

Acts 4 Supplement #1

Chapter Four – First Arrest

ACTS 4:1-10:

In the previous chapter, Peter and John healed a lame man, who had been in that condition since birth (over forty years – **4:22**); and was known by all. This notable miracle (**4:16**), created an audience, and Peter took advantage of this, by preaching Jesus as the Christ and repentance and conversion for the remission of sins (**Luke 24:47**).

In this chapter, we will see the success of the Gospel preached and accepted in the hearts of five thousand men of Israel; in addition, we will see the ire of the leaders of the people who thought they would be rid of the influence of Jesus of Nazareth, but in fact would come to realize that the Apostles of Jesus had truly been with Him, through the boldness of their speech (**4:13**).

Text #1:

Acts 4:1-4 “Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, ² being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. ³ And they laid hands on them, and put *them* in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. ⁴ However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.”

Captain of the Temple: He was the commander of the guard stationed chiefly in the tower Antonia. He was in charge of the Jewish temple police; that was permitted by the Romans for maintenance of order, protection against tumult, etc. during feasts, and other temple activities that the Gentile Roman forces could not police without violating the temple.

Sadducees: This is a sect of the Jews that we spoke of often in our study of the book of **Luke**. This specific sect of the Jews did not believe in the resurrection, angels, or spirits (**Acts 23:8**); and they were greatly disturbed that Peter and John were teaching concerning the resurrection of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, and therefore led the attack on these two Apostles of Christ Jesus.

Custody: Because of their fears concerning the instruction of the resurrection of the dead, they had Peter and John arrested (“**laid hands on them**”). Since all of the events leading up to this began at the hour of evening prayer (ninth hour, or about 3 PM - **3:1**), by the time they come to stop Peter and John, it is late in the evening and the Sanhedrin will not be in session. So, they will be imprisoned for the night, in the tower Antonia, until they can be brought before the court.

Five Thousand: Even though Peter and John were arrested, the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to salvation (**Romans 1:16**), is seen in that many of those who heard the testimony of the Apostles, believed. This means that they heeded the commands of **3:19** in repentance and conversion.

It is not clear by the expression of Luke, if he means that five thousand at this time believed, or the total number of believing men, now number five thousand. At any rate, it is an effective number of believers to begin to learn the Apostles doctrine (2:42) and prepare to continue to teach and spread the truth.

Text #2:

Acts 4:5-7 “And it came to pass, on the next day, that their rulers, elders, and scribes, ⁶ as well as Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the family of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. ⁷ And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, “By what power or by what name have you done this?””

High Priest: Annas had been appointed high priest by Quirinius, who was governor before Pilate in Palestine. Valerius Gratus (the Roman Prefect of Judaea province under Tiberius), who was also before Pilate, appointed Caiaphas as high priest later.

Caiaphas was the son-in-law of Annas (**John 18:13**). Although Annas was no longer the sitting high priest, he still held a great deal of influence with the Sanhedrin and was considered part of the family of the high priest.

All of these appointments had taken place through the interference of Roman authority and were not according to the Law of Moses (**Exodus 29; Leviticus 8-9**).

**Appointed by Quirinius
Roman Legate of Syria and Judea**

Ananus (Annas),
son of Seth
6 to 15 A.D.

**Appointed by Valerius Gratus
Roman Prefect of Judea**

Ishmael,
son of Fabus (Phabi)
15 to 16

Eleazar,
son of Ananus
16 to 17

Simon,
son of Camithos
17 to 18

Joseph (Caiaphas)
son-in-law of Ananus
(condemned Jesus)
18 to 36

Prefects and Procurators of Judaea: (those in bold letters issued coins)	
Coponius	AD 6-9
Marcus Ambibulus	9-12
Annius Rufus	12-15
Valerius Gratus	15-26
Pontius Pilate	26-36
Marcellus	36-37
Marullus	37-41
Cuspius Fadus	44-46
Tiberius Alexander	46-48
Ventidius Cumanus	48-54
Antonius Felix	52-59
Procius Festus	59-62
Albinus	62-64
Gessius Florus	64-66

John and Alexander: Nothing is truly known about these names mentioned by Luke. It is considered that they were men of great influence in the family of the high priest, and that Theophilus would have known who they were.

By What Power and Name: In truth, the leaders of the people have nothing to charge Peter and John. Their question is a stab at allowing them to incriminate themselves.

In fact, the question is also the answer to both the miracle in question, as well as the message of the resurrection that followed it.

Text #3:

Acts 4:8-10 “Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders of Israel: ⁹ If we this day are judged for a good deed *done* to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well, ¹⁰ let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole.”

Filled with the Holy Spirit: Jesus promised His disciples (soon to be Apostles), before His arrest and subsequent death, that He would not leave them orphans (**John 14:18**) but would send them back the Comforter - Helper (Holy Spirit). The Holy Spirit would be for the Apostles of

Christ in that day, a teacher, reminder, comforter, counselor, etc. (**John 14:15-17, 26; 15:26-27; 16:13-15**).

Here the fulfillment of this promise of the Father, they had heard from Jesus (**Acts 1:4**), is being demonstrated.

Instead of fear and unsettled testimony, the Spirit of God through Peter and John is going to give way before this high court of the Jews, to powerful and bold testimony, as to the power and Name behind the miracle performed.

Deed Done: We should take a moment and notice that not only had all the people in the temple at the hour of prayer, become aware of the miracle performed in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, but these rulers were also now very aware of it themselves. It is as plausible that some of them may have been there when it happened, as were aware by word of mouth. But no matter which method was at play in the knowledge of the miracle, all knew concerning the healing.

Let it be Known: Peter is now going to answer the direct question with a detailed explanation of the power and name behind this wonder causing act. Just as the miracle was known by all, Peter now wants all to also know by whom! To this end, he is going to give the name and authority behind the miracle, and two undisputable facts to coincide with it.

Name: “By the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth”. This entire entitled name is given; first, to identify to them that they already knew who He was. They were the ones who had been aggressively trying to kill Jesus of Nazareth for virtually His entire three, to three-and-a-half-year ministry. Second, Peter identifies that they were unsuccessful in their attempts to reject Him and keep Him from becoming King. In fact, Peter states that He is now the Christ (Messiah, Anointed of God).

Whom You Crucified: Imagine in your own mind, the courage it took to point a finger at these rulers, who had no trouble killing to Son of God, and in fact incriminate them for the blood of the Son of God.

Whom God Raised: In fact, they had killed the body of the Son of God, but God demonstrated Him to truly be whom He claimed by the power of the resurrection (**Romans 1:4**). The testimonial fact behind this statement is the man that stands before them, healed by the authority of the resurrected Christ of God!

Next: “No Other Name Under Heaven!”