

ACTS

of the Holy Spirit

Session #7 – 4:1 - 22

I. Peter's and John's Arrest (4:1 - 4)

Verse 1

- 1) **The priests** (hierous = from ieros (holy) – ritual leader)
- 2) **and the captain** (strategos = leader of the Levites) **of the temple guard** (hieros = sacred things)
- 3) **and the Sadducees** (Saddoukaios = followers of Zadok) **came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people.**

Starting in verse 1, Luke lists at least eleven people or groups of Jewish leadership that rise up in opposition to the miracles and message of Peter and John.

The term "Jewish Leader" is not a simple term. The Jewish leadership structure was fractured by many different theologies and offices that were sometimes in competition for power and prestige.



Priests

- Priests and Levites had to be men from the tribe of Levi.
- Priests offered the sacrifices and took care of the ritual concerns in the temple.
- They were divided into 24 clans and served a week at a time.
- The "High Priest/Chief Priest" was in charge of the Temple in Jerusalem. They were appointed annually and were in charge of the Sanhedrin.



Levites

- Those Levites who were not assigned duties as priests were concerned with the other duties of the Temple.
- Like priests they were divided into 24 families/courses, each serving one week at a time as guards, policemen, doorkeepers, singers, musicians, and servants.
- Note: the daily activities of the Temple require 1,000 people serving.



Sadducees

- Known as the "elite" group
- They followed the Torah and rejected the newer traditions including:
 - No resurrection
 - No afterlife at all
 - No angels or spirits
- Tended to be wealthy and held the majority of seats on the Sanhedrin.
- Tended to compromise with Rome to spare their wealth and powerful position



Verse 2

They were greatly disturbed (diaponeomai = offended to the point of pain)

because the apostles were

1) teaching the people (didasko = to explain/expound)

2) and proclaiming (kataggello = preach)

in Jesus

the resurrection (anastasis = rising up) of the dead.

This teaching would be a direct affront to the theology of the Sadducees.

Verse 3

They seized Peter

and John,

and because it was evening,

they put them in jail

until the next day.

The birth of persecution for righteousness sake!

“Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues.” Matt. 10:17

“You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.” Matt. 10:22

“They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, the time is coming when anyone who kills you will think they are offering a service to God.” John 16:2

Verse 4

But many

who heard the message believed, (pisteuo = have

faith)

and the number of men grew to about five thousand.

From the 3,000 added on the day of Pentecost, the church grew through the persecution of Peter and John as God authenticated their ministries through the miracle of the healing of the man at the Gate Beautiful.

II. Peter's Third Sermon (4:5 - 12)

Verse 5

The next day

the 4) rulers, (archon)

5) elders (presbyteros)

6) and teachers (grammateus = scribe/secretary)

of the law

met in Jerusalem.

Likely a similar group had condemned Jesus to death and now forms as a show of power and authority against Peter and John.



- Members of the ruling body of the Jewish people – The Sanhedrin.
- The Sanhedrin in Jerusalem was made up of 71 members with the High Priest being the leader.
- They included Scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees and had final authority over decisions of law for the people. Similar to our Supreme Court.



- Generally NOT part of the Temple service, but were older trusted Jews whose leadership in local business and civil organizations were helpful in keeping the peace and monitoring the people for the Sanhedrin.



Scribes

- Specially trained interpreters and teachers of the Law
- Part of several different parties
- Main focus is the duplication and supervision of the documents of the Temple.
- Sometimes called “lawyers” because they are called in to interpret the fine details of the Torah.



Verse 6

7) **Annas**
the high priest was there,
and so were 8) **Caiaphas**,
9) **John**,
10) **Alexander**
and the 11) other men
of the high priest's family.

Note: **Annas the high priest**: was high priest for nine years before being removed by the Romans. Five of his sons became high priests. Still retained the power even though was NOT currently the high priest. (Jesus arrest - John 18:13,14,24)

Caiaphas the High Priest: was the son-in-law of Annas. He was a Sadducee and ruled for nine years. Plotted to kill Jesus (Matt. 26:3,4)

Verse 7

They had Peter
and **John**
brought before them (mesos = placed in the center)
and began to question them:
"By what power (dynamis = strength or ability)
or what name (onama - authority)
did you do this?"

They acknowledged that there was some outside power involved in this sign/miracle – they wanted to get to the source – this is the exact point of miracles – to lead people to seek the source! This is also the purpose/focus of our love, service, preaching, and witness.

Jesus said, “they will know you are my disciples by the way you love one another” – John 13:35



Verse 8

Then Peter,
filled with the Holy Spirit,

Guided by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit – Peter was once again empowered to preach to the Jewish Leaders his most difficult audience to date.

said to them:

"Rulers and elders of the people!

He is now addressing this group of influential leaders among the Jewish people.

Verse 9

*If we are being
called to account today
for an act of kindness (euergesis = good deed)
shown to a cripple (asthenes = weak/feeble)
and are asked
how he was healed, (sozo = salvation)*

Peter is NOT intimidated by the powerful showing of these leaders. Notice his logic – why are we being “called to account” for doing a “good deed” – is this not what we are suppose to do as Jews?

Note: Peter moves right to the source of the power rather than the argument about the effect of the power.

Verse 10

*then know this,
you and all the people
of Israel:
It is by the name
of Jesus Christ
of Nazareth,
whom you crucified
but whom God raised
from the dead,
that this man stands before you healed.*

Power: IN the NAME of Jesus Christ

Process: THROUGH DEATH and RESURRECTION

Proof: THROUGH HEALING of the lame man

Verse 11

He is

*"the stone you builders rejected,
which has become the capstone."*

Quoting Psalm 118:22 to make the messianic point that this happening was expected and fulfilled by Christ.

Verse 12

[and therefore] – statement of conclusion

Salvation (soteria = Messianic deliverance) *is found*
in no one else,
for there is no other name [authority]
under heaven
given to men (didomi) *by which*
we must be (deo = to bind together) *saved."*

Peter does not claim that Jesus is A WAY of salvation, but rather because of what God did through him, that HE is the ONLY way of salvation!

John 14:6 – "... no man comes unto the Father except through me." Only Jesus Christ the risen Lord can bind you with eternal salvation.

III. Jewish Leaders Response (4:13 - 22)

Verse 13

[Now]

When they saw (theroreo = behold/consider)

the courage (parresia = fearless speaking)
of Peter and John

and realized (katalambano = to take hold of the mind)

that they were unschooled, (agrammatos = illiterate)
ordinary men, (idiotes = ignorant/rude/unlearned)

they were astonished (thaumazo = marvel/wonder)

and they took note (epiginosko = to acknowledge)

that these men

had been with Jesus.

Three great influences: 1) Confident faith, and 2) Supernatural power, and 3) Eye witnesses Testimony – having been with Jesus!

Verse 14

But since

they could see the man
who had been healed
standing there with them,

there was nothing they could say.

This last statement is not absolutely true. They can't say anything and continue to believe the lie they are standing on! Even with the trinity of evidence – they still refuse to repent from their unbelief in Jesus Christ.

Note: the Jewish leaders did not attempt to disprove the resurrection of Christ! This was a critical point in the Jesus Movement – if these leaders can dis-prove the message of Peter and John, they can dis-arm the entire future of the movement!

Verse 15

So they ordered them

to withdraw from the Sanhedrin

and then conferred together.

How would Luke be privy to what was discussed in that private meeting that day?

The most likely answer is that one of those people was Paul of Tarsus – later the Apostle Paul!

Verse 16

"What are we going to do with these men?"
they asked.

"Everybody living in Jerusalem
knows they have done
an outstanding miracle, (gnostos semeion =
recognized/approved sign of credibility)
and we cannot deny it.

Simple truth: If you can't deny it - it is true! If it is true, then you have change your opinion to allow for this truth.

Verse 17

But to stop this thing

from spreading any further
among the people,

we must warn these men

to speak no longer

to anyone in this name."

This was the fear of the Jewish leaders – containment of the movement – no more conversions! This would be the goal of Satan as well!

Verse 18

Then
they called them in again
and commanded them
not to speak (phtheggomai = utter a sound)
or teach (didasko = to instruct/disciple)
at all (katholou = wholly/entirely)
in the name of Jesus.

Oppression always begins by limiting the civil rights of a people.

Verse 19

But Peter and John replied,
*"Judge for yourselves
whether it is right in God's sight
to obey you rather than God.*

If you were me – would you follow God or men?
That is a great question – “is this right in God’s sight”?
The definition of “wisdom” is doing what is right in God’s sight.

Charles Stanley quote: *“Wisdom is seeing things from God's perspective -- how does God see this -- and then responding to that according to biblical principles.”*

Paul says, *“On the contrary, we speak as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts.”* I Thess. 2:4

Verse 20

[For] – The reason statement
we cannot help
speaking about
what we have seen
and heard.“

The compulsion of the Holy Spirit can not be contained and
the command of Jesus Christ can not be compromised!

ONE OF OUR MOTTOS:
If you are not convinced,
you will not be contagious!

Verse 21

After further threats (porsapeilleo = to menace)
they let them go.
They could not decide
how to punish them,
[heurisko medeis = finding no basis]
because all the people
were praising (doxazo = glorifying) God
for what had happened.

This is more than ironic: They challenge them to keep silent but they refused because they want to please God not men – The Jews refuse to speak because they are so concerned about pleasing men and don’t care about pleasing God!

Verse 22

For
the man who was miraculously healed
was over forty years old.