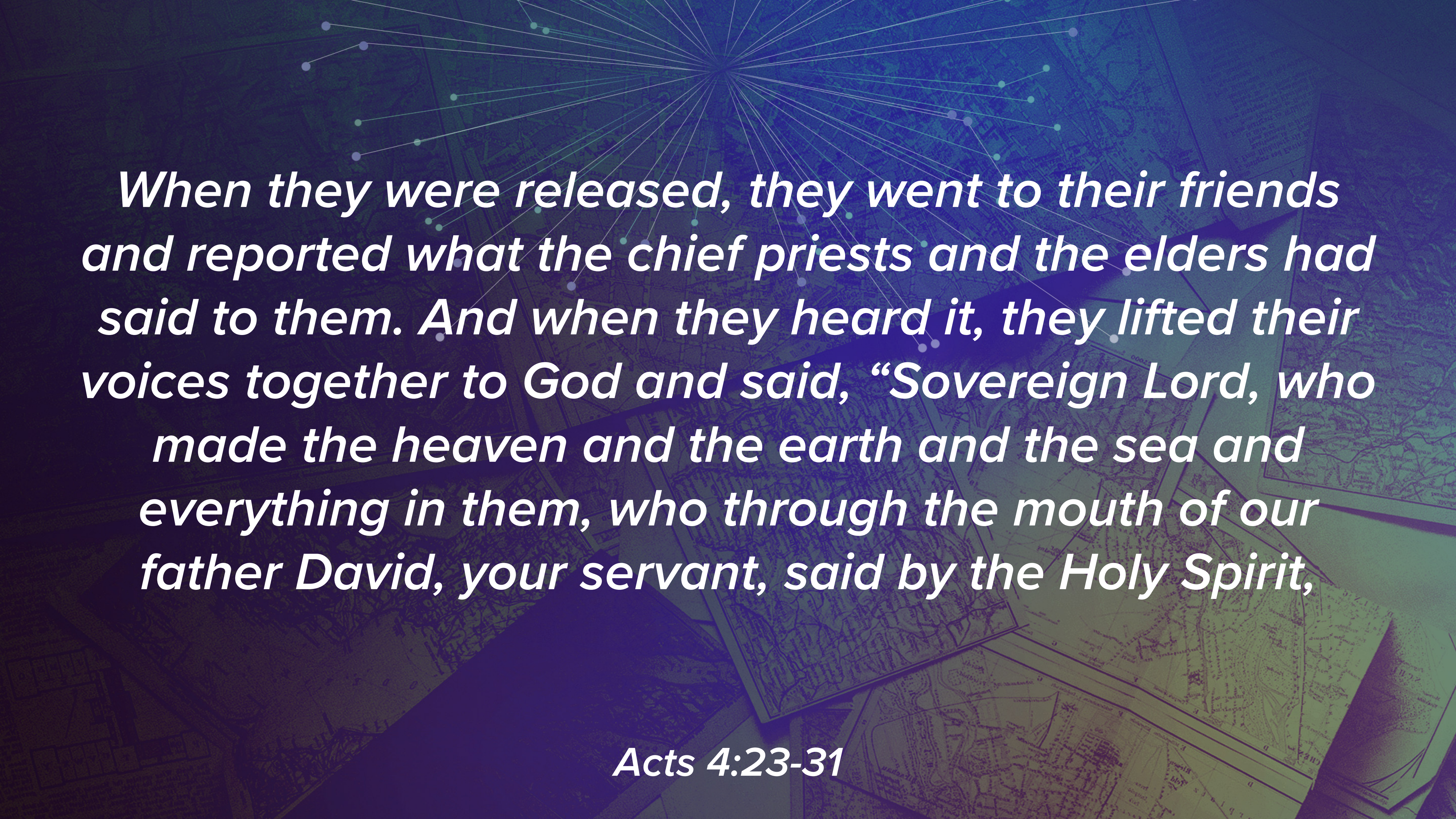


The background features a collage of old, sepia-toned maps. Overlaid on these maps is a network of thin white lines connecting various glowing blue and white dots, creating a sense of global connectivity. The text is centered in the middle of the image.

# **how the church survives**

## **Acts 4:23-31**

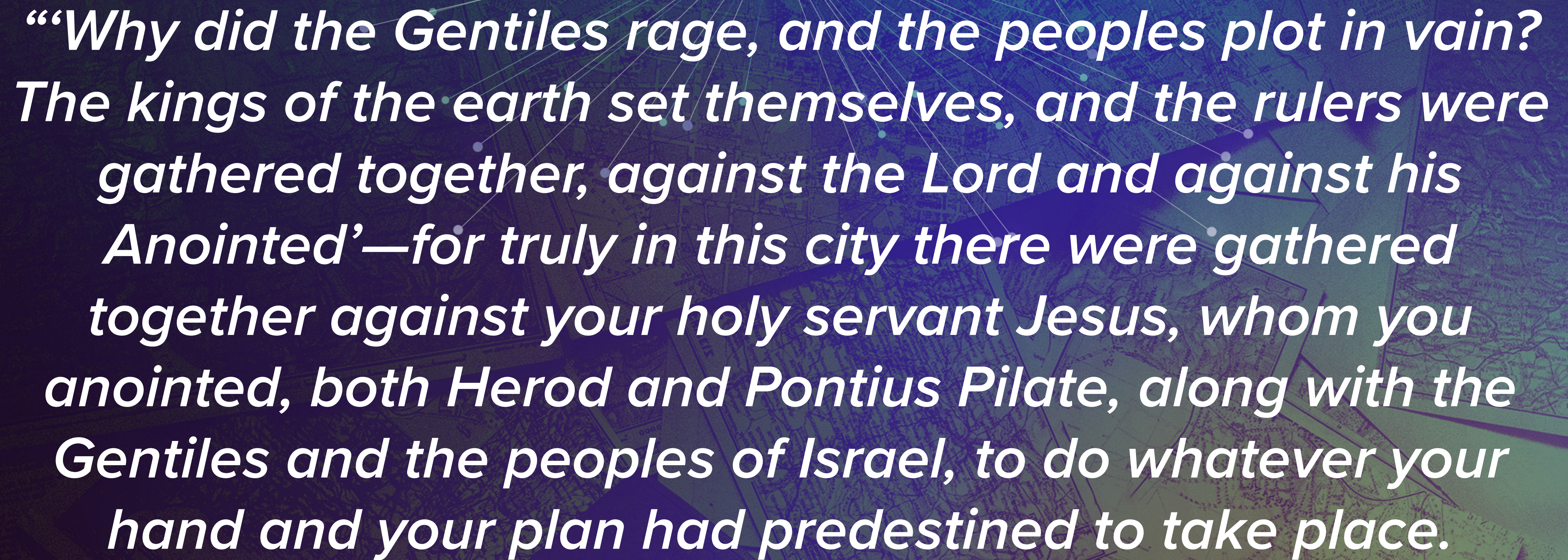


The background features a dark blue gradient. At the top center, there is a network diagram with a central point and many lines radiating outwards to smaller dots. Below this, a faint, light-colored map of a city or region is visible, showing streets and geographical features. The text is overlaid on this background.

*When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, “Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit,*

*Acts 4:23-31*

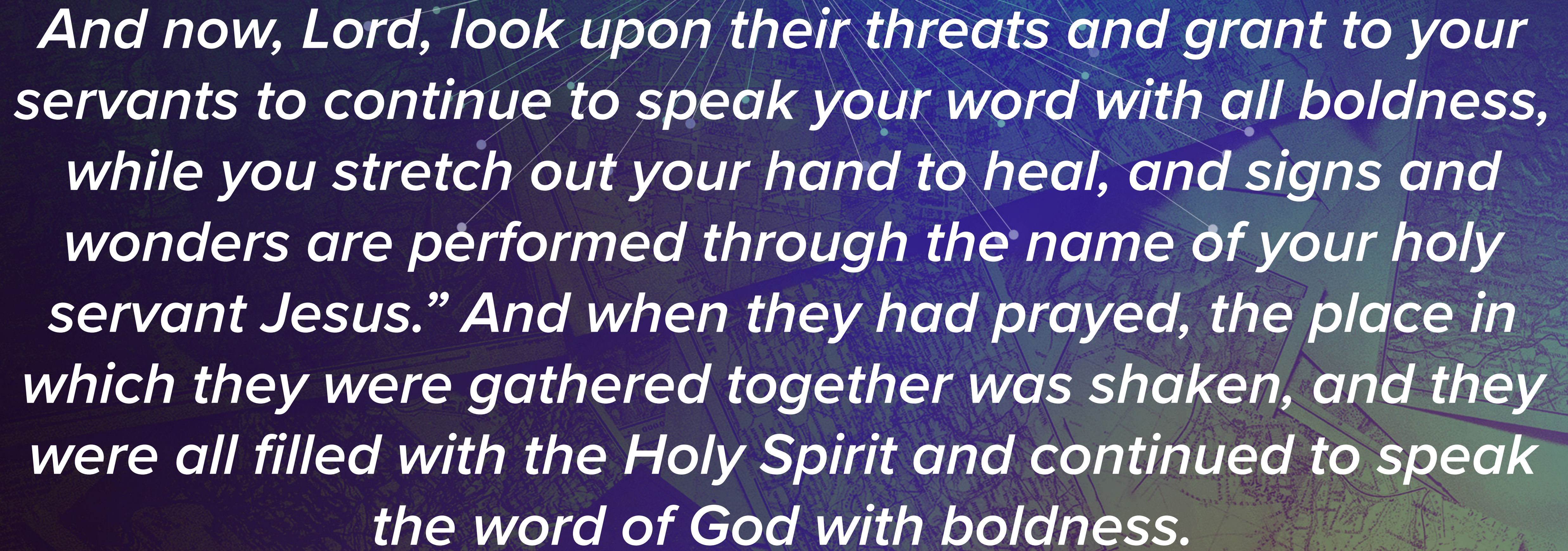




*“Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed’—for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.*

*Acts 4:23-31*





*And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.*

*Acts 4:23-31*





# Outline

- Context Within Acts
- Verse Breakdown
- A Time of Prayer



# Context Within Acts

- **Acts 1:** The Church before the Holy Spirit; Weak, Inward-focused, waiting for something to happen.
- **Acts 2:** The Coming of the Holy Spirit; The Church invigorated into prophetic preaching that changed lives with God's presence.
- **Acts 3:** A Snapshot of the Early Days; Wondrous miracles confirmed the truth of what the Apostles Preached: Jesus was the Messiah.
- **Acts 4:1-22:** The World Strikes Back; Offended by their teachings of Christ's exclusivity, the religious leaders of the day attempt to silence the Apostles.



# Verse Breakdown 23

- Vs. 23: This was the first example of persecution that the church ever experienced.
- Vs 23: Understandably, Peter and John immediately went to report, discuss, and respond to the situation with the early church leaders.

*[23] When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them.*

**Public Proclamation of the Word will always be met with hostility from people both outside and inside the church.**



# Verse Breakdown 24-27

- Vs 24-25a: The Church responded to this new hardship through God-Focused, Scripture-Based Prayer.
- Vs 25b-26: Psalms 2 is a reminder that despite their plans and machinations, The Son will always triumph over the rulers of this world.
- Vs 27-28: By connecting the truth of Scripture with their circumstances, the church was comforted by God's Plan.

***It is essential, through Prayer and Scripture reading, to be reminded of how God has chosen to respond to a world full of evil, sin, and hardships.***

*[24] And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, "Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, [25] who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit,*

*"Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? [26] The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed'—*

*[27] for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, [28] to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.*



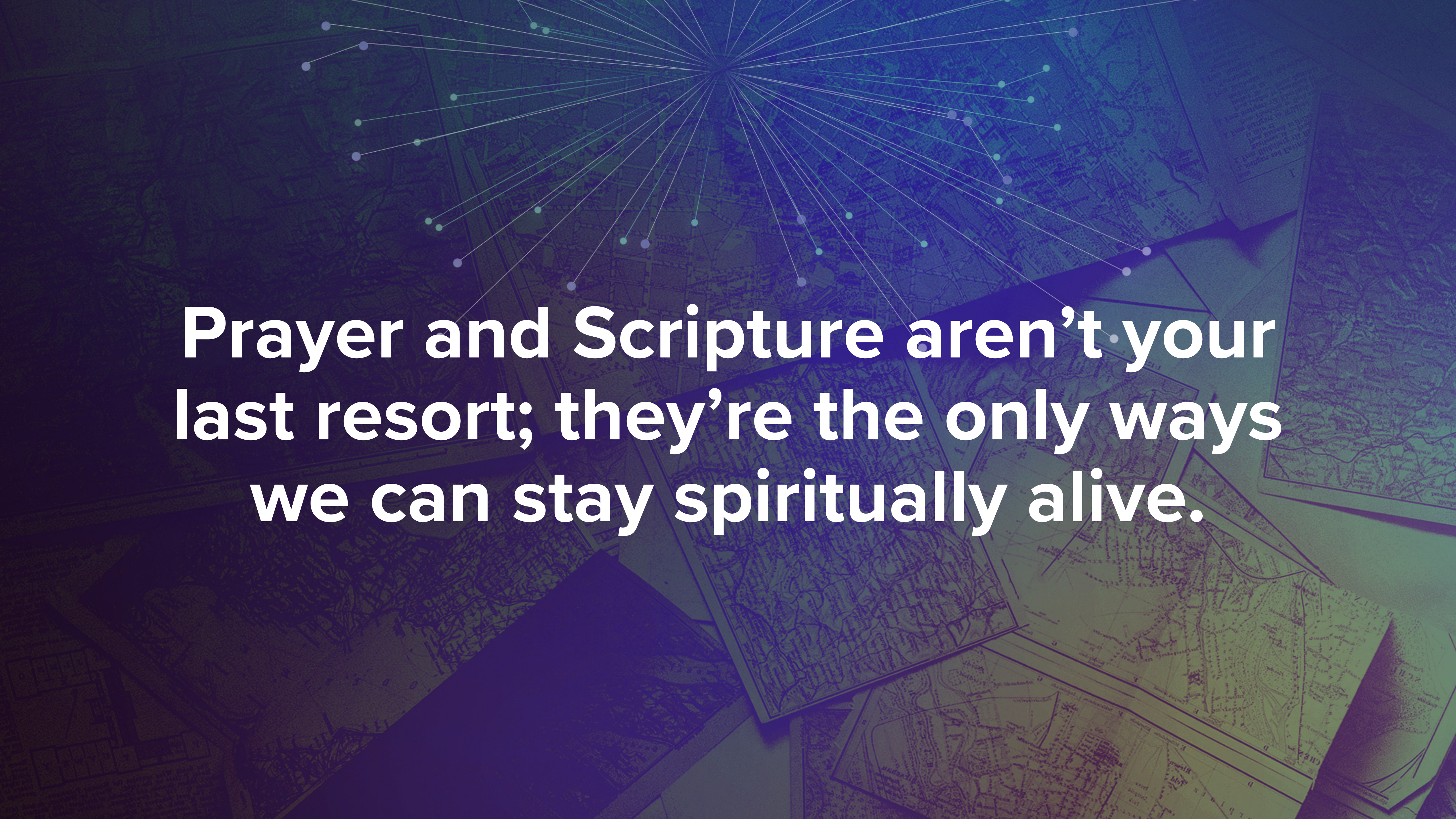
# Verse Breakdown 29-31

- Vs 29: Having approached God by affirming who he is, the Church addresses their fear.
- Vs 30: The prayer ends with a request for the continuation of the Great Commission.
- Vs 31: God responded to their prayer by drawing attention to his continual presence.

**God's presence will move our prayer to a place where one day all we'll pray for is God's presence.**

*[29] And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, [30] while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus." [31] And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.*



The background features a dark blue overlay with a network diagram of white lines and dots radiating from a central point. Below this, several historical maps are visible, including a detailed street map of London and a map of the United States with state boundaries. 

**Prayer and Scripture aren't your  
last resort; they're the only ways  
we can stay spiritually alive.**





# A Time of Prayer