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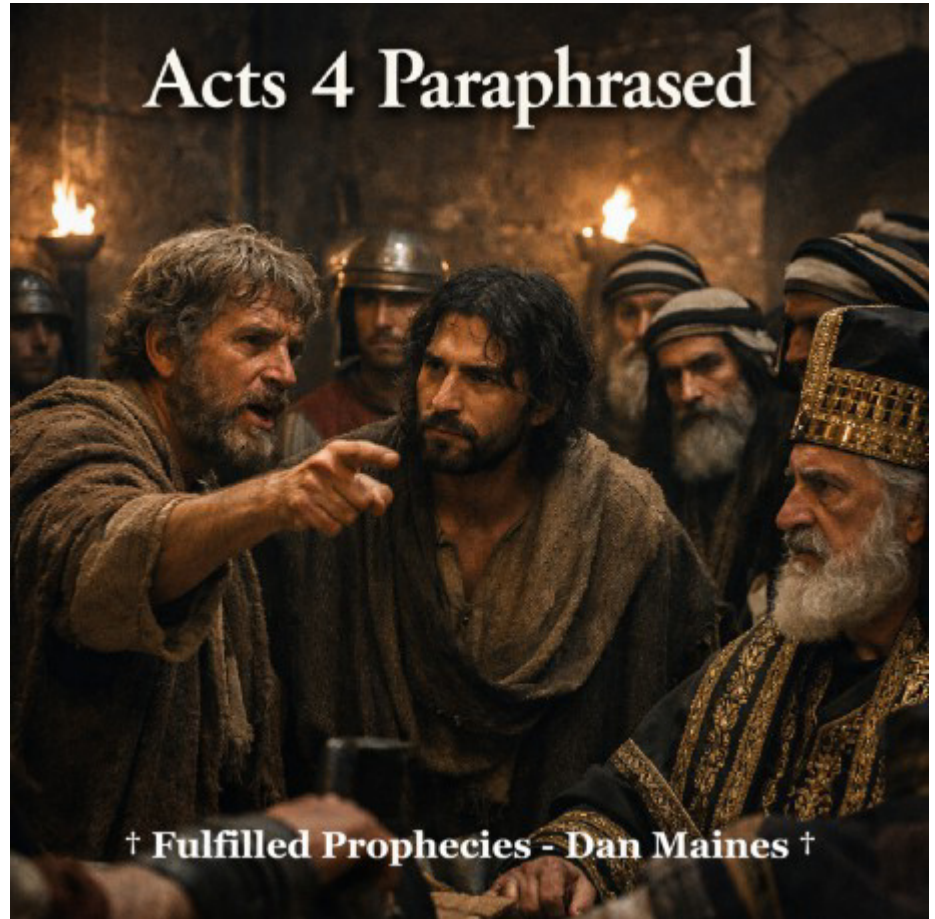
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Acts 4 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

Acts 4 Paraphrased

Introduction

- † The events in this chapter show the direct fulfillment of Jesus' warnings to that generation
- † The rulers, elders, and priests are now confronting the very message they rejected in Christ
- † This is not future prophecy, it's unfolding in real time in their generation

Acts 4:1

While they were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them

† The same leadership that opposed Jesus now opposes His apostles (John 15:20)

† The temple authority stepping in shows this was seen as a threat to their system

† This confirms the conflict Jesus said would come upon that generation (Matthew 23:36)

Acts 4:2

They were greatly disturbed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead

† The resurrection is being preached as a present reality, not future (2 Timothy 2:18)

† The Sadducees denied resurrection, so this message exposed their error

† Their reaction proves the message carried authority and power

Acts 4:3

They arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening

† This mirrors how Jesus Himself was treated (Luke 22:54)

† Darkness always tries to silence truth, but it can't stop it

† This was the beginning of the persecution Jesus warned about (Matthew 10:18)

Acts 4:4

But many of those who heard the message believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand

† Even under pressure, the gospel continued to spread

† Truth multiplied despite opposition, proving God's hand was in it (Isaiah 55:11)

† This shows fulfillment was expanding rapidly in that time

Acts 4:5

On the next day, their rulers, elders, and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem

- † The full authority structure of Israel is now assembled
- † This is the same system Jesus condemned before the cross (Matthew 23:1-3)
- † Jerusalem remains the center of judgment and confrontation

Acts 4:6

And Annas the high priest was there, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and all who were of high priestly descent

- † These are the same families involved in condemning Jesus (John 18:13-14)
- † The corruption of leadership continues unchanged
- † This shows continuity of guilt upon that generation

Acts 4:7

When they had placed them in the center, they began to ask, By what power or in what name have you done this

- † The issue is authority, not facts
- † They knew a miracle happened, but they resisted the source
- † This reflects their earlier rejection of Jesus' authority (Matthew 21:23)

Acts 4:8

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, Rulers and elders of the people

- † The Spirit empowers boldness just as Jesus promised (Luke 12:11-12)
- † Peter now stands fearless, unlike before the cross
- † This is the transformation that proves the resurrection reality

Acts 4:9

If we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made well

- † The healing becomes the evidence on trial
- † Good works are being treated as crimes

† This exposes the blindness of the leadership (John 9:39)

Acts 4:10

Let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by this name this man stands here before you in good health

† Peter directly charges them with crucifying Christ

† He declares the resurrection as a completed act

† This is public, national accountability placed on Israel (Acts 2:36)

Acts 4:11

He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, but which became the chief cornerstone

† This fulfills Psalm 118:22

† The leaders are identified as the ones who rejected God's foundation

† The kingdom has now shifted to Christ as cornerstone

Acts 4:12

And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved

† Salvation is exclusively in Christ

† This removes all reliance on temple, law, or system

† This is the transition from old covenant to fulfilled reality

Acts 4:13

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

† Authority doesn't come from formal training

† Being with Jesus is what transformed them

† This exposes the emptiness of religious credentials

Acts 4:14

And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply

- † The evidence was undeniable
- † Truth leaves no defense for error
- † Their silence proves the miracle was real

Acts 4:15

But when they had ordered them to leave the Council, they began to confer with one another

- † They move to private discussion because they can't refute publicly
- † This shows fear of losing control
- † Their concern is reputation, not truth

Acts 4:16

saying, What shall we do with these men For the fact that a noteworthy miracle has taken place through them is apparent to all who live in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it

- † They admit the miracle openly
- † This confirms the historical reality of these events
- † Their problem is not evidence, it's submission

Acts 4:17

But so that it will not spread any further among the people, let us warn them to speak no longer to any man in this name

- † They attempt to suppress truth
- † Control becomes their strategy
- † This fulfills Jesus' warning of silencing His followers (Luke 21:12)

Acts 4:18

And when they had summoned them, they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus

- † This is direct opposition to God's command
- † Man's authority is placed against God's authority

† This sets the stage for obedience to God over men

Acts 4:19

But Peter and John answered and said to them, Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge

† They confront the authority conflict directly

† Obedience to God takes priority

† This is the foundation of faithful witness

Acts 4:20

for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard

† Truth cannot be silenced

† Their testimony is based on firsthand witness

† This shows certainty, not speculation

Acts 4:21

When they had threatened them further, they let them go, finding no basis on which to punish them, on account of the people, because they were all glorifying God for what had happened

† Public support restrained the leaders

† God used the crowd to protect His witnesses

† This shows divine control over the situation

Acts 4:22

for the man was more than forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed

† The long-standing condition proves the miracle's legitimacy

† This wasn't temporary or staged

† It was undeniable evidence

Acts 4:23

When they had been released, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them

- † The church shares in both trials and victories
- † Unity is strengthened through persecution
- † This builds collective faith

Acts 4:24

And when they heard this, they lifted their voices to God with one accord and said, O Lord, it is You who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that is in them

- † They turn to God immediately, not fear
- † They acknowledge His total authority
- † This reflects trust in God's sovereignty

Acts 4:25

who by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of our father David Your servant, said, Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples devise futile things

- † They recognize prophecy being fulfilled (Psalm 2:1)
- † The opposition was already foretold
- † This confirms everything is unfolding according to plan

Acts 4:26

The kings of the earth took their stand, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against His Christ

- † This was fulfilled in the rulers of that time
- † Rome and Israel both stood against Christ
- † This is not future, it's already happened

Acts 4:27

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

- † This names the exact historical fulfillment
- † Both Jew and Gentile participated
- † This proves Psalm 2 was fulfilled in their time

Acts 4:28

to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to

occur

- † God was in control of the entire event
- † Even their evil actions fulfilled His purpose
- † This shows divine sovereignty over history

Acts 4:29

And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence

- † They don't ask for safety, but boldness
- † Their focus is on continuing the mission
- † This reflects true faith

Acts 4:30

while You extend Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Your holy servant Jesus

- † The power continues through Christ's name
- † Signs confirm the message
- † This shows ongoing authority in that time

Acts 4:31

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

- † God responds immediately
- † The shaking confirms His presence
- † Boldness increases, not fear

Acts 4:32

And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them

- † Unity defined the early church
- † This was a complete break from selfish living
- † It reflects kingdom living in action

Acts 4:33

And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all

- † The resurrection message remained central
- † Power and grace worked together
- † This shows God's favor on the church

Acts 4:34

For there was not a needy person among them, for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales

- † Needs were met within the body
- † This shows practical love
- † It fulfilled the law's intent in a new way

Acts 4:35

and lay them at the apostles' feet, and they would be distributed to each as any had need

- † The apostles managed distribution
- † This created fairness and provision
- † It reflects trust in leadership

Acts 4:36

Now Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles, which translated means Son of Encouragement

- † Barnabas is introduced as an example of generosity
- † His name reflects his character
- † Encouragement is part of kingdom life

Acts 4:37

and who owned a tract of land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet

- † This act shows full commitment
- † He trusted God over possessions

† This is living proof of transformed life

Historical References

† Josephus records growing unrest and tension among Jewish leadership during this period

† Eusebius confirms the bold preaching of the apostles in Jerusalem after Christ

† Tacitus acknowledges the spread of the Christian movement despite opposition

How it applies to us today

† We see that truth will always face resistance, but it cannot be stopped

† Boldness comes from knowing what Christ has already accomplished

† We're not waiting for fulfillment, we're living in it

† The same confidence they had is what we're called to walk in

Q & A Appendix

Q Why were the leaders so angry

A Because the apostles were proving Jesus was risen and exposing their guilt (Acts 2:36)

Q Was the resurrection future to them

A No, it was already being preached as fulfilled (2 Timothy 2:18)

Q Did Psalm 2 happen later

A No, it was fulfilled in Herod, Pilate, and Israel in that time (Acts 4:27)

Q Why didn't they deny the miracle

A Because it was publicly undeniable (Acts 4:16)

Q What gave the apostles boldness

A The Holy Spirit working in them (Acts 4:31)

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Acts 4

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History

† Tacitus, Histories

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