

Jewish Persecution Intensifies (c. 33/34)

Acts 5:17–42

The Apostles are Imprisoned

17 But the high priest rose up, along with all his associates (that is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with jealousy.

18 They laid hands on the apostles and put them in a public jail.

An Angel Releases the Apostles

19 But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the gates of the prison, and taking them out he said, 20 “Go, stand and speak to the people in the temple the whole message of this Life.”

21 Upon hearing *this*, they entered into the temple about daybreak and *began* to teach. Now when the high priest and his associates came, they called the Council together, even all the Senate of the sons of Israel, and sent *orders* to the prison house for them to be brought.

22 But the officers who came did not find them in the prison; and they returned and reported back, 23 saying, “We found the prison house locked quite securely and the guards standing at the doors; but when we had opened up, we found no one inside.”

24 Now when the captain of the temple *guard* and the chief priests heard these words, they were greatly perplexed about them as to what would come of this.

25 But someone came and reported to them, “The men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people!”

The Apostles Willingly Go Before the Jewish Council

26 Then the captain went along with the officers and *proceeded* to bring them *back* without violence (for they were afraid of the people, that they might be stoned).

27 When they had brought them, they stood them before the Council. The high priest questioned them, 28 saying, “We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.”

29 But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men.

30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross.

31 He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

32 And we are witnesses of these things; and *so is* the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.”

33 But when they heard this, they were cut to the quick and intended to kill them.

Gamaliel’s Wise Advice

34 But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the Law, respected by all the people, stood up in the Council and gave orders to put the men outside for a short time.

35 And he said to them, “Men of Israel, take care what you propose to do with these men.

36 For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a group of about four hundred men joined up with him. But he was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing.

37 After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census and drew away *some* people after him; he too perished, and all those who followed him were scattered.

38 So in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or action is of men, it will be overthrown;

39 but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found fighting against God.”

40 They took his advice; and after calling the apostles in, they flogged them and ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and *then* released them.

The Apostles Continue Preaching the Gospel

41 So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for *His* name.

42 And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus *as* the Christ.

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