

Extraordinary God

God is Concerned

I. Message from Jerusalem

2 Chronicles 6:6 (NIV)

I have chosen Jerusalem for my Name to be there

Acts 1:7-12 (NIV)

He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."⁹ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.¹⁰ They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them.¹¹ "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."¹² **Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives**, a Sabbath day's walk from the city.

A. God is Concerned about You

Luke 7:11-16 (NIV)

¹¹ Soon afterward, Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went along with him.¹² As he approached the town gate, a dead person was being carried out--the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the town was with her.¹³ When the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her and he said, "Don't cry."¹⁴ Then he went up and touched the coffin, and those carrying it stood still. He said, "Young man, I say to you, get up!"¹⁵ The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother.¹⁶ They were all filled with awe and praised God. "A great prophet has appeared among us," they said. "God has come to help his people."

1 Timothy 1:12-14 (NIV)

¹² I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful, appointing me to his service.¹³ Even though **I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy** because I acted in ignorance and unbelief.¹⁴ The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

Acts 9:1-10 (NIV)

¹ Meanwhile, Saul was still **breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples**. He went to the high priest² and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, **whether men or women**, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem.³ As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him.⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"⁵ "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied.⁶ "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."⁷ The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone.⁸ Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus.⁹ For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.¹⁰ In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias!" "Yes, Lord," he answered.

B. Jerusalem Conquered

Acts 5:40-42 (NIV)

His speech persuaded them. **They called the apostles in and had them flogged**. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.⁴¹ The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name.⁴² Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.

Acts 12:1-7 (NIV)

¹ It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them.² He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword.³ When he saw that this pleased the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This happened during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. . . .⁵ So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him.⁶ The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance.⁷ Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up!" he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists.

Acts 14:8-20 (NIV)

⁸ In Lystra there sat a man crippled in his feet, who was lame from birth and had never walked. ⁹ He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed ¹⁰ and called out, "Stand up on your feet!" At that, the man jumped up and began to walk. ¹¹ When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in human form!" . . . ¹⁹ Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead. ²⁰ But after the disciples had gathered around him, he got up and went back into the city. The next day he and Barnabas left for Derbe.

II. Principles to Protect

A. Our God is able

Isaiah 59:1 (NIV)

¹ Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear.

B. You are valuable to God

Matthew 6:26 (NIV)

Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

Colossians 2:13-15 (NIV)

When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴ having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

C. Extraordinary God --- merciful in His concern for us

Isaiah 1:18-19 (NIV)

"Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. ¹⁹ If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land;

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for your great concern for my life. Your loving kindness and mercy have protected me. I look to you as the strength of my life. Whatever circumstances I face, I trust you as my God and my redeemer. I rejoice in your faithfulness. Open my eyes and heart to your truth and the freedom it brings. In Jesus' name, amen.