

- **The Arrest of Peter and John (Acts 4: 1-21)**

1. After the healing of the Cripple man from birth at the Beautiful Gate.
2. Peter preached to the people in the Temple and the numbers of Christians increased to 5000.
3. Peter and John were arrested by the Sanhedrin or the Jewish council for healing the Cripple man.
4. They were asked to explain the power that they used in healing the Cripple man at the Beautiful Gate.
5. They told them that the man was healed in the power that is in the name of Jesus.
6. The Jewish council cannot do anything because of the lame man beside Peter and John.
7. They later warned the two apostles not to preach in the name of Jesus Christ again.
8. Rather the apostles preferred to listen to God's voice rather than man and they went to the temple preaching the gospel.

Significance:

- a. The arrest shows the opposition to the church by the Jewish authorities.
- b. The resistance by the apostles was the result of the power by the Holy Spirit.
- c. With the help of the Holy Spirit, the church is able to withstand all opposition in the way of its spread, growth and development.

- **The Arrest and trial of the Apostles: (Acts 5: 17 – 42)**

1. The apostles were arrested by the Jewish Council and were put in prison but the angel of God rescued them and instructed them to go and preach in the temple.
2. The apostles went as been instructed and speak boldly about Jesus in the Temple.
3. When it was in the morning the Sanhedrin sent for them from the prison to be tried but the captain of the prison saw the prison doors locked and the apostles were not found there and the councils were perplexed.
4. Someone came to inform them that the apostles were in the temple preaching in the name of Jesus.
5. The council summoned them and asked them for the reason why they refused to listen to them not to preach in the name of Jesus again.
6. The apostles replied that they would rather listen to God's voice rather than them.

7. They also spoke about Jesus passion and his promise to them before his ascension that came to pass in their lives on the day of Pentecost.
8. The Sanhedrin was about to kill them when they were defended by a great teacher of law called Gamaliel, a Pharisee and reputable man.
9. He told the Council to leave them alone so that they would not sin against God if they were sent by God but if not their teaching would fade away and the apostles were all beaten and warned not to preach in the name of Jesus again.
10. Rather, the apostles went out rejoicing insisted that it was better to listen to God's voice rather than man.

Ways by which the Church still faces opposition today:

1. Christians are not allowed to preach or teach openly in some areas.
2. Building of Churches in some areas is prohibited, and resisted in some areas.
3. There is persecution of Christians in some areas resulting in the destruction of life and property.
4. Discrimination against Christians in employment opportunities and promotion in some places.

• **The Arrest, trial and the death of Stephen (Acts 12: 1-24):**

1. Stephen was one of the seven deacons appointed by the apostles.
2. He was arrested as a result of massive increase in Christianity through his signs and wonders.
3. He was arrested and two false accusations were made against him.
4. They said that he was blaspheming against Moses and God and against the law and the temple.
5. Stephen was filled with the Holy Spirit and he defended himself in the presence of the Jewish council.
6. He started from when the Israelites were rescued in Egypt by God.
7. He continued till when they reached the promise land and they violated the commandment of God by worshipping idols.
8. He told them about how God sent Jesus to save the whole world from their sins that it was this Jesus that the stiff-necked Jews tried, crucified and he died on the cross and resurrected and ascended into heaven.
9. As he was talking, he said he saw Jesus seated at the right hand of God.
10. The Jews rushed at him and stoned him to death.
11. He prayed two prayers before he died and he became the first Christian martyr.

The Significance of the arrest, the trial and the death of Stephen

- i. The death of Stephen led to the Church evangelization outside Jerusalem.

- ii. It led to great persecution in Jerusalem
- iii. It helped to introduce Saul, who later became Paul the apostle to the Gentiles.
- iv. The death of Stephen led to a blessing in disguise for the early Christians.