

Apostolic Prayers – Acts 4:29-31

(NASB), “29 And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence, 30 while You extend Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Your holy servant Jesus.” 31 And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.”

I. Book of Acts Context

- a. The Book of Acts a narrative spanning about 30 years worth of time covering the activity of some early church key leaders. Acts is written by Luke, a Gentile apostle and physician, wrote it around 62 A.D.
- b. The purpose of Acts is both ecclesiastical and apologetic. It’s ecclesiastical to edify the church and apologetic to make the case that Christianity was not a threat to the Roman-Empire (Could’ve been Paul’s defense before Caesar).

II. Basic Outline of The Apostolic Prayer

- a. And now, Lord, take not of their threats, and
 - i. Grant your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence
 1. While You extend your hand to:
 - a. Heal and signs and wonders take place through the name of your Holy servant Jesus
- b. And when they had prayed
 - i. The place where they had gathered together was shake
 - ii. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness

III. Chapter 4 Verse 29

(NASB), “29 And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence,”

(NIV), “29 Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness.”

(AMP), “29 And now, Lord, observe their threats [take them into account] and grant that Your bond-servants may declare Your message [of salvation] with great confidence,”

(TPT), “29 So now, Lord, listen to their threats to harm us. Empower us, as your servants, to speak the word of God freely and courageously.”

- a. Key Words
 - i. **Grant** – *Didomi* – To give, bestow, present, to grant or permit one to
 - ii. **Word** - *Logos* – Something said (including the thought); a word, speech, talk.
 - iii. **Confidence** – *Parresia* – Freely, Freedom in speaking, boldness of speech
- b. And now, Lord, take not of their threats - The Apostles were literally just getting off trial for speaking the Word of God with boldness after God used them to heal a lame man. Peter and John go back and report this to the rest of the people and they begin to pray. They quote Psalm 2 in their prayer. Their response to raging nations, conspiracy, and opposition to the Gospel is to cry out for even more boldness to speak the Word of The Lord.

(Acts 4:23-31 NASB), “23 When they had been released, they went to their own companions and reported everything that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. 24 And when they heard this, they raised their voices to God with one mind and said, “[a]Lord, it is You who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and everything that is in them, 25 who by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of our father David Your servant, said, ‘Why were the [b]nations insolent, And the peoples plotting in vain? 26 The kings of the earth [c]took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the Lord and against His [d]Christ.’ 27 For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy [e]servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the [f]Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, 28 to do whatever Your hand and purpose predestined to occur. 29 And [g]now, Lord, look at their threats, and grant it to Your bond-servants to speak Your word with all confidence, 30 while You extend Your hand to heal, and [h]signs and wonders take place through the name of Your holy [i]servant Jesus.” 31 And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.”

- c. And Grant your servants may speak your word with all confidence – The prayer is that by impartation for God to give them (Not just Peter and John but all who were in attendance) more boldness to continue speaking about Him and what He says freely. They pray to not be hindered or intimidated to declare the Word of The Lord despite the raging opposition they were already facing. Acts 4:13 shines light on the type of confidence they spoke with. It was not a “schooled, or trained” type of boldness it was a boldness that came from (and was distinguished by) having walked with Jesus.

(Acts 4:13 NASB), “Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus.”

IV. Chapter 4 Verse 30

(NASB), “While You extend Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Your holy servant Jesus.”

(NIV), “Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”

(AMP), “While You extend Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders (attesting miracles) take place through the name [and the authority and power] of Your holy Servant and Son Jesus.”

(TPT), “Stretch out your hand of power through us to heal, and to move in signs and wonders by the name of your holy Son, Jesus!”

V. Key Words

- i. **Extend** – *Ektenio* – To stretch out, to lay hands on any one, exert power and energy, Cast out, let down an anchor Over, towards, against one – either to point out something or to lay hold of a person in order to do him violence.
 - ii. **Your Hand** - *Cheir* – The hand (literally or figuratively), power; especially by Hebraism a means or instrument (A special operation of God.
 - iii. **Heal** – *Iasis* – A healing, or cure
 - iv. **Signs** - *Semeion* – A Sign, a mark, token, by which anything is now or distinguished – of miracles and wonders by which God authenticates the men sent by him, or by which men prove that the cause they are pleading is God’s.
 - v. **Wonders** – *Teras* – A prodigy, portent, a miracle. *This word is found only in the plural and joined with Signs.*
- b. As you extend your hand to heal - Luke does an intentional word play using the word for heal “Iasis” and the Greek word for Jesus (pronounced Iesus) as though he would indicate that the very name of Jesus witnessed to His being the great healer. The apostles didn’t pray just to be bold and zealous in speaking the Word but they desired the power and authority of God to accompany the bold proclamation of His Word.
- i. He can see that healing is the result of those coming into agreement with His Word and Him responding to violently confront what opposes Him and bring things to wholeness.
- c. And signs and wonders take place in the name of your Holy servant Jesus – Miracles should be the seal of one’s commission from God. The apostles ask God to confirm their bold speaking of His Word with undeniable signs that authenticate what they speak.
- i. The couples words “signs” and “wonders” don’t really indicate a measurable limitation. Their prayer is as though they are saying, “God whatever it takes by any means meet EVERY need, heal EVERY sickness, go above and beyond to validate the authority of your Word that we speak.”

VI. Chapter 4 Verse 31

(NASB), “And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.”

(NIV), “After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.”

(AMP), “And when they had prayed, the place where they were meeting together was shaken [a sign of God’s presence]; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness and courage.”

(TPT), “At that moment the earth shook beneath them, causing the building they were in to tremble. Each one of them was filled with the Holy Spirit, and they proclaimed the word of God with unrestrained boldness.”

a. Key Words

i. **Shaken** – *Saleuo* – of the motion produced by winds, storms, waves; to agitate or shake to cause to totter.

ii. **Filled** - *Pimplemi* – To fill, to fill mentally (be under the influence), To come to pass, to be confirmed by the event, or completed.

iii. **Boldness** – *Parresia* – Freely, Freedom in speaking, boldness of speech, confidence.

b. And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken - The word which is translated “was shaken” commonly denotes “violent agitation” like the raging sea, or an earthquake or trees shaken by the wind. God responds to their prayer immediately and literally shakes the place where they had prayed.

i. God shakes things to overthrow that which is in opposition to His glory being displayed.

(Isaiah 64: 1-2 NASB), “Oh, that You would tear open the heavens and come down, That the mountains would quake at Your presence— 2 As fire kindles brushwood, as fire causes water to boil— To make Your name known to Your adversaries, That the nations may tremble at Your presence!”

(Hebrews 12:26-27 NASB), “And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, “Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven.” 27 This expression, “Yet once more,” denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.”

(Haggai 2:6-9 NASB), “6 For this is what the Lord of armies says: ‘Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land. 7 I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory,’ says the Lord of armies. 8 ‘The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine,’ declares the Lord of armies. 9 ‘The latter glory of this house will be

greater than the former,’ says the Lord of armies, ‘and in this place I will give peace,’ declares the Lord of armies.”

- ii. In this instance God shakes things up and fills them with the Holy Spirit and boldness and then Revival breaks out.
- c. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the Word of God with boldness –The Holy Spirit rests on them again and empowers them to speak the Word of God with a fresh measure of boldness. They specifically ask God for more boldness and He responds by filling them again and giving them and even greater more unshakable confidence in His Word.
 - i. A question some might raise here is “Are people filled with the Holy Spirit more than once?”
 - 1. It seems as though the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit at least 3 times.
 - 2. I think the point here is that being filled or empowered by the Spirit is not a one time event but a lifetime of fellowship and friendship with Him.
 - ii. It seems as though being filled once by the Spirit isn’t the most optimal plan for a “miraculous resurrection power” track of Christianity. In scripture we don’t really see any reason to stop asking God to fill us with more.