

Acts 4:23 And being let go, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them.

4:24 So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: "Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them,

4:25 "who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: 'Why did the nations rage, And the people plot vain things?'

4:26 The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the Lord and against His Christ.'

4:27 "For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together

4:28 "to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done.

4:29 "Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word,

4:30 "by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus."

4:31 And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

[From today's sermon]

"But let's threaten them not to say anything to anyone by this name, lest this thing spread further among the people." With imprisonment and threats, the officials, elders, teachers of the law, and the high priest and his relatives gathered around Peter and John, but they declared clearly, "We must obey God rather than you. Whether it is right in God's sight to do what you are threatening us with, you must decide. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."

The healing performed in the name of Jesus at the Beautiful Gate had placed Peter and John in a difficult situation, but they could not possibly abandon the testimony of Jesus, which was based on His promise: "When the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will receive power and will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Their hearts were connected to Jesus. It was impossible to remove Jesus from their hearts or stop them from bearing witness.

As prophesied in the Bible, persecution will come, but God will strengthen His disciples with power far greater than that, and He will answer their prayers, "Lord, give us boldness to speak Your word," by shaking the earth. Let us also cling to the living God and be encouraged.

Good morning, everyone.

It has been a record-breaking hot summer, but I hope you have been doing well.

According to the weather forecast, it will rain for a week starting Tuesday, so it should be a little more bearable.

Please make sure to eat nutritious meals, stay hydrated, and get plenty of rest, even in the heat.

Today, we read a powerful passage about how the Lord answered the disciples' prayers by shaking the house where they were gathered.

4:17 "But let's warn them not to say anything to anyone about this, so that this won't spread among the people."

4:18 So they called them in and ordered them not to speak to anyone about what they had seen or heard.

4:19 But Peter and John answered, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge for yourselves.

4:20 For we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard."

4:21 So they threatened them further and released them. They could not do anything to them because all the people were praising God, and they were afraid of the people.

Peter and John did not give in to the threats of the leaders at all. Even though they gathered together and glared at them with frightening expressions, it was meaningless to the disciples of the Lord.

1:8 But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will receive power and will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

They had received power from the Holy Spirit, just as Jesus had promised. They had come to know that following God was better than following any man, and that the salvation brought by Jesus, who had died on the cross as a substitute for them, was wonderful, true, and powerful.

The only Son of God became man, was born without sin, and yet died on the cross solely to redeem our sins and take our place in death and judgment. There is nothing in all the world that can compare to this excellent and righteous salvation.

4:12 There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

4:23 After they were released, they returned to their own people and reported everything that had happened, including what the chief priests and elders had said.

Empty leaders. They should have been the first to proclaim God's grace and the wonderful salvation through Jesus, but they were leaders with blind hearts. And they were not even aware that they were blind.

Prayers arose from them as they reported everything from beginning to end to their companions, how they had been threatened by them, yet had boldly spoken the things they ought to do and had not been intimidated.

4:24 When they heard this, they raised their voices with one accord to God and said, "Lord, who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and everything in them, 4:25 You spoke through the mouth of your servant David, your servant David, by the Holy Spirit: 'Why do the nations rage, and the peoples plot in vain?

4:26 The kings of the earth take their stand, and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One.'

This is a quotation from Psalm 2.

2:1 Why do the nations rage, and the peoples plot in vain? 2:2 The kings of the earth take their stand, and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One, saying,

2:3 "Let us break their chains, cast off their bonds, and cast out the rod from their hands."

2:4 Those who sit in the heavens laugh; the Lord laughs at them. 2:5 The Lord speaks in His anger and terrifies them with His wrath, saying,

2:6 "I have installed My King on My holy hill of Zion."

2:7 I will proclaim the decree of the Lord: The Lord said to Me, "You are My Son; today I have begotten you. 2:8 Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, and the ends of the earth your possession.

2:9 You will break them with a rod of iron and dash them to pieces like pottery." 2:10 Therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. 2:11 Serve the Lord with fear, and serve him with trembling.

2:12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

"I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill." 2:7 I will proclaim the decree of the Lord. The Lord said to me, "You are my son; today I have become your father.

Both the Gentiles and the chosen people rebelled against Jesus, whom God the Father sent in this way, burning with fierce anger and raging with fury, but the Lord said this:

2:4 Those who sit in heaven will laugh, and the Lord will mock them.

2:5 Then the Lord will speak to them in His anger and terrify them with His wrath, saying,

2:6 "I have set My King on Zion, the holy mountain."

Those who deny Jesus are exposed to the mocking laughter from heaven, but the leaders of the people were unaware of this.

4:27 Truly, Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, gathered together in this city to do anything against Jesus, your holy servant, whom you anointed.

4:28 By the power of your own hand and by your will, they did what had been decided beforehand. 4:29 Lord, now look at their threats and grant your servants to speak your word with great boldness.

You knew from the beginning that they were all fools. They did not realize that their wisdom was a delusion, that they were righteous and upright before God, and that they were mocked by heaven.

There is no one righteous, not even one.

Each of our actions is so unreliable and full of mistakes that it pierces our hearts sharply.

But salvation has been given to us from there. There is the Lord's redemption and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

To lead people to salvation, we believe in the name of Jesus, testify about the Lord, speak the Lord's words, save ourselves, and lead others to salvation.

4:29 Lord, now look at their threats and grant your servants to speak your word with boldness.

4:30 And stretch out your hand to heal, and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.

In this crooked age when both leaders and people have strayed from the path, are angry, and are walking in vain, please let us boldly speak to them, telling them to be saved. Lord, stretch out your hand and heal, and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus. Is this not our earnest prayer today as well?

4:31 When they had prayed, the place where they were gathered was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God boldly.

God responded boldly to them, showing them in answer to their prayer that He is alive, that He is the One who created the foundation of this world, and that He is the One who rules over all things in this world. The Lord speaks to us by shaking the earth. The Lord responds to our prayers with the reality that He is alive, impacting this real world. The Lord extends His hand and performs signs and wonders in the name of His holy servant Jesus.

Lord, fill us with the Holy Spirit. Show us the works of Your hands, and enable us to boldly and straightforwardly testify about the Lord Jesus without fear. Let us pray and move forward this week.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank You for today's worship. "When the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will receive power and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Strengthen your disciples, answer their prayers, and use them to perform your works, so that "by the name of Jesus Christ, the Holy Servant, diseases may be healed, and signs and wonders may be performed." Thank you for using your disciples to perform your works and spread salvation. Please lead all those who are suffering into God's salvation and peace. Bless our families and the people of our community. Use us. We pray in the name of the Lord Jesus. Amen.