

Chapter Four

Chapter 4

- We saw in the last chapter that many of the people who witnessed the miracle of the healing of the lame man were “filled with wonder and amazement”. Many repented and came to faith. There were others, however, who were not so pleased. It is important to remember that the temple priests and Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection, unlike the Pharisees who did.
- Who were listed in verse 1 that were upset by the teaching of the Apostles?
 - What was the basis of their objection and why do you think it was important to them?
- These religious leaders were so upset that they put the Apostles in custody overnight. Why do you suppose they felt that threatened by their teaching? Consider that it was the High Priesthood that demanded Yeshua

be put to death.

- Does an exalted position of authority or religious status, such as we see here with the Sadducees, guarantee that their teaching is from God?
- Is there a corollary to today's religious leaders who persecute true teaching that is in conflict with their own?
- The text in verse 4 indicates the message of the Apostles was quite effective. How do you account for this?
- According to verses 5-6, who were present at the inquiry the following day?
 - Would it be normal to feel intimidated by being brought before this tribunal?
- What did Yeshua promise the disciples in Matthew 10:19,20?
- According to verse 8, how was Peter energized and empowered in his response to them? What lesson is that for us as we face challenges to our faith and practices?
- The man who had been healed was standing there in

front of them all. Peter made the claim linking his healing to the name of Yeshua. Peter states in verse 12, “There is salvation (yeshuah) in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven that is given among men, by which we must be saved!” Examine this name in Matthew 1:21 where it states, “You shall name him Yeshua, for it is he who shall save (yoshia) his people from their sins.” The wordplay in Matthew as well as here in Acts revolving around the name Yeshua is linked to the word yoshia, meaning to save. This meaning can only be communicated and understood when using the actual Hebrew name “Yeshua” and not the later transliterated form of “Jesus”, which has no linguistic relation to the Hebrew language. Do you think it is important to use the actual, correct name of the Messiah?

- Verse 13 states, “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and Yochanon, and had perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled. They recognized that they had been with Yeshua.”
 - Peter and John were fishermen, not scholars of the caliber of the priests and Sadducees. Does advanced education and qualifications from men guarantee the truthfulness of their teaching?

- Where did Peter and John get this boldness from?
- Can others recognize in you that you are with Yeshua?
- The healed man stood as factual proof of the miracle. The leaders could say nothing against it. Verse 16 shows they affirmed the reality that it “can be plainly seen by all those who dwell in Jerusalem, and we can’t deny it”.
 - Instead of rejoicing over an obvious miracle and giving glory to God, what was their fear as listed in verse 17?
 - What was it about the name of Yeshua that was so central to that fear?
 - In our modern culture, why is there such an emotional reaction in opposition to the Messiah?
- In verse 18, the Sanhedrin “commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Yeshua.”
 - What do you do when a religious institutional authority gives rulings at variance with the written word of God?

- Can you think of other historical or modern-day examples of religious institutions and teachers teaching against the word of God?
- Are we enslaved to the “traditions of men” or are we bound to the eternal, unchanging word of God?
- What was Peter and Yochanon’s response in verse 19?
- What does verse 21 say that the Sanhedrin wanted to do but couldn’t? What prevented them?
- When the Apostles returned to their own company and reported everything that occurred, what was their response?
 - The prayer that followed was based on the Torah and Psalm 2:1-2. Why is that significant as a point of authority?
- In verses 27 and 28, the leaders stated, “For truly, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together against your holy servant Yeshua, whom you anointed, to do whatever your hand and your counsel foreordained to happen.”

- In the study on Chapter 3, we saw how it was not just “the Jews” who were responsible for the death of Yeshua. Who all is listed here?
- All that these people listed were “to do” is identified as “whatever your hand and your counsel fore-ordained to happen.” What does this mean when assigning ultimate responsibility for the death of Yeshua?
- The believers laid out the threats against them and prayed for what? In verse 31, what was the answer to their prayer?
- In verses 32-37, we see an example of the corporate choice of communalism as opposed to government-mandated communism.
 - Remember that these earliest believers were from all over the geographic region (see Acts 2) and were originally planning on staying in Jerusalem only for the festival of Shavuot. Even the Apostles were Galileans without property or financial means in Jerusalem. After the extraordinary experiences they shared, they all chose to stay on to support this movement.

- Instead of a government-controlled redistribution of wealth and centralized economic planning, the believers freely gave of their abundance to support those who lacked out of their heart-felt desire to see this ministry continue to expand.
- It is of interest to note that this practice was not the norm of the congregations founded by Paul in the diaspora. In fact, those congregations also sent support to the congregation of Jerusalem believers.