

NOON BIBLE STUDY: ACTS 4

ACTS 4:1-4 — ARRESTED, BROUGHT BEFORE COUNCIL.

ACTS 4:5-12 — PETER & JOHN BEFORE THE ELDERS

V. 6 — ANNAS, (HIGH PRIEST), CAIAPHAS, JOHN & ALEXANDER

UNDER THE ROMAN PROCURATORS THREE WEALTHY PRIESTLY FAMILIES LARGELY CONTROLLED THE EXTREMELY IMPORTANT POSITION OF HIGH PRIEST. ANNAS (ALSO KNOWN AS "ANANUS") WAS THE PATRIARCH OF ONE OF THESE POWERFUL FAMILIES OF HIGH PRIESTS (CF. ACTS 4:6). HE SERVED AS HIGH PRIEST DURING A.D. 6—15, AND THE HIGH PRIESTHOOD WAS SUBSEQUENTLY HELD BY FIVE OF HIS SONS, INCLUDING HIS SON-IN-LAW CAIAPHAS (SEE NOTE ON JOHN 18:24). ANNAS'S PAST STATURE MERITED HIS CONTINUED DESIGNATION AS "HIGH PRIEST" (ACTS 4:6), AND EVEN AFTER HIS DEPOSITION HE RETAINED SIGNIFICANT CONTROL OVER HIS FAMILY'S EXERCISE OF THIS POSITION (SO THAT LUKE 3:2 CAN SPEAK OF "THE HIGH PRIESTHOOD OF ANNAS AND CAIAPHAS"). JOSEPHUS MENTIONS A MONUMENT OF ANNAS (JEWISH WAR 5.506), WHICH HAS BEEN PLAUSIBLY IDENTIFIED WITH A HIGHLY DECORATED TOMB FOUND NEAR THE KIDRON VALLEY. (ESV STUDY BIBLE NOTE FOR JOHN 18:13)



ANNAS IS DESIGNATED AS HIGH PRIEST. (MUCH LIKE U.S. PRESIDENTS, HIGH PRIESTS SEEM TO HAVE RETAINED THEIR TITLE FOR LIFE.) HE HAD SERVED IN THAT ROLE EARLIER (A.D. 6—15) AND WAS THE CONTROLLING FIGURE IN THE HIGH-PRIESTLY CIRCLE, WHICH MAY ALSO EXPLAIN WHY HE IS GIVEN THE TITLE HERE. HIS SON-IN-LAW CAIAPHAS WAS THE OFFICIAL HIGH PRIEST AT THIS TIME (SERVING A.D. 18—36), AND ANNAS'S SON JOHN WOULD SERVE IN THE ROLE LATER (36—37). (ESV STUDY BIBLE NOTE FOR ACTS 4:6)

THIS IS THE SAME CAST THAT "TRIED" JESUS JUST WEEKS/MONTHS AGO. (AND SAME PETER)

MATTHEW 26:3-5 — JEWISH LEADERS

MATTHEW 26:57-63, 69-75 — PETER

V. 11 — QUOTE FROM PSALM 118:22

THESE VERSES USE AN IMAGE FROM ANCIENT BUILDING PRACTICES (PERHAPS SUGGESTED BY THE NEWLY BUILT TEMPLE ITSELF). THE CORNERSTONE IS PROBABLY THE LARGE STONE AT THE CORNER OF THE BUILDING'S FOUNDATION,...THE BUILDERS ARE THE WISE AND KNOWLEDGEABLE, AND THEY HAVE REJECTED SOME PARTICULAR STONE AS UNSUITED FOR THIS PURPOSE. THEY WERE WRONG IN THEIR JUDGMENT. THE PSALM IS LIKENING ISRAEL (AND PERHAPS PARTICULARLY THE PERSON WHO HAD SUFFERED) TO SUCH A STONE; THE IMPERIAL POWERS HAD THOUGHT LITTLE OF ISRAEL, BUT GOD HAD CHOSEN HIS PEOPLE TO BE THE CORNERSTONE OF HIS GREAT PLAN FOR THE WORLD....THE NT WRITERS USE THIS TEXT (MATT. 21:42; MARK 12:10—11; LUKE 20:17; ACTS 4:11; 1 PET. 2:7) TO INDICATE THAT THE POWERFUL FIGURES WHO REJECTED JESUS (ESP. THE JEWISH LEADERS) WERE NO WISER THAN THE WORLD POWERS THAT THOUGHT SO LITTLE OF ISRAEL. (ESV STUDY BIBLE NOTE FROM PSALM 118:22-23)

ACTS 4:13-22 — COUNCIL'S REPOSE

V. 13-14, 16, 20 — MIRACLE MADE THEIR PREACHING VALID/HARD TO REFUTE

V. 22 — AGE 20 → AGE 40 = 7,300 DAYS

ACTS 4:24-31 — PRAYER OF BELIEVERS

V. 25-26 — PSALM 2:1-2

V. 27 — FULFILLED!

V. 29 — OUR PART

V. 30 — GOD'S PART

V. 31 — PRAYER ANSWERED!