞；然后我对自己说：“哈罗德，这准是在做梦。你年轻力壮时都未必做得到，更何况现在！这只是梦境，你根本做不到。”眼前发生的事是如此不可思议，以至于彼得以为自己身处梦境，心想：“这怎么可能是真的呢？”

Absolutely amazing! So here he is in the middle of downtown Jerusalem, in the middle of the night, with nobody around. Verse 11:

> [Acts 12:11 NKJV] - [11] And when Peter had come to himself, he said, "Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel, and has delivered me from the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the Jewish people."

不可思议的奇迹！彼得就这样孤身站在半夜空无一人的耶路撒冷市中心街头。第十一节说：“彼得醒悟过来，说：‘我现在真知道主差遣祂的使者，救我脱离希律的手和犹太百姓一切所盼望的。’”

All the Jewish people were sleeping, planning a really good party the next day when Peter was killed. And Herod, no doubt, was bragging about what a wonderful man he was and how the Jews were going to respect him highly for killing Peter too. And so here's Peter in the middle of the street, in the middle of the night, saying, "I wonder what I should do next."

全城的犹太人都在梦乡中，满心盘算着次日彼得被斩首时大肆欢庆。希律无疑也在自鸣得意，夸耀自己手腕高超，幻想着除掉彼得后犹太人将对他何等推崇备至。而此时此刻，彼得却安然伫立在清冷的深夜大街上，寻思着：“我下一步当往何处去？”

The Prayer Meeting at Mary's House

Verse 12:

> [Acts 12:12 NKJV] - [12] So, when he had considered this, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying.

第十二节说：“想了一想，就往那称呼马可的约翰、他母亲马利亚家去，在那里有好些人聚集祷告。”

Peter, what's your first responsibility? He probably could have said, "The best thing I can do is run out of town and let nobody know where I'm going." But he said, "I've probably got a greater responsibility: I'd better go to the prayer meeting and tell these people that their prayers are answered." And did he know that they were praying in the middle of the night in John Mark's house? Had somebody come to the prison earlier and told him? I guess if they had told him, the guards would have known that everybody was praying too.

彼得，你的首要当务之急是什么？他原本完全可以说：“我上策是立刻潜逃出城，隐姓埋名。”但他深感自己肩负更重大的使命：“我必须去祷告会，向那些恳切代求的圣徒通报神已垂听了祷告。”他怎会知道深更半夜在约翰·马可的家里正有一场祷告会？是早先有人潜入监中通报过他吗？我想若是有人去报信，守卫们岂不也早就察觉众人在聚集代祷了？

Or maybe he knew that when James was in prison, they were praying at John Mark's house as well. Maybe he knew that these were outstanding Christians: they didn't just talk about prayer, they prayed! And even if it was the middle of the night, they were praying. I think that church at Jerusalem was a praying church at this time, which is why the power of God was amongst them. It's one thing to talk about prayer; it's another thing to be at the prayer meeting. These people were at the prayer meeting in the middle of the night.

或许他深知以往雅各被难下监时，信徒们也是在约翰·马可家里同心祷告。他深知这群圣徒信仰笃实：他们不空谈祷告，而是切实行道！纵然夜半更深，他们依然劬劳祈祷。当年的耶路撒冷教会正是一个恒切祷告的教会，这正是神的大能彰显在他们中间的秘诀。嘴上谈论祷告是一回事，置身于祷告会中则是另一回事。这群人实实在在地在深夜并肩跪在祷告会中。

Verse 13:

> [Acts 12:13 NKJV] - [13] And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a girl named Rhoda came to answer.

第十三节说：“彼得敲外门，有一个使女，名叫罗大，出来探听。”

What was Rhoda, a girl, doing at the prayer meeting? Are girls supposed to go to prayer meeting? How old are you when you go to prayer meeting? Rhoda was in school; she had to be in school in the morning. Most girls Rhoda's age would have said, "When I grow up, I probably will start going to a prayer meeting. I've got homework to do on Tuesday night, so I can't go to prayer meeting." This is the middle of the night, Rhoda! And Rhoda said, "I'm only a teenager, but I'm a Christian, and I'm going to behave like a Christian." Good girl, Rhoda!

罗大一个小姑娘，在祷告会里做什么？年轻姑娘应当参加祷告会吗？该到什么年纪才参加祷告会？罗大还是个读书的学生，早晨还要去学堂。多数同龄的女孩往往会推脱：“等我长大成人后，再去祷告会吧。周二晚上功课繁重，我去不了祷告会。”罗大，现在可是深更半夜啊！罗大却以行动宣告：“我虽是个少女，但我认信基督，我的行事为人就要活出基督徒的样式。”好姑娘，罗大！

Verse 14:

> [Acts 12:14 NKJV] - [14] When she recognized Peter's voice, because of her gladness she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter stood before the gate.

第十四节说：“听出是彼得的声音，就欢喜得顾不得开门，跑进去告诉众人说：‘彼得站在门外！’”

That's the kind of thing an excited teenager would do! Somebody more mature would have opened the gate; she just ran in, she was just bursting with joy. How did she know Peter's voice? She'd obviously heard him preach many times. Was Rhoda an ordinary teenager? Not every teenager I know is like her, unfortunately.

这正是情窦初开的雀跃少年才会有的举动！换作沉稳的老成之人，定会先开门迎客；而她激动得不能自已，连门都忘了开就往里飞奔，整个人被喜乐充满。她怎能听出是彼得的口音？显而易见，她曾多次亲聆彼得的讲道教导。罗大是个寻常的少女吗？遗憾的是，并非我所认识的每个年轻人都能有她这般的属灵心志。

Verse 15:

> [Acts 12:15 NKJV] - 15 But they said to her, "You are beside yourself!" Yet she kept insisting that it was so. So they said, "It is his angel."

第十五节说：“他们说：‘你是疯了！’使女极力地说：‘真是他！’他们说：‘必是他的天使。’”

Now even those who were praying didn't believe that God was going to answer the prayer that way. They may pray that Herod was going to change his mind, or that something would go wrong at the prison, but they didn't expect Peter to be standing knocking at the door, saying, "Could I come into the prayer meeting, please?"

甚至连那些竭力代祷的圣徒，都未曾预料到神会以如此不可思议的方式直截了当地应允他们。他们或许在祈求神软化希律的心肠，或是让刑狱突发差错；他们万万没料到彼得本人已经神完气足地立在门外叩门，轻声询问：“请问我能进来加入祷告会吗？”

Verse 16:

> [Acts 12:16 NKJV] - 16 Now Peter continued knocking; and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished.

第十六节说：“彼得不住地敲门。他们开了门，看见他，就甚惊奇。”

What would you do if there was a problem so great that you really didn't believe that God could answer a prayer to solve it? You've got two options: you can go to sleep, or you could pray anyway. And these great people said, "We're going to pray." They didn't pray alone; they prayed together. Praise the Lord!

若是面临一个庞大到令人难以置信神真能借祷告化解的危局，你该如何自处？你唯有两个选择：要么万念俱灰倒头大睡，要么无论如何定意呼求。这群信心的伟人断然选择：“我们要祷告！”他们不仅独自暗中祈求，更同心合意彼此托住。赞美主！

Verse 17:

> [Acts 12:17 NKJV] - [17] But motioning to them with his hand to keep silent, he declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Go, tell these things to James and to the brethren." And he departed and went to another place.

第十七节说：“彼得摆手，不要他们作声，就告诉他们主怎样领他出监；又说：‘你们把这事告诉雅各和众弟兄。’于是出去，往别处去了。”

So he explained to them how their prayers had been answered, and frankly, I think that would have been a most exciting thing for them to listen to. They may have said, "How did that happen, Peter?" And Peter would have said, "Because you prayed." What a wonderful story!

彼得向他们娓娓道来众人的祈求是如何实实在在地蒙了神的垂听。老实说，倾听这番见证对他们来说是何等激动人心的震撼！众人必定惊叹：“彼得，这到底是怎么成的？”彼得必会答道：“正是因着你们的迫切代祷。”何等奇妙的恩典见证！

And then he says to them, "Go, tell these things to James and to the brethren." Why weren't James and the brethren at the prayer meeting? Did they not believe in prayer? We're not told, actually. But I'm going to tell you what I think: I think that they were at another prayer meeting, probably a secret prayer meeting. Because they all figured that they could be taken prisoner the next day, and they would be number three or four or five in Herod's attack on the saints. He's already got James; Peter is number two; the other apostles could be three, four, five, couldn't they? So I think they were in another prayer meeting that night.

随后他叮嘱大家：“你们把这事告诉雅各和众弟兄。”为何雅各和众领袖没在现场？难道他们怀疑祷告的功效吗？经文并未详述原因。但我推断他们当时正身处另一处更为隐秘的祷告点。因为他们清楚预见到自己极可能次日即遭缉捕，成为希律毒手下的第三、第四或第五个目标。希律已斩杀使徒雅各，彼得是第二号目标，其余使徒领袖顺理成章就是下一批猎物。因此他们那一夜必定在另一处严守机密的据点同心祈祷。

Peter didn't go to them because he may have figured that if he'd been caught, they would have been in trouble. So anyway, he goes to the John Mark prayer meeting, and from there the line ends. At the end of verse 17, it says, "And he departed and went to another place."

Where was that other place? I don't think he told anybody at the John Mark prayer meeting; I don't think he told Rhoda or anyone else where he was going. He said, "My job is to disappear." If Herod had sent sixteen men to keep him from escaping, how many men do you think he would have sent to find him after he did escape? I think that he just said, "I'm going to go disappear," and that's what he did.

彼得未敢贸然前往雅各处，因他顾及自己一旦暴露反会连累众领袖一网打尽。他来到马可母亲家短暂停留，随即迅速抽身转移。第十七节末尾说：“于是出去，往别处去了。”那“别处”究竟在何方？我认为彼得绝未向马利亚家中的任何人吐露分毫，亦未告知罗大。他清醒地定意隐匿踪迹。希律尚且差遣十六名甲士围困他一人，越狱之后追捕搜查的罗网何其森严！彼得果决地决意避其锋芒，隐匿行踪。

Herod's Frustration and Futility

Verse 18:

> [Acts 12:18 NKJV] - [18] Then, as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers about what had become of Peter.

第十八节说：“到了天亮，兵丁扰乱得很，不知道彼得往哪里去了。”

You can imagine them accusing one another, each of them saying, "Why didn't you? Why didn't you?" And they were all asleep or incapacitated.

你可以完全想见那帮兵丁惊惶失措、彼此推诿指责的狼狈相：“你当时怎么当差的？你为何不严加看守？”而昨夜他们所有人竟全数陷入沉睡，昏迷不醒。

Verse 19:

> [Acts 12:19 NKJV] - [19] But when Herod had searched for him and not found him, he examined the guards and commanded that they should be put to death. And he went down from Judea to Caesarea, and stayed there.

第十九节说：“希律找他，找不着，就审问看守的人，吩咐把他们拉去杀了。后来希律离开犹太，下凯撒利亚去，住在那里。”

If you were offered a job by Herod, would you accept it or would you go do something else? Herod was not a nice man. Herod's relative had killed John the Baptist. It was Herod's father

who had killed all the babies in and around Bethlehem when the Lord Jesus was born. These men were ruthless men. And so Herod, instead of bowing his knee to the hand of God, said, "I'm going to kill the soldiers." How foolish to continually resist God!

若是希律王向你抛出高官厚禄，你会欣然就范还是敬而远之？希律家族历来残暴阴鸷。昔日是其同族手刃了施洗约翰；在主耶稣降生伯利恒时，下令残杀全境两岁以内无辜婴孩的正是他的先父大希律。这个家族嗜血成性。希律非但不向真神大能的作为屈膝战兢，反倒迁怒诛杀了无辜的看守士卒。执意抗拒造物真神是何等狂妄愚昧！

These chief priests, the priests who were behind all this, would ultimately lose their city, they would lose their temple, they would lose their livelihood, and most of them would lose their lives when Titus came in. Here is the warning from God: "You wicked men, stop fighting God!" So, Herod, what are you going to do? Do you think Herod's conscience was bothering him? Verse 19 ends: "And he went down from Judea to Caesarea, and stayed there."

那些在幕后推波助澜的祭司长和宗教权贵，到头来在提多军团陷城之际，都将彻底丧失其城邑、痛失其圣殿、断送其生计，甚至多数人必死无葬身之地。神严正的训诫赫然在目：“作恶的人哪，悬崖勒马，休要与神对抗！”希律，你当如何应对？你以为希律的良知不曾受尽煎熬吗？第十九节收尾道：“后来希律离开犹太，下凯撒利亚去，住在那里。”

He probably couldn't sleep at night. His conscience was bothering him so much, God saying to him, "Herod, you are a wicked man! You're fighting against the God of heaven. Don't do it!" So Herod says, "I'll move away; that will solve my problem." You may have noticed that moving away doesn't solve your problem. Remember now, when God is working on the conscience, humble yourself before the Lord and say, "Lord, I'm a sinner. Please forgive me." Instead, he says, "I can do something. I'll move away. I've killed all those other guys to put the blame on them, and then I'll move away, and I'll get along okay. I'm all right."

他极可能夜夜惊悸难眠。良心的谴责重重击打着他，神的声音威严控诉：“希律，你这罪恶滔天之徒！你竟敢公然抗拒天上的万军之主，不可再妄动！”然而希律却自欺欺人：“我迁居避世，便可一了百了。”大家或许早就察觉，单纯变换环境根本无法解决心灵深处的根本罪咎。请切记，当神借着良知拷问人心时，唯一的出路是谦卑仆倒在主前悔改：“主啊，我是个罪人，伏乞赦免我！”希律却冥顽不化：“我有的是退路。我诛杀了全部狱卒当替罪羊，我自己移驾行宫，远离是非，便万事大吉了。”

Our time is gone, so we're going to leave it there. We'll find out what happens to Herod next week. Let's pray.

我们今晚的时间到了，就暂告段落。下周我们将继续探究希律的结局。我们一同低头祷告。

Lord, we want to thank You that You are Lord. We haven't come to a good philosophy; we haven't come to a few people who've thought up some good ideas. We've come to the

miracle-working, covenant-keeping God who honors His servants and will bless and encourage them. And so, Lord, we want to thank You for saving Peter, and we thank You for the grace of God to each one of us. And we're thankful that we can say, "Peter's God is my God."

主啊，我们感谢祢，因为唯独祢是万有之主。我们来到这里绝非追逐某种精妙的哲学，亦非倾听人手策划的世俗见解。我们是俯伏来到这位施行神迹、信守坚约的永生神面前，祢看重祢的仆人，必施恩赐福并扶持鼓舞他们。主啊，我们因祢搭救彼得出监而向祢献上感恩，更因祢厚赐给我们每个人的浩大恩典由衷谢恩。我们满怀感激能够同声称颂：“彼得的神就是我的神！”

Lord, help us to be men and women of prayer like Rhoda was, for all who are with him. Lord, we get encouraged when we read stories like this in the Bible, because it says again and again, our God is a good God. Bless us each one now! Bless us tomorrow, Lord, as we meet to remember You and to honor You for all that You've done for us. And we give thanks now in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

主啊，求祢保守我们，使我们无论男女老幼，都能效法罗大以及当时所有坚守代祷的人，成为恒切祷告的属灵子民。主啊，每当我们在圣经中研读这些宝贵的见证，我们的信心就大得坚固，因为经文一次又一次向我们显明：我们的神是良善慈爱的神！求祢此刻厚厚赐福在座的每一位！主啊，明日当我们聚集擘饼记念祢、因祢为我们成就的救赎大工而敬拜尊荣祢时，求主充沛赐福！我们虔诚感恩交托，乃是奉主耶稣基督荣耀的尊名。阿们。

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