



## Filled with the Holy Spirit - Again!

### Acts 4:1-31 (Lesson #7)

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Although Peter does not preach a sermon today, he does quote the Old Testament a few times:

- Acts 4:11 is a quote from Psalm 118:22
- Acts 4:24 is a quote from Psalm 146:6
- Acts 4:25-26 is a quote from Psalm 2:1-2

#### OUTLINE of Acts Chapter 4:1-31

- 1) Peter is in the midst of a sermon when he is interrupted and he and John are arrested (4:1-3).
- 2) Approximately 5,000 men who heard Peter preaching believe on Jesus (4:4).
- 3) The Sanhedrin gathered and interrogated Peter and John (4:5-7).
- 4) Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit informs the Sanhedrin that it was in the name of Jesus that the lame man was healed (4:8-11).
- 5) Peter goes on to boldly proclaim that there is no other name whereby people can be saved (4:12).
- 6) The Sanhedrin are taken aback by the boldness of Peter and John (4:13-14).
- 7) The Sanhedrin put Peter, John, and the man who had been healed out of the room so they can discuss the problem (4:15).
- 8) Although they could not deny the validity of the miracle, the Sanhedrin opt to threaten the disciples about speaking any more in the name of Jesus (4:16-17).
- 9) The Sanhedrin call Peter, John, and the lame man back in the room and they threatened them about speaking any further in the name of Jesus (4:18-22).
- 10) The Sanhedrin released Peter and John and they shared all that had happened with their associates (4:23).
- 11) Together they prayed for boldness and that God would continue to show forth signs and wonders (4:24-30).
- 12) While they were praying the place where they were was shaken and they were filled with the Holy Spirit (4:31).

**4:1** And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, 2 greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. 3 And they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. 4 But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand.

**4:1** - As Peter and John were teaching the people, as they were proclaiming salvation in Jesus and Jesus alone, the priests, Captain of the Temple, and some Sadducees came upon them, there at Solomon's portico.

One commentator pointed out that came upon them suddenly, pointing out the suddenness of the event.

They interrupted Peter in the midst of his message to a massive crowd.

Named in the group who came upon Peter:

**Priests** - We cannot be sure exactly who these priests are or how many, nor can we be sure of their affiliation, likely Sadducees, but possibly Pharisees. It is also possible that these were the chief priests of the temple, Fruchtenbaum writes that there were 24 chief priests that served in various capacities.

**Captain of the Temple** – The Captain of the Temple was the second most powerful man behind the High Priest.

**Sadducees** – We do not know a lot about the Sadducees, but here is what we know:

- The Sadducees are mentioned 14 times in the New Testament. They rejected the belief in a future resurrection, as well as Spirits and Angels (Ac 23:8).

- None of their direct writings have survived until today, so we only know of them from what others say about them.
- They seemed to be an upper class, likely wealthy, religious sect closely connected to the high priesthood. Their focus seemed to be keeping political power rather than theological correctness.

So, Peter's sermon is interrupted by a number of religious leaders including priests, The Captain of the Temple, and some Sadducees.

**Vs 2** - The religious leaders were "**greatly annoyed**" the idea is they were worked up; they were indignant.

Then we are told why, these men were teaching the people, but not just teaching:

- 1) They were unlearned men (you will see this payout)
- 2) They did not have the approval of the religious leaders
- 3) They were proclaiming Jesus (who the religious leaders were instrumental in having executed by Pilate)
- 4) They were declaring Jesus had risen from the dead! (A real issue for the Sadducees in the group).

**Vs 3** - The religious leaders had Peter and John arrested, and they were placed in custody, until the next day, for by now it was already evening. Keep in mind they went to the temple mount at 3:00pm.

The religious and political leading body of Israel, the Sanhedrin, would not meet until the next morning. We will talk more about the Sanhedrin in a moment. So, they locked them up for the evening, likely in a chamber somewhere on the temple mount.

So you see it unfold, the man who had been lame for forty years and was healed is also locked up with them!

**Vs 4** - Although this may not be the best time in the story for this report, Luke wanted us to know, that many who heard the message from Peter believed, repented placed faith in God's son, and the number of "**men came to about 5,000.**"

The religious leaders are starting to put up opposition, but the church is growing like crazy!

*5 On the next day their rulers and elders and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem, 6 with Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. 7 And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" 8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, 9 if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed,*

**Vs 5 - Rulers** – priests who held high offices, **Elders** – heads of leading families, **Scribes** – those who interpret the law, many were of the sect of the Pharisees. What we are seeing is the Jewish High Court, the **Sanhedrin**, this was the religious ruling body of Israel.

The Sanhedrin consisted of 70 members, who were presided over by the current High Priest to make a total of 71. The **Sanhedrin** were the political and religious ruling body of Israel. The genesis of the seventy ruling elders is (Num 11:16).

So, Peter, John, and the lame man who was made whole spent the night in prison! The **next morning**, we are told that the rulers, elders, and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem. But there are others you will see in a moment.

You can imagine that the religious leaders are very aware of the growth of the early church and likely very aware of their doctrines. The most alarming to them are likely:

- 1) Peter keeps highlighting the fact that the nation of Israel killed the Messiah, they killed the Author of life, God glorified His Servant Jesus, they denied him and delivered him over to be murdered.
- 2) Peter keeps painting this picture of a cabal that involved many of the people of Israel, the religious leaders of Israel and the Roman leaders.
- 3) Peter was clearly teaching that although they murdered the Messiah, God raised Him from the dead!

The last point is **particularly sticky** for the **Sadducees denied the resurrection**, and here Peter is clearly teaching that Jesus rose from the dead.

**Vs 6** – We also have among the group, Annas the High Priest, who had served as High Priest from 6-15 AD.

Also, Caiaphas was there. Caiaphas, was the son-in-law of Annas and the current acting High Priest. He served as High Priest from 18-36 AD. Also with them was John. John was Annas' son, and he would serve as High Priest from 36-37 AD.

Alexander was another family member although we are not positive of his association. But many of the High Priest's family were gathered that morning, following the arrest of Peter and John the prior evening.

This is Peter and John before everybody who is anybody!

This gathering was no doubt meant to intimidate; this was a power play. First, a night under lock-up and then all the religious leaders of the day are **arrayed against Peter and John!**

**Vs 7** - You can picture this, the entire Sanhedrin (71) in a room on the temple mount, and they march in the three (including Peter and John) they are **encircled by the Sanhedrin and the Sanhedrin begin to question them.**

Peter and John now have the attention, in a very negative way of the ruling political and religious body of Israel.

The Sanhedrin enquire of Peter and John: *"By what power or by what name did you do this?"*

They likely know about the first sermon and a large number became followers of the man who Pilate had executed (Jesus). They likely have reports that the movement is continuing to grow.

They likely have reports from last night, that Peter and John had healed the lame man from birth, that once again Peter was preaching and the things he was preaching about Jesus, and they likely have the general content of what he was saying.

But they ask Peter and John about what power or whose name you are doing these things in?

- **Power - δύναμις (dunamis) power, strength, might**, it is where we get the English word dynamite.
- **Name - ὄνομα (onoma) means name.** This is all meant to scare and intimidate Peter and John.

They are not really interested in the answer, they have a totally different plan. Intimidation!

**Vs 8** - Then Peter: **"filled with the Holy Spirit..."**

A couple of important points here:

**FIRST**, Again, I hope you see how Peter has matured, and he has become the leader of the Apostolic band.

**SECOND**, I also hope you also see that Peter has already been filled with the Holy Spirit once. Remember Pentecost (Feast of Weeks) and what we read in (Ac 2:4).

**This clearly shows us that being filled with the Spirit is not a one and done kind of thing!**

The **filling initially happens when we are saved**, but it is also meant to be an ongoing experience as we submit and yield ourselves to God. We will see this point again at the end of our lesson today (Ac 4:31).

That will be the third time we read that Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit!

In the coming weeks we will see what happened when Saul was converted (Ac 9:17-18). Then four chapters later on the island of Cyprus on the first missionary journey we will read (Ac 13:9).

The filling of the Holy Spirit happens when we first give our life to Christ, we belong to God, He seals us with the down payment of the Holy Spirit, but then it is to be an ongoing process of the submission of our lives to His will and His way. **Paul summed it up in (Eph 5:18).**

**Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit** provides an answer to the inquiry of the Sanhedrin.

**APPLICATION:** If we are wondering today what God desires for our lives, I would say universally, He desires that each of us would be, being, continually filled with His Holy Spirit.

OK, back to Peter, so this is not really a sermon, **but I would call it a defense.**

**FIRST**, he addresses the audience: *"Rulers of the people and elders"* and does so in a very respectful manner.

One interesting point, this is the first time that we are aware of where anyone from the **apostolic group has addressed the ruling body of Israel.** The body that was instrumental in executing the Messiah.

*10 let it be known to all of you 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 is standing before you well. 11 This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. 12 And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."*

So Peter, John, and the lame man are in the most threatening environment of their lives. They are surrounded by the ruling body of Israel, the Sanhedrin, and Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, says this:

**Vs 9** - First the rhetorical question. This is the set-up to make sure we are talking about the same thing.

It is likely that Peter is being someone sarcastic: Are we being examined, have we been locked up all night and now thrust into a court hearing with 70 prosecutors and no defense attorney. Is that what this is about? **Are we being mishandled over the "good deed" that was done to the lame man?**

If John and I are being examined today, concerning the good deed, that was done to the crippled man, the man who had been lame from birth. If the question is about the means by which this lifelong invalid was healed, if that is what this is all about? If so:

**Vs 10** - Let it be **known to all of you** (all 71), as well as **all the people of Israel** (the entire nation):

- 1) **This man was healed in the name of Jesus Christ.** We talked about this before, but Peter is saying the power and the authority is Jesus's name.
- 2) **The One who you Crucified!** It is in the name of Jesus (Yeshua) the **one you killed**, it is in his name, that this man was made whole.

**Can you imagine**, Peter just accused the Sanhedrin of murdering the Christ!

- 3) The One you murdered is the same One, whom **God raised from the dead!**
- 4) Peter reiterates, it is by and **through the name of Jesus**, that **this man is standing before you well.**

**So much for intimidation.** Peter has just told the Sanhedrin, they killed the Christ and God raised him from the grave, and this man has been healed by the dead by now alive (resurrected) Yeshua!

NOTICE: Peter says: by him (Jesus) this man (the previous lame man) is standing before you well. They had arrested the lame man as well!

**Vs 11** - Then Peter quotes **Psalm 118:22**, and declares that they are the ones the Psalmist was talking about!

Here Jesus is pictured as a stone, a stone that was rejected by the builders. Peter is telling them that Jesus is the stone, and they are the builders (the leaders and institutional guardians of Judaism) who rejected the stone, and God has made the stone they rejected the "cornerstone!"

This is once again the exaltation of the Messiah: Remember in his sermon Peter had quoted Ps 110:1:

Peter is not a one verse trick pony, he sees the Messiah throughout the Old Testament now, indeed the **volume of the book is written of Him!**

**Can you imagine**, Peter just told the Sanhedrin that they are the builders who rejected the stone that God had made the chief cornerstone!

**Vs 12** - Here Peter addresses the Sanhedrin and says that there is only one way that a person can be saved, there is salvation in no other name, save the name of Jesus.

This is an implicit invitation by Peter, to the Sanhedrin to place faith in Jesus as the means of their salvation.

There is no other name, given under heaven among men by which we must be saved. Jesus and Jesus only!

**Can you imagine**, Peter just told the Sanhedrin that there is salvation in none other than Jesus!

**APPLICATION:** Can I tell you, there is only one way to be right before God. It is by placing faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus said it this way in (Joh 14:6).

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*13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus. 14 But seeing the man who was healed standing beside them, they had nothing to say in opposition. 15 ¶ But when they had commanded them to leave the council, they conferred with one another, 16 saying, "What shall we do with these men? For that a notable sign has been performed through them is evident to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. 17 But in order that it may spread no further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to anyone in this name."*

**Vs 13** - These are two Galilean fishermen, they were overall **uneducated** and **common men**.

The Greek word uneducated is: **ἀγράμματος (agrammatos)** it is another **Hapax Legomenon!** Again, Luke has a massive vocabulary. Likely Luke means they were untrained in the rabbinic schools.

Jesus was accused of **something very similar in (Joh 7:14-15)**.

The Greek word for common is **ιδιώτης (idiotes)** it is where we get the English word "idiot". In the Greek it is used of a common person when compared to a learned or an important person.

Their boldness and their understanding of the Scriptures **astonished the Sanhedrin!** And they recognized that Peter and John had been with Jesus!

These men knew the Word of God, understood the volume of the book was written about Him, and they were men who spent time with Jesus.

**APPLICATION:** Do people recognize that you and I have been with Jesus. Has our relationship with Jesus changed us enough so that people see a difference?

**Vs 14** - Even those who hated Jesus and did not believe in the resurrection could not argue. Here the man who has been lame since birth is standing next to them!

They likely knew him, they likely had seen him countless times at the Gate Beautiful begging, and they can say nothing in opposition.

The lame man for over forty years who is fully healed and standing next to them is himself a clear message of the power of Jesus!

They could not find any words to respond to what Peter had said. **They had nothing to say in opposition!**

**Vs 15-16** - So they put Peter, John, and the lame man now healed out and began to confer with one another on the best way to proceed. They asked one another: *What shall we do with these men?*

They acknowledged that a **notable sign** has been performed through them.

An extraordinary miracle had been performed through these men (Peter and John) and it has quickly spread through the entire city, it is evident to all who live here, and they cannot deny it!

They do not believe in the resurrected Messiah, but they are caught between a rock and a hard place.

Notice their own conclusion: **we cannot deny it.** What are they to do?

**Vs 17** - So an extraordinary, undeniable miracle has occurred that is common knowledge, but in order that it spread no further, the Sanhedrin concluded **we will warn them not to speak in his name.**

There is some irony here: Peter had silenced them and now they are going to “warn” Peter and John in an attempt to silence them! The Sanhedrin conclude, we will threaten them and that will take care of the whole problem.

We will forbid to them to speak, notice carefully what Luke records, **“in this name.”** it is almost like they did not want to say the name Jesus.

It is funny and sad that they refuse to face the supernatural nature of what has happened, but instead collude on how they can cover it up, keep it quiet, and prevent it from spreading any further!

*18 So they called them and charged them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, 20 for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard." 21 And when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way to punish them, because of the people, for all were praising God for what had happened. 22 For the man on whom this sign of healing was performed was more than forty years old.*

**Vs 18** - So they brought Peter and John back into the room and they charged, the Greek word is commanded them not to speak about or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

The religious ruling body in Israel gives Peter and John the command, no more teaching or preaching about Jesus.

You can almost picture this, the Sanhedrin said we are feeling nice today, and we are going to let you three go, but no more talking about Jesus and the resurrection.

**Vs 19-20** - Then it appears that both Peter and John answer: Whether or not it is right before God to listen to you over God, you must decide.

You can imagine Peter and John are like what? Jesus changed my life, Jesus filled me with His Spirit, I cannot help but tell people about Jesus!

**Peter and John, stand before the mighty Sanhedrin and repudiate their authority!** We cannot help but to speak about all that we have seen and heard.

Peter tells the Sanhedrin; I will let you judge if I should obey you or God. But here is the bottom line, we cannot help but talk about what we have seen and heard.

**Vs 21** - So then this ruling **body of 71 - threatened Peter and John,** not to speak or teach anymore about Jesus.

You see how small and pathetic this 71-person band of leaders looks. They are making empty threats against two fishermen, who could care less, for they are filled by the Holy Spirit of God!

No doubt they desired to punish them, but because of the people and all the excitement over this man being healed and all who were praising God because of it, they had to simply let them go.

I almost feel sorry for this religious ruling body, to be so close to the truth, and yet to reject it and make threats of silence in an attempt to cover it up.

**Vs 22** - Then Luke tells us what we already know. This was a real, legitimate miracle that had been performed on a man who had been lame since his birth who was now over forty!

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*23 ¶ When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. 24 And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, "Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, 25 who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, "'Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? 26 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed' —*

**Vs 23** - So Peter and John are released and they went to their friends, to the other 10, to the 120, no doubt to many among the exploding church and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them.

You can imagine the story and they recounted all that happened. The questions, the threats, everything!

Before we leave this verse, I want us to clearly see something. This Jesus thing is starting to become a problem in Jerusalem. It now has the attention and threats of the ruling religious body, the Sanhedrin.

**Vs 24-26** - When their friends heard all of this, they cried out to God, together, they lifted up their voices to God together, and together they prayed and said:

**FIRST**, they acknowledged who God is: *"Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them.*

**First the title** – They call God the Sovereign Lord. The **δεσπότης (despotes) θεός (theos)**. This Greek word **δεσπότης** is used of a slave owner or a sovereign whose rule could not be questioned.

God, you are the **despotes - Theos**. **The sovereign God!** They are praying to God **who controls everything**.

Then they say, you are the one who made heaven and earth and the sea and everything in them. This of course is true, but more than that, it appears that they are quoting (Ps 146:6).

He is he **Sovereign one**, He is the one who made heaven and earth, and everything in the heavens and on the earth as the Psalmist declared in Psalm 146!

**SECOND**, They said, You Sovereign God are the One who spoke through the mouth of David, and here they quote **Psalm 2:1-2**:

Before we comment on the quote let's talk a little Theology! This statement by the early church shows their belief in the authorship of Scriptures.

They believed in the dual authorship of Scriptures. God's Word, in this case came through the mouth of David or more specifically through the pen of David, but it was said by the Holy Spirit.

Do you see the Holy Spirit had something to say and He said it through the mouth of David. They believed the words of David in Psalm two were the words of the Holy Spirit! This is the testimony of the New Testament as well (II Tim 3:16-17; II Pet 1:20-21).

**SECOND**, They declare You Sovereign God are the One who spoke through the mouth of David, and here they quote **Psalm 2:1-2**.

**This is yet another Psalm about the enthronement of King Jesus.** The Kings of the earth set themselves with the rulers to take council against the LORD and his Anointed (Messiah).

They saw all that had happened with the Jewish people, the religious leaders and the Gentile rulers as a fulfillment of Psalm 2. More than that, what was happening to them was connected to Psalm 2.

All the opposition they are facing is not outside the reality that God is King and He is in control.

**27 for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, 28 to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. 29 And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, 30 while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus." 31 And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.**

**Vs 27** - Here they simply declare, what **Psalm 2** said is exactly what happened here in Jerusalem.

Gathered against your Holy Servant Jesus, (they use this title again). Again, this connects Jesus to the four Servant Songs of Isaiah.

But notice their point, what has happened was prophesied in Psalm 2. It was a **cabal** against your Holy Servant Jesus, the one whom You anointed!

**Vs 28** - Here it is again, the **autonomy and responsibility of man** and the **sovereignty** of God!

What they did was wicked, what they did was wrong, they sinned against clear light. And what they ultimately accomplished was to do: **whatever your hand and your plan (God's) had predestined to take place.**

The wrath of man cannot operate outside the sphere of God's control, we should never forget this and Romans 8:28 cannot be true unless this point is true!

Peter is in **no way** attempting to absolve them or guilt, quite the opposite, he is declaring they are guilty and yet at the same time he is saying in their rebellion they only accomplished what God's hand and plan had predestined to take place.

The Greek word translated "**predestined**" is **προορίζω (proorizo)**, it means to **decide beforehand**, it means to **foreordain**.

**Vs 29** - It is at least interesting to me that they do not pray for the removal of threats, **but instead that in the midst of threats they will have boldness to speak the Word of God.**

**APPLICATION:** We live in dark times. It would be wonderful if a revival would sweep the land and everyone would desire to hear God's Word, and we should pray for that. But we should also pray for boldness to declare God's Word with clarity!

**Vs 30** - Notice, they did not see the source of the miracles as in themselves.

They saw the source in the God-head, as you, stretch out your hand to heal, as signs and wonders are performed through the name of your Holy Servant.

Please keep in mind, and you will see this unfold in the book of Acts. Believers in general were not the ones performing signs and wonders.

Sometimes people will tell us the early church did all these signs and wonders, that is not what we were told nor what we are observing (Ac 2:43; Ac 3:6). Rather it appears that these signs and wonders were done by the apostles and their immediate associates. It does not appear they were done by believers in general.

**Vs 31** - And when they, likely had finished praying, the place, still likely the upper room, where they were **gathered was shaken!** The Greek word means to shake, it means exactly what it sounds like it means.

The place was shaken and they were, once again, filled with the Holy Spirit. This is now the third time for Peter.



Do you not desire for the continual filling of the Holy Spirit, Paul commands it, and God will to do it!

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