

Acts 4:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them,

Analysis

The arrival of 'priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees' signals organized religious opposition to gospel preaching. The Greek 'stratēgos' (captain) commanded temple police with authority to arrest. This triadic opposition - priestly aristocracy, temple security, and Sadducean theology - represents comprehensive establishment resistance. That they 'came upon them' (Greek 'epestēsan') suggests aggressive intervention, not mere inquiry, foreshadowing persecution's escalation.

Historical Context

The temple captain (Sagan) ranked second only to the high priest in temple hierarchy. Sadducees controlled temple operations and high priesthood through Roman favor. Their denial of resurrection (Acts 23:8) made apostolic preaching especially threatening - validating resurrection undermined their theological system.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does religious establishment opposition to the gospel continue in various forms today?
2. What does the Sadducees' theological denial of resurrection teach about doctrine's practical consequences?

Interlinear Text

Λαλούντων	δὲ	αὐτοῖς	πρὸς	τὸν	λαὸν	ἐπέστησαν
as they spake	And	them	unto	G3588	the people	came upon
G2980	G1161	G846	G4314		G2992	G2186
αὐτοῖς	οἱ	ἱερεῖς	καὶ	ὁ	στρατηγὸς	τοῦ ἱεροῦ
them	G3588	the priests	and	G3588	the captain	G3588 of the temple
G846		G2409	G2532		G4755	G2411
καὶ	οἱ	Σαδδουκαῖοι				
and	G3588	the Sadducees				
G2532		G4523				

Additional Cross-References

Luke 22:4 (Parallel theme): And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them.

Acts 6:12 (Parallel theme): And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council,

Acts 5:24 (Temple): Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow.

Acts 5:26 (Parallel theme): Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.

Matthew 3:7 (Parallel theme): But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org