

ACTS AND MARTYRDOM OF THE HOLY APOSTLE ANDREI

Edited by Noel Joshua Hadley

What we have all, both presbyters and deacons of the churches of Achaia, beheld with our eyes, we have written to all the churches established in the name of Yahusha HaMashiach, both in the east and west, north and south. Shalom to you, and to all who believe in one Elohiym, perfect Trinity, true Father unbegotten, true Son only begotten, true Ruach HaQodesh proceeding from the Father, and abiding in the Son, in order that there may be shown one Ruach HaQodesh subsisting in the Father and Son in precious Divinity. This faith we have learned from the blessed Andrei, the apostle of our Adonai Yahusha HaMashiach, whose passion also we, having seen it set forth before our eyes, have not hesitated to give an account of, according to the degree of ability we have.

Accordingly the proconsul Aegeates, having come into the city of Patras, began to compel those believing in Mashiach to worship the idols; to whom the blessed Andrei, running up, said: It behooved you, being a judge of men, to acknowledge your Judge who is in the heaven, and having acknowledged Him, to worship Him; and worshipping Him who is the true Elohiym, to turn away your thoughts from those which are not true elohiym.

To whom Aegeates said: Are you Andrei, who destroys the temples of the elohiym, and persuades men about the religion which, having lately made its appearance, the emperors of the Romans have given orders to suppress?

The blessed Andrei said: The emperors of the Romans have never recognized the truth. And this the Son of Elohiym, who came on account of the salvation of men, manifestly teaches— that these idols are not only not elohiym, but also most shameful demons, and hostile to the human race, teaching men to offend Elohiym, so that, by being offended, He turns away and will not hearken; that therefore, by His turning away and

not hearkening, they may be held captive by the devil; and that they might work them to such a degree, that when they go out of the body they may be found deserted and naked, carrying nothing with them but sins.

Aegeates said: These are superfluous and vain words: as for your Yahusha, for proclaiming these things to the Yahudiym they nailed him to the tree of the cross.

The blessed Andrei answering, said: Oh, if you would recognize the mystery of the cross, with what reasonable love the Author of the life of the human race for our restoration endured this tree of the cross, not unwillingly, but willingly!

Aegeates said: Seeing that, betrayed by his own Talmidiym, and seized by the Yahudiym, he was brought before the procurator, and according to their request was nailed up by the procurator's soldiers, in what way do you say that he willingly endured the tree of the cross?

The holy Andrei said: For this reason, I say willingly, since I was with Him when he was betrayed by His Talmidiym. For before He was betrayed, He spoke to us to the effect that He should be betrayed and crucified for the salvation of men and foretold that He should rise again on the third day. To whom my brother Kepha said, 'Far be it from you, Adonai; let this by no means be.' And so, being angry, He said to Kepha, 'Get behind me, Satan; for you are not disposed to the things of Elohiym.' And in order that He might most fully explain that He willingly underwent the passion, He said to us, 'I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again.' And, last of all, while He was supping with us, He said, 'One of you will betray me.' At these words, therefore, all becoming exceedingly grieved, in order that the surmise might be free from doubt, He made it clear, saying, 'To whomsoever I shall give the piece of bread out of my hand, he it is who betrays me.' When, therefore, He gave it to one of our fellow Talmidiym, and gave an account of things to come as if they were already present, He showed that He was to be willingly betrayed. For neither did He run away and leave His betrayer at fault; but remaining in the place in which He knew that he was, He awaited him.

Aegeates said: I wonder that you, being a sensible man, should wish to uphold him on any terms whatever; for, whether willingly or unwillingly, all the same, you admit that he was fastened to the cross.

The blessed Andrei said: This is what I said, if now you apprehend, that great is the mystery of the cross, which, if you wish, as is likely, to hear, attend to me.

Aegeates said: A mystery, it cannot be called, but a punishment.

The blessed Andrei said: This punishment is the mystery of man's restoration. If you listen with any attention, you will prove it.

Aegeates said: I indeed will hear patiently; but you, unless you submissively obey me, shall receive the mystery of the cross in yourself.

The blessed Andrei answered: If I had been afraid of the tree of the cross, I should not have proclaimed the glory of the cross.

Aegeates said: Your speech is foolish, because you proclaim that the cross is not a punishment, and through your foolhardiness you are not afraid of the punishment of death.

The holy Andrei said: It is not through foolhardiness, but through faith, that I am not afraid of the punishment of death; for the death of sins is hard. And on this account, I wish you to hear the mystery of the cross, in order that you perhaps, acknowledging it, may believe, and believing, may come somehow or other to the renewing of your soul.

Aegeates said: That which is shown to have perished is for renewing. Do you mean that my soul has perished, that you make me come to the renewing of it through the faith, I know not what, of which you have spoken?

The blessed Andrei answered: This it is which I desired time to learn, which also I shall teach and make manifest, that though the souls of men are destroyed, they shall be renewed through the mystery of the cross. For the first man through the tree of transgression brought in death; and it was necessary for the human race, that through the suffering of the tree, death, which had come into the world, should be driven out. And since the first man, who brought death into the world through the transgression of the tree, had been produced from the spotless earth, it was necessary that the Son of Elohiym should be begotten a perfect man from the spotless virgin, that He should restore eternal life, which men had lost through A'dam, and should cut off the tree of carnal appetite through the tree of the cross. Hanging upon the cross, He stretched out His blameless hands for the hands which had been incontinently stretched out; for the most sweet food of the forbidden tree, He received gall for food; and

taking our mortality upon Himself, He made a gift of His immortality to us.

Aegeates said: With these words you shall be able to lead away those who shall believe in you; but unless you have come to grant me this, that you offer sacrifices to the almighty Elohiym, I shall order you, after having been scourged, to be fastened to that very cross which you commend.

The blessed Andrei said: To Elohiym Almighty, who alone is true, I bring sacrifice day by day; not the smoke of incense, nor the flesh of bellowing bulls, nor the blood of goats, but sacrificing a spotless lamb day by day on the altar of the cross; and though all the people of the faithful partake of His body and drink His blood, the Lamb that has been sacrificed remains after this entire and alive. Truly, therefore, is He sacrificed, and truly is His body eaten by the people, and His blood is likewise drunk; nevertheless, as I have said, He remains entire, and spotless, and alive.

Aegeates said: How can this be?

The blessed Andrei said: If you would know, take the form of a Talmidiym, that you may learn what you are inquiring after.

Aegeates said: I will exact of you through tortures the gift of this knowledge.

The blessed Andrei declared: I wonder that you, being an intelligent man, should fall into the folly of thinking that you may be able to persuade me, through your tortures, to disclose to you the sacred things of Elohiym. You have heard the mystery of the cross, you have heard the mystery of the sacrifice. If you believe in Mashiach the Son of Elohiym, who was crucified, I shall altogether disclose to you in what manner the Lamb that has been slain may live, after having been sacrificed and eaten, remaining in His kingdom entire and spotless.

Aegeates said: And by what means does the lamb remain in his kingdom after he has been slain and eaten by all the people, as you have said?

The blessed Andrei said: If you believe with all your heart, you shall be able to learn but if you believe not, you shall not by any means attain the idea of such truth.

Then Aegeates, enraged, ordered him to be shut up in prison, where, when he was shut up, a multitude of the people came together to him from almost all the province, so that they wished to kill Aegeates, and by

breaking down the doors of the prison to set free the blessed Andrei the apostle.

Those same individuals the blessed Andrei admonished in these words, saying: Do not stir up the shalom of our Adonai Yahusha HaMashiach into seditious and devilish uproar. For my Adonai, when He was betrayed, endured it with all patience; He did not strive, He did not cry out, nor in the streets did anyone hear Him crying out. Therefore, do you also keep silence, quietness, and peace; and hinder not my martyrdom, but rather get yourselves also ready beforehand as athletes to Adonai, in order that you may overcome threatening by a nephesh that has no fear of man, and that you may get the better of injuries through the endurance of the body. For this temporary fall is not to be feared; but that should be feared which has no end. The fear of men, then, is like smoke which, while it is raised and gathered together, disappears. And those torments ought to be feared which never have an end. For these torments, which happen to be somewhat light, anyone can bear; but if they are heavy, they soon destroy life. But those torments are everlasting, where there is daily weeping, and mourning, and lamentation, and never-ending torture, to which the proconsul Aegeates is not afraid to go. Be therefore rather prepared for this, that through temporary afflictions you may attain everlasting rest, and may flourish forever, and reign with Mashiach.

The holy Apostle Andrei having admonished the people with these and such like words through the whole night, when the light of day dawned, Aegeates having sent for him, ordered the blessed Andrei to be brought to him; and having sat down upon the tribunal, he said: I have thought that you, by your reflection during the night, has turned away your thoughts from folly, and given up your commendation of Mashiach that you might be able to be with us, and not throw away the pleasures of life; for it is folly to come for any purpose to the suffering of the cross, and to give oneself up to most shameful punishments and burnings.

The holy Andrei answered: I shall be able to have joy with you, if you will believe in Mashiach, and throw away the worship of idols; for Mashiach has sent me to this province, in which I have acquired for Mashiach a people not the smallest.

Aegeates said: For this reason, I compel you to make a libation, that these people who have been deceived by you may forsake the vanity of your

teaching and may themselves offer grateful libations to the elohiym; for not even one city has remained in Achaia in which their temples have not been forsaken and deserted. And now, through you, let them be again restored to the worship of the images, in order that the elohiym also, who have been enraged against you, being pleased by this, may bring it about that you may return to their friendship and ours. But if not, you await varied tortures, on account of the vengeance of the elohiym; and after these, fastened to the tree of the cross which you commend, you shall die.

The holy Andrei said: Listen, O son of death and chaff made ready for eternal burnings, to me, the servant of Elohiym and apostle of Yahusha HaMashiach. Until now I have conversed with you kindly about the perfection of the faith, in order that you, receiving the exposition of the truth, being made perfect as its vindicator, might despise vain idols, and worship Elohiym, who is in the heavens; but since you remain in the same shamelessness at last, and think me to be afraid because of your threats, bring against me whatever may seem to you greater in the way of tortures. For the more shall I be well pleasing to my King, the more I shall endure in tortures for the confession of His name.

Then the proconsul Aegeates, being enraged, ordered the apostle of Mashiach to be afflicted by tortures. Being stretched out, therefore, by seven times three soldiers, and beaten with violence, he was lifted up and brought before the impious Aegeates. And he spoke to him thus: Listen to me, Andrei, and withdraw your thoughts from the outpouring of your blood; but if you will not hearken to me, I shall cause you to perish on the tree of the cross.

The holy Andrei said: I am a slave of the cross of Mashiach, and I ought rather to pray to attain to the trophy of the cross than to be afraid; but for you is laid up eternal torment, which, however, you may escape after you have tested my endurance, if you will believe in my Mashiach. For I am afflicted about your destruction, and I am not disturbed about my own suffering. For my suffering takes up a space of one day, or two at most; but your torment for endless ages shall never come to a close. Wherefore henceforward cease from adding to your miseries and lighting up everlasting fire for yourself.

Enraged, Aegeates ordered the blessed Andrei to be fastened to the cross. And he having left them all, went up to the cross, and said to it with a clear voice: Rejoice, O cross, which has been consecrated by the body of Mashiach, and adorned by His limbs as if with pearls. Assuredly before

my Adonai went up on you, you had much earthly fear; but now invested with heavenly longing, you are fitted up according to my prayer. For I know, from those who believe, how many graces you have in Him, how many gifts prepared beforehand. Free from care, then, and with joy, I come to you, that you also exulting may receive me, the Talmidiym of Him that was hanged upon you; because you have been always faithful to me, and I have desired to embrace you. O good cross, which hast received comeliness and beauty from the limbs of the Adonai; O much longed for, and earnestly desired, and fervently sought after, and already prepared beforehand for my soul longing for you, take me away from men, and restore me to my Master, in order that through you He may accept me who through you has redeemed me.

And having thus spoken, the blessed Andrei, standing on the ground, and looking earnestly upon the cross, stripped himself and gave his clothes to the executioners, having urged the brethren that the executioners should come and do what had been commanded them; for they were standing at some distance. And they having come up, lifted him on the cross; and having stretched his body across with ropes, they only bound his feet, but did not sever his joints, having received this order from the proconsul: for he wished him to be in distress while hanging, and in the night-time, as he was suspended, to be eaten up alive by dogs.

And a great multitude of the brethren stood by, nearly twenty thousand; and having beheld the executioners standing off, and that they had done to the blessed one nothing of what those who were hanged up suffer, they thought that they would again hear something from him; for assuredly, as he was hanging, he moved his head smiling. And Stratocles inquired of him: Why are you smiling, Andrei, servant of Elohiym? Your laughter makes us mourn and weep because we are deprived of you. And the blessed Andrei answered him: Shall I not laugh at all, my son Stratocles, at the empty stratagem of Aegeates, through which he thinks to take vengeance upon us? We have nothing to do with him and his plans. He cannot hear; for if he could, he would be aware, having learned it by experience, that a man of Yahusha is unpunished.

And having thus spoken, he discoursed to them all in common, for the people ran together enraged at the unjust judgment of Aegeates: You men standing by me, and women, and children, and elders, bond and free, and as many as will hear; I beseech you, forsake all this life, you who have for my sake assembled here; and hasten to take upon you my life, which leads

to heavenly things, and once for all despise all temporary things, confirming the purposes of those who believe in Mashiach. And he exhorted them all, teaching that the sufferings of this transitory life are not worthy to be compared with the future recompense of the eternal life.

And the multitude hearing what was said by him, did not stand off from the place, and the blessed Andrei continued to say to them more than he had spoken. And so much was said by him, that a space of three days and nights was taken up, and no one was tired and went away from him. And when also on the fourth day they beheld his nobleness, and his unwearied intellect, and the multitude of his words, and the serviceableness of his exhortations, and the steadfastness of his nephesh, and the sobriety of his ruach, and the fixedness of his mind, and the perfection of his reason, they were enraged against Aegeates; and all with one accord hastened to the tribunal, and cried out against Aegeates, who was sitting, saying: What is your judgment, O proconsul? You have judged wickedly; your awards are impious. In what has the man done wrong; what evil has he done? The city has been put in an uproar; you grieve us all; do not betray Caesar's city. Grant willingly to the Achaians a just man; grant willingly to us a Elohiym-fearing man; do not put to death a righteous man. Four days he has been hanging, and is alive; having eaten nothing, he has filled us all. Take down the man from the cross, and we shall all seek after wisdom; release the man, and to all Achaia will mercy be shown. It is not necessary that he should suffer this, because, though hanging, he does not cease proclaiming the truth.

And when the proconsul refused to listen to them, at first indeed signing with his hand to the crowd to take themselves off, they began to be emboldened against him, being in number about twenty thousand. And the proconsul, having beheld that they had somehow become maddened, afraid that something frightful would befall him, rose up from the tribunal and went away with them, having promised to set free the blessed Andrei. And some went on before to tell the apostle the cause for which they came to the place.

While all the crowd, therefore, was exulting that the blessed Andrei was going to be set free, the proconsul having come up, and all the brethren rejoicing along with Maximilla, the blessed Andrei, having heard this, said to the brethren standing by: What is it necessary for me to say to him, when I am departing to Adonai, that will I also say. For what reason have you again come to us, Aegeates? On what account do you, being a stranger

to us, come to us? What will you again dare to do, what to contrive? Tell us. Have you come to release us, as having changed your mind? I would not agree with you that you had really changed your mind. Nor would I believe you, saying that you are my friend. Do you, O proconsul, release him that has been bound? By no means. For I have One with whom I shall be forever. I have One with whom I shall live to countless ages. To Him I go. To Him I hasten, who also having made you known to me, has said to me, 'Let not that fearful man terrify you; do not think that he will lay hold of you, who art mine: for he is your enemy.' Therefore, having known you through him who has turned towards me, I am delivered from you. But if you wish to believe in Mashiach, there will be opened up for time, as I promised you, a way of access; but if you have come only to release me, I shall not be able after this to be brought down from this cross alive in the body. For I and my kinsmen depart to our own, allowing you to be what you are, and what you do not know about yourself. For already I see my King, already I worship Him, already I stand before Him, where the fellowship of the angels is, where He reigns the only emperor, where there is light without night, where the flowers never fade, where trouble is never known, nor the name of grief heard, where there are cheerfulness and exultation that have no end. O blessed cross! Without the longing for you, no one enters into that place. But I am distressed, Aegeates, about your own miseries, because eternal perdition is ready to receive you. Run then, for your own sake, O pitiable one, while yet you can, lest perchance you should wish then when you cannot.

When, therefore, he attempted to come near the tree of the cross, so as to release the blessed Andrei, with all the city applauding him, the holy Andrei said with a loud voice: Do not suffer Andrei, bound upon Your tree, to be released, O Adonai; do not give me who am in Your mystery to the shameless devil. O Yahusha HaMashiach, let not Your adversary release me, who have been hanged by Your favor; O Father, let this insignificant man no longer humble him who has known Your greatness. The executioners, therefore, putting out their hands, were not able at all to touch him. Others, then, and others endeavored to release him, and no one at all was able to come near him; for their arms were benumbed.

Then the blessed Andrei, having adjured the people, said: I entreat you earnestly, brethren, that I may first make one prayer to my Adonai. So then, set about releasing me. All the people therefore kept quiet because of the adjuration. Then the blessed Andrei, with a loud cry, said: Do not permit, O Adonai, Your servant at this time to be removed from You; for

it is time that my body be committed to the earth, and You shall order me to come to You. You who gives eternal life, my Teacher whom I have loved, whom on this cross I confess, whom I know, whom I possess, receive me, O Adonai; and as I have confessed You and obeyed You, so now in this word hearken to me; and, before my body come down from the cross, receive me to Yourself, that through my departure there may be access to You of many of my kindred, finding rest for themselves in Your majesty.

When, therefore, he had said this, he became in the sight of all glad and exulting; for an exceeding splendor like lightning coming forth out of heaven shone down upon him, and so encircled him, that in consequence of such brightness mortal eyes could not look upon him at all. And the dazzling light remained about the space of half an hour. And when he had thus spoken and glorified Adonai still more, the light withdrew itself, and he gave up the ruach, and along with the brightness itself he departed to Adonai in giving Him thanks.

And after the decease of the most blessed Andrei the apostle, Maximilla being the most powerful of the notable women, and continuing among those who had come, as soon as she learned that the apostle had departed to Adonai, came up and turned her attention to the cross, along with Stratocles, taking no heed at all of those standing by, and with reverence took down the body of the most blessed apostle from the cross. And when it was evening, bestowing upon him the necessary care, she prepared the body for burial with costly spices, and laid it in her own tomb. For she had been parted from Aegeates on account of his brutal disposition and lawless conduct, having chosen for herself a holy and quiet life; and having been united to the love of Mashiach, she spent her life blessedly along with the brethren.

Aegeates had been very importunate with her and promised that he would make her mistress of his wealth; but not having been able to persuade her, he was greatly enraged, and was determined to make a public charge against all the people, and to send to Caesar an accusation against both Maximilla and all the people. And while he was arranging these things in the presence of his officers, at the dead of night he rose up, and unseen by all his people, having been tormented by the devil, he fell down from a great height, and rolling into the midst of the marketplace of the city, breathed his last.

And this was reported to his brother Stratocles; and he sent his servants, having told them that they should bury him among those who had died a violent death. But he sought nothing of his substance, saying: Let not my Adonai Yahusha HaMashiach, in whom I have believed, suffer me to touch anything whatever of the goods of my brother, that the condemnation of him who dared to cut off the apostle of the Adonai may not disgrace me.

These things were done in the province of Achaia, in the city of Patras on the day before the kalends of December, where his good deeds are kept in mind even to this day, to the glory and praise of our Adonai Yahusha HaMashiach, to whom be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*