

The chapter we have read to introduce this mornings exhortation contains one of the most important speeches in the book of Acts.

今天早上我们读到的这一章节包含了使徒行传中最重要的申述之一。

It was delivered by a man named Stephen. Stephen is first mentioned in Acts 6. He was one of seven brethren appointed by the apostles to ensure that the welfare delivered by the ecclesia in Jerusalem was distributed fairly. These brethren are described in Acts 6:3 : *men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom*. So Stephen had a reputation as an honest man, he was full of the power of the Holy Spirit and he was recognized as being a wise man. In addition to this he is described in Acts 6:8 as being '*full of faith and power*'. So in the eyes of his brethren and sisters in Jerusalem he was recognized as being both faithful and wise. Even his enemies were forced to recognize the wisdom of Stephen, as Acts 6:10 states, they were not able to '*resist the wisdom and spirit by which he spake*'. So the speech we have read in Acts 7 is not delivered by any ordinary man. It was delivered by a man who was wise and faithful, and a man who was guided in what he spoke by the holy spirit.

给出这段申述的是司提反。他最早是在使徒行传第 6 章中被提及的。他是使徒们拣选的 7 位弟兄中的一位，这 7 个人是来管理耶路撒冷教会的供给的。在使徒行传 6: 3 中这样描述这 7 位弟兄：*有好名声，被圣灵充满，智慧充足的人*。所以司提反就是这样一位诚实的，充满圣灵的，和有智慧的人。另外，在使徒行传 6: 8 中还这样描述他：*满得恩惠能力*。所以在耶路撒冷的众弟兄姐妹眼中，司提反被认为是既有智慧又有信心的人。即使是他的仇敌也不得不承认司提反的智慧，如使徒行传 6: 10 所记，"*司提反是以智慧和圣灵说话，众人敌挡不住。*" 所以我们在第 7 章中读到的申述不是出自一个普通人之口，而是出自特殊的人之口，这个人是有智慧的，有信心的，以圣灵说话的。

What is the speech about? Stephen had been brought before the Jewish religious authorities to answer accusations that had been leveled at him. These accusations are found in Acts 6:11 – that he had spoken '*blasphemous words against Moses and against God*'. These accusations were of course untrue, but they were further expanded in Acts 6:13-14 where it was said of Stephen : '*This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law: For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us.*' Now these were a different set of accusations to speaking blasphemy, but in the mind of the Jewish elders they amounted to the same thing.

申述的是什么呢？司提反被带到犹太宗教权威面前回答对他的控诉。使徒行传6: 11 记录了这些控诉，"*我们听见他说谤渎摩西和 神的话。*" 这些控诉当然是不真实的，但是在6: 13-14中进一步控诉说；"*这个人说话不住地糟践圣所和律法。我们曾听见他说：这拿撒勒人耶稣要毁坏此地，也要改变摩西所交给我们的规条。*" 这些是两次不同的毁谤，但是在犹太长者的心里却没什么差别，他们认为说得是同一个意思。

The Jews believed that God had placed his name in Jerusalem, at the temple and that he would always preserve both the temple and their traditional way of worship which they thought came straight from the law of Moses. In addition to this they assumed that there was no other way to serve God, except through the rituals of the law; and that there was no other place in which God could be served other than in the temple in Jerusalem. Stephen's speech in Acts 7 set out to show from examples from the Jews' own history that firstly, God had appeared to people outside

of Jerusalem, even outside the borders of the holy land and secondly that many people had successfully established a relationship with God without using the rituals and offerings established by the Law of Moses.

犹太人认为神将他的名建在耶路撒冷的圣殿里，相信神会一直保护他的殿并保存犹太人传统的由摩西律法而来的敬拜方式。不单如此，他们还认为除律法的仪式之外，没有其他侍奉神的方式；除耶路撒冷的圣殿以外，没有其他侍奉神的地方。而司提反在使徒行传：7中的申述就从犹太民自己的历史中找到例子来证明以下问题：首先，神曾对耶路撒冷之外，甚至是对圣地之外的人显现；其次，有很多人并没有通过摩西律法的仪式和献祭来建立与神的联系。

Let's have a look at a couple of examples that Stephen uses in his speech to prove his points.

让我们来看看司提反用来证明自己观点的几个例子。

Stephen opens his argument with the example of Abraham. All of the Jews were proud to be descendents of Abraham. Christ himself had revealed how proud the Jews were of their ancestor Abraham in Luke 3:8: *Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.* The Jews thought that mere descent from Abraham would guarantee their salvation. So there was no better example for Stephen to begin with than their own patriarch. What does Stephen show from Abraham? Acts 7:2 : *And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran.* The most obvious point about Abraham, as Stephen states was that when God first called him, he was living no where near the promised land, no where near Jerusalem, and of course hundreds of years before the first temple was built. The Jew's patriarch, in whom they placed so much faith and pride, was not saved because he worshipped God in Jerusalem. God appeared to him when he was still living on the other side of the Euphrates river.

他最先提到了亚伯拉罕的例子。所有的犹太人都以自己是亚伯拉罕的后裔为荣。在路加福音3：8中，基督自己也表现了犹太人的这种骄傲：*你们要结出果子来，与悔改的心相称，不要自己心里说：‘有亚伯拉罕为我们的祖宗。’我告诉你们：神能从这些石头中给亚伯拉罕兴起子孙来。*而犹太人认为只要是亚伯拉罕的子孙就可以保证他们得拯救。所以司提反从他们自己的先祖亚伯拉罕开始做申诉是再好不过的。那么司提反通过亚伯拉罕的例子想说明什么呢？使徒行传7：2：司提反说：*“诸位父兄请听！当日我们的祖宗亚伯拉罕在美索不达米亚还未住哈兰的时候，荣耀的神向他显现。”*司提反这里提到亚伯拉罕最主要的一点是神最早呼召他的时候，他并没有住在应许之地，也没有住在耶路撒冷，当然距离第一所圣殿建立的时间还有几百年。这位犹太人如此依靠的并引以为傲的先祖，并不是因为他在耶路撒冷敬拜神而得救。神最初向他显现的时候，他还住在幼发拉底河的另一边。

Not only that, but Stephen goes on to show that even when Abraham did finally come to the promised land, he didn't actually own any of it. Read Acts 7:5 : *And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child.* Even when Abraham did live in the promised land, he lived there as a foreigner, he didn't own even enough land to put his foot down. Yet we know that God promised it to him and to his seed. Abraham will inherit the land one day, but that is yet to come – when Christ returns to the earth. The Jews that Stephen was speaking to thought that they owned the land, that that was what made them special. Well, says Stephen, you may have temporary ownership of the land now, but don't

forget that Abraham didn't own any of it, yet God has guaranteed his salvation. So present ownership of the land has nothing to do with salvation, in the eyes of God.

并不仅仅如此，司提反接着说道，就算亚伯拉罕最后来到了应许之地，他也没有拥有任何东西。见使徒行传7：5：*在这地方 神并没有给他产业，连立足之地也没有给他；但应许要将这地赐给他和他的后裔为业。那时他还没有儿子。*即使亚伯拉罕确实住在应许之地，确实作为外邦人寄居在那儿，他却连立足之地都没有。但是我们知道神应许这地给他和他的后裔。亚伯拉罕有一天肯定会继承这地，但那是在不久的将来----直到基督重临的那一日。那些与司提反对话的犹太人认为他们拥有这块地，并认为这让他们变得很特殊。但是司提反告诉他们，你们现在暂时拥有这地，但是不要忘记亚伯拉罕并没有得到这地，而神同样保证了对他的拯救。所以在神的眼中，暂时的拥有应许之地同拯救并没有什么关系。

The next personal example that Stephen bring up is that of Joseph – Abraham's great grandson and again a man that all the Jews held in great respect as one of the twelve sons of Jacob. Stephen begins speaking about Joseph in Acts 7:9: *And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him, And delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house.* Firstly, Stephen shows that sometimes the men the Jews revered (the patriarchs) were not always holy or good men. They sold Joseph because they were envious of him. But despite his brothers selling him into Egypt, God continued to be with Joseph. This is even though Egypt was hundreds of kilometres from Jerusalem and the holy land. God did not abandon Joseph just because he could not worship him at Jerusalem, God was there, with Joseph in Egypt.

司提反接下来提到的是约瑟的例子---亚伯拉罕伟大的孙子，雅各的儿子，是所有犹太人非常崇敬的人。在使徒行传7：9中，司提反提到约瑟说：*先祖嫉妒约瑟，把他迈到埃及去。神却与他同在，救他脱离一切苦难，又使他在埃及王法老面前得恩典，有智慧。法老就派他做埃及国的宰相兼管全家。*首先，司提反指出有时候犹太人崇敬的人（先祖们）并不都是为圣的好人。他们把约瑟卖了是因为他们嫉妒他。但是尽管约瑟的弟兄把他卖到埃及去，神却与他同在，虽然埃及距离耶路撒冷和圣地有几百公里之遥。神并没有因为约瑟不能在耶路撒冷敬拜他离弃他，神与约瑟同在，在埃及。

Not only was God working with Joseph, in Egypt – but in the promised land where there was a drought. Stephen shows in Acts 7:11: *Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Chanaan, and great affliction: and our fathers found no sustenance. But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first.* Jacob, who was in the promised land, was forced to look to Egypt to find food. So God provided food for the patriarchs, but they had to travel away from the promised land to get it. Again Stephen is showing that God is prepared to work in all nations to save those he has called. Salvation is not dependent on a connection to the promised land.

司提反在使徒行传7：11中继续提到，神并不仅仅和约瑟同在埃及，还在闹饥荒的应许之地做工：*后来埃及和迦南全地遭遇饥荒，大受艰难，我们的祖宗就绝了粮。雅各听见在埃及有粮，就打发我们的祖宗初次往那里去。*当时住在应许之地的雅各不得不到埃及去寻粮。所以神为先祖们预备了粮食，但是他们必须离开应许之地去得到它。同时，司提反还表明神在全地做工来拯救他所呼召的人。所以拯救并不取决于是否和应许之地有联系。

Another example that Stephen uses is that of Moses. He points out that when God first appeared to Moses, in the burning bush, that he was in the wilderness near Sinai – hundreds of kilometres from Jerusalem. Yet God tells him to remove his shoes *for the place where thou*

standest is holy ground (Acts 7:33). Again Stephen was showing that God is prepared to work with his people wherever they were – even in the desert in Sinai; and that wherever God's presence is, there is holy ground. This is not limited to the temple or the city of Jerusalem.

司提反提到的另一个例子是摩西。他指出，当神初次从荆棘里的火焰中向摩西显现的时候，他还在西奈山附近的旷野里----离耶路撒冷几百公里远。但是 神告诉摩西脱下他的鞋 “*因为你所站之地是圣地*”（使徒行传7：33）。同样，司提反是在表明无论神的民在哪儿，神也会对他们做工----即使是身在西奈山的旷野里；而且，神显现在哪儿，哪儿就是圣地。这并不单单局限于圣殿或耶路撒冷。

Stephen also points out that Moses was rejected by his own nation – the people that he came to save. Acts 7:35 : *this Moses they refused, 7:39 to whom our fathers would not obey.* Stephen was showing that just like their fathers had rejected Moses, who God had sent to save them, so the Jews had also rejected Christ who would have been their saviour. Not only that, but Moses prophesied that God would send a prophet like himself : *A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.* (Acts 7:37). This was a prophecy by Moses of the coming of Christ, yet they rejected Christ in the same way their fathers had rejected Moses.

司提反还指出摩西被他自己的民族弃绝---被他去拯救的民所弃绝。见使徒行传7：35： *这摩西，就是百姓弃绝的，7：39：我们的祖宗不肯听从的。* 司提反是在表明，就像他们的祖宗弃绝神派去拯救他们的摩西一样，犹太人也同样弃绝了拯救他们的基督。不仅仅这样，摩西还预言了神会兴起一为向他一样的先知： *神要从你们弟兄中间给你们兴起一位先知像我。* 这就是摩西做出的关于基督来临的预言，但是他们同他们的祖宗弃绝摩西一样弃绝了基督。

Stephen draws on many examples in Israel's history throughout his speech to show that the Jew's reliance on their connection with the land and the temple was wrongly founded, and that God could in fact work anywhere. It is worth going through Acts 7 slowly and working out how Stephen makes his point though the many other examples he selects.

司提反在他的申述里引用了很多以色列历史上的例子来表明犹太民信靠他们和应许之地和圣殿的联系是不对的，神可以在任何地方做工。我们可以细细地读一下使徒行传7，看看司提反引用的其他例子。

What lessons can we learn from Stephen's speech in Acts 7 that are suitable for us as we prepare to eat and drink the bread and wine today? One clear lesson is that God is prepared to work with us no matter what our circumstances are. It doesn't matter that we are not descendents of Abraham, or that we do not live in the holy land, or that we cannot worship in a temple in Jerusalem. Paul's words in Galatians reinforce this point for us. Gal 3:26-29: *For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.* God has called people of all nationalities and all social standings to be saved. What matters is not our nationality or occupation but the faith that we have in Christ Jesus. It is our faith that makes us children of faithful Abraham.

那么当我们今天预备掰饼喝酒的时候，我们能从司提反在使徒行传7中的申述里学到什么功课呢？首先是神预备在我们身上做工，无论我们处在怎样的境况下。无论我们是不是亚伯拉罕的后裔，是不是居住在圣地，是不是可以在耶路撒冷的圣殿里敬拜神。使徒保罗在加拉太书中重申了这一点。加拉太书3：26-29： *所以，你们因信基督耶稣，都是神的儿子。你们受洗归入基督的，都是*

披戴基督了。并不分犹太人，希腊人，自主的，为奴的，或男或女，因为你们在基督耶稣里都成为一了。你们既属乎基督，就是亚伯拉罕的后裔，是照着应许承受产业的了。神呼召了所有的民族和社会各阶层的人来得救赎。我们是什么国际或做什么工作并不重要，重要的是我们在耶稣基督里的信心。是我们的信心使我们成为亚伯拉罕的后裔。

Stephen himself was a man full of faith – as we saw from Acts 6:8. It was this faith that enabled him to speak clearly and boldly to his accusers. It was this faith that enabled him to face death for Christ's sake, and will ensure him a place in God's kingdom. There is only one way that we can develop a similar faith and that is by continually reading God's word. Romans 10:17 tells us that *faith cometh by hearing – and hearing by the word of God*. If we apply ourselves to the reading and meditation on the Bible, then our faith will develop and grow and we, like Stephen, will be confident of our place in God's kingdom when his son returns to this earth.

正如我们在使徒行传6: 8中看到的，司提反自己是一个充满信心的人。正是这种信心使他明白地坚定地面对那些质问他的人。也正是这种信心使他能为基督直面死亡，并使他获得他在神国里的位子。只有一种途径能让我们也建立起同样的信心，就是不断的阅读神的话语。罗马书10: 17告诉我们“*可见信道是从听道来的，听道是从基督的话来的。*”如果我们阅读并沉思圣经，那么我们的信心就会增强，那么我们也能像司提反一样在神子重临之日找到我们自己在神国里的位子。

Speaker Notes

总结

Background to Acts 7

使徒行传7的背景知识

- Stephen first mentioned in Acts 6
- 司提反最初在使徒行传6中被提及
- Stephen's character:
- 司提反的品格
 - Honest
 - 诚实
 - Full of Holy Spirit
 - 充满圣灵
 - Full of wisdom
 - 充满智慧
 - Full of power
 - 充满恩惠
 - See Acts 6:3, 8 & 10
 - 见使徒行传6: 3, 8, 10
- The accusations
- 控诉
 - blasphemy against Moses and God (Acts 6:11)
 - 毁谤摩西和神（使徒行传6: 11）
 - blasphemy against the holy place and the law (Acts 6:13-14)
 - 毁谤圣地和律法（6: 13-14）
 - Act 7: Stephens response to the accusations:
 - 使徒行传7: 司提反回应控诉
 - God worked with his people outside both Jerusalem and before the law
 - 神在耶路撒冷以外和律法之前的神的民身上做工

The Example of Abraham

亚伯拉罕的例子

- Luke 3:8 – Jewish pride in being descendants of Abraham
- 路加福音3: 8---犹太人以自己是亚伯拉罕的后裔为荣
- Act 7:2 – God first appeared to Abraham outside the promised land
- 使徒行传7: 2---神最初在应许之地以外向亚伯拉罕显现
- Acts 7:5 – Abraham didn't inherit any of the land in his mortal life, but lived as a stranger in it
- 使徒行传7: 5---亚伯拉罕在他有生之年并没有拥有应许之地，而只是寄居在那儿
- Present ownership of the land has nothing to do with eternal salvation
- 暂时的拥有应许之地与永恒的拯救没有关系

The Example of Joseph

约瑟的例子

- Acts 7:9 – the Jewish fathers were not holy men, but sometimes envious
- 使徒行传7: 9---犹太祖先并不是圣人，而是充满嫉妒心的人
- God continued to be with Joseph even though he was in Egypt, not the promised land
- 尽管约瑟身在埃及而非应许之地，神还是与他同在
- Acts 7:11 – famine in the promised land, food in Egypt – this was God's doing

- 使徒行传7: 11---应许之地遭遇饥荒，埃及却有粮食---这是神做的工

The Example of Moses

摩西的例子

- Acts 7:33 – God’s first appearance to Moses was outside the land, but still ‘holy ground’
- 使徒行传7: 33---神第一次向摩西显现是在应许之地之外，但仍然是“圣地”
- Acts 7:35, 39 – Moses was rejected by his own nation, just as the Jews had rejected Christ
- 使徒行传7: 35, 39---摩西被自己的人民弃绝，犹太人也同样弃绝了基督
- Acts 7:37 – Moses prophesied that God would send Christ
- 使徒行传7: 37---摩西预言了神会兴起基督

Lessons for Us

我们学到的功课

- Gal 3:26-29 – natural descent, or geographical location is not important to God
- 加拉太书3: 26-29---血缘，地理位置不是在神看来重要的事
- The most important thing is our faith in Christ
- 最重要的是我们在基督里的信心
- Rom 1:17 – faith can only come by continually reading the Bible
- 罗马书1: 17---信心只能通过不断阅读圣经来建立
- Reading will give us faith like Stephens and confidence that God will accept us into his kingdom
- 阅读圣经能带给我们如司提反一样的信心，并让我们确信神会在他的国中接纳我们