

# **The Apostles Persecuted**

Acts 5:12 – 6:7

by Don Falkos

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The apostles continued to perform many miraculous signs and wonders. The believers were highly regarded by the general population, and men and women alike were constantly coming to believe. Those who were sick or possessed by evil spirits were brought into the streets on beds and mats in the hope that Peter's shadow might fall on them as he went by; and every one of them was healed.

Out of jealousy, the Chief Priest arrested the apostles and threw them in jail. But that night an angel of the Lord let them out and told them, "Go into the Temple and teach the people."

In the morning the Chief Priest called together the Sanhedrin and sent the officers of the Temple guard to bring in the apostles. When the officers came back they said, "We found the jail locked and the guards in place, but when we went inside there was no one there."

Just then someone came in and said, "Those men you arrested are in the Temple teaching the people."

The captain of the guard went with his men and brought the apostles before the Sanhedrin. They were chastised and questioned. The religious leaders decided they ought to be executed. But one of their number, a highly venerated teacher named Gamaliel, said, "I advise you to leave them alone. If what they're doing is from God, you won't be able to stop them; you'll only find yourselves fighting against God."

The apostles were flogged, ordered not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let go. They were thrilled at having suffered for the name of Jesus. They delegated daily administrative tasks to others while they continued teaching and proclaiming the good news that "Jesus is the Messiah."