

## Acts Chapter 5 Continued

**Acts 5:17 "Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation,"**

“High priest” (see note on 4:6). Here the title could refer to Annas (4:6), or Caiaphas.

“Sadducees” (see notes on 23:8; Matt. 3:7).

We see jealousy coming forth here. This high priest and these Sadducees could not deny that the miracles were done. They knew that they did not have the power to heal people, and they felt that people would stop coming to the temple and would follow these apostles instead.

This is a little like some churches now that get upset when some other church starts having converts. Jealousy has no place in the kingdom of God.

**Acts 5:18 "And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison."**

These leaders of the temple felt to protect their position in the temple and to keep worship in the temple the only worship services going on, they would lock these men of God up. This common prison just means that they were put in with the thieves and other dangerous criminals.

**Acts 5:19 "But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said,"**

“The angel of the Lord”: This person should not be confused with “the angel of the Lord” in the Old Testament.

This angel of the Lord was a ministering spirit sent by the Lord to release them from prison.

**Acts 5:20 "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life."**

“All the words of this life”: The gospel (Phil. 2:16; 1 John 1:1-14). Jesus Christ came into this world to provide abundant and eternal life to spiritually dead people (John 1:4; 11:25; 1 John 5:20).

They were not released so that they might run and hide, but that they might carry the message of life to all. They were to go back to the temple where they were taken before and preach the good news of the gospel. They were to teach that all should repent of their sins, and be baptized.

Those who believe in their heart and confess with their mouth the Lord Jesus shall inherit eternal life.

**Acts 5:21 "And when they heard [that], they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council**

**together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought."**

Both "council" and "senate" refer to the Jewish Sanhedrin. It functioned both as the high court and legislative body of the Jews (see the note on 23:6).

It appears these people did not know that God had sent an angel to release them. These priests and council had planned to punish them. They were going to bring them before the council to be sentenced. Little did this council know that these apostles were right that minute preaching and teaching.

**Acts 5:22-23 "But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned, and told," "Saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within."**

These officers have an amazing tale to tell these rulers. The door was still locked, the guards were still on duty, and yet the imprisoned apostles had disappeared.

**Acts 5:24 "Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow."**

These rulers were concerned about this spreading to the people and making them more certain that these apostles were of the true God.

**Acts 5:25 "Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people."**

The very last place these rulers of the temple thought they would find these apostles would be in the temple teaching. They would have expected them to run to safety, not to come into the temple.

**Acts 5:26 Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned."**

We see here, that the captain and his officers are afraid of what these followers of Jesus might do, if they take Peter and the other apostles. Remember, that many of these followers had been healed by the shadow of Peter falling on them. These people had tasted of the power of the true God; they were not about to let this handful of officers destroy Peter and the other apostles.

**Acts 5:27 "And when they had brought them, they set [them] before the council: and the high priest asked them,"**

We see here, the fear that has gripped these rulers in the temple. They know they are guilty of having crucified Jesus.

**Acts 5:28 "Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us."**

“Teach”: The gospel of Jesus Christ (see notes on 2:14-40; 4:12-13).

They remind Peter, and the others, that they had been commanded of them not to preach and teach in this name. It appears they are afraid to even utter the name of Jesus.

Their guilty conscience has overwhelmed them, but they still will not admit that they asked for their Messiah's death. They are afraid, not only of the hereafter, but of losing their position in the church now.

**Acts 5:29 "Then Peter and the [other] apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men."**

“Obey God rather than men” (see note on 4:19).

Peter is not sanctioning civil disobedience, as he makes clear in his first epistle (1 Pet. 2:13-17; Rom 13:1-7). We are to obey civil government, but when it goes contrary to the explicit commands of God, we must obey God and be ready to suffer the consequences.

This was a very bold statement to make to the leaders of the temple. Up until Jesus' arrival, the high priest was thought to be God's agent here on the earth.

We discussed in an earlier lesson that, we should obey those in authority over us. The only time it is okay not to obey authority on earth is when it would hinder doing God's will. That is what is being said here. I will obey God and not man.

**Acts 5:30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree."**

“Hanged on a tree” (Deut. 21:23; Gal 3:13).

These apostles are filled with the power of God and are bold in their response to the high priest and the rulers of the temple. He reminds them, also, that his ancestry went back to Abraham, as well as theirs and that the God of all of them was the one who raised Jesus from the tomb. He is saying that you killed your own Messiah (Christ).

**Acts 5:31 "Him hath God exalted with his right hand [to be] a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."**

“God exalted with his right hand” (see notes on 1:9; Mark 16:19; Phil. 2:9-11).

“Prince” (see note on 3:15).

“Repentance to Israel”: Salvation for the Jews. Salvation demands repentance (2:38; 3:19; 17:30; 20:21; 26:20). For the nature of repentance (see notes on 2 Cor. 7:9-12).

These apostles are boldly telling these leaders of the temple: You killed the only one who can save you from your sins. You were cautioned to repent, and accept forgiveness of your sins, and accept Jesus Christ as Prince (the Son of God). Jesus was your Savior, as well as all of ours, and you rejected him.

**Acts 5:32 "And we are his witnesses of these things; and [so is] also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him."**

“So is also the Holy Ghost”: Every believer receives the Spirit the moment one is saved by obeying the gospel (see note on 2:4; Rom 8:9; 1 Cor. 6:19-20).

We are told that Jesus was seen of over 500 people after His resurrection. They were all witnesses that what Peter said here is true. Just the fact of the power of the Holy Ghost which had been manifested in these miracle healings they had done in Jesus' name, was a large enough witness that He was risen, and was indeed, the Messiah, the Savior of the world.

### **Acts Chapter 5 Continued Questions**

1. In verse 17, the men with the high priest were of what sect?
2. What did these temple officials do to these apostles?
3. What one word covers the feelings of these temple officials?
4. Compare this to churches of our day.
5. What did they do with the apostles?
6. What is intended by common in verse 18?
7. Who opened the prison doors?
8. What message was given the apostles?
9. Who shall inherit eternal life?
10. When did the apostles preach again and where?
11. Who met with the high priest to determine what to do with these apostles?
12. When the officers came to the jail, what did they find?

13. In verse 24, who was worried about the news of this escape spreading?
14. Someone came and told the rulers what about these apostles?
15. Why were the captain and officers careful not to use violence to bring the apostles?
16. What did the high priest say that he had already commanded them not to do?
17. The high priest said, they had filled all \_\_\_\_\_ with their doctrine.
18. Who did the apostles tell them they should obey?
19. When is the only time it is okay to not obey the authority directly over you?
20. Who did the apostles say raised up Jesus?
21. Who did the apostles say slew Jesus?
22. In verse 31, God exalted Jesus to be what two things?
23. What does prince in verse 31 indicate?
24. Who was a witness to the resurrection of Jesus?