



## Acts 5:12-33 | Session 14 | Apostolic Miracles and Opened Prison Doors

### Acts

Verse 12—

**By the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought.** There is no mystery as to what is happening here. The apostles are performing signs and miracles, just as Jesus told them they would do. The reason for this is that the Jews required a sign (John 4:48). Jesus also warned that even false Christs and false prophets would show signs (Matthew 24:24). And yet, even when Christ performed signs (or miracles), many did not believe in him (John 12:37). Nevertheless, the apostles were given a mandate from Jesus to perform signs (Acts 1:8; John 5:20; 14:12). Therefore, the apostles are fulfilling their kingdom authority given to them by Jesus Christ in anticipation of His return. **Wrought** means *to be fulfilled*.

**And the people were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.** Here is another indication that these believers in the Messiah are all Jews, still under the Law of Moses, as they are meeting in the temple as good Jews should. They were in **one accord** as they awaited the return of their Messiah in whom many of them have believed through *repentance and baptism*, not *by grace through faith*.

Verse 13, 14—

**And of the rest durst no man to join them. Them** most likely refers to the apostles and multitude who were gathered in Solomon's porch. The word **durst** is an archaic form of the past tense of *dared*. *No man dared to join them* (See John 9:22; 12:42). Many watched from the sidelines, but were afraid to join the group. They knew Peter and John were on the radar of the Sanhedrin (4:1,7), and had been arrested (4:3). They also knew Peter and John had been warned to stop speaking in the *name of Jesus*. Nonetheless, **the people magnified** (highly esteemed) the apostles.

More **believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both men and women.**

Verse 15,16—

Luke records the kinds of *signs and wonders* mentioned in verse 12. Here again is an indication this is not the church as we know it today. **Every one** who was **brought forth** (carried out) **into the streets** (Literally every street), not only the residents of **Jerusalem**, but **also a multitude** from other **cities** around **Jerusalem**. Luke doesn't describe in these two verses how much time has passed for this to occur, but it would have been at least several days as word would have taken some time to reach those in other cities, and then travel time, etc. This was a common occurrence and not a secret, it appears, as Peter walked through Jerusalem, he healed multitudes along the way, which would have eventually caught the attention of the *religious leaders*.

Verse 17—

**The high priest rose up.** In the negative sense, when someone has to *get up* to prevent something from continuing there is trouble. Not only the **high priest**, but the **sect of the Sadducees**. There were many religious **sects**. The **Sadducees** were not as numerous as their opposition, the Pharisees, but they were generally wealthier and therefore had more clout or influence (follow the money). The **Sadducees** denied there was a resurrection (Matthew 22:23; Acts 23:8). What were Peter and John preaching? The resurrection (Acts 2:31; Acts 4:2; Acts 4:33). Because of this, and the popularity of the apostles with the *people* the religious leaders were filled



with **indignation** (or, envy). Envy is destructive. We are warned of it by the apostle Paul (Romans 1:29; 13:13; 1 Corinthians 3:3; 2 Corinthians 12:20; Galatians 5:26; 1 Timothy 6:4; Titus 3:3), because any one of us can fall victim to envy.

Verse 18—

**Laid their hands on the apostles** for the second time, fulfilling Jesus's words in Luke 21:12. **Put them in the common prison**, that is the *public jail*.

Verse 19—

**But.** The conjunction means something bad or good is going to happen. In this case, it is a good for the apostles as **the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors**. There are several imprisonments in the book of Acts, all did not turn out well. In Acts 12:2, James was killed by the sword. Other times they were miraculously released (12:7;11), and sometimes released, but stayed in the prison and did not escape (16:28). Paul was left in prison for an extended period of time (24:27; 26:30-32). God doesn't open prison doors today. Today those who live godly will be persecuted, 2 Timothy 3:12. This was truly an apostolic moment for this period of transition.

Verse 20—

The angel gave the apostles instructions to **Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people**. This took boldness which Peter and John both had! (Acts 4:13). **The words of this life**. This is probably not referring to *eternal life*, but literally **this life**, that is, they were to keep speaking *repentance, and baptism for the forgiveness of sins*. God continually allowed the Jews a chance to say *Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord* (Luke 13:35).

Verses 21-23—

The apostles obeyed and **entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught**. Meanwhile, at the same time, the **council** (the Sanhedrin) convened and **sent to the prison to have** Peter and John **brought** before them. Except there was a slight problem, the **officers, found them not in the prison**. The report to the council was the **prison was shut with all safety** and well-guarded, but the cell was empty. Luke does not describe if it was only the cell of the apostles, or the entire prison that was opened. How they escaped is not known either—the cell was well guarded.

Verse 24—

The word **doubted** means *perplexed*. **Whereunto this would grow**, that is, what in the world is going on?

Verse 25, 26—

The report: **the men ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people**. Go get them! They were **brought without violence**, because the people were on the side of the apostles.

Verses 27-29—

**When they had brought them**, again before the **council**, it is interesting Luke doesn't record Peter and John being asked, "How did you get out of the prison?!" Rather, **Did we not straitly** (directly) **command you that ye should not teach in this name? Ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine**. The doctrine the **high priest** is referring to is that the apostles DID intend to put the sin of the crucifixion on the Jewish leaders (See 4:10). The only way the council could get around this was to *repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of their sin!* They don't appear to be about doing that. Therefore the statement of Annas the high priest was true. Peter's response? **We ought to obey God rather than men**.

