

## **ACTS of GOD #20: Freed to Stand**

Acts 5:17-26 6/09/2019

### **Rising Up to Protect Worldly Standing** (v.17-18)

*<sup>17</sup> But the high priest rose up, along with all his associates (that is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with jealousy. <sup>18</sup> They laid hands on the apostles and put them in a public jail.*

- The Sect of the Sadducees
  - Sect-divided from the rest for choosing & defending distinctive opinions
  - Theologically Liberal (no belief in resurrection from the dead or angels)
  - Politically expedient (willing to compromise w/ Rome & Herod for power)
  - Selfishly Motivated (Priestly Mafia w/ Annas keeping it in the family)
  - Jerusalem the seat of their brokered power, Must keep people in check
- They were filled with Jealousy
  - Filled to capacity & overflowing with jealousy
    - b/c the apostles were highly regarded by all "their" people
    - b/c the apostles were exercising influence in "their" place
    - b/c the rise of apostles & church threatened "their" power
    - b/c teaching/actions of the apostles threatened "their" chosen opinion
  - Jealousy is driven by a sense of transgressed ownership (rarely rightful)
    - They claimed for themselves what clearly belonged to God
    - To protect their delusion, they ignored/rejected clear acts of God
    - They feared "their" people would turn & "their" place & power lost
- They Laid Hands on the Apostles
  - They used their position of authority to seize & imprison the apostles
    - High priests must use the position to serve God & people, not self
    - They don't recognize God's clearly shown where His authority rests
    - How will public prison gates hold when gates of Hell don't prevail?
  - The apostles did not resist or run (like before), but submitted to seizure
    - Those serving God instead of self don't need to fight for "their" place
    - The Lord can be trusted to use every situation for His glory

### **Set Free in order to Stand & Serve** (v.19-21)

*<sup>19</sup> But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the gates of the prison, and taking them out he said, <sup>20</sup> "Go, stand and speak to the people in the temple the whole message of this Life." <sup>21</sup> Upon hearing this, they entered into the temple about daybreak and began to teach.*

- Freed from Jail & Sent to Stand
  - When threat is escaped, our instinct is to hide, avoid, or lay low
  - The angel opens the gates and takes them out, freeing them
    - Y'ALL GO, STAND, and SPEAK
      - Their freedom is for continuing to serve in the mission God gave
        - You All Go & Stand in the Temple
          - You are my servants, and the Temple is mine, so go
          - Not ferreted away, Not splitting up for safety, No Hiding
        - You All Go & Speak to the People
          - You are my servants, and the people are mine, so go
          - You are my servants, and the Message is mine, so go

- Speaking the whole message of this life
  - The full gospel (Jesus is messiah, crucified, resurrected, & reigning)
  - That repentance for forgiveness of sins is found by faith in His name
  - This message is at complete odds with the sect of the Sadducees

*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. <sup>22</sup> But the officers who came did not find them in the prison; and they returned and reported back, <sup>23</sup> 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." <sup>24</sup> 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. <sup>25</sup> But someone came and reported to them, "The men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people!" <sup>26</sup> 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).*

- They are greatly perplexed at what has happened
  - The gates shut with the guards standing by, yet empty
  - The apostles all teaching in the temple, rather than fleeing
- They are greatly afraid of the people
  - Fearing they might be stoned for opposing God in the people's eyes
  - The apostles return peaceably b/c the servants trust their Master

*It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. -Galatians 5:1*

- You're freed to stand. Don't be subject to the slavery of selfishness.