

Lectures on the life of Peter

Part 12

Speaker	W. Missen
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[00:00:00] Let us turn to the twelfth chapter of the Acts. Acts chapter 12.

Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to Vex, certain of the church, and he killed James the brother of John with a sword.

And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also.

Then were the days of unleavened bread. And when he had apprehended him he put him in prison and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him, intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.

Peter therefore was kept in prison. A prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him. And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and the keepers before the door kept the prison. And behold, the angel of the Lord came [00:01:06] upon him, and a light shined in the prison. And he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands. And the angel said unto him, Good thyself, and bind on my sandals. And so he did.

And he said unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And he went out and followed him, and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel, but thought he saw a vision. When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city, which opened to them of his own accord. And they went out, and passed on through one street, and forthwith the angel departed from him. And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of [00:02:02] Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews. And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John, whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying. And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken named Rhoda. And when she saw, when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in and told how Peter stood before the gate. But they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, This is angel. But Peter continued knocking. And when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished. But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go show these things unto James and to the brethren. And he departed and went into another place.

[00:03:02] Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers what was become of Peter. And when Herod had sought for him and found him not, he examined the keepers, and commanded that they should be put to death. And he went down from Judea to Caesarea, and there abode.

Going back just a little to the 11th chapter, we find that when the brethren in Jerusalem heard that Peter had gone to the house of Cornelius, and had eaten in the house, and had associated with these Gentiles, they called into account, as it were, for this.

They thought Peter had done something very wrong. And so Peter appeared there, and he took with him the six [00:04:06] brethren, who had accompanied him from Joppa as witnesses. And we see that Peter acted with wisdom there, in taking with him witnesses of this thing. You know, the Bible says, In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. And so Peter saw that there was ample witness of what had taken place. And Peter just declared what had happened, how that Cornelius had had this vision, and how he'd had the vision, and how the Lord had sent him, and how that the Holy Spirit fell upon them. And Peter said, Well, who was I that I can withstand God? And it ends up there, as it says, in verse 18, when they heard these things, that's chapter 11, verse 18. When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

[00:05:03] So it's lovely to see that when Peter and David with him gave their testimony as to what actually had happened, the brethren were glad. They saw that God was reaching out with the gospel to Gentiles, as well as to Jews. Now we come to our chapter 12, and we find a Herod. You see, these Herods, as we have the record of them in the New Testament, are a bad lot. Father and Son, and I think there are three Herods that appear all together in the New Testament. They're all related, and we find them all opposed to the truth of God.

And Herod stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. He wanted to ingratiate himself with the rulers of the Jews, and so he thinks he's going to gain the favor of them by killing off the apostles. Now the Lord, in his wisdom, [00:06:03] we don't always understand why the Lord allows things, but the Lord allowed James to be killed. This is James, or rather, yes, James the brother of John. He allows James to be killed. We find two James mentioned in this chapter. We find James the brother of John, who was...

These two were the sons of Zebedee, and they were the two who were partners with Andrew and Peter in the fishing boat, before they were called to be apostles of the Lord. He killed James the brother of John. The other James mentioned later on, who was also prominent in Jerusalem, was James the brother of our Lord. And he killed James the brother of John. God allows James to be killed. No details are given, but he's the first one of the apostles to suffer a martyr's death, because although Stephen had been stoned before this, but Stephen was not one of the apostles. [00:07:01] He was one of those chosen to administer the funds for the widows, you remember, in the sixth chapter. Now, he's going to do something the same apparently with Peter. So he put Peter in prison, and it's the days of unleavened bread, that is, the Passover feast was being kept. So he's not going to do anything with a pen, as used at that time. So he waits until... he's going to wait until the Passover is over. He's going to bring Peter out, and probably do the same thing with Peter, but make a great public event of it, to all the more please the Jews.

Well, the Lord still has a work for Peter, and the jail is not able to hold him, because the Lord has a

work for him. Peter's put in jail, and it says that he's delivered the four quaternions of soldiers.

I understand a quaternion would be four soldiers. So that is, they have put 16 soldiers to guard Peter. Probably they took turns [00:08:06] four at a time, and these soldiers were guarding Peter.

And the very night before he was going to bring him forth, God works. Now, in the meantime, the brethren are praying for Peter.

It says, verse 5, Peter therefore was kept in prison.

The prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

And you see Peter is released, as we saw, see there in the account, at night time, and then he comes to the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark. They're praying that right there. It seems that they were having in Jerusalem, no doubt in many homes, but this was one of the homes where the saints met. They were having all-night prayer [00:09:01] meetings. You know, it's a wonderful thing to have an all-night prayer meeting. I wonder if we could stand to have an all-night prayer meeting. It wouldn't necessarily mean that all of the brethren would stay all night. Perhaps some would come, that they would have to go, and others would come, but there would be a stream of prayer going on all night. I think that's what it was here. This was a very special thing. I believe that the Lord would call us to have special times like that on special occasions.

You see, in the history of the Church of God, we find that come times of crisis, when there's a special need for prayer, and the saints should make a point of getting together in times like that, and specially pouring their hearts out to the Lord. We should take advantage of opportunities like this, and I believe that if in any assembly, if there was some special thing had come up, that the brethren felt that there was a [00:10:04] special need for prayer, and they made a point of getting together, and everyone that could getting out to as many meetings as they could for prayer, that we could count on the Lord to come in and answer our prayers, brethren. You know, we have to get into a kind of a lackadaisical way of just attending meetings and not perhaps being as exercised as we should. I believe that even in our prayer meetings, we should be more spontaneous in our prayers. I never can understand, in prayer meetings, why there has to be such a long time that we have to wait after one brother sits down for before another brother prays.

I think it's the same in the breaking of bread. I wonder sometimes whether we're waiting on one another instead of waiting on the Lord. We should be waiting on the Lord in the prayer meeting, and in the breaking of bread too. You know, I think we brothers sometimes let the sisters down, because I'm sure those the sisters, when there are great, great long pauses, they must get uncomfortable [00:11:04] sometimes, and wish they could say something. And perhaps in the history of the church, the reason why women have got out of their place is just because the brothers are not taking the place that they should. God has put a responsibility on us brothers, to take our part in the meeting, and we should not be waiting on one another. We should be waiting on the Lord, and it doesn't matter whether you're an old brother or a young brother. We should be all waiting on the Lord, and not exercise as to whether we shouldn't take part, but exercise as to whether we should take part. Because if we all come along to the meeting determined not to take part, well, we won't have a meeting. And we should realize that we have a responsibility as members of the Lord to take part in the meeting. Well, I don't think there was any difficulty about taking part in this prayer meeting. You know, when there's something special, especially for prayer, you don't find too much, too many

pauses then in the prayer. Brethren feel that there's [00:12:03] something to pray about, and they pray about it. Well, they are praying, and they're praying all night. And it says, when Herod would have brought him forth the same night, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and the keepers before the door kept the prison. Here we have one of the Corthonians. I suppose they took turns. He's sleeping between two soldiers, he's bound with two chains, probably chained to the soldiers he's sleeping by, and then the door are there, and there's two keepers standing before the door, two sentinels.

You say, it's impossible for Peter to escape.

And there's a great big iron door on the very outside of the prison there, and they said, who could open that big iron door? Well, it says, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and the light shined in the prison.

[00:13:02] What happened to these soldiers that Peter was sleeping between? They didn't see the light.

The light shined in the prison, and the Lord filled in his angel. And you notice that Peter was sleeping. You know, I really think that Peter knew that this wasn't the time for him to die.

The Lord had said, Peter, remember when Peter was restored, the Lord said to him, when thou was young, thou girdest thyself, and walkest with thou with us. When thou shalt be old, another shall gird thee, and carry thee with thou with us not. And I think Peter must have reasoned with himself. I'm not old yet. The Lord still has a work for me to do. He told me to feed the lambs and feed the sheep, and I still have some work to do. So Peter was just, just left himself in the Lord's hand. He wasn't worried. He knew, he didn't know how the Lord was going to work, but he knew he was at peace. He was [00:14:02] sleeping. He wasn't worried. He was sleeping between two soldiers. The light shined in the prison, and the angel smote Peter on the side, and raised him up saying, rise up quickly. The chains fell off from his hands. It doesn't say they made a great clatter on the floor. I think these prisons had stone floors. Maybe the chains made a great clatter, but the prison, the guards didn't hear a chain.

Or maybe the Lord caused the chains not to make a clatter, but in the end they fell off. The angel says, get thyself and bind on my sandals. Put your shoes on, Peter. Get your clothes wrapped around you. Put your clothes on. All right, Peter did that. He did so. He said, pass thy diamond about him. Put your other diamond on, Peter, and follow me. He went out and followed him. He wished not that it was true. Peter, is this a dream, or is it not a dream? You can imagine. When they were past the first and the second ward, they went through one ward. They went through another ward. How many, how many sentinels were there? [00:15:04] We're not told. Maybe there weren't any more, but anyhow, they went through these wards, but there were probably many other prisoners in the jail. No one's there. When they got to the great iron door leading to the street, it opened and it's on the court. The angel goes along one street with him, and then leaves him. He didn't need the angel anymore. Peter knew where he was. You can imagine Peter pinching himself and rubbing his eyes. Now, is this a dream, or is this real? Well, he came to the conclusion that it was real. Now I know, he says, the Lord sent his angel, and he delivered me out of the hand of him, and from the expectation of the Jews.

And when they had, when he had considered the thing, verse 12, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John, whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying. Many were

assembled, many were gathered praying.

[00:16:01] What a lovely thing. There they were. Peter knew where to go. He knew that's the house I'm to go to, the brethren are praying there. So he goes and knocks at the door, and all of those places, they had the doorkeeper. You remember the doorkeeper that let Peter in when he denied the Lord? Now, here's the doorkeeper that doesn't let Peter in when she should have. You can imagine this little girl, she comes, she hears Peter's voice. Why, she's so overjoyed, she forgets all about letting Peter in, have to run in and tell them. Why, you're crazy, they said. And no, she said, it's Peter. Well, it must be his ghost, as we'd say today. Well, here's Peter. He continues knocking.

Someone says, well, someone's knocking, let's see who it is. Maybe, maybe it was right after all. Sure enough, it was Peter. And you can imagine the hubbub. Everybody's talking at once, they're asking what has happened. So Peter said, now be quiet. And he tells them what happened. And then he says, [00:17:02] go and tell these things to the James and the brethren, and he departed. Why did Peter depart? Well, he knew no doubt that Herod would search for him, and up told where he went. But the people knew where to go. Got right out of the way. And the next day, when they find out that Peter's gone, there's no great, great scare among the soldiers, and Herod also. He's frustrated, and he reaps his vengeance on the soldiers, on the poor soldiers that couldn't help it. They all get killed. These 16 men all get killed because they let Peter go. Just notice that it says of Herod, in verse 21, that he went down on his royal apparel, goes down to Orvea, Tyre, and Sire. He was displeased with them, it says in verse 20. And on the second day, it says, Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat on his throne and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a great shout and [00:18:03] said, it's the voice of a god, another man. Well, Herod couldn't help the people saying that. But I think he could help accepting it. He accepted what they said. You know, sometimes we can't help what people say about us. But we, it's another thing, if we accept, if they say something about us that shouldn't be said, that is giving us a position that God hasn't given us, well then, we're wrong in accepting it. And that's what this man did. And it says, the angel of the Lord smote him because he gave not God the glory. And it tells us that he was eaten with worms and gave up the ghost. I heard one said once, usually people give up the ghost and then afterwards they're eaten with worms. But this man got eaten up with worms first. What a horrible death that that man died. The judgment of God upon one who took the stand of opposing the truth of God.

And it says, that the word of God grew and multiplied. Now, I want us to notice [00:19:03] something in connection with verse 12. It says, many were gathered together praying. Now, if you look it up in the new translation, you'll notice that we have a similar expression used there, used in verse 26 of chapter 11, and used in the seventh verse of chapter 20.

And this is very important as showing us three gatherings of the assembly.

Now, in chapter 11 and verse 26, when he had found him, that's when Barnabas had found Saul, he brought him to Antioch and it came to pass that a whole year they assembled themselves with the assembly and taught much people. So here we find the teaching, teaching the word connected with the assembling of the assembly, with the gathering of the assembly. And you know, brethren, the assembly is [00:20:02] the place to get the teaching. I don't think I've mentioned this in these meetings, but I believe it's a big mistake to encourage our young people to go to these bible institutes. Now, I've no doubt that for some of these places they give a great deal of good sound teaching, but they also give teaching that is not in accordance with the word as we see, we see it, as gathered to the Lord's name. They encourage the clerical system. I have seen young people from our assemblies go to

those places and they end up with being lost to our assembly testimony. Young men have gone there and they get taught that it's right to be ministers, to be clergymen, and then they get offered a job in a denomination and that's the end of their testimony. Young women go and you find that they get laid out. I believe these places are halfway houses. They have been used of God in his overruling [00:21:02] providence to bring some people from outside into the assemblies because people from denominations who haven't had any good bible teaching go there. I believe that they're a help to those people. They give them a lot of truth that they don't get in their denomination. And as they learn truth there, they get anxious for more truth and they're willing to come into the assembly. So, they can be a house that could lead, a halfway house to lead people in. But for those who have the teaching of the word as we have it in the assembly and all the precious truth that God has given us and the truth of gathering to the Lord's name and the truth of the priesthood of every believer that is not taught in those places, they're a halfway house to lead our people out. And our young folks if they go there, they usually end up outside of our testimony altogether. So, the assembly is the place to get the teaching. And the various means that we have, our local assembly meetings, we have bible readings, [00:22:04] we have prayer meetings, we have the breaking of bread, we have ministry meetings, then we have other meetings like special gatherings for young people, we have conferences, we have camps. I don't believe there's any teaching that is needed that we cannot find in among us in the various types of meetings we have and in the special gatherings that we have for young people and on special occasions with special topics to take up. And so we find here they gathered themselves for a whole year with the assembly. The teaching was connected with the assembly. The Lord, the Holy Spirit honors the teaching of the word connected with the assembly testimony. Now, as Peter's in prison, it's an assembly prayer meeting.

Here it's the meeting of the assembly. The church is gathered together this day. Where there are many who go together praying in verse 5 says, prayer was made with our teachers as the assembly. It wasn't just a few of the [00:23:03] assembly gathered together in a house. No, that was one of the meeting places of the assembly in that city. And they were gathered as an assembly. The teaching is given in chapter 11 as the assembly, to the assembly. They're gathered as an assembly when Paul and Donovan was administering to them. They're gathered as an assembly for the prayer meeting. And in the 30th chapter it says, on the first day of the week, being assembled to break bread for a priesthood. So the breaking of bread, we're gathered together to break bread as an assembly. And these brethren are three important meetings. The breaking of bread, the meeting for the ministry of the word, and the meeting for prayer. These are assembly meetings where we gather as an assembly. And it's gathered there to the Lord's name. Collectively, the saints gather together.

The spirit is free to minister to our souls [00:24:01] in those meetings. So I just add those two other scriptures to this one here, all connected with the assembly testimony.

Peter has been prayed out of prison. And the sad lesson we see here is that even though they were so earnestly praying for Peter's release, when the Lord answered their prayer, they didn't believe it. Which, you know, we can't blame the people of Jerusalem too much, can we? Because isn't it true that sometimes we pray and are almost surprised when the Lord answers our prayer? We shouldn't be. But this is a lesson. God answers prayer. The Lord answered their prayer, and they were surprised when their prayer was answered. Just one more point before we leave this chapter. I believe that Peter and John here are types of the saints that will be persecuted during the great tribulation.

I think they're types of the godly remnant of Israel. At the time of the great tribulation, in the future,

after the church is gone, we find that some will be killed and some will be preserved. James is a type [00:25:07] of those who will be killed, and whose souls are seen under the altar praying in Revelation 6. Peter is a type of those whom the Lord will miraculously preserve, and they will be on earth for you when the millennium starts. And those who've been killed, God is going to give them the privilege of having part in the first resurrection. They won't be in the church, but they'll be part in the first resurrection, as it's said plainly there in the 20th chapter of Revelation. This is the first resurrection, and among them the souls of those who will be headed for the witness of Jesus, and so on. Now we go on to the 15th chapter, where we have Peter again mentioned for the last time in the Acts. In the 15th chapter, [00:26:02] there has come up a great problem in the church.

It says, certain men which came down from Judea taught brethren and said, except you be circumcised after the manner of Moses, you cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small distinction in disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain other of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders about this question.

And then it goes on in the chapter and gives the account of this council that they have at Jerusalem. We need to connect this up with the second chapter of Galatians, where we find Paul disputing with Peter, because it seems that what happened at Antioch was that when these brethren from Jerusalem who still wanted to carry out this right of circumcision, or rather wanted to [00:27:05] impose it on the Gentiles, came up there, Peter changed his behavior.

Apparently before these ones from Jerusalem arrived, Peter had gone in and out freely among the Gentile converts and eaten with them, because that's what he did in the house of Cornelius. But when these Judaizers came, Peter changed his behavior and stopped doing that. And Paul had to recruit him. Paul says, well you're not acting up rightly, Peter. And so it's decided in the end that they should go up to Jerusalem, because these men who were causing the trouble had come from Jerusalem. So Jerusalem was the local assembly where the trouble originated. So they go up to Jerusalem, the brethren send Paul and Barnabas and certain others, and Peter went up there too, and they all go up to Jerusalem [00:28:05] to gather there with the apostles and the brethren of the assembly. They have a meeting, possibly a meeting first of all of the responsible brethren, the elders, and then later on judgment is passed by the whole assembly in Jerusalem. I think there's an important principle here. It shows that when there's a difficulty, an endeavor should be made to settle the difficulty in the locality from which it originates.

The trouble, the troublers came from Jerusalem.

So it was at Jerusalem that the thing had to be settled. I think there's been perhaps troubles have come in among us sometimes when brethren from other localities have tried to decide on what should be as the settlement of a thing when it should be settled in the locality where it happened. And if the thing is settled locally under the guidance of the spirit, [00:29:01] then the other brethren, brethren in all other assemblies should accept it. We believe, we don't believe in independence of assembly. We believe in the truth of the one body. At the same time, brethren, that doesn't mean to say that each local assembly does not have certain local responsibilities that are the responsibilities of that assembly and not another assembly. You see, each assembly has its own local responsibility. And when difficulties come in, the ones that know the contributing circumstances to the difficulty are the local saints where the thing happens. And they're responsible before the Lord to get before the Lord and speak his And if they're not agreed, to wait on the Lord until the Lord gives them agreement so that they can go forward together. And then this being done in the fear of God and according to

scripture, the thing should be accepted by all other gatherings. That is God's order. Troubles have come in among the saints when one or other of [00:30:04] these things are not done. If a thing is rightly settled and others don't accept it. If a thing is wrongly settled and then others can't accept it. So you see, the Lord places the responsibility on the local assembly to seek his mind and to act according to the word. Now I believe here in Jerusalem, they act according to the word in the whole matter. It says in verse 4, when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, of the assembly and of the apostles and elders. And they declared all things that God had done with them. They let them know how God was working among the Gentiles. God was really working. Many souls were saved. Then there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying it was needful to circumcise them and to command them to keep the law of Moses. They had their say. These were some who'd been saved from among the Pharisees and who were so zealous for the keeping of the law that they wanted to impose the right of circumcision [00:31:02] upon the Gentiles. So they presented their their case. Then it says in verse 6, the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter. And when there had been much disputing or much discussion, Peter rose up. They talked a lot about it.

Well then Peter comes. And Peter declares what happened in the house of Cornelius. He explains to them how that says, men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God made choice among us that the Gentiles by mouth should hear the word of the gospel. And he shows that God put no difference. He says in verse 9, put no difference between us and them purifying our hearts by faith. The Gentiles received the Holy Spirit when they believed on the law, altogether apart from any ordinance, from any Jewish ordinance, circumcision or anything else. Just the same as the Jews received the Holy Spirit [00:32:02] as a result of having believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. God put no difference. Now why should we put a difference? So he says there, verse 10, now therefore why tempt ye God to put a yoke on the necks of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear. It has been a yoke on us all these years that to do this thing as a legal ordinance.

And we've not been able to bear it. Why put that on the Gentiles when God has received them without us? Because we believe, he says in verse 11, that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved even as they. I like that. He doesn't say they shall be saved even as we. You see? He says by the grace of God we shall be saved even as they. Will God by his grace be saving us Jews?

Just the same as he's saving the Gentiles. He's not saying he's saving the Gentiles just the same as he saves us Jews. No, he puts the Gentiles first. [00:33:03] We've got to be saved without any ordinances the same as God's saving the Gentiles. Then James speaks and James brings in the word.

You see James brings the word today. James gets up and he says now that Simeon has declared how that God would visit the Gentiles. That's Simon. He says Peter has told you that.

Now he says this agrees with the words of the prophet and he quotes what it says here in the prophecy of Amos. Amos refers to a thing like this. We have scriptures for this he says. So he brings a scripture to bear and then he says the only things he says that we should ask them to abstain from is what we have in verse 20. He says verse 19 says wherefore my sentence is that we trouble not them which were among the Gentiles that turned to God but that we write unto them that they abstain from pollutions of idols from fornication from sin strangles and from blood [00:34:03] for Moses of all time hath in every city been the preacher being read in the synagogues every sabbath day. So they

sent a letter around to all the Gentile assemblies in the strength. Well you might say well they still put some Jewish ordinance some Jewish some Jewish prohibitions on them in verse 20.

Those were not Jewish prohibitions. The prohibitions that they put go right back to the very beginning of God's dealing with the human race. They were to abstain from idolatry. God did not allow man to worship idols right from the very beginning. From the very beginning before Judea before the Lord called out the Jews before he called out Abraham. God did not count on them to worship in an idol so that goes back before the law and from fornication from the very beginning God says they shall be [00:35:02] man and wife shall be one flesh so fornication was not allowed of God from the very beginning of the human race and from sin strangle and from blood those two go together really and we find that that goes right back to the book of Genesis when Noah came out the Lord said that that they went to eat the blood and so these these are things that were given before the law came in that they you might say they're basic laws connected with the history of God's dealings with the human race right from the beginning of time so the letter was written and sent round to the assembly and that matter was settled so we have precious lessons in connection with people's life here in the way they handled this difficulty in the assembly where the trouble began they gave testimony as to what God was doing and they brought scripture to bear on it and they all accepted it [00:36:01] as being what the word of God taught now to close gentlemen and I don't want to keep you too late but this is the last meeting and I just want to end up with a reference to four things in the last chapter of Peter's second epistle just turn over now if we'd have time to have another another dozen meetings perhaps we could have gone through Peter's first and second epistle or maybe four or five but we're not going to continue on at the present time with any further meetings but I just want to notice in Peter's second epistle the last chapter four things that we have here in verse two he says read verse one this second epistle beloved chapter three of Peter's second Peter this second epistle beloved I now write unto you in both which I stir up your pure minds by well remembrance that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets [00:37:01] and of the commandments of us the apostles of the Lord and Savior be mindful four b's we have in this chapter the first is be mindful be mindful of what be mindful of the words that have been spoken by the prophets and apostles because he reminded in the last days there would come scoffers and brethren within the last days and we have the scoffers and we have the mockers and they're saying as they say here where is the promise of his coming you've been preaching that the Lord's going to come all these years he hasn't come yet where is the promise of his coming Peter reminds them that these people are willingly ignorant of the fact that God has intervened in the history of the human race before and he looks back to the flood everything was going on wonderfully man making great progress but leaving God out the earth filled with violence and corruption and all of a sudden God sends a flood he says don't forget it [00:38:03] man might like to deny that God intervened in the history of the human race in the past but God did intervene and the word proves it and all everything on earth proves it and God's going to intervene again the Lord is going to come and before he comes to judge he's going to come to take his people out so he says be mindful the second b is verse 8 be not ignorant beloved but beloved be not ignorant of this one thing that one day is with the Lord is a thousand years and a thousand years is one day the Lord is not slack concerning his promises some men count slackness but is long suffering to us with not winning it only should perish but that all should come to repentance be not ignorant if we can give a title for this chapter we will say it's a chapter that deals with knowledge and ignorance we have those who are not ignorant and we have those who are ignorant [00:39:04] these men who deny the coming of the Lord they are willingly ignorant but believers to us believers he says be not ignorant and we should not be ignorant of the word of God nor of the place that we occupy now in the history of God's dealing with man right at the very end we might say of the christian dispensation the coming of the Lord you might say we're on the threshold of his coming the

coming of the Lord draws nigh everything points to it everything's heading up to the same direction many people in the world are saying things can't go on like they're going even to talk about ecology and all that kind of thing and pollution people are beginning to realize that something there's got to be some somehow something's got to be done because that seems from the way they're going to catastrophe [00:40:01] we know from scripture that the Lord is going to step in and the Lord is the reason why he hasn't stepped in is that he's long suffering not willing that any should perish but the Lord should come to his presence do you know why Methuselah lived so long Methuselah lived to be 969 years old because the flood couldn't come until Methuselah died and Methuselah died the year of the flood and those who study the outside that the name Methuselah means when he is dead it shall be sent so Methuselah as long as he was alive was a reminder that something was coming when he died God's judgment was coming so the Lord lengthened out Methuselah's life to still give people a chance to repent and they didn't so they wouldn't be ignorant then and the sad thing is they're really ignorant today but God's still saving souls and so it's still for us to preach the gospel faithfully looking for the Lord's return be not ignorant now the next one is in verse 14 but beloved seeing ye look for such things be diligent that ye may be found of him [00:41:03] in peace without spot and danger and without spot and blameless that's what we need to be we need to be diligent be diligent in attending to the things of the Lord beloved we need to be more diligent in our spiritual things may the Lord stir us up as individuals as families and as family to be more diligent in his things diligent in living for Christ diligent in the testimony that we give diligent in speaking to souls diligent in attendance to meetings and in speaking the Lord's interest in every way possible let us be diligent and the last one is beware verse 17 ye therefore beloved seeing you know these things before beware lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked fall from your own steadfastness why do we need this warning beware because it's possible for a [00:42:01] person to make a false profession so this is for the professor the mere professor he says beware and even for real believers we need to beware of drifting into indolence and not and being not diligent but in contrast he says in verse 18 and this is where Peter ends his ministry but growing grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to whom the glory both now and forever amen you notice he doesn't say growing knowledge first he says growing grace and knowledge we like to pride ourselves on knowledge but we need to grow in grace first and then knowledge maybe that's where we lack sometimes and don't give the testimony we should we don't have grace we need grace with one another and we'll win one another with grace but the knowledge must go along with the grace the gates must go along with the knowledge so may the Lord enable us to take these four b's home to our heart as we realize the nearness of the coming [00:43:04] again of our Lord Jesus Christ